

**THE PLIGHT OF CHILDREN OF UN-IDENTIFIED PARENTS
OR ABANDONED CHILDREN: OLD TESTAMENT AND
CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY PERSPECTIVES**

BY

**NWEZE, STANLEY N. (REV. CANON)
PG/M.A/06/40772**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION,
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA**

JANUARY, 2010.

TITLE PAGE

**THE PLIGHT OF CHILDREN OF UN-IDENTIFIED PARENTS
OR ABANDONED CHILDREN: OLD TESTAMENT AND
CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY PERSPECTIVES**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED TO DEPARTMENT OF
RELIGION UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER'S OF ARTS (M.A) DEGREE IN RELIGION**

BY

**NWEZE, STANLEY N. (REV. CANON)
PG/M.A/06/40772**

SUPERVISOR: PROF. (BARR.) M.I. OKWUEZE

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION,
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA**

JANUARY, 2010

REQUIREMENT

**THE PLIGHT OF CHILDREN OF UN-IDENTIFIED OR
ABANDONED CHILDREN: OLD TESTAMENT AND THE
CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY PEREPECTIVES**

BY

**NWEZE, STANLEY N (REV. CANON)
REG. NO: PG/M.A/06/40772**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
RELIGION UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS (M.A) IN
RELIGION**

**PROF. (BARR.) M.I. OKWUEZE
SUPERVISOR**

APPROVAL PAGE

This Thesis has been approved for the Department of Religion,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

SUPERVISOR

INTERNAL EXAMINER

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DEAN OF FACULTY

DECLARATION

NWEZE, STANLEY N., a postgraduate student of Department of Religion, University of Nigeria, Nsukka with Reg.No: PG/MA/06/40772 has satisfactorily completed all the requirements for the Course and research works for the award of Masters of Arts Degree in Religion.

This work is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other degree or diploma of this University or any other University.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

PROJECT SUPERVISOR

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the candidate, NWEZE, STANLEY N. with REG. NO: PG/MA/06/40772 has duly effected corrections suggested by the External Examiner.

I, therefore, forward this project to you for onward transmission to the School of Postgraduate Studies.

Thank you,

PROJECT SUPERVISOR

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my children: Somtochukwu, Amarachukwu, Nmesomachukwu, Sopuruchukwu and Eziamaka Nwafor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the first place, I remain grateful to God Almighty who in His infinite mercy saw me through in this project. I feel immensely delighted to have worked under Prof. (Barr.) M. I. Okwueze as my project supervisor. His strong concern, genuine feelings and constructive criticism facilitated the successful completion of this work.

I equally express my profound gratitude to the Rt. Rev. Dr.E.O.Chukwuma (OON), Bishop of Enugu Diocese (Anglican Communion) on whose approval and sponsorship this programme was done. It is also my desire to appreciate the Ven. (Prof.) C. O. Nebo, the immediate past Vice-Chancellor of University of Nigeria, Nsukka for his fatherly care and love for me. I cannot forget to thank Rev. Prof. A. U. Agha, Dr. C. O.T. Ugwu as former Heads and the present Head, Department of Religion University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Rev Fr. Dr. H. C. Achunike for their special assistance to me.

May I also acknowledge my colleagues in the Department of Religion and my fellow students. Finally, I thank Njideka Orjiene for typing this work, Mrs Grace Eruchalu for painstakingly proof read this work and my wife, Mrs. Ukamaka N. Nweze for her invaluable encouragement.

PREFACE

The gift of children brings joy to any families that honestly desire them. However, there are children who are born against the wish of their parents. Hence, they are called “unwanted pregnancy” which is mostly abandoned in different locations in both Old Testament and Contemporary societies. The Plight of children of un-identified parents or abandoned children: from Old Testament and contemporary society perspectives is concerned with these unfortunate children.

This project has examined the plight of abandoned children in the Old Testament and contemporary societies. Their status in both societies shows signs of rejection and abuse from all standards. It also discovered all forms of abandonment of children and proffered solutions to them.

Furthermore, it examined the cultural and religious practices that promote abandonment of children in both societies. Suggestions were made towards reshaping these obnoxious religious practices. The relevance of the church and other agencies to these unfortunate children were brought to focus. Of course, the work tells us that these abandoned children should be allowed to die in their abject poverty and hopeless situations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page -----	i
Requirement -----	ii
Approval Page -----	iii
Declaration -----	iv
Certification -----	v
Dedication -----	vi
Acknowledgements -----	vii
Preface -----	viii
Table of Contents -----	ix
Abstract -----	xii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study -----	1
1.2 Statement of Problem -----	6
1.3 Purpose of Study -----	9
1.4 Significance of the Study -----	9
1.5 Scope of Study -----	12
1.6 Limitation of Study -----	12
1.7 Methodology -----	13
1.8 Definition of terms -----	13

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Abandonment-----	21
2.2 Procreation of Children -----	22
2.3 Children of Un-identified parents in the Old Testament -----	28
2.4 Children of un-identified parents in traditional Igbo society -----	48
2.5 Children of Un-identified parents in the colonial Igbo society -----	53
2.6 Children of un-identified parents in the present day Igbo society-----	57
2.7 The Role of the Church in the Plight of Children of Un-identified parents-----	66
2.8 Summary of the Literature Review -----	69

CHAPTER THREE: THE PLIGHT OF ABANDONED CHILDREN

3.1 Denial of parental care -----	70
3.2 Subjection to Welfare Dependent -----	76
3.3 Illegal adoption of abandoned children -----	78
3.4 Trafficking of Abandoned Children -----	84
3.5 Ritual killings -----	87

CHAPTER FOUR: CHURCH'S RESPONSES TO THE PLIGHT OF ABANDONED CHILDREN

4.1 Sound teachings on sex education -----	95
--	----

4.2 Establishment of orphanages and homes -----	104
4.3 Involvement of the church in the adoption policy -----	107
4.4 Creating more awareness on birth control policy ---	109
4.5 Fight Against customs and traditions that support children Abandonment -----	113
4.6 Rehabilitation of abandoned children in our society-	115

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The prospects of ending child abandonment -----	117
5.2 Recommendations -----	121
5.3 Conclusion -----	123
Bibliography-----	126

ABSTRACT

The study is on "The Plight of Children of Un-identified Parents or Abandoned Children in our Society". Children of un-identified parents refer to those human beings who are below the age of eighteen (18) years whose parents cannot be traced. Moreover, their parents have shelved their parental responsibility to unknown people. This act is always deliberate for different reasons. These abandoned children were found in the Old Testament era and are commonly located in many places in our society, with particular reference to South-East Geo-political Zone: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. The respondents and scholars are of the opinion that these children face a number of challenges beyond their control. These challenges deserve the intervention of the church under the auspices of Christian Association of Nigeria (C.A.N), South-East Zone. This is to complement the efforts of the Government and non-Governmental organizations in proffering solutions to these challenges. Hence, the abandoned children will have new lease of life, always full of hope and prospects for better living. It will reduce the anti-social behaviours usually exhibited by some of these children of un-identified parents.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Of the Study

In recent times, the menace of abandoned children has no doubt posed one of the Nigerian sociological challenges. To this end, there are children in all directions with reports of abandonment, exploitation, misery and oppression by unidentified parents. Ejeabukwa (2002:24) observed that children often wrapped in bags are abandoned in the dustbins, roadsides, street corners, uncompleted building or thrown into a pit toilet by some wicked people because they are not ready to care for the children, and because of the fear of shame and stigmatization of having illegitimate children or because the children are malformed. Kanu (2009:23) also noted, "In the quiet and breezy Palm groove area of Lagos State lies abused children where they come in with their many pathetic stories of pain, rejection, abuse and torture".

These children most probably are abandoned by their parents for varying reasons. These may include inability to provide enough economically to sustain the family. Some of

them are said to be ashamed of having children outside wedlock. Such parents mostly students feel ashamed of disappointing their parents who are responsible for their training in school. For the above reasons, these children were abandoned. In some cases, the children were denied of their fundamental human rights. They are also used for ritualistic purposes, which reveal a frightfully widespread disdain.

There are many known instances of abandonment of children in Nigeria, especially in the South- East zone of Nigeria: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. Itauma (2009:24) estimates about 5,000 children being abandoned in South- East zone of Nigeria since 1998, and many bodies have turned up. This estimated number of abandoned children in the present day society calls for urgent attention.

In the Old Testament, children abandonment is not far fetched owing to the fact that there were series of wars among the people. This could render some unfortunate children homeless. In turn, these children became abandoned children. The sacrifice of children to Molech attests for the child abandonment in the Old Testament. Of course, God expressed his displeasure over this act of human sacrifice. Vaux

(1961:42) said that, "...for the God of Israel abhorred the sacrifice of children (Lev. 20:2 – 5)". This may account for the preference of ram to Isaac by God, for the sacrifice against the readiness of Abraham for the human sacrifice (Gen. 22). Isaac was the only legitimate child of Abraham. It was a trail of faith in which God (Heb. **'elohim**) wanted to ascertain the degree of Abraham's obedience to Him. He was out to sacrifice Isaac to God as a mark of respect and absolute obedience to Him. It is a clear indication that God does not rejoice in the suffering or death of children.

In addition, the same obnoxious practice was also invoked in the traditional Igbo society. The people were involved in children abandonment in obedience to certain customs and traditions. Those who were born twins or had other natural disorder were thrown into the evil forest. In most cases, such children died without recovery, while some of them were fortunate to have been rescued by good citizens. For instance, in those olden days, when a woman was pregnant she would be praying secretly and hoping that she would not give birth to twins. At birth, on realizing that the second child was on the way, some midwives would abandon their patients. In such

cases, a man who cared to help would reluctantly engage the service of a very old woman to finish the job. Some of these innocent helpless women died as a result of the act. The twins were abandoned in the forests where they cried to death or devoured by animals.

Usually, children of un-identified parents were exposed to certain inhuman practices. They were mostly sent away as domestic slaves. They were also used for many other purposes such as rituals, child labour and trafficking. In most cases, abandonment of children was carried out in order to meet up with some pressing financial problems as well as cultural demands. The parents of these abandoned children were usually left without options but the obligation was on them to comply. This was among the negative culture practised by the Igbo people before the advent of Christianity. This culture usually tends to be oppressive, autocratic, and destructive.

Children who are left without identifiable parents should not be allowed to perish in our contemporary society. Hence, it is expedient that churches should rise to the occasion and try to alleviate the sufferings of these abandoned children.

Espeut (2009: 12) observes that:

Everyone knows that Fathers of the Church laid down the duty of the rich toward the poor in no uncertain time. As St. Ambrose puts it. You are not making a gift of what is yours to the poor man, but you are giving him back what is his.

These abandoned children are sometimes classified among poor people in our contemporary society. The church is meant to do everything within her reach to give assistance to this group of people in our society. It is not only assisting them in their sufferings but also in the areas of reducing the rate of children abandonment. The church cannot do all these without proper moral teaching and fight against any custom and tradition that promote or support children abandonment at all levels. As the church carries out all these, the records of child abuse and neglect will be reduced squarely. Uzodike (1990:14) noted that "child abuse as a social problem has only very recently gained the recognition and attention of the Nigeria Public". Therefore, the plight of the children of un-identified parents in Nigeria, especially in the South-East zone will be a

thing of the past, if churches could throw in their weight to address it.

1.2 Statement Of Problem

There is an increasing concern about the collapse of societal and moral values in our society. The blame always goes to the families for not carrying out their responsibilities to the children. The family is the smallest unit of the society. It is the bedrock of the society. The family has a lot to contribute to the well being of the society. O'Donovan (1996:288) is of the opinion that the parents' task of raising children includes the responsibility of giving their children thorough Christian instruction in the ways of the Lord (Gen. 18:19). Thorough Christian instruction helps to shape a child to maintain good moral standard in our society.

Moral degradation is all over our society especially among the teenagers. Amamgbo (2009:18) once said, "I am more interested in ensuring that our society does not turn out to be socially and morally depraved as most western societies are today". In his own contribution, Okolo (1993:15) posits that the problem of decaying moral values, which is evident in our society today, arises from our contemporary over secularization

of institutions that are naturally sacred leading to negative values. It is no longer debatable whether there is moral degradation but the issue lies on not allowing it to be worse than the western society.

The situation on ground has really increased the number of abandoned children in our society. In most cases, they are abandoned along the streets, thrown into the toilet pits, dustbins and bushes, as well as willful abandonment in some hospitals after delivery. These children are abandoned for obvious reasons. They include avoiding the sin of committing murder or abortion, besides, inability of parents to take care of their children due to poverty, and the position of the custom and the tradition of the land on pregnancy outside marriage.

Furthermore, these abandoned children are denied of their parental duties to them, which include giving them names, caring for their physical needs, educating them, disciplining them and laying up inheritance for them. Obviously, these abandoned children are prone to many of the social vices in the Old Testament and our contemporary society. Hence, they create many societal problems ranging from stealing, armed

robbery, immorality as well as becoming bandits, when they are not properly trained.

However, we are concerned with the plight of the children of un-identified parents who are kept by these religious or charitable organizations. The study is to ascertain if these groups are really doing what they are supposed to do in the area of child rearing. The Psalmist said, "Behold children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward" (Ps. 127:3). For this reason, every child is from God and is supposed to be well cared for by all and sundry, irrespective of the social status. Again, it is said, "Train up a child in a way he should grow, and he will not depart from, when he grows up" (Prov.22:6). Every child has a role to play in the Society. Hence, good care should be given to him.

This study will be of good help to look into the present moral decadence in Igbo traditional society, and proffer solutions to them. The abandoned children should be viewed with every sense of responsibility in our society. It is viewed that at the conclusion of this study, the issue of children abandonment will be reduced drastically and parents will be encouraged not to abandon their children. This will surely

restore the hope of these abandoned children in our society. This study intends to examine closely the Old Testament – Israelites and Igbo family institutions in respect to children abandonment.

1.3. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to:

- i. examine the plight of abandoned children in our society,
- ii. know the status of abandoned children in the Old Testament and Igbo societies,
- iii. discover and put in proper perspective the need to fight against all forms of abandonment of children,
- iv. examine cultural and religious practices that promote abandonment of children and suggest ways through which they could be amended,
- v. and know how best to improve the economy of our country for better living.

1.4 Significance Of the Study

It is true to say that, children are always abandoned in our society almost everyday. The abandonment involves both the infants and teenagers. It is done shamelessly without any

singular resistances. Hence, it is almost becoming an acceptable practice in our society. People usually say that it is better to abandon babies instead of killing them. On this basis, one may ask these questions: Is there any relationship between the Israelites of the Old Testament and the Igbo traditional society in child abandonment? How did both of them handle the abandoned children in their own time? What are the possible ways the church can be of great use in the issue of child abandonment? These questions and other similar ones expose the significance of this study.

However, a close look at the purpose of this thesis as stated above makes it evident that the study will be of great significance in many aspects. The research has been conducted to create awareness among Judaeo-Christians and to alert the society on the implications of abandonment of children in our society. It is also significant because it will help to educate not only the Judaeo-Christians but other members of the society on the implication of abandonment of children. The significance of this study cannot be overemphasized especially in the area of enhancing good moral standard among the people of the society.

