

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF IGBO CULTURE AND TRADITION IN ADDRESSING COVID-19 AND POST COVID-19 PROBLEMS OF DEPRESSION, BELIEF AND ANXIETY

By

Iheanacho Ambrose Onyeka

Department of Religion and Cultural Studies
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Joy Ezugwu

Department of Religion and Cultural Studies
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Rosemary Okolo

Department of Religion and Cultural Studies
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

Albert Ellis REBT (Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy) of 1955 sought to prove that sound rationality aided by a professional psychologist direction could effectively control and checkmate irrational behaviours of people namely anxiety, depression, anger and other negative thoughts among other psychological disorders affecting human behaviours and attitudes. Albert Ellis' ABCDE paradigm is a behavioural therapy aimed at rescuing someone from the clutches of depression, anxiety and disbelief in oneself, God and others. Giving the fact that Ellis hypothesis was formulated on western culture, it nonetheless cannot deny the intrinsic influence of his Jewish origin and culture. This work therefore tries to adopt Ellis standard to understudy the role of Igbo culture and religion in addressing COVID-19 and COVID-19 and post COVID-19 problems of depression, belief and anxiety in Igbo society. The work is a qualitative research which will use analysis to explain the relationship between rational emotive behaviour therapy, and African/Igbo culture and religion in relation to preventive medicine. The mention of African religion and culture in this piece should not be understood as two different concepts, rather it should be understood as a collary, one explains and supports the other concept effectively. This work is expected to justify African religion and culture in treating negative behaviours and thoughts in the individual person. The end result is the wellbeing of the client and the success of the professional.

Key Words: REBT, Critical Analysis, Impact, Igbo Culture and Tradition, Post COVID-19 Problems of Depression, Belief and Anxiety.

Introduction

This study is in the area of interdisciplinary research where issues or problems affecting or operating in one area of human existence could find solution or a collaboration of some sort in another discipline. Interdisciplinary collaboration in research aims at providing a more acceptable solution to a perennial problem. It is a frontier study which seeks to expand knowledge and explanation to a known social or natural phenomenon or emerging one. In this case psychology and religion collaborate in providing humanity with wellbeing especially when it concerns fear of the known and unknown. Laura Longobardi (2013:1) argues that, psychology and religion both provide people with a valuable way of understanding their relationship to the world around them, in spite of the appearance of difference between them. In Laura's view, by examining Sigmund Freud's and William James' attitudes toward both religion and psychology, it will be clear how similar these two disciplines are. A clear cut path is by dispelling the illusion that science and religion are in conflict with one another. Laura sees both as performing a complimentary task for humanity. According to Argyle (2000:1), during the scientific revolution of 16th century, most scientists saw no conflict between the laws of science and beliefs in God. Current researches on post-Covid-19 effects on foreign cultures apart from western cultures, will give insights into how Corona Virus was perceived, analyzed and controlled especially in African/Igbo context. Current researches may be both qualitative and quantitative procedures to arrive at a credible solution. There have been natural health occurrences such as Ebola pandemic, lassa fever epidemic, kwashiorkor, yellow fever outbreak, malaria, typhoid and most recent Covid-19. In all these, Igbo culture have created a natural resilience, awareness and protective tendencies, and methodologies.

Igbo culture and tradition have inherent capacities and procedures both in the past and present to handle natural events which may threaten her existence. This potency anchors on healthcare delivery predicated on the intervention of African Igbo gods and expertise of Igbo trained traditional healthcare practitioners namely the native doctors, herbalists, nurses and robust community relationship which supports one another in moments of crises and health challenges.

Effective communal support has a psychological and magical effect or healing on any social, mental or political challenge. A key factor in Igbo resistance to Covid-19 challenges is

their religious reliance in God of providence, cure from African gods and goddesses and the thrust of healthcare delivery mechanism pioneered by African herbalists, African traditional doctors and other health care providers. This stance can be explained from the backdrop that African psychology and existence is saturated in religious beliefs and practices. To this effect, faith in African Christian God, African gods, and friendly spirits provided relief and or against the fear created by the emergency of corona-virus pandemic.

