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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Hate Speeches among Pentecostal Clerics in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study critically examines the language usage by preachers, their utterances while preaching either on pulpits or on the social media. The data selected and sampled randomly for this study include remarks of some popular pentecostal pastors in Nigeria at different contexts: religious, social and political. The analysis interrogates the underlying ideological contents in the selected speeches. The triangulated content of Fairclough, Wodak, and van Dijk's approaches to Critical Discourse serve as theoretical framework of the data analyses. The analyses reveal the victimisers and the victimised as well as the sources and the targets of the divisive and late laded rhetoric from Pentecostal church preachers. The findings indicate that certain pastors, under the guise of religious freedom and prophetic boldness, engage in inflammatory remarks that marginalises other religious groups, stigmatises cultural practices, and incites fear or hostility toward perceived enemies. Such utterances, whether direct or veiled, contribute to a culture of exclusion, reinforce harmful stereotypes, and in some cases, embolden followers to act against perceived out-groups.

Keywords: Pentecostal Church Clerics, Hate Speeches, Critical Discourse Analysis, Religion, Preachers

Background to the Study

Hate speech has become a significant area of focus in contemporary research, although not limited to the rise of social media platforms, global political tensions, and growing concerns about the impact of harmful rhetoric on society, among others. Researchers across disciplines – ranging from Linguistics, Sociology to Law and Political Science, have sought to understand, define and address hate speech in various contexts.

At its core, hate speech refers to communication that targets individuals or groups based on attributes like race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, with the intent to degrade, threaten or incite violence (cf. Ayeni, 2024). Hate speeches in this current study dwells on divisive and inflammatory remarks from preachers and pastors to multiple targets of the speeches. In some Pentecostal churches utterances on the pulpit are marked with high level of indecent remarks by clerics in order to malign, defame and de-market other preachers or government. Some of these remarks are instances of hate speech and are subject to some of the enabling laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and even international laws. Therefore, the focus of this study is on the use of hate speeches by Pentecostal church preachers.

The problem raised for solution in this research work is the observation that Pentecostal church preachers use language to express hatred while on the pulpits. The use of language negatively as indicated by Crystal (2006) is tantamount to hate speech. The problem this paper seeks to address is the prevalence of divisive and inflammatory remarks among preachers in churches in Nigeria, unlike other climes where hate speeches are viewed from sociological or political perspectives. Much of the existing studies that seem to have taken much of linguists' efforts have all been on speech acts and Discourse Analysis (see Ugot & Uwen, 2013; Okpe, 2017; Adebayo & Zulu, 2018; Ojo, 2019; Ayansola, 2019; Okpeh & Nnameli, 2023 and Ayeni & Ibileye, 2024). The current study is an attempt to linguistically assess the menace of hate speeches and how these remarks have heated the Nigerian Pentecostal space in the recent time.

From a Critical Pragmatic perspective, Okpeh & Nnameli (2023) posit that a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of language use within the context of Nigerian Pentecostalism is underpinned by a holistic consideration of the function of language as the instrument of saying, doing and enacting varying identities in the process of saying and doing things with words. Ugot & Offiong (2013); Okpe (2017); Uwen (2020) have also made their voices heard from the perspectives of Discourse Analysis and Sociolinguistics of Nigerian English. What is new in this current paper is the unidirectional approach to the data sources in the first instance and the depth of the application of the theoretical orientation to the divisive and inflammatory rhetoric emanating from the Clergy and in fact, preachers on the pulpits in churches. The theoretical approach is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Critical Discourse Analysis

According to van Dijk (2007), Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. "We may find a more or less critical perspective in such areas as pragmatics, conversation analysis, narrative analysis, rhetoric, stylistics, sociolinguistics, ethnography, or media analysis, among others. (van Dijk, 2007:56)".

Crucial for critical discourse analysts is the explicit awareness of their role in society (Fairclough, 2003). Continuing a tradition that rejects the possibility of a "value-free" science; CDA argues that science and especially scholarly discourse are inherently part of and influenced by social structure, and produced in social interaction. In view of the above position, we can attest to the fact that CDA is one of the linguistic tools that can fit into the study of hate speech amongst Pentecostal clerics in Nigeria.

