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**PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF CHARLES OGUNDU
NNAJI'S INTRODUCTORY DICTIONARY**

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Abstract

Introductory Dictionary of Psychology of Religion by Charles Ogundu Nnaji (2020) basically introduces Psychology of Religion before presenting the Dictionary of Psychological Study of Religion. Published by ResearchGate online in 2020, the author, Ogundu Nnaji, made an academic attempt to define Psychology of Religion in its proper context of analyzing religiosity from its behavioral paradigms, since religion is currently being viewed and perceived as human behavior studied from the point of view of neurotransmitter actions functioning in the human brain and producing human ideas and believes in the numinous, the spiritual, and of God who pervades cosmic existence. Psychology of Religion has not concluded that brain chemicals produce and control human religiosity, rather that Ogundu Nnaji (2011 and 2015) noted that religious people who are corrupt and criminal minded are abnormal psychologies who need psychological help. This condition thus, points to a possible fact that brain chemicals could be involved in producing religious behavior, which theoretically brain studies in neurotransmitter studies have isolated brain chemicals which influence human behavior, of which human religiosity has been identified as an aspect of human behavior which can be influenced positively or negatively by different factors. The study is expository in that; it intends to open up Charles Ogundu Nnaji's (2020) *Introductory Dictionary on Psychology of Religion* and his other related works.

Keywords; Introductory, Dictionary, Psychology, Religion, Charles Ogundu Nnaji.

Introduction:

Psychology has been simply defined as the study of human behavior. The word Psychology comes from two Greek terms i.e. "Psyche" would mean Soul or mind and "Logos" which means word or (to study). Forerunners of modern Psychology include Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and William James etc., who laid down the principles of current psychology. Trying to explain how the human psyche or mind produces human behavior through the influence of neurotransmitter actions in the human brain (Nnaji, 2015).

Writing on Biochemistry of Religion, Ogundu Nnaji (2015), identified brain chemicals such as serotonin, dopamine, GABA and glutamic acids etc. as causative factors in the production of human behavior in the human, this being results from neuro-scientific studies by Psycho biologists. (Renato Dulbecco, 2000 on the Psychobiology of the human brain). This study is not a critique, rather it evaluates or tries to find the bring out what Charles Ogundu Nnaji is saying in the *Introductory Dictionary of Psychology*

of Religion in relation to his work on Biochemistry Religion, Psychology of Religion and Christian Psychology.

Other related research studies can focus on the criticisms. The study is not necessarily comparative but an evaluation and exposition of Ogundu - Nnaji's works on Psychology of Religion. Though it does not rule out comparison: for examples compared to Alen Bergin and Kenneth Pergament. Ogundu – Nnaji's Psychology of Religion goes beyond Religion and Spirituality as coping mechanisms in Religious Psychology, rather it goes closer to the Freudian sub conscious in Psycho-analyses, which moves closer roles of brain chemicals in producing religious behavior.

Religiosity as human behavior

Nnaji (2010) identified religion as a mental action, which if channeled wrongly to undesirable activities becomes abnormal psychology. He believes that the idea of God is externally real to the mental realm, not necessarily acquired environmentally or psychologically, which can be revelatory and extraordinarily indisputable.

Hence, activities such as false prophecy, religious terrorism and extremism, including narrow-minded religiosity, can be attributed to mental and genetic creations very much linked to fanatical and fundamentalist religious teachings.

Certain types of abnormal psychology include paranoia, manic depression, melancholy, phobic fears, hallucinations, and delusions, etc. When atheism calls religiosity abnormal, then abnormality calls for serious study, since over three billion people worldwide are very religious.

