

Patients' Rights: An Enquiry into the Activities of Local Psychiatric Centers Managed by Muslims in South-West Nigeria

Authors : Shaykh-Luqman Jimoh

Abstract : In Nigeria, aside the eight Government hospitals designated Psychiatric hospitals, there are also many local psychiatric centers managed by muslims and non-muslim individuals. These centers have been heavily criticized for human right abuses. This study is an inquiry into the truth or otherwise of the criticism. The study focuses on the activities of local centers managed by muslim individuals in South-West Nigeria with a view to determining the extent they uphold or violate their patients' fundamental human rights as guaranteed by Islam. Information about the activities of the centers were collected through oral interviews. Both descriptive and analytical methods were used in the study. The study revealed that while there are some activities of the local centers managed by muslims in the study area that could be regarded as outright violation of patients' fundamental human rights, some others, in view of the rationale behind them, may not necessarily constitute outright violation of the patients' fundamental human rights as hitherto painted except where excesses are committed. The study therefore, using Islamic paradigm, suggests general measures that could be taken to improve on the activities of the centers.

Keywords : local psychiatric centers, muslim exorcists, patients' rights, South-West Nigeria

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