In addition, the research will be significant because it will remind us about the ugly situation of the children of unidentified parents in the places where they are cared for. It will be of great help in understanding the possible ways of reducing the rate of children abandonment in our society. This research is also vital for research fellows in institutions of higher learning who might desire to under-take some studies on children abandonment.

Moreso, the significance of this research is not far fetched from teaching or reminding people about the need to see "children as heritage from God". These children should not be maltreated in any way by sex-hawkers, unconcerned parents and managers of the orphanages and motherless babies' homes. It also draws the attention of all the Christian denominations in Nigeria especially in Igbo society. These denominations should come together under one umbrella to challenge and denounce every structure that encourages children abandonment. They should see the reasons for not allowing the increase of such children in the present and future societies in Nigeria. This has always constituted problems all over the places. Therefore, this research, in no small measure will assist the religious,

governmental and non-governmental organizations to know how to improve on the welfare of these children.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focused attention on the children of un-identified parents or abandoned children in the Old Testament and in our contemporary society especially the present Igbo society. It took cognizance of the fact that children are equally abandoned in the other parts of the world. The researcher examined the role played by the church, in conjunction with the governmental and non-governmental organizations in alleviating the plight of the abandoned children in Igbo society at any point in time.

1.6 Limitations of the study

Whereas, it was the intention of the researcher to carry out the study in more than twenty-two (22) Motherless Babies Homes and Orphanages in the South-East geo-political zone of Nigeria: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states. Sixty (60) respondents were sampled and used for this study.

Moreover, the respondents tend to shy away from giving information to the researcher, even after assurance of confidentiality of their responses. Hence, the researcher had to

make appeal in order to collect enough data. Some of them and other material problems include such factors as distance between the researcher and the respondents, bad roads and the season of the year.

1.7 Methodology

The researcher made use of two basic sources: primary and secondary, for data collection. The primary source was an oral interview while the secondary sources were textbooks, questionnaires, magazines, newspapers and, internet among others. The information collected were carefully sifted, organized, analyzed and systematically written down for easy comprehension.

An imperative framework is employed with critical and analytical approaches to reflect on abandonment of children in our contemporary society.

1.8 Definition of Terms

In this part of this study, eight major terms need to be defined. These are plight, children, abandoned, un- identified, parents, Old Testament, contemporary and society. We will begin first by looking at the term, "plight" and end with the term, "perspectives".

i Understanding the term 'plight'

The word "plight" is sometimes used as a noun or a verb. Hornby (2000:892) defined "plight" as a difficult and sad situation. It could also be rendered as "to make formal pledge, especially when promising to marry" which is synonymous with the verbal phrase, "make vow" meaning "pledge". Therefore, the term plight is contextualized to mean "difficult situation".

ii. Understanding the term "Children"

In recent times, the word "children" (Heb. **banim**) has attracted so many definitions from various scholars and theologians. Attempts have equally been made to limit or expand its meaning. However, the term "children" is the plural form of the noun, "child". Hornby (2000:188) explained-child in for ways:

- (a) It refers to a young human being who is not yet an adult
- (b) it also means a son or daughter of any age
- (c) it connotes a person who is strongly influenced by the ideas and attitudes of a particular time or person, and
- (d) It is a way of (disapproving) an adult who behaves like a child and not mature or responsible.

Another school of thought defines a 'child' as somebody under a legal specified age who is considered not to be legally responsible for his or her actions". In addition, the 1999 Amended Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides:

... in chapter 3, section 29, and sub-section 46 that full age' means the age of eighteen years and above. By implication, a child in Nigeria refers to anybody who is less than 18 years and is not married.

Hence, this research is done in Nigeria, and it is most appropriate to accept the constitutional definition of child. The term, "children" refers to those human beings who are below the age of 18 years. These sets of people are usually deemed not mature to take responsibilities. Hence, such people are not to vote, or be voted for during elections. In this study, children here mean human beings who are not adults and have not attained the age of independence. This covers the period of delivery to the age of 17 years old in Nigeria.

iii. Understanding the term "Abandoned"

The word "Abandoned" is usually used as the adjectival form of the past tense of the verb, "abandon" (Heb.

e'ezabh). It could function as a noun or a verb. Hornby (2000:1) defines the term 'abandon' in five ways: a. it means "to leave somebody", especially you are responsible for; with no intension of returning. (b) it also means "to leave a thing or a place, especially because it is impossible or dangerous to stay (c) Abandon may also mean "to stop supporting or helping somebody; to stop believing in something" (d) it also refers to as, to stop doing something, especially before it is finished; to stop having something. (e) Abandon can also simply mean to feel an emotion so strongly, that you can feel nothing else.

In Encarta Dictionary (2009), the term "abandoned" can also mean "to leave somebody or something behind for others to look after, especially somebody or something meant to be a personal responsibility". From the above definitions, it is not difficult to deduce that the term has to do with total forsaking of something or somebody belonging to you for another person to take care of.

iv. Understanding the phrase "Un-identified Parents".

The phrase "un-identified parent" is made up of two words "un-identified" and "parents". The prefix "un" attached to the

word," identified" puts it in a negative form. According to Hornby (2000:593), the term, "identified" is the past tense of "identify" which means "to recognize somebody or something and be able to say who or what they are". This implies that the un-identified may mean "not recognized" or "unknown by anybody".

In Encarta Dictionary (2009), "parents" refer to the mother and father or legal guardian. However, in a singular form it can be 'a person's "father" or "mother" or "guardian". The phrase "un-identified parents simply means "not known parents". It is always difficult to trace the parents of these abandoned children.

Therefore, the phrase "un-identified parents" refers to those parents who abandon their biological children. These parents of the abandoned children could be hardly traced as the need arises. Hence, they are called the "un-identified parents."

v. Understanding the term, "Old Testament"

According to Cradock and Tucker (2009:24) in Encarta stated that: It is remarkable that Christianity includes within its Bible the entire scriptures of another religion, Judaism. The Old Testament came to be applied to those scriptures based on the

writings of Paul and other early Christians who distinguished between “Old Covenant” that God made with Israel and the “New Covenant” established through Jesus Christ. Because the early church believed in the continuity of history and of divine activity, it included in the Christian Bible the written records of both Old and New covenants.

Therefore, it means the Old covenant. It is made up of three sections of thirty-nine books: the Law (Heb. **tora**), the Prophets (Heb. **nebi'im**) and the Writings (Heb. **Ketabim**). Historically, it is divided in patriarchal, Judges, monarchal, exilic and post-exilic periods.

vi Understanding the term, “Contemporary”

The term contemporary means: 1. of same time: existing or occurring at or dating from the same period as something or somebody else. 2. existing: in existence now problems of contemporary urban society 3. modern in style: distinctively modern in style contemporary dance 4. of same age: of the same or approximately the same age as somebody else (Encarta Dictionary 2009). For the purpose of this work, it refers to something that is in existence now that is present occurrence.

vii Understanding the term, “Society” The term society can be defined as: 1. Relationships among groups: the sum of social relationships among groups of humans or animals. 2. Structured community of people: a structured community of people bound together by similar traditions, institutions, or nationality. 3. Customs of a community: the customs of a community and the way it is organized, e.g. its class structure the role of women in society. 4. Subset of community: a particular section of a community that is distinguished by particular qualities. In those days, the subject was never mentioned in polite society. 5. Prominent people: the prominent or fashionable people in a community, or their social life. 6. Companionship: the state of being with other people seeks the society of coworkers. Group sharing interests: an organized group of people who share an interest, aim, or profession. Generally, society means a group of people sharing common interest in any given environment.

Viii. Understanding the term, “Perspectives”

The word, perspectives can be viewed from these directions as:

1. Particular evaluation of something: a particular evaluation of a situation or facts, especially from one person's point of view a different perspective on the matter.
2. Measured assessment of situation: a measured or objective assessment of a situation, giving all aspects their comparative importance.
3. Appearance of distant objects to observer: the appearance of objects to an observer allowing for the effect of their distance from the observer.
4. Graphic arts allowance for artistic perspective when drawing: the theory or practice of allowing for artistic perspective when drawing (Encarta Dictionary 2009).

For the sake of this work, the term “perspectives” refers to a particular evaluation of a situation or facts.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is concerned with finding the children of unidentified parents or abandoned children in Old Testament and our contemporary societies.

2.1 Abandonment

The concept of abandonment has its root from the Old Testament up to this present day. One of the most fearful concepts in life is the utter termination of a cherished relationship. Whether we call it abandoning, forsaking, giving up on divorce, or the portrait is of a sharp line drawn in a relationship—a line that quickly becomes a great gulf between the two persons, putting them out of reach of one another. Moreover, one of the greatest consequences of being abandoned is that it threatens our feeling of self-worth. “I was worthless, so I was abandoned. I had something wrong with me, so no one wanted me.” How comforting to know that God will never abandon anyone who loves him.

According to Ps. 27:10: “Even if my father (Heb. **’abh**) and mother (Heb. **’em**) abandon me, the Lord will hold me close”. This suggests that there were possibilities of parents abandoning their children for obvious reasons in the Old

Testament. We can observe the psalmist's resolve that God will not abandon him. Truly, this concept of abandonment is widely used in the Old Testament in the relationship between God and his people.

2.2 Procreation

The need for continuity and increase in human populations has given room for procreation. Several attempts have been made to define the concept of procreation but there is no generally accepted definition. Center (1985:9) defines procreation as "the process by which the husband-wife community becomes family community when this meeting takes place between creative divine love and procreative human loves". In his definition, procreation is purely to be carried out by legally married male and female or couples joined together as husbands and wives. He does not support procreation outside marriage.

The fact is that a human being owns his existence to the creative act of God. Married couples are in positions to ensure that this act of procreation takes place. In other words, begetting of children is the work of nature and not by human effort. Kraynak (2001: 213) observed that the creation of male

and female and their union for procreation are part of God's created order". In Encarta, Numbers (2009:12) noted that:

Creationism refers to broad range of beliefs involving an appeal to God's miraculous intervention to explain the origin of the universe, of life, and of the different kinds of plants and animals on earth. Adherents, called creationists, all invoke divine intervention to explain at least some of these phenomena, although they do not necessarily agree on the length of time involved in creation. In the second half of the 20th century, the most visible and politically active creationists maintained that the entire universe was created within the past 6000 to 10,000 years.

Contrarily, scientists maintain their ground on the other possible theories of the origin of man. In Encarta, Potts (2009:23) defined Human Evolution as:

The lengthy process of change by which people originated from apelike ancestors. Scientific evidence shows that the physical and behavioral traits shared by all people evolved over a period of at least 6 million years. One of the earliest defining human traits, bipedalism—walking on two legs as the primary form of locomotion—evolved more than 4 million years ago.

Other important human characteristics—such as a large and complex brain, the ability to make and use tools, and the capacity for language—developed more recently. Many advanced traits—including complex symbolic expression, such as art, and elaborate cultural diversity—emerged mainly during the past 100,000 year. However, the Biblical account of the origin of man (Heb. **'is**) is considered more appropriate for this work. The sexuality of human being is expressed in three passages in the book of Genesis. Firstly as found in Genesis 2:26-28:

Then God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of sea, and over the birds of the air; and over the cattle, and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Livingston (1969:35f) opined that God gave man the command to procreate sets upon the act of production. Essentially the relationship of man and woman in procreation is good; is within the will of God.

The second expression of human sexuality is contained in Genesis 5: 1 – 2:

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the likeness of God he made him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

Genesis 5:7-2 is a synopsis of Gen. 1:27-28, and in form strongly suggested that this genealogy is a unit in itself. God himself created man in his own image. The third expression of human sexuality is seen in Gen. 9:5 – 7:

and surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, shall man shed his blood: for in the image of God made him, man. And you be ye fruitful, and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

And Genesis 9: 5- 7 is the reminiscent of Genesis 1:28-29, God blessed Noah and his sons. They were to dominate all other creatures on the earth. Kraynak (2001:213) said, "The implication is that the human power to procreate is an image of the divine power to create". These three passages show that God intends that there should be fruitfulness and multiplication of the human race that introduced human sexuality. Sanders (2009:221) sees human sexuality:

As the general term referring to various sexually related aspects of human life, including physical and psychological development, and behaviours, attitudes, and social customs associated with individual's sense of gender, relationships, sexual activity, mate selection and reproduction.

It is true that God has permitted the sexual activities for the purpose of procreation but it should not be abused. Norman and Lieberman (2009:45) remarked that, in a 1942 case, the court struck down a law that required compulsory sterilization for one class of felon and not for another, holding that the law discriminated against one group by interfering with the fundamental right of procreation. Furthermore, Freeman (2005:43) defined human procreation as the process of

conceiving and bearing offspring, but it is not limited to biological simplicity. Procreation was ordained by God from the very beginning when He created Adam and Eve.

Finally, the Hebrew words : (Heb. **peru**) and (Heb. **urebhu**) meaning “be fruitful” and “multiply” respectively. Peru is derived from the Hebrew verb (Heb. **para**) which means “bear fruit” while (Heb. **rebhu**) connotes the usage of two Hebrew words (Heb. **u**) and (Heb. **rebhu**). (Heb. **u**) means “and” whereas (Heb. **rebhu**) is rendered as “multiply”. It implies that the concept of fruit bearing is a command from the Hebrew God (Heb. **Yahweh**), and should not be abused. Here we are concerned with the abuse of sex among unmarried young ones, which usually end with unwanted pregnancy.

This unwanted pregnancy in most cases results to having children that cannot be cared for. Hence, these children are usually abandoned in different parts of the society. Bankole (2005:54) observed that the incidence of unwanted pregnancy has been on the rise in Nigeria”. In effect, sexual activities should be carried out with caution, to avoid unwanted pregnancies that are later abandoned by un-identified parents.

2.3 Children of Un-identified Parents in the Old Testament

It is worthy to note that the abandonment of children occurs in two categories: complete and incomplete abandonment. The complete abandonment of children implies leaving the person behind for others to take care of without intention of coming back to the child. The implication is that the child can never see his/her biological parents. Children of this category are always hopeless. The incomplete abandonment of children is the situation where the parent leaves the children behind for others to take care of, with the intention of coming back to him much later. Some parents engage in incomplete abandonment of children because of the situation on ground that cannot guarantee their survival. These parents go into abandonment of children hoping for a better condition when they will be brought back to their original homes.

In this section, we are concerned with finding the sources of abandoned children, and, or children of un-identified parents in the Old Testament. It will possibly look into the attitude of the people of the Old Testament towards these children in their predicament and abandonment. A study on Israel is necessary

to enable us determine their total view about these abandoned children. Okwueze (2001:13) asserted, the Israel, which emerged from a series of common destinies, and experience over the course of time is the result of historical process that could be likened to the formation of many states or nations. It is observable that it is the time before a nation known as Israel came to be in human history. Hinson (1990:24) maintains that the biblical account of the story of Israel begins with God's call to Abraham to be the father of new nation:

Now the Lord had said to Abram,
Get thee out of thy country, and
from thy kindred, and from thy
father's house, unto a land that I
will show thee. I will make of
thee a great nation, and thou
shall be a blessing (Gen. 12:1-
2).

