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# **Impact of Belief in Destiny Mythology on Healing Process Among the Christian families of South-West Region of Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

The study investigated the impact of belief in destiny mythology on healing process among the Christian families of South-West Region of Nigeria. Three local governments were involved, Osogbo, Ife Central and Ede North. The study was guided by the following research question; What is the impact of belief in destiny mythology on healing process among the Christian families of South-West Region, Nigeria? The study was founded on *Emile Durkheim theory and the Functionalism*. This theory sees religion as a consistent institution of every society and purely natural. The study applied the descriptive survey and phenomenology designs and a mixed method approach, using proportionate stratified, probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The sample size included the 400 Christians and 23 health care-givers, 10 spiritual healers, 8 traditional healers, 1 Doctor, 1 Psychologist, 1 Counsellor and 2 theologians. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) and Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample size determination formulas were employed. Instruments for data collection were questionnaires, interview guide and observation guide as a complementary tool. The triangulation data collections method and the sequential explanatory data analysis method were used respectively. Results showed that, though majority believed that only God changes the destiny of a person, the other different opinion suggests and confirmed one of the beliefs that “those with mystical powers like the *Ifa* priests, the witches or individuals can be beneficial if courted because they are not

regarded as total evil-doers. Pearson's Correlation was used to verify the relationship and the results indicated a statistically significant strong correlation ( $r = 0.648$  with  $p = 0.000$  which is less than 0.05). The study found that there was strong positive correlations coefficient between holistic health and belief in destiny mythology. Therefore, the study recommends that (1) there is a need to censor what social media feeds the people, for instance, movies that propagate excessive visit to the herbalists as the solution to every problem are a negative influence and dangerous. (2) Christians involvement in movie-making is recommended, (3) also, the provision of basic amenities by the government is suggested. (4) Lastly, this study recommends a study guide on traditional healing practices in each denomination beginning from the "Small Christian Communities" in each Parish.

**Keywords:** *Traditional mystical power, holistic health, holistic process, destiny mythology wholeness, Christian families, illness, sickness or disease, and health care-givers.*

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The image and likeness of God in the human person (male & female) connects him or her to the Divine. This is because, in every man and woman, is a composite of the body, the mind and the soul. The soul represents the divine nature in the human person. This is the reason why St. Thomas Aquinas says "Man reflects in his or her being certain proportion with the divine being, locating between two worlds: made up of material body and spiritual soul, the first one ties him to the sensible world and the second to the spiritual world" (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 91, a. 1). Man is created to love God, serve him and be happy with him in the hereafter. Religion helps the individual to achieve this desire, while health is all-encompassing state of who we are as complete individuals. It is the most significant aspect of our existence. Holistic health is when the human person is healthy in his totality. This means, his physical, psychological, spiritual, economic and mental aspects are in right connection with each another, thereby producing a good state of well-being in the individual.

In this study, the Christian family is considered as "the first and basic expression of man's social nature" (John Paul II, 1994: 1). According to John Paul II, the family is the smallest social unit and a community of persons. In this community of persons, two genders stay together and accept each other. They give themselves in love as they profess their faith during the sacramental bond of marriage. According to the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage, "the children born to them should consolidate that covenant enriching and deepening the conjugal communion of the father and mother" (John Paul II, 1994: 7). Thus, because of the significance and the vital role the family plays in the entire community and in the society, there is utmost need to safeguard the interest of the family. If the family is healthy, the society will remain cohesive. Hence, this is the justification of the desire to help the families especially Christian families who profess faith in Jesus Christ. This will help all family members to have a stable health and be able to fulfil their responsibilities in building the society for the good of all humanity. Therefore, this study aims to

investigate the impact of belief in destiny mythology on healing process among the Christian families of South-West Region of Nigeria. The goal is to discover different ways through which belief in destiny mythology has affected the Christian families of South-West Region of Nigeria in their quest for holistic healing.

In Jewish tradition, the Hebrews have divine origin of mysticisms, as well as the ultimate creative potential in God, who created the world by pronouncing His will in Gen 1:1-31. This understanding of God as the source marks the beginning of Jewish mystical and magical traditions. In Gen 20:17, Abraham prayed and God healed Abimelech, the wife and the maidservants, hence they bore children. At mount Horeb, God called and appeared to Moses through a burning bush, despite the bush catching fire, it was not consumed (Ex 3: 1-3). Moses also delivered the people of Israel by stretching his rod on the Red Sea according to the command of the Lord. This took place so that the people of Israel could pass on the dry land while Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and horsemen perished in the sea (Ex 14: 23-27).

In New Testament, Jesus Christ is revealed as the fullness God's revelation. He was conceived in the Virgin Mary, through the Holy Spirit's power. God sent the Angel Gabriel to announce the conception and the birth of Jesus to Mary. A virgin was to give birth to a son by the name Jesus without an intercourse with a man (Lk 1: 26-38). Jesus continues the work of his Father in the various manifestations especially through the miracles that he performed during His life time when He was with his twelve disciples. According to Snyder (1999: 23-24), the healing of the blind man, like the healing of the paralytic, describes the powerful presence of Jesus. Jesus performed many miracles during his brief public life, but the greatest of all, and the crowning proof of his divinity was his resurrection from the dead (Matt 28: 1-18). On this miracle rests the whole case for Christianity (Hayes & Drummey, 1996). The power of God in Jesus is manifested in these experiences as the one who has authority over heaven and earth.

In the same vein, this great power of God hovers in created things and operates in the world for the good of humankind. For this reason, Bojoga (2016) in the compilation made by many students all over the world explains the overwhelming power of water in the world. In the history of humankind, water has been important towards the spread of population on the earth, "being necessary and having an important role in all stages of human life, in all human activities, in all religious rituals, generating the largest concentrations of population" (Erasmus, 2014-2016: 6). According to these various authors, water does the work of harnessing the force of the waves, the tides and marine currents, water is a rich and an inexhaustible source of green energy it is an indispensable resource for all industries worldwide and has generated successful business opportunities.

Analysing oral Greek charms, Passalis (2013), gave an exposition of the power of words among the Greeks. The power of sound being alleged is the focus of the author. For him, "the use of incomprehensible or nonsensical words and expressions of unknown meaning and origin



constitutes an intercultural, diachronic characteristic of verbal magic” (Passalis, 2013: 1). Foley (1980: 86), supports this argument by emphasizing that “the effectiveness of charms is incumbent upon their oral performances and sound patterns”. In effect, Passalis explains that many a time, the unique rhythmic quality of speech is the foundation of grammar of poetry and also the languages types. The belief of these people is that there is mystical power beyond explanation that operates in these words even when they seem absurd.

