**IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION ON CULTURE**

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **Background of the study**

In this paper, **Christian** values are defined as those ideals or principles which Christianity cherishes. In this presentation, my aim is not to dwell on the unique worth of Christianity or its values. These are well-known and appreciated, especially in Nigeria society. My main concern is to relate and evaluate this worth in terms of a definite **culture**, namely, Nigeria ensemble of values. The choice of Nigeria is obvious for an Nigeria writer. It becomes attractive and obvious, too, once we identify Western, including American, **culture**, which Benin is, rightly or wrongly, identify with Christianity. That is, since Western **culture**has been perceived in Benin land as synonymous with Christianity, Nigeria **culture** as a recipient of Western **culture** bears the influence or weight of Christianity on its own **culture**. My second duty will be to select certain sections of this **culture** in order to highlight these **Christian** influences. To fathom the extent of the influence of **Christian**values on Nigeria **culture** some historical and sociological perspectives will be necessary as they will mirror such influences where they exist. The missionaries came to Benin land in the later part of the 19th Century, where they met a pattern of life not all of which ran counter to **Christian** principles. The spread of **Christian**influence was backed by such elements as the size of the area, the complete absence of roads and means of communication, as well as other harsh environmental circumstances which inhibited free movement of the early missionaries to all corners of the area. These facts may have accounted for the less universal preponderance of the **Christian** influence on the host **culture**. Such claims as these may be seen as too lofty in view of the allegation of mass caving in of Nigeria **culture** to the invading European **culture.** But the assumptions that local **culture** and **Christian** values were polarized and conflicting and that **Christian** values dislodged their host counterparts can be maintained only with notable qualifications, for it must be remembered that the host **culture** was traditional and natural, that is, it was unadulterated, original or God-given. It approximated in part, and accorded with **Christian** values and to that degree was not in conflict to them. Equally important in this regard is the similarity in human nature which tends to minimize among differences among human groups. I have been purposely cautious because there were indeed areas where conflict existed between the host **culture**and **Christian**values. Nonetheless, since grace builds upon nature and nature exists in Benin land as elsewhere, there is much of enormous positive value in Nigeria traditions and religious consciousness.

**1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The **effect** has been a more distinctive and permanent manifestation of the legacy or influence of Christianity, which is the invisible and unofficial striving to live in conjunction with both the **Christian** and the traditional life. Thus, the individual **Christian** in his subconscious and in moments of crisis clings tenaciously to, or relapses without conflict or qualms, into traditional life. But credit must go to Christianity for the tremendous impact it has had on the advancement of knowledge and learning in Benin: the opaque scales that blindfolded the people have been pulled down. All now know that all men are equal before God, and probably this new thought has been the motive force behind the struggle for Nigeria unity. Ignorance and superstition have been put to flight after contact with Christianity. And this is an invaluable achievement indeed.

**1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of this study is impact of Christian religion on culture. But for the successful completion of the study; the researcher intends to achieve the following sub-objectives;

1. To determine the bearing of Christian religion to culture
2. To determine the influence of Christian religion on culture
3. To ascertain the relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture

**1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

For the successful completion of the study, the following research hypotheses were formulated by the researcher;

**H0:** Christian religion does not influence Benin’s culture

**H1:**  Christian religion influence Benin’s culture

**H02:** there is no relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture

**H2:** there is relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture

**1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The research is important because it teaches us the relationship between Christianity and culture. It will expose to the Christian the importance of cultural heritage within the Benin kingdom, and also it will show us whether culture and Christianity work hand in hand.

**1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The scope of the study covers the impact of Christian region on culture. The researcher encounters some constrain which limited the scope of the study;

**a) AVAILABILITY OF RESEARCH MATERIAL:** The research material available to the researcher is insufficient, thereby limiting the study

**b) TIME:** The time frame allocated to the study does not enhance wider coverage as the researcher has to combine other academic activities and examinations with the study.

**c) Organizational privacy**: Limited Access to the selected auditing firm makes it difficult to get all the necessary and required information concerning the activities

**1.7** **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**CHRISTIANITY:** Christianity is an Abrahamic monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, who is the focal point of the Christian faith. It is the world's largest religion, with over 2.4 billion followers, or 33% of the global population, known as Christians.

**RELIGION:** Other words that are used for religion are "faith" and "belief system". Altogether, followers of religion can be known as religionists. Some people follow more than one religion at a time. The largest religions are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Sikhism and Judaism. There are many other religions.

**CULTURE:** Culture (/ˈkʌltʃər/) is defined as the social behavior and norms found in human societies. Culture is considered a central concept in anthropology, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human societies.

