

Ikenga International Journal of Institute of African Studies UNN Vol.12 No 2.

ISSN: 2006-4241



IKENGA

**International Journal
of Institute of
African Studies**

VOLUME 12, NO. 2

May 2012

A Publication of the Institute of African Studies
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

IKENGA, after which this journal of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, has been named, is a cult object of the Igbo-speaking peoples to which traditionally is attributed success or good fortune in the professions or in life generally. It is also closely associated with the right arm with which a man hacks his way through life. *IKENGA* could, therefore, be briefly described as the Igbo god of achievement. The journal is dedicated to the critical study of the fortunes of the black man down the centuries, and of his contemporary problems and dilemmas. Its interest covers the entire spectrum of African Studies.

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THE PLACE OF COUNTING AND MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS IN PEDAGOGY: THE ISUOCHI SPEECH COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper carries out a review of the Igbo traditional numerals, counting and measurement systems in Igbo. The paper studies the existing counting and measurement systems in Igbo and their inherent nature. It also investigates the extent to which foreign values have encroached or eroded the Igbo traditional value systems. The paper also seeks to find out how familiar Igbo children and youth are with the Igbo system of numerals and measurements and what can be done to remedy perceived lapses through pedagogy. The paper also seeks to find out the relevance of the Igbo indigenous counting and measurement systems in enhancing learning capabilities of Igbo students especially in mathematical subjects. The paper adopts the descriptive approach whereby relevant literatures are reviewed and analyzed. We also adopt the interview method in data gathering. The paper advocates the inclusion/integration of the Igbo Numerals, counting and measurement systems into the curriculum adopted for teaching the Igbo language especially at the basic stage of education. This calls for concerted effort and more emphasis on the part of educational policy makers and those involved in implementation.

1.0 Introduction

All languages of the world have their own counting system. Sanusi (1995) asserts that each language has words that are used in counting. Sanusi (1995:13) further observes that “the traditional system of counting, in any given speech community, constitutes one of the sociolinguistic factors that make up the distinctness and individuality of that speech community as against other speech communities”. There are well established ways of counting and numeral systems that sufficed for the Igbo man for all his activities that revolved mostly on farming including other activities before the coming of the white man. At the

moment, the traditional vigesimal system has given way to the British decimal system through language planning efforts. Ndukwe (1995:53) observes:

A fairly radical restructuring of Igbo numerals has been carried out. The traditional vigesimal system was considered by the planning agents as being too cumbersome, and riddled with ambiguities, for effective use in the ongoing modernization of Igbo society. An alternative decimal system was substituted and claimed to render the Igbo counting system more amenable to technological use, especially as it relates to mathematics.

The Igbo man also has his own system of observing days and months to keep record of time. This revolves around the appearance of the moon. His counting of days is predicated on the market days that serves as outlet for disposing his farm produce as he is majorly preoccupied with agricultural practices. The Igbo man also had his own standards and measurement systems. Some of these terms he used in past are still in use in some places but most of them have been eroded or lost entirely as a result of western influence and cross cultural influences. Most of these terms sound Greek to children while some adults have to take a pause before having a grasp of these terms.

The loss of some of these lexical items to western influences gives us an idea of how languages are endangered, mutilated or experience death. Furthermore, if these trends continue with the Igbo language whereby some Igbo terms are viewed as archaic or no longer in vogue and thereby not suitable to teach newer generations, the Igbo language may risk endangerment.

Oyebade (2010:2) observes that African languages are being eroded by the modern languages:

Counting systems as a feature of African Languages and African Linguistic behaviour is endangered precisely because "...Language practices in communities around the world are shifting so quickly away from traditional heritage languages and towards the 50 or so most important regional, national, and world languages,..." (Woodbury, 2003:37) such that the diversity that is easily

observed in various African counting systems is gradually being eroded by the more dominant decimal system of what are known as ‘world languages’. I find myself in total agreement, in this regard, with Everett (2003: 149-150) when he says “ As a linguist I am concerned with the theoretical significant lessons [African Language Counting System] have to teach us and the many lessons we will fail to learn if any of these [systems] are lost without careful documentation. One of the oft quoted response of modern African Language speakers to the traditional counting system in their language is that the numerals are derived in a “cumbersome and complicated manner.(Awobuluyi, 1994:33)

1.1 Methodology

The paper adopts the descriptive approach in the analysis whereby relevant literatures were harvested from books, journals, oral interviews etc. Bulk of the data for this research in the Igbo language was collected from the Isuochi speech community in Umunneochi Local Government Area, Abia State, south east of Nigeria through interviews and observations.

2.0 Data Presentation

2.1 Numerals in Some Nigerian Languages

Arabic	Bukpe	Igala	Tiv	Hausa	Yoruba
1	obong	ókà	mōm	daya	méni
2	ifie	èjì	úhwà	biyu	meji
3	itie	éta	útàa	ukù	meta
4	ene	èlè	únyíí	hudu	merin
5	iza	èlu	útaan	biyar	marun
6	etietie(3,3)	èfà	átéràtá	shidà	mefa
7	izarifie (5and2)	ebie	útánkááúhwá	bakwàii	meje

8	binebine (4,4)	éjọ	àníení	takwàs	mejɔ
9	(i)zaribine (5 and 4)	èla	utankaunyí	tarà	mesan
10	rikwe	ègwa	púé	gomà	mewaa
20	risi	ógwú	kùndú	ashirin	ogun
40	asiafie	ógwú meji	ákúndúhàà	arbain	ogoji
100	asiazan	ógwú mēlú	dérímōm	dari	ogorun
400	asirisi	úlú	dériunyiin	darihudu	irinwo

(Source: Interview with native speakers)

2.1 Igbo Numerals

2.1.1 Cardinals

Arabic	Igbo (Isuochi Dialect)	Standard Igbo
1	nna	ótù
2	ịbụɔ	àbụō
3	ịtọ	àtó
4	ịnọ	ànó
5	ise	ìsé
6	ìshî	ìsî
7	àsáà (ịsaa)	àsáà
8	sátō	àsátọ
9	teghete	ìtóólū
10	ìrí (eri)	ìrí

11	ìrí na nna	ìrí na ótù
18	ìrí na satō	ìrí na àsátō
20	ohu (qg×)	ìrí àbúq
21	ohu na nna	ìrí àbúq na àbúq
28	ohu na isatq	ìrí àbúq na àsátq
29	ohu na iteghete	ìrí àbúq na ítóólū
30	ohu na ìrí	ìrí atq
40	ohu ìbúq	ìrí anq
50	ohu ìbúq na ìrí	ìrí ise
60	ohu atq	ìrí isi
70	ohu atq na ìrí	ìrí àsáà
80	ohu anq	ìrí àsátq
90	ohu anq na iri	ìrí ítóólū
100	ohuise (ohu lese)	nàrì
400	nn×	nàrì anq
800	nn× labq	nàrì àsátq
1200	nn× latq	out puku na nari àbúq
2000	nn× lese	puku àbúq
4000	nn× leri	puku anq
1,000,000	-	ndè
1,000,000,000	-	ìjèrì

Uncountable in the Igbo traditional counting system could be referred to *nnx kwuru nnx* (400 upon 400), *agxta agxta*, *amakwuru*, *nnari* (referring to the number of sand, *ajambun'ala*, that is the sand that lives in the ground). Ndukwe (1995:54) observes that “the Igbo number names beyond ten are analysed as phrases plus the appropriate numbers properly analysed (e.g. 216 consists of $(100 \times 2) + (10 \times 1) + (6)$ ”. In other words, once we count beyond ten what we now have is a combination of phrases and numbers to express certain values in the numbering system. However, Ndukwe (1995) notes that in the traditional numeral system, *ogu* 20 and *nnu* 400, entails a mathematically different kind of operation from the phrase node.

2.1.2 Ordinals

(Human)

1 st	onye nvu
2 nd	onye ibuo
3 rd	onye ito
4 th	onye ino
5 th	onye ise
6 th	onye ishii
7 th	onye isa
8 th	onye isato
9 th	onye iteghete
10 th	onye iri etc.

(Non- Human)

1 st	nnke nvu
2 nd	nnke ibuo
3 rd	nnke ito etc.

2.3 Igbo Measurement Systems

There are several traditional standards of measurement and measurements systems that exist among the Igbo people before they came in contact with the whites. In the segment that follows we shall attempt to look at these methods.

2.3.1 Palm Oil Measurement

Traditionally, palm oil is stored and measured in *qba* or *aju*, hence *,qba mmanx* or *aju mmanx*. However, the Standard measurement of palm oil changed to bottle. Most of the time the cylindrical green bottle of aromatic schnapps bottle or the green beer bottle and later the Lucozade drink bottle was added. The Isuochi community, relied on the *ite Lqkpa*, (that is the pottery pot made of clay from Lqkpa but mainly sold at the Isiagx local market). The *ite nkpa* or *abaghx* is an equivalent measurement of 'Tin'. This the cylindrical tin ware used by the palm oil merchants to transport palm oil especially from the east to the north. Three *ite Lqkpa* makes up *one ite nkpa* which is equal to a 'tin'. Today, because of western influence, we no longer use these traditional standards. What is in vogue for measuring oil are all shades of bottles of various sizes. These bottles can be PET or glass based. The gallon system is also used whereby four litres make up a gallon. We now have gallons up to fifty litres.

These modern standards have taken over and eroded the traditional standards of measurements. The consequence is obvious, children of new generations may not have the privilege of learning these Igbo lexical items since most of them are not in active use any longer. Some of these traditional terms reside mostly with the aged in the rural areas.

2.3.2 Palm Wine Measurement

The palm wine is natural liquor of the Igbo people that has been with them over the years. Palm wine is produced and processed within the Igbo community; it is not imported like the schnapps or the *kaikai* liquor popularly called *akpxrxachia*. Hence, there are well established measurement standards for the palm wine. The *okpokoro* or *awariba* (gourd) is used directly for the palm wine tapping (*ikx mmi*) and processing from the Palm tree (*nkwx* or *akwx*) or the palm raffia tree (*ngwq*). The same *okpokoro* is used as standard of measurement for the palm wine. *Okuko*, as the traditional cup is used in drinking palm wine.

Okuko is a standard for determining the quantity of palm wine that is contained in the *okpokoro*. There are two sizes of *okpokoro* giving rise to *awariba mmị ukwu* (*okpokoro mmị ukwu*, big palm wine gourd) and *awariba mmị nta* (*okpokoromminta*, small palm wine gourd). *Awariba mmị ukwu* contains *okuko iri na nna* or *iri na ibu* (*iri na otu* or *iri na abụ* in standard Igbo, eleven cups or twelve cups) while *awariba mmị nta* contains *okuko teghete* (itoolu in standard Igbo, nine cups).

Another unit of measurement for the palm wine is *ite oti* (oti's pot). *Ite oti* has two sizes, *ite oti nta* (small *ite oti*) and *ite oti ukwu* (big *iteoti*). *Ite otinta* contains *okuko lasato* (*okuko asato*, eight *okuko*) while *ite oti ukwu* contains *okuko lerie na asato* (*okuko iri na asato*, sixteen *okuko*). There are also half measurements of the *iteoti* referred to as *uwaiteoti* (*okara iteoti*, half measure of *iteoti*). *Uwa(okara) ite oti ukwu* contains *okuko mmị lasato* (eight cups of wine) while *uwa ite oti nta* is *okuko mmị lan* (four cups of wine).

2.3.3 Standard and Measurement for Food Items

'*Oba*' is used to measure and also display for sale such food items as rice, *akidi* (beans) pepper, melon etc. *Nkata azoro* (*Azoro's* basket), a specially designed basket used to measure and also display for sale such food items as *jigbo* (tapioca), maize etc.. The basket is the smallest variety of basket available, it is unique in shape and special. The traditional baskets are generally used as standards for measuring most food items. The *mmimi* is a form of basket which is flat used to spread wet food products in the sun to dry. It is also used as a standard for measurement. The content of the *mmimi* basket is an equivalent of the content of the standard basket. Consequently, *mmimi jigbo* (flat basket of tapioca) is equal to *nkata jigbo* (normal basket of tapioca).

2.3.4 Observing Days

taa – today

echi – tomorrow

nwara + echi – nwarechi – next tomorrow

tonṭoro nwarechi – day following next tomorrow

tonṭoro tonṭoro nwarechi – the day following the day that follows next tomorrow

With *tonṭorọ* concept, we can express oncoming days till infinity. The *tonṭorọ* notion is derived from the idea of seniority; *itọ* - 'to senior'. Traditionally days are counted using the market days system. We have Eke, Orie, Afọ, Nkwọ. The first day of the four day *izu* (week) is Eke while the last is Nkwọ. The Igbo traditional month is twenty eight days. This is regarded as one full course of the moon, hence, the concept of one moon (out *onwa*) as a month. The moon as a month was popularized in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Hence, we see such expressions as "It is now three moons since ...". This would ordinarily mean "It is now three months since ...".

These Igbo traditional market days and the other special ways of expressing days ahead may sound strange to some Igbo children or even to some adults because the modern ways of expressing days have taken over. However, it is worthy of note that Igbo language has well established ways of expressing days ahead. Observing days using the traditional market days have died a natural death owing to the currency of the modern method in use. It only survives in the hinterland and in some religious circles. However, we note that where it is still in use, those that are using are the adult and aged populace. Most of the times, the children are oblivious of the traditional days system. For instance, mention of the traditional days can be done in some adult fora while the children would use the modern method. Again, in all schools, it is stating the obvious that no attempt is made to use the traditional day system except when it is taught as a topic.

2.3.5 Metric Measurements

Before the Igbo man came in contact with the conventional tapes in use today, he must have had a way doing his tape measurements especially when it comes to measuring lands for farming and building purposes. The Igbo man makes use of his fingers and feet in a special way to take measurements. The thumb in combination with the index finger spread apart from each other on surface gives us an *mgba aka* which is equivalent to six inches in measurement. An *mgba aka* is the distance between the thumb and the index finger when spread far apart on a surface.

The two feet when spread apart or a step gives us an equivalent of one metre. This is what we call out *nzọ ụkwụ* (one step). Traditional standards in metric measurements are as follows:

otu mgbà aka - 6 inches

mgbà aka abụ́q - 1 foot

otu nzọ ụkwụ - 1 metre

This kind of traditional measurement is still in use today in Igbo land. Most workmen that suddenly have need of measurement when they do not have their tape instruments make recourse to the traditional way of taping.

3.0. Counting System in Pedagogy

It is true that the mental picture that is conjured for the Igbo child that knows the word *iko* (cup) when it is mentioned is the modern cups of different shapes and kinds, does the Igbo child know that *iko* actually existed in Igbo concept in a different form that is what he sees today all over the places? We have *okuko*, which is the local cup used in drinking both water and wine. It is still in use today mostly for drinking palm wine.

The sharing spirit amongst the Igbo is always demonstrated when using the *okuko* to share palm wine from the *okpokoro* or *awarịba* (Gourd). The palm wine is served from the *okuko* one after the other until every body has had his turn and it begins to go its round once again until the wine is exhausted. Moreover, the *okpokoro* is used metaphorically to refer to emptiness; hence, we can say that someone is an *okpokoro* meaning that the person is shallow in thinking or is acting foolishly without enough reasoning as a full fledged Igbo that sucked her mother's breast. The idea of emptiness comes from the nature of the *okpokoro* shape. The *okpokoro* has a hollow that can be likened to the space in a barrel that gives rise to the English idiom; "An empty barrel makes the greatest noise".

We also see that the *okpokoro*'s emptiness concept is what we have in the shell of such creatures as snail, hence *okpokoro eju* (empty shell of a snail).

In pedagogy, if the Igbo child is familiar with the concept of *okpokoro* it would not be difficult for him to grasp the concept of the barrel when it is introduced. One would agree that the concept of the barrel is strange to our culture and not common to our environment, hence, the *okpokoro* would readily serve as a good analogy.

Most African languages have 400 as the highest number whereby higher numbers can be expressed in the multiples of 400. The question that has been posed which is a research challenge is why do African languages share this numbering phenomenon and why is 400 the highest number. One may argue that some Nigerian languages count more than 400 even up to 1000 and have values for Million, billion and trillion; it is interesting to note that from our findings that all these values are a result of metalanguage developmental efforts. For instance in the case of Igbo 100- *nar*[], 1000 – *puku*, million- *nde*, billion – *ijeri* were not there at the onset and may have been adopted from the dialects into the standard variety as part of the Igbo language metalanguage development process. Ndukwe (1995) opines that the inclusion of basic words representing 100, 1000, 1,000,000 and 1,000,000,000 are landmarks in the new decimal system.

4.0 Conclusion

From the foregoing, we can see that several values from the British counting and measuring system have filtered into the Igbo society through usage and also into our educational system through conscious language planning efforts. In other words, foreign values are gradually taking its toll on indigenous knowledge. These have obvious pedagogic implications.

Ndukwe (1995:55) comments on the pedagogic implications of the new system:

Whereas there is little doubt that the use of the ‘new’ numerals has permeated the educational system, for the print and electronic media as well as formal and public usage, an explicit picture is yet to emerge as to how far they have been adopted. But as time goes on and as increasing number of children are brought into the education system where they are exposed to new numerals, it is reasonably certain that they will completely replace the old counting system in the very near future.

This prediction has of course been fulfilled to a great extent as most school age children are no longer familiar with the old numerals. I stand by the position of Oyeade (2010) that there is the urgent need to document the counting systems of African languages before they are lost finally to the stampeding force of the so called world languages. The numeral systems of African

Languages according to Oyeade (2010: 19) are “windows into the cognitive process of numbers computation as carried out by ancient Africans”.

Such cognitive processes including the phenomenon whereby a majority of the Nigerian languages when they count up to twenty, have their other numbers in multiples of twenty are significant in pedagogy. Most of this inherent counting system is suggestive of the base system that we have in mathematics, hence, these traditional knowledge could be transferred to mathematics and other related subjects to enhance learning. Again if the students are familiar with the traditional tape measurements, it could facilitate teaching of the British or American standards. Besides, these traditional terms could help us develop the metalanguage for teaching science and technology. This is also a challenge to those that are saddled with the responsibility of developing Igbo metalanguage to look into the dialects for already existing terms that could be adopted before looking up to borrowing or coinages.

The paper calls for comprehensive documentation of the indigenous counting and measurement systems and further research into the indigenous counting systems to discover ways of applying some of its processes in modern pedagogy.

On the counting system, from data gathered from the Isuochi community, a determiner element was observed. For instance when referring to the number of items as in ‘five yams’. It would come out as ‘ji lese’ (ji ise in standard Igbo) ji lanọ (ji anọ, four yams). The morphology and phonology of this determiner (l’) would be a subject of further of research.

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PLACING TRADITIONAL AFRICAN ART AND CRAFTS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL CHANGE.

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Abstract

Traditional African art and crafts as an aspect of African indigenous knowledge is facing the challenges of global change arising from the spread of modern technology and globalization. This paper examines the impact of westernization of the African continent through colonialism, Christian missionary activities and Western education which has led to a shift of emphasis from traditional local arts and crafts that produced the great artistic heritage of masterpieces of African arts-Nok terracotta, Igbo-Ukwu bronzes, Ife terracotta, Benin bronzes etc; to today's, industrially mass-produced products and the incorporation of Western styles, techniques, media and materials. This necessitates the search for new ideologies different from those that produced the traditional African art and crafts. While the craze for modern technologies and models have edged out those who relied on the indigenous local experiences and practices, it has also raised the issue of consumption and pollution, sustainable development, environmental, social and ethical considerations. This paper therefore recommends that while we chase modern technologies, methods and materials we have to ensure that African indigenous knowledge whether in art or in any other sphere, is being promoted.

Introduction

As a boy growing up in the village at Avu in Owerri Local Government Area, the researcher was exposed to different levels of indigenous knowledge right from learning the techniques of how to climb trees, especially the pear tree during its seasons, making of local crafts of mat knitting for thatch roof and setting of traps for edible rodents. The bigger boys set more ambitious traps that caught rabbit. To move to that level was considered a sign of maturity and advancement in age and skills. The men set bigger traps that could catch grass-cutters and

antelopes. As they got more matured and gained some initiation or ritual knowledge, they could venture into night hunting. These experiences provided several layers of development into adulthood. They were also several other aspects of the village life which cut across the social, economic, political and cultural – such as herbal medicine, ritual priesthood etc. These equipped the individuals or collective groups with special skills, experiences and insight to survive in their environment.

The above illustrations clearly explain what indigenous knowledge is and how it operates in an African village setting. In recent decades, there has been an internationally growing awareness of the importance of traditional or indigenous knowledge, although the increasing attention this has generated in the academic circles and development institutions is yet to bring about a unanimous perception of its concept but there have been useful and overlapping definitions of what it is.

In the concept of global change, it is no longer the crafts one was confronted with as a little boy growing up in the village. It is now, for instance, one's ability to use the brush, pen, computer, books, etc. It is not clear whether these implements will help one to highlight and sustain the past. This is the dilemma of indigenous knowledge in Africa today. Part of the impact of global change is that African art and crafts in its indigenous forms are gradually being eroded or modernized to conform to western conventions.

Warren (1991) states that “indigenous knowledge (IK) is the local knowledge, knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. Indigenous knowledge contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, healthcare, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities.”

According to Flaviet *al* (1995) “indigenous knowledge is the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems.” The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) describes traditional knowledge as the “cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs, handed down through

generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment.”

The basic component of any country’s knowledge system is its indigenous knowledge which encompasses skills, experiences and insights of people, applied to maintain or improve their livelihood. It is the social capital of the poor which is invested in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter or to achieve control of their lives. Global changes are eroding indigenous knowledge systems and practices because it is being considered inappropriate or too slow to adapt. Some indigenous knowledge has even disappeared due to importation of modern technologies or short-term development measures which do not encourage its sustainability. The disappearances of indigenous knowledge is affecting those who survive directly from it and distant others because its problem solving strategies and expertise are continuously being lost.

Generally, development has been viewed in terms of technology transfer from more advanced countries. This has also ignored the potentials of local experiences and practices; as such indigenous knowledge has not been fully utilized in development process. Whether in art, agriculture, primary healthcare, community development or poverty alleviation, indigenous knowledge needs to be captured, preserved and utilized.

Indigenous Knowledge in African Art and Crafts

Nakashima *et al.* (2000:12) state that “sophisticated knowledge of the natural world is not confined to science. Human societies all across the globe have developed rich sets of experiences and explanations relating to the environments they live in.” The knowledge systems of the traditional African art provided arrays of information, understandings and explanations that sustained their interactions with their natural milieu. These included the mediation with ancestors, struggles against diseases and injury, naming and explanation of natural phenomena and the relevant strategies to cope with the fluctuating environments.

Indigenous knowledge as part of global knowledge has value and relevance in itself. As a tool it can be preserved, transferred, adopted and adapted in a new context. A combination of indigenous and modern knowledge is considered most appropriate for development strategies.

To understand the role of western education in undermining indigenous knowledge, Murray as maintained in Duckworth (1938) states that the younger generations who have been to school are unfortunately most ignorant and scornful of their local traditions and history, and fail to appreciate, even if they do not actually despise African art. The old religious carvings are gone or are disappearing and the missions are encouraging their destruction and discouraging their members from joining in traditional dances. Basden writes that “one of the sad effects of education is to make a gulf between the young people and the old.” He had asked school boys or teachers, why has that woman painted her face white? and what is the meaning of the painting on that wall? the answer was, I don’t know, even when they know, they feel it should not be known that as an educated person they have knowledge of such things (Duckworth, 1938).

The Nsukka art school has thrived very well in the appropriation of indigenous knowledge of uli decorations for modern creative experiments which draws from the Igbo uli wall and body painting. The accounts of Murray and Basden illustrate that our educational curriculum should adapt to our physical and spiritual environment in order to reflect a meaningful space. Art as a tool could bridge the understanding between indigenous ways of seeing and doing things and the acquired western ways of seeing and doing things.

Indigenous knowledge is passed on from generation to generation through the word of mouth and cultural rites which has helped the indigenous people to live a sustainable life. Some scholars have argued that formal education has impacted negatively on indigenous knowledge and ways of learning by replacing them with abstract knowledge. Today, a great deal of indigenous knowledge on African art and crafts is lost alongside its valuable contributions to the continuity of the society. For instance, Andah (1988:225) writes that “the *cireperdue* method of casting were known in Africa long before European contact... and like all other social phenomena, art experienced enormous pressures and change during the last four or five centuries... contact with first Arabic/Islamic and then European cultures was to contribute greatly to the decline of classic African art as it did to other aspects of African cultures.”

Indigenous knowledge in African art is all embracing, comprising the physical, spiritual and other aspects of human life that are cultural and artistic in nature. In indigenous knowledge of art and crafts, these

components are interrelated. As Battiste and Henderson (2000) put it “we carry the mysteries of our ecologies and their diversity in our oral traditions, in our ceremonies, and in our art.” In Africa, the belief systems, according to Kleiner (2009) “have given rise to many richly expressive art traditions, including rock engraving and painting, body decoration, masquerades and other lavish festivals, figural sculpture and sacred and secular architecture.”

African crafts according to Akolo (1977) comprise of potteries; weaving of raffia fibres, grass, palm fronds and canes to make baskets, hats, fans, chairs, bags; carving on calabashes, wood, slabs of clay and cement; leather works; embroidery; bead making; brass casting etc. These arts and crafts are African ways of expressing indigenous knowledge. Scholars have argued that indigenous knowledge is not cultural knowledge as such, rather it is recorded or passed on by such, rather means as art, song, myth, story and ceremony. Its diverse knowledge conveys the identity of a person, clan, group or nation in relation to their respective societies and as such must be dealt with respect, discussed within its context and in relation to observed protocols.

The Corpus of African Art and Crafts

African art has a long and controversial history. The origins of African art dates before recorded history, comprising of the rock art in the Sahara in Niger preserving 6000 year old carvings, the Nok culture of Nigeria dating 500 B.C, Egyptian paintings and artifacts among several other cultural arts and crafts. More complex and advanced art forms were produced in sub-Saharan Africa around the 10th Century; such works include the Igbo-Ukwu bronzes, Ife terracottas and metal works, Benin bronzes among others (Plate:1).

The designation “African” was only accorded to the arts of “Black Africa” referring to peoples in sub-Saharan Africa. The non-black peoples of North Africa, the people of the horn of Africa, the art of ancient Egypt were not included under the rubric of African art. The recent developments among African art historians and other scholars have been to include the visual culture of these areas since they were geographically bounded in the African continent. This is intended to enhance the understanding of the continent’s cultural diversity. African continent’s artistic diversity blends the indigenous black African societies with Islamic and Mediterranean cultures and ancient Egypt such

that distinctive divisions may not be necessary. African art in its wider spectrum of study is also beginning to incorporate the arts of the African Diaspora as evident in Brazil, the Caribbean and the South Eastern United States.



Most arts of sub-Saharan Africa are characterized by production from small scale traditional societies with variety of styles. The artistic expressions are conditioned by the environment, history and social circumstances which may be related to celebrations and social recreation. Prominent among the art forms are different masquerades or wooden masks, body adornment, *nsibiri* writings, potteries, textiles and utensils of everyday life among other visual culture materials. African art in their original context are inseparable from religious ceremonies, ritual use, rites and secret societies without an overriding aesthetic considerations. The artistic styles have remained mainly abstract and may portray human and animal forms which offer cultural continuity for the makers and their society (Plate:2).

According to Blier (1981) African art constitutes one of the most diverse legacies on earth, though most casual observers tend to generalize traditional African art. Though the continent is full of diverse peoples, societies and civilizations, each has a unique visual special culture, and in spite of this diversity, there are some unifying artistic themes in the culture of the continent of Africa. The Art of Africa (2006) states that the human figure has always been the primary subject-matter for most African art, and this emphasis even influenced certain European traditions. The human figures may symbolize the living or the dead, may reference chiefs, dancers or various trades such as drummers or hunters or may be anthropomorphic representations of a god or have other votive functions. Another common theme is the inter-morphosis of human and animal forms.

African art works tend to favour visual abstraction over naturalistic representation. This is because many of the art works generalize stylistic norms.



PLATE: 2. Ifa divination tray.

Wood. D. H. 45cm. Museum Rietberg Zurich. Switzerland.

Ancient Egyptian art thought of as naturalistically depictive made use of highly abstracted and regimented visual canons (Blier, 1981). African artists tend to favour three-dimensional artworks over two-dimensional works. African paintings or cloth works were meant to be experienced three-dimensionally. House paintings are handled as continuous designs wrapped round the house walls, forcing the viewer to walk around to be able to experience it full. Examples are the Igbo wall paintings of *uli* motifs. Decorated cloths are worn as decorative or ceremonial garments, transforming the wearer into a living sculpture, examples are the *ukara* cloth worn by members of the *ekpe* society.

The utilitarian function and three-dimensionality of traditional African art presupposes that African art is crafted for use in performance contexts rather than purely for aesthetic viewing and appreciation. Most of the artistic expressions in Africa, either of masks or costumes, potteries or sculptures are used in communal, ceremonial contexts where they are “danced.”

The expression of indigenous knowledge in African art through symbols and patterns was what Louis Senghor of Senegal referred to as dynamic symmetry. William Fagg, the British art historian compared such designs to logarithmic mapping of natural growth by biologist D’Arcy Thompson and more recently has been described in terms of fractal geometry (Egash, 1999).

African Art and Global Change

According to Stern *et al.* (1992) “global change in social context encompasses the social, cultural, technological, political, economic and legal change”. Closely related to global change is globalization or global integration. Global changes in communications, transportation and computer technology result to easy movement of ideas, culture, people, goods and services and money around the planet. The new global interconnectedness and free flow of information have made social movement to assume a planetary scale. Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN, 1992) state that “we must explore causes and consequences of how human, interacting within the social system affect and are affected by global change”.

African art introduced an evolutionary trend in western art in which western artists became open-minded in exploring art styles that is different from theirs. Before money became the main drive for creating art as in the present day, the indigenous African peoples of the past created solely sacred crafts for religious beliefs, display of tribal customs and for spiritual pride.

At the beginning of the 20th century European artists like Picasso, Matisse, Modigliani who were inspired by the Greek classical art tradition of portraying naturalistically the world of appearances; began to be influenced by African art which demonstrated well organized forms not necessarily produced by response to faculty of sight but essentially that of imagination, emotion, mystical and religious experience which European art lacked (Plate:3). Their artists were tenaciously copying

nature and lacked the liberty of self expression which African art produced.



PLATE:3 Pablo Picasso, *Les Demoiselles d' Avignon*, 1907

African sculpture influenced this pivotal work which opened door to a radically new method of presenting forms in space.

Fosu (1986) maintains that at the time European artists were appreciating the aesthetic qualities of African traditional art and experimenting with it, the African artists were equally fascinated with European aesthetic conventions of realism and also experimented with it in their works. Both groups of artists incorporated aspects of each other's works in their artistic expressions, as such the 20th Century ended the active practice of traditional art on both continents. Therefore the exchange of ideas between European colonial artists and their Black counterparts was not a one way process. While missionaries, patrons and educators exposed African artists to Western artistic practices, African artists were busy exploring unconventional modern art practices which

foundation was centered on integration of African and European aesthetics (Plate:4).