Since the researchers' interest is to study the use of language by preachers of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria whose aim is to damage the image of other fellow clerics or government, the relevant theorists and theories which have been reviewed in this work and their positions include those of Fairclough & Wodak (1997: 271-80).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) addresses social problems by examining how language functions within societal contexts. It views power relations as discursive, meaning that power is expressed and maintained through language. CDA also recognises that discourse constitutes society and culture, shaping how people understand and interact with the world. It performs ideological work by embedding values and beliefs within language use. As a historically grounded approach, CDA considers how past discourses influence present communication. It emphasises that the relationship between text and society is mediated, requiring careful interpretation. Furthermore, CDA is both interpretative and explanatory, aiming to uncover the deeper meanings and implications of discourse. Ultimately, it treats discourse as a form of social action that can shape, reinforce, or challenge societal structures.

van Dijk (1993) further expatiates that Critical research on discourse needs to satisfy a number of requirements in order to effectively realise its aims: As it is often the case for more marginal research traditions, CDA research has to be "better" than other research in order to be accepted. It focuses primarily on social problems and political issues, rather than on current paradigms and fashions. Empirically, adequate critical analysis of social problems is usually multidisciplinary. Rather than merely describe discourse structures, it tries to explain them in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structure.

More specifically, CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society. He also explains that the typical vocabulary of many scholars in CDA will feature such notions as "power," "dominance," "hegemony," "ideology," "class," "gender," "race," "discrimination," "interests," "reproduction," "institutions," "social structure," ... Dijk, Wodak and the rest have provided enough frameworks that can be of use to every critical discourse analyst today.

Methodology

The study explores selected hate speeches of pastors on the pulpit, their utterances on social media platforms among which include Premium Newspaper, The Cable Newspaper, Daily Trust Newspaper, Sun Newspaper ... Thus, this study concentrates on the content and context of hate speeches in the data constituting utterances of church preachers.

The data selected and sampled randomly for this study are presented with focus on analysing the linguistic expressions that contain hate speeches. The analysis interrogates the underlying ideological contents in ... Pentecostal church preachers. The framework is a summary of the postulations of Fairclough, (1992); van Dijk, (2004) and Wodak (1980).

Data Analysis

Text 1:

“Why I hate white garment churches...”

(Pastor David Ibiyemie: youtube channel, June 25, 2023).

Fairclough’s Approach to CDA: Analysis of Text 1

Above the Clause

According to Halliday (2016), “above the clause” refers to the grammatical functions and relationships that exist at a higher level than the individual clauses in a sentence. It refers to the higher-level units and structures that organise and connect the clauses within a sentence, such as the sentence structure, discourse organisation, and overall meaning. Thus, above the clause of the expression in text 1 is the tendency to explore the deeper meanings of the expression.

Within the Clause Vocabulary, Grammar and Cohesion

The clause highlighted as text 1 is a subordinate adverbial clause of reason. Between the clause are elements of reason, pronominal, verb, a nominal phrase as complement of

the complete ... is expected to be a judge over any other church, the expression in text 1 is undoubtedly a hate speech.

Inter-discursivity of Genre and Inter-textuality

The implicature in the statement above can be from the US versus THEM perspective. Thus, inter-discursivity of denomination, principles and doctrines might inform the utterance who probably is a pastor of high repute. There is another text which is not unveiled here in the statement. Purposes for the text, not here expressed tell why the speaker hates white garment churches.

Social Process Analysis Representation, Relations, Identities

The social process analysis requires representation, relations and identities. The church being represented as an entity in relation to other churches. Thus, there is an identity for each denomination which consists of churches with different identities. The speaker is obviously not a member of a white garment church and reserves reasons not to identify or be associated with the uniform-wearing-church.

Discourse Power and Ideology

The utterance is a discourse feature of assertive reasoning. There is a sense of self-aggrandisement, borne by some reverence hitherto given to the speaker. The speaker speaks from a position of power and not authority because he does not possess the power to like or dislike a denomination in the Christendom. Thus, rather than display authority, power-play and the ideological stance of superiority over the other church is being displayed by the Pastor.

van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Model

Cognitive – Personal, Social and Mental Models

van Dijk will approach the statement above from a cognitive point of view. This is firstly from a personal, then from a social and thirdly from a mental point ... a psychological perspective to the statement. The modus operandi of white garment churches differs from that of the Pentecostal churches.

Discourse and Social Practice

The discourse and social perspective to the meaning of the utterance at the instance of van Dijk who uses the statement to showcase the unexpressed sentiment of the masses. The sentiment is not limited to the society but the Pentecostal church members. This is a social practice being conjectured

Ideological Undertone, Social Relations of Power

The speaker has demonstrated that he is ideologically biased. In the Christendom there are different relations of power and authority. These differences are obvious in the utterances of some Pentecostal church pastors. The hate speech is not an isolated case because it is the unexpressed general impression of Pentecostal church pastors about white garment churches.

