



A Critique of the Transcendental and Pantheistic View of God in the Ibibio Tradition

Abstract

This study presented a philosophical critique of the transcendental and pantheistic view of God in the Ibibio tradition. To understand this cosmology, it should be borne in mind that the Ibibio conceive of the universe as being made up of hierarchy of beings with Abasi (Supreme God) as being at the apex, followed by Ndem or Obot Emana (guidian angels), then the ancestors, man, and lastly Isong (man's environment). The Ibibio conception over time has been misunderstood as pantheism which is the concept that God and the universe are necessarily one and the same. Drawing from ethnographic, anthropological and African philosophical sources, this study adopted the method of critical analysis to define the concept of Abasi (Supreme Being) in Ibibio cosmology as both transcendent and pantheistic with reference to hierarchy of being. While the Ibibio metaphysical conception avoids absolute anthropomorphism and preserves divine supremacy, its simultaneous affirmation of both realities raises conceptual issues concerning divine personality, causality, moral agency and metaphysical coherence. In analysing this terms, this paper maintained that, the diffuseness of the transcendental and pantheistic nature of Abasi in Ibibio cosmology responsibly participates in shaping the world in co-creating it as well as underpins the solidarity we have with other human beings.

Keywords: Ibibio, Cosmology, Abasi, Transcendent, Pantheism.

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Date Received: 2nd March, 2026

Date Accepted: 30th March, 2026

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19387648>

Introduction

The concept of God in African traditional religions has long attracted scholarly attention. Early anthropologists such as Edward Burnett Taylor mischaracterized African religious thought as animistic and

philosophically primitive. However, subsequent African scholars, particularly John S. Mbiti and Bolaji Idowu have demonstrated that many African traditions maintain sophisticated conceptions of a Supreme Being. Within the Ibibio tradition, God

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is known as Abasi. Abasi is conceived as supreme, omnipotent and beyond human comprehension. Simultaneously he acts within the cosmos, manifesting in natural forces and accessible through spiritual intermediaries. The dual structure invites philosophical questions such as: is the Ibibio God strictly transcendent? Is the world view truly pantheistic? or does it approximate pantheism (the belief that the universe is in God). This paper critically examines these questions through conceptual analysis, comparative metaphysics and critique.

Historically, the Ibibio people are found predominantly in Akwa Ibom State, the Southern coastal area of Nigeria. Before we talk about the cosmology of Ibibio people, who are the Ibibio people and what does 'Ibibio' really mean? Sarcastically, the word Ibibio has long ago been interpreted to mean 'petit', 'shortness', 'briefness', as not relating to a significant height. Funny as it sounds, but fundamentally held some accuracy of fact especially in the physique nature of a typical Ibibio person. Although, not in a general sense because of course a good number of Ibibio natives are born naturally possessing a tall physique, however, a noticeable number of her indigenes do not possess a significant height. Geographically, the Ibibio people are situated in the South South Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It has the largest ethnic group among the Annang and

Oron which are also ethnic group among the Akwa Ibom State. Historically, the Ibibio forefathers sojourned through the East Africa down to Ghana. Some settled in Cameroon, while some migrated to Benue Republic. When the Ibibio arrived in the Nigeria, they first settled at Ibom. It is believed that they were the original founders of 'Ibom' which is now known as Arochukwu in Abia State which is also located in the South East of Nigeria. It is estimated that the Ibibio settled in Arochukwu for over four hundred years before the Igbo's declared war. As at the time the Igbo's were migrating South South at about 1550 - 1720, from this point, the different ethnic groups and clans migrated until the Ibibio finally settled in what is now known as Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to critically examine the concepts of the transcendental and pantheistic views of God within the Ibibio traditional religious worldview. Other objectives of the study are to:

- i. Examine the concept of God in the Ibibio traditional religion, particularly how the Supreme Being is understood and represented within the cultural and religious worldview of the Ibibio people.
- ii. Analyze the transcendental view of God in the Ibibio tradition, focusing on the belief that God exists above,

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- beyond, and independent of the physical world.
- iii. Investigate the pantheistic view of God within the Ibibio worldview, especially the idea that God is present in nature and manifested in various aspects of the universe.
 - iv. Evaluate the philosophical implications of these two views, identifying their strengths, limitations, and areas of tension within Ibibio religious thought.
 - v. Provide a critical appraisal of whether the Ibibio conception of God is better understood as transcendental, pantheistic, or a synthesis of both perspectives.
 - vi. Contribute to the broader discourse in African philosophy and philosophy of religion by clarifying how indigenous African religious traditions conceptualize the nature of the Supreme Being.

