

RESHAPING THE VOCATION OF RELIGIOUS WOMEN IN NIGERIA:
*(Pedagogical Analysis of Psychological and socio-Cultural Problems associated with
Religious Women).*

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DEDICATION

To

my beloved Dad, late Mr. A. A Olisah, who loved me even until death. His last word when my mother asked him, what would happen to Amaka, he answered in reply,
“God will take care of her”

***RESHAPING THE VOCATION OF RELIGIOUS WOMEN IN NIGERIA:
(Pedagogical Analysis of Psychological and Socio-Cultural Problems associated with
Religious Women).***

Introduction

My research work will focus on the “**Reshaping the Vocation of Religious Women In Nigeria: (Pedagogical Analysis of Psychological and Socio-cultural Problems associated with Religious Women)**”. Why do I choose this topic? The answer is so simple. First, as a nun the problem is not peculiar to me. Second, my interaction with the Nigerian indigenous nuns both back in Nigeria and here in the United States has really confirmed to me that many nuns are suffering from psychological problems/disorders. These problems show themselves by the unhealthy attitudes and behaviors of these nuns, their crude attitudes among themselves, their unhealthy relationships to those living with them, and moreso, in their work places. These problems are not limited to individual nuns from any particular religious Congregation, but cut across several different religious Congregations in Nigeria. Many people complain about their attitudes and behaviors and these give bad image and shame to Nigerian nuns everywhere. After much thought and reflection, I decided to do a research work in order to uncover the root cause(s) of these psychological problems/ disorders, and to propose ways to avert them. The attitudes of these nuns raise a question in my head, if these nuns are really Christians, much less religious. One has to be a Christian first before one becomes a nun or a consecrated religious. Their moral behavior is not to be mentioned. A well known adage says, “You cannot give what you do not have.” If we do not live moral life as Christians,

especially as religious nuns, how can we teach children and adults who look to us as Christ's brides? If Nigerian nuns are not morally formed or trained, how will they be able to teach children, and adults about morality. My research shows that Nigerian nuns are suffering from several kinds of psychological disorders such as anxiety, eating, depression, mood, stress, personality, antisocial, schizophrenia, etc, which are caused by the unhealthy life situation in which they find themselves in the religious life. This problem affects the whole system. By the term 'system' I mean the religious communities of Nigerian nuns everywhere they are, and also the entire society in which they evangelize.

Peter Steinke puts it more aptly when he says: "Systems thinking is basically a way of thinking about life as all of a piece. It is a way of thinking about how the whole is arranged, how its parts interact, and how the relationships between the parts produce something new". (Peter Steinke, 1996, p.1). In other words, religious Congregations should stand in a helpful relationship to their members. Religious Congregations will function well if there are healthy relationships among the nuns within the communities. The life of the members should interface and at the same time affect each other in the community. Their behavior and attitudes should be reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. A change in one nun will produce a change in another nun and in the whole of the community of nuns, and the congregation at large.

Having experienced this situation and even studied the root causes, it is certain that no problem can be seen in isolation. The psychological problems lie in Nigerian religious Congregations, not just in the individual nuns, but in all the communities of nuns. It is my view that a religious Congregation is the locus of the problem of its members. The problem is the relationship or interaction between the authorities and their subjects. The same should be true for solutions and corrections. This research will explore the causes and reasons for the problems and the propose solutions or corrections to them.

Now, what do I mean when I say that someone is suffering from psychological disorder? How do psychologists and other clinical practitioners decide what is abnormal, or psychological disorder? Is it always clear when behavior moves from the normal to the abnormal category? The judgment that someone has a psychological disorder is typically based on the evaluation of the individuals's behavioral functioning. The term used to describe these phenomena depends on the particular perspective, training, and cultural background of the evaluator, the situation, and the person being evaluated. And so my experiences, courses taken in psychology, interactions, questions and interviews with Nigerian religious nuns from different Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations have helped me to understand that psychological problems/disorders are what many Nigerian nuns are suffering from.

According to Rosenhan & Seligman there are several criteria for labelling behavior as "abnormal" or psychological disorder:

1. Distress or disability. An individual experiences personal distress or disabled functioning, which produces a risk of physical or psychological deterioration or loss of freedom of action. For

example, a person who cannot leave his home without disturbing the environmental atmosphere and people therein. Such a person would be unable to pursue ordinary life goals.

2. Irrationality. An individual acts or talks in ways that are irrational or incomprehensible to others. A man who responds to voices that do not exist in objective reality is behaving irrationally.

3. Unpredictability. An individual behaves unpredictably or erratically from situation to situation, as if experiencing a loss of control.

4. Unconventionality and statistical rarity. An individual behaves in ways that are statistically rare and that violates social standards of what is acceptable or desirable. Thus, having extremely low intelligence is rare but is also considered undesirable; thus, it has often been labeled abnormal.

5. Observer discomfort. An individual creates discomfort in others by making them feel threatened or distressed in some way.

6. Violation of moral and ideal standards. An individual violates expectations for how one ought to behave with respect to societal norms. This criterion for abnormality also becomes relevant in legal situations. (Rosenhan & Seligman, 1989; DSM-IV-TR, 2000).

It is always a problem of objectivity to declare someone psychologically disorderly or abnormal for it is always a judgment about behavior. The goal for many researchers is to make accurate objective judgments without any bias.

This research will be presented in seven chapters. Chapter one will begin by exploring the socio-cultural background of the study, and the theme of the study which will describe the topic of the research. The second section of this chapter will describe the significance of the study, that is, how Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations will be healthy religious Congregations if the proposed solution to the psychological problems are taken. This would entail recruiting a limited number of candidates at specific periods in time in order to be able to train, maintain and educate them morally,

psychologically, socially, culturally, economically, academically and above all to be able to meet their daily individual needs, so that these nuns will be psychologically healthy and joyful serving in a healthy religious Congregations both in Nigeria and other parts of the world. Then they would be proud to be Nigerian indigenous nuns. They would be happy in the life which they freely chose to live, and be contented with that life, and above all appreciate what it means for them. This would help them to learn authentic values in an illustrative and enjoyable way for their personal betterment and that of the society. After treating the purpose of the study, there follows its meaning: examining the psychological and socio-cultural problems that lead the Nigerian nuns to have negative attitudes and behaviors towards their fellow nuns, as well as towards many individuals in the places where they work or minister. This then will lead me to explain why there are few healthy Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations of religious nuns. As pointed out before, the purpose of this work is to explore the root causes of the psychological problems, as well as find the solutions to them before the situation gets out of hand. As things stand now, some of these nuns do not even realize that they are suffering from psychological disorder, and that makes the problems worse. It is obvious that when one does not know or realize that he/she is sick, there is danger, but when one realizes that he/she is sick the sickness is half cured. Fourth, I will describe the socio-cultural context of the study. This would involve the duty of parents/family, elders, and the entire society to teach the young /youth the dos and don'ts of the society. This education which the young receive, is one that stresses self-discipline, honesty, and fair-play. For this self-discipline, it is necessary for one to live in the society. Fifth, the economic and political contexts of the study which will describe the instability of these factors in Nigerian, and

the resultant consequences. Sixth, the psychological context will describe how the unhealthy situation in Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations has caused a lot of nuns psychological problems and how this situation is getting out of hand. Some remedies need to be taken before the situation goes from bad to worse. Finally, the African religion as context. This will emphasize the respect of the sacred, living by the rules and norms of the land and culture. As St. Paul tells us in one of his epistles, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

In chapter two I will describe the historical survey of religious Women Vocation in Nigeria which will include/touch on the advent of missionary activity in Nigeria. This will proceed to describe the work of missionaries in Nigeria. As we know, there was nothing like Christianity and white man's education in Nigeria before the arrival of the missionaries. The people of Nigeria has their own traditional, native way of teaching traditional religion and educating their young, morally, spiritually, socially, and culturally. The second will examine the missionary Congregations and their purpose. This will describe how the missionary's primary objective was to evangelize the people through any possible method. The third section of this chapter will explore the history of women vocation. This will go along to describe how vocations began after the invitation of Father Shanahan, later Bishop Shanahan of Onitsha Ecclesiastical province, to the Holy Rosary Sisters from Ireland. The invitation says:

The ever-increasing number of our neophytes demanded ever-increasing care on the part of the few Missionary Fathers whose number was totally inadequate for the work they had to do. Hence the necessity of getting help at any cost. But urgent as was the need for Priests, the need for Sisters was as great if not greater, for there were no Sisters to attend to the Spiritual and corporal needs of close on 50,000 girls and women, all of whom were either Christians already or catechumens. (Bishop Shanahan's appeal, quoted by J.P. Jordan, p. 148).

Fourth, there will be a consideration of the indigenous women Congregations. This will describe some of the Nigerian indigenous women Congregations, the year in which they were founded, and some of their apostolate. Fifth, the present state of Women religious vocations in Nigeria. Above all this chapter will treat extensively the so-called vocation boom of both priests and religious men and women in Nigeria. Every parent and family want their child or children to become priest or nuns, for this gives them joy and places their moral and dignity high in the society. And they are proud of that.

Chapter three will treat the theology of religious women vocation. This will proceed, first by describing, and then defining and explaining the meaning of theology of women religious vocation. The third section of this chapter will present some of the Church documents on the meaning and purpose of religious women vocation, and how the Catholic Church supports its existence and its stability in the Church. Fourth, there will follow some Women Religious Congregations documents/writings which describe authentic religious women vocation. These Congregations have their particular Constitutions that contain the rules and norms of each Congregation. Fifth, this chapter will go to outline other theological opinions about women religious vocation, such as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Catherine of Sienna and Mother Theresa of Calcutta who said that religious vocation is a call to be faithful and not to be counted successful, because success materializes itself only when faithfulness achieves its goal. Finally, I will describe the African indigenous understanding of religious vocation.

In chapter four I will discuss the socio-cultural problems associated with religious women in Nigeria, and also the economic reasons of Nigerian indigenous religious women. There will be a brief description of the economic situation in Nigerian society. For instance, some family economic situation where poverty may drive some many young girls into the religious life where life could be better. The second section of this chapter will describe family prestige (reasons) as a factor in religious vocations. That is, how and why parents want their child or children to become priests and nuns. A good number of parents insinuate the idea or motivate their children to become priests or nuns just to receive the honor and respect in the society and the Church for being the parents of the nun or priest. And one can imagine what will happen when their son or daughter does not persevere in the religious life or priesthood. The third section of this chapter will look at the educational reasons. This will describe the educational motives behind the religious vocation boom in Nigeria especially in the Eastern part of the country. Finally, the last section of this chapter will describe what Nigerian indigenous religious women experience in their various religious communities nowadays. It will go to explain the situation and life of these nuns among themselves in their local communities and the Congregations at large. Because many people especially the young girls do admire the Nigerian nuns in their religious habits or attire and easily attracted to join them, but there is an adage that says, "all that glitters is not gold".

Chapter five is the core of this whole research, and it will go to lengths to explain and describe in detail all the points, topic and terms used in this chapter. The chapter will deal with the psychological problems/disorders experienced by the Nigerian nuns. It will

describe the meaning of psychological problem/disorder, such as stress, depression, schizophrenia, anxiety etc. The second section of this chapter will describe psychological problems in the religious life. In details it will describe the types or categories of psychological problems/disorder Nigerian nuns experience in the religious life. As we all know, the religious life itself is an unnatural life which is enough to create psychological problems in an individual. There are also other factors which could be the cause of psychological problems, e.g., low self-esteem, etc. The third section will explain the reasons for psychological problems/ disorder. Everybody is different, so, what may be a problem for one may not be for another. This is why we say that every human being is unique, and religious Congregations are differ. Furthermore, the fourth section will also detail the reasons for psychological problems in the religious life. For instance, some nuns develop psychological problems due to personal needs such as insufficient provision of personal needs, family needs and problems, lack of sufficient funds and materials to support family, lack of education, low self-esteem probably due to the inability to undertake academic work, and a denial of opportunity for further studies, denial to make religious final vows (commitment), so on. Finally, the fifth section of this chapter will describe how to prevent these psychological problems/disorders. It will describe many ways of averting psychological problems so that nuns will know how to handle their problems, or better, to avoid getting into them. This chapter will as well explore extensively the ways and means to foster positive attitudes in the lives of nuns and in the society as a whole.

Chapter six will describe what is meant by pedagogical analysis. It will also explain the educational dimension of this study by giving the definition and meaning of education. According to a former Nigerian Minister of Education, Prof. Fafunwa, “education is a process for transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth, and for disseminating knowledge either to ensure social control or to guarantee rational direction of the society or both.” (Babs Fafunwa, 1974, p.17). Education has as one of its tasks to return man to himself, to encourage rather than stifle awareness. And so it is to educate the emotions, the senses, the so-called autonomic systems to help man become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible. (George B. Leonard, 1986, p.127). The second section of the chapter will give the significance of education and proceed to describe how education not only emphasizes social responsibility, but also spiritual and moral values. Education will help Nigerian nuns to know how to handle their various emotions and crises in their religious vocation. A healthy nun finds joy in her religious vocation and finds joy in her apostolate. The third section will explain the need for revising the curriculum for religious life. It will explain the great need for competent and highly educated superiors to head Nigerian indigenous Congregations, as well as educated and qualified formators/directors for the formation of the (candidates) nuns to be. These congregation authorities should know the importance and value of education and be eager, willing and ready to impart it on those under their care. Furthermore, there is need for a limited number of admissions at every point in time. This will help reduce the tension and psychological problems/disorders Nigerian nuns suffer. This will ensure that there is enough resource to maintain and care for their needs. The fourth will explain in some detail what it means to educate for psychological health, that is, giving due priority to

health and explaining how important it is to be healthy and to live to in a healthy religious Congregation. Finally, the fifth section of this chapter will describe what it means to educate for justice in religious life, because there is great need to be just in whatever we are doing. Emphasis will be laid on the provision of each sister's needs. Nigerian nuns should be treated without any partiality or favoritism. We all are brides of Christ, equal in the eyes of God our maker.

Chapter seven of this research work will be the conclusion. This will include a summary of the whole work, from the introduction through chapter six. It will include the main findings in the research. It will also include my proposals and recommendations to Nigerian Congregations of women Religious. I will also describe what I mean by looking ahead, that is, to making the future more healthy, joyful, and meaningful for Nigerian nuns, and the entire society in which they serve and especially, to make the Church proud. The final conclusion of the research will then follow.

CHAPTER ONE

Socio-Cultural Background of Study

How important for one is the culture in which one grew up, and the culture in which one now live his/her life? One of the psychology's newest approaches is the socio-cultural approach, which has brought an increasing examination of culture's role in behavior.

How important is it to recognize that people are different from each other? Individuals play out their lives in different ways. No two people are exactly alike. Anyone who has lived with or been around another person for even a brief period of time knows this important principle. Room-mates, parents and children, teachers and students, and friends and lovers soon find that they are different from each other. According to Stanovich, (1999), one of psychology's important agenda is to chart not only the commonalities that we share with all others but also the unique ways we use our minds and the individual twists we put on our behavior. (Stanovich, 1999, pp. 18-19).

1.1 Theme of Study

The theme of the study is, “reshaping the vocation of Nigerian religious vocation and this will focus so much or go extensively on the pedagogical analysis of psychological and socio-cultural problems that the Nigerian indigenous nuns go through.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this work is to explore the root causes of the psychological problems, as well as find the solutions to them before the situation gets out of hand. And that is, to fully examine the psychological and socio-cultural problems that lead the Nigerian nuns

to have negative attitudes and behaviors towards their fellow nuns, as well as towards many individuals in the places where they work or minister. This situation also contributes why there are few healthy Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations of religious nuns.

As things stand now, some of these nuns do not even realize that they are suffering from psychological disorder, and that makes the problems worse. It is obvious that when one does not know or realize that he/she is sick, there is danger, but when one realizes that he/she is sick the sickness is half cured. How do we better our Nigerian nuns and make a healthy religious Congregations?. This is a big and urgent issue to handle with, and an immediate response is needed badly.

1.3 Significance of Study

The significance of the study is, how will Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations be healthy religious Congregations of healthy and joyful nuns that will transform the society and the world at large by their lives. This would entail recruiting a limited number of candidates at specific periods in time in order to be able to train, maintain and educate them morally, psychologically, socially, culturally, economically, academically, spiritually, and above all to be able to meet their daily individual needs, so that these nuns will be psychologically healthy and joyful serving in a healthy religious Congregations both in Nigeria and other parts of the world. Then they would be proud to be Nigerian indigenous nuns. They would be happy in the life which they freely chose to live, and be contented with that life, and above all appreciate what it means for them. This would help them to learn authentic values in an illustrative and enjoyable way for their personal

betterment and that of the society. The world at large needs transformed religious nuns not only spiritually balanced but psychologically healthy.

1.4 Socio-Cultural Context of Study

This would involve the duty of parents/family, elders, and the entire society to teach the young /youth the dos and don'ts of the society. This education which the young receive, is one that stresses self-discipline, honesty, and fair-play. For this self-discipline, is necessary for one to live in the society. With the high regard for the offspring, parents and the society take their upbringing very seriously. The parents start from infancy to calculate the moral code of conduct and good behavioral patterns in their children. The education of a child in African tradition starts from infancy. Parents train their children in general behavior and particularly in socialization which is very necessary for comfortable living. As P. K. Uchendu puts it; "A general rule among the Igbos, infants and young children are focal points within the family and are indulged by everybody. During infancy, this indulgence takes the form of constant caressing and soothing in addition to feeding upon demand..." (Uchendu, P. K., 1993, p. 5).

For African family, education is a process which provides the young with the knowledge, skills and values which the society considers essential. No family takes this light, because the future of the family depends on these offsprings. This type of education is usually informal and children learn from both their parents, the members of the family, etc., how to live, how to do certain things and the importance of both traditional religious and customary laws. This training, which starts in the family, later extends to the society, where both parents, elders, and other members of the extended family are involved.

In the family, children are gradually taught what to do and what not to do. As children grow up, parents do not leave any stone untouched in order to inculcate the right moral code and the best behavioral patterns which the society deems important.

The traditional African culture fashions moral, religious and philosophical attitudes to life. All were interrelated in reality. The result of inseparability of religion from morality was that:

“The ancient Africa was far from being an abode of laissez-faire morality. There were strict moral principles and determined code of conduct. Custom laid down the code of law which established the nature of right-doings and custom established penalties and taboos against malefactors. Moral sanctions were mainly religious sanctions, and these metaphysical sanctions were truly effective” (Cf. Onwubiko, 1991, p. 24).

As well as teaching the young a sense of community. As Onwubiko declares in his book; “Go the way that many people go; if you go alone you will have reason to lament” (Onwubiko, 1991, p.13).

The African idea of security and its value depends on personal identification with and within the community. In another sense, the community offers the African the psychological and ultimate security as it gives its members both physical and ideological identity. It must be noted that in the African mentality, the community, as an entity remains, while individuals, as persons, come and go. Therefore the African emphasizes community life and communalism as a living principle of which the basic ideology is community -identity.

Furthermore, it is the duty of parents/family, or elders to teach the young the sense of human relations. Life in the African community is based on the philosophy of live-and-let-live. Chieka Ifemesia sees human living among an African people as a concept which is defined as,

“A way of life emphatically centered upon human interests and values; a mode of living evidently characterized by empathy, and by consideration and compassion for human beings” (Cf Onwubiko, 1987, p.16).

Relationship between individuals recognizes their worth as human beings and not only what they possess or what they can do for each other, even though these can come as later or secondary considerations, in terms of reciprocity and in terms of inter-personal relationship. People help one another without demanding immediate or an exact equivalent remuneration.

Understanding how formative all aspects of social and cultural life are will lay a groundwork for understanding the importance and even urgency of formation assumes its inevitable importance in religious formations. Overlooking the relationship between formation as a social and cultural fact of life and religious formation leaves one open to misconstruing religious formation as a kind of structure of manipulative control, which brings about compliance without full awareness or consent.

1.5 Economic and Political Context

The economic and political contexts of the study which will describe the instability of these factors in Nigeria, and the resultant consequences. Political instability has affected Nigerian national economic and educational system in Nigeria. As governments come

and go within a very short time in the past, so do the national and educational planners emerge and disappear from the scene.

Moreso, the latest United Nations Human Development Report has, again, provided grim statistics on Nigeria's human indices and social conditions. The report, which is in line with the human views of other respected international agencies on degenerating living standards in the country, reflects a study in alarming regression to poverty. The report ranked Nigeria among the 20 poorest and most vulnerable nations worldwide. Using life expectancy, literacy level and Gross Domestic Products to rank 177 countries, Nigeria took the 158th position in UNDP's prosperity index. Nigeria thus dropped by seven points below the 151st slot it occupied in the organization's 2004 rating, further strengthening the belief that achieving the Millennium Development Goals, MDG's by the year 2015 is mere wishful thinking. (The Nigerian PUNCH. September 15th, 2005).

Again, the direct consequences of the non-performing economy on the population according to The Nigerian Newspaper, "The Punch" are growing unemployment, unbearable costs of living and the inaccessibility of potable water, medicare, electricity, good roads, quality education and even food to the majority. Although official reaction to the UNDP report was that it covered years 2002 and 2003, there is practically nothing on the ground to suggest that the living standards of Nigerians recorded any significant improvement in the past two years. Furthermore, that Nigeria which has ranked in more than \$320 billion from oil sales alone since 1970, is about the only oil producing country among the league of the world's poorest nations, is a sickening irony. Presently, the

nation's external reserve has hit an all time high of about \$27 billion, while the Excess Crude Oil Account stands at roughly \$12 billion. With such fortuitous financial resources at its disposal, a government that has the welfare of its citizens at heart, and which is desirous of pulling the nation from the edge of economic precipice, can achieve a lot. (The Nigerian PUNCH, Thursday, September 15,2005).

Moreso, the largely subsistence agricultural sector has failed to keep up with rapid populated growth. Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, and the country, once a large net exporter of food, now must import food. Following the signing of an IMF stand by agreement in August 2000, Nigeria received a debt restructuring deal from the Pais Club and a \$1 billion credit from the IMF, both contingent on economic reforms.

Sad to hear, while a privileged few Nigerians swim in obscene wealth and revel in profligate lifestyles, based on their unethical access to public treasury, the majority rot in grinding poverty. Much of the violence and soaring crime wave in the country, which affects life expectancy calculations, are believed to be rooted in the injustices perpetrated by the corrupt haves against the less privileged have nots. Unless good government is sincerely embraced at all levels and fighting corruption ceases to be mere rhetoric, the nation's future is at risk. Therefore, the Federal government should reflects on its economic reform project that has worsened, instead of improving, living standards in the past six years.

Besides, political instability has affected Nigerian national educational planners adversely. As governments come and go within a very short time, so do the national and the educational planners emerge and disappear from the scene. Moreover, some people believe that Nigeria's major problem is the instability of the national politics coupled with tribalism. They observe that it has adversely affected both the national planners and the educational planners, so as governments come and go in both national planning and educational planning units, this has given rise to lack of continuity.

However, the biggest problem that we face as Nigerians at the moment is the darkness, anxiety and the uncertainty that surrounds us. We are, as a people literally in the dark. We are in the dark about the present and even more so, the future. In 1999 when civilians assumed office at all levels, Nigerians had great hopes in their hearts; the enthusiasm of the time was so infectious, democracy, the new system of government, seemed like a golden trophy which we had won with our sweat with the blood of activists and heroes. And we all had thought that under democratic government, tomorrow would be a new day- bright, fresh, energizing and inspiring. Six years later, we are in a quandary. When Nigerians speak of the future, they do so only in terms of a date-2007. This is the date on every lip. Nobody knows the shape that the journey to that destination would take - whether we would arrive in the future drenched in blood, sorrow and tears of anguish, or we would be lucky once more- we are after all, the luckiest nation on earth, and the happiest people too, and 2007 would pass like another date in history. Other societies do not embrace the future with such uncertainty, with the feet of the citizens in their mouths. Therefore, the problem is not just leadership as Professor Achebe wrote. The problem is

the structure. The present Nigeria is a structure of social injustice borne out of colonial dictatorship of Lord Lugard. That is why it has ever provided a veritable ground for all its present and past heads of state to perpetuate its dictatorial might on the people. Nigeria must be restructured through an open, equal and all inclusive dialogue of all the stake holders in Nigeria.

Therefore, instead of blaming the powerless, suffering and impoverished electorate of Nigeria for the present crises in the polity, Mr. Obasanjo (present) and his administration should rather be blamed for denying the people of their mandate during the elections and also for their refusal to listen to the present call of the people for a Sovereign National conference. Yes it should be supreme and sovereign because it is only in it, that the true voices of the people would be heard and the true 'smell' of their armpit would be perceived.

