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Ethno-Sociological Inquisition of Marriage in Nigeria: The Christian African Perspective

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ABSTRACT

In the diverse and culturally vibrant nation of Nigeria, the institution of marriage is a multifaceted tapestry interwoven with the threads of Christian doctrine and indigenous African traditions. Marriage, as a fundamental societal institution, plays a central role in shaping individual lives and influencing broader cultural dynamics. This paper embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the implications of marriage from these two distinct perspectives, with Nigeria serving as an illuminating case study. The primary purpose of this research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the ethno-sociological inquisition of marriage in Nigeria, comparing the perspectives of Christianity and African culture. The scope encompasses confluence of faith and tradition within marital unions in Nigeria, focusing on interfaith marriages to uncover the intricate co-existence of Christian and African marriage traditions. The historical and phenomenological research methods are used in revealing the complex dynamics that influence gender roles, societal norms, and intermarriage practices. This study provides suggestions for reconciling faith and tradition in Nigerian marriages, proposing strategies to fortify marital connections and preserve cultural significance amid the challenges posed by globalisation, emphasising the importance of culturally attuned policies and approaches to address this intricate terrain.

KEYWORDS: Marriage, Christianity, African Culture, Ethno-Sociological, Globalisation

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an important social institution, deeply entwined with culture and religion, and it serves as a cornerstone of societal structures around the world. In the context of Nigeria, a nation characterised by its extraordinary cultural diversity, the union of marriage takes on a unique and diverse form. Marriage, as a fundamental institution, plays a pivotal role in the social fabric of societies worldwide (Cherlin 7), it also stands as a testament to the core human desire for companionship, procreation, and social stability. This universal bond between individuals transcends cultural, religious, and geographical boundaries, offering a lens through which to understand society's dynamics and transformations. The role of

spirituality in contemporary family life is important to clarify the concepts of religion and spirituality (Hill and Pargament 48-77). Marriage, in its various forms and expressions, influences not only the lives of the individuals who participate in it, but also the broader social structures in which it is embedded.

The significance of marriage is underscored by its inherent role in providing a structured framework for the formation of families and the nurturing of future generations (Giddens 40). This foundational institution is deeply interwoven with cultural norms, religious beliefs, legal frameworks, and individual aspirations, therefore, understanding the sociological implications of marriage is vital, as it sheds light on the power dynamics, gender roles, and expectations that influence relationships within a given society. Furthermore, as societies evolve in response to globalisation, migration, and changing norms, the institution of marriage undergoes transformations that impact social dynamics. Thus, this exploration of the ethno-sociological inquisition of marriage in Nigeria is not only a reflection of her past and present but also a valuable tool for predicting future societal developments. The profound impact of Christianity on marriage practices in Nigeria, with 49.3% of the population identifying as Christian (Pierri and Barkindo 133-153), and the influence of Christian doctrine on marital unions cannot be overstated.

Meanwhile, the Christian sacrament of marriage in Nigeria introduces a distinct set of norms, expectations, and rituals that coexist alongside indigenous traditions (Okonkwo 521-538). However, the traditional African marriage rituals is very vital in Nigerian traditional African marriage customs by exploring the myriad rituals, ceremonies, and symbolic elements that define these unions (Njoku 289), and in a Nigerian context, a marriage ceremony in the contemporary times is an elaborate performance that occurs in several phases while the fundamental aspect is the traditional (Ololajulo 8). Moreover, marriage is seen as a social institution which needs a societal structure for its effective administration (Gallagher 18). In the light of these challenges, understanding the intricacies of harmonising faith and tradition in Nigerian marital unions is crucial. This paper embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the ethno-sociological implications of marriage, juxtaposing the perspectives of Christianity and traditional African culture, and focusing on Nigeria as an exemplary case study.

The intersection of faith and tradition in Nigerian marital unions engenders complex challenges stemming from the amalgamation of diverse religious beliefs and ethnic backgrounds. Nevertheless, negotiating the coexistence of varying faiths often precipitates interfaith marriages, necessitating the reconciliation of divergent religious practices and convictions, thereby instigating conflicts and familial pressures to adhere to specific religious conventions. These complexities not only strain the marital fabric but also impede the seamless integration of faith and tradition within the conjugal realm. Furthermore, migration induced by globalisation can result in geographically distant couples, necessitating adaptation to diverse cultural norms across different regions of Nigeria, thus exacerbating the challenges of harmonisation.

In examining marriage in Nigeria from a Christian African perspective, historical research methods are utilised to trace the evolution of Christian marriage practices within the context of African culture over time. Also, the phenomenological research methods are employed to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of individuals involved in Christian marriages in Nigeria, elucidating the subjective meanings and cultural significance attributed to marital relationships.

The Social Exchange Theory is relevant to the topic as it provides a framework for understanding the decision-making processes within interfaith marriages, particularly in balancing the benefits and costs associated with harmonising faith and tradition. In the social exchange and mate selection theory, status, age, homogamy in education, and class are imperative factors for mate selection (Rosenfeld 1284–1325), however, marriage as a social institution has undergone changes in structure in contemporary Nigeria. Whether in simple or complex societies, social change is a universal phenomenon (Esiri 28-235). By applying this theory, it becomes possible to analyse how couples negotiate and compromise to maximise the benefits of maintaining cultural and religious identities while minimising the costs of potential conflicts or tensions within the family.

CONFLUENCE OF FAITH AND TRADITION

Marriage, within the Christian context, holds deep cultural and religious significance in Nigeria, nonetheless, the Christian sacrament of matrimony is not only a sacred covenant but

also a reflection of the faith of the individuals involved. The Christian doctrine of marriage emphasises unity, love, and the sacred bond that mirrors the relationship between Christ and the Church (Ohion 26-40), and this religious perspective has a profound influence on marital practices in Nigeria. However, Traditional African marriage customs play a significant role in the Nigerian society, and the indigenous customs encompass a rich varieties of rituals, ceremonies, and symbolic elements that define marital unions. The diverse and culturally significant practices that constitute traditional African marriage traditions in Nigeria shed light on the enduring influence of these customs on modern marital dynamics (Williams and Nussbaum 5-7).

Christian marriage in Nigeria is deeply rooted in the sacred covenant of matrimony. This covenant is not only a commitment between the spouses but also a sacred promise before God, emphasising the importance of faith in shaping marital practices in Nigeria (Smith 143-158). However, it is also accompanied by a set of rituals and customs that are deeply embedded in African religious tradition, and these rituals, such as the exchange of vows and the blessing of the union, reflect the spiritual dimension of the matrimony (Okeke 215-230). Meanwhile, the influence of globalisation on marital adaptations has brought significant changes to the landscape of marriage practices in Nigeria, which require strategies for harmonising faith and tradition. These changes often necessitate adaptations to the traditional customs and norms that shape marital unions (Afolabi 78-93).

Religion plays a central and profound role in Nigerian marital unions. It is a unifying force that has shaped the customs, values, and practices associated with marriage in the country. In Nigeria, the two major religions: Christianity and Islam, have a significant influence on the way marital unions are conducted (Williams 195-212). These religions introduce specific rituals, doctrines, and beliefs that intertwine with indigenous customs. Christianity, as one of the prominent religions in Nigeria, brings a sense of sacredness and spiritual significance to marital unions (Osadebe 215-230). The exchange of vows and the blessings of the clergy are integral elements in Christian weddings, a religious dimension that reflect the belief in the sanctity of marriage as a divine covenant. The impact of Christianity on marital unions is far-reaching, affecting both the religious and cultural dimensions of the ceremonies.

The intricate relationship between religion and indigenous traditions constitutes a multifaceted and evolving phenomenon. Within Nigerian marital unions, religious rituals contribute to spiritual enrichment while concurrently interfacing with entrenched customary practices. In some instances, there may be adaptations and compromises to harmonise religious and cultural elements within marriage ceremonies (Chukwuma 165-180). The role of religion in Nigerian marital unions extends beyond the ceremonies themselves. It influences gender roles, marital expectations, and family dynamics (Khalid 229-244). For example, religious beliefs may shape attitudes toward divorce, family planning, and the roles of men and women within the family. These religious influences have far-reaching effects on the social fabric of Nigerian society.

NIGERIA'S CULTURAL MOSAIC OF MARRIAGE PRACTICES

Nigeria's ethnic diversity is a striking testament to its intricate societal makeup, encompassing over 250 officially recognised ethnic groups, each offering a distinct cultural identity. Nigeria with over 180 million people consists of Muslims and Christians who live across the country. The religious divisions in the country crisscrosses more than 250 ethnic groups (Ejiofor 45-60). This rich shade of diversity is a result of complex historical, geographical, and sociocultural factors that have shaped the nation's ethnic landscape. Nigeria's ethnic groups vary widely in terms of language, customs, and traditions, with major ethnic entities such as the Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo, along with numerous smaller groups, contributing to the nation's cultural wealth (Okafor 345-360). The multitude of ethnic groups in Nigeria contributes to a rich diversity of marriage traditions, while religion plays a central role in their marriage practices. The Nigerian socio-cultural landscape, the intertwined influences of religion and marriage play a pivotal role in shaping the structure and dynamics of society. Religion, particularly in its various forms, holds a significant sway over the lives of Nigerians, with the country being home to a diverse array of faiths, including Islam, Christianity, and indigenous belief systems.

The role of religion in shaping marital practices, highlights how Christian and Islamic precepts guide marital choices and behaviours (Omotosho 133-151). These religious affiliations not only provide a spiritual framework for individuals but also serve as powerful social institutions that influence every facet of life, including marriage. Within the framework

of these religious traditions, specific norms, values, and rituals are prescribed, which have a profound impact on the conduct of marriage ceremonies and the roles and expectations of spouses. Marriage, as a fundamental social institution, holds paramount importance in Nigerian society, and it is not merely a union between two individuals but a bond that extends to families and communities. Within this context, marriage serves as a cornerstone of social stability and continuity which is deeply interwoven with religious values and practices.

Furthermore, traditional and customary marriage practices, often rooted in indigenous beliefs and customs, co-exist alongside religious ceremonies, illustrating the complexity of marriage in Nigeria. The intricate complexity inherent in Nigerian marital unions elucidates the convergence of religion and culture, illustrating their profound interconnection in delineating the contours of marital practices. In essence, the influences of religion and marriage in Nigeria are inseparable, creating a dynamic and multifaceted social institution that reflects the country's rich cultural tapestry (Smith 123-145). Moreover, gender roles and societal expectations are key components of Nigerian marital unions. In a culturally diverse society like Nigeria, unity within marital unions is both a challenge and an opportunity. Each ethnic group in Nigeria possesses its unique customs and rituals that influence marital unions (Olajide and Adeoye 213-229), both Christian and Islamic traditions influence marital customs and rituals (Alakija and Arowosegbe 124-139), and the roles of men and women are often influenced by cultural and societal norms (Chukwu 67-84). The differences between African traditions and Christianity can cause problems in families, even when couples love each other, these differences can still cause issues in their marriage. Inevitably, even minor conflicts have the potential to precipitate marital dissolution, particularly when familial support is lacking to mediate such discord. The repercussions of such outcomes extend beyond the immediate family unit to impact the well-being of the couple's offspring and broader societal dynamics. Undoubtedly, marital unions in Nigeria encounter various challenges, for which decisive adaptations are often necessary to foster unity and understanding among couples from different cultural backgrounds.

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN MARRIAGE RITUALS

Traditional marriage rituals in Nigeria are deeply rooted in cultural heritage and traditions passed down through generations. The ability to strike a balance between tradition and

modernity in marriage rituals will be crucial for preserving cultural heritage while allowing individual expression and adaptation. These rituals are significant aspect of Nigerian culture, reflecting the diverse ethnic groups and their customs (Mohammed 245-260). A distinctive feature of these rituals is the use of symbolic elements and ceremonies that are rich in cultural significance. Hence, these customs often involve elaborate ceremonies such as the exchange of dowries, traditional blessings, and communal celebrations (Nwabueze 123-140).

Traditional marriage ceremonies are deeply rooted in cultural and historical traditions. These rituals often encompass elaborate practices, such as dowry exchanges, intricate ceremonies, and community involvement. For example, in many African communities, the payment of dowries symbolises the transfer of responsibility from the bride's family to the groom. In the Igbo culture of Nigeria, "*Igba Nkwu*" is a traditional ceremony that marks the formalisation of marriage, involving various rituals and dances (Eze :256-271). Traditional marriage rituals are characterised by their adherence to established customs and the re-enforcement of cultural identity which play a pivotal role in preserving cultural identity and fostering a sense of belonging among communities.

The Yoruba people, who predominantly reside in south-western Nigeria, have a deeply rooted cultural and traditional perspective on marriage that reflects their societal values and norms. In Yoruba tradition, marriage is a sacred institution that transcends the union of two individuals; it signifies the coming together of two families and communities. The Yoruba concept of traditional marriage involves a series of essential ceremonies and rituals, including the introduction, engagement, and the main wedding ceremony (Obi 47-62). The first step is the "introduction," where the groom's family formally approaches the bride's family to express their intention for the union. This initiation is accompanied by discussions, negotiations, and the presentation of symbolic gifts, such as kola nuts, which hold great significance in Yoruba culture. Thereafter, the engagement follows, during this event; the bride's family hosts a formal gathering, which includes the exchange of dowry, gift-giving, and prayers for the couple's future.

A vital component of Yoruba traditional marriage is the main wedding ceremony, known as "*Igbeyawo*". This event involves an elaborate celebration, where the bride and groom exchange vows before their families, friends, and the community, often in the presence of the

relevant members of both families and the heads of the families, including the biological parents or their representatives, who will invoke blessings on the couple. The marriage ceremony is accompanied by traditional Yoruba music, dance, and feasting, symbolising the joy and unity that the union brings. In Yoruba traditional marriage ceremonies in Nigeria, the intermediary figure known as '*alarinna*' assumes a crucial role in facilitating the union between prospective couples. The '*alarinna*' acts as a mediator and negotiator, bridging the families of the bride and groom. This intermediary plays a pivotal role in ensuring a harmonious negotiation of the dowry, an essential element in Yoruba marriage customs, and facilitates communication between the two families. The '*alarinna*' embodies cultural significance by upholding traditional values and contributing to the preservation of social harmony within the community. Human interactions across different cultures are the basis for cultural interaction. Evidently, cultural interactions affect the totality of a people's way of life, which is also the case in Yorùbá culture (Richards-Greaves 83-97). Through their mediation, '*alarinna*' not only participates in the intricate process of negotiating marriage but also contributes to the continuity of Yoruba cultural practices and the strengthening of familial ties within the social fabric of Nigerian society.

Another crucial aspect of Yoruba traditional marriage is the role of the "*Aláàwò*" or the "Yoruba marriage officiant," the *Aláàwò*, who is often a respected elder or priest, plays a significant role in conducting the marriage ceremony, is also responsible for leading the couple through the various rites, reciting prayers, and invoking the blessings of the Yoruba deities and ancestors upon the union (Oladele 142-158). These spiritual elements underscore the Yoruba belief in the divine nature of marriage and the importance of ancestral connections in the marital journey. Overall, Yoruba traditional marriage is not just a union between two individuals, but a profound merging of families, cultures, and spiritual dimensions, emphasising the communal nature and enduring significance of marriage in Yoruba society.

The Fulani and Hausa people, primarily located in northern Nigeria, share many cultural and traditional aspects, including their approach to traditional marriage. In both cultures, marriage is a significant institution that reflects communal values and practices. Marriage is essentially a cultural phenomenon and therefore varies from one culture to the other, and from one ethnic

group and another. For instance, the nomadic Fulani, practice endogamous marriage (this is the marriage between first cousins), which is done to encourage group integration. Husband and wife often see themselves as having the same family blood, hence, these marriages are often in dissolvable (Fabidun and Bade-Afuye 2); (Adesina 55-68). However, marriages among the broad Fulani ethnic group is generally supervised and solemnised with an admonition from Muslim cleric called “*Modibbo*.” The bride price involves a young cow given as “*Sadaaki*” and belongs to the woman, which generally symbolises legality of the and regarded as part of her property (Oyeneye 5). In sum, Fulani and Hausa traditional marriages are deeply rooted in their cultural values and Islamic or Christian faith, emphasising the communal nature of marriage and its significance in maintaining cultural continuity. In contrast, modern marriage rituals exhibit a departure from tradition in favour of personalisation and simplicity. Contemporary ceremonies often prioritise individual preferences and may include non-religious or civil proceedings. The rise of secularism and the diversification of cultural practices have contributed to the transformation of marriage rituals. For instance, in Western societies, court-house weddings or outdoor ceremonies have become increasingly popular, reflecting the shift towards more personal and less rigid expressions of commitment (Kottak 2). This is a ground-breaking study of our culture's obsession with weddings. By examining popular films, commercials, magazines, advertising and television sitcoms (Popoola 1-20). The modern approach to marriage emphasises the freedom to choose the form and content of the ceremony, showcasing the influence of changing societal values.

The modern marriage rituals in Nigeria have evolved with the changing social landscape. Contemporary Nigerian couples are increasingly incorporating elements of modernity into their marriage ceremonies with the concept of 'alaga iduro' and 'alaga ijoko', the designated orators for both families, particularly in Yoruba land, officiate with fanfares during the exchange of traditional gifts, which contributes immensely to the mosaic of Nigerian society. Accordingly, the landscape of marriage rituals in Nigerian society is evolving, with traditional customs co-existing alongside modern practices, nonetheless, the challenge lies in finding a harmonious balance between these two aspects to ensure that the rich cultural tapestry of Nigeria is preserved while adapting to the changing world. The evolution of marriage rituals from traditional to modern reflects broader shifts in societal values, gender

roles, and the decreasing influence of religious and cultural institutions. This transformation has implications for familial and community dynamics, while the move towards modern rituals signifies a greater emphasis on individual autonomy and equality within marriages. However, it also raises questions about the preservation of cultural heritage and the role of tradition in contemporary society.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS, GENDER DYNAMICS AND GLOBALISATION

Intermarriage in Nigeria is a multifaceted phenomenon that reflects the country's cultural diversity and the co-existence of various ethnic and religious groups (Okonkwo 213-230). The practice of individuals from different ethnic, religious, or regional backgrounds marrying one another is an embodiment of unity in diversity, however, it does not only transcend cultural and religious boundaries but also fosters a sense of cohesion and unity in Nigerian society. One of the primary social implications of intermarriage is the promotion of cultural exchange and tolerance. Intermarried couples often find themselves navigating multiple cultural and religious traditions (Adams 189-204). This experience not only enriches their lives but also promotes understanding and acceptance of different cultural practices and world-views which also contributes greatly to a more inclusive and pluralistic society.

Furthermore, intermarriage is a powerful agent of social integration. It bridges the gaps between various ethnic and religious communities, fostering a sense of unity and common identity among the offspring of such unions (Nkemjika 125-140). Undoubtedly, inter-cultural marriage in Nigeria has significant social implications that promote both unity and diversity, contributing to cultural exchange, tolerance, and social integration, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society but it is not without its challenges. Cultural, religious, and familial expectations can sometimes create tensions for intermarried couples (Okafor 45-62). Negotiating these differences while preserving one's cultural and religious identity can be a complex and delicate process, however, while challenges exist, intermarriage has the potential to strengthen the fabric of Nigerian society by bridging cultural and religious differences.

THE DYNAMICS OF THE SOCIOCULTURAL POST-MORTEM ON MARRIAGE

A comprehensive analysis of the sociology of marriage necessitates an investigation into the intricacies of gender roles and power dynamics, given the distinct changes observed within both within the Christian and African contexts. These dynamics impact the lives of individuals within marriage, reflecting cultural and religious norms and expectations (Adewale 325-340). In many Nigerian cultures, men are often perceived as the primary bread-winners and heads of households, responsible for providing for the family, which has influenced the division of labour within marriages, where women often take on domestic roles such as child-rearing and household management. The African patriarchal family concept emphasises the central authority and decision-making power vested in the male head of the household, who typically assumes responsibility for providing and protecting the family. This hierarchical structure extends to various aspects of family life, including inheritance, lineage, and social status, reinforcing traditional gender roles and expectations. However, these traditional gender roles are not static, because, changes are occurring in response to evolving societal norms and expectations (Adeyemi 365-380). Predominantly, sweeping changes have taken place in the world's economies in the recent decades, and have reshaped the structure of employment on a global scale (Smith 137-160). Traditional African marriage customs in Nigerian society form a rich weaving of cultural practices deeply rooted in heritage and also play a significant role in shaping gender roles and social dynamics which also often assign specific roles and expectations to men and women within marital unions.

Gender dynamics within Nigerian marriages are complex interplay of cultural traditions, social norms, and evolving perceptions of gender roles (Afolabi 78-93). These roles are deeply rooted in indigenous customs and have shaped the dynamics of marriage for generations (Heintz 347-76). These customs encompass a multitude of rituals and ceremonies that are vital to the marital union (Achebe 115-130), and often influence the roles and expectations of men and women in marital relationships (Nwosu 235-250). The roles and expectations assigned to men and women within marital unions hold a significant influence on the dynamics of marital relationships, nonetheless, they are not solely influenced by individual choices but are deeply intertwined with broader social and cultural factors. Therefore, traditional gender roles in Nigerian marriages often shape the interactions and

responsibilities of spouse (Nwankwo 109-124), and these factors include societal expectations, cultural norms, and the influence of extended family networks (Igwe 321-340).

Apparently, the influence of modernisation and globalisation has introduced new perspectives on gender dynamics in Nigerian marriages. Education, economic opportunities, and exposure to different cultures have led to shifting gender roles. Women, in particular, are increasingly pursuing careers and gaining financial independence. These changes are challenging traditional notions of gender roles and responsibilities within marriages (Adekunle 123-140), and migration can also pose or introduce new challenges for men as it offers empowerment to women and has the potential to alter traditional lifestyle. While these changes reflect the dynamic nature of Nigerian society, they are not without challenges. Balancing traditional expectations with modern aspirations can sometimes lead to tensions within marital unions. Couples must navigate these complexities while maintaining respect for cultural traditions (Obioma 289-306). As Nigeria continues to transform, the dynamics of gender within marriages will continue to evolve, requiring flexibility and adaptation which will require the need for open dialogues and understanding between spouses to forge new paths in marital relationships.

Globalisation has ushered in a new era of cultural exchange and inter-connectedness, impacting various aspects of Nigerian society, including marital traditions (Akinwale 305-320). As Nigeria becomes increasingly integrated into the global community, traditional marital customs are facing challenges and adaptations to accommodate the changing dynamics of the modern world that has influenced perceptions of gender roles within Nigerian marriages. One of the primary challenges brought by globalisation is the influence of Western wedding norms and practices. Television, social media, and international travel expose Nigerians to Western-style weddings, leading to heightened expectations for extravagant ceremonies (Okoli 355-370). This has introduced challenges for couples who seek to balance these new ideals with their cultural traditions. Another challenge stems from the globalised economy, as migration and employment opportunities often separate couples across geographical boundaries (Oluwatosin 175-190). Long-distance relationships and the need to adapt to varying cultural norms in different regions can strain marital unions, therefore, couples may need to navigate these challenges while preserving their cultural

identities and traditions.

Exposure to global discussions on gender equality has led to shifting expectations within marital relationships (Nwachukwu 295-310). This adjustment often requires adaptations in the way couples understand and practice their roles within the marriage. Adaptations to these challenges are of great testament to the resilience of Nigerian marital traditions. Some couples choose to blend elements of both global and traditional customs into their wedding ceremonies (Ogunlade 355-370). Understandably, this fusion of global and local elements allows couples to honour their cultural heritage while embracing new ideas. Apparently, globalisation presents both challenges and opportunities for Nigerian marital traditions, and as the world becomes more interconnected, Nigerian couples must adapt to changing norms, gender roles, and expectations while preserving the cultural richness of their traditions. These challenges and adaptations reflect the evolving nature of Nigerian society in a globalised world.

STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING MARITAL BONDS

The confluence of faith and tradition in Nigerian marital unions is both a source of richness and potential tension. The country's diverse religious and cultural landscape offers couples an opportunity to draw from various traditions, but it can also pose challenges in terms of maintaining harmony within the marriage. Strategies for harmonising faith and tradition are crucial for strengthening marital bonds in Nigeria. Congregations that flourish are vibrant communities of faith, offering a sense of belonging to a spiritual home and family (Uzoigwe 45). Nonetheless, interfaith marriages in Nigeria are becoming increasingly common, and couples from different religious backgrounds often face the challenge of reconciling their differing faiths (Onyekachi 315-330). To address this, some couples choose to engage in an open dialogue and establish common ground based on shared values, ethics, and moral principles.

Moreover, parenting challenges within the context of harmonising faith and tradition in Nigerian marital unions are complex and multifaceted. These challenges often stem from differences in religious beliefs, cultural practices, and social expectations and they can affect

various aspects of child-rearing, from religious education to family customs. Couples in interfaith marriages may find it challenging to navigate these differences while ensuring their children receive a well-rounded upbringing. In such situations, it is important to seek common ground and employ open communication to address these challenges. One of the key parenting challenges lies in deciding how to educate children about their parents' respective faiths. When couples practice different religions, they must decide whether to introduce their children to both faiths, one faith, or neither. This decision can be particularly complex, as it can lead to disagreements and concerns about the children's spiritual development (Kamya 286-300). To address this, couples can engage in open and respectful dialogue to find a suitable compromise that respects both parents' beliefs while nurturing the children's understanding of their cultural and religious heritage. Another challenge arises in the realm of family customs and traditions, couples often come from diverse cultural backgrounds, each with its own set of customs and practices (Adeoye 165-180). The adaptation of customs within the family context can lead to misunderstandings and tensions, balancing these customs, especially during significant family gatherings and celebrations, can be challenging. To address this challenge, couples can discuss and agree on which customs to prioritise or blend, taking into account the importance of maintaining cultural heritage.

Furthermore, gender roles and expectations within the family can present challenges, as different faiths and traditions may hold distinct views on these matters. These differences can affect the division of household responsibilities and the modeling of gender roles for children (Jacob 245-260), and to curb this, couples can openly discuss and redefine roles within the family, ensuring that both partners' values and beliefs are considered. However, parenting challenges in the context of harmonising faith and tradition are complex and diverse, but open communication, compromise, and a shared commitment to maintaining cultural and religious identities can offer solutions to these challenge (Ikechukwu 135-150). One salient strategy for harmonising faith and tradition is through the fostering of mutual respect between spouses which involves recognising and honoring each other's religious beliefs and practices, even when they differ. Such respect can help prevent conflicts and strengthen the marital bond. Another perspective is the embracing of cultural elements that are acceptable within the faith traditions of both partners by finding creative ways to incorporate such elements of

both their faith and cultural traditions into their wedding ceremonies. This will not only fosters inclusivity but also allows each spouse to celebrate their heritage (Omolara 365-380).

Additionally, couples in interfaith marriages need to seek guidance and counseling from religious leaders who understand the dynamics of interfaith relationships, who through sacred scriptures and religious teachings can provide standards and prescriptions for personal virtue, relational conduct, and family life. Congregational affiliation provides clergy guidance and a community of shared faith, providing support in times of need. While therapists can engage in terms of transcendent values across faiths, which condemn violence and teach loving kindness, justice, and respect, honouring the dignity and worth of loved ones (Adebayo 78-93). These leaders can provide valuable insights and advice on how to harmonise faith and tradition within the context of marriage, moreover, harmonising faith and tradition in Nigerian marital unions is a complex endeavour that requires mutual respect, open communication, and guidance from knowledgeable sources. These strategies are instrumental in preserving cultural and religious identities while strengthening the marital bonds in a country as diverse as Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study of the confluence of faith and tradition in Nigerian marital unions highlights the intricate dance between cultural heritage and religious beliefs. Nigerian society, with its rich diversity of ethnicities and faiths, provides a vibrant backdrop for the examination of the challenges and adaptations that couples face in the pursuit of harmonising faith and tradition within their marriages. The interplay of globalisation, evolving gender roles, and changing societal norms adds depth to this complex narrative. As Nigeria continues to transform in response to both internal and external forces, the strategies for harmonising faith and tradition remain pivotal in maintaining the cultural identity and unity of the nation. By fostering mutual respect, open dialogue, and the inclusion of elements from both faith and tradition, couples can navigate the complexities of their unique union. This paper contributes to scholarly knowledge by providing a comprehensive exploration of the complexities, challenges, and strategies involved in harmonising faith and tradition within Nigerian marital unions, shedding light on the dynamic interplay between cultural heritage, religious beliefs, and modern societal influences contributions to a harmonious and inclusive society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are crucial for couples in interfaith marriages to successfully harmonise faith and tradition in Nigeria, preserving their cultural and religious identities while strengthening their marital bonds:

1. African Christians should not totally ignore their traditional culture

African Christian couples should recognise the enduring ethical values embedded within their traditional culture as valuable resources for nurturing enduring and affectionate marital bonds, especially, in parenting. By integrating these cultural riches into their Christian faith, they can enrich their understanding of love and commitment, thereby fostering stronger and more resilient marital relationships.

2. Foster Open and Respectful Communication

Facilitating open and respectful communication is imperative for the sustenance of a thriving marital union. Within interfaith marriages, the cultivation of transparent discourse serves as a conduit for comprehending and respecting the divergent beliefs, rituals, and principles held by each partner. Couple should endeavour to learn each others' local dialect, such communication nurtures trust, cultivates empathy, and fortifies the relational bond, enabling couples to effectively negotiate disparities and construct a cohesive matrimonial alliance.

3. Respect for Individual's Beliefs

It is imperative for parents and relatives to be adequately informed, directing their endorsement or objection towards their children's marital partners based on individual attributes and moral integrity, rather than relying on primitive affiliations such as tribal, linguistic, or religious factors. Valuing an individual's beliefs is paramount within the framework of a robust marital relationship, particularly in interfaith contexts.

4. Encourage local union of Nigeria major ethnics in Church

Being ethnocentric and passionate about one's culture and religion is not bad, but looking down on other people as a result of their culture and religion is condemnable in its entirety. Therefore, the Church leadership should deliberately encourage local union of major ethnics

to be incorporated into their membership structure, this amalgamation will serve as a unifying force, bridging cultural divisions and reinforcing the marital connection, thereby reflecting the diverse and vibrant mosaic of Nigerian culture.

5. Seek Guidance and Counseling.

Religious leaders with expertise in interfaith relationships can provide valuable guidance and support. They understand the nuances and challenges that interfaith couples may face and can offer solutions and advice that align with both faiths. Seeking their counsel helps couples navigate complex issues and maintain a harmonious marriage.

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From Theory to Practice: Expatiating the Importance of Religious Tourism in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Religious tourism is a popular religious component for people of different religious beliefs and the profound connection between religion and tourism extends to socio-economic and philosophical aspects. Observably, the area has remained undeveloped over the years despite its potentials. The study descriptively explores the challenges, relevance and prospects of religious tourism in Nigeria. Through participant observation strategy, the researchers identify that religious tourists in Nigeria are more concerned and interested in religious journeys for the purpose of worship and deeper faith experiences as they explore religious places of interest within Nigeria and the world. The journey to Omok in Rivers State; the Ududonka shrine located in Agulu, Anambra State, Omo-Ukwu temple in Ohaofia, Mary Slessor cain in Ibiono and some shrines in Osogbo called Oshun have the ability to influence and motivate the human person towards an all-embracing mental, spiritual, physical and social health-related benefits and overall positive impression of life in general. Findings reveal that religious tourism offers many benefits both to the tourists and the host communities, but there are some consequences that result from them. The study recommends that individuals should embark on religious tourism journeys to broaden their horizons and deepen their spiritual connections and insist that ministries of culture and tourism at the state and Federal of the available religious sites in Nigeria should collaborate for efficient use of the religious sites.

KEY WORDS: Religion, Cain, Tourism, Shrine and Religious Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Religion has been given numerous definitions by different people, depending on their perceptions and understanding of the phenomenon. The common thing that runs through the diverse and many definitions is the fact that religion is a relationship between a supernatural and a finite being(s). It denotes an expression of dependency of a finite being on the Supernatural Being. Religion as a discipline is multidisciplinary; “different disciplines engage in it in ways peculiar to them” (Udok 16). For the purpose of this work, suffice it to define religion as a means through which human beings acknowledge the source of their existence and all that is in the world and express their desire to worship this source. The acknowledgement of this Supreme Being that brought all into existence and sustains them, evokes the desire and sense of obligation to worship in the minds of human beings, hence, the different religious traditions are the diverse channels through which the people seek to know and worship the creator better, thereby building a relationship with the supernatural being.

One of the ways that the people exhibit worship and boost their spiritual connection with the Source of their existence is through religious tourism. The word tourism in this context brings to mind a trip undertaken for the purpose of spiritual enrichment; recreation, holiday and relaxation by enjoying nature/other people’s culture and as means of swelling the economy of a nation. Tourism also has a cultural dimension, when people go on tours; interact with the culture of their host cities and vice versa. Cultural tourism is a tourism that people make in order to experience other people’s culture; their lifestyle, food, dances, crafts, festivals, like it happens in the Calabar Carnival. Religious tourism is a popular phenomenon among people of different religious beliefs. It is a trip to a pilgrimage site undertaken by people of different religions as an expression of religious belief, worship or obligation. Religious tourism has remained a recurrent phenomenon in the history of different religious groups (Rinschede 92). Many scholars have studied various aspects of religious tourism such as devotional sites, religious tourists’ attractions, pilgrimage destinations, religious festivals and many others (Kim et al. 19). These studies brought to the limelight various and distinct religious tourism issues alongside the wider tourism phenomenon.

Nevertheless, it is generally known and accepted by humans that religion plays a major role in the daily life and affairs of human beings. Humans are basically awed and

influenced by religion to a great extent in their belief system and in all that they do. Religion intermingles with almost all of human activities. Modernity has conditioned all civilized societies and cultures to seek and develop various recreational lifestyles suitable to their activities and places of interest. According to Boonchuea (22) tourism is a movement of people from the places they live with the principal aim of recreation. Tourism though a form of spending leisure time, the productive part of that leisure time brings about positive and productive effects on the whole human person. Tourism provides the needed atmosphere and conditions that enables humans to constantly search for ways for individual spiritual enlightenment and personal development. There is therefore a profound connection between religion and tourism especially in the sociological, economic, theological and philosophical aspects.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Religion is one of the leading factors that bring about migration as well as its resultant factor. Vulkonic (96) opines that the best approach to the study and understanding of the relationship between religion and tourism is the sociological-anthropological approach. While the sociological approach describes the objective aspect of religion, the anthropological approach will concern itself with the understanding of the connections existing between human needs and a higher reality. So many movements or migrations have been necessitated by religion. People leave their places of origin and move to other places on a religious mission. Religious groups have also come into existence as a result of migrations, when people migrate, they take with them their religions; and establish same in their host communities. This type of migration is permanent and different from tourism.

People seasonally travel for spiritual reason(s) connected to religion. In their search for better understanding and deeper meanings, they undertake spiritual journeys. Such journeys may demand of the tourists some sacrifices as they search for eternal salvation by seeking the ultimate truth. Such spiritual journeys have been the tradition of some major religions of the world such as the Christians' pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Rome and Fatima. Also, the Muslims' *Hajj* to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in one's lifetime.

The spiritual journeys of Christians and Muslims are likened to the pilgrimage of the Jews in Exodus as they journeyed from Egypt through the rigorous paths of the desert, the red

sea to the promised land. The Israelites still observe similar spiritual journey to the Holy Land (Jerusalem) about three times annually (Jongmeewasin 26). Similarly, Buddhists visit as pilgrimage places where Buddha had been during his life time, the adherents of Hinduism make pilgrimage to the holy river which according to their belief, cleanses them from their sins. Christians are also known to visit the holy places where they believe God made revelations of himself and places where Jesus or the saints had been during their earthly life. Adherents of Shintoism find it spiritually beneficial to go into the deep forests and meditate. All these pilgrimages involve people moving from their places of residence to another place, during which they do not work nor earn any income, they rather live on the income they had previously made which they now spend in the place where they had gone on pilgrimage, which is a plus to the economy of the hosting cities. This means therefore that the “function of tourism as seasonal migration for spiritual journey performed by these tourists is finally presented in relation to society as a whole” (Jongmeewasin 86).

RELIGION: A COMMON MOTIVATION FOR SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

The event of tourism is profoundly embedded in its ancient and Middle Ages models. Tourism has as its basic characteristics the spiritual and religious attributes as was formerly believed and accepted. Tourist draws its meaning etymologically from the Latin word *tornus* which connotes the obligation of religious adherents to go through the shrines in Rome. Tourism therefore typically derives its development from the numerous psycho-social purposes, with religious and spiritual motives predominantly at the center of it all. Religion has a great and undisputable influence on tourism, religious sentiments and needs are mostly the motivating factors in making spiritual journeys. Most religions encourage their members to visit holy sites and attend religious festivals in order to find answers and relief from their spiritual and temporal problems, as well as to foster spiritual growth and upliftment. In modern times, religion remains the main motivation for tourism/pilgrimage. That notwithstanding, it must be understood that religion as a motivating factor is complex and multilayered, with varying degrees of meanings and intensity, such as personal beliefs, denial of faith, social context, religious fanaticism and outright denial of faith.

However, even though religion is usually the main motive of pilgrimage or spiritual journeys, other motives can also play a part in such journeys, because the motives can be

multifaceted and multilayered. It could be noted that though religion was the motive of the medieval Crusades to the Holy Land, somewhere down the line such other motives as wealth, adventure and development in other areas of life came into it. In all, it is insinuated that the religious motives usually supersede every other motive that may arise in the course of the journey.

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE IN TOURISM

Vukonic (19) argues that for tourism to be religious, there have to be sacred places of interest to the tourist that is where the physical connection lies. For most tourists, the principal attraction is the historic value of the cultural essence contained in the sacred buildings. According to De Pinho and De Pinho (27), there is a notable relationship between religious content and the accompanying historical value as demonstrated through a popular Fatima story on the cult of Mary in Portugal. It is believed that another role of religious contents in tourism is dependent on the roles they play in religion. Vukonic (19) makes a distinction in the religious function of the contents as classified into two major groups; the sacred building visited by the faithful to perform their religious duties such as rituals as well as to fulfil their religious needs just as it happens in mosques, temples and churches. The other group is the several building that do not have any religious character in the traditional sense of the word, but are nevertheless used by worshippers and most often belong to some religious organizations like convents, monasteries, seminaries and religious institutions. The first group however includes in its definition, all holy places (small or great), and also regions where adherents of religious groups visit because for them it carries some religious content or character.

Furthermore, in the study of Christian pilgrimages Nolan and Nolan (89) discover that there could be three distinctions of religious tourism groups; firstly, the pilgrimage shrines, which is the places that serve as the goals of journeys motivated by the religion beyond the immediate environ. Secondly, the objects that attracts the tourists which are in the form of sites, buildings and other structures with religious, historic and artistic significance. The third group identified by Nolan and Nolan are the festivals which have religious connotations. Just as stated by Vukonic (96), many eras have featured different events in numerous religious and cults and in the present era such events have religious contents rather than a religious

character. These events undoubtedly attract many tourists not because of its religious contents but by the uniqueness it exudes in the music, costumes, rich cultural display and many other attributes. Events such as carnivals and New Yam festivals in different parts of Igbo land of Nigeria are examples.

Souvenirs are also forms of religious contents in tourism because of their significance for the believers who visit some of the sacred sites. Defert (82) observed that the memorable figures from the literatures, arts, historical figures and sites, tombs, relics and many other religious souvenirs all hold reverential religious memories for those who make pilgrimages to those sites. For the Catholics, souvenirs are objects associated with places of birth, nurture, convents, monasteries, martyrdom or relics of the saints; such souvenirs have deep religious meaning and significance.

RELIGIOUS TOURISM AS A SOCIO-CULTURAL PHENOMENON

Religious tourism possesses a significant sociocultural feature, it is a social exercise or tradition that changes and positions the human person in the social strata. Religious tourism has the sociocultural ability to influence and motivate the human person towards the cultural and religious objects needed for the spiritual existence. Tourism is a social, cultural, economic and religious phenomenon that has to do with people moving from one place to another. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization, cultural tourism is “a type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attraction/products in a tourism destination”. The driving force for cultural tourism is the desire of the tourist to know more about the culture of the place, which includes their art, food, language, festivals, dressing, ways of life among many other aspects of their lives. The activity of cultural tourism is educative as well as entertaining.

Some people embark on tourism solely for a cultural experience, while some tourist experience culture as a byproduct of their trip. Culture cannot not be avoided in any kind of trip, notwithstanding the type and intention of the journey. One can hardly travel to a particular locality without encountering to some extent their culture in form of food, ways of life, language, tradition, fashion, and many other aspects of their lives. Some trips are intentionally targeted at interacting with the culture of the place visited by attending some of

their events and festivals, visiting their museums and experiencing their lifestyles in one form or the other. Cultural tourism involves elements of religion, cultural tourism can also involve religious culture, because some parts of culture are made up of religious ideologies.

Culture interacts with, influences and are most often influenced by religion. Religious sites and places of worship are melting pots for divergent cultures. There, different people meet as hosts and visitors. Tourism builds bridges across nations, cultures and religions. Most tourism sites have religious connotations, bringing cultures together and creating socioeconomic, political and educational grounds. Preservation of religious tourism entails not only maintaining religious sites but also ensuring respect for local traditions which is an element of sociocultural phenomenon.

RELIGIOUS TOURISM: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

Nigeria is a home for many and diverse religions, with numerous followers and adherents. Nigeria has a large number of Muslims and Christians as well as many and diverse ethnic religious communities. Religious trips to some sacred places of interest serve as a motivation to the many adherents of the religious groups. Religious tourism otherwise known as faith tourism undertaken by people sharing the same faith taking individual or group trips to sacred places driven by religious interest and for religious purposes. Religious tourism in Nigeria has many faces; it could be in form of vacations, retreats, crusades, rallies and conventions, visits to monasteries, Christian camps, pilgrimages, visits to sacred places attraction centers and many others. Majority of religious tourists in Nigeria are more concerned and interested in religious journeys for the purpose of faith sharing and fellowship as the exploration religious places of interest within Nigeria and the world. In addition to this, some tourists undertake religious journeys to seek inspirations and the long to experience major religious events as well offer humanitarian and spiritual help to those who need them. Okonkwo and Nzeh (29) maintain that religious tourism in Nigeria contributes to the economic growth, creation of job opportunities, environmental preservation and protection, preservation of culture and promotion of peace in the country.