The fulfillment of the promise made by God to Abram surely gave rise to a nation known as Israel. Israel occupies a very important position in the history of man on earth. Israel is referred to the nation that traced its ancestry back to the twelve sons of Jacob and sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacobs' daughter, which thing ought not to be (Gen. 34:7).

Harris (2009:32) points out that the biblical narrative continues with the 12 sons of Jacob, who had four different mothers. These twelve sons of Jacob formed the twelve tribes of Israel. In the Old Testament, the bonds of ancient Hebrews descended from the patriarch Jacob. Each tribe was composed of a group of families, united by blood and constituting a social and political unit.

Ferguson, et-al (1988:344) say that "Israel is thus that people through whom God's purpose to bless the world is to be fulfilled". For this reason, God became more interested in the affairs of the Israelites. However, we will consider the abandoned children, and or children of un-identified parents in the different periods in the Old Testament, beginning with the patriarchal, monarchical, exilic and post-exilic periods.

i. Patriarchal Period to age of Judges

The patriarchal period begins with Abraham. The Biblical scholars place the events surrounding Abraham (originally called Abram) circa 1800 BCE, give or take 100 years. Okwueze (2001:17) observed that according to modern scholars' view, Abraham lived between 2000BC and 1,550BC, in view of the context of the stories about them. Douglas, et-al

(1962:884) opined that the patriarchal age covering the life span of Abram, Isaac and Jacob is described in Genesis 12 –50, although chapters 39-50 are concerned more with Joseph. The patriarchal period centres on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It does not extend to the era of Joseph and his brothers. In addition, it is the time before the Hebrews went to Egypt.

The Judges' age refers to the period in which Judges were in control of Israel. Hinson (1990:80) described Judges as men inspired by God to lead the tribes in battle against their enemies. The Judges in Israel from the time of the elders who outlived Joshua until the time of monarchy. The book of Judges narrates the history of Israel from the death of the Hebrew leader and Joshua to the time just before the birth of the Hebrew prophet Samuel – that is, roughly from the end of the Israelite conquest of Canaan in the 13th Century BC to the beginning of the monarchy in the 11th century BC (Harri; 2009:23).

The patriarchal period witnessed records of abandoned children. For instance, Exodus chapter 2: 1-3:

and there went a man of house
of Levi, and took to wife a
daughter of Levi. And the
woman conceived and bore a

son and when she saw him that he was a godly child, she hid him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took him for ark bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein, and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

It is quite obvious that children abandoned might have existed among the people of Israel. Series of natural disasters such as war, pestilence as well as famine also accounts for the abandonment of children in Israel.

The story of Moses (Heb. **moseh**) is one among many cases of children abandonment during the enslavement of Israel in Egypt. Moses was born when the Israelites (Hebrews) were slaves in Egypt (Heb. **misrayim**). Pharaoh was afraid of them because he thought they might take over his country. He ordered that all Hebrews baby boys be killed at birth. This was to check the population of the Hebrews in the land of Egypt. Barker (1985:85) inferred that Exodus is centered on the account of redemption from bondage to consecration in covenant and the pitching of God's royal tent in the earth, all through the ministry of a chosen mediator, discloses God's purpose in history.

The actions of Egyptians against the Israelites occasioned the abandonment of Moses in a basket and hid by the side of the River Nile. It was true that his sister Miriam was still around to watch the baby boy, Moses, and possibly ascertain what would happen to him. The arrival of Pharaoh's daughter in the scene was timely. She found him helpless in the basket. Moses' sister, Miriam told her that she knew a woman who could be a nurse for the baby. Miriam called for this service, his mother. Pharaoh's daughter took him back from his biological mother when he grew up. This suggests that Moses did not have full parental care, which had a lot of negative effect on his personal and social life. He eventually, ended as the leader of the Hebrew, out of the land of Egypt. Hinson (1990:53) observed, "he was born of an Israelite mother, brought up in the Egyptian palace, and exiled because he killed a man in an uncontrolled anger.

Furthermore, child abuse was recorded in the Old Testament. Gelles (2009:56) defines child abuse as "the intentional acts that result in physical or emotional harm to the children". This child abuse also includes abandonment of children. It is evidenced in the giving away of children to Molech by some

parents. Molech was the god of Ammonites – who was demanding children for sacrifices. It is recorded in Leviticus that the Jews at a point sacrificed children to a god named **Molech**.

The Lord said to Moses, say to the Israelites: any Israelite or any alien living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death. The people of the community are to stone him. I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people. For by giving his children to Molech, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name (Lev. 20: 1-3).

The practice of children sacrifice to Molech is viewed as one of the several ways of abandoning children. It got to the level that needed the intervention of God for the sake of the innocent children. God had to put death penalty on this practice to ensure that they did not continue with this cruel practice. Barker (1985:155) said that the penalty for doing things that were abominable in the eyes of the Lord was severe". Such parents who offended God were removed from the covenant people through direct divine judgment.

In addition, the period of Judges begins after the forty (40) years in the wilderness described in the book of Exodus. Moses died before reaching Canaan. Canaan is the land, which we usually call Palestine in the early years of this period (Hinson, 1990:73). It is the land which the Lord gave to Israel which he swore to give to their fathers; and having taken possession of it, they settled there (Josh. 21:43). The original inhabitants of this land were Canaanites and Amorites who entered it in biblical times (Hinson, 1990:73). It is also known as the Promised Land.

The promised "Land" (Heb. **'adhama**) is the name given to the area promised by God to Abraham and his descendants. Thus, it more or less referred to the same territory described by such terms as "Canaan," "Palestine," "Israel," and "the Holy Land." But "Promised Land" emphasizes the fact that this territory was a gift from God to the Israelites.

The importance of this land area is first seen in the Bible when God called Abraham out of Ur and into Canaan. This was a turning point in God's relationship with humankind. Beginning at this point, he would focus on one group of people, living in one area, in his program of salvation.

The Lord made two promises to Abraham. First, the patriarch would have many descendants. And second, those descendants would occupy the land of Canaan. The promises of land and descendants are tied up together. The first time God made the promise of land to Abraham was when Abraham was new in Canaan (Gen. 12:7). But he repeated the promise at least four additional times throughout the remaining years of Abraham's life (Gen.13:14-17; 15:7, 18-21; 17:8; 22:17).

God made the same promise to Abraham's son Isaac (Gen.26:3-4) and grandson Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15; 35:12). Nevertheless, none of the three patriarchs ever possessed the land themselves. They were nomads, moving from place to place with their herds. All they ever possessed was the burial cave of Machpelah, near Hebron, where they were all laid to rest (Gen. 23; 49:29-32). It was left for another generation of Hebrews to possess the land.

After the period of the patriarchs, the Hebrew people lived in Egypt as slaves for many years. Then Moses led them out of Egypt and they lived in the wilderness of Sinai for forty years. Only after that, under the leadership of Joshua, did the people begin their conquest of Canaan, the Promised Land. All these

had been foretold centuries ago to the original recipient of the promise: Abraham (Gen.15:13-16).

Even after possessing the land, the people needed to realize that it was a gift to them from God. Moreover, in fact, it was God, not they, who owned the land. The Lord said to them, "The land ... really belongs to me. You are only foreigners and tenants living with me" (Lev. 25:23).

The Hebrew people could continue to live in the Promised Land only as long as they were faithful to God. If they were disobedient, they wouldn't have met the promise because, God warned them before they conquered Canaan (Heb. **kena an**), "You [will] disappear from the land you are about to enter and occupy. For the Lord will scatter you among all the nations from one end of the earth to the other" (Deut.28:63-64).

The Book of Joshua begins with an account of Hebrews' entry into the Promised Land, Canaan, and the destruction of the ancient Palestinian walled city of Jericho. Palestine is an area on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It is sometimes called Canaan or Israel. Palestine was on the west end of a long stretch of very fertile land that runs from the Persian Gulf through Mesopotamia and Syria all the way to

Egypt. Palestine was in a unique position because it was a land bridge between Mesopotamia and Egypt, which were two powerful countries in ancient times. It was also very important because it was a connection between Asia, Africa, and Europe. There were roads through Palestine that traders used when they brought things from as far away as Europe, India, and Africa. Armies also used these same roads when they would move from area to area looking for power, land, and wealth.

Palestine was the land of promise. God promised to give the land to Abraham and his family. It was the home of God's chosen people, and most of the stories in the Bible happened there. Now, Palestine has become a holy land for three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Palestine's diversity is amazing because it is so small. It is only about 150 miles long, but you can find almost every type of weather and land known on earth. Palestine has plains for farming, sandy deserts, rocky areas, forests, mountains, lakes, and rivers. In the northern part of the country, Mount Hermon is about 9,100 feet tall and has snow on it year round. However, just 100 miles to the south of Mount Hermon is the Dead Sea, which is about 1,300 feet below sea level. The Dead

Sea is the lowest point on earth. However, Barker (1985:288) has this to say:

Joshua is a story of conquest and fulfillment for the people of God. After many years of slavery in Egypt and forty (40) years in the desert, the Israelites were finally allowed to enter the land promised to their fathers. Abraham, always a migrant, never possessed the country to which he was sent, but he left to his children the legacy of God's covenant that made them the eventual heirs of all Canaan.

Once the Hebrews reached the Promised Land, they found that there were other countries around them. They were in frequent conflict with the original inhabitants of the land. This situation gave rise to their need for leaders. The leaders were the Judges who also handled more traditional as well as judicial matters. Wright (1962:88) maintains the Judges had been called "Charismatic" leaders. The frequent wars between the Israelites and her neighbours could have led to the abandonment of children in the period under consideration.

The children were highly demanded by each family to ensure that there was no sterility or chastisement from God. For instance, God had to make the wombs of the house of

Abimelech fruitless. "For the Lord has fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife" (Gen. 20:18). However, this did not remove completely abandoned children occasioned by series of wars in the land. Abandoned Children remained the most vulnerable set of people in the Promised Land.

A society can often be judged by how it treats the affairs of children in it. The law (the Decalogue) supposedly handed down by God to the ancient Hebrew has seemed friendly to children for their own good and protection. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a boy, but the rod of discipline drives it far away" (Prov.22: 15). Barker (1985: 964) urges that parents are encouraged to apply the rod of punishment to drive out folly, so that the children will not follow the path of destruction. The rod "imparts wisdom"; promotes a healthy and happy family. Discipline is used for the child's well growth and development.

However, in the period under consideration, children of both legitimate and illegitimate births enjoyed every right meant for them. Parents ensured that these children got all their rights and privileges as members of the family. Jewish custom permitted that every child must have a parent, which

was regarded as mark of honour. Roland de Vaux (1961: 41) noted that in ancient Israel, to have many children was a coveted honour and the wedding guests often expressed the wish that the couple would be blessed with a large family.

From every indication, children were highly respected and honored in this period. Nonetheless, due to prevailing circumstances some children were abandoned by un-identified parents.

ii. Monarchical Period.

The Monarchical period started with the anointing of Saul as the King of Israel. Wright (1961:122) notes that Saul reigned from about 1020 – 1000BC; David ruled from about 1000 – 961BC ... Saul, David and Solomon were the first three Kings of Israel and were the first monarchs in Israel. This implies that Israel was still together up to 922BC, but subsequently divided into two kingdoms: Northern and Southern Kingdoms, with different kings. The divided kingdoms came in about 922BC. Barker (1985:467) contends that it can be determined that the division of the kingdom occurred in 930 BC". The difference in the date of the division of the kingdom into two is in agreement with this view; "one of the most teaching problems of all

narratives in the Old Testament is that of precise dating of event which they narrate..."(Okwueze: 1998:16).

The human sacrifices practiced in the Old Testament are in the right direction of proving the children abandonment in that era. This is exemplified in the practice of King Manasseh. He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft and consulted mediums and spirits. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger (2Chron. 33:6).

In addition, king Ahaz was involved in human sacrifices. In 2Chron. 28:3-4, it is written thus:

He burned sacrifices in the valley of Ben-Hinnom and he sacrificed sons in the fire, following the detestable ways of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites. He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places, on the hilltops and underling every spreading tree.

The account of the two kings of Judah Ahaz and Manasseh sacrificing their sons in the fire in the Valley Ben-Hinnom is a clear indication of children abandonment. It is possible that other kings were also involved in this practice. Owing to the fact that, "it is hardly possible to discuss the life of Israel under

every single king that reigned within the long time of four hundred years” (Okwueze, 2001:117). The idea of abandonment of children was not categorically stated but the use of children for sacrifice, which is homicide, is a clear indication of the degree of child abuse in the Old Testament.

iii. Exilic and Post-Exilic Periods.

The exilic period is concerned with the time; the people of Israel were taken to exile. The Northern kingdom fell through the attack of the Assyrians. It went on exile in about 722BC under the kingships of Shalmaneser and Sargon II. Wright (1961:166) observed that Sargon repeatedly boasted: “I besieged and conquered Samaria, led away as booty 27,290 inhabitants of it. I formed from among them a contingent of 50 chariots (for the royal corps) and made the remaining (inhabitants) assume their (social) positions. I installed over them an officer of mine and imposed upon them the tribute of the former king.”

The Southern kingdom also suffered captivity twice in 597BC and 586BC. Okwueze (1998:200) also noted

After the first deportation of Judah in 597BC Nebuchadnezzar Jehoiakim’s uncle Mattaniah as puppet king over Judah (2kg

24:17) and changed his name to Zedekiah When he, therefore, decided to rely on the Egyptian support by revolting against the Babylonian (Empire) yoke, the Chaldean army swept down on Judah again in 587BC with the determination to destroy her (2 Kings. 24:1ff).

The deportation of the Israelites in the exilic period is a major factor that could encourage abandonment of children. The invasion of these foreign nations like Babylon and Assyria on the Jews took many Jews into slavery. There would have been chaos; many children might have been cut off from their families and were abandoned. In 538BC, some exiles returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Shesh-bazzar, with the permission of Cyrus the king of Persia (Ezra chapters 1 and 2). The list of the returnees in chapter 2, repeated with minor variations in Nehemiah chapter 7:6-73a, actually refers to those that returned with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2).

From the list compiled by Nehemiah chapter 7:4-69, after the exile, every child was identified with a parent. Okwesili and Anozie (2001:188) stated that Nehemiah maintained that a "true Jew must trace his ancestry a grandfather". That a true Jew must trace his ancestry suggests among other things that

other Jews that are not “true Jew” could behave otherwise.

Nehemiah took time to have everybody registered:

but for now the city was large and spacious, but there were few people in it, and the houses had not yet been built. So my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials and the common people for registration by families. I found the genealogical record of those who had been the first to return. This is what I found written there: these are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon had taken captive (they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town, in company with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azaria, Raamiah, Nahamani, ... (Neh. 7:4-69).

It was discovered after the registration, that they were 42,360, besides their 7,337 men-servants and maidservants. Also among them were 245 men and women singers. There were the married people among Israelites who were taken note of, for easier identification of parents and others. The registration of returnees might have been as a result of trying to separate between the returnees and the remnants that remained. The registration might be to formalize membership of the returnees

especially the maidservants. It could be possible that some of the maidservants were abandoned and later adopted into other families. Roland De Vaux (1961:51) described "adoption as an act by which a man or woman acknowledges a person of different blood as his or her son or daughter, with the legal rights and duties of a true child".