**BELIEF:** Belief is the state of mind in which a person thinks something to be the case, with or without there being empirical evidence to prove that something is the case with factual certainty. In the context of Ancient Greek thought, two related concepts were identified with regards to the concept of belief: pistis and doxa.

**1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This research work is organized in five chapters, for easy understanding, as follows

Chapter one is concern with the introduction, which consist of the (overview, of the study), historical background, statement of problem, objectives of the study, research hypotheses, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of terms and historical background of the study. Chapter two highlights the theoretical framework on which the study is based, thus the review of related literature. Chapter three deals on the research design and methodology adopted in the study. Chapter four concentrate on the data collection and analysis and presentation of finding. Chapter five gives summary, conclusion, and recommendations made of the study

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**2.1 CONCEPT OF RELIGION**

There is no one acceptable definition of religion Karl Marx says it is the opium of the people. It is an organized collection of beliefs, cultural system and world views that relate humanity to an order of existence (Marx) Many religions have narratives, symbols and sacred histories that are intended to explain the meaning of life or to explain the origin of life or the universe, from their beliefs about the cosmos, and human nature; people derive morality, ethics religious laws or a preferred lifestyle (Shouler, 2010:1). The word religion is sometimes used interchangeably with faith, belief system or sometimes set of duties (Kant, 2001). In the words of Emile Durkheim religion differs from private belief in that it is „something eminently social (Durkheim, 1915). It is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. Religion can also be defined as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs. Religion originates in an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred. The everything worlds Religious Book Explore the Beliefs Tradition and cultures of Ancient and Modern Religious and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in formulation and elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis in terms of both its originating experiences and its own continuing responses Religion refer to the sacred. Something left apart. The sacred is a mysterious manifestation of power and presence that is experienced as both primordial and transformative, inspiring awe and rapt attention. This is usually an event that represents a break or discontinuity from the ordinary, forcing a reestablishments or recalibration of perspective on the part of the experiences but it may also be something seemingly ordinary, repeated exposure to which gradually produces a perception of mysteriously cumulative significance originally invested in it. Elliot (1948:27) sees religion as “cultural phenomenon, a way of life and an explanation of whatever life is. It gives meaning to man and the whole nature”.

**2.2 CONCEPT OF CHRISTIANITY**

William, H. Harris and Judith S. (1978:551) Ed. defined Christianity as a religion founded in Palestine by Jesus Christ and his followers. It has become one of the world’s major religions predominating Europe and America where it has been a powerful historical force and cultural Influence, but which also claims adherents in virtually every country of the world. Similarly, the new Encyclopedia Britannica Macropaedia Vol. 4 (1968:519) sees Christianity as a religion founded in the 1st century A.D. by Jesus Christ of Nazareth, which has become the largest of the religions with a membership of over 1,000,000,000, its largest group being the Roman Catholic Faith, the Eastern orthodox adherents and the Protestant faith. The central teaching of traditional Christianity is that, Jesus is the Son of God. The second person of the Holy Trinity, made up of God the father, God the son, and God the spirit; was made man and that his life on earth, his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension into heaven are proofs of

God’s love for man and forgiveness of man’s sin. That by faith in Christ, man attains.

**2.3 CONCEPT OF CULTURE**

In modern times culture is defined as a whole state of intellectual and moral development in the society. It is a total way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual. Culture can be understood as the exercise of the spiritual powers of man through which better conditions are created for man than ever before. This can be described as the subjective assessment. The objective assessment see it as a collection of products acquired by man through the exercise of human powers be it spiritual or organic power. Consequently, when a person is referred to as being cultured, it means he had acquired some measure of cultural etiquette that can be compared. Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion notions of time rules, spatial relations, concepts of the universe and material, objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior, that is the totality of a person’s learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning. Dawson one said, “culture is a form of society” meaning that a society without culture is a formless society. It is the product of man. Niebuhr states that culture comprises of language, habits, values, beliefs, ideas, customs, social organizations, hereditary products and technological processes. Culture is social because it is a product of a group, it is laborious because it is the product of human efforts. It does not arise automatically. It is acquired with some difficulties overtime. For example, language is acquired by some with difficulty, the same applies with dancing. It also has a form, meaning that it can be seen, felt, manifested or displayed. It is important to note that culture is dynamic, it always undergoes evolution and transformation. It either moves forward or backward. It always develops or declines. Here too, culture is humanistic or religious, it portrays the human and religious aspects of life, bringing out norms to be respected thereby giving the society a humane and religious face. Durkheim defines it in 1935 as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden. Beliefs and practices which unite into a single moral community for all those who adhere to them

