

A CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF THE PRACTICE AND USE OF  
AFRICAN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE AMONG  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN  
REMOLAND OF OGUN STATE

**BY**

**AMANZE, PHILEMON OMERENMA**

(ARP/01 /02/11/0681)

**B.A. (HONS) RELIGION/HEALTH SCIENCE (MICHIGAN, 1984)**

**M.A. PASTORAL MINISTRY (MICHIGAN, 1996)**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE  
OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY,  
ILE-IFE, NIGERIA**

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE, OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES,  
FACULTY OF ARTS

**2007**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study identified and assessed the patterns and the extent of the practice and use of traditional medicine among the Seventh-day Adventists in Remoland; it also examined the veracity of the claim that the practice and use of African traditional medicine amounted to idolatry; analyzed the social, economic and spiritual impacts of the practice and use of traditional medicine on Seventh-day Adventists in Remoland. It also examined the interplay between African traditional medical practices and Western medical practices in the health care delivery system of the Seventh-day Adventists.

A multi-dimensional methodology was adopted. Firstly, phenomenological method was used by applying the principle of epoche to observe and interpret Seventh-day Adventists' belief and practice on the use of African and Western medicine. Secondly, questionnaire and oral interview were used to gather information from Seventh-day Adventists and non Adventists. Fifty Seventh-day Adventists made up of ten pastors, fifteen men and women leaders respectively, ten medical personnel; and fifteen traditional birth attendants, two bone setters and thirty three traditional medical practitioners were interviewed to know the materials and forms of traditional medicine they used. The data generated through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

This study discovered that African traditional medicine played important roles among Seventh-day Adventists. Among the Adventists, the use of herbal medicine had been endorsed by the Bible, is not tantamount to idol worship and it is supported by the ministry of Ellen G. White, a pioneer Seventh-day Adventist. It was discovered that

African traditional medicine complemented the deficiencies in modern medicine in handling some birth related issues. It was also discovered that African traditional medicine was used by most Seventh-day Adventists (56.6% of the 302 respondents) because it was affordable, available and effective for their health needs. African traditional medicine was used only in the explicable form by Seventh-day Adventists and not in the inexplicable form which involved the use of incantations, sacrifices, magic and mystic powers that were beyond human comprehension and empirical laboratory investigations. This explicable form involved the use of herbs, rhizomes, plants and other materials which could be pharmacologically and scientifically explained.

This study concluded that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Remoland played an important role in the use of African traditional medicine to meet the health-care needs of the people in the area.