

IGBO TRADO-MEDICAL ARCHITECTURE AS A MATRIX FOR DELIVERANCE MINISTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The thrust of this study is to portray Igbo trado-medical architecture as a matrix for deliverance ministries. The study also aims at casting off the western subservience and recapturing the Igbo rich cultural heritage. For some decades now, a lot of people have been condemning the Igbo trado-medical healing and deliverance architecture without knowing its relevance in the contemporary society. While some are projecting it, some are of the opinion that, it is something that is in connection with fetish, idol and ancestor worship and has nothing to do with God in its entirety. The purpose of this work therefore, is to clarify this conception and to ascertain what this phenomenon is all about as regards the healing and deliverance ministry in Igbo land. The descriptive research survey design will be used for this study. The instrument for data collation will consist of primary and secondary sources. The outcome is that the indigenous practices of healing and deliverance are still useful despite its condemnations by some group of people in the contemporary society. From the above, it will be on record that the African

healing and deliverance ministry has found its feet on orthodox institutionalized Christian churches. The work recommends that the practices are to be appreciated and be used by all and sundry as a tool for greater evangelism, thereby promoting a better and healthier society. This work therefore is an effort to redirect the mindset of people who think that the Igbo ritual practices in healing and deliverance should be relegated to the background because of the modern trend in the society. Therefore, it should serve as a blue print for Igbo trado- cultural religious renaissance.

Introduction

This study is an attempt to remind the Igbo people of their rich cultural values which they must necessarily protect and preserve. Preservation in this context does not mean going back to status quo ante but to a movement of their cultural heritage with the times, accepting what is noble from euro cultural values and discarding ideas not consistent and coherent with the Igbo values. Our context with the western world however has enlarge our scope and we cannot brush this aside under any pretext and this explains what this study had in mind, hence the topic: “Igbo Trado-Medical Architecture as a matrix for deliverance ministries. The study therefore, is an effort to redirect the mindset of people who thought that the Igbo ritual practices in healing and deliverance should be relegated to the background, because of the modern trends in the society. For the Igbo people to be free, they must thrive to be liberated from the shackles of western bondages be it political, cultural or religious.

The concept of Igbo Trado-medical architecture raises skeptical questions, and people, especially the Eurocentric scholars have been arguing, and debating on the efficacy of the phenomenon. Though the coming of the Europeans and their missionaries to Igbo land brought a lot of light and progress to the Igbo people, at the same time they tended to destroy a lot of credible and valuable things known to the Igbo especially the Igbo traditional medical system. Their language, religion, cultural values, trado-medical system, dressing mode and their general way of life were regarded as primitive or inferior. Today, the indoctrination by the missionaries still goes unabated and it is now very common to hear the Igbo people referring to their cultural heritage, including trado-medical system and their practices as inferior, primitive, demonic and evil, thereby creating bias against everything indigenous for the Igbo people.

Howbeit, man from the day of creation has received from God the resounding healthcare system to address the issues of diseases and other spiritual problems in his ecosystem. Against this backdrop, traditional means have not been uncommon in the treatment of diseases, sicknesses and deliverances of all types. The researcher averred that whatever is the cause of a disease or a spiritual problem, the traditional Igbo specialists especially diviners, medicine men and herbalists in their sophistication and mastery, would always have answers and solutions to them.

The Igbo have been very conscious and desirous of their survival, especially in the maintenance of good health in their ecosystem. This is because, they are aware of the many insurmountable challenges facing them including physical and spiritual health maintenance problems. In view of these, an Igbo man devices various means and strategies to enhance

the maintenance and security of his life. These, they do through many avenues to ensure that they not only survive but aim to live to a ripe age. Against this backdrop,trado-medical (healing)architecture mechanism came into play. It is therefore, a healing and deliverance system in ministries, believed to be instituted and gifted to the people by the supernatural being for healing and deliverance which serves as an avenuefor a range of healing and deliverance services to the Igbo people.The misconception, misunderstanding, and condemnation of the phenomenon Europeans and some other people has blindfolded the mindset of Eurocentric scholars and other elites to understand that the Igbo traditional medical system serves as a matrix for deliverance ministries in the contemporary Igbo church. This is a great problem to the society.

African traditional medical system and the Igbo in particular formed a holistic health care system that is organized into three principal levels of specialty which includes “divination, spiritualism and herbalism” (Ezekwesili&Okaka, 2019). Some Igbo Christians apply these mechanisms in the deliverance ministries.

These avenues form an array of initiatives by the Igbos for a resounding health care and deliverance system to address issues of diseases and ailments, all in a bid to secure life. In dealing with healing and deliverance mechanisms as endowed by a supernatural, one can notice the activities of the tradi-medicalistsas medical personnel battling on how to deliver, liberate and save lives of individuals in the society. It has been discovered that these Igbo trado-medical practitioners principally concern themselves with physical, psychological and spiritual sicknesses, diseases and misfortunes, all geared towards healing and deliverance

purposes in the Igbo society. They therefore, use their professional abilities to save lives.

Towards this end, the Igbo as an ethnic group is highly religious and highly endowed by a Supernatural Being of those medical practices or medical mechanisms which serve as a cultural heritage and remains one of the bedrocks of prevailing health systems despite incursions of orthodox medicine and the effects of globalization, western education, acculturation with other social groups (Nwankwo, 2014).

Under Igbo Trado-medical system, scholars have shown that Africans and the Igbo people in particular had their own system of healthcare before the advent of colonialism and modernization and these serve as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo societies. This is very evident among deliverance practitioners who are using mystical practices and other cultural tenets in their deliverance ministries. But, for some decades now, many intellectuals are condemning Igbo Trado-medical architecture without knowing its relevance to the society. The researcher came in contact with one particular orthodox doctor in Enugwu-ukwu, Njikoka Local Government Area of Anambra state, who formed the habit of condemning trado-medical architecture and their personnel without any reservation, not minding the area of specialization of such tradimedicalists and he forgets that there are also cases of sicknesses that defile scientific diagnoses. At Urum, there are cases of healings and deliverances, where the medicine man (*Dibia*) can cut the skin of a client with a razor and rub a substance prepared by him which is supposed to be able to cure pains resulting from insects, reptiles or other animal-like cases of scorpion stings, snake bites, dog bites and so on.

In these cases, it must be admitted that there is a possibility that what is rubbed into incisions can culturally cure and deliver the person and even produce immunity, yet people are condemning and having misconceptions about it. This study acknowledges the case of a particular tradimedicalist in one town called Daniel, but late now, who was believed to have treated cases of dog bite so effectively that the patients were free from rabies. His treatment was simple. As soon as a case was brought to him, he would prepare some herbs and rub the concoction over the wound with an instruction to the patient, not to bath until the next day. This man was gifted by a supernatural being who called him for this special ministry. There are cases that orthodox medicine cannot cure or deliver. That is why many a time when certain serious cases are proposed for hospital treatment, what one hears is “*ulọ Ogwuadighi agwooria nile*” that is the hospital cannot treat or cure all kinds of diseases especially the one that defiles physical treatment. The condemnation by these intellectuals is very worrisome and these are the areas where the modern medical scientist should do more work instead of condemnation, especially where we talk about psychological and spiritual healing/deliverance. But this is an indigenous healing and deliverance ministry instituted by a supernatural being among the Igbo for the benefit of man in the society.

The use of traditional medicare system and deliverance as remedies for the ailment has always been there from time immemorial and has always been part of human culture in all the continents of the world. This medical architecture which formed a base for healing and deliverance ministries has a cultural and religious connotation and has continued to be resilient and relevant to the primary health

care healing system in this contemporary Igbo society. This lack of knowledge, the misconception and the neglect of the Igbo trado-medical architecture are sources of worry to the researcher. The concept envelopes all rituals that are to do with healing and deliverance in Igbo traditional set-up. The Igbo people, as one of the ethnic groups in Africa, have their own trado-medical system based on their cultural settings and it works for them as far as trado-medical architecture is concerned.

Igbo Trado-Medical Architecture

This refers to those medical knowledge, systems or those traditional mechanisms and medical systems which developed several centuries ago by the Igbo before the advent of orthodox medicine. These knowledge, systems/mechanism constitute what we refer to as Igbo Trado-medical Architecture and are being used by tradimedicalists for healing and deliverance purposes. The medicines being used by tradimedicalists are called folk medicine by some school of thoughts, it has different forms and some people also called it indigenous or traditional medicine. The Igbo trado-medical architecture could also be viewed as those treatment not commonly believed within the framework of modern medicine (Huff, 2008). For World Health Organization (WHO), Igbo trado-medical architecture involves those health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs, incorporating plants, animals and minerals based medicine, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illness or maintain well-being (WHO, 2003).

From the above aforementioned description, the modern healing and deliverance ministries took their roots and started developing. What is today called “Christian deliverance ministries” started developing from traditional deliverance ministries. For this work in relation to Awka Anglican, the modern healing and deliverance ministries involves treating both physical, mental, spiritual, psychological and emotional problems. It should be noted that people sickness has connection or link with the spiritual and as such healing of a man encompasses both body and the spirit.

Deliverance Ministries

The deliverance ministry is a ministry dedicated to the power of the supernatural being (Almighty God). By deliverance, it is the process of setting someone free from evil spirit, manipulation of powers and personalities that molest him/her. “It refers to the freeing or rescuing of human beings from oppression, possession or obsession by demonic spirits (Okeke 2019). Going beyond that, Anunibe (2013) adds more meaning to it by saying that “It is an act of setting people free from sin, guilt, demonic bondage and death” (p.20) He went further to say that there are basically three levels of deliverance - Family deliverance, communal deliverance and individual or personal deliverance. When talking about deliverance ministries, it embraces or covers the healing and deliverance activities. In Christianity, especially in Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches, deliverance ministries refers/to groups that perform healing practices and rituals to cleanse people of demons or evil spirits. Biblically, deliverance is the act of rescuing, liberating people from danger, both seen and unseen. In

deliverance ministries, gifts vary and are endowed by a supreme being to people according to their abilities. The ministries called to this type of service should be able to exhibit wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of God.