Statement of the Problem

The nature of God has remained one of the most enduring problems in the philosophy of religion. Philosophers and theologians have long debated whether God should be understood primarily as transcendent, existing beyond and independent of the universe, or as immanent, present within and throughout the natural world. In Western philosophy, this debate is often expressed through the rigidity between classical theism, which emphasizes divine transcendence, and pantheism,

which identifies God with the totality of existence (Spinoza 32; Hick 74). While these conceptual frameworks have been extensively discussed in Western philosophical discourse, their relevance and applicability to African indigenous religious traditions remain a subject of scholarly inquiry. Within African philosophy of religion, scholars have argued that traditional African conceptions of God often embody both transcendental and immanent characteristics. For instance, the Supreme Being is commonly portrayed as a creator who exists beyond the physical world while simultaneously being present and active within it through natural forces, spirits, and ancestral agencies (Mbiti 29; Idowu 45). This dual characterization raises important philosophical questions about the precise nature of the African conception of God: whether it should be understood as strictly transcendental, pantheistic, or a unique synthesis that transcends these conventional categories.

In the Ibibio traditional religious worldview, God, often referred to as *Abasi*, is generally regarded as the supreme creator and ultimate source of moral authority. At the same time, elements of the divine are believed to be manifested in natural phenomena, spiritual beings, and sacred aspects of the environment. Such beliefs suggest an intimate relationship between God and the cosmos, which some scholars

interpret as reflecting a pantheistic or panentheistic orientation (Udo 63; Ekong 118). However, this interpretation appears to stand in tension with other aspects of Ibibio belief that portray God as remote, supreme, and distinct from creation. The philosophical problem that arises, therefore, is the apparent ambiguity and conceptual tension in the Ibibio understanding of God. On the one hand, the transcendental view emphasizes God's separateness, supremacy, and absolute existence beyond the world. On the other hand, the pantheistic interpretation suggests that the divine is inseparable from nature and manifested in the totality of existence. This duality raises critical questions about whether these views are genuinely compatible within the Ibibio religious framework or whether they represent conflicting interpretations imposed by external philosophical categories. Consequently, the central problem of this study is to critically examine whether the Ibibio conception of God can be adequately explained through the philosophical categories of transcendence and pantheism, or whether these frameworks fail to capture the complexity of the Ibibio religious experience.

Conceptual Review

Transcendent: When we say that God is transcendent we mean that he is beyond all other things or beings. In ontological sense, God transcends all creation and created beings because He is distinct from creation. In His very essence, He is different, He is beyond physical creation. God is transcendent beyond the need for 'body' time and space. God as a transcendent being does not depend on the universe because, He is independently set aside. According to St. Aquinas, "God is not mainly a being among beings but Being itself, subsistent and uncaused (42). God is not one being among others but the necessary act of being upon which all contingent realities depend. For Immanuel Kant, "God functions as a necessary postulate of practical reason rather than object of speculative knowledge" (328). In transcendental philosophy, God is not empirically demonstrable but functions as a postulate of practical reason. Kant situates God as a necessary moral assumption that guarantees the unity of virtue and happiness. In Tillich view, "God is not a Supreme being but the ground of being-itself" (235). Hegel also expounded the transcendental nature of God thus, "The divine is understood as Absolute spirit manifesting itself dialectically in history" (67). The concept of God as the transcendental being is understood not merely as a

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Supreme entity within the ontological order but as the ultimate ground, condition and foundation of all being. In other words, transcendence does not imply spatial remoteness but ontological superiority and foundational ultimacy. These philosophical and theological views provide a systematic analysis of the transcendental nature of God (the Supreme Being). It avoids reducing God to methodological imagery, empirical objectivity or pure subjective projection. Instead it situates God as the ultimate ontological ground and transcendental condition of reality itself.

