

# Covenant University Hosts the Nigerian Psychological Association Conference

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*The Nigerian Psychological Association, in conjunction with the Department of Psychology, Covenant University, just concluded her South West Zonal Conference, at the African Leadership Development Center (ALDC), in Covenant University, Ota.*

The conference which ran from the 11th to 14th February, 2014, explored the theme, 'Psychology, Rural Development, and Wellbeing,' and attracted participants from various universities and organizations in Nigeria.

Professor Taiwo Abioye representing the Vice-Chancellor of Covenant University, Professor Charles Korede Ayo, in her address, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Chairman of the Board of Regents, Dr. David Oyedepo, and the Management of the University.



Representative of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Abioye presenting a certificate of fellowship of the association to Professor Osinowo at the conference

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Commending the leadership of the association for the initiative for the conference, she emphasized the need for Psychologists to focus more of their developmental research attention on the rural areas, so as to enable the improvement of the quality of life of Nigerian rural dwellers.

Professor Abioye, stated, "Psychology has been described as an urban city profession; where both the training and practice largely reside in capital cities, and to a lesser extent, in sizeable regional centers."

She further explained that with the activities of the association, and the theme of the conference, the trend of focusing only on urban areas is about to change.

The President of the Nigerian Psychological Association, Dr. Andrew Zamani, in his speech, welcomed all participants to the second South West Zonal Conference of the association since the inception of the current national executive council.

According to him, the decision by the association to hold a zonal conference, was to promote the activities of the association at the grassroots, mobilize membership, and give leadership capacity for the administrative structures of the association.

Dr. Zamani explained that the organization has so far, experienced a good outcome through the initiative, as it has been able to mobilize through the grassroots conference, over 250 students and 50 other members for the association.

He commended the untiring efforts of Dr. Olukayode Afolabi, the association's outgoing zonal coordinator for the South-West and Dr. Deborah Adeyeyi in sustaining the activities of the NPA in the South-West zone.

Dr. Zamani further listed some fellows of the association in the zone, whose role have greatly contributed to the growth and development of the association. Some of them include Professor Olatunde Makanju, who happens to be the chairman of the Board of Trustees; Professor Kayode Oguntuase; Professor Salah Odowunmi; Professor Helen Osinowo; Professor Tope Akinowo; Dr. Esther Akinsola; Professor Peace Ajila, and Dr. Yetunde Ola-Davidson.

The President while thanking the management of Covenant University for hosting the conference, stated, "Covenant University is carving a niche for herself amongst universities in Nigeria," and declared that this year's meeting is particular in the history of the NPA, as it is the first time that Nigerian Psychologists will be discussing rural development as a conference theme.

"It is a great concern that the rural urban drift in Nigeria is not about infrastructural and industrial development, but the migration of young, agile and dependent population; about developing of slums; about abandonment of agriculture, and the neglect of the elderly," Dr. Zamani reiterated.

He further stated that the deliberations of the association in the next few days should generate solutions to those challenges.

The Chairman of the occasion, Professor (Mrs.) Helen Osinowo, while presenting her address, stated, "The migration of people from rural to urban areas, leaves the farms empty, brings about food scarcity, and affects food security. Hence, we have to be concerned about the wellbeing of rural dwellers."

She opined that those in the rural areas should not be forgotten, and the elderly should not be left alone; citing that the theme of the conference was chosen to address the situation of rural dwellers and their psychological needs.

Professor Emmanuel Aderemi Akinade while presenting his keynote speech, titled, 'Psychological Management of Mental Disorders Among Rural Dwellers in Nigeria,' said, "Mental disorders are everywhere, but the good news is that they are treatable."

During the ceremony, two deserving academics were presented with the Honorary Fellow of the Nigerian Psychological Association (HFNPA) award: Professor Aize Obayan, the immediate past Vice-Chancellor of Covenant University, a Professor of Counselling with specialization in Multicultural aspects of Human Behavioral Disposition; and Professor Olu Joshua Benedictus Osinowo, a Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery.

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