Another redemptive measure was African believe in one another that is, African/Igbo convivialism. REBT theory of Albert Ellis will therefore be gauged using aforementioned African healthcare processes, firm religious foundation and robust African/Igbo community life existential traits. This paper made use some of tables to explain the level of resistance to COVID-19 pandemic and similarity between REBT and Igbo culture.

Theoretical Foundation of the paper

This research is based on Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) of Albert Ellis. According to Esiadi et al (2018), and its relationships with Igbo culture in mitigating Covid-19 disturbances, irrational beliefs are theoretical/hypothetical variable that is believed to correlate with or cause emotional disturbance. In Esiadi's explanation, irrational beliefs refer to non-empirical, self-defeating, illogical thoughts or interpretations held by people regarding an event or situation. He went on to assert that REBT is founded on the insight that beliefs expressed through self talk can be rational or irrational. A rational belief is one that can be realistic reflecting real world events. On the contrary, it is illogical.

In the postulation of Ellis, irrational behaviours of people arising from previous events in life could actually be reduced when the professional psychologist applies Ellis therapeutic mental model of ABCDE on his client through clinically conducted self-verbalization. Self-talk in the opinion of Ellis could lead to rational expression from the client. In the theory of REBT, human beings are seen as rational beings but at times they show some negative behaviours. The negative or irrational behaviour leads to crisis. The ultimate objective of REBT is the wellbeing of the individual by thinking rationally instead of thinking irrationally. Rational thought has the potentiality of being positive about life events and challenges. On the reverse, irrational behaviours could lead to psychological trauma, anxiety, stress and depression.

Ellis theory of rational emotive behaviour therapy seeks to transform these mental or psychological dispositions through rational process of thinking aright during events in human life. Since events in life lead to attitudes and actions thereof, it is reasonable to take a second look at events which prompt irrational behaviours. Ezenwa et al (2013) explain that the basic philosophical underpinnings of this psychotherapy model include; human beings are rational and that their beliefs about things is the critical determinant of how those things affect them. Ebenezer et al (2019) explain that, REBT is an action oriented approach to managing cognitive, emotional and behavioural disturbances. It is one of the cognitively oriented approaches to counselling and psychotherapy. In the postulation of Alber Ellis (2010), therefore, “working to change your personal philosophy, is a valid therapeutic technique which can lead to genuine growth. He explains further that behaviour, emotion and cognition are all interrelated.

REBT that is applied in African culture may not follow the same systemic application in ABCDE rhythm. This is because of culture differentiation and worldview. Again, Ellis standard of achieving mental health for his client runs contrary to Igbo method of achieving same. While Ellis applies formalized approach according to his cultural environment. Igbo REBT process involves a three pronged model namely the native doctor, community assistance and belief in African gods. The stages are interconnected. What unities African ABCDE model and Albert Ellis model therapy is the wellbeing of the client or patient.

Igbo Worldview and Human Wellbeing Project

Metuh 1991 defines African worldview as the complex of beliefs and attitudes concerning the origin, nature, structure of the universe and the interaction of its beings with particular reference to man. To Iheanacho 2018:82, African worldview is the totality of assumptions, believes, philosophies and life interpretations of the African peoples which incorporate various interpretations of reality from its many culture areas and which in essence say the same thing.

In Madu (2004), Igbo worldview is basically a religious one thus everything is viewed from the lens of religion. Consequently, Igbo worldview incorporates reasons for preservation of human life, its advancement and protection. Ifesiah (1980) as cited in Madu (1997:14) states:

Human life is supreme, and everything is done to keep it on. Thus sickness diminishes life and so its cause must be diagnosed through divination and appropriate measures to restore life. Thus this world is exalted and valued more than any other world. He wanted to live long and thus he keeps in touch positively with the spiritual powers who, as it were, guarantee his security and continued existence. Childlessness is abhorred and must be guarded against. Childlessness abhorred and must be guarded against. Childlessness implies extinction of lineage, which must be resisted by marrying a second wife.

