



# ALIGNING AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY WITH AFRICAN CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS PANACEAS TO ILLEGAL BUSINESS IN BORDER AREAS OF AFRICA: A YORUBA (AFRICAN) CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Jones Segun JESUTUNWASE, Ph.D

Prince Abubakar Audu University,  
Anyigba, Kogi State, Nigeria.  
Department of Arts Education  
(Christian Religious Studies)  
Faculty of Education

E-mail Addresses: [jesutunwase.js@ksu.edu.ng](mailto:jesutunwase.js@ksu.edu.ng), [feyjones@gmail.com](mailto:feyjones@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This study explores how African Christianity and African Christian Religious Education can help address the widespread illegal business activities found in Africa's border regions, using Yoruba Africentrism as the analytical lens. The paper begins by noting that poorly marked borders, weak enforcement, and leadership negligence have made many borderlands hubs for cross border trade, commercial sex, and other illicit activities. It examines how early African traditional leaders upheld moral order and social responsibility before the arrival of Western missionaries and the rise of Eurocentric influence. The study also considers how African cultural values and aesthetic traditions once shaped communal morality and contrasts this with the effects of Western Christianity and Western civilization, which the paper identifies as contributors to moral decline, commercial sex, and mental colonization in several border communities. Using socio historical analysis, interviews, online sources, and narrative methods, the research finds that African Christianity rooted in indigenous cultural identity, along with purposeful Christian Religious Education, can serve as strong tools for social transformation, moral renewal, and public enlightenment in border areas. The paper concludes that reclaiming Africentric values can help reshape attitudes toward illegal business and offers recommendations for restoring responsible leadership and community ethics across Africa's borderlands.

**Keywords:** *Cross border trade, Illegal business, African development, African Christianity and Religious Education, Yoruba Africentrism.*

## **Introduction**

African states obtained their independence from colonial masters with artificial and poorly demarcated borders considered the most potent source of conflict and political instability. Recent studies unveiled that the dynamism of borderlands had created opportunities for social, economic, and political activism for human benefit, and the inhabitants are eager to benefit from the resources that borders create. Contextually, it was discovered that majority of the inhabitants of borderlands are involved in cross border trade, illegal business, and commercial sex<sup>1</sup>, which negatively affects the holistic development of Africans. Moreover, Africa's Government leaders have been passive over cross border issues, and their negligence on African cross border trade and sexual immoralities has been on record. This negligence appears to negate the attitude of Traditional Africa's indigenous leaders before the arrival of western missionaries and colonial masters. The emergence of Eurocentrism in Africa is colonization in disguise and has had negative effects on Africa's social, economic, political, and religious life. However, the emergence of African theology is liberational and contextual, aiming to proffer panaceas to Africa's challenges, and "African Christianity is the synthesis between Christianity and African Traditional Religion"<sup>2</sup>.

Africentrism or Africentricity is the observation of a phenomena from the perspective of African culture, studying the histories, thought, culture, values, and ideology of Africans without dishonouring biblical principles, and Molefi corroborates this researcher by defining Afrocentricity as the predomination of the thought and action of Africans on interests and values, noting that it is an exercise in knowledge and a new historical perspective<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, this paper investigates the effects of Africa's Government leaders' negligence over cross border trade, examines the leadership legacies of early African indigenous leaders through Yoruba Africentrism, explores the influence of African culture and Aestheticism on morality before Eurocentrism,

assesses how western Christianity and western civilization are agents of commercial sex and mental colonization in Africa, analyzes African Christianity as an agent of national enlightenment on border trade and illegal business, decolonizes Africans' mentality on commercial sex, and offers recommendations for the way forward.