Actor Description, Authority, Categorisation

The actor in the utterance above is a renowned Pentecostal church pastor in Nigeria. A description of Pentecostal churches, the modus operandi, structure and organisation will help explain the differences ... arise because there are numerous actors and categories of Pentecostalism as there are divisions even in the white garment churches.

Lexicalisation, Polarisation Vagueness and Victimisation

The lexical assemblage of the adverbial group above is such that meanings are easily deduced from the utterance. Why the speaker hates white garment churches is explicable to him if the remainder of the speech is accessible. There is a personalisation of the act of hatred. The targeted group being hated are the white garment churches. Thus, the lexical items are specifically relatable to specific targets and which makes meaning to be interpretable. The polarisation of the churches is such that, there are Pentecostal churches and there are white garment churches such as the Celestials and the Cherubim and Seraphim. There is no ... are the members of the white garment churches. This is hatred for a group not towards an individual, by implication.

Emphasis on Positivity or Negativity about White Garment Churches

Hatred is expressed to address negativity about the other person, people or group. In the current context, the speaker seeks to express his anger, hatred, misgiving and dislike for white-garment ... white garment churches as looking too African, traditional and therefore susceptible to being compromised spiritually to embrace fetish African traditions.

Wodak's Discourse Model

Power and Identity Power, Hierarchy and Privilege

A similar characteristic of van Dijk's approach is this account of power-relations and identity-marking. Thus, power, hierarchy and privileges abound in the dealings of churchmanship and operations in Nigeria. As the Christendom in Nigeria. Wodak's discourse model identifies the powers, the hierarchy and privileges which are associated with power and identity.

Background Knowledge – MCB of Individuals, Different Interpretations of the same discourses are possible.

Background Knowledge of a person or group determines the confessions about them. The Mutual Contextual Beliefs of individuals as well as different interpretations of the same discourses are possible in a critical discourse. The pastor who made this statement must have related closely either as a member or as an onlooker from a distance over a period of time before he could make an assertive hate speech that he hates white garment churches.

Ideologies and Identities

Wodak's model of CDA also appreciates ideologies and identities. Hating a sect or a religious group is ideological. The separatist ideology itself is an act of creating identities. Pentecostalism, Africanism, Methodism, Evangelism, Adventism, Anglicanism and Baptism among others are identities in Christendom. Despite the divisions informing the hate between one denomination and the other, Christ is the Center Point which binds all the denominations together.

Text 2:

“No Godly Pastor is permitted to play God. There are in Pentecostal churches as many bad eggs as there are in the white garment churches”.

(Pastor Gideon Oyedepo, Daily Post July 7, 2023).

From the framework Fairclough’s (1992) model proposes that the critical discourse of a text contain three imperative patterns of description, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation ... as well permitted to condemn people to be bad eggs, whether in Pentecostal churches or in the White garment churches.

Fairclough’s Approach to CDA

Above the Clause

The clause-complex and the sentence-context poses a balanced statement regarding the hatred earlier expressed towards the white garment churches. In the second statement, the subject commences with a negative “NO” Godly Pastor, while the verb group is an auxiliary “IS” with a complement, PERMITTED and an adjunct or a circumstance TO PLAY GOD. To analyse the second part of the clause-complex, let us see the illustration below.

//There - are - in Pentecostal churches - as many bad eggs - as there are - in the white garment churches//

The first word is a pronoun. It acts as a placeholder for a subject in sentences. It is followed by a plural auxiliary verb and an adverbial group, “in Pentecostal churches”. The sentence continues with adverbial groups. Adverbial groups are circumstantial elements according to Halliday (1967). Above this clause-complex is a demonstration of hatred for the bad eggs among Pentecostal church pastors.

Between the Clause – Vocabulary, Grammar and Cohesion

The lexical items selected in text 2 are simple and easy to interpret. Reading between the line, no pastor is allowed to play God, no matter how Godly the pastor ... from the beginning to the other. The critical meaning deducible from the text is that the speaker’s hatred is objective.

Inter-discursivity of Genre and Intertextuality

The speaker in text 2 compares notes. He had earlier claimed that white garment churches are not appealing to him for certain reasons. He has seen reasons to hate Pentecostal church pastors too for certain reasons especially when they are arrogant. Arrogating the attributes of God to themselves as pastors is not pleasing to Pastor Gideon Oyedepo. This is interdiscursive and intertextual. The hate speech in text 2 is balanced because of the objectivity of the speaker.

