



Sociological implications of faith-healing and herbal-therapy applications in Christ Apostolic Church

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Abstract

Christ Apostolic Church is believed to have a strong belief in faith healing. This is evidently rooted in the tenets of the church and its origin is linked to the famous Precious Stone Society, a prayer group that started in Southern Nigeria in 1918. Christ Apostolic Church is one of the most influential Pentecostal organizations in Nigeria. This paper defined the church's tenet of faith regarding faith-healing, it also discussed the sociological implication of herbal therapy application in Christ Apostolic Church. A combination of theological, historical, and phenomenological approaches are used. The results show that CAC believed in the Faith-Healing for believers which is the centre of Pentecostal theology. Also, research reveals that some of the members of Christ Apostolic Church believed that Herbal Therapy can also be considered in as much as they would not negatively influence one's spiritual life and cause any other havoc to the Christian community.

Keywords: Faith-Healing, Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Herbal-Therapy, Health Care

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Introduction

The issue of healing has always been man's major concern due to the significant role that health plays in the sociological development of man. In the medical sense, healing entails the restoration of (normal) functioning and the repair of damaged tissue(s), organs, and the biological system as a whole in cases of physical trauma or disease suffered by an organism. A more recent approach to the concept of healing is defined to be reducing physical symptoms, achieving mental well-being, regaining functions, and reestablishing activities, which are all energy-intensive processes.¹

In the literal sense, the concept of healing is often associated with medicine, with reference to surgery, psychiatry, and psychology in order to achieve the healing effect. In the spiritual sense, considering the Christian faith, healing according to Van Loon occurs "as a result of the integrating forces that heal, change, sustain, and nurture the whole person (body, mind, and spirit) at each stage and in every dimension of life, as well as within the relationships of the individual to the creation, to other people, and God. Christian healing is a lifelong process through the power of the Holy Spirit, faith in Jesus Christ, and God's sovereign love.² Looking at it from a cultural perspective, it is as if the advent of Christianity has denied many Africans from utilising their healing-based system which often entails the use of herbs for therapy. In light of this posits that: "Canaan's rejection of many cultures, religions, and peoples can be considered a precursor to today's prejudice against those who do not hold Jewish or Christian beliefs. The Canaanites had lower moral standards, worshipped idols, and engaged in promiscuity".³

Africans used "tried and trusted" African traditional medicine to treat a variety of health issues before the arrival of mission churches and colonialism. The colonizers and missionaries were the ones who added fresh healing facets to the mix. The African people's culture, rituals, and traditional ceremonies were considered perverse to the Christian faith. According to Adefolaju, "To cure, diagnose, and prevent illnesses or to maintain health, traditional medicine refers to health

¹ Allvin Rence, Berg, Katarina, Idvail, Ewa & Nilsson, Ulrica, Postoperative recovery: a concept analysis" . *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. **57** (5), (2007), 552

² Anne Van Loon, *One Another Care*. (Wayville South Australia: Baptist Care, 2008), 7-8

³ Pui-lan Kwok, *Discovering the Bible in the non-biblical world*. (New York: Orbis, 1995), 108

practices, approaches, knowledge, and beliefs that incorporate exercises, manual techniques, spiritual therapies, and medications derived from plants, animals, and minerals".⁴

Moreover, herbal medicine, bone setting, spiritual therapies, circumcision, maternity care, mental care, massage therapy, aromatherapy, music therapy, homeopathy, and many other practices are all considered to be part of traditional medicine.⁵ Although faith healing has always been a distinctive feature of Pentecostal spirituality, demographic changes, the advent of the charismatic renewal, and other social trends in Nigerian society created the conditions that allowed many in the movement to adapt their healing practices to complement and occasionally co-opt healing modalities that were common in the larger culture. In Nigeria, notably during the 1918 flu epidemic, the employment of outstanding African Indigenous Churches (AICs) elevated supernatural healing to the forefront. One of the most well-known Pentecostal churches in Africa, the Christ Apostolic Church, accepted the theology of faith-healing as one of its central tenets. The divine union between Apostle Ayodele Babalola and the Precious Stone members ignited the 1930 Great Revival, but it also helped the church come to terms with the use of faith-healing techniques. One vital factor in the healing ministry of the CAC is the need for constant prayer and fasting.⁶

Taiwo, asserts that:

The provision of health-care has benefited greatly from herbal medicine. Over 4 billion people, or 80% of the world's population, are said to rely on traditional medicine in some capacity for their healthcare. A further estimate is that 80% of those living in underdeveloped nations and 80% of Africans rely on herbal medicine to address their basic medical needs.

Moreover, Darko, establishes that: "The yearly market for herbal medicines in the world is presently worth over US\$60 billion and is

⁴ Toyin Adefolaju. "The Dynamics and Changing Structures of Traditional Healing System in Nigeria". *International Journal of Health Research*, June 2011;4 (2), 99

⁵ Temitope Borokini and Ibrahim Lawal, "Traditional Medicine Practices among the Yoruba People of Nigeria: A Historical Perspective," *Journal of Medicinal Plants Studies*, Vol. 2. No. 6. (2014), 20.