Plate 20. Ben Enwonwu. Shango. outdoor. National



The expressive power of African art, its formal perfection and sophistication of forms aroused interest in abstraction, organization and reorganization of forms and the exploration of emotional and psychological contents which were lacking in Western art. The expressive power of African arts changed the course of global art in the

20th Century and presented art as a medium for philosophizing and intellection which provided more profound aesthetic enrichment.

Kleiner (2009) writes that the spread of colonialism and geopolitical dynamics of the 19th and the 20th Century saw to the perception of colonized cultures as “primitive” and the non-Western artifacts as “artificial curiosities” or “fetish objects”. The exhibition of these objects collected during expeditions to the colonies served to reinforce the perceived “need” for a colonial presence in these countries. These objects bolstered the view that these peoples were “barbarians” who needed to be “civilized” or “saved” and these perception justified colonialism-including its missionary dimension-worldwide. Therefore, despite the European thinking on non –Western art,African art still had an important revitalizing and energizing force on Western art with the result that the avant-garde or modernist artists were determined to reject their copied conventional European models.

Kleiner also maintains that the worldwide appreciation of African art which began in the early 20th century also led to illegal and uncontrolled excavation by treasure hunters which had disturbed the original context of the artworks. This had made it difficult in establishing accurate chronologies and the problem of looting, loss of knowledge about the provenance and the original function of such objects also persisted.

Newman (1974) writes that African art functions as a way of living in the world, and whether as masks, sculptures, houses, fabrics, pottery, poetry, music, dance etc, it renders the invisible visible and reveals the meaning of the confrontation between life and death. And that African artists work from the forces to the form that embodies them (life and death).

The master pieces of African art remains one of the greatest cultural achievements of mankind, yet despite this impressive artistic history of expression, the Europeans thought of Africans as a people without a past, with neither history nor art. According to EkpoEyo as maintained in the accounts of Marc (1998) the taxonomic system which placed African societies at the lowest rung of human development was extended to the visual culture of the continent. It was not therefore, surprising that Leo Frobenius, a German ethnologist who on seeing the masterpieces of Ife art, believed that the city of Ile-Ife was colonized by the Greeks.

EkpoEyo further observes that early anthropologists considered African artifacts, many of which had exaggerated proportions and curious combinations of human and animal forms as “proof” of the primitive nature of human development. The artifacts were never considered as art because “primitive” people were believed to be incapable of the noble process of creativity. Consequently African art was placed at the lowest rung of artistic development, while Western art occupied its pinnacle (Marc, 1998). This notion gave rise to such terms as exotic art, primitive art, curio, arts sauvage, tribal art etc, in reference to African art being on a lower cultural level. Eyo (2008) argues that the refusal to accept African art and other non-Western art at par with Western art is nothing less than an attempt to divide humanity into a superior group having “true” art and an inferior group having merely a “primitive” version of the real thing.

According to Akolo (1977) the British colonization and activities of the Christian missionaries had adverse consequences on the patronage of traditional art and crafts. Art in Nigeria became westernized like many aspects of contemporary Nigerian life. In the schools and colleges only the Western forms of painting, sculpture and design were emphasized while traditional and local arts and crafts were neglected. Hand-made goods which use to be a source of rich artistic expression have been replaced by manufactured goods, e.g house pillars, doors, chairs, utensils, mats etc. UlliBeier as maintained in Akolo (1977:105) states that “the child must first be taught to look at and appreciate those works of art among which he is growing up and later on be introduced to foreign styles and ideas”.

Kiltz (2011) argues that the traditional art of Africa is becoming a thing of the past with changes in the continent in response to disappearance of traditions and other aspects of African culture and that quality of works of ancient African art are becoming harder and harder to find. Yet the value of its art has gone up accordingly as most of the traditional art works have left the continent for private collections in European countries. The artisans are also adopting new world views which makes the traditional work of modern vintage somewhat less meaningful and true to the original heritage.

Kiltz further observes that the “new” art most commonly found in Africa today, tends to be much more commercial, less amount of time and emotional energy is spent on making a work of art and this results to

something far less unique. Also the common and popular art themes today are mass produced for larger audiences. Kiltz concludes that “new African art is not inferior but just different. Just as modern Western art has taken prominence over older forms, so too, modern African art is replacing the traditional. This brings with it its own new meaning and aesthetic significance”.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that creative designs as stated by Bony (2004) are influenced by tradition. Therefore the transition of indigenous knowledge in African arts and crafts within the context of global change which embraces new forms of technology as expressed in products such as clothes, furniture, utensils, new plastic materials, iron products, cement, stainless steel among others, have to be based on due considerations that designers have to be responsible for their creations as all products have an impact on the environment.

The transition from a typical African setting which was self sustaining to one confronted by modern technology with the attendant problems of consumption and pollution, will have to take place against the background of sustainable development, environmental, social and ethical considerations; which support the view that human beings are the guardians of the biosphere and have to be accountable for the consequences of their acts.

Recommendations

African art and crafts techniques need to be integrated into the educational curriculum in ways that could benefit the society. The educational model should be designed to encourage respect for local culture, its wisdom, and ethics incorporated into teaching and learning methods with relevant knowledge and skills in art and crafts. Kenneth Murray as maintained in (Duckworth, 1938) posits that art is a good measure of the spiritual civilization of a country and it is certain that here Africa has less to learn from modern Europe than Europe has from Africa.

The contemporary African art transforming from traditional works are beginning to assume international character by the adoption of Western techniques, styles, media and materials which were never experienced in the traditional art of their forefathers. The African artist

needs to recognize value and appreciate his artistic heritage as expressed at the local community levels. This will enable him to understand its principles and being able to apply it in his contemporary expressions with new materials. Therefore the contemporary African artist has a responsibility to preserve our identity while participating in the present, as art remains a meaningful consciousness in dealing with the crucial dilemma of the world; on how peoples of different appearance and mutually unintelligible languages and different world views can coexist peacefully.

African governments can do more to encourage the establishment of museums and promoting scholarly activities at the various levels of government; Local, State and Federal, dedicated to the study and enjoyment of African arts. This is more so if in distant America and Paris outstanding museums can be created strictly for African art, and the establishment of departments for the study and award of higher degrees, up to Ph.D level in African art history. Promoting African art in whatever way can go a long way in positioning it in the main stream of global art and will help to accomplish its role in restoring human dignity in Africa.

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**MONUMENTS AS EVIDENCE OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE
IN AFRICA: AN INQUIRY INTO DUNOKA, LEJJA
TRADITIONAL ECONOMY.**

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Abstract:

Africa as a people has been subjected to all manner of malevolent rehistoricization by Western scholars. This led some to argue that Africa is full of darkness is not part of history. Today, this line of thought is fast dying, thanks to the role of Africanists who through the relics, artifacts, monuments and cultural practices of our ancestors are puncturing the old argument. Incidentally, their attention is geared more towards laundering the battered image of Africa. Little attention had been paid to how those monuments that are often linked to political and religious activities are pointers to the peoples economic past and how those monuments influence the economic activities of people in the communities they are found. This lacuna is what this work is out to redress using some monuments in Otoibo Ugwu Dunoka, Lejja in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state, Nigeria as examples.

Introduction

Granted that every human society thrives on knowledge, scholars over the years had been battling with what should be the working definition of knowledge. In fact, one cannot think of any society that is bereft of knowledge. If the latter is held to be a truism, then the question of what is knowledge and when is knowledge regarded as indigenous should be a convenient take off for any research on African Indigenous Knowledge. First and most importantly, a knowledge is said to be indigenous when it refers to the vast and largely undocumented body of knowledge, wisdom, skills and expertise that a given community has developed over time, and continues to develop as it grapples with the challenges in its' environment, with outside ideas, and with constantly changing

Otobo Ugwu Dunoka is a village square located at the foot of a hill called Ugwu Nwaidike by Lejja people. Dunoka is found in Ejuona quarter of Lejja. Lejja is made up of three quarters viz: Ejuona, Uwani and Akaibute. Otobo Ugwu which is the parliamentary square of Lejja as well as the cultural and traditional headquarters is often associated with politics more than the economy. The square spans an area of about 500m² with a density of 3-4 slag blocks per m² in some of the densest area. (Eze-Uzomaka, 2007:153). The first evidence of economic activity that any informed mind is confronted with in the square is the abundance of iron slag blocks and its debris. These are clear testimonies of iron working technology which took place in the area many centuries earlier. The date recovered through archaeological excavation in the area date the smelting process to have taken place at about 4 005±40 BP (this means over 2000 years before Christ)(Eze-Uzomaka,2009:41). Even with a very old date associated with the square and the monuments therein, the link between the monuments and the traditional Lejja economy is discernable as shown here under. The first monument to be discussed in this paper is called Odegwoo.



Plate 1: Odegwoo

Odegwoo

This is a shrine that is shaped like a cone. It is at the very entrance of the northern section of the square. Odegwoo is the human equivalent of Fijioku (Njoku/ Ahajioku) as it is associated with fertility and procreation. In Dunoka, all children born in the village were registered before this shrine. Items used during the registration depended on the sex of the child. Male children are registered with a cock that must have crowed Kola nut, yellow ochre (*odoo*) and palm oil. Females are registered using dried fish (*azu eshu*), yellow ochre, kola nut and palm oil.

The rules attached to *Odegwoo* which to a large extent reveals the nexus between it and the economy are as follows:

1. No woman undergoing her menstrual cycle is allowed to go near *Odegwoo*. If any one flouts this regulation, her cycle would not cease till *Odegwoo* is propitiated. Rationalizing this law, an elder of the village posited that purity is a must and the highest respect given to all deities. Since the deities guard the conduct of men, and the citizens of the village were all registered before the shrine, they are bound to be pure in their dealings with their fellow citizens. Consequent on the fear that *Odegwoo* might visit a victim or an offender of its law with anger, no citizen of the village dare cheat his neighbor in any economic transaction.
2. While worshipping *Odegwoo* by the entire village, two people worship serve as the officiating priests. Each of the officiating priests sat facing each other. The elders of the village posit that the reason behind two people serving as the chief priest is because *Odegwoo* is a deity associated with the labor force of the village (human population). With the popular saying *igwee bu ike* (multitude is strength) the people reasoned that since they have two main settlements- Ugwu and Agbor- each of the priests represent a settlement, and each settlement prayed for more children which translates to more labor force. During the offering of sacrifices to the deity, competition is witnessed among the priests. Each of them brought their oratory power to bear on the deity while pleading for more children from the deity and the words are muttered so that none of the priests would copy the prayer of the other (Opata: 2007).

3. After the sacrifice, every edible item used in the sacrifice was eaten by children who were instructed to scramble for them. The import of the scramble is to initiate the children into the rigors of the economy early in life. Thus, as an agrarian community, the message sent was that your sustenance depended on your physical strength as the amount of food eaten by any of the children present depended on how much he amassed during the scramble.

The other monument in the square that is so conspicuous is called *Oshuru*. This monument is built with iron slag blocks and some stones assumed to be hematite. On its' topmost part, it is covered with flat shaped stones. The said flat stone is said to cover a hole that its depth is indeterminate and the said hole is assumed to be representative of the insatiable nature of man. Thus, during worship of *Oshuru*, the items used in offering sacrifices to it are not seen after sacrifice as they were usually poured into the whole.



Plate 11: Oshuru

Oshuru

This monument is shaped like a big yam mound is located at the northern section of the square. *Oshuru* is linked with warfare. The nexus between this monument and the economy is that it is a perpetual reminder to people that they have to be combat ready at any time to defend their territory as they displaced other people to possess the land. Implicit in this monument is the importance of security to the economy.

The rules attached to *Oshuru* are as follows;

1. No woman is allowed to touch *Oshuru*; a replay of the purity associated with *Odegwoo* and other deities.
2. Items used in worshipping *Oshuru* are boiled yam and locally made stew prepared with *Akpaka*. The stew is made in such a way that palm oil is in excess, yet the priest must make sure that the oil is not spilled until the worship is over. Rationalizing this in relation to their economy and warfare, Ugwoke Nwani who is the oldest man in Ugwu Dunoka averred that yam is the chief crop of the Igbo and as a warrior nothing is fit for the hero (*Oshuru*) other than that regarded as first. In any society that is bent on promoting its economy, there is bound to be a mechanism to reward those who performed outstanding feat to get recognition. In this light, *Oshuru* is a constant reminder to all from the village that achievements go with reward. As for *inene akpaka*, he stated that *akpaka* is a hard tree and charcoal gotten from it holds fire for a long time. As warfare is akin to thriving in fire, *akpkaka* was chosen to remind the deity what they expect it to do for them during wars. The central message in this action is that resilience is a key factor for success.
3. No left over of the items used in worshipping the deity is taken home. This, the people argue is a constant reminder that during warfare (which literally serve as a metaphor for economic survival) one should be focused on success rather than booty (Nwani, 2007).
4. The oil in the stew used in worshipping *Oshuru* must not fall off from the plate containing the soup or even while it is being served or eaten by the worshippers. The people argue that if the oil should fell down it translate to defeat as falling down depicts that the person so

concerned is not agile; a constant reminder that failure is not honored and not associated with heroes.

The next monument to be discussed is called **UTU UDELEIGWE**.



Plate 111: Utu Udeleigwe.

This is a tree right in the centre of the square. The tree is associated with justice. In the real sense of the word, it could be regarded as the executioners' stake. With respect to the economy, this monument is a perpetual reminder to all defaulters that punishment awaits them. The people that were tied to this tree in the olden days were those who stole crops or domestic animals, adulterers and those who sold their fellow citizens into slavery.

The rules associated with *Utu Udeleigwe* are:

1. The leaf is not used in cooking (leaves of the same type of tree **Ogbu** are used as foil in wrapping food like *Okpa*(Cow pea). If this is done,

the food would never get done as was the case with *Affia Nwugwele*. The reason for not using the leaf as posited by (Ekenyi, 2007) is that it is a symbol of justice. Justice he said is not changed. Any cooked food must definitely lose its original form.

2. Women are not allowed to seat at the foot of the tree as they are assumed to have some innate destructive tendencies imbued in them by nature. This translates to preservation of the sanctity of the monument. The lesson drawn from this for the economy is that preserving what one has is more important than accumulating wealth. This is epitomized in the local adage that runs thus; *njido aku ka nkpatu aku* (taking care of what one already have is more important than searching for more and not taking adequate care of the ones in his stock).

Oya Ogwuu is the next monument to be discussed.



Plate iv: Oya Ogwuu

This monument is located in the western part of the square but is facing east. The monument is regarded as the store house of anti- poison. However, its role is not limited to health related matters. The monument is associated with ethno-astronomy in the sense that it serves the people need of keeping their local calendar. Standing in-between a road leading to Amaukwa(a settlement) in Ugwu Dunoka, the people on sighting the new moon would use ash to sprinkle on one part of the road and barricade the same part with a palm frond (*akpa ekwu*) .After this is done, the chief priest would pick a small lump of stone and dropped it inside a small clay pot buried at the foot of the tree . When the number of stones in the pot is 15 or 16, the year is regarded as completed. The variation is based on how early it rained (Iduma, 2007). Keeping the calendar is so crucial to the economy because, they use the number to predict the time it would rain for them to plant their crops. For early planters of crops like yam, they start planting when the stones are up to 12, they start planting as the last three stones representing moon cycles and by implication new months are regarded as having no names. In the local parlance they are called *ehukehu*.

Also all levies in the community are collated at the foot of this tree where there are assemblages of slag. The imports of this venue of collating levies to the economy are as follows:

1. It gives the Council of elders who use the square as a meeting point the room to concentrate on other businesses of the day outside the levy.
2. The monument which is associated with sun and moon is assumed to use the forces provided by these forces of nature to victimize any one that cheats; therefore it helps in economic security.
3. It is equally assumed that since the monument is anti poison, it has the potency to neutralize any charm that a cheat might use to defraud the society (Ekenyi and Nwani, 2007).

Okiti Akpuriagede

Another monument of great economic importance is called *Okiti Akpuriagede*(The house of the societies incarnate beings called *Omaba*. Built with clay soil and circular in structure, this monument is facing the east and is regarded as the collective point of rest for the male ancestors of the community who were said to be iron smelters.



Plate V: Okiti Akpuriagede

This monument is a constant reminder to the people the role iron technology played in their economy and overall history. The shape of the building reminds them of the “kitchen” used by their ancestors during smelting. More importantly, the rules and rituals associated with the incarnate beings that are ‘housed’ in the monument speak volume of the nexus between it and the peoples’ economy.

First, the classification of the incarnate beings and the role they are assumed to play in the society is a reflection of the division of labor during smelting. **Ugwaa** (a type of incarnatebeing) is regarded as the messengers of the professional smelters whose duty it is to mobiles resources used by the smelters. Quite often they appear very dirty and carry sticks which serve as their cane. Dirtiness according to Uroko (2007) is a reminder that soiled hands feed the stomach while the canes represent wood used in producing the charcoal used by the smelters. **Ujam** (another class of incarnate being that is adorned with white sparkling buttons) is assumed to be the apprentice smelters that had

attained a level of perfection and therefore exude a lot of energy used in smelting. They are seen holding either a cluster of short metal gongs, a small iron staff shaped like a stabbing knife in one hand or a cock and metal bell in the other hand. While the iron ware is there to represent the products of the smiths who use the end product of iron smelters, the cock is a sign of reward for proficiency in smiting. The other incarnate being that is housed in the monument is called **Okokoro**. *Okokoro* is assumed to be the chief smelter and is seen wearing white and sparkling fibers made from plantain trunks. Its' legs are left naked up to the thigh and in some cases the buttocks are left uncovered. With iron staff in hand and a big bell that has a very big roundish iron ringer inside, *Okororo* moves about with the thigh seen awash with sweat- an imitation of the sweat on the body of the chief smelters during smelting. The big bell hung on its buttocks represents the bloom which is the end product of smelting while the iron staff represents entrepreneurial authority- an indication that there existed some level of complementarities between iron smelters and blacksmiths.

Eze Mkpume



Plate vi: Eze Mkpume.

This is the monument that establishes the link between political authority and the economy of Lejja people. This slag is distinct from other slag blocks in the square. It is not to be touched or sat on. The people argue that it is the king of all other slag in the community; hence the accolade given to it is *mkpume Chi kedoru n'erashi mmanu* (literally translated as a stone well created by god licks oil). God as the creator in this case is metaphorical, so also oil. Whereas God represents the ingenious inventors who are respected and reserves the right to say how his invention is to be used, oil on its part represents the remunerations that come from the invention (Egwuete, 2007). The political role of slag blocks in Lejja society as reflected in *Eze Mkpume* is seen in all the 33 villages that make up the town. In all the villages, the shrines of the progenitor of the villages were instituted using iron slag as shown in plate vii.



Plate vii: Onu Ezelenyi (The Progenitor of Umuoda-Eze Village, Lejja)

In Lejja society, the political system is primogeniture and *Eze Mkpume* is regarded as the oldest of all the slag in the square; thus the respect accorded to it as an authority that no one should neither seat nor spit on.

Conclusion

In the words of Catherine Brace, monuments form backdrops in our daily lives by conveying symbolic messages based on the creation and sustenance of narratives of the past. They commemorate what we value and instruct us in our heritage by constant reminder through visible manifestations that gave meaning to what happened⁸. Therefore, any interpretation that must be given to any monument must be textual and contextual. It is only when this line of thought is strictly applied that the role of monuments in the preservation of indigenous knowledge is brought to the fore. Monuments are central to the shaping and preservation of memory. For the monuments discussed in this paper, they are testimonies of both the political, religious, social and economic thoughts of past Africans. Emphasis was only placed on the economic dimension because; those who preach that the monuments should be wiped away are always quick to as its economic value.

To such minds, it suffices to tell them that these monuments are symbolic representations of peoples past. Today many nations are minting a lot of money through tourism. These monuments if studied, documented and advertised are a major tourist attraction.

The monuments in Otobo Ugwu Dunoka speak volumes of the ingenuity of the Africans. Since knowledge is the strongest weapon of ascendancy onto honor and glory, the monuments here listed are constant reminders to the people in the society of how their ancestor made it. That being the case, some of the members of that community who wish to become more catholic than the Pope should have a rethink and desist from preaching and lobbying for the obliteration of these tangible relics. Tangible relics they should be made to understand are testimonies of the knowledge of the people who gave birth to them. Obliterating these monuments would indirectly amount to their denying their identity and even common heritage. What was more; these monuments that the people venerate are points of contact between the members of the society and the Supreme Being just as the churches are today.

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MIND AS TABULA RASA AT BIRTH: CASE STUDIES ON ATTENTION IN AFRICAN NEONATES

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Abstract

John Locke's (1632-1704) concept of tabula rasa of the mind of the newborn baby implies that the newborn only achieves knowledge of what is good or bad, likes or dislikes, or what he/she needs, as a result of experience after birth; that at birth such abilities are absent. In this paper, we present three case studies on newborn babies studied from birth to age 2-weeks for their ability to pay selective attention to events or things that seem to reflect their abilities to appreciate a need or beauty. These abilities include locating the source of food, attracting caregiver's attention to their needs and following the movement of beautiful objects but ignore less beautiful ones. We conclude that it is not only through experience after birth that the child's mind is formed: that the mind is already occupied and functional at birth.

Introduction

The concept of the newborn child's mind as tabula rasa or blank sheet is an age-long epistemological postulate. It was first proposed by Aristotle, expounded by Thomas Aquinas and popularized by John Locke (Hergenhahn, 1986; Jones, 1964). The basic premise of the tabula rasa concept of the mind is that individuals are born completely blank and are shaped by the outcome of their processing of experience especially with their parents or other members of the society who wish to mould them. Relating this theory of tabula rasa to neonates implies that newborn babies only achieve knowledge of their world through experience after birth. With advancement in the study of human behaviour, and in line with the findings of studies by many psychologists, we argue that the concept of tabula rasa is not strongly supported by scientific evidence. In

other words, that although it is popular and has been revived and transmitted over centuries, it lacks reliable empirical basis.

John Locke developed and popularized the concept of tabula rasa as an attack to the doctrine of innate ideas maintained by Leibniz, Plato, Descartes, and others (Jones, 1964). The doctrine of innate ideas claim that some kinds of ideas, principles, or knowledge are not acquired through experience but are built into the mind itself. Locke in his attack on innateness as the foundation of knowledge stated that the mind is like a blank sheet of white paper on which experience makes it marks. He stated that human beings come naked into the world, both physically and mentally; and that whatever ideas are found in the mind must have been deposited there by experience (Lawhead, 2002).

In his book, “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,” published in 1690 (cited in Hergenhahn, 1986), John Locke argued that the mind is usually blank at birth, without the capability to reason or knowledge, and then the mind is gradually built from experience that occur from two sources: **sensation** (ideas that were caused by sensory stimulation), and **reflection** (ideas caused by reflection on remnants of prior sensory experience). He noted that reflection occurs mainly by laws of association but that individuals however differ in their reflection or ways of processing experience. Locke further contended that since all abilities come from experience and were not inherited; hence all individuals should be given equal opportunity in a society. He asserted that since all human beings are equal at birth and any differences are due to experience after birth, the only power that a government should have was that given to it by the people.

Hergenhahn (1986) observed that Locke’s propositions became popular especially because of their political undertones. Locke’s ideas probably were widely accepted and considered very significant by people of his time because they ran notoriously contrary to the prevailing political setup in Europe whose people then were governed by inherited monarchies that were maintained by ideas of inherited innate superiority of abilities. According to Hergenhahn (1986), Locke’s theory effectively attacked the basis of the privileges of the monarchs and nobles over those of their subjects, and set a strong philosophical basis for democracy in Europe.

We accept John Locke's highlight of the significant modification that experience makes on the behaviour of the human individual. However, we differ from him basically on the grounds that the mind is already functional and responds to experience prior to birth; and that experience could have already started causing significant differences on the minds of newborns such that their minds are not only substantial before birth, rather than tabula rasa, but their minds might not be equal at birth.

Although many psychologists have argued against the existence of innate ideas, accepting that the mind at birth is tabula rasa at least with respect to its behavioural repertoire, most psychologists conclude that each individual is shaped by an interaction of genes and their environment (Pinel, 1997).

Ezeilo (2005) asserted that species-specific abilities present in neonates at birth, such as rooting reflex and sucking reflex, are rudimentary and only develop further as newborns interact with their environment. Eya (2004) observed that most of an infant's earliest reactions are mass, defuse and undifferentiated but gradually becomes more refined, differentiated, precise and effective. She noted, for example, that a child's initial attempts at grasping are gross and clumsy, compared to the refined thumb and forefinger movements the child will make a few months later. Eya also noted that during prenatal life, nourishment comes in constant supply through the placenta and umbilical cord to the foetus, but at birth it comes from the then imperfectly developed sucking and swallowing reflexes; and because these abilities are not yet efficient in the neonate, the child is usually not able to get adequate nourishment as was obtainable in the womb, and the neonate consequently experiences weight loss and slowing of the growth process. Enhanced nourishment and attendant rapid growth, similar to what was obtained in the womb, resumes only after the baby's sucking and swallowing reflexes become more regular over the following weeks. This implies that as neonates grow and acquire experience, their behavioural abilities, which are already present at birth, are then expressed in more complex forms.

Ezeilo (2005) asserted that genes determine the structure and function of the organism; they provide the potential for the organism to develop its characteristics, and whether in fact these characteristics eventually develop depend on the interaction between the genes and the

environment. Ozioko and Onyishi (2007) pointed out that Jean Piaget has clarified that the human organism, like all other biological entities, has a characteristic internal organization which interacts with the environment to determine the organism's unique mode of functioning. This internal organization could mean the genetic blueprint which is usually ignited by nervous system development.

Moreover, the preoccupation of behaviour genetics is on the degree to which psychological characteristics such as ability, emotional stability and temperament are transmitted, and this is usually achieved through the interaction of genes and environment (Ezeilo, 2005). Genetics generally has shown that humans are not infinitely malleable as John Locke's tabula rasa theory posited. In other words, people have limits and are born with certain features and abilities that they maximize through experience; not the reverse of experience infinitely moulding the individual's behaviour.

Scientists recognize that the cerebral cortex is indeed pre-programmed and organized by nature to process sensory input, motor control, emotions, and natural responsibilities. Consequently, Pinker (2002) argued that while the brain is programmed to pick spoken language easily for example, it is not programmed to learn to read and write; and individuals will not spontaneously learn to do so. Therefore, in as much as the brain is programmed, experience has some role to play to enable individuals learn how to read and write.

Bouchard and McGue (1981), Erlenmeyer-Kimling and Jarvik (1963), and Kety (1967) maintained that identical twins have been shown to be more similar than fraternal twins or siblings in certain personality traits such as intelligence and susceptibility to the mental disorder of schizophrenia. The implication of the above position is that it is the genetic traits that are to a large extent responsible for such similarities found to be more with identical twins (not species-specific), and not experience as Locke posited. Twin and adoption studies by Bouchard (1987), Bouchard, Lykken, McGue, Segal and Tellegen (1990) also indicated strong genetic influences on personal characteristics such as intelligence quotient, alcoholism, gender identity, and other traits. The above findings suggest that these abilities are strongly determined by heredity, obscuring the influence of environment since not much environmental differences was found in IQs of identical twins reared apart.

Pinker (2002) noted that Locke's theory of tabula rasa has become so entrenched in modern ideologies that even empirical evidence to the contrary cannot be rationally discussed because to oppose it is seen by the radical scientists as confirmation of the negative. The concept of tabula rasa became entrenched and many people see the idea as attractive, probably because it implies that innate mental differences could not exist, thus placing everybody at equal pedestal at birth. Moreover, the theory implies that there is no limit to the ways in which society can shape human beings. Redmond (2011) held that the theory is an old non-empirical logic which holds that humans are infinitely malleable, and that genetics seems to have disproved this theory. It is misleading to conclude that the mind does or does not have component mechanisms based on logic rather than empirical evidence. There are a number of empirical evidence, even with neonates and infants that indicate that the mind of the newborn baby is not tabula rasa.

Decasper and Fifer (1980), and Decasper and Spence (1986) studies which revealed that cognitive abilities appear to take shape during the prenatal period are typical examples of empirical evidence which seem to discredit tabula rasa theory. In their study, Decasper and Fifer arranged for would-be mothers to read "The cat in the Hat story" to their unborn children two times each day during the last six weeks of pregnancy. At the end of that period, the heart rate of each foetus was measured as recordings of familiar story and unfamiliar story were played. Results indicated that the familiar story produced a slight decrease in foetal heart rate, while the unfamiliar story produced a slight increase. A decrease in heart rate often indicates attention. This finding suggests that foetuses could distinguish between familiar and unfamiliar stories. The tabula rasa theory assumes that all normal human beings have equal status of the mind at birth. If this is so, babies would have the same level of knowledge at birth. This was not so in the above study. The differences among the foetuses do not reflect a reflex or an innate behaviour. The above finding does not provide empirical support for tabula rasa. Considering that the ability to pay attention starts right from the womb, there is no how such ability would have disappeared at birth leaving the neonate's mind blank. Also in Decasper and Spence experiment conducted with 3-day-old neonates, it was found that they sucked more on a nipple that activated a recording of a story that their mother had frequently read aloud during the last six (6) weeks of

pregnancy than on a nipple that activated recordings of two other stories. This apparently suggests that these neonates recognized the story they heard in the womb. A control group, whose mothers had not recited a story before birth, responded equally to all three recordings. This finding does not seem to support Locke's position of a newborn's mind being a *tabula rasa*.

In a series of experiments according to Berger (2001), pregnant women read the same children's book aloud daily during the ninth month. Three days after birth, their neonates listened to recordings of the same story read either by their mothers or mothers of other neonates. It was observed that neonates responded less when their mothers read an unfamiliar story than when they read a familiar one. Berger further stated that the result of the above study suggests that foetuses are equipped with more than just their reflexes and organ systems for physiological functioning after birth; they also begin to accustom themselves to the particulars of the social world that they will soon join.

Studies have also determined that newborns can distinguish between different colours (Adams, 1987), odours (Balogh & Porter, 1986), tastes (Granchrow, Steiner & Daher, 1983) and sounds (Morrongiello & Clifton, 1984). They have been found capable of expressing some basic emotions such as surprise, distress and disgust (Trotter, 1983). Moon, Cooper and Fifer (1993), and Decasper and Spence (1986) found that 2-4-day-olds prefer their mother's voices to male voices, and their mother's native language to another language. Research by Kisilevsky and Low (1998) showed that responses to sound and vibration seem to begin at 26 weeks of gestation, rise and then reach a plateau at about 32 weeks. The above pieces of evidence point to the fact that newborns have some abilities which may become more complex as they interact with their environment and acquire experience.

Oguntuashe (1985) analyzed mother's comments on their observations of their 4-15-week-old infants during their interactions with them and concluded that mothers perceive their infants' abilities as progressing from relatively simple expression at four (4) weeks to highly complex patterns at 15 weeks. He also noted that the mothers perceived some of the behaviours of their babies as "products of an intending, conscious, thinking and planning mind" (p. 230). He inferred that this perspective held by the mothers forms the basis of their interactions with their babies in a pattern reflecting intimate negotiations about meaning of

each other's behaviours. Oguntuashe noted that the adoption of this perspective of interaction by the mothers, even though it may in some instances mismatch the infant's abilities, have very important implications for the development of language, cognition, perceptual-motor and social skills of children.

