

# The Structure of the Chaplaincy of the Nigerian Army

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## Abstract

The Chaplaincy of the Nigerian Army is a religious institution that renders spiritual, moral, and psychological support services to military personnel in their service to the nation. It has three units with different religious identity: Catholic, Protestant, and Islamic Affairs. Since the commencement of the Army, services of the clergy for the soldiers have been required at both the barracks and on the battlefield, as well as services for their families at the barracks. However, this was never formalized until the situation demanded a religious institutional structure to serve the military more effectively. Guided by the theory of military spirituality, and built on analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, this exploratory study investigates the structure of the Chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army. It first examines the historical development of the Chaplaincy as a social institution, then explores the social structure of the Directorate of Chaplaincy services, and finally investigates the challenges that the Nigerian Army Chaplaincy encounters.

**Keywords:** Chaplaincy, Nigerian Army, Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Islamic Affairs.

The chaplaincy of the Nigerian Army, like that of any other military force in the world, plays a significant role in improving the religious, psychological, and social lives of military personnel (Miners 1992; Crosby 1994; Bergen 2004; Oyelade 2011). It is widely assumed that an army is not a profession for the indolent, because it requires dedication, perseverance, and patience of any aspirant. Individual military members must be physically, cognitively, emotionally, and psychologically fit to withstand the rigors of military exercises in regular training and military operations on the battlefield (Bergen 2004). Since the earliest days of the church, the clergy have always accompanied soldiers to battlefields, suggesting religious presence in warfare (Hassner 2013; 2016). This has been a subject of many discussions over the years, particularly concerning the conflicts of ethics presented by the advocates of the gospel of peace and love choosing and participating in a profession of violence and killing (Madigan 2011;

Oyelade 2011; Snape and Madigan 2013), a clear case of role conflict. The Directorate of Chaplaincy Services in the Nigerian Army operates as a religious institution, giving support to military men and women in their service to the nation. How did chaplaincy services develop in the Nigerian Army? What is the structure of the Directorate of Chaplaincy Services in the Nigerian Army? What are the challenges faced by the Chaplaincy Services in the Nigerian Army? All these issues call for investigations. This research therefore brings to the fore the structure of Chaplaincy Services of the Protestant, Catholic, and Islamic Affairs in military in Nigeria. It investigates the particular structure of the chaplaincy in the barracks in Ibadan, Nigeria, but first examines the historical development of chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army as a social institution, then explores the social structure of the Directorate of Chaplaincy Services, and finally investigates the challenges faced by the chaplains in discharging their duties.

## Theorizing Military Spirituality

Spirituality is concerned with sacred feelings and beliefs rather than the physical components of life (Maringira, Woodward, and Bulmer 2019). Military spirituality concerns how military religiousness or otherworldliness might exist. Even though the armies of every nation in the theater of war relate to and operate in physical jurisdictions as they engage in battles, particularly in defense of their national territory, the military also engages with religion, and the military's spirituality in no small measure aids their operations at all times. Spirituality extends the mind beyond constraints, beliefs, and restricted perceptions about life and the cosmos. It denotes a belief in something or someone greater than oneself that gives one's life meaning and purpose. It is the belief that there is more to life than what can be heard or seen (Simmons et al. 2018).

In military engagement with religious and spiritual matters, credence is given to God. This explains why, in one of the insignias of the Nigerian Army, it is boldly written: "Victory is from God alone" (see Appendix). It is also general knowledge that the US Army and Irish Army have religious hymns which they sing on their way to war. The spirituality of army personnel is demonstrated in praying to God for what is most desired. In this sense, the personnel see beyond the physical to recognize the power of God who is believed to be potent enough to grant victory in times of war, as well as succor in times of loss, and it is to them necessary to be connected to the same God. These are some ways chaplaincy strives to cultivate and advance the army of every nation (Oyelade 2011; Whitt 2014). Military spirituality revolves round soldiers' sense of connection to something beyond the materiality of the corporeal world and the interactions which are experienced within it. These interactions depict soldiers' responses to the social and geographical spaces of their deployments. Hence, military personnel hold that, while physical armor is important, without transcendent arsenal, desired results are not possible, especially in the theater of war.

Spirituality entails living by principles that make one answerable to someone or something greater than oneself (Simmons et al. 2018). Certain values are common to military practices, such as loyalty, diligence, and resilience, which are also notable virtues in connection to religious ethics, and cannot be separated from the spirituality of any religious individual. Hence, religiosity forms the basis for military spirituality, which in turn aids effectiveness of the structure of the army of any nation. In this sense, military spirituality may not have to do with a particular religion, or the religious affiliation of the personnel, but more with being dutiful in service to humanity within the army structure, with the sense and reverence of a greater one than all humankind – God.