⁶ George Folarin, "The theology and practice of Christ Apostolic Church on Divine Healing in the context of Pentecostal Theology. *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies, (IJOURS)* Vol.7 No.1, (2017),26



expanding consistently at a pace of 15% to 25%".⁷ However, recent studies have demonstrated that herbal therapy is efficient, more widely accessible, more cost-effective, culturally acceptable, and maybe an easily accessible health-care system for the general public.⁸ Erinoshio says that "that the power structure of any society cannot be separated from the nature of its health delivery".⁹ Furthermore, when analysing how Pentecostals relate to modernised African culture, the increasing link between faith-healing and traditional healing, especially, the use of herbs for therapy within the Pentecostal tradition, especially the use of syncretic elements, offers a particularly important perspective. It is in this wise that the researcher explores the sociological implications of Faith-Healing and Herbal Therapy Applications in Christ Apostolic Church.

Healing in African Traditional Society

In every culture, man has always been drawn to the idea of being whole. It is an idea that permeates every aspect of human existence. Being unwell alters the balance of the human physiology for the average African man, but it also, and notably, tears the social fabric. Therefore, many African communities have their system of healing which exists independently of any other therapeutic means from around the world. As a result of this, African communities rely on traditional healthcare despite the arrival of Western medicine and healthcare institutions in Africa.¹⁰

One of the vitalities of life is to live in good health. Health, according to World Health Organisation (WHO), is "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".¹¹ Health has been defined as a state of complete wholeness whereby every one strives in various circumstances and

⁷ Isaac, Darko, " Ghanaian Indigenous Health Practices: The Use of Herbs". *Unpublished MA Thesis presented to the Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education*. (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, 2009), 19

⁸ Ekor, Martins. "The growing use of herbal medicines: issues relating to adverse reactions and challenges in monitoring safety." *Frontiers in pharmacology* 4 (2014): 177.

⁹ Onifade Erinoshio, "Health Sociology for Universities, Colleges and Health-related Institutions" (Ijebu-Ode: Bulwark Consult 2019), 5

¹⁰ World Health Organisation. *Legal status of traditional medicine and complementary/alternative medicine*. Geneva: Worldwide review, WHO. 2001), 5

¹¹ Ayodele Jegede, *African Culture and Health* (Ibadan: Book Wright Publishers, 2010), 33



conditions to attain this state of wholeness. Medicare or medicine is one of the oldest arts in the world right from antiquity and it exists in every society.

The society is sustained by medicine because it is a means of improving the health status and quality of life. With this, it is suggestive to affirm that there is no society without its own art of healing. The type and method at which healing is achieved may vary from one culture to another or from one society to another, basically, because healing in every society is determined by the ecological and socio-cultural environments as well as historical antecedents of the people.

African traditional healing is defined as “the complete knowledge and practice, whether explicable or not, employed in identifying, preventing, or curing physical, mental, and social disorders.” Traditional African medicine refers to various traditional medical specialties encompassing African spirituality, midwives, herbalists, and native herbalism.¹² Traditional African healers assert that they can treat a wide range of ailments. Some of the ailments they constantly claim they could heal include psychiatric disorders, high blood pressure, cholera, most venereal diseases, epilepsy, asthma, eczema, fever, anxiety, depression, and so on. They claim these ailments could be healed without any scientific support.¹³ According to Dime, diagnosing a sickness in an African traditional medical system entails two distinct events:

Initially, the medicine man must carefully examine the patient and interrogate them to determine the organic or physical origin of the illness. Second, this is an addition to the divination of the illness's mystical or spiritual root, this is because an ailment or disease may have a spiritual or mental component in addition to its bodily manifestation. The African tradition widely holds a belief system that a person's misfortunes may be linked to ancestral spirits in or her ancestry.¹⁴

African indigenous churches proliferate in these environments for this very reason. African is notoriously religious” as a result. In most cases,

¹² David Adamo, ‘African Cultural Hermeneutics’, in R.S Surgitharajab (ed.) *Vernacular Hermeneutics*, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 66

¹³ Helwig, Charles C. "The development of personal autonomy throughout cultures." *Cognitive Development* 21, no. 4 (2006): 465

¹⁴ Dime, C. A. "Divination: the penumbra of African traditional religion." *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies* 14, no. 2 (1982): 105



a healer treats the whole individual and addresses symptoms that are social, psychological, spiritual, and physical. The natural from the spiritual or the physical from the supernatural are not distinguished by traditional healers. They will thus be forced to approach health concerns from the two main angles of spirituality and physicality.¹⁵ In the past, illnesses that afflicted communities were frequently blamed on the afterlife or on vengeful ancestors who needed to be appeased with numerous sacrifices. Such illnesses may have their origins in the germ hypothesis in modern times. Nonetheless, in traditional African civilization, the spirit hypothesis predominates over the germ theory. Among the Africans, mental problems are partly attributed to the bad spirits, the devils (demons), and require an exorcism.¹⁶