Moving on to England, something interesting is discovered too. The spiritual forces that pervade modern England is the manner of expression by God for instance, through wonders and signs sometimes. This force is manifested in different ways and may appear in terms of angels, demons, goblins and ghosts (Oldridge, 2016). In his book titled: the Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England, Oldridge reflects on the supernatural theme of Tudor and Stuart England. He discovers the attempts of human being in the understanding, hardness and how to accommodate the supernatural powers and the key roles they play in the contemporary world.

Among the Mexicans too, the Spanish missionary friars affirmed the presence of occult beliefs among the people. These occult beliefs confuse the people and exhibit terror of the dark. For them, they thought it was their duty to eliminate it. However, this was not just a simple task. They discovered that the *magi* in Mexico during the ancient times have been abandoned with the extraordinary difficulties of the Mexican past (Spence, 2015). According to Deczynski (2015), there is a connection of witchcraft or sorcery in the death of Mexico’s Santa Muerte. A skull mask in a woman represents this phenomenon. Amazingly, there is respect given to Santa Muerte and this is accorded in the statues that people perceive to have those supernatural powers.

In the islands of the Philippines, the story is very similar, they believed also in magic. “*Kulam* is a form of Filipino witchcraft, with practitioners called *mangkukulam*” (Deczynski, 2015). With this magical power, they manipulate others, for example, selling “love portions” to many young people. At other times, they used the power negatively. Many people fear them for this reason, hence, they avoid getting in their way. Having given an overview on the international level of various powers existing in the world, the view of Africa is also examined, namely, their thought on mysticism, or mystical power as they conceive it within their social context.

For the Africans, God has also created “*vital force*”, the so called energy of the universe which is considered as a source of life for each living being (Idowu, 2014). Vital force has been affirmed as representative of African ontology and cosmology (Nalwamba & Buitenday, 2017). The Africans recognize that all existing beings are made of forces. God’s power is always available in all living things and in all creatures (Ansah, 2015). The critical force is largely experienced by those who enjoy long life. In Africa, there is a belief that God dwells not on the earth, but in the heavenly part of the universe, home to the stars, sun, moon, and that God is present in lighting and in the wind as well. Lino (2000), asserts that characteristics of the vital force help people to trust that there is complete union that links people to eternal life and happiness.

In Africa Tradition Religion (ATR), there is a strong belief of traditional mystical power. This is a power that can be used to influence others positively, and it is separated from cheating or false manipulation, tricks and hypnotism (Nyabwari & Kagema, 2014). Modern-day Africa is dominated by the world's major Religions, like New Age Spirituality, Islam, Christianity or African Traditional Religion. Many Africans Christians or Muslims, still incorporate syncretic beliefs based in ancient African mythology with Christianity or Islam. For example, many people attempt to heal themselves, improve their luck, or remove curses by hiring *shamans* (healers) who perform ceremonies to communicate with the spirits (Gale Cengage Learning, 2015).

Sometimes “power” is literally worshiped and adored as God, as it is often the case in politics, religion, commerce and industry (Chidili, 2014). There are people who are born to rule, while others will have to acquire power by training. Some have to acquire their power through hook or crook, so that they can exert it on people. The problem occurs, when an individual exerts this power on others in an evil manner either to cause problem or to manipulate others for an evil intention. For many Africans therefore, when many things are constantly going wrong, the interpretation is always that the enemies of society are at work. According to Mbiti (1975: 164), “the people asked themselves what or who has caused these things to go wrong, for examples, when sickness, misfortune, barrenness, accident, death and so on occur”. For some, the answer to who makes things go wrong, is almost, in every situation a human agent while sometimes it is a spirit agent. This calls for a critical investigation. If this belief is upheld among many, then it may be a hindrance to holistic healing or health among the people, especially Christians. The manifestations of this mystical power in different part of Africa are highlighted below.

The *Kgaga* of South Africa believes in men and women with supernatural powers who inherit their dangerous abilities in a matrilineally way. For example, the witches are capable of transforming themselves into nocturnal animals, and harm their victims with poisons that wrack the body with pain. According to Olupona (2014: 51), “these witches threaten society’s normal order by decreasing the fertility of the land and the people” Those who think witches are responsible for their problems become afraid, defensive and sometimes are always misguided by thoughts of wickedness and manipulation that prevents holistic healing for them.

*Liemba* is a term used in *Bakweri* community Congo, meaning witchcraft. It is practiced by all genders, that is, women and men do practice it. This community has the belief that their shadows are “eaten” by the witchcraft, thereby killing their victims. It is to be noted here that the idea of consumption is a common theme among African beliefs about witchcraft (Olupona, 2014). This has led the people to belief that witches must be appeased (either by a ritual or sacrifice), to stop the evil they intended to do. Some of these witches are referred to as spirits.

Turner (1967), in his studies of the Ndembu of Zambia, points out that in one of their idioms, spirits demand rituals to be performed in their honour. Surprisingly, when they are neglected, or when people do wrong by neglecting customs or causing rifts in the community, the spirits make

their demands by causing the culprit's illness or other misfortune (Bourdillo, 1990). For them, religious healing is often concerned with symbolic or moral conditions. Therefore, healing requires symbolic rituals to be performed in honour of the spirits when moral norms have been transgressed and need to be re-established.

The Igbo of the South Eastern Nigeria explains that in their world-view, there are two broad categories of spirits (*mmuo*), namely, the dead spirit and the spirits of "those who were never human". The ancestors belong to the first group of spirits and they play an important role in the life of the Igbo. For them, each human being is believed to have a spirit (*mmuo*), which is a life-sustaining force. "It is this spirit that is believed to survive in the spirit world after the death of the individual. Hence, they can speak of "*embodied spirits* and *disembodied spirits*" (Ugwu, 1998: 44).

For the people of South West Region of Nigeria, known as the Yoruba, the story is not different either. For them, they have always held a world-view of God whom they called *Olodumare* and they considered Him as Supreme. They always share similar world-view everywhere they are found. They are always referred to as descendants the *Oduduwa*, a common ancestor. Yoruba believe that there is religious significance in nature. Their belief is that the plants, animals and all natural phenomenon have the sense of the divine in them. The "*vital force*" is controlled by God's power, and the deities are the intermediaries between man and God.