A few empirical studies seem to support John Locke's theory of tabula rasa to the extent that neonates can readily demonstrate some kind of learning. Meltzoff and Moore (1977, 1989) demonstrated that 12-20-day-old neonates could imitate facial gestures shown by an adult, for example, sticking out their tongues or opening their mouths. Also Reissland (1988) study with few-minutes-old neonates showed that such neonates imitated two facial expressions: widened lips and pursed lips. Although the above two evidence may seem to support the power of experience (learning) in neonate's behaviour, the fact still remains that the ability of such learning is due to the fact that the nervous system (the cerebral cortex) which controls learning develops to a reasonable extent before birth which portrays the power of innate/genetic traits.

Ezeilo (2005) pointed out that the following are abilities that are present in neonates at birth or shortly after: ability to absorb and process information from outside world; they are equipped with a number of reflexes that facilitate their survival; they can follow a human face or picture of one with their eyes, but not a scrambled drawing of a face; they show eye movements that are somewhat erratic at first but rapidly become more refined; they exhibit differences in personality, for example, differences in temperaments – some cry more than others, and some are more active than others. These abilities are rudimentary, as earlier noted, and develop further as neonates interact with environment.

Ibeagha (2006) also noted some abilities present in neonates, such as ability to respond to unpleasant strong odours like ammonia or acetic acid by turning away but seem insensitive to odours that are fainter, an increase in breathing rate and activity level can be noted when odours are present; that at two weeks, neonates can distinguish between sweet and bitter and prefer sweet; they can express surprise at the age of 10-days, which can be detected if water is substituted for the expected milk that the baby has grown used to; they are sensitive to discomfort and pain, and can distinguish light and dark areas, discriminate among colours, and prefer warm (red and orange) colours to cool ones (blue and green); they show inborn behaviours (reflex) such as crying, sucking and grasping.

Many studies reviewed above seem not to clearly support the tabula rasa theory and rather reveal that some babies are born with certain peculiar abilities which are developed more as they grow and acquire experience. In other words, human beings are not born blank but with some quirks, individuality and differences of the mind, and as they grow they interact with things in their environment, which influence them and they react.

This study therefore is an attempt to provide more empirical evidence to evaluate the tabula rasa theory, particularly regarding the African child. It specifically aims at presenting three case studies of neonates on their abilities to locate source of food, attract caregiver's attention to their needs and follow the movement of beautiful objects and ignore less beautiful objects.

Method

Participants

Three neonates drawn from the post-natal ward of Bishop Shanahan Hospital, Nsukka, participated in the study. They were drawn from mothers who delivered through caesarean section to enable the researchers have access to these neonates in the hospital for a period of more than one week. The neonates were studied during age 0-14 days. When their mothers were discharged from the hospital, the researchers went to their various homes to observe them for the remaining days of the two-week period of neonates. The three mothers were of the Igbo ethnic group and reside in Nsukka town.

Instrument

This study was mainly by observation. However, two handkerchiefs, one of white colour and the other of mixture of ash and light-blue colour, as well as a strip of a red and a blue ribbon were shown to the neonates.

Procedure

The researchers wrote and obtained approval from the hospital administration for permission to conduct the study. Part of the letter contained the nature of the study and the assurance that the procedure and report would not be of any negative consequence to the neonates and their mothers or the hospital. The hospital's General Matron introduced

one of the researchers to the hospital staff in charge of the postnatal ward and explained the purpose of the study, stating that it was a study on observing abilities of neonates that would last for two (2) weeks and required nursing mothers who would be on admission for about two (2) weeks. The researcher was subsequently introduced to three (3) mothers who had been delivered of baby the night before that day. The researcher explained the purpose and procedure of the study to the mothers, noting that their neonates would be observed each day for more than one week, and that each period of observation would last about 1½ hours. The staff requested the mothers to allow the researcher to come and observe their neonates at their convenience.

The neonates were observed on daily basis, with each session lasting 1½ hours, and study of each ability lasting 30 minutes within each session. The abilities assessed included:

1. Ability to locate source of food: indicated by neonates' ability to move their mouth sideways on their own and show mouth movement indicating sucking even when there was nothing in their mouth, or movement of their mouth in the direction of the cheek touched by the researcher, presumably in search of food.
2. Ability to attract caregiver's attention to their needs: ascertained through the ability of the neonate to cry or wriggle on the bed or kick legs and hands to draw the attention of the mother or caregiver to himself when distressed or in need of food. This was confirmed if the neonate stopped crying, wriggling or kicking of the legs and hands once the mother or care-giver touched him.
3. Ability to follow movement of beautiful objects and ignore less beautiful ones. The ability was established moving a white handkerchief slowly in front of the baby and observing his eye movement to determine if it followed the direction of the movement of the handkerchief. This was then repeated with a handkerchief with a mixture of ash and light blue colour. The procedure was then repeated using a red ribbon in place of the white handkerchief, and a blue ribbon in place of the handkerchief with a mixture of ash and light blue colour. Counterbalancing was applied in the presentations to control the effect of order of presentation.

In each session, the researcher ascertained whether the baby is hungry to know the ability to observe first. For instance, the ability to locate food would be observed more easily if the neonate is hungry. On those occasions when they were hungry, the researcher started with studying the ability to locate food. The moment the neonate expressed the target ability it was recorded as tick (✓); that is, that the ability was shown. An “x” was used to indicate absence of ability. More ticks (✓✓) indicated that the ability had been well established by frequency of the behaviour. Periods of no access to the neonates due to sleep, which indicate no observation, was represented with a dash (-). In the case of ability of neonates to follow movement of only beautiful objects and ignore less beautiful ones, following of only beautiful object was indicated with one tick (✓) while two ticks (✓✓) indicated ability to pay attention to both the bright and dull colours presented in this study (white handkerchief or red ribbon as bright colour; handkerchief with a mixture of ash and light-blue colour or a blue ribbon as a dull colour).

Neonate 1 – Name: Chika (not real name); Gender: male

Chika’s mother, Mrs Nwako (not real name), aged 31 years, had a 35-week pregnancy term. Chika was her first pregnancy. All indices of pregnancy (position and movement of baby, health of mother) were normal until the last day of the 35th week when the mother voluntarily went for an ultrasound scan that showed that the foetus was in a breech position (baby lay with buttocks, instead of the head, oriented towards the cervix). The amniotic sack broke the following day but there was no sign of labour for child birth. When Mrs Nwako went to the hospital, the doctor examined her and subsequently conducted a caesarean section (CS) on her. Foetus was reported to be normal at birth, and weighed 3.3kg. No abnormal medical or behavioural condition was observed.

The researcher observed that the ability to locate source of food was present from the first day of observation. Caregiver reported that Chika made effort to suck the blanket used to cover him few hours after birth. Due to the peculiar health of the mother, Chika was fed with water and glucose with a spoon on the first day, then with a feeding bottle on the second and third day. He began to suck breast unguided on the 4th day. Chika was also able to attract caregiver’s attention to himself right from the first day. He however was not able to show attention to either a bright or dull object until the seventh day, when he could only follow the

movement of bright, but not dull object. He was able to pay attention to both bright and dull objects only on the 14th day.

Chika's mother, Mrs Nwako, was able to carry Chika on the second day after delivery. Chika was delivered by 10pm and the researcher made the first contact with him by 2.30pm on the following day; 16½ hours later. Observation was completed for the 14-day period with adequate assistance and interest from the mother.

Neonate 2 – Name: Onyedikachi (not real name); Gender: male

Onyedikachi's mother, Mrs Nweze, who was aged 30 years, had a pregnancy term of 37weeks and 3 days. Onyedikachi was her third pregnancy, and all were alive. All indices of pregnancy were normal, including mother's health, the position and movement of baby. Delivery however was by caesarean section (CS) due to a prolonged labour that later terminated spontaneously. He was delivered by 12am. There was no reported abnormally at birth. Onyedikachi weighed 3.2kg at birth. The mother was strong enough to carry him on the third day.

The researcher made the first contact with Onyedikachi by 5.30pm on the same day he was delivered, 17½ hours later. The researcher observed that the ability to locate source of food was absent on the first and second day, and was only demonstrated from the third day onwards. Onyedikachi was fed with water after birth, when caregiver considered that he would have been hungry. Caregiver made the first effort to shift Onyedikachi's head towards the mother's breast after 23 hours of birth. He however could not suck breast. It was on the third day after birth that he started sucking breast after the mother had inserted the breast into his mouth. He also was able to attract caregiver's attention to himself only from the third day. He was not able to show attention to either a bright or dull object until the eighth day, when he was able to follow only the movement of bright object. He was able to pay attention to both bright and dull objects on the 14th day. Observation was completed for the 14-day period with adequate assistance and interest from the mother.

Neonate 3 – Name: Uche (not real name); Gender: male

Uche's mother, Mrs Nze (not real name), who was aged 32 years, had a pregnancy term of 37weeks and four (4) days. Uche was her third pregnancy, but second live delivery. Mother's health as well as that of baby was normal throughout the period of pregnancy. However,

ultrasound result at the 7th month showed that the position of baby was breech. Subsequent ultrasound at the 9th month showed that baby then presented normal position. Mrs Nze experienced prolonged labour at the end of term, which terminated spontaneously. Labour was subsequently induced in the hospital with drugs. It lasted for eight (8) hours but when baby was about to be delivered, he was observed to be held by the umbilical cord. Caesarean section (CS) was subsequently conducted to save the life of mother and baby. Uche was delivered by 2am and weighed 3.6kg at birth. He showed no abnormality at birth. He however had fever after two days. Mother was able to carry Uche on the third day. She did not oppose the researcher's observation of Uche.

The researcher made the first contact with Uche by 4pm on the same day of delivery, 14 hours later. The researcher observed that Uche indicated interest in eating right from the first day by the movement of his mouth. However, because the mother was not yet strong, the caregiver fed him water until the third day when the mother was strong enough to breast-feed him. He started sucking, unguided. Uche was also able to attract caregiver's attention to himself right from the first day. He however was not able to show attention to either a bright or dull object until the fourth day, when he was able to follow only the movement of bright object. He was able to pay attention to both bright and dull objects on the 14th day.

Summary of cases

Table 1: Ability to Locate Source of Food*

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
Neonate 1	√	√	√	-	√	√√	√√	-	√√	√√	√√	√√	-	√√
Neonate 2	x	x	√	-	-	√	√√	√√	√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√
Neonate 3	√	√	√	√	√	√√	-	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	-	√√

*: x = Ability not shown; - = Baby was asleep; √ = Ability was shown;
√√ = Higher frequency of ability

Table 1 shows that only the second neonate did not show the ability to locate source of food on the first day of birth. This ability was ascertained through the movement of their mouths as though they were sucking, even when there was no breast in their mouth; and turning of their mouths to the direction one of the researchers touched their cheeks, presumably in search of food. It needs to be noted that the second neonate could not demonstrate this ability until the third day despite the caregiver's effort to help the baby accomplish this, as reported above. However, by the seventh day, all the neonates seemed to have achieved efficiency in this ability, although the ability was observed in higher frequency by the first and third neonates earlier on the sixth day.

Table 2: Ability to Attract Caregiver's Attention to their Needs*

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
Neonate 1	√	√	√	-	√	√	√	-	√	√	√√	√√	-	√√
Neonate 2	x	x	√	-	-	√	√	√	√	√	√	√√	√√	√√
Neonate 3	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	√√	√√	√√	-	√√

*: x = Ability not shown; - = Baby was asleep; √ = Ability was shown;
√√ = Higher frequency of ability

Table 2 shows that neonate's ability to attract caregiver's attention to their needs was shown by the first and third neonate on the first day but was not present in the second neonate until the third day. The second neonate seems to have also lagged behind in manifesting efficiency in this ability. Just as obtained in locating the source of food, he was also the last of the three neonates to demonstrate a strengthening of competence in the ability to attract caregiver's attention to his needs. Whereas the third neonate showed increased efficiency in the ability on the 10th day, and the first neonate showed it on the 11th day, the second neonate only showed competence in this ability on the 12th day.

Table 3: Ability to follow Beautiful Objects and Ignore Less Beautiful Ones*

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
Neonate 1	x	x	x	-	x	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√√
Neonate 2	x	x	x	-	-	x	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√√
Neonate 3	x	x	x	√	√	√	—	√	√	√	√	√	-	√√

*: x = No attention to moving object shown; - = Baby was asleep;

√ = Attention to only bright moving object; √√ = Attention to both bright and dull objects

Table 3 shows that none of the neonates showed the ability to give attention to moving objects in their vicinity on the first, second and third day. Only the third neonate was able to show the ability to follow the movement of beautiful object and ignore less beautiful one on the fourth day. The first neonate accomplished this ability on the seventh day whereas the second neonate accomplished it on the eighth day. None of the caregivers of the neonates had subjected them to practice of following movement of objects before or during the study. All the neonates demonstrated efficiency in following the movement of both bright and dull objects on the fourteenth day.

Discussion

Observation made on ability to locate source of food showed that such ability was already expressed in neonate 1 and 3 at birth but not in neonate 2. The ability was observed in neonate 2 on the third day of life. It was observed that the ability became well established as time went on but not at the same rate with the three (3) neonates. The ability became better established on the 6th day for neonates 1 and 3 and on the 8th day for neonate 2. The result of this observation suggests that this ability was present at birth and immediately after birth. It also suggests the power of genetics in influencing human behaviour since the ability was present in the same degree in all the neonates at birth. The fact that this ability got better established as time went on suggests that environment must have interacted with the gene to facilitate the expression of the behaviour by the neonate. It also does not support the theory of tabula rasa since this

ability was found in these neonates at a period in which they could not have perfected the behaviour through experience.

The observation on the neonates' ability to attract caregivers' attention to their needs revealed that such ability was already functional at birth in neonates 1 & 3 but not in neonate 2. The ability was observed in neonate 2 on the third day of life. It became better established in neonate 3 on the 10th day and on the 11th day for neonate 1, and on the 12th day in neonate 2. The result of this observation shows that this ability was present at birth and shortly after birth in these neonates. In other words it does not confirm to the proposition of the tabula rasa theory. The fact that the ability got better established as time went on proves that the behaviour is influenced by interaction of both genetic differences and experience.

Finally, the ability of neonates to follow movement of a beautiful object and ignore a less beautiful one was not observed at birth but shortly after in neonate 3. It was shown in neonate 3 on the 4th day; in neonate 1 on the 7th day; and in neonate 2 on the 8th day. The ability became better established on the 14th day for the three neonates. There may be a tendency to interpret this result as learning after birth. However, it needs to be noted that transition from prenatal to the postnatal environment does not automatically indicate that genetic capabilities have been fully expressed or matured in the baby and every other new form of behaviour that is observed is a result of learning after birth; otherwise babies would have been taught how to run before they can sit. At first it was only the ability to recognize bright objects that was present, but with time the ability to recognize different colours, both bright and less bright colours was developed.

The ability was established in neonate 3 shortly after birth and in the other two neonates at different times despite no effort to teach any of them on this ability. This suggests differences in individual personalities (which are partly determined by genes and experience). This result therefore does not support the theory of tabula rasa. It is also difficult to clearly determine that it is after-birth learning unless we can demonstrate that the child knows the functionality of the brighter colour in relation to any advantage it has over less bright colour in the experience the newborn has had since birth.

Conclusion

John Locke's theory of tabula rasa was developed in Europe. Despite its popularity, studies carried out in Africa, Europe and other countries strongly indicate that the child's mind at birth is not tabula rasa. They show that newborns have differential abilities in them at birth which become more complex as they interact with their environment and acquire experience after birth. Some of the abilities are not mere reflexes but occur in the socio-emotional, intelligence, and personality domains. Findings of the present study show that the African child is not born blank, that they have abilities already present in them which is improved upon or modified with experience (interaction with the environment) after birth.

Oguntuashe's (1985) study shows that African mothers generally do not conceive the child's mind as tabula rasa. They therefore relate with their neonates as beings with abilities, and their efforts in raising them up are geared towards increasing or developing knowledge-related abilities they assume were already in them. According to Oguntuashe, the African mother speaks to and relates to the neonate as a full knowledgeable individual. The complexity of this interaction subsequently increases as the child grows and acquires experience. The African mother assumes that the newborn's mind is not tabula rasa, and they show this in their interaction with their newborns.

The present study, as well as some other studies cited in this paper, does not support the theory of tabula rasa. The concept of the neonate's mind as tabula rasa seems not to have a strong empirical basis. It may have served the purpose of a philosopher who interpreted human behaviour to Europeans who needed a strong basis to change their political system.

We differ basically from John Locke's proposition on the light of evidence showing that apart from genetic differences, newborns are already affected by experience while they were in the womb and consequently some of them already differ in significant dispositions and abilities at birth. Such abilities are not essentially the species-specific behaviours that John Locke assumed. Studies in behaviour genetics also show that experience does not infinitely mould an individual's behaviour. Many differences are genetically based.

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THE MUSIC THAT WORKS: AFRICAN MUSIC PROPAGATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Indigenous knowledge resides in African musical concepts and practices, and is expressed, transmitted and sustained through the sound of the music, song texts, musical instruments, paraphernalia and the other arts associated with this art. Consequently, African music is a treasure trove of indigenous resources that can be harnessed for human development. Unfortunately, this wealth has not been adequately approached, recognized and exploited. Since little attention is paid to traditional African music and its practices in the contemporary society, it stands the risk of possible extinction, and in effect, the loss of all that is enshrined within it. This study examines indigenous knowledge resources enshrined in the concept and practice of African music, which contribute significantly to development in the society. It employed the bibliographic method. This paper argues that despite the fact that African music has not been given adequate attention, its wealth can be purposefully utilized for therapeutic, educative, archival and rejuvenative purposes. It recommends the need for a reappraisal and more concerted efforts at a synthesis of traditional African music practices with modern music in order to optimally meet the demands of globalization and human development.

Introduction

Various kinds of indigenous knowledge are embedded in African musical concepts and practices and can be accessed, expressed, transmitted and sustained through the sound of music, song texts, musical instruments, paraphernalia and the other aspects of arts and culture are often exercised in a musical context. African music is both an aspect of culture as well as an avenue for its expression. It is fully embedded in the stream of the daily life of people. Diverse social, private and group activities, as well

as the most mundane daily chores are often accompanied by music (Okafor, 2005). This art may not only be an end in itself as musical sound, but also validates events and rituals, stimulates sustained effort, creates the right atmosphere for the right emotions and displays in its manifold aspects the norms, history, beliefs, aspirations, travails and stability of the people. This therefore puts African music in an important position as a repository of indigenous knowledge some of which would be stimulative to development.

Indigenous knowledge is knowledge developed and held by original inhabitants of an area, who use it in their daily life (Warren, 1991; Flavier, 1995). It forms the basis for local decision-making in all spheres of life. This knowledge system entails how to subdue the environment in order to survive, and understand the reason of survival. Indigenous knowledge can be different from each other (Magga, 2005), and it can be specific to different locales. Because it has been tested over very long periods of time, historically it is the root of all knowledge (Magga, 2005). It developed long before modern science by indigenous peoples of the world. This accumulated knowledge system is holistic and interconnected with the past, present and future. It is worthy of note that in the contemporary times significant contributions to global knowledge have originated from the indigenous peoples. For example, some of the new chemicals in medicines have in fact been discovered and developed by indigenous peoples for centuries in a variety of applications related to human and animal nutrition and treatments.

Sustainable development is an infinite process that entails the quantitative and qualitative transformation of lives of individuals and society, through limitless improvement in material infrastructures as well as social and cultural structures (Todaro and Smith, 2009). Development processes are not only related to economic and social factors, but also to history, values, self understanding, attitudes and the process of interaction (Sen, 1999). Consequently, the foundation of human development should be based on the harmonization of indigenous knowledge with modern paradigm, for the exclusion of these cultural concepts and ideals from the developmental efforts alienates the people from the efforts and render the process moribund.

Statement of Problem

Though the potentials of African music can be a stimulant to development efforts, this art is by and large marginalized in the contemporary society. This progressive neglect of traditional music is also leading to the progressive loss of repertory and performers. Consequently, all that it contains as a reservoir of knowledge, vital for the psychological and philosophical mobilization for development is also being progressively eroded. This disappearance results from diminished usage occasioned by change of lifestyle that relegates traditional music to the background of modern life. Prejudice against this genre by the youth, inferiority complex occasioned by its largely uneducated performers and lack of recognition are also taking their toll on the music.

The new music taking its place are unfortunately not adequately equipped to influence development the way traditional music could. The loss of resources useful for developmental efforts in the society has not only been suffered in the area of traditional music but indeed in all other aspects of culture. The reasons include a lack of self esteem by the protagonists of traditional music and cultural inferiority complex, both deriving from the effect of colonialism which sort to obliterate indigenous culture, regarding it as inferior, irrelevant and even harmful. Globalization which would have been expected to promote the culture by reason of its integration of diverse unique elements from all and sundry has instead been distorted to favour the strong, and marginalize the weak despite the richness of the cultures of formerly colonized countries.

Also, the rapid change in lifestyles in recent times from rural traditional to urban Western has been inimical to the stability and continuity of traditional music. In the wake of Westernization and urbanization, traditional music has suffered decline as new music devoted entirely to entertainment and almost to nothing else has rapidly taken over most occasions for music. This is because they offer easier convenience of performance and wider acceptability. The limited scope of the actual music sound of traditional music has not been able to compete favorably with modern music not least due to its inability to quickly incorporate new sounds and technology. Nigeria has the largest number of music programs in both secondary and higher education in West Africa and some of the largest number of trained musicians and musicologists on the continent. Unfortunately, there is yet to be a fruitful interaction between these and protagonists of traditional music in order to

give rise to an effective and holistic modernization of traditional music that would restore it to its former eminent position and role in society.

This paper employed secondary data. Published and unpublished data were used. Published data were sourced from books, journals, reports, and working papers of various international organizations, and governments. Unpublished data were found in thesis, conference papers, reports and guides of various international Indigenous Knowledge organizations. This study investigates the indigenous knowledge resources enshrined in the concept and practice of indigenous African music in the last fifty years. It argues that despite the fact that African music has not been given adequate attention by social institutions, policy makers and private individuals, within and outside Africa, its wealth can be purposefully utilized for sustainable human development.

The large indigenous knowledge resources in African music is wide and varied. Consequently, it will be impossible to discuss adequately within the confines of this paper each and every one of them. This paper therefore adopts a selective approach which is limited to the indigenous practices of therapy, education, archival and rejuvenation, achieved through the aid of indigenous music. The choice of these four practices is based on the importance of their contribution to sustainable development – health, education, individual and social stability.

Significance

African music is an aspect as well as an avenue for cultural expression. As a result of the fact that music is used to enhance social, political and economic activities, it is generally integrated fully into the stream of the daily life of the people. Consequently, it is usually a vehicle, through which several necessities are carried out and attained, hence, the importance of music in the society, and in accessing some indigenous knowledge resources, since many of them are contained in the practices and concepts of indigenous music. Some of the indigenous knowledge are concerned with the knowledge of cultural sciences and technologies, knowledge of the properties of plants and animals, oral traditions, literatures, designs, other arts and various human resources. This study will help in the documentation, propagation and extend the understanding of some indigenous knowledge connected to indigenous music. World Bank (1997) draws attention to the fact that the enlistment of knowledge capital in human development is as important as the

availability of physical and financial capital. The basis of any knowledge system is indigenous knowledge.

Appreciation of the importance of the preservation of indigenous music and its treasures will result in special measures that will contribute in checking its extinction. Documentation of indigenous knowledge skills not only benefits the locals but will also open opportunities for better universal understanding of certain occurrences. Experience shows that development efforts that ignore local technologies, local systems of knowledge and the local environment generally fail to achieve their desired objectives (Grenier, 1998). This study will contribute to improved design, delivery and evaluation of indigenous knowledge in the local as well as the global system in general, by preserving some of the indigenous knowledge resources associated with African music.

Theoretical and Conceptual Underpinnings

Drawing from modernization theory with the notion of linear development and transfer of technology, values and practices, from more technologically advanced societies to the less advanced ones, Osagie (1985) and Olutayo (1985) seldom take indigenous knowledge seriously. They cast opposition and skepticism on the usefulness of indigenous knowledge in the modern society, since they consider it to be primitive, prelogical, illogical, irrational and incoherent. Burges (1999) views indigenous knowledge as a challenge to the very concept of modern society since it is seen to confront the supremacy of Western science. They therefore, assert that Western societies have the duty and right to help develop less developed societies by transferring their values, practices and technology to them and annihilating the 'irrational' indigenous knowledge.

Other scholars such as Lambert (2003) recognize the contributions of other people's understanding of the universe. Magga (2005: 2) asserts that indigenous knowledge "... at least in some ways, are equal and sometimes even superior to Western scientific ways of understanding the same realities". He cautions that the prejudice against indigenous knowledge may lead to the grievous situation of the possibility of losing new insights into some spheres of human endeavours.

Since development necessitates the freedom of people to choose what they value (Sen, 1999), in a globalised world, different societies

should be allowed the liberty to pursue what they believe and value. Contrarily to assumptions of some proponents of the modernization theory, no society therefore should arrogate to itself the right to determine what others need. Furthermore, no society needs to be subjected to unsolicited and sometimes forced transfer of values and practices as was occasioned by colonialism.

Cultural diversity is an asset that is indispensable for the achievement of sustainable development. Mono cultural approach to any human endeavour is inappropriate especially in this contemporary time, as globalization has made possible unprecedented interaction between different peoples from diverse geographical regions. Indigenous knowledge entails different ways of generating and applying knowledge from that of Western science. For example, while the former concentrates on the role and position of human beings in a wider whole, the latter concentrates on details. Indigenous knowledge is often intuitive while Western science is analytic. For the purposes of the general good of mankind to be served, a synthesis of Western and indigenous knowledge needs to be applied. There is already an awakening to that fact and action is beginning to be directed towards that end, although, slowly.

No particular culture has the monopoly of development tools. Both advantages and disadvantages are possessed by different global cultures on different areas which are very important on particular elements that promote certain aspects of development. For instance, the Western science has been able to develop more advanced technology and economics, while the African and a host of developing worlds' indigenous knowledge system generated very strong family systems. These are all conducive to sustainable development. On the other hand, global warming, a result of Western science and technology, and the superstition generated by indigenous knowledge systems are all formidable threats to sustainable development. The integration of Western science and indigenous knowledge in a complementary way for development purposes serves humanity better. This way indigenous knowledge can be transferred, preserved, adopted, adapted and used elsewhere in the world. Thus, more attention will be given to importance of African music as one of the custodians of indigenous knowledge.

African Music, Indigenous Knowledge and Development

The contribution of indigenous African music in promoting the social, spiritual and material life of the African is glimpsed and observed during individual and collective participation in music as performers, dancers, artists and audience. The facets of life so affected by music include socio-economic, material, spiritual and artistic. The role of music in promoting human endeavours in the following areas will be examined; health, education, historical records and rejuvenation of the mind and body.

Health and Therapy

Some types of African music, to some extent, promote better health. The performances of some genres of music used on social occasions are meant to validate some ceremonies as well as to entertain. The process of entertainment tends to set the mind free from problems thus, reducing stress and stress related ailments. It aids relaxation and consequently, reduces anxiety. Many illnesses are either caused or are enhanced by one form of stress or the other. It follows therefore, that the removal or reduction of stress contributes enormously to the experience of general well-being by the individuals and groups involved with the performances. This feeling of well-being produced by music in people positively impacts on the productive capacity and social harmony of the people involved, (Collins, 2001).

Indigenous music is sometimes used as an analgesic. Suitable music seems to have the ability of relieving and sometimes removing pains. For instance, music is used as a form of analgesic during circumcision surgeries in some Nigerian societies, namely among the Ibibio of Akwa Ibom State (Akpabot, 1982), and the Igbo of Ishielu in Ebonyi State (Okafor, 2004). Immediately after circumcision, young boys in Ishielu are given *une*, a musical bow to play. This is believed to relieve their pains. Many African societies believe that through songs of supplication, the control of power for healing could be achieved. For this reason Music accompanies the practice of traditional healing.

In many traditional African societies it is acceptable to intentionally express and elaborate emotions that are in normal times considered taboo, during musical performances. Ordinarily if these emotions are indulged in they can be acted out eventually, endangering the health and well-being of individuals and the society. However, when

these emotions are expressed in music, for the fact that they originate from outside and induced by mere sounds, they do not have strong foundation within the individual, they therefore exert only a transient and harmless influence on the mind, since they do not belong to the substance of the self, but to imagination. The ancient Greeks were aware of this cathartic effect. This effect is witnessed in the ritual music of the princesses of the Papiag Kum (Baba 1) of the North West Region of Cameroon. It consists of the utmost obscene and vulgar lyrics shouted out in the darkness of the wedding evening of a princess at the premises of the Papiag Kum palace. Because of the context of this blatant immorality, the opposite effect is instead achieved in the culture. Prior to these obscenities, melodious wedding songs enumerating the best maiden qualities of a princess are perused by all the females at the wedding. Consequently, the stark pornographic utterances that come much later when most of the vulnerable children would already be asleep, are merely intended to assert the superior and authoritative status of the princess as she finally leaves the lofty and protective confines of the palace to the precarious world of commoners. This, bearing in mind that the Graffi/Bamileke culture to which Papiag Kum belongs is highly stratified.

Education

While Western education and science emphasize compartmentalized knowledge which is often decontextualized in a classroom setting, indigenous people acquire their knowledge through direct experience. This is often brought out, and vividly so by the medium of music. For example, the use of traditional songs in folktales to enliven stories, make the lessons of the tales more vivid, easy to understand and remember.

Since it aids learning by facilitating understanding and retention, African music greatly contributes to the education and integration of the African child into the adult society. From birth, children are introduced to the musical norms and practices of the society. Through games and instructions delivered through the medium of music, their skills and knowledge in all spheres of life are improved. In line with this, Agu (2006: 8) opined that, "...since whatever they learn at this early stage of life is well registered in their subconscious mind, music is purposefully

utilized in most learned experiences organized for them to help them discover and develop their personality”.

The broad cultural heritage of a society makes an indelible impression on values and attitudes. Thus, cultural values are powerful players in determining rate and type of development. Given that the psychology, concepts, values and attitudes of a people are reflected in the song texts, the fabric of the society is therefore upheld in music, through which these behavioural patterns come alive. Through music accepted codes of conducts are maintained, encouraged and rewarded by praises and appreciation, while the unaccepted ones are discouraged and punished through admonition and ridicules. Thus, some measure of law and order are maintained through music. Conversely, the contemporary African society is very much preoccupied with quick acquisition of wealth, with as little effort as possible. This is reflected in traditional music whose themes are replete with this idea. It is almost certain that such wealth would have resulted from criminal or illegal activities. Society would better be constructed if traditional music themes such as hard work, honesty, trustworthiness and the pursuit of peaceful co-existence are promoted to the detriment of the rampant frivolous themes that replete the lyrics and symbolisms of contemporary music. This is possible because of the fact that while music is consumed, it leaves a “mark on the psyche that re-directs the person towards a new personality, towards a new activity”, (Okafor; 2005: 277).