The three predominant religions in Nigeria are Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion. While Islam holds a strong sway in the northern part of the country and a good part of the southwest, the southeast and the riverine areas like Rivers, Delta, Akwa Ibom and Cross River states are predominantly Christians. Traditional religions are mostly

practiced in the rural areas of the country among the different tribes. Religion and tourism are intertwined, the commonest reason why people visit religious site is to have a better and more profound experience of their faith background. They desire to encounter, explore and discover the origins of their faith, to experience the sacred places where their forebears in faith worshiped. Christians desire to visit the places they read in the bible in order have a better understanding of the bible and consequently deepen their faith. Apart from the spiritual intention of the tourist, the effects of the religious journeys to these sites brings about economic growth and job opportunities in the communities visited. The most visited places for Nigerian religious tourists are Mecca for Muslims and Jerusalem for Christians.

Religious tourism impacts in a society by providing spiritual enlightenment and a deeper understanding of the interaction between culture, history and faith heritage in today's world. It could also serve as a wonderful vacation experience, thus religious tourism embraces all aspects of the human person; spiritual, intellectual, social and emotional (Udok et al, 23). As most pilgrimages are done in groups, it provides an opportunity for people to bond and form relationships that did not exist before the trip.

Though religious tourism may not be very popular among the traditional believers, however certain forests, water bodies, caves, trees are termed sacred and places of sacrifices, where it is believed spirits of the ancestor resides, these are designated places of worship for the traditionalists and are therefore form places of interest for the adherents of the religion. In Nigeria some of those sacred places include; Omo-Ukwu temple in Ohaofia and some shrines in Osogbo called Oshun (Okonkwo and Nzeh 29). Furthermore, some other sacred places of the traditional religion include; the yearly journey to the "Omok in Rivers State and the Ududonka shrine located in Agulu, Anambra State" (Okpoko 28).

Apart from pilgrimage to the sacred places outside Nigeria, there are pilgrimage sites within Nigeria where Christians go for religious tourism. Such places include; Pilgrimage Center Elele in Rivers State, Awhum Monastery in Enugu, Mary Slessor Cain in Use Ikot Oku in Akwa Ibom state and many others. Christians in Nigeria visit these places for spiritual nourishment, understanding and deepening their faith, worship and retreat and for so many other reasons.

A visit to Use Ikot Oku brings to life the memory, life and times of a great missionary; Mary Mitchel Slessor. Use Ikot Oku is a community in Itu, Akwa Ibom state, sharing boundaries with Obot Ebiriba and Okopedi Itu. Mary Mitchel Slessor was a Scottish Presbyterian missionary who came to Nigeria on mission. She did most of her missionary work in the present Cross River and Akwa Ibom States in Nigeria, especially in Okoyong and Use Ikot Oku. Her mastery of the Efik language and boldness endeared to the locals among whom she did her missionary work. She is particularly noted for her intervention and promotion of the rights and dignity of children and women, and in putting a stop to the barbaric killings of adults and infant twins. Her residence in Use Ikot Oku is sacred place to be visited by Christians especially Presbyterians on pilgrimage. However, this site housing so much history and memories is very much under used and scantily developed.

Use Mma Slessor as a pilgrimage center despite holding the precious and prestigious memories and history of a remarkable Christian missionary leaves more to be desired. The site needs to be further developed and put to a better use, affording interested pilgrims opportunities of retreat, leisure and educational purposes. Moreover, when properly developed and made more attractive, it will create job opportunities for locals and wealth for the host community. The person and works of Mary Slessor will be more popular to teach and inspire people to a life of sacrifice and Christian witnessing. Researchers may also find it useful in their educational and spiritual careers.

RELEVANCE OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM TO THE SOCIETY

Religious tourism though a trip undertaken for religious or spiritual purposes, affects different aspects of the human life and the society. The sacred tourism is one of the oldest and fastest growing form of tourism. It affects the social, economic, cultural and political life of the place where it happens. Both the host community and the tourists stand to benefits a lot from religious tourism. As people of faith visit the sacred sites, they gain spiritual growth and nourishment. Most of the time such trips are made as forms of retreat and spiritual purposes. The spiritual renewal, fulfilment and a sense accomplishing something of spiritual benefit brings a lot of calmness to the life and spirit of the pilgrims. Religious or spiritual tourism has been observed to offer to those who experience it an all-embracing mental health-related benefits. People have reported improved mental, spiritual, physical and social health, as well

as personal health benefits and overall positive impression of life in general, following a religious tourism.

As people visit various religious sites, greater awareness is created towards the common heritage of all humanity, the resources for preservation of the heritage is made available. Religious tourism affords great opportunities of economic growth to developing countries. Tourism activities encourage infrastructural development to countries and enhance the conservation of their culture. Financial gains made from religious tourism can be reinvested towards the conservation of the local culture and the religious heritage of the people in the locality. Religious tourism brings positive growth to the destination's culture and socioeconomic life, this distinguishes it as a tourism of high quality. When tourists invest interest in some of the local values discovered in the area visited, it empowers the locals and encourages a sense of pride in the culture and history as a people. The influx of tourists in a place brings about employment opportunities and increases the quality of life. Through the interaction among people of divergent cultures, ethnicity and nationalities at the religious sites and place of worship, cultural barriers are broken and bridges are built between peoples and nations. The result of this is a better cross-cultural understanding for improved social cohesion. Visits to religious sites can help learners to develop their own beliefs and values and to challenge same.

Economic growth remains one of the major benefits of tourism for a nation. "This is because, tourism provides an avenue for job creation and generation of income at all levels; local, regional, national and international" (Zaei and Zaei 213). Furthermore, as money flow in through tourism activities into a community, new businesses are ignited in the urban and rural areas, promoting more positive and powerful images of such areas. Income earned in places of residences of the tourists are spent in the destinations, it brings economic advancement in the area. Monies spent by tourists in an area, generates income multiple times, which is not the same with monies spent outside such a situation.

Employment is another economic advantage of tourism. Job opportunities are widely diffused as a byproduct of tourism, supplying goods and services to meet the needs of the visitors. The areas covered by the employment created include but not limited to;

- Entertainment
- Accommodation
- Transportation
- Travel planning

The interaction with people of diverse backgrounds, languages and education affects the level of education and literacy in people of a host community. In order to meet the needs of the tourists, those seeking to work in the tourist industries are meant to attend institutions that offer training in the areas of hotel management, food crafts, fashion designing and many of such institutions in order to gain the right training.

IMPACTS OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM ON THE PEOPLE

There are always two sides to a coin. As much as religious tourism offers many benefits both to the tourists and the host communities, there are some consequences that result from them. Due to the influx of foreigners into the locality who are not familiar with the life and tradition of the people, some level of cultural degradation may occur. There have also been cases of heritage trafficking following the activities of tourism, as it happened when the white men took away some of the crafts and artifacts of the Africans.

Population growth is another byproduct of tourism; this implies that the host community may have a tendency to be overpopulated. Overpopulation comes at the cost of nature, it brings with it the challenges such as pollution (air, water, land), destruction of the environment and chaos. Moreover, with the increase in population, there would be more waste and excessive use of the land and natural resources. The rise in population may in some cases induce unfavourable climate change. Waste management then becomes more challenging; most routes are littered with waste of products consumed by pilgrims. The use of pesticides to make the environment safe conducive and safe for visitors free of insects, rodents and reptiles disturbs the balance in the ecosystem of the environment and threatens wildlife. Meeting the needs of tourists may also increase carbon emissions and cause other types of environmental damage, destroying the natural flora and fauna.

Furthermore, the increase in population contributes to noise and traffic. The numerous automobiles plying the road as they convey tourists to their various destinations of interest creates pollution. The environment is littered with people and vehicles, destroying the beauty of the landscape and threatening the life and safety of humans and animals. There is also the danger of overcrowding and congestion. Constant trampling on the land, weakens the soil and leaves it vulnerable for erosion. More crime incidence will be experienced as more people

come into an area with different values and orientations, bringing about social transformations. As visiting people mix up with the indigenes of a host community, anti-social behaviours and tendencies may be on the increase. The quality of life of the original residents of the tourist destination is compromised. The social and cultural impacts resulting from tourism are means of influence in the people's value system, life style, family values, morality, belief systems, language, relationships, and security of the tourist destinations (Nazki 28). The interactions with the locals and tourists can have positive and negative nuances. It can create "Cultural clashes, Ethical issues, Crime generation, Child labour and Women exploitation" (Nazki 28).

On the flip side of the economic boost occasioned by tourism in host communities, there are also negative effects following. The large number of visitors moving to a tourism destination tend to push up prices of goods and services in the locality. The local people may have to risk at living at a high cost in their environment, making life more difficult for them. It is common to find shops in tourists areas providing more of the goods and services needed by tourists such as gifts items and souvenirs, and less of the products needed by locals. More of such shops and restaurants are often opened in tourists' areas than shops that serve the needs of the people living around the area.

Additional taxes are paid by locals to finance the services like water, facilities for tourist services. This increases the financial burden of the locals. To provide accommodation for tourists, second homes are built and reserved which are not always in use, this affects the ability of the residents of such areas to buy and own properties because they are very expensive. Traditional employment like farming, fishing, and crafts learning becomes less attractive in tourist areas. Young people will rather tend to service jobs made available by the presence of tourists, this affects even education and professional trainings, in other words the people become over dependent on the revenues provided by tourism. This is an economic disadvantage. If for any reason there is a decline in the number of tourist activities in the locality, there will be massive loss of job and businesses.

CONCLUSION

Religious tourism as journey undertaken for spiritual purposes, such as pilgrimages to sacred sites has as its center the purpose of worship and deeper faith experiences. It could also be

undertaken for the purpose of learning experiencing other people's culture and religion. It brings about spiritual, physical, psychological and in fact the over-all satisfaction of those that part-take in such journeys. Just as it benefits the participants of the journey, it also brings a lot of benefits and development to the host communities. However, on the flip side, the pilgrims lose money as they all spend while the journey and some other personal comforts while the host communities experience some loses like the degradation of the environment, discomfort of the citizens and many others. Religious tourism offers a unique opportunity for individuals to engage in personal reflection and meditation in religious sites, while also exploring other attractions and cultural landmarks in the destination for a well-rounded experience. It is important to maintain a balance between religious activities and leisure activities to avoid fatigue or overwhelm. By embracing religious tourism, individuals can promote cultural understanding and spiritual growth, while also practicing respectful and responsible behavior during their travels. The researchers recommend that individuals should embark on religious tourism journeys to broaden their horizons and deepen their spiritual connections. However, the ministries of culture and tourism at the state and Federal levels alongside religious organisations should collaborate for effective projection and utilization of the available religious sites in Nigeria.

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***In Vitro* fertilization and African Phallocratic Alliance: Alternative Cures to Male Infertility? A Christian Ethical Response**

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ABSTRACT

The problem of lack of reproductive wholeness has always been present in all cultures of the world. As there are diversifications of wholeness in human reproduction, so too are different proposed solutions to its incompleteness. Non-wholeness manifests itself when certain natural factors do not reach the teleological fulfillment. Procreation is natural and its natural process occurs in every human experience irrespective of culture. When this does not happen, it sufficiently challenges human reproductive wholeness and solutions are sought and proffered. One of the solutions proffered in recent times is the *heterologous in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer* (HiFET) and often in parallel line with the cultural and traditional *African Phalocratic Alliance* (APhA). With an analytical method based on factual experiences and scholastic research, this paper seeks to understand the meaning of the scientific act of artificial fertilization of human cells and critically compare it to the act African Phalocratic Alliance under the objective guidance of Christian Ethics. As it is not reasonable to hold that all that is technologically possible is also ethically permissible, it is also more unreasonable to propose that every 'natural' possibility becomes necessarily good and always ethically acceptable. Both of them may be accepted and propagated based on the guiding principles of Efficiency and Quality of Life Assurance depending on the culture from which they originated. Christian ethics considers these two acts in their nature together with their underlying ethical principles and proposes an ethically reasonable response that neither demonizes technology nor sanctifies naturalism.

KEYWORDS: In vitro fertilization, Phalocratic Alliance, Christian ethics

INTRODUCTION

Every male or female is naturally expected to generate offspring. This is the reason why marriage is normally and naturally between a man and a woman. In the course of human life and relationship, since inception of contractual and covenanted marriages, there exists a common phenomenon of infertility as reproductive defect in some male or female counterparts. Such pathology may be caused by various factors. It is, obviously, not our concern here to discuss particular factor and scientific cures to men and female infertility. We shall focus rather on male infertility as begetting of offspring is concerned. As for now, let us be contented with the general term 'infertility', which designates incapability to generate offspring.

In traditional African cultures, especially in Sub-Sahara region, infertility in general and, male infertility in particular, is a serious pathology that affects social and moral life of the people. In many African cultures, marriage is essentially contractual and begetting offspring is absolutely the main aim of such union. According to this fact, such expectation seems to be the principal end of the union. When a phenomenon like infertility is experienced in a union that had procreation as its sole end, how then can the problem be solved? In the social life, some African cultures hold *Phallocratic Alliance* as the sublime of all interpersonal alliances and as a 'lasting solution' to male infertility. An alliance could be made between a married woman and a married man. It could also be made between a married fertile woman and unmarried fertile man. Our concern here is the *Phallocratic Alliance* between a socially recognized couple with a male fertile person irrespective of his social status. Phallocratic Alliance "is a traditional process in which a married person farms out his wife to another man in the lineage to fertilize for him because he is impotent. The alliance, sealed through ritual is in agreement between him, his wife and the contracted man. The third party is not paid for the 'job' during which an oath of secrecy is taken" (Ekanem 8). This alliance is also recognized and accepted in many African cultures like Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana and others.

In Nigeria, for example, male infertility is very high nowadays. According to the recent research randomly carried out Southeastern Nigeria on three hundred and fourteen

couples, two hundred and four, that is, 65.0% of them had primary infertility (Ikechebelu et al. 658). There are myriads of causes of such high rate of procreative pathology, but these will not necessarily be considered in this paper. Traditionally, alliance may be sought to solve the problem. In fact, there might also be private or individual arrangements to 'beget' children in all other cultures of the world without being culturally recognized as an alliance. But we have no cogent reasons to generalize issues, processes and solutions to infertility in this consideration.

The African Phallocratic Alliance (APhA) is specifically concerned with the pathology of men infertility. Women infertility has yet another cultural considerations and solutions. But this, however, is not our concern in this paper. The western world resort to a culturally accepted procedure of *In Vitro fertilization and Embryo Transfer* which reached its peak in 1978 when the first human test-tube baby Louis Brown was born. But it might be of special interest to ask what was the proposed solution to male infertility in the western world before the discovery of *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer in human beings. Most probably, it must be presumed that, the same 'solution' sought and 'open-secretly' accepted in some African cultures might have been remotely and privately practiced and hidden away from indiscrete eyes of the world in the western cultures. The same thing could also be said about polygyny when African and the western worlds are compared.

Obviously, the APhA and HiFET are two solutions proposed by two different cultures for the problem of male infertility. These solutions are also based on two different ethical principles, even though they share a common goal. The APhA is based on the *principle of masculine efficiency*, while the HiFET is based on the *principle of life assurance*. The latter is the product of a culture of omni-manipulative technology in parallel line with the former, which is the product of a culture of omni-naturalism. In the whole, there is, however, a significant difference between what is generally accepted by a culture and what exists but not culturally acceptable. Based on the nature and dynamism of culture, these principles are also liable to change, whereas the principle of procreation is unmanipulable and unchangeable.

What interests us here is not *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer in general or any other reproductive procedures. We are particular about *heterologous in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer (HiFET). We want to place these two ways (Phallocratic Alliance and in

in vitro Fertilization and Embryo Transfer) of ‘solving’ the same problem (male infertility) in focus against the spotlight of Christian ethics. Some questions immediately arise: Is Phallocratic Alliance really a solution to the problem of male infertility? Does the knowledge and acceptability by the couple render the act of the alliance void of adultery? Does the meaning of marriage still remain same after the singular act of Phallocratic Alliance? Some of these questions may also arise against the act and the process of heterologous *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer. Outstandingly, is begetting a child the right of the couple? Does in vitro fertilization solve the problem of male infertility or does it only replace it with yet another and more serious problem? Is that which is accepted in a particular culture also universally acceptable? If APhA is a natural way of ‘solving’ the problem and the HiFET the artificial way of solving the same problem, are they ethically objective and valuable? The primordial (APhA) and the contemporary (HiFET) proposals must necessarily undergo a serious ethical consideration.

MALE INFERTILITY AND AFRICAN PHALLOCRATIC ALLIANCE

Procreation in African cultures is fundamental in marriage. It seems that the main aim of marriage understood as the union between man and woman is to beget children. Naturally, it is difficult to contract marriage without primarily seeking to have children in Sub-Sahara African cultures. In fact, “everybody therefore must marry and bear children: that is the greatest hope and expectation of the individual (Ekanem 8; Enang 16). According to this understanding, “bareness is therefore considered the greatest punishment upon a married couple” (Enang 258), since life is from God, procreation is a duty which everybody who receive life from him must perform. However, amid vicissitudes of life, pathologies in men can thwart the achievement of this inherent aspiration and expectation.

Male infertility may be related to several phenomena. Infertility may be caused by genetic defects, environmental factors, hormonal imbalances, infections and even psychic disturbances. For convenience’s sake we are not examining the causes of male infertility, we will rather group male infertility into two different categories: *impotentia generandi* and *impotentia coeundi*. There may exist in the male an inability and incapability, either psychologically or physically to effectively engage in the marital act. There may be desire to copulate, but there is no connection between the desire and the consequent physical

performance. There are series of factors that constitute *impotentia coeundi* (copulative impotence). In some of the African cultures, the society is patriarchal in nature in which masculinity is identified with valour and efficiency. Naturally, without sexual intercourse conception cannot occur. Therefore, the functionality of the generative system is a true indication of male perfection and efficiency. In these cultures, a male who is unable to generate is not considered real man who can really contribute positively to the development of the society. One can really see the reason why there are ceremonies and age grade systems and rites of passage from childhood to adulthood in nearly all traditional African cultures. One of the fundamental aims of these rituals is to integrally form young boys to become responsible men capable begetting and educating their offspring. A man must be able to generate offspring. It is, therefore, understandable the trauma, shame, sense of guilt and inferiority complex that could befall a man who is unable to generate another being to continue his lineage on earth after he shall have joined his ancestors. Take for example, in Annang culture in Southern Nigeria, if a man is unable to perform the marital act, he is not well considered in the society and his marital status constitutes the so-called “two-women-in-the-house”. This means that an infertile man, even though he is married, is just like a woman. In this case, living together with a wife is just an artificial act of cohabitation among two women.

There is yet another type of male infertility that neither affects the physical nor psychological abilities of the male to engage in the marital act with the spouse. Technically, it is characterized by normal desire and normal ability to copulate, but with incapability to generate offspring. *Impotentia generandi* (generative impotence) may be associated with a pathology normally known as azoospermia, that is, a total absence of sperm during ejaculation. It may also be associated with abnormal sperms which are morphologically void of motility and other qualities of healthy sperms. The two categories of generative pathologies found in men have one thing in common: infertility. Be it *impotentia generandi* or *coeundi*, it is always and all the way inability to generate offspring. Being sexually impotent and being generatively impotent do not have any consequential difference. In situations like this, it is clear that the aim of the union between male and female is totally unfulfilled. What then is the cure to these pathologies? Before the arrival of the technology of

artificial fertilization, and even after, some African cultures 'solved' and are still 'solving' the problem of infertility in men in a 'natural' way.

In every alliance there must be parties involved. The APhA is a coito-reproductive alliance. The qualification of this type of alliance as "African" does not mean that it is strictly and exclusively African. The reason why it is termed so is the fact that APhA is culturally acceptable in most parts, if not all, especially in Sub-Sahara Africa. Even though it may be a private alliance, the society has never, along the centuries, punished the parties involved in the alliance and no culture has ever condemned the practice. Instead, adultery has always and is still punishable by law and custom of the peoples of Africa. Take for instance, punishment for adultery, as in the case of theft, are different according to tribes (Amadi 18). For the Obowo tribe of Igbo in South Eastern Nigeria, adultery is settled with the aggrieved husband over a keg of palm wine (Talbot 19). Among all others, several other tribes classify adultery with murder and punish the offender with death. Take for example, "among the Yuroba and Edo, adultery with the chief's wife attracted capital punishment" (Amadi 19; Talbot 635-639). In our contemporary societies, adultery is punishable by civil and customary laws.

In Annang tribe of Southern Nigeria, adultery is normally the cause of divorce and permanent distrust among the couple. APhA is not an alliance that is sealed in the court through documentation of legal processes. Yet it has a strong bond that may be likened to a covenant in which the parties are also witnesses to themselves. APhA literally means *penile alliance* of one party with another outside the marriage union. In surrogate motherhood there is womb in rent. In APhA there is penis - *phalus* in rent and *wife* farmed out. However, the difference between womb in rent and penile rent is substantial. In the surrogate motherhood, the already fertilized embryos are transferred into the womb of another woman other than that of the wife, to ease implantation. In AFhA, there is numerous engagements in sexual intercourse by the third-party with the wife of the infertile husband until conception is visibly acknowledged. It is only when conception is visible that the contracted man stops having sexual intercourse with the farmedout wife and recommences when she is ready for another conception.

The process of APhA is specific in its nature. APhA takes place whenever a married male realizes that he has been affected by *impotentia generandi* or by *impotentia coeundi* that

he seeks 'cure' to the pathology. Culturally and religiously, infertility and bareness are considered the greatest punishment upon a married couple (Enang 258). Infertility of the wife may be easily "treated" by marrying a second wife which is customarily and culturally acceptable, since in many African cultures polygyny is acceptable and a remarkable privilege is accorded to male than female by the society. For this reason, the male has to live up to the societal expectation. Being in such society and situation, an infertile man is overwhelmingly disturbed. This clarifies the reason for the existence and finality of *Phallocratic Alliance*. In the normal circumstance, couples do not welcome any sexual third-party in their union. Here the cure of infertility is not sought in medicine and technology, but in the customary and *natural way*. The couple chooses a seemingly healthy male whose duty is to impregnate the wife through normal sexual intercourse. It must be noted that the chosen male is never the choice of the wife; it is always the choice of the couple (husband and wife). This is a *penile contract* or alliance between the third-party and the couple. The alliance is easy to understand; the husband agrees and accepts another man to copulate with his wife and the wife agrees and accepts the man intimately solely for the purpose of begetting children. In reality, it is only the penis that is being rented even though the third party may be a relative or friend of the family. Interestingly, this is a 'natural way' of conceiving a child or children accepted and concealed in the cultures. The child conceived therein is never and will never be that of the biological father, he belongs to the culturally recognized parents since the contract ends at conception.

ETHICS OF APhA

APhA seems different from adulterous act in which a woman on her own accord and secretly involved in extramarital relationship to have a child with whom she chooses. It is also not the same as an act of begetting a child through extramarital intercourse with another woman by the husband. Furthermore, it differs from the so-called "swing" sexual perversion in which a couple agrees to exchange the wife with other man's wife for hedonistic motives without any romantic or emotional commitments to their sex partners (Alain Rastain 1-306). These types of relationship are ethically considered as perversions and are not our concern in this paper. APhA has a combination of many ethical theories throughout the process. Ethically considered, every extramarital sexual relationship is tantamount to adultery and is

intrinsically disordered. Ethical quality of adultery is clear and objectively immoral in all African cultures and in Christian Ethics (Matthew 5:27-28; Matthew 19: 9).

The Bible verses go further to consider even the intention and dig deeper into the conscience of the agent. Therefore, the constituent of adultery is not merely the physical act, but all the contingencies. But this is different from APhA which has a different cultural concept and ethical consideration. APhA is also different from the act of raising children for the deceased husband which is also practiced in many cultures in Nigeria. The so-called levirate relationship, a compulsory marriage of a widow to a brother of her deceased husband has yet a different ethical analysis and consideration (Mark 12: 18-27). APhA instead, is a contract, an alliance executed by husband and wife and another man solely on physical and biological levels for the sole purpose of begetting children. This reality embodies multifaceted ethical issues. The line between Christian understanding of marriage and the practice of APhA seems to grow wider in cultures in which both realities subsist. This is the reason why we want to ethically understand the meaning of APhA. First, what really constitutes adultery?

Culturally, the major *component* of adultery is engaging in sexual activities by one of the spouses without the *knowledge* and *consent* of the other. While Christian ethics considers the act of adultery *in itself* and recognizes it as *intrinsically* and *objectively* wrong and immoral independently on individual approval. APhA instead, bases its ethical consideration on the knowledge and agreement of the couple and the expected consequence of the act. Does the agreement of the husband and the wife in the act of APhA weaken the *meaning* of adultery? Does the desire to have a child supersede the meaning of adultery and undermine the meaning of marriage? Most importantly, is APhA able to cure the existing and persisting impotence of the male spouse? These questions would not be properly answered if the components of APhA are not ethically understood. It is necessary to translate the elements involved into ethical terms. First of all, the act of APhA is a voluntary, human and moral act, which means the persons involved have knowledge and free will of choice of the act. And as such, it attracts moral qualification.

In the act of APhA, the prominent and projected element is the desire to *generate* a child through *natural process*. The choice of natural process (as opposed to technological process)

is based on cultural and ethico-religious tenets. Curing any type of sickness depends on profound relationship with these tenets (Ekanem 30-44). Take for example, in the whole South of Nigeria, “since life is a gift from *Awasi* (God), procreation is a duty which everybody who received life from him must perform. Everybody therefore must marry and bear children; that is the greatest hope and expectation of the individual.” (Ekanem 8; Enang 16). There are many reasons for desiring to have a child. Alpern enumerates the reasons normally put forward to desire to have children. Some of them are:

- a) It is a culture’s norm (it is the natural thing to do); it is expected by parents, peers, religions; it may even be felt to be a duty for fulfillment of God’s command.
- b) Having children gives significance to marriage or to personal relationship of two people; children symbolize, express, and actualize the union of the parents.
- c) Having children is a way of continuing oneself, one’s line (family, bloodline, geneline), and one’s species.
- d) Having children is participating in the process of life and existence through intercourse, pregnancy, giving birth, and raising children.
- e) Children are sources of labour and of physical and emotional support, especially in old age.
- f) Having children contributes to the perpetuation and advancement of one’s society, one’s culture, one’s ethnic group, etc. (151).

The above reasons to desire to have children determine the contents of one’s intention. They affect the meaning of marriage since they were primarily the driving force of the decision to marry. Each of these reasons deserve an ethical evaluation, but we are only concern about the fact that there are always reasons in the desire which constitute the intention of the agent involved in the APhA. The question now is: is the desire to have a child so essential that (however plausible) it justifies the decision and the act of penile alliance in marriage? Does the end justify the means? Here it seems that only the intention of the agent is the reason for which an act is performed, concretized, and materialized (Etokakpan 132).

It must be recalled that APhA is a *ritual* done by the husband in collaboration with the wife and the contracted man. Culturally and religiously, ritual transforms objects from profane to sacred. It can transform anger into appeasement, conflict into peace and, most especially ritual has the capacity to transform evil act into good act. In this case, through the ritual (agreement of the husband, disposition of the wife to submit sexually to another man

and the oath to seal it) the culturally bad act of adultery is transformed into good ethical act. But this is only a ritualist interpretation of an act. That is the reason why APhA is neither *culturally* nor *customarily* punishable. Culturally, APhA would even be seen as a source of lineage protector, a means of development for the family and society.

In Christian Ethics, it is not enough to have a good intention in order to perform a good moral act. The act itself and the circumstance must be objectively considered. There may be good intention in a particular act, but wrong means may be chosen to fulfill the intention. Christian ethics would readily direct that it is *intrinsically* and *objectively evil* to use bad means to achieve a good end (1 Corinthians 13:1-7; 1 John 2: 4-5; Matthew 15: 12-19). There are actions which have a deformity inseparably connected with their nature, namely, fornication, adultery, and others of this sort, which can in no way be morally permissible or can be changed in nature by time and culture. Such actions are always bad in themselves (May 135). This is the truth about moral absolutes. Therefore, the act of APhA, its *object* is intrinsically wrong whatever the intention or the circumstance may be. And it is not the culture that determines the moral object of the act. The act of APhA in itself does not satisfy the moral demands and the meaning of the marital act and marriage.

In the process of APhA, there is a fundamental deformity of act, namely, democratization of truth. But the truth which depends solely on the recognition of the majority as the determinant factor is not in consonance with the universal understanding of truth. The agreement between the husband and the wife as well as their prior knowledge about a particular act to be performed does not change the meaning of the act. It is not objective and reasonable to affirm that the remote knowledge of the act could morally qualify such act as neutral or good. Instead, APhA is intrinsically a disordered act and must be morally qualified as adultery and, therefore, immoral. The customary and cultural acceptance and choice of an act that is objectively and morally illicit by certain groups of people do not in any way render the act licit or change its objectivity and moral qualification. The simple, but effective definition of adultery as an act of sexual intercourse and disordered relationship with a married person recognizes the special value of human sexuality and marriage. The object of the act of APhA is not ethically acceptable in Christian Ethics, because of lack of corresponding meaning to human sexuality and conjugal act.

Christian Ethics, based on the truth about humanity, does not contemplate any situation, circumstance or agreement that can ethically change bad act into good act. In fact, in APhA, there is a concept of act that does not reflect the Christian meaning of marital act. The true meaning of the marital act is of two dimensions of inseparable existence: unitive and procreative dimensions. Human sexuality, in fact, is “something radically different from sexuality of any other creature. The body’s sexuality has meaning given to it by God; since this is so, it is not entirely up to each individual to determine how that sexuality should be expressed.” (The Pope John XXIII Center 85). Christian ethics specifies that it is an act that unites the couple to each other in a deep and unbreakable bond and which is open to life at the same time. For this reason, marriage “is human act by which the partners mutually surrender themselves to each other for the good of the partners, of the children, and of the society. This sacred bond no longer depends on human decision alone” (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes* 48).

Social anthropology defines marriage as “a union between a man and a woman such that the children born to the woman are the recognized legitimate offspring of both partners” (Beattie 117). This definition points to only one important function of marriage in most societies. The definition confers an acknowledged social status on the offspring. That is, wherever the child comes from, either from adulterous act of the woman or from APhA, he must be recognized and accorded a social status. In fact, it suggests the existence of Phallocratic Alliance in different cultures. The efficient cause of marriage according to Social and Cultural Anthropology is procreation. But Christian Ethics and Theology indicate a triple truth about marriage. First, the bond is sacred because it was instituted by God for the benefit of the couples (companionship); second, it is for procreation and education of the children and, third for the good of the society. This triple function is inseparable even though the *principium* is the good of the couples and the *cum-principium* is procreation and the good of the society. This implies that a man can engage in marriage even when he is aware of the pathology of infertility (*impotentia generandi*), since marriage is not absolutely and exclusively meant for procreation. In the normal circumstance, it is a fact that not every conjugal act results in generation of offspring, but every conjugal act is open to life. The openness to life culminates in the adoption of children as a tangible expression of the *cum-*

principium. Instead, the purposely and intentional exclusion of offspring in marriage renders such marriage infertile.

Based on the Christian ethical understanding of the constituents of good ethical act, APhA presents a serious moral issue. The child that is generated through APhA may be loved and cared for by the “parents”, but he or she is the end product of a *subjective* act. The child is a ‘product’ sought to calm emotions and desires of the couple. He is wanted, not as a subject, but as a means for self- fulfillment and satisfaction of the couple. It is, however, clear that APhA is guided by utilitarian ethical principle where the moral quality of the act depends on its usefulness and benefit acquired or expected therein. Inversely, the APhA would not have been accepted in any culture if sexual activities of the third party were not bringing about offspring. In one hand, the offspring becomes the object of happiness to the couple and, on the other hand, generation of the offspring becomes the consequence of the act erroneously considered morally good. For this reason, APhA also enjoys the protection of ethical consequentialism: an ethical theory in which the outcome of the act determines the moral quality of the same act. Not considering the *object* of the act, that is, the objective meaning of the act (procreation by a third-party), APhA centers on the consequence of the disordered sexual activity. The whole process is directed towards the *end*, that is, procreation of the offspring. Again, begetting a child through such process has another serious ethical issue. If the end product justifies the act, then it would also be morally right to kill people to reduce the shortage of food.

Based on the above indicated principles, couples may view child bearing as *a right* or *as a privilege and gift from God*. Begetting children is different type of act. For example, we have right to food in order to sustain our life, right to education, to worship and even right to marriage so as to live as human being and satisfy our inclination to the inherent *societas amicorum*. In contrast, we do not have a comparable right to a child because this would mean we have a right to own a person. APhA encloses within its nature the right to a child, because the wife was first considered the ‘right’ of the husband. An owned person is a property of the owner, an object and not a subject; and this would be tantamount to admitting that a person rightfully can be a slave to another. Catholic Theology outstandingly commits herself to the teaching that a child is always a gift to be received and cared for (Pope Pius XII 193 – 5).

Consequently, considering the child to be a right of the parents flows from the notion that couples have a right to beget a child by any means, including the use of artificial fertilization, *in vitro* fertilization, surrogate motherhood and *African Phallocratic Alliance*. There is yet another consequence of such right, a child who is being owned may also be disowned and may also be rejected by the parents whenever they considered it so and, the status accorded by the parents and the society could also be revoked. Contrary to the *right-to-child* notion, the Old Testament clearly upholds that the children are a gift from God (Genesis 4:1; 4:25). To procreate is a gift and an answer to a prayer offered to God asking for a privilege and gift (1Samuel 1:27). This teaching has been constant throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament and Christian ethics has not taught anything contrary to it.

HETEROLOGOUS *IN VITRO* FERTILIZATION AND EMBRYO TRANSFER

Heterologous *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer is one of the technological “solutions” to *impotentia generandi* (male incapability to procreate). It can also be seen as a solution to the infertility of the woman. It is an artificial fertilization, that is, when human conception is obtained artificially by the use of at least one donor other than the spouses who are joined in marriage (Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith II, A). Heterologous fertilization can be obtained *in vitro* through the meeting of gametes taken from at least one donor and then the already growing human embryo being transferred into the womb of the wife. We are specifically interested in the donation of the sperm by a donor because of the pathology of the husband. We will not get into the totality of the technical analysis of the procedure. Instead, we shall focus our concern on the donation of gametes, *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer. These facts present ethical issues. For example, it may be asked whether it is ethically permissible to fertilize a wife’s egg with a donor’s sperm. What is the relationship between artificial fertilization, the meaning of marriage and the conjugal act? Is it able to cure the pathology of infertility? There may be more questions of ethical concern in the procedure.

Heterologous *in vitro* fertilization is a substitute to the natural act of conjugal act and conception. There is artificiality in contrast to natural procedure. In fact, “actual fertilization takes place in a petri dish. The eggs are removed from the incubator, and each is placed in a separate dish in a small droplet of medium. A few drops of highly concentrated sperm are pipette onto each egg. The mixture is placed in the incubator and if all goes well, fertilization

occurs within 24 hours.” (Kaplan 25-26). This procedure allows the embryos to grow to a certain stage before they are transferred into the womb of the woman. It should be immediately noted that there are always many fertilized eggs and a number of them are also transferred at the same time. It is also observed that “when multiple embryos are introduced, usually only one implants and develops; the others are discharged from the woman’s body.

Occasionally, more than one embryo implant, and multiple birth result (Kaplan 26). It is also of experience that through this procedure, innumerable fertilizations and destructions of human embryos generally called “spare” occur (Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith 11). The spare embryos may also be donated to other infertile couples who may be in need of them (Etokakpan 32). All these are for the sole aim of ‘making’ children. Certainly, there is manipulation of the gametes and the fertilized embryos. It is scientifically proven that the fertilized ovum or the embryo in its nature has all it takes to develop into adult human being. Considering its status, the human embryo is *human being with potentialities* and *not a potential human being*. The fertilized egg or the embryo only needs time to unfold as growth what was already genetically stored at the completion of fertilization (Sgreccia 366). Therefore, destruction of the embryos is tantamount to destruction of human life. Based on the insight from science and the procedure of the *in vitro* fertilization, other ethical questions arise: Is what is scientifically possible also ethically permissible? Is it objectively and ethically licit to destroy human lives to procure another life? Most especially, if one knows that in performing a certain kind of act, other human beings may be destroyed can one still engage in such activity? These are serious ethical issues that heterologous *in vitro* fertilization must necessarily consider.

ETHICS OF HETEROLOGOUS *IN VITRO* FERTILIZATION AND EMBRYO TRANSFER

Technology in its effort to proffer solution to the problem of infertility through HiFET creates serious ethical problems. Being artificial in nature the HiFET usurps absolute power in substitution of *procreation* with *making*: the manipulated is not the same as the manipulator. And while seeking to ‘fabricate’ a life (child), other lives are being used as objects for the set goal. And by doing so, there is set the categories of life: the ones to be discarded, the so-called spare embryos and the ones needed, the transferred ones. In fact, in the act of

“fabrication” or “making”, the act proceeds from the agent to something produced and it is inferior to the producer. The human being is different from other sentient beings, he has an inestimable value and his life is the primordial value on which all other values are built. It is therefore, difficult to find any parameter for judging between lives of the same worth and that is exactly what HiFET does.

Naturally, marital intercourse has two dimensions: procreative and unitive dimensions which are essential to the act itself. For this reason, marital act cannot be termed so if one of the dimensions is lacking. In fact, “Christian thinkers in the West have argued that the procreative and relational aspects of marriage strengthen one another, and that each is threatened by the loss of the other. This is a knot tied by God, which men should not untie. It is clear that any attempt to convert begetting into making constitutes a loosening of that knot, a severing of the relational from the procreative and the procreative from the relational” (O’Donovan, 198). The first act of HiFET is the severing of the meaning of the conjugal act: unitive dimension is separated from the procreative dimension giving rise to a unilateral act. The fact that gametes are technically collected and manipulated in the laboratory physically separates the essence of the conjugal expression of love. As it is known, “by its intimate structure, the conjugal act, while most closely uniting husband and wife, makes them capable of generating new lives, according to laws inscribed in the very being of man and woman” (Pius XII 470). Therefore, it is never morally permissible to separate these different aspects to such a degree as positively to exclude either the procreative intention or the conjugal relation (Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith II, 4). The above affirmation seems to suggest a purely physical or biological separation of the act thereby violating the moral principle. But this would be a physicalist understanding of marital act. In this case, one could well substitute biological laws with ethical principles.

But the conjugal act, sexual act, goes beyond mere biological or physical actualization of sexual desires. It is an act pregnant with values which necessarily involves the donation of self in its totality to another, it concerns the person in his entirety. The two dimensions of the conjugal act are essential to meaning of the act and rooted in the human person. The ontological foundation of these dimensions is the Natural law which is not identified with the physicalist concept of human sexuality. Therefore, “the basis of the position is not a

“biologist” interpretation of natural law. That is, it is not argued that the biological structure of acts is relevant because that is the normal pattern, where normal means usual for “all animals” (Johnstone 228). There is essential difference between sexuality in animals and sexuality in humans. As human sexuality cannot be separated in its two essential meanings, the coming into being of the embryo, new life, cannot be separated from the marital union.

CONCLUSION

The techniques of artificial fertilization in general certainly constitute the scientific progress. There are risks in the technological application of scientific research to the human person when it is not established on sound ethical principles. Ethics has the duty to construct the bridge of sound and objective relationship between technology and the human life. A one-sided act of pursuing technological development and its eventual application of its results to human life may cause human beings to become one dimensional and this is a threat to life itself. It is, therefore, necessary to consider all dimensions of man in any technological advancement (Janssens 6).

In our discussion so far, we tried to put side by side two cultures: technological and naturalist cultures with their respective processes for the cure of male infertility. The pathology of infertility is a burden to couples, nature and science. However, neither HiFET nor APhA is a cure to male infertility. The *substitution* for the marital act either by an artificial or naturalistic act is not a cure to the pathology, instead each process creates more serious problems. Both solutions are rooted in different principles contrary to objective ethical principles. The technological possibilities as proposed by HiFET do not prove that all that is scientifically possible is also ethically permissible. The act of HiFET and the act of APhA express in their procedure independent acts of different people other than a single act of the couple. Whereas, in procreation by sexual intercourse there exists one and the same choice made by each spouse as an expression of the experienced unitive and procreative dimensions of a single act.

Even though human sexual act is physically and biologically the same as that of animals, human sexual relationship is naturally made to be expressed in *humano modo*. In the HiFET, there are irreducible separate and independent acts of choice of different people and

the child that comes into existence is not received as a gift, but as an end product from a factory. Human sexuality radically involves spirituality, relationality, sanctity, morality and physicality. In fact, sexuality has meaning given to it by God. Christian ethics does not understand human sexuality solely as a physical expression or contact between persons. Sexual intimacy is that which specifically differentiates marriage from all other types of relationship. In the APhA, the presence and the invitation of a third-party to the marital relationship deadly attacks the meaning of the marriage, the function of marriage and the meaning of sexual act itself. The offensiveness of APhA consists in its capacity to separate the unitive dimension from procreative dimension and the insertion of another type of choice which involves persons other than the couple. The presence of a third-party in APhA does not match the couple's search for help within their sexual union, it is a substitution of the marital act.

It is ethically false to hold on to a pseudo-principle that the decision of the couple diminishes the gravity or even erase the objective meaning of adultery in heterologous *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer. It must be recalled that Phallocratic Alliance demands the knowledge and the conspiracy of the couple before the contract is sealed. Even though, such condition might be culturally accepted, yet it is a negation of the moral absolutes which indicate the existence of universal norms that are valid at all times. That the act of adultery is intrinsically evil does not depend on the agreement between people, it depends on the meaning of the act itself. If we agree, as members of a given community, that embezzlement of public funds is not stealing, our agreement lacks the capacity to change the meaning of that particular act, since appropriating goods of others is theft. Again, in cultures in which infertility is considered a failure on the part of a male, such consideration lacks the capacity to determine the goodness or wrongness of any act. The pathology of infertility cannot ethically qualify either HiFET or APhA as good acts. Situation ethics is always against human development and cannot in anyway help in solving human and societal problems.