Ogun, for example, represents the god of iron and it is worshiped by those who want mystical power to dominate others. In ancient mythologies in Africa, and among the Yoruba, iron played an important role. Iron production was so important that the second-ranking Yoruba god *Ogun* (iron) was closely associated with the process of acquiring power to dominate the other. For them, "*Ogun* is the patron of soldiers who wielded knives, arrows, and spears, as well as that of hunters who used these weapons" (Gale Cengage Learning, 2015:15).

Within the Yoruba Traditional Religion (YTR), the feminine image of deity and the functions of women in the religious system are of great importance. According to Omoyajowo (1990: 77), "their special contribution to the general welfare and cohesion of the society is indispensable for the gods." The hearts of the gods are warmed through women's dances, rituals and songs and with their genius as women, especially in the homes. They contribute to appropriate social control measures within the community. The divinity has always been manifested in a female priest commonly referred to be as "*AyaOlua*" (wife of *Olua*).

For the Yoruba, this concept proposes that the destiny of a person influences his or her life in terms of health and whatever one encounters in life is related to the destiny (*ayanmo*). Accordingly, different academicians and researchers have been able to explain this concept, for example, Dos Santos, 1971, Abimbola, 1967 & Morakinyo, 1983, have explained how one is involved by studying one's destiny to be able to achieve the purpose in life. In essence, the

Yoruba spirituality is mainly focused on spirit interactions, learning the concept of one's destiny, self-exploration, interaction with ancestors and finally connecting with *Olodumare*, the Almighty Creator (Johnson, 2013).

These cultural beliefs are extended to the issues related to illness and health in the cultural matrix of the Yoruba. In most of the places African Traditional Religions have been replaced by Islam and Christianity. But the African world-view still shapes the attitudes and lives of the people. Interpersonal interactions are exhibited in people's daily lives in mosques as well as in the churches. The Yoruba philosophy has been underlined by the illness and health, which are deemed as opposing phenomena to each other in a health-religion relationship (Jegede, 2015). With the above discussions on various cultural beliefs among the Yoruba, the key fact explained is that sometimes, individuals are guided with some of these beliefs and practices in their daily living especially in their quest for good health.

Though majority of the Yoruba have been converted to Christianity, they still fall back to finding solutions for their health problems by making use of the African Traditional mystical power of healing practices. In addition, traditional beliefs directly or indirectly continue to affect them especially when one is sick, or affected by a serious disease. One of these beliefs is the interpretation of dreams especially a nightmare and the effect it has on an individual. All these are attributed to traditional mystical powers that affect Yoruba thought. The problem is not just that they are guided by these beliefs and traditions, but in relation to health and diseases, many seems to be in bondage of body and mind because they believe that unless they seek solutions from both ends, namely, Christianity and African traditional healers, their problems cannot be solved.

However, for many, the belief is that, for any misfortune or illness that occurs, the fault is always attributed to someone with a traditional mystical power. These are the major reasons why they always sought for healing and purification from the ritual healers. The ritual practitioners heal diseases, and remove abuse and pain, and other issues that affect someone after death of a loved one. Also, they remove curses from broken marriages, as well as free people from HIV/AIDS. But to what extent can they bring them to holistic healing or health? In the light of the above, these are some of the cited problems discovered in the cultural background among the Yoruba that call for attention and solutions. This is because of the negative effects they have on some people and the outcry by various individual seeking holistic well-being.

Hence, there is a need for a better understanding of how they could be healed from this situation physically, psychologically and spiritually without falling into crisis of religion. In view of this, the indispensable role of all health care-givers, especially religious care-givers, cannot be underestimated. They are instruments of God's message of liberation to His people and are agents of pastoral care and teachers of faith.



Therefore, the cultural beliefs in traditional mystical power as the cause of every misfortune and sickness among the Yoruba need to be reviewed by having a clear understanding about the effects of beliefs on health. In achieving this, the human person must be treated in his or her totality. There is need for the Yoruba to have a clear understanding about the meaning and the interaction between health and religion that might help the individual in the family of believers to operate better when faced with the challenges of illness. This knowledge will help to resolve the challenges of illness encountered in the family without having to recourse to traditional healers whom they believe are more effective than the power of God Almighty.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The people of South-West Region of Nigeria (Yoruba) have strong attachment to their traditional beliefs and practices. They also believed that their culture is superior to others. The beliefs in traditional mystical power had good and bad effects in the individual, especially when challenges of health arise in the families as they case may be. Women in particular, are always the ones who are mostly affected. Mothers give life and are the protector of the lives of their children. In explaining this affirmation, John Paul II (1988: no. 18), says:

*“The order of love constitutes a woman’s own vocation, together with the moral and spiritual strength joined to her awareness that God entrusts the human being to her in a special way. Motherhood is linked to the personal structure of the woman and to the personal dimension of the gift. I have brought a man into being with the help of the Lord (Gen 4:1). The Creator grants the parents the gift of a child. On the woman’s part, this fact is linked in a special way to a sincere gift of self. Although both of them together are parents of their child, the woman’s motherhood constitutes a special part in this shared parenthood and the most demanding part”.*

Hence, once this life is affected by anything, for example, sicknesses, premature death in the family, or miscarriages, women are the ones who usually run around for help. They will always seek for solutions everywhere and at all cost, and even at the risks of their own lives.

When one is sick in the family and one visits the hospital for health-care services, or the church and there seems to be delay in the healing process, there is always a suggestion to solve the problem through the traditional way, because the cause of the problem is not diagnosed easily, (*e je ki ate ‘se ile bo*). This term means, “let us solve this problem through the traditional way”. This saying is one of the manifestations of this belief, which leads some Yoruba Christians to visit the traditional healers, diviners and sometimes women goddess. For the Yoruba, even among Christians, they believed that through the consultation with *Ifa* (divination) and with rituals and sacrifices, all problems will be solved.

### **1.3 Research Objective**

- i. To investigate the impact of belief in destiny mythology on healing process among the Christian families of South-West Region of Nigeria.

### **1.4 Research Question**

- i. What is the impact of belief in destiny mythology has on healing process among the Christian families of South-West Region of Nigeria?

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1.1 Emile Durkheim and Functionalism**

Emile Durkheim is a known sociologist from French origin, a philosopher and a psychologist. He came up with functionalism approach. Most of his work and time reflected on religion and focused more on small societies.

