

# Pentecostal Creative Ideas, Inspiring Vision, and Innovation in Ghana – A Bane of Pentecostal Continued Plausibility

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**Abstract** The growth and increasing prominence of Pentecostal activities across Africa and Ghana in particular has generated interest across disciplines. Consequently, the study of religious organisations competing amongst themselves for clients, through the provision of social and spiritual services that society cherished a lot provides an insight into how religious leaders innovate to respond to social change. Using a field data collected in Tamale in the northern part of Ghana, this paper looks at how pastors in recent times have employed economic principles of innovation and entrepreneurship in their evangelisation drive to promote their interest on one hand and serve the interest of their clients on the other. The paper posits that modern day pastors are able to survive in the Pentecostal enterprise because they have been able to innovative both socially and spiritually in the running of their daily activities.

**Keywords** Pentecostalism, Divine-actor, Innovation, Entrepreneurship

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## 1. Introduction

In recent times, the resilience of Pentecostalism in both developed and developing countries has been observed by scholars investigating the economics and sociology of religion [11; 28]. Many of these scholars focus their attention on religion as a rational response to changes in the political, ecological, and socio-economic environments in which religions operate. Consequently, the ambition of most religious leaders, especially Pentecostal pastors (divine-actors), after successfully planting a church (divine industry), is to nurture it in line with the vision of its founder(s). However, before these visions are realised, divine-actors have to engage in a competitive religious market [27] with other religious actors who also have similar visions. Divine actors in a religious marketplace work as religious firms [27] with entrepreneurial orientation and skills, enabling them to boost the fortunes of their respective divine industries [23]. Under this circumstance, clients of divine-actors are seen as rational consumers of religious commodities who decide whether or not to buy, or in which divine industry to buy. This action is often based on a cost-benefit analysis [27]. The suppliers of these commodities are also engaged in a competitive religious market, particularly regarding spiritual, social and

welfare service provision. Using the theory of demand and supply of religious goods, this paper is of the view that the current happening within Pentecostalism depicts buyers (clients) and sellers (divine industries) meeting in a marketplace whereby the forces of supply and demand dictate allocation of clients across divine industries [11].

## 2. Objectives

In almost all Ghanaian societies, religion continues to play a central role in people's lives although there are visible signs of acculturation. The objective of this paper is to explore how divine-actors innovate with divine gifts and how this innovation serves as a catalyst for the current growth of Pentecostal divine industries. This phenomenon is evidenced in the increasing activities of the Pentecostal divine industries across cities and towns, serving as the cradle of their astounding activities [20]. The dynamism and rapidity with which the movement grow in the global south [10] makes it imperative for the emerging trends to be monitored continuously, hence the importance of this study.

## 3. Methods

Between February and September 2012, 20 members (15 members and 5 divine-actors) each, drawn from the Winning Life Chapel, Kings Christian Ministry, Reach Chapel World Outreach, and Powerful Jesus Outreach Ministry (making a

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total of 80 members) were sampled and interviewed in relation to the increasing appeal of Pentecostal activities in Ghana. The sampling was randomly done at the time the researcher was undertaking participant observation at the regular services of the divine industries. Although the respondents were randomly chosen by approaching the individual members of the divine industries, only those who agreed to be interviewed were interviewed.

Divine-actors were engaged in an in-depth interview after they had finished with all their activities. On the part of the members, a focus group discussion was arranged for members of each divine-industry. The aim was to gain insight into the perspective of different members of the divine industries in the study. In view of the fact that the research was intended to elicit views of clients of divine industries resident in the Tamale metropolis, only those who had stayed in the city for at least six months qualified to part of the focus group discussion. Six months was considered enough time to observe the religious activities and to actively participate in such activities themselves. Since the majority of residents in Tamale speak English, Dagbani and Mampruli, all of which are languages the researcher speaks, the research was conducted using these languages. An interview guiding questions were used to elicit detailed information from divine-actors as well as members of divine industries concerning their activities. Each interview lasted between 20 to 30 minutes, and was recorded and later transcribed, while observations and field notes were also taken for analysis.