Pantheism: This is the belief that the entire universe is divine and that God and nature are one and the same. Instead of saying that God is a one and separate being who exists apart from creation. Pantheism pictures every part of nature as an expression of the divine. This idea can be expressed in various ways. From an observation in the physical world to the speculation from philosophical views that all things are simply different part of all-encompassing substance. The root of pantheism dates back to ancient times in Eastern traditions especially in Hindu text "Upanishads" - the idea that the ultimate reality "Brahman" is identical with the universe. In ancient Greece, early philosophers Thales and Heraclitus explored expounded ideas about a single underlying principle in nature. Later the Stoics saw the divine

as the rational face that holds the universe together. In the modern era, the term pantheism began in the 17th century by thinkers like Joseph Raphson and popularized by John Toland. Baruch Spinoza's work in "*Ethics*" was hugely influential arguing that there is only one substance God or nature of which everything is a mode. His ideas alongside Glordano Bruno helped spread pantheistic thought in western culture. For pantheists God is not a separate personal being but the same as the universe. Every star, tree and river is part of God. Some forms of pantheism see the divine as having a kind of spirit or consciousness. Pantheism believes that while God is present everywhere it is not the same as his creation. Unlike the transcendental reality that cannot be perceived empirically, pantheistic realities are often personal and experiential. Many pantheists engage in meditation, nature walks and artistic expression to feel connected to the universe. This approach often emphasizes environmental responsibility. In summary, pantheism is the view that sees the divine as identical with the natural world. To influential modern philosophers like Spinoza and Bruno, pantheism challenges the naturals separation between the transcendental God and the creative world.

Citation: Inyang, Samuel E. & Itokem, Edidiong F. "A Critique of the Transcendental and Pantheistic View of God in the Ibibio Tradition". *Journal of People and Worldviews (JPW)*, 2026: pp209-223.

Methodology

This study adopts a conceptual-analytic and hermeneutical method of research. Rather than merely describing Ibibio religious practices, it extracts the metaphysical implications embedded within oral traditions, ritual practices, linguistic categories, moral structures and cosmological hierarchies.

Findings

The critical examination of the transcendental and pantheistic views of God in the Ibibio traditional religious worldview reveals several important philosophical insights about the nature of the Supreme Being and the structure of Ibibio cosmology. From the analysis carried out in this study, the following findings were identified:

i. **The Ibibio Conception of God Primarily Affirms Divine Transcendence:** One of the major findings of this study is that the Ibibio traditional understanding of God strongly emphasizes the transcendence of the Supreme Being, **Abasi**. Abasi is widely regarded as the creator and ultimate authority over the universe, existing beyond the physical world and superior to all spiritual and natural forces. This view aligns with the classical theistic conception of God as a supreme and independent being who is not identical with the material universe (Mbiti 43).

- ii. **Elements of Divine Immanence Are Present in Ibibio Cosmology:** Although the Ibibio worldview emphasizes divine transcendence, the study also found that the religious system contains strong elements of divine immanence. The sacred significance attached to aspects of nature, such as rivers, forests, and other natural phenomena, reflects the belief that divine power is present within the natural order. This belief suggests that the divine is actively manifested in the world, thereby creating an impression that the Ibibio conception of God contains pantheistic tendencies (Ekong 121).
- iii. **The Presence of Intermediary Spiritual Beings Challenges a Strict Pantheistic Interpretation:** Another important finding is that the Ibibio religious system recognizes the existence of divinities, spirits, and ancestors who function as intermediaries between human beings and the Supreme Being. The hierarchical structure of these spiritual entities indicates that the Ibibio worldview does not equate God directly with nature. Instead, the Supreme Being remains distinct from other spiritual forces, which contradicts the strict philosophical definition of pantheism (Idowu 59).