## Research Design and Methodology

This study is primarily exploratory, and adopts both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. For the qualitative data, twelve in-depth interviews were conducted with soldiers, four in each of the three military barracks in Ibadan, Nigeria. It involved the chaplains, both Christian and Islamic, selected as Congregational Leaders who were also military men and worshipers of various ranks in the Nigerian Army. For the quantitative data, 315 questionnaires constructed for the purpose of this research were distributed, using the standard formula for calculating sample size for a total population of 2,170. The formula for a population equal to or greater than 10,000 is  $n = \frac{Z^2 Pq}{d^2}$ , whereby  $n$  = sample size,  $z$  = standard error associated with the chosen level of confidence = 1.96,  $p$  is estimated variability in the population = 0.6,  $q = (1-p) = 0.4$ , and  $d$  = acceptable error = 0.05. The formula for a population lesser than 10,000 is  $nf = \frac{n}{1+n/N}$ , whereby  $nf$  = sample size for a population lesser than 10,000,  $n$  = sample size for a population of 10,000, and  $N$  = Actual Population.

Selection was done randomly among the personnel in the worship centers, including the Protestant and Catholic churches as well as the mosques of the three military barracks in Ibadan, namely Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment at Odogbo, Letmauck Cantonment at Mokola, and Eleyele Barracks. Respondents included personnel of various ranks in the Nigerian Army, dependents and families of military personnel, chaplains, their assistants, as well as appointed leaders in the churches and mosques in each of the barracks. One hundred and fifty questionnaires were randomly distributed among the Catholics, Protestants, and Muslims at Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment, one hundred at Letmauck, and sixty-five at Eleyele Barracks. However, only 215 questionnaires could be retrieved in all; every effort to retrieve the rest proved futile. The qualitative data were analyzed with the use of descriptive and content analyses, while the quantitative data were analyzed with the use of frequency and percentage. Secondary data for this study were also collected from journal articles, scholarly articles

sourced from the internet, as well as Seminal Papers and releases by the Directorate of Army Public Relations (DAPR). Some other available related textual materials were also consulted. All these enabled the researchers to locate the study within other studies that have been conducted around chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army.

## Historical Development of Chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army

The history of the development of the chaplaincy services in the Nigerian Army is scarcely presented in literature. The few works available on the emergence of Chaplaincy Services/Directorate are classified documents, and thus restricted from public consumption (Miners 1992). However, the fieldwork conducted in this study reveals that the chaplaincy, as a unit within the structure of the Nigerian Army, dates back to the colonial era. One interviewee explained that the Nigerian Army is an offshoot of the British colonial system, emerging from the West Africa Frontier Force. The British created a cell under which the chaplaincy services were carried out. That small cell (Chaplaincy) metamorphosized into a unit that has great impacts on Nigerian Army personnel (IDI/ LT COL / Fajuyi Cantonment /03/02/2011). Hence, chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army emerged from the inception of modern military formation as established by the colonial masters.

Chaplaincy was not limited to the Army. All three branches of the military—navy, air force, and army—began with some form of chaplaincy services. The chaplaincy was a rather small cell within the military system at its inception, but for the British to have included such a cell shows that some degree of importance may have been accorded its services. However, unlike the artillery unit, the chaplaincy was never a regular unit in the Nigerian Army until after the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. Indeed, the accounts of some of the Army personnel interviewed showed that during the civil war, civilian clergy were responsible for chaplaincy services. During the civil war, some clerics went side by side with soldiers wherever they went. The Army authority recruited those clerics, though they neither commissioned nor made them an integral part of the system. In some areas, when the authorities wanted to pray before they advanced, they told the clerics to conduct prayers for them. After the civil war, the need arose for a unit of that nature within the system, and gradually from that period on, the idea of modern chaplaincy emerged (IDI/MAJOR/Letmauck Cantonment/ 25/01/2011).