Ogundu-Nnaji's Definition of Psychology of Religion and Its Basic Issues:

Ogunde-Nnaji defined Psychology of Religion as applying psychological methods to the behavior of religion and religious people. This definition as simple as it sounds, is tied to Ogunde-Nnaji's "Cerebellum Neurotransmitter functions in Biochemistry Religion" (2015:5, 31,70-72) where Psychology of Religion studies, religious mentality through the following:

1. Extra sensor religious perception, i.e. the ESPs which are probably beyond human sensory comprehension of man's contact with the numinous, and possibilities divine revelations from Astral beings.
2. From Neurotransmitter brain chemicals angles which suspect that Cerebellum Neurotic brain functions seems to be involved in the production and control of religious behavior intrinsically
3. Then Religiosity being of the Neuroses or brainal deceptions hallucinations and delusions related to Schizophrenia and psychiatry insinuations that religiosity may be psychiatric, which Ogundu Nnaji called an insult on religion (Ogundu Nnaji 2025:31, on Cerebellum Neurotransmitter Functions in Biochemistry Religion).

“To add insult to injury, one finds psychiatric insinuations of schizophrenic connections to religious behavior; the issue of schizophrenia in insulting to religion, since schizophrenia, without diplomacy, means madness or mental disturbance (i.e. psychoses and neuroses. See John M. and Stanley M. (eds.) Psychobiology of Suicidal Behaviour vol. 487; New York; Academy of Science, (1989)”. It may be more cautions for Psychology of religion to ask, “Is religious mentality a mental problem” than for psychology of religion to out rightly conclude that, “religious mentality is a mental problem”. But would anyone ask, is religious mentality a mental problem; while a lot of religious people will often argue that religious experience is an extra-sensory (supernatural) contact with God,” (Charles Ogunde Nnaji, 2015:31; Cerebellum Neurotransmitter Functions in Biochemistry Religion)

Related to Nos 2 and 3, in Ogunde Nnaji (2011:66-67) in Christian Economics and Christian Psychology, which states that Christian Psychology means transparent Christian moral behavior; hence it is seriously abnormal for a society to be 99% religious and 98% corrupt and criminal. Thus, the psychology of practicing Christians must be transparent morality. This is one of the basic reasons why Christian Psychology (partly) agrees with Psychology of Religion and Biochemistry of Religion, that it seems likely that Brain chemicals produce and control religious behavior, which makes it possible for one to be spiritual, yet corrupt and criminal. Please note the following Bible passages cited by Ogunde Nnaji: Jeremiah 14:14, Isaiah 29”13, Jeremiah 29:26 etc.

Chatrles Ogundu Nnaji, Bridging the Gap Between (1)Psychology (2) Psychology of Religion (3) Biochemistry – Religion and (4) Christian Psychology.

Ogundu Nnaji (2015 and 2011) defined Psychology from the Greek “Psuxe”, to English Psyche which means “Soul” or (mind) then Logia”, which means word or study, this which technically means study of the human mind which produces human behavior: Ogundu Nnaji identified Religiosity as an aspect of human behavior which can be extra-sensory or intrinsically psycho-biochemical. This is where Psychology of Religion comes in to point out that corrupt and criminal minded religious people are abnormal psychologies who need psychological help, especially biochemical psychological help, since Psychology of Religion believes that bran chemicals produce and control violent, corrupt and criminal minded religious behavior. (Ogunde Nnaji: 2015, on Theories on Origins of Religions).

As already noted, Ogundu-Nnaji (2015) explained that extra sensory perceptions and Neurotransmitter actions in the human brain can produce religious behavior. This which, brings in Biochemistry – Religion to identify and isolate brain capable of prompting human religiosity. Partly collaborating Psychology of Religion and Biochemistry Religion, Christian Psychology cites Jeremiah 14:14, Isaiah 29:3; Mark 7: 6-8, Jeremiah 29:26, that a society which is 99% religious, but 98% corrupt and criminal, is a psychologically abnormal society (Ogundu-Nnaji, 2011).

The following are from Charles Ogundu Nnaji “Biochemistry-Religion” 2011 and 2015.