Similarly, social engineering of the masses for particular actions could be made very effective through the enlisting of more indigenous music which, while articulating the message effectively, would at the same time be entertaining. Traditional music can also be made a potent vehicle of the mobilization and orientation message of government agencies and public enlightenment efforts. The genre is already being used extensively for the advertisement of goods and services, by various companies and agencies in Nigeria.

Historical Records

African music, particularly the traditional music, helps to maintain and safeguard the continuity of tradition. This is very important in a non literate society where historical facts are not adequately preserved by an organized preservation system. Since music is transmitted from generation to generation, archaic languages which have

been long extinct in spoken words still live on in song texts. Thus African music serves as the custodian of archaic language. Music facilitates retentive memory, therefore historical facts, myths and legends, set to songs are not easily forgotten since as music is passed from generation to generation, these events, enshrined in the music, are also passed on, thereby contributing to the preservation of historical facts. In some societies loss of historical facts can hinder peace, as seen among the Baba 1 of Northwestern Cameroon, where the princes and princesses are held in contempt and seen as just crooks, bullies, cheats or parasites deserving no special status by that society, especially the young people. The elderly people would however insist that they have not always been like that, especially within the last half century. The truth is that princes had enormous privileges in the past as well as weighty responsibilities. The people were their most precious possession for which they were the first to give their lives for in wars and conflicts, by being the commanders and first on battle fields for the cause of the people. The young people are not aware of this. The reason is that as the young people (both the commoners and princes and princesses) left the village for schools in distant towns, they were unable to take part in the *Ngiri* performances, thereby being cut off from the norms and values of the culture. *Ngiri* is a musical performance that reenacts heroic deeds in Baba 1. They failed to learn the trade of *Ngiri* to the point that almost everything has fallen into oblivion leading to ignorant young princes attempting to seize privileges without responsibilities and thereby meeting with the firm rejection of the equally youthful population of the village. But then that large body of sacrificial coordinators, the princes, is gone leaving the management of the village in disarray! This might not have happened if *Ngiri* performances had been kept.

In some societies, for example, among the Hausa, a professional class of musicians exists whose role is to maintain the oral tradition of the aristocrats and the community. They do this by re-enacting episodes from the history and tradition of the society. These are performed with music in accompaniment. Allusions to significant incidents and genealogies linking present generations to past ones and fostering solidarity among the people with a common past may also be made by various musical groups in the society. These musical performances exhort the members of the society to emulate the noble characteristics and heroic deeds of their ancestors. The knowledge of one's ancestral

history promotes confidence, identity and stability among individuals and the society as a whole. Stability in turn fosters human development.

Literary resources are enshrined in song texts and are expressed in epic poems, prose and beautiful verses rich in onomatopoeia, figures of speech, idioms and proverbs. These provide rich insights into concepts, value systems, societal norms and behaviour (Okafor, 2005) of the past and present societies, and possibly a projection of the future. This knowledge if applied properly could provide indispensable resources that will enhance plans and policies geared towards development.

Rejuvenation

Some traditional music is imbued with the power of rejuvenation of the mind and body resulting in enhanced creativity. Consequently, unusual feats, mental and physical are achieved under the influence of music. An example is the *Nkpokiti* dance of the Igbo which in its best traditional form exhibits such acrobatics as can never be achieved in a non musical context by the same people. Little wonder that some types of music when played to tired manual workers instill fresh energy and spur them to work harder. There is a need for further investigation and exploitation of the rejuvenative effect of some genres of indigenous music on the populace. What element of music is responsible for this regeneration? This knowledge could then be directly applied to the contemporary attitude. This may contribute to stimulating people to work harder and perhaps enhance general productivity in Africa which, unfortunately is not among the best in the world.

Recommendation

The inevitable globalization being experienced today calls for the elimination of all forms of prejudices, viz, cultural, race, class and religious in the interaction of the diverse peoples of the world. This is imperative in order that a vista for a fully and mutually beneficial experience be open to all to make remarkable progress in all fields, especially as modern advances in technology and communication has turned the world into a global village. The realization of the importance of cultural diversity and the rich resources of indigenous knowledge systems, in social creativity as well as violence and exclusion, motivated United Nations (UN) through United Nations' Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) to initiate efforts towards cultural policy formulation and international cultural co-operation. To this end it set up a commission which came up with 'Our Cultural Diversity' in 1995, the basis of human rights and tolerance, and on which culture is regarded as the source of human development. This stipulates cultural determination of all the diverse peoples of the world and their rights to exist. In the light of this therefore, it becomes pertinent for Africans to put away 'inferiority complex' and to re-evaluate the worth of their cultures and knowledge systems and take advantage of this policy and optimally project and harness indigenous knowledge for purposes of development. Certainly not all cultural practices are desirable. Because not all cultural phenomena are adequately dynamic, some indigenous knowledge resources are becoming extinct, not because they are obsolete, but because they have fallen into oblivion. The positive ones should not be allowed to vanish as many are in the process of dying; rather they should be projected and harnessed for the betterment of humanity.

It is imperative to prevent indigenous knowledge system from extinction, not only because of the role they play in sustainability of development process but also because they are the heritage of the world. This necessitates the need to use all available arsenals for the protection of relevant indigenous knowledge. The exportation of some indigenous knowledge may result to economic gains as well as increased self esteem and its attendant advantages.

More research should be encouraged in the field of African music therapy in order to determine whether and how music reduces stress and acts as analgesics, and the possibility of increasing the use of music for the treatment of more ailments. This practice if viable could help reduce the ingestion of harmful chemicals in the body as some ailment would be treated by simply listening to some types of music rather than intake of hazardous chemicals. To this end, the government and philanthropists should provide funds for researches of this kind.

The integration of traditional music in the social life should be encouraged and not allowed to die off. There is a possibility of this occurring as people acquire new behavioural patterns that go hand in hand with modernity, thereby abandoning some useful cultural practices which necessitate performances of traditional music. The performance of folk music in schools, public and private should be given every support and encouragement. Additionally, the collection and proper storage of

this music should be embarked on in order to ensure the continuity of this cultural heritage.

Such encouragement will in turn stimulate increase in the production and development of traditional musical instruments. This will in turn stimulate new indigenous technology supporting the new instruments. In this hard economic time, no avenue for economic growth can be treated with levity.

Conclusion

In this contemporary time the interaction between indigenous knowledge and Western science is inevitable. Consequently, leveraging indigenous knowledge with western technology is imperative for development process. This has also been advocated by Meagher and Wilkinson (2000). A proper interaction between traditional music performers and ethnomusicologists will give rise to an effective and holistic modernization of traditional music that would restore it to its former eminent position and role in society. Only such an effective development will stem the decline of traditional music. Furthermore, the sustainability of African music will ensure its infinite contribution to human development. However, the sustainability of African music and practices depends on the respect, admiration and support of Africans themselves.

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EFFECT OF MODERNIZATION ON THE POTTERY MAKING IN INYI, ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The art of pottery is deeply rooted in African culture. In Nigeria, earthenware pots have been used since ancient times in Igbo land for cooking, water storage, wardrobes and banks. Today earthenware pots have almost gone into extinction and replaced by aluminum containers and more modern methods of storing clothes, water and saving money. Pottery is an indigenous craft in Inyi, in Oji-River Local Government Area, Enugu state. They depend on pottery for their trade, survival and interaction with other communities. However, with rapid development and modernism, pottery seems to have lost its significance and value to alternative products like plastics in that area. This has affected the lives of Inyi people especially in the area of craftsmanship. That, which forms the identity of the Inyi people, has become so de-emphasized. This work, therefore, attempts to examine the pottery craft in Inyi with the objective of understanding the effect of modernization on it and, therefore, suggest ways of harnessing it for total development in Nigeria and Africa. The paper uses participant observation and oral interview conducted among the Inyi potters and non potters in carrying the research. The results were analyzed qualitatively.

Introduction

Pottery is a widely practiced craft in Nigeria. This is because of the numerous uses for pots as a vehicle for cooking, storage and decoration. Pottery has represented the identity and life style of their makers. The art of pottery has no ethnic or regional distribution. Excavations have shown that pottery attained a high level of development in Nigeria several hundred years ago. The earliest pottery so far recovered in Nigeria (from Dusten Kongba in Jos Plateau Area) dates to about 4th millennium B.C (Andah and Okpoko, 1994). Well fired pottery is almost indestructible and very informative when recovered

from archaeological contexts. Features often taken note of in the study of excavated pottery include the manufacturing techniques, the forms, decorations and inferences with regard to functions. Thurstan Shaw an archaeologist carried an archaeological excavation at Igbo Ukwu in 1960s, on which he unveiled a lot of findings of which earthen pots were among the findings, apart from bronze objects discovered. This could make us believe that pottery making in Igboland has a remote antiquity and it is believed to be indigenous. Semplil (1969) said that the craft is one of the traditional crafts embraced by all parts of the country starting from the prehistoric period when man became sedentary. Pottery is man's interaction with his physical environments. The Igbo-Ukwu pots showed a long time creative development of indigenous art, craft and technology among the Igbo people. Scholars have carried out studies in African pottery. A notable scholar is Micheal Cardew, who helped to establish the famous Abuja pottery centre. He was marveled at the indigenous technological know-how of the local potters. This western scholar has confessed that traditional potters "know very well just what they are doing and how best to do it". According to him, they do so "much better than many 'whites' who call themselves potters too" (Cardew, 1986:4 in Onuzulike, 2007). Pottery as part of Nigeria's crafts is well integrated into the living patterns of Nigeria and inseparable from their spiritual and cultural philosophies. It is mostly engaged in by women in Yoruba and Igboland, while it is mostly engaged in Hausa land by men. In the South-South part of the country from the 13th to the mid twentieth century, pottery was made in Calabar area by Qua woman at Ikot Ansa. One of the leading pottery centers in the country is in Suleja Niger State, which was made popular by Nigeria's foremost potter Ladi Kwali, who worked with the traditional leg-powered wheel. In 1963 she was the first Nigerian to tour England and Europe to demonstrate the art of pottery making in Nigeria. Her face today graced the 20 Naira note of the Nigerian currency. Locally a good selection of her work is on display at the Abuja Sheraton Hotel. Basden (1938) and Igwilo (1989) noted that Igbo pottery in all these areas is an exclusive art for women.

A number of towns in Igboland still engage in pottery production, these include Inyi, Nrobo, Eha-Amufu, Eha-Ndiagu, Ishiagu, Ezzamgbo, Amarin, Afikpo, Awonmamma, Amaraku, Aguleri, Amawobia, Ihube, Iwala, and Owerre-Ezukala. The major town that practises pottery that shows great specialization is Inyi and Ishiagu. Inyi is very notable in

pottery production, because of the information gotten from the archaeological site of Igbo-Ukwu. A large body of excavated material dating about the ninth century AD (Shaw 1970 in Okpoko, 1987) was discovered. Ethnographic study carried out by Okpoko (1987) suggests that the past and present people of Igbo-ukwu obtained pottery products from different markets, but mostly from Ufuma and Umuze markets about 20 to 25km east of Igbo-Ukwu. He further noted that these pottery products found in Ufuma and Umuze markets came from Inyi and Owerre-Ezukala. However, through Umuze and Ufuma the pottery products were transported to Igbo-Ukwu and other areas. Petrological analysis carried out on Igbo-Ukwu ware and Inyi clay pot by Ibeanu (1989) strongly points to Inyi as the probable centre for the manufacture of wares found in Igbo-Ukwu. There are features relevant for pottery making in Inyi. Firstly, Inyi is within the forest zone and during the rainy season certain areas of these towns (especially the parts on the slopes or those near the streams and rivers) are usually waterlogged. Secondly, they have suitable clay for pottery making, readily available in the area. This could be found on banks of rivers or in flood valleys as in Aguleri and on slopes of elevation in Inyi and Owerre-Ezukala. Thirdly, wood which is used as fuel during firing of pottery is easily available, and finally there are nearby markets where the pottery products can be sold. Inyi pottery could be sold at Nkwo and Afor Ufuma Market. The paper hopes to examine the effect of modernization to pottery production in Inyi and to suggest how to harness it for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Brief Background of Inyi

Inyi is one of the communities in Oji River Local Government Area of Enugu State. Oji River is a Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria to the south bordering Anambra State and Abia State. Its headquarters are in the town of Oji River. It has an area of 403 km² and a population of 126,587 at the 2006 census. The postal code of the area is 401. Inyi is about 23 kilometres North-east of Enugu, the capital of the state and about 60 kilometres from Anambra, the neighbouring state. It sits in the lap of hills which forms a crescent wall around it. The town has an area of approximately 110 square kilometers. Inyi is made up of 9 (nine) major villages or quarters. These villages include Amankwo,

Obule, Enugwu-Inyi, Arum, Agbaliji, Umuagu, Akwu, Nkwere, and Umuome(Obiadinma,1999).

Inyi is bounded on the south by Oro (Awlaw), east by Achi, Akpugoeze on the West, Uvume (Ufuma) on the South east and Ugwuoba on the North-west. The most common vegetation found in Inyi is the tropical rainforest with marked seasonal variation and two rainfall maxima which last from April to October. The rainfall figures range between 1600mm and 2000mm. The dry season lasts from November to March. The hottest months of the year are February, March, and April. The coldest is usually August. Inyi is blessed with numerous springs and streams. Some of which run dry during the dry season. All these streams are joined to Mmamu and Odu River of Amankwo Inyi.

Traditionally the people depended very much on land for their existence because of the fertility of their land. Inyi is known for carving and pottery making. They carved Odu n'lkwe (Pestle and Mortar), Ekwe (wooden gong), Igba (Drum), Abike (Aspecial drum), and Ikoro (A large hollow resonant wooden instrument). Inyi pottery attracted admirers from far and near. They make oku (a lidless dish) of different sizes, Ite mmiri (pots used for water) Ite Mmii (pots used for wine) and others. All the items produced were sold in Nkwo Inyi, Ekegbo Achi and Afo Ozegu Ufuma.

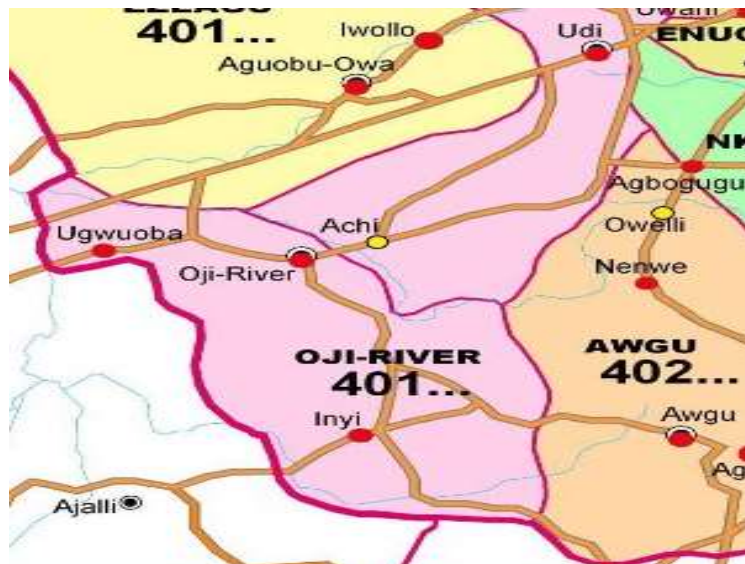


Plate 1: Map of Oji- River Showing Inyi Town.

History of Pottery

Potters have been forming vessels from clay bodies for millions of years. When the nomadic man settled down and discovered fire, the firing of clay pots was not far behind. Pinch pots, made from balls of clay into which fingers or thumbs are inserted to make the opening, may have been the first pottery. Coil pots, formed from long coils of clay that are blended together, were not far behind. These first pots were fired at low temperatures and were thus fragile and porous. Ancient potters partially solved this by smoothening the surfaces with a rock or hard wood before firing. These low-temperature fired pots were blackened by these fires. Decoration was generally the result of incisions or insertions of tools into soft clay.

Early potters created objects that could be used for practical purposes, as well as objects that represented their fertility gods. The civilizations of ancient Egypt and the Middle East utilized clay for building and domestic use as early as 5000 B.C. By 4000 B.C. the ancient Egyptians were involved in pottery on a much larger scale. They utilized finer clays and fired the pieces at much higher temperatures in early kilns that removed the pots from the direct fire so they were not blackened from the fire. Bricks from clay were used as building materials as well. By late eighteenth century, many fellow potters followed suit, experimenting with all kinds of new bodies and glazes. Moulds were used to make mass quantities of consistent product so that the consumer could be assured of the look of this piece.

Archaeological evidence, together with the example of primitive tribes in recent times, suggests that the earliest containers used by neolithic man range from hollowed out pieces of stone or wood to more elaborate artefacts such as bags of animal skin and, above all, baskets. Basketry is one of the earliest crafts to be developed. Almost every region of the world has suitable materials, in grasses, reeds or willows, and the resulting object is both cheap and light. But baskets are not good for containing liquids. For that purpose early technology soon finds another material which is cheap, widely available and (by comparison with stone) relatively light. This material is clay. Not all societies have developed the useful craft of pottery. Nomads tend not to be potters. The technical demands of pottery do not fit well with life on the move, and pots are too fragile for a nomadic existence. Equally, in areas where nature provides admirable pots in the form of gourds, the potter's trade

seems an unnecessary labour. But most communities, tending their crops in the Neolithic Revolution, soon discover the technique and use of pottery. Pottery fragments from about 6500 BC have been found at Catal Huyuk in Turkey. The earliest wares at Catal Huyuk are made by one of the standard methods of primitive potters. Rings or coils of clay are built up from a circular base. The walls of the pot are then smoothed and thinned (by simultaneous pressure on the inner and outer surfaces) before being fired in a bread oven or in the most elementary of kilns - a hole in the ground, above which a bonfire is lit. Early neolithic pottery is usually undecorated. Where there is decoration, it takes the form of patterns cut or pressed into the damp clay (Historyworld, 2011).

The Uniqueness of Inyi Pottery

Inyi pottery is one of the best finest potteries in Igboland. Their products can be distinguished among other pottery products from other areas. The smoothness of their pots came from the rigorous ways of their pottery production. Concentration is needed for a potter to get the desired quality of Inyi pottery product. Pottery making are mainly the work of women in Inyi community. In some areas it is a taboo for any man to engage in pottery making/production. In Inyi, which is the study area, men can help in digging the clay and carrying it home, but it is the women who make pots and other products. From the interview conducted, it was revealed that most women in Inyi that engage in pottery production were pagans. This is not to say that Christians do not practise the art of pottery, but the statistics gotten from the research shows that the pagan worshipers were more in number. This could be because of the aesthetic nature of their art. *Uli* which is the main decorative substance is associated with heathen worshippers in *Inyi*. Their women use it in beautifying their bodies and houses. The raw material for pottery production in Inyi is clay.

Clay is the product of the geologic weathering of the surface of the earth, and since this weathering process is continuous and goes on everywhere, clay is an extremely common and abundant material in nature. Its primary mineral is kaolinite; clay may be generally described as 40% aluminum oxide, 46% silicon oxide, and 14% water. Varying additives give the clay different characteristics. People come from different places especially large factories to purchase the clay in huge quantities. It is abundant, cheap, easily acquired and prepared. Rhodes

(1960) notes that clay does not require extensive processing, as do most of the raw materials which we use for making things. If it were not so, it would have been impossible for primitive people to make pottery. The plasticity or workability of clay varies widely, that some serve quite well for one thing or another. Clay shrinks when it dries and shrinks more when fired, and this creates all sorts of problems in making pottery. The reaction of clay to the fire may seem unpredictable and even under the most carefully controlled conditions a certain amount of uncertainty attends the firing process. The practical answers to all of those problems connected with making things out of clay lie with craft rather than science (Rhodes, 1960).

Inyi is endowed with this abundant earthly powder produced by the weathering and disintegration of granitic and other feldspar bearing rocks. Clays in Inyi are mostly found along the riverbanks. Clay when wet will be formed into any desired shape. This property is known as plasticity. The carbonaceous matter in clay also contributes to its plasticity. The organic matter seems to act almost as a gum or glue in the behaviour of clay. It is a well known fact that clay which has been allowed to age for a while becomes more plastic and workable. clays are classified into primary and secondary clay, primary clays are those clays which have been formed on the site of their parent rocks and have not been transported, either by water, wind or glacier while secondary clay in clay which has been transported from the site of the original parent rock (Rhodes, 1960). This secondary clay, a mixture of sediment, is finer and lighter than primary clay. Pottery is a craft involving shaping wet clays and firing them under heat to trigger a chemical transformation, thus hardening the clay.

Importance of Pottery to an Archaeologist

Pottery to an archaeologist is very important because it is not destroyed or decayed in any form no matter the years it stays. To an archaeologist pottery is used as a dating tool. The pottery types can help to tell the archaeologist more about the cultures of the area excavated. The design of a pot could be compared to other designs elsewhere to have a cross cultural data. Wares of different types could be used as souvenirs to visitors and tourist who visit for one reason or the other. For archaeologists, anthropologists and historians, the study of pottery can help to provide an insight into past cultures. Cardew (1970) notes that

pottery remain is “a sure guide to a nation’s character” having been made by ordinary people and has never had to suffer from the patronage of the great. Pottery is durable, and fragments, at least, often survive long after artifacts made from less-durable materials which have decayed from recognition. Combined with other ethnographic evidence, the study of pottery artifacts is helpful in the development of theories on the organization, economic condition and the cultural development of the societies that produced or acquired pottery. The study of pottery may also allow inferences to be drawn about a culture's daily life, religion, social relationships, and attitudes towards neighbours, attitudes to their own world and even the way the culture understood the universe. Chronologies based on pottery are often essential for dating non-literate cultures and these are often helpful in the dating of historic cultures as well. Trace-element analysis, mostly by neutron activation, allows the sources of clay to be accurately identified and the thermoluminescencetest can be used to provide an estimate of the date of last firing. Examining fired pottery sherds from prehistory, scientists learned that during high-temperature, firing iron materials in clay record the exact state of Earth's magnetic field at the exact moment.

Pottery Production in Inyi.

Pottery is made by forming a clay body into objects of a required shape and heating them to high temperatures in a kiln to induce reactions that lead to permanent changes including increasing their strength and hardening and setting their shape. There are wide regional variations in the properties of raw materials used for the production of pottery, and this can lead to wares that are unique in character to a locality. Pottery is a well known craft in Inyi and this attracts a lot of people to their market. An interview I had with both potters and semi potters has shown that potters in Inyi are semi – specialists, who practiced their pottery as a part-time activity. The craft gives them opportunity to engage in their farm work. Commercial manufacturing of pots are done during dry season because these pots are fired in an open space. During rainy season the firewoods that should be used will be wet and this affects the production of wares. The only thing they produce during the rainy season is the small pots that could be kept in the workshop or in a shade to dry. This is the reason why Effah-Gyamfi (1980:108 in Majuk, *et.al*, 2010) noted that the dry season was the peak period of pot production for

obvious reasons. Firstly, frequent flooding of clay mines which occurs during the rainy season is unknown during the long dry months of the year. Secondly, considering the fact that pot-making is only an adjunct, the dry season when there is little or no work in the farms provided the best opportunity to concentrate on the industry. Thirdly, all operations take place in the open air, under tree shades. This means that during the dry season, work would not suffer any disruptions occasioned by rainfall. Fourthly, the intense sunshine associated with the dry season was the most ideal time for drying clay pots. Finally, firewood, the main fuel for firing the pots, is easily available during the dry season, unlike in the rainy season.

Irrespective of the fact that they are pot makers, they can still engage in trading and other businesses. Usually they participate in the political, religious and economic activities of their society. They live their normal life like every other person in the community. The processes involved in the production of pottery is such a delicate one that if any stage is left more than required, the pot moulded can have a serious problem and what it means is to break it and start all over again. To avoid this, potters are conscious anywhere they are so that they do not exceed the time they are supposed to do one thing or the other to their product. This is the reason why the potters' excuses are honoured in any gathering even in church activities. There are five stages in the art of pottery making in Inyi. They are as follows:

- 1) The raw materials procurement
- 2) Treatment of the clay/Preparing the clay for pot making
- 3) Forming stage
- 4) Decorative stage and
- 5) Firing

Raw Material Procurement

Clay which is the raw material for the manufacturing of local wares is gotten from clay deposits in Obule, Alum and Agbariji Inyi. Agbariji Inyi has clay deposits in Aguike. Alum have four clay deposits, these are *Owere Umuibudu*, *Obodoudele*, *Oghochiri Utu* and *Obunma* in *Duli*. *Obule Inyi* also has a clay deposit called *Osuigwe* (the name of the person that owned the clay). In Alum Inyi one can go and collect clay as she wants, because the deposits are owned by the community, but in Obule

Inyi, clay is being sold because it is owned by an individual (Osuigwe). To have a better quality of pottery product, a potter may decide to mix the clays from different clay deposits. The collection of clay could be very risky, because some of the good clays are very deep inside a hole or mine. After the collection, the clay will be carried home where it will be ground until a very fine texture is obtained. To avoid the pots cracking during firing, a tempering material is added. The tempering material used is ground potsherd. Water is poured on the clay which is worked on legs or hand to produce dough like paste. An old pot is used as a mould for the base of the new pot or the potter can still make a pedestal stand for her pot to rest on while molding.



Plate 2: Pedestal Stand of Different Types (Olu Alula).

Treating the Clay/Preparing the Clay for Pot Making.

The potter sits on the ground where she prepares the clay mixture. The most comfortable place for the potter is a special shed with a thatched roof that provides excellent ventilation or a workshop. In Inyi, no clay could be used in its natural state; they need to be worked upon to be suitable for pottery production. After the potter had procured the necessary quantity of clay, she leaves the clay one or two days to dry. Some dig up the clay and leave it for over a longtime. In some houses you can still see clays that have stayed more than three months. The reason is to enable the clay to sit or age. She does this effectively by wrapping it in a damp bag or in any other container. After the collection of the clay, it will be sun dried. The reasonable quantity to be used should be grounded using grinding stone as Inyi potters. Then the tempering material to be used will be grounded too. The tempering material usually used in Inyi is broken potsherd. The clay which is fully

dried is soaked in a very large pot or bowls for three or four days. The tempering material which is added to the plastic clay is called “*Mgba*” (grog). This helps the plastic clay to be less plastic and easy to work with. It adds strength to the clay. This also helps in a greater measure to reduce the shrinkage propensity of the clay. In mixing the clay and grog, kneading method is used. In Inyi, the mixtures are kneaded with hands or legs to make sure that they are mixed thoroughly and the desired paste are gotten which looks like a dough. If they are too plastic, during firing there is the tendency that the wares will crack. Oyeoku (1999) notes that clays are kneaded thoroughly for uniform consistency. Much kneading is done throughout this process until many large loaves are formed. These are piled up in the potter’s workshop.

Forming of Pot /Bowl

In preparation for making wares, the potter assembles the prepared clays and tools around her. These consist of the smoothening and decorative tools. The smoothening tools are “*Kworinkwo*” (smooth pebbles), *Oghuru* (wooden paddles) “*Azu aku oyibo*” (coconut shell), “*Udara leave*” (leaf used in shaping the mouth of a pot or bowl). The decorative tools are “*Nde*” (Bamboo stick shaped to create a design), “*Uri*” (Black Indigo), many other smooth sticks, and rags for wiping and smoothening. The reason why the potter assembles the tools is that she needs concentration to achieve the desired quality she wants. The potters’ tools are packed in unused pots or bowl, which is now kept in the workshop to avoid losing of any.

In forming the pots, the potter will start to build some clay into coils about seven inches. She picks out an unwanted object if any. This could build up to 20 for a start. The potters in Inyi always sit on the bare floor in their workshop to set to work. She starts forming by picking the “*Uro ehurehu*” coil, one after the other. She picks the coil in her right hand; in an anti clockwise way, she flattens it in her left hand to create a hollow. With careful pressure between the fingers, the wall is gradually thinned and a form is developed. She will continue with the coil to form the base of the pot or bowl until it becomes too big for the potter to carry. She will now rest it on a broken pot’s neck fit for that pot/bowl. The potter continues to build the clay pot/bowl into a desired size. As the pot grows she will change the size of the broken pot’s neck “*Olu alula*” fit for that size. The pedestal is made using the neck of any previously fired

pot that had broken. During the process the potter turns the mould around with the help of the pedestal stand. She uses his first finger to close the gap in the exterior part that must have been created during the moulding process (Plate 3=3). As the building mechanism continues, she uses her left palm to support the outside of the growing pot or bowl from the pressure of her right hand. The moulding continues with the interior of the growing pot, smoothened often with coconut shell “*Azuakuoyibo*”. The clay coil must be plastic but not moist or too stiff. This can cause the clay to collapse or break during firing. Another thing that can cause the pot/bowl to collapse is if the “*Olu alula*” (pedestal stand) is not the same size with the size of the pot/bowl been produced. She will continue building until the pot/bowl reaches the desired size. She will now apply some other techniques which involves using her second finger to get a desired uniform thickness and after which she will add another clay coil to make the rim thick in order to form the mouth (Plate 4=6). She will use a wooden paddle “*Nchiri uro*” to beat the clay all around the mouth to enable him to get the thickness. She uses the coconut shell to smoothen and still uses the wooden paddle to beat the rim again (plate 2e). After this second beating she will now use wooden plank “*The ejiatunata onu uro*” to flatten the mouth into a shape.



Plate 3: Tools for pottery making (a-c=Smoothening and Decorative tools,d=Udara leave, e=Nchiri Ulo, f=Kworinkwo and Nde).



Plate 4 Stages of pottery production by Priscilla Ifo from Umuochie Alum Inyi (1=The kneading process, 2=forming the coils, 3& 4=building the foundations, 5& 6=adding clay to form a uniform thickness to the rim, 7=shaping the mouth, and 7-14=smoothing the exterior and the interior parts)

As the potter has gotten a desired shape, she will use smoothening tools to get a uniform thickness. She uses coconut shell, piece of cloth or *Udara* leaf, and Spatula "*Obara uro*" to do this. She smoothen the interior side first before the exterior. After the smoothening of the interior, she adds some pinches of clay coil at the neck wall of the bowl/pots and uses her smoothening tool to smoothen the exterior again. Smoothening exercise is carried out when the pot is leather – hard. Smoothening in the exterior is by scraping with spatula (*Obara uro*). After this stage the pot/bowl will be allowed to dry in a shade or indirect sun.

Decoration

The decoration on a pot brings out the aesthetic and cultural endowment of an area. It is through the decoration on a pot that one can stand to say that this pot belongs to this cultural area for instance, anywhere you see Inyi pots with its motif decorations you will know. The decorations are put when clay is leather-hard. Clay bodies at this stage are very firm and only slightly pliable. Trimming and handle attachment often occurs at the leather-hard state. The major decorations in Inyi pottery are burnishing, incision, excission, "*Uri*" (black indigo), applied, or appliqué and impression. Burnishing is when a bowl/pot is made without any design on it. It is done by rubbing with a river pebble "*Kworinkwo*". Incision is done by removing a bit of clay to make a design on a pot. It is done with a sharp pointed object. Impression is stamping a leaf or net like object on the body of the pot/bowl. For instance a potter can stamp cassava leaf on a pot to creat design. "*Uli*" is a black indigo, which could be used to make a design on a pot. It can be spread on a pot to make lines which gives the pot a design. Applied or Applique is a type of decoration made by the addition of clay when the pot is still leather-hard. In Inyi pottery design, animals are used for the handles or applied in the body. These animals could be attached to pots lizards, crocodile and birds of different types are fixed and this is significant in "*Ite Ike*" (ceremonial pots). A coil still could be applied on the body to make a design. Excision is the removal of excess bits of clay to create a good design using '*Nde* tool'. The "*Nde*" (made from bamboo stick) is used in making groove in the body of the pots. Usually you see this in Inyi bowl like "*Oku nri*" "*Oku Ozo*". After the decoration the pots are allowed to dry slowly for some days before firing. Groves are made

into vertical, horizontal, or concentric lines that cover almost all parts of the bowls/pots.