Biblically the deliverance practices as adopted by deliverance ministries are those acts of delivering someone or something. It is the act of delivering someone from physical or spiritual danger especially liberation or rescuing from danger. Jesus Christ is the originator of deliverance ministries of any type and He is the one who heals or cures diseases and delivers people from all kinds of infirmities. Okeke (2019) asserts that the religious practices of the Igbo of Nigeria include, "...*Ọlụezinaụlọ* ritual practices, divination, traditional medicine ritual practices, witchcraft and sacrificial ritual practices. So, in the contemporary Igbo society, most of the Christian healing and deliverance ministries always engage in such ventures all in the name of conducting *Ọlụezinaụlọ*" (p.16). In some places some people call deliverance (spiritual cleansing), *Ilọmuo* (placating) or appeasing the spirit in traditional deliverance ministries. To contrast & differentiate between oppression, possession and obsession in deliverance ministries. It will be very apt here to differentiate clearly that: the deliverance ministry is characterized by understanding spiritual authority and applying this spiritual authority along with spiritual weapon to force the demonic spirits to leave the place of abode (person being oppressed, possessed or obsessed. By being oppressed means- when one is oppressed, the spirit can operate from inside or outside. Oppressed can be manifested in form of bad mood, which comes over a person. Another major way through which demons can easily oppress people

is through fear, especially the fear of death or fear of failure and so on.

Possession on the other hand, entails that the demon is resident in the person due to the fact that the individual has yielded to the evil spirits manoeuvres. It means that the evil spirit has taken over the three components of his or her entity (body, spirit and soul) (Anunibe, 2013)

Obsession-when someone is under the power of obsession, he or she manifests lust of the eyes. His or her eye is never satisfied with looking especially sexually at and desiring the opposite sex. Obsession therefore is the state in which a person's mind is completely filled with thought of one particular thing of person in a way that is not normal.

Deliverance ministries exist almost in all the mainline churches including the Pentecostal Churches. Some essential qualities a practitioner in the healing ministries should exhibit includes - wisdom, understanding, knowledge, ability to counsel, fortitude, piety and fear of God. The above qualities or virtues are evident in both Traditional and Christian perspectives of deliverance ministries. In the Christian concept, for somebody to have the spiritual gift of healing and deliverance, he must have the gift from God. In Christian theology the gift of healing and deliverance are among the spiritual gifts listed in 1st Corinthians, chapter twelve. More so, as an extraordinary charism, the gift of healing and deliverance being practicalized in deliverance ministries are a form of supernatural enablement given to a believer to minister various kinds of healing and restoration to individuals through the power of the Holy Spirit.

At this juncture, the healing ministry of Jesus must be spiritual, physical, emotional and social. In the contemporary Igbo church, we have healing and deliverance ministries showcasing in various churches in Igbo land. They include Roman Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal churches.

Traditional healing and deliverance ministries also exist side by side with the Christian oriented ones in Igboland. In that regard, among the traditionalists those responsible for *Ikpualu* (removing abomination) are there. Those responsible for destroying bewitchment caused by sorcerers, witches and wizards, those in charge of placating evil spirits and removing curses or what the Igbo called *iruagwu* or placating evil spirit are also existing. These are applied to deliverance ministries in Igbo land as it concerns Igbo Tradomedical Architecture.

The Concept of Ritual

Ezenweke (2012), described rituals as ceremonial acts or religious behaviors prescribed by tradition or by a sacerdotal decree (p.13). It is a pattern which a group recognizes as its typical way of doing things that has a creative impact in a community, (Uzukwu, 1988). According to Fairchild (1965), “Ritual is a form of behavior prescribed by custom, law, rule and regulation” (p.262).

Ejizu (1986) in his contribution asserts that:

Ritual is concerned primarily with ordering bodily movement in space in man’s endeavor to transcend and communicate with the divine. Man indulges in ritual also in a bid to interrelate the various spheres of his life in a harmonious and faithful manner. (p .71).

It is a cordial link between the physical and spiritual being. Leach(1954) defines ritual as “that which serves to express

the individual status as a social person in a structural system in which he finds himself for the time being”(p.10).

According to Shorter (1973), “ritual is literary or verbal symbols accompanied with symbolic action. Human beings, being everywhere fundamentally try to act out their expectation on experiences through symbolic action” (p.122). Socially, ritual is also a force that makes known to the participant, the social value of the community.

During ritual an observer will understand what a community values for instance from traditional ritual cleansing/deliverance one will understand how they understudy values of traditional medicine and its ritual relationship with deliverance. The cardinal point in religious ritual is that it points to the religious experience, religious symbol and religious action. (Ezenweke 2012).

The Igbo – ethnography

The Igbo speaking people occupy the eastern parts of the mid – western and part of Delta areas of southern Nigeria. The Igbo are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria and are based mainly in the southern part of the river Niger. Their territory falls within latitudes 5 and 7 degrees North and longitudes 6 and 8 East. Ajakor (2016) opined that a lot of views have been proffered but yet the Igbo remained a mirage (p.41).

Madu and Umeanolue (2017) pointed out that:

The Igbos, though occupy the present South Eastern states of Nigeria, all the same, we have pockets of them in Delta and Rivers states as well as Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. The origin of the Igbo people has been the subject of debates and speculations but this origin or where the Igbo

originate from has not been proved beyond any reasonable doubt (p.216).

Madu and Umeonolue (2017) maintained that:

“As in the outside origin hypothesis, the Igbo tradition of origin is traceable to the East (Israel, Mecca or Egypt). One peculiarity about this outside origin hypothesis is that it does not suggest that all the Igbo are from the same place” Edeh (1985) maintained that from oral tradition, the Igbo claimants to this hypothesis base their argument on their particular kinship relationship and not of the entire Igbo people such notable claimants are the Onitsha Igbo and Arochukwu Igbo. Oral tradition claims that Onitsha Igbo migrated from Benin of the present Edo state of Nigeria. This claim seems to be based on the affinity of kinship between Onitsha and Benin (p.217).

On the outside origin hypothesis, the Arochukwu Igbo claims of the outside origin of the Igbo, Edeh(1985) echoes this thus.

The Aros were quite a different racial type from the indigenous inhabitants of the Igbo country because the Aros were light in colour; they must have been among the people associated with the descendants of a Phoenician colony that had settled on the lower Congo in very distant past and had intermarried with the natives (p.11).

The first view holds that the Igbo migrated from Israel or Jewish race possibly during the Exodus period. According to this version, the Igbo of Nigeria are off shoots of south Hebrew tribes. The school of thoughts said that the Igbo migrated from the Middle East and they are the descendants

from “The lost tribes of Israel”, This view is supported by Equinox (1974), an Igboex-slave who advanced the theory that the Igbo originated/migrated from the Jews. He based his arguments on the ethnographic and cultural grounds (Diara, 2001). Basden supported this fact by adding that the Igbo are culturally related with the Hebrews. In his argument, he pointed out some areas of similarity between the two cultures, such as religious inclination, the practice of circumcision and mummification (Basden, 1982). The above background supported the outside origin hypothesis.

Another school of thought in internal origin hypothesis, argued that the origin of the Igbo is from the Benin or Oduduwa origin. According to Ajakor (2016), those who hold to this view believed that the Igbos were part of Oduduwa, the father of the Yoruba, and originated from Benin kingdom only to settle at riverine area or the ika Igbo land of the IgboDike in support of this assertion opined that there was an eastward movement of population in 17th century, AD (p.41). The third Igbo origin is the Benue River region. This school of thought held that the Igbo migrated from Igala country of the Benue River into Igbo belt Late 17th Century AD to avoid the Fulani slave trade. majority of the Igala Igbo settled in the Northern part of the Igbo territory (Ajakor 2016).

Madu/Umeanulue (2017) averred however that;

The internal original hypothesis seems to be stronger than the outside origin especially when this is viewed from the area of archeological finding by archeologists, ethnologists and sociologists. The researches of Thursten Shaw, Harlstle and Onwuejeogwu are eloquent testimonies to the internal origin hypothesis of the Igbos (p.218).

The Igboukwu Bronze archeological findings were dated around 1500AD when the Igbos were already occupying their present location. Again, Hartte's findings at Bende, Afikpo, Okigwe, Awka and Nsukka have shown that the Igbo had settled in those areas even before A.D. 205 (Edeh, 1985). Onwujeogwu, an Igbo ethnologist in his work on Nri people of Igbo land drew an insightful inference from findings of Shaw and Hartte as to the validity of the Igbo internal origin hypothesis. He contends that there is a strong continuity of materials between Nri culture of 580AD and that of the present time that the undated objects collected by Hartte could mightily be said to fill one of the gaps between 580AD and the 20th century. (Madu/Umeanolue, 2017).

In summary, Ezebuilo (2009) made an insightful remark in favour of the internal origin hypothesis of the Igbos when he said:

The origins of the Igbos have been the subject of much speculation, however, studies based on testable facts clarify that the Igbo have lived in their country for tens of millennia. The archaeological finds at ugwele okeigwe make an insightful proof of human activities in the theatre of Igbo civilization more than two hundred and fifty thousand years ago. Evidence of man made tools like axes, pottery and carved stones dug up at the present-day Enugu and Ebonyi states establish the credibility of the habitation of Igbo for a very long time. In other words, tradition of Igbo origin favours Igbo genesis in Igbo land (p.6).

Having made this historical excursus of the Igbo origin, we now proceed to discuss on the socio-cultural practices of the Igbo people.

Socio-Cultural Practices of the Igbos

On the concept of social-cultural practices of the Igbo, the Igbo believe in living together. For the Igbo as for the Africans, to exist is to live in the group, to see things with the group and to do things with the group. Igbo philosophy put it like this, “life is not individual venture, each for himself (Arinze, 1970). This powerful instinct has been harnessed to produce wonderful results, in community development projects. Through socialization, they interact with others and help to develop the undeveloped areas.

In Nigeria the Igbos are known for their sociability and their ability as co-developers. They help one another to build a houses, construct new roads, to celebrate marriages and organize funeral rites for their deceased ones. To the Igbo indigenes, solitude is held to be a mark of wickedness. They believe in living together, working together and interacting together. Age groups are formed by men and they help in town development. In the social aspect we see *Ọzọ* titled men taking paramount positions. The Igbo man as a social being enjoys taking of titles of which the *Ọzọ* title is the highest.

Socio-cultural practices are the distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional factors that characterize a society or a social group. Igbo people therefore have their own social-cultural practices which help in building a healthy and balanced society. They have festivals as part of socio-cultural practices, new yam festival is gladdened with the celebration of the new yam called *Iwaji* or *iri ji ohuru*. Ibezim (2018) affirms that: “The totality of rituals around the new yam eating expresses the community’s appreciation and renewal with the gods, for making the harvest of yam yields possible and successful” (p.82).