“Hence, Biochemistry of Religion seeks to identify and isolate neuro chemical and genetic elements responsible for, especially, violent and narrow-minded religious behavior. Chemical Religion insists that religiosity experiences may not really be only extra sensory, but products of neurotransmitter and genetic actions in Central Nervous System of all human beings; therefore hallucinations (hearing voices) and delusions (to see false visions) can be as results of neurotransmitter alterations in the human brain. Mentally imbalanced people (schizophrenia) hear voices and see strange things; though in rare instances extra ordinary supernatural experiences can occur (see phenomenology of religion). However, arguments for the existence of God in philosophy of religion ask questions such as “how do we verify human claims of contact with the Divine”. (See Ogunde Charles Nnaji: General Introduction to Religion and Philosophy: “Philosophy of Religion”. Enugu and Abuja)

Please also note the following citations from Charles Ogundu Nnaji (2011)

“Christian Religion emphasizes doctrine, while Christian Psychology teaches that basic transparent morality is what is expected from practicing Christians. Christian Psychology is thus an updated field of Christian studies which emphasizes the teaching of morality, rather than doctrine, since it is better not to be called a Christian, than to be a criminal who claims to be a Christian; hence Christian Psychology focuses on the expected. Moral Psychology or behavior of those who claim they practice the Christian Religion”.

Some of the concepts and areas in Psychology and Biochemistry of religion in Charles Ogundu Nnaji’s (2020) Introductory Dictionary of Psychology of Religion include...

1. **Extra sensory perception:** i.e. beyond human comprehension which requires supernormal powers to understand and interpret, but called “psycho structural” in psychology of religion circles.
2. **Mind:** Is mind spirit or is the mind the “Brain”? The human mind is the human brain. The human mind is the human soul, the seat of the human mentality or its man’s consciousness, mentality, or intellect which creates beliefs in man, all these which make man higher than lower animals. Man can think and reason if he has mind. This writer calls the mind the brain, because the human brain has chemicals which produce mentality, consciousness, and thinking in the human brain (see the CCD).
3. **Extra terrestrial:** Phenomena or things outside earthly existence.
4. **Extra terranean:** Outer space, outside earth's atmosphere and gravity see Quantum physics.
5. **Extra Ordinary:** Difficult to explain: Mystery requiring great wisdom to explain.
6. **Extra sensory:** Outside normal human senses of touch, feeling, smell, and taste, it requires supernormal: powers to explain.
7. **Consciousness:** Being aware you are existing. A child realizes he is existing after his third year.
8. **Cerebrum:** Understanding or mentality

9. **Cerebral** - Intellectual, thinking, creating believes.
10. **Subconscious**: (a) storing thoughts (b) brain's ability to record information and replay them in dreams (c) doing something, e.g. not realizing you said something, and what you said, (d) thinking or knowing without knowing that you know e.g. running towards a direction on the instinct that a door is there.
11. **Subhuman**: Lower animal mentality. Not exhibiting enough higher intellect: Brutish.
12. **Human Mentality**: Human understanding and reasoning (not lower animal mentality)
13. **Meta terranean**: Beyond the Physical; beyond human scientific and psychological analysis.
14. **Metamorphic**: Ability to be transformed to another form; e.g. re-embodiment or reincarnation of the soul.
15. **Metaphysical**: mysterious forces in Nature; Inexplicable.
16. **Meta psychic**: A person knowledgeable in extra ordinary powers.
17. **Conscious**: The human mind is the human brain; it makes you aware of what you are and
18. what your consciousness means you know you are human, you are alive or you are naked. A child becomes conscious that he exists around 3 years. Before 3 or 2 years, he knows nothing.
19. **Conscience**: Conscience Helps you know or realize you committed evil; you don't need to be told you are a thief: conscience is your inner judge. (Moral Psychology)
20. **Meta normal**: Unsteady strange mental or psychological state; Eccentric or strange character.
21. **Ecstasy**: Spiritual exuberance during praises and worship, and speaking in strange tongues.
22. **Exuberance**: (see Ecstasy) or spiritual ecstasy; highly excited.
23. **Psephonomy and Psephics**: Figuring out something; or mental effort at solving mysteries.
24. **Psyche**: Soul, mind, human spirit, or spiritual part of man.
25. **Dreams and near death Experiences**, (a) wandering of the human soul when the body is at sleep or comatose, (b) The human brain replays its recordings when the body is asleep
26. **Psychothenics/Psycho theism**: Habitual practices of religions; religious rituals like ablution and prayers become habits done for fear of what will happen if not carried out.
27. **Psychology**: Study of the human mind: how the mind works; what produced, and controls the mind, then its functions in the human body, including; its diseases or defects; or things that can influence it positively and negatively.
28. **Psychonomy**: Extremist and violent religious mentality.
29. **Psychomeny**: Brainwashing and indoctrinating people.
30. **Psychosocial**: (or group psychology): (a) Actions practised or done because others are doing them; Caused by environmental or social factors.
31. **Psycholinguistics**: Subconscious, psychological, or mental factors in children who are learning languages (or mother tongues).
32. **Obsessive compulsion** (phobic neuroses) (a) fear that has become a habit; hence, being addicted to religious practises, especially due to fear of the unknown, (b) Constant religious practices

