

**PSYCHO-SOCIAL PREDICTORS OF MENTAL HEALTH AMONG  
ORPHANS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA: EFFICACY OF PSYCHO-  
EDUCATION INTERVENTION**

**BY**

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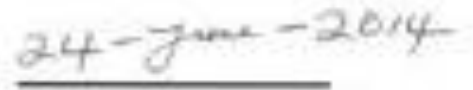
**BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
PSYCHOLOGY, SCHOOL OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT,  
COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY,  
OTA, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY.**

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research was carried out by ELEGBELEYE, Ayotunde Oluwadamilola and has been read and approved as meeting the requirements of the Department of Psychology, Covenant University, Canaan-land, Ota.



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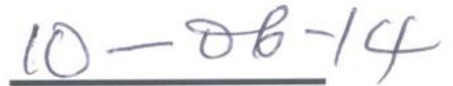
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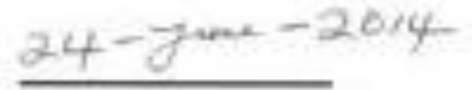
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## DECLARATION

It is hereby declared that this research was undertaken by ELEGBELEYE, Ayotunde Oluwadamilola. The thesis is based on her original study in the Department of Psychology, College of Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, under the supervision of Prof. S. E. Idemudia and Prof. A. A. Alao. Ideas and views of this research work are products of the original research undertaken by Elegbeleye Ayotunde Oluwadamilola and the views of other researchers have been duly expressed and acknowledged.



Prof. S. E. Idemudia  
(Supervisor)



Date

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my Heavenly Father, God Almighty, who was there at the very beginning, and has brought it to a glorious completion. He alone deserves my adoration. Also to the memory of my late father, Pastor F. B. Elegbeleye, who was my first mentor in academia.

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**ELEGBELEYE Ayotunde Oluwadamilola**  
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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

1. United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
2. United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
3. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
4. Acquired immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
5. Centre for Economic and Leadership Development (CELD)
6. Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)
7. World Health Organization (WHO)
8. Orphans and Vulnerable Children – Comprehensive Action Research (OVC-CARE)
9. AVERTing AIDS & HIV (AVERT)
10. American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP)
11. Subjective Well-Being (SWB)
12. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
13. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
14. Department for Children and Families (DCF)
15. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
16. University of North Carolina (UNC)
17. Interpersonal Social Support (ISS)

## ABSTRACT

Orphanhood is a global phenomenon. Over the years, due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the upsurge of killings, terrorism, accidents, and other disasters, there has been a steady increase in the orphan population across the globe, particularly in Africa. These crises have negatively impacted the lives of many orphans as they are faced with multifaceted challenges that leave them helpless, distraught, and distressed. This study was done in two phases: Phase I and Phase II. Phase I of the study set out to examine the psychosocial variables that predict the mental health of orphans in Southwest, Nigeria. The variables examined are self-concept, self-esteem, social support, life satisfaction, age, gender, and child abuse. Phase II of the study examined the efficacy of a psycho-educational programme in improving the mental health of orphans. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted to collect data in phase I. A sample of two hundred orphans, between ages 13 and 18 years, was selected from orphanages in Ogun, Lagos, and Oyo States respectively and another sample of two hundred non-orphans within the same age range was selected as a control group. The participants completed measures of the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28), Self-Concept Subscale of the Adolescent Personal Data Inventory, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Questionnaire, Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Questionnaire, and Childhood Abuse Questionnaire. Pre-posttest control group design was utilized for Phase II with a sample of twenty-two orphans randomly assigned to experimental and control groups respectively. The experimental group was exposed to a psycho-educational programme (Covenant Coping Skills Intervention Programme). Six research hypotheses were tested at  $p=0.05$  level of significance. Independent-samples t-test was used to test hypotheses one, two, four and five; Multiple regression was used to test hypothesis three; and One-way ANCOVA was used to test hypothesis six. The results revealed that there was a significant difference in the mental health of orphans and non-orphans ( $t=2.898$ ,  $df=398$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Orphans differed significantly from non-orphans on self-concept, self-esteem, social support, life satisfaction, and child abuse ( $t= -3.733$ ,  $df=398$ ,  $p<.05$ ;  $t= -2.084$ ,  $df=398$ ,  $p<.05$ ;  $t= -4.926$ ,  $df=398$ ,  $p<.05$ ;  $t= -6.219$ ,  $df=398$ ,  $p<.05$ ;  $t=3.158$ ,  $df=398$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Age, gender, self-concept, self-esteem, social support, life satisfaction, and child abuse significantly predicted orphans' mental health ( $R=.628$ ,  $R^2=.395$ ,  $F_{(7, 192)} = 17.898$ ,  $P<.05$ ). There was no significant age difference in the mental health of orphans ( $t=.540$ ,  $df=198$ ,  $p>.05$ ). There was no significant gender difference in the mental health of orphans ( $t= -.810$ ,  $df=198$ ,  $p>.05$ ). There was a significant difference in the mental health of orphans exposed to psycho-educational programme and orphans not exposed to same programme ( $F_{(1,19)}=19.655$ ,  $P<.05$ ). The results underscore the need to shield orphans from vulnerable situations that could result in abuse and development of poor self-concept. It is also important to develop intervention programmes that are specifically tailored to improve the mental health of orphans.

**Key Words:** Orphans, Mental Health, Self-concept, Self-esteem, Social Support, Life Satisfaction, Child Abuse, Psycho-educational Programme, Southwest Nigeria.