

THE ROLE OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN SHAPING ANGLICAN CHURCH

DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE: A STUDY OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(ANGLICAN COMMUNION)

BY

NWANEKPE, DAVID CHIMEZIE

ECT/M.TH/2024/24

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO EZEKIEL COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY, UJOEKLEN-

EKPOMA, EDO STATE IN AFFILIATION WITH CROWTHER GRADUATE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE

NOVEMBER, 2025

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STATE**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF THEOLOGY (M.TH) DEGREE**

NOVEMBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I declare that this Master’s Dissertation entitled “The Role of Theological Education in Shaping Anglican Church Doctrine and Practice: A Study of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)” has been carried out by me in the Department of Theology. The information derived from the literatures has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Nwanekpe, David Chimezie

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ECT/M.TH/2024/24

Signature

Date

David Nwanekpe

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work entitled “The Role of Theological Education in Shaping Anglican Church Doctrine and Practice: A Study of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)” is an original work carried out by Nwanekpe, David Chimezie (ECT/M.TH/2024/24) of the Department of Theology has been supervised and approved as satisfying the requirements for the award of Master of Theology Degree.

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David Nwanekpe

DEDICATION

To my beloved wife, Amuche Ijeuru Nwanekpe, for her steadfast love, prayers, and sacrificial support that carried me through this journey.

To my precious children—Chimamanda Blessing Nwanekpe, Sochikiyima Michelle Nwanekpe, and my son David Chimezirimu Nwanekpe—you are my pride and inspiration, the legacy I pray to bless through this work.

To my only brother, Uchenna Nwanekpe, your encouragement and loyalty have strengthened me more than words can express.

To my mother, Mrs. Augustina Nwanekpe, whose unshakable faith, prayers, and nurturing spirit have built the foundation upon which my life and ministry stand.

To the faithful parishioners of the Anglican Church of the Holy Spirit, Bronx, your prayers, encouragement, and partnership in ministry have been a tremendous source of strength.

And to all unsung heroes in the vineyard of the Lord who labor with devotion and hope—may your reward be eternal.

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May the Lord richly reward you.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of theological education in shaping the doctrine and practice of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). The background of the study highlights the historical development of Anglicanism in Nigeria, the establishment of indigenous theological institutions, and the Church's ongoing efforts to maintain doctrinal fidelity and liturgical integrity amid contemporary challenges. The problem addressed in this research centers on gaps in theological training that affect clergy effectiveness, the rise of doctrinal threats such as prosperity theology, syncretism, and liberalism, and the need to align ministerial preparation with the socio-cultural realities of Nigerian congregations. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing primary sources such as questionnaires and interviews with clergy, theological educators, and church members, alongside secondary sources including books, journal articles, and archival materials. Theoretical frameworks applied include Curriculum Theory, and Contextual/Inculturation Theology, which collectively explain the interplay between theological training, doctrinal formation, and ministerial effectiveness. Findings indicate that theological education significantly shapes clergy doctrinal understanding, liturgical practices, and pastoral competence. Seminary training fosters doctrinal fidelity and spiritual formation, while also equipping ministers to respond to emerging doctrinal threats. However, challenges persist, including limited resources, inadequate contextualization of curricula, tension between academic rigor and practical ministry, and generational or cultural gaps in instruction. The study further reveals that clergy and laity perceive theological education as vital for sustaining church growth, worship quality, and ethical ministry. Based on these findings, the study recommends curricular reforms that integrate contextual theology, enhanced investment in seminary infrastructure, ongoing professional development for clergy and lay leaders, and strategies for

bridging doctrinal gaps in local congregations. The research concludes that robust theological education is essential for upholding Anglican doctrine, promoting effective pastoral ministry, and ensuring the Church of Nigeria remains doctrinally sound, culturally relevant, and spiritually vibrant.

Keywords: Theological Education, Doctrine, Anglican Communion, Church of Nigeria, Clergy Formation, Doctrinal Fidelity, Contextual Theology, Inculturation, Curriculum Theory, Pastoral Ministry, Seminary Training, Syncretism, Prosperity Theology, Liturgical Integrity, Ministerial Effectiveness, African Christianity, Church Growth, Spiritual Formation, Curriculum Reform, Nigerian Theology.

David Nwanekpe

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