According to Nigerian Guardian Newspapers, "The unfortunate thing is that the people who manage to get to the corridors of power are ever so grateful, they dare not speak the truth. At all levels, our democracy is built on a foundation of falsehood partly because we do not have leaders who are interested in the truth. It is made worse by the realization that the people who do greatest damage to Nigeria and Nigerians are not necessarily elected politicians but the large crowd of hangers-on, yes men whose survival depends on their own sycophancy. They are the attack dogs in the corridors of power, the big man's Rottweillers. They are the ones who help to keep the man of power in the dark, and they spread the darkness to the rest of us. Perhaps in the future, we must devise ways of

holding such persons accountable. But that can only happen when we begin to run an open government under which no one would be able to hide in the inner chambers of power to commit evil against Nigerians.” (Nigerian Guardian Newspapers Limited, 2003-2005, pp. 1 & 2).

1.6 Psychological Context

The psychological context will describe how the unhealthy situation in Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations has caused a lot of nuns psychological problems and how this situation is getting out of hand. The situation is being caused by the inability to really explain and educate the candidates (nuns to be) the meaning of what life is all about in the religious life and how possible as well as impossible one can attain or make it. Rather, there is a false image about the whole thing. Also it is sad to learn that Nigerian nuns make themselves perpetual beggars and choose to live in perpetual naked poverty that has no end. Founding indigenous religious Congregation must be done with reasons and aims as well as objectives, and not just to make names. Some remedies need to be taken before the situation goes from bad to worse. A healthy human being is one who is able to control and handle his/her emotions psychologically well.

1.7 African Religion as Context.

The African religion as context. This will emphasize the respect of the sacred, living by the rules and norms of the land and culture. As St. Paul tells us in one of his epistles, our

bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because religion in the indigenous African culture was not an independent institution. It is an integral and inseparable part of the entire culture. Religion in the African sense was practical. One's entire action is reflective of one's religious concepts and practices as is seen in the ordering of society. This is because social morality is dependent on religion, and what Bolaji Idowu says of the Yoruba can as well pass for many African people. He says:

“With the Yoruba, morality is certainly the fruit of religion. They do not make any attempt to separate the two; and it is impossible for them to do so without disastrous consequences” (Cf Onwubiko, 1991, p. 24).

The traditional African culture fashions moral, religious and philosophical attitudes to life. All were interrelated in reality. The result of inseparability of religion from morality was that:

“The ancient Africa was far from being an abode of laissez-faire morality. There were strict moral principles and determined code of conduct. Custom laid down the code of law which established the nature of right-doings and custom established penalties and taboos against malefactors. Moral sanctions were truly mainly religious sanctions, and these metaphysical sanctions were truly effective” (Kato, B. H., 1976, p.28).

According to Onwubiko, the awe, and the idea of the sacred filled the African as he approached religious elements and matters, these too, were practical. It has been admitted by African and European authors that Africans do not know how to live without religion. Whereas not every philosophy is a religion, every religion is a philosophy of a type. Hence, religion protects philosophy within the community culture. (Onwubiko, 1991, p.24). For the African, the sacred is not only associated with power, but it is also affiliated with the highest values in human life such as: honesty, justice, gentleness,

patience, endurance, perseverance, sincerity in one's word, etc. A sacred person is expected to mirror these values.

In African traditional conception, the sacred is not so much a category that is opposed to the profane, as Eliade maintained (*ibid.*, p. 15), but a way of looking at reality in its wholeness. Traditional Africans regard the entire cosmos, when viewed in its totality (invisible and visible) as sacred. The visible penetrates the invisible through a unique Being, God, known in various African ethnic languages as: Chukwu, Osebuluwa, Chineke, Ezechitoke Abiama (Igbo), Olodumare (Yoruba), Kwot (Nuer), Soko (Nupe), Onyame (Ghana), Mawu (Fon), Ngewo (Mende), and so on. All realities: invisible (divinities, ancestors, spirits) and visible (man, animals and inanimate objects) become sacred when viewed in their total relationship to the unique wholeness of God. The individual in a society is sacred from the perspective of his /her relationships with the totality of beings around him/her. (Mbiti, J. S., 1975. P.262).

The African family is sacred because it reflects wholeness in unity of being. Certain persons, objects and places are sacred because they manifest this wholeness of being either symbolically or in actuality. A masked figure is sacred on account of its relationship to the invisible sacred reality it is representing. Certain trees are sacred either on account of their structure or their mode of existence which reflects life in its totality. Human speech becomes sacred when viewed in its relationship to the speaker and the totality of human beings. Places and things are sacred in so far as they reflect the

unity of the beings which they symbolize. (Ed. African Religions a Symposium, New York, London-Lagos: NOK Publishers Ltd., 1977, p. 7).

CHAPTER TWO

Historical Survey of Religious Women Vocation in Nigeria

This chapter in its historical survey of religious women vocation in Nigeria will describe the advent of missionary activity in Nigeria. The Missionary Congregations and their purpose. The history of women vocation and Indigenous women Congregations, and finally, the present state of women Religious vocations in Nigeria.

2.1 The Advent of Missionary Activity in Nigeria

No one can escape to write about the advent of missionary activity in Nigeria without mentioning the role played by the missionaries. Indeed, any study of the development of Western education in Nigeria which does not give the missionaries their proper place based on the role they played should of course be seen to be grossly incomplete and lacking the heart of the matter. This was because the missionaries adopted the school system as their chief strategy of evangelizing the people especially of the Eastern Nigeria. In the pursuit of this goal, she has played a leading role in the struggle to entrench Church influence and participation in education in this part of the country. Moreover, missionaries all over the world, therefore, see education and evangelization as part and parcel of their activity. This motive inspired the missionaries in Nigeria to employ education as a means of evangelization. They were indeed successful.

It should also be emphasizes here that the drive of the early Catholic missionaries to the interior was mainly motivated by their intense desire for the conversion of the people to the Catholic religion. They believed strongly that they had an obligation to share the

true religion with the people. This was indeed an uphill task for the Fathers who found themselves working in an area where they had been preceded by the Protestants for nearly three decades. It is not surprising that in one of Bishop Shanahan's letter, then as a priest wrote:

A new era is opening for the immense Igbo race. The soul of that race is at stake. Who will take possession of it? Will it be the godless or the true envoy of Christ? (Ekechi, 1972, p.129).

The missionary zeal explains the moving spirit behind the rapid spread of Catholic activity with its concomitant growth of 'bush' schools in Eastern Nigeria after 1900.

This is so because the early missionaries were the pioneers of education in Nigeria and they used the school system as their main strategy for evangelization, especially in the former Eastern Region of Nigeria. To them the school and the Church were interwoven and everybody that went to school eventually became a Christian.

2.2 The Missionary Congregations and their Purpose

The pioneers of the missionary congregation were the Holy Ghost Fathers, and their main task was the evangelization of the people and the offer of the White man's knowledge, that is the Western education. To achieve that objective however, they adopted the practical expedient of approaching the people with the charitable provision of medicines and other material needs. It does appear that right from the start they regarded the opening of schools as an essential tool for the work of evangelization. They also declared their purpose to the inhabitants so that they would be accepted:

“We come to live near you, to open a school, to teach your children and your people, all who may wish to come

and learn knowledge from the white men of Europe.”
(Ekechi, F. A. *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in
Igboland 1857-1914*, Frank Cass, London, 1972, p.74).

It is necessary to note however, that on their arrival, the missionaries were most unwelcome and the people were not eager to follow them. As a strategy, therefore, they turned their attention to the Nigerian children, believing that if such children were converted, the hopes and aspirations of the missionaries would be achieved.

The missionaries believed strongly that they had an obligation to share the true religion with people. The strategy was to educate not a few but as far as possible, to educate everywhere and everybody. This was indeed an uphill task for them. And to achieve this task they decided to build, if possible, a school in every town that requested it. This is why one of the Nigerian Bishops describe Bishop Shanahan one of the pioneer missionaries to Nigeria and in particular Eastern Nigeria that he (Shanahan) wanted to give the people the full benefits of Christianity by giving them formal education. Since religion without education tends to degenerate to superstition, he strode to spread religion and education in every town or village within his sphere of influence. He spared no labors in planning and building Catholic schools to serve as a kind of solid foundation for the Christian Faith being handed on to the people. With the realization that the school would serve as a sure means of attracting the young people, the Catholic Missionaries devoted a greater part of their resources and effort to the establishment of schools in every town. For them the influence of Christian education should transcend all aspects of the people's life and produce a permanent change in their habits and way of thinking which would dispose them to accept Christianity.

To the missionaries and the people, western education and religion were complementary for the early church buildings were also the early school buildings. Right from their arrival, the missionaries involved the communities in which the schools were built in the administration of their schools. It was the missionaries' policy that schools should only be built in places where the people expressed the desire of getting and supporting their schools. So the first step towards the establishment of a school was a community delegating people to the missionaries, requesting for a school and church. Their religious zeal was tested to see how serious they were before such a request was granted.

2.3 History of Women Vocation In Nigeria

An interesting aspect of Catholic Missionaries enterprise in education in Nigeria was the importance the pioneer missionaries attached to the education of women.

Bishop Shanahan believed that no community was completely and truly converted to Christianity without its womenfolk. Thereby, he thought of opening more separate schools for girls where they would be taught by educated female teachers. Moreover, the ever-increasing number of our neophytes demanded ever-increasing care on the part of the few Missionary Fathers whose number was totally inadequate for the work they had to do. Hence the necessity of getting help at any cost. But urgent as was the need for Priests, the need for Sisters was as great if not greater, for there were no Sisters to attend to the spiritual and corporal needs of close on 50,000 girls and women, all of whom were either Christians already or catechumens. (Jordan, J. P. 1953, p. 424).

This was the motive forced behind his founding the religious Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary (Holy Rosary Sisters). The new Congregation was inaugurated on February 25, 1924 at Killeshandra, Ireland. The first band of the Holy Rosary Sisters arrived in Onitsha in 1928. The Holy Rosary Sisters began to improve upon the girls' school started by Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny which now became a convent school with 230 girls.

2.4 Indigenous Women Congregations

The concern of Bishop Shanahan and his successors in the Vicariate of Southern Nigeria was not confined to the training of indigenous priests but also in establishing indigenous religious congregations for both men and women. The first group of religious women to work in the Vacariate was the French Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny. They arrived in Onitsha in 1889, to take care of the women and education of girls.

But as things were, they did not recruit any of the indigenous girls into their congregation and most likely they had no such plans at that point in time. However, Bishop Shanahan writing to Sister Mary Charles Walker on April 30, 1926, had this to say:

For many years I have had in view the foundation of a native sisterhood in this vicariate. If its establishment has been delayed it is because, in the first place, among the Christian girls there seemed to be no vocation to the religious life, and secondly even if there were, in the vicariate there was

a religious competent to train them. (Cf. Obi C. & et al, 1985, p. 316).

However, Sister Charles Walker popularly known as Mother Magdalene was a firm believer in the necessity of attracting indigenous women into religious life. When writing her superiors in Ireland in October 1929, she said:

I have always felt that the chief work of nuns here must be to train native sisters. We never could have enough European nuns for the enormous work that must be faced if this continent is to be really converted... we can never really understand the native mind as they themselves do. (Makozi, A. O. & G. A. Ojo (eds): The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria, Macmillan, Nigeria, 1982).

As we might know that many things go into the making of a religious congregation, there must be an original inspiration, a charism that gives a congregation its corporate identity as well as the permission to begin and the approval by the Ecclesiastical authority as well as the formation of members in the way the religious life. It is also good to know that the founding of the indigenous religious congregations and the establishment of schools, training colleges, social centers and hospitals as well as a means of fulfilling the vision of Bishop Shanahan is to give the women of Nigeria an opportunity to play their rightful role in the society and become the Christian wives and mothers of a new generation.

Some of the indigenous Congregations in Nigeria are the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus which was founded by Sr. Mary Charles Walker in 1931, when she received its first four foundation members as aspirants. The congregation have realized the dream of Sr. Charles Walker; “My hope has always been to have many convents of native sisters scattered throughout the country.” (Information got from the Golden Jubilee brochure of the Congregation of the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus).

In Nigeria the Handmaids sisters have established several local communities both within and outside the country. The congregation has produced sisters as catechists, school teachers, nurses, medical doctors and social workers to work among various groups of people in diocese where they work.

Another is the Congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary which is the child of the inspiration which the founder, Bishop Charles Heerey had, when he went on pilgrimage to Lourdes in the early 1930's. Like the mustard seed of the gospel, the congregation has grown from its cradle at Ihiala in 1937, to a big tree with branches spreading to many dioceses in Nigeria and beyond. The congregation has produced several medical doctors, nurses, school teachers, catechetical and social workers to name but a few. (Cf. "A historical sketch of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Nigeria" (1974), p.6).

Other indigenous congregations include The congregation of Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy (D.M.M.M). This Congregation was founded by the late Bishop Nwedo of Umuahia diocese on December 29, 1961. Their main apostolate is mission to the poor and abandoned, especially the orphans. The Congregation has produced many school teachers, social workers, catechists, nurses and medical doctors as well.

Furthermore, is the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love which was founded by the late Bishop Godfrey Okoye on July 16, 1969, during the Nigerian civil war. The founders desire was to found a community of religious woman who would live out, bear

witness and propagate the infinite love of God for mankind, especially as manifested in the Incarnation, hence the name “Daughters of Divine Love.” This congregation has as well produced several education personnel, nurses and medical doctors, catechists, caretrines, etc. (Cf. Obi, C. A., 1980).

2.5 The Present State of Women Religious Vocations in Nigeria

This is a period that is characterized by indigenization, vocation boom, structural growth and a minimal tacit positive attitude towards the African religious culture. The number of juniorate and religious Congregations in Nigeria which have come throughout the whole country during this period shows that these are the most viable years in the history of religious Congregations and formation houses in Nigeria. In an Epilogue to, *The Centenary History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria*, the editor not only saw the finger of God in this phenomenal numerical growth of both the local clergy, religious and laity, but went on to add that:

The people who had been in darkness have indeed seen a great light. Responses to the Gospel message have witnessed a fervor and tenacity that astonished the very missionaries themselves. Perhaps the people discovered in Christianity, what seemed to be lacking in their traditional religions. (Obi, C. A., et al., cit., p. 393).

Religious formation still retains its ambivalent character even in modern Africa. The unchangeable elements are sought along some imaginary foreign ideals that are counter productive to religious nuns after their formation. But, glaring changes can be observed in the number of intake, expansion of visible structures and recruitment of qualified formators/Directors. However, what is actually needed is an integrated formation which

takes cognisance of resilient and relevant African traditional values for a wholesome formation of future Church of Christlike.

Many may wonder why there is such an increase in vocations among male and female congregations in Africa and a net increase in foundations of female congregations. They do not wonder why there is such hospitality given to Christianity and Islam by the primal religions of Africa. They may not wonder why the primal religions of the Greco-Roman world gave quick hospitality to Christianity as opposed to the more entrenched and impenetrable Asian religions. Despite the impact of secularization, a religious view of the world remains a fundamental value of African cultures. Religious life lived in celibacy is a satisfying life, despite the tensions in religious celibate life, as in all life.

According to Elochukwu Uzoukwu in his article (African Scribe, 2001), “Whatever the reasons for the upsurge in religious vocations and in the expansion of Christianity in Africa , these reasons must be good for the African women and men who embrace Christianity and who embrace the priestly and religious life. How can one explain this “vocation explosion” in Nigeria? By all the rules, it should not have happened. There was a devastating civil war, the expatriate missionaries were expelled and the Catholic schools were taken over by the States. (Uzoukwu, 2001, pp. 5-6).

The phenomenon of the vocation boom to the religious life and the question of the reasons why so many women in Nigeria are drawn to it is ultimately a mystery known to God alone, and to the individual. Nigerians, like most Africans in general, are a very

religious people. Therefore, one can safely conclude that the basic force attracting women to the religious life is religious. They have the desire to dedicate themselves to the service of God and neighbor following the way of their respective congregations. Nevertheless, some have tried to explain this vocation boom as a temporary phenomenon, probably an after-effect of the civil war- that the sufferings, deaths and brutality of the war could have impressed on the youth the worthlessness of this passing world and turned their minds to more enduring religious values. (Eke, C. I.,1983, p. 13).

Some other writer has tried to emphasize that to understand this upsurge in vocations, the social political and missionary developments in the Province should be considered. According to him, in the eyes of the local faithful, the Catholic Church of independent Nigeria presented two images of itself. On the one hand, it was an organization in which the highest positions were now accessible to the indigenes. On the other hand, it was a church which lacked ministers, especially after the civil war. It was this double realization of great need for religious personnel and the awareness that the indigenes could be accepted into any religious congregation. (Onyeneke, 1975, pp.408-413.).

A major factor unknown to the casual observers, is the impact of the junior seminaries and juniorates established in most of the dioceses from 1950s and especially the care given to their training- morally, spiritually, academically and physically. Another factor which must have contributed a lot to the upsurge of vocations in the East was the network of primary and secondary schools established by the missionaries. For Bishop Shanahan,

schools were as important as churches, and most communities did not attempt to build churches until they had enough schools.

Mention must be made of another factor which has helped in promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life especially in the last decade. This is the creation of a special movement known as the 'Vocation Promoters' Association.' Since more than a decade, a special 'vocation week' is observed in most dioceses of the Ecclesiastical Province and during this week, a select team of priests and religious nuns visit schools and parishes preaching vocation.

But mention must be made of another most important factor which seems to promote vocation boom in Nigeria, and at the same time a question mark is raised of all in the priesthood and religious life truly have a genuine vocation. As once a vocation directress in the Dominican Order in Nigeria, I realized that a lot of men and women join the religious life and priesthood due to many reasons behind what life is all about. For instance, due to some economic reasons, excessive poverty that outrages the family, the parents may insinuate into the their child to enter into priesthood or religious life so that not only that the child will benefit but that they themselves will as well benefit from the excessiveness that come from it. And this economic hindrance may also lead to other reasons why young girls and boys enter into priesthood and religious life, may be to have education and other life satisfactions.

CHAPTER THREE

Theology of Religious Women Vocation

This chapter will explain what theology of religious women vocation is all about. The ecclesial documents on the meaning and purpose of religious women vocation as well as Women Congregations documents/writings with other Theological opinions. Finally, African indigenous understanding of religious vocation.

3.1 What is Theology of Religious Women Vocation?

The theological notion of “religious” is derived from the definition of the virtue of religion itself, a kind of justice. Religion is defined as the moral virtue which inclines the will to render to God the worship due him because of his infinite excellence and his sovereign dominion. This virtue’s direct object is worship, namely, the conscious, human thoughts and desires (mental prayer), words and actions which give God honor, praise and glory. Giving one’s entire mind, heart and self to the worship and service of God enables one to develop this virtue towards perfection. As St. Thomas notes that by giving all one’s temporal goods, body and will through religious profession one has offered, in principle, a “holocaust”, that is, a complete sacrifice of oneself to God. Living out this profession lets one fulfill the virtue of religion perfectly, because sacrifice is the highest act of worship, expressing as nothing else can the supreme homage of creature to creator. (De. Perf. Vitea Spiritualis, ch. 2; ST 11-11 186, 1; Quodl. 3 a. 17; LG 45).

The theology of this act is that which embodied in the profession of vows or sacred promises, by which our very life become an expression of the noblest moral quality since

everything that consecrated persons should do has been dedicated to worshipping God. Again, the consecrated person no longer belong to oneself but rather to God. Thereby having returned this right to God, he/she belong to him as a consecrated person, freely withdrawn from secular roles to live out sacred ones.

According to Aquinas, who notes that the only way for a human being to offer his or her life to God all at once is to make a solemn vows which offers not only virtuous actions but even their source, the very capability to produce them (ST 11-11 88, 6; 6 ad 2). This means that all the good acts of religious done through duty, even the humblest, are consecrated to God as actions of worship. Therefore, love's interpersonal closeness, which the consecrated life makes possible, is only an approximation of eternity when beatitude is both perfect awareness of God and fruition of love. It should be evident that every form of religious life is directed to contemplation as its primary goal. All religious are primarily entrusted with giving themselves to contemplation, this is their principal end. (Cf. Rahner, K., 1967, p. 77)

Besides, every religious is called to be a sacrament of the mystical, a reminder for people of their divine loveliness. There is a beautiful way of celebrating life, of preaching the word of God, of being present to the hurting, of embracing sinners, of dancing with the limping on this precious Earth. The people will then believe that by their very presence, every word and every meal they share becomes a small but vibrant sacrament of God's beauty, warming people's hearts when they grow too cold, and bringing the morning

early, when the nights are too dark and too slow. And that's when people will start to appreciate God's presence in us.

3.2 What is Religious Women Vocation

George Tvard says that "The religious vocation is a call to form a liturgical community with others, thus constituting the Church as a local unit." And so as Andre de Bovis has observed that if the religious life is rightly adapted and holily lived, the nature of the Church will show through." (Cf. Judith Tate, O.S.B, 1966, p.16). The very nature of religious community is founded scripturally. Moreover, the institution of religious life in the strict sense is a creation of the Church, the origin of religious life is due to Christ Himself . (Baum, 1964, p.66).

For Christ said that "there are those who bar themselves from marrying for the sake of the kingdom of heaven." They do not bar themselves for the sake of efficiency in their ministry or for the sake of self-discipline, but for the sake of God's kingdom. Christ added, "It is not everybody who can live up to this -only those who have a special gift," and "Let the man who can accept what I have said accept it." (Cf. Judith Tate, 1969, p.18).

The religious vocation, then comes from Jesus Christ. Its essentials are the essentials of the Church; it is the total, public, communal commitment to the kingdom and its comings. In religious community, celibacy and a special kind of poverty are means which enable a group to live this commitment with a special intensity and are signs to the

world of the commitment itself. In actual fact, however, poverty and chastity have not always served as means to community. Indeed, it might be said that community sometimes has served as means for exercising the vows.

Besides, the vocation of the religious women is to be a prophet of beauty, to remind people of the light within them. To reassure them that they are as Thomas Merton realized in his moment of intense disclosure in a city street, “shining like the sun”; to tell that they, like those schoolchildren, can almost touch a rainbow. The calling of the religious nun, like it was for Jesus before him, and like it is for the Church and her sacraments now, is not to introduce something new to God’s creation, but to reveal, purify and intensify what is already there.

St Irenaeus was talking about beauty when he said that the glory of God was fully alive human being. So was St. Paul when he reminds us that “our unveiled faces reflect like mirrors the brightness of the Lord, growing brighter and brighter as we are turned into the image that we reflect”. And in the most wonderful words, Thomas Aquinas assures us that “God is beauty itself, beautifying all things. God puts into creatures a kind of sheen, a reflection of God’s own luminous ray, which is the fountain of all light.” (Daniel O’Leary, *The Tablet*, 18 September, 2004).

3.3 Ecclesial documents on the Meanings and Purpose of Religious Women

Vocation

According to the Constitution on the Church, “Religious life must be defined by what distinguishes it from the following evangelical counsels in the world by the ordinary baptized Christian, namely, the stable form of life in community. Religious vocation is a coming together, in love, of baptized persons who have chosen a special mode of life which permits an intense and intimate service of God and witness of the Church. That is, persons coming together in loving oneness, create out of that oneness a “moral person,” the community which is the oneness created by individual persons. Whereby the one whole must serve the ones which are parts. (Baum, 1969, p. 66).

Despite such a great variety of gifts, all those called by God to the practice of the evangelical counsels and who, faithfully responding to the call, undertake to observe the same, bind themselves to the Lord in a special way, following Christ, who chaste and poor

(cf. Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58)redeemed and sanctified men through obedience even to the death of the Cross (cf. Phil.2:8).Driven by love with which the Holy Spirit floods their hearts (cf. Rom. 5:5) they live more and more for Christ and for His body which is the Church (cf. Col. 1:214). The more fervently, then, they are joined to Christ by this total life-long gift of themselves, the richer the life of the Church becomes and the more lively and successful its apostolate.

The three evangelical vows make religious vocation and community living possible. In fact, the Constitution on the Church seems to make it clear that all Christians, being vowed to the “state of perfection” through baptism, are bound to practice poverty of spirit, obedience, chastity, and all the other precepts of Christ according to their state. Such clarification of vocation points up the essentials of the religious vocation. Celibacy as witness of the kingdom and liturgical community as witness of the Church. (Kaam, A.V., 1978, 52).

Furthermore, religious vocation is a communal living which is a valid vocation and the vows reestablished according to Christ’s invitation, are basic to that vocation. Religious vocation is coming together of the community in love, of baptized persons who have chosen a special mode of life which permits an intense and intimate service of God and witness of the Church. Persons coming together in loving oneness, create out of that oneness a moral person the community. Thereby, religious community is the oneness created by individual persons. The one whole must serve the ones which are its parts and they have rights and obligations.