Ifesiah's explanation implies that Igbo worldview has inherent rationale and procedure in favour of human wellbeing project. Madu corroborates Ifesiah thus, "The Igbo can find answers to their day to day existential problems both the gods and medicine (Ogwu) can give them confidence, protection and security of life crisis, and periods. The consequent attitude of the indept faith in traditional healthcare channel is the patronage of diviners, mystics, herbalists and other professionals in the religious and medical circles. Ejizu (1986:114) opines that the Igbo of South-East Nigeria have the sense of the enhancement of human life, for human life is believed to be the prime value, and everything is expected to serve its realization.

In the Igbo ontological hierarchical vital ranking, man occupies the lowest level. To this end, Madu 1997:6 explains, man is subordinated to the higher beings that are spiritual. The consequence of this inferiority complex of man in regard to spirit beings is, man's reliance, security, providence and healthcare. The power or imbalance in spiritual velocity between humanity and spirit beings, is the reason for the ever interference in humanity's life project by forces above man. This protective and dependency theory between African gods and human beings can explain African/Igbo perception, deliberation and mitigation towards Covid-19 pandemic between 2019-2020.

Traditional healing system consists of some measures of diagnosis and prognosis. In the circumstance, Albert Ellis ABCDE psychological therapeutic model is relevant here. In stage "C" of the rational emotive behaviour therapy, the psychologist questions the emotional stability of his client. This of course springs up from earlier stages of A & B. In religion as an expression

of Igbo culture, the native doctor relates with his patient (client), the spirit and relatives of the person under treatment. The reason for this interlocation is for the wellbeing and benefit of his patient. Madu 2004:77 gives more insight into the healing process in African traditional religion. He opines that;

Diagnosis of the cause of illness is a step leading to its cure. There is therefore an interaction between the clients, the priest and the spirit of any kind. This portrays the holistic perspective on which health is interpreted by the Igbo. A person's sickness therefore, is not looked upon only from the physiological point of view, but also from psychic or spiritual perspective. (p.7)

Van der Poel (1999) had earlier on reflected on human wellbeing from his Christian background. His insights agree with that of Madu (2004). Briefly, he states that,

Healthcare ministry is an active concern for wholeness and wellbeing in people who are physically or emotionally ill. Ministry or supportive concern and assistance, is called for by the human condition itself when an individual is disabled or has significant difficulty dealing with life and its responsibilities. Human wholeness is achieved when there is an appropriate balance between the physical, psychological or emotional and spiritual dimensions in an individual (p.1).

In Van der Poel's perspective, there is a distortion or disbalance in someone's health status because of illness. Serious illness can affect relationships both vertically and horizontally. To restore wholeness therefore, Van der Poel advocates healthcare ministry or active concern for the wellbeing of any sick individual. He believes that good relationship is not a luxury but an essential component of human existence.

Spiritual Foundation of African Health Delivery System

Igbo healthcare system is embedded in the belief that total or complete cure of illnesses and pandemics rests with African gods, ancestors and friendly and powerful spirits that inhabit

the African cosmos. This deep belief is also shared by Igbo Christians as the trait of religiosity can be observed in their attitudes also. As a people saturated with both positive and negative religious characterizations, it can only be rational to state without any ambiguity that Igbo religiosity also permeates its healthcare delivery system. In certain solutions concerning life, the Igbo and indeed Africans would naturally consult deities for guidance. This stance rests on the assumption that divinities have superior ideas, insights and power over any ailment more than mere humans. Long association, cult practice and assurance attest to this religious practice. This religious stance may explain Igbo reluctance to apply word health protocols on COVID-19 pandemic for a long time.

The “A” component of rational emotive behaviour therapy of Albert Ellis is put here as the first stage of therapy when an African consults a diviner or an oracle. In African healthcare structure, the diviner plays the double roles of a mediator and a psychologist. He obtains information from his client (verbalizations) and then consults his oracle for solution or direction.

Madu (2004:78) elaborates further,

A diviner observes that one does not just dabble into treatment without consulting the oracle. Like the orthodox analysis and culturing of a specimen in the laboratory, so also is the spiritual analytic technique used in the traditional society to find out the type of medication to be employed in treatment of fear attacked persons.