programmed (not programmed) into the brain hence done mindlessly; i.e. you don't understand why you are doing it, or its meaning or importance; you just learnt how to do it.

33. **Psychosomatic:** Involves positive or negative thinking i.e. positive thinking or outlook to life from the human mind helps the body secrete chemicals that boost the human body; while gloomy and depressive thoughts are harmful to the body.
34. **Psychoses:** i.e. Schizophrenia or outright madness, different from Neuroses that involves more of phobias or senseless fears of things that do not exist; or things that are really not serious.
35. **Psychiatry:** Treatment of madness or mental problem which includes psychopharmacology, or drugs for treating mental problems.
36. **Psychometry:** Statistics or figures collected and analyzed on human psychologies (local and international).
37. **Psychotherapy.** Using psychological methods like psychoanalysis in treating psychological problems.
38. **Psychoanalyses:** This is Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung's Psychological method of treating psychological problems by comparing how the subconscious interacts with the conscious levels of the human mind.
39. **Psychognosis:** Man's mental ability to invent or discover greater things. Human Intelligence is capable of stronger reasoning, but remains underutilized.
40. **Psychodemy:** General Psychological state or condition of a people, country or geographical zone ; i.e. are they industrious, docile, gentlemanly or extremist and violent?
41. **Psychomancy:** Trusting- in, and confusing you with magic.
42. **Magic and Witchcraft:** Negative use of extraordinary powers.
43. **Psychopharmacology:** Manufacturing drugs for treating mental illness.
44. **Parapsychology:** Mental or psychological powers controlled by the human mind often mistaken as miraculous powers: e.g. levitation, hypnosis, Telepathy, magic etc.

Ogundu Nnaji on Psychonomy and Socronomy

a) Nnaji (2015; 80, 92, 112) defined Psychonomy as a violent religious mentality. Particularly, Psychonomy advocates developing strict and relevant laws for punishing extremist and violent religious behavior.

b) The Dictionary of Psychology of Religion also has the word Psychomeny, also coined by Ogundu Nnaji (2015:92), which means brainwashing and indoctrinating people. This can relate to Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung's psychoanalyses (Ogundu Nnaji, 2015: 93).

c) Socionomy, also coined and defined by Ogundu Nnaji (2015:112-114), means that religion seems to have become a social problem, rather than a problem solver. Writing on the origins of religion, Ogundu Nnaji (2015, cover page) stated that people are busy solving religious problems, rather than religion

solving people's problems. To worsen the situation, some societies are busy creating religious constitutions, religious laws, and religious judiciaries which violate minority religious rights.

Abnormal Psychology in Psychology of Religion.

Abnormal Psychology has been divided into Psychosis, Neurosis, and Psychoneurosis (R. Atkinson 1993 cited by Ogundu Nnaji 2010) explains that psychoses are mental problems also called schizophrenia simply defined as madness, whereby the victim walks around naked or fully clothed, but aimlessly walks about, unaware of what he or she is doing (S. Ackerman, 1992). Citing Dulbecco (2000), Nnaji, 2015 explained neurosis (religious and neurosis) to be of a lesser form of madness or mental disorder. The sufferer moves about fully okay like every other human being, but inwardly he has minimal mental disorder such as anger problems (high temperature), paranoia, phobia, addiction, abuse of drugs, and certain types of hallucinations that make him or her feel he is higher than every other person (or blameless).