The purpose is that each person is bound to serve the community and the common good of all the members. In doing this, it helps bring into being the very personalities of these religious women/vocation. Such a unique play of call and response is created, not by system, but by very personal knowledge and love of each person for the entire religious community. We must acknowledge that religious vocation and community living cannot happen in the intensity required by stable religious groups unless they are rooted in God.

Indeed, it needs God's love. To engage in religious community is to share the love of the Trinity which is perfect religious Community. It was in love that Christ and His apostles made perfect religious community. As He prayed to the father:

May the love with which you love me
dwell in them as I dwell in them myself.

(Tate, 1966, p. 24).

Above all, the purpose of the religious life is to help the members follow Christ and be united to God through the profession of the evangelical counsels. It should be constantly kept in mind, therefore, that even the best adjustments made in accordance with the needs of our age will be ineffectual unless they are animated by a renewal of spirit. This must take precedence over even the active ministry. The manner of living, praying and working should be suitably adapted everywhere, but especially in the mission territories, to the modern physical and psychological circumstances of the members and also, as required by the nature of each institute, to the necessities of the apostolate, the demands of culture, and social and economic circumstances. (Documents of Vatican 11, Religious life, no.2).

In order that the great value of life consecrated by the profession of the counsels and its necessary mission today may yield greater good to the Church, the sacred synod lays down the following prescriptions. They are meant to state only the general principles of the adaptation and renewal of the life and discipline of religious orders and also, without prejudice to their special characteristics, of societies of common life without vows and

secular institutes. Particular norms for the proper explanation and application of these principles are to be determined after the council by the authority in question. (Cf. Papal Encyclicals, May 23, 1964).

3.4 Women Congregations documents/writings

Following the address of Pope Paul VI to the general chapters of Religious orders and Congregations in May 23, 1964:

We wish to note the very great importance of your Religious Institutes, and to observe that your work is wholly necessary for the Church in these days. Admittedly, the doctrine of the universal vocation of all the Faithful to holiness of life (regardless of their position or social situation) has been advanced very much in modern times. This is as it should be, for it is based on the fact that all the Faithful are consecrated to God by their Baptism. Moreover, the very necessities of the times demand that the fervor of Christian life should inflame souls and radiate in the world itself. In other words, the needs of the times demand a consecration of the world and their task pertains pre-eminently to the laity. All these developments are unfolding under the counsel of Divine Providence and that is why We rejoice over such salutary undertakings.

However, we must be on guard lest, for this reason, the true notion of religious life as it has traditionally flourished in the Church, should become obscured. We must as well beware lest our youths, becoming confused while thinking about their choice of a state in life, should be thereby hindered in some way from having a clear and distant vision of the

special function and immutable importance of the religious state within the Church. Therefore, it has seemed good to us to recall here the priceless importance and necessary function of religious life; for this stable way of life, which receives its proper character from profession of the evangelical vows, is a perfect way of living according to the example and teaching of Jesus Christ. It is a state of life which keeps in view the constant growth of charity leading to its final perfection. In other ways of life, though legitimate in themselves, the specific ends, advantages and functions are of a temporal character.

Indeed, it is necessary that you hold the religious vows in highest esteem and that you attach the greatest importance to their religious function and practice. Only this manner will you be able to lead a life that is becoming and in harmony with the state you have embraced.. A state that you have freely chosen and in which, consequently, you now find yourself caught up from day to day, only in this way will your state of life efficaciously aid you to progress toward the perfection of charity, only in this way will the Faithful thereby receive from you your witness to the Christian life and be inspired to follow it.

The holy Father continues, although human conditions have changed notably in recent years, and consequently religious life must be accommodated to these changes, yet those things which follow from the very nature of the evangelical counsels (obedience, poverty, and chastity) still retain all their vigor and can in no wise be diminished. Therefore, it is supremely important to cherish diligently religious obedience in your lives.

Furthermore, it is quite evident that the proper way of living religious life requires discipline. There must be laws and suitable conditions for observing them. Therefore, the principal task of the General Chapter is, as time goes on, to keep intact those norms of the Religious family which were set up by its Founder and Lawgiver. Therefore, it is your responsibility to firmly shut the door against all those modes of conduct which gradually devitalize the strength of religious discipline, namely, practices which are dangerous to religious life, unnecessary dispensations, and privileges not properly approved. You must likewise be wholly on guard against any relaxation of discipline which is urged, not by true necessity, but which rather arises from arrogance of spirit, or aversion to obedience, or love of worldly things. For Religious Institutions will flourish and prosper so long as the integral spirit of their Father continues to inspire their rule of life and apostolic works, as well as the actions and lives of their members.

Religious Communities, inasmuch as they resemble living bodies, rightly desire to experience continual growth. However, this growth of the Institute must be based firmly on the more diligent observance of your rules rather than on the numbers or the making of new laws. Multiplicity of laws is not always accompanied by progress in religious life. It often happens that the more rules there are, the less people pay attention to them. Therefore, let the general Chapters always use their right to make laws moderately and prudently. (*Address to the General Chapters of Religious Orders and Congregations, May 23, 1964*).

3.5 Other Theological Opinions

Many theologians today, who are seeking to formulate a clear definition of the theology of religious vocation, stress this fact that the religious community is a sacramental microcosm of the Church. George Tavard says that the religious vocation makes theological sense only if it is an epitome of the Church, as representing on a small and intensified scale what the Church is on a large and dispersed scale. Both are worshipping communities, both are called to the life of perfection; the saving mission of the community is the mission of the Church. (Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, 1965, Ch VI).

Religious vocation is a consecrated life which is a mystery of totality. Because it reaches beyond the basic choice of good over evil, which includes ordinary human and Christian growth, to making their own the way of life practiced personally by Jesus and proposed by Him to his disciples. This spirituality completes a person's foundational baptismal consecration to God. Moreover, John Paul II states, the mission of religious is their "special conformity to Christ, chaste, poor and obedience" (Pope John Paul II, address to the religious women, 1982).

Other theological opinion is that, the essence of the consecrated life is a human being's total dedication to God in a way accepted by him. It is a complete commitment willed and assisted by God and actively made by the person who wishes to belong entirely to God and so pledges himself or herself to the lifelong practice of the evangelical counsels. A consequent duty is to make Jesus' way of life, to which he gave absolute eschatological

value, present in time and place. Indeed, through some of his followers living the counsels, “the characteristic features of Jesus- the chaste, poor and obedient one are made constantly ‘visible’ in the midst of the world”, directing attention toward the mystery of the kingdom of God already at work in history, even though it will reach completion only in heaven. (Vatican Counsel 11).

According to Cardinal Paul Philippe, O.P., the goal of religious (consecrated) person is that of all Christians: interpersonal union with the Triune God. All has to achieve this supreme goal of life primarily through the charity-love response to God (as friend-spouse through contemplation) (ST II-II 184, 1) and secondarily through the justice-religion response of worship and service(as knowing, obedient creatures of their Maker). Consecrated person differ from other Christians, however, in that they seek to attain the supreme goal of life as perfectly as possible within their lifetimes by pursuing, through perfect means, these two main interdependent goals of charity and religion. Their striving requires special attentiveness, opportunity and means. And since the goal of love, worship and service are achieved primarily through the mind and heart, the degree of their availability and responsiveness determines whether a person will be able to develop ever more perfect virtues of charity-love and religion. (Basil Cole, Paul Conner, 1997, p.52).

John Paul 11 states that “The purpose of religious vows is to scale the heights of love~: a complete love, dedicated to Christ under the impulse of the Holy Spirit and through Christ, offered to the Father.(John Paul 11, November 2, 1994, p.23, #4). The grace of a

religious vocation does not automatically sanctify those who receive it, but it is an exceptional help both to those who live it well and to those who observe it.

The Holy Father has often insisted on the importance of the interior life of religious sisters. Their consecration to God demands it and is this consecration that justifies their existence, for most of the apostolic activities entrusted to them (teaching, social service, care of the sick) could be performed by professional women. And since they are vowed to the apostolate, they will be mindful that all evangelical work is a 'revelation' of God, an encounter in which those under their care, in the person of the sister, meet Christ living in the Church. But how can an apostle reveal what he has not first discovered himself?

Therefore, religious nuns must not forget that evangelical work presupposes a thorough knowledge of the milieu which is to be evangelized, and that this knowledge demands the renunciation of some part of the protection formerly afforded by enclosure. Every religious nun today is an apostle and must therefore carry within herself her own cloister, that inner strength which will not only protect her, but will render her apostolate dynamic and effective.

3.6 Nigerian indigenous understanding of Religious Vocation

Many may wonder why there is such an increase in vocations among female congregation in Nigeria and Africa as a whole and net increase in foundations of female congregations. They do not wonder why there is such hospitality given to Christianity and Islam by the primal religion in Africa. Despite the impact of secularization, a religious view of the world remains a fundamental value of Nigerian /African culture.

I do agree with Elochukwu Uzoukwu's observation that says, "Whatever the reason for the upsurge in vocations and the expansion of Christianity in Africa, these reasons must be good for the African women and men who embrace Christianity and who embrace the priestly and religious life. My observation of the incredible energy, creativity, and generosity of Nigerian priests and male and female religious convince me that Christian religious life and priestly ministry contains something good for the human person and for the continents especially in Europe and America- by the services they render to the universal Church. With patience, they quite make their contribution to the dialogue of cultures working towards harmony in tension- the dynamic grains of the Nigerian view of social engineering." (Uzoukwu, Vol.1, No.2 May 2001).

For Nigerian women understanding of religious vocation, I can not fully agree with Uzokwu who in his current issues says that, "evidence, on the ground shows that, rather than being unpopular, celibacy is embraced as a truly satisfied challenge in life, as much as marriage. According to him, ... of the number of young Nigerian women who have embraced the religious life, a key aspect of which is "celibacy". Interestingly, this phenomenon is associated more with Igboland than with the rest of Nigeria" (Uzoukwu, 2001,vol. 1, No. 2)

Here I can understand that Uzoukwu counts the quantity or number of women that join the religious Congregation in Nigeria without counting on the quality. I mean, how many of these indigenous nuns really understood or taught what religious life is all about or entails. The Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations' formators are they really sure

and boast of themselves understanding what religious life is all about and how to impart it on the candidates?. There is an adage that says, “You can not give what you do not have”. And that is exactly what is happening now in most of Nigerian women religious congregations. Most of the authorities and formators do not have enough knowledge or understanding of what religious life is all about, especially the meaning of the evangelical counsels.

An elderly nun I live with here in the United States once told me that these Nigerian nuns know the names of the vows but surely do not keep them. Is it the long rope and huge head-gear that make one a nun or living out the life? We have to be very careful in what we are doing with our lives so that we do not betray what we profess to be or make jest of religious life. It is so unfortunate that the immoral life of some indigenous Nigerian nuns have really given bad image to the entire Nigerian religious nuns all over the world.

Can we not understand what the late Joseph- Therese Agbasiere (missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary) by painting a portrait of the authentic Igbo woman in Nigeria. The Nigerian author, who chose a life of celibacy rather than the life marriage that traditionally celebrates the peak of maturity as a person or as a woman, demonstrated that the traditional Igbo notions of womanhood are useful codes for transforming the world. According to her, the woman is “gift to the society, an ethical being who confers some status on man, one who is an upholder of morality” (Agbasiere, 2000, p.8).

I do not think Agbasiere means that Nigeria nuns should uphold waywardness as a way of life. Neither do I think that s`e means that Nigerian nuns should become an international public prostitutes with holy religious habits on. Common, let us call a spake, a spake. We need God's providence. It is a high time that all Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations' authorities should sit and reason together, make a concrete decision of the best way or method of forming the (nuns)subjects to make more meaningful of what this religious life is all about. It is a high time we stop deceiving ourselves, the Church and the entire world. Good moral life should be held to the esteem.

CHAPTER FOUR

Socio-Cultural Problems associated with Religious Women

This chapter is solely done by my own experience and my personal interview with some Nigerian nuns from different congregations, names and congregations withheld to avoid trouble with the individual nuns concerned.

The phenomenon of the vocation boom to the religious life and the question of the reasons why so many women in Nigeria are drawn to it is ultimately a mystery known to God alone, and to the individual. Nigerians, like most Africans in general, are a very religious people. Therefore, one can safely conclude that the basic force attracting women to the Religious life is religious. They have the desire to dedicate themselves to the service of God and neighbor following the way of life of their respective congregations.

There are economic, social (family/prestige), and educational factors that motivate women to join the Religious life. Perhaps there can be no generalization or blanket application. Like other vocations, such as the priesthood or the religious orders of men, candidates come to the Religious life with mixed motivations, mostly unconscious motivations. The individual is perhaps completely unaware or vaguely aware of these subliminal motivations, which could be economic or socio-educational, among others.

4.1 The Economic and Reasons for Religious Women in Nigeria

The Nigerian traditional set-up is agricultural. Women bear a disproportionate part of this burden. They are highly invaluable man power. They carry this burden as wives, often in a polygamous set-up. Religious life takes a nun away from this exacting labor as well as from the challenges of urban life in which a woman does not yet enjoy equality.

-Poverty:

As a matter of fact, poverty plays no significant roles when a young lady/girl decides to embrace a religious life in Nigeria. However, it is a factor. In a family of say- seven, and the potential candidate realizes that she has no chance to further her education because parents haven't enough money to keep all of them in school, she may decide to go to the convent. This individual may hope that her religious profession, the authorities may send her out for further studies.

Another factor influencing a lady's decision to join the religious life is what clinical psychologists call "secret fear". That means a lady could be scared of getting married, because of the problem of carrying pregnancy, or caring for children, and experiencing difficulties married people go through, then she decides not marry and the only way to avoid people worrying her about marriage is to the convent. However, she doesn't share thoughts with anybody. This is called "secret fear". In other words it would seem that some are unconsciously attracted to the Religious life because of the poor economic conditions of their families and the prospect of better quality life in the Religious life. The poor are often more religious than the rich. Because of their poor economic

conditions, some families may be unable to bear the financial burdens of sponsoring their children's education in state or public institutions. Naturally, children from such families may be attracted to Church-owned schools and institutions where the fees are supposed to be minimal, the facilities optimal, and the quality of education better. The external appearance of religious women with smiling faces, often dressed in impeccable well-iron habits, can give aspirants the erroneous impression of a cozy life devoid of the hardships and everyday struggle that affect the rest of mankind. Some may therefore be motivated to escape from the world of family conditions into the platonic world or the Religious.

-Not fortunate enough to have a suitor:

whether we believe it or not there are a good number of nuns in Nigeria that entered religious life because there was no suitor(s) on their way. So the best way to run away from the society's shame is to enter religious life. One may ask why such people did not have any suitors? The answer could, either because of physical ugliness, negative attitude or behavior.

I once met a Nigerian nun who just entered the Religious Order, (name and Congregation's identities withheld), and a certain Priest asked why should this person be taken into the Order? Because the "person" is well known to him and according to him her life was not a pleasant one or encouraging. It was also made known that the particular "person" was consulted/approached by another nun, and her answer was, "If the Priest should marry her she will certainly pull out from the convent. This statement

answered the above idea of “Not being fortunate enough to have a suitor”. We also need to know or learn what attitude these set people portray after they made their vows.

4.2 The Family (Prestige) Reasons

Yes, there are elements of prestige the candidate envisages in joining the religious life. In Nigeria where sisters wear their religious habits, young girls or ladies admire them. Any public occasions or functions offer the opportunity for the nuns to congregate, feel happy, smile, laugh, and hug one another. Many young ladies feel attracted to this type of life and they want to be like them (nuns). A lot of young ladies have told me that personally, that alone influenced their decisions.

Religious women, like Religious men and priests, are highly regarded and respected in Nigerian society. They are often accorded honor and respect not given to other professionals like doctors and lawyers. Religious women, men and priests are generally seen as religious symbols and representatives of God, the sacred and the divine. It is often the desire and prayer of many parents and families to have a priest or a Religious from their family. The families of priests and religious are seen by others as having been blessed by God, and are highly respected . It is a fact that family pressure and suggestions from parents and others often influence the decision to join the religious life or the priesthood. Even the rich want to have one. The ring of lawyers, doctors, engineers, and professors in the family needs to be completed and crowned with a priest or religious. In fact, there is a lot of competitions now in Nigeria especially in the eastern part of the country, (Igboland).

-Competition Among Families Now in Nigeria

On the part of the family, some families derive joy in being called “mama sister”, or “mama father” in the case of priests. They feel happy that one of their sons or daughters is a nun or a priest. It gives them some sort of prestige in the society and the people recognize and honor them for what their children represent. In some cases, some parents have constrained their daughters and sons to join the religious life or priesthood. Brothers and sisters of a nun or vice versa also take pride in being called “nwanne sister” (brother or sister of a nun). And so when a girl or a boy decides to join religious life or priesthood, the advise he/she gets from the family is always “do not disappoint us”, that means, do not fail to become a nun or a priest. This is why most of these girls or boys why in the religious life find out that the life is not for them, when they remember what they were told by their parents (family) they will rather stay put, bearing the pain of not being happy with the life, and thereby causing unhealthy environment in the religious community as well as suffering from psychological problem. All because one is not in the right vocation. Many Nigerian nuns entered into religious life due to parental, or societal pressure.

Although, marriage, more than anything else, gives a woman status and prestige in Nigeria. But after a slow start the religious life has far out stripped marriage in bestowing prestige on the family of the nun. To become a Father or a mother sisterhood is now a “status” of choice among many in Nigeria especially in Igboland. Some may also argue

that the religious life and the marriage life are in neck-and neck competition. Even though that:

Mothers still cherish “ije ne omugo.”

Fathers still cherish the gifts from son in-laws especially when such in-laws are influential people.

On the contrary, it is also the perceived escape from the challenges of married life on the part of the nun.

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4.3 The Educational Reasons

It has sometimes been observed that many Nigerian women are attracted to Religious life because of the educational opportunities it offers its members (candidates). This is probably more so for those who have made their profession in the Religious life. Joining the Religious opens up for them the opportunity of higher education and the fulfillment of personal ambitions that could otherwise have eluded them. However, the struggle to be sent for some form of higher education at home, but most preferably overseas, is often the source of rancor, bitterness, and maneuvering in some indigenous Religious congregations. Many a time, there are accusations and rumors of favoritism on the part of their superiors and their councilors. Besides, the educated and the “been-to” tend to see themselves or are perceived by others as belonging to a higher class. Those who have not been given the opportunity of a higher education are often low in morale, bitter and unhappy, and perceived themselves as condemned to doing the menial work.

Some young women come into religious life with only the minimum of education. Some can actually be classified as barely literate. They come in, hoping to get the opportunity for further studies. This can be a driving force in some cases. They hope they would get the opportunities they didn't have in their families because of financial constraints. They dream for the day they would be called upon by their religious authorities to choose what field of education they would like to pursue and vice versa. At times it works out so, at times the dream doesn't come through.

Apart from allegations of uneven handedness in the distribution of opportunities, it is often alleged that many of those sent for higher education in universities and other institutions are very poorly catered for. It is said that many are left to "fend for themselves", to provide their fees and cater for their basic needs. In the effort to provide for their needs, some Religious are forced to fall back on their families, and others are exposed to the danger of looking for help in ways and by means that may undermine or compromise their vocation as dedicated women Religious.

Without a doubt, the educational opportunities of Nigerian women Religious have produced very positive results. Education has raised their social status in the society and made them available for the evangelizing mission of the Church. Quite a few of them have trained as medical doctors and nurses. Thus equipped, they are able to work in hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities, often in poor and remote rural areas, with great and inspiring personal sacrifice. Compare with the tremendous number of Nigerian indigenous nuns, a very few number of them hold a doctorate, a licentiate or a masters

degree in theology, philosophy, law (civil and canon), sacred scripture, education, and the sciences. They are thus able to teach in institutions of higher learning. However, there appears to be a tendency for those sent to study abroad to overstay or to prolong their study indefinitely, sometimes with the appearance of refusing to return home. There is also the perception that many of those on study leave overseas do not want to live in community with others. With the measure of independence given them by their study overseas, the perception is that some prefer to live independently on their own, and not in a community.

4.4 What Religious Women Experience in Convent or religious communities

During my encounter with some nuns from different indigenous religious congregations of women in Nigeria, I was made to understand that some (many) young women embrace religious life without first coming to terms with the meaning of Christian life. (This does not exclude those born into Christian families). They thus bring into religious life a multitude of worldly baggage that create a host of personality crises and interpersonal clashes in their religious communities. Examples:

- Some are hated for being fashionable because they dress well.

- Some, when in authority are so down-right cruel and intolerant that one wonders if they were ever baptized Christians.

Some nuns, for whom religious life is an opportunity for upward mobility, juxtapose family welfare and religious life; this creates problems with authority . For example; to

what extent can a nun bear her family's economic problem in view of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Some nuns are simply too young at the time they embraced religious life that they hardly know or understand what they are getting into. They have not really internalized their life and commitment.

There is an adage that says: "All that glitters is not gold". One nun told me, "What I thought and hoped before joining the religious life is farce". After religious profession, what else? Many of the nuns don't get the education they hoped for, and the few who get it, are the beloved of the authorities or related in one way or other. Some older nuns lavish in agony and do domestic duties. They swallow insults and abuse from the educated nuns. They have no education to upgrade themselves and nobody will send them. A nun told me that, "she had National Certificate in Education (NCE), and needed to get a first degree which the school she teaches demanded from her. But when she made this request known to the authorities of her religious congregation, the answer she received was that she could as well come back to the community and water the plants, that is, to be a gardiner". We could imagine that in their frustrations, they see newly professed nun or beloved of the authorities being sent to university to major in any field of their choice. As one would expect, this type of system causes a lot of bickering, quarrels and fighting. And this contribute to the psychological problems/disorders the nuns suffer from.

Again, the economic reasons for joining the religious life do not work at all. The cost prospectus or what an aspirant provides for herself before joining the religious community is enormous. The same family poverty one seems to be running away from follows one to the religious life (convent). Even after religious profession, the poverty level remains the same.

Many religious congregations in Nigeria count for the quantity and not for the quality of the members and the candidates taken. The number of the candidate taken within the period of one year formation is enormous and proper religious formation, proper care and maintenance are not rendered to them as it should.

CHAPTER FIVE

Psychological Problems

In this chapter, I will describe the meaning of psychological problem/disorder as well as the psychological problems in religious life. Also the reasons for psychological problems in religious life, and finally how to avert psychological problems/disorders.

5.1 Meaning of Psychological Problem

Psychology is a fascinating field that contains some of the interesting inquiries you will encounter in any area you study in college. As we can see, psychology doesn't accept assumptions about human nature at face value, however reasonable they may sound. It is a rigorous discipline that tests assumptions.

Definitions:

According to John Santrock, "Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes". There are three aspects to this definitions: science, behavior, and mental processes.

As a science, psychology uses systematic methods to observe, describe, predict, and explain behavior. Psychology's methods are not casual. They are carefully and precisely planned and conducted. They are often verified by checking to see if they describe the behavior of many different people.

Secondly, as behavior, psychology is everything we do that can be directly observed - two people kissing, a baby crying, a college student riding a motorcycle.

Thirdly, as a mental processes, psychology is trickier to define than behavior; they are the thoughts, feelings, and motives that each of us experiences privately but that cannot be observed directly. Though we cannot directly see thoughts and feelings, they are nonetheless real. (Santrock, John, 2000, p.5).

Furthermore, psychology is not a cure-all for every knotty problem, and it doesn't tell us the meaning of life. It does however, contribute enormously to our knowledge about why people are the way they are, why they think and act the way they do, and how they can cope more effectively with their lives. Many of live's problems today are psychological problems: death caused by unhealthy lifestyles , such as lack of exercise, poor eating habits, and inability to cope with stress, pollution, violence, racism, and employment in a changing information age. However, psychologists are enthusiastic about psychology's potential to improve our lives in these and many other areas as we move into the twenty - first century. It is an exciting time of discovery in the field of psychology.

There are several principles that can help us understand what psychology means in life. These are; biological processes, this process has a powerful influences on behavior. For example, when the visual areas of the brain are damaged, some aspects of visuals experience disappear while others remain intact (Pinker, 1977, 1999). Individuals with such brain damage might see a complete world but pay attention only to half of it. They

might eat food from the right side of the plate, shave only their right cheek, and draw a clock with all numbers placed on the right half. The brain, after all, does nothing visible to you. But when injury and diseases assault the brain, its powerful role influencing behavior becomes apparent (Stoler & Hill, 1998, p. 30).

Second, the environmental process. According to Greenough and Nash's view on behavioral approach, environmental processes have powerful influences on behavior. The experiences you had when you were growing up have influenced the development of your brain and your behavior. Environmental experiences can contribute to a wiring, or rewiring, of the brain. (Greenough, 1999; Nash, 1997, p. 310). Therefore, in psychology and life, environmental experiences matter.