#### 4. Discussion of Findings

Within Pentecostalism, the one common thing that cut across all divine industries is the charisma of the divine-actor. In the Weberian sense, the use of the term charisma emphasises the supernatural endowment of a leader. Such leaders are often endowed with divine gift which is used to demonstrate to followers through such manifestations as miracles about their divine authority. This manifestation is however not done in a vacuum, but involves the obedience of the followers as it plays a vital role towards their belief in the leader's divine powers. The likelihood of divine-actors losing their gift and by extension their following is high if they fail to prove such gifts or obey the divine rules (cf Spencer,[26]). In this regard, divine-actors within the Pentecostal divine industries build their authority and charisma in two ways. First, the divine-actor in his or her claim to divine leadership often proves his or her access to spiritual power and charisma, and second, the congregation he or she ministers often legitimises this authority and charisma. As divine-actors, they are able to communicate effectively and in ways that provides clients basic emotional needs including the ability to inspire and motivate. These inspiring features often make their followers move along with them without any question. They also appeal strongly to the values of their followers and it is this 'psychological bond' between the two that makes many divine-actors

succeeds. What must be noted is that the actor's personal 'charm', negotiating skills, physical appearance, sermonic fervour, and the level of convincingness, all boost their appeal to clients[24]. It is also important to note that the credibility, traits and behaviours of the divine-actor and the perception of followers about them (divine-actors) all boost their appeal.

The supernatural activities of divine-actors become useful only in situations of belief, with the existence of such entities as devils, spirits, demons and gods. Consequently, charisma as applied to divine-actors can safely be conceptualised as a compound product of three factors: The actor and his attributes, the social situation which demands such an actor, and the perception of clients about the divine-actor. Due to their divine inspiration, they structure a universe of values for their clients to satisfy their deeply felt needs[2]. They articulate what people wish to hear by seizing upon diffused and intense, but articulated, sentiments and by giving people a voice, they acquire a charismatic following.

It is worth noting that the charisma of divine-actors is not just an attribute, but something they build, through social relationships. One important observation about these divine-actors is the way they use their spiritual mentors as a point of transference to build their charisma[14]. By speaking and behaving like their spiritual mentors, they gradually take form in charisma and related attributes of leadership. During the field interview, it was observed that a section of the divine-actors claim the public likens them to some other spiritual leaders because of the way they preach and the relationships they have with such personalities. Some of the Ghanaian based personalities who were mentioned include Duncan Williams of Action Chapel International, Eastwood Anaba of Fountain Gate Chapel, Dag Heward Mills of Lighthouse Chapel International, and Agyin Asare of Word Miracle Church International all in Ghana. Although charisma is conceived of as a special grace or a personal characteristic, divine-actors build up their charisma, not only through the recognition they get from their clients, but also claiming it from 'religious celebrities' or big 'Men of God'[14]. The term religious celebrities is used to refer to divine-actors who founded their divine industries three decades ago and have since gained some respect in view of their valuable service to society.

Moreover, through these relationships, divine-actors establish their 'spiritual lineages', by explicitly referring to whom they descend from spiritually. This involves those who mentored, trained and ordained them. Establishing links to these powerful 'Men of God', adds to their credibility and status as divine-actors[14]. During my interactions with some of the divine-actors, it was observed that some of the divine-actors trace their spiritual lineage from Idahoza of Faith Miracle Centre, a Nigerian based divine-actor, through whom Agyin Asare and Duncan Williams had their training. As the divine-actors interviewed had their training from Duncan Williams and Agyin Asare, they immediately claimed to be spiritual descendants of Idahoza. This gives them considerable legitimacy since Idahoza was an

internationally revered apostle of the gospel who did quite well. Clearly, this way of carving out one's spiritual lineage creates room for innovation and flexibility regarding who one can establish links to, as there are no formal rules to follow, and because these relations do not need to follow institutional ideologies, claiming spiritual lineage is a way to build up positions and status as spiritual actors. The lived reality of both clients and divine-actors often paves the way and shapes these beliefs and ideas. The religious beliefs, and possibly the ideas they generate, that inform the way social, economic and spiritual circumstances are perceived, interpreted and acted upon in a specific social context. Divine-actors work to improve upon situations rather than leaving them unattended, bearing in mind that the goal is not to be owned by the enslavement of too much responsibility. They recognise that the most important part of any divine business is the human element whether in the form of employee or client – this is what makes or breaks any enterprise, and communication is the key to successful relationships with people.