### **An Examination of How Negligence by African Government Leaders Impacts Cross Border Trade.**

In this section of the paper, the researcher intends to examine the negative effects of the attitude of the contemporary Africa's Government leaders which negated that of the Early Africa's Traditional indigenous leaders before the arrival of western Christian missionaries and British colonial masters to Africa. The Effect of Africa's government leaders' negligence over cross border trade are seen below:

- i. Disunity among Africa's government leader along the lines of a common vision at the national and international levels over cross border trade illegal business like: smuggling and so on in Africa.
- ii. Disunity among Africa's government leaders along the lines of a common ethical basis at the national and international levels over cross border trade led to economic crisis among Africa's nations.
- iii. Deficiency of the ability to make sure the country can defend itself in case of a conflict-The military's strength has not been viable since national leaders are not united because of their unchallant attitudes towards cross border and so on in Africa; this might be consequential to the current uncontrolled insecurities in Africa like: Banditry, *Boko Haram* insurgency and so on.
- iv. Discourages exceptional diplomats and negotiators who can turn enemies into friends and keep friends in check<sup>4</sup>.

- v. Africa's government leaders would not be able to realize their economic and social potential in the context of cross border trade and in other Areas in Africa.
- vi. A bad governance scheme and poor leadership stunt growth.<sup>5</sup>

### **Leadership Legacies of Early Indigenous African Leaders before Western Missionaries and Eurocentric Influence: A Study of Yoruba Africentrism**

In this section of the paper, the researcher seeks to assess the impact of leadership legacies of the early indigenous leaders before the emergence of western missionaries and general Eurocentrism in Africa, using the case study of Yoruba Cultural and Religious Experience in the light of curbing Illegal business, sexual abuse and other corruption in Africa's Churches and African communities; these corruptions are consequential to the negative effects of Eurocentrism in Africa. Yoruba ethnic group in Africa like other neighbouring Africans have their own cultural values and traditional religion before the advent of western Christianity that brought along western civilization to Africa. Below are the selected cultural- leadership legacies of the traditional community leaders of the Ancient Yoruba kingdom. Other neighbouring African community leaders equally have good legacies that are similar. The aim of exploring these traditional African leadership legacies is for the contemporary African especially, Government leaders to emulate the legacies in order to have a positive mindset and seek for the panaceas to curb Illegal business, commercial sex in Border Areas and other corruption in Africa. Below are the Africentric (Yoruba) traditional leadership legacies:

- i. **Servant-leadership:** Servant leadership is a philosophy built on the belief that effective leaders strive to serve others rather than accrue power or take control<sup>6</sup>. This researcher hopes contemporary Africa's Government leaders will emulate the heroes and heroines

who served their generations selflessly. Current research shows that many of Africa's leaders are not there to serve but appear selfish and power drunk, and their dereliction on Cross border trade and Illegal business in Africa is evident. In Yoruba tradition, Oduduwa was a servant leader, the son of Lamurudu and progenitor of the Yoruba who journeyed from the east to Ile Ife, fathered seven strong sons whose military exploits formed major Yoruba kingdoms, including Oyo, Ketu, Isabe, and Owu, and he died in Ile Ife as a servant leader<sup>7</sup>. Moremi Ajasoro, a Yoruba queen and heroine, helped liberate Ile Ife from the Ugbo kingdom. Married to Oranmiyan, she sacrificed her marriage, her son, and risked death for her people<sup>8</sup>. Living in the 12th century, she confronted the invaders known as forest people (Igbo in Yoruba, not related to the modern Igbo). These invaders appeared as raffia-covered masquerades, enslaving many Ife citizens<sup>9</sup>. Moremi vowed to Esimirin for guidance, was taken as a slave by the Igbo, married their ruler, learned their military secrets, escaped to Ile Ife, and enabled the Yoruba victory<sup>10</sup>. She later fulfilled her vow by sacrificing her only son Oluorogbo, a grief shared by the whole kingdom, commemorated today in the Edi festival<sup>11</sup>. While it is important not to mix African traditional religion with biblical teaching to avoid syncretism<sup>12</sup>, this researcher highlights these cultural legacies so contemporary African leaders may emulate them in addressing Cross Border Trade challenges and Illegal business. Leaders today could sacrifice time, pleasure, finances, and more for the continent. Africa's cultures and religions have played significant roles even in biblical periods<sup>13</sup>, and an Africentric servant leadership approach could enhance proper Cross border trade and curb Illegal business if leaders reject selfishness, materialism, egocentrism, and fame, creating hope for holistic development across African nations.