Third, mental processes. How important is your mind in all you do? We not only are biological and environmental beings, we also are mental beings. This concept is at the center of the cognitive approach. A twentieth-century French philosopher Albert Camus said that an intellectual is someone whose mind watches itself, but this is true of all human beings, more or less. An important dimension of psychology is the rigorous effort expanded by many scientists to explore the inner workings of the human mind. And so in psychology and life, mental processes matter.

Fourth, the social world processes. Take away people and what would your life be like? Imagine it. No one to talk with. No one to comfort you. No one to challenge you. No one to smile and cry with you. We are social beings who need other people to satisfy our

wants and desires. Parent, teachers, peers, friends, and partners in close relationships play important roles in our socially connected lives (Collins & Laursen, 1999).

Again, another psychologist defines Psychology as “an academic discipline, a body of knowledge with themes of method and content which tie together disparate parts. The knowledge is organized and synthesized into theories and “schools of thought” for communication among members of the scientific community, and for transmittal to students and other interested parties”.(Super, C., and Super, D., 1983, p.3). Indeed, one may even define psychology as the study of the behavior of the individual resulting from his adjustment to the environment. (Thorpe, L., 1980, p. 3).

Psychology stands at the very center of the educational process. Schoolhouses, certification of teachers, transportation of pupils and the taxation of property for school support- all are for one purpose and for that purpose alone. This purpose is to provide ways and means to develop human beings.

Psychological problems such as stress, depression, anxiety, personality disorder, eating disorder, etc. affect everyone in their life. The body has an inbuilt physical response to stressful situations. Faced with pressure, challenge or danger, we need to react quickly, and our bodies release, hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline to help us do this. These hormones are part of the “fight or flight” response and affect the metabolic rate, heart rate and blood pressure, resulting in a heightened- or stressed- state that prepares the body for optimum performance in dealing with a stressful situation.

Meehl (1962), says that, “Stress creates an excellent breeding ground for illnesses to develop, it can place your physical and psychological well-being in jeopardy if not attended to.” Researchers estimate that stress contribute to as many as 50-70 percent of all illnesses including cardiovascular illness, high blood pressure, cancer endocrine and metabolic related diseases, skin disorders, infections and others.” (Santrock, J., 2000, p.392).

Symptoms of stress: When one is under a lot of stress, it will carry with it a whole host of signs such as: fatigue, headaches, irritability, loss of appetite, forgetfulness, confusion, low self-esteem, aloofness, nervous twitches, lowered sex drive, intestinal disorders and high blood pressure. (Santrock, J., 2000, P. 393).

Mechanism: In the face of perceived problems we are always under stress, at that time we undergo physical changes where hormone and adrenalin levels increase and our body reacts to fight or flight response. The dumping of hormones by the adrenal glands causes acidosis in the body. That in turn will trigger a whole cascade of health affecting problems. If left unchecked, it may cause physical or mental malfunctions. So, the increased production of adrenal hormones may be one of the factors responsible for most of the symptoms associated with stress. Stress can create vulnerability in the body’s immune system prompting other disorders including factors to run riot. Long-term stress can throw your body’s functions out of syndrome.

There are several types of stress. Stress can be good or bad, good stress keeps you motivated and healthy while bad stress hurts your health. Stress is not a dangerous condition itself, it is only when the level of stress exceeds our ability to cope with that it becomes a problem and affects health. Chronic bad stress may lead to heart disease and other debilitating conditions. A state of continued stress eventually wears out the body. Physical and psychological stress in a healthy adult may produce acute deficiencies of trace minerals despite other adequate dietary intake. Stress is a common precursor of psychological problems like anxiety and depression. Tolerance of stress levels differ from person-to-person. Some can sustain stress easily while others succumb readily. (DSM-1V).

However, the stress response is actually a part of a larger response known as the general adaptation syndrome. It is divided into three phases:

Alarm reaction - Is referred to as the fight or flight response. It causes the adrenal to secrete adrenalin and other stress related hormones like cortisol. It is usually a short-lived phase.

Resistance phase: - This is influenced by cortisol and other corticosteroids secreted by the adrenal cortex. It provides the necessary energy to deal with stress. Continued stress or prolongation of the resistance phase may increase the

risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems and cancer. If continued it may lead to the exhaustion phase.

Exhaustion phase - This phase manifest as a total collapse of body function or collapse of specific organs. Two of the major causes of exhaustion may be:

1. potassium loss
2. reduction in the amount of the adrenal hormone cortisone.

With prolong stress, the body may become deficient in many useful nutrients and is unable to replace them to par level. Long-term stress is dangerous and may lead to more serious medical problems.

5.2 Reasons for Psychological Problems

The fundamental psychological division of all things is that between self and ego and that which is not self (non-ego). By ego, I mean that which constitute the centrum of the field of consciousness and appears to possess a very high degree of continuity and identity. This is why the psychologists have seized upon this important fact as a starting point for their teachings regarding human behavior. For example, they point out that practically all antisocial behavior is based not upon any inherent dislike for other humans or any innate inability to get along in society, but rather on some personal factor of maladjustment. Something is wrong in the ego, there is a lack of confidence, frustration, or something

similar which inspires distorted conduct toward others as a compensation or some other form of transfer.

Certainly, there are several reasons for psychological problems and these are distinctively identified in the DSM-IV.

First, lack of regard for the moral or legal standards in the local culture, marked inability to get along with others or abide by societal rules. Sometimes called psychopaths or sociopaths. A common misconception is that antisocial personality disorder refers to people who have poor social skills. The opposite is often the case. Instead, antisocial personality disorder is characterized by a lack of conscience. People with this disorder are prone to criminal behavior, believing that their victims are weak and deserving of being taken advantage of. They tend to lie and steal. Often, they are careless with money and take action without thinking about consequences. They are often aggressive and are much more concerned with their own needs than the needs of others. This could be named antisocial personality disorder

According to the DSM-IV, essential features include a consistent pattern of total disregard for, and the violation of rights of others. For purposes of diagnosis, individuals must be at least 18 years of age. Symptoms begin in childhood and early adolescence, continuing into adulthood. Children often have histories of conduct disorder, socialized aggressive, non-socialized non-aggressive. They show aggression towards people, as well as animals. It is not uncommon for children to maim animals, specifically cats. They

violate rules, are deceitful, and often steal. There is a complete disregard for others. Again, as with all personality disorders, there are gradations of severity. However, full-blown antisocial personality disorder in western society occurs in approximately 3 of males and 1 of females, according to the DSM-IV.

Hart & Hare (1997), declares that, theories abound, but causes for antisocial personality are unknown. Many have tried to draw a physiological link between smoking or drinking during pregnancy, or other teratogenic during the gestation, or a hereditary link; if a father is antisocial, then perhaps there is a greater likelihood that the son will also be antisocial. However these studies have no significant P-values, and none have been proven. Another theory has to do with an extra Y-chromosome, the "supermale." However many diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder do not have this extra chromosome. The bottom line is, We don't know for sure what causes antisocial personality disorder. It is this author's opinion that a combination of many ingredients causes an antisocial outcome, for example, a dysfunctional family component, inadequate parenting, inconsistent discipline or lack thereof, and perhaps a lesser ingredient will be the social environment including the media.(cf. Nole-Hoeksema, S., 2001, p. 415).

Some individuals who have been diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder have a history of traumatic abuse in their youth. However as with sexual abuse, abused individuals do not necessarily grow up to be perpetrators, or antisocial. Research studies have shown that of the many individuals who were sexually abused, only approximately 13-28 will go on to sexually abuse in their adult lives. Subsequently, a large percentage

of individuals who were sexually abused do not in fact go on to sexually abuse others. A father with an antisocial personality disorder will not necessarily have a child with the disorder. However, the child will observe poor role modeling, and children growing up often want to be like their parents. This type of role modeling definitely lends itself towards a higher incidence of crime. We do know that parenting plays an enormous role in the development of many personality disorders. However with our development and the walk of life, we find that many factors impact the individual. When performing a history we take as many factors as we can into consideration before a diagnosis is made. (Nole-Hoeksema, S., 2001, p. 413).

Another reason for psychological problem is marked with social inhabitation, feelings of inadequacy, and extremely sensitive to criticism. This is also called avoidant personality disorder.(DSM-1V).

However, personality refers to a distinctive set of traits, behavior styles, and patterns that make up our character or individuality. How we perceive the world, our attitudes, thoughts, and feelings are all part of our personality. People with healthy personalities are able to cope with normal stresses and have no trouble forming relationships with family, friends, and co-workers.

It is good enough to know that those who struggle with a personality disorder have great difficulty dealing with other people. They tend to be inflexible, rigid, and unable to respond to the changes and demands of life. Although they feel that their behavior

patterns are "normal" or "right," people with personality disorders tend to have a narrow view of the world and find it difficult to participate in social activities.

Recognizing a Personality Disorder must fulfill several criteria. Such as, a deeply ingrained, inflexible pattern of relating, perceiving, and thinking serious enough to cause distress or impaired functioning is a personality disorder. Personality disorders are usually recognizable by adolescence or earlier, continue throughout adulthood, and become less obvious throughout middle age.

Some experts believe that events occurring in early childhood exert a powerful influence upon behavior later in life. Others indicate that people are genetically predisposed to personality disorders. In some cases, however, environmental facts may cause a person who is already genetically vulnerable to develop a personality disorder. Moreso, personality disorder is identified by pervasive pattern of experience and behavior that is abnormal with respect to any two of the following;

thinking, mood, personal relations, and the control of impulses.

The character of a person is shown through his/her personality, by the way an individual thinks, feels, and behaves. When the behavior is inflexible, maladaptive, and antisocial, then that individual is diagnosed with a personality disorder.

Secondly, most personality disorders begin as problems in personal development and character which peak during adolescence and then are defined as personality disorders.

But again, personality disorders are not illnesses in a strict sense as they do not disrupt emotional, intellectual, or perceptual functioning. However, those with personality disorders suffer a life that is not positive, proactive, or fulfilling. Not surprisingly, personality disorders are also associated with failures to reach potential.

The DSM-IV-TR: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, defines a personality disorder as an enduring pattern of inner experience and behavior that deviates markedly from the expectation of the individual's culture, is pervasive and inflexible, has an onset in adolescence or early adulthood, is stable over time, and leads to distress or impairment. (Published by the American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

Besides, there are many reasons for psychological problems/disorders which can be; One's lack of own identity, with rapid changes in mood, and an intense unstable interpersonal relationships, as well as lack of self-image. According to Santrock, people with this disorder are prone to constant mood swings and bouts of anger. Often, they will take their anger out on themselves, causing themselves injury. Suicidal threats and actions are not uncommon. They think in very black and white terms and often form intense, conflict-ridden relationships. They are quick to anger when their expectations are not met. (Santrock, 2000, p. 393).

I will not be mistaken when I say that most of the Nigerian nuns prone to this disorder because during their formation period they were not educated enough or taught how to really develop one's identity that can help one to have good relationship with oneself, and

with others. They are so bitter with themselves and others. No manner of approach, they think that every day has to be a feast, forgetting that there must be ups and downs in everyone's life. And as a matter of fact, one has to withstand the daily ups and downs with ease and tranquility.

Good enough to know that it would be remiss to discuss Borderline Personality Disorder without including a comment about Linehan's work. In contrast to the symptom list approaches detailed below, Linehan has developed a comprehensive sociobiological theory which appears to be borne out by the successes found in controlled studies of her Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. (Linehan, M.,1987, p261).

Linehan theorizes that borderlines are born with an innate biological tendency to react more intensely to lower levels of stress than others and to take longer to recover. They peak "higher" emotionally on less provocation and take longer coming down. In addition, they were raised in environments in which their beliefs about themselves and their environment were continually devalued and invalidated. These factors combine to create adults who are uncertain of the truth of their own feelings and who are confronted by three basic dialectics they have failed to master (and thus rush frantically from pole to pole of):

- vulnerability vs invalidation
- active passivity (tendency to be passive when confronted with a problem and actively seek a rescuer) vs apparent competence (appearing to be capable when in reality internally things are falling apart)

- unremitting crises vs inhibited grief. (Linehan, 1987, p. 261-263).

According to Linehan, DBT tries to teach clients to balance these by giving them training in skills of mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, distress tolerance, and emotional regulation. Chief among these is splitting, in which a person or thing is seen as all good or all bad. Note that something which is all good one day can be all bad the next, which is related to another symptom; borderlines have problems with object constancy in people -- they read each action of people in their lives as if there were no prior context. They don't have a sense of continuity and consistency about people and things in their lives. They have a hard time experiencing an absent loved one as a loving presence in their minds. They also have difficulty seeing all of the actions taken by a person over a period of time as part of an integrated whole, and tend instead to analyze individual actions in an attempt to divine their individual meanings. People are defined by how they lasted interacted with the problem/disorder.(Lineham, 1987, p. 267).

Other primitive defenses cited include magical thinking (beliefs that thoughts can cause events), omnipotence, projection of unpleasant characteristics in the self onto others and projective identification, a process where the borderline tries to elicit in others the feelings s/he is having. Kernberg also includes as signs of BPO chaotic, extreme relationships with others; an inability to retain the soothing memory of a loved one; transient psychotic episodes; denial; and emotional amnesia. About the last, Linehan says, "Borderline individuals are so completely in each mood, they have great difficulty conceptualizing, remembering what it's like to be in another mood." (DSM -1V).

Gunderson, a psychoanalyst, is respected by researchers in many diverse areas of psychology and psychiatry. His focus tends to be on the differential diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder, and Cauwels gives Gunderson's criteria in order of their importance:

- Intense unstable relationships in which the borderline always ends up getting hurt. Gunderson admits that this symptom is somewhat general, but considers it so central to Borderline Personality Disorder that he says he would hesitate to diagnose a patient as Borderline Personality Disorder without its presence.
- Repetitive self-destructive behavior, often designed to prompt rescue
- Chronic fear of abandonment and panic when forced to be alone.
- Distorted thoughts/perceptions, particularly in terms of relationships and interactions with others

Again, hypersensitivity, meaning an unusual sensitivity to nonverbal communication. Gunderson notes that this can be confused with distortion if practitioners are not careful, somewhat similar to Herman's statement that, while survivors of intense long-term trauma may have unrealistic notions of the power realities of the situation they were in, their notions are likely to be closer to reality than the therapist might think. Impulsive behaviors that often embarrass the borderline later, poor social adaptation; in a way, borderlines tend not to know or understand the rules regarding performance in job and academic settings.

Another reason for psychological problem is extreme need of other people, to a point where the person is unable to make any decisions or take an independent stand on his or her own. Fear of separation and submissive behavior and lack of decisiveness and self-confidence. This could be called Dependent Personality Disorder.

Another reason for psychological problem could be an exaggerated and often inappropriate displays of emotional reactions, approaching theatricality, in everyday behavior, such as, sudden and rapidly shifting emotional expressions. This is called Histrionic Personality Disorder

Furthermore, another reason for psychological problems could be identified by some behavior or a fantasy of grandiosity that leads to a lack of empathy, or a need to be admired by others, or an inability to see the viewpoints of others, and hypersensitive to the opinions of others, all this could contribute to psychological problem, and it is called Narcissistic Personality Disorder. However, Santrock describes how Narcissistic personality disorder is characterized by self-centeredness. Like histrionic disorder, people with this disorder seek attention and praise. They exaggerate their achievements, expecting others to recognize them as being superiors. They tend to be choosy about picking friends, since they believe that not just anyone is worthy of being their friend. They tend to make good first impressions, yet have difficulty maintaining long-lasting relationships. They are generally uninterested in the feelings of others and may take advantage of them.

Another reason for psychological problem according to Santrock, is characterized by perfectionism and inflexibility, preoccupation with uncontrollable patterns of thought and action and is called Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder. In other words, individuals with obsessive-compulsive personality disorder are preoccupied with rules and duties, rarely express warmth or caring, and are emotionally insensitive, and are oriented toward a lifestyle of productivity and efficiency.

Furthermore, Paranoid Personality Disorder, is another reason for psychological problem. According to Schiffman and Walker (1998), it is marked with a distrust of others, including the belief, without reason, that others are exploiting, harming, or trying to deceive him or her. Lack of trust, and always belief of others' betrayal; belief in hidden meanings; unforgiving and grudge holding. This disorder is characterized by a distrust of others and a constant suspicion that people around you have sinister motives. People with this disorder tend to have excessive trust in their own knowledge and abilities and usually avoid close relationships with others. They search for hidden meanings in everything and read hostile intentions into the actions of others. They are quick to challenge the loyalties of friends and loved ones and often appear cold and distant to others. They usually shift blame to others and tend to carry long grudges. (Cf. Santrock, J. 2000. p. 393). This disorder perfectly describes the image of majority of Nigerian nuns. That is why it is very difficult for them to have a healthy religious congregation. They always see themselves as morally correct yet vulnerable and envied.

Another reason for psychological problem is that some people are primarily characterized by a very limited range of emotion, both in expression of experiencing, and indifferent to social relationships. This problem/disorder is called Schizoid Personality Disorder. As Schiffman and Walker describe that individuals in poverty are more likely to have schizophrenia than people at higher socioeconomic levels.

Again, another reason is that some people have peculiarities of thinking, odd beliefs, and eccentricities of appearance, behavior, interpersonal style, and thought (e.g., belief in psychic phenomena and having magical powers. And this is called Schizotypal Personality Disorder:

Many believe that schizotypal personality disorder represents mild schizophrenia. The disorder is characterized by odd forms of thinking and perceiving, and individuals with this disorder often seek isolation from others. They sometimes believe to have extra sensory ability or that unrelated events relate to them in some important way. They generally engage in eccentric behavior and have difficulty concentrating for long periods of time. Their speech is often over elaborate and difficult to follow.

The last but not the least, is that some people are characterized by a need to be taken care of. People with this disorder tend to cling to people and fear losing them. They may become suicidal when a break-up is imminent. They tend to let others make important decisions for them and often jump from relationship to relationship. They often remain in

abusive relationships. They are overly sensitive to disapproval. They often feel helpless and depressed. This is called Dependent personality disorder

Moreover, there are various reasons for psychological problems. For instance, when the negative reactions to life's situations become repetitively intense and frequent we develop symptoms of depression. Life throws up innumerable situations, which we greet with both negative and positive emotions such as excitement, frustration, fear, happiness, anger, sadness, joy et al. Depression is prevalent among all age groups, in almost all walks of life.

Persons of any age, children or adults, may develop depression symptoms. Even minor stress events can stir up depression symptoms depending on the personality type. Symptoms such as intense sadness, loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities, sleep disturbances or oversleeping, change in appetite and decreased energy level; feelings of helplessness and thoughts of suicide are sequels to stress induced depression.

According to Dr. Sadhana Vohra, a psychologist in India, who feels that by nature women might not be prone to depression, but the society makes them so. Women, in these days, have a lot of balancing to do between home and workplace, including balancing between social and personal requirements. It has the ingredients to create a lot of stress in women that can easily lead them to depression. (Vohra, 2005, Article, p. 1).

It has often been stated that women are more prone to depression than men. But Dr. R. K. Singh, professor and head of the department of psychiatry in Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, India, feels that this might be a wrong assumption. "Men are conditioned to deny their feelings whereas a woman feeling slightly upset to say that she is depressed. A man may express the same feeling either through anger or alcoholism. This doesn't mean that men feel any less depressed than women,"he argues. (Singh, 2005, article, p.2).

Many factors such as job stress, strained family relationships or sometimes stress from mid-life transitions' plunge people into depression. Researchers and medical practitioners are of the opinion that there is no one cause to the condition of psychological problems. Just as depression is closely linked with one's mental disposition or inner personality, the road to this condition is complex and subtle.

Often, the psychological constitution of an individual decides the tendency towards psychological problems, such as. depression. The coordinated working of brain and various neurotransmitters are chemicals that help different areas of the brain to communicate with each other. If these chemicals are low then miscommunication can occur and one may show signs of depression. This type of depression may run in the family. Additional factors, possibly stresses at home, work, or school, precipitate its onset.

Again, difficulty in decision-making, lack of energy, loss of interest in normal pleasurable activities, poor sleep and appetite, irritation and frustration are some of the symptoms that arise from biological depression. All human beings are not equipped to take on changes or difficult situations in life, naturally. Out of them, many don't adapt to those situations. The result normally is those situations and accompanying stress overwhelm people. Since modern times stress has been identified as the single biggest contributor to depression. The mind-boggling changes in every sphere of life-culture, profession, modes of transportation and rapid lifestyle changes put pressure on men to adjust with equal speed. Stress begins to wear them out and there is a loss of resiliency against adverse situations of life. Consequently, they begin to pull away from others and give in to depression.

Moreover, it is often said that people think themselves into depression. The thinking pattern of a person helps him/her accept or avoid a stress situation. If one shows disposition towards anxiety, worry, restlessness, anger and tension as stress responses, it can lead him/her to chronic emotional turbulence. We can worsen an ordinary sorrowful situation by imagining its possible intensity. We create problem situations by imagining what might go wrong, or could go wrong, and how terrible it would be. Even if the depression is due to biological imbalances, the person doesn't abstain from thinking negatively about it. Constant stressful situations make one develop a negative pattern of thinking, which gives in to depression at the slightest provocation in life

Many things can lead to psychological problems in ones' life:

- . Pressure to perform at work, at school or in sports
- . Threats of physical violence
- . Money worries
- . Arguments
- . Family conflicts
- . Divorce
- . Bereavement
- . Unemployment
- . Moving house
- . Alcohol or drug abuse.

Psychological disorders know no social and economic boundaries. They find their way into the lives of the rich and famous and the poor and unknown. These are some of the questions we may explore: How can you tell if someone has a psychological disorder? What causes psychological disorder? How are psychological disorder classified? Or what are some of the main types of psychological disorder?

People with schizophrenia suffer a decline in their level of functioning; for instance, they may not be able to work at a job that requires the same level of skill or concentration as the job they held before they became ill, or they may lose all ability to withstand the pressures of the working world. They may show a decline in their ability to attend to household chores or all the demands of raising children, and/or they may not be able to have a full social life anymore.

Sometimes schizophrenia is a chronic condition, and the individual afflicted is constantly experiencing hallucinations or other symptoms of the disorder. Other people have periods of time when they are relatively symptom-free but have periods of more acute psychosis.

Every individual is different, and every person with schizophrenia experiences the disease in a different way.

An illness that resembles bulimia nervosa is binge eating disorder. Like bulimia, the disorder is characterized by episodes of uncontrolled eating or binging. However, binge eating disorder differs from bulimia because its sufferers do not purge their bodies of excess food.

Individuals with binge eating disorder feel that they lose control of themselves when eating. They eat large quantities of food and do not stop until they are uncontrollably full. Usually, they have more difficulty losing weight and keeping it off than do people with other serious weight problems. Most people with the disorder are obese and have a history of weight fluctuations. Binge eating disorder is found in about 2 percent of the general population - - more often in women than in men. Recent research shows that binge eating disorder occurs in about 30 percent of people participating in medically supervised weight control programs. (Nole-Hoeksema, S., 2001). Majority of Nigerian indigenous nuns suffer from this disorder and the worse of it all is that they do not know that they are sick psychologically.

5.3 The Psychological Problems in Religious Life

Most Nigerian nuns suffer from Self-centeredness that manifests itself through a me-first, self-preoccupied attitude. Secondly, lack of individual accountability that results in a victim mentality and blaming others, society and the universe for their problems. Thirdly, lack of perspective taking and empathy that leads to manipulative and exploitative

behavior. Fourthly, unhappiness, suffering from depression and other mood and anxiety disorders. Fifthly, vulnerability to other mental disorders, such as obsessive-compulsive tendencies and panic attacks. Sixthly, distorted or superficial understanding of self and others perceptions, being unable to see his or her objectionable, unacceptable, disagreeable, or self-destructive behaviors or the issues that may have contributed to the personality disorder. Finally, social maladaptive, changing the rules of the game, introducing new variables, or otherwise influencing the external world to conform to their own needs. All these are the reasons for psychological problems/disorders in the religious life by which anxiety is manifested by disturbances of mood, thinking and behavior. It is debilitating and should not be taken lightly.

Besides, the likelihood of developing anxiety disorder involves a combination of life experiences, psychological traits, and genetic factors. There are several major psychological theories explaining anxiety-psychoanalytic, psycho-dynamic, behavioral and cognitive theories. Anxiety disorders are so heterogeneous that the relative roles of these factors are likely to differ. Some anxiety disorders, like panic disorder, appear to have a stronger genetic basis than others, although actual genes have not been identified. Other anxiety disorders are more rooted in stressful life events. It is not clear why more women than men suffer from anxiety disorders, although some theories have suggested the possible role of steroids. Research on women's responses to stress suggests that women experience a wider range of life events that are stressful as compared to men.