The implication from the citation is that the traditional healer treats a patient in accordance with instruction from his god during divination. For the Igbo, good and functional health means living in harmonious situation with other beings in Igbo universe. The spiritual foundation of Igbo health care delivery as opined by Madu (2004) found correspondence in Harris and Sawyer in Onunwa 1990: 83. They assert that,

Oracular powers are invoked in causes of illness. Any sickness which does not readily respond to simple herbal cure In cases where a person is laid up, the relations approach the diviner on his behalf. The diviner then offers his special acts diagnosis to ascertain the causes of the illness. (p. 76)

Henderson (1972) explains that the world of the Igbo is not an indifferent universe. He implies that the principles of cause and effect are applied in the analysis of serious health challenges that defy normal and natural therapies. To this end, causes and cures from strange epidemics, outbreaks and other illness are ascertained through divinations by oracles.

Analysis of the roles played by Igbo culture and religion in addressing post Covid-19 problems of depression, belief and anxiety

We shall address each of the psychological problems encountered in Igbo society during Covid-19 pandemic.

Depression during Covid-19 Period

According to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 6th edition (2006), depression is a mental condition in which a person feels very sad and anxious and often has physical symptoms such as being unable to sleep. It is also the state of feeling very sad and without hope. Depression is defined by psychiatry.org (2019) as major depressive disorder that is common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act. In like manner and understanding, medicalnewstoday.com (2020) refers depression as a common mental health problem that involves low mood and loss of interest in activities. Depression can be triggered off by feeling of emptiness, irritability, sleep disorder and lack of concentration. Its types are genetics, substances intake, childhood experience and events one encountered at adult stage.

Depression operates at the level of emotions. When it is not noticed on time and discouraged, it leads into a mental case. Covid-19 pandemic indeed created a stress condition in human society, Igbo society not an exception. Depression can be more dangerous to a loner than a community person. A loner can suffer in silence or solitude because there is no close relation or friend to confide in. In comparison to a community minded individual, his/her mental condition may be observed by close associates and treatment begun on time. Igbo culture favours communality life which makes it easier for someone to observe the condition of life of another. This is in contrast to Western culture that favours solitary life. In solitary life, life is understood from the prison of the self before others. Psychological state of depression may be slow to affect

someone who shares personal problems with others and who sincerely seeks for solution and direction. Igbo culture and tradition anchors web of relationships in pursuit of wellbeing of the citizens. This view is supported by Onyeocha 1998:89 thus;

In African thought the individual affirms himself and herself, not by isolating himself or herself from others, but by constantly relating and exchanging with them. The individual exists because the group exists. Thus it is through being rooted in an ongoing community that the individual ultimately comes to realize himself or herself as a person.

Corona Virus epidemic stayed in China and the Western countries for months before spreading to African in the first half of 2020. This dreaded disease came to African via contacts with people from other parts of the world. It did not originate from Africa. This may account for its perception as a white man's disease and subsequent foot-dragging in its management it has spread among some Africans. The depression it created in America and Europe and number of deaths recorded can never be compared to the number it has in Africa or Nigeria. That of Africa or Nigeria was significantly low.

Apart from the application of natural and therapeutic modalities against COVID-19, depression was taken care of through African/Igbo communal life which helped one another in moments of crises such as Corona Virus disease. In applying communal help initiative, everyone looked for solution, cure and prevention of the nascent health challenge. People came together to share experiences, give admonitions and directions. Sacrifices like this produce palliates both in the medicals and food security. Of significant importance is the re-introduction of Igbo practice of cooking together various types of leaves and roots for treatment of fever related illnesses.

Covid-19 period offered the Igbo people opportunity to come together and reflect on the solution to emergent disease, Covid-19. Those who developed disinterest in life were helped to regain interest. People returned to their normal daily activities once the government relaxed restriction orders arising from the advance of corona virus disease local therapies, local anti-depression mechanisms were combined with orthodox medications to checkmate the affront of Covid-19 pandemic.