Other cultural practices include ofalla festival, polygamy, male and female circumcision, secret cult, worship of deities (divinities). Ezenweke, (2009) says: “Traditionally, the basic socio-cultural Umunna (village) made of homestead and links together by ties of kinship that made up a village” (p.111).

But for the researcher, the basic-socio-cultural unit among the Igbo is Umunna (kindred) and this Umunna is made of families, different Umunna make up villages and villages make up towns which is today known as community. Music serves as a means of entertainment. Igbo people love music. Arinze” opined that whether they are dancing or working, paddling a canoe or hoeing the field, one hardly, finds groups of Ibos silent. Wrestling is a popular sport and is often staged between villages and religious festivals (Arinze, 1970). This can be more prevalent during moonlight plays and from young ones could be able to learn more things from their neighbours.

Ala cult has something to do with socio-cultural practices of the Igbo. Ala cult also serves as the most potent for social unity, in that people can go to “Okwu Ala” or Ala Ndiche” for swearing or taking oath. Each village or group of village has a communal Ala shrine for social ceremonies and rituals. Okeke (2019) opined that:

Qhanaeze Ndi Igbo is another social organization that binds Igbo together. This central organization serves as a socio-cultural and socio-political organization among the Igbo people. The composition of *Qhanaeze* Ndi Igbo includes; all the leaders of, thought town union leader/representatives and traditional heads of every community in Igbo land. The aim or objectives of the organization includes to

hold all the Igbos together as a body which will have common cultural, political and social forms that can help to march forward as an ethnic group in Nigeria. This socio-cultural organization helps the Igbo people to speak with one voice in the political situation in Nigeria. Having dealt extensively on social-cultural organizations of the Igbo, it will be very pertinent to look closely the belief system or the religious practices of the Igbo race.(p.75).

Religious practices – (Belief system)

The Igbo society is overtly religious and time has gone when European scholars will say that Africans have no religion. Rather in the African society, religion is an integral part of the lives of the individual; the family is the community as a whole. The Igbo religion as part of the African religions has foundational religious practices that emanate from their traditional beliefs and worldview.

Worldview is the totality of the people's assumption about how the world is conceived contemplated and perceived by people who live in it. It is a totality of beliefs about the universe which are common among members of any society and is demonstrated in the value system such as philosophy of life, social conduct and morality, myth, theologies, among others. In defining the religious world view of the Africans, Mbiti (1969) stressed the fact. "That the spirit world of the African people is very densely populated with spirit being spirit's and the living dead or the spirit of the ancestors" (p.75).

i. Belief in spirit beings:

The spirit world is the most pervasive in Igbo world view in African traditional religion, there is a very close relationship between the spirit being and impersonal power and forces (medicine, charm and magic). The Igbos believe in spirits (both good and evil spirit). This has a very big influence and impact on this dominant religious belief of the Africans. In the first place the spirit world can be divided into two broad categories:

- 1) Non-human spirit.
 - 2) The spirit of the dead (Ancestors).
- Even among the spirit of the dead, there are good and evil ones. The evil ones cannot be regarded as ancestors but can be called *akanegholi* or *Ajommuo*.

The close relationship between, spirit being and mystical impersonal power and forces is fully connected in producing spirit forces called *Alusi* which people normally rely upon. Therefore, the spirit world or the realm of the supernatural is in a sense a battle ground of spirits and power that use their mystical powers to manipulate and influence the course of human life.

ii. Belief in mystical powers: Belief in medicines charm and magic is one of the outstanding beliefs in the African Traditional Religion or Igbo Religion. Medicine will be divided categorically into two different concepts – those for healing and deliverance purposes and those for mystical powers which relate to magic and charm (*ogwu agworọ agwọ*). The latter is being used for manipulations which is more or less diabolical in nature. The belief in this impersonal (mystical powers is dominant and pervasive among traditional Africans/Igbo people. The Igbo see it as a religious core value and its dominant influence upon man is

very great. Mystical powers are beyond our ability to understand.

They are not natural powers, but powers from unseen and unexplained sources. There are the powers of witchcraft, magic and sorcery. The act of witchcraft is the act of the mind; witchcraft uses the mystical powers to achieve its objectives/aims. In fact the universe itself has a power or force that affects people for good or for bad. One cannot understand, the indigenous religion of the Igbo people or the Africans in-general, unless he has a thorough understanding of mystical powers. This belief and practice affect the behaviour and attitudinal orientation of the traditional and modern Africans.

Igbo people also believe in medicine for cure otherwise called curative medicine. This type of medicine is the one which the tradimedicalists can use for healing and deliverance purposes.

Another aspect of mystical power is magic. Magic are those positive acts performed with a view toward manipulating supernatural powers or supernatural being. Magic is forcing something to happen instead of praying to asupreme being for something to happen.

According to I. Agwu (personal communication January 30, 2022) from Isiakpu Nise, He explained that. Magic refers to the saying of a set of words and the doing of a set act in order to control and bend powers of the work to do what a person wishes. Most of the sorcerers, strong medicine men (*ndị Dibia*) and herbalist make use of magic to achieve their objectives. Magicians use impersonal power through the use of rituals and ceremonies whereas religion is the belief in unseen spirits or gods and the

use of prayers to request or beg for their help. When magic failed, there was no other option but religion.

Howbeit, Okeke (2019) communicated on the use of mystical powers stated that the whole bible which Christians are using forbid the use of mystical powers, whether they are acceptable in Igbo society or not. Though God knows their existence but all these mystical powers of magic charm *ajọ ọgwu*(bad medicine), divination, sorcery and witchcraft are forbidden by God (p.131). According to the principle of guiding the Christian faith, Gehman (2013) said that “all specialists in mystical powers are under God’s judgment. All Christians who consult a specialist or use mystical powers are disobeying God. White magic and black magic are forbidden” (p.100).

However, the thrust of this dissertation is just to open the eye of people to see how Igbotrado-medical architecture is serving as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo church, and to see the impact in the Anglican Church, hence the word Awka Anglican experience; Most of the so-called ministers or African independent churches of deliverance ministries are using mystical elements or powers to influence members and the outsiders. Some use these mystical oil or holy water to perform deliverance, some even go to the extent of *Isa ire* and *iniOgwu* in the compound where they are ministering, thereby borrowing the traditional way of healing or deliverance.

As part of religious practices, charm and medicine are made by *witchdoctors* for curative, preventive and protective purposes. Their practitioners can use materials like herbs, roots, barks, insects, skin and bones, leaves, animal skeletons, and horns. Certain set of words may be used to

make charm powerful. In Igbo land and in Africa generally, charms can be used to protect warriors from deadly equipment, modern warfare's. These are being used by traditional practitioners in different healing and deliverance ministries. Some present Christian ministers are copying from their traditional counterparts in their respective deliverance ministries/churches. In fact it has been discovered that they are borrowing a lot from their traditional counterparts into their different healing and deliverance ministries in the contemporary Igbo society. In the ministries, practitioners are using charm, magic/medicine to fascinate members into their deliverance ministries. All these are a true evidence that tradomedical architecture serves as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo church.

iii. Belief in the Supreme Being: Time has gone when the Eurocentric scholars will claim that the Igbo did not believe in God. The Igbo believes in the Supreme Being who is above other lesser divinities (deities) and the hierarchy of being started from the Supreme being to other beings. The works of African scholars for the past decades have established the fact that the Igbo have this concept of a universal God and the creator called the Supreme Being. The overwhelming facts do show that even though the Igbo generally have the awareness and beliefs in the Supreme Being (supernatural being), the truth is that this supreme being is not known to have been exclusively worshipped by the traditional Igbo, what they practice is henotheism. In this case, Igbo divinities and ancestors who are the lesser beings have been actively involved in the everyday religious lives of the traditional Igbo. They directly receive sacrifices, offerings and prayers offered by the traditional Igbos. They

believed that these lesser deities and spirit forces emanated from the Supreme Being

In Igbo land, even when they believe in divinities or deities are directly involved in the affairs of men, they also involved God directly and indirectly having recognized Him and seen Him at the Apex of all other deities. The divinities are believed to be emanated from God and therefore both divinities and ancestors serves as ambassadors, intermediaries or mediators between man and the Supernatural Being. The Supernatural Being (God) who is above the lesser deities seems not to be intimately involved or concerned with the affairs of men. This had made them to turn to the impersonal beings, the divinities the ancestors, spirit forces or beings for help. Therefore, they practices henotheism because they worship one God without denying the existence of other deities.

Commenting while practitioners of deliverance ministries use prayers and magic as part of their religious practices, Madu (1997) made the following remarks:

Prayer and magic are two basic techniques for dealing with the Supernatural. Although Durkheim has said that magic results when religion is employed for antisocial means, it seems this is not so, since not all magic acts are anti-social. Magic in our view is the application of the increment power in man to manipulate the supernatural forces, an indication that these forces are not immutable so to say; magic therefore, can be said to be written in the realm of religion, since their common denominator is the relation of man with the supernatural. Magic is the manipulation of human affairs by the spiritual forces (p.27)

In the application of magic, magicians believe that under certain conditions he can control Supernatural powers. Therefore, he works with a kind of selfassurance and arrogance/pride. Under the religious state of mind, man acknowledges the superiority of the supernatural power, upon his action, and his wellbeing. Thus, his action is that of submission, reverence, besiegement, petition, prayers, sacrifice and offering.

Occupation of the Igbo People

The Igbos of Nigeria are known for their farming, trading, smithing, wood carving, healing specialist and so on. The most important aspect of the economic life of the Igbo people is farming. They are well known for their agricultural life. To an Igbo, Agriculture or farming is a habit. This life habit permeates her ritual and celebratic thinking and forms her entire horizon. In pre-colonial Igbo society Agriculture was the most important economic activity with regard both to the number of people engaged in it, either in full or part-time basis or the prestige it carried. Through agriculture, they produce food with which they can feed themselves on. Today they depend on subsistence and commercial farming. Their agricultural products include Yams, Cocoyam's, Okro, Ona, Adu, Black-beans, Maize Cassava, Vegetables, Plantain, and Herbal plant medicine. (Afigbo, 1987).