Therefore, anxiety disorders are possibly the most common and frequently occurring mental disorders. They include a group of conditions that share extreme anxiety as the principal disturbance of mood or emotional tone. Anxiety, which may be pathological counterpart of normal fear, is manifest by disturbances of mood, as well thinking, behavior and physiological activity. Included in this category are panic (with or without a history of agoraphobia), agoraphobia (with or without a history of panic disorder), generalized anxiety disorder, specific phobia, social phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorders, acute stress disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Anxiety disorders are ubiquitous across human cultures. The longitudinal course of these disorders is characterized by relatively early ages of onset, chronicity, relapsing or recurrent illness and periods of disability. Panic disorder and agoraphobia are particularly associated with suicidal tendencies.

Research shows stressors can distort one's spiritual well being. Symptoms such as self-doubt, jealousy, suspicion, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, feelings of loneliness, sense of inadequacy and sexual problems are directly linked to one's spiritual disturbances. Stressed out individuals are known to rush into self-injury, suicidal attempts and fatal accidents. In recent times, the word stress has been added to the vocabulary of modern medicine. Medicine has defined the cause of psychological problems such as stress as diseases in the following manner. "Stress diseases are caused when the combat mechanism of the body goes into action under some shock, the thyroid demanding a purposeless increase in metabolic output, the pituitary sending **ACTH** flooding to the

adrenal glands modifying blood pressure, blood sugar increasing and exhaustion following, often with a dangerous lowering of the body's normal resistance to infection"(quoted from the practitioner).

There are several reasons why nuns have psychological problems in the religious life. Most causes of psychological problems are perennially related to emotional and psychological disorders. Stressful situations, whether long-term or short-term, can set forth a series of emotional symptoms such as a feeling of personality disintegration, phobia, anxiety attacks, unfocussed attention or distractions, exaggerated emotional responses and psychological discomposure such as depression, confusion, burn out and, never forget the resultant, vehicular accidents. No wonder, under persistent stress, an individual suffers from spiritual riots within herself.

These perturbations in emotional and psychological health may cause or exacerbate debilitating disorders, which can stop life on its in track. Because studies show as much as 50 to 80 percent of all the complaints treated by physicians are psychosomatic ailments resulting from psychological stress.

“A quiet mind cureth all” (Burton, Robert, 2000, p.10).

We are in the world of explosive change, a breeding ground for uncertainty, insecurity and tremendous stress. As we know, stress is one of the psychological and physical response to the demands of daily life that exceed a person's ability to cope successfully. Stress unfortunately is an unavoidable part of modern life. Some common day-to-day

factors that may cause stress include: the life itself in the religious life, (unnatural life), overwork, lack of sleep, that caused by anxiety, illnesses, financial problems and believe it or not to a lesser degree. We can see that stress creates an excellent breeding ground for illnesses to develop among the Nigerian religious nuns as well as other individuals in general. It can place once physical and psychological well-being in jeopardy if not attended to. Researchers estimate that stress contributes to as many as 50 to 70 percent of all major illness including cardiovascular illness, high blood pressure, cancer, endocrine and metabolic related diseases, skin disorders, infections and others.(Newman, 1989; Zisook & Downs, 1998, p. 85).

Furthermore, almost all anxiety attacks and stress related mind-body illnesses are known to cause sleep disorders to Nigerian nuns such as sleep apnea, delayed sleep phase syndrome, and even oversleeping. In extreme cases stressors or causes of stress can even cause insomnia.

Again, Nigerian nuns suffer from Attention -Deficiency Disorders which is caused by chronic stress conditions. These again are products of the demands of modern life and its priorities. We understand that individual with Attention-Deficiency Disorder, predominantly inattentive type exhibit six or more symptoms of inattention and less than six symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity. They usually exhibit some of the following symptoms: inattention, distractibility, disorganization, daydreaming, lack of foresight, carelessness, forgetfulness, lack of motivation, lack of persistence, and procrastination.(DSM-1V).

More so, individuals with Attention -Deficiency Disorder, predominantly hyperactive-impulse type usually exhibit six or more symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity and less than six symptoms of inattention. They usually exhibit some of the following symptoms: hyperactivity, fidgeting behavior, restlessness, excessive talking, inappropriate running and climbing, often “on the go,” can’t wait, interrupt others, and impulsiveness. And these are what many of the Nigerian nuns are going through, without having any knowledge of it all.

Also very important to talk about is the Spiritual Disturbances and Negative Mental Trait. It is understandable that constant stress can ruin one’s spirit, slowing down the motivation to lead a meaningful life. It is certain that under stress an individual may fall into compulsive, obsessive behavior and fear. Stressed out individuals seem to be easily charmed by negative habits of procrastination, addiction to alcohol, smoking and substance abuse. Addictions (alcohol, drugs, etc.), as stress responses, depend on many factors:

- . One’s false sense of relief through it,
- . The intensity and type of stress and one’s inability to cope with these.
- . As a genetic stress response’
- . Non-availability of social support as a cushion against stress. (Chugh, S., Life Positive, 2001).

All these debilitating mental traits arise from a loss of self-confidence and inner strength as well as prolong pressure and inability to disburse with the same, lead individuals to

such situations. I personally have come to believe that most of these Nigerian nuns suffering from psychological problems/disorders are ignorant of what their lives have become them by taken in alcohol not just occasionally, but always as if taken alcohol is now a way of life for religious women. Not realizing the damage it causes in them and the environment. It intoxicates them and makes them to talk too loud and with no reservation.

Research shows stressors can distort one's spiritual well being. Symptoms such as self-doubt, jealousy, suspicion, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, feelings of loneliness, sense of inadequacy and sexual problems are directly linked to one's spiritual disturbances. Stressed out individuals are known to rush into self-injury, suicidal attempts and fatal accidents.

Being poorly equipped academically for fulfillment in religious life, a nun can encounter any number of psychological problems, example:

- This results in grumbling over such trifles as house work.
- envy in community towards fellow nuns
- obsessive ambition for further studies etc.

All the above, and more, can leave a young nun consummately immature, unable to think for herself and sometimes difficult to control.

5.4 Reasons for psychological problems in the religious life.

Estrangement from family can cause this for a Nigerian nun. Non appropriate handling of hysteria-related problems can top the list of causes of psychological disequilibrium.

Again, religious life has its own peculiar psychological problems that need to be targeted and addressed from the onset. It is an unnatural life. These problems are; lack of spiritual balance, self awareness and fulfillment. Any number of factors can lead to psychological problems among religious women in Nigeria. Among these are:

-Low self esteem

Threats can cause low self-esteem. Threats come from a perceived danger to one's self-worth or self esteem. Anxiety from this source can be caused by harassment or rejection by the nun colleagues, the possibility of one's family problems, such as parents separation or family in disaster, flunking a course in school, such as poor academic performance, or any other number of threats. In the case of Nigerian nuns, it can be caused by threatening the nun that she can be sent away if the mistake made is repeated again. Instead of helping the nun to know the right thing to do so that she does not find herself in the mess again. Secondly, some Nigerian nuns have no ambition in life at all, no enthusiasm or urge for something good or progressing in their lives. Sometimes one asks, is the religious life where every dons and harry can find a home? Let us be realistic in what we are doing. I know couple of Nigerian nuns whom their Congregations asked to go into schools, take some or certain exams and all that and get into higher education, but they objected to that. Either because they believe that they can not measure up with the academic needs/performance or all that it entails. These nuns forgot that one can achieve the highest goal in life through high determination and hard work because I

believe that what Sister A did to achieve the highest goal in life that Sister B can equally do so.

-Lack of fulfilment in religion (religious life)

Religious life itself creates anxiety because it is not a natural life. If it is not your vocation, it will be hard for you to live it happily. Lack of fulfillment in the religious life could be caused by pursuing two or more desired but incomplete goals . For example, an anxiety of living one's religious life as it should be and anxiety of pleasing the authorities in order to be recognized as an obedient nun. OR the anxiety to please or support your family economically and also to pursue a career in educational settings. All these can cause lack of fulfillment in one's religious life. According to one of the Nigerian movies I watched named, "The Pope Must Hear This," portrays the true knowledge of unfulfilled life of a Priest, named Fr. John Bosco who succumbed to parental/societal pressure to priesthood. Again, parental/family and societal pressure on the part of the nun can make a young girl to enter into religious life, not on her own accord, but that of her parents and the demands of the society. This pressure makes it possible for the nun to live unfulfilled life in the religious life. Because the religious life is not truly her vocation. Like John Bosco (the priest) who finds himself in a uncomfortable lost and living a life that leaves a hallow, living like animal, ruled by lust. And this is why the Bishop in the movie says that; "All that the Catholic holds sacred has been desecrated.

-Lack of insufficient supply of personal needs

Many indigenous congregations in Nigeria can not boast of having sufficient supply of its members personal needs. This is causing a lot of discomfort in the religious communities in Nigeria among the nuns who go about asking individual people to provide them with their needs. And we can imagine what might go along with that if it happens to be from the opposite sex. With the society in which we live, only very few opposite sex can provide for your daily personal needs without demanding for sexual intercourse. It has also come to the knowledge that some of the Nigerian religious women congregations authority have left their nuns to flirt about in order to acquire reaches for their congregation and when the worse happens these nuns are deserted or abandoned by their congregation superiors who gave them the go ahead They suffer and bear the shame only. I am not kidding, so Nigerian superiors who encourage their subjects to go on and do whatever you think others are doing in order to have enough of their personal needs or enrich the community should be ready to bear the consequence when the time comes, and not to live the victim nun to bear the shame alone.

-Absence of Christian charity and lack of mutual understanding within the community.

It will be something unheard of to hear that some of the Nigerian nuns are more or less un-Christian, by the attitudes and behavior towards their fellow nuns, and also towards other human beings. If one is not charitable enough to one's fellow nuns whom she lives with under the same roof of religious community, how can one be charitable enough to

other human beings that are not living or sharing the same life with. Besides, how can one claim that she loves God in whom she never saw. This is a big lie.

Secondly, some of the Nigerian nuns show unchristian attitude towards their fellow nuns especially during the time of sickness. Many nuns have been abandoned or forsaken at their critical point in time when they most needed the congregations financial and moral support. I would not go further because it reminds me of my own experience at the point in time when I had serious automobile accident with a colleague and friend in the order who lost her precious life and the trauma of that incident will never leave me free. Do I need to talk about some Nigerian nuns I knew personally who lost their lives, or become devastated during the time of their illness because the congregation authorities have not given the go ahead to meet the doctor's requirements to save their life. I believe that the God we serve will judge us accordingly.

Many who will read this my research work, I'm sure will be shocked to learn that the Nigerian nuns do have physical fight because of one thing or another. They abuse each other, blackmail each other, and even have character assassination of one another. Some of them when talk, is like vulgar, and these unhealthy attitude they carry to other people. What a shame? I mean, many of them need to be refined. So there is no doubt that Nigerian nuns suffer psychological problems/disorders.

-Lack of intellectual/ academic preparation (not necessarily acquisition of higher degree).

Lack of intellectual wisdom, or initiative, lack of natural intelligence, lack of prudence and lack of manner and half beaked literate have really had some bad influence on some of the Nigerian indigenous nuns And this make them to act so arrogantly, no manner of approach in whatever the are doing or whomever they are dealing with.

-Economic problems in family

A very good number of Nigerian nuns have poor economic problems in their respective families. Probably, she has many siblings who need to go to school but no source of income to take care of that, and again the parents are so poor that they cannot afford a daily good three square meal, but depend on hand to mouth to make a day go by. In any case in Africa this is the type of family that always has more children than even the rich will find it very difficult to maintain or care for. And this poor situation is really affecting the Nigerian nuns badly in the religious life. And to worsen the situation their religious congregations can not even offer them some help as they might hope for. In some cases the nun may be whom every member of the family looks upon, but when it is not even possible for her to help them, it is something disheartening and heart breaking.

-Other external interference, e.g.(Pressure from former acquaintances etc.)

Believe it or not, there are some who are out there trying to discourage some Nigerian nuns why they are in the religious life. Why not come out into the world get married and have their own family and children. Or some who continue to ask or persuade these nuns that he is still out there waiting for her to come out so that they get married outright.

And of course, a lot who will say to these nuns why can't you quit the religious life and go to school, and then get a better job to help your family and your loved ones.

It is so certain that when the negative reactions to life's situations become repetitively intense and frequent we develop symptoms of depression. Life throws up innumerable situations, which we greet with both negative and positive emotions such as excitement, frustration, fear, happiness, anger, sadness, joy etc. Depression is prevalent among all age groups, in almost all walks of life.

Persons of any age – children or adults, may develop depression symptoms. Even minor stress events can stir up depression symptoms depending on the personality type. Symptoms such as intense sadness, loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities, sleep disturbances or oversleeping, change in appetite and decreased energy level; feelings of helplessness and thoughts of suicide are sequels to stress induced depression.

5.5 How to avert/cure psychological problems.

Psychological problems such as depression or stress affects virtually everyone at some time in their life. As well as the emotional and psychological disruption it causes, these psychological related problems are becoming increasingly common. In the modern world, we all need to learn how to cope with

At present, a whole lot of holistic therapies are applied to heal acute and chronic psychological problems such as, depression, stress, anxiety, personality disorder, spiritual

disturbances, etc. Besides, prescription drugs, healing methods such as naturopathy, energy balancing, and yogic techniques are extensively and effectively utilized all over the world. Adopting a positive lifestyle helps you develop a healthy mind-body frame to avoid depression. Furthermore, if one feels that he/she is suffering from any of the above psychological problems, he is to identify the aspect of life that is causing it. Sometimes one may not be able to change or avoid them, but at other times simple lifestyle changes can make all the difference.

According to the information gotten from the “Bupa’s Health Information Team, (2003), there are several strategies that can help one deal with different psychological problems, such as;

- . learning to be more assertive
- . taking regular exercise
- . eating a healthy, balanced diet, rich in fruit and vegetables
- . Finding humor or absurdity in stressful situations
- . Organizing your time better to get as much done as possible
- . Talking to friends or family, and sharing your thoughts and fears
- . Listening to music or relaxation tapes
- . Tensing and then relaxing your muscles, starting at the toes and working up to the head and neck.

If one thinks that he/she can benefit from help, either in identifying the things that are causing your stress, or in learning techniques to help you relax, talk to a doctor about this.

There are many people who can give you professional help in these areas.

More over, there are many stress management techniques in the form of counseling, psychotherapy and reflexology and these may, if nothing else, provide a quiet, relaxed environment in which to wind down. For religious nuns, meditation can help relaxation, and practicing yoga or the Alexander technique may help to relieve muscle pains and help to control breathing in stressful situations.

It is important to know that the aim of stress management is to help you balance the various aspect of your life, that is, your work, your relationships and your leisure and to balance the physical, intellectual and emotional aspects of life. People who effectively manage stress consider life a challenge rather than a series of irritations and feel they have control over their lives, even in the face of setbacks.

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Again, Spiritual parts such as Yoga, and holistic healing methods such as Pranic healing and Reiki speak of a luminous energy body that encircles an individual's physical body. This is composed of subtle particles (life force) and intimately related to one's emotional conditions.

The efforts of mental health professionals, need to be combined with those of other health professionals to obtain the best treatment. Physicians treat any medical complications, and nutritionists advise on diet and eating regimens. The challenge of treating eating disorders is made more difficult by the metabolic changes associated with them. Just to maintain a stable weight, individuals with anorexia may actually have to consume more calories than someone of similar weight and age without an eating disorder.

Your feelings of stress or anxiety may be your mind's way of telling you to attend to your spiritual needs. The inspiration gained from spirituality is an essential part of the healing process. Mind, body, and spirit are inseparable. Making an overt connection with your spirit will provide healing for your mind and body. Prayer is a powerful healer as well. Praying for someone else is more effective than praying for yourself.

Belief in God helps put our problems in the right perspective. The ones we have no control on can be left to God to worry about. When there are problems that seem insurmountable, isn't it nice to believe that everything is good and God has a reason for subjecting you to these problems. We will then see the positive side of these problems and will come out better from this experience. We have a section on prayer and spiritual healing where this subject is covered in depth.

Similarly, healing must be understood as a social and not just as an individual event. Psychological problems, above all severe and chronic illness, often leads to the

withdrawal of the person concerned from society. These people withdraw themselves, but those around them also distance themselves from them. Thus in addition to the physical and psychological suffering there is a social isolation which usually felt to be even more burdensome. (Theilmsann, L., 1998, p. 27).

In any case, it cannot be overemphasized how important treatment is - - the sooner, the better. The longer abnormal eating behaviors persist, the more difficult it is to overcome the disorder and its effects on the body. In some cases, long-term treatment may be requested. Families and friends offering support and encouragement can play an important role in the success of the treatment program.

The complex interaction of emotional and psychological problems in eating disorders calls for a comprehensive treatment plan, involving a variety of experts and approaches. Ideally, the treatment team includes an internist, a nutritionist, an individual psychotherapist, a group and family psychotherapist, and a psychopharmacologist - - someone who is knowledgeable about psychoactive medications useful in treating these disorders.

To help those with eating disorders deal with their illness and underlying emotional issues, some form of psychotherapy is usually needed. A psychiatrist, psychologist, or other mental health professional meets with the patient individually and provides ongoing emotional support, while the patient begins to understand and cope with the illness.

Group therapy, in which people share their with others who have similar problems, has been especially effective for individuals with bulimia.

Use of individual psychotherapy, family therapy, and cognitive-behavior therapy, any form of psychotherapy that teaches patients how to change abnormal thoughts and behavior is often the most productive. Cognitive-behavior therapists focus on changing eating behaviors, usually by rewarding or modeling wanted behavior. These therapists also help patients work to change the distorted and rigid thinking patterns associated with eating disorders. Fluoxetine has also been useful in treating some patients with binge eating disorder. These antidepressants may also treat any co-occurring depression.

The first step towards tackling stress is to accept that it exists as a result of our lifestyle or attitudes. According to Dr. Hans Selye a Canadian Physiologist and a pioneer in stress research, "stress in itself should not be viewed as a negative phenomenon. Stress doesn't have to be so stressful once we learn to react in more positive ways to handle the stressful situation we see ourselves as up against". (Cf. Published article by BUPA's Health Information Team, July 2003).

There is no escape from stress however there are mechanisms to combat it. And these mechanisms are:

- Identify the stressors to be tackled.

- Identify negative coping pattern and replace it with positive coping pattern.

Example: you're stuck in traffic, well, instead of stressing try to use that time positively

by using it as reflection or thinking time, could be anything from making a list of things

to do the next day or reflection on an issue that you haven't had time to think about because you've been too busy. To reduce the negative impact of stress, do accept the fact that bad stress is inevitable and try coping positively by learning to relax and by being optimistic. Studies show that individuals that have learned to relax, are optimistic and who laugh a little tend to live longer and healthier lives. Adapting flexibility in the face of challenges will reduce stress.

-Adopt a good lifestyle

Try to be positive, kind and compassionate. Refrain from unnecessary anger and anxiety. Example: getting red in the face because the checkout line at the supermarket is too long (unnecessary anger leads to anxiety and stress), traffic light taking too long to turn green (unnecessary anger leads to anxiety and stress). Learning to calm the mind and body is extremely important in relieving stress. Learn to let go and try to cultivate a sense of humor. According to “The Inner Vibrance Team (2005), Type A personalities (hyperactive and always stressed) or controlling personalities suffer from more stress than any other group. Look at your lifestyle to determine if it's a cause for your stress. It is rightly said “a merry heart doeth good, like medicine, but a broken spirit (due to overstress) drieth the bones.”

It is also very important to have a cheerful attitude in life if you want to keep stress at bay. When you're stressed out listen to your favorite melody, music does wonders; it will soothe and relax your tense, stressful nerves and muscles. Stress releasing techniques like meditation, relaxation, yoga and aromatherapy also may help. Shrugging exercises

will relax the tensed neck and shoulder muscles. Example - breathe deeply as you do this exercise. Raise your shoulders as close as possible to your ears then push them back and down in a counter-clockwise motion repeat this five to six times and you should feel much better. Yoga is another technique of de-stressing. Yoga is inspired by the natural habits of certain animals like cats, the relaxation habits of which have been observed closely. One posture of yoga that briefly deserves attention for this topic is "savasana" or corpse pose i.e.: a posture of complete repose, complete relaxation. The effect of this posture is immediate; Lie down on your back, in a quiet place. Place the arms 8 inches away from the body, palms upturned. Keep heels 3 feet apart. Keep your eyes closed and breathe slowly and deeply, feel a sense of calm relaxation come over your whole body, concentrate on loosening all tension. You should feel relaxed after this.

Another technique to release stress is called "Pranayama" or breathing exercise. One purpose of this exercise is to get rid of the stress hormones in the blood thereby decreasing stress. 20 minutes of diaphragmatic deep breathing will get rid of stress.

De-stress yourself now before further problems like anxiety and depression develop which may be more difficult to deal with.

-Treatment

It is very difficult to successfully treat individuals diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder. Most of these individuals are ordered by the court system to seek treatment. However treatment options in our prison systems are poor to nonexistent. If individuals have used malingering techniques and have had a good attorney, chances are they will be

placed in forensic mental health facilities, having slipped through some loophole and found to be not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI), unfit to stand trial (UST), or guilty but mentally ill (GMI). In these settings patients have a better opportunity to receive appropriate treatment with individual and group therapy. I just hope that Nigerian nuns do not get into so deep of this situation now because as far as I know there will be no remedy for them at all, and they will run into being crazy. The use of prediction in paradoxical intervention can also be helpful in treating antisocial personality disorder. Prediction of failure will cause extreme anger, but can be helpful. Paradoxical interventions works with individuals with an average IQ or above.

Medication for the most part is not helpful, and only comes into play when the individual is depressed or displays severe aggression. Some medications that have been beneficial for anger are Lithium Carbonate, and Valproic acid. These medications have been helpful in the treatment of aggression. Many factors such as job stress, strained family relationships, or sometimes stress from 'mid-life transitions' plunge men into depression. Then exactly what causes depression? Researchers and medical practitioners are of the opinion that there is no one cause to the condition of depression. As depression is closely linked with one's mental disposition or inner personality, the road to this condition is complex and subtle.

Often, the physiological constitution of an individual decides the tendency towards depression. The coordinated working of brain and various neurotransmitters prompts all decisions for action and reaction. Neurotransmitters are chemicals that help different

areas of the brain to communicate with each other. If these chemicals are low then miscommunication can occur and one may show signs of depression. This type of depression may run in the family. Additional factors, possibly stresses at home, work, or school, precipitate its onset. Besides, difficulty in decision-making, lack of energy, loss of interest in normal pleasurable activities, poor sleep and appetite, irritation and frustration are some of the symptoms that arise from biological depression.

All human beings are not equipped to take on changes or difficult situations in life, naturally. Out of them, many don't adapt to those situations. The result normally are those situations, and accompanying stress overwhelm people. Since modern times, stress has been identified as the single biggest contributor to depression. The mind-boggling changes in every sphere of life-culture, profession, modes of transportation and rapid lifestyle changes put pressure on men to adjust with equal speed. Stress begins to wear them out and there is a loss of resiliency against adverse situations of life. Consequently, they begin to pull away from others and give in to depression.

It is often said that people think themselves into depression. The thinking pattern of a person helps him accept or avoid a stress situation. If one shows disposition towards anxiety, worry restlessness, anger and tension as stress responses, it can lead him to chronic emotional turbulence. We can worsen an ordinary sorrowful situation by imagining its possible intensity. We create problem situations by imagining what might go wrong, could go wrong and how terrible it would be. Even if the depression is due to biochemical imbalances the person doesn't abstain from thinking negatively about it.

Constant stressful situations make one develop a negative pattern of thinking, which gives in to depression at the slightest provocation in life.

However, counseling and psychotherapy are highly recommended because anxiety disorders are responsive to counseling and to a wide variety of psychotherapies. During the past several decades, there has been an increasing enthusiasm for focused, time-limited therapies that address ways of coping with anxiety symptoms directly, rather than exploring unconscious conflict or other personal vulnerabilities. Besides, the use of Pharmacotherapy is very necessary. The medications typically used to treat patients with anxiety disorders benzodiazepines, antidepressants and newer compounds such as Buspirone.

Furthermore, some patients with anxiety disorders may benefit both from psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy treatment, either combined or used in sequence. It is likely that such combinations are not uniformly necessary and are probably more cost-effective when reserved for patients with more complex, complicated, or severe disorders. However, panic disorders are extremely debilitating and common, yet respond well to treatment if started early enough in the course of the disease. It is not a condition to be taken lightly in view of its effect on the quality of the sufferer's life.