Durkheim sees religion as “being a consistent institution of every society” (Monivas, 2007). He was of the view that society members were able to critically think and perceive the world differently through religion, which also influenced their behaviour. The functioning of the society occurs when all parts are active and each influences the other. This is a positive effect of social institutions, “society can perpetuate the social conditions of its own existence” (Whitney, 2016). Durkheim was of the opinion that ceremonies and ritual practices are of key concern in religion and not only beliefs. This fact happens within an aggregate of many believers who have strong bond with each other. Through rituals, members of the society are brought together and their social bond is strengthened. Rites of passages like marriages, and birth are marked by practicing rituals.

In all these definitions, it is evident that it is important to have faith in God because He is powerful and infinite. Faith in God can be expressed through language that reflects symbols. In this context, the object of faith is understood as sacred, numinous or holy. Therefore, there is an expression of a relationship between God and the one who has faith in Him. In support of this argument, only beliefs that are religious, personal and social when combined together can have the ability of increasing the social networking not only with the sacred, but also with “self”, and others. This will help to have integration with other people, which is very essential. To accomplish this, traditional society and “self” need to be linked together by incorporating religious practices and beliefs. Individuals use their religious beliefs to answer questions about life, death, suffering and evil (Hall, 1986).

The perspective of religion in Durkheim’s theory clearly indicates how sociological phenomenon is examined by the functionalists. Religion is seen by individuals as a contributor to social

health. Through religion, members in a group or society are able to realize the importance of their beliefs and values. This explains the reason why Durkheim's theory is categorized under "macro level", since the organic analogy is used which describes society as a system with parts like that of the body for proper functioning. From this perceptive, the functionalist sees the society and its institutions as a whole. This concept helps people because it is structured towards regulating their behaviour and showing how they are expected to live. This is exactly like glue that holds the society together. This kind of system is very effective as it assures individuals of guiding principle in human relationships. Those who do right in the society will be rewarded accordingly, while those who do wrong will be equally punished. This kind of teaching will definitely help people to choose the path to take. This strategy in relationship demands cooperation as individuals are integrated fully into the society.

Accordingly, Durkheim asserts that religion is natural and not an illusion. He related it to what he called "mechanical solidarity". This type of solidarity is found in more traditional societies that have similar cultural practices and religious beliefs (Thompon, 2002). According to Durkheim's social theory, societies' characteristics are similar from one to another and that similarity holds them together as they conform to shared norms. However, this can be seen as the weakness of this theory. This is because attitude among persons can lead to the prediction and the instability of the individual's behaviour. It seems inexperienced or immature to assume that there is a consensus among the individuals. Again, because all attention is all about how the society functions as a whole, this assertion can lead to the neglect of how minority groups live within a large society by not paying proper attention to them.

Additionally, it seems there is so much emphasis on religion as a social phenomenon by Durkheim. The critics have argued that there is no need for thinking that religion should be social. For instance, Altaman (2013: 14), argues that "ascetical tradition that prioritizes isolation and solitude would not fit Durkheim's theory." In this context, traditional mystical power beliefs sometimes emphasize the role of personal encounter with the "Supernatural" (Supreme God) in acquiring the knowledge of healing. Personal prayers, rituals and sacrifices are important elements for the individual who desires a close relationship with the Supernatural. This is the main gap and the weaknesses identified in this theory, because, in Durkheim's theory, solitude in prayers to acquire supernatural powers would not fit in this theory which is needed in acquiring supernatural powers.

In relating Durkheim's theory to this research, the shared culture that provided a framework for the individuals to cooperate by defining his or her goals fit in for this study. Holistic health is very important in the life of the individual and therefore, it is an important value in the society of believers. A healthy society is a functional society. For this to be attainable, every member of the society participates in this function without neglecting man in his totality. There should be cooperation and co-responsibility between different professionals who at different times are

health care-givers or health care providers. The parents at birth are the first health care-givers who nurture, protect and provide for the welfare of the child. The family members, friends, schoolmates, teachers, medical practitioners will carry out this function at various times too. The psychologists, counsellors and spiritual care-givers as well, would have to perform their duties with one another in a state of cohesion to attain holistic health in the individual at various times especially when challenges to health demands.

The importance of investigating the cultural beliefs and practices become very essential as this research advances, especially in achieving holistic healing in the individual person. Durkheim's theory was used as the guiding principle as the researcher sought for the relationship between the different variables

## 2.2 Empirical Review

Sutherland (2017), explained destiny and fate mythology in Greek, Roman and Slavic mythology. He quoted Pico Della Mirandola (1494), who asserted that people dictate their own life and they shape their own destiny and fate. However, for Sutherland, he opposed this belief by saying that the life humans are living is because of the actions of fate which is a higher power beyond the will of any human and the results are always irreversible. There is no way one can avoid his or her fate and humans don't have a choice when it comes to that. The resulting consequence is usually death to everything. Many people through the ages have pondered on this and the ideal of a person's fate was known widely during the 1<sup>st</sup> century in Europe.

In Slavic mythology, fate and destiny of humanity were the responsibility of the *Sudice*. The *Sudice* men and women are usually those who judged and they meted fortune and fatality to the individuals. *Sudice* were powerful, hence, they appeared as three sisters or a single goddess at birth of a child. Therefore, a newly born fortune was foretold sealing the destiny. For these goddesses, regardless of gender, fate was determined for all. Because the *Sudice* were beautiful old women, the ancient Slavics made offerings to them in form of salt, bread and candles. This literature affirms and supports the understanding and the effect of *Ori* (head) and human destiny on the individual born in this context. This addresses one of the research questions of this thesis.

Doja (2005), gave an interesting overview of Albanian tradition on mythology and destiny and how it was conceived among the people. With his method of observation, questions and interviews, he documented certain facts about the people. In Albanian tradition, destiny was symbolically interchangeable with indispensable attributes representing birth itself. He discovered that Albanians believed in omens and predictions with the placenta, and the umbilical cord. Also, among various religions practiced among the people, with the baby teeth, locks of hair from the first haircut, they can manipulate the child either for good or bad purposes.

Generally, the people believed that these objects can be used in various magical practices directed against the owner. They have strong convictions that these parts of the body carry heavy



supernatural overtones which can be used for wicked ends. Hence, special care is taken of these separated pieces of the part of the body, and so, they are not exposed to misappropriation or danger. If so, in the hand of the wicked men and women, they might use them to bring about the person's downfall or death. The people affirmed that sacred things are dangerous because they are charged with a strong ambivalent symbolic value.