Nganwuchu (2018) succinctly said that:

The Igbo approach to agriculture is so sublime that each family employs farming not just as occupation but as a way of life. Each family produced various forms of food items such as yams, cocoyam, cassava, vegetables and so on to last for the year. More prosperous ones even produced enough to trade to

other areas through distant markets. This group is distributed according to land location and soil types (p.66).

The Igbo are not alien to trading and business. To the Igbos, business is not just an act of survival; it is just an act of God. The Igbos are known for trading in the olden days, they trade by barter. Trade by barter is a process where by people can exchange goods for money. Another article of trade in those days can be sold or bartered under the guise of slave. Although subsidiary to Agriculture, trade was non-the-less an important aspect of Igbo economic activity. Just as *Chukwu* is believed to have instituted Agriculture so he institutionalized trade and marketing by creating Igbo market days naming them after four heavenly fishmongers. These fishmongers went around establishing market bearing his name (Afigbo, 1987).

Trading and business activities therefore have been major parts of rituals and economic lives among the Igbos. This accounts for several forms of migrations and intermarriages between the Igbos and other trading areas among and outside the Igbo territories. The Igbo people not only trade outside their geographical zone, but also established cultural contracts with other ethnic groups. Against this Backdrop;

Nganwuchu, (2018) testified that before the arrival of the white man, indeed, before the nineteen century AD (if one goes by Thurstan Shaw's suggestion) of North-South cultural contacts, the Igbos not only traded outside their own geographical zone but also established cultural contacts with other groups. By 1930, for example, when the British penetrated Northern Igboland following the conclusion of the

Aro war (1901-2). They found Igala and Hausa traders in Enugu, and Udi, while Awka blacksmith were settled for trade reasons in Igala and Idoma. These merchandise from the north reached the Igbos; horses coral beads, cloth, dye, ostrich feathers, potash raw cotton and native tobacco. (p. 74 – 75).

Having discussed briefly on trading by the Igbo, it is also crucial to mention that the Igbo people are very good in the manufacturing industry. The Igbos manufactures agricultural tools, war implements and various kinds of baskets, mats, cloths, earthen jars, household furniture and so on. Some of the crafts are being produced by some selected communities. Example Awgbu community is well known for pottery, Akwaete is known for their peculiar cloth weaving (Akwaete cloths). Some communities engaged themselves in smithery, the most lamed and the best among them are Awka, Nkwerre and Abiriba people. Okeke (2019) summarily, added: Today people are known largely for their trading activities in different parts of the world. They can today be seen in different parts of the world seriously engaged in trading. Animal husbandry is also part of their occupation. Also, in every community there are those specialists whose occupation is based on tradomedical Architecture. There are the tradimedicalists or we simple called them indigenous or native doctor (Dibja).

Certain communities were endowed with gifted indigenous doctors for healing and deliverance Example, Nsukka people are well known for producing drugs treatment for Nsi. It is surprising to notice that the missionaries regarded the Igbo culture as good radiance to bad rubbish, Nsi though not well-understood and studied and elaborated by them (missionaries) constituted part of the list of Igbo

culture that must be abandoned, dropped and abolished. The people rejecting the Igbo culture and tradomedical system have not seen the beauty surrounding the phenomena.

Therefore, the Igbo cultural practices should not be thrown away completely all in the name of Christianization of the Igbo people. That is the reason why Ekwunife, (2011) succinctly posits that:

Christian missionaries often throw away the baby with the bath water in that they regarded that which was mysterious in foreign cultures as simply devilish, without distinctions. They too quickly assigned to devil powers that ancient people might well have received from God, who is the maker and protector of all people, no matter how much the Jews would have us believe that only they as a people were chosen by God. Does creation not involve the free will of God and therefore the choice to create or not to create? By creating all peoples God chose all of them (p.12).

From the above it is pertinent to note that the missionaries saw nothing good in our culture such as respect for elders, respect for life, community consciousness, tradomedical/health care system, Ajakor (2016) affirmed that “they use of derogatory names as evil, barbaric, paganism, fetish, juju and heathenism to qualify our cultural heritage” (p.91). This type of occupation of Igbo people used to save life should not be abandoned like that.

Taxonomy of Dibia in Traditional Healing and Deliverance Ministries

In Igbo religion-social society, *Dibia* is the traditional doctor. It can be explained further by saying that there are two categories or type of *Dibia* in Igboland – the one that

saves life and the one the one that prepare mystical substance in order to harm or eliminate life.

Ekwunife, (2007) stated that:

The word *dibia* can perhaps be translated as diviner or as doctor – magician. A *Dibia* will normally specialize in one or other of these two branches of his profession, though some combine the two activities, and all seemed to have a smattering of both”. (p.79).

That’s may be the reason for misconception of the word “*Dibia*”. *Dibia* is not all about diviner or a magician as they are being referred in contemporary Igbo Society and most especially among the Eurocentric scholars.

Against the above backdrop, some scholars hold different views on the meaning and functions of *dibia* among the Igbo, while some are having negative views, some are also having positive views. Some scholars in their scholarly works made their submissions. Studies by Isichi (1976) and Umeh (1997) focused on the positive role of traditional Igbo *Dibia*. Ajakor (2016) made it clear that the traditional Igbo *Dibia* were men of extra-sensory perceptions, the life-wires of traditional socio-religious, political, economic and other dimensions of the peoples live” (p.33). They therefore involve themselves in healing and deliverance practices in order to save lives and maintenance of good health.

The magicians or the sorcerers are the typical example of those that posed negative picture of the meaning of *dibia* in Igboland. This include *Dibia Nsi*, (those that prepare poison and other medicine for aggressive purpose). No wonder people misconstrue the true meaning or true conception of the name.

Generally, in Igbo concept, a *Dibia* (Doctor) is a master of knowledge and wisdom of esoteric practices. He

specialized in fortune telling and seeks to discover secrets and gives spiritual advice about sacrifice as well offer sacrifices to divinities. They also prepare medicine or drugs for patients. They can also serve as practitioners in deliverance and liberation ceremonies in traditional healing and deliverance ministrations. They can also serve as mediator between gods/spirit and man. As it concerns maintenance of health, saving live and deliverance purposes, these are the tradimedicalists who use medicinal plants as traditional medicine to diagnose, prevent cure, heal, eliminate diseases/sicknesses and practice physical and spiritual cleansing/deliverance (Okeke, 2019). These tradimedicalists can use different mechanism, techniques and knowledge they acquired in their practices. They helped greatly in diagnosing, healing and delivering people from emotional, material, physical, spiritual and psychological problems. These traditional medical practitioners (*ndịDibia*) always rely on the direction of Supernatural Being and the *Agwu* Spirit (patron spirit of healing) for proper direction on what to do. This is because they serve as intermediaries between their fellow human being on one hand and supersensible realities on the other. Usually their professional roles vary, depending on the skill and religious knowledge they are trained for (Anyanwu, 1999). In this contemporary Igbo society, the homeopathic doctors who in their practices, prepare local herbs with a mix to meet modern medicine standard are among the types of *dibia* (tradimedicalist) we have in the society). Now let us explain in clearly well on the typology of *dibia* we have in Igbo land.

A. *Dibịa Afa* (Diviner)

Dibịa Afa is a diagnostician endowed with special skill of divination. They are those whose functions are to find out hidden secret or knowledge probably from the land of the unknown (spirits) to the land of the living through divination. C. Chukwuma (personal communication, July 2022) emphatically stated that “Diviner’s art is largely mystic, deeply magical and involves the use of several instruments purported to have magical or mystical power of consulting the spirits”. They dominate the guild of native doctors, because of their power of extra sensory perception. They may at times be referred to as the Priest of *Agwū* (the Igbo deity responsible for divination and healing in our study area, and their main instrument is known as *afa* in which the diviner uses incantations called *Agwū/oracular language* to perform his art. Through them they are not the head of any public cult like *Ezemụọ* (Priest) but divines under the influence of ‘*Agwū*’ divination spirit, to whom he is devoted (Metuh, 1985, Anyanwu, 1999). Ajakor (2016) emphatically stated thus:

Diviners can be either men or women but majority of them are often men. They occupy an important position in the Igbo health care delivery system hence the Igbo saying/proverb. *Ana esi n’anya Dibịa (afa) afa ndi mmuo*’ (one sees the spirit through the *Dibịa*eyes (p.112).

Therefore, *Dibịa afa* (diviner) has an indispensable role in helping the sick person to discover whether the said misfortune comes from human agents of the community – witches, sorceress, or from spiritual agents like evil spirit, an *alusi* or occultic men.

The *dibịa afa*’s findings are made known to his client during and at the close of the consultation and he advises

accordingly. Often times they give up to one hour or more as consultation duration. They are consulted for different purposes ranging from, the cause if sickness, the possible solution to the problem, type of sacrifice and rituals to be performed, and so on. More often, their clients are not necessarily the sick, but the troubled. Some scholars in indigenous religion, tradition and culture have presented divers opinion about the categories or type of dibia within Igbo society. As mentioned before Ekechukwu (1982) groups the Dibia into two broad categories: the herbalist and diviner (*Dibia Afa*).

Mume cited by Madu, 2004) in his own classification identifies eight types as follows: The general practioners, the herbalist/native doctors, the faith healers, the bonesetters, the native gynecologist and midwife, the witch doctor, the blood letters, the traditional surgeon.

Nwala (1985) indentified six categories of tradimedicalist (*Dibja*) in Igboland. They include *Dibja Agwu*, *Dibja Aja*, *Dibja Ohu*, *Dibja Ogalamuo*, *Dibia Ogwu* and *Dibja Nsi*. It is from all these categories of *Dibja* that the contemporary medical practioners started developing.

It is very pertinent to note that the roles of *Dibja* (whether *Dibja Ogwu*, *Dibja afa* and others) in Igbo society is a difficult task to embark on. However, ‘*Agwu*’ being the patron spirit of divination and making of medicine chooses its worshippers and endows them with gift of divination, and the knowledge of medicinal herbs.

All these categories of dibia in one way or the other are involve in deliverance practices in Igbo society. All these practitioner has been transformed and their medical practices upgraded by practitioner to suit the contemporary Igbo world.

B. *Dibịa Mgbasi* (Sorcerer)

Sorcerer believe in sorcery involves worldwide practices and it involves practices that are beneficent and maleficent and includes mechanical and spiritual invocation of spirits.