Application of Religious Belief to redress Anxiety during Covid-19 pandemic

The gains and effects of African communality in addressing any serious, health challenges have been discussed above. Religious belief in God of providence, ancestors and friendly spirits was practical during the Covid-19 era. This was possible due to the fact that the outbreak of Corona Virus was spiritualized like other epidemics before it. Igbo society like their other African cultures, trusted their gods, deities and their ancestors to guide and protect them as the fire of Corona Virus ragged on. It was a firm belief by the Igbo Africans that Covid-19 pandemic cannot affect us like other peoples of the world because gods and ancestors were watching and protecting us against the spread of the disease. Igbo culture postulates firm believe that God directs and controls the affairs of humanity through religious activities like prayer, sacrifice, public worship, divination and incantations. Igbo trado medications have a history of curing strange health issues like madness, infertility, leprosy, cough, fever, ulcer, fibroid, etc. Igbo medical traditionalism has proved potent in securing the lives of the people to a reasonable extent. Its application has a nexus with powers above human beings namely, the divinity. This religious psychology does not negate human efforts at mitigating sickness. Instead, it works in harmony.

Healing personnel in Igbo traditional religion and Albert Ellis Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy

There are several healing methods and healers in African traditional religion. These methods are standard health care processes in the economy of health. Healing in Igbo traditional society is combination of efforts made by the herbalist who concentrates his skill on the knowledge of herbal application. He or she takes notice of visible sickness. This profession of healing with herbs and roots is based on their mastery of identifying with ease healing properties in herbs and roots. Another expert in Igbo healing profession is the native doctor who heals his clients with supernatural powers. He may choose to increase his healing power with some practice of ritualism which may include; incantation, sacrifice and public workshop. Mume (1984:204) identifies other authorities in Igbo traditional health delivery channel. These include; faith healers, bone setters, native gynecologist and midwife, witch doctors, blood letter and traditional surgeon. To Madu (2004) therefore, the aforementioned traditional healing personnel, exhibit a spectrum of healing activities from the physical to the mystic ones. Madu further

deposed that, in Igbo religion, there is a nexus between divination and healing by the use of herbal medicine depending on the type of sickness and the ritual healing through the use of sacrifice (p.27).

Traditional faith healers in Igbo culture agrees with REBT in healing negative habits. The confession of sins during cure in African religion is similar to “B” which is when the client relates the activating experience to the therapist (native doctor). The activating experience in the interlocution between the native doctor (therapist) include past misdeeds which hurts the client (sick person) Mume explains faith healing process in Igbo traditional religion as “where patients are persuaded to confess their sins which torture them, and once this is done, such patients feel emotionally relieved. The relief relates to healing in REBT. This can be related to stages C & D in REBT. The persuasion by the native doctor or herbalist involves threats, perceived consequences of committing serious sin like rape, murder and manslaughter in Igbo society. The therapist (herbalist or native doctor, assures his patient that all will be well if proper sacrifices are done. The client may worry about the efficacy of the native doctor’s prescription and persuasions to open up. This state is the level of D where there is disputing. The disputing stage may not end with immediacy. The assurance from the native doctor may lead acceptance and recovery.

REBT paradigm can be employed in treating simple mental disorders in Igbo traditional society such as torment of sin, fear of the unknown, fear of death, anxiety and depression, for such healing process to happen, the patient must be assigned to a known expert of such case.

Belief in the intervention of the deities and effective application of drugs by herbalists, traditional doctors and nurses underpin the theory of cause and effect. In Igbo religion and culture, nothing happens by chance. Every action whether human or divine, is caused by something else. This belief will ultimately lead the Igbo or African to search for a solution. Ultimate solution to critical or perennial problems rests with the divine. Sickness or disease for instance causes distress among the Igbo. It is considered along with death as man’s greatest enemies. For shorter in Onunwa (1976:60),

Sickness for the African is a diminution of life, a threat posed to life, and healing is an activity second only that of giving life, petition for healing is probably the most common subject of prayer.

Onuwa (1990:81) corroborates shorter; among the unfriendly agents that threaten life here on earth for the Igbo, is sickness. The other enemy is death. Mume (1984:204) established Igbo philosophy behind traditional medicine. He says;

Traditional medicine has been designed as an art, science, philosophy and practice following definite natural, biological, chemical, mental and spiritual laws for the restoration and maintenance of health and correction of bodily disorders.