It is true that APhA does not constitute threat to life as it happens in HiFET, yet the child that may be born through it is not as a result of an act of marital union. In APhA there constitutes adultery while in HiFET there exist artificiality and destruction of human lives. These are too grave a risk to be taken for the sake of satisfying desires. One of the common

fronts of APhA and HiFET is the fact that begetting children is considered a right. If the first aim of marriage is companionship among the couples, this means that there may exist marriage without children if there is no possibility of having them. The couples do not have right to a child because this would mean that they have a right to a person. It can now be seen why embryos in artificial fertilization are used as objects of experiment and can also be sold to other couples. Yet there is another false conclusion from the premise that parents have right to healthy children. The choice of APhA or HiFET presupposes an expectation that the child to be born will be perfect, male or female, according to the ideology behind the current standard.

Consequent upon the ideology behind the choice is that, a child who is born less than perfect, who is born female instead of male (or vice versa) or born with physiological and mental defect is likely to be socially or psychologically rejected. In fact, some cultures and societies are guided by the *principle of efficiency* in certain areas of social life. Take for instance, in Ashanti matrilineal society of Ghana, “a barren woman is in disgrace and despair. Her state is held to be an implicit betrayal of her people and she feels it as such... The desire for children makes childlessness on the part of man, a very serious, if at times pitiful.” (Sarpong 7). According to this consideration, an infertile man is not *efficient* and *useful* to the society and this given status has ethical consequences. Accordingly, those who are not *useful* to or *efficient* in the society may be scorned, marginalized and despised. It is worth noting that the underlying ethical theory that gives birth to the principle of efficiency is utilitarianism where the usefulness determines the goodness or wrongness of the act.

It is true that APhA is a ‘natural act’ physically considered, but every natural act has its inherent meaning independently on any hermeneutic interpretation. It is true that human being has inclinations inherent to his nature, thus, inclinations to survival, reproduction, self-preservation and inclination towards his creator. But these inclinations are not inherent to the human being in a disordered manner. Take for example, to survive we need food, but we do not eat anything that we come across nor do we eat what was not meant to be eaten by humans. The naturalness of sexual intercourse does not mean it must be expressed with whosoever, wherever and however. Procreation is a human act and, therefore, demands

ethical qualification. It is important to note that ethical considerations of APhA and HiFET are bound up in the meaning of what it is to be human.

Christianity sees human beings as creatures of God and interpret practical life situations in reference to Him; those who view humans differently will view humans as the sole judge of their own actions. In fact, while the entire universe and its component parts are creatures of God, humans hold a privileged position (Psalm 8: 5-7). The same humans receive the gift of sexuality and procreation, but since these are only gifts and not rights, it must be reasonably expressed and cared for. In the same manner, technology can help to solve myriad of human problems including infertility in marriage as it does in the *Assisted artificial Insemination* (AI), but this must be done in absolute respect for the human person and his necessary and objective benefits.

The biblical vision of human persons united in love in marriage is by no means contrary to scientific research and technology for genuinely therapeutic reasons. But it emphasizes and affirms the inviolability and sacredness of human persons themselves and their interpersonal procreative reality. Without demonizing reproductive technology and without exalting the naturalistic concept of human reproduction, thereby destroying the objective meaning of marital act and procreation, it is ethically worthwhile to reconsider the act of *child adoption*, a significant act of love in contrast to APhA and HiFET. Adoption is not contrary to the meaning of marriage, but strengthens the unitive and procreative dimensions in a formidable way. Through adoption the marital union expresses itself in a way that children become real gifts to be received and loved. It is, therefore, the duty of Christian Ethics to construct a conveying point between cultures and technological development.

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Impact of Presbyterian Church in Nigeria 1846 to Present

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ABSTRACT

The Presbyterian Church in Nigeria (PCN) also known as the Church of Scotland Mission was established for mission expansion dated 1846, and is regarded as the oldest Christian religious body which was established by European Christian missionaries in Eastern Nigeria. This means that its establishment in this region preceded the establishment of other Missions or Churches in Eastern Nigeria, namely the Church Missionary Society (Anglican), the Methodist, Roman Catholic, Qua Iboe Mission and Seventh-day Adventist Church. The study aims to establish the history of the Presbyterian Church as a child of circumstance, borne out of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century in Europe with the eye of Mission in the 21st century and beyond without neglecting the rich historical records of the beginning of Christianity and its vicissitudes over the years. In addition, it aims to provide some vital historical facts on the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria: its origin, growth and the multidimensional contributions of the Mission to the growth and development of Nigeria. The study is qualitative research and has adopted a historical survey with a missiological and pedagogical approach. The research found out that the Presbyterian Church did not only spread Christianity but also provided education and healthcare, which contributed significantly to the social fabric of Nigerian society. Additional findings include the achievements and failures of the Presbyterian Church, and factors inhibiting its growth. The study recommends new strategies and approaches should be adopted by the leaders of the church to make sure that churches in rural areas will grow like churches in urban places. The church has to overcome the stranger's church syndrome in many places where the presence of the church is felt by becoming more interested to the needs of members.

KEYWORDS: Presbyterian, Church Mission, Protestant, Missiology.

INTRODUCTION

The roots of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria could be traced from 1846 when Scottish missionaries established her presence in the region to the eve of the independence of Nigeria in 1960 (Ojo 60). This is to say, that the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria could be regarded as the oldest Christian religious organization established by European Christian missionaries in Eastern Nigeria. The church's early years were marked by the intertwining of foreign evangelical efforts and the indigenous cultural context. The initial mission aimed not only at spreading Christianity but also at providing education and healthcare, contributing significantly to the social fabric of the communities it engaged with. As the church expanded, it underwent a missiological process of indigenization, adopting local languages and customs, thereby fostering a sense of cultural inclusivity. This unique blend of Scottish Presbyterian

doctrines and indigenous practices shaped the church's character, making it an acceptable distinctive religious institution in Nigerian society.

The statement of the problem addresses the impact of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria from 1846 to the present. The study endeavours to scrutinize the social and educational impact of the Presbyterian Church, addressing its influence on language preservation, and contributions to education and healthcare. Moreover, the paper navigates the intricate terrain of denominational relations, illustrating the church's commitment to ecumenism and collaboration with other Christian denominations in Nigeria. The paper explores the Christian church's journey through the modern era post-present; the paper scrutinizes changes, challenges, and adaptations, shedding light on the Presbyterian Church's response to evolving societal dynamics. The exploration of the contemporary state of the church aims to provide insights into its current challenges, resilience, and strategic initiatives for the future.

The objective of this paper is to address the impact of the Presbyterian Church and provides a comprehensive exploration of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria from its establishment in 1846 to the contemporary period. This undertaking aims to offer a nuanced understanding of the church's historical roots, growth, and development, delving into its missionary endeavours, key figures, and pivotal moments that have shaped its identity. The study is qualitative research and has adopted a historical survey with a missiological approach. The reason for adopting this method is because the impact of the Presbyterian Church has a long history.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TIME FRAME 1846 TO PRESENT

The selected time frame, spanning from 1846 to the present, encapsulates a critical period in Nigeria's Church historiography, encompassing the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, and contemporary eras. The late 19th early 20th and 21st centuries witnessed the imposition of British colonial rule, profoundly influencing societal structures, governance, and religious practices. Revealing how the Presbyterian Church navigated these tumultuous times provides invaluable insights into its resilience, adaptability, and role in shaping the spiritual and social landscape of Nigeria. However, the period leading up to Nigeria's independence in 1960 and the subsequent decades witnessed remarkable socio-political changes. During this period, the Presbyterian Church, as an integral part of the religious body, actively engaged with these shifts, contributing to the ongoing debate on national identity, justice, and human rights made waves. This study seeks to explore the multifaceted interactions between the Presbyterian Church and the historical events that unfolded within this period, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics between faith and societal transformations in Nigeria.

THE FORMATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The formation of the Presbyterian Church worldwide has its credence of origin in the Protestant Reformation, championed by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century. As one of the plethora of churches that sprang up during the Reformation in Europe. The Presbyterian Church was born out of the frantic effort of John Calvin (1509-1564) who was a famous leader of the Reformation after Martin Luther during the sixteenth century. John Calvin was born in a middle-class family of Noyon in Picardy France; Calvin studied Theology and Law in Paris, where he was interested in Luther's teachings (Ojo 60). In 1533, it was observed that he experienced a sudden conversion which he believed was a divine call for him to forsake

catholicism to teach purer Christian doctrines. This made him leave France with some of his followers to Basel where they lived in exile because of the hostility of the anti-Protestant French King Francis who was also in charge of Switzerland where Protestants had a firm stronghold (ibid). At Basel, in 1536 Calvin formulated and published a new theology in his famous work titled "The Institute of Christian Religion". The work contains the core beliefs and teachings of Calvin. Not very long Calvin decided to leave Basel for Geneva where he settled permanently (61). The special doctrines and teachings Calvin and his followers developed which made them distinct from other Christian sects and other Protestants, apart from the rejection of all sacraments save Baptism and Holy Communion, included stripping the church of all rites and ceremonies that were unfounded and lacked biblical authority. They also rejected bishops and regular clergy but kept one order of clergy, the ministers, who together with elected elders from different congregations formed a governing council called consistory or presbytery which was empowered to make and enforce laws. Also, Calvin's doctrine on salvation was based on predestination, which entails the natural selection of the saved or division of people into the elect and the damned. However, this is the most striking in the new religion and has not only influenced many humanists such as Charles Darwin and Hebert Spencer but it also influenced Europeans, which included Christian Missionaries in their dealings with people outside the continent of Europe. At the same time, there was great emphasis on hard work, strict observance of the Sabbath, rejection of amusements and the supremacy of the Bible, which was the chief instrument of governance, as well as the presbytery.

It is seen that from Geneva, Calvinism spread like wildfire far and wide. The Calvinists were called Huguenots, in Netherlands and Calvinism was called the Dutch Reformed Religion. Also, in the British Isles, John Knox introduced Calvinism into Scotland in 1559 under the name Presbyterian. John Knox and his followers worked hard and in 1567 Presbyterianism became a state religion.

EARLY MISSIONARY EFFORTS IN NIGERIA

The establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria at Calabar was made possible by two-dimensional factors: Firstly, the plight of the freed slaves, at the international level at Jamaica, among whom the Scottish Missionary Society had been working since 1842; the evangelical and missionary zeal in the churches in Europe and the fact of actively obeying the Gospel commission of spreading the message as mandated by Matt.28:18-20. David Livingstone took the message to Nyasaland, Malawi, East Africa. Secondly, in the local scene, after signing the treaty which formally abolished the slave trade in their domain, the Efik Kings, Eyamba of Duke Town and Eyo Honesty of Creek Town wrote letters to the Queen of England to send her subjects to Calabar, to teach their people how to read and write, to understand God like the white men and to build industries, (Ogbu 64-66). This means that the Efik monarchs encouraged the Christian Missionaries to promote literacy education, Christian religion, commerce and industry in their homeland.

However, the advent of Scottish missionaries in Nigeria during the mid-19th century marked a transformative phase in the region's religious landscape. On 10th April 1846, Hope Waddell, an Irish minister from Dublin in Northern Ireland, with two Scots, Mr and Mrs Edgerly (Catechist) and two Jamaicans, Andrew Chisholm (assistant Catechist), Edward Miller who was a carpenter, G.B. Waddell who was Hope's house boy, were useful in

establishing the church by the Scottish Missionaries. The Jamaicans were people of African descent, and many of them had worked among Africans for many years. This shows that they were aware of Africans' way of life and treated them with love as human beings and not as brutal or vicious persons who worked among the Jamaican slaves for about thirteen years before they arrived in Calabar. Hope Waddell founded the famous Hope Waddell Training Institution in 1895, aiming to provide both academic and vocational education. This institution became a cornerstone of the Presbyterian Church's educational initiatives, leaving a lasting impact on the development of education in Nigeria, (Okafor 205-209).

According to Falola, Rev. Henry Townsend, stationed in Abeokuta, simultaneously played a pivotal role in linguistic and literary achievements (47, 49). Recognizing the importance of local languages, he initiated the translation of the Bible and other religious texts into Yoruba, fostering a deeper connection between Christianity and the indigenous population. His linguistic contributions had a profound and enduring influence on the dissemination of Christian teachings in the Yoruba-speaking regions.

Founding of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria

The formal establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria in 1846 was orchestrated by these pioneering missionaries. Rev. Hope Waddell, based in Calabar, played a crucial role in organizing the first presbytery, laying the institutional foundation for the church. His administrative acumen and commitment to education contributed significantly to the initial phase of the church's growth (Nwachukwu 345,349).

Falola avers that Rev. Henry Townsend, stationed in Abeokuta, brought his linguistic expertise to the forefront during the founding period (43). His translation work not only facilitated the communication of Christian doctrines but also fostered a sense of inclusivity by incorporating local languages. The Presbyterian Church's early success in navigating linguistic and cultural challenges owed much to Townsend's contributions. These missionary efforts, characterized by educational initiatives, linguistic endeavours, and the establishment of organizational structures, exemplify the multifaceted approach adopted by the early Presbyterian missionaries in Nigeria. Their distinct roles and locations laid the groundwork for the church's subsequent development and its enduring impact on the Nigerian religious landscape (Nwachukwu 361).

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NIGERIA

The latter half of the 19th century marked a transformative phase for the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria as it strategically expanded its reach into various regions. The Lagos Mission, initiated in 1868, became a significant milestone in the church's history. Led by missionaries such as Rev. A. C. Monk-house, the Lagos Presbyterian Church not only catered for the spiritual needs of the burgeoning urban population but also became a hub for educational and social development (Afigbo 30, 33).

Furthering its commitment to reach diverse communities, the Presbyterian Church extended its influence to Onitsha, Owerri, and Abeokuta. The establishment of these missions reflected a nuanced approach, acknowledging the cultural diversity of Nigeria. For instance, the mission in Onitsha, established in 1870, became a pivotal center for engaging with the Igbo people, adapting Presbyterian practices to the local context (Onwubiko 127,128).

A seminal moment in the church's expansion occurred with the establishment of the Oguta Mission in 1888, spearheaded by Rev. George Leslie Mackay (140). This marked the church's entry into the Igbo heartland, fostering a deeper connection with the indigenous population. The mission not only became a bastion for evangelism but also laid the groundwork for the church's enduring presence in the region. The growth and development of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria were profoundly shaped by the leadership and contributions of key figures. Rev. Samuel Bill, a luminary during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, served as the first Nigerian moderator in 1901. For Ogunewu his tenure was marked by a strategic vision, navigating the church through challenges such as the complexities of colonial rule and the transition to post-colonial independence (108). Dr. Alexander Neilson, as the Principal of the Hope Waddell Training Institution in Calabar, provided transformative leadership in education. Ayandele agrees that under Neilson's guidance, the institution expanded its curriculum, incorporating vocational training alongside academic pursuits. His emphasis on practical skills empowered students for meaningful contributions to society, aligning with the church's broader mission of holistic development (200).

THE IMPACT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NIGERIA, 1946 TO PRESENT

The impact of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria could be seen in the area of its operations in the light of the overall changes which have been manifested over time. Before the missionaries arrived in Nigeria, the people lived in atomized societies, which regarded other communities as enemies that should be treated as such without compunction. There was no respect for human life and dignity of labour. This was shown in the widespread practice of human sacrifice under various pretexts. In many communities in Nigeria, women were held in low esteem, the mothers of twins were usually banished from the community, while the twins were usually banished from the community and the twins were killed. However, people were superstitious and believed that all diseases were the result of witchcraft or evil spirits. The missionaries tried so much to bring about worthwhile changes in the lives of the various people in the areas of operation in various ways. We shall now discuss the social impact of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria.

The Social Impact

The Presbyterian Church missionaries brought new programmes and patterns of life and worship which contributed positively towards the growth of the communities in Nigeria. As the purveyors of new cultures and civilizations, it added a new dimension to the cultural heritage of the Nigerian people, especially the Efik/Ibibio and Cross River-Igbo people. In these places, the Church introduced the English Language, a new form of education and culture, a new pattern of thought as well as new techniques of masonry and architecture, which are evident in the schools and churches that were built in the areas. The missionaries also persuaded the chiefs to abolish sacrifices, rituals twins killing and the torturing of slaves.

Socio-Cultural Impact on Nigerian Society

The Presbyterian Church in Nigeria wielded a profound influence on the social and cultural dynamics of the nation, becoming an integral part of the diverse tapestry of Nigerian society. A significant facet of the church's impact lies in its role as a catalyst for social change, notably in challenging established gender norms. Dibua opines that the inception of the

women's Guild in 1916 marked a watershed moment (20, 21). Led by formidable women such as Mrs. Florence Nwapa and Mrs. Janet Ekandem, the Women's Guild transcended the ecclesiastical boundaries, evolving into a platform for advocating women's rights and empowerment. Their endeavours, encompassing issues such as education and healthcare, rippled through Nigerian society, contributing to the burgeoning women's movement and fostering a more inclusive societal ethos (Ekandem 220). Moreover, the church became a bastion for the preservation of indigenous languages and cultures. Missionary endeavours, exemplified by Rev. Henry Townsend's translation work in Yoruba, served not only to spread Christian doctrines but also played a pivotal role in documenting and preserving local languages. In the opinion of Afolayan, the enduring cultural impact is evident in contemporary Nigeria, where linguistic diversity owes much to the church's historical contributions (64, 67).

According to Emezue, the church's involvement in social issues extended to advocating for justice and human rights (185,189). During pivotal moments in Nigeria's history, such as the struggle for independence and the fight against military dictatorship, Presbyterian leaders like Rev. J. P. Clark and Rev. David Noi actively engaged in social and political spheres, embodying the church's commitment to societal transformation (Adiele 56).

Impact on Education

The Presbyterian Church among other things is noted for the provision of a different and formal education, which was planned for the new converts to initiate them into some basic teachings of the Christian faith. This is to say that, missionary impact on education remained intrinsic to the Presbyterian Church's growth strategy. Ojo holds that in 1916, the establishment of the Women's Guild marked a significant milestone, showcasing the active involvement of women in missionary endeavours. The Women's Guild became instrumental in community development, healthcare, and education, contributing to the church's multifaceted approach to mission work ((170-172). Ekejiubu, reveals that educational initiatives flourished with the establishment of the Qua Iboe Mission in Itu and the Presbyterian College of Education in Akropong (335). These institutions not only became bastions of learning but also served as cultural and intellectual hubs. Alumni from these institutions, such as Prof. Eyo Ita and Dr. Alvan Ikoku, emerged as influential figures in the fields of education and national development, embodying the church's commitment to nurturing leaders. The Presbyterian Church's dedication to education and missionary activities during this period exemplifies a dynamic and multifaceted approach to growth. Beyond religious realms, its legacy resonates in the broader spheres of education, healthcare, and community development, establishing a lasting imprint on the social fabric of Nigeria.

Role in Education and Healthcare

The Presbyterian Church's contributions to education and healthcare have been instrumental in shaping the intellectual and physical well-being of Nigeria, leaving an enduring legacy. In the realm of education, institutions established by the church emerged as centres of academic excellence. The Hope Waddell Training Institution in Calabar, founded in 1895, became a beacon of educational advancement. According to Okeke, alumni from this institution, including Chief Michael Okpara, played pivotal roles in Nigerian politics, contributing to the shaping of the nation's post-independence landscape (170). Similarly, the Qua Iboe Mission

in Itu, with its emphasis on holistic education, produced scholars like Prof. Eyo Ita, who left an indelible mark on the academic sphere. The mission work received a major boost from the coming on board of Dr. Akanu Ibiam, the first indigenous medical missionary in Nigeria. The church's engagement in healthcare went beyond the confines of religious institutions. Oko maintains that the establishment of the Hope Waddell Hospital in Calabar in 1925 marked a significant stride (35-48). This hospital, under the leadership of medical professionals like Dr Oku Ampofo, became not only a centre for medical care but also a training ground for healthcare professionals. Etim avers that the church's healthcare initiatives extended to rural areas, addressing public health challenges and contributing to the overall well-being of communities (66, 68).

During critical junctures in Nigeria's history, such as the Biafran War (1967-1970), the church's healthcare infrastructure played a pivotal role. Mission hospitals, including those operated by the Presbyterian Church, became lifelines for those affected by the conflict (513-516). The dedication of medical personnel and the resilience of these institutions underscored the church's commitment to humanitarian efforts during times of crisis. The Presbyterian Church's enduring impact on education and healthcare in Nigeria is a testament to its multifaceted commitment to the nation's development. Beyond religious boundaries, the church's influence has permeated various facets of societal life, contributing to the ongoing narrative of progress and transformation in Nigeria.

Impact on Linguistic Studies

The Linguistic studies undertaken by the Scottish missionaries made an outstanding impact such as Hugh Goldie's principles of Efik Grammar and Specimens of the Language, Efik Dictionary, Efik Grammar and Efik Grammar in English, the translation of the Bible into Efik Language, the Old Testament by Dr. Robb in 1866 and the New Testament by Hugh Goldie in 1874, writing of Hymns, Songs and Efik Languages by William Inyang in 1919 (Ojo 69). This means that the Scottish missionaries studied the Efiks language and used it to write dictionaries, translated the Bible from English to Efiks. Also the missionaries taught them how to write and teach their songs in Efiks.

Economic Impact

The church introduced several trades, which constitute the basis of many Nigerians' economic survival. For Ojo, through the effort of Hope Waddel Training Institute, Calabar, many people were trained to develop such vocational skills as carpentry, blacksmithing, coopering masonry, naval sciences, dressmaking, bakery, plumbing, printing and bookbinding, and engineering among others (71). Training was also conducted at the Boys' Vocational School Ididep and the Macgregor College Afrikpo. The Itu Ieper colony also trained people and engaged in large-scale cultivation of oil palm. Also, the missionaries' introduction of the use of flowers for environmental beautification and the changes in building styles, contributed to the people's aesthetic perception, and development in Nigeria.

Challenges Faced by the Church

The colonial era presented multifaceted challenges for the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria. The introduction of indirect rule by the British colonial administration posed a unique predicament. In light of this, Smith argues that the church had to navigate the intricacies of working within a system that emphasized governance through traditional rulers. This shift in

governance structures had implications for the church's autonomy and influence, leading to a complex negotiation between the ecclesiastical and colonial authorities (165,167). Concurrently, Arin observes that the influenza pandemic of 1918 emerged as a critical challenge, transcending mere health concerns. In regions like Calabar and Lagos, where the Presbyterian Church had established a significant presence, the pandemic exacted a heavy toll (156-160). Beyond the immediate health crisis, the church faced the daunting task of providing pastoral care to grieving communities while actively participating in healthcare initiatives. This period became a defining moment, shaping the church's subsequent engagement with healthcare and community development. The post-colonial period ushered in a different set of challenges, notably the Nigerian Civil War.

The church found itself entangled in the complex web of political, ethnic, and religious tensions. According to Falola, the regions which were directly affected by the conflict experienced disruptions than normal church activities, including displacement of congregations and destruction of church infrastructure. Navigating these challenges required the church to reassess its role amid societal upheaval (380). However, the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria exhibited a remarkable capacity for adaptation, showcasing a nuanced and strategic approach to the evolving landscape. During the colonial era, the church responded to the imposition of indirect rule by engaging in constructive dialogue with the colonial administration. Notably, the establishment of Native Courts in Calabar in the early 20th century exemplifies this adaptation. By participating in matters of justice and governance, the church maintained a degree of autonomy and relevance within the changing socio-political framework (Falola and Heaton 370,372). Ohaeri, says that the influenza pandemic of 1918 prompted a significant shift in the church's role, particularly in healthcare. Recognizing the integral connection between physical and spiritual well-being, the Presbyterian Church expanded its mission to include healthcare initiatives (510,511). The establishment of the Hope Waddell Hospital in Calabar in 1925 served as both a response to immediate health needs and a strategic investment in long-term community development.

In the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War, the church played a crucial role in post-war reconciliation. Onuoha reveals that Peace and reconciliation committees were established in regions directly affected by the conflict. These committees, comprising church leaders and community representatives, actively engaged in rebuilding efforts and contributed to the healing process. The church's involvement in post-war reconstruction extended beyond the spiritual realm, emphasizing its commitment to holistic community development (57, 58). Over the years, the Presbyterian Church's ability to adapt to complex and dynamic circumstances became integral to its identity. The adaptive strategies employed by the church not only sustained its mission but also positioned it as a dynamic and responsive institution, contributing meaningfully to the broader socio-political and economic landscape of Nigeria.

Impact on Other Christian Denominations in Nigeria

There is a major impact made by the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria in fostering unity and collaborative dialogue among others. The journey of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria has been intricately woven with a commitment to ecumenism, fostering collaborative relations with a myriad of Christian denominations across the nation. This commitment to unity and

shared purpose has manifested in various forms, shaping the landscape of Christianity in Nigeria. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) stands as a testament to the collaborative spirit between the Presbyterian Church and other denominations. Since its inception in 1976, CAN has been consistent for providing a common platform for denominations, including the Anglican Church, the Methodist Church, and the Catholic Church, to address collective concerns. Through CAN, the Presbyterian Church has actively participated in national discussions on social justice, religious freedom, and national development (Ayandele 193,195). This collaborative effort reflects a shared commitment to societal well-being and underscores the collective strength that arises when denominations work together toward common goals.

Impact on Theology Education of Ministers

The establishment of theological institutions in conjunction with other denominations exemplifies the Presbyterian Church's dedication to collaborative education initiatives. Akhigbe holds that Joint efforts have resulted in the founding of institutions such as the West African Theological Seminary (WATS) and the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, where denominations pool resources to provide quality theological education. These institutions not only serve as centers for academic excellence but also foster a spirit of camaraderie among future religious leaders, contributing to a more unified Christian community (1-8). The Presbyterian Church actively engages in humanitarian initiatives in partnership with other denominations. Collaborative ventures include disaster relief efforts, community development projects, and healthcare initiatives. For instance, Afolabi says that joint medical missions, involving the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, have provided essential healthcare services to underserved communities (150). These initiatives showcase the collective impact that denominations can have when they unite for the betterment of society (Okafor and Nwafor 220,222).

The Presbyterian Church's participation in the Nigerian Christian Pilgrims Commission further illustrates its commitment to ecumenism. Collaborating with denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church, the church contributes to facilitating Christian pilgrimage, emphasizing the shared spiritual journey of believers across denominational lines (Onyeneke 10). Interdenominational theological dialogues, involving scholars and clergy from diverse traditions, including Presbyterian scholars and clergies, serve as intellectual forums for deepening understanding and fostering unity. In the contributions of Ogunmodede the Presbyterian Church's involvement in dialogues, such as those organized by the Nigerian Inter-religious Council, contributes to a richer theological tapestry and promotes mutual respect among denominations (215,220).

Beyond formal structures, the Presbyterian Church actively engages in grassroots ecumenism. Joint worship services, community outreach programs, and collaborative youth initiatives which bring congregations from different denominations together, fostering relationships at the local level (Ojo 121). This means that the Presbyterian Church's relations with other Christian denominations in Nigeria are marked by a commitment to unity, shared initiatives, and mutual respect. From national platforms like CAN to grassroots collaborations, these relations contribute to a vibrant, harmonious, and collectively impactful Christian witness in Nigeria.

Changes and Developments of the Presbyterian Church 1846-Present

The research discusses significant changes and developments within the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria from 1846 to the present, reflecting the dynamic nature of religious institutions in response to evolving societal trends. According to Akomolafe and Adebayo, one notable transformation has been the integration of technology into various aspects of church life (19). The adoption of digital platforms for worship services, outreach programs, and communication has become a defining feature. The Presbyterian Church has embraced social media, live streaming, and online resources to connect with a wider audience, transcending geographical limitations and engaging with the younger generation in innovative ways (Ayegeboyin 50).

Additionally, there has been a concerted effort to address social issues more directly. The church, cognizant of its role in societal transformation, has increased its involvement in advocacy and community development initiatives (Odoemelam 32, 33). This includes campaigns for education, healthcare, and social justice, reflecting a commitment to holistic ministry that goes beyond the traditional confines of the church building. The post-2006 era has also seen a diversification of ministry approaches. Omobowale says that the Presbyterian Church has explored contemporary worship styles, small-group ministries, and community-based outreach programs to cater for the diverse needs of its members (186). This adaptability reflects an awareness of changing cultural dynamics and a desire to remain relevant in the lives of congregants.

Peculiar Challenges of the Church

As of the present, the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria grapples with a set of challenges reflective of the broader societal landscape. One prominent concern is the tension between tradition and modernity (Ogunbameru and Ogunbameru 351,352). The church seeks to navigate the delicate balance between preserving its rich historical heritage and embracing contemporary expressions of worship and ministry. According to Fadahunsi and Akinbode, financial sustainability poses a challenge for contemporary Christian denominations, the Presbyterian Church not excluded. The changing economic landscape and increasing demands for social and community services necessitate a strategic approach to resource management (175). The church is actively exploring sustainable funding models and partnerships to ensure the continuity of its mission and outreach programs.

Moreover, the Presbyterian Church faces the ongoing challenge of maintaining relevance in a rapidly changing cultural and religious environment. The rise of new religious movements and the influence of globalized cultural trends present both opportunities and challenges. The church seeks to engage with these dynamics while holding steadfast to its theological foundations. Ecclesiastical unity and denominational identity remain essential considerations. The Presbyterian Church endeavours to foster unity among its congregations and maintain a cohesive denominational identity, particularly in the face of theological diversity and differing interpretations of doctrine.

Additionally, the church has initiated strategic planning processes, incorporating input from congregational leaders and members. These efforts aim to position the Presbyterian Church for continued growth, relevance, and impact in the modern era. The church faces the

complexities of the contemporary landscape, and continues to draw on its historical resilience and commitment to its mission, through intentional adaptation and faithful stewardship; it will navigate the challenges of the modern era and continue to play a vital role in the spiritual and societal well-being of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the journey of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria from its inception in 1846 to the modern era in 2006 has been marked by a tapestry of historical, social, and ecclesiastical developments. From the early missionary efforts and the founding of the church to its growth, engagement with societal challenges, and collaborative ventures with other denominations, each phase has contributed to shaping the identity and impact of the Presbyterian Church. The church's historical background, intricately connected with figures such as Rev. Hope Masterton Waddell and Rev. James Africanus Beale Horton, underscores the indelible mark of missionary zeal and educational initiatives. The growth and development of the church, exemplified by its expansion, key figures, and missionary work, showcase a commitment to holistic ministry that goes beyond the spiritual to encompass education, healthcare, and community development. Challenges faced by the church, whether during the colonial era, the influenza pandemic, or the Nigerian Civil War, are crucibles for adaptation and resilience. Responses to these challenges, including engagement with colonial authorities, the establishment of healthcare institutions, and post-war reconciliation efforts, highlight the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the church's mission.

Denominational relations, characterized by active participation in Christian associations and collaborative ventures, illustrate the Presbyterian Church's commitment to ecumenism. These relations have extended to education, healthcare, and theological dialogues, contributing to a more unified Christian community in Nigeria. The social and cultural impact of the church has been profound, from challenging gender norms through the Women's Guild to preserving indigenous languages and cultures. The Presbyterian Church's role in education and healthcare, exemplified by institutions like the Hope Waddell Training Institution and the Hope Waddell Hospital, has left an enduring legacy in shaping the intellectual and physical well-being of Nigeria. In contemporary times, the church has changed, embracing technology, increasing involvement in advocacy and community development, and diversifying ministry approaches. The current state involves a delicate balance between tradition and modernity, financial sustainability challenges, and an ongoing commitment to relevance in a changing cultural and religious landscape.

THE LEGACY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NIGERIA FROM 1846 TO PRESENT

The legacy of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria is woven into the fabric of the nation's history and society. It is a legacy of missionary fervour, educational advancement, healthcare provision, and social advocacy. The church's commitment to holistic ministry, addressing both the spiritual and material needs of communities, has left an enduring impact on the social, cultural, and educational landscape of Nigeria. The legacy is also one of resilience in the face of challenges. From navigating the complexities of colonial rule to responding to health crises and participating in post-war reconstruction, the Presbyterian Church's ability to adapt and contribute meaningfully to societal development stands as a testament to its enduring legacy. Ecumenism and collaborative ventures with other denominations have contributed to a unified Christian witness in Nigeria. The Presbyterian Church's role in

preserving indigenous languages, challenging societal norms, and fostering gender equality reflects a commitment to social transformation and justice. As the church grapples with the challenges of the modern era, its legacy continues to unfold. The integration of technology, increased advocacy, and strategic planning demonstrate a commitment to staying relevant while upholding core values. The legacy of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria, therefore, is not merely a historical narrative but an ongoing story of impact, adaptation, and steadfast commitment to the mission of Christ in the context of Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The paper on the “Impact of the Presbyterian Church from 1946 to present” pointed out that the establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria at Calabar was born out of the plight of the freed slaves, at the international level at Jamaica which Scottish missionary Society worked in 1842. It was discovered that the Evangelical and missionary zeal in the churches in Europe that it was David Living Stone who took the missionary message to Nyasaland in Malawi, East Africa. This was done after signing the treaty which abolished the slaves’ trade in their domain, the Efik Kings, Eymba of Duke Town Eyo Honesty of Creek Town wrote letters to the Queen of England demanding her to send missionaries to Calabar who would teach the indigenes how to read and write which the Queen of England responded positively without delay.

The study notes that the Efik monarchs supported this idea and welcomed the missionaries who then promoted literacy education, Christian religion, commerce and industry in the homeland. Throughout the paper, effort has been made to establish that the history of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria is a child of circumstance, bore out of the protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century in Europe with the eyes of mission in the 21st century. The paper maintains that the Presbyterian Church did not only spread Christianity but provided quality education, health care which was of great importance to the growth and welfare of the nation. The study discovered for the Presbyterian Church to survive the challenges in Nigeria it has to undergo missiological process of indigenization by adopting local language and customs, which made it to foster sense of cultural inclusivity, which made the church acceptable in Calabar in particular and Nigeria in general.

The work captures and encapsulates a critical period in Nigerian church historiography which covers the pre-colonial, Colonial, Post-colonial and the contemporary periods. The point of interest for this paper, is the formation of the Presbyterian Church with its history of formation of the origin in the Protestant Reformation, which was orchestrated by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century in Europe. However, the effort of John Calvin (1509-1564) who was a famous leader of the Reformation after Martin Luther during sixteenth century was fundamental to the origin and growth of the church. The findings of the study show that the impact of Presbyterian Church established in Nigeria in 1946 was championed by Rev. Hope Wadell who based in Calabar, and played a crucial role in organizing the first Presbytery, laying of the institutional foundation for the church.

Finally, the paper concludes by pointing out other areas Presbyterian Church made impacts such as social, education, healthcare, justice, human rights, studies, economic impacts and theology education of ministers. It stands to reason that, many other achievements could be seen as evidence of the fact of good work done by the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria. Since 1846, which was a gradual beginning as the pioneer mission in Calabar, the church has continued to expand its frontiers, despite its lean finances and few resources for the ministers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. New strategies and approaches should be adopted by the leaders of the church to make sure that churches in rural areas will grow like churches in urban places.
2. The church has to overcome the stranger's church syndrome in many places where the presence of the church is felt by becoming more interested to the needs of members.
3. The church has to make proper plans for training and employing young indigenous ministers and evangelists who have the passion for the work of the gospel.

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Maintaining Peaceful Relationships in Matthew 5:21-26 and its Implications for Conflict Resolution in African Christian Society

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ABSTRACT

Maintaining peaceful relationships is the bedrock of conflict resolution as detailed in Matthew 5:21-26. Existing studies on the text have focused mainly on the literary interpretation of the text as regards the value of human life, with little attention paid to maintaining peaceful relationships. This study, therefore, examines maintaining peaceful relationships in the text, with a view to understanding its implications for conflict resolution in African Christian society. While the grammatico-historical approach serves as the framework, the interpretive design is used. Data are subjected to exegetical analysis. The study shows that to maintain peaceful relationships, people must guard their heart from evil thoughts—including anger and guard their tongues from evil speech—including slander. It also reveals that reconciliation between brothers must be accomplished whether the “innocent” (5:23-24) or the “offending” (vv. 25-26) brother takes the first step. Without such reconciliation, gifts presented at the altar mean nothing because discord hinders their relationship with God. Thus, defendant should seek to resolve conflict quickly to prevent potential judgment or easing awful potential penalties for the offences committed. The paper encourages acts of peaceful relationships in Africa and recommends that all Africans should seek to resolve conflict without necessarily relying on litigation.

KEYWORDS: Maintaining peaceful relationships, conflict, conflict resolution, reconciliation, African Christian Society

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining peaceful relationship is essential in human society due to the fact that conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction or human interpersonal relationship (Oyeniya 258). This is because after the fall of human beings as recorded in Genesis 3, God prophesied the conflict that would happen in human relationships. The wife will aspire to control her husband and the husband will strive to dominate her (Gen 3:16). This fracture in marriage spills into all human relationships. And so, the first murder occurred when Cain killed his brother, Abel (Gen 4). Paul in his epistle to the Galatians (5:20-21) notes that hatred, conflict, anger, dissensions and factions are product of the sinful nature (Gal 5:20-21). Thus, human beings are prone to conflict (Brown n. p.). And this necessitates the need for conflict resolution in human societies, Christian society is inclusive. This is because Christian

society as one of the sacred institutions is also involved in conflict. As Afolabi notes, “It is a fact that Churches in Africa are going through conflicts” (476). This is because we hear about conflicts in the Churches from the west to the east or from the north to the south of the Africa.

Likewise, the state of conflict in the Church is reported in the newspapers. According to Osunde, “Church that is meant to put man in running order with God in an atmosphere of love and oneness has today turned into a theatre of war with material gain as its divisive factor” (34). In the same vein, Olusegun states that “violence, hatred, oppression, tussle for leadership, power and divisions have characterized the Indigenous Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria, particularly in the last two decades of the twentieth century” (2:37). These reports suggest the alarming rate of conflict in African Christian society and the need for biblical principle to resolve the conflicts. Therefore, the burden is how this conflict will be appropriately resolved to the advantage of the church. This is because Faleti rightly avers that “actors should prepare to deal with the outcomes and consequences of conflict, since it is inevitable, rather than wish there were none” (45).

Existing studies on Matthew 5:21-26 have focused mainly on value of human life (Davis 1-18), the subtlety of anger and its connectedness to murder (Abuor 1-131), with little attention paid to maintaining peaceful relationships in Matthew 5:21-26. This study, therefore, examines maintaining peaceful relationships in the text, with a view to understanding its implications for conflict resolution in African Christian society. Matthew 5:21-26 which is the focus of this study, presents the essential of maintaining peaceful relationships. This is more forcibly and beautifully set forth by Jesus Christ. Here Jesus interprets the fuller meaning of the sixth commandment, do not murder (Exod 20:13). He shows that God is watching and will judge those who live in conflict. Jesus starts by looking at the ultimate fracture of a relationship – murder; then moves to the motives and acts that precede it. To Him, murder is not only limited to outward act of murder but also involves the inward choice of anger that generates such acts. And so, both outward and inward acts of murder and slander attract God’s judgment. To be precise, the teaching implies that Jesus Christ has foreknown the future of the church that maintaining peaceful relationships is necessary because conflict is inevitable, as He presents the appropriate principles of

reconciliation for interpersonal relationship in the church and the promptness of resolving conflict with one's adversary without necessarily engaging in prosecution. Therefore, this study examines maintaining peaceful relationship in Matthew 5:21-26, with a view to understanding its implications for conflict resolution in African Christian Society.

Some of the relevant questions arising from the study include: What does Matthew 5:21-26 teaches about peaceful relationship? How shall Christians maintain peaceful relationships with others? What are the implications of maintaining peaceful relationships in Matthew 5:21-26 for conflict resolution in African societies, especially in African Christian society? This study aims at providing answers to these questions. Primary data are sourced mainly from the Greek text of Matthew 5:21-26 with reference to other biblical texts when necessary, while secondary data are sourced from published works on conflict resolution in African Christian society. The grammatico-historical approach serves as the framework, while the interpretive design is used. Data are subjected to exegetical analysis. The grammatico-historical approach posits that in order to understand the meaning of Scripture from original author's intention, the text of the Scripture should be understood according to its grammar, its syntax, and according to the historical context (Fuller n. p.).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A DEFINITION

Conflict resolution is defined in different ways among the peace and conflict scholars. Miller defines conflict resolution as a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems "distinct from resolution or transformation of conflict" (8). According to Oladosu conflict resolution is seen as "a short-term measure which addresses a particular conflict" (1:119). Miall and other scholars are of the opinion that conflict resolution is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of conflict has been changed. Therefore, conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties to conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense (Miall, et al. 21). The above definitions suggest the willingness and the satisfaction of the parties to conflict to resolve the conflict amicably and resume their friendship again after a period of hostility and conflict.

As Best rightly notes, in conflict resolution, peaceful methods exist in two broad categories. The first is what he refers to as the proactive category, which involves methods

that aim to prevent the occurrence of conflict in the first instance such as undocumented community-based trust and confidence building measures, communication, good governance, interparty collaboration, among others. The second category is reactive, dealing with responses to situations that have already turned conflictive, or are potentially so. These he said include third parties interventions such as mediation, brokerage, conciliation, arbitration and litigation, among others (Best 94). The fact that the peaceful methods exist in two broad categories suggest that every effort of conflict resolution in every society can either be proactive or reactive in nature. To this effect, since Christians do not live in isolation to their community in Africa, this study considers it necessary to examine African approach to conflict resolution prior to examining conflict resolution in African Christian society.

AFRICAN APPROACH TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In African cultural practices, the theme of peace and reconciliation is not unknown in Africa both in secular and African Religion. Religion is part and parcel of African life. Therefore, African religion plays a very dominant role in bringing about peace and reconciliation. As noted by Mbiti, there are four means by which African Religion addresses issues of peace and reconciliation. The first means is through making prayer for peace and reconciliation. In all these prayers of peace, peace in African Religion functions not only on human level but also in the dimension of the spiritual realities. Therefore, the living makes an effort to 'please' the living dead for peace to reign. The second means is through measures that enact peace and reconciliation. These measures include willingness of both parties to work out peace, witnesses from both sides to these acts of peace and reconciliation, willingness to lay down the weapon of warfare, shedding the blood of an innocent animal as the blood of reconciliation and peace, common sharing of food, pronouncing the formal curses (anathemas) upon those who break the peace accord and arrangement, among others. The third means of peace and reconciliation in African Religion is through covenants. There are covenants that people draw up to cement a wide range of relations, such as marriages, agreements, settling of disputes, among others. The fourth means of peace and reconciliation in African Religion is proverbs about peace and reconciliation. This is because Traditional African culture is primarily oral culture. This suggests that African Religion is a potential asset for peace. Yet, African Religion, Christianity and Islam are not innocent of engaging,

aggravating, or promoting conflicts and wars. But their teachings can challenge people to make and practice peace at all levels (Mbiti 56).