The idea of adoption in the Old Testament is a reflection of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. For example, in Deu.32:6. Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought you? Has he not made you, and establish you." This suggests that all God's dealings with his creatures are regulated by wisdom which cannot err, and perfect justice. He is indeed just and right, he takes care that he shall lose none. Nevertheless, Nehemiah's exclusivism which was based on the fact that every true Jew must at all time be identified with a particular ancestor (Okwesili and Anozie: 2008:188) is deemed to be the true position of the people of Israel and God.

The strict observance of the law among the Israelites during and after the deportations was to ensure that every child was provided with a home. But this does not imply the absence of

abandoned children in the land due to the prevailing factors. The covenant law (Exod. 2:2) is divided into two: namely the cultic law of Israel and the Ethical law of Israel. According to Okwesili (1993:9), the first five stipulations (cultic injunctions) were concerned with securing permanent relationship with Yahweh while the second five (social injunctions) were designed to protect not the citizen's property but his person. Hinson (1990:64) maintains that Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:2-17, Deut 5:6-12) are central to the whole Israelites. This to a large extent shows the views of Israelites about God, and about His plan for humankind, which changed because of their experiences in the wilderness. The covenant was given to re-direct their cultic and ethical lives for the general well being of the people of God.

The issue of abandoned children in the exilic and post-exilic periods is certain. During this period, the Israelites were subjected to extreme difficulties, which really affected their moral, socio-cultural and religious life. This encouraged children abandonment, in the said period.

2.4 Children of Un-identified parents in the traditional Igbo society

The Igbos constitute one of the largest ethnic groupings in Nigeria. The Igbo people largely made up what was formerly known as Eastern Nigeria and a good proportion of the former mid-western state of Nigeria. Ekwunife (1992:2) observed that the Igbos inhabit an area of Southern Nigeria between latitude 5 to 7 degrees north and longitude 6 to 8 degrees east. The area covers about 15,100 square miles, the bulk of which within the equatorial rain forest region. The Igbo have a common border with the Igala and the Idoma on the North, the Ijaw and the Ogoni on the South, the Yako and Ibibio of the eastern boundary and the Bini and the Warri of the West.

The Igbo traditional society refers to the period, free of interference from any other culture. This can be referred to as the pre-colonial Igbo society. In this section, we are concerned with finding if there were abandoned children or children of unidentified parents in the Igbo society before the arrival of the missionaries.

Ekpunobi and Ezeaku (1990:1) define 'tradition' as the handing down of beliefs, customs and information by word of mouth, or by practical example, from one generation to another, without any written instruction". The Igbo traditional society upheld

several traditions, interpreted from the religious point of view. The life of an African is wrapped up in his religion. Hence, it is said that the African is "notoriously religious". Because of this, these traditions were held to a high esteem. Some of these traditions were against humanity and God, these include, human sacrifices, killing of twins, and abandonment of children in the woods or forest. Achebe (1958:6) has this to say:

As the elders said, if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings. Okonkwo clearly washed his hands and so he ate with kings and elders. And that was how he came to look after the doomed lad who was sacrificed to the village of Umuofia by their neighbours to avoid war and blood shed. The ill-fated lad was called Ikemefuna.

The lad, Ikemefuna was sacrificed by his people in order to avoid going to war with Umuofia village that was very strong having warriors like Okonkwo. Ikemefuna was later put to death as agreed by the entire village. This is affirmed by the position of Okonkwo in the killing of Ikemefuna. He heard Ikemefuna cry, "My father, they have killed me!" as he ran towards him dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machet and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak" (Achebe

1958:43). The manner in which Ikemefuna was abandoned and later massacred is pathetic.

In addition, the manner in which Joseph was treated by his brothers is also pathetic. The name Joseph (Heb. **yosef**) means, "The Lord will add" and it was a very common name in biblical times. Even though there are many different Josephs mentioned in the Bible, there is one Joseph whose story stands out—the son of Jacob. Despite facing many difficult circumstances and evil people, Joseph remained true to God and generous to other people. As a result, God made him extremely successful and used him to save the completely Hebrew race.

In the Old Testament, Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son and the firstborn son of Rachel. Rachel named the boy Joseph, which meant, "May He add." This showed Rachel's desire that God would give her another son after Joseph (Gen.30:24).

The Bible does not tell us anything more about Joseph until, at the age of seventeen, we read about him tending to his father's flocks with his brothers (Gen.37:2). Joseph was the favorite of his father, Jacob, since he was the son of Jacob's old age (Gen.37:3) and the firstborn son of his favorite wife.

Because of this favoritism, Joseph's brothers hated him. Their envy towards Joseph only got worse when Jacob gave Joseph a ground-length, long-sleeved, multicolored robe (Gen. 37:3-4).

The animosity of his brothers increased even more when Joseph revealed to them that he had dreams where his brothers would one day bow down before him (Gen.37:5-11).

Because of this, when Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers and the flocks near Shechem, his brothers tricked him and sold him to a caravan of traders going down to Egypt (Gen. 37:25-28). Joseph's brothers then took his robe, dipped it in goat's blood, and brought it back to Jacob, who was overwhelmed with grief when he concluded that Joseph had been killed by wild animals (Gen.37:31-35).

The throwing away of children into wood or forest in the traditional Igbo society was necessitated by different reasons: the birth of twins or triplets; breach of natural order in delivery and growth of a child; unwanted pregnancy by any spinster in her matrilineal home, or a baby cutting the upper teeth before the lower teeth. In the pre-colonial Igbo society, such babies were put into a big pot tied with palm frond and carried to "an evil forest." "They were returning home with

baskets of yams from a distant farm across the stream when they heard the voice of an infant crying in thick forest "(Achebe :1958:43). Uchendu was a man who was unfortunate to have twins up To twenty-two and buried all of them. Achebe(1958:97) goes further to say;

Do you know how many children
I have buried – children I got in
my youth and strength?
Twenty-two. I did not hang
myself, and I am still alive. If
you think you are the greatest
sufferer in the world ask my
daughter, Akeuni, how many
twins she has borne and thrown
away. Have you not heard the
song they sing when a woman
dies? For whom is it well, for
whom is it well? There is no one
for whom it is well.

In addition, Onyemelukwe in Animalu and Ogbuka (1995:8) attested that there was still killing of twins between 1897 and 1909. In such situation of killing of children of unusual birth or growth, some parents preferred abandoning them rather than having them killed as demanded by the tradition of the land. To them, such developments were regarded as sacrilege; a crime which an average Igbo man saw as sin against the land goddess. Arinze (1970:34) affirmed that:

The Igbo man believes that when he sins he makes the higher powers frown. He wishes to regain the favour of the higher powers. Igbo expiatory sacrifices fall into two distinct types: sacrifice to remove 'abominations' and sacrifice for lesser offence.

Their inhuman attitude towards the children of unusual birth or growth was seen as a way of appeasing their gods and to avoid their anger which was for the general well being of the people of the land. Hence, they were shameless and uncompromising in carrying out the order, not minding whose children they were. However, this action is the effect of ignorance and superstition.

2.5 Children of Un-identified parents in the colonial Igbo traditional Society

The colonial traditional Igbo Society refers to the period that started with the advent of colonial masters in the nineteenth century up to 30 September 1960. The early missionaries in Igboland arrived when the Igbo people were deep necked in the practice of these inhuman activities. There were proven cases of abandonment of children in order to meet one traditional demands or the other. Ilogu (1985:63) affirms that:

It was an Ibo old custom to destroy twins because it was considered unnatural for human beings to be born more than one at a time, only lower animals like hens, goats, dogs and the rest could give birth to more than one at a time. A woman giving birth to twins would therefore need a special cleansing sacrifice and the twin children would be destroyed, otherwise the land thus abominated would incur the wrath of the ancestral spirits, which would plague the community because the natural harmony between the man, the spirit world and the cosmos in general had been destroyed.

With this practice, there were many cases of destruction of human lives especially of the twin children. Some of them were abandoned in the "evil forest" without anybody coming to their rescue. So, because some of them were abandoned in the evil forest and later died, and their mothers became childless.

On the arrival of the first missionaries, including John Christopher Taylor, faced the challenge of the new converts that had twins and refused to follow the tradition of the land. He was the first missionary and pastor in Onitsha from 1857-1869 (Animalu and Ogbu, 1995: 67). Taylor in Onitsha advised the newly converted Christians to disobey this custom and keep

their twin children. This, the converts found difficult. Then they came to Taylor with a request that he Taylor should provide them with protection from the outrage of the populace who no doubt, forcibly destroy such twins of Christians and punish their parents in addition. Some of these twin children were preserved from destruction by some parents who took them to the mission grounds while others that lived in fear surrendered theirs for destruction.

Whereas, the unconverted people of Africa had no reason for not complying. At the earliest stage of the missionary activities, the church was deeply concerned about the abandoned children. Hence, the church quarters turned to be the home of such children of unusual birth, growth and development. The church was interested in ensuring that children were not killed by other human beings. It was this arrangement that made it almost impossible to have children of un-identified parents or abandoned children after the advent of Christianity from this source.

However, children were still being abandoned for other reasons apart from the birth of twins. Ekpunobi and Ezeaku (1990:1) noted that some aspects of the religion must have been

changed as a result of contact with foreign religions and culture". The encounter of the African and Traditional Religion and Christianity brought about changes in certain customs and traditions. The sort of change that occurs when a culture encounters another culture is called acculturation. In such change, one culture borrows from the other. Another change of culture is enculturation, which means changing from within.

As a result of this change, people were made to understand that any ill-treatment against any child is considered as offence against humanity and should be discouraged at all levels. The right of every child should be properly preserved and the violation of the right of any child is tagged child abuse. The colonial masters and missionaries worked together to ensure that such practices did not continue in the Igbo society. Even at this, there were still cases of abandoned children. The church has continued to show concern to the abandoned children in different ways especially in the aspect of homes and orphanages for the affected children.

2.6 Children of Un-identified parents in the present day Igbo society

The present day Igbo society refers to the period from 1st October, 1960 which is the date of Nigeria's Independence.

This marks the total withdrawal of colonial masters from the direct involvement in the administration of our country. Shortly after the independence was the out break of Nigeria – Biafra civil war on 6th July, 1967, which threw the South-Easterners back to square one. Anyaele (1994:303) pointed out that:

The first consequence of the civil war was that inestimable lives and properties were lost. The war reduced the population of the country. Many of those who died in the war did not die in the battlefield but were killed by hunger. The properties of Nigerians were equally destroyed during the war with dangerous weapons.

Following the death of many people as a result of the war, it is possible that many children were abandoned or left out of their parents. Anyaele (1994:303) also observed that:

The civil war bestowed a lot of hardship on the people of Nigeria. This was as a result of the fact that many people lost their parents and bread winners in the battle fields and outside the war front. Also many people were displaced from their homes, villages and communities during the thirty months civil war.

The people in the eastern part of our country were greatly affected which brought about new orientations among them. With the new orientations, things started changing to the negative side. The attitude of the people towards certain practices such as sex, wealth acquisition, children etc gained a new dimension. The moral standard was almost destroyed. They imbibed some practices that were not formally accepted by the society. In this direction, Ndubuisi (1991:144) noted that:

The bane and doom of Nigeria will ever remain as long as the leadership of the country is zoo – leadership which is symbolized by irrationality, corruption, fraudulence,deceit, sectionalism, selfishness,recklessness,immorality, lack of a sense of direction and devotion, indiscipline, greed avarice, lust for power and flagrant abuse of office.

The inclusion of immorality as one of the characteristics of the “ Zoo-leadership” remains a major concern in our contemporary society due to its implication on the teenagers. It is one of the major factors that promote the abandonment of children in our society. The number of cases of immorality in society is

overwhelming because it cuts across every level of human existence.

The existence of Motherless Babies Homes/Orphanages in all the states: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo in the South-East, Geo-political zone of Nigeria attests to the presence of abandoned children in our society. The existence of the abandoned children varies from state to state. Linkachild, a non-governmental organization organized a documentation of these orphanages or homes in our country in 2008. The table below shows the statistics of some of these homes or orphanages in the South- East.

Abia State	Year of establishment	No. of children	No. of staff	Estimated up keep
Chim's Motherless & Destitute Centre, Aba	1960	16	8	100,000
Ngwa Road Motherless Babies Home Aba	1964	24	10	150,000
Anambra State				
Nigeria Red Cross Motherless	1970	25	15	

Babies Homes Onitsha				
Onitsha South Local Government Motherless Babies Home Onitha	Early 80's	25	15	
Ebonyi State				
Izzi Motherless Babies Home, Oswanka	1970	16	8	1000,000
Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Abakakilki	1973	-	-	-
Enugu State				
Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Enugu	-	28	14	300,000
Holy Child Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Ogui Enugu	1985	33	20	150,000
Guardian Angle Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Emene	1999	19	17	270,000

Imo state				
Blessed Thomas Fusco Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Owerri	2001	12	7	71,000
Christian Child Care Umuoba Uratta	1981	15	5	-
Eziama Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Owerri	1980	11	5	156,675
Mercy Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Okwelle	1962	-	12	300,000

The statistics above is clear indication that not all these homes/orphanages are recognized. It is possible that, there are some of them that are operating illegally in the zone. It may also be that they are not properly organized. The table also shows that there is information on thirteen (13) of them, out of more than 25 in existence in the zone. Further enquires need to be done to ascertain the causes of the shortage in documentation on the remaining ones.

Furthermore, the reports agree that the abandoned children are not usually got through their relatives but in some

cases from the streets. They are always picked from the streets in their hopeless situations. They are usually kept under the custody of the managers of these homes/orphanages. Some of these children are later reclaimed by their relations after 18-24 months. There are those who cannot be reclaimed because neither their parents nor their relatives can be identified. The plight of these children should be the concern of everybody, especially the church.

There are the factors that encourage increased abandonment of children in the society. These factors, which are classified as immediate and remote factors, are said to be responsible for this ugly development. The result of the questionnaire administered to the staff of some Motherless Babies Home in Enugu, Anambra and Ebonyi States and Federal School of Social Welfare, Emene shows that the following factors are evidenced: the immediate factors include poor economy, sexual immorality and single parenting. Whereas the remote factors are: decay of the ethical standard, lack of sex education and lack of implementation of birth control policy as the factors that enhance abandonment of children in the present day society. This is so because the

perceptions of the respondents show that these factors encourage the increased numbers of abandoned children in our society. This point was supported by Gelled, J. who said:

Although the extent of child abuse is difficult to measure, it is recognized as a social problem, especially in industrial nations. It occurs in all income, racial religions and ethnic groups and in urban and rural communities. It is however, more common in some groups, especially those below the poverty line.