The destiny goddess displayed a vast range of knowledge which gave them a particular job to do. A relationship was established which differentiated isolated actions from change affected by time. Events such as child-birth were of great importance and they were calculated from the time of conceiving to the delivery time. This gave human life more meaning and they treasured it. For the Albanian, they were optimists and their confidence did not stumble or fail. They expressed good wishes in either songs, directly in rituals or religious ceremonies. They are optimistic and supported by the wish that the new life that will be created will be that of happiness, valuable and better life than theirs. For Nieswand, the charismatic Christians in Berlin are embraced by these two components. He affirmed that, God became innate in the daily lives of these charismatic Christians. This means that the manifestation of the divine uses the human agency in the world. There is something interesting that he discovered. This research indirectly explained the traditional mystical power enacted in the human person. The existence of the Supernatural is highly manifested. Though, the author does not mention whether it has any effect on holistic health.

Ogbujah (2014), through his analytical research of Igbo conception of destiny and rebirth confirmed certain ideals about Igbo people in Eastern Region of Nigeria. The author availed himself of observation method with few interviews with Nigerian authors to write on the subject matter. Amidst the numerous questions asked and the mystery surrounding the concept of human destiny, he came up with some facts about the people's understanding of human destiny. He explained the meaning of various concepts like, human life, death, destiny, immortality and *Ilo-uwa* which means return to the world. Amongst the numerous and perplexing issues associated with the Igbo's idea of destiny and rebirth, Ogbujah identified the three that are more significant, these are, death, immortality and *ilo-uwa* (re-incarnation).

Balogun (2007), asserts that the understanding of human destiny among the Yoruba has two concepts, these are, "*ori* and individual's destiny itself". According to Balogun, the two concepts in Yoruba people are better framed in the soft-determinism as compared to the interpretations of some African philosophers who had a different opinion. "The Yoruba believe that destiny once chosen by one or conferred is unalterable" (Balogun, 2007: 122). *Ori* (the individual's head) represents the personality of individuals and their human dignity. According to Idowu (1962), *Ori* (head) has a strong attachment to the Yoruba since *ori* is said to be the controller of destinies and reflects human characters by providing guidelines. Human events are controlled by the power within the human destiny. This means that future happenings are well predicted and

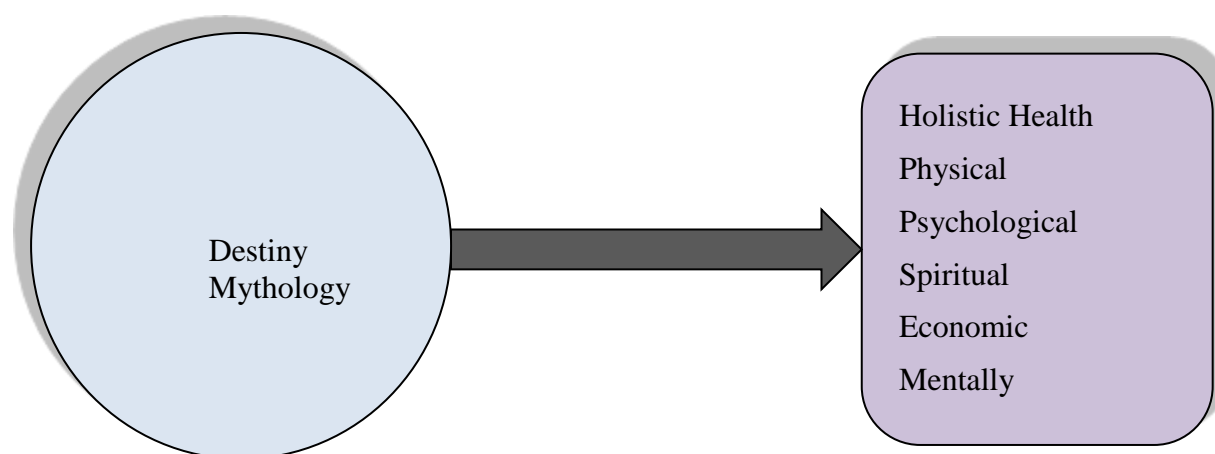
planned through the mysterious power in human destiny. The master plan is drawn early enough to make a better future.

The aspect of *ori* and human destiny in Yoruba people requires a detailed description in regard to metaphysics. Putting into consideration the argument raised, he supports self-determinism by arguing that it is an effective and well proven paradigm that is causal. A critical analysis of this paper offers a supportive argument to the themes of this thesis. This is one of the beliefs affecting the Yoruba concept of how lucky or successful one can be in attaining one's destiny in life. If one follows the argument of fatalism as a better option, then, one is reduced to thinking that nothing could be done to change the bad destiny one brought into the world. The gap spotted here is that, the author does not elaborate how this belief has affected some people negatively in relation to sickness, especially in attaining health. Hence, this thesis thought is wise to investigate this area of study. Balogun's research has illumined one of the research questions related to human destiny in a distinctive way. The work is significant and relevant to this thesis.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

#### Independent variable

#### Dependent variable



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**Source: Researcher(2017)**

### 3.0 Research Methodology

Descriptive survey and phenomenological research designs were used in this study. "Survey research is often used for descriptive research" (Saris, et. al., 2014: 4). According to Czaja and Blair (2005), descriptive survey design is most effective when used in a study that uses

questionnaires to collect data and the population is well defined. This was used to collect data for this study from the Christian families from the five BLOCKS of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Qualitative data was collected using phenomenological design and this was done through interviews. The target population for this study was 407, 779 people. This study used simple random selection to select a sample of 500 respondents from five blocks of denomination with 100 respondents from each block. The study used questionnaire, interview guide and observation guide as instruments to collect primary data. The quantitative data collected was analysed using SPSS, while the qualitative data was analysed using content analysis technique.