Similarly, the role of African Religion in conflict prevention in Africa is enormous. This is because African cultural beliefs and practices play a catalytic role in averting conflicts. In the traditional set up as Daniel rightly notes, when the problems of conflict erupt, there are defined methodologies to resolve them. These include the institution of ancestorhood, elders, religious leaders, and covenants. To this effect, peace and reconciliation in African religion play a fundamental role in integrating human society. It offered its members certain common values and objectives which bound them together. This shows that a revitalization of African religious values to redress the problems of conflicts in Africa is imperative (Daniel 26).

Besides, the mechanism for social control and engineering as well as resolution of conflict was in Yoruba palaces. In Yoruba cultural practices, “it is significant to note that Yoruba palaces were courts of arbitration with robust mechanism for managing conflict” (Olaoba 116). Hence, not only that palace institution in Yoruba land serves as machinery for peace initiative and orientation, but also facilitates peace and harmony. This indicates that formal courts existed in Yoruba palaces and they were often considered as the throne of judgment where the machinery of justice was exhibited (Olaoba 116). In a nutshell, African society had robust means of conflict resolution before the advent of Christianity in Africa.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AFRICAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

It is revealed in the history that the church has been playing an enormous role in conflict resolution. This is because the church is vested with duty of a spiritual mandate to enhance peace social justice and reconciliation by creating an inclusive society where God’s people are expected to live in peace and harmony. First and foremost, it is noted that through the means of mediation, the church has been playing a positive role in conflict resolutions across the continent of Africa and has been proffered solutions to some of the most devastating civil wars the continent has ever encountered. For instance, church in Mozambique participated in the conflict resolution process, which culminated in the peace treaty between the belligerent parties. The church in Kenya also played a vital role in conflict resolution in the period between 1986 and 1992. Similarly, during the Biafran war in Nigeria,

Quakers were involved in mediating conflicts in 1967-1970 between the warring parties. In the same vein, the signing of the 1972 Addis Ababa peace agreement in Sudan was a product of the effort of the all African Conference of Churches, who mediated between the Southern and Northern Sudan. Likewise in South Africa, Christianity was a contributing factor in the truth and reconciliation commission (Obondi n. p.).

Moreover, in term of healing and reconciliation, the church has access on daily basis to meeting their church members and as a result has a place of influence that they can employ to bring social moral and spiritual influence in conflict resolution. “They have been involved in bringing together warring communities and leaders in the post conflict resolution building efforts” (Obondi 43). Besides, through the means of negotiation and dialogue, the church in African has been playing their role in conflict resolution. For instance, during the time of war in Liberia during the administrations of president Doe, Christian women as well as Muslims women played an active role and as a result helped in resolving civil war by means of negotiation of peace dialogues between Taylor rebels and the government of Liberia (Gbowee n. p.). Therefore, “the role of the church has been greatly felt in trying to resolve conflicts in the continent of Africa” (Obondi 43).

However, one basic fact of modern society pointed out by Bryan H. Slanders, is the method of resolving conflict in the church. Slanders notes that, The church increasingly relies on the court for conflict resolution in an ever-increasing litigious society. This tragic using is a drain on the church’s resources and, more importantly, a stumbling block for those who seek to know Christ as their life-changing force (n. p.). This suggests the failure of the church organizations at constructively and proactively handling conflict or crisis. This is because a lawsuit is not always God’s answer. Paul’s admonition in 1 Corinthians 6 is to avoid lawsuits against fellow Christians and Jesus emphasizes the same notion in his teaching in Matthew 5:21-26, which is the focus of this study. But instead of avoiding lawsuits, the whole picture of the church reflects vividly the one pointed by Chinua Achebe as the title of one of his works *Things Fall Apart*. It contains the story of a divided society succumbing to foreign domination (Achebe 159). As a result, the very fabric that binds the church together as a corporate entity – reconciliation is eaten away by the cankerworm called unforgiving spirit. In the light of this abnormality, how shall the Church maintain peaceful relationships with

others? To achieve this objective, grammatico-historical approach is adopted to exegete the selected biblical text.

EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 5:21-26

In the entire sermon of Jesus in Matthew 5:21-48, unlike the Pharisees who had considered external actions as sinful, Jesus explained that sin came from the attitude of the heart (Wiersbe n. p.). In Matthew 5:21-26, which is the focus of this study, Jesus depicts that to avoid murder and to maintain peaceful relationships, people must deal with their heart by guarding their heart from evil thoughts—including anger and guarding their tongues from evil speech—including slander. This is because discord hinders human relationship with God (Brown n. p.). To this effect, people must seek to resolve conflict quickly with their accuser without necessarily relying on litigation. This is with a view to avoiding God’s judgment, imprisonment, and awful potential penalties.

In verse 21, Jesus took one of the important Old Testament (OT) laws, do not murder (Exod 20:13) and interpreted it for His people in the light of the new life He came to give (Wiersbe n. p.). Ἡκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις· Οὐ φονεύσεις· ὃς δ’ ἂν φονεύσῃ, ἔνοχος ἔσται τῇ κρίσει is translated in RSV as “You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.’” The clause Ἡκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις reveals the aspect of the law that Jesus’ audience were familiar with. According to Keener, the kind of words Jesus uses (Ἡκούσατε ... ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω—“You have heard, ... but I say”) was employed by other Jewish teachers to ascertain the fuller meaning of a text. However, Jesus speaks with greater authority than Jewish teachers normally claimed (Keener 58). The word ἀρχαίοις (“men of old”) is the dative masculine plural adjective of no degree from ἀρχαῖος. So the phrase τοῖς ἀρχαίοις (“to the men of old”) in this context implies “the people of ancient times” (Baurer, Arndt, and Gingrich “ἀρχαῖος” 27). And so, it refers to those who lived under the OT law.

In the command Οὐ φονεύσεις (“You shall not kill”), οὐ (“not”) is the particle or disjunctive part from οὐ. This negative particle is used as an object negation (Muller n. p.). In this context it is used to negate φονεύσεις, which is the indicative future active 2nd person singular verb from φονεύω. It means “kill, murder.” Hence Οὐ φονεύσεις means “You shall

not kill.” As Balz rightly notes, the prohibition of murder is picked up in the first antithesis of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:21-26). This text “does not expand the Decalogue commandment in any way, but carries it rather, contrary to any casuistic reduction, to its logical extreme (cf. also Lev 19:18; Eccl 7:9; Ecclus 34:25-27” (Balz n.p.).

Consequently, “whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.” The word ἔνοχος (“liable”) is the nominative masculine singular adjective of no degree from ἔνοχος, which means “guilty, subject to.” ἔνοχος followed by the dative (κρίσει— to judgment, which is the dative feminine singular noun from κρίσις) appears only in Matt 5:21 f., where the dative indicates the appropriate court of judgment. In the antithesis, which is certainly authentic (5:21a[-b?], 22a), Jesus presents a radically sharpened ethic of unlimited neighbour love. The judgment of God becomes the ultimate court of judgment for all acts of unkindness. As a result of the redactional addition of v. 22 b-c (which is probably intended to caricature a Pharisaic-casuistic teaching of the law), κρίσις in v. 22a can mean only the local court, by which a progression in the levels of the court (local court — Sanhedrin — hell of fire) is established. The inconsistent climax in the statement of the offense and the court proceedings becomes intelligible when one understands “fool” as a disrespectful designation of the godless (cf. Ps 14:1; 94:8, etc.). What is pointed out is that “one who harms human relationships is subject to human judgment, while one who disturbs a relationship with God is subject to divine judgment” (Kratz “ἔνοχος” n. p.). Despite the fact that the word used for judgment in verses 21 and 22 are the same, it does not refer to the same judgment. In the ancient Israel, whosoever committed murder would be tried by a human court. And so, it was a capital punishment. The judgment that Jesus referred to in verse 22 was the judgment of God. This is because no human court can condemn a man for evil motives without the corresponding act (Brown n. p.).

In verse 22, Jesus further expatiates on His sermon that not only angry is murder in heart but also the thought and slander place humans under the judgment of God and destruction. ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ὀργιζόμενος τῷ ἀδελφῷ ^[d] αὐτοῦ ἔνοχος ἔσται τῇ κρίσει· ὃς δ’ ἂν εἴπῃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ· Ῥακά, ἔνοχος ἔσται τῷ συνεδρίῳ· ὃς δ’ ἂν εἴπῃ· Μωρέ, ἔνοχος ἔσται εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός is translated in RSV as “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his

brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be liable to the hell of fire.”

In verse 22a, Jesus teaches that in order to maintain peaceful relationships, Christians must guard their hearts from evil thoughts— including anger (Brown n. p.). In the expression ... πᾶς ὁ ὀργιζόμενος τῷ ἀδελφῷ ^[d] αὐτοῦ ... (...“everyone who is angry with his brother”...), ἀδελφῷ (“brother”) is the dative masculine singular noun from ἀδελφός, which means “brother.” In this context, it does not refer to physical brotherhood. This is because in a more general sense ἀδελφός in the NT denotes “fellow-Christians” or “Christian brothers.” Thus, in verse 22, τῷ ἀδελφῷ ^[d] αὐτοῦ (“his brother”) that one is angry with refers to “his fellow-Christian brother or his Christian brother” (Kittel and Friedrich “ἀδελφός” n. p.). Thus, “his brother” in verse 22, “your brother” in verses 23 and 24 refer to “your fellow-Christian brother.” This implies that a Christian should not be angry with his fellow-Christian brother or sister. The word ὀργιζόμενος (“angry”) is the participle present passive nominative masculine singular verb from ὀργίζομαι, which means “to be (become) angry.” It is used 8 times in the New Testament (NT). In Matt 18:34 and 22:7, it is used as a metaphor for God’s wrath.

However, in the context of Matthew 5:22, it is used only for human anger. When this verse uses ὀργίζομαι as a designation of the sinful disposition of one person towards another, it stresses that ὀργίζομαι perverts a person. Not only the act of murder (v. 21), but also the thought and the word place humans under the judgment of God and destruction (Pesch “ὀργίζομαι” n. p.). Jesus did not say that anger leads to murder, but He made it known that anger is murder. However, “There is a holy anger against sin (Eph 4:26), but Jesus talked about an unholy anger against people.” As ὀργίζομαι is used in verse 22, it means “a settled anger, malice that is nursed inwardly” (Wiersbe n. p.). The Pharisees taught that murder consists in the act of taking someone’s life. However, Jesus explained that the commandment extended not only to the act itself but also to the internal attitude behind the act. This indicates that not only that murder is wrong, but the anger prompting the act is also as wrong as plunging in a knife (Walvoord and Zuck n.p.). Jesus teaching reveals that not only external actions that were sinful, but also that sin came from the attitudes of the heart. And so, anger is murder in the heart (Wiersbe n. p.).

Therefore, for Christians to keep away from anger, they need to test if the anger is a righteous anger or not. This is because there is holy anger against sin (Eph 4:26; cf. Psalm 7:11; John 2:13-17; Matt 23). However, Jesus speaks of unrighteous anger in Mathew 5:22. While righteous anger has to do with injustice done to others and dishonour towards God, unrighteous anger deals only with personal injustice – when people hurt or offend us. And so, the unrighteous anger and slander will be judged by God with the punishment of hell fire. Christians can also keep themselves from anger by viewing things from God’s perspective (cf. Gen 50:20; Job 1:2), resist the devil and his accusations and to overcome anger with acts of love (Rom 12:21) (Brown n. p.).

Besides, in verse 22b, Jesus teaches that for the sake of maintaining peaceful relationships, Christians must guard their tongues from evil speech– including slander (Brown n. p.). The word Ῥακά is a term of abuse from Aramic word. “Among the most likely meanings are empty-head, numskull, fool” (Baurer, Ardent and Gingrich “Ῥακά” 176). “Raca” is Aramaic for “empty-headed one.” The insult is about identical to the one that follows it, Μωπέ (“Fool!”), which is the vocative masculine singular of no degree from μωρός, meaning “stupid, foolish; fool, foolishness.” This implies that to address one’s brother as “empty-headed one” or as a “fool” demonstrates the sinfulness of heart and it is liable to judgment. The punishments for both slanders (empty-headed one and fool) are also roughly the same: the (day of God’s) judgment, the heavenly Sanhedrin or supreme court, and hell. In the Jewish conventional wisdom, they described God’s heavenly tribunal as a supreme court, or sanhedrin, parallel to the earthly one in their literature (Keener 58). As Walvoord and Zuck note, the place called “Gehenna” means valley of Hinnom, the valley south of Jerusalem where a continually burning fire consumed the city refuse and this became an apt name for the eternal punishment of the wicked” (n. p). “The hell of fire” is literally “the Gehenna of fire,” which refers to the standard Jewish concept of Gehinnom, the opposite of paradise. And so, the Jewish teachers believe that the wicked would be burned up and eternally tortured in Gehinnom. This implies that not only the outward act of murder that is liable to judgment but also the inward choice of anger that generates such acts violates the spirit of God’s law against murder (Keener 58).

To this effect, for the sake of maintaining peaceful relationships so as to avoid the aforementioned God’s judgment, people especially Christians must guard their tongues from

evil speech— including slander. In a practical sense, to guard our tongues requires from us four things. The first one is to be quick to listen and slow to speak (James 1:19; cf. Prov 17:21; 18:21; 29:11). Secondly, it also requires from us to only speaking gracious and edifying words (Col 4:6). This involves that our conversations must be full of grace— this implies that we bless people with our words even when they do not deserve it. Apart from this, for our conversations to be seasoned with salt, it connotes that we turn conversations from perverse or ungodly talk to something edifying. Thirdly, it requires from us to remember that God will judge our words (Matt 12:33-36). Fourthly, it requires from us to submit our tongues to God (James 3:7-8; Psalm 141:3; Gal 5:16, 22-23) (Brown n. p.).

In verses 23 and 24, Jesus teaches that to maintain peaceful relationships, Christians must recognize that discord hinders their relationship with God (Brown n. p.). ἐὰν οὖν προσφέρῃς τὸ δῶρόν σου ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον καὶ ἐκεῖ μνησθῆς ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἔχει τι κατὰ σοῦ, ²⁴ ἄφες ἐκεῖ τὸ δῶρόν σου ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου καὶ ὑπάγε πρῶτον διαλλάγηθι τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου, καὶ τότε ἐλθὼν πρόσφερε τὸ δῶρόν σου is translated in RSV as “So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

The word ὑπάγε (“go”) is the imperative present active 2nd person singular verb from ὑπάγω, which means “go, go away.” So, it is a command to go away from the altar when you (a worshiper) remember that your fellow-Christian brother (ἀδελφός σου) has something against you and first of all reconcile with him before coming back to present your gift. The word ἀδελφός (“brother”) is the nominative masculine singular noun. It serves as subject of the verb, διαλλάγηθι (reconciled). The word διαλλάγηθι (“reconciled”) is the imperative aorist passive 2nd person singular verb from διαλλάσσω, which means to change the mind of anyone, to reconcile. As it is used in this context, it means “to be reconciled, to renew friendship with one” (Matt 5:24; 1 Sam 29:4; 1 Esd 4:31) (Thayer n. p.). This suggests that when an innocent person remembers while bringing his gift to the altar that his fellow-Christian brother has something against him, it is commanded that such wrongful attitudes should be dealt with and made right before presenting the gift to God on the altar. Reconciliation between Christian brothers or sisters must be accomplished whether the “innocent” (5:23-24) or the “offending” (vv. 25-26) brother takes the first step. Without such

reconciliation, gifts presented at the altar mean nothing (Walvoord and Zuck n. p.). This suggests that reconciliation must be both vertical and horizontal among Christians.

As Keener notes, not only that Judaism emphasized reconciliation between individuals, but also stressed that God would not accept a superficial offering if one had oppressed or mistreated one's neighbour and refused to make it right. In the OT, it is clearly stated that God accepted only sacrifices offered with a pure heart towards Him and one's neighbour (Gen 4:4-7; Prov 15:8; Isa 1:10-15; Jer 6:20; Amos 5:21-24) (Keener 58). Therefore, in the context of Matthew 5:23-24, the study reveals that discord between fellow-Christian brothers or sisters hinder Christian relationship with God. This affirms that in Matthean Jesus teaching, community harmony precedes worship (cf. Matt 6:14-15; 18:15-17, 21-35). This calls for the need to seek to resolve conflict quickly in human society.

In verses 25-26, Jesus further teaches that to maintain peaceful relationships, Christians must seek to resolve conflict quickly with their accuser (Brown n. p.). ἴσθι εὐνοῶν τῷ ἀντιδίκῳ σου ταχὺ ἕως ὅτου εἶ^[e] μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, μήποτε σε παραδῶ ὁ ἀντίδικος τῷ κριτῇ, καὶ ὁ^[f] κριτὴς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ, καὶ εἰς φυλακὴν βληθήσῃ· ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃς ἐκεῖθεν ἕως ἂν ἀποδῷς τὸν ἔσχατον κοδράντην is translated in RSV as "Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny." Historically, Jesus uses a legal illustration in verses 25-26. It was common in those days for a creditor to charge his debtor who did not pay his debt to court. It is possible for the defendant to make amends with the plaintiff when they were on the way to court. However, once the case had started in the court it was out of their hands and in the hands of the judge. Perhaps the accused was found guilty, he was put in the prison until the debt was paid (MacArthur 298). For the sake of avoiding imprisonment and awful potential penalties therefore, Jesus gives instruction to the defendant to make friend quickly with his accuser while both the defendant and the opponent are on the way to a court trial.

In verse 25a, the word εὐνοῶν is the participle present active nominative masculine singular from εὐνοέω, which means "be well disposed (to), make friends (with)" (Matthew 5:25) (Baurer, Arndt and Gingrich 17). In this context, it means to make friends again (Balz and Schneider "εὐνοέω" n. p.). This suggests that a Christian brother should make friends

again with his accuser. The word ἀντιδίκω (“accuser”) is the dative masculine singular noun from ἀντιδίκος, which means “enemy, opponent in a lawsuit or generally” (Matthew 5:25; Luke 12:58; 18:3; 1 Pet 3:8) (Baurer, Arndt and Gingrich 17). In biblical Greek, ἀντιδίκος usually appears in the context of a lawsuit as an image for the relationship among human beings or between human beings and God (e.g., Jer 27:34 LXX) (Batz). So, the expression, ἴσθι εὐνοῶν τῷ ἀντιδίκῳ σου ταχὺ in reference to the opponent in a trial denotes “make friends again or come to an understanding” (Batz and Schneider n. p.) quickly with your opponent in a lawsuit.

In verse 25b, the expression ἕως ὅτου εἶ^[e] μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ (“while you are going with him to court”) suggests the promptness of making friends again without necessarily relying on prosecution. In addition, verse 25c reveals the implications of refusing to resolve conflict or make friends again with one’s opponent in a lawsuit— ἢ ποτέ σε παραδῶ ὁ ἀντιδίκος τῷ κριτῇ, καὶ ὁ^[f] κριτὴς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ, καὶ εἰς φυλακὴν βληθήσῃ (“lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison”). In this text, the word παραδῶ is the subjunctive aorist active 3rd person singular verb from παραδίδωμι, which means “hand over; pass on.” “As an intensified form of “give,” παραδίδωμι designates the act whereby something or someone is transferred into the possession of another.” This word has many meanings depends on the context. As it is used in this context, it refers to “hand over for judgment/punishment” (Popkes “παραδίδωμι” n. p.). Consequently, the defendant is liable to be imprisoned and to the awful potential penalties. As Walvoord and Zuck rightly note, “Even on the way to a court trial a defendant should seek to clear up any such problem. Otherwise the Sanhedrin, the Jewish court of 70 members, would send him to prison and he would be penniless” (n. p). Therefore, seek reconciliation as quickly as you can so that you may not incur judgment. In this way and in this context, reconciliation appears like a means of preventing potential judgment or easing awful potential penalties for the offences committed.

In verse 26, the awful potential penalty to be paid as fine is expressed. The word ἀποδοῦς (“paid”) is the subjunctive aorist active 2nd person singular verb from ἀποδίδωμι. The compound of δίδωμι formed with ἀπο means “give away, give out, yield, and give back, repay, recompense.” As ἀποδίδωμι is used in this context, it shows when repayment of a debt is required of someone (Matt 5:26 par. Luke 12:59; Matt 18:23-35; Luke 7:42). (Sand

“ἀποδίδομι” n. p.). In the phrase τὸν ἔσχατον κοδράντην (“the last penny”), “κοδράντης represents the smallest coin” (Batz and Schneider n. p.). As Keener notes, the awful potential penalty “to be repaid extended to the last (literally) quadrans, almost the least valuable Roman coin, the equivalent of only a few minutes’ wages” (58). This reveals that such a defendant would not be realised from prison until he became penniless or until he pays his last penny. This suggests the payment of exorbitant amount of money.

In sum, the exegetical study of Matthew 5:21-26 on maintaining peaceful relationships reveals how Christians can maintain peaceful relationships. Jesus presents a radically sharpened ethic of unlimited neighbour love. The judgment of God becomes the ultimate court of judgment for all acts of unkindness. Jesus further expatiates on His sermon that not only angry is murder in heart but also the thought and slander place humans under the judgment of God and destruction. For the sake of maintaining peaceful relationships, Christians must guard their hearts from evil thoughts – including anger, they must guard their tongues from evil speech – including slander, they must recognize that discord hinders their relationship with God – reconciliation must be both vertical and horizontal, and must seek to resolve conflict quickly with their opponent. While maintain peaceful relationships with one’s fellow-Christian brother or sister will assist Christians to have unhindered relationship with God, avoiding God’s judgment, avoiding litigation, avoiding imprisonment, and no repayment of an exorbitant debt as fine, failure to maintain peaceful relationships with one’s fellow-Christian brother or sister will suffer conversely.

IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING PEACEFUL RELATIONSHIPS IN MATTHEW 5:21-26 FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AFRICA AND AFRICAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

The exegetical study of Matthew 5:21-26 reveals various positive implications of maintaining peaceful relationships for conflict resolution not only in African Christian society but also among people of other religious affiliation in African societies at large. In verse 21, the study shows that avoiding the act of murder right from the time of those who lived under the Mosaic Law has delivered people from being subjected to judgment of being tried by a human court for capital punishment. By implication, this suggests that maintaining peaceful relationships protects not only African Christian society but also other religious

community in Africa from being sentence to death in the local court, by which a progression in the levels of the court (local court — Sanhedrin — hell of fire) is established.

Moreover, in verse 22, the study reveals that not only angry is murder in heart but also the thought and slander place humans under the judgment of God and destruction (Pesch “ὀργίζομαι” n. p.). First John 3:15 says, “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” This shows that not only the outward act of murder but also the inward choice of anger that generates such acts violates the spirit of God’s law against murder. The implication of this for conflict resolution in Africa and especially in African Christian society is that no human court can condemn a man for evil motives without the corresponding act. However, a proper interpretation of the OT law according to Jesus did not focus on outward observance as the Pharisee did. To Jesus, all the OT laws can be summarized into two commands – love God and your neighbour (Matt 22:36-40). Hence, as a method of maintaining peaceful relationships, Christians and people of other religious affiliations in Africa must guard not only their heart from evil thoughts—including anger, but also guard their tongues from evil speech—including slander (Brown n. p.). While the approach of conflict resolution in verse 22 falls within proactive category of peaceful method, the approach of conflict resolution in verses 23-25 falls within reactive category of peaceful method. This is because while verse 22 aims at preventing the occurrence of conflict in the first instance, verses 23-25 deal with responses to situations that have already turned conflictive, or are potentially so (Best 93). Therefore, to avoid God’s judgment, Christians and non-Christians in Africa must guard their heart from anger and their tongues from slander. This is because the unrighteous anger and slander will be judged by God with the punishment of hell fire (Brown n. p.).

Besides, in verses 23-24, the exegetical study of the text shows the effect of wrong relationships on worship. Jesus demonstrated that right relationships with others are essential to have a right relationship with God. This suggests to African Christian society and people of other religious affiliations in Africa that to maintain peaceful relationships, they must recognize that discord hinders their relationship with God (Brown n. p.). This is because God accepted only sacrifices offered with a pure heart towards Him and one’s neighbour. By implication, worshipers cannot have right relationship with God without having right relationships with others. It is established in the Scripture that one’s horizontal relationships

always reflect his or her vertical relationship (cf. Matt 6:15; 1 John 6:20). Therefore, reconciliation between brothers must be accomplished whether the “innocent” (vv. 23-24) or the “offending” (vv. 25-26) brother takes the first step. Without such reconciliation, gifts presented at the altar mean nothing (Walvoord and Zuck n. p.). This affirms that maintaining peaceful relationships with one’s neighbours will assist worshippers to have unhindered relationship with God.

Moreover, in verse 25, the study reveals that to maintain peaceful relationships in African Christian society and in African society at large, people must seek to resolve conflict quickly with their opponent, even on the way to a court trial a defendant should seek to make friend again with his accuser by resolving such a conflict without necessarily relying on the court for conflict resolution. This view falls in line with the view of McSwain and Treadwell that conflict within churches can have either positive or negative results for the persons involved. “The commitment of individuals in conflict to positive results will lead to positive results.” (McSwain and Treadwell 29). Therefore, for the Christian, Muslim and adherent of African Religion to constructively and proactively handle conflict in Africa, there is a need to avoid lawsuits not only against one’s fellow-Christian brother but also against non-Christians. This in turn will help the African citizens not only to avoid imprisonment but also to avoid the repayment of an exorbitant debt as fine in the court of law.

Therefore, Matthean Jesus conflict resolution in this text (Matthew 5:21-26) is identical to one of the African proverbs in Yoruba that says, “A kì tí kòtù dé kí à sòrè,” which means “We cannot return from court for conflict resolution and still maintain friendship.” This implies that to maintain peaceful relationship in African societies and especially in African Christian society, Christians and non-Christians cannot settle conflict amicably by relying totally on court for conflict resolution. Hence conflict resolution that will be characterized by friendship and good will at the end of the day in Africa can only be achieved through willingness of the parties to conflict to resolve conflict without necessarily relying on litigation. This implies that Matthean Jesus conflict resolution is in line with African approach to conflict resolution. However, in some critical cases, some conflicts are beyond what the parties to conflict can be resolved between themselves without involving litigation so as to exhibit justice.

CONCLUSION

The study of Matthew 5:21-26 on maintaining peaceful relationships shows that God's judgment becomes the ultimate court of judgment for all thoughts and acts of unkindness in human interpersonal relationships. This is because not only angry is murder in heart but also the thought and slander place humans under the judgment of God and destruction. The study reveals that Christians, Muslims, and adherents of African Religion in Africa can maintain peaceful relationships by guarding their hearts from evil thoughts—including anger, by guarding their tongues from evil speech – including slander, by recognizing that discord hinders their relationship with God, and by seeking to resolve conflict quickly with their opponent without necessarily relying on the court for conflict resolution.

The study also shows that while the positive implications of maintaining peaceful relationships in Matthew 5:21-26 for conflict resolution in African society, especially in African Christian society result to having unhindered relationship with God, preventing potential judgment or easing awful potential penalties such as God's judgment, prosecution, imprisonment, and exorbitant fine for the offences committed, failure to maintain peaceful relationships with one's neighbours hinders one's relationship with God, results to incurring God's judgment in fire of hell, prosecution, imprisonment, and the repayment of an exorbitant fine. The paper establishes that Matthean Jesus conflict resolution in the chosen text is identical to African conflict resolution. It concludes that conflict resolution that will be characterized by friendship and goodwill in Africa cannot be achieved through prosecution. To this effect, the paper encourages acts of peaceful relationships in Africa, especially in African Christian society and recommends that all Africans should seek to resolve conflict quickly with their opponent without necessarily relying on the court for conflict resolution.

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Culture and Tradition in the Trajectories of Gender Differences and Power in Africa

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ABSTRACT

Gender and gender differences represent critical areas of argument in the critique of religious beliefs and practices especially on spirituality. Studies have shown that women have continuously and openly criticized established religions as being gender biased and have self-consciously analyzed the ways in which concepts of gender, vulnerability, discrimination, and power are situated in contemporary discourses in society. Drawing upon extensive contemporary research and literature on gender differences, power and spirituality, this study adopts descriptive methodology with content analysis and phenomenology as auxiliary techniques. The study situates the trajectories of gender differences in Africa within the correlation between power and spirituality in the dynamics of the socio-cultural norms and affiliations in Africa. Findings reveal that gender differences encapsulate socialization and cultural norms where gender roles and expectations are allowed to shape our understanding of power and spirituality, thus influencing how men and women access and experience spiritual practices and leadership positions. The study further demonstrates that patriarchal structures create a leeway for women to be marginalized from positions of power, and construct a limitation for their access to spiritual leadership and decision-making roles. Nonetheless, gender continues to be a foremost issue in the discourse of social attachments, vulnerability and negative stereotype which threatens the place of relationship between people, culture, and religion. Though the conceptualizations of the divine reflect and shape the gender roles and power dynamics in Africa, individual experiences of spirituality and power mirrors the spin-offs of gender, culture, and personal beliefs.

KEY WORDS:

Gender differences, Spirituality, Power, Cultural norms, Gender Discrimination, Marginalization, Spiritual leadership, Deprivation, Social Vulnerability

INTRODUCTION

Evolving discourse within the sphere of gender studies demonstrates that gender is only one of an individual's many identities and almost every woman in the world today encounters one form of gender prejudice or the other at some point during their lifetime. In recent years, the subject of gender differences has generated a lot of concern for scholars in different area of studies, particularly as women have started to be in charge of some important position in terms of tasks and headship. Gender in many societies is recognized as a public issue that

affects dissimilar cultural planning (Daughy and Leddick 27). Furthermore, gender beliefs have the capacity to persuade and make people to hold on to previous thinking about men and women. In earnest, gender diversity is always mostly structured as a natural differentiation between man and woman (Hall and Matsumoto 204), but studies so far have not been able to present such proofs of natural dissimilarity in sundry actions. On the whole, the gender diversity study has decided to give attention to issues of whether women's relative deficiency in success as well as attaining elevated positions in the society could be connected to divergence in their headship or management technique. Scholars have also made effort to look at the individual quality and behavioural mould of women as probable justification for female subordinate standing in many societies. Nevertheless, the idea of femininity or womanliness has been seriously labelled to be synonymous with dependence, submissiveness and compliant, thus women have been seen as deficient in certain virtues for administration, management and/or headship (Ellis 306). The reality of male bias in contemporary society is mirrored by the artificial notion of a small number of people who are fortunate to be in charge, command and/or control of certain segment of the society. Prejudice

Practically speaking, an assortment of studies in the literature of women and gender scholarship has revealed that the representation, responsibility and position of women have been generally shaped by the overall background of a people culture and tradition. This is exemplified in the characterization of identity with colour where blue for instance is used as the colour for male while pink is the colour for the female folks (Hays 1130). In very many societies, the representation of a lady is exaggerated by the culture, as tender, submissive, compliant, dutiful, and respectful. They are given roles such as a household administrator, husband supporters and dutiful housewife. The picture that is given to men is that they know everything and that they are character moulder and more sensible and reasonable than women. However, the traditionally assigned responsibility of the male folks as the worker and main source of income for the family unit and society is further amplified and strengthened while that of the woman is downgraded and sometimes not even mentioned (Roivanen 145).

In very many societies, especially in Africa, the female folks are still being openly regarded as subservient being who can be disregarded, replaced and overlooked. The inference of this way of thinking in many societies helps to create stereotypes and further denigrate the already battered image and lopsided position of the female gender. Traditionally, the balkanization or compartmentalization of the society into domestic and the public as well as the philosophy that the place for the women is in the domestic is not only stereotypic but approval of certain unhealthy practices against women and their status (Schubert 757). This kind of philosophy as authorized by different institutions in the society has over a long period of time become a social reality regarding the standing and functions carried out by women in the society (Baumeister 347). In numerous societies, gender discrimination is created through some official laws as well as diverse oral and traditional norms. In many cases, the laws found in

some communities and groupings frequently does not bear the character of gender in them, they are most times blind and vague to so many issues in order to give rooms to manipulation by men (Melnik and van Osselaer 82). It is understandable that official set of laws affects the certified principles of every society and its traditions, while the traditional customs are implied to form the everyday mind-set and actions (Lin and Raghbir 159). These societal processes are therefore regarded as ordinary procedure that is established by the society to help the people even though it take place external of the limits of necessary righteousness that is supposed to be the case. Nonetheless, viewed from the eyes of miscellany, the significance and responsibility of women in their different societies is experiential from the perspective of an assessment of their different values and ways of life.

SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORIES OF GENDER DIFFERENCES

One way of looking at gender diversity is to approach it from the perspectives of societal, cultural, emotional, and ecological dimensions. However, the main material distinction will hinge on the women's capability to accept and take care of offspring while men's superior dimension, swiftness, and power, would be directed toward differences in work competence which leads to effective sharing out of effort (Ertac and Gurdal 24). A good example is in the area of childbearing and nurturing of toddlers which increases the woman's skill in performing household duties like food preparation, and administering the place of residence as well as giving their point in time and liveliness investment in those actions, condensed their suppleness concerning some performance outside the house. Also in terms of bodily potency and magnitude, men's capacity to acquire income is enriched enormously as is the case in going for hunting, farming, and even fighting wars. There is also the question of authority differences involving the sexes which surfaces afterwards in more intricate social order as fresh cost-effective and useful ways (Fehr-Duda, DeGennaro and Schubert 283). Furthermore, differences that takes place between the social order happened from initiating new ways to ecological problems such as climatic conditions and innate possessions. In this case, cultural values, or gender responsibilities are considered as collective values that members of a particular society embrace about the male and female folks.

It apparent in every society that the process of learning, development and mixing that happens between the young men and the young woman naturally takes place by process of simulation. This is because cases of role modelling of parents' and peers' manifest in behavioural pattern and learning which reinforces the punishment of “weak” emotions when it occurs. Nonetheless, throughout the process of development and transition or life crisis from childhood to adolescent into adult life, these ways of life tries to encourage ease of classification via gender (Meyers, Levy and Zhu 495). It is worthy of note that an essential purpose of gender task and/or cultural viewpoint about male and female is to direct conduct. Communal beliefs offers opportunity to alter manners and conducts by way of societal incentive and castigation for either compliance or non compliance to responsibilities which may produce gender differentiation that may not have taken place.

Similarly, in many societies, men are ridiculed at and sometimes castigated for following the so called female profession or for shared qualities such as friendliness or doing what the society commonly will call the “fine chap” (Nekby, THoursie and Vahtrik 405).

Gender responsibilities produce some sort of anxiety which will enable one obey the rules which will thereafter become part and parcel of gender characteristics, such that even when others are not there, those who are there will conduct themselves all the time in line with the already established characteristics. Gender responsibilities and values are in any case all-encompassing, and can be stimulated with just slight stimulus and their effects on peoples' reactions depend on the perspective. There is a strong hope that male and female proficiency is capable of improving or damaging performance on assignments carried out based on gender consideration. As noted by Ertac and Gurdal (27), the commencement of a well-built gender label is discovered to weaken performance of collective feeling in males when it comes to difficult tasks. Conversely, it turns out to be the other way round when expressing sentiments that are significant from a shared and emotional perspective. It is instructive to note that at times gender labels possess the power to grow positive accomplishment. It goes to show that gender responsibilities can be used by male and female folks to create self-adjustments in behaviour and actions. On the other hand, the feelings encountered by both male and female can provide a reaction which can support behavioural modifications in specific gender distinctive manner. Consequently, man and woman with tough gender characteristics encounter a rather superior sense of self worth and encouraging effect when they accept or agree to gender values (Meyers, Levy and Zhu 480). The two genders could also favour trademarks with qualities that equal their gender uniqueness (Grohmann 109). For that reason, their collective leaning especially in the case of women may be on the whole susceptible to ecological prompts that make them more likely than men to make some adjustment in their behaviour in circumstance fitting manners (Grohmann 119).

GENDER DIFFERENCES, ROLES AND CULTURAL BELIEFS

Cultural beliefs, or gender roles, are shared beliefs that members of a particular culture hold about men and women. They are formed in copious ways which affects modus of socialization. Socialization of boys and girls occurs by imitation of others beginning with the role modeling of parents' and peers' behavior through learning by reinforcement such as punishing "weak" emotions in boys. Throughout the development stages and into adult life, these beliefs promote ease of categorization by gender. For instance, if a woman is observed to have the characteristics of caring for children, then such a woman is believed correspondingly to be the nurturing type, she is also expected to be kind, and possess other communal traits like emotional intelligence. If men are observed in strength-intensive tasks, they are believed to be assertive and dominant and have skills in leadership, math, and mechanics. These positive stereotypes of communion and agency allow women and men to take pride in their gender roles and are sometimes used to justify their division of labour or its continuation. It should be noted that one of the important function of gender roles or cultural beliefs about men and women is to guide behavior.

Societal expectations influence behavior through social rewards and punishments for conforming or not conforming to roles and may create gender differences that otherwise might not have occurred. For example, female leaders are evaluated more negatively than male leaders, and even more so when they exhibit agentic traits like dominance, directness, confidence, or anger (Cross, Copping and Campbell 98). In many societies, men are castigated and ridiculed for pursuing female occupations or for communal traits such as

agreeableness or being too “nice a guy” (Charness and Gneezy 51). Gender roles create pressures to conform and become internalized as gender identities, such that even when others are not present, people behave consistently with an internalized self-image. Gender roles and beliefs are pervasive, can be activated with subtle priming cues, and their effects on individuals' responses depend on the context. Expectations about male and female skills can enhance or impair performance on gender-typical or atypical tasks. As Charness and Gneezy (52) noted, activation of a strong gender stereotype is found to impair performance of social sensitivity in males about things or tasks such as math and leadership performance. However, the reverse also can occur, demonstrating the importance of the social and psychological context. Exemplifying this, sometimes priming gender-atypical stereotypes can enhance performance as is the case with women on maths and career experiences in gender-atypical fields which oftentimes immunize women from stereotype threats.

Gender roles can be used by men and women to self-regulate their behavior. The emotions experienced by men and women can serve as feedback and reinforce behavioral change in more gender-typical ways. As a result, males and females with strong versus weak gender identities experience higher self-esteem and positive affect when they conform to gender standards (Riedl, Hubert and Kenning 397). Both genders also prefer brands with a personality that matches their own gender identity (Grohmann 118). Because of their communal tendencies, women may be particularly sensitive to environmental cues, making them more likely than men to modify their behavior in context-appropriate ways (Childs 147). The socio-cultural perspective also proposes that gender roles and behaviors should change across cultures and time. Cultures with more versus less gender equality exhibit weaker communal–agentic stereotypes (Fischer and Mosquera 21) and smaller gender differences in domains such as preferences for mates with gender-typical attributes, scores on math tests, and sexual activity. Self-reported measures of gender-typical attributes show fewer cross-cultural effects. Across a stretch of time, gender roles and behaviors have changed, particularly for women (Bossom and Michniewicz 425). While communal–agentic roles remain, the stereotype for women has broadened to accommodate an increased focus on careers and greater acceptability of agentic traits like assertiveness. The male stereotype also has changed, such as men's increased responsiveness to social influence, but lack of acceptance of most feminine attributes in males has remained fixed. Changes in these social role beliefs mirror those seen in society, such as an increase of women in male-dominated occupations, a slower increase of men in female-dominated occupations, and decreased support by both sexes for gender inequality (Bossom and Michniewicz 426).

GENDER DIFFERENCES AND MORAL JUDGEMENT

Analyses and literature on gender differences in moral judgment find rather limited support for the notion that women are more moral or ethical than men (Jaffee and Hyde 703). This is exemplified in current researches on forgiveness. Even as a particular study establish that women are more forgiving than men (Miller, Worthington and McDaniel, 843), yet another one discovered that there is no relationship between forgiveness and gender (Fehr, DeGennaro and Schubert 283). Studies have shown that there is a correlation between forgiveness and female-stereotypic traits, such as empathy and relationship commitment, just as it is negatively related to others, such as reflection and cruelty of victimization (Guimond et al. 236). Forgiveness and other ethical behaviors may be a complex interplay of affect and

cognitions that reflect combinations of female- and male-stereotypic traits. Given such unconvincing discovery, it became necessary to focus on more specific psychological processes that influence morality and moral development (Guimond et al. 229). Moral sensitivity is a specific morality-based construct that measures awareness of how one's actions affect others, including an understanding of the cause–consequence of events and the use of empathy and perspective-taking skills to prove that women exhibits more of this trait than men (You, Maeda and Bebeau 263). Women also account for greater interest and engagement in environmentally-conscious actions (Kring 42), which are associated with ethics concerns, but gender differences are absent in scepticism toward demands (Heisz, Pottruff and Shore 1157).

Similarly, honesty and telling lies have been examined from a behavioral economics perspective of weighing the costs and gains of lying to self and others. In this case, men were found to be more likely than women to lie to obtain a monetary benefit for themselves (Kotze, North, Stols and Venter 416), whereas women were more willing to lie when the lying would benefit a person but harmed no one financially (Ertac and Gurdal 27). Females' ethics related responses also may be more context sensitive than males'. Women were found to lie less often than men for personal gain when the pay compensation was small (Kotze, North, Stols, and Venter 418), but gender differences disappeared when the monetary benefit was larger (Childs 147). Again, Childs (148) argues that men may respond quite uniformly to opportunity costs of lying which emphasize personal gain, whereas women may weigh the relative costs of altruism and personal gain. Also, women seem to favour greater altruism in exchange relationships (Kotze, North, Stols and Venter 420), but when stakes are higher, they consider personal gain outcomes. Gender differences in response to charitable appeals have been observed in business contexts. Joffe and Hyde (705) is of the opinion that women would prefer a project that focused on helping others, while men would prefer a utilitarian appeal that focused on helping oneself and one's in-group.