The idea that spirits rule over human affairs is widely held in African societies. The existence of evil is brutally real in the African indigenous culture. Enemies include witches, sorcerers, wizards, bad spirits, and anybody who wishes you harm. In African indigenous civilisation, the knowledge of these foes is a significant cause of terror and worry. The Yoruba people of Nigeria hold the view that each individual has at least one *ofa*, or adversary, who might cause unpleasant repercussions. It might be strange behavior, the unexpected loss of children and possessions, a long-term sickness, or even death. Even among Christians, this perspective of reality has barely changed throughout time. Nigerian traditional healers can be subdivided into two broad subgroups on the basis of their epistemological, rather than on the basis of their therapeutic regiment .

The prominent methods of healing spiritually based cases in African society include spiritual protection, sacrifices, spiritual cleansing, appeasing the gods, exorcism, and pouring of libation while the healing process of physically based issues is often handled through an herbal application which is the main focus of this study. To address physical health issues, "the traditional healer or diviner would prescribe herbs to the ill individual depending on the type of sickness they had brought to him. These prescriptions include detailed directions on the dosage, period, and how to prepare the herb".¹⁷

Also, the sick person would apply the white clay to his or her body for several days as part of the treatment procedures, which the

¹⁵ Aidey Thorpe, *African traditional religions* (University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1993), 123.

¹⁶ Anekwe Oborji, *Towards A Christian Theology of African Religion- Issues of Interpretation and Mission*. Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publications., 2005), 149

¹⁷ White, Peter. "The concept of diseases and health care in African traditional religion in Ghana." *HTS: Theological Studies* 71, no. 3 (2015): 5



traditional healer would prepare with some herbs. Most people with skin problems receive treatment in this way. This idea's foundational notion is based on Genesis 2:7. They hold the opinion that since the human body is composed of dust and earth, you must return to its original location to address any problems. This can also be linked to the healing miracles performed by Jesus in Mark 8:22–23 and John 9:6–7 when He combined his saliva with clay. Rituals for prevention can also occasionally involve the use of clay and plants. For ritual preventatives, certain plants are available. The sick person can ward off attacks from the spirits responsible for their ailment by applying the herb and clay to their bodies.¹⁸

Biblical Concept of Healing

The concept of healing cannot be overemphasized in the bible, the concept of faith healing or divine healing is an exercise believed by Christians as being rooted in the bible. Faith-Healing is the use of gestures (such as laying on hands) and prayer that some think will invoke divine intervention for both spiritual and bodily healing. Religious belief in divine intervention does not depend on empirical proof of a faith-based result that is supported by evidence.¹⁹ The Old Testament Bible has twelve instances of personal healing and three instances of collective healing, according to Mayhue

The healing story of Naaman who had leprosy and was cured after receiving a sevenfold wash in the river, is one of the Old Testament's healings (2 Kg 5:14). Seven years after contracting a sickness that damaged his senses and caused him to begin living like an animal, a once-famous Babylonian monarch totally recovered and regained his position as a global leader (Dan 4:33–34). Leprosy was cured in Miriam (Nm 12:13). Even people's lives were restored by God. Elijah's touch brought healing to the son of the widow from Zarephath (1 Kg 17:17–24). The Shunammite's son was revived from the dead by Elisha (2 Kg 4:18–37).²⁰

The prophet Elisha visited Mount Gilgal during a famine while a group of prophets was gathering there (2 Ki 4:38). He instructed them to

¹⁸ White, Peter. "The concept of diseases and health care in African traditional religion in Ghana (2015): 5

¹⁹ Andrew Village. "Dimensions of belief about miraculous healing" . *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*. **8** (2). 2005

²⁰ Richard Mayhue, *Divine healing today*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 73

prepare a huge pot of toxic wild vine stew for these prophets (2 Ki 4:38). Because the stew was produced from a toxic wild vine, the group of prophets cried out, "Oh man of God there is death in the pot," as they were eating it (2 King 4:38–42). Elisha, the prophet of God, used flour to mend the stew, making the dish safe once more (2 King 4:42-44).²¹

The aforementioned instances show that there were several healings in early Biblical times, "(to Israel) the return to health meant redemption from all sorts of disease". Salvation is therefore about "getting protection against the perils of witchcraft love and recovery from illness".²² Yahweh identifies himself as a healer in the book of Exodus, saying, "I, the Lord, am your healer" (Ex 15:26b). The validity of Hasel's assertion that the Lord of the covenant is viewed as the "healer" in the avoidance of the illnesses that plagued the Egyptians should also be acknowledged. The covenant people's health would be preserved if they obeyed the Lord (Ex 15:26a).²³