These explanations of psychosis and neurosis are a layman's presentation of what abnormal psychology is. A deep study of psychology gives us much more expert technicalities in psychological and behavioral studies.

Ogundu Nnaji on Psychics, Para Psychology, and Psychology

Ogundu Nnaji (2000) cited Sybil Shepard who explained Psychics and Para Psychology as one and the same with qualities ranging from extraordinary intelligence and actions such as in magic, witchcraft, telepathy, levitation, and outrageous levels of the human IQ that places some of them on the levels of geniuses which looks like magic yet such people cannot explain the origins of their intuitional extraordinariness. Some people call magic black (or black magic), yet there is nothing black about magic. Magic and witchcraft simply represent extraordinary levels of human words, actions, and powers which according to Ogundu Nnaji (2015) if used for evil purposes become magic and witchcraft.

Religion as para psychology is simply religion as an extraordinary human activity different from human psychology which can be reasoned and created as an idea from human mental thoughts (Ogundu Nnaji, 2015); origins of religion states that religion is a human behavior but not reasoned or created, so far Divine revelations are involved, while hallucinations and delusions are discarded. Ogundu Nnaji in his works on Psychology of Religion cited Thomas Hobbes (1651) in *Leviathan*, who said that "Madmen" will not allow us to know who is a mad man and who is a prophet", corroborated by Godwin Lasebikan (1983) in his University of Ibadan PhD thesis titled *Old Testament Prophecy and Schizophrenia*. That PhD thesis looked into the behavioral character of Old Testament prophets compared to behavioral characters of mentally disturbed persons. In Old Testament times, prophets and their methods of prophecies often seemed like mental issues, since they were involved in hearing and seeing extraordinary things which normal people have no access to. Hence, when the newly crowned king Saul

was cited among the prophets (the nebhim), they made a derogatory statement on him i.e. “Is Saul among the prophets?” In those days, Old Testament prophets spoke and prophesied fearlessly, telling people the truth of what will surely happen if they do not abandon sin and obey God. Such prophets like Elijah confronted Jezebel and Ahab the king, resulting in his killing Baal Jezebel prophets. He did this fearlessly as God’s own prophet which annoyed Jezebel, and Jezebel vowed to kill him as he had killed her Baal prophet. (1 Kings 18:21-the end.)

Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung on Psychoanalysis

Ogundu Nnaji, in his lecture series and writings, touched on the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, which deals with the human subconscious; that is, mental activities deep in the human psyche and in the human memory which hardly appear except if faced with or by impossible traumatic situations.

Religion in the human subconscious often comes with normalism, while fundamentalism and extremism defy the human subconscious with tendencies which often escalate out of control and proportion, leading to violence and extreme terrorism. This can also be linked to syncretism, whereby highly religious people can be involved in proportional double worship in Christianity in the morning, then Islam in the evening.

Subconsciousness is not relative to religion alone, while syncretism and double standards are everywhere in human existence. True religion should not find itself in syncretism, neither does it have anything to do with the human subconscious; rather, Psychology of Religion expects to see religion in moderation, doing away with terrorism and extremism.

Ogundu Nnaji (2011), on Christian Psychology (Psychonomy and Socionomy), has a strong maxim which simply states: *“Don't tell me you are a Christian, rather let me watch your character and conclude if you are a Christian or not; particularly, that there are criminals on the Christian pulpit who claim they are Christians, yet behaviourally there is nothing Christian in their characters.”*

Thus, Christian Psychology clearly states that moral theology is the A-Z of Christian behavior, since morality are mere words and statements; rather, basic Christian Psychology must be backed up with good virtues and good moral conducts that must speak for themselves.

Psychonomy actually tilts towards Christian characters that are not in line with basic biblical moral standards, while Socionomy aligns itself with societies governed by Christian moral laws rather than societies governed by extremist religious and manmade constitutional corpus juris (that is, manmade laws).