In addition, there are certain customs and traditions that also give full support to the increased number of abandoned children in our society. These obnoxious practices such as rejection of promiscuity, teenage pregnancy and pregnancy outside married life. Others include rejection of twins and children of unusual growth and development, high bride prize, promotion of OSU caste system, wrong attitude to female gender and, strict enforcement of rites of passage in some societies. These customs and traditions according to the perceptions of the respondents encourage children abandonment in our society. For instance, some parents of twins would rather prefer abandoning their twins to killing them according to the demands of the tradition. Perhaps, people who

would take care of them might see them. A teenager would also prefer abandoning her child outside married life to aborting the baby at the early stage of her pregnancy.

In addition, Okwueze (2004:241) also observed that there is apparently dwindling and decaying of moral values. This largely has affected the ethical standard of our time, which exposed our people especially the teenagers to great dangers. The teenagers are usually involved in illicit sexual relationship. Stott (1990:285) noted that:

Marriage is intended to be that reciprocal commitment of self-giving love which finds its natural expression in sexual union, or becoming "one flesh" Gen 2:24. But today, it has been abused by teenagers for reasons best known to them which mostly end in unwanted pregnancy.

Hence, children from unwanted pregnancy are usually abandoned by unknown parents. However, it has been established that unwanted pregnancy as a factor encourages the increase in number of abandoned children, and or children of un-identified parents in our society. It is certain that this practice is not favorable to the entire society because of the

dangers they pose to the entire community. There is need for these customs and traditions to be modified. Ekpunobi and Ezeaku (1990:1) advocate for cultural changes. With these changes, there will be no strict observance of certain customs and traditions that encourage children abandonment in our society.

Furthermore, it is of necessity to report my discussion with one of the abandoned children, in the person of Mr. Moses Chinedu Nwafor who hails from Amaebo, Olikwu, Awgu in Awgu Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. He is 21 years old. According to him, his parents whom he cannot trace even now in a bush along Badagry Road, Lagos in 1988 abandoned him. Mazi John Nwafor who was a wine taper in Lagos and from Awgu picked him up. He said that Mazi Nwafor died when he was only five years old, leaving him, his wife and his brothers and sisters who never accepted him to be part of the family.

This situation has always made him miserable in the family and in the community because they always wanted him to realize that he was picked up from the bush. To worsen the whole matter there was no due process for his adoption into the family, hence there is no legal support for him being a

member of the family. He also said that this has made him to be involved in some criminal activities that had almost ruined his life. For now, this young man is totally confused and needs assistance from governmental, non-governmental organizations as well as the church.

2.7 The Role of the Church in the Plight of Children of Un-identified parents.

The Church since inception in Nigeria and especially, in the Igbo society has been out for the rights of the children, whether abandoned or not. On arrival, the church observed the obnoxious practices meant to dehumanize the children through human sacrifices, killing of twins and other related acts. The church, as well as government and non-governmental organizations established homes, where these children are kept for their up bringing. These homes are usually called Motherless Babies Home or Orphanage. For instance, in the Igbo society, some of these homes located in the South-Eastern geo-political zone were established by the church. Below are some of them.

Abia state

- i. Motherless Babies Home of the Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy Ahianeke Ndume, Umuahia.

- ii. Ngwa Road Motherless Babies Home, Aba
- iii. Nigerian Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Aba

Anambra State

- i. Motherless Babies Home, Awka.
- ii. Motherless Babies Home, Nnewi
- iii. Motherless Babies Home, Umuoji
- iv. Orphanage and Motherless Babies Home, Nkpor
- v. Motherless Babies Home, Omuna, Onitsha
- vi. Model Motherless Babies, Home Awka
- vii. Nigerian Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Onitsha.

Ebonyi State

- i. Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Abakaliki
- ii. Izzi Motherless Babies Home, Oswanka, Abakaliki

Enugu State

- i. Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Ogbete, Enugu
- ii. Guardian Angels Motherless Babies Home, Emene, Enugu
- iii. Holy Child Motherless Babies Home, Ogui, Enugu
- iv. Cheshire "Home, Uwani, Enugu
- v. Cathedral Church of the Good Shepherd Motherless Babies, Independence Layout, Enugu.

Imo State

- i. The Nigeria Red Cross Motherless Babies Home, Owerri

- ii. Eziama Motherless Babies Home, Ngor Okpalla
- iii. Imo State Salvation Army Children's Home, Owerri

The list of twenty-two (22) different homes for children is not exhaustive. There may be other ones that have been given full recognition by the respective State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.

Most Churches visit these homes or orphanages during the festive periods such as Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday, Fathering Sunday and other festivals in the Church. Some of these abandoned children are under the scholarship of some churches from pre-nursery to secondary education. Some of these churches provide the human resources for the running of these homes. From the names of these homes, it is clear that the church established most of them especially Catholic Church and Anglican Church of Nigeria. They usually give donations of material and non-material gifts for the up-keep of these homes.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

It is obvious that there were abandoned children in the Old Testament and the contemporary societies. The church has realized the urgent need to address this problem by

establishing some of these homes and offering assistances to these unfortunate children. The Literature review reveals that all the five states in the South-East zone have these homes and the number is yet insufficient.

The literature review shows the contributions of Government and non-Governmental organizations towards the abandoned children. They also established some homes for these unfortunate children in society. These contributions of the government and non-governmental organizations cannot solve the problems of the abandoned children in the contemporary society. Hence, the researcher is concerned with finding more ways of being of great help to them. In addition, it will find possible reduction in the number of these abandoned children, in a situation where total eradication of it may not be feasible in contemporary society.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHALLENGES OF CHILDREN OF UN-IDENTIFIED PARENTS

This chapter delves into the challenges facing the abandoned children or children of un-identified parents in the contemporary society. The children of this status in our society encounter many problems such as denial of parental care and

subjection to welfare dependent. In addition, they are used for illegal adoption, trafficking and ritual killings.

3.1 Denial of Parental care

Every child needs parental care. The parental care is part of the environment that enhances child's growth and development. Unachukwu(1989:127) in the context of psychology refers "environment to non-genetic external factors that influence the human organism right from the womb and continues after birth" it consists of both the parental and postnatal environment.

The prenatal environment is concerned with all the things that affect the organism in the uterine world. The postnatal environment includes socio-economic status of the parents which influences the child's nutrition, academic exposure, socialization, medical attention and proneness to diseases, birth order of the child, the number of siblings in the family, diseases, accidents, attitude of people around, drugs and geographical location of family residential abode (Unachukwu: 1989:127).

This truly shows the active involvement of parents in the upbringing of a child. Upbringing of every child

lies mainly in the hands of the parents who form the nuclear family. Okwueze (2004:242) has this to say.

Right from the family, unceasing efforts are made by parents and other elderly relatives to inculcate the appropriate moral values upon the children of the family. The children are taught to tell the truth, to form the habit of hard work and to be considerate while dealing with other people.

This clearly defines the role of the parents in the upbringing of their children. O' Donovan (1996:283) said that the first idea of God in a small child's mind is often the image of his or her parents, especially the father. Munroe (2001:58) once said, "A child needs to learn how God disciplines, teaches, instructs and does things through an earthly father who embodies the Father."

In his opinion about the parental duties to children, Taylor (2006:28) summarized these duties as:

Giving them name: "And Abraham named his son Isaac" (Gen.21:3) and "So Leah became pregnant and had a son. She named him Reuben" (Gen. 29:32). Care for their physical needs: "But Hannah did not go. She told her husband, "Wait

until the baby is weaned. Then I will take him to the Tabernacle and leave him there with the Lord permanently.” (1Sam.1:22)

Educate them: “And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children.

Moreover Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away on a journey, when you are lying down and when you are getting up again” (Deut.6:6-7). Discipline them: “Don’t fail to correct your children. They will not die if you spank them. Physical discipline may well save them from death” (Prov.23:13-14). Lay up inheritance for them: “Now I am coming to you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you. I do not want what you have; I want you. Anyway, little children do not pay for their parents’ food. It’s the other way around; parents supply food for their children” (2Cor.12:14).

The abandonment of children in the Old Testament can also be exemplified in the life of Esau. Esau was Isaac’s son, and the older twin brother of Jacob (Gen.25:24-26). He was given his name because of the hair on his body at birth. Because the baby Esau had a reddish color, and because the color red was to play an important role in his life, he also

became known by the name Edom, or “red.” The race of people known as the Edomites claimed to be Esau’s descendants, and even the name of their land, “Seir,” may come from the word “**sair**”, meaning “hairy.”

A good hunter, Esau, brought tasty wild meat to his father, who enjoyed its strong flavor much more than he enjoyed the milder-tasty meat that Jacob brought to him from the family’s flocks. One day Esau came home very hungry from an unsuccessful hunting trip. Jacob talked Esau into selling Jacob his birthright (the special blessing he would receive from his father) in return for food (Gen.25:29-34).

Esau in the later part of his life was denied of his father’s blessings. Jacob and Rebecca deceived Isaac. Although Esau was Isaac’s favorite son, he displeased his father by marrying two Hittite women. Near the end of his life, Isaac wanted to bless his firstborn in the traditional patriarchal manner (Gen.27). Rebecca overheard his instructions to Esau. She encouraged Jacob to deceive the blind old man by disguising himself as Esau and taking his brother’s blessing. The deception succeeded, and Isaac gave Jacob the blessing of the firstborn. When Esau appeared to receive his blessing, he was

too late. He was very bitter against Jacob because of what had happened. Rebecca sent Jacob away to her brother Laban in Mesopotamia. The purpose was to escape Esau's anger and to obtain a wife. Esau did receive a blessing from Isaac, but a lesser one. Two decades later a rich and prosperous Jacob returned with his family. He made peace with Esau before Isaac died, and the brothers buried Isaac in Hebron (Gen.35:27-29).

However, the abandoned children are denied of these parental cares. This actually places such children in circumstances that are more vulnerable. In fact, some of them are usually at the mercy of their guardians. Their guardian in most cases cannot really give them the desired motherly affection. This helps to aggravate their problems, which may lead to some deviant behaviours, which usually lead them to juvenile delinquency. Essuman et-al in Unachukwu (1989:327) refers to juvenile delinquency as "the behaviour of youth or children in a community which violate one or more of the legal or expected rules and norms of the community to such extent that legal action is taken against the offenders".

Nevertheless, some of them become victims of juvenile delinquency unintentionally, without knowing the consequences due to lack of proper teachings on the norms of the society. The parents normally teach their children the norms and rules of the community through informal education. Nevertheless, they are denied of these privileges, which produce negative effects on them.

Children whose parents do not get or stay married are more likely to slip into poverty to become welfare dependent. To be physically and sexually abused, to experience both physical and mental health problems, to be involved in criminal activity, to abuse drugs or alcoholic, to become sexually active in young ages and with multiple sex partners and to become young unmarried mothers and fathers themselves (if they don't become habitual abortionists)
(Okwueze, 2004:251).

Every child without exemption is expected to receive the full parental care. Parents are supposed to discharge their obligations to their biological children without pushing them to others. The absence of these parental cares in any child results

to adverse effect on the child in particular, and the society in general.

3.2 Subjection to Welfare Dependent

In most cases, the abandoned children are taken to Motherless Babies Homes or Orphanages for their upkeep. In each state of the South-East geo-political zone of Nigeria, there exists the ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. The Ministry is charged with the affairs of the abandoned children and other related matters. Such abandoned children are made available to the welfare dependents, against the usual practice of parent's dependent. Welfare dependent implies that livelihood lies on the hands of the good spirited individuals or groups who render assistance to the abandoned children.

Linkachild Ltd is always out to solicit help for these homes/orphanages. In most of these homes, there is insufficient staff and shortage of food supply. The medical care is not always guaranteed and sound education is also in doubt. They are usually remembered during festive periods which may not be enough for their general well being. For instance, Chim's Motherless and Destitute Centre, Aba was established in

1990. This centre has 16 children in their custody with 8 staff and requires the sum of one hundred thousand naira for the estimated monthly upkeep of the centre. This is seemingly insufficient for the daily running of this centre. It suggests that these abandoned children cannot be properly cared for, due to the aforementioned factors.

It is obvious that children in this kind of situation, the abandoned children are seldom given adequate attention in all ramifications of human existence. Shortage of food and poor diet may cause malnutrition in these children. Michael (2005:34) defines balance diet as a diet containing the correct proportion of the right amount of all the six food substances required by an organization or man". The resultant effect of shortage of balanced diet is usually malnutrition.

Hornby (2007:716) refers malnutrition as a poor condition of health caused by a lack of food or lack of the right type of food. The poor condition of health is rampant among abandoned children. This has increased cases of infant mortality among these abandoned children in our society.

Hence, the survival of the abandoned children subjected to welfare dependents may not be fully guaranteed in our

society. This really makes it a great challenge to the abandoned children in our society. It is so because in most cases, these homes or orphanages are not regularly and properly supervised by the responsible agencies.

3.3 Illegal adoption of abandoned children

Adoption is the act of God by which believers become members of "God's family." As with human adoptions, believers receive all the privileges and obligations of family membership. "Sons of God," a common King James Version expression, includes individuals of both sexes numbered among God's children and from north and south. "I will bring my sons and daughters back to Israel from the distant corners of the earth ... But forget all that—it is nothing compared to what I am going to do". (Isa.43:6, 18).

According to the New Testament, all persons are sinners by nature. Thus, they are called "children of wrath" (Eph.2:3). However, those upon whom God lavishes his love become "children of God" by grace (1 John 3:1). This adoption process has its origin in God's love and its foundation in Jesus Christ who is uniquely the Son of God. The term "Son of God" refers primarily to Christ's deity

(Matt.11:25-27; 16:16-17), for he is one in substance and glory with the Father. As the second person of the Trinity, Christ is distinguished from the Father as "the only begotten Son." Believers in Christ, although "adopted," are never seen as on a par with the uncreated, divine Son.

Nevertheless, in the beloved Son, sinners have been loved and chosen by God the Father to become his children by adoption (Eph.1:4-6). Christ the Redeemer makes that adoption possible. Through his death and resurrection, he destroyed sin and its death penalty. He also restored the righteousness and life needed for the status of Sonship. Christ is the head of the "new covenant" as its mediator. Believers in Christ become God's heirs and his joint heirs (Rom.8:17). God gives to them the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of his Son, as the Spirit of adoption (Rom.8:15; Gal.4:6). The indwelling Spirit gives believers assurance that they are indeed God's children. The Spirit enables them to cry out to God as Father (Rom.8:15-16). Such intimacy with the Creator and Savior in prayer is one privilege of adoption.

Adoption was a privilege given to God's people under the "old covenant" (Rom.9:4). Both Israel as a whole and

individual Israelites knew God as Father (Isa.64:8-9; Hos.11:1). The New Testament regards adoption as ultimately possible only through Jesus Christ. Israel's adoption before the Incarnation was a sonship comparable to the status of servanthood (Gal.4:1-7). In Jesus, the privilege of mature sonship was extended to include both Jews and Gentiles (Gal.3:25-29). Adoption is a benefit enjoyed in the present experience of God's people (1 John 3:1). However, its full extent will be realized only at their resurrection from the dead (Rom.8:21-23).

The high demand for children by childless couples or couples who may be in need of a particular gender: male or female, has prompted the acceptance of adoption in our society. In addition, right to identity has also increased the demand for adoption. All children should have names and families where they belong. They should also have countries or nations they call theirs. The discrimination against the female gender has also occasioned adoption in our society. Couples may go in for adoption due to the barrenness of the women or the impotency of the man. It may also be as a result of the desire for a particular sex (male or female).