The above corroborates the explanation that, in the history of the Nigerian Army, it originally saw the need to invite civilian clergy to serve Army personnel, because there were no military chaplains at that time. Gradually they began to see the need for employing pastors in the military that would wear an Army uniform and always move along with the soldiers. That was how they began training chaplains either from among the enlisted soldiers or from among civilians (IDI/Leutenant /Letmauck Cantonment /08/02/2011). Another interviewee further explained how the military employed the service of civilians:

For example, when the need arises, they may approach any Mallam from Sabo to come and perform religious service for them. But with time, the civilian clergy started saying some things against the military ethics because they did not understand the military command, as they were not trained soldiers. (IDI/ Lieutenant/ Letmauck Cantonment/25/01/2011)

It can be argued that civilian clergy do not provide adequate service to the military of any nation because they are not trained as military personnel, and their preaching and profession of faith most times will contradict military norms (Brinsfeild and Wester 2009). Thus, the need arose after the Nigerian civil war for military clergy who would understand the principles and psychology of the Nigerian Army, wear Army uniform, and identify with the Army, especially in absolute loyalty to Army authority, and be obedient to Army high command. Hence, some were trained and commissioned into the Army system. Others were just commissioned and given the uniform as they continued the work (IDI/ Lieutenant/ Letmauck Cantonment/08/02/2011). This is because only the trained military personnel who were required to swear the oath to abide by all the codes of conduct governing the Nigerian Army would understand the military language in terms of order. That is why the Nigerian Army established a religious body of its own (IDI/Lieutenant/Letmauck Cantonment/ 25/01/2011).

Another but similar version of the historical development of the Nigeria Army chaplaincy holds that the civilian clergy only came when they were needed, whereas the Army needed to have them always present. That was why the Army worked toward having military chaplains who would be in uniform and be moving along with the rest of the personnel. The civilian chaplains were merely rendering a skeletal service when there was need to call them for either prayer or any priestly duty. They were doing the work, but were not really committed because they were not soldiers. They could not advance together with the soldiers because they were not men in uniform (IDI/Lieutenant/Letmauck Cantonment/08/02/2011). Therefore, military chaplaincy was instituted to bring potentially independently minded clergy under martial rule and be made to serve the interest of military hierarchy (Paget and McCormack 2006).

However, in another, yet related historical account, the chaplaincy became a formation in the Nigerian Army because of the transformation that the entire Army system went through during the Civil War. According to one interviewee,

Chaplaincy itself is part and parcel of the system, right from the establishment of Nigerian Army, but then it was a small cell. It has since been undergoing a series of transformations. During the civil war, a lot of people died, such that there was a process in the Army to absorb more people. As that process was on-going, it also affected the Chaplaincy. (IDI/LT COL/Fajuyi Cantonment/03/02/2011)

This was substantiated by another interviewee: “[E]ven in the whole Nigerian Army, the only corps that was in place was infantry; all other corps came along the line” (IDI/MAJOR/Letmauck

Cantonment/25/01/2011). This confirmed that the contemporary chaplaincy started from the time of the Nigeria Civil War, during which bishops and denominations seconded their priests to administer sacraments and conduct services for people in the war. By 1970, the war was over, and because of its effects on victims of the war, chaplaincy could not be established until 1974. By then, formations and units were asked to be formed, the Protestant chaplaincy came on board, and their activities became known in 1976 through the planting of churches in Army barracks. Since then, the chaplaincy has continued to grow year by year (IDI/Major/Fajuyi Cantonment/31/01/2011).

## The Social Structure of the Chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army

This section explains the relationship between Chaplain/Imam and congregation, the process of appointing chaplains in the Army, the process of appointing congregational leaders, and the relationship between congregational leadership and members. The Nigerian Army chaplaincy services are comprised of the Protestant, Catholic, and Islamic Affairs, each with its own Directorate, with the three directors being answerable to the Chief of Army Staff. The Nigerian Army does not directly reckon administratively with Christians who claim to be either Pentecostal or of the Indigenous African Churches (IACs). Although they are not hindered from worshipping with congregations outside the barracks, the Protestant chaplains are officially responsible for attending to their spiritual and emotional needs within the barracks.