African traditional medicine as pointed above by Mume, therefore, provides reasons, procedures, channels, personnel for the restoration of any physical defect. Mume's position and analysis of African trado medications amplifies faith in the African against any threat to its cooperate existence as a people. It is a buffer especially to foreign illness like Covid-19 pandemic.

The Relationship/similarity between Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy and African Culture

At this point, it is necessary to draw the connection between the healing processes in Igbo culture and REBT. This analysis will be done in a tubular format.

S/N	African Culture	REBT
A	Seeks the wellbeing of the client (patient) while dealing with the traditional doctor/herbalist. The health/spiritual authorities are approached.	Trained psychologist admits his client tries to know the history of the client's problem through clinical appraisal of past events.
B	The problems are exposed to the native doctor/herbalist who consults his oracle for solution. Outcome of oracular consultation may agree with past event or misdeed of the	The client is encouraged to be open to the therapists questions about A, (activating experience). The client's response (verbalizations are let out through rational

	patient (activating experience). Consequently, the patient is encouraged to open up to the questions from the native doctor/herbalist.	emotive process).
C	The diagnosis begins from the information obtain from B, which may be responsible for consequences of former negative lives like – sinful life, incest murder, no success in life, infertility, anger and distrust in God.	The openness from the client may be the reason for B. The therapist discovers emotional causes of irrational behaviour like anxiety, sinful life, threat to life, etc.
D	The patient (client) may decide to question or dispute oracular pronouncements or indictment. He/she may decide to take another means for a cure. The native doctor/herbalist gives professional advice to the patient to accept the revolution from the god and believe the therapeutic process of traditional medicine.	At proffering the causes from B, client and therapist may disagree at the discovery. This is the disputing stage. It is a process of rationality and recovery stage.
E	This stage seeks the wellbeing of the client or patient. All efforts done were made for the normalization of the patient's wholeness or healing. There is development of positive thinking and adjustment. This is a sing of mental health.	REBT's stage "E" is the target of mental therapy of the client which is the wellbeing or the wholeness of the client. The therapist feels fulfilled as his client recovers from mental negativities.

The analysis seeks to point out correlation between African healthcare process and REBT revitalization process or mental therapy. At the end, wellbeing is achieved by both processes.

Anxiety in Covid-19 Era in Igbo society

Nelson-Jones (1989:47) defines anxiety as “your fears about your capacity to cope adequately with the future. This may be a general trait of yours or in state that applies mainly to specific situations. There is close connection between your sense of worth and feelings of

anxiety. There was palpable fear or anxiety in Igbo society as a result of news about the spread and deaths alluded to Corona Virus disease. This fear was heightened when there were pockets of death in South East and neighbouring South-South and North Central parts of Nigeria. Igbo society nonetheless witnessed low deaths compared to other parts of Nigeria. This table below will further explain the level of spread of Covid-19 Virus and its consequence in Nigeria and Igbo society in particular.

Table 1: COVID-19 Pandemic data/Nigeria medical cases

S/N	States	Cases	Active	Recovered	Deaths
1.	Lagos	99,193	362	98,062	769
2.	FCT	28,618	98	28,272	248
3.	Rivers	16,636	54	16,428	154
4.	Kaduna	11,242	8	11,146	88
5.	Plateau	10,252	3	10,174	75
6.	Oyo	10,219	77	9,940	202
7.	Edo	7,694	0	7,373	321
8.	Ogu	5,810	11	5,717	82
9.	Delta	5,369	88	5,170	111
10.	Ondo	5,173	315	4,749	109
11.	Kano	4,985	7	4,851	127
12.	Akwa Ibom	4,657	27	4,586	44
13.	Kwara	4,601	362	4,175	64
14.	Osun	3,311	36	3,183	92
15.	Gombe	3,307	83	3,158	66
16.	Enugu	2,952	13	2,910	29
17.	Anambra	2,825	46	2,760	19
18.	Nasarawa	2,720	336	2,345	39
19.	Imo	2,560	22	2,480	58
20.	Katsina	2,418	0	2,381	37
21.	Abia	2,173	5	2,134	34