iv. **The Ibibio Conception of God Reflects a Synthesis of Transcendence and Immanence:**

The analysis further revealed that the Ibibio understanding of God cannot be adequately categorized as either purely transcendental or purely pantheistic. Rather, it represents a synthesis in which God transcends the universe while simultaneously manifesting divine influence through natural and spiritual agencies. This integrative perspective suggests a worldview that accommodates both divine transcendence and immanence within a single metaphysical framework.

v. **Western Philosophical Categories May Not Fully Capture the Ibibio Religious Experience:**

The study also found that applying rigid philosophical categories such as transcendentalism and pantheism to African traditional religions may sometimes distort the indigenous understanding of the divine. The Ibibio conception of God reflects a holistic worldview that integrates spiritual, natural, and social dimensions of reality, thereby challenging the adequacy of conventional Western metaphysical classifications (Mbiti 69).

vi. **Ibibio Traditional Religion Possesses Significant Philosophical Depth:** Finally, the study discovered that the Ibibio religious worldview

contains sophisticated metaphysical insights regarding the nature of God and the relationship between the divine and the cosmos. These insights demonstrate that African indigenous religions are not merely systems of belief but also contain rich philosophical reflections that deserve critical scholarly attention.

Discussion

The philosophical discourse on the nature of God has often revolved around two major conceptions: transcendence and immanence. The transcendental conception portrays God as a being who exists above and beyond the universe, independent of space, time, and material reality. In contrast, the pantheistic view identifies God with the universe itself, suggesting that the divine is present in all aspects of nature and existence. These two perspectives have shaped philosophical and theological debates for centuries, particularly in the philosophy of religion (Hick 78). In many African traditional religious systems, including the Ibibio worldview, the concept of God appears to incorporate elements of both transcendence and immanence. The Ibibio people traditionally recognize a Supreme Being known as Abasi, who is regarded as the creator and sustainer of the universe. Abasi is often considered supreme, omnipotent, and morally authoritative, which suggests a transcendental conception of

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God similar to the classical theistic notion found in many religious traditions (Mbiti 39). However, despite this transcendental characterization, the Ibibio worldview also emphasizes the presence of divine power within the natural and spiritual order. Natural phenomena such as rivers, forests, and other elements of the environment are often perceived as possessing sacred significance or spiritual forces connected to the divine. This belief suggests that the divine is not entirely removed from the world but actively present within it. Such a perspective resonates with pantheistic or panentheistic interpretations, where the divine permeates the natural order (Idowu 52).

This apparent duality raises an important philosophical question: Is the Ibibio conception of God truly pantheistic, or does it merely reflect a form of divine immanence within an essentially transcendental framework? Pantheism, as traditionally defined in philosophical discourse, equates God entirely with nature, implying that the universe itself is divine (Spinoza 35). However, the Ibibio understanding of Abasi does not necessarily reduce God to nature. Instead, nature and spiritual forces may be understood as expressions or manifestations of divine power rather than God Himself. Furthermore, the presence of intermediary spiritual beings - such as divinities, spirits, and ancestors - within

the Ibibio religious system complicates the interpretation of the divine. These entities often serve as mediators between human beings and the Supreme Being. Their existence suggests a hierarchical spiritual structure rather than a strictly pantheistic system in which all existence is identical with God (Mbiti 75). This hierarchical structure reinforces the idea that God remains supreme and distinct from the rest of creation, thereby supporting the transcendental interpretation. Another philosophical dimension of the Ibibio conception of God relates to the issue of divine accessibility and remoteness. While Abasi is recognized as the ultimate source of existence and moral order, He is often perceived as distant from everyday human affairs. As a result, worship and ritual practices are frequently directed toward lesser divinities and ancestral spirits rather than directly toward the Supreme Being. Some scholars interpret this phenomenon as evidence of divine transcendence, suggesting that the Supreme Being is too exalted to be approached directly (Idowu 60). However, the symbolic presence of sacred forces in nature and communal life indicates that the divine is not entirely detached from the world. Instead, the Ibibio worldview appears to maintain a dynamic relationship between transcendence and immanence. The Supreme Being remains above and beyond creation while simultaneously

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expressing divine influence through natural and spiritual agencies.