Gender differences also occur when it comes to donations, in which case women were found to be more persuaded and intended to donate more money than men when it comes to charity appeal which generates sympathy rather than pride. Whereas men is found out to have greater intentions to give when the appeal is likely to generate pride rather than sympathy. In regards to corporate moral transgressions, women were discovered to be more negatively involved than men. Not only were they more outraged than men about unethical corporate behaviors, but also their indignation was found to increase boycotting of the establishment (Puntoni, Sweldens and Tavassoli 413). Women also were more likely than men to blame the company in a product harm case (Laufer and Gillespie 141). While women felt more empathy than men for the victims, their attributions of blame reflected their feelings of being personally vulnerable if a similar situation befell them. In contrast, men's attributions were based on their assessment of the corporation relative to their personal beliefs about fairness and justice, that is, looking at it from a “moral-equity norm” perspective.

Gender Differences and the Question of Trust

Previous research on trust has revealed that women are both more trusting than men (Feingold 92) and more likely to be trusted by others, perhaps due to their greater tendency toward social affiliation (Beck et al. 1279; Buchan, Croson and Solnick 466). Fascinatingly,

though, gender differences in trust reverses when evaluated in the context of games and sports. There is the likelihood that the pendulum on trust swings positively towards the female folks. In these contexts that often involve short, reactions and interactions, men tend to be more trusting (Midha 198) and are deemed more trustworthy than women (Melnyk, van Osselaer and Bijmolt 96). Women's lack of trust in relationships is related to their greater concern about privacy (Midha 202). Women are more concerned about abuse of privilege and information (Guimond et al 226), they are more likely than men to read privacy notices, and favor enacting laws that protect confidentiality (Midha 201). These concerns are abated for women but not for men especially when a place is recommended by a friend (Hines 74). For instance, males' greater trust also applies to gaming contexts that involve monetary exchange. A very good example here involve playing an investment game with an anonymous male or female partner, here, men were more likely than women to trust their partner, and they are ready to give money to female than male players (Glenberg 151). In a separate study, Buchan et al. (468) studied behavior in an investment game where participants' only option to increase personal wealth was to send money to another player. Here, trusting the other player to respond in kind was a means of achieving personal gain. Men, more than women, trusted the other player, and they did so because they expected more in return. This researcher argued that this behaviour indicates males' greater focus on instrumentality. This game also allowed participants to return money to the sender, a more communal response not associated with monetary gain. This response was used more often by women.

Gender Differences and Emotions Control

Women are more likely than men to express more feelings of anxiety, worry, fear (Gentile et al, 45) and sadness (Dittmar, Long & Meek, 423). Women accounts for greater constant stress and minor daily stressors, they rates their life events as more negative and less controllable (Laufer and Gillespie 150), and explains more psychological distress (Hargitai and Shafer 432). On the other hand, men exhibit lower exposure to anxiety even when the genders' physical responses are held constant. There is also the theoretical explanations include ones that are socio-cultural in nature such as that parents reward girls but punish boys for expressing negative emotions like fear and sadness (Large, Beheshti and Rahman 427). In addition is the evolutionary dimension that women's care and protection of offspring contribute to greater anxiety about threatening situations, and finally is the hormonal perspective which explains that hormonal fluctuations in women increase anxiety and exposes them more to fear, worry and sometimes sadness than their male counterpart (Maddux and Brewer 159). In the same vein is the socio-cultural theory which links the subjective experiences of emotion and control to power differences in men and women. If a negative event is appraised as within one's control, the resulting emotion is likely to be anger, implicating power and invulnerability. But if the event is beyond one's control, sadness or fear is more likely with an appraisal showing powerlessness and vulnerability (Fischer and Dube 850). Available evidence from extensive studies further reveals that, women feelings shows more powerless emotions than men such as sadness and fear (Fischer et al. 96), and this gender difference was abated in societies where emotional suppression of feelings is less often discouraged in males. Another glaring example of gender differences is that women and men also process information differently when in a negative mood. While women were discovered to use more detailed processing approach and did so more when they were in a sad mood (MacRae et al. 143), men on the other hand used to a distraction strategy of

repairing their sad mood. Women also engage in more meditations, which have the likelihood to increase their depression and anxiety (McRae, Ochsner, Mauss, Gabrieli and Gross 144).

Parental styles and Gender Difference

Consistent with the socio-cultural perspective, parenting style influences boys' and girls' learning of sex-typed attitudes. An investigation by scholars such as Garside and Klimes-Dougan (115) found that parents' attitudes toward gender roles were related to their children's attitudes toward gender-related work, themselves, and others. Yet, parents' attitudes have only weak links to their children's gender-related interests or developmental behaviors. Further, studies reveal that mothers and fathers interact with and influence their children differently. Studies that have examined whether parents treat their sons and daughters in sex-typed ways found only limited support. Differences that did emerge tended to follow communal and agentic roles, with mothers encouraging more two-way communication and using both more supportive and more negative speech, and fathers establishing norms and standards for children to follow and using more directive and informative speech (He, Inman and Mittal 414).

Children were observed to talk more to mothers than to fathers, and after a communication breakdown with a parent, engaged in more elaboration with mothers than fathers (Laufer and Gillespie 148). Studies also show that mothers were more likely to influence their children's brand attitudes by encouraging them to express their opinions and communicate openly (Holt and Devore 165). In contrast, fathers tended to influence their children's brand attitudes by encouraging obedience and social harmony. Among preschool children, only fathers attended more to daughters' than sons' submissive emotions such as sadness, and parental attention at this age predicted submissive behaviour. Among early school age children between ages 1-6, fathers attended more to sons' than daughters' disharmonious emotions like anger, and such emotions envisage later behaviour and confusion (Wrase et al 43). With regards to competitiveness, risk, and confidence which constitutes the three commonly observed gender differences that females and males exhibits, it is obvious that female respond more negatively to competition than males, and are more risk averse, and less confident of their performance (Amanatullah and Moris 256).

Nevertheless, a good deal of research reveals a more complex picture. For example, Rodgers and Harris (322) found that males outperformed females in any quiz or task solving competitive. However, while both genders performed better under competitive than non-competitive conditions, only females' performance was sensitive to the gender of their competitors. That is, they performed considerably better when they competed against an all-female versus a mixed-gender group, whereas males' performance was relatively constant irrespective of competitors' gender. These findings suggest that females' responses to competition are more malleable, as they are sensitive to the particulars of the situation. In an attempt to corroborate this viewpoint, Schubert (758) examined the genders' responses to a competitive bargaining situation in which individuals could negotiate their payment. When this situation was framed as a negotiation opportunity—a frame that is intimidating to low power individuals such as females, males bargained for a higher payment than did females. But when the framing was less intimidating—an opportunity to “ask for more,” gender differences disappeared.

Similarly, Amanatullah and Morris (560) found that females' but not males' behavior was sensitive to the particulars in a job salary competitive negotiation situation. When females advocated for themselves, they anticipated a backlash due to others' communal expectations of them (i.e., concern for others) and used fewer competing tactics, resulting in a lower salary than that negotiated by males. But when females advocated for others, which eliminated backlash concerns, females' tactics and outcomes were comparable to males'. Research also finds that males take more risks than females (Charness and Gneezy 50; Ertac and Gurdal 30), with variation in risk taking linked to different neural activity patterns for men and women (Chan, Kulra and Sun 611). Supporting this, He, Inman, and Mittal (415) found that, overall, males took more risk than females when making financial decisions, and males' but not females' risk seeking in selecting investments increased when they felt they were more skilled in investing. However, interestingly, females' typical aversion toward risk depended on the particulars of the situation. They not only became more risk seeking but also accepted as much risk as males did when they perceived their investing skills as higher and they could limit their risk by purchasing investment insurance. Research also confirms that females exhibit less confidence than males (Croson and Gneezy 50), yet this too seems to depend on the particular situation.

Power Demonstration and Gender Difference

Researchers have long posited that power and gender are related. This is because many differences observed in the power research parallel those seen in the gender literature. For instance, females have higher incidence of nonverbal communication such as the nodding of the head and verbal communications such as the marking of questions is often viewed as evidence of males' greater power (Weiser 167). In terms of gender, the invisibility of masculine practices and privileges has been recognised as central to understandings of gender dynamics. Within the context of men and women, power is seen as a discursive relation centred around circulating discourses of gender based on notions which place men and women in subject and object positions. Power is not a 'thing' that can be held by or belong to any particular individual or group, power rather is connected to the notion of discourse. This refers to a system of knowledge which provides us with a '...whole way of constituting the world through the ways we have to know and talk about it.

Power discourses do not only describe or represent 'the real'; they bring realities (including who we are) into being' (Workman and Lee 206). Power connotes the asymmetric control one has over other(s) (people), material and valued resources in social relations (Weiser 172). People with high versus low power exhibit different psychological states and behaviors, including their perceptions of events and influence strategies. Some contend that this power difference reflects the assignment of higher power social roles to males (Baumeister 348). Others suggest that high (low) power fosters a male agentic (female communal) orientation that emphasizes assertion and expansion of the self (fostering and maintaining social relations and harmony; Workman and Lee 213). Hence, here, we shall characterize certain effects involving power and then outline their conceptual counterparts in the gender literature.

Research indicates that people high versus low in power assume a more self- versus other-oriented perspective, which lessens sensitivity to others' views and how one assigns priorities (Workman and Lee 213). Parallel effects obtain in gender research. In the domain

of empathy, which clearly taps sensitivity to others' perspective, research finds that females are more empathetic than are males and more accurate in inferring others' feelings (Klein and Hodges 720). A meta-analysis also finds that females versus males are more likely to resolve conflict via compromise (Holt and DeVore 166). In assigning priorities, resource allocation studies commonly find that males favor providing gains to the self, whereas females favor equity-based allocations that benefit others and the self (Fehr Duda, De Gennaro and Schubert 284).

Similarly, Phillip and Suri (360) found that among frequent patrons of a store, males favored exclusive promotional deals that benefited few besides the self, whereas females preferred inclusive deals that benefited many others as well as the self. Examining this in a different context, Ono and Zavodny (111) found that when people's moral identity was important, those adopting a feminine gender identity (i.e., predominantly females) increased their charitable donations to out-groups (i.e., groups not associated with the self), but those with a masculine gender identity (i.e., predominantly males) heightened donations to in-groups (i.e., groups associated with the self). And in a study by Garbarino and Strahilevitz (768) concerning the endowment effect—the tendency to inflate the value assigned to one's possessions, findings showed that exposure to social threat strengthened the endowment effect among both genders for in-group goods, but the effect entirely disappeared among males (but not females) for out-group goods. As implied by research concerning psychological distance, people high versus low in power are found to think more abstractly (Voyer, Postma, Brake and Imperat-McGinley 27).

Although we found no work exploring gender differences in abstract versus concrete thinking, research implies that differences are likely. To explain, self-construal research indicates that males (females) typically adopt an independent (interdependent) self-view, where an independent (interdependent) self-view means that the self is perceived as separate from (integrated with) others (Holt and DeVore 167). Supporting the premise that males (females) are likely to engage in more abstract (concrete) thinking, Roothman, Kinsten and Wissing (312) found that people with a salient independent (interdependent) self-view construed actions in a more abstract (concrete) manner. Higher power has been found to trigger three other propensities: taking action or behaving assertively, exhibiting optimism, and feeling greater confidence (VanSlyke and Belanger 84). Analogously, gender research finds that males versus females exhibit these same propensities. Regarding assertive behavior, findings show that males behave more aggressively than females (VanSlyke and Belanger 82). Further, the genders view assertive gestures like fist making differently. For males, a fist expresses increased hope for power and elicits positive judgments of a target who acts assertively, but for females it prompts decreased hope for power and negative judgments of such a target (Schubert 769).

Gender differences favoring males also exist in optimism and positive thought, particularly about the self. Exemplifying this, males were less likely than females to perceive that a product will fail when buying durable goods, thus, making them less likely to buy an extended warranty (Rosip and Hall 267). Males also displayed a stronger optimism bias than did females about their likelihood of being happily married or divorcing (Roy, Taylor and Chi 229). Studies also demonstrate that males scored higher than females on established scales that gauged their frequency of positive cognitions or positive self-statements, their

sense of self-worth and adequacy as a person, and their physical being involving health, body, and physical skills. Further, when investigating gender differences in regulatory focus, where a promotion focus appears to signal greater optimism by implicating heightened attentiveness to positive outcomes. Roothman, Kirsten, and Wissing (315) also found out that males were more promotion-focused, suggesting that they are more optimistic. Ultimately, studies show that males express greater confidence than do females in assorted domains and irrespective of their competence. Similar outcomes were also obtained on several esteem-related facets of the self, such as personal self, self-satisfaction, athletic self and physical appearance (Gentile et al. 39).

Self-understanding and Gender Difference

Gender differences have the capacity to generate some level of self understanding among people in the society. This is so because people form perceptions of themselves on many different dimensions. On the one side is concerned with gender identity, which has something to do with the degree to which one defines the self in a masculine manner characterized by an emphasis on being autonomous, assertive, and instrumental, or in a feminine communal manner that emphasizes fostering social harmony and being sensitive to others and their situation. Although an individual's sex and gender identity are isomorphic, most males adopt a masculine agentic identity and most females a feminine communal identity. Interestingly, recent research indicates that males (but not females) strongly view same- versus other-gender-typical traits as essential to their gender identity. Hence, only males must earn their gender identity by simultaneously demonstrating same-gender traits and stamping out opposite-gender ones (Bosson and Michniewicz 427).

People's gender identity has important consequences on their behavior. Because certain products are strongly associated with a particular gender such as meat is associated with maleness (Kotze, North, Stols and Venter 416), people whose gender identity corresponds with such products may consume more of them. Further, heightening the salience of people's gender identity also can influence their responses to products or items of this type, although sometimes counter-productive outcomes occur. Consider two studies that exemplify this point. Workman and Lee (213) found that the sight of males driving male-oriented vehicles such as pickup trucks, increased purchases of new vehicles of this type more among male than female consumers. This counterproductive outcome occurred because heightening the salience of females' gender identity triggered a defense mechanism, which actually lowered females' perceived risk of acquiring a deadly disease that affects only women.

Burgeoning work on self-construal focuses on a different dimension of people's self-view: People vary in whether they view themselves as independent, meaning that the self is an autonomous unique entity that is individualistic in its pursuits, or it is interdependent and fundamentally connected with others and the environment (Berkout, Young and Gross 21). Considerable evidence indicates that males are typically independent and females are interdependent in their self-construal. For instance, when given positive and negative items that corresponded with these two self-construals, males defined themselves as higher in independence and females viewed themselves as higher in interdependence (Guimond et al 226). Further, Wrase, Klein et al (44) found that males (females) were more persuaded by ad appeals that relayed separateness and differences from others (connectedness and alignment

with others). Because gender corresponds with self-construal, some studies have used self-construal theory to predict gender differences. For example, Heisz, Pottruff, and Shore (1157) posited that being in a romantic relationship should contribute to both sexes' self-esteem, but it should do so for different reasons.

The intimate emotional connection with another in a relationship should contribute to females' self-worth by satisfying their interdependent needs. However, for males who value independence and being distinctive, such emotional connections should not be relevant; instead, a utilitarian benefit of being in a relationship should enhance males' self-worth, for being in a relationship can signify elevated social distinctiveness or status, and thus bolster males' self-esteem. Studies supported these deductions. Refinements of self-construal theory have led scholars to distinguish between two types of interdependence, with the genders favoring different types. Females favor relational interdependence by forming twofold relationships with individual entities. However, males satisfy their belongingness needs via collective-interdependence, where their connection involves membership in a larger collective such as being a club or football fan. Accordingly, Maddux and Brewer (161) found that whether males trusted a person in an online game depended on whether they shared a group membership, but females trusted people who shared either a direct connection or an indirect relationship connection.

Similar outcomes emerged in the types of business entities that garnered the genders' loyalty. Melnyk, van Osselaer, and Bijmolt (88) establish that males were more loyal to multi-person entities or businesses, other than females who were more loyal to individual service providers. The communication between individual's self-construal and their gender suggests that many other outcomes on which independents versus inter-dependents have been found to differ are also apt to show gender differences. The propositions offered next underscore this parallel by identifying and linking outcomes for which self-construal differences have been reported with gender studies that show similar outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This chapter investigated the diverse trajectories underlying gender differences and power in the society. In this regard, we examined many studies and experiences as they relate to gender differences using the diversity framework. Clearly, the framework links gender to the cultural, social, economic and biological determinants and consequences of widespread and varied gender biases and differences. The study illustrates that the central premise of discourse in this study is that men and women are basically different. Baumeister, Catanese and Vohs (349) refers to this paradigm as the gender-centered perspective, in which women's underrepresentation in the society at the higher levels in many settings (organizations) is attributed to differences between men and women, mainly in psychological traits and/or socialization background, different work orientations or career choices (Bennett, Farrington and Huesmann 263). In recent years, the subject of gender differences has been of great interest to researchers in various fields of study such as the social sciences and the humanities, especially as women have begun to assume some elevated status of responsibilities and leadership positions.

Gender has already been identified as a social location that affects multiculturalism (Carli 99). Additionally, gendered beliefs are understood to influence and socialize people to hold pre-existing beliefs about men and women, whether those beliefs are accurate or erroneous. Gender differences are largely framed as biological differences between male and female (Bjorklund and Kipp 163), but the research has not been able to provide such evidence of biological differences in diverse activities as a particular context. Most of the gender difference research has focused upon whether women's comparative lack of success in attaining high positions could somehow be related to differences in their leadership style. It has examined the personality characteristics and behavior patterns of women as possible explanations for their lower status. Nonetheless, femaleness has been stereotyped as dependent, submissive and conforming, and hence women have been seen as lacking in some qualities for management, headship and/or leadership (Cohen-Bendahan, van de Beek and Berenbaum 354). The existence of male bias in contemporary society is mirrored by the false conception of select few as mere command or control and oftentimes vaguely justified by culture and tradition.

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Interrogating the Doctrine of Fair Hearing in the Nigerian Constitution and the *A-gbó-ẹjọ-ẹnikan-dá-àgbà-òṣìkà* in the Yorùbá Socio-Cultural Milieu

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ABSTRACT

The right to a fair hearing as contained in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, is as old as mankind. The doctrine of fair hearing which could be said to have existed with the first man in the garden of Eden, featured where God did not condemn either of the parties, but sought to hear from them before making a decision. The doctrine, simply put, means that in any matter for adjudication, each party should be given ample opportunity to present their case. Existing studies on fair hearing which has in it, the twin pillars of natural justice of *Audi alteram partem* (Hear the other side) and *Nemo judex in causa sua* (One cannot be a judge in his own case) and its implication on Nigeria's legal system and peacemaking process have focused on the legal, administrative, sociological and political perspectives. While some are of the view that the doctrine is not relevant in the contemporary time, due to the intricacies involved in it, others believe that the system is as relevant as ever. For them, it is the only way the masses can have a sense of hope in a country where justice is believed to be delayed and denied with impunity. However, the focus of this paper is to explore the doctrine of fair hearing in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vis a vis the Yorùbá adjudicatory process of settling disputes (*A gbó Ẹjọ Ẹnikan dá, àgbà òṣìkà*) which has over the years been applied for the sustenance of peace and order in Yorùbá society. Methodologically, this paper relied on secondary sources for data collection. Recommendations are made for the incorporation of the two adjudicatory processes where necessary to ensure a just and peaceful society.

KEYWORDS: Doctrine of fair hearing, Nigeria Constitution, *A gbó Ẹjọ Ẹnikan dá*, Yorùbá Socio-Cultural Milieu.

INTRODUCTION

Before the modern system and process of adjudication, the Yoruba society in the pre-colonial era had a very strong, well-structured and well-established channel of settling their civil and criminal cases, using an institution that was as old as the history of Yorùbá people themselves (Onadeko 15). The society then was structured in such a way that it comprised a socio-political and economic set-up that was patterned in line with the indigenous system. The

Yorùbá traditional process of resolving disputes could be considered as one of the best, due to the levels of the adjudicatory process devoid of bias, sentiments, politicking and sectionalism. The method was so popular that it was embraced by all and sundry who valued peace. The adjudicatory process of fair hearing was established in order to ensure fairness, justice and equity in the dispensation of justice (Justice 4). The Western justice system is full of bureaucracy, expenses, ambiguities, inconsistencies, formal and technical complexities, corruption, delay and deceit in the adjudication of justice which in most cases, deny the poor the right to get justice (Bielu 6). The adjudicatory process in Yorùbáland starts from the family which is seen as the basic unit of the society (Onadeko 25). Suffice to say therefore that, the family set-up, in most cases, determines how society will look and this is the more reason the traditional society ensured that there was peace in the family and whenever there were disputes, the elders in the community tried to settle them amicably through various processes that were introduced in the various Yorùbá communities (Daramola and Jeje 23).

For proper administration of justice, the Yorùbá communities were divided into quarters headed by the *Olóri- Ebí*, *Baálé*, *Baálè*, and the *Ọba*, respectively, assisted by his chiefs and community leaders representing the various *Agboolé* (Adeniji 211). These quarters chiefs represent their people at council meetings. Whatever decision was taken at the palace or pieces of information for the attention of the people, were taken back to the various *Agboolé* by the chiefs (Fadipe 65). The unwritten doctrine of fair hearing was strictly adhered to by every member of the community. The elders constituted the think tank: *Àgbà kî wà lójà, kí orí ọmọ tuntun wọ* (An elder should not be in the marketplace and a child's head would be seen bend), *Àgbà kò sí ní ilú, ilú bàjé, baalé ilé kú, ilé dí ahoro* (When there are no elders, the kingdom is lost, when there is no elder at home, the home becomes desolate) (Ademowo and Adekunle 5). Elders in the community in the traditional society provide leadership which guides the community in ways that are consistent with the ancestral pattern. The active presence of elders assures that innovations will be developed in ways that are consistent with the highest ideals of the collective consciousness. They were the people with a wealth of experience gathered over the years to administer justice. The unwritten laws were to direct the affairs of the people and anyone who behaved contrary to the norm and expectation of the society was dealt with, not minding his or her status in the society.

Settlement of disputes and the administration of justice to offenders starts with the *Olórí- Ebí*, the head of the family who was traditionally charged with the sole responsibility of maintaining peace at the family level. Cases handled by the family head include disrespect to elders, stubbornness, theft, laziness, public disturbance and so on. At times, when the family heads, could not handle certain matters, such matters were referred to as the *Báálè*.

Qualification for the position of *Baalé* is usually through heredity. The position requires that he must possess the required administrative acumen needed to see to the affairs of his people. Intellectualism and moral qualification are key to becoming the *Báálè*. An imbecile (*Dindinrin*), close-fisted person (*Ahun*), a back-bitter (*Aşòrò ẹni léhìn*), a drunkard (*Òmùtí*) and a wicked person (*Ìkà*) cannot be a *Baalé*. For administrative purposes, the *Báálè* had some lieutenants who worked with him and for him and provided him with information on how to maintain peace and tranquility in their immediate environment. His major duty is to preserve peace and order within the compound first, and in the larger community (Adedayo 8). Quarrels between husband and wife, co-wives, friends and neighbours are settled at the palace of the *Baalé* (Ajayi and Buhari 130). After this, we have the *Báálè* who is the head of the community. He possesses a greater responsibility (Albert et al. 20) as a result of various compounds under his administration enclave. The *Báálè* reports to him any case of infraction on the part of any member of their compound who is acting in contradiction to the societal norms. He adjudicates civil and criminal cases such as adultery, incest, theft, burglary, sexual misbehaviour and sexual waywardness (Olaoba 17-19).

The point here is that, in all of this, the adjudicatory process from the family head (*Olórí Ebí*) to the community head (*Báálè*), the doctrine of fair hearing was adhered to strictly (Bielu, 4-18). Whenever a decision was to be taken on any matter, each side is called upon to state and re-state their case before the chiefs and elders in the community, while witnesses would be called upon to state their own side of the matter too (Olaoba 75). This is the beauty of the Yorùbá traditional adjudicatory process. The *Báálè* as powerful as he may be, could not and must not singlehandedly decide on any matter, not until chiefs and elders in the community had made their inputs (Sango, 120). The same goes for the *Ọba* who was regarded as the representative of God (*Aláşẹ ẹkejì Ọrìşà*). In the practical sense, the *Ọba* ruled in conjunction with his *Ìgbimò* (Council of Chiefs) (Oladosu and Olaiya 169). He is a

repository of traditional knowledge, culture and customs of the people he rules over (Ogunode 92). *Obaship* was not based on connection, popularity or money, but purely hereditary (Bascom 495). The punishment meted out to any offending party is based on the gravity of the offence committed. Battery, assault and street fights could be punished by flogging or fine, while criminal-related offences like rape, murder, arson, manslaughter and treason were by banishment or execution (Chinyere 10). What is legitimate depends largely on the culture and cultural standards of the people.

The watchword of the Yorùbá traditional society was peaceful co-existence and cohabitation and this must be pursued by the *Oba* and his Council of Chiefs. During the adjudicatory process, the *Olóri Ebí*, *Baálé*, *Báálè* and *Oba* as the case may be, must try to be as fair and just as possible to the parties involved (Ojigbo 284). One important thing that is outstanding about the Yorùbá adjudicatory process, is that the process will not identify a party as guilty and the other as innocent. They would do it in such a way that both parties would go home pacified after being told where a particular party had gone wrong (Taiwo 3).

THE DOCTRINE OF FAIR HEARING IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Fair hearing as a doctrine has generated a lot of controversies and debates within the bar, the bench, security agencies, law enforcement agencies and the members of the public (Udombana 23). According to the Black Law Dictionary, fair hearing is a judicial or administrative hearing conducted in accordance with due process (Black et al. 734). In essence, the practice of fair hearing stipulates that litigants in a matter before the court must be allowed to be heard (Bielu 6). Such a litigant after being heard, cannot claim or complain of a breach of fair hearing principle (Bielu, 10). Therefore, it is only when the aggrieved party is heard that the judge will be said to have conducted or discharged his duty creditably well and without bias (Akhtar 28). The doctrine of fair hearing rests on two pillars of natural justice namely: *Audi alteram partem* (Hear the other side) and *Nemo iudex in causa sua* (One cannot be a judge in his own case) (Pauzi 302).

The Latin maxim *Audi alteram partem* means “a person to be affected by the decision of the court must be given enough time to be heard”. For example, in *Muhammad vs Abu*

Zaria, the court held that the law requires anyone who has been alleged or on trial before a regular court or a disciplinary committee a fair hearing before he is made to suffer. If the opportunity is therefore given, and he refuses to make the best use of the opportunity, he cannot complain of not being heard afterwards. In *Futo Mina vs Olutayo*, the court also held that it was the principle of natural justice that a student who was accused of examination malpractices should be allowed to know the purpose of being in court. That is, he must know the allegation levelled against him (*A gbó Ejó Enikan dá, Àgbà òṣìkà*); “meaning wicked and iniquitous is that one who hears the evidence of one party to a case”. he must be in court when the case against him is heard (*A kii fá orí lèhìn olórí*). He should be allowed not to accept the allegation line, hook and sinker. But he must be able to contradict where necessary. The principle often expressed in the Latin maxim *audi alteram partem* meaning “hear the other side”, has long been enshrined in the Nigerian jurisprudence (Pauzi 297).

The importance of hearing before condemnation has always been recognized and emphasized under our law. In *Imonike vs Unity Bank Plc*, the Apex Court per Rhodes Vivour, JSC held that the principle had its root in the Old Testament when God Himself heard Adam before He passed sentence. The wisdom of the court is to the effect that the principle is a two-edged sword. That is, for the plaintiff to be heard without delay and for the defendant to avail himself the constitutional right to present his case (LPELR 20). Further to this, fair hearing presupposes that anything that will facilitate parties to a matter in court must be made available. If this is not done, then there is a breach of the rule of fair hearing (Bantekas 992). In *Nweke vs State*, the court held that every facility that will help the defendant to present his case must be afforded him. All these must be made available and the court and even, the prosecution must accede to his request (FWLR 899).

The second principle of natural justice is the Latin maxim *Nemo judex in Causa Sua*, meaning that no man shall be a judge in his own case. That is, the judge must decide a matter without any bias and impartially (Chigara 26). The meaning is that the rule prohibits or restrains the judge or court of law from being a judge in his own cause in order to actualize its impartiality. One is said to be a judge in his own cause when he is likely to be biased for reasons of interest or funds. To be biased, therefore, means that the judge has a pecuniary or

proprietary interest in the subject of litigation. Here, the court does not look for actual bias, they rather ask whether there was a likelihood or reasonable suspicion of bias (Bielu 16).

The Yoruba concept of “*A gbó Ejó Ènikan Dá, Àgbà Òṣìkà*”

As long as human beings co-exist, conflict is inevitable. It is apposite to say then that, no society is free from conflict. Conflict occurs because people have different views and perceptions on issues and life generally (Dincyurek and Civelek 218). Conflict can occur at the interpersonal level or inter-group level (Fisher 5). Therefore, in Yorùbá traditional society, the people tried to reconcile warring parties through various traditional means to restore peace and harmony (Zulu 187). What was paramount in the minds of traditional rulers at every level, is that communities must live together peacefully (Ehrhardt et al. 5). During the colonial period, the position and the authority of traditional rulers were recognized, respected and honoured (Bayeh 34). Civilization, modernization and culture contact notwithstanding, traditional rulers still ensured peaceful co-existence in their communities. One advantage the traditional method of adjudication has over the modern court setting is the familiarity and the closeness that exist between traditional institutions and different sections of the community (Bayeh 42).

During adjudication, the *Oba* would take the warring parties the memory lane of the friendship that existed between the two families and made them see reasons why they should not fight (*A ré má jà kan kò sí*). Not minding the level of closeness, conflict is inevitable. At times, they support their adjudicatory process with intermittent interjections of proverbs and wise sayings to drive home their points. The words of an *Oba* are a command. This is why the Yorùbá will say (*Oba kì n dá àbá, Àṣẹ lóba ma n pa*). The king does not make suggestions, he commands. This is because his actions and statements were considered divine and sacred (Ademowo 13)). The respect accorded traditional institutions then was second to none (Olokungboye 38). This made it very easy in most cases to adjudicate. The implication of this is that matters should be settled amicably as they arise (Albert 32). This is why the Yorùbá people will say “*Ahón àti ẹnu ma n jà, Sùgbón ká jà ká parí ẹ niyì ọmolúábí* (The tongue and mouth do fight, but ability to resolve conflict is a mark of integrity). Another one

will say *Ìjà kò dọlà, Orúkọ ló ń sọ ni*. “Conflict leads to name calling, shame, stigma and dishonour (Akinmade 201).”

In the traditional society, therefore, parties present their cases before the traditional ruler, chiefs and community leaders (Olaniran and Aisha 123). Cases that are difficult or criminal are heard based on the discretion of the *Oba* and his chiefs. The concern of the Yorùbá people was to reconcile parties and not necessarily to apportion blame to whoever was guilty but to ensure that peace reigned among the people (Olaniran and Aisha 128). That is why an epithet in Yorùbáland says “*A gbó ejò ẹníkan dá àgbà òṣìkà*” “wicked and iniquitous is that one who hears the evidence of one party to a case”. There is a clear departure from the adjudicatory process in the traditional society and the modern court settling in post-colonial Nigeria. Native Courts flourished in Yorùbáland, though they have not been attuned to social engineering hitherto witnessed in the traditional courts (Morrison 293). The Yorubá therefore evolved proverbs to show their resentment for the established Courts because of its inability to resolve conflict permanently. *A kù ti kóòtù bọ ká sọrẹ*. You don't come back from the (British established) court and remain friend. (Adegoju 56)." The import of this statement is that, in the traditional Yoruba society, the people valued the spirit of togetherness and when conflicts occurred among them, they would find a way to settle them. The Western court system, as it were, erodes the social bonding that was common among the people and this can affect generations unborn because of its inability to resolve conflict permanently. In the traditional Yorùbá setting, the *Oba* delivered judgment in the presence of the Council of Chiefs and leaders in the community (Oladosu 172). A good example of such an epithet is “*Ẹnu àgbà lobì tí ń gbó*.” It is in the elder's mouth that the Kolanut sounds right. The *Olóri-Ebi*'s ‘court’ served as the court of appeal to the nuclear family's court (Olaoba 108). One important feature of the nuclear family court is the presence of every adult, married or single, who all had the right to contribute to the discussion (Otite 52). *Olori-Ebi* needs to uphold the principles of fairness, justice and equity in the dissemination of justice. His judgment, like any other traditional head, must be passed based on the contributions of all present (Ajayi 140).

FEATURES OF YORUBA TRADITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

We need to know at this juncture that the conflict resolution process of the Yorùbá society worked effectively for the people. There is no doubt that with the advent of modernization, the ethos of traditional institutions is still holding sway and gaining ground. It has over the years tried to weave the society together with core societal principles of peace, solidarity and harmony. It is therefore important to analyse the features of the traditional judicial process to resolve conflict.

- i **Administration of Justice:** One point that is crystal clear about the administration of justice in traditional society is the quick dispensation of justice. The maxim *Qui iustitiam morari iniustitiam negat* “Justice delayed, is justice denied” does not have any place in the traditional society (Gardner 63). Unlike in the contemporary time, where justice is delayed through frivolous adjournment by counsels, the traditional society was aware of the implication of delaying justice. That is why every effort was made to make sure that issues were resolved without delay. Time was of the essence to the adjudicators. The litigants must have been at the palace awaiting the arrival of the traditional rulers and their chiefs (Ogunode 58). Any matter on the list for the day was dispensed with before another matter was called. Judgment was usually in the open, except few criminal cases.

- ii **Imperativeness of Fair Hearing:** In attending to matters between warring parties in the Yorùbá traditional society, the principles of fair hearing and cross-examination are very crucial (Bodwen 42). Even though time was of the essence, the king and his Council of Chiefs would leave no stone unturned to make sure that there was no miscarriage of justice as they gave all the parties the benefit of the doubt to ensure that nobody’s feelings were hurt (Olabimtan 42). This was done in order to remove every sentiment and bias from the adjudicator. This is apposite to the Yorùbá belief that one should not listen to a party and base their judgment on the statement made by the party without allowing the other party to state their case (Albert 28). This is in agreement with the belief of the Yorubá that “*A gbó ejó ẹnikan dá, Àgbà òṣìkà*” (An elder who adjudicates based on a one- sided hearing is wicked) (Arowosegbe 159). Many a time, elders in the community who were not Chiefs but possessed native knowledge, were called upon to be of help, especially when the matter before them was criminal (Idang 108). The king, chiefs, community leaders and an array of respected adults in attendance who were believed to be the mouthpieces and the eyes of the gods and ancestors, served as cross-

examiners. The cross-examiners were people with a wealth of experience who could trace the history and the genealogy of the disputants. This is quite different from the modern court setting, where the counsel to the disputants is employed and paid as solicitors and advocates without any attachment to the litigants (White 6).

- iii. **The spirit of fraternity:** As mentioned earlier, what was paramount in the Yorùbá traditional society was the maintenance of peace and harmony (Oyitso 238). *Okùn alájobí kò gbòdò já.* (Family and kinship bonds must not be severe). Kings, elders and the Council of Chiefs constantly made it a point of duty to remind everyone present of their family and communal bond. This was the more reason they tried to nip every conflict in the bud before it escalated. In the spirit of family bond, the adjudicator might ask parties to swear to an oath with their ancestral spirit, that all they would say was the truth and nothing but the truth (Ebenezer 26). There is nothing like fraternity or bond in the modern court setting. Litigants with the help of counsels try to outsmart each other through prayers that may not have anything to do with the matters at hand.
- iv. **Judicial Precedence:** In the established court setting, arguments are based on legal technicalities and point of law, case laws and statutes (Cerar 18). Lawyers make use of decided cases that are relevant to the matter at hand (Oko 15). However, the Yorùbá traditional society had what was regarded as unwritten laws. There was no written document to refer to, but native knowledge about the norm, culture and tradition of the people came to play in deciding cases. They referred to related extant cases in order to shed more light on the matter for adjudication. This is clad with wise sayings, proverbs and words of wisdom to drive home their points to the understanding of disputants and other members of the public.
- v. **Commensurate Punishment:** Just like the established court, there were civil and criminal cases upon which the adjudicators had to dispense justice (Okeke 19). Cases that could not be settled at the family level by the *Olórí –Ebí Baálé, Baálè* were brought before the *Ọba* and his Chiefs who served as the appeal court (Okuda 217). Cases like assault, street fight, house wives' rivalry and so on, were given mild punishment like flogging, fine or reprimand, while criminal cases such as rape, arson, treason, murder and so on were given stiffer punishments like ostracisation or death (Vincent 13). Punishments were usually commensurate with the

offence committed. The palace of the king was where all cases (civil and criminal) were brought to bear and laid to rest. The *Oba*, Chiefs and community leaders were charged with the responsibility of maintaining peace and harmony at all costs (Oduwole 1138). The essence of the commensurate punishment meted out to offenders was to serve as a deterrent to others (Balogun 38). Their decisions were always respected because the people considered them arbiters and conflict resolution experts who were full of native intelligence to solve social problems in a fair, just, truthful and brotherly manner (Jacob 28). In the course of the dispensation of justice, there were rules, regulations and ethical conduct that must be displayed, though not written, but must be observed by everyone present. One such rule was the observance of perfect silence throughout the proceeding. Nursing mothers should not come near the venue; if she was the one involved (Stobbe 117), she would be advised to drop her child at home. Silence and decorum must be strictly maintained and adhered to.

- vi. **Open proceeding:** To let the people know and have confidence in the proceeding, the conflict resolution process was done in the palace or the market (Ezekiel 132). This was done to ensure there was nothing like bias and sentiments. Punishment for any erring party was not delayed. If the guilty deserved flogging, it would be carried out by able-bodied men approved by the king himself; if it was fine, it would be awarded openly. Judgments on criminal cases like rape, arson, treason, murder and so on were carried out mostly at the marketplace because of the mammoth crowd that would attend (Coursey 127). The *Oba* can use his discretion on where to execute the judgment. In the case of rape, the identity of the victim would not be revealed to avoid being stigmatized and ridiculed (Justice 8). But, the rapist will be taken around the venue for people to see and mock. Satirical songs were rendered by women in the community to condemn his actions. He has not only brought shame to himself but to all the members of his family. The disputants will provide the food and drink the *Oba* and Council of Chiefs would eat and drink (Olatunji 79). During the traditional court session, women in dispute were required to kneel while men were required to prostrate and remove their caps. This is to show respect for the royal stool. Even if the *Oba* was much younger than the disputant, it is customary to kneel or prostrate as the case may be as a mark of honour and respect for the stool.

THE CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA SITUATION

Effective and efficient resolution and management of conflict are *sine qua non* to development. No nation is without conflict (Abdulrahman and Tar 192). This may be inter-

personal, inter-ethnic, inter-cultural or inter-religious. But, the line of demarcation in all these, is the way and manner communities manage their conflict that determines how progressive or retrogressive such a community or nation will be. Peace is the fulcrum upon which a nation will be said to have made a giant stride in terms of development (Gyang 73). This is the reason Nigeria and other African countries are still struggling to find their feet among the comity of the developed economies in the world. No meaningful development can be achieved in a country engulfed by conflict and insecurity (Dantala 52). It is worthy of note that Nigeria is in dire need of peace in all ramifications. The Nigerian judicial system is such that has over the years immersed itself in corrupt practices, delayed justice, frivolous adjournment, *Jànkara* judgment and robbing Peter to pay Paul syndrome, among others and so on (John and Alewo 133). There are cases of disobedience to court orders by individuals and governments at every level (Ayodele 17). One such instance was the refusal of the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo to obey the order of the Supreme Court to release the statutory financial allocation due to the government of Lagos State for its newly created area councils in 2004. Also, the Peoples' Democratic Party flagrantly disobeyed the order of the court to reinstate the former governor of Anambra State, Dr. Chris Ngige whom the party illegally expelled. The position of the party was that it was waiting for the National Executive Council to decide whether to re-admit him or not (Ajagun 282). This is in total disregard to the order of the court. Many other parastatals and agencies of government like the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Directorate of State Security (DSS) and so on had in the past disobeyed the order of the court with impunity (Ajagun 281).

There was a clear departure from the conflict resolution process in the traditional society and what we have now. There was no sacred cow and any judgment given was to be carried out without delay in the traditional judicial setting (Kuruk 69). If any member of the council of chiefs was found wanting in the discharge of his or her duty, he or she would be dealt with accordingly (Nwabueze 68-70). In fact, because of the position such a chief was holding, his punishment at times can be more severe than other members of the community to serve as a deterrent to others. There have been cases, where the *Baálè* or the *Ọba* had been deposed or banished from the community because of his despotic style of leadership

(Onweasu 93). This was the beauty of the traditional adjudicatory institution. The modern method is full of complexities and intricacies that do not allow for fairness and justice. We have seen cases where judges were removed from office due to an unsubstantiated allegation of bribery; lawyers prosecuted without following due process; and judicial officers alleged of bribery and corruption and unfortunately, in most of those cases, the principle of fair hearing was not followed by the court.

The traditional justice system of conflict resolution had in the past helped in no small measure to address the social, economic and political challenges, as well as provide a panacea for kidnapping and banditry that Nigerians are grappling with currently. The incorporation of the traditional and the modern/Western judicial system for resolving conflict will provide a pathway to the much-needed positive national identity that has almost eluded Nigeria as a nation (Ajayi and Buhari 142). Miscarriage of justice, immunity clause and plea bargaining which are common phenomena in our current judicial system but were unknown in the traditional society will be addressed without bias and sentiments. Another issue of concern to the doctrine of fair hearing is the Islamic Criminal law otherwise called the Shari'a system. Since its introduction in 2000, about 12 Northern states have incorporated Islamic laws into their legal system thereby extending the Shari'a law beyond civil matters like marriage, succession and inheritance to the criminal law arena (Ludwig 610-613). These states have established Shari'a courts to try offenders (Nmehielle 394). It is also to be stated that most of the cases brought before the Shari'a court do not follow the international fair trial standards and deprive defendants of due process rights (Chenwi 613). For instance, many defendants are not represented in courts and are not even informed of their rights to representation, which is their fundamental human right. Defendant attorneys have been disallowed from defending accused persons based on what the Shari'a judge believes is absurd to Islamic tenets. Many capital punishments that were passed by the judges of Shari'a have been reversed on appeal (Weiman 25).