**2.4 RELIGION AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION**

Religion and culture are so intertwined that every culture hinges on some form of religious practice hence Elliot (1938:27) writes that “no culture can arise or develop except in relation to a particular religion”. As a way of life, a social and cultural phenomenon, religion preserves the social intercourse, the connection between man and man on one hand, man and the ancestral spirits and between man and God on the other hand. Therefore, religion determines every aspect of community’s social system and acts as the fulcrum of social integration. It helps to solve problems, provide the needs and protect the interests of the people. This informs Mbiti‟s (1966:13) “religion becomes sociologically significant precisely in those areas of human life where knowledge and skill fail to provide the needed means of adaptation or mechanism of adjustment”. This shows it as a unifying factor. Christian religion today has diminished the ostracism associated with the caste system. They are no longer treated as social pariah or with the same degree of ignominy as done a century ago.

**2.5 AFRICAN CULTURAL VALUES BEFORE COLONIZATION**

African cultural values have been discussed by many authors. Sofola (1973:14) in his African Culture and the African Personality states that some important African values includes: Wholesome human relations among people, respect for elders, community fellow feeling, a live and let live philosophy, altruism and hospitality”. In his “Metaphysics of Man”. Okafor (1974:74), lists hospitality, kindness and brotherhood” as some of the cardinal African values before the advent of Western Civilization. Other African values include a sense of community life (communalism), good human relations, sanctity of life, hospitality, and the sacred and the religious, sense of time and sense of language, language is creative of community because it is through a people’s language and values that a community is identified as distinct from another.

**2.6 AFRICAN COMMUNITY LIFE (COMMUNALISM)**

The authentic African is identified and known by and through his community. The spirit of interdependence among men, the knowledge that people are mutually related, fertilizes African communalism. Davidson (1969:102) writes that beyond the community; There stood the void in strong and ever present contrast, outside this ancestrally shattered system, there lay no possible life, since a man without lineage is a man without citizenship, without identity and therefore without allies or as Congo put it, a man outside his clan is like a grasshopper which has lost its wing. In spite of this tie, it must be noted that in the African mentality, the community as an entity remains while individuals come and go.

**2.7 SENSE OF HUMAN RELATIONS**

Life in African society is based on the philosophy of life and let live. Individuals recognize their worth as persons and not what they possess or what they do for each other. Contribution of one member of society to another is not hinged on reciprocity in interactions. There is humane living. People respect and assist one another without considering immediate or an equivalent remuneration. The art of dialogue and conversation is cherished as people discuss their problems and seek solutions to them. The unwillingness to do the same is unafrican. Anything capable of causing crisis is avoided during such discussions. Biko (1979:27) maintains, “ours has always been a man-centred society intimacy is not exclusive for particular friends but applies to a whole group of people who find themselves together whether through work or residential requirement.

**2.8 AFRICAN VALUES**

African traditional values emphasize good character. Thus a good man is a man of good character who refrains from evil. Goodness does not entail avoiding vices alone, it also involve cultivating virtues such as keeping ones virginity before marriage and dressing appropriately. Development were measured by innovations and development of natural endowment not development in science and technology. African traditional morality and religious practices upheld and encouraged honesty, sincerity, outspoken, kindness, and hard work. These were exemplified in their mode of prayer. In the Niger Delta, libation is an important form of prayer when a man wakes up he pours libation and makes invocation saying, “if I have planned evil against my neighbor (or anybody) may his evil plans against me come to pass. If I have taken anybody’s property by force, if I killed or sent assassins to kill somebody, if I have slept with my brother’s wife or neighbor’s wife, if I have poisoned or planned to poison anybody, may the ancestor and the gods of our land (god) strike me down. But if I have not, may evil machinations of my enemies against me return to them. This is akin to one of David’s prayers in the book of Psalms 7:3-5. African traditional values are inculcated in the development of the individual (Jaja, 1996). Africans preach respect for people’s rights, uprightness, a live and let live philosophy and a gentlemanly attitude. It shuns materialism, embezzlement, corruption, selfishness, conflicts, and war, among other things. It welcomes material achievements when they are products of hard work. Fear of untimely death awaits evil-doers as punishment from the gods. This deters people from doing evil.