#### 4.0 Research Findings and Discussions

##### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1: Informants' opinion on Destiny Mythology as responsible for success or failure in life**

	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD	MEAN	SD
1	Do you belief in destiny mythology as responsible for your success or failure in life?	37 9.30%	32 8.00%	6 1.50%	310 77.50%	15 3.80%	3.54	0.998

**Source: Field Data, September, 2018**

Table 1 reveals that 325 (81.3%) of the informants disagreed in destiny mythology as being responsible for their success or failure in life. 69 (7.35) of the informants believed that destiny mythology is responsible as shown by a means of 3.54, while 6 (1.5%) were neutral. The small percentage that affirmed this belief could be explained by the fact that among the Yoruba and in the Yoruba worldview, "*Ayanmo* (destiny), *Ori* (head) or *Ipin* (lot) are synonymous with destiny. This mythology believes that each person chooses from heaven his or her personal destiny before setting out to come into the universe. *Ipin* is known as destiny while *Ori* represents the object that symbolizes it" (Elebuibon 2014: 42). According to Elebuibon, destiny is believed to have very strong imprints on the type of life one lives. Hence the saying "*A kunle a yan ipin a dele aye tan oju nyan ni*" (we choose our destiny on bended knees, but arrive on earth to start struggling). This simply means that there is a conviction that most of the problems which man has to wrestle with have been pre-destined. This is why, TH 2 added:

*"The explanation of this is that the problems do not come directly from either the witches (aje), the ancestral spirits (egungun); the divinities (orisa) or the comrades of heaven (egbe orun).*

*They are the dictates of the individual (ori), which is the whole personality or the epitome of an individual. Ori (head) controls, guides and nurtures the life activities of an individual. It is the one in charge of successes and failures” (Oral Interview with TH 2, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2018).*

This explains clearly the frequent search for a change of destiny and the interactions with traditional healers, or diviners and sometimes with spiritual healers whom they believed could help to transform the situation from bad to good.

**Table 2: Informants’ opinions on how often they visit traditional herbalist to change their destiny from bad one to good one**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1	Rarely	25	6.20%
2	Occasionally	2	0.50%
3	Frequently	1	0.30%
4	Never	372	93.00%
	Total	400	100

**Source: Field Data, September, 2018**

Table 2 indicates that 327 (93.0%) of the informants have never visited the traditional herbalist for a change of destiny from a bad one to a good one. 25 (6.2%) of the informants do but rarely; 2 (.5%) said that “occasionally” they visit traditional herbalist, while 1 (.3%) accepted he frequently visit traditional herbalist for a change of destiny from bad to good. The results showed that the majority do not visit the herbalist for this reason. But for those who visit the herbalist, it could be connected to the fact that among the Yoruba, one significant point to note is that there is a belief that says:

“There is no individual that does not hate one thing about himself or herself, be it his physical characteristics, parentage, nativity or career This implies that no one chooses a very perfect destiny. This underlines the reason why some people are rich but have no children. Some are born with a silver spoon in their mouths but are not brilliant enough to attain the highest possible academic height. These instances of ill-assorted luck can be influenced in one or the other. Essentially the intervention of *Ifa* is very necessary for every individual” (Elebuibo, 2014: 43).

TH 7 acknowledged this fact and said:

“In Yoruba language use, an individual may be referred to as *olorire* or *olori-buruku* (a fortunate or unfortunate man) respectively, depending on the accomplishments and failures of the individual person concerned. Hence, people want to be referred to as fortunate



people and so will make every effort to achieve that as much as they can” (Oral Interview with TH 7, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2018).

In support of this assertion, TH 8 remembered that:

“According to Yoruba mythology, when a person picks his or her *Ori* (head) he or she simultaneously picks his or her character, whether good or bad. The same rule applies to one’s destiny. As for *Iwa* (deeds), it is believed that it is a sack which an individual is supposed to carry on his or her shoulder right from heaven. If the deeds are bad, the person would have to at least struggle to change for better” (Oral Interview with TH 8, 14 October, 2018).

For the majority who believe in the Creator, their faith sustains them; rather than consulting the diviner for help, they affirmed their absolute trust in God when needs arise in the family. This is the reason why SH 7 said:

“Many Christians profess their total dependence on God in times of troubles or when they are afflicted with serious sickness in the family. They come to the Church and asked for prayers. We support them by assisting them to get the necessary healing and by not disproving the medical facilities available by the Church and the community” (Oral Interview with SH 7, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2018).

**Table 3: Informants’ opinions on who has the power to change someone’s destiny from bad to good**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1	God	241	60.30%
2	Man	27	6.80%
3	Herbalist	62	15.50%
4	Individual	30	7.50%
5	If others, kindly indicate (nature, unknown forces)	40	10.00%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data, September, 2018**

Table 3 shows that 241 (60.3%) of the informants believed that God alone has the power to change someone’s destiny from bad to good. 62 (15.5%) of the informants believed that the herbalist has the power to do this change; while 40 (10.0%) stated that nature or unknown forces can also help in changing someone’s destiny. Amazingly, 30 (7.5%) of the informants thought that the individual has the power to change someone’s destiny from bad to good, while 27 (6.8%) of the informants believed that any man or woman with mystical power is capable of changing someone’s destiny from bad to good. Although the majority believed that only God has the

capability of changing one's destiny, other opinions were suggested and confirmed one of the beliefs, as TH 5 echoed:

“Those with mystical powers like the *Ifa* priests, the witches or individuals can be beneficial if courted because they are not regarded as total evil-doers. It is only when they are provoked that they bring about misfortune like barrenness, misery, and untimely death otherwise their powers can be used also for good like changing of the destiny from bad to good” (Oral Interview with TH 5, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2019).

Besides this, the Yoruba people generally believe that there is need for everyone to be considerate, careful, diplomatic, law abiding and respectful. These are necessary attributes to cultivate so as to be able to surmount the myriad of problems confronting the modern man in Africa, America and Europe. The importance of good character and the need to possess good luck justify why the traditional Yoruba man or woman will make every possible effort to change his or her destiny from bad to good. The Christians who are faithful and trust in God will place this power in the Almighty God rather than individuals with mystical power who claimed to have been endowed from above.

**Table 4: Informants' perception of Holistic Health and their current health status**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1	Physically	28	7.00%
2	Spiritually	32	8.00%
3	Mentally	45	11.30%
4	Emotionally	37	9.30%
5	Socially	56	14.00%
6	Psychologically	44	11.00%
7	All of the above	158	39.40%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data, September, 2018**

Table 4 reveals that 158 (39.4%) of the informants believed all of the above. This means that someone needs to be hale and hearty in all aspects of the human person, to be able to claim that he or she is healthy holistically. Again, 56 (14.0%) of the informants agreed that they are comfortable socially, 45 (11.3%) of the informants affirmed they are okay mentally, while 44 (11.0%) of the informants settled for psychological wellness. Lastly, 32 (8.0%) of the informants believed they are spiritually okay, while 28 (7.0%) said “yes” to physical fitness.