The principal agent of healing in the Old Testament is Yahweh, who sometimes used the prophets as the channel of fulfilling this supernatural task. Yahweh was the direct agent of healing for Sarah in Genesis 18:11–14 and Genesis 21:1-2, whereby the barren women of Abimelech's household had children (Gn 20:17-18). Through praying to Yahweh, Rebecca, and Rachel were able to conceive (Gn 20:17-18). While not being given much attention in the Old Testament text, physicians are acknowledged as agents of healing, and their role is acknowledged as well as their value. In contrast, physicians were respected in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and other parts of Africa during the post-biblical era, and their presence was not only acknowledged but also conspicuous. Individuals were urged not to reside in areas without physicians.²⁴ Also, Old Testament prophets either provide medical counsel or perform healing treatments on the ill. As mentioned earlier, Naaman, the leader of the Syrian army, was healed of his leprosy when Elisha gave him the advice to bathe in the Jordan River (2 Ki 5:1-14)

²¹ Rugwiji, Temba. "Faith-based healing and African traditional medicine in Zimbabwe: A postcolonial perspective." *Theologia Viatorum* 43, no. 1 (2019): 5

²² Rugwiji, Temba. "Faith-based healing and African traditional medicine in Zimbabwe: A postcolonial perspective, 7

²³ Hasel, Gerhard F. "Health and healing in the Old Testament." *Andrews University Seminary Studies (AUSS)* 21, no. 3 (1983): 8.

²⁴ Gaiser, Frederick J. *Healing in the Bible: Theological insight for Christian ministry*. Baker Academic, 2010, 59-60



In the New Testament, several passages in the four canonical gospels of the New Testament claim that Jesus had healing powers much beyond what was possible in first-century medicine. Jesus' healing deeds are seen as miraculous and remarkable because the outcomes are unusual or statistically unlikely Jesus Christ performed several healings throughout His public ministry. Never before in history have so many individuals received healings recorded in the gospels.²⁵ However, some factors must be taken into account to comprehend Christ's healing ministry at the heart of the numerous healings documented during his career. The numerous goals that Christ's healing mission fulfilled all ultimately helped to establish Jesus' divinity and also as the genuine Christ (Messiah) that the Old Testament scripture has written about.²⁶

Jesus commanded his disciples to heal the sick and said that evidence of faith includes things like healing. Jesus also instructed his disciples to "Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, cleanse the lepers, and drive out devils". Jesus had a distinctive ministry. The multitude exclaimed, "This has never been seen in Israel," when Jesus exorcised an evil spirit from a dumb man (Mt 9:32– 33). Jesus' healing abilities were a gift from the Father; for instance, by the power of the Holy Spirit, He exorcised demons (Mt 12:28). He could heal the ill because the Lord's might be with him (Lk 5:17). • He declared that the Son is powerless to act on his own (Jn 5:19). Through him, God performed signs (Act 2:22). Because God was with Christ, he was able to heal (Act 10:38).

Theology and Practice of Divine Healing In Christ Apostolic Church

One of the most upheld tenets of Christ Apostolic Church is the belief system of Faith healing. "Divine Healing through obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ and Faith in His name and merits of His blood for all sickness, disease and infirmities". Prior to 1930, when the founding fathers were associated with Philadelphia's Faith Tabernacle, this notion was formed. The three pillars of CAC faith are this faith, the belief in forgiveness from sin, and reliance on God for all necessities. Members rely on God for healing as a result. The Biblical assertions that support this tenant are James 5:14– 18 and 2 Kings 1:2– 4.²⁷

²⁵ Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A historical introduction to the early Christian writings*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 251

²⁶ Bosworth, Fred Francis. *Christ, the Healer: Sermons on Divine Healing*. (FF Bosworth, 2001), 130

²⁷ Christ Apostolic Church, *Christ Apostolic Church (Worldwide) Constitution and Doctrines*, (Ibadan: CAC Publicity Department, 1995), 12

Although Christianity has always recognised and practiced faith healing, Pentecostalism increased its focus on it. The emphasis on healing dates back to the mid-nineteenth century when efforts were made to bring back New Testament signs and wonders to the church.²⁸ Although the concept of Faith healing is prominent in Christ Apostolic Church, it is to be noted that Faith Healing does not originate from the church. The practice of faith healing is a crucial indicator of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity as a worldwide movement. Others who have studied Pentecostalism concur with Brown that faith healing rather than "speaking in tongues or prosperity" best describes it as different from other forms of Christianity.²⁹

Of the three constitutions of CAC (1961, 1970, and 1998) only the edition of 1998 has divine healing as a tenet. The term "tenet" is used in this article for CAC dogma or doctrines accepted by the Church to guide the religious practices of its members. In this wise, one can conclude that divine healing is a belief held dearly by the members of the Christ Apostolic church as a means for arriving at health after being inflicted with a disease or an illness.