**2.9 EFFECTS OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION ON AFRICAN CULTURAL VALUES**

It has been established that prior to colonialism and Westernization, African culture and morality blossomed. There was communalism and people cared for one another. Customs and traditions were highly respected. There was a lot to eat and drink, ostentation, crime etc. was very low and diseases were not rampant. The Golden Rule prevailed. When the missionaries and colonial masters came, they disregarded most of the virtues in African customs and tradition, gave them derogatory names and employed all manners of methods to reduce traditional religion and custom to ashes and historical anachronism. They sacrifice African traditional values on the altar of Islam and Christianity. These Muslims and Christians coerced Africans into believing that nothing is good in Africa unless it is done the way they do it. Africans were deceived into thinking that material achievement is tantamount to civilization. As Ezekwugo (1992:79) observes: They discover that Africans use shrines, statues, effigies and images to worship God. These were branded paganistic, heathistic, devilish, or satanic. In their places the imported religious started using altars, sacristies, statues, crosses, medals, chaplets, and relics of foreign ancestors whom they call saints or martyrs. It is because of African customs, traditions and cultural values that the African is regarded as being highly religious in the sense that the hopes and fears of the ancestors, spirits and divinities or gods and the Supreme Being guide everything he does whether seen or unseen. He is mindful of the taboos and the sacred, all in keeping with the desire to be in line with the entire existence (Ontological structure). It is in this respect that the African is said to hinge on Ontology. The sense of ethics, Omoregbe (1993) writes, is to understand the reasons behind the approval or disapproval of both his actions and those of others. Africans know that morality is important because man lives in society with other men. There are rules which if neglected or disregarded boomerangs. They know that morality is synonymous with society. This is why in greeting, dressing, eating, talking, singing etc, the African exhibits a high sense of values for which the African is known. It brings out the gentleman in a person. Unfortunately colonialism destroyed our cultural values and introduced foreign religion and culture of materialism, capitalism, ostentatious living materialistic world view all synonymous with development and civilization destroying ethical and spiritual dimensions which the African emphasized. Schweitzer, (1961:20) writes, “a civilization that develops only on its material side, and not in corresponding measure in the sphere of the spirit, is like a ship with defective steering gear, which gets out of control at a constantly accelerating pace and thereby heads for catastrophe”. According to him materialistic worldview has led the Westerners to a wrong conception of civilization because; Material achievement does not constitute civilization. Civilization is the product of an optimistic ethical conception of the world. It is the sum total of all the progress made towards the moral and spiritual within the society. Jaja (2011) went as far as saying: Christianity on the other hand. Instead of enriching and empowering people does the opposite. It weakens people’s ability to think rationally. It conditions them to believe that they are sinful depraved people living in a state of sin without Jesus in their lives. This is a controlling spirit of fear because they are led to believe that without Jesus they will be punished in the everlasting external fires of hell. It is this fear of hell that keeps a Christian in bondage to the church. Carried away by their progress in knowledge and power, they did not reflect on the danger to which “we were exposing ourselves by the diminished values we put in the spiritual elements in civilization”. Omoregbe (1974:144), writes that this naïve conception of civilization with its emphasis on material achievements intensified the social and political problems and the result was the loss of the dignity of the human person. Schweitzer (1961) states; In every respect, our individual existence is depreciated. It is becoming ever more difficult to be a personality all advances in the moral life and inwardness of the individual were allowed to come to a standstill. In the area of dressing, the Westerners teach that God looks at the heart of men (and not what they wear) and this has become a license to nudity, chewing of gum in churches, immodest dancing styles, excessive facial make-up, distractive practices eschewed in African culture and tradition. It is common to see young girls come to church in very tight jeans trousers so tightly shaped that all the contours of the buttocks are revealed to the chagrin of serious-minded Christians. Contrary to African culture and tradition, some young men plait or perm their hair, wear earrings like ladies to places of worship. In African culture, a woman who commits abortion or soils her hands with blood does not come near the shrine. Nobody comes to the shrine of a deity with a stolen item for fear of incurring the wrath of the gods. Nobody swears falsely to an oath in the shrine for fear of instant justice. This practice raised very honest men and women who live long. This is not the case today. People hold the bible in their hands, pledge to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and thereafter they tell tissues of lies bear false witness against the innocent and go scot-free. Communalism, hospitality and sense of human relations are part of cultural values of Africa but foreign religion has turned brother of one against brother of another religious sect because of the misinterpretation of the biblical injunction, do not be unequally yoked with the unbeliever. These become an excuse not to participate in anything by unbeliever.