Plate 5: Decorating of a Bowl



Plate 6: Decorations in Inyi pottery (Groove decorations/excision and incision)

Firing the Clay

After designing, it is dried before firing. Unfired objects are often termed *greenware*. Clay bodies at this stage are very fragile and hence can be easily broken. The firing of pots/bowl is called “*Ilu uro*” in Inyi. In firing, certain things are important such as *Ahurihu*, baked clay pedestals, special firewood from “*Akpaka* tree (oil bean tree), “*Oka*”, “*Aga*” (a tree that give colour), “*Omanyi*” and “*Okenchi*”.

The potter makes a circular form with a baked stone, and she loads her pottery alternatively with the firewood and grass. This is done in a careful way to avoid collapsing of any pot/bowl in the fire. The fire is set in and the burning starts. Gradually as the burning continues, they

put in more grasses to feed the fire. The duration of the firing depends on the size of the pots/bowls. It may last from two hours or more. Inyi potters apply some design that comes out after firing. Even during smoothening process the type of clay used during smoothening depends the colour of the pot after firing. *Uli* and *Aga* design is applied after firing. The potter offloads her wares with two long sticks. The potter checks the quality of her pot by tapping at the back. She listens to the sound produced by the pot and this determines the quality of the pot. The good ones that produces quality sound will be assembled together while the ones that did not produce nice sounds are assembled together to serve as potsherds in subsequent pottery making. Another way one can know that a pot is not good is to put water in it, if it starts leaking (Ikwo Nshi), then you know that it is not good.

Types of Pottery Products and Their Functions.

There are different types of pots produced by Inyi people. In Inyi there are areas that specializes in one kind of pottery products or the other. Alum and Enugu Inyi are known for the production of bowls, while Agbariji is known for the production of pots. A renowned pottery maker is from Agbariji who is known for her big pots production (*Ite Ike*) with applied decoration. She was known as late Mrs. Nwaebewe of Agbalidi Inyi (Plate 6e). In Igbo land pottery is classified into three main groups like “*Ite*” (necked pot), “*Udu*” (Narrow mouthed and long necked pot, sometimes with a hole at the shoulder) and “*Oku*” (bowl).

Inyi types of pots and functions were:-

Ite mmiri –For getting water or storing water and as water bottle. It is a coolant(Plate 7a,b,c,d).

Ite Ike – This is a big pot using during marriage burial, funeral or any festivity in the town for the putting of “*mmanya umunna*.” It can contain upto fourty gallons of palm wine (Plate 7e,f,g).

Oku Ozo-Special bowl used by the Ozo title holders (Plate 7h).

Ite mmanya – This is a long necked pot used in selling or taking mine to an individual during festival (see plate 7i).

Ite Ofe –They are used for cooking soup and other things. It is always shorter with broad rim (plate 7j)

Oku Akwu – This is a big bowl made for special occasions. For instance in traditional marriage and burial/funeral ceremony it is used in preparing tapioca food (Plate 7k).

Ishi oku – This is a medium sized bowl used in preparing household food especially tapioca food (Plate 7n).

Oku onu nwa Nkwere-This is also used in serving food and preparing Tapioca food(Plate 7m).

Oku Nri – This is used for serving any kind of dish. The small bowls are also used for storing valuable like jewelries (Plate 7o,p).

Eju – This is made from broken pieces of pots. It is used for frying breadfruit seed, corn seeds, groundnut, ground pea etc.





Plate 7 Different types of wares found in Inyi (a,b,c,d,=*Ite Nmiri* , e,f,g,=*Ite Ike* (for *nmanyanya umunna*)h=*Oku Ozo*, i= *Ite Nmanyanya*,j= *Ite Ofe*,k= *Oku Akwu*,l= *Ishi Oku* ,m,n,o= *Oku Nri*)

The Effect of Modernization on Pottery Production

In the social sciences, modernization refers to a model of an evolutionary transition from a 'pre-modern' or 'traditional' to a 'modern' society. Historians link modernization to the processes of urbanization and industrialization, as well as to the spread of education (Wikipedia, 2011).

To modernize is to make a system or methods more modern and more suitable for use at the present time. In other words, to start using modern equipment and ideas in production. As we are talking of indigenous knowledge and global changes in Africa: The challenges in the 21st century we are talking all about culture and their changes overtime and their survival in the face of globalization. Pottery making in Inyi is a form of culture of which *Inyi* people are known for or peculiar to them. It is the pride of Inyi people of which without the culture of this craft the past seem non-existent and the present seem suspended without pillars. Indigenous craft need to be preserved so that the younger generations will be proud of their forefathers in their innovations. This is

just why people struggle to leave good legacies for their children more especially in terms of assets. For instance, a notable scholar in any institution who has not built a house in his village or in the town where he lives might not have tangible assets to pass to his children. A hymn in Anglican Communion sings “*Nani olu iluru ka aga eji cheta gi*”. Apart from the virtue you possess as a man, what are the tangible assets to lay hand on. As good citizens of Nigeria, let us not forget our culture which shows our creativity, technology, craftsmanship, identity and our heritage.

Modernization has an effect on pottery production in Nigeria and precisely in Inyi, Oji River L.G.A, and Enugu State. In an interview with the potters (Mrs Priscilla, Ilo, Mrs E. Madu and Mrs Mechie Ajalla), I came to know that there is a great demand for these locally made wares and this increased their economic gain. Recently, people use other forms of vessels and this pulled down the economic gain gotten by the potters. Nowadays people engage in a business that gives them money and large profits. That is the reason why you see people leaving their shops to ride Okada believing that Okada riders count their money/profits immediately. This drastically reduced the interest to engage in art of pottery production by the younger generation. People seeing the alternatives in the market do not have the urge to go for apprenticeship. Before now, people go to some special potters to learn the art of pottery making and this lack of continued apprenticeship has led to decreased expertise. Some people complain that the work is tedious and demanding. If a potter has a moulded pot outside for sun drying, she cannot leave it to go out for any business. The reason is that she is timing the period she has to take in the pots so that it cannot over dry or break in the process. At this time people see pottery business as a business that you cannot lay your hope on. In case of accident the whole product will get broken because of its fragile nature.

However, another important way modernity affects pottery is that people really want to be associated with modern things that are good, but our indigenous knowledge should not be thrown to the dust. We all know that the modern knowledge was derived from the indigenous knowledge. The modern technology did not come from an island but an improvement of the old technology. For people to eat with such utensils like *Oku Nri*, they are seen as uncivilized people. Yet a number of people prefer eating from it especially those that are title holders. People still complain about

the heaviness of the product which can only be difficult to carry or transport. Before now young girls took over the pottery production from their mothers who now went on voluntary retirement because of old age. Now this art has been left in the mercy of the old women who can no longer fetch the clay or fire the pots. What they do is to employ young potters as they are to help them in firing the wares. What will happen when this generation passes away is what we cannot fathom. The craft will totally go into extinction. Although modernization has made people not to engage in the pottery production but this could also be a means of upgrading the industry.

In Inyi, there has been a pottery industry near Inyi comprehensive Boys' Secondary School. Presently, the area is where the headquarters of Mamu River development center is situated. The industry was built by PRODA, with Mrs Nnenna Orah as the initiator. The industry stayed for about two years and stopped functioning. The reason is poor management and unable to pay the staffs/workers. They just stopped work and the government does not care. From an interview, the potters were agitating that several times they were taken to cultural centres for exhibition, and at the end they will not be compensated. This is one of the problems I faced in this research because they were reluctant to give information. To move the pottery making in Inyi to aid sustainable development, more efficient method of production processes need to be introduced. Culture is dynamic and changes with time. Nigerian potters, especially Igbos have to adapt to this modernity without destroying the basic traditional outlook of their system. Pottery retains its popularity particularly among the traditional African societies, irrespective of the competition posed by the foreign synthetic wares (enamels and plastics). People patronize the modern wares more than traditional wares, forgetting that modern wares have nothing to portray in terms of production and design. A traditional ware portrays the culture of an area which is very specific to such group. The major thing in Inyi vessels are the motifs and the techniques of decoration. Inyi pottery wares have a kind of appliqué and groove decorations. This is not to say that other techniques are not found, but the major designs were these two.

Inyi potters are faced with a lot of challenges like belief and customs. People out of their zeal from the western culture especially Christians believe that anything cultural has something to do with deities, since most of the Inyi potters are pagans. People see the traditional

production method as tedious and slow. The lack of technological know-how and lack of equipments constitute a big problem to the potters. This retards the advancement of pottery in Inyi. There is need to post modern potters to the rural areas to help educate the natives on modern techniques of pottery making which involves the use of throwing wheels and the construction of wood kilns with bricks. This will improve the firing temperature and firing may continue despite rains. The educators should learn and adapt with the local styles too. Gwari potters at Abuja incorporated both traditional and modern pottery methods by the assistance of Cardew Micheal. If Inyi people will be given the opportunity, the success of Abuja will repeat itself. Inyi wares are found in our museums. In the pottery section in Jos museum (When we went for an Archaeological Conference at Institute of Archaeology and Museum Studies) you will find wares labeled Igbo pot. Those wares are from Inyi, please the curators should help to document objects appropriately in our museums instead of generalizing it. Earthenware and fashionable things of clay are being rapidly supplemented by aluminum, plastic, steel and other alternative materials. Prestigious people never tend to buy earthen ware thinking about their images and status. But it is admitted everywhere that cooking pots of clay is more conducive to health than pot of silver or other materials. Cooking with earthen wares cure gastric problem. The local pitchers keep water cool in hot days. Clay pots loose heat slowly than aluminium pots. If clay is used for the construction of a water heater it will retain heat more than aluminium.



Plate 7 Dilapidated pottery house built by the PRODA Industry

Suggestion/Conclusion

The creative skill found in pottery making in Nigeria by the potters need to be preserved since it tells us more about a cultural group. Inyi potters are creative; they show expertise in their craftsmanship. In trying to upgrade the local methods with the modern methods, the traditional significance does not need to be removed. The modern ways need to be introduced without displacing the trade marks found from the motifs and techniques of decoration from these areas. The government with the help of the NGOS should help these potters by giving them loan and the erection of pottery industry in the pottery centers that is well maintained for continued survival. The emphasize is to ensure the continuity and preservation of this Inyi culture and not to allow it go into extinction. We have to appreciate pottery not only for its utilitarian purpose but as a heritage resource that portrays ones identity.

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LANGUAGE: THE LOCUS OF PARALLEL DISCIPLINES

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Abstract:

Creativeness and description constitute a natural sequence which finds expression in language. While the former is unconscious, the latter is deliberate. This paper examines the relationship between the unconscious resort, by the literary writer, to his latent knowledge of phonology and the willful art of phonological descriptions.

Preambles:

Euclidean geometry evolved around the concept of axioms. Thus known as the axiomatic construction, it “furnishes the proof of a statement in terms of logical derivations from the axioms alone” (Reichenbach (1958)). It was a closed and complete system, characterized by its ability to reduce knowledge to a precise thesis. The search for knowledge could have ended with the Euclidean formulations because they contain a statement about infinity. But the development later of non-Euclidean geometry which uses the axiomatic construction as an instrument of discovery reversed the situation by demystifying or denying the article of infinity, with which the Euclidean geometry is identified, thus paving the way for modern philosophical thinking. Philosophy touches the mind in reasoning, changes the mind in its logic and directs the mind in thinking.

The provision by the non-Euclidean geometry will be used as basis for the discussion here. In this paper, there is therefore, a deliberate resort to the use of “parallels”, a qualitative term which can be associated with any entity – idea, object, opinion, notion, lines, disciplines, etc., rather than in its strict geometric sense. In other words, this resort to the use of geometrical forms for this study is rather only for illustrative purposes.

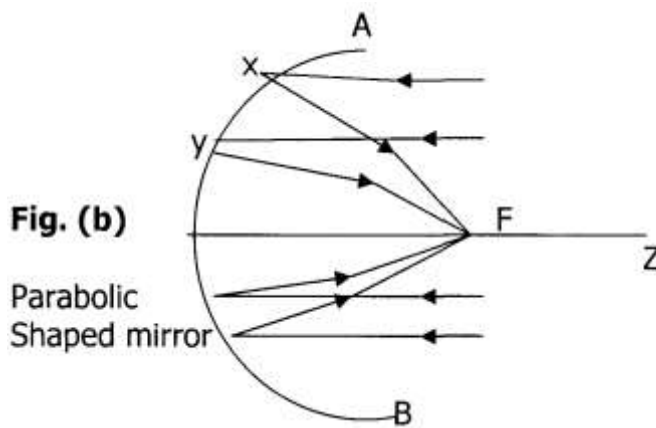
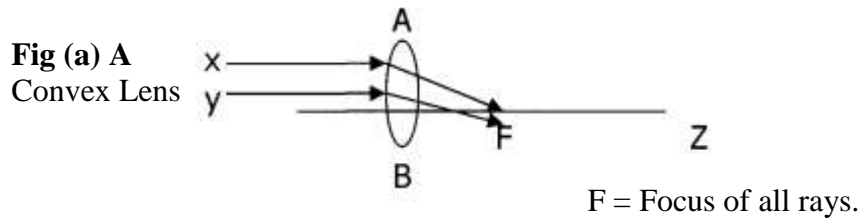
Both the Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometries seem to agree on the non-convergence of parallels but have divergent opinions about their infinite nature. The quarrel about the infinite nature of parallels may have emanated from the fact that nothing on its own is totally independent. So-called independent countries still depend, in one way or

the other, on other countries for one thing or the other. It may also have come from the fact that something must happen so that other things either happen or are prevented from happening – call it the cause and effect theory. Otherwise, the world would be a drab; nothing happens; the air is till; rivers are stagnant; life itself is at a stand-still; there will be no development... Newton's apple will not fall, etc.

There is no need to think that we are about to propound another theory of parallels; neither are we trying to say that parallels do not exist. Rather by this, we seem to agree with the non-Euclideans that, whether they be lines imaginary or visual, whether they be disciplines or notions, parallels necessarily depend on something else in order to be what they are or what they appear to be. They are thus the parallel lines which I may chose to draw on paper or on the ground, etc. (or parallel non-agreeing lines of thought held by two or more people...), depending on me, my pen and on my paper. If my hand is shaky, thereby preventing my pen from making straight lines, or my paper is not smooth enough, or if I do not want to draw parallels at all, we cannot have parallels. In this way, and like the non-Euclideans, we see parallels as such only as long as we take them to be so. At the same time, we only see them as not being so depending on visualisation. In other words, the big question mark on their infinite nature remains conspicuous. This lends itself to a suspicion that the monopoly of the infinity of parallels can be revisited. Therefore for the world to move, for there to be development..., there must be, somewhere along the line, an intervention, an intrusion, an interposition of something to bring about a destabilisation to enable something else to happen. That we cannot yet appropriately identify what that intervention is and locate the point of intervention does not mean that what we visualise as parallels are infinitely so.

The Convergence of Parallels:

Physics provides a good number of instances where parallel rays of light converge, the most intriguing being those demonstrated with a convex lens, a parabolic shaped mirror, the human eye and the pin-hole camera. What these examples do not seem to be specific about is what happens after F, the focus of these rays.



Adapted from Emeka E. Ike (2003).

In figures (a) and (b) above, AB causes parallel rays to converge at F and all culminate in Z. Z is therefore a factor of x, y... convergence.

One may question the necessity for this reiteration of already existing facts. How else is knowledge, indeed the world organised if not by the simple procedure from known to the unknown?

The Disciplines-Phonology and Literature:

Knowledge is unquantifiable. Likewise, the individual disciplines of knowledge are not quantifiable. Assuming the former assertion to be an axiom upon which the later is built, it will make no difference if we say that the individual disciplines of knowledge are of equal magnitude. This thesis and anti-thesis syndrome which sounds like saying: X is... and X is not... seems to be in line with the central thesis of the axiom of parallels and non-Euclidean geometry (Hans Reichenbach (1958)). With it as

basis, we shall attempt, in what follows, to examine the relationship between phonology and literature or creative writing.

Phonology and creative writing (Literature) are seen here as parallels of equal magnitude. While the former is a deliberate and conscious undertaking, the later is an unconscious utilisation (through the game of manipulation) of the former's findings (Ada Ugah (1990)). Motivated by the pulsion/drive to communicate, to interact and to exchange ideas and concepts, both converge at a locus (F) – language, their common channel of experience. Having found this weapon, the creative writer is, thus, equipped for the conquest of the universe if he is sufficiently motivated.

We can, therefore, see that (F) is not an end result, but the very beginning of the search for knowledge, the end of creation and the beginning of recreation.

From Phonology to Literature:

What transformational processes do sounds undergo to make them literature? This question borders on what happens at the confluence (F) of creation and recreation. Isolated sounds, which phonology aims at describing, do not constitute language on their own. A language is born through the structuring of elemental components of sounds into a systematic entity, according to a specified pattern. Equipped with these entities and with the rules governing their coinage into meaningful strings, the creative writer is thus fired by an image which he regards as his lamp, his guide, his inspiration, his primary vision.

Writing is one of the most rigorous tasks, the most painstaking, the most involving human endeavour if it is to be carried out effectively. A well constructed line or piece is a mirror through which the writer visualises an image, his universe, his environment and it is also the picture which the audience has of the writer himself. Composition, therefore, is a rebellious selective manipulation of built-up entities which fit into a specific imagined context. Therefore cognizance of these discrete sound units in a purely phonological sense is not necessarily a prerequisite for writing. The creative writer's job actually begins where the phonologist's stops. What brings them together is in the realm of language, the locus of their parallel disciplines.

In accordance with Umezina (1990), we shall attempt an illustration of the unconscious application of phonological findings to creative writing, with Ada Ugah's symbolism in **The Ballads of the Unknown Soldier**. A cursory look at this 117-page novel in ballads reveals two major themes or concepts.

On the one hand, the theme of Hero is camouflaged in what may be regarded phonologically as its pertinent traits or literally as the sub-themes-fame, fiery, force. In characterising the hero and the unknown soldier, the writer resorts to the use of the following forms whose phonological implications he may not have been aware of:

Calabar, calabashes	battle (battle line, battle dress)
Gallantry	combat
Baobab gift	parade
Twisting	beat (a retreat)
Comrades	gallons (of hot slimy saliva)
Bury	gape
Turn day to darkness	pregnant cows
Guns	groped and grabbed
	bulldozers, etc.

Each of these forms commences with stop consonants or occlusive or yet in certain phonological quarters, plosives, signifying some exertion of force or energy in their articulation. Also in the chapter entitled "Ballad of the Fortune Teller", the element of fear is identified with the use of words with similar initial articulation – cowries, black, blow bugles, darkness, crucible (of new climes) tormented, grief etc.

On the other hand, the theme of the countryside, characterise-able with the traits serenity, souvenir and syndrome, is exemplified in the ballads with soft initial sounding coinage among which are:

Sunshine, shades, landscape lined, singing serenity, splendour, aroma, yearning, longing, harmony, velveteen, azure skyline, verdure, etc. Nature goes with beauty, peace, harmony and smoothness. Natural beauty can be seen in the use of the relatively soft articulating sounds at the initials of the above words.

In Ugah's **In the Beginning**, Albert and Benjamin are names alien to the Igbo traditional culture, which is the setting of this book. While names like the above in the Western culture admit consonant

clusters and closed syllables, Igbo names never signal any instances of such occurrences. These names are therefore, foreign in the sense that, first of all, consonant clusters are nowhere attested in Igbo culture. Secondly, their syllabic patterns are contradictory to the Igbo phonological structure. This is probably the reason why the writer dissociates Achebe, the traditionalist we know, from Albert. This may also be the reason why Benjamin (the driver) was painted with an image of the intruder, the distracter and the alien. Howbeit, Albert and Achebe on the one hand and Benjamin and Agunkwandu on the other constitute parallels of equal magnitude, which only find their locus in Ugah's novel or language.

Conclusion:

This study which embraces a little of a number of areas, may cause concern in the minds of many. As can be seen from its presentation, it is neither a pure linguistic analysis nor a pure mathematical deliberation, neither a pure literary analysis nor a pure philosophical conjecture. This may be as a result of our belief in the destabilisation of the mind prior to its introduction to a new concept. If this procedure meets a consensus, our resort to a mathematical-cum-philosophical treatment serves to loosen the ground for the phono-literary study, a relationship which it aims at establishing.

The locus (language) of these two parallel disciplines finds utilisation in a wide range of disciplines. Even within the same discipline, we have a network of smaller or sub-disciplines whose existence has been made possible because of the possession of language.

Again, mere possession of language without being aware of its capabilities serves a very narrow purpose. During the last few decades, emphasis was placed on language performance. Whoever spoke and wrote good grammar could pass for everything. That was an epoch comparable to the axiomatic era when "... unless one was a sceptic, one was content with the fact that certain assumption had to be believed axiomatically...", Reichenbach, H. (1958). But in recent times, our awareness of the implications of possessing a language has resulted in diversified preoccupations.

Therefore Z is a factor which results from the convergence of X and Y in F . Z can generate $Z_1, Z_2, Z_3 - Z_n$ depending on motivation.

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BUREAUCRACY AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM IN AFRICA: THE PATH TO DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The issue of bureaucracy as agent of national development in Africa has generated debate among scholars of diverse persuasions. The liberals argue that bureaucracy in Africa is pro-active and development-oriented, while their radical counterparts insist that Western bureaucracy as imported from the Western advanced nations has contributed nothing to the development of Africa. Rather, this group argues that Western model of bureaucracy has instead worked to stall the development process in Africa. This paper sets out to examine the practical and theoretical basis of the Weberian bureaucracy, as the most perfect and ideal organizational construct ever developed, for the accomplishment large scale and complex administrative tasks. The article analyses the correlation between African indigenous knowledge system, and the practice of bureaucratic theory as developed by Max Weber. The paper takes a position to argue that in spite of its enormous advantages, the application of Western bureaucracy in Africa has failed to achieve the desired objectives. The conceptual framework to this argument derives from David McClelland's theory of negative or absence of Achievement motivation orientations which promote and sustain kleptomaniac tendencies among bureaucrats in Africa.

Introduction

As agent of the state, bureaucracy is an indispensable instrument of change at the disposal of the executive arm of government, designed to engineer and drive the development process. In advanced polities, this role is clearly manifest. However, in Africa and most other countries of the third world, the picture seems blurred due to a variety of factors. In this study, attempt is made to examine the correlation between Africa's indigenous knowledge system, and the practice of Weberian bureaucracy

in Africa. The paper analyzes some of the factors that have constrained bureaucracy from performing its developmental and pivotal role in Africa. As a concept in public administrative system, bureaucracy is a key institution in the development process, as well as a principal agency concerned with the execution of the will of the state (Appadorai, 2004:556). As Etzioni (1984) aptly noted, without the application of bureaucracy, specified goals of modern government and organizations may not be easily accomplished. In spite of this critical role, the issue of bureaucracy as agent of national development in Africa has remained contentious. The thrust of this argument is two- fold. The first is that Western bureaucracy is a product of colonial heritage imposed on Africa to maximize colonial economic and political objectives. As Uzuegbunam (2010:238) succinctly puts it, “it is a truism that African Civil Service was created to serve colonial objectives and interests”. Secondly is that Western bureaucracy evolved within a specific socio-economic and historical milieu of Europe and the Western world which contrasts sharply with those of Africa. The highpoint of the above argument was that Western bureaucracy developed out of the contradictions of the industrial revolution in Europe. But the question is, shall we continue to bemoan colonialism forever? Is time not yet ripe for African scholars to find alternative explanations for Africa’s underdevelopment? These are some of the issues this paper sets out to address.

The paper is partitioned into four sections. Section one is the introduction. Section two analyzes the relationship between African indigenous knowledge and the practice of Western bureaucracy in Africa. Section three discusses the nexus between bureaucracy and African development, while section four, the last section, is the conclusion to the article.

Bureaucratic Theory and African Indigenous Knowledge System

The Concept of Bureaucracy

What is bureaucracy? As a concept, bureaucracy has been assigned various meanings and interpretations by scholars of varied intellectual backgrounds. According to Duru (1998:145), bureaucracy is a word coined by Monsieur de Gournay in 1845, which was later developed by Max Weber, a German born sociologist (1864-1920). As a sociologist, Weber saw bureaucracy from his idea of social facts, relating

to power and authority as regards law and order in social organizations. To Max Weber, “authority is a legitimized power which creates conditions for people to obey law and order in organizations” (Uzuegbunam, 2010: 232). As Etzioni (1975) pointed out, bureaucracy, for Weber, means a complex hierarchical organization governed by formal rules and regulations, which has clear specification of duties as division of labour. In his own opinion, Adebayo (1992), perceives bureaucracy, as a process and an element of administration. He argues that an expert administration is necessary in a complex modern state to facilitate social services delivery in society. In the words of Heady (1992: 304), bureaucracy is a large scale and complex administrative organization, common in both public and private sectors of contemporary society. To him, bureaucracy represents a means of social relationship in organizations within society.

According to the Webster’s New Encyclopedic Dictionary, bureaucracy is a body of appointed or trained government officials; a system of administration, characterized by specialization of functions, adherence to fixed rules and regulations, and a hierarchy of authority. Thus, according to Appadorai (2004:562), bureaucracy is “a professional body of officials, permanent, paid and skilled”. Consequently, the theme of the foregoing is that bureaucracy is an indispensable element of public administration designed to grapple with large scale and complex administrative tasks.

As Meier (2006:122) aptly demonstrated, bureaucracy is an essential feature of post-industrial organizations where complex and large scale administrative tasks need to be undertaken. What distinguishes bureaucracy from other systems of administration, according to Meier (2006:122), is its characteristic features, namely: hierarchy of office; impersonality (the work is conducted according to set rules, without arbitrariness or favoritism, and with little flexibility or discretion to deviate); continuity (the administrative offices constitute full-time salaried occupations, with security of tenure and prospects for regular advancement); and expertise (officials are selected on merit, are trained for their duties; and control access to knowledge and information because written records are kept of transactions).

Consequently, it is against this background of sterling characteristics, that bureaucracy is adjudged the best and ideal model of administrative construct. In the Weberian bureaucratic organization, the

official or bureaucrat who holds office in the organization, does so on the basis of his specialized educational or technical qualification or professional accomplishments, or expertise, as symbolized in certificates, university degrees or other forms of records of achievements (Duru, 1998: 146). Again, the bureaucrat's office is by appointment, not by election. He is promoted in a series of ascending steps throughout his career. His pay is in form of fixed salary not determined by the amount of work he performs, but rather on the position of his office in the total organization.

In addition, the bureaucrat is entitled to pensions and gratuity after retirement, and in turn, his duties, obligations, loyalties and primary relationships are toward the organization. The relationship of the offices in the organization is determined by an arranged principle of hierarchy, and orders flow downwards, while obedience flows upwards the ladder of the hierarchy. In other words, according to Duru (1998:146), matters of direction, control and discipline flow from the top to down, in a step fashion.

In a classical bureaucratic organization, the office is separated from the person (individual) who occupies it. There is a clear dichotomy between the use and the ownership of the means of production, that is, there is an atmosphere of impersonality in a bureaucratic set-up. And the method of operation is based on established rules and norms. In other words, there is a set of rules which guide the conduct of the office, and operations. And the bureaucrat is expected to act within the prescribed rules to ensure that his actions are safe and justified, hence the heavy reliance on records and files by bureaucrats. Thus, all communications must be prepared in multiple copies and records of all conversations, orders, and transactions systematically filed away for future reference. (Duru, 1998:146).

In a bid to find a system of authority which produces the highest degree of goal achievement in an organization, Weber advocates the rational – legal authority relationship. This is a type of a system of authority derived from impersonal, abstract rules, based upon rational decisions or calculations for all members of the organization, in order to achieve maximum efficiency. Unlike the traditional authority (based on custom, tradition, culture etc); and the charismatic authority (based on personality traits, wisdom, eloquence in speech, etc); Max Weber advocates an organization where in practice, an official obeys a superior

person, but obedience is not given to the person on individual merit, but to the office which is a legitimate personification of the rational – legal authority (Duru, 1998:147).

Nevertheless, as noted by Harman (1990:62), apart from the positive features that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations as demonstrated by Weber, bureaucracy have some negative connotations, such as; ‘red-tape’, non-accountability, unresponsiveness, delay, bottleneck, inflexibility, ineptitude, centralized elitism, and undemocratic tendencies. Nevertheless, in spite of its shortcomings and immanent pathologies, bureaucracy is still seen as the highest form of organizational design, developed by humanity to address the challenges of large scale and complex administrative systems. In a nutshell, the key factors of a bureaucracy that permit it to function as a classic of administrative organization, as adduced by Weber include:

- An hierarchical chain of command
- Division of labour and specialization
- Clear lines of authority
- Structure, authority, and rules with specific goals
- Impersonal rules and merit based decision-making
- Productivity evaluated by established rules

Some few examples of everyday bureaucracies include; governments at all levels – federal, state, local, including their agencies, arms and institutions; armed forces, the police, corporate organizations – banks, industrial establishments; educational Institutions– Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Educations, Secondary Schools, Primary education, hospitals, the judiciary, legislature, NGOs, Ministries, big businesses, clubs, big professional and academic bodies, etc,

Bureaucracy and African Indigenous Knowledge

The notion exists among African intellectuals, that underplaying the African indigenous knowledge, whatever the guise, jeopardizes Africa’s chances of independent growth. Thus, all efforts must be made to promote and preserve African indigenous knowledge and cultural beliefs, whether negative or positive. To us, this is a misnomer. Indigenous Knowledge and belief system that are good and progressive should be upheld, while those that are counter productive and antithetical should be dropped, since Africa is not an island onto itself. It exists within a

globalize village and must keep pace with others, if it must be relevant within the global community.

In this section, we have made attempt to analyze the relationship between African indigenous knowledge and bureaucracy as developed by Max Weber. To begin, if African indigenous knowledge means our native experience, our indigenous education system and understanding, as offered in the pre-literate era, our native skills and abilities, our perceptions and worldview, which are peculiar and original to the African people; and if bureaucracy is a systematic, well organized and complex system of men, offices, structure, methods and authority, which large organizations employ in order to achieve their goals; then, one would say without fear of contradiction that there is no good basis for a comparing the two systems. This is because prior to the coming of the whites in most African societies, a well thought out and patterned administrative system was non-existent. According to Hague (1997), learning in most African societies was by rote, and most organizations were largely rudimentary (peasant farming communities and petty traders). There was no need for a complex and elaborate administrative arrangement. As Hague (1997) succinctly puts it,

In the pre-colonial era, large scale administrative organization such as the modern day governments, public institutions and complex private sector establishments were virtually non-existent.