Questionable is the assertion made by the late General Evangelist of CAC, David O. Babajide, that: *lati owo Emi Mimo, ni a ti fi awon ilana ati eko ijo CAC le awon baba wa ninu igbagbo l'owo*. The direct translation of this means that: CAC practices and teachings were passed down to our founding fathers by the Holy Spirit.³⁰ The church ruled that a pregnant lady must not visit any hospital or maternity home for either a checkup or childbirth shortly after CAC was founded. The constitution stipulated that those who broke the law would face harsh penalties, including a six-month suspension from receiving Holy Communion. The next step will be to declare Western Medicare to be sinful.³¹ The CAC's 12th tenet reads: "We believe and hold: 'Divine healing through obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ and faith in His name and merits of His blood for all sickness, diseases and infirmities.

²⁸ Vinson Synan, "A Healer in the House?" Hope-Faith-Prayer, n.d (2017) @ <https://www.hopefaithprayer.com/word-of-faith/a-healer-in-the-house-vinson-synan/> .. Accessed on 21st February, 2023

²⁹ Candy Brown. "Introduction: Pentecostalism and the Globalization of Illness," in *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*. (New York: Oxford University Press., 2011), 3

³⁰ David O. Babajide, *Iwe Ibeere ati Idahun Ijo C.A.C.* (Ilesha: Self Published, 1980), 1

³¹ Christ Apostolic Church, *Christ Apostolic Church (Worldwide) Constitution and Doctrines*, (Ibadan: CAC Publicity Department, 1995), 42.

Prior to 1930, when the founding fathers were associated with Philadelphia's Faith Tabernacle, this belief was developed. The three pillars of CAC faith are this faith, the belief in forgiveness from sin, and reliance on God for all necessities. Members rely on God for healing as a result of their Biblical expository of 2 Kings 1:2– 4 and James 5:14– 18. CAC, according to Orogun, was established on three principles: reliance on God alone for material supply without borrowing from others; exclusive reliance on Christ for salvation; and reliance on God alone for healing without the use of drugs.³² He observes that CAC's emphasis on faith healing and the Holy Spirit sets it apart from other denominations. His two assertions are untrue because all Pentecostal churches share the same doctrines of the divine and the Holy Spirit's baptism. Orogun contends that the use of pharmaceuticals for healing in CAC is “ a tremendous sin, a disobedience to Jesus and a denial of Jesus, albeit he takes a more audacious tack than Joseph Babalola.³³

The use of medicines for healing was still a topic of debate among the members of the Faith Tabernacle Congregation in Nigeria in 1930. A meeting was scheduled for July 9 and 10 in Ilesa to discuss a report sent to church leaders about Pastor J.A. Babatope, who was allegedly accused of teaching the church in Oyan that using drugs, whether they were domestic or imported, was acceptable. This accusation ran counter to the beliefs of the majority of church members. Also stating that the meeting's key agenda was altered by Joseph Babalola's miracle of resurrecting the dead in Ilesa.³⁴ When the elders of the fledgling church were debating whether Christians should use pharmaceuticals for healing, Babalola unexpectedly revived a dead man. The church's leaders deduced from this occurrence that God was against the use of pharmaceuticals for healing. No decisions were made at that meeting, but those who were advocating that the use of medicines should be considered a part of divine healing briefly suffered a setback.³⁵

³² Joseph Orogun, “ History of CAC,” an unpublished lecture delivered at the 5th CAC. Ilorin: National Sunday School Conference, 5

³³ Joseph Orogun, “ History of CAC,” an unpublished lecture delivered at the 5th CAC. Ilorin: National Sunday School Conference, 7

³⁴ Daniel Olayiwola, “ Joseph Ayo Babalola (1904-1959),” *Makers of the Church in Nigeria 1842-1947*, (ed) J.A. Omoyajowo, Lagos, CSS Bookshop, 1995, 142

³⁵ Daniel Olayiwola, “ Joseph Ayo Babalola (1904-1959),” *Makers of the Church in Nigeria 1842-1947*, (ed) J.A. Omoyajowo, Lagos, CSS Bookshop, 1995, 142



The Role of Herbal Medicine in Healthcare delivery in Nigeria

The fundamental provision of clinical treatment at the community level by traditional medicine is crucial because it is founded on the general principles of natural and holistic healing, psychological community welfare, economic growth, and wealth creation. According to archeological evidence, people have been using medicinal herbs since the Paleolithic period, or about 60,000 years ago. Herbal treatments have been documented in writing since the Sumerians' list-making of plants more than 5,000 years ago. In texts known as herbals, certain prehistoric cultures discussed plants and their medicinal applications.³⁶

