

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)  
Calling Planet Earth - Space Outreach To The General Public (4)

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MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF SPACE OBJECTS AND EVENTS IN SOME NIGERIAN CULTURAL  
GROUPS

**Abstract**

Socio-cultural beliefs have much influence on a country's venture into space. The first stages of socialization are the family and the immediate environment. Children influenced by this environment grow up with the beliefs and concerns of these environments. These children grow up to be teachers, scientists and policy makers. Even when exposed to modern science and discoveries, many hold on to their early beliefs and fears. Hence, the myths and legends are passed down to the younger generation, who grow up to be adults; the cycle continues within the country. This is especially seen in the space sector.

While some cultures promote wide thinking, innovation and exploration; others do not. An understanding of the beliefs, fears and concerns of a society will enable a better approach towards the enlightenment and education of such people. Pervasive knowledge mobilization of the society in space benefits is able to spur national participation and put in place supportive policies that could propel the national space programmes. This paper is an adventure into the beliefs of some socio-cultural groups in Nigeria and how such knowledge can be used to mobilize their support for, and interest in space activities.