From a philosophical perspective, this synthesis challenges the adequacy of strictly Western categories such as pantheism or classical theism when applied to African religious thought. The Ibibio conception of God may be better understood as a holistic worldview in which transcendence and immanence coexist without contradiction. Rather than equating God with the universe, the Ibibio tradition recognizes the universe as deeply connected to the divine source from which it originates. Consequently, the philosophical task is not merely to categorize the Ibibio conception of God within existing metaphysical frameworks but to critically examine whether these frameworks sufficiently capture the complexity of indigenous African religious thought. Such an examination reveals that the Ibibio understanding of God reflects a distinct and integrative worldview in which the divine transcends the world while remaining actively present within it.

The Ibibio people believe in a sky-dwelling Being which is Supreme and above all deities, man and other creation. The Ibibio cosmological system recognizes Abasi as the Supreme Being. Their belief in the Supreme God does not counter nor stand in disalignment to the African cosmological belief. According to Mbiti, "African traditional

religions generally affirms God as a Supreme Being who is the creator, sustainer and moral formator" (29). Similarly, the Ibibio own a popular divine exclamation thus, "Abasi asana-nyong (God of the sky). 'Abasi asana-nyong' is one and the same as the Supreme God - the omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God. The pantheistic notion or perception of God by the Ibibio people is regarded as Abasi Isong (God of the earth). According to Ubong, this pantheism view involves the believe in many deities (29). Abasi Isong permeates His essence through nature found in water, earth, air and fire. These elements are recognized as "nature force", drawing God's essence through the cosmic flow of abundance, purity, wisdom and justice. Owing to these relational force, God shares his existence through everything of existential importance, which brings us to the hierarchy of being.

The Ibibio cosmology and perception of being is structured hierarchically and can be summarized as follows:

- i. Abasi (Supreme Being) - Absolute and Transcendent
- ii. Divinities/Spirits (Ndem or Obot Emana) - Guardian Angels and intermediaries
- iii. Ancestors
- iv. Human beings (Man)

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- v. The physical cosmos (Isong Udót Ukót) - Environmental elements.

Within this hierarchy, Abasi is not one spirit among many but the ontological ground of all spirits and beings, which indicates metaphysical transcendence rather than mere superiority. In Ibibio metaphysics Abasi (God) is; self-existent (uncreated), Supreme over all divinities, beyond human limitation, invisible and incomprehensible in essence. Abasi as the Supreme God does not belong to the class of Obot Emaná (spirits), rather, the spirit derive their existence and authority from Him. Although Abasi is transcendent he is not absent. Hence, the Ibibio cosmology holds a complementary structure which are:

- i. Abasi Enyong (God of the sky) - emphasizing transcendence
- ii. Abasi Isong (God of the earth) - emphasizing pantheism

The dual expression does not imply two gods but reveals the dialectical balance between divine remoteness and presence. God transcends the world yet sustains and governs it. The plants and animals which occupies the terrestrial plain also have a place in the dimension of beings. According to Etim, "they are believed to be created and imbued with the spiritual dimension - Ukpong (soul) and Odudu (force) by God" (213). This clearly explains the sacredness and reverence given to some plants and animals. It is tenable to mention that not

all animals and plants are regarded as sharing the nature potency of God. This interconnectedness is what the Ibibio cosmological system embraces as pantheism - Abasi enyong ye Abasi Isong (God of heaven and the earth).

The transcendental conception of God emphasizes the idea that the Supreme Being exists beyond and above the physical universe, independent of the limitations of space, time, and material existence. In the philosophy of religion, transcendence implies that God is not identical with the world but stands as the ultimate cause and foundation of all reality (Hick 81). This understanding is commonly associated with classical theism, where God is regarded as omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly distinct from creation. Within the Ibibio traditional religious worldview, the Supreme Being known as Abasi is widely perceived as the creator and supreme ruler of the universe. Abasi is believed to possess absolute authority over the cosmos and is responsible for the origin and sustenance of all forms of life. This perception reflects a transcendental understanding of God, since Abasi is viewed as superior to and independent of the natural world (Mbiti 43).