Although herbalism has drawn criticism for having the potential to be a minefield of faulty product quality, dangers, and even false health advice, however, herbal medicine remains one of the major remedies to healthcare delivery in Africa, particularly Nigeria. The major factors that contributed to the wide acceptance of herbal medicine as it is the cultural acceptability, affordability, and accessibility, while a crucial part of traditional medicine is herbal medicine". Erinosh, says that:

Nigerian traditional healers can be subdivided into two broad subgroups on the basis of their epistemologies, rather than on the basis of their therapeutic regimen. The first are the indigenous native healers and the other, the faith healers. The former have been part of the Nigerian society from time immemorial, while the latter only began to play a vital role in the healing art about the middle of the 19th century.³⁷

(Oreagba, Oshikoya, & Amachree) also say that:

Traditional medicine is a broad term that refers to a variety of health practices, approaches, knowledge, and beliefs. It includes manual techniques, exercises, spiritual therapies, and medicines derived from plants, animals, or minerals that are used singularly or

³⁶ Braun, Lesley, and Marc Cohen. *Herbs and natural supplements, volume 2: An evidence-based guide*. Vol. 2. Elsevier Health Sciences, 2015, 12

³⁷ Onifade Erinosh, "Health Sociology for Universities, Colleges and Health-related Institutions" (Ijebu-Ode: Bulwark Consult 2019), 51

in combination to maintain health as well as to treat, diagnose, or prevent disease.³⁸

According to WHO, in several Asian and African nations, traditional medicine provides primary healthcare for more than 80% of the population.³⁹ In previous research, WHO further emphasized that between 70 and 80 percent of people in many developed nations have utilized complementary or alternative medicine, such as Ayurveda, homeopathic, naturopathic, traditional oriental, and Native American Indian medicine.⁴⁰

Oreagba, Oshikoya & Amachree, also say that: "The most often used traditional medicine is herbal, and it is quite profitable on the global medical market. In Western Europe, annual revenues were predicted to be \$5 billion in 2003– 2004, in China, they were estimated to be \$14 billion in 2005, and in Brazil, they were estimated to be US\$ 160 million in 2007".⁴¹ Shifting our focus back to Nigeria, malaria and blood enrichment were two illnesses for which herbal remedies were employed. In Nigeria and other African Countries, the first line of treatment for 60% of children with high fever resulting from malaria is the use of herbal medicines at homes, finished herbal medicines have active components that are plant parts or other plant materials. Plant parts used in the product may include seeds, berries, roots, leaves, bark, or flowers.⁴²

There are many real-world and scientific examples that support the effectiveness and value of several medicinal plants in the Nigerian healthcare system. Several that have noteworthy with pharmacological effects that can be seen include: Aloe vera; It has

³⁸ Oreagba, Ibrahim Adekunle, Kazeem Adeola Oshikoya, and Mercy Amachree. "Herbal medicine use among urban residents in Lagos, Nigeria." *BMC Complementary and Alternative medicine* 11 (2011): 7

³⁹ W.H.O. *Media Centre: Traditional Medicine* (2008), <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs134/en/>. Accessed February 20, 2023 @

⁴⁰ World Health Organisation. *Legal status of traditional medicine and complementary/alternative medicine*. (Geneva: Worldwide review, WHO, 2001).

⁴¹ Oreagba, Ibrahim Adekunle, Kazeem Adeola Oshikoya, and Mercy Amachree. "Herbal medicine use among urban residents in Lagos, Nigeria." *BMC Complementary and Alternative medicine* 11 (2011): 5

⁴² Elujoba, Anthony A., O. M. Odeleye, and C. M. Ogunyemi. "Traditional medicine development for medical and dental primary health care delivery system in Africa." *African journal of traditional, complementary and alternative medicines* 2, no. 1 (2005): 48

long been used to treat burns and other wounds.⁴³ Melegueta aframomism, alligato pepper; Fruits, seeds, and leaves are used as stimulants and as a cold treatment. Goat weed is known by the Yoruba name ime-esu (*Ageratum conyzoides* L (Compositae). Fresh plant juice is used to wounds, ulcers, craw craws, and as a treatment for inflammation. Hausa-Tafarnwa language, Liliaceae family, *Allium Sativum* used for fevers, coughing, flatulence, and nervous system diseases, it has diuretic qualities. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) (*Zingiber officinale*), Ripe fruit is consumed as a laxative. It is said that seeds boiled in milk are a potent contraceptive and a treatment for diabetes. Components of green tea (*Camelia sinensis*) may slow the growth of breast cancer cells and hasten the healing of scars.⁴⁴

A wide variety of applications in the treatment of illnesses, particularly critical diseases of Africa like HIV/AIDS, malaria, sickle cell disease, diabetes, and hypertension. In Nigeria, using pure compounds obtained from plants, plant extracts, or both to cure illness has become a medicinal approach that has withstood the test of time.⁴⁵

Sociological Implication of Faith-Healing and Herbal Therapy Application in Christ Apostolic Church