As Gunderson describes, borderline personality disorder (BPD) is one of the most controversial diagnoses in psychology today. Since it was first introduced in the DSM, psychologists and psychiatrists have been trying to give the somewhat amorphous

concepts behind BPD a concrete form. Kernberg's explication of what he calls Borderline Personality Organization is the most general, while Gunderson, though a psychoanalyst is considered by many to have taken the most scientific approach to defining BPD. The Diagnostic Interview for Borderlines and the DBI-Revised were developed from research done by Gunderson, Kolb, and Zanarini. Finally, there is the "official" DSM-IV definition. (Gunderson, et al., 1995, p. 211-212).

Some researchers, like Judith Herman, believe that BPD is a name given to a particular manifestation of post-traumatic stress disorder: in *Trauma and Recovery*, she theorizes that when PTSD takes a form that emphasizes heavily its elements of identity and relationship disturbance, it gets called BPD; when the somatic(body)elements are emphasized, it gets called hysteria, and when the dissociative/deformation of consciousness elements are the focus, it gets called DID/MPD. Others believe that the term "borderline personality" has been so misunderstood and misused that trying to refine it is pointless and suggest instead simply scrapping the term.(Cf. Sturmey, P., & Gaubatz, M. D., 2003, p. 256).

CHAPTER SIX

Pedagogical Analysis

This chapter will treat the educational dimension of this study which goes along to define education, explain the educational dimension of the study as well as describing the significance of education in this study, then, revising of the curriculum for religious life, and educating for psychological health and finally, educating for justice in religious life.

6.1 Educational dimension of this Study

Definition of Education:

According to a former Nigerian Minister of Education, Prof. Fafunwa, “education is a process for transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth, and for disseminating knowledge either to ensure social control or to guarantee rational direction of the society or both.” (Babs Fafunwa, 1974, p.17). Education has as one of its tasks to return man to himself, to encourage rather than stifle awareness. And so it is to educate the emotions, the senses, the so-called autonomic systems to help man become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible. (George B. Leonard, 1986, p.127). Education is a way of life. It is learning how to live, not just how to make a living. Education is building character. It is doing what is right, not what is pleasurable, or what you feel like doing.

The educational dimension of this study should involve the education and the development of self. We will now consider some of most important applications of these facts in the training of character. These applications are valid at any age but it is easier

to see their scope in the forming of the young. Besides, education should be a way of people's living and working together that provided for freedom of interaction among groups and for the widest possible sharing of experiences, interests, and values. This, in turn will provide each person with a supportive and nurturing social environment in which to grow and develop as an individual. Education should be regarded as the highest national industry which prepares people for future.

It seems that one of the major preoccupations of the educator is to lead his or her charge toward self-realization. The very word education (e-ducere) connotes a drawing forth of the latent powers, a continued advance to a goal of achievement. In character formation, that goal is the establishing of the full human person in the sense defined above. The whole modern trend in education is inspired by the findings of psychology.(Cf. Uchendu, 1993, p.2).

Therefore, educators cannot be content to teach what we think we now know. They must prepare people for the future by teaching them how to think and how to solve problems. And the best way to be prepared to face the future is with a rich knowledge of what human beings have come to know about themselves and their world. We must make learning meaningful, and that can only happen if people are not forced to study things disconnected from their lives, but given the opportunity to study what interests them.

According to Carter, "Every man must be taught his own worth. He must be treated with respect as a person. He must learn that his contribution to the world, however small, is

important. He must judge himself by himself, not by comparison with others, because his worth is an absolute thing, not relative. (Carter, 1978, p.25). Such a spirit is bound to affect the personality and to bring religious nuns to an acceptance of self which will contribute immensely to their happiness. The worthwhile independence which accompanies this self-acceptance corresponds to a natural urge.

In the process of educating the novice formators should observe that there is a problem of individual differences among the novices. These differences have a lot of negative impact on the novices if not tackled immediately. It is the ultimate duty of the formator to understand that individuals differ so greatly in their physical, emotional, intellectual, family background, and social development that those of the same chronological age meeting in the same class show widely differing amounts of these capacities. Thus, there must be a provision for individual differences, so that each person can burgeon out all that is within her, this should be of the first importance.

Again, the problem of personality development. I really agree with the modern educational psychology which is not satisfied unless there is total, well-balanced individual development during the formation period. Knowledge, skills, abilities, and understandings must be supplemented by corresponding development in emotional, social, and moral traits in a well-balanced personality.(Uchendu, 1993,p.3).

This means that there must be no crippling emotional maladjustments symptomatic of which are withdrawals, hostility, exaggerated daydreams, overcompensation, and other

means of escaping from reality. The personality must be integrated, organized, and unified. Formators should fully know that personality maladjustments refers to emotional deviations which unfit individual for participating happily with others in any social undertaking, or of living at ease with himself or in a community. This is exactly what most of the Nigerian nuns are suffering with their members here in U.S., Nigeria, and other parts of the world where they reside. It is of importance that symptoms of un-socialness, suspicion, cruelty, and melancholia be promptly detected and, if possible, corrected. Religious formators should work on the balance in all phases of personality, so that an individual nun can participate happily in social affairs and fulfill her personal obligations as nun in living fully a religious community life.

As for educating religious nuns without the aid of large and well-staffed novitiates, one might suggest an in-service type of entry into community. When a woman desires to engage in community with a group of nuns, she could live with them, work with them, worship, eat, and recreate with them. If after a period of a year or two, she desires to engage herself permanently with those nuns and if they desire to admit her, she could exchange with them a promise to community. Besides availing herself of college courses and sharing religion courses with the other sisters, the novice will have as a chief source of education her sisters. Just as there is subsidiary or shared obedience, so there is shared formation not only insofar as each sister helps the new member, but also insofar as each sister continues her own formation throughout her life. Every nun should be continually taught the fundamental loving acceptance of their femininity; their feminine body and soul. They are not just a self; they are women. (Tate, J.,1966, p.42).

Furthermore, it is important to know that formation, far from being a process used mainly by religious formators to reproduce among candidates (novices) to be nuns' beliefs and lifestyle considered appropriate, is a central and inevitable process in all of human life. So, understanding how "formative" all aspects of social and cultural life are will lay a groundwork for understanding the importance and even urgency of formation within religious congregations in Nigeria. Actually, as we shall see, formation assumes its inevitable importance in religious congregations precisely in the face of the powerful formative structures found in wider social and cultural life in Nigeria. However, overlooking the relationship between formation as a social and cultural fact of life and religious formation could leave the nuns open to misconstruing religious formation as a kind of structure of manipulative control, which brings about compliance without full awareness or consent. Although, according to Tertullian who once wrote that, "distortions are possible in religious formation and they need examination and critique, categorical dismissals of religious formation's value and importance will not stand up under critical scrutiny. (Cf. Warren, 1976, p. 21).

Religious congregational authorities/superiors in Nigeria should understand the importance of the processes by which the directors help the new members participate in their understanding and ways of the religious life. Religious formation today is an issue of special significance among religious congregation in Nigeria and other areas of the world where electronic communications technology has been made widely available at the local level. My reasons for making this claim are as follows. Any particular

religious congregation is itself a culture, that is a “signifying system through which a religious and a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored.” In any case, the religious congregations have to maintain their own meanings in the face of the wider world culture.

Besides, the educational dimension of this study should also teach the fact that it was God’s design to create man after Himself, so that He would have someone to commune with, someone to love Him of their own free will...(Gen. 2:24). It was God’s purpose for humans to have a life-long commitment with each other, man and woman together for life, and this eternal union would be blessed by enjoying a pleasure that was meant to be shared between only themselves and no one else, the enjoyment of sex.

More emphasis should be stressed on this, that having intercourse with someone should be always avoided unless we are ready to parent the child. Did St. Paul not tell us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit?

Of course, this fact is simply prove: Birth cannot occur without pregnancy, and pregnancy cannot occur without conception, thus birth cannot occur without conception, since it is originally conception that begins the process of bringing life into the world, should not a conceived child, if only one second old should be recognized as a human being? After all, we all did start out there. Would you really want to find yourself in such a mess? (Berger, P., 1969, pp.16-17). Therefore, it is a high time that Nigerian nuns should respect their bodies and abide with what St. Paul says in one his Epistles.

That is why conscience has to be built in the nuns especially during the period of formation. There is need to educate the nuns what it means to human beings, then Christians and then religious nuns. We cannot go on desecrating our bodies, God's temple as St. Paul calls it.

Again, there are also medical reasons for God commanding no sex outside of marriage. People who have intercourse with more than one individual increase their risks, not only of contracting an STD, but also of cancer. Therefore, Nigerian nuns should continuously be taught the importance of sex education. I believe sex education is a very basic thing that shouldn't have to be ignored without teaching every category of human beings, whether married or unmarried as well as nuns. I mean teaching abstinence courses on sex education. Such courses should also cover lust, and the prevention of it as to not fall into such actions.

Not just teenagers, but people in general need to be taught the roots of love, and the meaning of sex. In this lustful, gender-confused world, a light needs to shine among the darkness, that same light that the darkness "comprehended...not." (John 1:5). What Jesus said should as be said to Nigerian nuns, "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16). Please let the life of Nigerian nuns shine today.

Certainly, so important to know that in today's culture, not just in developed countries, but everywhere in the world, many have become confused on the subject of love. The definition of the word "love" has changed and many even have their own personal opinion on what love truly is. So, the question is, "what is love?" One must have a biblical perspective in understanding of what love is. Why is a biblical perspective necessary to define love? Well, a biblical perspective is necessary to discern everything, without a paradigm to form the foundation of a belief system, no one can discern from truth lies, Jesus is our vine of truth, and apart from Him we can do nothing. Understanding why Nigerian nuns need a solid biblical belief system should be a foundational teaching and what a big foundation it is. On this foundation, the religious entire spiritual house is built. Every part of our theology rests on it.

So, looking at love with a biblical perspective, using a attentive and discerning mind, we can bypass all of the secular definitions and terminology dealing with love and cut directly to what the bible says love is. Under the wonderful influence of our Lord, the Apostle John wrote a simple, three word definition of love. 1 John 4:8 says, "God is love." People absolutely adore this small part of the verse and use it constantly. Yes, it is true that God is love, this has been taken out of the context, rather it's common use has caused it to lose it's power. And this why I that the Nigerian congregational authorities and formation directresses should themselves understand fully well what the church says about love so that they will impart well on their subjects. Because with the on-look of things and the situation, I doubt that some of the Nigerian congregations understand the life they are in for.

Secondly, the congregation formation directors should always bear in mind that best learning should be number one goal directed. The goal is most highly motivating when it is ego-involved., when the learner finds that his desires are fulfilled in the goal. Such goal-directed learning if clearly envisioned tends to give meaning to the details which must be learned if the goal is achieved. These detail-barriers are thus removed because they are integrated into the whole. Thus the goal of writing good articles for the school paper makes spelling, sentence structure, and paragraph unity become meaningful experiences.

To educate meaningfully, we have to abide by what Eisner,(2002),says that “to obtain desirable goal-directed learning is one of the most difficult of all problems in teaching.” It involves an understanding of the learner’s whole personality. To aid the teacher in knowing more about pupils, good schools keep records which accumulate from year to year. This cumulative record card contains in most cases a rich mine of pertinent information concerning each child. It will always contain personal data relating to the conditions of the home, whether his parents are living, sometimes of their socioeconomic conditions, and how the child gets along there. Many records will have a set down the student’s vocational plans, the college to be attended, if any, his out-of-school employment, etc. On the pedagogical side it may have records of his significant experiences, test of intelligence and reading, some samples of his creative work, and, of course, records of his schoolwork. On the personality side there may be anecdotal records describing objectively episodes when he acted as a total individual. There may

even be ratings of his personality traits and whatever disciplinary measures have been taken. Some cumulative records have more items, some fewer. In addition to these available records, if a teacher obtains inventories of children's interests and themes written on what he would like to do, makes a visit to his home, and listens in class to his discussions and questions, he is more nearly ready to consider with the child desirable projects to be undertaken. (Eisner, E., 2002, p. 12).

Again, they have to understand that they will encounter problem of personality development. Modern educational psychology is not satisfied unless there is total, well-balanced individual development during the school period. Knowledge, skills, abilities, and understanding must be supplemented by corresponding development in emotional, social, and moral traits in a well-balanced personality. This means that there must be no crippling emotional maladjustments symptomatic of which are withdrawals, hostility, exaggerated daydreams, overcompensation, and other means of escaping from reality. The personality must be integrated; organized, and unified. For the most part personality maladjustments refer to emotional deviations which unfit a student for participating happily with others in any social undertaking, or of living at ease with himself. It is of first importance that symptoms of unsocialness, suspicion, cruelty, and melancholia be promptly detected and, if possible, corrected. Balance in all phases of personality, so that an individual can participate happily in social affairs and fulfill his personal obligations at home, at school, and subsequently in his occupation, must somehow be achieved. The prospect of an adolescent, overwhelmed with feelings of inferiority accompanied by its symptoms of overresponse to criticism or flattery, of derogating others, of

overcompensating, gives us pause. Such a one may be successful in algebra and English but his personality may become so warped that he cannot participate pleasantly in ordinary affairs, nor feel satisfied with himself.

6.2 The Significance of Education in this Study

The significance of personality adjustment through the thwarting and fulfilling of motives should be one of the essential goal of the formators of the candidates to be nuns. The educative process is without form and void unless its direction is influenced by objectives and goals. The ultimate goals of education stem from a consideration of what is desired in a well- educated person. These goals should differ from culture to culture. We believed that education should teach Nigerian nuns to live happily and effectively within their religious communities and in the society at large. In order that this over-all goal be most effective as a guide it must be broken down into smaller objects whose attainments may be realized in clearly defined patterns.

There is always a problem of motivation, but we do understand that a novice (nun to be) who is well motivated should be ready and willing to learn and vice versa. Her aims and the formators aims should agree. If she understands the significance of what she is embarking upon her interest is captured and learning proceeds more easily. Besides, God wants us to lead a happy, successful, exciting life. But most do not, because they refuse to do what God asks in order to receive such blessings. Begin now by submitting to God in all humility. Then seek His Kingdom with all of your might. Beyond that, if you make God the center of your life in every goal you have, prepare for a life of

happiness and abundant blessings. God's laws work. See for yourself. Put it to the test.

If you do, what an education life will be.

Furthermore, I do agree with Charles Peirce, a U.S. philosopher, who defines belief as the orientation of the behavior of those who hold it:

Believe consists mainly in being deliberately prepared to adopt the formula believed in as the guide to action; the essence of belief is the establishment of a habit; and different beliefs are distinguished by the different modes of actions to which they give rise (Cited in Thomas McCarthy, 1978, p.63).

The lived commitment is the one that is actually formative. Practice defines doctrine, false practice inevitably engenders false doctrine and false theory, and, I would add that a false life among the Nigerian religious nuns engenders false religious commitment.

According to Dorothee Soelle, "A good model of how a religious congregations and their members can deal with the rival imaginations of the human can be found in the catechumenal process of the early church and its emphasis on the way one lived one's life. Here I do not intend to lay out the catechumenal process, but rather to emphasize how the restructuring of lived commitments was central to the whole ethos of the catechumenate. (Cf. Tate, J., 1969, p.121).

Nigerian nuns should be taught how to recognize and trust the beauty in themselves, awakened by the call of beauty from others. Few things in life have the compelling power of beauty. Beauty beckons us once we have recognized it. It points beyond itself.

We know it is a sacrament of God because that is what the beautiful humanity of Jesus is. Beauty awakens us to our mystery and transforms us more deeply into it. It tells us our name and names our horizons. For beauty we are born. By beauty we are nourished. Without it we decay. Our seeds of beauty may sleep through many a winter, but they never die. Ronald Rolheiser reminds us that taking care of those in need is also the religious work.

Furthermore, education of the sisters should be to transform them to be themselves with full consciousness, to encourage rather than stifle awareness, to educate the emotions, the senses, the so-called automatic systems to help them become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible. Everybody expects that the future should be better than the past and the present and that it should lead to good life.

To achieve these, all the Nigerian women religious congregations need to take a close look at themselves, to review their programs of formation and to reorganize their priorities. They should stress both general education and moral aspects of development, that will equip the nuns with conscience. The Church expects the religious Congregations to be the makers, shapers and creators of tomorrow's world, and not merely its product, instruments and agents. (George B. L., 1968, p. 127).

6.3 Revising the Curriculum for Religious Life

Often times, Nigerian congregations of women religious take formations of its candidates (novices) for granted. No curriculum is set up for the formation. Not a capable novice

director is pointed for the novices. No proper moral education or philosophical and theological education nor academic education or exposure is given to the novices. All in the novitiate was prayer and meditation four or five times or as many as possible daily.

Definition: Curriculum as Eisner (2002), defines it could be conceived of as a series of planned events that are intended to have educational consequences for one or more students. Soltis went on to explain that curriculum is planned; someone must do something that has some aim, some purpose, some goal or objectives, even though it might be highly diffuse or general. Also the intention must be educational in character. Finally, this concept deals with the term consequences. In other words, educational events or activities do much more than what is intended; influence people in a wide variety of ways. (Eisner, 2002, p.31

As Soltis (1997), puts it, “The curriculum should be conceived, therefore, in terms of a succession of experiences and enterprises having a maximum of life-likeness for the learner. The materials of instruction should be selected and organized with a view to giving the learner that development most helpful in meeting and controlling life situations. According to Harold Rugg, the method by which the learner works out these experiences, enterprises, and exercises, should be such as calls for maximal self-direction, assumption of responsibility, of exercise of choice in terms of life values” (, Cf. Walker & Soltis, 1997, p.20).

For if we believe that education is a continuing revelation, unfolding in time many things that have not been known before, and if we believe that learning has its own rhythms and cycles and repetitions, and if we believe that forms and contexts themselves educate, and again if we believe that essentially, religious life is mysterious and sacred and to be faced with fundamental awe, then other forms for revising curriculum are needed.

Besides, our present world is a changing world. Never before has change been so persistent or so permeating a factor. Moreover, there is every promise that, rapid as change has been, it will be even more rapid in the future. Our Nigerian nuns face, then, an unknown future. Once education could merely repeat the past. That time has gone. Education must know that we face an unknown and shifting civilization and our curriculum must reflect on this

The proper avenue for approaching religious formation is by the route of understanding how formative social and cultural systems are for all persons. New materials concerning the roles of the formator and the formation in personality development should be added to the decision about the methods to be used. The selection and arrangement of materials to be used as well as the methods utilized should directly be influenced by the following conditions:

1. The candidates, nuns to be should be motivated by being aided in the selection of their own goals.
2. When the meaning and understanding develop from what is learned, there should be a result that is to be facilitated by making available a rich supply of

published materials, such as; visual aids, opportunities for experimentation, and trips for observation

3. When the procedures and materials tend to develop in the with means of candidates' independence in thought and that should provide them attacking and settling new problems they may encounter.

4. When they develop the ability to transfer such meanings and such understandings into real life about oneself and act with more effectiveness because the individuals understands the reasons for her actions. (Jordan, 1986, pp.253-254)

The proper avenue for approaching religious formation is by the route of understanding how formative social and cultural systems are for all persons. We know that the problem of motivation is indeed a broad one. Therefore, it is related to the total personality development of an individual; her physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. While harking back to her past experiences it also derives substance from her present activities and interests, and even looks toward the future.

They need to have a team of formators/directors and professors to have various classes or courses in all fields of life and not just one formator who even may not know her left from her right how much more knowing how to direct and impart knowledge on others. However, if the religious formators can make use of the derives, motives, interests, and understandings of an individual novice and arrange situations which can carry on or fulfill them, they shall gain in motivations. It should also be clear that these motives, derives, and interests must be channeled into skills, understandings, and attitudes characteristic of a religious person. The outcome of such thinking on the part of the religious authorities and the congregation's formators in Nigeria would be abundantly rewarding, for it has been demonstrated by Bolshevistic Orientation of Theory and

practice; that goal- directed learning is more effective than is learning with no direction, and that learning with understanding is quicker and more significant than learning by rote. (Cf. Psychological Abstracts, Vol. 304, No. 90, March, 1998).

More so, in recent years it has become apparent that an appreciation and understanding of the socio-economic background of the pupils or students results in a better motivation and consequently more effective learning.

The educative process may for the purposes of study be divided into three parts: (a) definition of aims and objectives, (b) learning, and (c) appraisal, testing, and evaluation. These three parts of the educative process are inextricably connected with each other and unified in the individual. In the third part, measurement is necessary to know to what extent the goals have been reached, the objectives achieved. Suppose the tests show that the objectives are measured by the test and have been reached. The teacher, then, can be certain that the objectives decided upon are achievable and that the procedures used for collecting and arranging materials have been satisfactory. If, however, the objectives have not been achieved, both procedures and objectives and inadequate procedures become hardened into custom.

Besides, educational planning is the application of a rational systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective in responding to the needs and goals of its students and the society. It deals with the future

but draws enlightenment from the past. (Philips H. Combs, 1970, p.15). So educational planning is related to both the past, the present and the future.

As Blang puts it, “educational planning should be necessarily involves making conscious decisions now that have further consequence for actions that still have to be taken in the future”. Through planning, a better aggregate result is achieved within the limits of available resources. It is a *conditio sine qua non* for a progressive meaningful education in any country, as its major task is to co-ordinate different factors that inter-play in education. Philips also in describing this in his book maintains that; “one of the central tasks of educational planning is to determine how best to keep these intricate internal and external relationships of the educational system in reasonable balance under dynamically changing circumstances, and to bend them constantly in the required direction.” (Combs, 1970, p. 15)

Furthermore, if Nigerian nuns are to have an integrative or holistic formation in an African context, the following African values should be introduced into the curricula of the religious formation of the nuns.

-The sense of the sacred

For the African, the sacred is not only associated with power, but it is also affiliated with the highest values in human life such as: honesty, justice, gentleness, patience, endurance, perseverance, sincerity in one’s word, etc. A sacred person is expected to mirror these values. The emphasis on the African sense of the sacred should have far-

reaching effects in the formation of the Nigerian religious nuns. It will create in them an attitude of respect for the things of God and anything associated with God like the liturgy, devotions, studies, etc. It will also foster in them a great appreciation for the value of human person, the most sacred of all creatures. This will explain why crimes like murder, abortion, calumny, disturbance of harmony, etc. are taboo not just only against God, but against humanity. Stimulating the sense of sacred in the religious formation of Nigerian religious nuns will help Nigerian nuns to respect the sacredness of every being, and also their commitment to the vowed life they have chosen.

-Corporate existence

Nigerian nuns need to be taught the need for sense of community living and values. That they are to take into account the general aspirations, values and customs of the community to which they belong before making a personal decision. These are transcendence or the sacred in its totality. Perhaps, it is in this sense that this affirmation of John V. Taylor becomes meaningful:

...This is the context in which an African learns to say, I am because I participate. To him the individual is always an abstraction; man is a family (The Primal Vision Christian Presence Amid African Religion, London: SCM Press Ltd., 1963, p. 85).

6.4 Educating for Psychological Health

In fact, there are a lot of things like good health that curriculum theorists have wished for people, such things as a just society; a harmonious, progressive, democratic nation; the abilities to think critically, act morally, and live responsibly.

Educating for psychological health is nothing but how people should be cared for, respond to, and manage their life together. It is about holding in trust the well-being of the congregation. The health of religious congregation should involve the stewardship of the congregation as a unit in itself. In the introduction to Healthy People 2000, Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, declared, “Personal responsibility, which is to say responsible and enlightened behavior by each and every individual, truly is the key to good health.” (Steinke, 1996, p.v).

Therefore, health is to be promoted by personal activity. Health should come from the measures that each person in the religious community can affect. It is the congregation that promotes individuals health through responsible and enlightened behavior. And on this note, I should say that the people who are most in position to enhance the health of Nigerian indigenous women religious congregation are precisely those who have been empowered to be responsible, namely the leaders. They are the chief stewards; they are the people who are in position to be accountable for both the psychological health and welfare of the congregation. They are responsible to set a tone, invite collaboration, make decisions, map a direction, establish boundaries, encourage self-expression, restrain what threatens the integrity of the whole, and keep the congregation’s direction aligned with its purposes.

To address question about the psychological health of women religious congregation, we need to have in mind and educate the members some picture of what health means. Health is wholeness. Health means all the parts are working together to maintain balance. Health means all the parts are interacting to function as a whole. Health is a continuous process, the ongoing interplay of multiple forces and conditions. And so if this proves to be true there is no need to worry about having psychological problems.

Paul J. Philibert defines health as the abundance of life and so involves a variety of aspects. Health is unimpaired physical integrity- the absence of wounds, fevers, weakness, pain or other type of distress. It implies strength and energy in the bodily organs, limbs and senses of a person and the experience of well-being and joy in living. To the degree that well-being is diminished or damaged, some aspect of illness is involved. (Cf. Chauvet, L. And Tomka, M., 1998, p. 1).