This type of *dibia* is the evil one. The *Dibịa mgbasi* (sorcerer) can cause bewitchment and thy work closely with witches and wizard. This type is the one that causes misconception and people only called them *dibia* anya nzu in the area of study. Among all the types of *Dibịa* we have in Igbo land, *DibịaMgbasi* (sorcerers) are the most fearful *Dibịa*. This type of *dibia* is not for health maintenance rather they are the evil ones.

They engaged themselves in *Nsi* (poison) practices. Metuh is of the view that sorcery may also be practiced through contagious magic. He may use hair, cloths, nails to perform rituals or mutilation. The act of mutilating or ritually destroying one's extension of personality is believed to harm the intended victim (Ajakor, 2016) *DibịaMgbasi* (sorcerers) may use offensive or black magic to harm people's health or destiny. Against this backdrop Parinder (1962) opined that:

Offensive or black magic is much feared and many charms are worn with the object of defeating it by the use of the stronger power. The black magician, sorcerer or wizard on the other hand is an evil person, feared and hated. He works in darkness because his deeds are evil. All manner of evil that attributed to the called accidental or misfortune is attributed to the malfeasance of sorcerers, broken limbs, cramp, internal pains, still born, babies twin and any unusual events are taken as showing that sorcerers are on the war Path. (p.117).

So *Dibija mgbasi* are those that practice sorcery. They are those who by use of drugs, herbs or by other means tried to bring about supernatural effect for the harm of others or the protection of others. True faith in the supermebeing cannot be allowed whenever people are practicing sorcery, because they will always depend in all mystical powers. In their practice, the sorcerers and magicians practice hurting someone with imitative magic. They can do this by hurting an effigy (image or doll) of that person. They can prepare effigy of mud, wood or other material. Then he tries to hurt the effigy with needles, knives, thorns or other weapons. By using mystical power, whatever is done to the effigy produces harm to the enemy. Once this happened in the society, the best thing to do is to fight it down by consulting strong-*Dibija* (for deliverance) who will counter the evil power of the sorcerer in operation. *DibijaMgbasi* therefore use black magic and medicine against others but those *dibias* who saves life are called to counter it. When a sorcerer is identified as hostile, driving her out of the community or otherwise persecuting him/her gives the orthodox a sense of comradeship and self justification.

Looking inwardly to the activities of diviners and sorcerer in as it concerns deliverance ministrations, Esiegbé (2008) made the following remarks “sorcerers appear to look like prophet of God but they are fake and deceptive”. That may be the reason why there are a lot of misconception and misunderstanding the Igbo tradomedical Architecture which serves as a matrix for deliverance ministries in our days.

In The contemporary Igbo society and most especially among Eurocentric people, there are misunderstanding and misconception of the word *Dibija* whenever it is being discussed. Whenever we talk about

dibia, mindset of people will rush to being a sorcerers, magicians, witches and wizard medium and so on. In the context of this study our mindset will concentrate on the medical ones-that is those responsible for health maintenance and deliverance purpose in saving life.

There are other different special areas in the *Dibia* profession in traditional Igbo Society as it concerns healing and deliverance. They include the followings:

Dibia Ogwu (Medicine man/Herbalist) *Dibia Okpukpu* (orthopedic Doctor) Faith healers, The blood Letters, The traditional surgeon, *Dibia Aja*, *Dibia Nsi*, Tellapeutic occultic, *Dibia Oghonwa/Dibia Afoime* (Gynecologist/midwifery) *Dibia Ara* (psychiatrist) *Dibia Umụaka* (pediatrician) *Dibia Amosu* (Witch Doctor) *Dibia Afa* (Diviner) and so on. It will be good to talk briefly on these areas of *Dibia* specializations:

1. ***Dibia Ogwu* (medicine man/Herbalist):** Some people call Them *Dibia Nkporogwu na nkpaakwukwọ*. This is because some are inclined in using herbs and roots in their health care delivery. The main functions of *Dibia ogwu* are to prepare and administer medicines of all types. He is always approached to provide cure for all sorts of bodily and mental illness which a doctor and a psychiatrist would handle in western society while diviner primarily seeks to diagnose disease or discover the cause of disease/problems of the clients and offer solutions to Those problems/sickness *Dibia Ogwu* being a herbalist/medicine man can be referred to as “general practitioner” and he deals with herbs, bark which is referred in Igbo as *Ogwu* (medicine) . He knows how to

choose and mix the right herbs and root to take care of clients' complaints (Mgbemere – Emukah, 2017)

Obiagwu cited in Mgbemere – Emukah (2017) observed that some of the methods the medicine men deal with their patients are Psychological. This method he quoted, Parinder as saying that it is sympathetic magic which is based on the belief that using part of a thing or a copy of an object may affect The whole obiagwu further stated that this type of psycho-medical care is still lacking in most of our modern hospital up till this time (p.267)

The above description is the role which *Dibija* Ogwu play in healing and delivering the sick in Igbo land, and humanity in Igbo land desires good health so much that they go about The liberation of people and restoration of good health in different ways and methods. This type of *Dibia* is responsible in making curative medicine.

2. *Dibja Okpukpu* (orthopaedic Doctor)

Before The coming of Missionaries and the western doctors, The Igbo have their cultural oriented orthopaedic doctors whose main concern is correction of skeletal deformities, disorder or injuries. Some people in Igbo Land called The *Okwamgbada* – (Those that specialize in repairing and setting broken bones). This is so special in that in some cases, he sets back to its normal position those broken pieces of bones. In some places in the study area, Bone setter use some sliced bamboo stick or any other fear Plank tied together to keep the bone steady to aid speedy recovery. Okonkwo (2012) succinctly stated :

While the western orthopaedic surgeon applies the Plaster of Paris (P.O.P) antibiotics, pain relievers and

so on, *Dibịa*Ọkpukpu relies on herbs, wooden splints, clay and so on, which They apply to the fractured bones, The medicine is applied to the fractured area, alongside wooden splints, which are protective and supportive meant to keep the medicine in place as well as guide the fractured bone and enhance easy recuperation (p.73).

So, in Igbo land this type of *Dibịa* is serving the traditional Igbo society in terms of healing and delivering people from the physical misfortune.

3. *Dibịa Ara* (Psychiatrists)

Psychiatry is a branch of medicine that deals with mental or behavioral disorders. *Dibịaara* as he is locally called specializes in the management of mental problems. In our study area, *dibia ara* deals mainly with mental syndromes and other related behaviours. It is a general belief among the studied groups that madness (mental problems) is caused by evil spirit and as such requires series of ritual performances and sacrifices to appease the offended deity or spirit. The *Dibịa Ara* handle abnormal behaviours before they deteriorate to full blown madness.

Normally every tradimedicalists is supposed to have this agwu (spirit of healing).

4. *Dibịa Afoime/Dibịa oghonwa* (Traditional midwifery/Birth Attendants)

These are the traditional doctors who specialize in handling pregnant women or Barren women. *Dibịa Afoime/Dibịaoghonwa* helps women who always have miscarriage. They are mostly middle-aged and elderly women who have the skills in the management of

maternity issues and child delivery. Some of them are involved in the practice of male circumcision after eight days of child's delivery. In the time past, they have apprentices who learn on the job; but due to the multiplicity of orthodox medicine/hospital as well as white color jobs, the art does not enjoy apprentices anymore. Looking critically at the topic of this work one can easily infer that those modern midwifery/nursing college started germinating from the trado-medical system which the supernatural gifted to the Igbo before the coming of white men and their subsequent colonization, indoctrination and acculturation.

C. Nnaemeka (Personal communication January, 20, 2023)

Explained that those midwives/Gynecologists in Igbo Land are mainly women, but few men in their mist are concerned mainly with treating barren women with concoction prepared with roots and herbs.

5. **Pediatricians (*Dibịa Orịa Umuaka*)**

Pediatricians are called children's doctors. They are specialists who handle children's sickness, like Alubala, spleen inflammation or enlargement of the spleen (*Oma afo*) Jadi jadi (mgbemere emunah, 2017). It is not every dibia that is knowledgeable in children's diseases. Some of them operate in their homes. The researcher observed how they treat their patients at Nsugbe, Ugwuoba and ogbunike

6. ***Dibịa Agwu***: this is another kind of native doctor who works specially under the direction of and influence of an agwu spirit which is the oracle in charge of healing in Igbo Land. This *Agwu* spirit is regarded as

the Patron spirit of healing and divination which is in charge of healing in Igbo Land. *Dibịa Agwu* has the power of letting people know certain hidden mysteries and develop the faculties for divining the Past, present and future. The traditional Igbo man believed that this kind of spirit directing the *Dibịa Agwu* emanated from God.

The difference between *Dibịa Afa* and *Dibịa Agwu* is that While *Dibịa Afa* is serving as a diagnostitian, *Dibịa Agwu* is a “specialist diviner” who serves as patron spirit of healing (muo agwu), *Dibịa Agwu* supposed to perform the duty of *Dibịa Afa* in the sense that in the modern balance, people regards them as visioners, or seer as well as a pharmacist.

It is the duty of *Dibịa Agwu* to determine if the client needs deliverance or ordinary treatment. He hears from the spirit of healing before treatment begins. The *Dibịa Agwu* doesn't apply magic as instrument of healing, but *Dibịa Afa* fortells the cause of the problem and appropriate way of managing them. Diviners art is largely mystic and deeply magical in his or her practices.

There are other types of *Dibịa* which may not be directly connected with trado medical treatment but they are relevant in the area of healing and deliverance ministries in traditional Igbo. They include:

- i. ***Dibịa Ohu (Prophet/seers)*** : These are the Prophets/seers who may also acts as psalmist they forecast future events, read and reveal peoples destiny, they behaves as the prophet of God and prophesy the mind of the supernatural Being, They are usually wandering native doctors. They also help in performing rituals for deliverance purposes.

- ii. ***Dibịa Ogalà Mụọ*(Necromancers):** These are the dibia who commune with the dead and other spirits. As Igbo believe, they can go to the land of the dead, they can go and commune with them and get message from them and receive special powers. Such *Dibịa* often go to burial ground with candles and other materials very late at Night (Ajakor, 2016)

Some of the attributes of dibia as exhibit in their Profession can be seen when they are Performing, Ajakor (2016) affirmed that:

A *Dibịa* is believed by the Igbo to possess:

- Ifụzọ (seeing beyond the ordinary/clairvoyance)
- Igwọria (healing a sick person) or Aka ile (potent hand) with which such feats at the healing touch ekiri effected and ogwu created.
- Igwọgwu (making medicine)
- Igwo ajo ogwu (making bad medicine which result in nsi (p.37).