Although occupations and productive activities existed, they were essentially rudimentary, and in most cases, only sufficient for self-sustenance. The predominant occupations were mainly farming, trading, craftwork, fishing, cattle rearing, wine tapping, traditional medicine, blacksmithing, weaving, dye production etc. Man's existence during this period was to say the least, primitive and crude. Consequently, because of the low level of productive forces or lack of improvement of the tools, implements, techniques and technology employed by labour, production was abysmally low mostly enough only for family and individual needs.

Also, owing to the low volume of production, the place of market forces and free economic competition to determine economic growth was unnecessary. What thrived in most of the pre-colonial African societies

was trade by barter and conspicuous consumption. The economy was weak and the state too fragile and poorly developed as to propel and moderate economic growth. As Haque (1997:436) noted, the political system was weak and the state apparatus highly underdeveloped to rise up to the challenge of its mediating role in the societal class struggle, as there was indeed no class struggle. Even though, the pre-colonial indigenous education system offered what looked like a comprehensive education package, such that it provided informal training in physical, character, intellectual, social and vocational development, it however, had its limitations. For one thing, in the absence of writing, people depended on the power of their memories to facilitate the retention and transmission of all learned ideas to future generations.

But as Mkpa (2008) rightly noted, memory could fail, and in the event of the death of a custodian of some useful information or skill, all was lost. As to cultural value systems and beliefs in the pre-colonial African societies, the African people are strongly attached to such negative orientations and values such as: ritualism, ascriptive norms, patron-client relations, reciprocity, caste structure, informal interaction, seniority-based authority, extended family relations, ethnicity, geographic affinities, low achievement motivation etc.

Consequently, these were the scenario and social milieu under which most African societies lived before the coming of the Western model of bureaucracy, following colonial rule. It was like a child who did not crawl before walking. And as was expected, the introduction of this alien system of administrative structure in a pristine culture, created a serious mismatch and an unimaginable degree of incongruity or incompatibility that virtually pre-empted its dysfunction. As O. P. Dwivedi and J. Nef (1982) aptly demonstrated:

The evolution of administrative system in advanced capitalist nations which accord with the changes in their extra-bureaucratic societal realms such as the mode of production, class relations, political structure, cultural beliefs and behavioral patterns; the administrative systems in African countries were mostly imposed under the colonial rule and reformed in the post colonial period by imitating the same Western model. In Western nations, the modern state bureaucracy emerged within a socio-historical context based on the scientific and industrial

revolution, the rise of capitalist production, the separation of the state from religion, and human behaviour guided by impersonal reason and competition. However, most African nations adopted such Western bureaucratic models without experiencing similar socio-historical events and contextual realities.

Thus, as Duru (1998:150) had argued, bureaucracy in the less developed capitalist societies, such as Africa, is essentially an instrument of capital accumulation by a multifarious contending ruling class with poor economic foundation and insufficient cognate administrative and political experiences. And because of this, most bureaucracies in Africa are basically anti-people and anti-development oriented.

Granted that African intelligentsia had put up elaborate critique against the claims of western development theorists, by giving illustrations to support that African peoples possess the same positive values, if not better values which propelled western industrialized societies to develop; the fact still remains that Africa is underdeveloped in comparison with the West. For example, Stanley R. Barrett (1968), through his studies, has invalidated the claims or assumptions of the western development scholars, by demonstrating that a high n-Achievement value exists in the traditional structure of the Igbo society in Nigeria, insisting that a high n-Achievement was even there prior to western contact.

In a similar study, after testing dream accounts of Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba school boys in Nigeria, Levine (1997), tells us that Nigerians are after all, not traditional or primitive. He opined:

We might accurately regard them as pragmatic frontiersmen with a persistent history of migration, settlement and re-settlement of new lands and of responding to the challenges of intertribal wars and the slave trade.

We can presume from this quotation that Nigerians have entrepreneurial types, even though the Nigerian economy and growth rates are very low. Nigerian n-Achievement scores were not significantly different from those recorded in developed societies. Also, Kamarck, a former director of the Economics Department of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, has observed that Africans;

Show exceptional willingness to adapt or change their institutions to the requirements of economic development. Indeed, the Africans' openness to innovation and creativity is comparable to or even perhaps greater than, that of the Japanese and American in the past Unlike some other developing areas which depended or depend on a socially or ethnically marginal group for innovation, the African "elite" itself, like the American and Japanese, is open to innovation....African willingness to learn has shown itself from the continent's very first contacts with the rest of the world. For example, cassava and maize spread rapidly through much of Africa as basic food crops after they were introduced by early slave traders when contact was limited and travel difficult. Many other basic African foods (yams, bananas, plantains, domestic forest goats, and fowl) are also not indigenous, but were acquired in the course of limited contacts with south Asia.

Equally, Africans who has had opportunity to study as students overseas make the same claim of possessing equal intelligence, if not better IQ with peoples of western descent. But the question remains, what is then the problem? Why is Africa still underdeveloped? How do we explain the fact that in African bureaucracy, bureaucrats or the governments that employ them hardly ask questions about output or the level of production of their workers, yet they are paid their monthly salaries? Why is it that the African civil or mechanical engineers prefers to work in air-conditioned and lavishly furnished executive offices, instead of his workshop, laboratory or construction sites? Why would African medical doctors prefer to abandon their medical practice in preference for politics and governance? In Africa, it is not a paradox to see a mechanical engineer that cannot service a carburetor talk less of opening an automobile engine?

Africa is a society where you find a government or privately employed medical doctor parading a certificate that qualifies him to practice, yet he cannot diagnose common malaria, but nevertheless, collects fat salaries every month or exploits unsuspecting public just for belonging to the so called "prestigious and noble medical profession". Such people continue to gamble with the lives of their patients through

trial and error method, until they find the slightest opportunity to jump into politics or governance where they will have unlimited access to primitive capital accumulation and the looting of public treasury. Such are the ironies of the African bureaucracy. The Asian tigers, Japan, China, Taiwan, south Korea, India etc have had one form of experience, history, or romance with Western colonialism and were as well, integrated into the international capitalist economic system, yet, they are fast developing or rather even more developed than some Western industrialized societies. Why should African scholarship, not bother to inquire into this magic?

In the attempt to explain African underdevelopment and the paradox of the backwardness of the third world countries, Western development scholars such as David McClelland (1961), Everett E. Hagen, Bert F. Hoselitz (1960), have tended to look within the individual psyches of the African populace to analyze what differentiates the industrialized societies from the non-industrialized nations of the third world countries. In his theory of “Achievement Motivation”, which is popularly referred to as (n-Achievement), McClelland, claims to have discovered a motivational syndrome or drive previously overlooked by Freudians, which he labels, “need for achievement” (n-Achievement). The discovery resulted from laboratory testing, the result of which was expounded in McClelland’s book, *The Achieving Society*. The central hypothesis of McClelland’s work is that a nation “with a generally high level of n-Achievement will produce more energetic entrepreneurs, who in turn, produces rapid economic development”.

The basis of this theory is the assumption that “it is values, not motives or psychological forces that determine ultimately the rates of economic and social development of a nation”. After a rigorous laboratory experiments, McClelland was able to establish that the need to achieve (n-Achievement) is a personality variable, independent of the social structure. He thus, asserts, “It is men, and in particular, their deepest concerns, that shape history”. By implication, McClelland submits that pre-industrial or underdeveloped societies such as Africa, suffers from a low achievement – orientation, hence their inability to develop.

Similarly, Everett E. Hagen (1968), equally attempting to use psychological factors to explain growth and development, has argued that improved technology, availability of abundant capital, the diffusion of

cultural factors, adequate markets, easily exploitable natural resources, and a host of other factors, are not as important for the beginning of economic growth and social development, as are individuals who take leadership in “innovation”. According to Hagen (1968), “it is the creative or innovative personality that impels growth”. In a similar contribution, Bert F. Hoselitz (1960), takes cue from the pattern variables of Talcott parsons (1967), to posit that the cardinal difference between industrialized societies and the third world countries is that the industrialized advanced societies exhibit the characteristics of universalism, achievement motivation, specificity, affective – neutrality and self – orientation, while the non-industrialized ones exhibit their opposites, that is, particularism, ascription, diffuseness, affectivity, and collective orientation.

Reduced to simple analogy, what Hoselitz (1960), is saying, is that in Africa for example, success or progress in life, depends on “who you know” (i.e., particularism, ascription and affectivity), in contrast to that of the Western nations, which depend on meritocracy (i.e., a universalistic principle). Although, the foregoing claims by Western development theorists have been variously criticized by African scholars, who argue that the African peoples possess enough entrepreneurial spirit, high achievement-orientation, creative and innovative capabilities, universalistic and affective-neutrality, and self-orientation etc; the question still remains that, an unimaginable wide gap exists between Africa and the Western world in terms of growth and development. Indeed, most African countries are still underdeveloped in virtually all ramifications (political, economic, social, cultural etc). One may ask, what then is the cause? Why is it that more than fifty years since most of the African states gained independence from colonial rule, they cannot rise up to the challenges of national development? Do we not think that time has come for African scholars to seriously look deep into some of these socio-psychological and attitudinal factors adduced by Western development theorists, as the true cause of African underdevelopment, rather than this penchant for recourse to impacts of colonialism and imperialism as offered by radical/Marxist African intelligentsia?.

Apart from Hoselitz (1960) and his group, other liberal and orthodox development theorists (Meier, 1976; Nash, 1959; Spengler, 1960 etc), have all maintained that apart from the foregoing deposition, the peoples of Africa and third world possess “poor saving habits” which

are exacerbated and encouraged by their anachronistic traditions, culture, institutions, extended family, and value systems, and so on, all of which impinge on their ability to develop and grow.

Bureaucracy as Path to African Development

Africa has no choice to being part and parcel of the global system. Indeed, Africa cannot afford to be an island unto itself or afford to isolate itself from the international community. Of course, Africa should be talking about how to adjust in order to fit into the global challenges of the 21st century. They require a paradigmatic shift, away from all inhibiting factors. However, before delving into the thorny issue of bureaucracy and development in Africa, it is essential that we explicate the meaning of the term, “development”. This is because different scholars have assigned different meanings to the concept, and these differences in approach, have created serious analytical problems. The same problem goes with the definition of the concept of “underdevelopment”.

Conceptualizing Development

Overtime, the emphasis in the conceptualization of development has been on economic growth. This perspective is generally held by the liberal/orthodox schools of thought. According to Duru (1998:149), the economic growth or liberal approach emphasizes increases or growth in GNP, GDP, per capita income, and other measurable economic indices. To them, development simply means material or physical development of structures (e.g. airports, seaports, bridges, flyovers, etc). However, with the passing of time, the inadequacy of this approach became obvious, and the fallacy of equating economic growth with development became the object of intense criticism. The criticisms largely derive from the paradox of “growth without development” as identified with most third world nations (Duru, 1998; 149).

To provide a better framework for understanding development, the radical/Marxist scholars argue that “development” is a far wider phenomenon, reflecting as it does, economic, social, political, cultural psychological and other aspects of society’s life, which put together amounts to clear progress. This non-Western perspective adopts the holistic perception or concept of the phenomenon of development, the emphasis being man’s overall well-being in the society. The basic feature of the new Marxist or radical movement is its emphasis on “home-

centered development”, conferring on the phenomenon (i.e. development) a purposive character. In other words, development must have purpose, and that purpose is man himself (the object as well as the subject of development).

These contradictory perspectives about development have put the radical and liberal scholars, as well as social scientists and analysts into serious loggerheads, over what actually constitutes “development”. But as Kunu (1987:46) aptly observed:

It is my thesis in what follows that about the radical/Marxist and liberal/orthodox schools explain development and underdevelopment of Africa and the third world generally, there is no significant difference between the two schools of thought, save in ideology and methodology.... Walter Rodney, in spite of his disenchantment with G.D.Ps and G. N. Ps in the explanation of development and underdevelopment in Africa, nevertheless, proceeded to define development as increase in productive capacity, measured in terms of GNP, GDP, growth rate, and indicators such as hospitals, doctors, and energy consumed (Rodney, 1974: 21-24).

This agreement between the radical and liberal schools of thought, on the definition of development and underdevelopment of Africa, argued Kunu (1987), is one basic reason why both radical and orthodox (liberal) theorists have failed to explain underdevelopment of the third world differently and satisfactorily. All the definitions equate development with wealth, and underdevelopment, with “poverty”. Yet, the history of mankind, shows that right from man’s primitive existence in the caves, to his present sophisticated life, as typified in the great civilizations in USA, Britain, Soviet Union etc; development has always been “the improvement of the tools and technology employed by labour”.

Development, far from being wealth or output or income or equalizing distribution of poverty or wealth; is simply the ease or increase in the ease with which man dwell on earth. It is the ease with which we transform nature, traverse distance (transport and communication); control diseases, discomfort, and disasters; control heat, cold, hunger and thirst; defend self and property; do administration of people and things; and reduce physical labour, or toil, and time-which

includes, the ease with which we do our jobs, our learning, studies; and our daily chores, such as cooking, shopping, washing, and preservation of things (including, preservation of our voice in the groove of tape); the ease with which we do things; not consume goods; may be measured by rate, speed, accuracy (with which we do things); the convenience we enjoy, the labour saved and the sheer accomplishment of the thing sought. For example, the sheer accomplishment of producing aero plane or a nuclear weapon. Thus defined, development becomes the overcoming of difficulties posed by nature and social environment, especially the difficulties listed above (Kunu, 1987:48).

Consequently, development of Africa and the third world requires abandoning the “consumption approach” to the ‘production imperative’. Corollary to the above, is the fact that development, is a process of socio-economic and political transformation of problems generating structures in such a way that it leads to improvement in the level of living of the people, including income, education, health and nutrition and other related social services; decreasing inequality in the distribution of income, urban-rural imbalances and political and economic opportunities. In addition, it includes the capacity of the society to achieve auto centric growth, sustain and accelerate the pace of these improvements over time. Therefore, any development strategy requires not only, concern with accelerating economic growth, but also a direct concern with the improvement and ascendancy of material and mental conditions of living of the entire population in the society through fair and equitable distribution of national wealth and resources, championed by the bureaucracy at all levels, among others (Duru, 1998:149).

It is in this same vein, that Nnadozie (1990:308), sees development as the capacity of members of the society to actualize themselves by participating actively in the social engineering of their lives and destiny. That is to say, they must draw their strengths and aspirations from their socio-economic milieu. The question is the role of the bureaucracy in African development? The African bureaucracy by virtue of its strategic position and centrality in the implementation of government policies and programmes ought to champion development in Africa. Unfortunately, the reverse has been the case. If development is about material or physical development of infrastructures such as the construction of buildings, mansions, bridges aerodromes, seaports, roads, flyovers etc, or accumulation of primitive capital by a privileged few or

the massive importation of goods and services or even opening the economy for conspicuous consumption; one would say without fear of contradiction that the African bureaucracy, in collusion with the military, the ruling class or the few political elites, have made considerable impact in national development. In other words, we mean to say that state bureaucracies in Africa have exploited the opportunity of their bureaucratic power and privileges to enrich themselves through the collaboration of the ruling elites via various tactics, including the inflation of contracts to develop different kinds of infrastructures which often has no impact on the standard of living of the citizens.

Bureaucracy works on rules, laws, regulations and order, and deviations from these rules and code of conducts, attracts sanctions inherent in this ideal system of authority and administration, so as to make for efficiency and effectiveness. However, in African countries, rules and regulations are made but are hardly enforced. The non-enforcement of rules and regulations results in the high rate of corrupt practices which mar efficiency and effectiveness. As Uzuegbunam (2010: 237) rightly observed;

In Africa, government programmes and projects are manipulated at will. Abandoned and unsatisfactory execution of projects has persisted, while money budgeted for projects are misappropriated or diverted to private pockets. Public policies and decisions meant to improve the lots of the people benefit only the elite and their cohorts. Furthermore, death of public infrastructural facilities became a permanent feature of bureaucratic set up in Africa. Contracts are awarded and services not provided. Yet the money meant for the services has been shared or disbursed without accounting for it.

In African countries, the bureaucrat is always under pressure from different groups in the society to satisfy their demands. He is prepared to sacrifice the organizational norms and objectives, provided he satisfies his personal interest. He soils his position in order to satisfy his ethnic group, kinsmen, cronies and his political boss. He is in constant pressure to make appointments to their members or acolytes.

On the other hand, the public lack motivation which could make them to understand what the government is doing. Public servants or rather bureaucrats in these states are poorly remunerated and this promotes their penchant for corrupt practices. Public and civil servants in many African nations are persistently weighed down by heavy debt burdens from foreign nations that “development” discourse has become perpetual apron-slings of their masters. Again, bureaucrats in Africa have contributed in no small measure to the politicization of the civil service, resulting in the active political participation by civil servants in politics and political activities. By this, they destroy the much cherished ‘neutrality’ and ‘anonymity’ of bureaucrats or civil servants. Worst still, some of these bureaucrats who get involved in partisanship, instead of attempting to put things right, finds themselves joining the bandwagon (Uzuegbunam, 2010: 237). Obviously, it is these factors that mar African bureaucracy from performing its development roles. As Duru (1998:150) succinctly asserts:

In advanced capitalist societies, such as Britain and the United States, bureaucracy is relatively efficient, effective and development oriented, hence can be catalysts or purveyors of national development, basically due to the homogeneity of the ruling class and the relative autonomy of the bureaucracy, from the contending social forces. However, the picture appears differently in the less developed countries because “the bureaucrat is essentially anti-development”. This is because of its inherent pathologies, which include elitist character, and status character; and status barrier from the masses, their aloofness to the needs of the people, their rigidity and inflexibility. Thus, it is essentially an instrument of primitive capital accumulation by multifarious contending ruling classes, coupled with poor economic foundation of this capitalist class.

These are in addition to other salient socio-psychological and attitudinal factors which Hoselitz and others have already highlighted. It is our submission that the Weberian bureaucracy if tenaciously followed has the capacity to chart a viable alternative path to African development agenda.

Conclusion

This article takes a look at the role of bureaucracy in the development of Africa. It examined the correlation between African indigenous knowledge and the practice of bureaucratic theory as developed by Max Weber. It argues that although the Weberian bureaucratic model has its merits, its application in Africa has not achieved the desired goal. The article takes exception to the fact that the problem of Africa's underdevelopment cannot be explained outside the fact of colonialism and imperialism, and the attendant integration of the African people into the international capitalist economic system.

In contrast, the paper surmises that time is ripe for a paradigm shift in the search for an authentic and sustainable explanation for African underdevelopment. Such a paradigmatic shift must of necessity pry into such areas as the African indigenous knowledge system, culture, our value orientation and even, socio-psychological factors (such as attitude, behavior etc) in order to identify or discover those aspects of the African lifestyle and belief system that are counter productive, and would require urgent change.

Thus, as the indigenous African scholarship make effort to strategize on how best to promote its indigenous knowledge system and culture; effort must as well be made to sift out aspects of our lifestyle that inhibits us from moving along with the global community. This indeed, is an imperative for which Africa has little or no choice.

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TOWARDS PROMOTING THE IGBO LANGUAGE AND CULTURE THROUGH EFFECTIVE INTER-LINGUAL SUBTITLING IN IGBO FILMS

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Abstract:

The paper aims at exploring the role of translation in promoting the Igbo language and culture through a critical appreciation of selected films in Igbo with English subtitles. Two Igbo films selected randomly are used for this study. The theory of translation for this purpose is the interpretative approach which gives priority to the communicative function of translation. A critical look at the sample of subtitles detected some errors: grammatical errors; omission; misinterpretation; overcrowding. From the analysis of these errors, one sees the translator's poor rendering of the source text, inability to summarize the source text, disrespect for the rules of the target language which portrays the translator as being unskilled in the art of inter-lingual subtitling. These findings show unseriousness on the part the editors and producers of the films. However, one recommends that the promotion of the Igbo language and culture should not be left with the Igbo studies scholars alone. Igbo speaking should be encouraged at all spheres of life. Children should be allowed access to Igbo language early in life. Certain aspects of the Igbo culture which are peculiar to Igbo are best expressed in the Igbo language and be transmitted to foreigners in their languages through effective inter-lingual subtitling. Finally, the film producers should engage the services of professional inter-lingual subtitlers to make their presentation meaningful.

Introduction

In the 21st century, our people have shown cold attitude towards our culture and language. In most elitist families, speaking the Igbo language to children is seen as a taboo. Children receive punishment for speaking Igbo in their homes; parents are proud to declare that their children do not understand Igbo thereby making them aliens to their own

culture and background. "... teachers and parents discourage the use of Igbo language [sic] among school children from birth, through the nursery to the secondary"(Chukwukere n.d). In some schools (private), teaching of Igbo language is neglected. They only start teaching Igbo from Grade 3. In the private primary school where my children attended, this problem was raised in a parents/teachers meeting, and some parents were of the opinion that Igbo should not be taught at all. They argued that Igbo is not the language of the computer. Defending their stand, the school authority said that they did not want to expose the pupils to several languages at an early age.

Promotion of the Igbo culture through the Igbo language cannot be overemphasized because language is the vehicle that transmits culture. In this era of globalization, giving the Igbo language a place is very vital. Of particular reference is Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry. In as much as this industry was pioneered by the Igbo, the Igbo language has a little place in the industry. The Igbo people now resort to making their films in the English language even those aspects of the Igbo culture that are best expressed in the Igbo language. The role of translation in the promotion of Igbo language and culture cannot be underestimated. The inter-lingual subtitling allows us to express our views in our language and then relay to foreign viewers in their own language. For translation to play this role effectively, the translator/subtitler not only has to demonstrate some degree of proficiency in both languages but should be trained in the art of translating/subtitling. Now, the question is: How effective are the subtitles on the few existing Igbo films with English subtitles?

The first part of this paper presents the introduction; the second part discusses language and culture to show the relationship between the two. The next part looks at the imperative of promoting the Igbo language and culture and this takes us to the role of translation in part four as seen from the study of inter-lingual subtitling through a critical examination of subtitles of two Igbo films: "Husband for sale"(2009), "The secret of that woman"(2007). Finally, we look at the conclusion and some recommendations

Language and Culture

Language is defined as a body of words and the systems for their use common to a people who are of the same community or nation, the same geographical area, or the same cultural tradition (Dictionary.com.2011).

Language is vital in every given society. The absence of language renders one's existence very unbearable because it is the vehicle through which the realities of life are transmitted. This is why the deaf and dumb resort to sign language to be able to express themselves. Language barrier renders communication very difficult or worse still, impossible. Imo (2001:189) in quoting Sangotoro said "If man cannot communicate with his environments, particularly to educate, inform, socialize, request and entertain, life will be sadly incomplete, seriously boring and totally meaningless."

Culture: This embraces the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country or group (Hornby 2006). Biobaku as quoted by Ezema (2006:67) gives the definition of the term culture as

That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other abilities acquired by man. Culture, accordingly, encompasses those conventional understandings and practices which give a people their uniqueness and thus render such people distinct from all others.

Language cannot be dissociated from culture, because culture is expressed with language. Sapir as quoted by Ezema (2006:68) affirms that,

Language does not exist apart from culture. In other words, language does not exist apart from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determine the texture of our lives. This explains why anthropologists have been in the habit of studying man under the three rubrics of race, language and culture.

Again, according to Lotman as quoted by Bassnett (1996:14),

No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language.

Bassnett (1996:14) concludes as follows: “Language, then, is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy.”

With the argument of Biobaku and Bassnett, one concludes that language is the power house of culture and if this is neglected, culture that it propels faces extinction and when this happens, the whole race that is identified with this culture faces total extinction. The interwoven nature of language and culture does not allow one to exist independent of the other; language transmits culture and at the same time, forms an essential part of the culture. One therefore, cannot claim that one is promoting one’s culture without one’s language.

The Imperative of Promoting the Igbo Language and Culture in this Era of Globalization

The promotion of the Igbo language and culture is imperative since culture is what distinguishes a particular society from others. Promoting our language and culture should be our collective responsibility and with due effort and concern, the Igbo language should be taken to a greater height. In the 16th century, a group of seven great French poets took same bold step in studying French language alongside Latin and Greek and they came to a conclusion that the French language could be their language of literary expression. They engaged in an onerous task of improving the language. They called their group “La Pléiade”. The Igbo language occupies the second position among those that will go into extinction in 50 years’ time (Maduka, 2007:14). “There is no gain saying the fact that over 98% of the Igbo are illiterate in Igbo” (Maduka, 2004:198). These claims of Maduka should be a source of worry to the Igbo. They call for the involvement of all Igbo in the promotion of the Igbo language and culture. The Nigerian film Industry (Nollywood) was pioneered by the Igbo people with “Living in Bondage” and subsequently with “Evil Passion”, “Taboo”, “Rattle Snake” etc. Now, where are the

Igbo films in the industry? Our people have taken to presenting all their movies in the English language except for few comedies in Igbo. The 'Africa Magic' station that shows the African movies now has Yoruba and Hausa stations where all the movies are shown in Yoruba and Hausa respectively with subtitles in the English language. The AMAA (African Movie Academy Award) has an award for the best movie in African indigenous language. This award is always taken by a Yoruba, a Hausa or a Swahili movie: 2009, 'Gugu and Andile' (South Africa) (AMAG TV: 10th August, 2009); 2010, 'Imani' (Uganda); 2011, 'Izulu Lami' (South Africa) [www.amaa](http://www.amaa.org). The nominations do not feature any Igbo movie. Even some scenes and settings that are typical of Igbo and consequently, demand the use of our indigenous language are presented in the English language in the present day movie production. For instance, "Igba Afa" is a kind of divination to find out what is beyond human comprehension. Before the advent of the church, an Igbo man who finds himself in an incomprehensible situation normally goes to "dibia afa" (the afa priest) to consult the oracle to unveil the situation to him. The priest will then communicate to the spirits of the ancestors in the language they understand. The "afa" as Igbo culture should be consulted in the Igbo language so that the ancestors will be able to understand. But in most of the movies with typical Igbo setting, the "afa" is being consulted in English and this makes a ridicule of the 'Afa' for we know that a deity that was installed in the Igbo language cannot understand a strange language. How can our ancestors who did not understand or speak English be consulted in English? In one movie, "Shedrach, Mishak and Abadnego", a deity was installed in the Igbo language and when there was trouble, the chief priest of the deity consulted the deity in English. What a contradiction!

Again, 'Qj [' (Kola nut) is accorded a very special place in the Igbo culture. 'Qj [Igbo' that is the specie of kola nut with many parts is revered as a very special fruit in the Igbo culture. 'Qj [' is a symbol of life in the Igbo culture. It is used to pray for life. Hence the saying "Onye wetara Qj [wetara ndx" (He who brings kola brings life). A typical Igbo man wakes up in the morning and prays with Qj [, breaks it and shares with his family before doing any other thing. It is a symbol of hospitality among the Igbo people. The kola nut is the greatest symbol of Igbo hospitality. It always comes first. "It is the king" (Nwadike, 2007:47).

The kola nut (Ọ́j [Igbo) represents the culture of the Igbo people and as such, the process of the kola nut ritual is not done in another language other than Igbo. In our movies today, this ritual is performed in the English language. For instance, in “Women in power” (2005), when kola nut was presented in a meeting, the masculinity of the kola nut was duly observed, but when it came to blessing/praying over the kola nut, it was done in English. What a contradiction! In as much as the primordial aim of film making is to make money, this should not be done to the detriment of our culture. We should be mindful of the image of ourselves we are presenting to the world.

We know that making movies in the English language will give them a wide audience but our culture has to be preserved. This is where translation has to play an important role.

I propose that in representing very important aspects of our culture, our indigenous language has to be used for this culture to make sense. These aspects of our culture have their roots in our language. They are best expressed in our language and transmitted to the foreign audience in their languages through effective translation or interpretation. For example, the oji ritual should be performed in Igbo otherwise, it will amount to disrespect for our ancestors who instituted it. How can we invite them to eat kola nut with us in a foreign language they never spoke? Ukaegbu (2005:85) laments,

Remarkably, every part of Afrika respects the customs of their ancestors, without which they will never become ancestors themselves. Also, in some parts or all over Europe, USA, and China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam, the customs of the ancestors laid foundation for growth and development. Britain’s most major power is her historical records and ability to keep consistent records. The roll system of the unwritten constitution in Britain upholds custom and precedence that ensures respect to the ancestors or predecessor.

Ukaegbu was lamenting about the white man’s indifference to the plight of the Igbo, whereas the Igbo themselves are adamant to their own course.

This quest for globalization is a path to be trodden on with a lot of caution for if we make our children aliens to their own culture, how then will they propagate this culture when we are no more. Our concern now should be how to find a way of forestalling the imminent danger of extinction of the Igbo race through the assertion of our cultural identity. Translation is the answer. The role of translation in promoting the Igbo language and culture cannot be underestimated. After all, what is involved in every literary translation is the transfer of culture. Nwaozuzu (2006:76) in considering African literary artist as a translator aptly pointed out that “the African writer has the arduous duty of translating African concepts, thoughts and beliefs into the target language.” Translation as an art involves the acquisition of skills and its efficiency depends on the translator’s degree of proficiency in both the languages and the art of translating. Inter- lingual subtitling as an area of specialization in translation will go a long way in helping the film industry propagate the Igbo culture. Let us at this point, look at what translation is all about.

What is translation?

For Bassnett (1996:2) “Translation involves the rendering of a source language text into the target language so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the target language structures will be seriously distorted”. In his own definition, Delisle (1984:16) reiterates the fact that translating does not mean comparing languages; he emphasizes its fundamental role of transmitting the message of the author and its communicative function. According to him,

Traduire n’est pas comparer, mais fondamentalement réexprimer un vouloir-dire manifesté dans un texte doté d’une fonction communicative précise.

Translating does not mean comparing the languages in question, but it is fundamentally reexpressing a message of a text endowed with a precise communicative function.

Translation has evolved from different theories. It was considered earlier as a means of learning foreign languages when it was considered as a form of comparative study of two languages or more. With the trend of events in the later part of the 20th century and in the present century when globalization becomes the order of the day, translation has grown to suit the needs of the people. Translation as an art has assumed its primordial position in the society as a special means of communication. The theories of translation have towed the same line. Translation is no more considered as a means of comparing languages but a means of transferring message from the original text to the target text using language as a vehicle. Therefore, for this message to be complete, word for word and sentence for sentence rendering of text is discouraged for the message is not found in sentences taken in isolation but in the whole text. In this case, what is considered is the contextual meaning of the text for interpretation to be complete. This is actually what the interpretative theory is all about. The theory that was propagated by Danica Seleskovitch and Mariane Lederer in L'Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs (L'ESIT) in France emphasizes the interpretation of the original message of the author in the other language.

Domains of Translation

Translation has several domains: literary, scientific, technical, techno-scientific, and pragmatic or general. The many different domains of translation allow practitioners to specialize in any one or two. Carroll (2004:4) considers translation as a changing profession. She affirms:

The translation world is as diversified and specialized as life in the early 21st century, so it is not surprising that translators become specialists in particular areas in the course of their careers.

Inter-lingual subtitling is one of the areas of specialization in translation. This is a very important and indispensable means of propagating the Igbo language and culture.

Inter-lingual subtitle can be defined as words that translate what is said in a film/movie into a different language or different languages and appear at the bottom of the screen.