Another element that reinforces the transcendental nature of Abasi is the belief that the Supreme Being is remote and not directly involved in the

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everyday affairs of human beings. In many Ibibio communities, religious practices are often directed toward lesser divinities, ancestral spirits, and other spiritual intermediaries who are believed to act as mediators between humanity and the Supreme Being. This religious structure suggests that Abasi occupies a higher metaphysical level that is not easily accessible to human beings (Idowu 59). Furthermore, the transcendental interpretation of Abasi is evident in the way moral authority is attributed to the Supreme Being. Abasi is believed to be the ultimate judge of human conduct and the source of moral order within the universe. This moral supremacy implies that the Supreme Being exists above the natural and social order, thereby reinforcing the notion of divine transcendence (Mbiti 67). However, the transcendental interpretation of God in Ibibio tradition also raises philosophical questions. If God is completely transcendent and distant from the world, it becomes difficult to explain how the divine interacts with the natural and spiritual realms. This challenge has led some scholars to argue that the Ibibio worldview contains elements that point beyond a purely transcendental understanding of God.

Pantheism is a philosophical doctrine that identifies God with the universe, suggesting that the divine is present in all aspects of nature and

existence. In classical pantheistic philosophy, as exemplified by Spinoza, God and nature are essentially identical; the universe itself constitutes the divine reality (Spinoza 37). From this perspective, everything that exists is a manifestation of the divine substance. Certain aspects of the Ibibio religious worldview appear to support a pantheistic interpretation of the divine. In traditional Ibibio cosmology, the natural environment is often perceived as possessing sacred qualities. Rivers, forests, mountains, and other natural elements are sometimes regarded as dwelling places of spiritual forces that reflect the presence of divine power. This belief suggests that the divine is intimately connected with the natural world (Ekong 121).

Additionally, the Ibibio belief in various spiritual entities - such as divinities, spirits, and ancestral beings - indicates that the spiritual dimension permeates the universe. These entities are often associated with natural phenomena and communal life, thereby reinforcing the idea that the sacred is embedded within the fabric of reality. However, describing the Ibibio conception of God as strictly pantheistic presents certain difficulties. Pantheism implies that God and the universe are completely identical, leaving no distinction between the creator and creation. In contrast, the Ibibio worldview maintains a clear recognition

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of Abasi as the Supreme Being who created the world. Natural elements and spiritual beings may reflect divine power, but they are not necessarily regarded as identical with the Supreme Being. This distinction suggests that the Ibibio understanding of the divine may be closer to panentheism, a philosophical position in which God is present within the universe while simultaneously transcending it. Such an interpretation allows for the coexistence of divine transcendence and immanence within a single religious framework.

A Critical Evaluation of the Transcendental and Pantheistic Conceptions

The coexistence of transcendental and immanent elements in the Ibibio conception of God presents an important philosophical challenge. On one hand, the transcendental interpretation emphasizes the supremacy and independence of the Supreme Being. On the other hand, the apparent presence of sacred forces within nature suggests a form of divine immanence that resembles pantheistic thought. A critical analysis reveals that neither the purely transcendental nor the strictly pantheistic framework fully captures the complexity of the Ibibio religious worldview. The transcendental view, while highlighting the supremacy of Abasi, tends to overlook the deep spiritual connection between the divine and the natural world that is evident in

Ibibio cosmology. Conversely, the pantheistic interpretation risks oversimplifying the Ibibio conception of God by equating the divine entirely with nature.