Practically speaking, there are cases at the trial courts in Nigeria that were considered not to have followed the process of fair hearing. That is, all the safeguards necessary to ensure its certainty and purity were absent. Therefore, since such safeguards are violated,

then, justice cannot be dispensed. It is said that nothing can be fair without a fair hearing. Examples of cases that were considered to lack the principle of fair hearing at the trial court are: *Shanu vs Afribank Nig Limited* (2002) LPELR-3036SC, *Nyesom vs Peter side* (2016) 7NWLR (pt1512) 452 @ 504, *Kunle Kalejaye VLLPDC & anors, Nana Taiwah Vs Kwesi EWd21, WACA 52*. In this case, two of the members of the tribunal who gave judgment were not present throughout the proceedings and did not hear all the evidence. This is a clear case of injustice, since those who are to hear the two sides of the matter, before the judgement was given, were nowhere to be found during the proceedings But, unfortunately, they went ahead to give judgement (Olabimtan 2).

A country that is culturally and religiously diverse as Nigeria needs to develop a structure that will incorporate the traditional judicial system of adjudication with the modern system to address a mammoth of cases that are being delayed in court. This interjection will take care of legal technicalities that are associated with the Western judicial system (Uwise 5). This is necessary because, as long as human beings interact and relate together, conflict will arise. As a result, societies must be able to develop means/ ways they see as more appropriate to sustain peaceful co-existence. The noticeable loopholes in the court-established judicial system call for an alternate dispute resolution that is indigenous and aboriginal. The introduction of the traditional methods, processes and procedures in the resolution of dispute reduces antagonism and hostility which are the characteristic features of the modern method (Udezo 18)

CONCLUSION

In this study, we have examined the traditional judicial system that was premised on fairness, equity and justice before the arrival of the modern judicial system in Nigeria. We also considered the Western-styled court setting with its characteristic features of bureaucracy, bottleneck, legal technicalities, frivolous adjournment, corruption and the delay in the dispensation of justice. We also painted the picture of the various levels at which cases were settled in a well-structured, well-established order from the *Olórí-Ebí* to the *Ọba* and his council of chiefs which was devoid of corrupt practices, delay in the dispensation of justice and unfair treatment of parties. The traditional judicial system ensured that peace was

maintained and sustained for the development of society. We, therefore, conclude that conflict and insecurity that have in recent years threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation are due to the inter-religious, inter-ethnic and inter-cultural crises that have taken the lead in the annals of events in the country. However, the country is rated as one of the most developed economies in sub-Saharan Africa, and the most populous black nation in the world.

The bottom line for this mammoth of challenges is the contention that the judiciary as the hope of the common man, has lost its integrity and as such, lost the moral right to be accorded such appellation. The established court justice system with its attendant abuses and lack of virtue expected of them has crippled the indigenous justice system which was jealously and religiously respected by the people. The traditional judicial system which is seen as archaic, primitive and crude, worked effectively in the sustenance of peace and harmony in the various communities, where the system was applied. But the so-called modern method of adjudication to settle conflict today has on many occasions escalated the dissonance into an unmanageable proportion, due to the weak and manoeuvrable system where justice is for the money-bag members of the society and the highest bidders. This is why the following recommendations will be made for the government, judiciary, and agencies of government and policymakers in the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend therefore that, for holistic peace to be achieved across the nation, the wrinkling traditional judicial system should be rejuvenated in order to provide an alternative peaceful resolution of conflict mechanism. This is important because, every society has ways of resolving conflicts without necessarily going to the western- styled court setting.
2. Government in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice at the state level should as a matter of urgency establish a traditional Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Board that will work together with the modern court in resolving matters. Just like the proposal for the establishment of an African traditional method of healing the sick in our hospitals which has been widely applauded in the recent times as a step in the right direction as it will help a lot in reducing the workloads of medical Doctors in our hospitals. The board members should be

made up of people with a wealth of experience who understand the culture, norms and traditions of the people. The government will do well by paying them good remuneration to discourage them from getting involved in bribery and corruption.

3. Those who have benefitted tremendously from the traditional approach to conflict resolution approach can reach out to people through a sensitization campaign for the members of the society to access the traditional conflict mechanism as it is accessible, economical and less bureaucratic.
4. There is a need for the government at every level to develop a curriculum on peace and conflict study in both primary and secondary schools across the states in the country. If this is done, it will go a long way in helping young minds to appreciate the imperativeness of living together in peace as they will embrace it passionately and see to its sustainability. Elders in the community who are knowledgeable about the traditional value system can be invited at intervals for lectures and seminars on the importance of their cultural heritage and the need to live together in peace and harmony.
5. The government can also partner with relevant agencies of government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that have passion, vision and mission for peacemaking and peacebuilding to organize seminars, conferences and symposia in the local languages of the people. This will help them to have a better understanding of the essence of peace.
6. The National Orientation Agencies (NOA) can also play an active role in this direction by sponsoring stage drama or play for the people in the local area to help the youth, most especially to imbibe the culture of we-feeling and unity in diversity.

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Aesthetic Experience in Music: A Philosophical Appraisal of Pentecostal Gospel Songs in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Elements of worship and doctrinal positions of the Pentecostals are often seen by many non-Pentecostals as deviant from sound Christian tenets. The widely held opinion is that contemporary Pentecostal gospel songs generate “noise” and is bereft of solemnity and message of true worship. Therefore, this study aims at appraising Pentecostal gospel songs with the view of identifying whether Pentecostal songs are worship-centered or musical pieces orchestrated to excite the liminal elements of the listeners. The study adopts the interpretive and descriptive approaches to explore the relative ontological understanding of musical piece. From the data used - that is the songs and lyrics of selected gospel songs, the study reveals that there are *glossolalic spice*, amplified intensity of rhythm and pop-theological lyrics which give unique identity to Pentecostal gospel songs. Furthermore, the study identifies that Pentecostal songs are intentionally produced to aid the connection with the transcendence; and serve the purpose of being a tool for evangelization and commercialization. The study concludes that aesthetic experiences induced by Pentecostal songs are intense appeal to the emotions of the listeners, healing, inspiring, motivating and bridging the gulf between the Sacred and the profane listeners. The study cautions that where songs and worship are emphatically aimed at saturating the liminal system of the listeners, this would result in sensualism and spiritual immaturity. The study recommends that Church leaders should censor songs to be ministered in church to avert plunging the act of worship to an act of sensationalism.

Keywords: *Music, Pentecostalism, Gospel Songs, Aesthetics and Aesthetic Experience.*

INTRODUCTION

Music as a piece of art can be evaluated to ascertain its worth, value or beauty. The philosophical effort to quantify the value or beauty of art is known as aesthetics. Aesthetics of music is a philosophy that scrutinizes the significance of a musical composition. Every piece of music is believed to evoke some form of emotions in the listeners. Every genre of music evokes a unique kind of feeling – R&B, Reggae, Hip-Hop, Jazz, Afrobeat and Religious

Music is supposed to bring about some form of feelings. Gospel songs or Christian songs which are classified under the genre of Religious Music are expected to bring about spiritual connectivity between the Transcendental Being and man. Gospel songs ought to fundamentally serve the purpose of offering the Christian community a channel to solemnly worship God for divine favours made available through the God's gifting.

However, there has been an evolution of Christian songs to what is referred to as Contemporary Gospel songs – a situation that has attracted interest of many scholars who have articulated that the evolution of Christian songs has led to the value or beauty of its contents. The value of the Gospel songs tends to be rooted in multiplicity of purpose of which Obidike in Chimene-Wali (11) agrees that Gospel music originally was used in the church and was performed at special festivals such as harvest, thanksgiving and so forth. However, with the electronic technology and the need for youths to have the type of music that cater for their social interest, gospel music was taken out of the confines of the church. Taiwo (1) notices the situation and explains that “songs in contemporary gathering no longer have pure worship contents – a situation attributed to socio-economic experience which has resulted to economic decline; the indigenous spiritual worldview and other contemporary social practices have filtered into many Christian songs.” The resultant effect of this situation is that Christian worship now has pure social value, thereby eroding the worship value. This is in addition to Vidal in Adedeji (87) whose opinion is that “all through the history of the church, church leaders have tried to establish the highest level of aesthetics necessary for praising and worshipping God in spirit and in truth. Contemporary music used in many churches today would seem to be on the lowest ebb of aesthetics of music.”

Furthermore, recent studies have pointed Pentecostals as the major agents propelling the evolution of Christian songs in Nigeria. Pentecostal Gospel Songs therefore is a sub-genre of religious music that is being critiqued for internalizing social contents or elements. Ukpong (27-28) explains that Pentecostal churches have positively revolutionized the music industry in Nigeria. “Pentecostal attempts to adapt Christian message to rhymes and rhythms result in infiltration of worldliness into Christian worship. This infiltration has the propensity of making Pentecostal worship easily become a worldly show.” Additionally, Stanford cited in Ukpong explains that incorporation of elements of Jazz, rock-n-roll into praise and worship produce seductive beat which appeals to human sensuality at the detriment of aiding spiritual

connection. The researcher opines that a song is said to aid spiritual connection when the lyrics are scripturally-backed to edify or thank God.

Succinctly, aesthetic experience in music in the context of this study is an attempt to identify the kind of value (positive or negative) that is induced by gospel songs in Nigeria. Chimene-Wali is of the opinion that Gospel music at the formative years was church-centered, performed within the confines of the church with the primary essence of inducing spiritual connection, basically, for reaching out to the unsaved and also for the upliftment of the saved ones already in church. It was played solemnly and accompanied by light instrumentation of bell, organ and local drums. The problem therefore hinges on identifying whether the modern Pentecostal songs in Nigeria are aesthetically pleasure-laden or God-centred songs used by the community of faith to worship Him. What elements make Gospel songs aesthetically qualified for the worshipping of God? What are the philosophical tools that can be used in appraising the positive aesthetics in Pentecostal Gospel songs? The study thus is a descriptive attempt to examine questions raised.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Music:

The popular definition many people have about music is that it is an organized and intentional sound. Disagreements abound as to what music entails due to the fact that not all sound qualifies to be termed music. According to Judkins (14), “music is organized sounds framed by silence,” while Kania (343) sees music as “sounds intentionally produced or organized to have at least one basic musical feature such as pitch or rhythm.” The difficulty that abounds in trying to offer definition to music is because according to Kania, there is no universally accepted definition of music; and music is probably a vague concept that is, one under which everything either clearly fall or does not.

Music, however, as an intentional organized sounds serve a purpose which philosophers believe can either serve utilitarian or non-utilitarian purposes. Huron (157) believes that modern music-making is apt to engage a plethora of pleasure-evoking mechanism and so it may prove difficult to untangle any presumed original purpose from the agglomerated mix of hedonic mechanisms assembled in modern music-making. Additionally, Ukpong (12) posits that at the secular level, the inner feelings and unexpressed yearnings of the heart come to forefront with generative energy of music. Music drags the human person

to the metaphysical – it pricks the base of the human emotions and sends the soul to the realm of ecstatic pleasure or connection with the divine. To assuage the difficulty associated with defining music, Scruton (21) has identified the salient features which must be present in a piece of art to qualify it as music. These features include: “rhythm, otherwise referred to as beat; melody which entails a sweet or agreeable succession or arrangement of sounds, as well as harmony. These features are carefully and intentionally produced in order to achieve a purpose.”

Christian Music

There are wide arrays of genres of music of which one is religious music – a genre that serve a religious purpose or used for worship by a particular community of faith. Christian music therefore is a sub-genre of religious music that Christians use in liturgy or in private worship of God. The distinguishing marks of Christian music are embedded in its biblical-based lyrical construction; and relatively morally-sensitive instrumentation often adopted by its various makers. To this end, Christian music is spiritual in theme, orientation and purposes – “Christian music pays tribute to God and contains powerful spiritual messages of worship, praise and evangelization” (Endong, 14).

From the foregoing, the salient element of a true Christian music is then spirituality. The composition of any Christian song must incorporate solemnity and sobriety in order to achieve the purpose of glorifying God and enabling the connection of the spirit of the worshippers with the transcendence. Ukpong corroborates that music that is Christian in nature helps the submerging of oneself in the universality of a Christian community and cosmic communion with the divine. However, the evolution of Christian music tends to come with multiple problems. The quest for creativity has motivated Christian song writers and artistes to incorporate deviant elements into Christian worship. Servant cited in Endong (14) believes that “cultural artifacts that were derogatorily and pejoratively relegated to sinful artistry are incorporated into contemporary Christian songs. Pentecostal singers incorporate rhythm hitherto considered as the music of the devil.” The demonized rhythm (including those often used for ancestral worship and rituals), modern marginalized or stereotyped rhythms such as gangster rap, makossa, mapuka, RnB, rock-and-roll, hard rock, reggae and etc.

Pentecostalism and Pentecostal Gospel Music in Nigeria

Pentecostalism is a form of Christian sect that emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit and the direct experience of the presence of God by the believer. Pentecostals believe that faith must be powerfully experiential, and not something found merely through ritual or thinking, Pentecostalism is energetic and dynamic – its members believe they are driven by the power of God moving with them. The origin of the Pentecostal phenomenon is rooted in the religious vigour of African-Americans during the Azusa Street Revival in the United States of America in 1904. The emergence of the movement came with the emphases that took divergent doctrinal positions when compared with the mainstream Christian denominations. Many scholars however express the opinion that Pentecostal Movement as a breakaway sect in Christianity emerged due to the spirit of dissatisfaction and defection among the earliest Pentecostal preachers but quite contrary, the Pentecostals see the emergence of the movement as the manifestation of the work of God through the Holy Spirit to ameliorate the situation of the world ravaged by poverty and infirmities. The BBC report that “most Pentecostals think that the Pentecostal Movement revert the Christian faith to a pure and simple form of Christianity that has much in common with the very earliest stage in the life of the Christian Church.”

However, in Nigeria, the BBC points out that the historical antecedence of Pentecostalism finds its root in the charismatic activities of the university-educated charismatic youth of Nigeria during the 1970s. The Harvard Divinity School explains that Pentecostalism in Nigeria finds its locus in the African Initiated Churches and other American and British Evangelical Pentecostal of the 1960s which Nigerians encountered through international studies, Pentecostal outreach, American televangelism and other Christian media. Ukpong is of the opinion that the Nigerian spirit and hazard gave impetus to the emergence of the Pentecostal faith in Nigeria. The Nigerian spirit is understood in the energy exude by Nigerians to indigenize Christianity while the hazard is what The Harvard Divinity School refer to as the “period of immense post-independence instability, characterized by violence (the civil war), political corruption, and the rise of military government.”

The distinguishing mark of the Pentecostal faith in Nigeria is the pivotal swing from the mainstream tenets to the emphasis on the activity of the Holy Spirit – a regenerating Spirit who makes *dumamis* and *exousia* (power and authority) experiential in the church, there is the combination of elements of African and Western culture in worship. The implication of this is that the different denominations of the Pentecostal churches either act very African in scope or a mix of the African and the Western cultural elements with biblical proof-texts for support and justification. This situation brings about great changes in many aspects of worship of which one of these changes is in the music of the Pentecostals which is often referred to as Pentecostal Gospel music or Contemporary Gospel Music.

Obi explains that Gospel Music in Nigeria finds its roots in the Christian songs introduced by the “Portuguese that visited Benin Kingdom in the 16th century and subsequent missionaries that visited Nigeria during the 18th and 19th centuries.” However, in the early 20th century, the emergence of Reverend Josiah Ransome-Kuti who fused choral music with Yoruba gave foundation to indigenized Gospel songs. Later music works by Kris Okotie, Panam Percy and African-America gospel artistes such as Kirk Franklin and Winans gave impetus to Nigerian Gospel artistes such as the Infinity, Sam Okposo and Tope Alabi. Since the turn of the 21st century, the Pentecostal Churches have produced great number of Gospel artistes in Nigeria such as Frank Edwards, Sinach, Eben, Nathaniel Bassey and many others. The emergence of these artistes alongside the organization of gospel music concerts such as the Experience Lagos has helped in the process of dragging Gospel songs out of the confines of the Church. Hence, Chimene-Wali (12) explains that:

Gospel music is not like any other music. It is a unique genre of music that appeals to both the spiritual and physical needs of the listeners. It is a type of music that glorifies, exalts as well as preaches about the “good news” of Jesus Christ. It is a music that was, basically, for church performances among the Christian communities during services or special church events, however, overtime it has found its way into public arena so that it can be performed in social gathering outside the church.

However, studies by Adedeji; Taiwo, Ukpong, Endong and Ukpong have x-rayed the issue of Pentecostal music. Ukpong asserts that Pentecostalism has greatly improved the

music industry. Religious music has witnessed remarkable innovation because of Pentecostalism. The belief is that many people have discovered more about the Christian faith through the channel of the Gospel music. Ukpong (170) explains thus: “The fluidity of Pentecostal rhyme and rhythm has made it easy for people to sing and play the same tune in various languages and in diverse cultural ambience; the Pentecostal movement is homogenizing the cultural spectrum of the country through music.” Additionally, the presence of Pentecostal music and accompaniments have helped many young Africans to realize that religious services could be pleasurable and created a common identity for people of various denominations and ethnic groups.

Pentecostal Gospel music enjoys a distinct identity which helps it to stand out in the world. These basic features in the Nigerian Pentecostal songs as explained by Endong (19) are: lyrics, glossolalia (singing in tongues) and rhythm. The lyrics are the wordings of the song while the glossolalia is a spiritual experience that flows as the song is sung. The rhythm is the heavy or light beat that harmonizes the flow of the lyrics. However, Maultsby in Ukpong (22) elaborately explains that the basic principles and features that characterize Pentecostal music is the spiritual tradition – the foundation of Pentecostal finds its base in the soulfulness of African music which incorporates:

- i. Communal composition
- ii. Call-response
- iii. Repetitive choruses
- iv. Improvised melodies and texts
- v. Extensive melodic ornamentation, slurs, bends, shouts, moans, groans and cries
- vi. Complex rhythmic structures and
- vii. Integration of song and bodily movement

In summary, Pentecostal Gospel songs are used in worship in Christian gathering, sometimes among Pentecostals, there is a perception of distinction between different kinds of songs such as praise songs and worship songs. Taiwo (7) asserts that to some Pentecostals, “praise songs are characterized by faster beats and dancing, while the worship songs are solemn. These songs come with divergent themes or Christian doctrines ranging from faith, love, righteousness, perseverance, to adoration of God, gratitude to God, commitment to the Christian services and prayer.”

AESTHETICS AND AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE IN MUSIC

Aesthetics according to Huron (223) is a “branch of philosophy that gives attention to beauty or value of arts or artistic experience.” The researcher observes that inquiries into aesthetics started in the 18th century with many philosophers delving into the subject. Immanuel Kant and Edward Hanslick have observably done seminal works on the subject of aesthetics. The earliest attempts to discuss aesthetics concentrated on the utility of a piece of art work. This brought about the earliest aesthetic schools of thought – formalism and realism. The formalists school of which Immanuel Kant was one of the proponents argue that “aesthetic form of a work of art includes the way that the parts are and materials put together and organized. This part of the work of arts must be arranged in a way that will stir aesthetic sentiment” (Lumen, para.3). In music, form includes the element common in musical piece that create pleasure for the listeners.

Art works are believed to convey metaphysical message as well as serve a purpose. Music is a piece of art form that acts as a doorway to the inner life of the human person – a realm that physical eyes cannot see. Hence, Matz (para. 2) explains that when discussing music aesthetics, the crux of the discussion is about a “philosophy that considers the source, type, development, intention, performance, perception and significance of a musical composition.” Additionally, Bazemore (para. 4) shares the thought that musical aesthetics as a whole seeks to understand the perceived elements of music, in particular those elements that lead to experiences of musical value for the listener. It may also be understood more broadly as essentially synonymous with philosophy of music, thus including issues of music ontology, epistemology, ethics, and sociology.

Although sound is the primary component of music, Matz (para.3) corroborates that “the composer’s musical structure, culture, and desire for expression all feed into the aesthetics of a musical piece.” From a philosophical standpoint, however, existence, knowledge, musical ethics, relationships and sociology are all aspects of musical aesthetics. In order to understand the aesthetics of a musical piece, an individual has to go beyond the sound. Trivedi shares the same opinion by asserting that the ontology of musical works allows a researcher to grasp what music entails. Music very often is defined as organized sound but in order to have a much deeper understanding of music one has to go beyond the notion of music as organized sound because not all sounds are qualified to be termed music.

The aesthetic process leads to emotions which are triggered by the imaginative sensation by the listener. Hanslick's opinion in Huron agrees with the summation that aesthetic feelings are induced by the aesthetic judgement of the listener. The aesthetics of any musical piece has the ability to engage and enliven the inner experience of the listener.

PHILOSOPHICAL APPRAISAL OF PENTECOSTAL GOSPEL SONGS

The philosophical appraisal of aesthetic experience in Pentecostal Gospel songs hinges on the basis of the contents that the songs have to offer; the utilitarian patterns to the listeners, the meanings the songs convey and the ability of the songs to express deep conscious feeling of the people as well as provide the power to touch the life situation of the listeners. Levinson (10) explains the criteria for appraising the aesthetics in music to include:

- i. proper arrangement of melodies, harmonies, rhythms and timbres;
- ii. communication of things essentially musical such as emotions, attitudes or the deeper nature of the world
- iii. value and beauty as well as afford pleasure to the listener. The quality of a piece's expressiveness, its depth, richness and subtlety all form the important part of value judgment.

Contextually, in appraising the aesthetic experience in Christian music of which Pentecostal gospel songs constitute a sub-genre, Adedeji (90-91) believes that the indispensable criteria or elements are: theologically-sound text, biblical purpose, forms and styles (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs), good sound organization, packaging, stagecraft and performance ethics and artistes living out the messages of the songs.

Moreover, critiques by many scholars often conclude that Pentecostal Gospel songs are below the criteria. The first point of argument is the alleged defect through the theme of glossolalia – that is singing in tongues common in Pentecostal songs. To Pentecostals, speaking and singing in tongues is a divine manifestation, a pointer to the activity of the Holy Spirit being present in the individual and in the community of faith. Ditzel's opinion in Endong (19) summarized thus indicates that glossolalia lacks biblical backings thus: "glossolalia must be admitted to be delusional or deception; and it cannot be considered to be harmless. It is absolutely not wrong to test the spirit," and in fact, we are commanded to do so and the implication is that we are to reject what is not from God, and I believe that both

biblical and non-biblical evidence shows that it is not; then it must be rejected. Those who ignore this do at the peril of opening themselves up to even greater deception.

Moreover, the opinion of Endong (20) summarized indicates that the principles of aesthetics are greatly flawed in songs which are spiced up with glossolalia. This is due to the fact that tongues somehow distorts the principal message contained in the song as it facilitates the inception of expression that are strange, meaningless and incomprehensible to majority of the audience. Many of the Pentecostal songs have the spice of tongues – an example is Gratitude's *Raba baba Eha* single album by the Choir of the Commonwealth of Zion Assemble (COZA). The chorus of the song according to John is thus presented:

... Lingua for the street for the Heaven I know
 Ain't nobody fit to stop my Spiritual flow
 Step inna the place with no physical guns
 You should already know

... I want to rabababa Eh (Gbera)
 I want to rabababa Eh
 I want to Rabababamasataba Eh (Gbera)
 And when I'm speaking kole Eh (Ko ma le ye won)
 I want to rabababa Eh (Gbera)
 I want to rabababa Eh
 I want to Rabababamasataba Eh (Gbera)
 And when I'm speaking kole Eh (Ko ma le ye won)

Majekobaje cited in Endong (19) admits that although “glossolalia in gospel music adds to the *Christianness* of the song, the concern is that sometimes tongues in gospel lyrics can be too much and would hinder the audience connecting through the lyrics.” Additionally, there are many people who do not love gospel songs that are spiced up with tongues.

On the contrary, value judgment of Pentecostal gospel songs based on the spice of singing in tongues is a subjective endeavor hence one's judgment cannot negate the judgments of others because judgment of taste has an agreeable validity. Building the argument on Immanuel Kant's idea on aesthetics is that in judgment of taste, Zangwill (2)

argues that “we demand or require agreement from other human beings – in the issue of taste and beauty, individual preference must be taken into consideration.” Since the question of what ought to be the standards of judging the aesthetics of music is problematic, argument on the issue therefore should consider the rule of preference an individual is bound to make. In the opinion of Paul, “I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also” (1Corinthians 14: 15) gives room for preference in worship. Watson (para. 14) believes however that the “passages of singing in tongues are directed towards God as part of personal worship; the listener can only listen to the tongues as vocal instrumental and connect with the spiritual flow.” Ukpong (29) corroborates to the idea by asserting that: “The authenticity of Pentecostal music consist in texts and sounds that are traditionally and spiritually Christian, capable of bringing a human person out of nihilistic egoism to experience the glory of God in a community of believers”

Furthermore, the second criterion for philosophical appraisal of Pentecostal gospel songs in the study is whether the gospel songs produce the intended utilitarian purposes. The utilitarian purposes or functions of music as established by Maloney (62) include the emotional functions of music which “show a distinct subset of functions related to the directionality of emotional regulation: “accentuation,” “change,” “convey,” “regulating,” or “triggering” the emotions of the listener.” The utilitarian purpose also captures the most frequent domain-specific function was that of “interaction and bonding” – that is to say that gospel songs should as a matter of utility aid the listener to connect or bond with God. The criterion of utility is maximized by the expressiveness of the song which touches the emotions of the listeners and ultimately facilitates the spiritual worship of God. Are Pentecostal songs expressive of the thoughts about God or capable of touching the emotions of the listeners or worshippers? While it is difficult to use a yes or no in this context, songs by Gospel artistes such as Sinach and Eben tend to express the character of God as well as stir the emotions of the worshippers to connect. Sinach’s *Great Are You Lord* is an example of Pentecostal song with aesthetically expressive content with maximized utility when sung.

The lyrical structure of the song is transcribed by the researcher thus:

Holy Holy, God almighty
 It's a privilege to worship You
 Maker of all universe
 It's an honour just to stand before You
 With a grateful heart I lift my hands to You
 Proclaiming Lord You reign
 With a grateful heart I lift my hands to You
 Proclaiming Lord You reign
 Great are You lord
 Greatly to be praised
 Greatly to be praised
 Father You reign
 Great are You Lord
 Great are You Lord
 Great are You Lord
 Great are You Lord

Another criterion to consider is performance ethics which revolves around the behavioural or dispositional patterns of the artistes during presentation of the song. Performance ethics in music has to do with the right or wrong conduct of the artistes while presenting or performing the song. This takes into consideration whether there is virtuosity, solemnity and sobriety in worship. Any gospel song that is lacking the basic performance ethics can be termed to be aesthetically ugly or lacking positive aesthetics. While Gratitude's *Raba baba Eh* tend to raise questions about the stagecraft and performance ethics of Pentecostal songs, one has to note that the video of the song reflects a *streety consciousness* denoting that the Gospel is capable of being applied to diverse cultural patterns. If contextualization is accepted in Christian evangelization, then the artistes were in essence contextualizing gospel song taking the *street consciousness* into consideration.

The philosophical appraisal also takes into recognition the intention of the gospel artistes. Intention here is directly connected to the purpose of putting up a gospel song. Primarily, Christian songs serve the purpose of worship and extensively strengthening the

emotional brokenness and spirit of the believers. However, in contemporary time, the Pentecostal songs are for many purposes beyond worship, evangelization to entertainment and commercialization. Hence, the propensity for negative values abounds in Pentecostal Gospel songs due to the desire of the artistes to produce musical contents that would be appealing to the wider listeners to boost profitability. The commercialization of gospel songs is a propeller of incorporation of negative aesthetic values.

AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE AND VALUES OF PENTECOSTAL GOSPEL SONGS

Aesthetic experience arises in response to works of art or other aesthetic object. Fisher-Lichtes (8) sees aesthetic experience as “liminal (sensory-related) experience accompanied by a mostly temporary transformation of the spectator or listener.” This liminal experience is induced by certain conditions such as performances and the audience or listener’s ability to submerge self into the intensity of the ambience created by the musical piece in this context. Immanuel Kant’s opinion on aesthetic experience during the 18th century was that of the “pleasures associated with the occasions when one judges something to be beautiful. The pleasure arises simply because the form of the object is delightful and could be enjoyed by anyone” (Anonymous).

However, in the sphere of religiosity or spirituality, Shockley (3) believes that when the liturgy or service is either conducted in a manner that is mechanical, routine, and mindless, the worship experience tends to be forgettable, forgotten like a dream – it falls short of aesthetic experience. The researcher summarizes that the aesthetic experiences that can be deduced from Pentecostal gospel songs are derived from the positive values that the contents of the songs produce. These experiences enable:

- i. **The connection of the Sacred and the profane:** The Sacred reality as a distinct force from the profane can be connected with through the channel of aesthetic experience induced by the sublime gospel songs. Sublimity of the Pentecostal gospel songs overrides the clumsiness of human material property of the worshipper, pricking the liminal elements to teleport the spirit to commune with the Transcendence. Pentecostal songs bring about an aura that is spirit-filled. This atmosphere helps worshippers to connect with the divine. Since worship is a ritual and spiritual endeavor, the human spirit is therefore aided by songs that are

harmonic and expressive of God's kindness and nature. This expressiveness pricks the human emotions and releases it from the strings of physical nature.

- ii. **Healing Experience:** Music therapy denotes the power of a musical piece to offer healing to the sick and broken listener. Neuroscientists support the proclivity of music to stimulate dopamine (a neurotransmitter in the body) to send message of wellness to nerve cells. According to Healthdirect, "dopamine is responsible for allowing an individual to feel pleasure, satisfaction and motivation." Pentecostal gospel songs with the divine-oriented lyrics, harmonic and rhythmic tone produces the aesthetic feeling that counters diseases and mental ailments. The healing power of some Pentecostal gospel songs tells the listeners that "they can over the trials life throws at them. This idea, more than anything else, was a running theme in gospel music especially for the enslaved African-Americans" (SYR).
- iii. **Conversional Experience Evangelical tool for the Christian faith.** Pentecostal gospel songs are apt tools of conversion and tool for propagating the gospel. The contents of Pentecostal songs often contain the goodness and beauty of God and extensively calling on the listeners to embrace the salvific work of God through Christ.

CONCLUSION

The study was set out to appraise contemporary Pentecostal gospel songs using the interpretive and descriptive approaches to research. The thesis statement hinges on identifying whether Pentecostal gospel songs are worship-centered or musical pieces orchestrated to excite the sensory system of the listeners; to ascertain the elements that give Pentecostal songs distinctiveness as well as essentially appraise the aesthetic experience and value induced by contemporary Pentecostal songs. Using some selected songs by Gratitude, Sinach and Steve Crown, the study concludes that Pentecostal gospel songs in Nigeria are intentionally produced to evoke emotional response from the listeners in order to connect with God. This idea agrees with the opinion of Fisher-Lichte who asserts that aesthetic experience induced by songs brings about a religious experience. Additionally, Bychov (250) shares the opinion that aesthetic experience traditionally serves as a bridge between the secular and the spiritual and can serve in this capacity in the post-secular age. The values

produced by the aesthetic of Pentecostal songs range from connecting the Sacred and the profane, healing, motivating, inspiring and disseminating the Christian gospel message to the world.

The study cautions that overemphasis on producing gospel songs that are appealing to the emotions of the listeners would result in mistaking sensationalism to worship and spiritual experience. At the overemphasis level, what would be achieved is a mere emotional response from the audience, congregation and listener, a goal which overrides the true worship. Therefore, the study recommends that:

- i. Gospel Musicians' Association of Nigeria (GOMAN) should be proactive by organizing robust and periodical orientation programmes for members on the intricacies of gospel music. The Music and Entertainment Gospel Awards (MEGA) should be made lucrative and prestigious to be given to artistes with musical contents that encourage true worship. This award would motivate gospel artistes to strive for excellence.
- ii. Church leaders should censor songs to be ministered in the church to prevent infiltration of worship or formal liturgy with songs that appeal more to human senses than aiding the worship and honoring God. However, it is expedient for the congregation to be enlightened on the need for proper response to gospel songs.
- iii. The media and other music streaming platforms should review and be selective about gospel songs that are aired or placed for downloads. Gospel songs with lyrics that appeal more to emotions than aid worship of God should be censored. This would serve as a preventive measure since the media is one of the gatekeepers of the music industry.

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Interrogating the Influence of *Babaláwo-Ifá* Priest's Lifestyle on *Ọmọ Awo*-Neophytes as found in *Ifá* Divination and the Lessons for Contemporary Societal Leadership

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ABSTRACT

Leadership, the ability to lead by good example, is universal and it cuts across every aspect of human life, be it political, social, economic and religious. Leadership quality must be displayed by the people at the top so that their followers/disciples will not be led astray. It is a position that may be bestowed on one by right, heredity, training, certificate/paper qualification or by chance. However, not all leaders are leading by good examples, the effects of which are felt by the led at the receiving end and the society at large because the study proffered answers to the questions from the data that was generated from fifteen Babaláwo-Ifá priests and twenty Ọmọ Awo-trainees/ neophytes in Yorùbá land, southwestern Nigeria and their views content analysed. The study was able to discover that Ifá priesthood is a service to humanity and not a money-making venture and discipline against greed is their watchword for them to achieve this. If the contemporary generation could imbibe this culture, it is going to be the best antidote against many social vices particularly the get-rich quick syndrome that is rampant among the youths nowadays which is causing their early death.

KEYWORDS: Leadership, Babaláwo-Ifá Priests, Neophytes, Ifá Divination System, Contemporary Generation.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the ability to lead others to success in a mission or assignment set by an employer or by oneself. A leader should be able to draw from his pool of skills, attributes and values and should be able to make use of them at the right time and at the right direction. This is because his/her success depends largely on how his/her followers are able to follow his steps, examples or better still on the ability of the followers to follow well (Thatcher np) This is the reason why Drucker says “he who thinks he leads and has no one following him is only taking a walk” (Drucker np). Therefore, a good leader must have people following him to achieve his vision or a goal toward which he or she aspires to walk toward achieving. In a similar form, Myles Munroe defines leadership as ability to lead others by influence or a response to responsibility (Monroe 15). Here, there are some vital issues to be raised if we agree with the definitions articulated above. One, a leader must have the ability, capacity and

capability to lead. Not only to lead anyhow, but to lead to success in a mission, whether to run an errand for family members or to organize an event possibly among friends, at school, in religious homes etc. Two, a good leader must have a vision, or must be an influencer, and must be someone that can be proudly emulated. This is the position every Babaláwo found himself in the midst of his *Ọmọ Awo* based on the interview conducted among some selected Babaláwo and *Ọmọ Awo*. The study showed that *Ifá* priesthood is a service to humanity and not a money-making venture. Besides this, discipline against greed is their watchword for them to achieve this.

THE DYNAMICS OF LEADERSHIP AND WHY LEADING BY EXAMPLE?

Leadership is all about responsibility. That is why LeRoy opined that a leader must be ready to take responsibility of a mission both in success and in failure (Eims 9). The ability of a leader to accept or be responsible for the failure or success of a mission will surely boost the morale and motivation of the people whom he or she is leading and this may affect to a great extent the loyalty and respect they have for such a leader. A very good example here is the leadership style of the politician in Nigeria, late Lamidi Adedibu, who gained the confidence of the people in his environment because he was ready to take responsibility for their actions. As a result, he was able to use them as a tool for protection against challenges from opponents and for political leverage during the Third Republic, in the 1990s (Ayokunle np). Again, in the same manner, Adekunle Fajuyi, the military governor of the then Western region in 1966 demonstrated leadership quality and mark of responsibility when he sacrificed his life along with the then Head of Nigerian State, Aguiyi Ironsi. It was clear to Fajuyi that he was not the target; however, the target was in his territory, under his custody. When it was clear to the coup plotters that he would not allow them to kill their target alone, they eliminated the two (Adegbamigbe np). Akanni (28) summed this up when he says that 'leadership determines the destiny of a nation'. Thus Fajuyi saved Nigeria from an inter-tribal war or what could have led to an everlasting enmity between the Yorùbá and Igbo ethnic groups in Nigeria. That long-lasting animosity was averted by the responsibility taken by Fajuyi to die with his Supreme Commander. Therefore, a good leader must be responsible, fair but firm, honest, act decisively, be correct, not selfish or greedy, and must be a good listener to criticism. This is so because, according to an informant, leadership gives shape and

form to any society, association and finally to a nation. He went further to explain that the blessing of all these organisations mentioned above is tied to the quality of leaders they have. According to him, this is the grace *Ifá* priesthood is enjoying today. He admitted that though there are some bad eggs among the cult, yet they are able to curtail their excesses to a large extent (Fayemi, Oral Communication).

To lead by example, therefore, a leader must be a good example of right living and discipline. He should not be someone who has mortgaged himself, his freedom of speech and decision-making to his superiors. He must not listen to falsehood. He must be able to entrust people with responsibilities by delegating authority and providing support and supervision. He must also be a good planner for success (Akanni 61).

THE BABALÁWO-IFÁ PRIEST AND THEIR LIFESTYLE

Babaláwo -*Ifá* priest are the representatives of Ọ̀rúnmìlà, the custodian of *Ifá* on earth who must be able to cast *Ifá* through the use of Ọ̀pẹ̀lẹ̀ or *Ikin* – instruments used in diagnosing man’s challenges physically and spiritually. In addition to that, he must be able to interpret the *Odu* that comes out of divination and relay or link it with the client’s situation. Therefore, the Babaláwo -*Ifá* priest must, as a matter of fact, be able to chant a lot of verses from each *Odu Ifá*. This is in order to equip him (the Babaláwo -*Ifá* priest) to be able to carry out the appropriate sacrifice that will solve the client’s problems for which he came to make an enquiry about. Therefore, a Babaláwo is a mediator between the man and his God (Salami 575).

The Babaláwos are the keepers of morals, ethics and culture of the society. As a representative of Ọ̀rúnmìlà, a Babaláwo must be able to reflect all the moral teachings of *Ifá* in his personal life. All values of uprightness must be found in him. He must be gentle and not misbehave because of the power he possesses as a Babaláwo. He is a king in his own right and so must not prostrate to anyone not even to a king when in his full regalia so as not to rubbish the sacred post he holds. Therefore, they are hardly annoyed. All these attributes or behaviours are what all the *omọ Awo* – neophytes are expected and must emulate from their master before they graduate.

The Babaláwo must as a matter of fact commit to memory a great number of verses of *Odù Ifá* from both the major and minor *Odu*. He must know the procedures of what to say in services and at festivals. It is essential also for him to know all the rules guiding *ẹbọ*-sacrifice (Mc Clelland 86). In summary, he must know the three basic procedures guiding the profession which are *dídá ọwọ* – casting of *Ọpẹlẹ*, *Agbigba*, *Ikin*, *Eerindinlogun*, *Olokun* and other divination procedures. *Títẹ alẹ* – imprinting the *Odù* that comes out of casting of *Opele* and *ọkarara ẹbọ* – the sacrifice that will proffer solution to the problem brought to *Ifá* by the client. Therefore, *ẹbọ*-sacrifice is the most important aspect of divination. This is buttressed by *Odù Ọyẹkú bìwòrì* (Arifalo, Oral Communication) where *Ifá* says:

<i>Ṣákítí ní gbojú aró</i>	<i>Ṣákítí ní gbojú aró*</i>
<i>Ìkàsì òun ni ò kan bọ̀rọ̀bọ̀rọ̀</i>	<i>Ìkàsì òun ni ò kan bọ̀rọ̀bọ̀rọ̀**</i>
<i>Ogun àjàjù ni ò jọmọ ó mojú orórì baba</i>	Constant war prevents a child from knowing his father's grave
<i>Ogun àjàjù ni ò jọmọ ó mojú orórì yeye</i>	Constant war prevents a child from knowing his mother's grave
<i>A dífá fún Ọfúnnùlólá</i>	Cast divination for Ofunnuola
<i>Yíó lóyún Ọsányìn sínú</i>	She will be pregnant of Osanyin
<i>Ìgbà tí yíó bí,</i>	When she gave birth
<i>Ó bí egbé</i>	She gave birth to Egbe (Egbe is a career, a kind of charm)
<i>Ó bí àjàbó (ọwọ)</i>	She gave birth to Ajabo (Ajabo is a kind charm to make someone struggle and escape)
<i>Ó bí àfẹ̀rì (ìṣíjù)</i>	She gave birth to Afeeri (Afeeri is a kind charm to make someone invisible)
<i>Ó wá bí ẹbọ tí nṣọmọ ikéyìn wọn lénjelénje</i>	Ebo was the smallest she gave birth to
<i>Níjọ ó burú</i>	On a bad day
<i>Egbé rebi, Egbé ò sí nílẹ</i>	Egbe traveled, he was not around
<i>Àjàbò ò tilẹ sí nílú rará</i>	Ajabo was not in town at all
<i>Ọjọ ó burú,</i>	On the bad day
<i>Ẹbọ ní gbéni yọ.</i>	It is sacrifice that saves one

To identify a Babaláwo, there are some things they do and ways by which they dress to distinguish themselves from the rest. A Babaláwo in his full regalia will put on *otutu ọpọ̀n* or *idè* on his neck, which are beads in form of necklace; there is another one that is usually put on the neck which signifies the office the Babaláwo is occupying. Every Babaláwo also carries whisk in his left hand. A Babaláwo will either tie a wrapper (white) across his shoulder or in a flowing Agbádá. Above all, he puts on a beaded crown, most especially the Araba Awo who is usually the head of all the Babaláwo in a town or city. This is the reason

why they do not prostrate for anyone including Kings because they are kings in their own right as said earlier (Arapati, Oral Communication). In festive period or during important rituals or rites, they are always with *Òsùn idẹ*, a kind of staff that jiggles when hit on ground. They do this to create an awareness of their presence. It is also used to announce an appointment into a new post of any of their members. Whenever it is placed in front of a person's house, it symbolises that the person has been appointed to hold a chieftaincy post in such a town, or country. There is also *Apo Jẹrùgbé*. This is a bag that usually contains their divination materials like *Òpẹ̀lẹ̀*, *opón Ifá*, *Ikin* and whatever things they were given during the time of discharging their duties which may be part of sacrificial materials and money. Important charms and medicine are also kept there.