## **ii. An Africentric Holistic Leadership Approach**

Holistic leadership is an approach that emphasizes the importance of balancing personal and professional growth investing in oneself and others, and fostering a collaborative and supportive organizational culture (Doyle, 2022). In holism, Africans maintain a unitary version of reality underline the common source of all lives and uphold the interdependent of all within the planetary system.<sup>14</sup>

### **Influence of African Culture and Aesthetics on Morality before Western Missionaries and Eurocentric Influence in Africa**

This section examines culture, artistic forms, and general Aesthetics in African socio-cultural life in relation to morality and godliness. Before the arrival of western Christianity, Africans held arts, culture, and oath taking in high esteem for faithfulness in marriage and leadership. Early western missionaries, however, viewed African aesthetic values as evil, even though recent findings show many African cultural practices parallel those of Ancient Israelites and promoted morality before Eurocentrism. African traditional religion contains numerous artistic expressions rooted in socio-religious beliefs. African arts, referring to works across sub Saharan regions, include carvings, metal work, masks, inscriptions, and shrines<sup>15</sup>. Some Eurocentric biblical scholars and missionaries considered these arts unchristian, a perception that ignored African cultural identity and its role in worship. In many communities, artistic images foster caution and discourage fraud or sexual immorality.

African aesthetics generally rest on ethical and religious foundations, as artworks seen as beautiful are also considered morally good<sup>16</sup>. Shava explains that African aesthetics draw from diverse cultural and spiritual experiences and serve as tangible and intangible heritage

affirming both diversity and unity<sup>17</sup>. These symbolic forms define Africanness for future generations, including those in the diaspora. Traditional aesthetics, including modest dress for women, promoted decency and reduced sexual temptation, but western Christianity and western civilization encouraged immodest dressing that heightened sexual urges. Before western influence, traditional leaders upheld communal, heroic, and moral aesthetic values, yet Eurocentrism disrupted these Africentric ethics among African leaders.

Western missionaries also altered African marriage systems. Before the Sudan Interior Mission and ECWA, Yagba Yoruba people wore Aso Oke for marriage, which covered the bride decently, but western civilization replaced these with white wedding garments that exposed the bride's body and encouraged sexual immorality<sup>18</sup>. Virginity was taken seriously in traditional Nigerian marriage<sup>19</sup>, and it was shameful if the bride was not found chaste<sup>20</sup>, which sustained morality among youths before western Christianity<sup>21</sup>. Similarities in marriage between ancestral Africans and Ancient Israelites suggest both cultures shaped early Christianity. Adamo notes that cultural parallels arose through interrelationship and intermarriage<sup>22</sup>, and both traditions valued marital faithfulness, unlike modern practices shaped by western civilization<sup>23</sup>.

Before western Christianity, commercial sex was not legalized in African communities, including border areas. Virginity, also upheld in Ancient Israel, was valued among Jews and early Judeo Christians. Some westerners attempted to adjust biblical teachings to suit their context<sup>24</sup>, removing miracles like the virgin birth because they felt modern westerners rejected them<sup>25</sup>. By contrast, Africans readily accepted the virgin birth due to their cultural emphasis on virginity. Examining these aesthetic similarities highlights God as guardian of morality, law, and order<sup>26</sup>. Goodness in African traditional thought focuses on doing good and avoiding harm, and Africans avoided

cheating or sexual immorality to escape divine punishment, a practice reflected in Ancient Israelite ethics<sup>27</sup>.

Oath making was central in both traditions. Couples swore oaths of faithfulness and unity in marriage, and violating these required sacrifices to the gods or punishment from the gods or Yahweh<sup>28</sup>. Ademiluka notes that these virtues were eroded by western missionaries, whose influence introduced western civilization and Christianity that encouraged social vices such as divorce, premarital sex, dishonor to parents, sexual dishonesty, commercial sex, rape, and other immoralities<sup>29</sup>.