In these contemporary Igbo church, some of the above attributes can be seen working among the deliverance ministers in their respective deliverance ministries.

At this juncture, the researcher wish to agree with what Ajakor said. Ajakor maintained that not all *Dibịa*as partake in the attribute of Igwọajo ogwu (making bad medicine for manipulations and preparing poison against his fellow Human being. However, those that are incline to saving lives delivering and liberating souls can deliver health services to the society. Some gifted men have even answered call in serving God in His Igbo church.

Contributing on the typology of *Dibịa* (*Ichie Agwu*/Personal communication February 26 2023)

emphatically stated that those who practice tellapeutic are occultics. He describes them as.

- 1. The tellapeutic occultics:** These are the *dibia* that include fortune tellers and those using mystic materials in their healing/deliverance purposes. Within this category, the sorcerers, magicians, witches and wizard Doctors and other strong medicine men like the occultic people are those who work against the good of their neighbors. Therefore, They are not regarded as true tradimedicalist because they work against the health and progress of people living in the society.
- 2. Faith Healers:** The faith healers are the type of tradimedicalists which concern themselves in persuading the patients to confess their sins through prayer. The faith healers including other trado-medical practitioners like *DibiaAgwu*, *Dibia aja*, *DibiaOhu*, *Dibiaoganamuo* among others can reflect in the contemporary deliverance ministries.

Tradomedical Architecture as Matrix for Deliverance Ministries – A reflection

One may ask, do we have traditional deliverance ministries in Igbo land in the olden days? How does this phenomenon serve as matrix for deliverance ministries? Yes, we have traditional deliverance ministries depending on the type of problem being encountered whether physical, emotional, psychological, material or spiritual aspect of it. We have it right from onset, the only problem is that it wasn't pronounced openly as it is been done in our contemporary society. What we have today is more refined and more transformed deliverance ministry, to compare with

what was obtainable then. Even the traditionalist are still practicing them today as they inherited from our forebears.

In Igbo concept, deliverance ministry is nothing but “*Ọlụ Nnapụta*” and so the Igbo in their own understanding and tradition has their own type of deliverance ministries (*Ọlụ nnapụtaga*) even before the advent of Christianity in Igbo land in 1857. They use exorcism and mystic powers as tools to deliver those entangled with evil spirit. A times they combine mystical powers and sacrifices to set people free. Exorcism is the religious or spiritual practices of evicting evil spirit or other malevolent spiritual entities from a person or an area. This process is part of deliverance practices in both traditional and Christian concept of deliverance as stated earlier is the acts or process of being rescued from danger. It is acts or process of freeing or rescuing people from oppression, possession or obsession of evil spirit (Anunibe, 2013). Exorcism is the religious or spiritual practices of evicting evil spirit or other malevolent spiritual entities from a person or an area. This process is part of deliverance practices in both traditional and Christian concept of deliverance practices. Deliverance as stated earlier is the acts or process of being rescued from danger. It is the acts or process of freeing or rescuing people from danger oppression, possession or obsession of Evil spirit (Anunibe, 2013).

Those bewitched can be delivered through spiritual cleansing in traditional concept those bewitched can receive deliverance through *Dibia* aka (strong medicine men), the deliverance can be conducted with the combined efforts of *Dibia Afa*, *Ezemmụ* (Priest) and *Dibia nkporogwunankpakwukwọ*. C. Nnaemeka (Personal communication January 25, 2022) aptly said: The traditional medical system and deliverance practices revolves around the

Tradimedicalists (*Dibịa*) as the agent of patron spirit of healing and deliverance.

The *Dibia* who communicates with the spirit makes inquiry from the spirit and proffer solutions to the problem that could not be solved through the orthodox practices. The *dibia* and his methods of operation which involves rituals, the use of mystical and deliverance practices constitute what is known as Igbo trado-medical Architecture. Under this medical architecture which involves healing and deliverance ministry, the whole mechanism practices revolved around the personnel called the '*Dibịa*' and his or her *modus operandi* and this '*Dibịa*' is a messenger of the spirit who usually engage in communication (consultation) with the spirit to find and proffer solution to problems confronting human. Nnaemeka succinctly said that *Dibịa* sometime engages in activities and using organic material and medications prepared from natural herbs and roots. Atimes they uses mystical elements in their healing and deliverance practices. The activities of the *Dibịa* responsible for healing and deliverance are mostly directed by the spirit. The *Dibịa* is said to be under the control of the spirit of healing called '*Agwu*'. If the '*Dibịa*' obeys the instructions of the *Agwu*, he may be led to solve human problems, call it spiritual, physical, psychological, emotional and material problems, otherwise he or she will be disorganized. All these activities of tradimedicalists (*Dibịa*) are geared towards the restoration of human health

It will be very apt to say that Igbo trado-medical architecture is the matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo society. It serves as a cradle. It is pertinent to note that before the advent of the white man and subsequent colonization and Christianization, the Igbo nation

has been one of the races of the world, which has her culture or way of life including system of deliverance and health care system and these revolves around this medical practitioner called '*Dibia*'. So what, we see today as deliverance ministries evolved from traditional deliverance/healing ministries. It is safe therefore to conclude that the Igbo tradi-medical architecture is the matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo church because whatever we are experiencing today in terms of using traditional or orthodox medicine and deliverance practices in the Igbo church originated from tradomedical architecture. Even the conventional or orthodox medicine and modern Western doctors have their root from traditional concept. It is from the traditional medicine that orthodox or conventional medicine originated. Every nation of the world has its own traditional medicine which later was refined scientifically and developed into orthodox or conventional medicine.

The traditional medicine, its mechanism& techniques in Igbo forms refer trado medical architecture and as a cultural heritage it remains one of the bedrocks of prevailing health system despite incursions of orthodox medicine and the effect of globalization, western education technological development and acculturation with other social group. It should not be out of place to say that Igbo trado-medical architecture have been in existence for many centuries before the incursion of orthodox medicine by its medical practitioners. It is from this Trado medical system that modern medicine and modern medicalists started taking their root and started developing. Among the Igbo people, they have what they called folk medicine (indigenous or traditional medicine) and this refers to medicine and medical knowledge/mechanism, which developed several centuries

ago in any social group before the advent of modern medicine (Nwankwo, 2014). Nwankwo (2014) maintained that: Among the Igbo as of South East Nigeria, traditional medicine and its medical practitioners has had a long history. It constitutes part of their effort over the years to cope with their environment and to lessen pain, treat injuries and illness of physical and mental nature. This mental nature involves spiritual cleansing/deliverance. Their traditional medicine clearly prescribes the care for the sick, who to provide the care and how he should proceed. This is where the tradimedicalists play important role as medical practitioners. Looking closely into the taxonomy of tradomedicalist, we have the following tradomedicalists – the general practitioners, the herbalists and native doctor, bone setters, native gynecologists and midwife witchdoctors, blood letters, traditional surgeon faith healers and so on. All these categories of tradimedicalists (*ndịDibịa*) future well in traditional healing and deliverance practices. Against this backdrop the faith healers including *dibia agwu*, (*Dibịa Aja*, *Dibịa Ohu*, *Dibịaoganamuo*, *Dibiansi* among others can reflect in the contemporary deliverance ministries. Some of these tradimedicalists maybe referred to as faith healer or native healer, who involves themselves in traditional deliverance practices. These traditional healers in other words are the life wires of traditional medicine in Igboland. They may apply exorcism or sacrifice for cleansing and appeasement of the spirits. They are the medical practitioners recognized by the community in that, they are there to provide health care. Their method of treatment or healing are based on the social, cultural and religious backgrounds as well as knowledge, attitudinal orientation and belief system of the people. These traditional healers (tradimedicalists) are

responsible for carrying out healing ceremonies, or deliverance practice other religious rituals and rites that intended to ensure the safety and health equilibrium of the people.

In contemporary Igbo church, some churches like Roman Catholic Church, Sabbath mission and other independent African churches (I.A.C) make use of traditional medicine in treating people in their respective healing and deliverance ministries. The Roman Catholic Church with this ideology has dominated the scene and are using the tradomedical practices for soul winning and the extension of God's Kingdom. A lot of their ministers who are gifted in tradomedical practices are serving as agents of using the practices for saving life and soul winning in their respective ministries/churches. Such ministers like late Fr. Arazu, Rev. Fr. Emma Edeh, Fr. Obimma Emmanuel (*Ebube Muo Nso*) and so on are such Roman Catholic Church Ministers who engaged themselves in such vocation and have established deliverance ministries in different parts of Igbo land. In dealing with Igbo tradomedical architecture, Kanu (2015) outlined different categories of tradimedicalist the Supernatural Being used in harmonizing good health and saving life among the Igbos before the advent of Christianity in Igbo land in 1857.

These tradimedicalists include herbalist, diviner, the general practitioners, the faith healers, the bone setters, the native gynecologist and midwife, the witch doctors, the blood letters, traditional surgeon and so on. As already established, these tradimecalists (*ndiDibia*) in Igbo societies belong to a group of sacred specialists as a member of the same group it is not surprising that they would sometimes overlap in their function. Since then, these specialists have

been useful in Igbo trado medicare system and have evolve into deliverance ministries. At times some of these medical practitioners perform the functions that belong to priest and diviners, but today they have evolved into what we have today as deliverance ministers, prophets of God who engaged themselves in deliverance ministries.

The traditional faith-healers and witchdoctors have eventually developed into contemporary deliverance ministers in the society. Some of them have even been absorbed or called into service in the church according to the ability and specialty in Igbo churches today. Some of the traditional diviners have developed into diagnostician (Laboratory scientist) seers, visioners or prophets in churches and society today. Among the faith-healers, one will get impression that tradimedicalists will continue to be relevant especially as they help to solve contemporary health problem. The Igbo trado-medical healing and deliverance practices are holistic in nature in the sense that they treat both physical and spiritual aspect of disease and sickness But, there are sickness or ailment that can define medication using Western or modern scientific method. Instead of applying orthodox medication, traditional medication (which is holistic in nature) will be used as alternative for healing and deliverance among the Igbo People.