Apart from items mentioned above, there are other emblems that form part of the dressing of Babaláwo. One such is *Ìlẹ̀wó*, a wooden staff that looks like *Ìrọ̀ké* but not as curved as *Ìrọ̀ké*. All these emblems have both physical and spiritual importance and symbols in the life of the Babaláwo. For instance, the use of *Ìdẹ̀* by a Babaláwo and all devotees of *Ifá* was as a result of an agreement between *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and Sanponna (the Orisa that afflicts with small pox) who was coming to the world to inflict punishment on people that *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* said through divination. He offered sacrifice to avert this and made further enquiry and Sanponna told him that he, his priest and all his devotees should wear *Ìdẹ̀* which he would see on them as a mark of identification for him to spear them. This is the genesis of wearing *Ìdẹ̀* by *Ifá* devotees. According to Salami, it is a taboo for anyone wearing these sacred beads to serve as slaves or laborers. *Ifá* confirmed this in *Ogbè rẹ̀tẹ̀* (Salami 581) that;

<i>Àfàimọ́ dídá ọwọ́</i>	Scarcely does the Babaláwo not know how to pack the seeds off his palms
<i>Àfàimọ́ òntẹ̀ alẹ̀</i>	Hardly does the Babaláwo not know how to pack the seeds off his palms
<i>Babaláwo kii fídẹ̀ sówó sin ni.</i>	Babaláwo s do not put Ide on their wrists and serve as slaves or labourers.

This validates the saying of the Yorùbá that *Oúnjẹ t'Áwo ó jẹ, ibùgbé Awo ní b'Áwo*- the food that Ifa priests will eat will always come to his domain. This is a fact because no Ifa priest will go to anybody's house for divination except on demand and this is usually by the kings and high chiefs or a sick person who cannot walk to the priest's house.

Basically, *Ifá* priesthood is a profession dominated by men. However, there are a few women among them who are *Ifá* practitioners. They are called *Ìyánífá* – mother in *Ifá*. Although *Ìyánífá* can chant *Ifá* poems, offer sacrifice to *Ifá* and other *Orisa* but they cannot see *Odù Olófin*, the sacred deity in *Ifá* divination, whether before, during or after initiation. This is because *Odù*, otherwise known as *Òròmòdìmòdì* was also a woman. This is the reason why some Babaláwo claim that it is not appropriate to initiate women into *Ifá* cult and not that *Ifá* forbids their initiation into the cult (Fasusi, Oral Communication). However, the aspect of divination that women have their domination is *Owo Eérindínlógún* –16 cowries because of its simplicity. According to (Bascom 3), it is simpler than *Ifa* divination. This may be the reason why it was held in low esteem in Yorùbáland. However, in foreign land like Cuba, Brazil and America, it is more important than *Ifa* due to the same reason why it is held in less esteem in Yorùbáland, simplicity. Here we can only see a few men practicing it in Yorùbáland. Other aspects of divination women are found in their large numbers is *Olókun* – a kind of divination with shells picked from the Atlantic. Another form of divination where the lifestyle of Babaláwo influence their *omọ Awo* is *Agbigba*. *Agbigba* is a kind of fruit from a crawling plant that is used for divination purposes. There is also divination through *obì-kolanut*. This often happens in the shrines, temples groves and where traditional form of prayers takes place. However, no matter the forms and differences, they always arrive at the same conclusion which is divination to know the mind of the gods and the same principle and law guides all.

THE *OMỌ AWO*-NEOPHYTES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

The concept of *Omọ Awo*, according to (Atunfagbon, the Araba Awo of Ipakodo, Telephone Interview) can be trace back to Esu, the first *Omọ Awo* *Òrúnmìlà*. This is a view supported by Ayo Salami that Esu was the first apprentice of *Òrúnmìlà* on Earth (Salami 527). Part of the duty and responsibility of *Omọ Awo* is to help his master carry load with the *Àpò Jẹrùgbé* –bag that usually contains all divination materials and all the *ẹrù* – gifts given to the master to and from any function. They are to sit at the right hand side of their masters to hold the ballots and to dab the surface of the divination tray containing divination powder with *Ìrùkẹrẹ* – whisk after each casting.

Again, the *Ọmọ Awo*'s responsibility is to run errands for his master, particularly, domestic errand. This is the reason why they usually stay with their masters as part of the family of their masters. The fact is that their masters always supplement what they get from divination with farming, since it is not a paid job, rather, a service to humanity, the *Ọmọ Awo* usually help out in the farm. Again, *Ọmọ Awo* is also to testify for or against his master in the hereafter before Olódùmarè, God in Yorùbá belief about the upright nature of their masters. This is responsible for the reason why Babaláwo's leadership by good example is crucial.

In the past, the learning of *Ifá* usually took up to fifteen years and memorization of enough verses to be called a full-fledge *Ifá* priest could take about thirty years. Today, learning the profession may not take more than a few years. This is due to the fact that contemporary learners are always in a hurry to practice and make money. Most especially, if they have masters that get good patronage from clients, they will visualize themselves to be in their master's shoe of patronage. After the initial training and graduation, he travels far and near to learn more from other Babaláwo, though not as an apprentice again, before he finally settles down to practice alone. This is the reason why *Ọmọ Awo* usually begins the training at an early stage of life (Olayemi, Oral Communication).

INFLUENCE OF BABALÁWO-IFÁ PRIEST'S LIFESTYLE ON ỌMỌ AWO-NEOPHYTES AS FOUND IN ÌRÉTÈ-ÒKÀNRÀN IN IFÁ DIVINATION

Ifá, according to Akintola, is the philosophy and wisdom divinely revealed to Ọ̀rúnmilà. It is a fundamental knowledge relating to life that encompasses philosophy, politics, religion, wise sayings, science, ethics, metaphysics, theology, divination and the therapeutic arts. Makinde (Akintola¹) also affirms that *Ifá* is a repository of knowledge with many branches such as science of nature (physics), animals (biology), plants (botany), oral incantations, divination, medicinal plants and all the sciences associated with healing diseases. All these are what every Babaláwo following the footsteps and procedures laid down by Ọ̀rúnmilà, the custodian of *Ifá* must follow, most especially the moral (Elebuibon 6) and ethical aspect that directly deals with human relation and everyday affairs.

Among these moral and ethical values of Babaláwo's lifestyle that usually influenced the *Ọmọ Awo* is the concept of simple life devoid of pride; how to live in the world and operate according to the laws of nature and how to live at peace with the Creator without

contravening these laws of nature. Also, worthy of mention is the principle of love and how to show compassion, most especially to the poor who cannot afford money for divination purchased items prescribed for sacrifice. Thus, a Babaláwo cannot say because a client cannot afford these items and as a result refused to attend to his/her problem. At the same time, he would not say someone is very rich he will overcharge the client as this would be tantamount to greed that must be avoided. A Babaláwo must be tolerant. This is a virtue demonstrated by Ọ̀rúnmilà in *Ìwòrì Wẹ̀rẹ̀* (Lijadu 41) where *Ifá* says:

<i>Ajá tí mo wí lóràn tí ò bá fẹ́,</i>	The dog that I warned without heeding,
<i>Ó dajá Eḷégbára</i>	Will become Elegbara's own
<i>Àgbò mòmò tí mo wí lóràn tí ò gbà</i>	A huge ram that I warned without heeding
<i>Ó dàgbò mọ̀lẹ̀</i>	Will become emblem of ancestral worship
<i>Ọ̀tòtò ènìyàn tí mo wí lóràn tí ò bá fẹ́</i>	A human that I warned without heeding
<i>E jòò è sí</i>	Leave him alone
<i>Bó ti le ẹ se ni kó máa ẹ</i>	He should act the way he pleases
<i>Ọ̀un ni yóò fowó agara bomi mu.</i>	He would be the one to regret it
<i>A dífá fún ọ̀kòòkan nínú Irúnmọ̀lẹ̀</i>	Cast divination for four hundred and one deities
<i>Níjọ́ tí wọn nlọ̀ rẹ̀é bá wọn nájà pàyàmọ̀rà...</i>	On the day they went to trade at payamora market...

All the divinities tried to go to the market of tolerance but could not succeed in entering or buying in the market except Ọ̀rúnmilà who was able to tolerate the gate keeper's actions. To emulate their master therefore, every Babaláwo must be able to endure pain and tolerate nonsense from people, most especially the rich and the kings who always look down on the Babaláwo as poor and greedy as found in *Irete-Ọ̀kànràn* (Bogunmbe 43) where *Ifá* says:

<i>Ìrẹ̀tẹ̀ Ọ̀kànràn ni a dá f' Ọ̀rúnmilà</i>	It was Irete Okanran that came out for Orunmila
<i>Lọ̀jọ́ tí gbogbo Awo péjọ́ sílé Ọ̀lọ́fin</i>	On the day all the initiates assembled in Olofin's house
<i>Tí wọn lọ̀ jẹ́' yán aláìmọ̀ra nílẹ̀ Ọ̀lọ́fin</i>	On the day they went to pounded yam in Olofin's house without consciousness
<i>A ní kí Ọ̀rúnmilà gbàwẹ̀ sùlẹ̀ ojọ́ lóní</i>	Orunmila was asked to fast throughout that day
<i>Kí ojú má bàá tí bọ́ ilé Ọ̀lọ́fin lóní,</i>	So that he would not be put to shame from Olofin's house today
<i>Wọn ní èé tún ti rí lóní,</i>	They said, what happened again today?
<i>Ó ní èyin kò mò pé</i>	He said don't you know that
<i>Aláìlójúti ní jẹ́' yán Ọ̀bàrà Ọ̀fún?</i>	It is a shameless person who eats pounded yam of Obara Ofun

In the *Odu*, Ọ̀lọ́fin thought that Ọ̀rúnmilà was just coming to his house to collect his money and material things which he was not happy about. As a result of that, he puts poison in the drink and the pounded yam prepared for Ọ̀rúnmilà and other Babaláwo who divined and assured Ọ̀lọ́fin that his son that was sick would not die. However, Ọ̀rúnmilà, through

divination detected the plot of Ọlófín and prevented other Babaláwo from drinking and eating the poisoned food and drink. When Ọlófín realised that Ọrúnmilà detected his evil intention, he was afraid and he paid dearly for his action. In the same manner, Ọsé Ìwòrì (Ajeigbe, Oral Communication) also explained that

<i>Bí wọn bá mọṣé jé,</i>	If they are skillful on how to run errand
<i>Wọn a má a jé oníṣé</i>	They become errand experts
<i>Bí wọn kò mọ jé</i>	If they are not skillful on how to run errand
<i>Wọn a má a jé olùṣè</i>	They become mere doer/unfortunate
<i>Ló dífá fún Eja</i>	Cast divination for Fish
<i>Tí í ṣ'omọ Olókun ṣení adé</i>	The son of Olokun
<i>Bía bá ránni níṣé erú</i>	If we are sent on a slave like (stupid) errand
<i>T'omọ la fí jé</i>	We should try to deliver the message as humbly and tactically as possible (with caution like a child)
<i>Ló dífá fún Alákàn</i>	Cast divination for Crab
<i>Omọ Olókun ṣení adé....</i>	The son of Olokun...

“Alákàn–crab was sent to Orisa-nla for the command of the source of the water”. Even though he was offered abundant food and drink, he refused to be tempted with them until he delivered the message sent him. He applied wisdom that benefited him beyond the message he was asked to go and delivered. Therefore, it is expected of every Babaláwo to portray and display wisdom as a basic virtue because *Ifá* is a book of wisdom that every Ọmọ Awo must emulate from their masters just as Ọwónrín was made a Chief in his father’s house because he displayed wisdom even though he had no money (Akintola 111). This is an indication that wisdom is more valuable than money. After all, if one is rich, he needs wisdom to spend the money on the right path.

As said earlier, helpfulness and service to humanity are two of the important concept and key in Babaláwo lifestyle that his Ọmọ Awo must emulate for them to make it in life. The Yorùbá is of the opinion that *ò fí tí è sílẹ̀ gbọ̀ tẹ̀ni ẹ̀lẹ̀ni, Ọlórún ní bá gbọ̀ tíè* – Whoever devotes his time in helping others; it is God himself that will personally help such a person to oversee his own affairs. This *Ifá* below in *Ìròsùn Meji* (Alebiosu, Oral Communication) explains further:

<i>Àkùkọfogbelébébéseyì</i>	Àkùkọfogbelébébéseyì (name of a priest)
<i>A dífá fún Ọpílíkí.</i>	Cast divination for Opiliki (name of a person)

Tí ó fì tiè sílè
Tí ó ma a gbó ti ẹni ẹlẹni káyé kiri
Ọrúnmilà ni ó ba tún tiè náà se...

Who would abandon his own affairs
 And concentrates on other people's matter
 Orunmila will help such a person in his own affairs...

Opiliki was asked to offer sacrifice and be helpful, more than ever to people. If he does that, Ọrúnmilà will intercede for him from God to ensure that fame, joy and every other good things of life he desired from God gets to him (Akintola 119).

A Babaláwo's lifestyle is also worthy of emulation in guiding against lustfulness after women and avoiding the temptation of being carried off his feet by physical beauty and cosmetic achievement as explained by *Ìwòrì Ọwónrín* (Abimbola 63-64) that expounded the adoration for unmistakable death under clothing.

<i>M bá j'óbìnrin,</i> <i>Àrà kan nì m bá dá</i> <i>M bá tò'lẹkẹ títí lọ dé bẹbẹrẹ ìdí</i>	Were I a woman, I would have performed one feat I would have displayed waist beads most alluringly
<i>Ma fì gbogbo ara hurun títí lọ dé pọ-n-pọlọ itan</i> down onto my thighs <i>Ma bojú w'abẹ wò ma fẹrín si</i>	I would display fluffy skin hair right I would behold my captivating vagina with a smile
<i>Ma ní ikú dẹdẹ n bẹ lábẹ aṣọ</i>	And express ominous adoration for this unmistakable death under my clothing
<i>Ọrìṣà tí kìl jẹ k'òmọkùnrin ó leè t'ọjọ</i>	The goddess that spells premature death for many a young man
<i>Dífá fún Gbòngàn-Ìrókò,</i> <i>Tí í se olóbò yèrèpè</i>	Cast divination for Gbongan-Iroko With excessively sexy vagina
<i>Èyí tí n relé ọkọ</i> <i>Njé, Gbòngàn-Ìrókò, a rí ẹ r'ẹwà ná ò</i>	Who was getting set for her betrothal Now, Gbongan-Iroko, we know you are beautiful
<i>Jé ká rí ẹ rómọ tuntun.</i> babies?	But what about your fortune to rear

Here *Ifá* emphasised that a sex with the kind of Gbòngàn-Ìrókò, the goddess that spells premature death for men that lust after women is not qualified to be a priest. This is the reason why a big test is conducted for would-be Babaláwo before initiation into the cult. A week before the initiation, he would be kept in a confinement where only a woman is allowed to attend to his needs. If he lusts after her, then, he is not qualified to be initiated because it is believed that this is what he would be doing after graduation because most of his client would be women. (This is so because when it comes to spirituality, women are more sensitive than

men. As a result, they quickly attend to spiritual matters better than men folks). Therefore, if he cannot discipline himself against lust after women and greed against money, then he is not qualified to be a priest.

A Babaláwo must be appreciative and show gratitude for little kindness. This would help a long way to help his *Omọ Awo*, a virtue they will emulate from him. This is so because in the past, every *Omọ Awo* usually joins his master's family before their formative period. As a result, whatever his master is doing will become part of him at the end of the day because he sees him as a father figure worthy of emulation. This is explained more by *Irosun Meji* (Odegbemi 49) where *Ifá* says:

<i>Olówó ó wá</i>	The rich will come
<i>Aláwìn ó wá</i>	The debtor will come
<i>Asièrè èniyàn</i>	The metal derailed
<i>Ní bẹ nídí èkọ</i>	Was the one selling Solid pap
<i>Èyàn tí ò lówó lówó</i>	The person that has no money
<i>Kó má a gbóórùn léyìnkùlé</i>	Should stay at the backyard to perceive the odor
<i>A dífá fún Elékòdèrè</i>	Cast divination for Elekodere
<i>Èyí tíó lórò</i>	That will be rich
<i>Kálélé ó tó ó lé</i>	Before her old age
<i>Ojú ní pón Elékọ Ìdèrè</i>	Elekodere was in need
<i>Òun le lówó lówó báyí</i>	Would she be rich
<i>Ni Elékọ Ìdèrè dífá sí</i>	Was what Elekodere consulted Ifa for
<i>Wón ní ebọ ni kó wá rú</i>	She was told to come and offer sacrifice
<i>Ó rúbọ, wón se Ifá fún ún</i>	She offered and Ifa was done for her
<i>Kò rówó Ifá náà san</i>	But could not pay Ifa consultation fee
<i>Tí àwọn Awo rẹ</i>	Till her priests
<i>Fi sawo lọ</i>	Went on divination tour
<i>Apá òkun, ilàjì òsa</i>	To part of the beach and half of the ocean (far distance)
<i>Ìgbà tí wón ó fi dé lódún kẹta</i>	When they came back the third year,
<i>Elékọ Ìdèrè ti di olówó</i>	Elekodere was already became rich
<i>Şùgbón,</i>	But
<i>Nígbà tí àwọn Awo rẹ bẹ̀rèrè owó lówó ó rẹ</i>	When her diviners ask for their money,
<i>Ó ní òun ò lówó lówó</i>	She said she had no money
<i>Ni àwọn Awo rẹ bá nfí şorin kọ</i>	Her diviners burst out singing
<i>Elékọ 'Dèrè</i>	Elekodere
<i>Şe bóo ló jere</i>	You claim you did not make profit
<i>Elékọ 'Dèrè</i>	Elekodere
<i>Şe bóo ló jere</i>	You claim you did not make profit
<i>O róşọ dúdú</i>	You tied black dress
<i>O róşọ pupa</i>	You tied red dress

<i>O fàyìn rìn gbàjá</i>	You tied multi colour dress
<i>O lé kinkà</i>	You look gorgeous
<i>O fàpótí tìdí</i>	You sat on a stool
<i>O lé kenkà</i>	You look gorgeous
<i>Èlẹ̀kọ 'Dèrè</i>	Elekodere
<i>Şe bóo ló jere.</i>	You claim you did not make profit

Regardless of any situation in which a Babaláwo might find himself, he should and must be able to tell the truth and guide against perfidy. Babaláwo are dutiful. This is contrary to people's belief that they are lazy. To avoid being called lazy, therefore, they usually have farm to support the little income they generate through divination and sacrifice so that they will not entirely rely on what their clients give them, so as to guide against greed, falsehood and betraying the confidence reposed in them by their communities. *Ifá* buttresses this further in *Ose Meji* (Odegbemi 49) where *Ifá* says that:

<i>Aşégé şégé mósun</i>	<i>Aşégé şégé mósun</i>
<i>Aşègè gègè mósun</i>	<i>Aşègè gègè mósun</i>
<i>Ọşun lótún</i>	Osun on the right side
<i>Ìbàdàn lósì</i>	Ibadan on the left side
<i>A dífá fún Ológoşé</i>	Cast divination for Ológoşé (an <i>Ifá</i> priest)

<i>Tí nşawo ó lọ sí òde Ìbàdàn</i>	Who was on a divination tour to the city of Ibadan
<i>Bí Babaláwo bá kì fún ni</i>	If a diviner casts divination for someone
<i>A má a kì f'áwo</i>	Someone can as well divine for the priest
<i>A dífá fún Oníbadàn</i>	Cast divination for Onibadan
<i>Tí yíó kì Ifá fún Ológoşé Awo re...</i>	Who was going to divine for Ológoşé his <i>Ifa</i> priest...

It was Ológoşé, a priest of Onibadan (a king) that divined for the king to engage in farming. When the king realised that there was money and food there, he also advised his priest to go into farming in addition to his priesthood. He took to the advice and he also became rich through farming.

INFLUENCE OF BABALÁWO-IFÁ PRIEST'S LIFESTYLE ON ỌMỌ AWO-NEOPHYTES AND THE LESSONS LEARNED FOR THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

The contemporary generation should learn from the Influence of *Babaláwo-Ifá* Priest's Lifestyle on *Ọmọ Awo*-Neophytes especially in all the points raised above and learnt that, just as *Ifá* priesthood is a service to humanity and not a money-making venture that made discipline against greed their watchword, the contemporary generation need to guide

against greed that is turning African society upside down today. In this generation, nothing should give African greater pleasure than to learn how to be patience, endure, persevere in all things, tell the truth in every situation, be considerate, show love and concern and be our brothers' keeper. Above all, not be envious.

If the contemporary generation could imbibe this culture, it is going to be the best remedy against many social vices predominantly the get-rich quick syndrome that is widespread like harmattan fire among the youths which is accountable for their early death. This is an indication that what we are discussing here goes beyond the *Babaláwo-Ifá* Priest's Lifestyle on *Ọmọ Awo*-Neophytes. Rather, it applicable to all. The Babaláwo and their *Ọmọ Awo* only serves as models in Yorùbá society and in every society in Africa in general. We should learn how to be satisfy with God given virtues that are peculiar to Africans as a whole before the advent of western education, foreign religions and civilisation so that our situation will not look like what *Ifá* says in *Ìrèntẹgbẹ̀* (Salami 20) that:

<i>Oun a bi wonbi kii wu won</i>	They are never inspired by their own historical legacy
<i>Teni elelni ni yawon lara</i>	The ones for the others are what they catered for
<i>A difa fun iwo deere</i>	Cast divination for the fishing Hook
<i>Ti nsalabarin eja</i>	The close friend of the fish.

CONCLUSION

Leadership cuts across all aspects of human life, however, it is more sensitive when Applying to religion, particularly traditional religion and training of *Omo Awo* where they begin their training at a very tender age in their formative period. This makes it more complex and sensitive because whatever their masters do, they assume and believe it is the right thing. However, priesthood is a service to humanity. This is a notion they are made to know from the beginning of their training by their masters. This gives their mentors the opportunity to guide them against greed, falsehood and other social vices that could make them lose credibility in their various communities thereby tarnishing the good and prestigious image that priesthood has. Therefore, the watchword of these masters (Babaláwo) to their *Ọmọ Awo* (Neophytes) is always:

<i>Ajá gbó gbó ó gbó</i>	The dog backed and backed
<i>Ajá ẹran asínwín</i>	It became a neurotic animal

Òfàfà gbó gbóó gbó	Tree Hyrax backed and backed
Òfàfà dẹran ijíwèrè	Tree Hyrax became a neurotic animal
Àgbònrín tí nbẹ nínú igbórò gbó gbóó gbó	The deer living in the sacred forest growls and bellows
Ó wọ igbó ìráhùn lọ	It became tongue-tied
A dífá fún òpẹ sẹgì sẹgì	Cast divination for sacred palm tree
Èyí tíó jẹ baálè asòótó	The chief truth teller
Ó sòótó	She told the truth
Ó bí Ikin fún Alára	She had baby Ikin for Alara
Ó sòótó	She told the truth
Ó bí Oduşọ fún Ajerò	She had baby Oduşọ for Ajero
Òpẹ sẹgì sẹgì	It was the sacred palm tree
Ló bí Erinwo Oşin fún Àjàlá	That gave birth to Erinwo Osin for Ajala
È jé á sòótó	Let us tell the truth
È jé á máa sòdodo	Let us tell the facts
Èni tó bá nsòótó o	It is he that speaks the truth
'Lólórun ó gbè.	Whom God would take side with

Nonetheless, there are still bad eggs among the Babaláwo s and the *Omọ Awos*. However, what they usually made them realise is found in one of the Babaláwo's songs:

Kámá şikà láyé	We should not do evil on earth
Torí à nròrun	Because we are going to heaven
Kámá şikà láyé oò	We should not do evil on earth
Torí à nròrun ùn	Because we are going to heaven
Tabá ti débodè aó rojó ò.	When we get to heaven's gate we shall render account.

That is, whatever one does on earth here, one will render account in the hereafter.

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** There is no English translation of the word Ikasi (It is a food left over till the following morning). We should note that it is not every Yoruba words that can be translated into English.

*This does not have a direct English interpretation. It is the left over or chaff of the materials used in making the dye that is used in the olden days to dye clothes.

Church as a Medium of Peace and Harmony in the Society: Experience from Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Ntighauzo South, Abia State.

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ABSTRACT

The Christian Church was founded mostly for mission purposes—to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost world, which is in a stupendous crisis for destruction. The research espouses the Christian Church as a medium of peace and harmony in a lost society. This study is designed to propose approaches that will promote and ensure peace and harmony in church communities and secular communities and discourage any form of dichotomy. The research aims at suggesting approaches to encourage positive Christian living where S.D.A. Church is located. In addition, it aims at encouraging the denomination to maintain relative peace and tranquility. It is hoped that this study will be of tremendous significance to those whose fields of study is church history and sociology of religion or contemporary issues in the study of religion. The study is qualitative research and has adopted a descriptive and historical survey with missiological and pedagogical objectives. The research discovered that conflict is inescapable and is good because it elicits different points of view, clears the air, and makes it possible to resolve extraordinarily complex issues. It was discovered that the crisis in the then-S.D.A. church of Iferife could have been averted if the church leadership had confronted the issue wisely. Therefore, this research recommends that the church Pastors should promote peace and teach morals in order to sustain harmony, which would foster infrastructural development in the church communities.

KEY WORDS: Church, Mission, Gospel, Peace, Harmony, Society.

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church (S.D.A. Church), Ntighauzo South, was pioneered by the late Evangelist Robert Onwere in 1934. This local church was initially a part of the Ohanze group of churches under Umuobiakwa District of the then East Nigeria Mission, the Nigerian Union Mission now in Aba East Conference, and the Eastern Nigeria Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria. John Alaribe, notes that when the church grew in membership or population, it was organized into a full-fledged church, i.e., it became administratively independent. It was through this organization that the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ntighauzo South, was carved out of the then Ohanze Group of Churches, now Ohanze District, and it started in one of Mr. Ukaegbu Okpokoronu's compounds at Iferife in Ntighauzo Amairi Community in Abia State (Personal Communication, Alaribe). This was the time Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ntighauzo South, was a company and does not have

church building for worship, members worshipped at this time in Iferife village along Ahia Afo. It was in Iferife village that the church was first located, with a building for worship built by the pioneer members. Before the Seventh-day Adventist Church was relocated to Amapu, which is the center of the Ntighauzo Amairi Community, Joel Ubani, reveals that there was a crisis alleged to have been caused by a reported vision from a member of the church, the late deacon Amos Anyanwu. Deacon Anyanwu was regarded as a local seer, as it was alleged and reported that he was shown other visions by God at different times. One of such visions was that which he advised that the church should be relocated to the center of the Ntighauzo Amairi community for reasons of space to accommodate the membership and its central position to be accessible to members (Personal Communication, Ubani). This new insight aroused crisis and schism in the then Seventh-day Adventist Church Branch Sabbath School in Iferife village. Some of the members were in agreement with the new insight to move the church out of Iferife village to Ntighauzo Amairi Community Center, while other members decided that the church should remain in Iferife village. The result of this crisis and disagreement was for those members who refused to move from Iferife village to retain the pioneer building of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Iferife village and renamed the church “the Pillar of Truth Church of God Seventh-day.”(Personal Communication, Ubani) The members that left Iferife village because of this crisis moved to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu, which is the community center. They maintained the denominational name of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and they erected a mud house with a thatch roof for worship. This new Seventh-day Adventist Church only stayed in Mbara Amauhie from 1950–1951. In 1951, it subsequently moved from Mbara Amauhie to a more central but densely populated location, still in Amapu. The whole of this area and its environs are called Ntighauzo South. The church has been on that site until today. Its membership has grown so much that the church gave birth to another organized church, known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church Ntighauzo East.

According to Mary Joel, the movement of the church to the center of the Ntighauzo Amairi Community led to the establishment of the first primary school in the community in 1953. The name of the school was S.D.A. Primary School, Ntighauzo Amairi. The first headmaster of the school was Mr. Pharaoh (his full name is not given); he was from Germany (Personal Communication, Joel). The school grew very rapidly, being the only one in the area at the time. It was later renamed Ntighauzo Amairi Community Primary School by the government of Abia State when it took over schools in the state. The Seventh-day Adventist Church Ntighauzo South later had a church building of its own and was fully organized on July 5, 1952.

The Church of God is an instrument of peace and harmony in the world. The church is the mount piece for the powerful and the powerless because it stands in association and relationship of the rich and the poor (Blough et al.1).Its members should be taught and led to live in peace and harmony in order to encourage unity in the church community and in the secular community where it is located. The schism that occurred in the early development of the S.D.A. Church in the Ntighauzo Amairi Community should have been better handled or avoided if the leaders of the church embraced dialogue. However, according to Obinna Nwala, the event that took place in Iferife unfortunately led to the loss of members who turned out to form two opposing church groups: the S.D.A. Church and the Pillar of Truth

Church of God Seventh-day (Personal Communication, Nwala). Therefore, this research proposes approaches that will encourage peace and harmony in the Christian Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church Ntighauzo South, in order to discourage the future occurrences of such disagreement. The study will encourage and inspire spiritual maturity, forbearance, peace, and harmony among fellow Christians toward the successful propagation of the gospel in the communities where the church is located.

In line with the principle of church growth, expansion, and vision, the church should be moved from *Iferife* village along *Ahia Afo* to a central area, *Mbara Amauhie*, in *Ntighauzo Amairi* Community, without the acceptance of the entire church membership. Reactions to this insight brought about a sharp schism in the pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Church of *Iferife*, which should not have taken place as a Christian community. This incident suggests that there was a gross dislocation of peace and harmony in the pioneer S.D.A. Church on *Iferife*. Therefore, the concern of this research is to propose what should have been done better by the members of the S.D.A. Church *Iferife* to bring peace and harmony instead of disagreement. The research also suggests that certain approaches to solving issues of disagreement in the church should not be spiritualized or taken personally, but rather that the Bible should be allowed to guide both church leaders and members in such areas of disagreement in order to ensure peace and harmony in the church. The purpose of the research is to encourage positive Christian living wherever the S.D.A. Church is located and to remind the Seventh-day Adventist Church in *Ntighauzo* South that the essence of her existence is to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, practice and uphold peace and harmony in the church and the community where the church resides. The research will enhance peace and harmony in the *Ntighauzo* community and in church communities. It is a contribution to the existing body of knowledge in church history and missiology. The work also, provides a biblical approach to solving church crises and conflict in order for church members to focus on soul-winning endeavors in any community where the church is located.

The research adopted historical and descriptive approaches to ascertaining the origin of Seventh-day Adventist Church Ntighauzo South as regards the issues that arose in *Iferife* village, all of *Ntighauzo Amairi* Community, and the essence and goal of its existence as a church in that community. The study administered gathering available information about S.D.A. Church Ntighauzo South and, as much as possible, from the Pillar of Truth Church of God Seventh-day in *Iferife*, using primary sources such as books, church records, and interview reports from persons who are conversant with the history of these churches. The study made use of available and relevant literature reviews from secondary sources such as journals, books, magazines, et cetera on scholarly biblical principles and practices on the topic. The literature especially focused on approaches for tackling issues that could bring schism and disharmony among church groups in order to address the problems that confronted the early developments of the S.D.A. Church in this research and to encourage peace and harmony in Christian Churches. The study is qualitative research; it involved the choice of a population of up to 40 respondents, and 20 Likert scale questionnaires were prepared and distributed among the population, which was composed of the S.D.A. Church, the Pillar of Truth Church of God Seventh-day, and non-S.D.A. members in *Ntighauzo Amairi* Community. The questionnaires were collected and analyzed to find out what the possible causes of the schism that broke the bonded pioneer church in *Iferife* into two groups

were and to find out the extent of the impact of the S.D.A. Church on the Ntighauzo Community in terms of its growth and developments.

CAUSES OF DISHARMONY IN LOCAL CHURCHES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Iheanacho rightly summarized the causes of disharmony as thus:

1. Religious fanaticism: Religious fanaticism can be caused by unbalanced state of one's disposition which could lead to distortion of religious teachings and spiritual issues. This may lead to wrong understanding and interpretation of Christian doctrines and religious beliefs and such practices may characterize adherents. This is right because in Seventh-day Adventist Church Ntighauzo South the church witnessed sharp disharmony due to religious fanaticism of vision.
2. Inadequate spiritual knowledge: This could be promoted by low cognitive ability to discern the spiritual knowledge. This factor is noted in a church member who finds it difficulty in appreciating the meaning and essence of religious teachings, doctrines and principles of the religion. Such lacuna creates opportunity for formulation and thrives of unbiblical teachings which may be inimical to appreciate human diversity in the contemporary society.
3. Inability to appreciate and accept change: This is another factor which promotes disharmony and schism in the church and society. This inability of religious adherents to accept change and adjust to inevitable and necessary forces of change in human life this makes believer to remain unchanged holding on to their old practices and ways of doing things. They do not want to adapt strategies to the wave of change.
4. Religious members lack of knowledge. This makes them incubate the impulse of extremism and irrational acceptance to unscriptural and contradictory views.
5. Arrogance to religious and spiritual issues: This is in the sense that someone holding firmly to his beliefs and unwilling to accept the sound religious teachings leading to euphoria of unfounded religious superiority leading to ignorance of self-esteem. This is true because this religious prejudice, discrimination, conflict and crisis could be seen in such churches (109,110). These factors were responsible is the division and disharmony in Seventh-day Adventist Church Ntighauzo South.

Commenting on the division and disharmony Cosgrove and Hatfield in *Church Conflict*, titled "The Hidden Systems behind the Fights," affirm that "Christians don't fight." They also aver that Christian communities should not be known for fighting wars but rather for talking peace amidst disharmony in their congregations (96). The contrary of this claim is true, according to research. Conflicts and disharmony erupt everywhere, even in the church. Cosgrove and Hatfield agree that Christians should rather pray away conflict. Congregations displaying such responses or actions either try to ignore or avoid conflict or attribute the conflict to a lack of spirituality among their members and then try to preach and pray it away (12). Nel in "identity-driven churches: who are we and where are we going?" Further advances the argument against conflict, which, through observations and experiences, discovered that conflict can arise at any point and time of being, becoming, and cultivating church (234). Conflict is not something that is intentionally planned; rather, it is a natural element of life that might be brought on by the behavior of certain members of a congregation. Osterhaus in *Thriving through Ministry Conflict* reveals that conflict is

inescapable and is both good and necessary because it elicits different points of view, clears the air, and makes it possible to resolve both extraordinarily and complex issues (14). This means that it is not possible for human beings in any community secular or religious, to live without conflict. Commenting further on this Osterhaus, points out that conflict and disharmony cannot be overlooked because it is an undeniable fact (15). This is to say that in a home where family members of the same parent live, sometimes conflict is noticed. However, not all conflicts are dangerous or divisive; some are meant to be corrected by real-life experience. Congregational conflict sometimes offers a better method of providing answers to some problems that may be harming the church. This is possible in the senses that, as people are interrogated, relevant information to help find an answer to a particular issue is obtained through conflict. Chris Crain agrees that there are possible factors that may trigger disharmony or conflict in a local church. Thus:

1. High unemployment rates: People who are jobless frequently are simple targets for corruption.
2. Widespread poverty: Poverty is a result of a lack of education. The majority of the populace lacks knowledge or is illiterate. As a result, it is simple to teach them the necessary skills. These studies can occasionally be founded on ideologies that promote death and violence in the name of God. The inhabitants who join and believe are told that after carrying out the required deed, their families will receive money, and they themselves will receive recompense from heaven.
3. The dread of dominance: When one of the dominant religious groups notices that another one is beginning to rule in a certain area, it employs numerous strategies to reduce the proportion of rival powers to a negligible level.
4. The separation of newcomers and local residents. It is clear that members of the other group are less likely than members of the same religion to be respected by the natives when they live in a particular place. Conflicts, harassment, and violence may result when people of various religious beliefs begin to protect their rights.
5. Communication breakdown within churches: This issue is widespread. Because it seems like it can be resolved with coffee and settle internally which has not being able to work out. Communication is something that is frequently neglected. As a church expands, there isn't enough time to continue operating just by word of mouth. In order to be totally linked in thought and actions, as stated in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "you must be aware of what the other person is thinking". It is not surprising that James tells us to confess our transgressions to one another. If we can strengthen our bonds inside the church and are willing to confess our sins to one another, it would reduce disharmony.
6. Lack of clear direction. Without clear leadership direction, the church will inevitably be pushed in a million different directions by various church members (especially the loud people). There will be a clear vision and expectation if there is a clear course, direction, or mission. This vision enables the church's leadership to acknowledge the personal visions of other members and then determine how those visions relate to the mission of the church as a whole allowing people to avoid feeling offended while realizing that we must go in the direction of the church's overall purpose.
7. Absence of expectations. If there are no expectations, the body of believers will not meet up with the expectations and would hardly adhere to expectations that do not materialize.

The body's various components will function independently. If our human bodies function inconsistently, we would disintegrate very quickly so as the church.

8. Religious politics. Intentional or inadvertent political posturing and manipulation by religious factions can result in conflict. For instance, older Churchgoers may prefer tried-and-true techniques, while newer members want change. A faction may try to enlist more people in their cause and gain control. It could be difficult for someone to find a solution without upsetting the other people or groups involved in the argument. This requires the utmost integrity and caution from Christ-followers.
9. Power abuses. Power is the ability to have an impact on one's surroundings, interpersonal connections, or oneself. Gains or losses may result from changes in power. Power is the capacity and tools for action. Power abuse can destroy church and cause church schism (13, 14). This is to say that, church leaders may create the atmosphere of disharmony if they blatantly refuse to lead their members with clear vision, sincerity of purpose and constant communication to discuss the teachings and doctrines of the church.

IMPACT OF CHURCH DIVISION AND DISHARMONY

There are impacts of division and disharmony on human existence. This sub-section x-rays and presents the impacts of this disharmony on community where a church is found. A number of negative repercussions are felt in the communities where some of the local churches are located as a result of the discord in those churches. Frequently, this leads to conflicts between the churches. There is strong evidence to suggest that social unrest in the church has a disastrous impact on the peace and order in the various areas where these churches are located. The losses and harm caused by this war cannot be measured in any way. The ongoing conflicts that occasionally resulted from this had a detrimental effect on both the government's ability to provide aid to those affected by religious unrest and on individuals in terms of property damage and human life loss. Discord and religious violence tend to damage not just the stability and order but also the reputation of the neighborhood where the church is located. This research is particular as the disharmony often causes some sense of psychological trauma and stirs up among the victims of the disharmony and religious disturbances, a recurring decimal in which such persons never live. It is not in doubt that the effect of disharmony in churches are negative and dangerous in the sense that some church members who are negatively affected by the schism and disharmony to their spiritual lives may neither forgive nor forget the persons involved in the circumstances of such incidents. Aside from the enormous losses that could be suffered as a result of the discord, this ongoing issue could also lead to an eternal separation among the congregation's members. It is also important to keep in mind that social miscreants and criminals can flourish in an environment of violence and discord, and because they have access to firearms, they can incite violence in their neighborhood. Haugk identified in his article, "Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict" another effect of church disharmony where the church is found is members' mobility. As people move back and forth from one church to the other, never to settle as they seek spiritual satisfaction and a place to belong. Thus, the congregation gets into a state of mobility and change (29). The work of Haugk, though not done in Ntighauzo, pictures the experience of that church, as already stated in the early part of this research. Thiga et al., in their article, "The Effect of Church Conflict on the Growth of Pentecostal Churches in Kenya: A Case Study of Selected Churches in Nairobi", assert that:

The impact of church division and disharmony can lead to negative mindset of the members in their spiritual life, thereby, retrenching from going to church, as some go contrary to losing their tempers and go as far as waging physical wars, which is against the scriptures in Hebrews 12:14–15: “That no bitter root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled” (35). This means that the effect of Church discord causes division among the congregation's members and slows down church growth because people stop attending services, taking part in fellowship activities, giving to the church, and attending events. They also frequently turn against their leaders. Church discord also indicates a lack of spiritual life in the members, which makes it difficult for them to carry out their mission of evangelization in the neighborhood or society because listeners may not be interested in their messages. This leaves the congregation in a state of spiritual bankruptcy because no soul can be won to be converted and make up the church. He further adds that church disharmony is a major cause of the split of churches, during which the numerical growth is affected as different factions go with sections of the members, and sometimes the members quit the church or join other neighboring churches. He continues to believe that because of the changes that church members must undergo, the impact of discord has led to numerous church divides, which has hampered the church's growth and success. One may add that personal animosities can burst forth as a result of church disharmony. This may apparently cause family division and the loss of properties.

The Impact of division and disharmony on Church members' attitude

Having seen the impact of division and disharmony on any community where the church is found, this section exposes the attitude of the members of the church in the community where it is found. Bob Dixon, in *Ingenious Communities*, affirms that the church has a role to play in building a sense of belonging where people feel valued and can develop trusting relationships, which is often referred to as social capital (1). This viewpoint expounds that the Church should give hope to the hopeless and to those who are not regarded or who feel they are less important in the community or society, thereby imbuing in them the sense of associating with people again, thereby making inputs where necessary so as not to be counted as nobody but somebody in their various communities. He further reveals that the local church is a place where people can connect with others as well as receive assistance, warmth, and kindness, particularly during times of distress (8). He validates the essence of the church community by stressing that the local church in the community where it is found may be a medium through which people that are not endowed financially could get help and be connected and attached to something yielding. By showing such acts of generosity, it can be a source of evangelism in the community. It also points out that the act of generosity constitutes a strategy for winning souls, which enhances the growth in membership of the congregation as such a magnitude of kindness is shown to people who in times of their distress, got relieved. This entails the church as a relief agency that should provide help and assistance for people in need.

The Essence of Peace and Harmony in the Church Community

Peace is a relative term; it could mean different things to different people at different times. It is often conversely related to war, a state of highly strong conflict or extreme violence. Peace, according to Best recognizes that certain concrete effort and process are required to be made by individuals, groups and communities for conflict to be reduced to a minimum level and for

a peaceable society to be achieved, peace thrives on justice, fairness, equity, trust, friendship, mutual respect, communication (270). This means that it is the process of restoring normal relations between people who are not in one accord. Nwanguma, in “Peaceful Co-existence in Nigeria: An Analytical Study of the Christian Perspective of Neighborliness” invalidates the reason why peaceful co-existence in Nigeria has always proven abortive despite the various attempts to live together in harmony as a people. This is as a result of the activities of evil men who take advantage of the endemic ethnic biases or religious intolerance in the various churches and communities in order to fulfill their evil plans. Nwanguma further points out that the last two lines of our national anthem read, "One nation bound in freedom, peace, and unity. It is believed that the nation is a place where the maintenance of peace and order is especially important, fostering our religious intolerance. The reverse is the case in our church communities today (144). He comments also that peace is primarily about total soundness, which includes soundness in all spheres of life, including health, intra- and inter-personal relationships, religion, and social interactions. Essentially, Paul's topic throughout the entire section (Romans 12:14–21) is a stress on the Christians' dedication to the church community, both within and beyond the church community, particularly the latter. Therefore, Christians are urged to establish excellent relationships with non-Christians in the neighborhood where their church is located by praying for them, showing empathy for their joys and sufferings, and treating them with respect and forgiveness.

