

A Study of Social Responsibility / Social Action in the Filipino-Pentecostal Context

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ABSTRACT

The perceived indifference of Pentecostals toward social, economic, and political issues has been attributed to their eschatology and dualistic vision of the world. This study is undertaken as an attempt to assess the validity of the prevailing perception of Pentecostals' lack of engagement in socio-economic and political issues that confront the Philippine society. Field research explored the nature and extent of both socio-economic and political involvement. Questionnaire-based survey and interviews were employed to collect data from the respondents. The initial stage (reconnaissance) of the research was undertaken to locate the churches and sample the questions. The data collected from both questionnaire and interviews during the first stage were used to formulate the questions in the main survey.

Data analysis demonstrates that while the Pentecostal churches have no formal position regarding social involvement, the actual outliving of their adherents revealed certain forms of contribution, via changed lifestyles, attitudes and actions, part of which is attributed to their religious faith or perceptions. The study also shows that the Roman Catholic churches with all their capital of international links, theological expertise and position in society do not represent any significant advance on the position of the examined Pentecostal churches, newly emergent from both poverty, the animated world of Philippine culture, and working in isolation apart from some dependency on US tutelage. The research findings reveal the Pentecostal churches are in a state of self-help and developing their own positions over time. This shows an important framework in order to understand their achievement fully and thus undermine the inaccurate assumption that their people are lagging behind, whereas in fact they are taking crucial steps under their own power which will render their development the more sustainable.

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