Social Process Analysis – Representation, Relations, Identities

The three features of representation, relations and identities are replete in text 2. The pastor represents himself as one who is humble and unassuming. He frowns at whoever sees himself as a tin-god to his congregation. He relates pastoral work by the Pentecostal pastors with the white garment churches and reveals his identity as belonging to the Pentecostals. The social process analytical dimension to text 2 is that hate speeches are directed towards persons of different identities.

Discourse Power and Ideology

The sense in the word, “permission” is indicative of “power”. Ideologically however, wrong doing is endemic in humans and not a sole property of certain individuals or groups. No Christian ... The speaker objectively balances the condemnation of the white garment churches by accusing Pentecostal churches too of having bad eggs.

Teun van Dijk’s Socio-Cognitive Model

Text 2 has been discussed analytically according to the socio-cognitive model of Teun van Dijk. The identified perspectives of the cognitive models have been used to examine the text under study.

Cognitive – Personal, Social and Mental Models

The speaker identifies personality traits in individual pastors as social beings. It is also a psychological thing for pastors to be carried away by the events unfolding from the supernatural to the mundane. These divinely manipulated occurrences could get into the

heads of the pastors who may be prompted to misbehave. It is hate speech to call people who are assigned to represent God, “bad eggs”.

Discourse and Social Practice

As illustrated above under the cognitive perspective, the discourse is nothing strange. It is absolutely a social practice. In other words, hate speech is a social phenomenon whose victims are the vulnerable groups of larger Christian groups. The social identity-marking-features of the white garment churches differentiates them from other Christians and so makes them vulnerable.

Ideological Undertone, Social Relations of Power

Teun van Dijk recognises some ideological undertones in the text 2 above. No group has the monopoly of good or evil. This is ideological. The two groups being referred to, by the speaker share common social power relations. The two groups have a known leadership structure. Thus, there is a social relationship existing between the leadership and the followership. Justifiably, no pastor is permitted to play God to the congregation.

Actor Description, Authority, Categorisation

The three principal factors of actor description, authority and categorisation are present in text 2. The major actors include Godly pastors both in the Pentecostal and the white garment circles. There are also ungodly pastors in both circles. Thus, these pastors exercise one form of authority or the other on their unsuspecting congregations. There are as many bad eggs as there are in each group. This is categorisation.

Lexicalisation, Polarisation, Vagueness and Victimisation

The text is a composition of lexical items on its own. Two groups are being juxtaposed, such as we have a polar-relations, and Victimisation of churches and their pastors. When there is a hate speech, it is usually directed towards some persons. In text 2, both the Pentecostal and white garment churches are being victimised

Emphasis on Positivity or Negativity about Pastors

The text 2 is a condemnation of bad eggs in both the Pentecostal and the White garment churches. The emphasis in the text is NEGATIVITY about pastors. van Dijk perceives hate speech as negative comments towards the victim. POSITIVITY in this context is the opposite of NEGATIVITY as there are good eggs among the Pentecostal church pastors and also good eggs in the White garment churches.

Wodak's Discourse Model

Power and Identity Power, Hierarchy and Privilege

Wodak's model centres on power and identity. Elaborately, there are power, hierarchy and privilege as components of power and identity. In text 2, the speaker is a powerful member of the Nigerian church and thus in a position to pass comments about churches in Nigeria. Of course, there is hierarchy in the leadership of the churches. These leaders enjoy different privileges. These privileges are gotten from the church as an institution or from individuals in the church.

Background Knowledge – MCB of Individuals, Different Interpretations of the same discourse are possible.

Without a common ground or background knowledge of the churches, ministries and pastors in the leadership positions of different denominations, the speaker would not have been able to confidently pass the comments. So, he has a background knowledge, an MCB of individuals and the interpretation of the discourse contexts which have informed his comments about the pastors and their churches.

Ideologies and Identities

Wodak also entertains ideology and identity in her model of critical discourse. Ideologically, Pentecostal church pastors may be prone to hero worshipping especially if it is a single proprietorship. The General Overseer (GO) plays a tin god by taking absolute control of the church and the congregants.

Text 3

“Anyone that is buying arms and sponsoring the killings in Nigeria, may his generations be wiped out to the 7th generation”.