Fundamental to a healthy knowledge, acceptance, and love of one's self is a right knowledge of what person is. One's concept regarding personhood determines one's stance towards self, indeed towards that thing nebulously called life. If a person holds, as poet Robinson Jeffers held, that man is "a moment's accident," "heresy" evolved from some primordial slim, such a person's stance in the face of life will be an apologetic slump. (Cf. Tate, Judith, 1966, pp. 39-40).

One quality of a fully alive person is peace of soul. Disease can damage the physical stability of life, thus ruining its quality and diminishing the integrity of health. Health is also modified by a person's experience of purpose and of community of purpose. One's mission in life is sustained and interpreted in terms of a network of others- family, colleagues, friends and community, who receive the contribution of one's work and generosity.

6.5 Educating for Justice in Religious Life

What is justice? Socrates argued that justice requires balance and harmony among different groups, with fair treatment of each person according to his/her nature. (Cf. Decker F, walker & Jonas F. Soltis, 1997, p.14). He went on to argue that individuals are, in a way, like society. Individuals thrive when their different parts function in a balanced and harmonious way. Nigerian religious Congregations need to emphasize the sense of community living and values to cut across ethnic and social boundaries. This has to be given a christological interpretation of the concept of neighbor as found in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk, 10:29-37).

The religious Congregation should be a community house where individually sisterly spirit is nurtured and sustained. However, this sense of community cannot be fostered without a deep sense of justice. It is with great importance to say that justice is at the hub of the human interactions in Nigeria not only in the society, but within the religious community. For Africans, justice is more than the Aristotelian idea of giving each one

his/her due. For instance, the Igbos in Nigeria, look at justice as “Ikwuba aka oto” (literally meaning to keep the hand straight) in society. The straight hand is a metaphoric way of expressing, “Say the truth without fear or favor. Give to everyone what he/she is supposed to have; maintain fair relationships with your neighbor, never tilt the balance in ontological relationships and so on”. (Cf. Onwubiko, 1991, p. 14).

Nigerian religious authorities/superiors should use justice to prove their sincerity in discharging their duties. Then, their subjects will respect them according to their truthfulness and sincerity. That is when they become real ambassadors of Christ for the society. A sense of justice has to be instilled in the religious Congregations among the authorities and the subjects throughout Nigerian indigenous Congregations.

Traditional African culture attached great value to sincerity in one’s words and pledge. It was an allied virtue to justice. Indeed, Nigerian religious Congregations should endeavor cherish someone who will always be truthful and who will always stand by her word no matter the odds. Such an individual should be entrusted with community responsibility and leadership. So therefore, religious authorities need to encourage their subjects to express their views sincerely without fear of expulsion. This can be done by challenging them to be true to themselves. Authorities should bear in mind that an atmosphere of insecurity and fear created through threats will certainly suffocate sincerity among their subjects. Therefore, Nigerian nuns have to begin now to live examples of this virtue to counteract the rampant cult of hypocrisy, cheating, and immoral life that have taking root in them throughout the society and beyond.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

In this chapter, there are five sub-headings to treat with. First, the Summary of the study that will describe the entire research work from chapters one to six. Second, the main findings of this study, the proposals and Recommendations. The looking Ahead and finally the conclusion.

7.1 Summary of the Study

Chapter one explored the socio-cultural background of the study, with the theme of the study which describes the topic of the research. This chapter describes the significance of the study, and how Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations will be healthy religious Congregations if the proposed solution to the psychological problems are taken. This would be possible by recruiting a limited number of candidates at specific periods in time in order to be able to train, maintain and educate them morally, psychologically, socially, culturally, economically, academically and above all to be able to meet their daily individual needs, so that these nuns will be psychologically healthy and joyful serving in a healthy religious Congregations both in Nigeria and other parts of the world. This would help them to learn authentic values in an illustrative and enjoyable way for their personal betterment and that of the society. This chapter also treated the purpose of the study, which examined the psychological and socio-cultural problems that lead the Nigerian nuns to have negative attitudes and behaviors towards their fellow nuns, as well as towards many individuals in the places where they work or minister. This is why there are few healthy Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations of

religious nuns. The chapter as well pointed out the root causes of the psychological problems, among the Nigerian nuns, as well as finding the solutions to them before the situation gets out of hand. Because some of these nuns do not even realize that they are suffering from psychological disorder, and that makes the problems worse. It is obvious that when one does not know or realize that he/she is sick, there is danger, but when one realizes that he/she is sick the sickness is half cured. The chapter also described the socio-cultural context of the study. This involves the duty of parents/family, elders, and the entire society to teach the young /youth the dos and don'ts of the society. This education which the young receive, is one that stresses on self-discipline, honesty, and fair-play. For this self-discipline, it is necessary for one to live in the society. It went on to explore the economic and political contexts that describe the instability of these factors in Nigerian, and the resultant consequences. There is also the psychological context which described how the unhealthy situation in Nigerian indigenous religious Congregations has caused a lot of nuns psychological problems and how this situation is getting out of hand. There was some outline remedies which need to be taken before the situation goes from bad to worse. Finally, the African religion as context was emphasized with respect for the sacred, living by the rules and norms of the land and culture.

In chapter two, I described the historical survey of religious Women Vocation in Nigeria which includes/touches the advent of missionary activity in Nigeria. There was a broad description of the missionary work in Nigeria. As we know, there was nothing like Christianity and white man's education in Nigeria before the arrival of the missionaries.

The people of Nigeria has their own traditional, native way of teaching traditional religion and educating their young, morally, spiritually, socially, and culturally. The chapter goes on to examine the missionary Congregations and their purpose, which describes how the missionary's primary objective was to evangelize the people through any possible method as well as the history of women vocation. This goes along to describe how vocations began after the invitation of Father Shanahan, later Bishop Shanahan of Onitsha Ecclesiastical province, to the Holy Rosary Sisters from Ireland. There is also consideration of the indigenous women Congregations that, describes some of the Nigerian indigenous women Congregations, the year in which they were founded, and some of their apostolate. It went on to describe the present state of women religious vocations in Nigeria which treats extensively the so-called vocation boom of both priests and religious men and women in Nigeria. Every parent and family want their child or children to become priest or nuns, for this gives them joy and places their moral and dignity high in the society. And they are proud of that.

Chapter three treated the theology of religious women vocation which proceeds by describing, and then defining and explaining the meaning of theology of women religious vocation. The chapter also presents some of the Church documents on the meaning and purpose of religious women vocation, and how the Catholic Church supports its existence and its stability in the Church. There follows some women religious congregations documents/writings which describes authentic religious women vocation and how these congregations have their particular constitutions that contain the rules and norms of each Congregation. The chapter describes other theological opinions

about women religious vocation as well as the African indigenous understanding of religious vocation.

Chapter four I discussed the socio-cultural problems associated with religious women in Nigeria, and the economic reasons of Nigerian indigenous religious women. There is a brief description on the economic situation in Nigerian society. For instance, some family economic situation where poverty may drive some many young girls into the religious life where life could be better. This chapter described family prestige (reasons) as a factor in religious vocations. That is, how and why parents want their child or children to become priests and nuns. It made mention of how a good number of parents insinuate the idea or motivate their children to become priests or nuns just to receive the honor and respect in the society and the Church for being the parents of the nun or priest. And one can imagine what happens when their son or daughter does not persevere in the religious life or priesthood. It described the educational motives behind the religious vocation boom in Nigeria especially in the Eastern part of the country. Finally, the chapter described what Nigerian indigenous religious women experience in their various religious communities nowadays. It went on to explain the situation and life of these nuns among themselves in their local communities and the Congregations at large. Because many people especially the young girls do admire the Nigerian nuns in their religious habits or attire and easily attracted to join them, but there is an adage that says, "all that glitters is not gold".

In chapter five which is the core of this whole research, goes at length to explain and describe in details all the points, topics and terms used in this chapter. The chapter treated the psychological problems/disorders experienced by the Nigerian nuns. It describes the meaning of psychological problem/disorder, such as stress, depression, schizophrenia, anxiety etc. In details it described the types or categories of psychological problems/disorder Nigerian nuns experience in the religious life. As we all know, the religious life itself is an unnatural life which is enough to create psychological problems in an individual. There are also other factors which could be the cause of psychological problems, e.g., low self-esteem, etc, which were also explained. This goes on to explain the reasons for psychological problems/ disorder. Everybody is different, so, what may be a problem for one may not be for another. This is why we say that every human being is unique, and religious Congregations differ. Furthermore, the chapter details the reasons for psychological problems in the religious life. For instance, some nuns develop psychological problems due to personal needs such as insufficient provision of personal needs, family needs and problems, lack of sufficient funds and materials to support family, lack of education, low self-esteem probably due to the inability to undertake academic work, and a denial of opportunity for further studies, denial to make religious final vows (commitment), and so on. This chapter describes how to prevent these psychological problems/disorders. It also described many ways of averting psychological problems so that nuns will know how to handle their problems, or better, to avoid getting into them. The chapter as well explored extensively the ways and means to foster positive attitudes in the lives of nuns and in the society as a whole.

Chapter six, describes what is meant by pedagogical analysis and also explained the educational dimension of the study by giving the definition and meaning of education. For according to a former Nigerian Minister of Education, Prof. Fafunwa, “education is a process for transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth, and for disseminating knowledge either to ensure social control or to guarantee rational direction of the society or both.” (Babs Fafunwa, 1974, p.17). Education has as one of its tasks to return man to himself, to encourage rather than stifle awareness. And so it is to educate the emotions, the senses, the so-called autonomic systems to help man become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible. (George B. Leonard, 1986, p.127). The chapter gave the significance of education and proceeded to describe how education not only emphasizes social responsibility, but also spiritual and moral values. Education will help Nigerian nuns to know how to handle their various emotions and crises in their religious vocation because a healthy nun finds joy in her religious vocation and finds joy in her apostolate. This chapter explains the need for revising the curriculum for religious life. It went ahead to explain the great need for competent and highly educated superiors to head Nigerian indigenous Congregations, as well as educated and qualified formators/directors for the formation of the (candidates) nuns to be. Because these congregations authorities should know the importance and value of education and be eager, willing and ready to impart it on those under their care. Furthermore, the chapter explained why there is need for a limited number of admissions at every point in time, for this will help to reduce the tension and psychological problems/disorders Nigerian nuns suffer. This ensure will that there is enough resource to maintain and care for their needs. It also explained in some detail what it means to educate for psychological

health, that is, giving due priority to health and explaining how important it is to be healthy and to live to in a healthy religious Congregation. Finally, this chapter described what it means to educate for justice in religious life, because there is great need to be just in whatever we are doing. Emphasis was laid on the provision of each sister's needs. Therefore, Nigerian nuns should be treated without any partiality or favoritism because we all are brides of Christ, equal in the eyes of God our maker.

7.2 Main Findings

The religious congregations in Nigeria, no less than individuals, are subject to the same principle. If a problem or conflict is allowed to fester and swell, it becomes even more embedded and resistant to management. Generally, religious congregations in Nigeria refuse to act on early warning signals. Some are fearful of emotional outbreaks, financial troubles, and loss of members. They remain "numb to signals" that something is amiss. Waiting too long only gives the psychological problems process more time to become entrenched. However, individual differences are common. People are biochemically unique. People's response to drugs, food, spiritual and other needs vary. Universal applicability of any one form of treatment to prevent or stop psychological problems in the religious life is not possible. One person's medication can be another's poison. But at the same time Nigerian religious congregations should however try as much as possible to solve these psychological problems before they get of control.

It has often been stated that women are more prone to depression than men. But Dr. R.K. Singh, professor and head of the department of psychiatry in Lady Hardinge Medical

College New Delhi, India, feels that this might be a wrong assumption. "Men are conditioned to deny their feelings whereas a woman feeling slightly upset is more likely to say that she is depressed. A man may express the same feeling either through anger or alcoholism. This doesn't mean that men feel any less depressed than women," he argues. (Cf. American Psychiatric Association).

This research work has taught me to understand that people think themselves into depression. And that the thinking pattern of a person helps him accept or avoid a stress situation. If one shows disposition towards anxiety, worry, restlessness, anger and tension as stress responses, it can lead him to chronic emotional turbulence. One can worsen an ordinary sorrowful situation by imagining its possible intensity. One creates a problem situation by imagining what might go wrong, could go wrong, and how terrible it would be. Even if the depression is due to biochemical imbalances, the person doesn't abstain from thinking negatively about it. Constant stressful situations make one develop a negative pattern of thinking, which gives in to depression at the slightest provocation in life.

-Living unfulfilled Life

Most Nigerian nuns who entered the religious life whole heartedly to serve God and mankind, think that the religious life should be better than marriage life, but now find a different meaning than what their initial idea or meaning was. In other words, since the congregation have no better or laid down plan for its members, each of them has to fend for herself in one way or the other, whether appropriate or not. As it is written in the Bible, "to your tents oh Israel". And what a shame!.

I have come to believe that Nigerian (African) mentality is the same everywhere, no matter what one becomes. For instance, my interactions with two women whom I know so well, because their situation was given me much concern, but for them it was a normal life. Each of these women has about seven to nine children and has nothing reasonably doing to earn a source of income for the family, neither was their husbands doing any reasonable thing themselves. I was highly worried because these children need better feeding, education, good health and descent clothing, and so on. But the people concerned do not seemed to worry at all. I said to the first woman, with all these children you have, how are you going to train all of them? Her answer to me was that God will see to that. I did not seem to have understand her well , and I questioned her again, saying, how much do you think you have in your bank account that will be able to educate all these children? She asked me in return, what is bank account? By this, I come to understand that the woman is so naive about what life is all about, and has no absolute future plan for her children. Then, to the second woman, I said to her, why can 't you have family planing, and stop bearing more children so that you will be able to maintain them all. Her reply to me was that she has to finish bearing all that God puts in her stomach. This interactions really gave a full conviction that this is how poverty goes on and on in Africa because very poor parents never plan their lives well, and they never have fewer number of children that they will be able to properly cared for, and poverty goes from one generation to another until thy kingdom come. So this is applicable to the Nigerian indigenous religious women congregations who have no future plans for the betterment of its members, only taken in and counting the numbers.

But it is so unfortunate that these congregations never learn from lives economic situations in the country, and not even from the scandals caused by its very members.

Secondly, some Nigerian nuns entered religious life due to some family and societal pressure, and they are never happy with the life, no matter what, and this unhappiness creates unhealthy religious life in their religious communities. The most unfortunate thing is that, they would like to quit, but when they remembered what they were told by their parents or families, they would not be accepted or welcomed back in the families, they would rather stay in the religious life, but very unhappy. This is Nigerian mentality about religious life or priesthood. “Make sure you make it, do not disgrace us by coming back home.”

Another aspect of main findings is that most Nigerian nuns with obesity share certain personality traits. For example, low self-esteem, and feelings of helplessness. I have come to find out or believe that most Nigerian indigenous nuns have formed the habit of eating behaviors, or obesity, so to develop a way of handling stress and anxiety. But this situation or behavior is not helping them either, because they end up having too much weight which makes them appear shapelessly. However, it eventually becomes clear to me that people who develop obesity typically consume huge amounts of food, often junk food to reduce stress and relieve anxiety. Individuals with obesity could be impulsive and more likely to engage in risky behavior such as abuse of alcohol and drugs.

In an attempt to understand eating disorders, my research has led me to know that some scientists have studied the biochemical functions of people with the illness. For instance,

they have focused recently on the neuroendocrine system - - a combination of the central nervous and hormonal systems. Through complex but carefully balanced feedback mechanisms, the neuroendocrine system regulates sexual function, physical growth and development, appetite and digestion, sleep, heart and kidney function, emotions, thinking, and memory in other words, multiple functions of the mind and body. Many of these regulatory mechanisms are seriously disturbed in people with eating disorders. (Cf. Sturmey, P, & Gaubatz, M., 2003, p.110).

As a Nigerian nun, I have come to understand that there are a good number of religious congregations in Nigeria, and it is difficult to define what is normal for all. Certainly Nigerian religious congregations share many functions and purposes. Each Congregation, however, has its own nuances, particularities, special stories, fitting moments, and historical twists and turns. No remedy will necessarily address every religious congregation's psychological problems. What is best for Congregation A might not be best for congregation B, and might not even be best for congregation A two years from now.

Furthermore, during this research work I have come to reconfirm my experiences and understanding that most of Nigerian indigenous women congregations do not regard health as something so important in life. As of this moment, they have not realized that health is a process, not a thing or state. It is ongoing, dynamic, and ever changing. That health is a direction, not a destination, a once-and-for-all property, and unless it is being realized, otherwise, Nigerian indigenous religious congregations face a threat. Its

primary need should be to have all its members working together in a healthy condition. The question is, can religious congregations in Nigeria reconcile its sharp differences about how to handle growth spiritually and otherwise? No religious congregation can serve two visions. It must need a clear direction.

And again, shared vision is necessary, but some differences can co-exist as long as members are loyal to Christ, the head of the body, and each cares for the other. Some nuns, however, feel threatened by the disorders/problems differences create. They confuse community with sameness. They may even make their own experience, perception, or way a law for others. But the fact is as long as this situation continues no women religious congregations in Nigeria can remain psychologically healthy if its members are selfish or not in touch with others. Learning how to deal with threat differences arouse is a task of a healthy living.

However, some Nigerian indigenous nuns have not gotten self-development which is the basic need. For modern psychology is most insistent on this point. That man is a self-contained, self-governing agent. His destiny is to arrive at the full expression of his powers. If somewhere along the line he fails to achieve the proper development, if he is held by some chain of dependence which is not in accord with his nature as a free and sovereign agent, he will be stunted in growth, he will never reach the height of his power, and within himself he will feel the tension between what he is and what he should be. (Carter, 1978, pp.20-21).

An important issue to mention is often young sisters are assigned to apostolic works immediately after the novitiate, without the benefit of practical training. Certain Nigerian Congregations send young nuns out on missions as soon as they completed their novitiate formation. But young sisters sent out on mission after such a novitiate are exposed to a two fold danger. First, that of defending at any cost the system of spirituality learned in the novice-ship, without infusing into it a new vitality in which apostolic contacts are a help to prayer. Second, that of abandoning this same system on the plea that it is unsuited to a rhythm of life for which they have not been prepared.

The favorite example, and in fact the most recurring one in life, is that of a religious nun who has never developed sufficient confidence in herself and in her ability to meet life. This state of mind has received many names, most often that of “inferiority complex,” although the term ‘inferiority feeling’ is much more acceptable. Here, the nun has not developed properly. She has not accepted herself, her powers, and her limitations. As a consequence, happiness is impossible for her, and her whole life and effectiveness will be at least partly spoiled by this situation. She will refuse to accept the universe; she will become sour, embittered, jealous, asocial, or antisocial. She is a cog which does not fit in the machine and which will necessarily generate friction.

On the other hand, the well adjusted nun, not necessarily more talented, but better developed personally, will be relatively happy and contented, a useful citizen and a worthwhile relative and friend. What is the difference? One has developed to full maturity. She accepts herself as she is and in her relationship to others. The other,

perhaps through factors of which he is entirely unconscious, has anxieties, and insecurities to such a point that these dominate her personality. She does not accept herself in the world as it is, with the resultant dislocation of her personality which affects the religious community in which she belongs and the entire society badly.

There is another main finding and deeper one, at least in my own opinion. Religious are uniformly dedicated to a life of chastity. Now there are three fundamental human drives.

- (a).the preservation of self
- (b).the propagation of the species
- (c).the will to power.

Certainly, celibacy involves the repression of the second of these. What is more natural than to expect that this repression will take the form of a transfer of drive at least in some degree and that the will to power will be proportionately strengthened?

Besides, (Reports of the Episcopal Conferences), points out that the theological level of women religious and of others responsible for vocations, chosen for this task by the own congregation authorities/superiors are judged insufficient. That means that the pastoral ministry of vocations, more than on a theological foundation, has in the majority of cases, a pedagogical root, for which this pastoral ministry is often reduced to some activities programmed with good interest, but also with much improvisation. (Cf. Reports of the Episcopal Conferences of Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Spain).

Secondly, lack of preparation of the formators/directors and all those responsible for formation is one of the problems that require an unavoidable solution. This means that those responsible for vocations should be experts in speaking to the youths of today. They should possess the gift of efficiency in presenting the Christian life as a vocation, and in showing the sense and the value of the various consecrated vocations.

Furthermore, Large number of intakes for a specific period results in fact that there is poor training of both cognitive, physical, mental and lack of proper direction of one's vocation. As well as inability to provide for each individual needs, how much having enough to solve family needs and problems. And to crown it all, no specific or lay down plan for these individuals after their formation training.

Lack of incompetent superiors and formators/directors to direct their subjects towards the sense of direction and aim in life. The religious entails teaching what the evangelical counsels mean by words and examples. Lack of, or insufficient personnel for the need of Nigerian indigenous congregation. That is, insufficient income to run an outnumbered nuns within the religious communities.

I have found out too that in actual sense, the life of parenthood is the normal means of satisfaction for the drive to power. But since this is impossible for the religious nun, she tends to concentrate on the power given her by her position. Nigerian indigenous religious nuns are notoriously jealous of their rights, privileges, and prerogatives. They use this power to suppress their subjects.

Besides, there are other findings such as;

-Individual Differences

It is well known, of course, that people react differently to anxiety-producing situations,' writes Collins. 'Some people are almost never anxious, some seem highly anxious most of the time; many are in between. Some people are made anxious by a variety of situations; others find that only one or two issues trigger anxiety. Such differences may be due to the person's psychology, personality, sociology, physiology, or theology.

In psychology, most behavior is learned as a result of personal experience or teaching by parents and other significant persons. When we have failed and must try again, when we have been hurt in the past, when others have demanded more than we could give, when we have seen anxiety in other people (e.g., the child who learns to be anxious in thunderstorms because his mother was always anxious, all of these are psychological reactions which arouse anxiety.

-In personality, it may be that some people are more fearful or "high-strung" than others. Some are more sensitive, self-centered, hostile, or insecure than others.

-In sociology, a past president of the American Psychological Association once suggested that the causes of anxiety rest in our society: political instability, mobility which disturbs our sense of rootedness, shifting values, changing moral standards and religious beliefs, and so on. (Cf. DSM-1V).

-*In physiology*, the presence of disease can stimulate anxiety, but so can dietary imbalance, neurological malfunctioning and chemical factors within the body.'

-*In theology*, beliefs have a great bearing on one's anxiety level. If God is seen as all-powerful, loving, good, and in ultimate control of the universe, which is the biblical teaching, then there can be trust and security even in the midst of turmoil. It should not be assumed however, that nonbelievers necessarily are more anxious than believers. Some Nigerian Nuns, for example, are so worried about pleasing God that their theology creates anxiety. Nor should it be concluded that anxiety always reflects a lack of faith. The causes of anxiety are too complex for such a simplistic explanation. Nevertheless what we believe or do not believe does contribute to individual differences in the extent to which we experience anxiety.'

False Beliefs.

Not only a person's believe contribute to the experience of anxiety, Dr. G. Keith Olson identifies specific false beliefs as a major cause of anxiety among youth:

Many adolescents...believe one or more of the following false beliefs:

- It is essential that I am loved or approved by virtually everyone in my community.
- I must be perfectly competent, adequate and achieving in order to consider myself worthwhile.
- It is a terrible catastrophe when things are not as I want them to be.
- Unhappiness is caused by outside circumstances, and I have no control over it.

- Dangerous or fearsome things are causes for great concern, and I must continually dwell upon their possibility.
- It is easier to avoid certain difficulties and self-responsibilities than to face them.
- I should be dependent on others, and I must have someone stronger on whom I can rely.
- My past experiences and events are the determiners of my present behavior; I cannot eradicate or alter the influence of my past.
- I should be quite upset over other people's problems and disturbances.
- There is always a right or perfect solution to every problem, and I must always find it or the results will be catastrophic."(Cf. American Psychological Association).

Besides, "Anxiety sometimes produces beneficial effects;" writes McDowell and Hostetler, "it can motivate a person, for example. Too much anxiety, however, can produce severe, even crippling effects."(McDowell and et al., 1988, 102). These crippling effects have four areas in which they work: physical, behavioral, spiritual, and psychological.

Physical Effects

Physical effects can cause ulcers, even in youth. Other, less known, physical effects include: "headaches, rashes, backaches, upset stomach, shortness of breath, sleeping problems, fatigue, and loss of appetite, writes McDowell and Hostetler. In addition, the changes in blood pressure, muscle tension, and digestive and chemical changes caused

by anxiety can, if they persist over time, cause severe harm." The physical effects of anxiety are no laughing matter.(McDowell and Hostler, 1988, p. 81). Believe it or not most of the Nigerian indigenous religious nuns suffer from these physical ailments and that is really devastating.