The sociological effect of faith healing cannot be undermined, especially in Christ Apostolic Church. Some believers assert that religious faith may heal illness and handicap, and they think that rituals such as prayer can invoke a supernatural presence and power. Any results from faith healing that can be experimentally confirmed do not affect a person's religious belief in divine intervention. This is also the case with Christ Apostolic Church, wherein there is the belief that God has the power to heal people divinely without any medical support.⁴⁶

It is to this effect that Sophia Odunlami, a teacher in an Anglican school close to Ijebu Ode, asserted that she had been called by God to be a prophetess. Odunlami, who was one of prominent member of

⁴³ Maenthaisong, Ratre, Nathorn Chaiyakunapruk, Surachet Niruntraporn, and Chuenjid Kongkaew. "The efficacy of aloe vera used for burn wound healing: a systematic review." *burns* 33, no. 6 (2007): 713

⁴⁴ Belguise, Karine, Shangqin Guo, and Gail E. Sonenshein. "Activation of FOXO3a by the green tea polyphenol epigallocatechin-3-gallate induces estrogen receptor a expression reversing invasive phenotype of breast cancer cells." *Cancer research* 67, no. 12 (2007): 5763

⁴⁵ Raphael, Ekeanyanwu Chukwuma. "Traditional medicine in Nigeria: current status and the future." *Research journal of pharmacology* 5, no. 6 (2011): 94

⁴⁶ Ayegboyin, Deji, and S. Ademola Ishola. "African Indigenous Churches." *An Historical Perspective* (1997), 67



Faith Tabernacle, that later metamorphosised to C.A.C, stressed the healing ability of God. Some of her ideas concerning divine healing are still persisting in CAC to this day, albeit in changed forms. One of which was criticising the usage and production of medication because they are against the will of God.⁴⁷ Availability of a good medical facility has been one of the major problems the country has been facing right from time, and this necessitated the need for an alternative therapy, either faith-healing or herbal therapy.

Again, Odunlami delivered another oracle to her audience that they should use rain water and, blanched oil sanctified with prayer for healing the plague which was sometimes known as the Spanish flu, some described it as a bubonic and small pox epidemic, in the southern part of Nigeria, which followed shortly after the end of the World War I.⁴⁸ This was due to the air pollution brought on by the many weapons used during the conflict, particularly bombs. In October of that year, the influenza reached its peak. As a result, the government issued an order to close all public buildings, including churches, in an effort to stop the bubonic plague from spreading further.⁴⁹

It is to be duly noted that other than the fact that people were saved from a serious epidemic that had taken away the life of many, the society can be also said to be saved indirectly due to the aftermath of the healing process exercised in the church. Around 10 million individuals are thought to have perished from the pandemic.⁵⁰ One consequence of this epidemic was the subsequent global economic recession, which saw a number of institutions closed their doors or go out of business. This case was not exempted in Nigeria, wherein colonial rulers and the mission churches withdrew as a result of the closure of institutions such schools, hospitals, clinics, colonial offices, and churches. It was the advent of the Precious Stone Society which

⁴⁷ Ogunleye, A. Richard. "Elimination by substitution: Christ Apostolic Church and indigenous faith interplay in Nigeria." *European Scientific Journal* 9, no. 11 (2013), 183

⁴⁸ Israel Olofinjana, *The Genesis of the Aladura Movement in Nigeria: Lessons to be learned on Coronavirus* (2020) Accessed on 28th February, 2023@ <https://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2020/03/09/the-genesis-of-the-aladura-movement-in-nigeria-lessons-to-be-learned-on-coronavirus/>

⁴⁹ Samuel A. Fatokun, S.A. "I Will Pour Out My Spirit Upon All Flesh" : The Origin, Growth and Development of the Precious Stone (2007). <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj19/fatokun.html> Samson Adetunji Fatokun. Accessed on 28th February, 2023

⁵⁰ Israel Olofinjana, *The Genesis of the Aladura Movement in Nigeria: Lessons to be learned on Coronavirus* (2020) Accessed on 28th February, 2023@ <https://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2020/03/09/the-genesis-of-the-aladura-movement-in-nigeria-lessons-to-be-learned-on-coronavirus/>

later metamorphosed into Christ Apostolic Church that helped the nation at large to recover from this economic dismay.⁵¹ Oluseye asserts that:

According to a research work carried out by Tella Oluseye, the outcome of his work indicated that about 70% of the members of Christ Apostolic Church believe in the use of herbal medicine for healing. Although about 80% of the respondents understand the concept of faith healing to be absolute reliance on the power of God for healing without the use of drugs or herbs.⁵²

Orogun, states that:

The main reason why the western medicine (herbal therapy) were not considered as an alternative for the 1918 epidemic was because herbal medicines were not effective for the epidemic, and it was difficult to distinguish the herbs and concoctions upon which demonic spirits were conjured from those upon which incantations were not pronounced.⁵³