**2.10 INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE TRADITIONAL BELIEFS OF AFRICAN PEOPLE**

As stated earlier the emphasis is on the Igbos of Eastern Nigeria although references could be made to other parts of the country. This section tries to look at the part played by foreign religion (Christianity) towards the changes that have occurred in the society Christianity is a foreign religion imported into Nigeria while the traditional religion is the indigenous faith (Onyeidu, 1999). Christianity has in time past and at present impacted so much on African culture in general both positively and negatively and it is still doing so now. Against this backdrop Ugwu (2002) said,” although the imported world religions have brought in some positive influences or effects on the Nigerian communities, they have also dealt a staggering blow on our social, economic, religious and political systems.” However, change is the only thing that is constant in human life and as such it is inevitable in human interaction. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defined change, “as act of passing or making somebody or something pass from one state or form into another” ”The writer adopts the above definition as his working definition, Therefore, African society like any other one is a dynamic one, hence it is susceptible to change. The pattern of change among many West African societies has been an on-going process, moving in different directions. This can be deciphered by a close look at the historical development of religion. The whole theme of religious change in Africa has been seen from the perspective of a phenomenon, which only began when Africans came into contact with Europeans. Fundamentally, rapid social change in Africa, owing to the western influence in the second part of the nineteenth century helped to transform very simple, harmonious and homogenous society into complex and heterogeneous one. The people strictly observed the religion and culture of their communities (Chuta, 1992). Foreign religion (Christianity) and their cultural baggage which accompanied their preaching have been identified to be responsible for this state of affairs. This cultural baggage (i.e. education and urbanization) served as the sweet pills with which Africans were enticed and captured, (Ozigbo,1988) No wonder, Wood, (1942) aptly remarked that Judaism, Christianity and Islam have all acted as social revolutionary forces in our societies. It should be noted that some of the changes are inevitable because they are a part of the survival strategy; others are irresistible in the presence of conquering culture. A reinterpretation of theme has, therefore, shown a few instances of those changes. In the words of Bolaji Idowu in Ugwu (1999) one or two things have happened to man’s religion in any given situation: modification with adoption or extinction. This is very true of the influence of these imported religions on any culture it interacts with. Consequently, the introduction of Christianity and Islam in Africa marked the beginning of religious pluralism on the continent, thus putting to an end the monolatric religious system that operated in the traditional African societies. Most of the people, for varying reasons, opted for the new religions without necessarily understanding the implications of their new choice, (Chuta 1992). But when their desires were not met, they opened up new religious sects, as off-shoots of their frustration. Hence the comment by Dale cited in Onyeidu, (1999) cautioned that “A sincere man does not change his beliefs hastily”. This situation undoubtedly, led to a compromise. Here, the traditional religious beliefs and practices are blended with those of the foreign religions (syncretism). Hence the emergence of independent churches such as the cherubim and seraphim, Aladura, Christ Apostolic Church, etc and some engaged in herbal healing, (Okeke, 1998). Writing on the level of syncretism, Leith-Ross, (1939) drew attention to the case of the Igbo, who were often regarded as exemplary in the way they embraced western ways: Thus an Igbo attends communion at the same time as he believes in the potency of traditional magic, he ties in the same handkerchief, the rosary and the traditional talisman. In the same vein, Ajayi, in Ogbu Kal,, (1978), wrote that an African gets himself baptized as a Christian sends his children to school, comes to terms with modern technology by buying a lorry and learning to drive it and yet insists that the lorry is not just a mechanical device but also a force whose control properly belongs to the god of iron, whose emblem and charms he therefore, displays on the lorry. In consonance with the above, Onunwa (1990) came to the conclusion that “syncretism has been a feature of religion all through human history”. Basden cited in Onunwa, (1990:)) in his contribution, written after over thirty five years of missionary work, after a careful and a painstaking field work in Igboland, made an important observation. He wrote at the close of his field research that: religion, language and custom of the Igbo have been tinged with outside influence superimposed with ancient Igbo beliefs and practices.’ African traditional religion has a very rich cultural heritage and this rich values and virtues have sustained Africans for so many years before the advent of Islam and Christianity. Jordan (1948) wrote that a whole system of taboos and ritual of ordination has controlled the entire life of Africans particularly the Igbos of Eastern Nigeria. This whole system of taboos and ritual of ordination that controlled the entire life of the Igbos were expanded by Onyeidu (1999) to include: swearing of oath, making of blood pact, trial by ordeal, oracles, vows, secret societies and the meticulous observation of customs and traditions. Unfortunately, these whole systems of taboos and rituals are no longer strictly observed because of the influences of Christian doctrines and this perhaps explains why there are so many crimes in the traditional communities today Christianity condemned polygamy and upheld monogamy, but Africans from pre-history and timeless immemorial, had polygamy as part of their cultural heritage. The Nigerian society, for instance is an agrarian one, and there is the vast land for everybody to cultivate. The more the number of wives and children a man possessed, the greater the manpower to cultivate the arable land, and this increased the economic status of the people. In addition, they saw polygamy as an ideal way of dispensing social justice to women by providing husbands for all women. Another area that has been eroded and discarded was that of oath-taking. People now take oath according to their religious inclination and no longer on the basis of their original rich cultural heritage. This undoubtedly, has provided room for moral decadence and other vices in our society (Ugwu, 1999). The introduction of western education in Africa brought in western idea of rationalism and individualism into Africa, (Chuta, 1992). Many Africans began to doubt their religious traditions, and subsequently decided to live without it, and that was the inception of secularism in Africa. This created conditions for the rise of new elites with western educational outlook in African societies, who had their own elites. Among these were chiefs, priests and war leaders, many of whom normally owed their elite status to birth, (Afigbo, 1976) There in school, the children acquired a whole body of new teachings, touching on all aspects of human existence, and these were openly and widely advertised as anti-theatrical to African way of life. Western education weaned African children from their control and influences of their families.