(Apostle Johnson Suleiman. pmnewsnigeria.com).

Fairclough’s (1992:34) approach breaks discourse down into three interconnected levels:

Textual analysis (description) – what is said and how it’s said (vocabulary, grammar, rhetoric).

Discursive practice (interpretation) – how the text is produced, distributed, and consumed (i.e. media, audience, speaker intentions).

Social practice (explanation) – how the discourse relates to power, ideology, and society at large.

This textual descriptive level focuses on linguistic features and rhetorical strategies in the text.

Lexical choices: Words like “buying arms,” “sponsoring killings,” “wiped out,” and “7th generation” are emotionally loaded and violent.

Hyperbolic curse: The phrase “to the 7th generation” is an amplification of moral outrage, invoking ancestral punishment, a concept with deep roots in African traditional and religious rhetoric.

Binary construction: The speaker creates a stark moral dichotomy- evil perpetrators vs. righteous outrage - without room for ambiguity.

Lack of mitigation: There is no hedging or softening of the statement. It is a direct curse, constructed as uncompromising moral judgment.

Linguistic Pattern: The statement mirrors the prophetic genre- declarative, performative, emotionally charged

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

Here we examine who is speaking, to whom, and why.

Speaker’s role: Apostle Suleman is a high-profile Pentecostal preacher. His words carry spiritual weight and media amplification, especially among large religious audiences in Nigeria.

Genre: This is a religious-political utterance framed as a spiritual curse but functioning as social and political condemnation.

Audience: The statement is directed at,

Perpetrators of violence (specifically arms dealers and sponsors of killings).

General public and followers, who are likely to share his anger and perceive the curse as a righteous appeal.

Media circulation: Quoted in pmnewsnigeria.com, the discourse is lifted from its pulpit or religious setting and placed in public media discourse, where it may influence public opinion or be critiqued for inciting or divisive language.

This reflects how religious speech intersects with public and political discourse, blurring boundaries between spiritual authority and political engagement.

Now we relate the discourse to broader social, cultural, and ideological structures.

Context of violence in Nigeria: The statement emerges from a national crisis of insecurity including terrorism, banditry, and mass killings. It taps into collective fear, frustration, and moral outrage.

Religious authority as moral force: In Nigeria, religious leaders are key influencers in public life. Their words can mobilise political sentiments and frame national discourse around good vs. evil, justice vs. injustice.

Ideological function: The curse delegitimises perpetrators of violence, casting them as morally and spiritually damned. This echoes a moral populist narrative, in which the righteous masses (led by spiritual leaders) are victimised by corrupt, violent elites.

Power and resistance: Though not directly naming political figures, the curse serves as a form of discursive resistance to perceived systemic impunity. It gives voice to public frustration, while also reinforcing the speaker's own moral authority and leadership.

Suleman's discourse draws on spiritual tradition to challenge real-world power structures, blurring the line between religious speech and political resistance.

Using Fairclough's (1992) model, we see van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Model: Key Components

Mental Models (Cognitive Structures)

Mental models are internal representations people build based on their experiences, beliefs, and social influences. This statement activates several cognitive frames:

Victim-Villain Schema: The speaker positions armed sponsors as villains, responsible for violent harm. The audience, likely Nigerian citizens and religious followers, are framed as victims.

Justice and Curse Schema: The curse (“may his generations be wiped out”) reflects a cognitive model rooted in moral outrage, collective punishment, and divine justice concepts common in both religious and traditional African worldviews.

Transgenerational Responsibility: The mention of the “7th generation” reflects a cultural cognition that actions have spiritual consequences across generations; a belief common in many African societies.

This text taps into shared cognitive-emotional schemas of justice, retribution, and divine accountability.

Social Representations (Ideologies and In-/Out-Groups)

van-Dijk shows how discourse constructs ideological boundaries between groups:

In-group (Us): The righteous, law-abiding citizens and victims of violence. This includes the speaker and his audience, presented as morally upright and under threat.

Out-group (Them): Arms dealers and sponsors of violence-dehumanised and delegitimised by invoking a curse. These individuals are portrayed as morally corrupt, evil, and deserving of extinction.

The use of spiritual condemnation functions ideologically to polarise society and rally moral condemnation toward perceived enemies.

Power and Ideology

van Dijk (2004) stresses that discourse is a site of power; the power to influence minds:

Discursive Power: Suleman, as a religious figure, wields symbolic and ideological power. His words don’t just express opinion. They shape how people morally interpret violence and who they blame.

