

## Conception and Misconceptions About Mental Health in Gwafan Community of Jos North Nigeria

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**Abstract :** This paper is an attempt to gauge the conception and misconception of mental health in the Gwafan community, Jos North Plateau State, Nigeria (West Africa), to ascertain which side of the scale the pendulum swings. Mental health education and awareness are necessary for healthy community development. However, in a society such as ours in Nigeria (Africa) that is not knowledge-based, it is easy for people to embrace hearsay, speculations, superstition, and the supernatural. The objectives of this paper are two folds: first, to examine the level of awareness of the people on mental health, or the lack of it; second, to ascertain their access to mental health services and good practices. The methodology adopted is qualitative research, and the instrument used is T-test related. The findings include, first, the fact that a larger population has misconceptions about Mental Health. Second, this misconception is a result of a lack of basic knowledge of Mental Health. Based on the aforementioned, the paper recommends that there is a need for more Mental Health Education among the populace and access to Mental Health services and practices (Preventative and Curative). The paper concludes that in a society that is not knowledgebase, every attempt should be made to shift people's mindset from superstitious knowledge to evidence-based knowledge, which can empower them to make informed decisions not only on mental Health but on associative Health issues that can aid their wellbeing, livelihood and sustainable development as a whole.

**Keywords :** conceptions, misconceptions, mental health, knowledge, superstition, service delivery

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