### **Negative Effects of Illegal Cross-Border Business in Africa**

Informal cross border trade (ICBT) is widespread across Africa<sup>30</sup>. It involves two forms of illegality: the nature of the goods themselves, such as narcotics, or violations in trading practices like evading customs duties and regulations<sup>31</sup>. Both forms exist on the continent, and West Africa in particular plays a major role in organized criminal trade in narcotics, especially cocaine<sup>32</sup>. Yet most informal trade, though unreported and non-compliant with statutory tax rules, involves goods that are not illegal in themselves<sup>33</sup>. The risks of ICBT are significant, especially for women who face harassment, sexual demands, forced prostitution, and exposure to health threats including HIV infection.

Another challenge is the mindset of some Eurocentric minded Africans who, influenced by migration and cultural exchange, argue that ICBT has positive macroeconomic effects such as food security and income generation, particularly for rural populations vulnerable to exclusion<sup>34</sup>. Some scholars even suggest that if properly structured, ICBT could aid Africa's poverty alleviation efforts. However, this researcher observes that these views do not align with traditional African culture prior to western Christianity and western civilization. Decency

and morality were central virtues in traditional African societies, and these values can still be traced in African Christianity.

ICBT also promotes inconsistent behaviour among Africans and within African churches, contributing to national underdevelopment. Its negative effects far outweigh the “acclaimed” benefits. ICBT fuels commercial sex, armed banditry, and kidnapping. Research shows that armed banditry significantly worsens poverty, unemployment, food security, education, health, income levels, and overall living standards for people across African states, undermining broader socio economic activities<sup>35</sup>. Illicit trade strips African nations of natural heritage and undermines good governance. It fuels corruption and finances criminal networks that threaten peace and security (“what are the negative effects of illegal trade ...unctad.org>non-official-document”). These networks cause large revenue losses, strengthen organized crime, and disrupt normal economic activity because of the porous nature of African borders<sup>36</sup>.

Overall, the negative impact of illegal cross border business has deeply weakened the international economic standing of African nations. Illicit trade connects directly to other crimes, including human trafficking, drug trafficking, corruption, bribery, and money laundering. It damages the global economy and harms public health in every region of the world, affecting all sectors of industry<sup>37</sup>.

### **Western Christianity and Western Civilization as Drivers of Commercial Sex and Mental Colonization in Africa**

Many Western missionaries and Eurocentric biblical scholars reshaped African tradition, African Christianity and African biblical studies. Adamo notes that Bible colleges and seminaries became centres for training priests, pastors and evangelists, and for many years the

teachers were Western missionaries whose teaching reflected Western methods and Western views of communicating the gospel. They also taught Western culture and ways of life. Students were required to interpret Christian scripture according to Western interpretive patterns. African culture and religion were treated as unimportant and were therefore excluded from the curriculum.<sup>38</sup> This produced damaging psychological effects on Africans and their church leaders, especially in Christian practice and biblical interpretation. Many experienced cultural confusion, unable to decide whether to be African or European. Under the influence of Western philosophy, they abandoned values that were central to African cultural heritage and embraced behaviours such as commercial sex, divorce and pre marital sex which undermine spiritual growth and the holistic development of Africa. This supports the conclusion that early missionaries in Africa were agents of colonialism.

Migration and cultural exchange have also produced negative effects on the African church and African society. The contemporary African church is expected to guide citizens toward a decent and godly life, yet many Christians participate in commercial sex, pre marital sex and other forms of corruption in border regions and elsewhere. This raises questions about why Christian beliefs and values have changed so drastically. Is there any connection between the doctrine of the early church and the church in the modern era. The steady influence of Western civilization, technological advancement and sociological forces appears to be a major cause of Africa's religious, moral and ethical challenges. These forces have weakened traditional African values and long standing Christian values that trace back to Jesus Christ, the apostolic fathers and the early African church.