The Governments in the South-East geo-political zone have tried to address this matter of public interest by approving adoption, backed up with a law. For instance in Enugu State, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development has adoption procedure in the state through which adoption is formalized and legalized. It is sanctioned by Adoption law of Anamabra State 1979 section 4(c) adopted from eastern Nigeria Law No 12 of 1965 and applicable in Enugu State. It provides for application for adoption of a child: The applicant(s) to make written application to the Honourable Commissioner, Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Enugu, stating their names, address, home town, occupation, reasons for their intention to adopt a child and sex of the child they desire. The application must reach the chief social welfare officer (Director of Social Welfare), three months before the date of the adoption shall be made (Child Fostering and Adoption Procedure in Enugu State, 2006:1).

The introduction of the child fostering and adoption procedure that came to effect on 26 June 2006 has helped to control adoption. It could be an indication that adoption was carried out in most of these homes or orphanages without

following the appropriate procedure. Some of them were just given out to couples or even single parents without following the procedures sanctioned by the law for adoption of a child. In this way, they were exposed to many hazards of being used for ritual purposes.

The far-reaching implication is that one cannot say with certainty the fate of the adopted children. It does not give enough room for close examination of the "factors that enhance adoption of a child". It does not also regulate the conduct of adoptee and the Social Welfare Department or adoption officer who supervises the adoption. Finally, illegal adoption does not really show much concerns on the personal welfare of the child to be adopted, by ensuring his complete integration with his /her adoption parent.

However, this issue of illegal adoption of these children is a major concern in the contemporary society. Hence, the National Report on the Implementation of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says:

It is an offence for a person to permit or cause to be procured the possession of a child to any person out side the state or outside Nigeria with out the due

process of the law being taken into account.

Presently, people still ignore the law and go to transfer children to different people without following the appropriate procedures for adoption. This is against the stand of Alston (1994:28).

Section 6 of the adoption Act 1976 provides in reaching any decision relating to the adoption of child, a court or adoption agency shall have regard to all the circumstances. First consideration being given to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child throughout her or his childhood.

The abandoned children are usually helpless in this regard of adoption. The choice is always made for them without their consent. Anybody can adopt them without considering their human right. Some of them that were illegally adopted are usually nowhere to be found. Even if they are alive, their positions in the family of the adoptee are not clearly stated. At the death of the adoptee, they may be displaced out rightly with or without anything to fall-back. This act of second abandonment is typically inhuman and needs to be addressed in our society.

3.4 Trafficking of Abandoned Children

Trafficking in persons means procurement of unpaid workers: the illegal practice of procuring human beings for unpaid work in physically abusive settings and locations from which they are not allowed to leave. The reality of human trafficking in the contemporary society cannot be faulted. Children are usually the most vulnerable of this evil practice. It is quite true that trafficking of children is in our society but the abandoned children are most affected. They are always defenseless in all issues affecting them.

The Palermo protocol specifically address the trafficking of children, stating that the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation is considered trafficking in person (Internal Programmer on the Elimination of Child Labour,2007:53)

It is true now in our society that human trafficking is growing at increasing rate. Hammed, et al (2009:17) asserted that human trafficking is a serious human rights violation and a disgrace to humanity. It is one of the worst forms of exploitation of human beings taking place in the 21st century. According to Ezeilo (2001:23) affirmed that:

Human trafficking is not a new phenomenon. It is simply slavery wearing a new cloak and bearing a new name but now operating at a more sophisticated high- tech level.

The issue lies not on its possible existence but on the people involved in this practice. The mostly affected people in the evil business of human trafficking are women and children. These children are usually got through illegal adoption, kidnapping or abduction. It is probable that the illegally adopted children are commonly used because they are most easily found in most cases.

For this reason, a national action plan on trafficking in persons was adopted in 2006. Chawla (2009:105) observed that Nigeria has three different specialized police units dealing with trafficking in persons. To an extent, these special units could be a way of confirming how serious it (trafficking) is in Nigeria. Hyacinth Okafor, an administrative staff of National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Enugu, in an interview with the researcher revealed that recent research on the trafficking in persons shows that the evil trade is currently going on in all the states in the South-East. These persons are usually children, possibly the abandoned ones who have no one

to speak on their behalf or have been falsely adopted to be trafficked. Hammad, et al (2009:57) observed that:

Victims of human trafficking descend into a world that robs them of their freedom, their dignity of the divine spirit that our creator bestowed as the most precisions gift to the human soul.

The consequences of human trafficking are so great that they affect every aspect of the life of the victims. They are usually affected psychologically, socially, culturally as well as physically. It contributes greatly towards humiliation of human beings in this contemporary society. Trafficking in persons could lead to exploitation of the victims in form of sexual abuse, hard labour and ritual killings.

The human trafficking provides girls and women for prostitution rackets in Europe and the Middle East (Child Trafficking in Nigeria, 2000:05). In addition, trafficking in persons also leads to servitude or slavery. The children are usually exposed to different hazardous works. Tajgman (2007:41) defines hazardous work as:

the type of work which is prohibited to persons, under a particular age, often 18 years without specifying that the work

is hazardous or likely to cause harm to their health or moral.

This situation poses a lot of problems to children especially those whose parents cannot be identified. They remain in the custody of their guardian who may or may not be of great help to them in all cases. Therefore, it should be a major concern for all and sundry, to protect the human rights in the contemporary society.

3.5 Ritual Killings

The cases of ritual killings in our society are increasing on daily basis. The ritual killings form part of human sacrifice. Child sacrifice is the ritualistic killings of children in order to please, propitiate or force supernatural beings in order to achieve a desired result. In this part of the world ritualists go after children who are albinos, dwarfs and certain special people otherwise known as the physically challenged for rituals. Ritual killings are real and constitute a menace to the society. In some cases, innocent and physically challenged children are demanded for the sacrifice. Witchdoctors determine the age of the human being for the ritual, depending on the purpose of the ritual.

In Nigeria, there are more cases of ritual killings during electoral periods. Some of the politicians purposely do it for their success in the election. Basden (1966:69) observed that human sacrifice was a traditional demand among the Igbos, which was never hindered by any means. It is usually called the great sacrifice. It is a great sacrifice because it involves a human being. The sole aim of it is that the sacrificed would go to the spirits and send good things to them. Again, human sacrifice was required for burial ceremonies of kings.

Moreover, slavery served as a source of getting human beings between the ages of fifteen and twenty years for ritual purposes. Basden (1921:107) postulated that slaves were required for sacrificial purposes. Ilogu (1974:65) identified three types of human sacrifices that had existed in Ibo before the arrival of Christianity. They include:

- (i) the sacrifice of atonement when extreme abomination to the land had led to breach of harmony between the spirit world and the community.
- (ii) when chiefs and some noblemen holding the Ozo title were buried and
- (iii) the use of priests and manipulators of secret cults, oracles and shrines made of human sacrifice to appease the gods of such oracles.

The advent of Christianity did not completely wipe out human sacrifices in our society. Human sacrifices as they are known today have really taken a different dimension. The essence of it is still paramount in the minds of the occultists and native doctors. These groups of people still recognize the three types of human sacrifices. Hence, they are involved in ritual killings. Igwe (2005:23) opined generally that:

Ritual killing is a common practice in Nigeria. Every year, hundreds of Nigerians lose their lives to ritual murders, also known as head-hunters. These head-hunters go in search of human parts-head, breast, tongue, sexual organs-at the behest of witchdoctors, juju priests and traditional medicine men who required them for some sacrifices or the preparation of assorted magical portions.

According to Igwe, this ritual killing mostly affects children. In this regard, one may ask from what source, they usually get these children for ritual killings. It is likely that slavery was one of the sources in the past but now adoption, kidnapping as well as children abandonment are major sources for this practice in our contemporary society. It is possible that these head-hunters are taking the undue advantage of the

abandoned children in our society. The spread of the ritual killings all over our country, Nigeria without an exception has almost made life unbearable for the entire nation. The citizens are indeed worried about the ugly development that is capable of denying them the right to live. It is imminent for the church to rise from slumber and proffer solutions for this endemic negative practice through pragmatic efforts to stop it.

In view of our discussions in this work, it is important to note that these unfortunate children in both Old Testament and our contemporary society almost pass through the same conditions. They are denied of naming ceremonies by their parents. God himself gave mandate to Jacob to this effect. "For he issued his decree to Jacob; he gave his law to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children" (Ps.78:5). Taylor (2006:617) confirmed that:

teaching children in order to prepare them for adulthood is the responsibility of parents, with a special measure of responsibility falling on fathers. Education includes instructing children in the divine Word and telling them about God's powerful deeds in the past and present.

These abandoned children are also deprived of the physical cares by parents in both societies. Weaning of children by biological parents is essential for their growth and development. In most cases, they are ignorant of parental discipline in both societies. Taylor (2006:541) maintained that:

the Bible distinguishes between chastening (discipline) and punishing, the former being used only for God's people. Discipline is a sure evidence of love, and it has a goal the development of a good character in the one being corrected. Its focus on training, instructing, correcting and improving-and is often accomplished through pain, sorrow and loss. Discipline is expected at home, where parents discipline children.

Their parents' inheritances are usually not for them in both societies. Hence, these parents cannot be identified. An inheritance is something left behind by one generation to be received by the next. Inheritance plays a significant role in the Scriptures; it is used as a metaphor to convey theological, or spiritual, truths. As we might expect, these theological uses of the word reflect the legal customs of Old Testament and New Testament.

The stories in Genesis describe some of the inheritance

customs of early second-millennium BC. For example; the firstborn son could normally expect to receive the birthright. In Genesis, of course, this rule is observed mostly in the breaking: Ishmael (Gen.16:15; 17:15-21), Esau (25:23), and Reuben (49:3-4) lost the birthright to a younger brother. Abraham also suggested that his servant Eliezer might be regarded as the heir, since Abraham at that time had no natural children (15:2-5); scholars have found Hurrian legal documents of the second millennium testifying that this was actually practiced.

According to Deut. 21:15-17: Hebrew firstborn sons were legally entitled to a double portion of the inheritance. Israelites' law also made provision for widows (25:5). According to Numbers 27:1-11: The daughters of Zelophehad argued that they should receive the inheritance since their father had died without sons. Consequently, God decreed that if a man died without sons, the inheritance should be transferred to his daughter; if he had no daughter, to his brothers; if he had no brothers, to his nearest relatives. This incident also illustrates the importance of preserving tribal possessions: the daughters of Zelophehad were not allowed to marry outside the tribe of

Manasseh, for this would give the tribal possessions to another tribe (Num. 36).

How highly the Israelites valued a family's inherited possessions may be seen in Lev.25:25-28. If an individual sold his land for financial reasons, provision must be made for a relative to redeem it; if he had no near relative, he could still purchase it back at a later time. Even if he could not afford to do so, the land automatically went back to him in the Year of Jubilee, when all debts were canceled. The Israelites recognized that land was wealth, and that losing the land of one's family could throw the family into poverty for many generations.

Indeed, there are challenges facing children especially, the abandoned children in Old Testament and our contemporary society. These challenges are usually very harmful to them. In most cases, they are denied of their human rights and privileges. In addition, they live without a "voice" and finally die silently with their lives full of frustrations and disappointments. It is proper to say that the church can be of good help to these unfortunate children in our society. Ajibulu (2009:34) lamented that the plight of Nigerian child is

regrettable. Moreover, ultimately the non-implementation of the Child Rights Acts and the benefits therein has worsened the situation.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSES TO THE PLIGHT OF THE CHILDREN OF UN-IDENTIFIED PARENTS IN OUR SOCIETY

This chapter focuses on the responses of the church to the plight of the abandoned children in our society. These responses are ways of complementing the efforts of the government and non-governmental organizations in this direction of alleviating the sufferings of the abandoned children. It is proper that the church steps into this social

problem and improve on what it has been doing in the past in Nigeria.

Furthermore, it is imperative that the church takes the following serious: sound teachings on sex education, establishment of more home or orphanages and regular supervision of these homes. The church can also embark on creating more awareness on birth control, involvement in the adoption policy, in addition to fighting against customs and traditions that support children abandonment as well as rehabilitating the already abandoned ones. The church can respond to the plight of the children of un-identified parents in our contemporary society through these ways.

4.1. Sound teachings on sex education

According to Beers (2003:677) in Ilumina Gold maintained that Unlike some religious and philosophical systems, the Bible takes a positive view of human sexuality. According to the Old Testament's account of Creation, God himself made people sexual beings. Being male or female is part of what it means to be created in the image of God. Above everything else, therefore, sexuality is a precious aspect of what a person is,

not merely a description of what he or she does.

In line with this positive approach, the Old Testament sees nothing embarrassing in the bodily differences between the sexes (Gen.2:25) and nothing shameful in physical expressions of lovemaking (Prov.5:18-19; Eccl.9:9). The Song of Songs, in particular, is a most beautiful love poem. Its powerful language should not be so spiritualized that the physical passion it describes is stripped of its delight and candor.

Paul strikes the same positive note in his letters to Corinth and to Timothy at Ephesus. Sexual vice was rampant in both these cities. Partly as a reaction to this, a negative, ascetic attitude was threatening to take control in the life of Christians. Marriage was being forbidden (1Tim.4:3) and married couples were abstaining from sexual intercourse in the belief that this would help them to become more spiritually mature (cf. 1 Cor.7:5). Paul had no hesitation in branding such attitudes as heretical. Recalling his readers to the message of Genesis, he encouraged them to receive God's gifts thankfully (1Tim.4:3-5). Husbands and wives, he writes, are mutually obliged to satisfy each other's sexual needs (1 Cor.7:3-4).

Most obviously, God made sex for procreation (Gen.1:28). But sex is for relationship as well as procreation. Genesis 2 describes how God made woman to fill man's relationship vacuum (2:18-24). The relational purpose of human sexuality embraces far more than physical intercourse. In this broad sense, being male or being female is a God-given aid to making all sorts of relationships, including some not normally thought of as sexual at all.

The Bible does not, of course, ignore the darker side of human nature. Having described the goodness of sex in the Creator's perfect plan, Genesis goes on to explain how man's disobedience to God spoiled sex, just as it spoiled every other aspect of human life.

Nudity became a matter of embarrassment and fear, as men and women eyed each other as sex objects instead of as people with physical differences (Gen.3:7-10). On the relational side, trust and tenderness gave way to betrayal and harshness. Here lies the root cause of all the discrimination and abuse that fuel modern feminist protests. In addition, procreation was spoiled, too, as the marvelous experience of childbirth was marred by unnecessary pain and distress.

This is the context in which the Bible's ban on extramarital intercourse should be read; it prohibits adultery (Exod.20:14) and any kind of extramarital or premarital sex (1Cor.6:18; 1Thes.4:3). The Bible does not usually pause to back up its prohibitions with arguments, but on the rare occasions when it does expand its veto on extramarital intercourse, the reasons given are highly instructive. There is no appeal to consequences (these things are wrong because they result in disease and unwanted babies) or even to motives, (these things are wrong if they are done in an unloving spirit).

