

NBS
M Th
M 296a
306.8743

AFRICAN MOTHERHOOD PRACTICES AND
THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL CARE
AND COUNSELLING: A CASE STUDY

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the
Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho, Nigeria.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Theology

J. C. POOL LIBRARY
BAPTIST SEMINARY
OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA

by

George Solomon Mallet

June, 1995

95242

ABSTRACT

AFRICAN MOTHERHOOD PRACTICES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING: A CASE STUDY

The purpose of this work is to provide insight that will be helpful to the pastoral care giver who works specifically among the Yorubas or among other African ethnic groups. In pursuance of this goal this writer sets out to do a critical examination of certain Yoruba motherhood practices with the intent of finding out whether these practices have positive or negative psychological effects on the child's personality. These practices are the proximity ones of nurturing, the socialization ones and the ones involved in child discipline.

The first chapter's concern is with introductory matters while the second chapter surveys the literature on these practices. The third chapter is devoted to analysing the field work. The analysis indicates that higher education affects negatively, the practices of 'backing' and breast-feeding. Again, the chapter shows that a high percentage of mothers in the groups commence toilet-training for their children within the first year. This is contrary to what most expert opinions are. Yet contrary to expectation, a high percentage of the mothers have no problem with this training. Furthermore, the chapter reveals that mothers who force-feed their children also have difficulty helping their children with toilet-training. Again, a very large percentage of respondents indicate that they use either physical or verbal means in disciplining their children. While some of these methods will cause psychological problems for some children, other children will be toughened by some of these methods. In addition to these, the chapter shows that the majority of mothers of this group give religious education to their children.

The critical examination of the psychological dynamics at play in the motherhood practices is demonstrated in the

fourth chapter. The chapter demonstrates that while many of the dynamics that the practices generate are positive, others are negative. These have their consequential effects on the child's personality. The final chapter demonstrates how these findings can affect the pastoral counselling and care giver who works specifically among the Yorubas but also in other parts of Africa where some of these same practices are carried out. The care giver can use the knowledge to provide care, helping families to continue or discontinue practices. The understanding of the effects of the practices can also help the pastoral counsellor provide both care and counselling for people who have these practices in their culture. The knowledge will also help the counsellor find both the causes and the solutions to some personality problems of persons affected by such cultural practices.