An inter-lingual subtitler is a professional audiovisual translator who has undergone a special training on the techniques of subtitling.

Subtitling Techniques

For subtitling to make sense, it has to adhere to some rules and technicalities. The fact that a subtitler deals with two languages, the actors' movements, the images on the screen, the sound effects and the space on the screen makes his job a difficult one. Again, transforming a spoken dialogue to a written translation is not a child's play because the rules of written language have to be duly observed. All these in effect require extra knowledge and training. The subtitler has to be very good in summary writing to be able to condense the script to suit the space on the screen and for the audience to be able to combine watching the acting and reading the lines without difficulty. Talking about the peculiar nature of subtitling, Carroll (2004:6) has this to say:

The intersemiotic nature of subtitling is what makes it so special. Interpreting transfers speech to speech, translating transforms the written word of one language to that of another, while interlingual subtitling converts the dialogue of one language into writing of another against the background of the audiovisual medium. The challenge facing the subtitler is to find an accurate translation limited to the number of characters which an audience can read in a restricted length of time. The subtitler's choice must always respect the visual and verbal language of the film.

She recommends that

- Subtitlers should have sound journalistic skills, an appreciation of film and a sense of rhythm.
- Subtitles in providing an accurate translation must adhere to three rhythms: the rhythm of the actor's speech, the rhythm of the images as defined by the shot changes and an audience reading rhythm.

- Subtitlers in complying with these constraints should learn to condense the text of the original without compromising it or omitting important information or nuances.

She adds that subtitlers use paraphrase, ellipsis, simplification of syntax and distribution of text in sense blocks or syntactic units.

Experts have reiterated the importance of the ability to summarize in subtitling. This is because, some languages do not have economy of words.

Again, subtitlers should translate from the spoken dialogue and not the entire text. This makes it important to work with a copy of the film so as to be able to match their subtitles with the on-screen movements.

Line division is very important to a successful subtitling. The subtitler should know how to divide his/her lines to ensure smooth reading of the lines and to enhance better understanding of the movie by the audience or viewers. Cristiana Coblis (proz.com ,assessed May 20, 2011) gave some guidelines:

1. Divide at punctuation marks (“,”, “.”, “:”, “...”)
2. BEFORE conjunctions (i.e. you should have the conjunction on the
3. BEFORE prepositions (i.e. you should always move the preposition on the second line, ex: on, for, in, inside, on the outside of, etc.) Watch out for compound prepositions .
4. DO NOT SEPARATE a noun from its article (i.e. do not leave the article “a”, “an”, “the” on the first line and the noun on the second line).
5. NO DOT DIVIDE a name, whenever possible and whenever you have plenty of space the [sic] keep it together.
6. NO NOT DIVIDE compound or reflexive verbs (i.e. do not leave the auxiliary, reflexive, negative particle etc on the first line and main verb on the second line.)
7. NO NOT DIVIDE verbal phrases, idioms, expressions
8. Do not split abbreviations
9. Try not to divide the subject from the verb whenever the space allows it.
10. DO NOT LEAVE ONE WORD on a line even if it is followed by punctuation.

The basic principle to line division is to keep idea units and semantic units together; it will insure easier and faster reading and comprehension by the viewer.

Sample of Subtitles and Analysis

The English subtitles of the films, “Husband for sale” and “The Secret of that Woman” are just a display of unseriousness on the part of the producers. The subtitles are marked with errors ranging from grammatical to total misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the source text. The errors will be treated under four rubrics: **Grammatical errors (orthographic, wrong use of tenses, wrong use letter cases, punctuation errors); omission; misinterpretation; overcrowding.**

Sample of Subtitles

Husband for Sale

1. Nnq (to Ikpo): Ikpo nwanne m.

Subtitle: Ikpo my brother.

2. Joseph (to Ikpo): Obx1x n' [ma xd[mma [maa.

Subtitle: If you know how attractive you are.

3. Ikpo (to Nnq): Ekpere a na *change* ihu? Ekpere onwere ike *turn* imi m q hapx [basa abasa kwrx qtq? Mba , enwere m ike ikpegide ekpere a s[na m erue 7ft?

Subtitle: will prayers change my face, change my physic
and make me 7ft tall and become a handsome man don't
deceive me.

4. Papa Joe (to neighbour): Onye am[anarala m ego, onye oshi anara m.

Subtitle: The thief and the army **has** taken my money.

5. Papa Joe (to neighbour) : Agwq abxa lxx qgx qkwa [ma
n'ahx ha abxa ga- abx ntupu ntupu.

Subtitle: Two snakes that **fights** will have sore skins.

6. Papa Joe (to neighbour): Onye ogbi q ga- emenwu ihe a m
na-eme?

Subtitle: A disable cannot do this thing I'm doing.

7. Neighbour (to Papa Joe): Ekwela ka m s[g[ala gbagbuo
g[

Subtitle: Don't force me to call you idiot.

8. Neighbour (to Papa Joe): Ihe a n'eme g[, qbx ala ka qbx
agwx?

Subtitle: Are you mad or demonized

9. Neighbour (to Papa Joe): Nye m ego m!

Subtitle: Give my money!

10. Akxla (to Qkpqntu): Nwata nwanyi *ebugo awoo.*
(*slang*)

Subtitle: She has ran away.

11. Qkpqntu (to Akxla): I ma n'agxx ji m, [were
richaa nri ahx.

Subtitle: You know I was hungry and you finish the whole fufu.

12. Ikpo (to Joseph): Ihe mmadx emebegh[m ka mgbe
m jiri bxx mmadx.

Subtitle: I have not been insulted like this ever.

13. Joseph (to Ikpo): I bu asa. I nweghi nsogbu.

Subtitle: You are a fine boy. you have no problem.

14. Joseph (to Ikpo) : Na-aga, akwx m g[n'azx. Egwu atxna g[.

Subtitle: Pose I'm behind you. Go for this babe. No fear.

15. Ikpo (to Joseph) : Emetx m ya aka q d[etua, m makxz[a ya amakxa, [ma na nwaa nwere ike [nwxnah[m.

No subtitle

16. Joseph (to Ikpo) : Gaba, akwx m g[n'azx.

Subtitle: Pose I'm behind you. Go for this babe. No fear.

The secret of that woman

17. NG. Baby (to Perpetua): Achqkwagh[m ka iwee iwe.

Subtitle: PLS BE ANNOYED

18. NG. Baby (to Perpetua) : O nwee ka a ga-esi n'ahxta g[.

Subtitle: People will disregards you.

19. Perpetua (to Papa Joe) I nwaa anwaa bie m aka n'arx, etie m g[mmanwx

Subtitle: If you touches me! I will show you the stuff am made of.

20. Qkala (to Concord) : Qbxrx ma ego igwe, aka m nwere ego eriri eri, aka m nwere nwa nke mx na g[ga-eri. Qbxrx ma nd[Jip, ha gbaba, ihe m ma bx na ole m nwere zuru m.

Subtitle: If its money i have enough, i don't make noise, i've so much money, i'm not interested in buying huge cars.

21. Perpetua (to Concord): Leenx ihe [na-ama. Lez[a nx m nwanne m, atqkwaanx m atq. Alugbuo m onwe m na di, qd[m ka m bxxr g[.

Subtitle: Look at how beautiful you are, just help me i've suffered in this marriage that i found myself in it.

22. Mama Ifxnanya (to NG. Baby): Nkea bxxr kwa izizi na ikpe azx [hx m n'xzq kwxs[m.

Subtitle: And let me warn you let it be the first and last time you will see me on the road and stopped me.

23. Okorie (to Donatus): Dona, inwekwara ugwu na ndx g[? Etua [d[nqq, xmx agbqghq be any[nine na-eru ka mmiri, onwez[gh[nke [na-ahx?

Subtitle: Dona do you have respect for yourself? So you cannot resort to all these beautiful girls rampaging this village?

A critical look at these subtitles shows

1. Grammatical errors:

i. Orthographic:

In sample (1) brother is written with 't' at the end. In (2), *row* instead of *how*, in (3), *physic* instead of *physique*, in (19), *am* instead of *I'm*.

ii. Wrong use of tenses and verb forms:

In (4), *has* instead of *have*, in (5), *fight* for *fought*, in (10), *ran* for *run*, in (11), *finish* for *finished*, in (18), *disregards* for *disregard*, in (19), *touches* for *touch*, in (22), *stopped* for *stop*.

iii. Wrong use of letter cases:

In nos (3) and (13) small letters are used to begin sentences, in (20), small letter 'i' is consistently used instead of the capital 'I', in (21), bEautiful for beautiful.

iv. Punctuation errors:

A question mark is supposed to come after '**man**' and '**don't**' is supposed to start with a capital letter.

The spelling errors in samples 1 and 2 are due to poor editing. Those in 3 and 19 are due to confusion in the spelling of the homophones on the part of the translator. For the use of verb forms, it is glaring that the translator does not know how to use them. Again, the 's' in singular verbs confuses a lot of English learners that they attribute it to plural nouns. The translator is ignorant of the use of capital letters.

2. **Omission:** This ranges from the omission of some letters to that of a whole idea. In (9) 'me' is omitted leaving the sentence without the indirect object. In (15), a whole idea is omitted where Ikpo was wondering what would have happened if he had grabbed the girl as suggested by Joseph considering how she ran away abandoning her shop when he merely touched her. In (17), 'do not' is omitted thereby giving a contrary idea to that of the source text. Again, 'please' should not be abbreviated to have 'PLS'.

Omission of a whole idea and that of the negative marker 'do not' betrays the original message of the source text. The abbreviation is as a result of the influence of condensed text messages on mobile phones. This and the misuse of letter cases show a total disrespect of the rules of the target language.

3. **Misinterpretation:** Some subtitles show a total misinterpretation of the source text. In (6), 'a disable' is used for 'a dumb', dumbness is one of the disabilities in man and should not be represented by disable which is a general term. In (7), idiot is used to express madness. The original text shows an abusive language which can easily be expressed with 'Don't be silly'. In (8), demonized does not express madness rather to demonize a

person means talking about the person in a way that people think he or she is evil. *'Are you mad or something?'* expresses the original text. In (12), 'ever' in place of 'never' *'I have never been insulted like this'*. In (13), boy is used in place of man, Ikpo in the movie is not a boy but a man. In (23), 'resort' instead of 'choose', resort gives the impression of not having any other possible means of doing something. 'Rampaging' gives the impression of a violent protest while the original text talks about abundance (n-eru ka mmiri) which goes like this, *'Dona, do you have respect for yourself? Can't you choose from the numerous beautiful girls in our village?'*

The misinterpretation does not show that the translator did not understand the message of the source language but this is due to wrong choice of words in rendering the message.

4. **Overcrowding:** Some subtitles show a total lack of summary making skill. The subtitler in trying to represent every detail of the spoken dialogue ended up presenting overcrowded subtitles representing superfluity and this resulted in some cases, to cutting the subtitles into two. Sometimes, subtitles of similar dialogues are presented without expressing the nuances. In (14), the idea of 'Go for this babe' is shown with a sign pointing at the girl. But in (15), Joseph only said 'Gaba! akwx m g[n'azz' and there was actually no girl in that scene and the whole subtitle of (14) is repeated which is unnecessary and probably will leave the audience in confusion. In (20), the only message is the idea of having enough money to take care of the two characters which should have been rendered in this form: *Never mind, I have enough money to take care of both of us.* There is no need repeating oneself. In (21), the sentence should have stopped after 'marriage'. The rest is superfluous and at the same time grammatically incorrect. In (22), the only message is the idea of sounding a note of warning which should have been represented in this form: *'Let me warn you, never stop me on the road again!'*

The overcrowding is as a result of the translator's inability to condense the information of the source text.

From the above recorded errors, suffice to say that the whole subtitles portray the translator's inadequate proficiency in the target language as well as in the art of translating and subtitling. The subtitles represent the work of charlatans.

Conclusion

Language and culture are interwoven. While language is part of culture, the latter is expressed through the former. The two cannot exist in isolation. Promoting the Igbo language and culture is imperative in this era of globalization. The Igbo culture should be preserved in the Igbo language and be transmitted to others in their languages through effective translation. Our knowledge of the western world's languages and cultures should be deployed in championing our own course. The Igbo people should not be lost in our quest to belong to the globalized world. Let not our case be that of Cheikh Hamidou Kane's Samba Diallo in *L'Aventure Ambiguë* (*The Ambiguous Adventure*) who was lost in the search of white man's knowledge and became psychologically wrecked and consequently found himself in a state of cultural ambiguity of which Irele Abiola as quoted by Nwachukwu- Agbada (2000:18) also lamented,

The educated African completely at home in his traditional culture as well as in the European culture is a very rare bird indeed. The vast majority of us moves and lives in a dim region of cultural and linguistic ambiguity.

With all these in mind, the Igbo man should be working towards forestalling the impending danger of extinction which threatens the Igbo race when our language and culture would have no place in the globalization race.

Recommendations

At this point, I deem it pertinent to make some recommendations towards the realization of our desired goal. Our primary concern now should be to look for a possible way of improving the Igbo language so that it can match with others in the globalization race. The Igbo should not let ourselves be intimidated by the colonial mentality that placed African culture and civilization at a very disadvantaged position. The movement of "La Négritude" (the quality or fact of being of black African origin)

which originated among the francophone black Africans led a tough fight to reclaim and assert the cultural identity of the black Africans. Why should we throw away this effort and castigate our own cultural identity?

- First and foremost, The Igbo should be proud of our language which asserts our cultural identity.
- Children should be allowed access to the Igbo language early in life both in school and at home so that they will learn it alongside other foreign languages which will eventually lead them to the realization of life goals. Exposing children at an early age to two or three languages will not do any harm as confirmed by Rita Merhej, a clinical psychologist and specialist in developmental disabilities. She compared the brains of little children to little sponges that suck up languages much easier than adults' brain. Even exposing a newborn to many languages won't hurt, she said, she also stressed that a child, by learning different languages, not learns languages, but also develops other intellectual and social skills. When she was asked about the dangers of exposing a child to too many different languages, she said that there is hardly any (Zawya 2008).
- Let all hands be on deck to develop sufficient Igbo language soft wares and make them available to all.
- Igbo language should be the language of expression of cultures typical of Igbo race and be translated to other languages for foreign audience through subtitling.
- Film/movie producers should engage the services of professional inter-lingual subtitlers so as to make our purpose meaningful.

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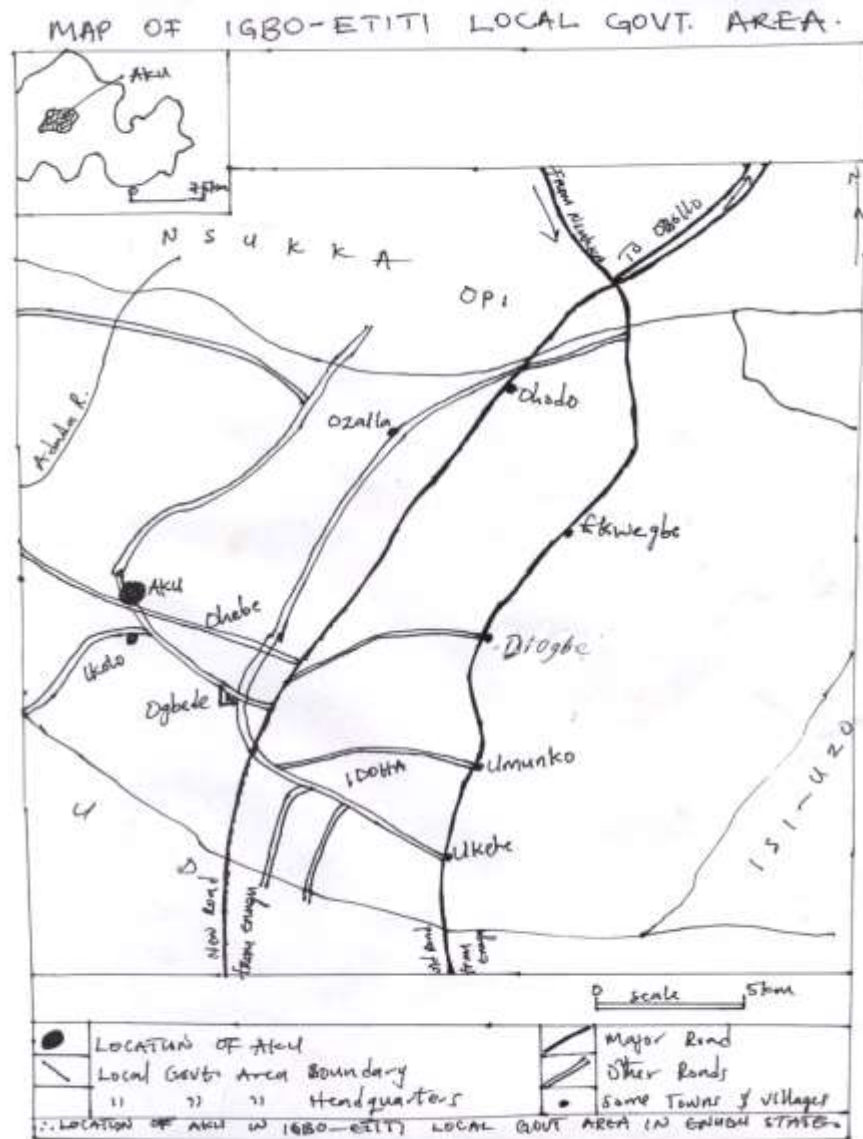
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM ON TRADITIONAL TEXTILE WEAVING TECHNOLOGY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF AKU IN IGBO-ETITI L.G.A. OF ENUGU-STATE

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Abstract

The fragments of textile recovered from the Igbo-Ukwu Archaeological site (Radio-Carbon dated to the ninth century AD) give some idea of the antiquity of Indigenous knowledge system on Traditional textile weaving technology among the Igbo people. Weaving was done in nearly all the communities of the Old Nsukka Division, but of all these communities, Aku community did more widely and popularly known for weaving than any other. From evidence available at present, Aku would appear to have the oldest traditional textile weaving technology in old Nsukka Division. Cloth-weaving is as old as Aku history. The craft is as old as the land. This paper therefore is designed

to bring into perspective the indigenous knowledge acquired by Aku people of Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu state in which the people planted cotton to supply the needs of their looms and did most of their own dyeing themselves. The weaving tradition here (Aku) was very strong and has continued to survive with a measure of its earlier vitality in spite of the serious erosion of its base by colonial impact.



Introduction

The Traditional textile weaving technology among the people of Aku is as old as Aku history. The craft is as old as the land. The traditional knowledge of textile weaving technology in Aku has been a long aged means of the production of a particular local cloth called Ajima. In Aku skills and experience are passed on from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Therefore, knowledge is transferred in a top-down manner through training and extension. Ajima is usually the standard size of cloth woven on the loom. It measures about 1.5 metres in length and 0.6m in width and is normally used as wrapper by young men and women. A full time weaver can complete one Ajima in less than two days.

In the early stage of the 19th century, however, this indigenous textile weaving technology grew so rapidly in Aku community, as it became not only a source of revenue but also a source of the production of Ajima textiles. It was also used for some social and ritual purposes especially now that modern technologies have been introduced into the weaving technology, so that different designs and colours of Ajima cloths can be produced. This paper therefore sets to feature the origin of weaving technology in Aku, raw material sources, weaving methods, dyeing process, types, designs and colours of clothes woven. The Economic importance as well as change in weaving technology are briefly treated. Further historical facts can still be obtained in respect to weaving technology in Aku, since this work does not claim an exhaustive treatment of the topic.

Aku is located in the Western part of what is today known as Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu State. The people inhabit an area lying approximately 60° 40' North of the equator and 70° 18' East of the Green which meridian. Aku is surrounded by chains of hills which are in many places over 428 metres high. This area under study is broken and hilly, except in the extreme East where settlers from Umunko and Ukehe have pushed their farms and houses out into the plains (J. Barmby (1974) p. 2).

One of these chains of hills starts in the Eastern direction at Amogwu Aku and passes in a south-eastern direction, through Nua, Ugwunani to Oshigo in the West. Fortunately, these hills correspondingly have spring waters on them. Such spring waters with their corresponding hills include, "Ase-Nua", "Aturu-Ugwunani" and "Omani-Oshigo". The

second chain of these hills starts from the same direction at Ohemje in a parallel line to the former chains, till it terminates at “Ezugwu-Mgboko” hills, whose main spring water is “Ujere”.

Aku has a tropical climate with two sharp seasons – the rainy and dry seasons. The rainy season which begins around March and ends around October has two periods of maximum rainfall with a break around August. The town experiences a mean annual rainfall of up to 2000mm. most of this rain falls during the wet season. Temperatures are high throughout the year with only small daily and seasonal variations. Temperature ranges between 75⁰F and 85⁰F. The dry season is marked by the great harmattan winds which are hilly and lasts from about November to early March, a period known as “Ohoko Use” in Aku. A climatic condition which favours the growth and production in large quantity cotton wools used in the production of Ajima clothes.

According to conventional Geography, Aku falls within the forest zone of West Africa. This zone was originally characterized by dense perennial vegetation of huge trees, including Alu and Uri trees whose leaves and roots were extensively used as materials for dying of Ajima clothes. This vegetation has however been changed to derived savanna vegetation which has evolved as a result of human disruption of the ecosystem. Only in places as sacred groves (Uhamu), shrines and some water courses as Aturu, Ase, Omani, Adada and Oshaba can relics of tropical vegetation be seen. Elsewhere, the place has a widely spread of hard trees like Akpaka (oil bean tree) “*pentaclethra mucrophylla* Agirinye – *piptadeniastrum africanam*, Okpeye – *Parke clappertoniana*, Ahaba – *Acioa-barteri*, which produced the type of charcoal for iron smelting and smithing. Those hard wood were so thoroughly exploited by the early iron smelters that their tough stumps are quite discernible presently in most Aku iron smelting site (Ezike, 1989 p. 17).

The reconstruction of the early history of the pre-literate societies like Aku presents a lot of difficulties. This is because such societies base their claims on oral traditions and therefore unanimity is least to be expected. Various versions of oral tradition differ in being mainly for internal use within the community and they serve to validate the special primordial rights of the group which preserve them (Jones, 1965).

“Aku Diawa Mgboko Odobo” has no unified tradition of origin from one common eponymous father. Whereas most communities claim that they originated from Igala with Diawa as their founding father, some

assert that they originated from nshi (Nri) citing Ijija, a prince of Eze Nri as their eponymous father. Others claim that they were the autochthonous Aku communities citing their onerous roles as both the political head (Onyishi Aku) and the priests of the ancestral god – Ojiyi Aku to support their claim. It is not to reconcile these conflicting assertions on the Aku origin but it is necessary to note that all Aku traditions refer to Aku as “Aku Diawa Mgboko Odobo”, the name by which people from Nsukka and beyond know Aku today.

Aku as a social-cultural and political group has her own peculiarities and philosophy of life with which she is identified and differentiated from other social groups. These peculiarities of life of Aku people are clearly exemplified in their over all social-political and Economic life as well as religion and belief systems. The peoples’ social dress code were mainly of different design of Ajima clothing materials.

The pre-colonial economic activities of Aku were many and varied and embraced the fields of Agriculture, trade, iron smithing and smelting, weaving, wine-tapping and hunting. Agriculture was the mainstay of Aku economic activities. Preparation for farming, including clearing and burning of bushes was usually done in the dry season. The crops cultivated included yams, cocoyams, beans, maize, melons, Okro, pepper, pumpkin, bambara groundnuts (Okpa) pigeon pea (Mgbungbu, Banana, Orange, kolanuts etc. Other category of plants planted as cash crops included oil bean tree, bread fruit-tree, native mango (ujuru) apple tree and pear tree.

Because of the infertile nature of Aku soil, the people made extensive use of green manure and compost manure for planting. The people also practiced terrace farming to over come the problems of land scarcity created by the hilly nature of the area. Such terrace farming still exists today in Aku. Because of scarcity of land and infertility of the existing ones, up to 50% of Aku great farmers migrated to other fertile areas to acquire fertile lands and established farm settlements, producing cash crops in very large quantities. Such places include “Opanda”, “Adani”, “Daba” and “Ogurugu” all in Uzo-Uwani. Others are at many reserve forests in Benue and Kogi States. Great varieties of local yams were produced, such as “Abi”, “Otikpo”, Egbura, Abala, Adaka, Arafu, Oshioha, Eyeba Obiaru, Ona, and Edu. Varieties of cocoyams (ede) such as Ezi-Ede, Agba-Enyima, Ede Idah and Ede-Eru were also produced.

Aku people were successful farmers. Some produced upwards of three or more barns of yams, each measuring about 18m long and 2 ½m high, containing about one thousand big tubers of yams.

Farm tools used by Aku people includes; Matchets Hoes, Weeding Knives (Mkpu) Tapping knives (umango), Dibbles (Ngwu), Sickles (Nkugoro) etc. The importance of agriculture to Aku people is seen in the feast of Fijioku as celebrated by the people. Livestock farming was also practiced in Aku. It was usual for family heads to keep cows, pigs, goats, rams, dogs, fowls and sheep.

Aku people are very famous traders. Like other towns in the Old Nsukka Division, Aku took part in the local regional or central and inter-regional trades. Aku trade route, in the 19th century stretched from the extreme North of Ejure to the extreme south of Bende with Nkwo Ibagwa as the focal centre of the Nsukka marketing system (Afigbo). This stretch of route covers such commercial towns as Enugu-Ezike, Idoma, Ichi, Ankpa, Ejure, Idah, Adoru, and Obimo. Aku people equally travelled to other communities and towns for trade purpose.

The extended family nature of the people of Aku, coupled with their compactly clustered living patterns, as well as their common tradition and beliefs are the major instrumental factors for the high level of various social lives activities being practiced by the people of Aku. Certain assertions by Aku people such as “Nwanne ka Oyi” – a relation is more endearing than a friend, and “Iwe Nwanne anagi n’ Okpukpu” – the quarrels with a relation donot last are all social adages meant to be used to unite the entire families of Aku as a single unit, hence, the strict adherence to the extended family system.

The back of the social life of Aku people is clearly exemplified in their performance of certain social activities. Such activities include feasts and festivals – “Ama” festival, “Odu-aha” festival, “Ivu-ndu” (outing ceremony or naming ceremony of a child), Fijioku festival, Odo (Masquerade) festival, marriage ceremonies etc. each of these feasts is usually marked with a variety of shows, observable rites and rituals, cultural humour, feasting, dancing as well as exchange of gifts and visits. Other aspects of the social life of Aku people are seen in title taking such as the “Ozo” title taking “Lolo-anyi”, “Obodo” and Ogbajiri title taking. These title taking ceremonies involve a lot of food items, drinks and the expenditure of huge sums of money. In the Ozo and Lolo-Anyi title taking, the main dress code was Ajima clothes, decorated with Ufeyi dye

during the entire period of incubative initiation (Mbuba) which lasts from 'Onwa-Eto' (3rd month of the year) to onwa Ise (the 5th month of the year), about 18 native weeks.

Prior to the coming of the Europeans, the primordial political institution in Aku was "Gerontocracy" which was later modified into village democracy (Oha-Aku). It was a government by the elders (the Onyishis) who met formally and frequently to interpret the "laws and sanctions" handed down from the supernatural world through the ancestors. These elders were recognized not as chiefs but as intermediaries between the dead ancestors and the living, a fact that made the politics of the time purely based on fair play and on the principles of equity, devoid of bickering, abusive words and aggressions. They formed a council of elders known as Oha-Aku". To them consensus was reached by the thorough examination of the truths projected without biases. The quorum for their formal meetings were formed only when all the section – Akibute, Akutara and Ejuna were represented. The decision of Oha-Aku on any matter becomes the final verdict and must be implemented.

Aku women – (Ndiomu Aku) were not the least in Aku politics. Their "Onyonyo muru Nwa ya" syndrome and demonstration to the Divisional Officer at Nsukka in 1924 over the inadvertent conscription of their sons for the railway construction at Eha-Amufu could be equated to the Aba women's riot of 1929 over their suspected multiple taxation. The present political setting and consciousness in Aku is a direct brain child of the series of political evolution of Aku body politics, and typified by the later formation of political parties from the seventies (Okikpe vol. I, 1974).

Apart from Christianity, Aku people have their own traditional religion whose mode of worships are typified in the rituals of homages to their many gods and goddesses. Aku people are traditionally religious by nature. The core traditionalists combine religion in all their lives activities. The view of Mbiti (1975) about Africans is true of Aku people when he says; "wherever the Africans are, there is their religion, they carry it to the fields where they are sowing seeds, harvesting a new crops, he takes it with him to a party or to attend a funeral".

In Aku, religion is taken as an instrument for attaining socio-cultural goals, and forms the strongest element in the traditional background of the people. This is seen clearly in their yearly festivals of Fijioke (New yam festival or feast of harvest), "Ojiyi" (father of gods)

festival, “Onwa-ato” and “Onwa-asaa” (third or seventh months) festivals respectively, in belief that they can through these practices, come in terms with the powers above for the solution of their life problems. In the people’s religious beliefs and practices, the belief in the supreme being (chi), ancestors and mystical powers constitute the main pillars of the religion of Aku people.

Like other Igbo ethnic groups, Aku people worship “Chukwu”, the supreme being. He is called “Eze-chite-oke”, creator of the whole universe. CHUKWU (God) is regarded as an invisible spirit as well as the author of life (Eze Chitoke-Abiama) (Mbiti, 1975). There are also divinities in Aku, such as “Ojiyi”, “Egwunshi”, Offienyi “Ezugwu Mgboko”, “Aturu Ugwunani”, “Omani Oshigo”, Ekumeha Amogbo”, “Ase nua”, “Ujere”, Nshi Aku.-Obie, “Ejiri Umu-Ezike”, Chikere Eguru Umu-Odeke”, etc. These divinities are so dreadful that they are feared and believed to be the powers that look after the villages under them and solve individual problems. Most shrines and the houses of the gods and goddesses are decorated with Ajima clothes.

General background of the area of study

Aku, popularly known and addressed as “Aku-Diewa” is at present in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu State. Aku is almost completely surrounded by chains of hills, thus, it has a very good defensive position at times of inter community war and raids. Aku is almost the largest town in the Old Nsukka Division.

The people of Aku live in a some what compact and clustered form of settlement more than a few metres apart between groups of houses and villages throughout the whole town. The name Aku is a very common term, not only in Igboland but in many parts of Nigeria. In the Igbo context, the word Aku has three popular meanings. These include wealth, palm kernel and the edible ants. There is a town in Awka, the capital of Anambra State that bears the name Aku. There is still another town at Okigwe in Abia State bearing the name Aku. The name Aku is also used to denote the whole of a Yoruba creed who migrated into the Yoruba land from free town (Okikpe vol. I (1974) p. 39).

Aku is equally a designation for some kings in Northern Nigeria, such as the “Aku of Wukari”. In Igala land, most people answer the name Aku. To my own people however, the name has no special interpretation nor has it any historical connection with any town or person that bears

the name. simply put, my people understand the name to mean wealth. The full name is “Aku Diewa Mgboko Odobo” “Diewa Mgboko Odobo” abbreviated to “Diewa” is historically known to be the father of Aku.