**Table 1. Structure of the Chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army**

<b>Process of Appointment of Chaplain/Imam in the Army</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Military Posting	183	82.4%
Secondment from the Civilian Church	8	3.6%
By the Congregation Subject to Military Approval	3	1.4%
By the Congregational Independent of Military Approval	28	12.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Process of Congregational Leaders Appointment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
By the Clergy	22	9.9%
By Military Command	72	32.4%
By the Congregation Subject to Military Approval	47	21.2%
By the Congregation Independent Of Military Approval	81	36.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Relationship between Chaplain/Imam and Congregation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Military Command	51	23.0%
Cordial relationship	149	67.1%
Non-Command Relationship	22	9.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Relationship between Congregational Leadership and Members</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Military Command Style	41	18.5%
Cordial Relationship	145	65.3%
Non-Command Relationship	14	6.3%
Others	22	9.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 shows that 82.4% of the total respondents stated that chaplains were appointed by military posting, 3.6% of the total respondents stated that chaplains were appointed by endorsement from the civilian church, 1.4% of the total respondents stated that they were appointed by the congregation subject to military approval, while 12.6% stated that the appointment of chaplains is by the congregation independent of military approval. This study thus reveals that Army chaplains were appointed by military posting, which finds support in the qualitative study.

As one interviewee explained, “It is the Director that sends the Chaplains and Imams to unit, battalion, and division to assist commanders in matters relating to religion” (IDI/WOI/Fajuyi Cantonment/date). As another interviewee explained, “At the helm of Affairs we have the Director of Chaplaincy – Roman Catholic. He has a rank, and his appointment is based on the prerogative of the Chief of Army Staff. It is just the same for Protestant, as well as Islamic Affairs” (IDI/LT COL/Fajuyi Cantonment/03/02/2011).

The Nigerian Army chaplains are appointed by military posting, as revealed by this qualitative study and affirmed by this quantitative study. This means that the Army chaplains are being posted from their Corps headquarters by their commanders, and it is the Chief of Army Staff who appoints commanders.

Table 1 also shows that 9.9% of the total respondents stated that the process of congregational leaders’ appointment was by the clergy, 32.4% stated that it was by military command, 21.2% stated that it was by the congregation subject to military approval, while 36.5% stated that it was by the congregation independent of military approval. Since the total percentage of those who stated that the process of congregational leaders’ appointment was by military command (32.4%) and those who stated that it was by congregation subject to military approval (21.2%) is (53.6%), this study reveals that the appointment of the

congregational leaders is not independent of military approval.

According to one interviewee, “The social structure of chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army is a matter of what denomination or faith the personnel want to follow. The Catholic Church has its social structure worldwide and the same thing operates” (IDI/Lt Col./Fajuyi cantonment/31/1/2011). Another interviewee also explained that, “Many things that make personnel desire to go for their religious observance in civil society are being introduced within the Army congregation, and the congregation in Army Church increases” (IDI/Major[Protestant]/Fajuyi Cantonment/).

The Army system allows the chaplains to give consideration to the members of their congregation on appointment of their leaders. The Army command structure has little or nothing to do with religious ritual, rather, the social structure of religious units dictates the mode of rituals in the Army system. The Nigerian Army does not force any religion on any Army personnel. However, the freedom of worship officially given to any Army personnel is restricted to membership of any of the three units of the chaplaincy, and provision is never made for an atheist. This explains the importance of religion within the structure of the Nigerian Army most especially as a means of controlling Army personnel. Thus, religion is used by the Army to confine soldiers within the command structure of the Nigerian Army.

The quantitative data collected as reflected in Table 1 shows that 23% of the total respondents stated that the relationship between the clergy and the congregation is military command, 67.1% stated it is a cordial relationship, while 9.9% stated that it is non-command. This suggests that the relationship between the chaplains and congregation is quite cordial, and this view finds support in the qualitative data collected in this study.

According to one interviewee, “The relationship between the congregational leaders and members is very cordial. The chaplain is all over and he himself relates well with all units” (IDI/Lieutenant/Letmauck Cantonment/08/02/2011). Another interviewee explained that “You see, people having mutual understanding among themselves is a good thing. Also, among the leaders and the followers, we put heads together to do things. We have a cordial relationship” (IDI/Lieutenant/Letmauck antonment/25/01/2011). Naturally, this cordial relationship is expected of stakeholders of any religious gathering or organization, and it shows that it is no different in the Nigerian Army.

Again, as reflected in Table 1, 18.5% of the total respondents stated that the relationship between congregational leadership and members was military command style, 65.3% stated that it was a cordial relationship, 6.3% stated that it was a non-command relationship, while 9.9% stated that it was some other form of relationship not specified. Thus, the data explains that the relationship between congregational leadership and members was cordial relationship. However, it is not entirely without command structure. This is clearly explained in the result of the qualitative study.

