

Topic: The African Seventh-day Adventist Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice Towards Mental Health.

Abstract

The Seventh-day Adventists church members usually turn to their church in search of support and guidance in times of emotional distress. Despite the prevalence of mental health concerns, there is still a stigma attached to mental illness in many of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Africa. The predominant culture of silence, along with mistaken expectations and misguided attitudes, often causes suffering believers to feel ashamed, blamed, and alone in their experience of mental illness. This study aimed to assess Adventist church members' knowledge, attitudes, and practice toward mental health in Africa. A descriptive study utilized a cross-sectional analytical design with data collected using a questionnaire for the study. The 213-item questionnaire contained closed and open-ended items and was administered by trained research assistants. Results of the study indicated that only 3.1% of the church members all of the time felt depressed while 38.7% felt depressed none of the time. There is also a positive correlation between mental health and church members' knowledge, practice, and attitude toward optimism ($p < .01$). Moreover, a one-way ANOVA test revealed that married people in the church tend to have more positive mental health than those who are single, separated, divorced, widow, and widower and older people tend to have more positive mental health than younger people ($p < .05$). The demonstration of positive knowledge, attitude and practice towards the mental health of the African Seventh-day Adventists has positive implication for the health principles taught by the church.

Key Words: Seventh-day Adventist, mental health, knowledge, attitude, practice.