## 5. Performing the Role of Social Entrepreneurs

An interesting development with regard to the activities of Pentecostal divine-actors in recent times can be likened to the operation of social entrepreneurs[16]. Two perspectives (broad and narrow) are very crucial in the analysis of social entrepreneurship. In a broader scale, a social entrepreneur is conceptualised as someone with an innovative foresight and a socially beneficial vision that is aimed at making 'profit' within the social purpose commercial ventures[5; 9], or a person operating in a non-profit sector such as hybrid structural forms which mix for profit and non-profit approaches[8]. On the narrow scale, a social entrepreneur is conceptualised as someone with business-minded expertise and market-based skills, which are applied in the non-profit sector just as when profit organisations develop innovative approaches to earn income.

This gives social entrepreneurship as a concept several associated meanings, but which essentially involves a mission to create social value in an innovative and energetic way by divine-actors who, in the words of Gregory Dees[8], are referred to as 'reformers and revolutionaries.' The central driver of the activities of divine industries is the social and spiritual problems they seek to address. To effectively address these challenges, divine-actors usually equip themselves with spiritual capital and authority that characterises God's anointed persons who upon the experience of divine power use it to influence the needs of clients[7]. Under this situation, divine-actors as social entrepreneurs are people with not-for-profit initiatives in search of alternative innovative management schemes to create social value[5], though one is mindful of the fact that others still conceive of it as a socially responsible practice of commercial business engaged in cross-sector partnership.

## 6. Corporate Institutional Role of Divine Industries

Pentecostal divine industries in Ghana function like corporate entities both in structure and in legal provisions. They rationally tie their corporate social responsibilities to winning more souls to the kingdom of God[31]. Some of their engagements are mostly outside the core principles establishing the divine industry, but which nevertheless impact positively on the health and wellbeing of society. They initiate social, educational and health service programs that help clients and surrounding communities in various ways including development initiatives, income maintenance, youth programs, and job training. Much of this organised assistance is of immense benefit to the vulnerable members in society. One of these observations was made at the Kings Christian Ministry that has collaboration with the Grace Outreach Ministry in the United States of America. Through this collaboration, they distribute on a regular basis a lot of goods including children and adult clothing and shoes to some deprived communities in the Northern Region of Ghana.

What was observed at the Reach Chapel World Outreach Ministry, another participating divine industry is that Rev Kingsley, the founder, has attached an NGO called the 'Living Waters Community Rural Aid' to his divine industry to reach out to the needy in society with basic social amenities. The context, within which these donations are given, coupled with the multiple and competing ideologies amongst these divine industries, signifies what is described as humanitarian ideals, social justice and human rights, or goodness for its own sake[4]. These kind gestures, it must be noted, go with an appeal from the divine-actors to the recipients of these donations to accept Christ as their saviour for a better future. Some of the divine-actors contend that it is their wish to draw people to the faith by publicly demonstrating their commitment to meeting their communities social and economic needs, as one divine-actor put it: 'We want to turn people on to Jesus Christ through this process.'

Others however, advocate for the development of innovative ideas to empower individual clients to be able to take care of their own social and spiritual needs. In their conviction, the antidote to this is through mental empowerment and the provision of training to clients to equip them with employable skills. This, in their view, would ultimately provide them with cover against the shackles of poverty and illiteracy. In recognition of this latter view, one of the respondents indicated that: 'Giving them (clients) fish all the time to eat does not help. Instead they should be provided with fishing nets and taught how to fish for themselves.' This clearly shows that some of them support the idea that clients need to be resourceful to be economically independent. They create a sense of personal self-reliance, self-worth and positive attitude to help clients to work through unpredictable events that requires the application of enterprising initiatives, self-motivation, and

flexibility with which to face an insecure future[17]. With their enviable record in the provision of hope to the hopeless using the wealth and health messages, divine-actors educate clients to think differently in ways that gives them the wisdom to confront social challenges with courage. Using the spirit of the ‘overcomer,’ some of the actors recounted how they sold their personal belongings to ensure that they experience their divinely inspired visions. For instance, Rev Kingsley of Reach Chapel World Outreach was emphatic that he had to sell the personal car he and his wife were using to see to it that his divine industry was not resource constrained.