According to one interviewee,



We have our rules that guide our relationship in our law books; our relationship is well defined. So as an officer we are being taught how to operate. A soldier is equally exposed to these laws, so the Chaplain knows his line. They know their limitations. It is just like in your own organization too, you have your junior staff, senior staff and so on. We still maintain our command structure. That command structure is there. (IDI/LT COL/Fajuyi Cantonment/03/02/2011)

Another interviewee explained that

We must recognize that in the house of God there are spiritual leaders, but then there are higher authorities, and you must give honor to those who are due it. Even if he has gone to the seminary and graduated, it does not empower him to become the lord overnight. He has to fall within the norms of the military structure, he has to continue to pray to God who has given him the wisdom and the new certification he is holding to grant him luck to be commissioned. (IDI/LT COL/Fajuyi Cantonment/03/02/2011)

A third interviewee further explained that “He (the Vicar, a Lieutenant) knows that if an officer with one pip comes in, the first thing he has to do is to salute him and he is subject to his order. If he does contrary, he could be charged and be disciplined” (IDI/Major/ Letmauck Cantonment/25/01/2011).

The Nigerian Army is bound by laws, and just like any other organization, their laws that establish the Armed forces are supreme. They are binding, and whatever corps of the army a soldier belongs to, he or she is subject to the law. Apart from the law, they have legislations and regulations that are being published from time to time from the Army headquarters which military personnel are expected to follow. It does not conflict, as everybody knows his or her schedule. For instance, the chaplaincy knows its schedule, which cannot go against the law that establishes it. In this sense, the cordiality of the relationship between congregational leadership and members does not overlook the army command structure.

It can therefore be stated that the military posting system by order does not exclude the chaplaincy, and wherever a member of the chaplaincy is posted, it becomes his station where he relates with the Battalion, Brigade, or Divisional Commander on administrative matters that have to do with religion. This is one of the ways religion in the Nigerian Army is confined within the military command structure. Military command cannot be ruled out in the relationship between the chaplains and other military personnel; the clergy is subsumed under the military hierarchy. Therefore, the chaplaincy does not operate in a vacuum or in a stand-alone situation. The rules that affect other units in terms of command structure also affect chaplaincy and personnel under it. This may not be surprising, because the military succeeds primarily on the command chain structure or “obey the last order.” Therefore, the Chaplaincy

cannot be allowed to operate outside the norms and prescriptions of the Army system. The law is considered supreme and an essential part of the Army as it runs through all corps. It also explains the place of power structure in such relationships.

It can therefore be concluded that the Directorate of Chaplaincy services in the Nigerian Army, as a religious arm, is subjected to the rules, regulations, and laws of the Nigerian Army. Hence the Nigerian Army controls the religious world view of its personnel, and the chaplaincy uses religion to enhance the value of loyalty and obedience in the Army, all of which are embedded in army spirituality.

## Nigerian Army Chaplaincy Services and Challenges

This section discusses the challenges faced by Nigerian Army Chaplaincy Services, and explains the methods used to address those challenges.

**Table 2. Nigerian Army Chaplaincy Services and Challenges**

<b>The Challenges Faced by the Chaplaincy/Islamic Affairs in the Nigerian Army</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Finance	106	47.7%
Shortage Of Personnel	81	36.5%
Disobedience/Resistance from Congregational Leaders	13	5.9%
Slow Career Progression	22	9.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>The method used to address the challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
By Prayers	82	36.9%
Appeal to Military High Command	9	4.1%
Appeal to the Congregation	12	5.4%
All of the Above	119	53.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 identifies the various challenges faced by the chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army. It shows that 47.7% of the total respondents stated that finance is the main challenge, 36.5% of the respondents identified shortage of personnel, 5.9% identified disobedience/resistance from congregational leaders, while 9.9% consider slow career progression to be the main challenge. Therefore, finance is revealed as the main challenge faced by the chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army.

Table 2 also identifies the methods used to address the challenges. It shows that 36.9% of the total respondents stated that prayer is the method used to address the challenges, 4.1% of the respondents identified appeal to military high command, 5.4% identified appeal to the

congregation, while 53.6% of the total respondents stated that all methods stated are used. The qualitative study explains the challenges and the methods used to address them further. For example, according to one interviewee:

Lack of personnel: we don't have enough personnel to cover all units and formations of the Nigerian Army and so that is a serious problem. We embark helping the widows, sponsorship of orphans, provision of clothing and food items for the needy. We visit orphanages, psychiatric hospitals and prisons to render assistance. All these things require money and without adequate finance it cannot be fulfilled. So, finance is equally a problem. (IDI/MAJOR (Catholic)/Fajuyi cantonment/31/01/2011)