The results looked very attractive, as only 158 (39.40%) believed that they are okay 100%, the remaining percentage 242 (60.50%) stated that they are not 100% okay. This could be attributed to the fact that to be totally healthy among the Yoruba means a great deal and it is not easily

achievable. Such a person must be a super human being and it is very difficult to attain that state by one's power; that is the reason why they seek for help from time to time from supernatural powers, either from God Almighty or from the deities, depending on their belief.

This argument was further supported by the explanation of the importance of *Iwa* (character) in Yoruba tradition. *Iwa to dara* (good character), according to this argument, is a factor which enables man or woman to accomplish his or her desires or aspirations. "For one who acquires good luck, however, if he or she possesses bad character, this means that the ugly traits in his or her character will negate the good luck" (Elebuibo, 2014: 47-48). Therefore, for a man or woman to be complete, he or she has to combine both good luck and good character. This implies that one needs to be good and generous in one's endeavours. One needs to survive by desiring to help a fellow human being.

**Table 5: Informants' opinions on being Spiritually, Mentally, Emotionally, Socially and psychologically healthy**

Statements	Yes	No	Not Sure
Do you consider yourself to be physically healthy	288 72.0%	63 15.80%	49 12.30%
Do you consider yourself to be Spiritually health	400 100%	—	—
Do you consider yourself to be mentally health	400 100%	—	—
Do you consider yourself to be Emotionally health	400 100%	—	—
Do you consider yourself to be Socially health	400 100%	—	—
Do you consider yourself to be Psychologically health	400 100%	—	—

**Source: Field Data, September, 2018**

Table 5 reveals that 400 (100%) informants considered themselves to be spiritually, mentally, emotionally, socially and psychologically healthy in items I, II, III, IV, V, and VI respectively. 288 (72.0%) said "yes" to being physically healthy; 63 (15.8%) said "no", while 49 (12.3%) said "not sure". These informants were sincere as regards their physical fitness in item I.

**Table 1: Informants' opinions on how a person can become Healthy Holistically**

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
By the power of the Supreme Being alone (God)	168	42.00%
Through traditional mystical power	42	10.40%
Through <i>Ifa</i> (divination)	31	7.80%
Through consultation with the spirit being	80	20.00%
A combination of the above is the only guarantee for holistic health	79	19.80%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data, September 2018**

Table 6 reveals that 168 (42.0%) of the informants believed that it is only through the power of the Supreme Being (God) alone that a person can become holistically healthy. 80 (20.0%) of the informants accepted that it is only through consultation with the spirit; 79 (19.8%) of the informants said it has to be a combination of all before a person becomes healthy holistically, while 42 (10.4%) of the informants accepted that it is through traditional mystical power. 31 (7.8%) of the informants said it is through *Ifa* (divination) that a person can become holistically healthy.

**Table 7: Informants' opinion about the status of their current health**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1	The Supreme Being alone (God)	170	42.50%
2	Traditional mystical power	20	5.00%
3	<i>Ifa</i> (divination)	48	12.00%
4	Spirit beings	50	12.50%
5	A combination of the above	110	28.00%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data, September 2018**

Table 7 reveals that 170 (42.5%) of the informants attributed their current health statue to the Supreme Being alone (God), 110 (28.0%) of the informants agreed that it was a combination of the above, 50 (12.5%) of the participants affirmed that the spirit beings were responsible, while 48 (12.0%) of them said that *Ifa* (divination) was the one responsible. Finally, 20 (5.0%) of the informants asserted that traditional mystical power was responsible for their current state health status. This confirmation indicates clearly what the belief of these Christians is as regards their general state of health. From the analysis in Tables 45 and 46, there are two categories of



believers. The first category has strong faith in God and believes that God is the only one who can do all things in any situation or when sickness occurs in the family. Concerning this position, SH 7 said:

“I am a testimony of God’s love. God in his mercy has helped me to break spiritual curses in my family. It is a belief in my family that no one can do a Church wedding, because if I do, it will have negative repercussion on the individual. It took me fasting, months of prayers and sacrifices. Mummy, it wasn’t just two months or three months, it took me total dedication, that, I had to summon my wife and told her that we need to break this curse. Eventually, I was the only son, who did white wedding. Even my younger brother who was an assistant Pastor in Redeemed did not do white wedding. I was the only one that did white wedding. And for a year they told me the repercussion that my wife will not get pregnant, if I go ahead with the wedding and go beyond those boundaries. They told me and my wife face to face not to get married in the Church. I said with prayers and with God, all things are possible. Eventually, mummy, here I am standing before you, we have a set of twins. This confirms (Daniel 11 vs. 32) “they that know their God they will wax strong; they will get constituency”. I strongly believe in God. My mother refused to attend my wedding because I violated the law. But, thank God, I am standing before you, Sister, I will call the twins to greet you” (Oral Interview with SH 7, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2018).

The second categories of Christians are those who, despite their faith in God, make use of different traditional mystical powers in the healing practices, because they do not see it as contradictory to their Christian belief. TH 6 supported their position and said:

“When I feel sick or have some misfortunes in the family and I need to regain my health or solve a problem, the first thing I do is to consult *Ifa* Priest for me to be healthy again. As a Yoruba man, I am supposed to be both traditional and religious. The Yoruba man is to be devout to the core. If I am coughing, my parents or guidance will go and consult *Ifa* first, to reveal the cause of the misfortune and the cause is revealed. For us, ‘*Ifa becomes a guide*’. 24 hours and 100%, a Yoruba man will not move until *Ifa* says please move. They believe so much that, *Ifa* cannot misguide or mislead them” (Oral Interview with TH 6, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2018).

This could be because for many of the Christians, they believe that satisfactory healing involves the social and psychological re-integration of the patient into his or her community, as opposed to merely recovering from bodily symptoms. While they do not tell all the truth, the healers themselves affirmed that various categories of enlightened Christians come to them for healing or for alleviation of problems. This is what TH 6 affirmed again by saying:

“A good number of the Christians do visit us for various reasons, and at the same time praying and consulting the spiritual healers in their various Churches” (Oral Interview with TH 6, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2018).