Ogundu Nnaji (2015), on Psychonomy and Socionomy, rejected societies with state religions, religious constitutions, and insensitive religious and secular laws which do not respect minority religious rights.

Socionomy strongly believes in God, but it rejects constitutional religious laws that do not respect minority religious rights. Socioeconomic and psychosocial issues which arise in socioeconomic societies include religious extremism, religious fundamentalism, insensitive constitutional religious laws which violate minority religious rights, often condescending to insurgent proportional religious uprisings challenging the insensitivity of such socioeconomic constitutional religious societies. In Psychonomy, Ogundu Nnaji advocated deterrent constitutional punishments for religious terrorism, since religious extremism must not be allowed to violate not just minority religious rights, but all forms of religious rights.

Some Related Current Issues in Psychology of Religion

(a) Ogundu Nnaji's Introductory Dictionary of Psychology of Religion (2020) highlighted a number of issues in philosophical studies of religious behavior which includes

- a. Genetic and psycho-biological origins of religiosity
- b. Psycho-social origins of religious extremism
- c. Religious neurology
- d. Suicide bombings
- e. State and constitutional religionism
- f. Westernization vs. Arabization
- g. A third world war that can be triggered by religious extremism
- h. etc., for all the stated above, Ogundu Nnaji's introductory dictionary of psychology of religion covered all the issues stated, and the philosophical and psychological need to constantly analyze and develop methods for preventing religious conflicts

(b) Comparative Psychology of Religion and Religious Psychology

The relationship between religion and psychology usually involves the study of religious belief and behavior from a psychological perspective. The psychological study of religion includes a focus on both religious behavior and religious belief; then it uses various models of human nature and many psychological concepts. Psychology of Religion thus consists of the application of psychological methods and frameworks for interpreting diverse religious traditions' contents (psychology online, 2026). Psychology of religion also involves investigations of human mental processes in the development of religious behavior in order to identify areas in religious behavior which can be called "normal, paranormal, or abnormal" in its extreme sense.

Religious Psychology, as stated above, can be described as a psychological enterprise or study applying psychological dynamics rather than utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods of study aimed at arriving at research results objective enough without subjective psychological models deliberately infused into it. Ogundu Nnaji states that the majority of the opinions are that not much difference exists between Psychology of Religion and Religious Psychology. From Religious Psychology, it is also related to Spiritual Psychology, which can also be interested in the spiritual components of a person's life, including the beliefs, faith, and practices that are important to the believer. Spiritual psychologists can also be interested in how a person's religious or spiritual beliefs affect their relationships and worldviews.

Research Evaluation and Conclusion

This study has so far analysed Charles Ogundu Nnaji's 2020, *Introductory Dictionary of Psychology of Religion* and his related works such *Neurotransmitter Functions in Biochemistry-Religion*, *Christian Psychology* and *Theories on the Origins of Religions*. Ogundu Nnaji (2020:22) in the *Introductory Dictionary of Psychology of Religion*, stated that it is possible that brain chemicals called Neurotransmitters can produce religious behaviors, since the chemicals are involved in the production of human behaviors. Ogundu Nnaji (2020:24) also in the *Introductory Dictionary of Psychology of Religion* noted that Biochemistry -Religion help's to isolate and study brain chemicals believed to be involved in producing and controlling religious and other behaviors (Ogundu Nnaji; 2020:23) Ogundu Nnaji (2015: 184) in *Neurotransmitter Functions in Biochemistry-Religion* pointed out that basic Christian Psychology demands that religiosity should produce morality, since anything to the contrary becomes an abnormal psychology (Ogundu Nnaji: 2011...), on *Christian Economics* and *Christian Psychology*; Abuja;)

Ogundu Nnaji (2020:34) on *The Implications of Population and Political Theology in Economic life and Performance*, explained in the abstract that when the ability to produce children runs faster than the ability to provide for them, increased religiosity, criminality, unemployment and banditry related activities occur.

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