The modern world is pluralistic and complex, and science and philosophy strongly influence biblical theology, African culture, Christianity and human thought. As people migrate and interact with different cultural environments, they encounter new ideologies that reshape their original ways of life. In this environment emerged the

ideas of Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Clifford Geertz. Their theories became foundational to many modern schools of thought and now shape how individuals form and assess their worldview.

The church, including the African church, often misapplies these theories in ways that undermine its original traditions and produce diverse forms of corruption. Migration encourages an exchange of beliefs and opinions, including harmful ones. Marx held that religion is the opium of the people and viewed it as a tool of manipulation.<sup>39</sup> According to this researcher, the extreme misuse of Marx's view appears when clergy or church organisations create religious practices for selfish reasons and eventually fall into failure and moral shortcomings. Western Christianity, Western civilization and colonial influence, strengthened by migration and cultural exchange, have contributed to what this researcher identifies as biblical eisegesis. This refers to reading personal motives into biblical texts to justify selfish intentions, which has resulted in manipulation of scripture under the cover of civilization and modern theology. These developments have contributed to illegal business and commercial sex in African border regions.

The rise of sexual scandals within the Pentecostal world appears connected to migration, cultural exchange and biblical eisegesis. Church members often adopt the wrong teachings and lifestyles of their leaders. Sexual abuse by African church leaders is one of the factors contributing to commercial sex in border regions and other parts of Africa. Recent research shows that many church leaders engage in sexual relationships with both single and married members. Examples include the case reported by SAGE<sup>40</sup> in which Favour Onah suffered complications after an abortion allegedly arranged by Pastor Friday Onuh, and the case in Tanke, Ilorin, where a pastor raped a girl on a church altar during a vigil.<sup>41</sup> A similar case occurred in Ogun State, where Segun Alawode was arrested for raping a woman in his church.<sup>42</sup>

The 16th century Reformation, led by Martin Luther, removed exclusive clerical control over scripture.<sup>43</sup> However, many clergy in modern Africa are not truthful in interpretation but manipulate scripture for personal interest. This was not the case before sustained migration and cultural exchange with the Western world. Geertz viewed religion as a cultural practice, and religion and culture remain closely connected. With the arrival of Western Christianity and colonialism, African culture and Christianity were colonized. European missionaries and colonial administrators imposed their culture on Africans but rejected African cultural values. When African church leaders travel to the West or engage in intercultural relationships, many abandon good African cultural values and adopt Western ones, leading to corruption among leaders and members.

Durkheim saw religion as a practice rooted in primitive societies.<sup>44</sup> Although this view does not fit the modern pluralistic world, those who hold to it rigidly reject change, even when such change promotes development. Such leaders resist correction and hold tightly to traditions, even when advised to avoid corruption. However, being conservative can be useful when preserving the good traditional values of the early church, biblical principles and African cultural aesthetics.

### **African Christianity as a Tool for National Enlightenment on Border Trade, Illegal Business, and Commercial Sex in Africa**

This section of the paper delves into the impact of African Christianity as it demonstrates its potency as an agent of national enlightenment on border trade and illegal business in Africa; this would be done from the perspective of Yoruba Christian Africentrism. The implementation of the characteristics of African Christianity as agents of national enlightenment could be done by its suggestive stake holders in Africa. These suggestive stakeholders are: African Christian Journalists, African Christian educational teachers and lecturers of (Kindergarten to

Higher academic institutions), African Christian specialists in educational technology, African Christian curriculum designers, African Christian educational policy makers, African Church leaders, African Christian missionaries, African Christian dramatists and so on. The implementation of the characteristics of African Christianity as agent of national enlightenment could be contextualized in African Christian Religious studies' curriculum. The contextualization of Christian Religious Studies (CRS) in Africa is needful for the enlightenment of the African scholars, natives and indigenous Africa's national leaders on issues of Borderlands, in order to adopt legitimate business. In addition, there is the need for an enlightenment of Africa's indigenous government leaders on legitimate business at Cross Border through inculturation of Christian drama and movies in Africa. The 'contextualization of 'CRS' would be examine in three ways in this paper. These are:

**i. Contextualizing Christian Religious Education as a Tool for Enlightening Africans and Government Leaders on Borderland Trade and Related Issues**

This could be done through the efforts of CRS teacher's right from the kindergarten level of an African child to his or her tertiary level of education; he or she from the prime of life should be enlightened about the importance of 'African-communalism' and that it is typological to Ancient Israelites 'Communal culture' in the Bible. Through that an African child could hopefully have a fundamental knowledge of 'African-unity' from inception. Every child is a potential government leader. Communalism in African world-view portrays the natural African identity, cultural values where a person is allowed to discharge his or her responsibility towards the growth of the community.<sup>45</sup>

African leaders should see themselves as brothers and not to allow conflict and Western-individualism mentality to hinder the general development of African continents. The challenges of cross border trade and illegal-business in Africa should be jointly curbed via the efforts of CRS curriculum designers, teachers, lecturers, journalists and so on in African context.

**ii. Contextualizing Christian Religious Education on Africa's Biblical and Historical Identity as a Blessed Continent from an African Hermeneutics Perspective**

The spread of western Christianity blended with western culture has shaped the thinking of many Africans in unhelpful ways. A major influence came from early missionaries and Eurocentric biblical scholars who promoted the idea that Africans are descendants of Ham, the supposedly cursed son of Noah. "...this study of the Black presence in the Bible is about Ham and his descendants, since he and his people are the central figures under investigation..."<sup>46</sup>. This researcher does not deny the Hermitic descent of Africans, but rejects the Eurocentric conclusion that Africa is a cursed race. This mindset has created a sense of inferiority, encouraging the thought that nothing good can emerge from Africa, and leading many Africans to remain passive in the face of challenges. Such interpretations also weaken the belief in racial equality before God and ignore the authority of African biblical hermeneutics.

According to Adamo, African cultural hermeneutics is an interpretive method that makes African socio cultural realities central to understanding scripture. African cultural hermeneutics is rereading the Bible from a consciously Africentric lens<sup>47</sup>. Its aim is not only to help Africans encounter God through their own culture and experience, but also to dismantle the long standing interpretive dominance held by Eurocentric scholars. The contributions of Africa and Africans to Christian theology and the life of the early church are significant<sup>48</sup>.

Africa, particularly Egypt, shaped the worldview of the Ancient Israelites, and both Africans and Israelites played vital roles in the Redemptive Drama. The long sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years suggests the deep imprint of African culture on Judaism and Christianity. There was also Africentric communalism in the wilderness between the Ancient Israelites (African Jews) and the sympathetic Africans identified as the mixed multitude in Exodus 12:38<sup>49</sup>.

These insights reaffirm the historical identity and enduring relevance of Africa and Africans. They also show that, through God's grace, Africa is not a cursed people but a vital contributor to human civilization. Africa has been a stakeholder in global development since antiquity, and Africans, including political leaders, must reclaim a positive mindset that promotes holistic development and rejects mediocrity.

### **iii. Contextualizing Christian Religious Education as a Catalyst for Africentric Leadership: Addressing Illegal Business and Other Challenges in Africa**

The Yoruba people as well as other neighbouring Africans from inception until now are *Akikanju (s)* (i.e Heroes and Heroines); they are warriors, great leaders, bold, influential, helpful and so on.<sup>50</sup> The CRS curriculum from kindergarten to higher educational levels in Africa should sensitize an African child by educating him or her on the highlighted African values above (e.g. great leadership, boldness helpful and so on). Furthermore, the CRS curriculum could reflect the significant impacts of early Africans on the national development of the Ancient Israelites in the Bible; Early Africans' religious, political military and socio-economic impacts on Ancient Israelites in the Bible can never be overemphasized.<sup>51</sup>

Obviously, recent discoveries unveiled agility of early Africans as Heroes and Heroines; this might have led to the realization of independence of the African nations from the British colonial masters. Therefore, the contemporary African indigenous leaders should be sensitized and enlightened to discourage idleness, laziness, illegal business and other corruption in Africa.