In Nigeria, particularly among the Yoruba's where Christ Apostolic Church originated from, the use of traditional medicine which includes herbal therapy is a well-known fact. Although there is the belief that some of the illnesses faced by people in the society may have supernatural forces behind them, however, other naturally occurring illness that occurs due to the aftermath of malnutrition, insect bites, worms and infections can be approached using herbal therapy.⁵⁴ If the words of Orogun that was aforementioned were critically emphasised, it is deductive that the use of herbal medicine in itself is

⁵¹ Israel Olofinjana, *The Genesis of the Aladura Movement in Nigeria: Lessons to be learned on Coronavirus* (2020) Accessed on 28th February, 2023@ <https://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2020/03/09/the-genesis-of-the-aladura-movement-in-nigeria-lessons-to-be-learned-on-coronavirus/>

⁵² Oluseye Tella, "A Review of Christ Apostolic Church Doctrine of Divine Healing in the Light of Upsurge in The use of Herbal Therapy in Nigeria". Unpublished B.th Thesis @ Christ Apostolic church Theological Seminary Ibadan Campus, 2019, 125-127

⁵³ Joseph Orogun, "History of CAC," an unpublished lecture delivered at the 5th CAC. Ilorin: National Sunday School Conference, 14

⁵⁴ Olugbenga Olagunju, "The traditional healing systems among the Yoruba" . *Archeological Science Journal*, Vol.1. No. 2. (2012):6



not wrong, in as much as they have the ability to cure certain illness and are also free from the influence of incantations and demonic spirits.⁵⁵ while natural illness are cured using herbal therapy, but supernatural or spiritual approach is utilised to treat illnesses or disorders that are thought to have been brought on by preternatural or supernatural causes.

Herbal therapy is an essential and crucial component of alternative medicine. It is an integral component of alternative therapeutic approaches. A variety of plant parts are used in herbal therapy. Plant components have therapeutic qualities: The leaves, stem, fruits, seeds, flowers, and roots are among these components. Essentially, our food, especially the vegetables and fruits are medicinal in nature, therefore, it is part of our cultural heritage for our food to equally serve as medicine.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the early times of the establishment of Christ Apostolic Church, the church is filled with numbers of ministers who promote spiritual healing but have little regard for orthodox and traditional medicine which includes the use of herbs for therapy, a widely accepted alternative in Nigeria and among Yoruba people wherein the church was originated. Most scholars ignore these crucial concerns, leaving it unclear how herbal therapy and faith-healing interact. This research indicates that there is a lot more to gain other than the aforementioned effect of faith-healing and herbal therapy Application in Christ Apostolic Church. Another point to be considered is that this may end the long time controversy that it was the arrival of mission churches and colonialism that truncated the wide used of herbal therapy as a remedy for health issues. Apparently, the significance of herbal medicine cannot be over-emphasised, especially with the dwindling Nigerian economy which is affecting the affordable health care programme and the exploitation of some armchair prophets (self-proclaimed prophet) in the Christianity who are not upright, but are smiling to the banks in the name of divine healing for some common ailments which can be healed through herbal therapy.

The inter-relationship between spiritual, conventional, and biological healing has been studied, it is therefore recommended that the church, as a social institution, should give its members the freedom through biblical teachings by encouraging them to embrace herbal



therapy by complimenting it with faith-healing, where necessary, after all, they all serve common goal of ultimate healing. Herbal Mixtures, especially in African society, and Nigeria in particular, are gaining popularity in today's therapeutic experiences which is due to their cultural acceptability, availability, affordability, efficacy and safety claims. Most of these herbal mixtures are carrying the approval of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration Control (NAFDAC), Nigerian agency saddled with the responsibility of the control of food and drug, meanwhile, the research observes that in the area of herbal medicine, it seems much has to be done to curtail the excesses of consumption of alcohol in the so-called herbal bitter mixtures which are being abused by many, especially our youths. Therefore, it recommends that it is necessary to develop proper guidelines in evaluating the herbal medicine with modern scientific procedures and applying suitable standards for its consumption.

Moreover, the work also examined the unprofessional conduct of some herbal-mixtures hawkers, who are mixing their herbs with illicit substance, like cannabis, tramadol and a host of others, therefore, there is need for the government and the church to sensitise the public and their members respectively of the danger of taking excessive alcohol or illicit drugs in the pretence of herbal mixture. The National Association of Nigerian Traditional Medicine Practitioners (NANTMP) should go after the quacks to enable the society recognise the original amongst them.

Nonetheless, the efficacy of herbal therapy cannot be contested, if properly applied but the research recommends adequate control and public enlightenment of the practitioners. For the church, the study recommends that it should desist from solely teaching faith-healing, without taking into cognizance the importance of herbal-therapy, especially, for preventive diseases, to their members which is readily affordable, after all, both are serving the ultimate wellness.

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