Concerning this position, TH 8 said:

“Nurses come to us sometimes for help and clarification on certain sicknesses and we go to hospital too when needs arise. The herbalists go to the hospital whether is for them or for their patients. There are instances where herbs do not work on all sickness. When it comes to emergency, herbs do not work. Herbs do not have quantity. It can be taking in the morning, afternoon and evening. It is more for prevention. If there is an accident emergency and someone is bleeding profusely, he or she will be taken to the hospital first. Then later, they can send for the herbalist and the herbalist will come to the hospital to help with his or her own healing process” (Oral Interview with TH 8, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2018).

Hence, these two different positions have been presented clearly in this study, to obviously elucidate the significance of the responses given by the two categories of Christians identified in this study.

## 4.2 Correlation Analysis

**Table 8: Correlations Coefficient Table**

		<b>Holistic Health</b>	<b>Belief in Destiny Mythology</b>
Holistic Health	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.	
	N	400	
Belief in Destiny Mythology	Correlation Coefficient	.648	1.000
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

**Source: Researcher, September 2018**

The researcher applied the Pearson moment correlation statistical tool. Accordingly, as indicated by 0.000 level of confidence, a 0.648 correlation coefficient established that belief in destiny mythology and holistic health had a strong positive correlation.

### 4.3 Regression Analysis

**Table 9: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.901 <sup>a</sup>	.811	.798	.88195

**Source: Researcher, September 2018**

A dependent variable's variation because of an independent variable's change is explained through the coefficient of determination, adjusted R squared. This indicates that there is a variation of 79.8% on holistic health due to belief in destiny mythology at 95% confidence level, a value of 0.798 represented the adjusted R squared as shown in the table above. Additionally, while it reveals the association between the variables of study, R is the coefficient or correlation. Accordingly, as indicated by a value of 0.901, the study established that the variable of study has a strong positive relationship as shown in table 9.

**Table 10: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.404	1	0.101	6.3125	.018 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	6.32	395	0.016		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.724</b>	<b>396</b>			

**Source: Researcher, 2018**

The associated and *p* values and F ratios resulting from the one-way analysis of variance and the observed means for every dependent variable as analysed in this study have been summarised in Table 10. As such, the model is reliable in the prediction of the manner in which belief in destiny mythology influence holistic health, since the *p*-value was 0.018 (less than 0.05) as shown from the findings. However, the F-critical (2.80) was less than the F-calculated (6.312), which implies that the null hypothesis has to be rejected since there is no significant relationship between Traditional Mystical Power beliefs and holistic health in some Christian families in South West Region, Nigeria. This study failed to reject the alternate hypothesis that there exist significant relationships between Traditional Mystical Power beliefs and Holistic Health in some Christian families in South West Region of Nigeria.

**Table 11: Table of Coefficients**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.176	0.017	0.124	10.35	0.00
Belief in destiny mythology	0.469	0.118	0.394	3.97	0.00

**Source: Researcher, 2018**

In this case, Holistic Health =  $0.176 + 0.469$  Belief in destiny mythology is the established regression equation. The strength or magnitude of variable is shown by the beta. Accordingly, this relationship shows the dependent variable's degree of variation as a result of the independent variable's increase by one unit.

Ideally, holistic health would be 0.176 while holding leadership integrity, visionary leadership, leadership innovation and leadership inspiration constant in accordance with the above regression model. This means that an increase in holistic health by a factor of 0.469 would result from a unit increase in belief in destiny mythology.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings summarised in chapter four, the following conclusions have been put forward for consideration: For those who believe that man has to wrestle with problems because of the dictates of *ayanmo* or *ori* (destiny or head), the desire to seek help is very real for them. But the great majority of Christians are not bothered at all by this ideology. They continue their daily business relying on God for guidance. The wrong message spread through Yoruba movies surfaced in the course of this study. They stress that the solution to health issues or challenges in the family must be found in consultation with *Ifa* priest who discovers the cause and prescribes the solutions. This needs to be corrected, because it appears that the Yoruba movies stress the influence and the importance of rituals and sacrifices in African Traditional Religion, and as such have an impact on holistic health among the Christian families. Ultimately, Christians must be prepared in their minds and hearts to accept this affirmation so that there will be healthy persons in the society. In this regard, when challenges of health occur in the community, proper steps must be taken and they must avoid seeking for a fast solution and the confusion caused by running from pillar to post seeking for magic or miracle. Once proper steps that lead to healing or health are taken, the rest is left to God who is the perfect healer, the giver of life, the protector of life and the one who knows when death will eventually come. All Christians must renew their trust in the Almighty God and Father who is the creator of all that exists in the world.



## 6.0 Recommendations

As a follow-up to the conclusions made, the following recommendations are made:

There is a need to educate the people of God according to a structured plan that could be inserted in the parish activities as on-going formation towards holistic health or healing as the case may be. This can be done in seminar form or through conferences. This should be aimed at empowering and transforming the people of God through traditional knowledge of how they can, on their own, begin to save lives for the purpose of gaining holistic health. This study can begin from the family which is the basic unit of every society. The family is a vital part of African life. It is what unifies us, and the family is the foundation on which our society is built. This is proven by the fact that all over the world, every society is structured around a family unit. In African society, the '*family*' is the central unit responsible for the primary socialization of children...." this is because God has made "*the family*" the basic educational institution, the most important place for teaching the Christian faith and formation. It is the home where all religious ideals are impacted.

Recession, corruption and political instability in Nigeria have contributed immensely to the unemployment of people in many families. The youth are without work while some parents are paid very low salary, some others go without salaries for many months. This has caused pain, division and instability in many families. Many are looking for ways to change their destiny from poverty to riches. Others believe that they are not making it in life; so a solution must be found to change an individual's destiny from bad to good. To move from a situation of sickness to health, because for many people poverty is sickness, some have resolved to visit *Ifa* priests and herbalists in order to address the issue of unemployment. The greater majority are not bothered at all about this ideology; so, they go on with their daily activities relying on God for guidance. There are some, too, who have been involved in unethical and immoral games in order to survive in a tough and unstable environment. For this reason, a passionate appeal is made to the Government of Nigeria to fix the problem of education, unemployment, corruption and other issues affecting the stability of the country so that the society can be healed. A healthy society will surely produce healthy people

For Holistic health to be achievable among Christian families, all must work hard. Families, the Government, all social institutions, the Churches and all health care-givers including traditional healers (those who make use of plants and their God given talents) must work together as a team. This collaborative mission is for the benefit of all. In this way, the challenge presented by the different sicknesses or ailments that may befall anyone in the family will be addressed appropriately. This is the only way to create a favourable environment in which everyone will be helped holistically.

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