#### **iv. Enlightening Africa's Indigenous Government Leaders on Legitimate Cross-Border Business through Inculturated Christian Drama and Movies**

Recent studies show that many Africans regularly watch drama and movies on television and across social media. These platforms can be used to educate Africans, especially indigenous government leaders, on legitimate cross border business through the inculturation of Christian drama and movies. In this context, inculturation means adapting Christian liturgy in a way that fits African environments in drama and film. It involves adjusting and reconciling Christian messages with African cultural forms so audiences can better understand issues related to border trade and holistic well-being without compromising biblical principles. This requires consistent application of the positive effects of inculturated Christian drama and movies in Africa <sup>52</sup>. Challenges such as illegal business, poverty, oppression and terrorism are areas where Africentric Christian drama and films can make an impact. Eurocentric Christian drama, by contrast, often feels foreign and less effective for African audiences.

Many who engage in illegal business do so because of poverty and related pressures. Inculturated Christian drama and movies can help reveal the dangers attached to these activities and guide indigenous African leaders toward lasting solutions. Sexual activity is often exchanged for money, food, drugs, shelter, transport, a phone or even social status <sup>53</sup>. Changing this mentality requires an Africentric Christian

approach, using inculturated drama and film to challenge the long legacy of western colonization of Christianity, biblical studies and African culture.

Western Christianity, western civilization, colonialism, migration, cultural exchange, globalization, technology and sociological influences have all shaped contemporary Africa. They have contributed positively to Christian growth, leadership, politics, economics, medicine, education and social life. Yet they have also harmed Christian practice, church leadership and African socio cultural values. Important aspects of African heritage that were weakened by these forces should be restored through inculturated Christian drama and movies. Examples include the traditional rejection of premarital sex, sexual perversion such as bestiality, lesbianism and homosexuality, as well as commercial sex and the loss of virginity as a valued moral standard. These values align with biblical principles, and African drama ministers should be intentional in recovering them. In traditional Yoruba religion, *Ibale* (virginity) and sexual morality were essential, and similar values existed across other African societies before Eurocentrism. These cultural values can be woven into Christian drama and film to counter misleading elements of western Christianity that arrived through modernization, which often encourages illegal cross border business, commercial sex and other corrupt practices that conflict with scripture.

A growing concern is that many African church leaders, particularly in the Pentecostal movement, appear more focused on wealth, pleasure and personal gain than on soul winning. Some have turned the gospel into a commercial enterprise<sup>54</sup>. Ademiluka notes that in a 2007 study of controversial issues in the Nigerian church, prosperity teaching had become central for many congregations, especially neo Pentecostal ones<sup>55</sup>. This prosperity doctrine originated in the West, but its misuse in Africa has become widespread. Some neo Pentecostal leaders lack sound theological training and proper biblical hermeneutics,

leading to distortions that contribute to corruption and even commercial sex, since many people seek wealth by any means available.

Incultured Christian drama and movies are therefore needed to address corruption across Africa, especially in border regions. They can also help inform indigenous government leaders about practical solutions and encourage proactive leadership in combating corruption at every level.

## **Conclusion**

The investigation into *Aligning African Christianity with African Christian Religious Education as Panaceas to Illegal Business in Border Areas of Africa: A Yoruba (African) Christian Religious Education Experience*. Contextually among many other challenges facing Africa and Africans are the problems associated with Cross border trade and Illegal business including commercial sex; invariably, these are inimical to the holistic development of Africans and Africa's nations. African states obtained their independence from colonial masters with artificial and poorly demarcated borders considered the most potent source of conflict and political instability. Recent studies unveiled that the dynamism of borderlands has created opportunities for social, economic, and political activism for human benefit.