From a philosophical standpoint, the Ibibio worldview appears to integrate both transcendence and immanence in a complementary manner. The Supreme Being remains the ultimate source and ruler of the universe while simultaneously expressing divine presence through spiritual beings, natural forces, and communal life. This synthesis reflects a holistic understanding of reality in which the divine is both beyond the world and active within it. Therefore, the attempt to classify the Ibibio conception of God strictly as transcendental or pantheistic may impose external philosophical categories that do not adequately reflect the indigenous worldview. Instead, the Ibibio understanding of the divine may be better interpreted as a unique metaphysical perspective that transcends the rigid distinctions commonly found in Western philosophy of religion. Such an interpretation contributes to the broader discourse in African philosophy by demonstrating that indigenous religious traditions possess sophisticated metaphysical insights that deserve careful philosophical analysis rather than simplistic categorization.

Conclusion

This study examined the transcendental and pantheistic views of God within the Ibibio traditional religious worldview with the aim of critically evaluating the philosophical implications of these perspectives. The analysis revealed that the Ibibio conception of the Supreme Being, Abasi, embodies elements that appear to support both transcendence and immanence. On one hand, Abasi is regarded as the creator and supreme authority who exists above and beyond the physical universe. This perception aligns with the transcendental conception of God commonly discussed in the philosophy of religion, where God is understood as independent of and superior to creation (Hick 84). On the other hand, the Ibibio worldview also reflects a strong sense of divine presence within the natural and spiritual order. The sacred significance attributed to elements of nature, as well as the recognition of spiritual intermediaries such as divinities and ancestral spirits, suggests that the divine is actively manifested within the cosmos. These features have led some scholars to interpret the Ibibio understanding of God as containing pantheistic or panentheistic tendencies (Mbiti 70). However, a critical philosophical examination indicates that neither the purely transcendental nor the strictly pantheistic interpretation fully captures the complexity of the Ibibio religious worldview. While the transcendental

perspective emphasizes the supremacy and distinctness of the Supreme Being, the pantheistic interpretation risks overlooking the hierarchical relationship between God, spiritual beings, and the natural world that characterizes Ibibio cosmology.

The study therefore concludes that the Ibibio conception of God represents a holistic metaphysical framework in which transcendence and immanence coexist. The Supreme Being remains distinct from creation while simultaneously expressing divine influence through natural and spiritual agencies. This integrative understanding challenges the adequacy of rigid philosophical classifications that attempt to impose purely Western categories on African indigenous religious thought. Ultimately, the Ibibio worldview demonstrates that African traditional religions possess rich philosophical insights regarding the nature of the divine. A careful and critical engagement with these traditions contributes not only to the development of African philosophy but also to the broader discourse in the philosophy of religion. Based on the findings of this study, and the conclusion given above, the following recommendations are proposed:

Recommendations

- i. **Further Philosophical Research:** More scholarly studies should be conducted on African indigenous

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religious concepts in order to deepen philosophical understanding of the nature of God in African thought. Such studies would help clarify misconceptions that often arise when African religious beliefs are interpreted solely through Western philosophical categories.

- ii. **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Researchers should adopt interdisciplinary approaches that integrate philosophy, anthropology, and religious studies when examining African traditional religions. This approach would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the metaphysical and cultural dimensions of indigenous belief systems.
- iii. **Comparative Studies:** Future research should explore comparative analyses between the Ibibio conception of God and other African traditional religious perspectives. Such comparisons may reveal broader patterns in African metaphysical thought and contribute to the development of a unified philosophical framework for interpreting indigenous religious worldviews.
- iv. **Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge:** There is a need for greater documentation and preservation of traditional religious knowledge among the Ibibio people. Many aspects of indigenous belief

systems are transmitted orally and risk being lost due to modernization and cultural transformation.

- v. **Integration into African Philosophy Curriculum:** Universities and academic institutions should incorporate more studies on African traditional religions into philosophy and religious studies curricula. This would encourage critical engagement with indigenous philosophical traditions and promote a more balanced representation of global philosophical thought.

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Citation: Inyang, Samuel E. & Itokem, Edidiong F. "A Critique of the Transcendental and Pantheistic View of God in the Ibibio Tradition". *Journal of People and Worldviews (JPW)*, 2026: pp209-223.