**2.12 RELIGIOUS CHANGE**

From the onset, the missionaries saw the savagery of mundane impurities inherent in the African belief systems and practices. The missionaries unconditionally condemned the African concept of gods. The whole continent was seen as 'citadel' for gods and spirits. Sacrifices of any kind to these gods were highly castigated and forbidden by Christians. Shrines dedicated to these gods evict pitilessly annihilated in most parts of the area. The idea of throwing out kola nuts and pouring out libation, the unseen gods and ancestors was condemned. Human sacrifice like killing of twins and dedication of human beings to gods were abolished to an appreciable degree. The traditional medicine used in curing are preventing ailments was renounced with reckless abandon. The missionaries failed woefully to understand the true nature and validity of the traditional religion. The condemnation of traditional religion in its total context implied renunciation and destabilization of the moral codes, principles and ethics of life of the people that have been long engraved on their mode of existence. We admit the phasing out of such debasing practices in the African traditional religion like the killing of twins, human sacrifices and sorcery, but the belief in gods and ancestors by the Africans should riot be seen as superstition or vanity but rather as mode of control of life of the people. It has been established that in a country or society where religion has become cement of life in social, economic and political aspects, any puncture! on its core essence will case its tragic ruin. Christianity had led to the abolition of Qkpucha, tradition; cult in Ogbulika, one of the towns that make up Orumba area. In those olden days, Okpucha was highly recognized as a god worshipped the people in whose care the life and property of the people were traceable. Also it was said to be the giver and owner of the best stream water in Ogbunka known as Obi. The water from the stream the best in the whole of Orurnba locality; coming from stone i.e. gushing out from stone. I could remember during our secondary school days that students from other towns even beyond the locality used to fetch water from Obi, which they carried home during holiday periods. Though people do not worship the god of this water more but many people irrespective of their religious inclinations venerate it. Christianity through her teachings has succeeded in dissuading most if not all the members from worshipping Qkpucha because it is God the Creator who has given this water and not okpucha as some people wrongly believe. It is a well-known and acceptable fact that every traditional is a deeply religious person. According to Nwala while quoting Major Arthur Leonard has this to say they (lgbos) are a truly religious people of whom it can be said as it has been said of the Hindus, that they eat religiously, sin religiously, drink religiously, dress religiously religion of these natives is still their existence and their existence is their religion . This statement is true of every human society in the sense people's ideology, which could have religious or political emphasis, influences the behavior in innumerable cases Orumba area inclusive. The place which religion occupies in the life of the people is seen in the daily lives of the people in which prayer is offered to the gods and their help sought in everything they do. Today, we still observe that where a man is sick, libations are poured incantations said invoking Chukwu i.e, the almighty God, the gods and the ancestors to come to his rescue. Before food is eater) or even kola is taken, bits are thrown out for the gods and the ancestors: During cleansing or propitiatory offerings, lizards, fowls etc are round a person's head and it is believed his sins are transferred lizard or fowl. Prayer and sacrifice, vital elements of religion arm a constant feature of the daily lives of the people and they show low heavily dependent the people are on the goodwill and protection of the gods. Religion generally involves three major elements: beliefs, rim and code of conduct in accordance with the beliefs. The introduction of Christianity has influenced these major religious elements. From the earliest history of European Christian Mission in the whole of Africa, there has been a strong link between the desire to Christianize and the desire to 'civilize' the African. According Thomas Fowell Buxton, through the use of the Bible and the plough, Africa's "Dark Continent" could be won to Christianity and to civilization. Actually, the influence of the Christian religion has changed system of the Igbo man's way of religion. The cult of "Ndi ichie" private or public cult of the ancestors has been declining following presence of Christianity. Rituals of all types have been condemned as paganistic and backward. Such rituals include birth, puberty; traditional marriage and burial rituals. The missionaries have tried replacing them with the Christian wedding and Christian burial. The earth goddess (ala) is no longer recognized. Sanctity around which ethical principles, norms and values are built has somehow been relegated to the background. It could be discovered that immortality has escalated among the people. Christians shall never in any way be seen as advocates of high immorality rate, they maintain that one's immorality is personal and private matter between one and one's god gods. But in the African context, the position is not viewed the same way. The iniquity of someone rattler was believed to be visited on the entire members of the community hence every member of the community strives maintains law and order. Such Biblical quotation as Ezekiel Chapter eighteen and view four (Ezekiel 18:4) which states, "Behold, all souls are mine, the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sins shall die" gives the individuals the audacity to do whatever they would do since they are to be held responsible and their actions not affect the society at large. But in the real sense of it, what one does in a society affects the entire members of the society directly or indirectly. In short the changes wrought by the missionaries to the entire Orumba and the whole of Africa cannot be over-emphasized. It can said to be overwhelming, touching all aspects of life, cultural educational, economic, social, political and religious aspects.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