The inhabitants are eager to benefit from the resources that borders create. It was discovered that majority of the inhabitants of borderlands are involved in cross border trade, illegal business and commercial sex. Moreover, it was discovered that Africa's government leaders have been passive over the various challenges and immoralities, African government leaders are not united, they were brain washed by Eurocentric ideology. All these are inimical to national development in Africa. However, this paper examined the negative effects of the

selected challenges; it assess the leadership legacies of the early African traditional indigenous leaders before the emergence of western missionaries and general Eurocentrism in Africa: A study of Yoruba Africentricism. More so, it examined the influence of African culture and African Aestheticism on morality before the emergence of western missionaries and general Eurocentrism in Africa and delves into the suggestive panaceas that is impact of African Christianity as agent of national enlightenment on border trade, illegal business and other forms of corruption like commercial sex in Africa. Hopefully, the adherence to these suggestive ameliorative panaceas would hopefully lead to a holistic national development of the African nations, and would hopefully decolonize African's mentality from negative effects of Eurocentrism.

## **Recommendations**

1. African national leaders should avoid conflicts among themselves and embrace communalism, recognizing that Africans have been united and caring for one another since inception.
2. African citizens and national leaders should value the dignity of work and refrain from illegal businesses, following the legacy of African forefathers in honoring honest labor.
3. Contextualizing Christian Religious Education in Africa is recommended. This approach would educate Church leaders, students, and national leaders on the historical impact of early African leaders on the religious, socio-economic, and military life of the Ancient Israelites, inspiring contemporary Africans to develop heroic qualities, diligence, and honesty.
4. Contemporary African leaders should emulate the leadership of early Africans by boldly and sacrificially addressing the challenges facing their nations.

5. Smuggling, commercial sex, and other illegal activities are linked to the influence of western Christianity, culture, and civilization. Africans should embrace African Christianity, which promotes honesty, legitimate work, respect for life, and social responsibility.
6. African national leaders should collectively condemn illegal business and commercial sex in borderlands, ensuring defaulters face appropriate penalties to deter others.
7. Leaders should first cleanse themselves of involvement in cross-border trade and illegal business and adopt the role of mentors. Effective mentorship requires qualities such as modesty, self-respect, integrity, guidance, cooperation, interdependence, and self-discipline<sup>56</sup>.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Sunday Ajanaku, “it was discovered that majority of the inhabitants of borderlands are involved in cross border trade, illegal business and commercial sex” (Anyigba: Interviewed, 2003).

<sup>2</sup>William Laslow, “Intersections Between culture and Identity” (June 2023), [scielo.org: za>pdf> scripture](https://scielo.org/za/pdf/scripture).

<sup>3</sup>Asante Molefi, "The Development of Afrocentricity: A Historical Survey” (June 2022), [www. Scielo. Org](http://www.Scielo.Org).

<sup>4</sup>Festus Ogungbemi "what are the negative effect that bad Leadership can create in a nation? (May 2021), [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com) >what are the –ne.

<sup>5</sup>Theophilus Noguira, why Nigeria's development remains Stunte” (April 2020), [www gisreportsonline.com](http://www.gisreportsonline.com).

<sup>6</sup>Moses Adeyemo, “what is servant Leadership?” (June 2020), [www.techtarget.com](http://www.techtarget.com)> search (io)>s.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, “In the Yoruba tradition, ‘Oduduwa’ was a servant leader, he is the son of Lamurudu”. (June 2020), [www.techtarget.com](http://www.techtarget.com) > search (io) >s.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, “Moremi Ajasoro was a Legendary Yoruba queen and folk heroine in the Yoruba land region who assisted in the liberation of the Yoruba kingdom (June 2020), [www.techtarget.com](http://www.techtarget.com)>search(io)>s.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, “The Ayaba Moremi lived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, hailed from Offa” (June 2020), [www.techtarget.com>search\(io\)>s](http://www.techtarget.com>search(io)>s).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, “Moremi was a very brave and beautiful Woman who in order to deal with the problem facing her people , pledged a great sacrifice to the spirit of river of *Esimirin* ( June 2020), [www.techtarget.com>search\(io\)>s](http://www.techtarget.com>search(io)>s).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, “The River demanded She Sacrificed her only son, Oluorogbo” (June 2020), [www.techtarget.com>search\(io\)>s](http://www.techtarget.com>search(io)>s).

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