Indirect Political Influence: Though not a political actor, Suleman's discourse exerts pressure on public consciousness and subtly calls for justice beyond legal mechanisms tapping into divine and communal punishment.

Ideological Framing: The killers/sponsors are not named, but are framed as enemies of society, deserving total erasure. This reflects a populist religious ideology where the people are righteous and their oppressors deserve divine vengeance.

The curse becomes a rhetorical weapon to challenge systemic impunity, mobilise anger, and assert a moral hierarchy.

Control of Discourse and Access

Access to discourse: Apostle Suleman has a large following and media visibility, giving him access to public platforms. His speech enters both religious and mass media discourse, broadening its impact.

Mind control and persuasion: van Dijk (2004) argues that elites often influence what people think through discourse. In this case, Suleman influences how people assign blame for insecurity and what emotional responses (anger, vengeance) are acceptable.

The text works as discursive resistance, channelling public frustration into a spiritualised form of protest.

Summary Table

Using van Dijk's model, we see that Suleman's statement is not just a curse. It is a powerful ideological discourse. It shapes mental models of justice and morality, frames violent actors as enemies of society, and uses spiritual rhetoric to resist powerlessness and demand accountability. The result is a message that mobilises public sentiment, grounded in both faith and fear.

The Key Characteristics of this Hate Speech:

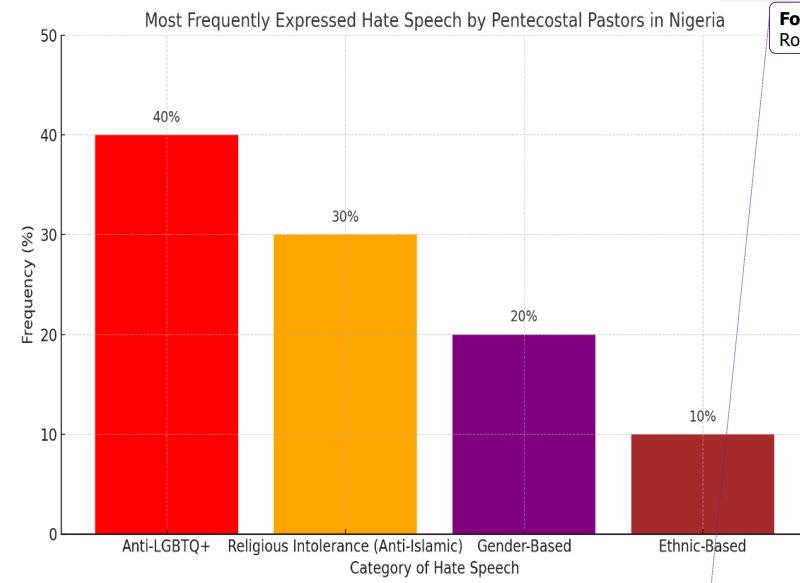
Hate speeches by pastors are often coded in religious language, cloaked as "truth" or "prophecy," and justified through scriptural references, metaphors of spiritual warfare, or appeals to moral panic. These utterances are frequently reinforced by congregational responses such as vocal affirmations and "amens," which lend them social legitimacy within religious settings. Their influence is further amplified through circulation on

social media, television broadcasts, and recordings from religious crusades, allowing the messages to reach wider audiences beyond the physical church space. The basic contents of such hate speeches by pastors are summarised in the bar chart below.

Figure 1: Bar Chart of Hate Speeches among Pentecostal Church Pastors in Nigeria

Here's the bar chart representing the most frequently expressed hate speech among Pentecostal pastors in Nigeria. It shows that anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric dominates the discourse, followed by religious intolerance, gender-based hate, and ethnic-based speech.

The basic contents of hate speeches by pastors are summarised in the bar chart below,



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Findings

The study reveals that certain Pentecostal pastors, under the guise of religious freedom and prophetic boldness, engage in discursive practices that marginalise other religious groups, stigmatise indigenous cultural practices, and incite fear or hostility towards perceived enemies. These utterances, whether direct or veiled, contribute to a culture of exclusion, reinforce harmful stereotypes, and, in some instances, embolden followers to act against perceived out-groups.

Conclusion

Given the potential of such hate-laden religious discourse to fuel social division and violence, there is a pressing need for increased public awareness, critical media literacy, and policy interventions. These measures are essential in mitigating the spread and impact of hate speech within religious contexts, promoting social cohesion, and ensuring that religious expression does not undermine national unity or peace.

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