Another interviewee explained:

Rank parity is a problem. That is why sometimes we don't want some of the non-commission chaplains to put on uniform because the respect accorded to them is given based on the rank. So, you see them putting on a clerical shirt with collar so that the respect will be given to them as clergy and not as non-commission soldier. (IDI/Major {Protestant}/Fajuyi Cantonment/31/01/2011)

Workforce and financial challenges are major problems faced by the chaplaincy, and these challenges are addressed by prayers, appeal to the military high command, as well as appeal to the congregations. Chaplaincy services also face the challenge of hierarchy or rank parity in relation to the command structure of the Army. It also reflects in the administrations of the churches and mosques, especially in the interaction between the Chaplain and superior officers, and most especially, non-commission personnel. The so-called non-commission chaplains are advised to dress most of the times as clergy and not in Army uniform to solve the problem of rank parity.

## Further Discussion of Findings

This study further reveals the impacts of chaplaincy services on Nigerian Army personnel. The Chaplaincy Services give religious comfort, contribute to congregations' welfare, and impact personnel, character training, and development. It enhances loyalty to the Army high command by emphasizing the services of Army personnel to Nigerian territorial integrity, and by teaching religious values within the context of military ethics. In times of war, Chaplaincy Services also impact Army personnel through hope for survival, hope for victory, and care for the men in the battlefield. Regarding the dependents of Nigerian Army personnel, chaplaincy gives them comfort and builds in them hope for survival of their loved ones who have gone to the peacekeeping mission or battlefield. The Army Chaplains also contribute to the command and control of Army personnel at the war front. They do this by teaching and

preaching ethics within the context of religious belief, emphasizing the sanctity of military responsibility, and emphasizing loyalty to military high command. They give moral, psychological, and religious support to the Army personnel who have the primary responsibility of fighting at the war front. The Chaplains assist the commanders of units and formations in administrative issues relating to religion in times of both peace and war.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The findings from this study show that chaplaincy, as a unit within the structure of the Nigerian Army, dates back to the colonial era, being a rather small cell within the military system at its inception. During the Nigerian Civil war in the 1960s, civilian clergy were made responsible for chaplaincy services, despite occasionally contradicting military ethics in their teachings and preaching because they were not trained personnel. Therefore, the need arose for military clergy who would understand the ethics and psychology of the Army, and be obedient to Army high command. That led to the formation of the Nigerian Army Chaplaincy in 1972 alongside some other formations of the Nigerian Army.

The Nigerian Army Chaplaincy provides spiritual and pastoral support for service personnel on the battlefield in time of war, and in the barracks for them and their families at all times. The rules and regulations that affect other formations of the Army in terms of command structure also affect the Chaplaincy. The military command cannot be ruled out in the relationship between the Chaplains and other military personnel, as the Chaplains are subsumed under the military hierarchy; they take command from and obey the dictates of superior officers. The Nigerian Army controls the religious world view of its personnel by making the Directorate of Chaplaincy Services—Protestant, Roman Catholic and Islamic—a religious body subject to the rules, regulations, and laws of the Nigerian Army.

Army chaplains are appointed by their Commanders to various units and formations of the Army within the system. However, the appointment of congregational leaders is by the congregation, and the relationship between the congregational leaders and their congregations is said to be cordial.

The Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Islamic Affairs operate individually, each of them attending to the religious and moral needs of their adherents. The army command structure has nothing or little to do with religious rituals; the social structure of each unit determines its mode of rituals. Every soldier is expected to identify with a religious unit, though the Nigerian Army does not enforce any religion or faith on any personnel. Hence the Nigerian Army does not accommodate religious discrimination or sentiment of any kind, yet it uses religion as a means of controlling its personnel.

Challenges facing the Chaplaincy include finance, shortage of personnel, and rank parity, and these challenges are addressed by prayers, appeal to the military high command, and

appeal to congregations. Meanwhile the challenge of hierarchy is addressed by the advice given to the non-commission personnel who are chaplains to not wear their Army uniforms at all times, but rather their clerical collars, presenting themselves to be more clergy than Army personnel.

In conclusion, from all indications, the structure of chaplaincy in the Nigerian Army is within the Army structure. The command structure of the Nigerian Army reflects in its chaplaincy services such that the Nigerian Army controls the religious world view of its personnel and uses religion to enhance its command and control.

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## Appendix:



Retrieved from: <https://thelinksnews.com/2019/10/29/nigerian-army-approves-new-postings-and-appointments/>

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