## 7. Developing Clients’ Skills through Partnership

One of the aims of divine-actors is to ensure that their existing clients do not defect to other divine industries. To ensure this, enabling environments are created for clients to learn new skills or develop existing skills. Some of the skills are administrative and relational in nature, and are aimed at improving the capacity clients to work as part of a team through which interpersonal skills are acquired. Some engage the services of stake holders (organisations and divine industries) to take clients through skills development workshops and seminars. As Rt Rev Luguterah of Kings Christian Ministry indicated:

*.....Pastors do not know it all, so bringing people with different expertise help the pastors to keep their congregation and even attract new members. So when you find somebody who has something you can benefit from, you invite him.’*

They stressed on the need for flexibility and innovation in order to achieve the desired results. As Joseph Suico[30] rightly indicated, the time has come for men of God to conduct on regular basis seminars and workshops to promote healthy social and the spiritual lives of clients. In trying to legitimise their status in a rational and efficient manner, they invite people to provide training to clients through seminars and workshops in areas they consider relevant to their welfare and progress. What was observed and subsequently confirmed by many of the divine-actors is the fact that this practice is an effort to keep their congregation from defecting to other divine industries.

In explaining why they invite other divine-actors, they indicated that some divine-actors are more gifted in healing and deliverance while others are blessed with prophecy and teaching. Indeed, even though each divine-actor has his way of attracting clients, when they are invited by their colleagues it is often an opportunity for the invitees to market themselves by proving their worth. As innovators and ‘revolutionaries’ preaching the gospel of change and progress in the religious field, Pentecostal divine-actors are stimulated when they notice progressive change all around them. Their desire to generate change through promising ideas keeps them abreast of relevant changes. It is worth noting that the rate at which this change occurs is dependent

upon the audience and the type of knowledge they impart to them.

## 8. Competition within the Divine Industries

Competition, a concept used in a religious market place and the idea of comparing religious services to ordinary commodities has a particularly relevant implication in explaining how religious institutions entrench their positions in society[25]. Regardless of the differences in the ideology, the survival and growth of divine-actors is dependent upon how they access resources from the external environment [22]. Resources, as used here, are not limited to only financial and physical assets, but also include the number of clients in a divine industry and how they contribute to the growth and development of these divine industries. The loyalty of clients is one area divine-actors do not take lightly, and as such, each divine industry strives within its means, using its available resources, to ensure that it keeps its existing clients and possibly attracts new members. The ‘mad-rush’ for clients sometimes leads to rivalry especially in a pluralistic religious environment like Ghana where each religious institution constantly devises new techniques to remain in the religious business. The spirit of competition amongst the divine industries enhances both static and dynamic efficiency through motivation and innovation. Dynamism as observed within the social context, characterised by pluralism, and the changing gender roles facilitates and determines the direction and nature of competition amongst these divine industries[22]. In any religious competitive environment as a whole, and the case of Ghana in particular, Pentecostal divine industries operate like firms[27], who aspire to sell their religious products to the consuming public. This leads to a perceived rivalry, borne out of the strategies each institution employs to compete for clients. This brings to light Peter Berger’s assertion that:

*... The religious tradition, which previously could be authoritatively imposed, now has to be marketed. It must be ‘sold’ to the clientele that is no longer constrained to ‘buy.’ The pluralistic situation is, above all, a market situation. In it, the religious institutions become marketing agencies and the religious traditions become consumer commodities. And at any rate a good deal of religious activity in this situation comes to be dominated by the logic of market economics (Berger, 1967:138, 22).*

From this observation, it means that in a religiously competitive market, people often have variety to choose from, and making this choice is dependent upon which of the numerous religious denominations that can best provide the social and the spiritual needs of the consuming public. Thus, the successes and failures of divine industries in a competitive market is dependent upon how they package their religious commodities to win the souls of the potential clients. Some of the strategies they adopt in their competitive drive include radio adverts, the packaging and the branding

of their products, and how they relate the gospel to the real life situations of ordinary men and women. As Iannaccone[10] has observed:

*We hear and talk these days of 'religious markets' and 'religious entrepreneurs'. 'Religious consumers' are said to 'shop' for churches much as they shop for cars: weighing costs and benefits, and seeking the highest return on their spiritual investment. 'Religious producers', the erstwhile clergy, struggle to provide a 'commodity' at least as attractive as their competitors. Religion is advertised and marketed, produced and consumed, demanded and supplied'[10]*

The effect of healthy competition becomes apparent in the Pentecostal religious market not only when several firms compete in the same market environment, but also when they are able to differentiate between the very different products and services produced by these institutions. The term healthy is used here to indicate that the competition does not lead to conflict but rather improvement in their activities. Religious competition amongst the various actors in the divine industry, as the case may be, are categorised into three: inter-divine industry, intra-divine industry and inter-religious competition. To put it another way, competition is faced from within Pentecostal divine industries in particular and orthodox divine industries as a whole and competition from outside where they compete with other religious bodies such as the traditional African and Islamic religions.