Osaije, in his article, “Religious leaders as agents of peace and security for sustainable development in Nigeria”, asserts that religion is a potent tool for peace and harmony, and it could be practiced to overcome differences in order to bring to the grass root sustainable development. Religion teaches morals, reshapes society, and brings happiness to its followers. In other words, religion helps man to have his ultimate as well as build good citizens who will be useful to themselves adequately by contributing immensely to the peace and harmony of the community for sustainable development (269). Osaije seems to tie together what the other authors in this study have been saying. And that is, the church in any environment or community should propagate peace and teach morals so as to bring about development in the church community.

SOLUTION TO THE CHURCH DISHARMONY:

The following ways can offer solutions to the possible causes of division and disharmony in a church: It is worthy to note that countless lives had been lost, properties burned, and many displaced as a result of religious conflict and disharmony in a local church. Thus, this calls for a religious dialogue among the religious parties involved. Inter-religious dialogue is done in order to promote peace and security and, most especially, to erase the prejudices and foster.

1. Dialogue and Interfaith Relations: The term dialogue is derived from two Greek words namely “dia” and “logue”. When coined together it means to talk, conversation and discussion between two or more people, or groups (Iheanacho 117). This means that dialogue is fundamental to human relations and togetherness and interaction. Dialogue fosters explanation and communication. These instruments are needed towards reasoned insight that extracts agreeable tendencies for the parties and dialogists. So dialogue is required as essential tool for solution of church division and disharmony. In this regard

Ebosele captures the opinion of the writer when he says that dialogue enables people to understand and tolerate themselves, as they live together under conditions of diversity (2).

2. Interface dialogue between the Church leaders and the members: This approach of religious dialogue is not intellectual or academic approach (Olupona 5) but involves a practical religious approach. This means that joint participation of different bodies and members involved in social or religious service should be involved for a symbolic expression of their common concern which maybe doctrinal in form of new light, vision among others for mutual understanding, freedom, dignity and religious growth of both parties.
3. Prompt response by the Church leaders to call for dialogue. The Church leadership is peddled with the responsibility of solving conflict which arises among members. Each time Church leadership fails, it could take extra effort from well-respected members to of the church and the community to solve such problems. The conference as at the time of the crisis of SDA Ntighauzo South Church had a lot of areas to cover, therefore the church leadership failed to pay prompt attention to issues in branch Sabbath schools. If the conference (Church Administration) was close to the people as at the time, then there would have been a better way to solve the crisis of division and disharmony of the church.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data was presented in the table of frequencies and percentages, as indicated below:

Frequency Table

Table.1: Gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	31	77.5	77.5	77.5
Female	9	22.5	22.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 1 above, 77.5% of our respondents are male while 22.5% are females

Table 2: Ages of respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 36-45	26	65.0	65.0	65.0
46-55	6	15.0	15.0	80.0
55 and above	8	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 2 the data collected, ages 36-45 made up the 65% of the respondents while 15% represents the ages 46-55 and only 20% are for ages 55 and above

Table.3: Education Qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid ND	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
B.Sc	5	12.5	12.5	27.5
School Certificate	29	72.5	72.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 3 above, 72.5% of respondents are school certificate holders, 12.5% are B.Sc., and 15% have their national diploma (ND).

Table.4: Occupation of respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Civil/Public Sector	10	25.0	25.0	25.0
Farmer	14	35.0	35.0	60.0
Artisan	16	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 4 above, 25% of the respondents are civil or public sector workers, 35% are farmers, and 40% are artisans.

Table 5: Denomination of respondent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seventh-Day Adventist	23	57.5	57.5	57.5
	The pillar of truth Church of God Seventh-day	7	17.5	17.5	75.0
	Other	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From 5 table above, 57% of the respondents are Seventh-day Adventists (S.D.A), 17.5% are members of the Pillar of Truth Church of God Seventh- day and 25% makes up the other option.

Table.6: Was there Seventh-day Adventist Church established at Iferife Ntighauzo?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Agreed	12	30.0	30.0	45.0
	Strongly Agreed	22	55.0	55.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 6 above, 15% disagreed that “there was a Seventh-day Adventist Church established at Iferife Ntighauzo.” 30% agreed and 55% strongly agreed.

Table.7: Was the Church along Ahia Afo?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agreed	24	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Strongly Agreed	16	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table no7 above, 60% and 40% agreed as well as strongly agreed that “there was a Church along Ahia Afo.”

Table.8: Was the Church a make-up of the indigenes of Iferife village?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagreed	8	20.0	20.0	20.0
Agreed	6	15.0	15.0	35.0
Strongly Agreed	26	65.0	65.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 8 above, 80% of the respondents jointly agreed that the Church was a make-up of the indigenes of Iferife village.” 20% of the respondents disagreed.

Table 9: Where there other community membership in the old SDA Church in Iferife?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Undecided	10	25.0	25.0	25.0
Disagreed	6	15.0	15.0	40.0
Strongly Agreed	24	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 9 above our statistics of response, 60% strongly agreed that “there were other Community membership in the old S.D.A Church in Iferife.” 15% disagreed while 25% were undecided.

Table 10: Was there peace and harmony in the Church when it first started?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agreed	17	42.5	42.5	42.5
Strongly Agreed	23	57.5	57.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 10 data above, 100% of the respondents jointly agreed that “there was peace and harmony in the Church when it first started.”

Table 11: Was there a case of a vision in the Church that caused some members to relocate?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undecided	9	22.5	22.5	22.5
	Disagreed	4	10.0	10.0	32.5
	Agreed	17	42.5	42.5	75.0
	Strongly Agreed	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 11 statistics above, 67.5% of the respondents jointly agreed that “there was a case of vision in the Church that caused some members to relocate.” 10% disagreed and 22.5% are undecided.

Table 12: Did all the members in the old SDA Church Iferife before the crisis accept the visionary position as a regular seer in the church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undecided	11	27.5	27.5	27.5
	Strongly Disagreed	29	72.5	72.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 12 above, 72.5% of the respondents jointly disagreed that “all the members in the old SDA Church Iferife accepted the visionary person’s position as a regular seer in the church before the crisis, while 27.5% remains undecided.

Table 13: Was the vision an occasional one, just for the relocation of the old SDA Church in Iferife to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu in Ntighauzo Amairi Community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undecided	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Strongly Disagreed	4	10.0	10.0	25.0
	Agreed	30	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 13 data above, 75% of the respondents jointly agreed that “his vision was an occasional one, just for the relocation of the old SDA Church in Iferife to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu in Ntighauzo Amairi.” 15% are undecided.

Table 14: Was the Conference aware of this relocation?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undecided	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Agreed	8	20.0	20.0	30.0
	Strongly Agreed	28	70.0	70.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 14 above, 90% of the total respondents agreed that “the conference was aware of the relocation” while 10% were undecided.

Table 15: Did the Conference approve the relocation of the old SDA Church to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu in Ntighauzo Amairi Community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agreed	31	77.5	77.5	77.5
	Strongly Agreed	9	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 15 above, 100% of the respondents jointly agreed that “the conference approved the relocation of the old SDA Church to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu in Ntighauzo Amairi community.”

Table 16: Was there any attempt to settle the misunderstanding in the old S.D.A Church concerning the relocation by the Conference?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	5	12.5	12.5	12.5
	Agreed	6	15.0	15.0	27.5
	Strongly Agreed	29	72.5	72.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 16 above, 87.5% agreed that “there were attempts to settle the misunderstanding in the old S.D.A Church concerning the relocation by the conference”. 12.5% disagreed.

Table 17: Was the peace talk successful?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagreed	7	17.5	17.5	17.5
Strongly Disagreed	33	82.5	82.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 17 above, the entire respondents generally believed that the peace talk was not successful.

Table 18: Was the issue of relocating the Church to a central place one of the reasons that made some members of the Church to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu in Ntighauzo Amairi Community?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagreed	10	25.0	25.0	25.0
Agreed	17	42.5	42.5	67.5
Strongly Agreed	13	32.5	32.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 18 statistics above, 32.5% strongly agreed, 42.5% agreed and 25% disagreed that “the issue of relocating the Church in a central place was one of the reasons that took some members of the Church, then, to Mbara Amauhie in Amapu in Ntighauzo Amairi Community.”

Table 19: Was seeing of vision in the old S.D.A Church in Iferife the major issues that led to the division in that Church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Agreed	16	40.0	40.0	50.0
	Strongly Agreed	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 19 the data above, shows total of 90% agreed that “seeing of vision in the old S.D.A Church in Iferife one of the issues that led to the division in that church” 10% disagreed.

Table 20: Was it the interest of the indigenous people of Iferife in the Church one of the causes of the division?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Agreed	24	60.0	60.0	75.0
	Strongly Agreed	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 20 above, 85% of respondents agreed that the “interest of the indigenous people of Iferife in the Church was a cause to the division.” 15% disagreed.

Table 21: Was it for the purpose of acquiring a larger area to accommodate the members that led to the division?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	3	7.5	7.5	7.5
	Agreed	8	20.0	20.0	27.5
	Strongly Agreed	29	72.5	72.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From the table 21 above, 92.5% agreed that “the purpose of acquiring a larger area to accommodate the members was what led to the division” 7.5% disagreed.

Table 22: Are there other reasons for the division of the Church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	7	17.5	17.5	17.5
	Agreed	13	32.5	32.5	50.0
	Strongly Agreed	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 22 above, 32.5% agreed, 50% strongly agreed and 17.5% disagreed that “there are other reasons for the division of the Church.”

Table 23: Did the division of the old S.D.A branch in Iferife encourage peace and harmony amongst its members?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagreed	23	57.5	57.5	57.5
Strongly Disagreed	17	42.5	42.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 23 above, 100% of the respondents jointly believe that the division of the old S.D.A branch in Iferife did not encourage peace and harmony amongst its members.”

Table 24: Is the church at Mbara Amauhie still in existence and remains where it was first located?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Undecided	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
Disagreed	5	12.5	12.5	22.5
Strongly Disagreed	31	77.5	77.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 24 statistics above, 90% Of the total respondent believes that “the Church at Mbara Amauhie is not in existence where it was first located.” 10% are undecided.

Table 25: Was the new S.D.A Church in Mbara Amauhie relocated to somewhere else because of centrality?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagreed	12	30.0	30.0	30.0
Agreed	16	40.0	40.0	70.0
Strongly Agreed	12	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From table 25 data above, 70% agreed that “the new S.D.A Church in Mbara Amauhie relocated to somewhere else because of centrality” 30% disagreed.

Table 26: Was the new S.D.A Church in Mbara Amauhie relocated to somewhere else because of crisis?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	20	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Strongly Disagreed	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Respondents from table 26 data above jointly disagreed that “the new S.D.A Church in Mbara Amauhie was relocated to somewhere else because of crisis.”

Table 27: Was the new S.D.A Church in Mbara Amauhie relocate to somewhere else because of space in Mbara Amauhie?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undecided	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Agreed	16	40.0	40.0	50.0
	Strongly Agreed	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From the table above, 90% of the respondents agreed that “the new S.D.A Church in Mbara Amauhie was relocated to somewhere else because of space in Mbara Amauhie”. 10% were undecided.

Table 28: The movement of the Church to Mbara Amauhie, did it bring peace and harmony in the Community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undecided	12	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Disagreed	6	15.0	15.0	45.0
	Agreed	22	55.0	55.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From the table above, 55% of the respondents agreed that “the movement of the church to Mbara Amauhie, did it bring peace and harmony in the Community”.15% disagreed while 30% are undecided.

Table 29: Do you think that moving the Church to Mbara Amauhie from Iferife, brought an end to the division in Ntighauzo Amairi Community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	7	17.5	17.5	17.5
	Agreed	13	32.5	32.5	50.0
	Strongly Agreed	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From the data above on table 29, 82.5% agreed that “that moving the Church to Mbara Amauhie from Iferife, brought an end to the division in Ntighauzo Amairi Community”17.5% disagreed.

Table 30: What is the relationship between S.D.A Church and the Pillar of truth Church of God Seventh- day members in Ntighauzo Amairi Community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagreed	7	17.5	17.5	17.5
	Strongly Disagreed	4	10.0	10.0	27.5
	Agreed	29	72.5	72.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

From the data above on table 30, 72.5% of respondents agreed that “there is relationship between S.D.A Church and the Pillar of truth Church of God Seventh- day members in Ntighauzo Amairi Community” 20.5% disagreed.

This research was carried out in Ntighauzo Amairi Community in Obingwa Local Government Area of Abia State, using 40 respondents which comprised of members from Seventh- day Adventist Church Ntighauzo and the Pillar of truth Church of God Seventh-day. The study revealed that many has lost their lives, properties burnt and many displaced as a result of religious conflict and disharmony in a local Church. Also, there are lots of negative repercussions which are felt in the Church and secular Communities where the Churches are located as a result of disharmony in the Churches. This research submits that discord between Churches brings about conflict. Furthermore, it was discovered from this research that Church discord causes division among the members of the congregation and slows down the growth of the Church because people stops attending Church services, taking part in fellowship activities, giving to Church, attending events. Sometimes, they blame their leaders for failed leadership. It was also discovered that Church discord indicates a lack of spiritual life in the members as it makes it difficult to carry out evangelistic campaigns within the neighborhood.

CONCLUSION

We have in this paper examined Church as a medium of peace and harmony in the society: A case study of Seventh- day Adventist Church, Ntighauzo South. Answers have been provided to basic research questions. The research discovered that Christian Church should serve as a medium of peace and harmony in the contemporary society. The work pointed out that Adventist church leaders, pastors in various levels should work in harmony with the leaders of churches in different places and groups to secure peace and harmony for harmonious relationship with members of Adventist faith and the entire community in Ntighauzor in particular and Nigeria in general. The paper revealed that the Church of God is an instrument of peace and harmony in the world which is expected to showcase love, peace, harmony and truth to the world. The leaders of Adventist church should teach her members the need to demonstrate love, kindness and peace to the community. The paper discovered some causes of disharmony in the church which includes: Religious fanaticism, inadequate spiritual knowledge, and inability to appreciate and accept change, religious members' lack of knowledge on how to resolve issues and arrogance of religious and spiritual issues. The paper points out that impact on church division and disharmony leads to negative mindset of the spiritual life, which is responsible for church splitting. The work suggests solutions to the church disharmony to include dialogue and inter faith relations, interface dialogue between the church leaders and members and prompt responses by the church leaders to call for dialogue since peace and love characterizes the church of God.

There is need to promote peace and harmony in the various churches and secular communities where the churches are situated. This would go long way to foster unity as people living in such communities will be together and carry out their activities without much disharmony. The work suggests that mutual dialogue would help to restore trust, peace , harmony and church growth in their different churches, communities in Ntighauzo Amairi community in Obingwa Local Government Area of Abia State in particular and Nigeria in general.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Church leaders of Seventh-day Adventist church in Ntighauzo South should arise in consultation with other high ranking Pastors within the church to institute peace and harmony in the society by making sure that they have dialogue with the aggrieved church members and traditional rulers of the community and seek for the peace of the communities. The Pastors and religious leaders in various places should promote and propagate peace and teach morals to their members and political public office holders in other to bring infrastructural development in the society and Church Community.

Church leaders are to invest in sound biblical teachings on appropriate church doctrines on prophecy and interpretations. Members of Seventh-day Adventist church should demonstrate exemplary life style by maintaining peace and harmony.

Finally, the Church by fostering peace and harmony should proclaim and focus on the mission of “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). This will help to win souls for our Lord Jesus Christ.

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History of Western Education in Ogidi-Ijumu 1900-2022: The Role of the Church and the Society

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ABSTRACT

One of the greatest impacts of the coming of Christianity to Ogidi-Ijumu, is the establishment of Primary Schools, which eventually produced the elite that started the secondary education in Ogidi-Ijumu. It was a literate education in the spirit of the Church Missionary Society's motif for the establishment of schools which is Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. An education that enhanced local, national and international socialization, personal and community development, and global relevance. With the employment of historical survey method, this paper seeks to document the history of the educational endeavor of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in the establishment of St. John's Primary School in Ogidi-Ijumu, and the establishment of Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu. The ripple effects which is the establishment of Government Day Secondary School and many other private nursery and Primary Schools in the town. The paper assesses the impact of these educational efforts on the people, the current state of the schools and what it portends for the future. It is a sociological description of an institution (education) among a people (the Ogidi-Ijumu) of Kogi State.

INTRODUCTION

Following the statement of our Lord Jesus Christ in the great commission given to his church, that is "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you (Matthew 28:20 RSV), the planting of Christianity anywhere especially by the Mission Churches (Anglican, Roman Catholic) has always been accompanied with education – establishment of schools. The schools as agent of literate education (Ojo 195) have served as the vista for multifarious – social, economic, political and physical transformation and development. The history of Western education in Ogidi-Ijumu owes its origins to the Christian church, especially CMS (Anglican) and The Roman Catholic Church, through their effort in establishment of Primary Schools – St. Johns by the CMS in 1927, St. Michael by the RCM in 1947. This was done by the church according to her ability. With the result of the Primary Schools, the whole community that is Ogidi-Ijumu at last found it necessary and established a

Secondary School – Community Secondary School in 1979. This work documents the history of St. John’s Primary School, and Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu. It seeks to answer such questions as: why was a Secondary School not established in the community by the church for a very long time; has education been beneficial to the community; has the existence of the C.M.S (Anglican) of any relevance; what was education in Ogidi-Ijumu in the pre-contact and the contact era? the present dilapidated structure of St. Johns Primary School and education generally in Ogidi is highlighted and appropriate implications for the future is drawn. The work surmised that in response to the efforts of our heroes past, education in Ogidi-Ijumu need the rejuvenation of the church’s and community’s spirit in revamping this very useful instrument that has been of great value to the life and continuity of Ogidi-Ijumu.

Education

Education has been defined as that process that help to develop the whole man, physically, mentally, morally, politically, socially and technologically to enable him function effectively in any environment in which he may find himself (Ojo 75). Three forms of education have been identified which include “informal, formal and non-formal education (Ojo 75). Informal education is received through experience, exposure to the environment at home, at work or plays; examples through family and friends, from travel, mass media, books and newspaper etc. is not organized and is not the subject matter of this paper. Formal education; this refers to the highly institutionalized, chronologically graded, and hierarchically structured educational system starting from primary to the university. Non-formal education: this covers any organized, systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population. It includes agricultural extension and farmers training programmes, occupational skill training outside the formal system, instruction on health, nutrition, family planning and so on. The emphasis of this paper is on the last two types of education.

Society

Society, a noun, the aggregate of people living together in a more or less ordered community (Hornsby 207). Among other meanings of the word society which include an

organization, or club, or association, the meaning of the word society in this paper refers to the first one, which is akin to the word community which means a people of a district or country considered collectively especially in the context of social values and responsibilities (Hornsby 207); here we mean Ogidi-Ijumu, the people and the town.

Ogidi-Ijumu, a brief ethnography purview: Ogidi-Ijumu is one of the ancient towns in Northeast Yorubaland (Ojo 40) and it is a major town in the present Ijumu Local Government Area of Kogi State. The town lies between latitudes $7^{\circ}43'$ and $7^{\circ}48'$ N of the equator and longitudes $5^{\circ}59'$ and $6^{\circ}2'$ E of the Green which Meridian (Olatunde 25). Its boundaries to northeast and east are with Kabba and Kakun respectively, to the North is with Iyara, to the west is with Aiyere and to the South is with Ogale. It is in Ijumu Oke district of Ijumu Local Government Area in the West Senatorial District of Kogi State. Ogidi people are Yoruba, who speaks the 'Okun' dialect of Yoruba Language, which belong to the northeastern Yoruba dialect areas (Otioju 15).

Judging from the 1963 census, the population of Ogidi was put at 15,000. Ogidi is about four kilometers in length and one kilometer in breath (Ojo 41). The people occupy four major areas along the Kabba-Ogidi-Ayere road, namely Ileteju, Iga/Igah, Okoro, Ilare/Ilaire and other few places like Origa and Igbolaere. Other inhabitants are the Ebira who are mainly farmers scattered all over the fertile farmlands of Ogidi, but who normally comes to the town to market their products and also avail themselves of the social amenities like school, hospital, church, mosque in the town.

Education in the pre-contact era in Ogidi-Ijumu: Education which is called *Eko*, in the pre-contact era among the people of Ogidi-Ijumu was purely, traditional education, and which was the system or process of cultural transmission from one generation to another. It was the transmission of the whole aspect of their culture or continuity especially as living a culture is the surest route to its perpetuation or continuity (Ojo 117). The traditional education was interchangeable with the culture of the people. In this education, every Ogidi-Ijumu persons is pupil and the society is the educator and the examiner.

Though this was not an informal form of education called "*Eko*" meaning, training (Ojo 79). It enables the Ogidi-Ijumu children to participate fully in her social life and most

importantly in the culture of the people. It was an all embracing training which qualifies the children for the enrolment into the traditional societies such as Imole, Ofosi, Ogboni, Oro, Egbe awo, Ifa, etc (Jegede Personal Communication). It includes education about environment, (*Ayika*) house management; *eko ile*, and above all instruction in the social norms of the Ogidi-Ijumu with particular emphasis on respect for elders, government, cultural instruction, spiritual and moral values. The children acquired considerable linguistics skill (*Kiko ede*) and enlarged their vocabularies through listening to folk tales, *Ipalo*, proverbs, *Owe*, riddles, *alo*, stories, *itan*, tales, *Iye*. A comprehensive education geared towards physical training, with character building, manual activity and intellectual training.

The importance of education in Ogidi-Ijumu and the Yoruba generally can be seen through the backing it receives in the traditional religion, Ifa oracle, the Yoruba god of wisdom and divination system (Ojo 79) which is the intellectual think tank of the Yoruba has Oranmila says:

Bi ako omo eni	If we teach a child
Omo eni agbon sasa	The child will be wise
Bi ike omo olokun	Like the Olokun
Bi ako ko omoeni	If we do not teach a child
Omo eni ago susu	The child will be a food
Bi ibawini omo otuife	Like Iba wini of Ife

The oracle shows how Yoruba traditional religion has such a grip on the people about the training of children. The objective was to produce an individual who is honest, respectable, skilled, cooperative and conforms to the social orders of the day (Ojo 79).

As noble as this informal educational system was, it lacked the rudiment of literacy. It was and can be glossily termed as inefficient. It could not equip the individual with the skills and knowledge required for the process whereby the social, economic and political life of Ogidi people undergoes a transformation, that is geared towards an improvement in the quality of their life. It was not an education with universal relevance, value and appeal. So while the concept of education was not foreign to the Ogidi-Ijumu people, the art of reading and writing were not known.

The planting of Christianity by the CMS (Anglican) in 1902 and the harbinger of Western Education in Ogidi-Ijumu: It was in 1902, that one Mr Bamigbaye of Ejugbe (a settlement in Ogidi) brought Christianity to Ogidi from his sojourn in the western part of Nigeria, after he was converted at Abeokuta. Scared to preach Christianity to the people because of persecution from the adherents of Oro traditional religion, he chose to read the Bible on his own in his house and all those who were interested in what he was doing went to him, to learn to read the Yoruba alphabet called ABD and to write (Ojo 195). With the gradual growth in the number of converts by 1910 a good number of people could read and write, but the learning, reading and writing were eventually being done in the different apole-settlements. With these settlements which include Iloko, Ebere, Otun, Okoro, Igbogaja, Tepe, Oloyi, Aro, Ebeni, a primary school was set up in Ogidi in 1910, just like it was done in Kabba (Crampton 40). Thus, the necessity to be able to read, and write as a necessary tool in being a Christian served as the harbinger for the foundation of education in Ogidi-Ijumu.

The establishment of the First Primary School - St. John's Primary School Ogidi-Ijumu, 1927: With the movement of Ogidi-Ijumu people from their different apoles – settlement to one central location in 1917 along the road that was being constructed from Owo to Lokoja, one of the out fall of this was the coming together of the CMS (Anglican) members to establish a primary school in the town. While prayer houses were established in Ilare, Okoro, Iga and Ileteju, there was the location of the common central church building at a land in Iga that had been given to the church. With the siting of the church at Iga, there was the decision to establish a primary school at Okoro at the present site of Dispensary/Maternity in 1927 (Jegede Personal Communication). The maternity is presently located on the school's old stricture, while its football and play field now hosts Ogidi town hall and a field for large community gathering. There was on this land was also a cemetery for Christians – CMS members, all of which has been leveled for the multipurpose town hall, and business centres. The Okoro prayer house is still standing close by. The school as owned by the church was named St. John's Primary School, Ogidi-Ijumu.

The beginning of the school, though was a joyous thing to the Christians, there were initial problems encountered in its growth. First, with Ogidi having its traditional religion holding grip on the people (Michael Personal Communication) the school could not grow, the

release of boys to the school means a loss to the traditional religion, more so, it is the boys that were more useful in the farm; as farming was the major occupation of the people. Therefore, girls were sent to the school which account for why at inception very few pupils enrolled, because only girls were allowed by their parents. This cannot be far from the fact that, the people were yet to know the value of western education and what it held for the future of the town and the people. The District Officers have to compel the head chiefs to release male sons to the school or face deposition.

St John's Primary School was mooted and established through the advice of the CMS missionaries and the church agents who told the people that: "if they can be-coming to church as Christians, they can also start a school for the benefit of their children who eventually will be able to read, write, serve in government and transform the people and the town" (Jegede Personal Communication). The agents that were supervising the Anglican Church (St Johns Church) in Ogidi were already literate to an extent (Jegede Personal Communication).

With the agreement reacted among the *adugbos* – quarters in Ogidi such as Ilaere, Okoro, Igah and Iteteju to have a joint hut for worship in 1932 at its present location (St. John's Church) the school was built at Okoro through the combined effort of all the quarters. It was agreed that if the church is located at Iga, the school should be at the upper side of the town, that is Okoro, thereby giving room for mutual benefit to all. If people moved down to Iga for worship, their children will move up to attend the school at Okoro (Jegede Personal Communication).

St. John's Primary school was started with the coming together of the quarters in a joint community effort and labour. The buildings were made of mud and thatch roofed with grass. At the first site in the present day dispensary/maternity in Okoro quarters, only two classrooms and a small office were erected, and with just two or three staff. Mr Ale from Ikare was the last Head master of the primary school while it lasted at Okoro.

Movement of St. Johns Primary School to a very large expense of land which already is hosting St. Johns Anglican Church started gradually and finally in 1954/55. At the present location of the primary school within the compound of the church, everybody participated, the people went to the farms around to look for stones for the foundation of the buildings.

The work was done with joy, and there were no sign of looking back. Six classrooms were built and a long hall. Planks and plywood were used to carve out the HM's office. Six other rooms were built to house the teachers, all were roofed with grass (Jegede Personal Communication).

The CMS from Akoko and Ondo supplied the teachers. The school at its initial stage operated from standards 1– 6, after which the pupils will either move to United School Iffe-Ikoyi or St. Andrews Primary School Kabba for standard 7. Standard 7 was granted to St. Johns in 1962. The first HM after the granting of standard 7 was Mr. Olusuyi from Ogori (Jegede Personal Communication).

The land for the church which now included the school because of its largeness was given to the church by Chief Noah Olugbemiro Elero, free of charge. It's a land that lies in between the stream with irregular geographical description due to encroachment. The relationship between the church and the school has been very cordial like father and son. It was the church that paid the teachers and this was done for two years before the government came in. The church agents/catechist was the school manager. The school manager collects the school fees, remit the same to the church from where the salary of the teachers were paid. The church appoints the teachers, while at times the pupils assist the agents in menial jobs in the church (Jegede Personal Communication).

Pupils in the school participated actively in the yearly church harvest, and a good number also served as choristers in the church. With time, in the late 80s the school was divided into two, that is junior 1-3 and senior 4-6 primary schools and were headed by different Head Masters.

It is of note that between 1962-1965, there were shortage of teachers and standard 7 pupils were recruited to teach in the school as probationer teachers. With the increase in population of enrolment over the years, there was the challenge of accommodation for the teachers, a factor which moved the church and school to secure accommodation for the teachers in the town, and the offices were converted to classrooms.

In 1991, with the creation of new Local Government Areas in Kwara State, Ijumu Local Government Area been one of them, there was the need and St. Johns Primary school was split into two, that is St. John 1 and St. Johns 2, running full primary school curriculum

with different Headmasters (Tolorunju Personal Communication). By this development there was room for the creation of more jobs for more teachers to be engaged in the school.

The list of headmasters that have managed St. John's Primary School

List of the Headmaster (1) P A Oyedeji 1/1/48---16/12/48 (2) G A Ajisafe 1/1/49---16/1/50 (3) R Olaniyi 16/1/50--- 22/2/51 (4) A A Omonogun 22/1/52-- -19/12/52 (5) J A Sale 19/1/53---31/12/53. (6) L O Ijagbemi 18/1/54--- 1/7/56. (7) D A Bodamisi 2/7/56--19/1/59 (8) G A Fasaye 30/1/59--- 19/1/60 (9) A O Garuba 30/1/61---20/12/62 (10) T O Mokelu 25/1/63-- 22/12/64 (11) J B Ola 25/1/65---7/2/75 (12) S A Olatunji 30/10/75-- 12/2/76 (13) J O Olugbamiye 20/1/76--- 13/5/76 (14) D B Eniayekan 3/9/76--11/1/78 (15) Z A Ore 7/7/78---13/8/78 (16) Ch D O Kumolu 3/1/79-- 31/8/79 (17) S A Amupitan 3/9/79--8/9/80 (18) Fatope 9/1/81-- 17/981 (19) E A Dada 22/9/81---31/8/82 (20) Rev G A Ganna 1/9/82---31/10/84. (21) L O Ijagbemi 1/11/84--- 1/3/85 (22) R. S. Ako 22/4/85----30/9/85. (23) J S Daramola 1/10/85--- 30/12/87. (24) R F Ihinmikalu 1/1/88--- 31/1/88 (25) J S Daramola 1/2/88--- 10/10/94 (26) S F Adeyanju 18/10/94--- 26/5/96 (27) C O Abodunde 27/5/96-- 9/9/98 (28) P A Balogun 10/9/98---30/10/02 (29) Mrs D M. Alonge 30/10/02-- 10/3/07 (30) Mrs E O Olayinka 16/5/07----28/11/08 (31) Canon T. T. Tolorunju 28/11/08---9/11/10 (32) D O Olupeka 9/11/10----30/6/15 (33) E O Awe 30/6/15----20/11/16 (34) A T Olarewaju 21/11/16- 8/6/17 (35) S B Oshatoke 9/5/17--- 5/11/17 (36) D T Arowolo 6/11/ 17 to date (Archives of St. John's Primary School Ogidi 2023).

The impact of St. John's Primary School and other Schools on Ogidi-Ijumu

Through the establishment of St. Johns Primary School in Ogidi-Ijumu, significant changes, and development has been recorded in multidimensional way in Ogidi.

1. **Socially:** Ogidi-Ijumu can now compete with other towns in the local government and the nation through the enlightenment it has brought. The pupils have learnt a lot, it has served as the spring board for further educational attainment for majority of children in Ogidi-Ijumu. Through this, many sons and daughters have become great and had played significant roles locally, nationally and at international level. The school has helped to open the eyes of our children to modern ways of life. Many sons who would not have been educated were opportune to be educated, such as Dauda Ipinmisho, a physically challenged person, who through the closeness of the school to his father's farm, was always carried and dropped in

the school, and who became a graduate and chairman Guild of Editors of Nigeria. Mr. Sunday Bada, passed through the school, joined the Nigeria police, and became an Olympic Gold medalist (Ipinmisho Personal Communication).

2. **Politically:** Many products of St. Johns have been appointed into one political office or the other at the local, national and international level, for example, Hon. Medupin became Commissioner of Education in Kogi State; James Omoniwa, Chairman Nigeria Labour Congress, Kwara State; Patrick Adaba, Deputy Governor Kogi State; Hon Fehinti Dada, Chairman Ijumu L.G.A.; Hon Justice Gbenro Olupeka, High Court of Justice Kogi State; Controller General P.D. Olorunsola, Nigeria Custom Services; Director General NDLE Chief Lanre Ipinmisho; Editor in Chief Daily Times of Nigeria – Dauda Ipinmisho; Sir Chief Abejide Eniolorunda – Deputy Controller General, Nigeria Immigration Services; Mr. S.O. Thomas, Chief Executive Officer, National Insurance Commission and Continental President, Insurance in Africa; Mr. Segun Ogbonnewo- General Manager Guaranty Trust Bank etc.

3. **Spiritually:** With St. Johns serving as the spring board, many sons and daughters have become Christians, with vocations to serve in various churches either as founders or as ministers in those churches as Bishop, Priests Apostle, Prophets e.g. Very Rev Matins Ogbonnewo, Provost St. Barnabas Anglican Cathedral Ilorin; Rt. Rev Dr. Paul Ojo, Bishop Diocese of Ijumu (Anglican Communion) (Ojo 203). Thus, education has brought light, has enlighten the people, and has enhanced the good living, enhance unity, limit darkness and superstitions in the community.

4. **Economic Development:** The products of St. John's have been able to discover the limitless opportunities available to them in the wider world, and have used these opportunities to pursue their carriers and goals in life, thereby bringing home modern buildings, scholarship to the less privilege, electricity, shops etc. In the sphere of unity and harmonious living, the teachers and pupils of St. John's Primary School have always engage in Children National Day, Interhouse Sports, football matches, match pasts, home economic classes, joint examinations with sister primary school that is, St. Michaels Primary School

which was founded by the Roman Catholic Mission in 1947 (Jegade Personal Communication).

Why was St. John's College not founded?

Alongside the contribution of St. John's Primary School to the educational development of Ogidi was the question, why did the church not go further in establishing a "St John's College: the factors responsible were that, the church (Anglican Church) in Ogidi could not fund the establishment of a college alone. And as a part of LokoJa Archdeaconry, and later Kabba Archdeaconry, the joint effort at the establishment of St. Barnabas secondary school at Kabba, and Ijumu Anglican Secondary School at Iyara did not allow individual towns to be able to fund a College (Oyeleke Personal Communication).

Some Personalities that have passed through St. Johns Primary School

- (1) Adeyemi Sumanu Maliki – Commissioner of Police
- (2) Mr. Aroniyo Paul – Commissioner of Police
- (3) Samuel B. Kinrin – Accountant
- (4) E.E. Oloruntobi – Medical Doctor
- (5) Mr. Adejumo Olayinka – Customs
- (6) Mr. Z. A. Oloruntoyin – Economic Planning Governors – Office - Ilorin
- (7) Mr. Ola Osanupin – NNPC Office – Ilorin
- (8) Prof. C.F. Ajakaiye (Mrs) ABU Zaria
- (9) Mr. James Amupitan – Accountant, School of Agriculture Ahmadu Bello University
- (10) Mr. Dada Abu NNPC – Ilorin
- (11) Chief G.E. Olupeka Accountant, finance office Minna
- (12) Ade Bello Kogi State University
- (13) Mrs. Olarewaju Banke
- (14) Chief M.A. Adeyinka DSS Ijumu
- (15) Mr. F.A. Ajayi, Principal, MD CEO TAACO
- (15) Lawyer F. Oloruntoba, NDLEA, Lagos
- (16) Dr. Philips Alafiatayo, UAIF; Kano
- (17) Late J.J. Jermirade (Principal), Govt Teachers College, Bunchi Kano etc

(18) Prof. Olatunde, University of Abuja

(19) Prof. Sadiku Rotimi, Germany, and South Africa etc (Jegede Personal Communication)

The present State of St. John's Primary School Ogidi-Ijumu and its Implications

A visit to St. John's Primary School which now house two primary schools is in an appalling state. The earliest buildings, classrooms, hall, headmasters office have collapsed. The young trees that served as shade for the school have become large trunks that have destroyed the buildings. Majority of the remaining classrooms have had their roofs destroyed by wind-storm. There are very few teachers (about 5) including the Headmaster. While, it was the appalling state of St. Michael's Catholic primary school that moved a good number of those who had passed through the school and other sons of Ogidi to come to its rescue in 2020, which resulted in its total renovation, St. Johns primary school need the same intervention.

It is as a result of the declining state of the primary school that has not only lead to decline in education and reduction in the pupils enrolment, but also the establishment of other private schools in Ogidi which the parents cannot afford the fees, and even parents sending their children to Kabba for primary education. Since Ogidi-Ijumu is an agrarian community, the future of primary education is not certain if the mission primary schools are left unattended to.

Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu (1979)

While there has been primary education in Ogidi-Ijumu for almost half of a century as provided by St. John's Primary School (Anglican) and St. Michael's Primary School (Roman Catholic), the need for a secondary school was very glaring. Difficulties that the products of these primary schools do encountered in furthering their education include:

1. The children has to travel far to another town at times on foots, covering long distances and this became major hindrance to many who were from indigent homes to progress educationally (Olupeka Personal communication).
2. The lack of fund to be able to cater for the expenses involved in sending a child to secondary school beyond Ogidi-Ijumu.

3. There was the rationalization in admission against the children from other towns other than where the secondary schools were located (Olupeka Personal communication).

The Beginning of Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu

It was on Dec 26, 1976 at the general meeting of Ogidi Development Union, when the erstwhile executive was dissolved and Pa. R. A. Aiyenugba was elected president that he moved that we should have a secondary school. As a follow up to this well received suggestion, the money which the community had contributed through the auspices of the ODU and was earlier earmarked for the execution of pipe borne water project was used for the construction of buildings for the secondary school (Jegede Personal Communication).

A total of 100 bags of cement were purchased at the sum of six naira N6 per bag. The first four blocks were built by Ogidi Community. The work was done through the Firm and supervision of Chief Baiyegbusi Iwa, a bulding engineer based at Akure and a native of Ogidi, who also has passed through St. Johns Primary School. At the meeting of the ODU in 1976, an education committee was put in place which was headed by Mr. Paul Medupin who was already a principal in Government Secondary School Idofin Kwara State. The committee interviewed the prospective students yearly at the initial and also set an entrance examination for them. Successful candidates are given admission. The establishment of Ogidi community secondary school was another major turning point and a relief in the educational development of Ogidi-Ijumu. A very good number of children attended the school.

The education committee which was made up of professional teachers also interviewed interested teachers and to engage the best available hands in the teaching of the subjects in the school from the take off, Ogidi Community paid the teachers for two years before the Kwara State government took over the payment of the teachers of the school. This enhanced job security and carrier development, and the movement of teachers as needed. The land for the establishment of Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu was freely given to the Ogidi Community by the Okelare Clan (Jegede Personal Communication). Some principals that have worked noticeably in the college include Mr. Olufade who later became Rev. Deacon Olufade (Ogori) Ven Adegboye Sam, Mr. Olusegun and prophet Onujah.

The first set of students graduated from Community Secondary School Ogidi in May/June 1985 with very good performance in all the subjects. The Ogidi Students Union

made it a policy to see that interested undergraduates and graduates of Ogidi origin offer summer classes free of charge in preparing the students for their final West African Examination Council (Ibileke Personal Communication).

The Establishment of Government Day Secondary School Ogidi

Sources have it that, the Kwara State government had approved a Government Secondary School for Ogidi-Ijumu some years earlier, but it was diverted to Iyamoye in the same Ijumu Local Government Area. This is as a result of the desperate need of a secondary school in Iyamoye as of that time. This was why Community Secondary School was built in Ogidi by the indigenes, in order not to keep delaying the education of their children.

It was on the occasion of the visit of the Governor of Kwara State, Alhaji Adamu Attah for the official opening of Community Secondary School in 1979 that he was so impressed with the work done in the school, and how he was received and entertained, that there and then he approved Government Day Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu (Jegede Personal Communication).

At present the numbers of schools in Ogidi-Ijumu has risen and include the following:

- (1) St. Michaels Primary School
- (2) St. Johns Primary School (2)
- (3) Model Primary School
- (4) Jamatu Nasril Islam School
- (5) UBE1 School
- (6) UBE2 school
- (7) Community Secondary School
- (8) Government Day Secondary School

Private schools in Ogidi

- (1) Anti Bose Nursery/Primary School – Ilaire
- (2) St. John’s Nursery/Primary school - Iga
- (3) Ile Oba Nursery/Primary School - Ilaire
- (4) St. Paul’s Nursery/Primary School - Ileteju

CONCLUSION

Like a mustard seed, from the learning and reading of ABD, Ijapa etc, Ogidi-Ijumu through the products of its Christian Communities' educational effort has experienced a multi-dimensional development which the town will for ever be registered for among the comity of towns in their reception of the gospel, and the attendant result which is education. Beginning with St. Johns Primary School, and other schools, the products of the schools have risen to occupy and played important roles in the social economic and political landscape of Nigeria and at the international level. Thus, the importance of literate educational effort of the church and the society has been justified.

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Oral Sources

S/n	Name	Status	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
1	Ade Ibileke	a pupil of St. John's Primary School in the late sixties, member of Volunteer Graduate Teachers in Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu. An Accountant/Banker in Lagos	Ogidi – Ijumu	3 April 2022
2	Chief Michael A. Olupeka	a pupil of St. John's Primary School in 1928, a retired teacher, Headmaster Iffe-Ikoyi United Primary School	Ogidi – Ijumu	12 Dec 2017
3	Jegede Gabriel	a product of St. John's Primary School Ogidi, Retired Teacher, Secretary of the Committee for the establishment of Community Secondary School Ogidi-Ijumu	Ogidi – Ijumu	15 July 2023
4	Paul Oyeleke Dada	a pupil of St. John's Primary School in the late sixties, a Retired Teacher and Presently a Priest in Anglican Diocese of Ijumu	Ogidi – Ijumu	16 July 2023
5	Titus Taiwo Tolorunju	a pupil of St. John's Primary School in the 80s, a retired Teacher and Headmaster; a Priest of the Anglican Diocese of Ijumu	Ogidi – Ijumu	18 July 2023
6	Tunde Dauda Ipinmisho	a pupil of St. John's Primary School in the Sixties, Retired Editor Daily Times Nigeria, Chairman, Nigeria Guild of Editors	Ogidi – Ijumu	3 April 2022