22.	Benue	2,129	340	1,764	25
23.	Ebonyi	2,064	28	2,004	32
24.	Ekiti	2,004	50	1,926	28
25.	Bauchi	1,953	14	1,915	24
26.	Borno	1,629	5	1,580	44
27.	Taraba	1,473	62	1,377	34
28.	Bayelsa	1,315	5	1,282	28
29.	Adamawa	1,203	68	1,103	32
30.	Niger	1,148	130	998	20
31.	Cross River	827	5	797	25
32.	Sokoto	817	0	789	28
33.	Jigawa	669	2	649	18
34.	Yobe	609	0	600	9
35.	Kebbi	480	10	454	16
36.	Zamfara	375	0	366	9
37.	Kogi	5	0	3	2
	Total	255,415	2,672	249,601	3,142

Table 2: South East

S/N	States	Cases	Active	Recovered	Deaths
1	Enugu	2,952	13	2,910	29
2	Imo	2,560	22	2,480	58
3	Anambra	2,825	46	2,760	19
4	Abia	2,173	5	2,134	34
5	Ebonyi	2,064	28	2,004	32

Table 3: South-South

S/N	States	Cases	Active	Recovered	Deaths
1	Rivers	16,636	54	16,428	154
2	Edo	7,694	0	7,373	321
3	Delta	5,369	88	5,170	111
4	Cross River	827	5	797	25

5	Akwa Ibom	4,657	27	4,586	44
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Table 4: North Central States and Abuja

S/N	States	Cases	Active	Recovered	Deaths
1	Benue	2,129	340	1,764	25
2	Niger	1,148	130	998	20
3	Nasarawa	2,720	336	2,345	39
4	Kogi	5	0	3	2
5	FCT	28,618	98	28,272	248
6	Kwara	4,601	362	4,175	64

Source: National Centre for Disease Control

<http://COVID-19.ncdc.gov.ng>. Retrieved 17 July, 2020.

The above tables represent the states, number of cases, active cases, recovered cases and occurred deaths of COVID-19 disease. In the above tables, South Eastern States have the least casualties when compared to neighbouring geo-political zones of South-South and North Central. Anxiety in the Eastern part of Nigeria (Igbo society) was reduced drastically due to its religiosity and communal dispositions. The restriction of contact from carriers of the virus by National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) was immediate and gainful. The reduction in death fatalities in Igbo society was a conscious effect between federal, states and community/family efforts.

Summary and Conclusion

The author tried to explain the synergy between religion and psychology in human wellbeing project. The task was not easy due to technical or theoretical discrepancies between the two disciplines. But the area of interdisciplinary research especially that which can benefit human wellbeing in the area of public health is most welcome. The relationship or similarities between Albert Ellis rational emotive behavioural therapy REBT and African Religion and culture is certainly a new horizon of research. This is simply the collaboration between psychology and practical African religion. While psychology understands man's emotional and rational processes in relation to others in human society, religion, applies moral consciousness in relation to God, ancestors, deities and man. REBT model is a behavioural therapy aimed at

mitigating the effects of irrational thought. The aim is to advance positive procedures to counter negative thought in a client.

The work was able to establish the similarities in the procedure of mental cures existing in REBT theory and that done by Igbo native healers and herbalists. While Ellis method was done in western culture, traditional medical standard responds to African/Igbo cultural environment. The table presented proved the authors argument that cultural belief in God, ancestors and spirits have mitigated the spread of corona virus among the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria.

Post Covid-19 psychological impact on Igbo society was taken care of during the period of its control, mitigation and cure. It was taken together as the effect on the society was not very devastating. The level of impact would have been further reduced if not eradicated if federal government banned visits from foreigners and Nigerians in diaspora.

Measures adopted during the pandemic included herbal treatment which took into cognizance inhalation of vapour from cooked herbs and leaves with medicinal values. The application of appropriate healing strategies and positive result had their root from the providence of African gods, Christian God, African ancestors and benevolent spirit friends.

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