All extramarital sex is wrong in itself, simply because the body is not meant for sexual immorality and those who commit sexual sins against their own bodies (1Corinthians 6:13, 18). Sexual intercourse is a unique kind of body language that the Creator has designed to express and seal that special, exclusive, life-long relationship between a man and a woman, which the Bible labels "marriage."

The Bible also prohibits homosexuality (Lev.18:22; Rom.1:26-27; 1Cor.6:9-10; 1Tim.1:9-10). The only verses that provide an explanation for this prohibition are Rom.1:24-27. Essentially, these verses indicate that God gave up on

those who gave up on him when they turned from worshiping the Creator to worshiping things God made—that is, when they became idolaters. As such, God abandoned them, as they abandoned themselves to their own sinful and sexual desires, especially practicing homosexuality. Thus, homosexuality is seen as a violation of the natural created order and thereby an offense to God the Creator who created men and women, male and female, for procreation.

The Bible's advice to anyone caught up in sexual temptation is practical: flee from temptation. When Joseph was invited by another man's wife to go to bed with her, he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house (Gen.39:12). In addition, Paul tells his Christian readers to follow Joseph's good example (1Cor.6:18; 2Tim.2:22). This is an acknowledgment of the power of the normal person's sex drive, not a counsel of despair. The power of the Holy Spirit, Paul taught, gives any believer the strength to win the war against sexual temptation. He knew Christians who had found the Spirit's power to gain self-control and conquer the most deeply ingrained habits (1Cor.6:9-11; Gal.2-23; 2Tim.1:7).

Finally, there is a strong hint in the New Testament that

God is going to end human sexuality just as he began it. There will be no marriage, Jesus taught, in heaven (Matt.22:30). That is an unlikely but fitting climax to the Bible in the teaching of sex and sexuality. When there is no more death, the need to procreate will be over. Moreover, when relationships perfectly love, there will no longer be any need for a sexual prop to support them. So both of God's main purposes for human sexuality will be perfectly fulfilled in eternity.

The increase in the cases of unwanted pregnancies in our contemporary society is a clear indication that our young people are not yet exposed to sound teachings on sex. It has led many young people into illicit sexual activities that usually resulted to unwanted pregnancies, which many of them would not abort. This ugly development among our young people calls for sound sex education. Sex education is a topic, which only a few people would want to discuss. Esu (1994:292) defined "sex education as the acquisition of knowledge that deals with human sexuality". It consists of instruction on the development of an understanding of the physical, mental, emotional, social, economic and psychological phases of human relations as they are affected by male and female relationships. It is broadly

defined as any instruction in the processes and consequences of sexual activity, ordinarily given to children and adolescents.

However, Bozimo and Ikwumelu (1999:56) pointed out that:

Sex education is prone to misrepresentation and misinterpretation probably because some writers have used them interchangeably with venereal disease education, family life education and even population education.

They pointed out that while sex education has one or two things in common with all these aspects of education, it is not similar with any of them. For instance, venereal education focuses on the diseases, their causes and cures. Contraceptive and birth control education is concerned with the devices of family planning. Family life education deals with the area in addition to such areas as divorce and child abuse. And population focuses on all the areas mentioned above in addition to such topics as population growth, birth and mortality rates and migration.

Historically, the task of instructing adolescents about sex has been the duty of the parents, but parents - children

communication in sexual matters may be hindered by prenatal inhibitions or by various cultural inhibition. This is the likely reason why children rarely receive their first information on sexual activities from their parents. Sex education is better appreciated with the idea of the objectives of it. According to ESU (1994:45) who concluded that the objectives of sex education include:

- develop normal attitudes and ideals in relation to sex and family,
- develop desirable habits, behavioral patterns, and conduct in accordance with such attitudes and ideals.
- acquire knowledge of matters related to the physiology of human reproduction and aspects of family life.
- learn to use the proper terminology in reference to the body
- become aware of some of the possible consequences and outcomes of various forms of conducts.
- correct and alleviate some of the common anxieties and misconception in the field of sex adjustment.
- contribute to the emotional and social adjustment of the individual so that he can function adequately as a member of a family and eventually as a parent.

The general objectives accommodate religious group, schools and social institutions. This really places the church in a right position to embark on sex education without fear of contradiction. Contrarily, Bozimo and Ikwumelu (1999:45) were of the opinion that the church is supposed to focus on the

spiritual and moral aspects of a child. Ogbazi (2005: 146) opined that the teachings of our religion influence our decisions and values. They influence attitudes towards sexuality and relationship by promoting discipline, self-control, chastity and honesty.

Christianity being one of the major religious groups in Nigeria stands in better position to go into serious sex education. The combination of teaching on sex education, spiritual and moral aspects of the child will definitely yield more positive results among the teenagers. According to Okonkwo and Okoye (2001:27) the adolescent, in order to develop effectively needs some information. Such information is usually obtained through a number of sources such as the home, school, peer group and church. Here, the church is concerned with sound teaching on sex education, and uses this medium to relay the major religious injunctions on sexual interaction.

These religious injunctions are on premarital sexual intercourse, abortion, prostitution, exploitation of children, rape and other bad behaviours that hurt children. These normally give rise to what is called unwanted pregnancy, which usually results to children abandonment. The advocate for sound sex

education is necessitated by the rate of misinformation on this subject to children. Isangedighi (1994:34) suggested that:

the nature of adolescents' exposure to modernity for example: pornographic, peer groups influence, parental attitude toward sex education as well as eroding social morality, make it justifiable to include sex education in secondary school curriculum.

4.2 Establishment of orphanages and homes

The establishment of Motherless Babies' Homes and Orphanages should not be left for the government and non-governmental organizations alone. Orphanage is the residential institution that cares for orphans (children who have no parents). The Motherless Babies Home is also residential institution that cares for children whose parents cannot be identified.

In the South-East, there are about six of these institutions established by church organization. They include:

- 1). Motherless Babies Home of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy Ahianeke, Ndume, Umuahia.
- 2). Guardian Angles Motherless Babies Home, Emene Enugu.
- 3). Daughters of Divine Love Motherless Babies Home, Ehalumona (near Nsukka)

- 4). Holy Ghost Cathedral Motherless Babies Home, Ogbete, Enugu.
- 5). The Cathedral Church of the Good Shepherd Motherless Babies, Enugu.
- 6). Holy Child Motherless Babies Home, Ogui, Enugu

However, in the South East, there are more than twenty two (22) orphanages and homes. Out of the five states in the zone, church established these institutions in only two states. The remaining three states: Anambra, Ebony and Imo have no record of these institutions established by the church. This is a clear indication that the church has not done much in this regard of establishing orphanages. The church, which is made up of different denominations, is supposed to establish more homes or orphanages in Nigeria. We have the Christian Association of Nigeria, which is also found in the South Eastern zone. In the course of this research, it was discovered that most of the blocs in Christian Association of Nigeria do not show concern in the establishment of these homes. The blocs of Christian Association of Nigeria are:-

- (a) Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN)
- (b) Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN)
- (c) Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)
- (d) Organization of African Instituted Churches
- (e) ECWA – Evangelical church of West Africa.

The research reveals that the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) has been involved in establishing orphanages or homes. Recently, the Christian Council of Nigeria is only involved in running of Motherless Babies' Home in Enugu in very small scale. Hence, the Churches in Nigeria in general, and South East in particular have not been made much impact.

Furthermore, the church is in better position to establish these institutions as well as performing supervisory roles for them. The importance of supervision of these institutions cannot be overemphasized. Nevertheless, in most cases it is completely neglected by the church. These abandoned children in these homes face more dangers if they are not properly supervised. In addition, child abuse may occur where the home keepers are not under strict supervision.

Moreover, the establishment of these homes by the church gives room for good moral teachings. This inculcates the spirit of good behaviour in the lives of the abandoned children. They cannot get good behaviour from the society that is almost morally bankrupt. The present day society needs sound moral instructions that will be of great help to the abandoned children. However, it is not out of place for the

church to throw her full weight on this issue by ensuring that the abandoned children are not left in wrong hands in our society. If it is allowed, it will in turn raise children who are morally debased which are not for the best interest of the society.

4.3 Involvement of the church in the adoption policy

In Igboland, the issue of adoption still sparks some controversies because of its implication on the adopted children in some cases. Many couples have children through adoption. Couples have also gotten particular gender (male or female) through adoption. Sklar and Wasserman (2009) defined adoption as "the procedure by which people legally assume the role of parents of a person who is not their biological child". Adopted children become full members of their adopted families and have the same legal status as biological children. O'Donovan (1996:111) concluded that:

orphans are often put up for adoption because an orphan is adopted; a man who is not the child's father becomes his or her new father. The orphan becomes a legal member of a new family.

Adoption is a common practice throughout the world and throughout history but it is yet to be fully accepted in the Sub-Saharan Africa. However, laws regulating adoption vary from country to country. The state Ministry for Women Affairs and Social Development in the South-East zone of Nigeria are vested with the power to oversee adoption and fostering of children. Through these ministries in their respective states, abandoned children are usually adopted.

The research reveals that some of the abandoned children in most cases are later abandoned for the second time. In discussion with one of the home keepers, who said that the adopted children in some cases are left without helpers at the death of the adoptee. She attributed the cause of this, to lack of expert pastoral counseling before proceeding into adoption. In this regard, church has a very important role to play in ensuring that the adopting parents are made to know their roles to the child. The involvement of the church in adoption policy provides the pastors the opportunity of giving the proper counseling for the good of the child. In addition, the church may offer help to any child who may be abandoned for the

second time, because of her involvement in the initial stage of the adoption procedure.

4.4 Creating awareness for birth control policy

The word "birth" indicates the emergence of the young of a human or animal from the mother's womb into the outside world. The term "control" denotes restraining or limiting something from further production. Birth control in general term is the deliberate prevention of pregnancy using any of the several methods. Birth control stops the male sex cell from fertilizing a female sex cell. Okwueze (2003:134) pointed out that scientific birth control mechanism raised hope for easy control of the world's population, which at the time appeared to be growing out of proportion. Nevertheless, there is relatively corresponding increase in food production. The control of growth rate is something that must be done, due to poor economy found in the world's economy. It is even difficult for most parents to give their children the deserved parental care. This has contributed greatly to the current moral decadence in our contemporary society.

However, the church has not accepted everything about birth control in the context of natural and artificial methods of birth

control. The church is only against the use of artificial methods of birth control. According to Encarta 2009, the artificial methods are:

- (a). barrier methods which is made up of condom, female condom, diaphragm cap, spermicides.
- (b) intrauterine device (IUD) which is a small plastic device inserted into women's uterus to prevent pregnancy.
- (c) hormonal contraceptives which include: birth control pill, hormonal implant, contraceptive injection, contraceptive ring and contraceptive patch.
- (d) surgical sterilization which is almost 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy.
- (e). emergency contraception which refers to methods that a woman can use after unprotected intercourse to prevent fertilization of the egg or implantation of the fertilized egg in the uterus.

Okwueze (2003:134) took note of an encyclical issued by Pope Paul (IV) on July 25, 1968. He condemned all forms of birth control except the rhythm method. By virtue of the sanctity of human life and natural law life should not be tampered with not minding the occasion that rise to demand. Birth control can still take place outside the artificial methods not recognized by the church.

The rhythm or natural methods approved by the church are:

- a).Fertility awareness methods which includes calendar charting, basal body temperature measurement and cervical mucus monitoring .

- b). Withdrawal which is the deliberate removal of the penis from the vagina before ejaculation so that sperm is not deposited in or near the vagina
- c). Continuous abstinence which denotes the avoidance of any sexual activity that could cause pregnancy (Encarta, 2009).

The issues lie not on the method to be used for birth control but on the orientation of the people. The traditional Igbo society threw much recognition of a man based on the number of children he has. This has made many men to become polygamist. The resultant effect is usually having many children that may not be properly trained. In alternative, some of these innocent children are left without parental care and are abandoned. According to O'Donovan (1996:288) having several wives has been a symbol of power, wealth and influence in traditional African societies for many centuries.

It is therefore expected of the church to create more awareness on the accepted birth control method. The natural method approved by the church is more reliable as well as safer than any other method. The church stands in a better and more far reaching position because the uneducated members of the society can be reached easily. This can be done through

preaching and teaching on the need for every child to receive sound training from parents. It is no longer a matter of continuous procreation without enough provision for the children's upkeep. Parents should be made to understand the dangers of exposing their children to certain unwelcome practices such as child abandonment and abuse.

But whosoever shall offend of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea (Matt. 18:6).

The involvement of the church in creating awareness for birth control in our contemporary society is also a panacea for the children abandonment, because birth will longer take place indiscriminately.

4.5. Fight against customs and traditions that encourage child abandonment.

In Igboland, customs and traditions play major role in the affairs of the society. The customs and traditions stipulate the accepted way of living for the common good of everybody. According to Lain Matlean in Okwueze (2004:229), he asserted that tradition is anything, which is typical of the past, customary or part of a cultural identity. He further said that

tradition could include such diverse items as religious benefits, sporting customs, linguistic practices, or dietary habits (Okwueze: 2004:229). On the other hand, custom means usages, practices, standards and codes which are common to certain groups or classes of people and which regulate their actions in social and religious obligations (Okwueze: 2003:67-68).

Furthermore, customs and traditions are well developed in most communities in Igboland. Some of them encourage certain practices that may lead to children abandonment. They really throw full weight on the people in observing them. This occasionally brings about abandoned children in our contemporary society. In the research conducted, the respondents identified the following practices as customs and traditions of the Igbo people that encourage child abandonment:

- rejection of sexual promiscuity
- unacceptance of teenage / pre-marital pregnancy in some societies.
- ostracizing of parents of unmarried daughters having children
- rejection of children of unusual growth and development (malformation)
- high bride price
- promotion of Osu caste system
- wrong attitude to female gender

- and enforcement of rites of passage in some societies.

The factors enumerated above largely encourage child abandonment especially in the South-Eastern Zone of Nigeria. Against this background, the church should not fold arms and watch things spoil on daily basis because of some customs and traditions that do not have “human faces”.

In essence, the church should realize her roles in the society. The church has remained the voice of the voiceless. The fight against these customs and traditions that support abandonment of children in our society should be total. The church has always been involved in assuaging the physical ills and miseries of humankind (Compare Jesus’ reaction to social / physical ills) (Okwueze: 2003:163). Therefore, it will not be out of place, if the church really determines to give freedom to those in bondage by means of negative or unhealthy customs and traditions.

4.6 Rehabilitation of abandoned children in our society

Rehabilitation is concerned with helping somebody to return to good health or a normal life by providing training or therapy. In most cases, some of these abandoned children are denied of

sound training in befitting places or institutions. The existing homes and orphanages found it difficult to feed these children, and provide sound education to them. The church in the past had such children of twins' birth or abnormal growth who were abandoned by their parents. The church was able to train them on scholarship in different areas of human endeavours. It was possible for the church to do it because it was part of her social work. Social work, in this sense it is used here stands for

a professional activity of helping individuals, groups or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goal (Compton:1980:109).