* 1. **Research design**

The researcher used descriptive research survey design in building up this project work the choice of this research design was considered appropriate because of its advantages of identifying attributes of a large population from a group of individuals. The design was suitable for the study as the study sought to the impact of Christian religion on culture

* 1. **Sources of data collection**

Data were collected from two main sources namely:

(i)Primary source and

(ii)Secondary source

**Primary source:**

These are materials of statistical investigation which were collected by the research for a particular purpose. They can be obtained through a survey, observation questionnaire or as experiment; the researcher has adopted the questionnaire method for this study.

**Secondary source:**

These are data from textbook Journal handset etc. they arise as byproducts of the same other purposes. Example administration, various other unpublished works and write ups were also used.

* 1. **Population of the study**

Population of a study is a group of persons or aggregate items, things the researcher is interested in getting information on the study impact of Christian religion on culture. 200 staff of ministry of information and culture was selected randomly by the researcher as the population of the study.

* 1. **Sample and sampling procedure**

Sample is the set people or items which constitute part of a given population sampling. Due to large size of the target population, the researcher used the Taro Yamani formula to arrive at the sample population of the study.

n= N

1+N (e) 2

n= 200

1+200(0.05)2

= 200

1+200(0.0025)

= 200 200

1+0.5 = 1.5 = 133.

**3.5 Instrument for data collection**

The major research instrument used is the questionnaires. This was appropriately moderated. The secretaries were administered with the questionnaires to complete, with or without disclosing their identities. The questionnaire was designed to obtain sufficient and relevant information from the respondents. The primary data contained information extracted from the questionnaires in which the respondents were required to give specific answer to a question by ticking in front of an appropriate answer and administered the same on staff of the two organizations: The questionnaires contained structured questions which were divided into sections A and B.

* 1. **Validation of the research instrument**

The questionnaire used as the research instrument was subjected to face its validation. This research instrument (questionnaire) adopted was adequately checked and validated by the supervisor his contributions and corrections were included into the final draft of the research instrument used.

* 1. **Method of data analysis**

The data collected was not an end in itself but it served as a means to an end. The end being the use of the required data to understand the various situations it is with a view to making valuable recommendations and contributions. To this end, the data collected has to be analysis for any meaningful interpretation to come out with some results. It is for this reason that the following methods were adopted in the research project for the analysis of the data collected. For a comprehensive analysis of data collected, emphasis was laid on the use of absolute numbers frequencies of responses and percentages. Answers to the research questions were provided through the comparison of the percentage of workers response to each statement in the questionnaire related to any specified question being considered.

Frequency in this study refers to the arrangement of responses in order of magnitude or occurrence while percentage refers to the arrangements of the responses in order of their proportion. The simple percentage method is believed to be straight forward easy to interpret and understand method.

The researcher therefore chooses the simple percentage as the method to use.

The formula for percentage is shown as.

% = f/N x 100/1

Where f = frequency of respondents response

N = Total Number of response of the sample

100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item

Contained in questions

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**PRESENTATION ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

**4.1 Introduction**

Efforts will be made at this stage to present, analyze and interpret the data collected during the field survey. This presentation will be based on the responses from the completed questionnaires. The result of this exercise will be summarized in tabular forms for easy references and analysis. It will also show answers to questions relating to the research questions for this research study. The researcher employed simple percentage in the analysis.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed in tabular form with simple percentage for easy understanding.