Behavioral Effects

When anxiety builds up," writes Collins, "most people unconsciously rely on behaviors and thinking which dull the pain of anxiety and enable us to cope." Reactions like these could include seeking relief in sleep, alcohol, drugs, or attempting to deny how deep the anxiety really is. Others may become very disagreeable, blaming others for their own problems or throwing childish temper tantrums at the least bit of provocation. In the case of the Nigerian nuns, they become or act like what the Bible tells us that there are those who do not remove the logs in their eyes but tries to remove the flakes in others. In other words, always see the little faults in others but do not see their own outstanding faults or bad attitudes.

Spiritual Effects:

Collins writes, "Anxiety can motivate us to seek divine help where it might be ignored otherwise. But anxiety can also drive us from God at a time when he is most needed. Fraught with worry and distracted by pressures, even religious people find that there is a lack of time for prayer, decreased ability to concentrate on Bible reading, reduced interest in church worship services, impatience and sometimes bitterness with heaven's seeming silence." (Cf. Reiki, Life Positive, Nature and Cure, 2005). We find out that

too much of everything is bad, and too little of everything also is not worthy. So life must be in a balance so that one will be able to handle any situation at any point in time.

Psychological Effects

Anxiety is the "most pervasive psychological phenomenon of our time." It can give rise to many disorders, for example:

-Separation Anxiety Disorder.

This is a psychological effect that causes excessive worry or fear of being separated from an important influence, such as a parent or close friend. Ofcourse, there is no doubt that some Nigerian nuns suffer from this disorder, especially those who are mummy and daddy's pet or favorite.

As you can see, anxiety has many varying causes and effects. Now that we are familiar with this emotional issue that many face in today's world, we are going to look at the Biblical perspective of anxiety. Collins does an excellent job of discussing the biblical view of anxiety. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that we should not be anxious (worrying) about life's basic needs, such as food, clothing, or about the future. We have a heavenly Father, Jesus said, who knows what we need and will provide (Matt. 6:25-34). In the New Testament Epistles, both Peter and Paul echoed this conclusion. "Stop perpetually worrying about even one thing," we read in Philipians. Instead, Christians are to bring their requests to God, with an attitude of thanksgiving, expecting to experience the "peace of God which surpasses all comprehension" (Phil. 4:6,7). We can cast our anxieties upon the Lord knowing that he cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7). I am equally conveying these words to my Nigerian religious women that we have not much

to worry about, only to do our own part properly, and live the rest to God who is in charge of our lives.

Because many people with eating disorders also appear to suffer from depression, some scientists believe that there may be a link between these two disorders. This link is supported by studies showing that antidepressants can be used successfully to treat some people with eating disorders. In fact, new research has suggested that some patients with anorexia may respond well to the antidepressant medication fluoxetine, which affects serotonin function in the body.

People with either anorexia or certain forms of depression also tend to have higher than normal levels of cortisol, a brain hormone released in response to stress. Scientists have been able to show that the excess levels of cortisol in both anorexia and depression are caused by a problem that occurs in or near a region of the brain called the hypothalamus.

In addition to connections between depression and eating disorders, scientists have found biochemical similarities between people with eating disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Just as serotonin levels are known to be abnormal in people with eating disorders, they are also abnormal in patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder. Recently, NIMH researchers have found that many patients with bulimia have obsessive-compulsive behavior as severe as that seen in patients diagnosed with OCD. Conversely, patients with OCD frequently have abnormal eating disorders. (DSM-1V).

The hormone vasopressin is another brain chemical found to be abnormal in people with eating disorders and OCD. NIMH researchers have shown that levels of this hormone are elevated in patients with OCD, anorexia, and bulimia. Normally released in response to physical and possibly emotional stress, vasopressin may contribute to the obsessive behavior seen in some patients with eating disorders.

NIMH-supported investigators are also exploring the role of other brain chemicals in eating behavior. Many are conducting studies in animals to shed some light on human disorders. For example, scientists have found that levels of neuropeptide Y and peptide YY recently shown to be elevated in patients with anorexia and bulimia, stimulate eating behavior in laboratory animals. Other investigators have found that cholecystokinin (CCK), a hormone known to be low in women with bulimia, causes laboratory animals to feel full and stop eating. This finding may possibly explain why women with bulimia do not feel satisfied after eating and continue to binge. (DSM-1V).

7.3 Proposals and Recommendation

The atmosphere pervading the whole religious communities has to be that of a family spirit. The authorities, led by the major superiors/mother generals are expected to create this spirit. They ought not to distance themselves from the rest of the nuns. Rather they have to win their subject's confidence at all levels as they share life together.

Decisions on vital matters must be taken after prolonged dialogue and consultations on both sides. The sense of communal spirit has to prevail. No Nigerian nuns should be

expelled for expressing her candid opinion on matters affecting her welfare. The era of blind obedience has gone. Instead, congregational authorities have to encourage responsible obedience after mature deliberations. They are to be good listeners taking cognisance of valuable contributions of the nuns on vital matters. Furthermore, the Nigerian nuns ought to see their authorities as real mothers of one family who can be approached freely, without inhibition.

According to Peter Steinke, “Short of prevention, early treatment is best treatment. Everything in creation starts small and grows, including conditions of psychological problems. Early warnings come from small disturbances. When disturbances are still local and small, they are more treatable. Their peak is not so high; their duration is not so long.” (Steinke, 1996, p. 21). The deeper into its course a psychological problem proceeds, the stronger the means needed to stifle or reverse it.

If stress is causing physical symptoms, severe distress or making it difficult for you to function as normal, it is worth seeing a doctor. It is important to remember that although stress is a usual part of life, extreme or prolonged stress can lead to other illnesses that will need treatment, so it is better to visit a doctor sooner rather than later. Stress, for example, has been linked to the development of high blood pressure and heart disease, as well as insomnia and depression.

There is no diagnostic test for stress since everyone reacts to it differently, but a doctor will be able to spot the physical symptoms, and should ask pertinent questions to identify and underlying problems that might be the cause. In case there are physical reasons for

the symptoms, the doctor may also want to do some tests to exclude certain conditions. If you feel that you are suffering from stress, try to identify the aspects of your life that are causing it. Sometimes you may not be able to change or avoid them, but at other times simple lifestyle changes can make all the difference. There are several strategies that can help you deal with stress.

- Delegating or sharing your responsibilities at work
- Avoiding confrontation with difficult colleagues
- Learning to be more assertive
- Taking regular exercise
- Not using drinks or drugs to cope
- Eating a healthy, balanced diet, rich in fruit and vegetables
- Finding humor or absurdity in stressful situations
- Never taking on more than you know you can cope with
- Organizing your time better to get as much done as possible
- Talking to friends or family, and sharing your thoughts and fears.
- Listening to music or relaxation tapes
- Tensing and then relaxing your muscles, starting at the toes and working up to the head and neck.

I think it is necessary to abide with what Archbishop John Onaiyekan in one of his reflections on “The Priesthood and the African Synod” suggests that instead of having large seminaries for our teeming seminarians in Nigeria, it may be better to have some small size seminaries for qualitative formation. (Cf. Mbefo, L.N.C.F., and Ezeugu, M.E., (ed.):The Clergy in Nigeria Today, Enugu: SNAAP Press Ltd. 1994, p. 102). This is also applicable to Nigerian women religious, let us stop counting on the quantity but quality for better formation in order to better the Church and the world at large.

I recommend also that each and every nun should be wholly maintained and properly cared for, both spiritually, financially and morally. No excuses should be given for

improper maintenance of these nuns so that they do not have the reason for improper misconduct in on other to meet to their personal needs. It is also the congregations duty if possible, to help the families of their nuns who are in great need.

Every Nigerian nun should be given sound and authentic education both academically and morally. The congregations superiors should not send out their nuns on mission or studies outside the location or outside the country without these experiencing the religious life in the community for some years. That is, Nigerian indigenous nuns have to understand what religious commitment means. As I can see most of these nuns understand religious commitment only if one is in her religious habit with the veil or head gear, every other immoral life she lives on does not matter.

Congregation's superiors/formators, and vocation directors should take it as a point of duty to help their subjects to get to their right vocation in life because this is where the problem lies. If one is not in her right vocation in life hardly will he/she be happy and not only that he is not happy but sick, and her sickness affects the whole members of the community as well.

In relation to training of nuns and the pursuit of works of the apostolate, what is in fact necessary is to recreate and renew minds and wills, with the aid of the grace of the Holy Spirit, that as far as possible the new fashions of our time and the spiritual destitution of our age will be met. Complete reform of oneself is not achieved by any means equivalent

to the disowning or unreasoning contempt for what has been achieved by the laborious strivings of those who have gone before us, and which should be regarded as the glory and ornament of each one's society. Reform means, rather, not to lead a sluggish, idle life. It means striving by every means that the constitution of one's congregation will not appear as a collection of exterior and useless regulations, whose letter, in the absence of the spirit, kills.

Treatment can save the life of someone with an psychological disorder. Friends, relatives, teachers, and physicians, and above all, Nigerian nuns should play an important role in helping the ill person start and stay with a treatment program. Encouragement, caring and persistence, as well as information about eating disorders and their dangers, may be needed to convince the ill person to get help, stick with treatment, or try again.

Religious authorities can call local hospitals or university medical centers to find out about eating disorder clinics and clinicians experienced in treating these illnesses. Members of the Nigerian Women religious and its authorities, family members and friends should read as much as possible about psychological disorders, so that they can help the person with the illness understand her problem. Once the person gets help, she will continue to need lots of understanding and encouragement to stay in treatment.

Nigerian religious women Congregations should see the need to review the formation planing/curriculum from time to time, because formation is also education which is a dynamic instrument of change to ensure its adequacy and continued relevance to societal

needs and objectives. The world philosophy on education which is based on the integration of the individual into a sound, moral, and effective citizen should always be in the minds of the religious formators/directors and their authorities. This will enable them to gear their plans towards self-actualization, better human relationship, individual and societal efficiency, effective citizenship and the Nigerian nuns will understand that their mission is also to help in achieving the societal objective which takes care of the whole man and produces better citizens for the world.

It will be necessary also in the novitiate curricula to be more attentive to a consideration of moral values which are relevant to contemporary society. This will require very well trained theologians, not just people commenting on treatises in scholastic theology which has been the same since St. Thomas Aquinas.

So those who are entrusted with the curriculum of the religious formation should rise above sectional or tribal mentality and address themselves to the entire religious women problems. Therefore, there is need for a uniformed religious formation in Nigeria to ensure a uniform development. This research promises to yield even more hope for Nigerian nuns with psychological disorders and their religious members in the congregation as well as their families by providing a greater understanding of the causes and complexities of psychological disorders.

7.4 Looking Ahead:

We look ahead to see the Nigerian indigenous Congregations have a healing capacities. They should possess strengths and resources. Healthy Congregations are known for renewing and regenerating themselves. Like natural organisms, Nigerian religious congregations should live through a series of births and deaths, agonies and ecstasies, or ebbs and flows. Besides, Nigerian religious congregations should processes move from challenge, from disturbance to regeneration to collapse and back to stability.

However, we look forward to witness education play its tasks by returning Nigerian indigenous nuns to themselves, as well as to encourage rather than stifle awareness. In other words, to educate the emotions, the senses, the so- called autonomic systems to help man become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible. Therefore, everybody is expecting that the future should be better than the past and the present and that it should lead to good life.

We should understand that the significant measure of the health of a religious congregation is not where it stands in moment of comfort and ease, but rather, where it stands at times of challenge and crises. According to Edward Hays, "Vision offers meaning; vision instills hope; vision directs energy. (Hays, Edward, 1974, pp. 10- 11).

We look forward to witness our Nigerian nuns in good health, happy with the religious life in which they chose to live, being maintained properly and sufficiently, and very contented with what the congregation provide for them and not being shameless international beggars.

We look ahead to witness in a near future the Nigerian indigenous religious congregations of women able to a fewer candidates at a time, and not for quantity sake. And at the same time able to provide fully well for each nuns personal needs as well as able to render some help to these nuns if need arises in their families which they left behind, and not to use the stupid and immoral words when these nuns ask for some help, such as “Do what others are doing or do what you can to support your self.” These words show that some Nigerian indigenous women religious congregations give their subjects licence to flirt about and support themselves. The congregation authorities must be very careful and God fearing to what to say to their religious nuns and how and where and when to make any useless statement because they will never know how far these statements of theirs will go or reach

We do look ahead to see the Nigerian nuns be God fearing and spiritual religious nuns whose piousness will bring reach harvest for the Lord our God.

We also look ahead to see our Nigerian religious women congregations live up to the expectations of what the Code of Canon law indicates: “It is of greatest concern to us that the work of the members of Religious Institutes should go along harmoniously with the norms established by the Sacred Hierarchy. As a matter of fact, the exemption of Religious Orders is in no conflict whatsoever with the divinely given Constitution of the Church, by force of which every priest, particularly in the performance of the sacred ministry, must obey the Sacred Hierarchy. For the members of these Religious Institutes are, at all times and in all places, subject principally to the Roman Pontiff, as to their

highest Superior. For this reason, the Religious Institutes are at service of the Roman Pontiff in those works which pertain to the welfare of the universal Church. With regard to the exercise of the sacred apostolate in various dioceses, Religious are also under the jurisdiction of Bishops, to whom they are bound to give assistance, always without prejudice to the nature of their proper apostolate and the things and auxiliary ministry of the Religious given to the diocesan clergy conduces to the good of the Church, when their united forces result in more vigorous and more effective action. (Canon 499, par. 1).

I use the same words used by Pope Paul IV on address religious Orders and Congregations in the general Chapters in 1964, to address my Nigerian indigenous Congregations of women. From the Papal Encyclical, (1964), I quote, "Now, my dearly beloved sons, from these brief observations, you know our mind as what we consider as greatly contributing to the growth of religious life in our times. May all these remarks show you with what solicitude We view and esteem the religious life and what great hope We put in your helpful work. The road which we pointed out to you is certainly difficult and laborious. But lift up your soul in hope, for the cause is not ours but that of Jesus Christ. Christ is our strength, our hope, our power. He will be with us always. Continue to diffuse the good odor of Christ as wisely as possible by the integrity of your faith, by the holiness of your life, by your great zeal for all the virtues. Meanwhile, as We thank you for your obedience, We pray God through the intercession of the Most Sweet Virgin Mary, Mother of God, the maternal nurse of religious virtues, that your Institutes may continue to grow daily, and bear ever richer and more salutary fruits. (Papal Encyclical,

May 23,1964). We look ahead to see the Nigerian nuns being transformed with all the virtues proposed by the Holy Father for them.

However, according to Leonard, George B. I believe that education as one of the task should return the Nigerian nuns to themselves, encourage them rather than stifle awareness, educate the emotions, the senses, the so-called autonomic systems to help them become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible. (George B. Leonard, 1968, p. 127. Education and Ecstasy. New York: Dell Publishing).

To achieve these, Nigerian nuns need to take a closer look at themselves, to review their programs and to reorganize their priorities. They should stress both technological and moral aspects of development, that will equip them with knowledge and animate them with living conscience. The Church expects them to be the makers, shapers and creators of tomorrow's world, and not merely its products, instruments and agents. This of course, calls for wider vision and more penetrating insight in all matters. With this new vision, we look forward to see the Nigerian nuns stand erect in the world, knowing their roles, because they are not an incomplete women, not cheap labor for the world, they are witnesses of time's fulfillment. We expect that Nigerian nuns, in loving community, should constitute a public and real beginning of that timeless fulfillment.

7.5 Conclusion

Women religious vocations in Nigeria have increased by thousands since after the Nigerian civil war. Numberless girls flock into convents and yet the Nigerian nuns are

moving away from being Christians as their supernatural humanization progresses. There is something out of gear. The current ambition does not succeed in breaking through the obstacles of indifference and materialism that arise on all sides. This situation might be compared to a car whose engine is excellent and has proved its worth. The bodywork is intact and imposing, yet the car will not go, or it moves haltingly and too slowly, because the transmission is out of order. The trouble will be eliminated by rectifying the cause, not by making a deeper study of the engine. This is false supernaturalism.

But not with standing, according to Elochukwu Uzoukwu; my observation of the incredible energy, creativity, and generosity of Nigerian priests and male and female religious convinced me that Christian religious life and priestly ministry contains something good for the human person and for the continent. Many African priests and women and men religious have proven their mettle in five continents, especially in Europe and America. By the services they render to the universal Church. With patience, they quietly make their contribution to the dialogue of culture working towards harmony in tension, the dynamic grains of the African view of societal engineering. (Uzoukwu, E., African Scribe, Vol. 1, May 2, 2001,).

The deficiency in most Nigerian religious Congregations are largely caused by the non-inclusion of timeless African traditional values in the curriculum of the nuns formation. If Jesus, the formator of all formators accomplished his gigantic task through the prism of

the Jewish culture and yet became relevant to the European and American religious as Jesus of today through their culture, then he can equally and should be relevant to Nigerian nuns as Jesus of tomorrow through their cultural mold.

According to the Bible, therefore, there is nothing wrong with realistically acknowledging and trying to deal with the identifiable problems of life. To ignore danger is foolish and wrong. But it is also wrong, as well as unhealthy, to be immobilized by excessive worry. Such worry must be committed in prayer to God, who can release us from paralyzing fear or anxiety, and free us to deal realistically with the needs and welfare both of others and of ourselves.

A correct plan of proposal should be founded necessarily on a solid theology of vocation and of vocations, in harmony with the ecclesiology of Vatican II. "To understand and appreciate the Christian vocation and the vocations to the consecrated life, it is necessary to consider these vocations in the light of the mystery of the Church." (Cf. *Developments in Vocational Pastoral Ministry*, 1988).

Thus Nigerian religious should learn to see beyond their own narrow sphere. They should come to discover spontaneously what is positive and worthwhile in all whom they meet, even those who seem most hostile, taciturn, or inept. They will become able to lead them to the discovery of their positive worth, their hidden and hitherto unsuspected possibilities.

It is absolutely necessary for a religious to be a witness to the mystery, this is in fact, a condition *sin qua non* of the fruitfulness of her apostolate. Being a witness is not only one who speaks, it is one who, by her very life, attests that her words proceed from the Word Incarnate. It is one who, in her apostolic activity, never separates her words from her life.

Nigerian religious women must attained maturity and be able to stand on their own feet. This strength of character is particularly necessary for religious. While they live under the yoke of obedience, they must show that obedience admits of and even encourages perfect liberty of thought in all spheres in which it does not come into play. An example of true religious obedience will have all the greater force if it is given by a person psychologically and effectively mature.

In my research work, I have come to understand that there is still much to learn about the workings of the world and our place in it. Each personality disorder shows its own unique manifestations through a story or narrative, but we do not have enough information or verifying capability to determine whether they spring from a common psycho-dynamic source.

Therefore, it is important to note that some people diagnosed with antisocial, schizoid, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders may be suffering from an underlying biological disturbance (anatomical, electrical, or neurochemical). A strong genetic link has been found in antisocial and personality disorders.

As Dr. David B. Adams of Atlanta Medical Psychology says that, therapists have the most difficulties with those suffering from personality disorders. They are difficult to please, block effective communication, avoid development of a trusting relationship, [and] cannot be relied upon for accurate history regarding problems, or how problems arose (The Psychological Letter, February 2000).

It is also of great important to know that personality disorder is identified by a pervasive pattern of experience and behavior that is abnormal with respect to any two of the following: thinking, mood, personal relations, and the control of impulses. The character of a person is shown through his or her personality, by the way an individual thinks, feels, and behaves. When the behavior is inflexible, maladaptive, and antisocial, then that individual is diagnosed with a personality disorder.

Most personality disorders begin as problems in personal development and character, which peak during adolescence and then are defined as personality disorders. We have to understand that personality disorders are not illnesses in a strict sense, as they do not disrupt emotional, intellectual, or perceptual functioning. However, those with personality disorders suffer a life that is *not* positive, proactive, or fulfilling. Not surprisingly, personality disorders are also associated with failures to reach potential.

The DSM-IV-TR: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association, defines a personal disorder as an enduring pattern

of inner experience and behavior that deviates markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture, is pervasive and inflexible, has an onset in adolescence or early adulthood, is stable over time, and leads to distress or impairment. (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p.206).

We have to understand that most causes of psychological stress are perennially related to emotional and psychological disorders. Stressful situations, whether long-term or short-term, can set forth a series of emotional symptoms such as feeling of personality disintegration, phobia, anxiety attacks, unfocused attention or distractions, exaggerated emotional responses and psychological discomposure such as depression, confusion, burn out and, never forget the resultant, vehicular accidents. No wonder, under persistent stress, an individual suffers from spiritual riot within himself.

The perturbations in emotional and psychological health may cause exacerbate debilitating disorders, which can stop life in its track. Because studies show as much as 50 to 80 per cent of all the complaints treated physicians are psychosomatic ailments resulting from psychological stress. Almost all anxiety attacks and stress related mind and body illnesses are known to cause sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, delayed sleep phase syndrome, and even oversleeping. In extreme cases stressors or causes of stress can even cause insomnia.

Besides, chronic stress conditions can lead to various Attention-Deficiency Disorders such as ADD and ADHD. Which are again products of the demands of modern life and

its priorities. Individuals with Attention-Deficiency Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type (ADD) exhibit six or more symptoms of inattention and less than six symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity. They usually exhibit some of the following symptoms: inattention, distractibility, disorganization, daydreaming, lack of foresight, carelessness, forgetfulness, lack of motivation, lack of persistence, and procrastination. Individuals with Attention-Deficiency Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type (ADHD) usually exhibit six or more symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity and less than six symptoms of inattention. They usually exhibit some of the following symptoms: hyperactivity, fidgeting behavior, restlessness, excessive talking, inappropriate running and climbing, often "on the go," can't wait, interrupt others, and impulsiveness. (Article on Life Positive archives Art Gallery, 2005).

Post-traumatic stress can affect anyone who has been through an extremely difficult or violent experience, such as witnessing a violent death or disaster, being involved in a serious car crash or surviving a fire. People suffering from post-traumatic stress may experience any of the symptoms listed opposite. They may also feel a mixture of emotions such as fear, shame, depression, guilt or anger, and recurrent memories or images that may be haunting or lead to nightmares. These feelings can last for weeks, months or even years after the traumatic event that triggered them. Specialist treatment, possibly with medicines and psychological therapies, is available.

By reading the DSM-IV's definition of personality disorders, it seems that these conditions are not treatable. However, when individuals choose to be in control of their

lives and are committed to changing their lives, healing is possible. Therapy and medications can help, but it is the individual's decision to take accountability for his or her own life that makes the difference. To heal, individuals must first have the desire to change in order to break through that enduring pattern of a personality disorder. Individuals need to want to gain insight into and face their inner experience and behavior. (These issues may concern severe or repeated trauma during childhood, such as abuse.) This involves changing their thinking—about themselves their relationships, and the world. This also involves changing their behavior, for that which is not acted upon is not learned. Then, with a support system (e.g., therapy, self-help groups, friends, family, medication), they can free themselves from their imprisoned life. Are we not unhappy because we cannot do something we want to do, we cannot have something we want to have, or because we're concerned about what others will think? The first step towards freedom lies in coming to this realization.

According to David Banner; the Gift of Being Yourself is that true knowledge of God and true knowledge of oneself which are inextricably intertwined. In the profound exploration of identity, psychologist David Benner illuminates the spirituality of self-discovery. This is very important because many Nigerian nuns need to discover who they are, if they don't discover that it will be difficult for them to understand the religious life in which they have chosen to live and the whole situation will be as if they are having nightmare.

Constant stress can ruin one's spirit, slowing down the motivation to lead a meaningful life. Under stress an individual may fall into compulsive, obsessive behavior and fear. Stressed out individuals seem to be easily charmed by negative habits and procrastination, addiction to alcohol, smoking and substance abuse. All these debilitating mental traits arise from a loss of self-confidence and inner strength. Prolonged pressure and inability to disburse with the same lead individuals to such situations.

Spiritual paths such as Yoga, and holistic healing methods such as Pranic healing and Reiki speak of a luminous energy body that encircles an individual's physical body. This is composed of subtle particles (life forces) and intimately related to one's emotional conditions. Under chronic stress, this energy body or aura gets depleted due to inadequate absorption of 'life force' or *prana* into body, and the energy pathways or *chakras* are blocked with stagnant and toxic *prana* leading to imbalances in body, mind and spirit. An individual tends to lose his all round composure and fails to look for solutions within. A depleted and weakened aura can incapacitate one to remain connected to his 'self' and even to the outside world. This sense of disconnectedness can cause depression in individuals.

Finally, if Nigerian religious congregations of women could just abide with the proposals and the recommendations which I hope will improve their psychological problems/disorders, they will improve in living up their religious commitment as well as being healthy nuns in a healthy religious congregations. They will as well have better relationship with themselves and each other, working for the good of the church and the

world at large. In other words, unless these proposals and recommendations are taken into cognizance, the Nigerian indigenous women religious Congregations would continue to suffer psychologically.

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