Identifying Genuine Trado-medical healing in Anglican Diocese of Awka.

Among the Igbo (Awka people in particular), health is the normalization of cosmic forces, visible and invisible in accordance with the natural laws (Madu, 2004). There is every need to identify genuine tradomedical healing and their practitioners within the ambit of Anglican diocese of Awka.

One of the respondents whom the researcher interviewed informed the researcher that among the Igbo of the South East of Nigeria, traditional medicine as a cultural heritage remains one of the bedrock of privilege health system despite what the fake medical Practitioners are injecting into the system. Howbeit people maintained that there are many genuine tradimedicalists whose calling originated from God and these medical practitioners are being used by the Supernatural being to save life.

The findings in the study area showed that there are many genuine tradomedical healers and majority of the respondents accepted that traditional medicine is very relevant in promoting health and safety in the population (Diocese of Awka).

From all indications, there is no doubt about their existence, but the problem remains how do we identify the genuine healers in Anglican Diocese of Awka and absorb them into the ministry of the church.

Identifying the genuine tradomedical healers

Generally, the practitioners of trado-medical healing are known principally for the following:

- i. Their callings must emanate from Supernatural being or he/she must possess, the spirit of healing (*Agwu* spirit).
- ii. They must not depend on materialism
- iii. The affordability of their medicine product must be considerate.
- iv. Total reliance of the instructions from the spirit of healing must be adhered to.
- v. People in the Diocese of Awka Anglican Communion have to accept the notion that the Igbo have their medical system and their taxonomy of Medical Practitioners and

they have their medicine for healing and saving lives. Therefore these medical mechanisms/techniques should not be relegated to the background. By their fruits you will know them.

- vi. Among the faith healers in traditional set up which later developed into contemporary healing and deliverance ministries, that they possessed the same spirit of healing which helps the practitioners in their practices. The Bible says by their fruit you shall know them. This spirit of healing which the Igbo refers as spirit of *Agwu* emanated from the Supreme deity (God).

These faith healers according to Ajakor (2016) are the tradimedicalists that believe that only one's faith in God or Supernatural Being/deity will cure him or her of any Sickness. They hold that sickness and disease are as a result of guilt and that they are healed through confessions, prayers faith and drinking of water. They believe that pure water possesses spiritual power of healing (p.55).

Howbeit, they can supplement it with administration of drugs with faith and prayers addressing everything to divine healing. From the above notion, it is believed that this serves as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo Church. From the research conducted in the study area, there is a problem of non-acceptability of Trado-medical healing and deliverance among the Eurocentric or Christocentric scholars and a lot of people are still seeing the practice as fetish, inferior, primitive and demonic. People have bias against everything indigenous for our people.

The researcher is of the view that this should not be misconstrued. The problem of misconception, misunderstanding and condemnation should not blind fold the mindset of people, rather people should see the

phenomenon and believed as being instituted and gifted to the people by the Supernatural being for healing and deliverance.

It is pertinent to note that the Igbo does not toy with life and maintenance of good health and the tradimedicalists in Igbo society belong to a group of sacred specialists who are very relevance in the contemporary society.

On the trado-medical treatment approach among the Igbo, each of folk (traditional medical practitioner) in Igbo society has treatment approaches which cut across medical herbs, massage, hot and cold foods or bath prayers, dancing and even flogging as in cases of mental illness, others are magic, diet, exercise, exorcism, Proper social relations and counseling and so on (Nwankwo, 2014).

One may like to ask what constitute this healing and deliverance practice or what form the base or foundation to this healing and deliverance ministry in traditional set up. Do they have any connection with the use of mystical powers in contemporary healing and deliverance?

Igbo trado-medical healing and deliverance process as adopted by the Igbo traditionalists.

In order to return to normal health balance of human person, they have connection with the application of mystical powers in contemporary healing and deliverance practices. It is believed that the Igbo society is a community of relationship. It is a community that has a unified view of reality. This underlies the holistic nature in which everything is perceived by the Igbo (Madu, 2004). Madu (2004) asserts:

The world of the Igbo is not a different universe. Nothing happens in this universe by chance or in isolation. Thus every type of sickness from severe headache

to stomach upset – is caused by forces, evil spirit, witchcrafts, angry divination machinations of the enemies in the form of sorcery (*Ogwuor nsi*) (p.76).

Against this backdrop, Igbo trado-medical architecture provides the remedies or solutions to these problems under physical and spiritual healing /deliverance practices. Under the Igbo trado-medical healing practices, diagnosis of the cause of the illness serves as a step leading to its cure. Through the interaction between the clients, the priests or any other healing practitioner's solutions to the problem may emerge. There are so many factors responsible for both physical and spiritual sickness which may lead to trado-medical healing and deliverance. In dealing with Igbo trado-medical healing, the activities of Trado-medicalists serves as the process of traditional healing and this need to be analyzed and appreciated because each one specializes in different cures or healing and deliverance ranging from physical cures to mystical ones. Madu (2004) asserts "one can appreciate the fact that in Igbo religion, there is a nexus between divination, healing by the use of herbal medicine depending on the type of sickness and the ritual healing through the use of sacrifice"(p.27). This ritual healing is what we refer to as spiritual healing (spiritualism). Just as we noted that the Trado-medicalists like general practitioners, the herbalist, and the faith healers, the bone setters (traditional orthopedic), the traditional gynecologist and midwife, the witch -doctor (who specializes in wizard diseases), the blood letters, Traditional dentist, the traditional surgeon and so on are foundational medical practitioners before any other specialists, they are still relevant up till this day. All these specialists are involve in one way or the other in what we call the Igbo trado-medical healing and

deliverance before the coming of western doctors and their orthodox medicine in Igbo land. One thing that is very special with traditional medicine in Igbo society is that it helps to explain the causes of illness.

On the type of nutrition to take, traditional doctor who specializes in the area will recommend balance diet to people. Some herbs and the other medicinal plants are very useful for preparation of drugs for healing and deliverance in Igbo land. Under tradomedical practices, Trado-medicalists use different mechanism for curing medicinal plants for preparation of drugs which may be useful for healing and deliverance may be prescribed. Looking at the role of traditional dietary system, the Trado-medicalists recommends to his client to eat right and have balance diet. Diet as we know plays a major role in health. It helps the Igbo people to eat right that is, what to eat and how to eat to maintain a balance diet. Traditional dietary system is one that focuses on natural food, salty food, sugary food and fatty foods. Its main concern is on eating foods that provide good health to the body. It is the duty of traditional dietician to advice individual on how to maintain balance diet. Traditional dietary system is very essential for development and maintenance of body function, its major role is to create good health and reduce disease.

Summary

The ethnic indigenous Igbos are super abundantly blessed in all ramifications. In the area of traditional medical system their versatility is beyond description that the potency of most of their prescriptions is automatically guaranteed if religiously followed to the letter as orally handed down by the progenitors. Unfortunately, these

pioneers who revolved around their level of civilization without education, has no means of documentation for the benefit of posterity.

G. Nnite (personal communication, July, 27, 2023) asserted that the belief in a supernatural being by every nation is incontrovertible. The case of the Igbos cannot be different. The same supernatural-being that gifted the peoples of the world with wisdom, knowledge and understanding also made roots herbs and leaves available for general wellness of humanity within their circumstances and level of development, the restless Igbo, endowed with the gift of traditional medicine, not contented to stand still, continued their exploration and research into the field of faith healing. Those who were talented in this area were divinely inspired to make them to understand the potency and efficacy of herbs, leaves, roots and also spoken words at appropriate times and circumstances.

Misunderstanding and misconception of the phenomenon bordered mostly on ignorance which was and still is a very dangerous weapon for the promotion of superstition and inferiority complex, like the scripture says, people perish for lack of knowledge.

Time changes, and the advent of Christianity dealt a very powerful blow to ignorance which gave way automatically to learning known as education. With the advent of Christianity which brought about education, the spirit of inquiry began to manifest, questioning and debunking the superfluities of the old order which held people in a state of coma. The enlightenment that assailed peoples brains, coupled with the crosspollination of ideas from those who introduced Christianity let to the resultant

dawn of civilization that has continued to propel people towards wider development and refinement.

The Supernatural being that created the entire planet earth knows what is good for his children in different parts of the world. He therefore gives the same thing to serve the same purpose to different peoples of the world according to what is obtainable in their various geographical locations.

God promised not to leave the children of men alone. He therefore made wisdom, knowledge and understanding to those who obediently sought his kingdom and righteousness and added other things to them. They increased and multiplied in education and knowledge became the light of the world that beamed the rays of enlightenment to every nook and cranny.

The Igbo caught the bug also and the spirit of evolution, civilization and illumination came down and encamped amongst our people. As an integral part of the world, the Igbo cannot be precluded from the scheme of things as ordained from above for universal benefit. Our culture which determines our ways of life cannot be inferior to any other group culture because each one is indigenous and therefore tailored to suit the purpose of each group.

When Jesus Christ sojourned on the earth, He proved himself to be the greatest healer. He made the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the weak to be strong, the dead to come back to life and so on. He said those who follow Him can do even more than what He did. Till date, healing and deliverance taken place still at the mention of His name. What obtains in the contemporary church in Igbo land is what obtains in the contemporary churches in different nations of the world. The main difference is the language of each people and their cultural

beliefs. The kind of knowledge God spread to every part of the world is for the upliftment of his kingdom in all areas including tradimedical system of healing and deliverance. Thanks be to God that the world is evolving gradually, both culturally, religiously and otherwise. Christianity brought to the Igbo a lot of changes and advancement in all ramifications.

As part of the strategies to win members: courting alliance with the elites; the use of pulpits for evangelization, the issue of charity and the dispensation of medicine to the needy were adopted by missionaries. Anyanwu (2017) asserts that “the Catholic mission arrived in Igbo land in 1885, and their team included medical doctors. Given the financial stability of their home base, they had sufficient equipment regarding personnel and medicine, they built hospital and health centers where Igbo people were cared for. (p. 235).