In the case of intra-Pentecostal competition, the engagement is between members of the Pentecostal family. Often, they deploy different strategies with regard to their engagement with adherents and the public on how to solve their social and spiritual needs. The rapidity with which a divine industry grows is determined by how they engage existing and potential adherents with respect to how they respond to their needs.

The existence of inter-divine industry competition comes to light when the Pentecostal divine industries are seen as competing with the orthodox faith, with similar products and services. This has led to orthodox divine industries like the Catholic and the Presbyterian divine industries instituting charismatic renewals groups within their institutions to maintain their market share.

With regard to inter-religious competition, the Pentecostal movement engages with other religious organisations such as Traditional African Religion and Islam as is the case in Ghana. As Meyer[18] has indicated, they are able to offer people concrete religious forms and patterns to act on and access the power of the Holy Spirit. It is based on this engagement that, as a strategy, the Pentecostal faith continues to vilify the traditional religious practitioners and Islamic religious healers for their use of animals in their rituals, thus questioning the authenticity and efficacy of their products[19]. There is always competition with regard to the ideas each sells to potential clients. Those with the best ideas win the day. Active and innovative divine-actors benefit from increased competition from new entrants, because the increased competition by less innovative and charismatic

leaders results in lower membership cost, thereby encouraging entry of other potential competitors into the market[24].

It has also been observed that the activities of Pentecostal movements revolve around their product quality, innovation, reputation, and the reliability of the individual divine-actors, and the brand names of their respective divine industries including the services they provide. The divine industries have exclusive rights to an identifiable brand name, which is an important way to signal the product quality. The brand name reduces the customer search cost and facilitates loyalty[22]. Some of the Pentecostal divine industries gain their appeal through brand names including names such as 'Powerful Jesus Outreach Ministry', 'Christ Physicians Church', 'Holy Healing Church', and 'Pure Fire', among others. A careful choice of name is part of the strategies divine-actors devise to achieve a competitive advantage over their co-competitors, creating opportunities for their clientele with enduring product quality. There are also notably aggressive advertising and marketing techniques, and above all, the incorporation and marketing of spiritual healing and deliverance in such a manner that people are attracted. How they are able to sustain the appeal of their respective divine industries in the eyes of the general public is where the development of trust and credibility begins. As is the case in other business entities, the key to marketing religion is the creation of perception of credibility[22]. Credible commitment on the part of religious suppliers fosters confidence not only because they prove the efficacy of their claims, but also because they signal the supplier's convictions. Their credibility is also boosted when their predictions and prophecies attain some measures of accuracy with many people proclaiming positive testimonies about them. The development of confidence in the activities increases and more clients get attracted when trusted persons make testimonies. These pronouncements further foster the perception that religious experiences are broadly shared among religious clients[22].

## 9. Divine Healing as an Aiding Activity

One common belief held by all Pentecostal divine-actors is the fact that prophecy and healing is a gift from God and they use it as an aiding practice to propagate his word, to compete amongst their peers, strive for clients, and to prove that they have divine authority for what they say and do. Thus, in addition to the provision of social services, healing through deliverance and prophecy are employed as strategies to attract potential clients to their respective divine industries. In view of the widespread competition as found amongst the current breed of Pentecostal divine industries, a journalist in Nigeria was quoted as saying that: 'Nigeria is fast becoming a pagoda of prophets and prophetesses each of whom pretends to be a lighthouse capable of illuminating the country from Atlantic to Sahara'[4]. This development is borne out of the fact that, for one to survive in any

competitive environment such as the Pentecostal religious market in Ghana, one has to prove to the clients, one's capabilities in any given situation. One concern that came up from divine-actors was the fact that the stiffer competition results in a situation where 'charlatans' infiltrates the ranks of the chosen men of God. It is however difficult to distinguish the alleged 'charlatans' from the genuine ones since each divine-actor claims his activities are under the influence of God. Moreover, given the fact that each divine-actor tries to be innovative, one can argue that, whether 'charlatans' or genuine, all the actors are in a competitive market to win potential clients, and therefore proving who is a genuine or charlatan is not the focus of this paper. What is important however is the fact that each actor claims to be an agent of God, sent to fulfil certain objectives on earth, but because the supply of these agents appears to be increasing by the day, these agents have to compete amongst themselves to fulfil their set missions.