A total of 133(one hundred and thirty three) questionnaires were distributed and 133 questionnaires were returned.

Question 1

Gender distribution of the respondents.

TABLE I

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender distribution of the respondents** | | | | | |
| Response | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male | 77 | 57.9 | 57.9 | 57.9 |
| Female | 56 | 42.1 | 42.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 133 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

From the above table it shows that 57.9% of the respondents were male while 42.1% of the respondents were female.

Question 2

The positions held by respondents

TABLE II

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The positions held by respondents** | | | | | |
| Response | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| **Valid** | Senior cultural officers | 37 | 27.8 | 27.8 | 27.8 |
| Tourism officers | 50 | 37.6 | 37.6 | 65.4 |
| Senior staff | 23 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 82.7 |
| Junior staff | 23 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 133 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

The above tables shown that 37 respondents which represents27.8% of the respondents are senior cultural officers 50 respondents which represents 37.6 % are tourism officers 23 respondents which represents 17.3% of the respondents are senior staff, while 23 respondents which represent 17.3% of the respondents are junior staff

**TEST OF HYPOTHESES**

Christian religion does not influence Benin’s culture

**Table III**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Christian religion does not influence Benin’s culture** | | | |
| Response | Observed N | Expected N | Residual |
| Agreed | 40 | 33.3 | 6.8 |
| strongly agreed | 50 | 33.3 | 16.8 |
| Disagreed | 26 | 33.3 | -7.3 |
| strongly disagreed | 17 | 33.3 | -16.3 |
| Total | 133 |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Test Statistics** | |
|  | Christian religion does not influence Benin’s culture |
| Chi-Square | 19.331a |
| Df | 3 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3. | |

Decision rule:

There researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that Christian religion does not influence Benin’s culture as the calculated value of 19.331 is greater than the critical value of 7.82

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that Christian religion influence Benin’s culture

**TEST OF HYPOTHESIS TWO**

There is no relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture

Table V

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **There is no relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture** | | | |
| Response | Observed N | Expected N | Residual |
| Yes | 73 | 44.3 | 28.7 |
| No | 33 | 44.3 | -11.3 |
| Undecided | 27 | 44.3 | -17.3 |
| Total | 133 |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Test Statistics** | |
|  | There is no relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture |
| Chi-Square | 28.211a |
| Df | 2 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 44.3. | |

Decision rule:

There researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that state there is no relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture as the calculated value of 28.211 is greater than the critical value of 5.99

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that state there is relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 Introduction**

It is important to ascertain that the objective of this study was to ascertain impact of Christian religion on culture

In the preceding chapter, the relevant data collected for this study were presented, critically analyzed and appropriate interpretation given. In this chapter, certain recommendations made which in the opinion of the researcher will be of benefits in addressing the challenges of Christian religion on culture

* 1. **Summary**

This study was on impact of Christian religion on culture. Three objectives were raised which included: To determine the bearing of Christian religion to culture, to determine the influence of Christian religion on culture, to ascertain the relationship between Christian religion and Benin’s culture. In line with these objectives, two research hypotheses were formulated and two null hypotheses were posited. The total population for the study is 200 staff of ministry of information and culture. The researcher used questionnaires as the instrument for the data collection. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for this study. A total of 133 respondents made up senior culture officers, tourism officers, senior staff and junior staff was used for the study. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies.

**Conclusion**

It is crystal clear from the review that there are some practices in the traditional African belief systems that are no longer useful in the contemporary society that require to be changed by superior belief system preferably Christianity. The changes have brought new lease of life by exposing the people to new frontier or horizon of living (Christian/western cultures) different from their ancient faith, although not without some disadvantages. Some the adherents of the primal religion are now mixing the two thereby engaging in syncretism. That the notion of a static religion and culture which got a dynamic and violent shake-up only when impacted upon by western culture is no longer tenable. That in spite of the influx of foreign cultures and values the core values of the people still remains the same in most places. It is the contention of this paper that the changes brought about by Christianity are useful ones, therefore, they should be welcomed and sustained for posterity.

**Recommendation**

* Christians should employ dialogue and persuasion in their course of transforming the presumed obnoxious practices of the people rather than being forceful**.**
* Persuasion should be employed through regular visit to the areas where the natives are finding it difficult to accept changes, and a fellow-up visit aimed at ensuring that the people did not go back to their old changed practice
* The church should organize workshops, enlightenment programmes and conferences to educate the people on the negative implications of their presumed bad/evil practices.

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