According to Okwueze (2003:163) through the centuries the Catholic Church as well as the Anglican Church and other Methodist bodies would establish their presence together with building of hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged and infirm, while orders of monks, nuns, priests and brothers were devoted to the corporal works of mercy. Through those establishments, the abandoned children were rehabilitated. Nevertheless, in the recent times, there is the outcry of the

society on the inability of the church to remember those good days and do the same.

However, there are many of these establishments owned by the church, but they are usually more expensive than other ones in our society. The church is expected to render these services to the unfortunate children on mercy grounds. This rehabilitation of the abandoned children should be viewed as lending a help to the needy for the good of the society.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the prospects of ending child abandonment, conclusion and recommendations.

5.1. The Prospects of Ending Child Abandonment.

The adverse effects of child abandonment on the affected children necessitate the call for ending it. In recent times, a good number of children have been involved in the children abandonment. The idea of abandonment is both morally and

ethically wrong. The wrong nature deprives some children the opportunity to associate with their biological parents. The deprivation of parental care to the abandoned children is termed as the "height" of child abuse and neglect. However, it is sometimes assumed that some of them live better than some of the children living with their biological parents. The issue remains that they are deprived of biological parental care. Ezeilo (2001:39) upheld that parents have the primary responsibility of a child's upbringing but states shall provide them with appropriate assistance for the development of the child. Nigerians are increasingly worried with the tremendous increase of children abandonment in our contemporary society. The breakdown in some families and homes is a result of the effect of children abandonment.

In addition, the abandonment of children in our society is not for the best interest of the society. This is because of its far-reaching implications on the entire contemporary society. Some of these children usually exhibit anti social behaviours. These anti social behaviours may include breaking of Law and order in our society, involvement in armed robbery, poor attitude to human sexuality and juvenile delinquencies,

discrimination among children, and increased cases of infanticide. Ayua and Okagbue (1996:176) are of the opinion that:

... street children are also exposed to all kinds of morally bankrupt people and, very often, they engage in truancy and delinquent behaviour, such as cheating, lying, stealing, drug abuse and prostitution. For those who are still in school and are forced to hawk wares, many complain of fatigue and inability to study at home. It was found that such children perform badly at school and more often than not perform below their chronological age.

Presently, there is an increase in cases of armed robbery and burglary. Investigation shows that some of them are children without good family background. Nevertheless, there are instances of children with poor parental upbringing involved in these criminal activities. Hence, the fight against child abandonment in our society is a step in the right direction. This fight seeks to find ways of ending children abandonment in our society. The achievement of this goal will be of great assistance to the socio-economic development of our society.

Moreover, ending children abandonment in our society depends on a number of factors that must be dealt with. Firstly, to abolish all customs and traditions that encourages children abandonment. The study has shown that certain customs and traditions are against teenagers, which aids to having abandoned children in our society. Secondly, the approach used in the Old Testament to control abandoned children that made it almost impossible to have direct identification of abandoned children in their period should be adopted in our present situation. Thirdly, correct attitude to sex should also be seen as another issue that will help to end child abandonment. In addition, ending this evil practice of child abandonment requires the attention of the government in ensuring improved economy that will profit every citizen.

The improved economy will definitely make living wage more reliable. Ayua and Okagbue (1996:194) opined that:

children in Nigeria, in spite of efforts both at government and non-government levels to address their problems, do not appear to be faring very well, more so in face of worsening economic conditions in the country. As a result, children's right to life, good care, nutrition, health and education, etc, as

spelt out by the United Nations convention on the Rights of the child remain only a dream for many.

The continuous occurrence and reoccurrence of wars can also be a great impediment in ending children abandonment in our society. Even the natural disasters are also big obstacles to this honest desire of ending child abandonment in our society. It is obvious that the task of ending children abandonment in our society is a very difficult one because of the prevailing factors that promote it. It almost made it humanly impossible to eradicate the abandonment of children. However, it is still imperative that enough care should be given to reduce the cases of abandonment of children in our society.

5.2 Recommendations

The sufferings of children of un-identified parents in our society have raised concerns among the people. These unfortunate children found in most places in Igboland need the help of individuals as well as corporate bodies especially the church. It is imperative to explore possible things that could be done to improve their living standard in our society.

The government and non-governmental organizations should see churches as “partners in progress”. The church should be

fully involved in the adoption policy in our society, to give close monitoring of the growth and development of the adopted children. The church should accept sound sex education and teach it to the young children. This will drastically reduce “illicit” sexual relationships among our children. In most cases, illicit sexual relationships usually end up in unwanted pregnancies that are usually abandoned, if not aborted.

It is also expected of the church to embark on reformation and transformation of certain customs and traditions that encourage child abandonment. This can only be achieved through dialogue and persuasion on the people to change these bad practices. These evil beliefs and practices should be altered to enhance good living among our children in the 21st century.

In addition, government should help to reduce poverty among the citizens. Poverty has indeed negatively affected some parents so that it becomes impossible for them to make use of and imbibe healthy birth control measures. In most cases, these uncontrolled births make parents to have more children than they can adequately care for. This leads to the abandonment of the unfortunate ones. The Government can

reduce poverty rate by creating job opportunity as well as ensuring that parents are gainfully employed. Stable economy can also reduce poverty in society.

The church should see the awareness for birth control policy as a step in the right direction. It is of great importance for the church to make regular visits to the existing homes and orphanages. They should also go with some money for the purchase of food and other necessities as well as ensuring good welfare package for the workers. This will make these home keepers to sit up and do their jobs more satisfactorily. This definitely ensure good standard of living for these children.

Again, all hospitals and maternity homes that harbour some teenagers for pregnancy without Government's approval should be closed down for the sake of these helpless abandoned children. The Government's agency in charge of children welfare should track down these illegal operators. These agencies of Government should work hand in hand with the church in the supervision of these homes and orphanages, for the best interest of the abandoned children.

5.3 Conclusion

This research examined the plight of children of un-identified or abandoned children in our society from the Old Testament background and our contemporary society. The Old Testament as well as any other society cannot claim the absence of these unfortunate children no matter how developed it may be. There are traces of abandonment of children in the patriarchal to the age of Judges, Monarchical period, exilic and post-exilic periods. However, the truth remains that there were prevailing circumstances capable of making children abandonment possible. In the Old Testament era, every child was provided with a home at all costs.

The perception of the respondents leaves no one in doubt that there are currently many abandoned children in our society. The increase of children of un-identified parents sometimes called "street children" is running out of hand. Moreover, they agreed that poverty, uncontrolled sexual activities, obnoxious customs and traditions encourage it. In addition, wars and natural disasters, HIV / AIDS pandemics, child abuse and neglect are supporting it in our contemporary society. The children of un-identified parents always face many challenges in the homes or orphanages where they are being taken care

of. Some of them were not given opportunity to travel out of their vicinity to see other places. They are denied of parental care, exposed to illegal adoption, trafficked and used for ritual.

The church can teach sound sex education to the teenagers to reduce illicit sexual activities found among them, which in most cases lead to unwanted pregnancy. The church has not done much in establishing these homes in Igboland. The church is not also involved in the adoption of children in our society. It is also discovered that the church has not been creating enough awareness for birth control policy. The church can also rehabilitate these children of un-identified parents and place them in a good condition in our society. This can be done through establishing more homes and full funding of them. These unfortunate children can also receive scholarships from the church for their educational trainings. Adiele (2001:6) pointed out that one of the objectives of Christian Association of Nigeria (C.A.N) is "to be a watchdog of the spiritual and moral welfare of the nation". In recent times, it seems that C.A.N is like a toothless bulldog, due to her poor responses to some socio-political matters in our society.

.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Achebe, C. (1958). *Things Fall Apart*. Ibadan: William Hinemann Ltd.

Adiele, S.N. (ed) (2001). *The Anglican Church in Nigeria: Trends, Issues and Activities*. Ikot Ekpene: Clean hinds Productions.

Animalu, A.O.E. and Ogbuka, C.J. (ed) (1995). *Symposium on Archdeacon T.J. Dennis, The Niger Diocese and DMGS*. Nsukka: Ucheakonam Foundation Ltd.

Anyaele, J.U. (1994). *Comprehensive Government for Senior Secondary School*. Lagos: A Johnson (Publishing) Enterprises.

Arinze, E.A. (1970). *Sacrifices in Ibo Religion*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

- Alston, P. (1994). *The Best Interests of the Child – Reconciling Centre and Human Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Ayua, I.A. and Okagbue, I.E. (1996). *The Rights of the Child in Nigeria*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.
- Barker, K. et-al (ed) (1985) *The NIV Study Bible New International Version* Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.
- Basden, G.T. (1921) *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. Nigeria: University Publishing Company
- Basden, G.T. (1966). *Niger Ibos*. London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd.
- Bozimo, G, and Ikwumelu, S.N. (1999). *Issues in Social Education in Nigeria*. Owerri: Whyte Publishers.
- Center, J. (1985). *The Family Today and Tomorrow: The Church Addresses her future*. Massachusehs: Moral Research and Education centre Brain tree.
- Chawla, S. et-al (2009) *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. Vienna: United Nations Office on Drug and Crime.. Boston: The Dorsey Press.
- Compton, B.R. (1980). *Introduction to Social Welfare Work Structure, Function and Process*
- Ejeabukwa, C.O. (2002) *Preventing Evils against Women and Children*. Enugu: Chukwuma Publishers.
- Ekpunobi, E. and Ezeaku, I. (ed) (1990) *Socio- Philosophical Perspective of African Traditional Religion*. Enugu: New Age Publisher.
- Ekwunife, (1992). *Consecration in Igbo Traditional Religion*. Enugu: Jet Publishers.

- Esu, A.E.O (1994). *Sex Education in Nigeria Schools. Issues facing Adolescents and Nigerian*. In I.D.N. Nwachukwu (ed) contemporary Issues in Nigerian education and development. 291 -301. Enugu: Sam & Star Company.
- Ezeilo, J (2001) *Women and Children's Rights in Nigeria*. Enugu: Women's Aid Collective (WACOL).
- Ferguson, Sinclair B., et-al (ed) (1988) *New Dictionary of Theology*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Hammad, A.E.B et-al (2009). *The Golden Book. A call to End human Trafficking: A collection of Voices*. Geneva: The Suzanne Mubarak Women's International peace Movement.
- Hinson, D.F. (1990) *History of Israel*. London: S.P.C.K.
- Hornby, A.S. (2000) *Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ilogu, E.(1974). *Christianity and Igbo Culture*. Onitsha: University Publishing Co.
- Kraynack, R.P. (2001). *Christian Faith and Modern Democracy God and Politics in the Fallen World*. India: University of Notre.
- Livingston, George H. (1969). *Beacon Bible Commentary (Genesis)*. Kansas: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.
- Michael, M.C. (2005) *Essential Biology for Senior Secondary School*. Lagos Tonad Publishers Limited.
- Munroe, M. (2001) *The Principle of Fatherhood*. Lanham: Pneuma Life Publishing.
- Ndubuisi, Acha F. (1991) *Nigeria: What Hope? Enugu*. CECTA (Nig) Ltd.

- O' Donovan, W. (1992) *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective*. Carlisle: The Paternoster Press.
- Ogbazi, J.U. (2005). *Family Life and HIV Education for Secondary Schools*: Enugu. Ezu Books Ltd.
- Okonkwo, R.U.N. and Okoye, R.O. (ed) (2001) *The Nigerian Adolescent in Perspective*. Anambra: Theo. Onwuka and sons Publishers.
- Okolo, C.B.C. (1993). *Education and Nigerian Values: A Companion for Students*. Enugu: CECTA (Nig) Ltd.
- Okwesili, P.I. (1993). *The Covenant Law and the Prophetic Movement in Israel*. Nibo: Mico Industrial press.
- (1987.). *Hebrew History and Religion from the Creation to the Awka*: Pete's Commercial.
- Okwesili, P.I. and Anozie, E.C. (2001). *The people and the Faith of the Old Testament from Saul and the Seer to Sheshbazar and the Ruminants*: Rabboni Publishers International.
- (2008). *The People and the Faith of the Old Testament*. Enugu: Rabboni Publishers International.
- Okwueze, M.I. (2001). *The Old Testament as History, Religion & Literature*. AP Express Publisher.
-(2003). *Ethics, Religion & Society: Biblical, Traditional & Contemporary Perspectives*. Nsukka: Prize Publishers.
- (ed) (2004). *Religion and Societal Development: Contemporary Nigerian Perspectives*. Lagos: Merit International Publications.
- Pritchard, J.B. (1955). *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old*. London: Princeton University Press.

- Roland De Vaux, O.P. (1961). *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Sangedighi A.J. (19940). *Adolescent Sexuality in the Nigerian Society*. In D.N. Nwachukwu (ed). Contemporary Issues. Enugu: Sam & Star Company.
- Tajgman, D. (2007). *Child Labour Modern Policy and Legislative Responses to Child Labour*. Geneva: International Labour Organization)
- Unachukwu, G.C. (1989). *Educational Psychology Theory and Practice*. Owerri: Totan publishers Limited.
- Wright, G.E. (1962). *Biblical Archaeology*. London: The Westminster Press.

Newspapers and Magazines

- Amamgbo, O. C. (2009, Monday 10, August) " Moral Depravity" Codewit Global Network
- Kanu, A (2009, Thursday 28, May) "Abused Children in Palm Groove of Lagos" National Daily Newspaper.
- Itauma, S.I. (2008, Friday 28, November) "The Witch-Children of Akwa Ibom" The Guardian Weekly Newspaper.
- Ona, D (**2006**) "Child Fostering and Adoption Procedure in Enugu State"
- Uzodike, E (I990, Tuesday 20, November) "Child Abuse" International Journal Law, Policy and the family.

Internet Materials

- Beers, R.A (2003) *ILUMINA Gold: www.tyndale.com*
- Igbo cultures and tradition:
<http://72.32.124.166@google.com.ng>.

The Gleaner – www.jamaica-gleaner.com

Trafficking in Persons – www.naptip.gor.ng

Family – Parenting – www.codewit.com

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/abandonment>

Bankole, A – <http://paa2005.princeton.edu>.

“Birth Control” – Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009 (DVD) Redmond.
WA: Microsoft Corporation 2008.

Linkachild Ltd: www.linkachild.org/index.php.

Christian Association of Nigeria (C.A.N):
<http://www.canonline.org.ng>

Gelles, R.J. “Child Abuse” Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009 (DVD).
Redmond. WA: Microsoft Corporation 2008.

Freeman, Scott (2005) “Biological Science, Prentice Hall”
Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009 (DVD). Redmond. WA:
Microsoft Corporation.

Harris, J.M. “Jews” Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009 (DVD).
Redmond. WA: Microsoft Corporation.

Human Sacrifice Wikipedia –
<http://72.32.124.166@google.com>

Rituals <http://www.earthward.org/rituals>
<http://www.oyibosonline.com>.

<http://www.modernghana.com/news/218468/1/children>

“Parent and child”, Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009 (DVD),
Redmond. WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2008.

Sanders, S. A. (2009) “Human Sexuality” Microsoft ® Encarta
® 2009 (DVD). Redmond. WA: Microsoft Corporation
2008.