Additionally, the continuous reference to the Holy Spirit as a source of power makes it quite difficult for one to judge whose actions or inactions are divine and whose are not. However, it appears a great part of their activities is in the interest of society, and since in any competitive environment, people constantly innovate to stay in business, such accusations and counter accusations would continue to be part of their daily activities. Part of the challenge divine-actors encounter emanates from the fact that certain actors take credit for the good work and blame a lack of results on the individual's lack of faith. It is this development that has convinced many people that a career as a divine-actor is the easiest path to amassing wealth since social problems are ever increasing, forming part of the strategies many people employ to provide cover for themselves[14]. There is no doubt that some of them genuinely accept the fact that it is not possible for God to touch all people at the same time to ameliorate their problems. Considering the diversity of opinions and perception, there are some divine-actors who do not want to be associated with such difficulties, and it is the distaste for such excuses that it is speculated, some of them allegedly resort to other worldly mediums to make their 'package' attractive for their clientele.

In light of the competitive environment, it is not uncommon to see Pentecostal divine industries in Africa as a whole and in Ghana in particular being planted like family businesses, with unique characteristics that allow them to strategically organise their activities in an effective and efficient manner to face the market. Their activities are controlled with priority given to close associates in top management and other sensitive positions as well as being selective in their recruitment procedure. This strategy allows them to have lower recruitment and human resource costs at the initial stages, rendering them more efficient than other types of institutions. It also creates a unique and flexible work environment that inspires other religious actors (employees) to be motivated, committed and show loyalty to the business. Focusing on the well-being of their clientele, in

order for the business to implement an efficient and effective management strategy is part of the divine industry's priority.

By contrast, a key insight from the dynamics of religious competition is that an institution by itself or in coordination with other players can make strategic moves to reshape the nature of competition. Administrative and political strategies and cooperation highlights the role of institutional distinctiveness in gaining and sustaining competitive advantages, specifying how different institutional characteristics lead to different cooperative patterns. A state policy towards religious institutions is a critical determinant of relative competitive position and the resources available to the sector as a whole. It has been observed that 'The capacity of a single religious firm to monopolise a religious economy depends upon the degree to which the state uses coercive force to regulate the religious economy'[29]. However, the situation in Ghana is an open competition. Thus, it is not hard to find evidence that dominant religious organisations influence government regulations in ways that favour their own interest. Certain religious organisation views their prospect for shaping the legal environment more favourably than others. In particular, Christianity constitutes a large segment of Ghana's population and is more likely than the minority religions to sway government policy decisions in its favour.

## 10. Spiritual and Social Innovation

Pentecostalism has been consistently described as a religion characterised by the prominence and presence of the Holy Spirit as the source of empowerment[1]. This is often validated by evidence of a deep spiritual experience with God, and is informed by the desire of clients to see that their divine-actors are different from divine-actors found in other religious establishments[7]. Without evidence of spiritual depth in divine leaders, their operating principles and experiences may not be distinguishable from other forms of leaders within the secular sphere. It is based on this unique spiritual gift that activities that surround the behaviour of divine-actors in the Pentecostal faith are tied to the notion of charisma, the gift of the Spirit, which manifests in practices of healing, speaking in tongues, deliverance, and prophetism, among others. Consequently, the structuring of leadership among various actors of Pentecostal faith involves constant mutational work through which 'symbolic capital' of spiritual gift is turned into position of authority[32]. The structure and actions of the divine-actors in position of authority is akin to that of innovative entrepreneurs, especially from the point of view of individual actors, and how they acquire and use resources for and on behalf of clients[15].

In pursuance of their divinely inspired missions, it is important to note that divine-actors first seek autonomy to facilitate the establishment of their own places of worship. They take these actions in order that they would be able to pursue their intended visions (God's work). It is on this note that Anderson[3] asserted, that these divine-actors are often

motivated by compelling desire to innovate, to preach and experience new message of the power of the Spirit. Most often, the visions divine-actors aspire to fulfil are embedded in social and spiritual purpose principles. It is in pursuance of these visions that phenomenon in related areas within Pentecostalism has experienced a significant rise in recent decades[5]. This is evidenced by the growth in the numbers of Pentecostal related organisations, with a unique dynamic and more robust form of social purpose mission, almost matching up with those occurring in other non-profit organisations.