For researcher, the type of medicines and doctors are not indigenous but foreign in nature. It was later after the coming of the missionaries that people started accepting again the genuineness of Trado-medical practice as a way of evangelizing Igbo people, and people are promoting the use of Igbo traditional medicine. Other denominations followed the suit of establishing hospitals using orthodox medicine in healing. As regards culture, the R.C.M. in particular, studied the philosophy of life, beliefs, customs and practices of Igbo. They were conscious not to replace all traditions with European norms but to refine them and so create a worthy civilization among the people. This is the area other Christian denominations must not toy with, rather they should develop the mind of enculturation, Christianization and refinement.

The researcher also observed with keen interest that the Roman Catholic mission started good work of Igbo religious cultural renaissance including adopting Igbo Trado-medical healing and deliverance earlier than other denominations in Igbo land. Good number of healing and deliverance ministries have been established by them, all these efforts are geared towards capturing souls alive for Christ and delivering them from the satanic bondage. Therefore, their doctrine is no longer on the side of wholesome condemnation of the Igbo way of life. Well, all is not lost because today, it has been noticed that almost the remnants of those who abandoned the Trado-medical, architecture of the Igbo people has come to realize that many beautiful things in their Traditional medical system, has come to stay. According to O.U. Kanu, “No society is static, the organic parts evolve with the process of social evolution”(Anyanwu, 2017).

At this juncture the researcher observed that Trado medical healing and deliverance and Igbo traditional religious renaissance has become imperative in order to rediscover the Igbo traditional values since most people are opting for revival of Igbo cultural values.

The topic of this dissertation extensively discussed on Igbo tradomedical architecture the role of *Dibịa* and health care delivery among other things. The Igbo people do not just jump into treating and sickness and delivering people from spiritual sickness, rather they will first consult *Dibịa Afa* (diviner) to diagnose the illness in treating diseases among the Igbo people, then, another type of specialist diviner (*Dibịa Agwụ*), the priest (Ezemmụọor onye isi nchụ aja) work hand in glove, for maintenance of good health.

The *Dibịa Agwụ* will know if the clients need deliverance or ordinary treatment, the *Dibịa Afa* or the *Dibịa Agwụ* divines and recommends to the clients, a herbalist or medicine man (*Dibịa Ogwụ*) who will use herbs or roots, bark of tree or insect or birds or animal or mixture of all or two or more to treat it, if is ordinary physical sickness, or the clients may be referred to the chief priest (*Ezemmuor onyeisinchu aja*), if it need a sacrifice to appease the gods or ancestors. The *Dibịa* with their specialties work together to care for the health of the Igbo (Emukah, 2017). The above description reflects the healing/deliverance chain of getting holistic healing and deliverance among the Igbo.

The fact remains that in exception of divine healing, in traditional Igbo society, healing and deliverance cannot take place without the involvement of *Dibịa*. In their various specialties and with division of labour, the sick is helped, and they recover from their state of dangerous condition of health. Finally, the supernatural being is at the apex of healing and deliverance ministries and His spirit of healing which the Igbo people regarded as *Agwụspirit* is indispensable in both traditional and modern healing and deliverance ministries. Let us be proud of our rich cultural heritage devoid of idolatrous and occultist practices in our tradomedical system. We should see the supernatural being (supreme God) as the original and initiator of Igbo tradomedical Architecture who designed the phenomenon as a way of maintaining good health among the Igbo. More so, people should see Igbo trado-medical architecture as a cradle to orthodox medical system and contemporary deliverance ministries.

In summary, all the nations and ethnic in the whole world have their cultural values and cultural heritage

including their Trado-medical architecture. This tradomedical architecture started evolving gradually as the whole. World changes, and practices on the phenomenon started developing steadily till they came up with the present medical healing and deliverance development. As they developed culturally in their skill of producing those medicines, mechanisms and deliverance practices; it is assumed that the supernatural being is regarded as originator of the phenomenon.

As things are going now, It can be succinctly said without any contradiction that Igbo tradomedical system just like any other ethnic Trado-medical system serves as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo church or society, in order to see that good health is maintained physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally and socially and otherwise.

Conclusion

Discussing on the topic of this dissertation, which is “Igbo tradomedical Architecture as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo church – The Awka Anglican experience, one should understand what tradomedical architecture is all about. It is all about these total traditional medical knowledge or practices adopted by the Igbo in diagnosing, preventing or eliminating a physical, mental, spiritual or social disease in order to achieve holistic healing and deliverance. Traditional itself is referring to what is native or indigenous (endogenously generated) and free from foreign (or exogenous) influences. Traditional in Igbo or African context, means being free from European or external ideas and cultural influences. Traditional on the other side is the sum total form of life, ideas and cultural

influences. Traditional on the other side is the sum total form of life, ideas and culture which antedate foreign colonialism.

The practices of Igbo traditional health care system should not be relegated to the background at all because of its relevance and its efficacy in the area of health maintenance among the Igbo people. While we are advocating for Igbo Traditional healing and deliverance ministries in our church and society, one should carefully notice that in 1977, the World Health Organization (WHO) gave formal recognition to the importance of African traditional health care system and has encouraged African countries to make the practice more formalized to ensure quality and better service delivery. Because of the importance of the role that indigenous medicine has played and continued to play in African countries (Igbo inclusive), and beyond, some countries and institutions of higher learning have started researches in plant medicine and the training of traditional medical practitioners and this has ensured quality traditional herbal medicine which helps in health care delivery.

Long before the advent of orthodox medicine and their doctors, the Igbo race has their own way of dealing with diseases and also their own way of practicing deliverance. All these revolved round the *Dibia* and this work for them. The Igbo tradimedicalists are regarded as traditional healers\deliverance practitioners. They are intelligent enough to prescribe traditional solution to any problem whether it had spiritual or physical undercurrent. When it is psychological, the person is sometime counseled and given necessary attention.

In the light of the above, Igbo tradomedical Architecture is intentioned with cultural and religious beliefs and is holistic in nature. It does not only focus on the

physical condition, but also on the emotional, psychological, spiritual and social aspects of individual families and communities. The relevance of Igbo tradomedical Architecture is very apt in that it really serves as a matrix for deliverance ministries in contemporary Igbo church. Every nation or every ethnic race has her traditional and cultural way of health maintenance. Based on the above backdrop, the Igbo culturally have their own medical practitioners (*Dibia*) and deliverance personnel who aid in deliverance ministries. In Igbo culture there is interconnection between traditional medical doctors and deliverance ministries in the contemporary society\Church. This is because the same special gifted personnel (*Dibia*) working in traditional forms under traditional health care have been reformed and transformed through evolution, inculturation, acculturations deliverance ministers in deliverance ministries. Thus, tradimedicalism has come into play in some of the established churches in their deliverance ministries.

The difference between trado-medical and modern or orthodox medical system is that while traditional medicine is the use of natural remedies such as herbs rituals and other plants to prevent or treat different kinds of illnesses, modern or orthodox medicine on the other hand makes use of scientifically approved therapeutic systems and diagnostic methodology for treatment of different kinds of diseases. From all indications, the use of traditional medicine is very holistic, in that it covers physical, spiritual, emotional, psychological, mental and social healings. It is from the above that healing and deliverance ministries started developing. Time space changes with evolution and Globalization /teachnology. Therefore, most of the mechanisms or techniques used by the *dibia* for healing and

deliverance are this time manifesting at the healing and deliverance ministries in our churches. The faith healers as Igbo tradimedicalists evolved into deliverance practitioners as one can now witness them flourishing in most Igbo churches.

The Igbo ritual practices in healing and deliverance should not be relegated to the background because of the modern trend in the contemporary society. This therefore should serve as a blue print for Igbo Trado-cultural religious renaissance. The Igbo trado-medical mechanism centred on holistic healing and deliverance. A holistic approach involved in Trado-medical healing means to provide support that looks at the whole person not just their mental health needs. The support should also consider their emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing. That is what Igbo traditional medical practitioners are for.

With thorough research conducted in the study area as it concerns this dissertation topic, it is very clear that Igbo have their own indigenous medical system otherwise called Igbo tradomedical architecture (traditional medical system) but with the advent of Christianity, wind of social change and trend of globalization and religious change, it is obvious that tradomedical architecture acceptance, the success so far made by the wind of cultural, social and religious change as regards this phenomenon can never be forgotten. Many gifted tradimedicalists are being used as medical and deliverance practitioners in the church and some of them have been absorbed into the Christian deliverance ministries to achieve a lot for Igbo race as far as health maintenance is concerned. They have contributed meaningfully to the spread of the gospel, extension of God's kingdom, development of human resources and in nation building. Some are being absorbed

into theological training for better use as church ministers as well as medical and deliverance personnel in the church and society. This should be fully appreciated and utilized fully in Anglican church, most especially in Anglican Diocese of Awka.

Recommendations

The Anglican Church should borrow a leaf from the Roman Catholic mission, whom on their arrival in Nigeria in 1885 came in with western doctors and sufficient orthodox (Conventional) medicine. They later settled down and understudied the tradomedical mechanisms used in saving lives; This made them to embark on using the traditional medical mechanisms & techniques in healing and deliverance ministries in their respective churches and parishes.

- (1). There is need for the Igbo theologians and religious leaders to settle down and discover some rich cultural heritage which can be employed to embellish Christianity in Igboland, so that it can be truly an “Igbonised garb”. This is what enculturation should be all about. Towards this end the Igbo people should love and embrace what they have knowing fully that everything in our culture contexts are not all that primitive, fetish and ungodly or obnoxious in nature. Some of the rituals seen in Trado-medical system and deliverance practices which are not obnoxious or idolatrous should be accepted in Christian principle.
- (2). It is now clear that certain misfortune, including childlessness in marriage, spirit possession, loss of job and accidents are believed to be caused by evil spirit/spirit forces. Therefore, there is need to get the tradimedicalists and men of God who specialize in

those areas to confront those evil forces and cast them out as Christ did and restored good health to the oppressed victims or families.

- (3). Those who are gifted by supernatural being (Supreme Being) those that are hereditary from their birth place should be absorbed and be trained as orthodox doctors and deliverance ministers for better understanding and for a better and healthier society.
- (4). Those gifted practitioners should be encouraged to do their work fully in the Church of Christ. When they fail to receive attention from Church authority, members may troop to the healing centers being managed by false pastors/prophets who came in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves (Mathew 7:15). In all, people should be careful about fake traditional medical practitioners/ fake deliverance practitioners.
- (5). Both traditional doctors, orthodox doctors and deliverance practitioners should see themselves as a team who work together to actualize good health and deliverance of souls in the society and church.

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