Within the past few decades, Ghana has witnessed a proliferation and multiplicity of initiatives by Pentecostal divine industries, many of who use mass communication media in the dissemination of social and spiritual ideas, images and other religious products, and also draw the public's attention to topical social and religious issues with the hope of effecting change in the social and spiritual milieu[19]. Having this viewpoint in mind and the fact that it is the divine-actors who spearhead these initiatives, they truly bear resemblance to what Sandra Waddock and James Post[33] described as 'catalytic social entrepreneurs', a phenomenon attributable to the fact that divine-actors are endowed with charisma and knowledge that helps them in the management of their respective divine industries.

Part of their resilience and capabilities emanates from the conviction that the greatest fear of most enterprising divine-actors in the Pentecostal faith is the feeling of being stuck right at where they are and not being able to make positive progress in their individual endeavours. With this observation, many of them make frantic efforts to surmount this fear by challenging the status quo of their spiritual mentors. This strategy, when successful, serves to mark the beginning of their social and spiritual entrepreneurship; a development that enables them to put their divinely inspired innovations and spiritual capital to the test. It is in reference to this, some have argued, that every divine-actor in the Pentecostal faith is characterised by an attitude of not giving up in the face of challenges. This attribute in Pentecostal circles is described as the 'spirit of the overcomer.' As has been observed, actors in possession of this attribute have the distinct but related characteristics of innovativeness, competition, risk taking and autonomy[23]. Divine-actors presumably have the agency to represent self-interest and also to choose interest and actively enhance the management of the rules of the social environment[19]. It is important to note that in the pursuit of their ambitions, divine-actors experience constraints and limitations in the realisation of the needed innovations, especially in their effort to balance the need for individual support to their existing clients with the desire to attract new ones. With the legitimate and collective authority possessed by the actors as divine leaders, they use their enterprising skills to keep the 'burning flame' of their respective divine industries alive, bearing in mind, the cardinal need to provide emotional sustenance to the existing clients.

## **11. Creative Ideas, Inspiring Vision, and Innovation as Bane of Pentecostal Plausibility**

It must be noted that though divine-actors may be gifted divinely, not much could be achieved if they lack strategic enterprising skills and the vision needed to successfully effect the desired social and cultural change in modern society. The likelihood of introducing the desired change rest on the belief that life is built and legitimated in society on the choices of people, and assessed in terms of the benefits they derive[21]. In this regard, acting as social and spiritual innovators demands that they generate ideas that offer promise and hope to their audience. Through the ingenuity and initiatives of divine-actors, these ideas are developed into attractive opportunities for the good of the public. However, fashioning the ideas in a systematic manner is based on critical observation, experience, reasoning, and creativity. It is through experience and long-term observation that some of the ideas are framed as crises needing resolution, setting an important part of the agenda-setting process of which the ideas initiated are part[33].

The activities of the divine-actors begin with the ideas and visions they generate, mostly rooted in the experience they acquire and the purpose the idea intends to serve. Even though this might not be the only factor that motivates the innovativeness in handling some of the issues, the recognition of the existence of societal needs and the availability of social and spiritual capital to meet these needs often sets the stage for other things to follow. This automatically leads to the generation of other sets of ideas and the cycle continues. To sustain the process, the divine-actors see it as their responsibility to ensure that they choose the right actions at each given situation after studying the religious market situation[27]. Studying the religious market enables them to produce religious goods and services needed at any given point in time. It has been observed that the actions taken by divine-actors are divinely guided. This view is based on the numerous prayers and fasting they undergo for God to grant them wisdom and ideas to be able to approach challenges with efficiency. One interesting observation however is that the problems identified by the divine-actors frequently do not directly affect them as divine-actors. They are usually problems of clients or beneficiaries who are partially removed from the divine-actors[33].

One other important observation about the recent activities of the divine-actors is that the ideas and innovations they generate are directly related to the level of education of the actor. Majority of the current Pentecostal divine-actors are university graduates, with a minimum qualification of first university degree or higher. This provides them with an in-depth understanding of social and spiritual challenges that exist in society. To carve a niche and maintain it, a section of the elite divine-actors are proposing that a bench-mark for a

divine-actor in any divine industry should be a university degree. One reason for this current development may be attributable to the worldwide explosion of formal education that equips persons with the privilege and obligation to incorporate their rationalised knowledge system in their daily religious endeavours[21].

Another interesting observation with regard to the desire to incorporate their initiatives is borne out of the feeling of disenchantment with the status quo of their former divine industries in particular, and other religious organisations as a whole. This often leads to the exploration of alternative approaches to problem solving to ease the numerous frustrations many of them face personally on the job, including what they witness amongst friends or families. The individual experience and the knowledge of prevailing social problems guide them to come up with better ways of solving most of the problems identified. It is also worth emphasising that the higher educational credentials of many divine-actors removes them from the traditional family and community influence, and links them directly to universalistic and rationalised cultural rules of modern society[21]. With the blend of this knowledge system, in addition to the charisma, and enterprising qualities, divine-actors are able to handle social and spiritual problems with some degree of efficiency.

The sound and purposive ideas that are carved out of individual visions are designed to respond to the genuine social and spiritual needs of society. As social entrepreneurs, divine-actors explore beyond the core principles guiding the establishment of their respective divine industries (provision of spiritual wellbeing) by moving a step further to provide promising ideas based on their understanding of social and spiritual needs of their clients[33]. Social and spiritual needs in this context are needs that ordinary men and women desire to live a decent life in the social and spiritual realm. Providing these needs is grounded in personal values and a sense of moral imperative, and serves as a powerful motivator for enterprising divine-actors with a considerable amount of spiritual capital. It is important to note that the efforts of these actors are achieved through a network of support from other related religious institutions, and the realisation of the effort is dependent upon the values, vision and commitment of the divine-actors in addressing a particular social and spiritual need, often shared by network of relations with key stakeholders.

They engage and reengage in a process, and acting continuously through adaptation and learning with innovations, acting boldly without being limited by resource constraints. They preoccupy themselves with the feeling that the time has come for ‘Men of God’ to decentralise the help they render to the poor using the gospel, both within and outside the divine industry, and ensure that the divine industries decentralise their activities to provide the needed assistance to all their clientele. It is the conviction of many actors in the divine industry that the divine-scripture of the Bible is concerned with the economics of the poor and their well-being, and one possible way actors professing this scripture could represent God’s plan on earth is to be

entrepreneurial and innovative with the divine message. On the basis of this, divine-actors initiate business organisations that are rooted in the desire to use the gospel to transform society. Living in poverty prevents people from participating in ‘markets’ due to the weakness or complete absence of supportive institutions. Poverty here is not limited to financial poverty, but also includes spiritual poverty with regard to the working of the divine industry. Actors and their respective divine industries are thus strategically positioned to help the faithful to develop to fulfilment, their spiritual capital. They also create the enabling environment for clients to meet their basic social and spiritual needs.

## 12. Conclusions

The paper discussed Pentecostal divine industries as entrepreneurial divine industries, an idea borne out of the fact that their activities in recent times depict entrepreneurs in the circular sphere. In the same vein, divine-actors are likened to social entrepreneurs in view of their social purpose interventions in society. The paper notes that the operations of divine-actors revolve around social purpose principles, with the incorporation of innovation and flexibility as their guiding principle. It points out that a lot of divine-actors are pre-occupied with progress and hate being stuck at one place all the time, indicating that the actors are in charge of cultural change in their respective divine industries.

The paper also points out that the innovation and flexibility that characterises divine-actors actors is often done in line with their ideas and visions. These visions and ideas are consistent with the level of education of the actors who sum up to their existing biblical insight and equip themselves with an in-depth knowledge regarding the social and spiritual needs of society. Additionally, the experiences they gather and what they witness among friends and families equips them to deal with social issues. It points out that the divine industries in their bid to help humanity operate like corporate institutions with their corporate social responsibility in mind. These are often tied to their evangelisation to attract clients to their respective divine industries. They provide skill training to their clients free without any cost, a move aimed at attracting more clients.

The paper shows that the divine-actors gain their charisma through the manifestation of miracles and signs of wonder. It indicates that the charisma divine-actors build rest on the obedience of their followers upon their belief in their power and manifestations. To maintain their charisma and legitimacy, the actors often try to prove their divine power to their clients and society. For their part, society as well as clients tries to legitimise this power and charisma after believing in what they do. Also important is the fact that the supernatural activities of divine-actors plays a central role during situations of belief, where the attitude of awe is conceptualised in the worldview of society when the presence of such things as devils, spirits, demons and gods are acknowledged. The fulfilment of the divine gift to



surmount these entities gives them full control over their followers. It further discussed the fact that in view of the presence of these entities, many divine-actors finds themselves in a competitive spirit in order to attract potential clients. Many of them use the principles of economics in their marketing drive. In view of the fact that divine-actors are spiritually gifted, and the fact that many of them are guided by visions and ideas which are all backed with innovation, their presence and their activities continued to be felt across society.

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