There are thirteen villages in Aku, viz, Use, Amabokwu, Mgboko, Umu-Ezike, Ohemje, Offienyi, Nua, Ugwunani, Obie, Amogwu, Oshigo, Orda and Ugwuegede, listed in order of seniority. The first six villages are called “Akibite”, the next four “Akutara” and the last three “Ejuona”. The three sons of Aku, therefore include Akibite, Akutara and Ejuona in that order. The first son of Akibite was Mgboko, who gave birth to ten other children, the second son; Akutara had four sons while the last son Ejuona had three sons.

Origin of weaving technology

The massive production of cotton as raw materials for the weaving of Ajima textile apparels was long established in the socio-economic and cultural foundation of Igbo people. The fragments of textile recovered from the Igbo Ukwu Archaeological site (Radio-carbon – dated to the 9th century AD) give some idea of textile weaving technology among the Igbo (Afigbo, 1985 p. 7).

It is safe to assume that centuries of experimentation and adjustment must have passed before the sophisticated level revealed by the weave of the Igbo Ukwu textile was attained. As a result of insights gained from the Igbo Ukwu excavation it can now be assumed that textile industry in Igbo culture is much older than the period which witnessed the rise of centralized state systems among the Edo and Igala. Also as a result of insights gained from the more extensive and scientific exploration of oral tradition, it is now established that cloth-weaving was more widely practiced in Igboland than the scanty colonial records on the matter wrongly suggest (Afigbo, 1985 p. 12).

Further, the pre-1950 colonial record reveals that the weaving communities of Igboland whose textile industries received even the most casual mention includes Old Nsukka Division. Among the communities which made up the Old Nsukka Division, the village groups more widely known for weaving include, Aku Ibagwa-Ani, Edem Ani, Enuug-Ezike, Okpuje, Nsukka and Obukpa.

More importantly, oral history records that of all these communities, Aku people did more weaving than any other, due to the fact that Aku people were very conscientious, pragmatic and took

everything they did very seriously. A critical analysis of the oral tradition regarding the origin of Aku textile industry shows that weaving is as old as Aku history, the craft is as old as the land, that is, the arts of weaving had a local origin. It might be that Aku people evolved and developed the technology of weaving.

Sources of raw materials

The primary raw materials for the production of Ajima textile is the cotton wool. There has not yet been any substitute nor additive to cotton wool as a primary raw material. Aku textile weavers produce for themselves greater quantity of cotton wool which they need for their weaving work. Evidence from oral sources was emphatic that the cultivation of cotton was taken seriously in Aku, so that raw materials for weaving was not lacking (see fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Showing cotton plant of which the Aku weavers grow in large quantities not only as an inter-crops but also in plantation so that cotton wool will not lacking. The cotton plant produces a natural vegetable fiber used in the manufacture of cotton cloth in Aku. Domesticated cotton for the purpose of producing cloth first came into wide spread use in ancient Aku. Along with wool and silk, cotton continues to be one of the most widely produced in Aku

Presently, agriculturists have joined in very large cultivation and production of cotton wool, either to sell to the weavers or to use for spinning threads which weavers use for their stitching. Aku people grow cotton, not only as inter-crop but also in plantations set aside for this purpose.

Apart from their own source, there are equally supply of cotton from neighbouring towns which also plant cotton in large quantity for the purpose of supplying to Aku people. The best period to grow cotton is between May and June while the best period for harvesting is between the Ama Ibute and Ama Obie which falls between December and early march (Afigbo, 1985, p. 19). After planting, cotton may last about seven months before harvest. The growth of the plant is controlled by proper spacing and constant clipping of the branches to avoid vertical shooting to the skies and encourage horizontal growth.

During harvest, sharp knives are used to remove the bolls with the stable. This is sunned to split-open, producing the cotton fibre which is needed. Further sunning makes the fibre whiter. The harvested cotton contains the seeds as well as some trash. Small quantities are cleansed at a time using hands to get rid of the trash and seed contents, the latter being stored for future planting in Aku (see fig. 2).



Fig. 2: Showing a typical Aku weaver woman “Omade Eloka Okenyi of Umu-Arum, Umu-Ehelete Oshigo, Aku using hands to separate the seeds from the cotton or fibre for the traditional cloth weaving.

Spinning

This is the final process in the transformation of cotton into yarn or thread before dyeing in Aku. The object of spinning and of the processes that precede it is to transform the single cotton or fibres into a cohesive and workable continuous length yarn. Processes that staple cotton fibres go through vary according to the type of cotton /fiber. In Aku, before the age of machinery, spinning was done by hand with the spindle locally called “Ntuturu in Aku and the distaff (see **Fig. 3 - 5**).



Fig. 3: Showing an Aku weaver in the process of spinning her cotton fibre into thread for the traditional cloth weaving. Thus yarn is spun from the mass of combed cotton lint on the “Urua-owu” held above the rotating spindle “Ntuturu”. This is locally known as “Itu-Owu” in Aku.



Fig. 4: Showing the Aku weaver spinning the thread into double threads which is the final spinning. The actual spinning is commenced by bringing the spindle into contact with the thigh and rubbing this spindle “Ntuturu” sharply against the thigh with the open palm of the hand. Three spindles “Ntuturu” are involved in this process, two spindles “Ntuturu” each with thread are raised up above the left hand while the remaining one is being held by the right hand and is into contact with the thigh and rubbing this spindle sharply against the thigh with the gripe palm of the hand with this, the actual spinning has commenced. This is locally known as “ifia-owu” in Aku.



Fig. 5: Showing the Aku weaver in the actual final of finals of spinning the thread. Here the weaver stretches out the actual length that will be spun into the spindle called “Ntuturu”

The latter was a stick or staff upon which a bundle of the cotton or fiber to be spun was loosely bound and it was either held in the left hand or stuck in the belt. The spindle “Ntuturu” was a rod or a stick, usually weighted at the end to make it spin like a top. The spinning action further drew out the cotton or fibers and wound the resulting thread around the spindle “Ntuturu”

The process of dyeing

The Aku craftsmen and women the Aku weaver have a wide variety of domestic sources for dye. The dyeing process in Aku involves the use of dye pots by Aku women. The materials and tools used are pestle and mortar, leaves and barks of many plants and trees which includes sap of old physic nut tree (*Jatropha curcas*) as well as “Alu” leaves (*Lonchocarpus cyenesuensis*) Afigbo, 1985) (see fig. 6)



Fig. 6: Showing “Alu” plant (*Lonchocarpus cyenesuensis*) of which the Aku weavers used for dyeing process only to get Blue dyeing colouration

Blue dyeing is always done by women in Aku. The fresh green leaves called “Alu” are used to produce the blue dye. Soon after picking, the leaves are pounded in a wooden mortar with a heavy wooden pestle. The leaves are quickly bruised and a blackish coloured juice so produced. The stem and leaves turn black soon after picking from the plant. A woman would collect a bundle of “Alu” leaves and work in a shady place, pounding till she has made the quantity she needs. When the leaves are well pounded, a blue-black mass is left in the mortar. This she scoops out with her hands and moulds into balls which are dried after few days of fermentation.

Another raw material, normally life plants such as oil bean tree (*Pentaclethra macrophylla*) “Akpaka”, “Uchakiri”, Iroko “Uroko” tree and mango tree are cut into logs and burnt to recover the ashes are then added to the grounded and moulded “Alu” leaves in a big pot and again kept under the sun to ferment. The solution should be vigorously stirred intermittently for about three days when it will turn dark blue or indigo colour. Dyeing of threads is three times daily – morning, afternoon and evening, each lasting for a period of one hour. This involves also turning the threads in the “Alu-pot” till indigo colour is obtained, after which the threads are dried and ready for use in weaving. When the indigo colour is obtained, the dye is ready for use.

The article to be dyed is totally immersed in the dye. A busy dier works three articles simultaneously. Two articles are left dripping on the draining board of the pots while the third is in the dye. The object to be dyed is held in the liquid for about two minutes, then lifted onto the draining boards. Each article is dipped three or four times, then carefully laid on stones or spread on hangers to dry in the sun.

This process is repeated five or six times until the required colour is obtained. To test the colour, the dier squeezes a small piece of the article between her fingers. During this process the dye pot is kept covered and never stirred. When the dyed articles are first brought out of the dye into the light, they are a greenish colour but soon change to blue. When a deep blue – black is needed, the second Deepings are made in a pot of new dye. Some dyers use tinned chemical dye. Once the dye is in the pot, the process of dyeing is the same as that for real indigo. Red was obtained from camwood (“Uhie” or Ufie) which could be ground on stone and reduced to a pastey state to be mixed with water according to

need. The Aku weavers also prepared a red dye by boiling the bark of a tree called “Okpeye” (see fig. 7)



Fig. 7: Also showing the “Okpeye” plant (“Parke clappertoniana) that the Aku weavers equally used in dyeing process when they want to obtain Red dyeing colouration

The yellow dye was obtained also by grinding a certain wood in the same manner as canwood. Alternatively either wood could be soaked for long periods in water or boiled to extract the required colouration. The Aku weavers did most of their own dyeing themselves (Afigbo, 1985 p. 20).

For Aku weavers, their real dye never rubs off, even when first sold, never fades nor damages the fabrics. They do not grudge over the time spend in its preparation or use and are completely satisfied with their effects. They are proud of their crafts.

Methods of weaving

Cloth production essentially involves the interlacing of a set of horizontal threads (termed weft) with a set of vertical threads (termed warp) in a planned order. This order of planning is also referred to as the design or weaver structure of the particular cloth. The passing of the weft threads between the warp threads to form cloth would mean practically lifting every alternate warp threads and depressing the other. Over a very long period of time weavers have ingeniously devised some means of giving tension to these warp threads and making them to put in a planned regular order, so that the weft could be passed across in one movement. The means so devised is the loom. The loom is known by different names in the different parts of Igboland where it is used. The loom is generally a rectangular framework (Okeke, 1985 p. 44).

Weaving is the process which involves the use of a loom for the production of local textiles. In Aku, a true loom must have heddles which separate groups of warp yarns between which the wefts pass. The practice of weaving can be considered to be characterized by the presence of heddling devices, although finger weaving is not within the context of my discussion.

In loom-weaving, the yarns or strands are of infinite lengths so that the need to add another length is not pressing. The yarns can be spun to any length, limited only by one's patience and the capacity of one's yarn-handling equipment – wrapping, loom beams etc.

In Aku, the local name for a loom is "Ogwere". They are of different types and are normally set up inside the living hut or under the eaves of the roof of the living hut or inside the kitchen, out of the reach of children. The type of loom Aku weavers use is the vertical broadloom

type but with some individual difference in the choice of wood used for the loom frame work and constructional differences (see fig. 8).



Fig. 8: This is a typical Aku loom locally called “Ogwere”. It is a vertical broad handloom. The two uprights are usually of New bouldia Laevis called “Ojinoshi” or “Ogirisi” or India bamboo “Oja” or “Otoshi”. They are dug into the ground inside the living hut.

Indian Bambo (“Oja or Otosi”) or New bouldia leavis (“Ogirisi or Ojinoshi”), though other types of wood may be used. “Oja and “Ojinoshi” are not often prone to insects or ants attack. The upright posts have their bases dug into the ground. The raffia palm beams, one near the top and the other near the bottom, run horizontal to the two upright posts. The top cross bar is lashed to the upright posts with a tough rope “Udo” while the bottom cross bar, with a uniform cross-section connects the two upright posts through holes bored at their lower ends. The bottom cross-bar give tension to the loom (see fig 9a & 9b)



Fig 9a: Showing another different type of loom “Ogwere” the Aku weavers use. Here weaving has already commenced and the cloth being displaced on the loom “Ogwere”



Fig 9b: Showing the locally made Accessories being labelled A – Azi-Ogwere (upright post of the rectangular loom), B – Oholu-Enu Ogwere (Cloth Beam), C – Mbuba-Ani Ogwere (Weaver’s Sword) , D – Oholu-Ani Ogwere (Cloth beam), and E – (bottom bar) how they are being positioning during the process of weaving in Aku.

Between the top and bottom bars are the warp and cloth beams. The warp beam is positioned some centimeters below the top cross bar and parallel to it and lashed to the upright posts. In some cases the weaver bores another pair of holes, one each on the upright posts just under the top cross bar. Through each holes, she suspends a loop of strong cord “Udo”

or “Ukpu” with which she fastens the ends of the warps beam “Oholu-Enu Ogwere” to facilitates adjustments of the warp beam to varying height the upright posts according to the length of cloth desired (Okeke, 1985p. 59).

The cloth beam “Oholu-Ani Ogwere” is positioned a few centimeters just above the bottom bar and is connected to the warp beam by the warping ropes and to the tensioning bar by tensioning cords. The warp and cloth beam called “Oholu-Enu Ogwere” and “Oholu-Ani Ogwere” respectively are made of the raffia palm midrib, locally called “Ogoro”. Some other accessories used are:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------|
| (1) Warp space | - | Mbuba Elu |
| (2) Weaver’s sword | - | Mbuba Ani |
| (3) Shedding stick | - | Mpa Ekwa |
| (4) Warping stick | - | Mbuba |
| (5) Lease rod | - | Eyo |
| (6) Shuttle | - | Ukara |
| (7) Warping stick | - | Mgbakpa |

During the initial process of stretching the warp threads over the warp and cloth beams, two lease rods are introduced to separate the warps. The lease rods are made of flat blades of raffia palm mid – rib with blunt edges. Each lease rod carries the warp threads of one of the two basic sheds, one consisting of all the even numbered threads, the other, the odd numbered ones (see fig. 10).



Fig 10: Showing an Aku weaver in action Madam, Enyivueku Igara of Igara Dimezie, Umu-Ehelete, Oshigo, Aku. Having completed the warping the primary heddle rod is woven in the manner described earlier, the number of heddle rods (shafts) required on a loom varies according to the intricacy of the patterning planned by the weaver.

The friction caused by the rods keep the threads from crossing and in position for the warping order. After warping the lease rods are pushed up, close to the warp beam. Behind the lease rods, alternate warp threads are carefully selected and lifted by the finger and simultaneously a flat thick wooden rod is inserted under the raised warp threads across the width of the warp. The opening created by the separation of the raised and lowered warps by this rod is the shed, and the rod itself, shed rod locally called “Mpa”. This shed-rod or “Mpa” remains permanent in its position till weaving is completed (see fig. 11).



Fig. 11: *Showing during the process of warping how the Aku weavers position the lease rods OR showing how the lease rods are being positioning by the Aku weavers during the process of warping.*

Since the fundamental forms of weaving in Aku operates on the principle of opposites, a device for counter shedding becomes necessary. To achieve this, the warps under the shed-rod are attached by means of a string forming loose loops around each of them, to a pair of thin flexible reel lying on top of the warp behind the shed rod. This device is the heddle locally called “Eyo” which when pulled produces a counter shed. The method of introducing the weft thread alternately into the shed

formed by the shed-rod “Mpa” and that formed by the heddles “Eyo” causes the warps to interlace with the wefts to form cloth.

A shuttle, locally called “Ukara” is slightly longer than the width of the warp for easy picking from one hand to other through the shed

For beating in every newly inserted wefts into the fell of the cloth, a batten is employed. This is made of strong wood, usually from camwood. It is made flat and smooth to enable it enter into an open shed and slide through across the width of the warps (**see fig. 12**).



Fig. 12: *Showing how the shuttle (Ukara) is being picking by the Aku weavers during the process of weaving in Aku. Here the shuttle locally called “Ukara” is being warp from right hand side and then to be picking from the left hand side through the shed.*

It is slightly longer than the width of the warps to enable the weaver hold it at both ends during the action of beating in the wefts. Both edges are blade-like but blunt to enable it reach deep into the cloth fell. It is also referred to as the weavers sword because of its sword-like shape. It is also used in keeping open the shed by setting it in edge between the

parted sets of warp. When in this position, the weaver's hands are both free to introduce elongated wefts-carrying shuttle locally called "Okara" with one hand through one end of the open shed, pulling it right across the shed from the opposite end to insert each pick (see fig 13).



Fig. 13: Showing the Aku weaver operates on the principle of opposites. Here the shuttle "Ukara" is being warp from left hand side and then to be picking from the right hand side through the shed.

Most often, a wooden instrument locally called in Aku "Mgbakpa" is employed. This is as long as the warp is wide and has regular indentation along its whole lengths into which the warp threads are made to enter in order to space out. In the absence of the warp spacer, warp and weft would adjust themselves to each other naturally and skip together with the result that in the fabric, threads could easily draw apart or pile up, thereby destroying the appearance aesthetically (see fig. 14).



Fig. 14: Showing the Aku weaver in actual action of beating in every newly inserted wefts into the fell on the cloth. This process is repeated till the warp threads are use up and the weaving process is completed.

As a tensioning device, a straight wood is firmly nailed new the base of the two upright posts below the cloth beam and parallel to it. The cloth beam is linked to this bottom bar with strong cords locally called “Ukpu” or “Udo” for tensioning.

Weaving starts from the bottom and progresses upwards and when it gets to a point where the length of the warp threads between the woven cloth and the warp beam is too short to allow easy shed formation, weaving is stopped.

The tensioning cords “Ukpu” or Udo are loosened to slack the taut warps and fabric so that the woven parts is manually pulled under the cloth beam to the back of the loom while simultaneously more warp lengths are lowered from the top. This process is repeated till the warp

threads are use up. The average length of woven clothes is about two metres. The yarns largely sued are locally hand spun and dyed indigo.

Types of cloths woven in Aku

Aku people weave only one kind of cloth. This is the traditional cloths and they are of three types: They are:

- (a) Uja – for tying babies at the back, Ugodu as male pants
- (b) Mbubu - As wrapper
- (c) Okpurukpu – for funerals and mourning period

“Mbubu” are produced in strips, often in white and indigo (dark blue) colouring order using locally spun and dyed yarns. The “Mbubu” cloths are used as lion cloth, towels, work cloth, wrapper, easy chair cloth “Ngada-Ekwa” and sleeping cloth depending on their sizes.

“Okpurukpu” is also woven with locally spun yarns but in this case, the yarns are not dyed. “Okpurukpu” are usually woven in solid dark blue and very heavy. The cloth is generally used for masquerading, in funerals and in performing certain traditional rite such as burial rites (see fig. 15).



Fig.15: Showing a masquerade “Manwu” completely dressed in the traditional textile woven clothing, weaving brightly coloured cloth “Ajima” and at his hands are wharp which it uses to scare people away.

Generally, Aku weavers produce two designs of cloths:

- (i) Oja: this is narrow in width and serves miscellaneous purposes including work – cloth, towel, easy chair cloth (Ngada-Ekwa) and for tying babies on the back by nursing mothers.
- (ii) Ajima: This is usually the standard size of cloth woven on the loom “Ogwere”. It measures about two metres by sixty centimeters and normally used as wrapper by young women and men. A full time weaver can complete on “Ajima” in two days or less.

The economic importance, problems and prospects

The economic importance of weaving technology in Aku lied in the fact that weaving technology served as source of employment, mostly for women, yielded a big revenue for Aku weavers and provides greater majority of our population with Ajima textile clothes, according to their needs. In the old days, greater majority of our young ladies and men were employed in the weaving technology as the main source of their living. Since they had very good market for their product, they wove in large quantity sold and made big money. As at the time, more than 60% of the total annual revenue for an individual weaver came from weaving. Further only few other cloths were bought from neighbouring towns, the rest cloths worn by Aku people were produced by Aku weavers.

The problems of weaving technology in Aku lied in the defeat which it suffered from other industrial and commercial activities in Aku. The sudden wave of change by Aku weavers from weaving to Agriculture and Trade automatically slowed down the growth of the arts of weaving. This major factor helping to depress indigenous textile weaving industry in Aku was as a result of the growth fast of western fashions textile industries and as well as the competition of European fabrics and fashions. These fabrics were not only cheaper and more fanciful but were imported in such large quantities that they simply swamped the products of the local handlooms. In this situation the local weavers came to be despised as dull and too heavy for easy wear (Afigbo, 1985 p. 31).

Further, lack of proper market, inconsistency in the procurement of raw materials, poor storage facilities, lack of interest by men as well as

increasing taste for modern textiles all constituted hindering forces to the growth of traditional textile weaving industry in Aku.

In the light of these, the prospect of traditional textile weaving technology in Aku was bleak. General interest has fallen to hopelessness. This industry may no longer have a thriving ground in Aku.

Change in weaving industry

The traditional Igbo loom as well as the weaving industry were deficient in many respects. Modern technology has introduced modern horizontal treadle loom as well as modern weaving equipment. In the modern treadle hand loom, a contrivance known as the reed is employed. This consists of narrow strips of metal arranged in a vertical position above the loom so that it oscillates freely, making the reed to pound every new weft in the shed into the cloth fell evenly across the entire width of the warp. The treadle loom is a great improvement on the traditional loom type as far as increase in rate of cloth production is concerned.

The weaving loom today has been completely mechanized and some are so sophisticated that the need for man power in the weaving industry has been reduced. In the recent times, the innovations and contrivances in the mechanized power loom has attained such phenomenal heights that the power loom appear to have all the answers to the problems saving time and labour.

In the light of the above, it would appear that the need for traditional loom for cloth making is meaningless. This is not so because the type and quality of cloths produced with out traditional loom remains unique and spectacular and satisfies the need of the people. Various fabrics of great beauty are being produced with the traditional looms without much mechanical aid and yet producing results of great craftsmanship in contemporary traditional cloths which distinguishes themselves from the modern mass-produced, machine-made, factory cloths, it is therefore, worth while to modernize the traditional loom to take account of its limitations while maintaining the uniqueness of the product.

Conclusion

In conclusion this work, it is necessary to state that there were some difficulties in tracing the historical origin of weaving technology in Aku. Although, a fair attempt has been made in this respect exact date(s) and manner of origination were not on records. However, oral history reveals that the technology is as old as Aku, being safe therefore, to assume that the technology has a local origin.

Aku people were very conscientious and serious minded because during the boom of weaving industry, Aku people were able to supply all the necessary raw materials and labour needed for weaving. Aku weavers were artistic and crafty, judging from the aesthetic nature of cloth they produced which yielded them fat revenue.

Weaving industry in Aku, though has been prosperous, has its own set backs. Foreign competition, presence of white kola jobs, western civilization, flare for foreign and cheaper cloths all slowed down the development of weaving industry and so renders its prospect bleak.

It is important therefore, to revive and modernize the weaving industry in all the sub regions of West Africa where the technology was developed before so that it will thrive as our own local industry.

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THE “EBI” AND “IRI MBUBE”: INDIGENOUS METHODS OF CRIME CONTROL AMONG THE MBANO AND EZIAMA- MBAISE OF IGBO LAND.

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Abstract

*Indigenous African Societies have distinct methods and processes of crime control. These methods, however, differed from one society to another. Different societies evolved various methods that were sacred and consistent with the native laws, customs, traditions and cultural norms and beliefs. Through these methods, especially in pre-colonial Africa, cases relating to murder, rape, stealing and the likes, were almost unheard of. The penalties for such crimes, if committed, were sure and known, most times resulting to death or banishment. Colonialism, the ungodly contact between African culture and Western culture in most part, through Christianity and Western education, and Western court system and institutions, disrupted the effectiveness and workability of most, if not all the indigenous methods of crime control in Africa. With the introduction of Western methods, crimes seem to have been on the increase in many African societies and Igbo land in particular. Among the Mbano and Eziamam-Mbaise of Igbo land, there were indigenous methods of crime control known as; **EBI** and **IRI MBUBE**. These methods were effective in crime control when compared with the Western methods. This paper attempts a historical examination of the indigenous methods of crime control in Africa (Igbo land) as against the western methods. It argues that, the substitution of some indigenous methods of crime control in Africa with those of the Western methods, accounts for the increase in crime witnessed in many Igbo societies today.*

Introduction

The peoples of Africa have their indigenous ways of life, one that is distinct to them and expressed in a culture pure and undiluted before the contact with external cultures. The contacts were mainly through, trade, religion, education, legal and social systems. The tradition, custom and norms as identified in Africa, differ from one African community to

the other. Besides, the integration of these various aspects manifest in the cultural patterns of each society. For the Igbo, the cultural pattern that emerges is found in their traditional social structures. They also manifest through the institutions of the family, religion and economic pursuits. In this sense, they could be termed communalistic (Ilogu, 1974:22). Obligations among the Igbo are regulated more by the demands of moral codes, while tradition and custom are by the exercise of individual's moral judgment and conscience (Ilogu, 1974:22). Within the Igbo enclave, social expectations and shared values are commonly observed and the social ethos of the village jealously guarded and upheld religiously by accepted practices and prohibitions of the community. The common belief shared by the Igbo emphasis rigid morals. The rigid moral guides the custom, tradition and culture at large. They are in tandem with the moral code and belief system.

In addition, certain Igbo words connote different things in the Igbo cosmology and determine the attention accorded to such words. The names used to identify a particular crime, shows the gravity of the offence and penalty it attracts. Igbo words like *Aru* (abomination or pollution) or *Nso Ala* (behaviour contrary to laws of the land, that is, the earth goddess or deity), are used when speaking of contraventions against approved social and religious norms (Ilogu, 1974:22). There are two main kinds of customs: customs that pertain to morality and those that are purely social and cultural. All the codes of morality are nearly always in the form of prohibitions sanctioned by the earth goddess (*Ala*), and communicated from by the dead ancestors (*Ndichie* or *Ndebunze*) to the community. It is common knowledge that the Igbo respect the earth goddess and many other deities. There is also the strong belief that the goddess, the ancestors and a person's *chi* guide people's daily activities. It then follows that any one who breaches any part of the *Omenani* is punished by the gods. Tradition prescribes the various sacrifices that must be performed to reduce or forestall the evil effects of such offences or crimes, or else, the spirit of the ancestors and *Ala* would plaque the society. *Omenani*, therefore, becomes the means by which traditional Igbo society enforces conformity (Ilogu, 1974:22).

However, the methods adopted by the Igbo are determined by each society and are intrinsic in the culture of the people. Afigbo (1981:1) writes that, Igbo society and culture enjoyed basic patterns of cosmological and social idea. These patterns are expressed in the

collective way the people tackled crime communally. The Igbo placed high premium on moral standard before the contact with western ideas. This accounts for the low level of crime which existed at that material time. This claim stems from the fact that, in many pioneer Igbo literature, one could hardly find chapters that discusses crime and methods of crime control in historical perspective. Much was not known about crime in the pre-colonial era. Part of the reason could be found in the assertion that:

...not only did the Igbo not know a literate culture until the imposition of European rule, but in addition, their land lay outside the areas traversed by early travelers, Arab or European, until a little over a century ago. The result was that the development of Igbo culture, throughout the millennia before 1900 went undocumented (Afigbo, 1981:2).

However, there has been continued effort by scholars at reconstructing the pre-literate history of the many dying Igbo cultures in recent times. It is in line with the ongoing historical reconstruction that this paper seeks to align itself in bridging the lacuna in knowledge. This neglected past needs urgent and adequate attention. The reason is to have the customs and traditions threatened by extinction properly documented, lest they are interred with the bones of the dead. Again, it could be claimed with much cogency, that of all African ethnic nationalities of about their numerical size and general dynamism, the Igbo are the least studied, the people we know the least about the main landmarks in their cultural evolution (Afigbo, 1981:2).

The people of Mbano and Ezianya-Mbaise being integral part of the larger African society and Igbo land in particular evolved different culture patterns. The indigenous methods of crime control have remained for too long at the background of history. The continuous increase in crime rate in most Igbo societies brings to one's consciousness, the need to re-examine the effectiveness of the indigenous methods of crime control against the western methods. There are many and varied methods, but the paper focuses on the indigenous methods of crime control used by the Mbano and Ezianya- Mbaise known as the **EBI** and **IRIMBUBE**. These methods had existed prior to colonial rule and even lasted far into the heart of the colonial and post-colonial era. To this we shall return anon.

The people and their environment

Igbo land is a territory in southern part of Nigeria, protected by such great land marks as the Cross River near the foot of the Cameroon Mountain in the east, the Kukuruku hills in the west, the Benue River off the Jos Plateau in the north, and the great Atlantic Ocean at the Bight of Biafra in the south. Most importantly, Igbo land lies on the plain near the delta of the famous Niger River. (Isichei, 1977:100) It is not true that Igbo land cover only those military dictated states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. (Ugwu 2004: xiii). But Igbo land includes the states of Abia, Anambra, some parts of Benin, Delta State, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and the larger part of what is today called River State. Obi-Igbo (Igbo heart land) is a name in Port Harcourt, and in fact, Port-Harcourt by commission of 1952, was confirmed and regarded as Igbo land. (Ugwu, 2004: xiii). However, it is not the intention of this paper to bore the reader with issues or arguments on Igbo history or its landmass as such, but to provide an insight into the geographical location of the people. Mbano and Eziamma-Mbaise live within the enclave so described. Precisely, they are found within Imo State.

Nonetheless, the people of Mbano and Eziamma-Mbaise are located within the twenty-seven (27) local government areas that make up Imo state. The geographical area known and called Mbano today, embraces two local government councils: Isiala-Mbano and Ehime Mbano respectively. They occupy an expanse of land of more than 205.30 square kilometers. Mbano is located approximately between latitude 5 and 7°N, of the equator and longitude 7 and 8°E of the Green which Meridian (Mbalisi, 2008:9). The people are predominantly farmers. In pre-colonial times, they had belief in ancestral spirits. More so, Eziamma-Mbaise is located within Ahiazu- Mbaise local government area of Imo state. One important point is that, Eziamma-Mbaise people are the closest neighbours of Ehime Mbano.

Historically, they claim their origin and migration from Mbano. But more importantly, they share a common ancestry and belong to the Isu-ama clan of Igbo land. Afigbo (1981:12-13) asserts thus; in the tradition of the Isu-ama Igbo (meaning the Isu who had gone abroad-made up of Mbama, Mbieri, Ikeduru, Osu, Ehime, Ugboma, Mbaise) of the Ohuhu, Ngwa and many Cross River Igbo groups, indicate that they migrated eastwards from the general area of Orlu. It then follows that

Mbano and Mabise people are culturally and historically related. In all, the link helped to impose on this whole region, a measure of cultural unity that deserves further study and emphasis today. Borrowing a leaf from Afigbo, (1987:73) it has become necessary to highlight those issues, institutions that helped the people maintain an almost crime free society, especially in Igbo land, using Mbano and Mbaise as case studies. Like in Ezianya, Umueze II, Ife, Umuoparanume communities among many others

As adherents to a common religion and belief in ancestors as, when a person dies, he enters the spirit world where he has more powers than before; and is still regarded as a member of his family or clan; he is believed to use his position and new powers to help and or punish his people. (Fuller; 2001:58) The belief in the power of the ancestors to help or punish the people strengthened the effectiveness of the Igbo indigenous methods of crime control.

The concept of crime and crime control

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 7th Edition, defines crime, as; activities that involve breaking the law; an illegal act or activity that can be punished by law; an act that you think is immoral or is a big mistake. Crime has been one of the most serious problems facing many societies. A crime is simply an act committed or omitted in violation of law. A law is formal social rule that is enforced by a political authority. (Zastrow, 2004:286). Crime also is defined as, those acts that violate certain strongly held values and norms. Not all behaviours that violatenorms are prohibited by law: in some cases, informal processes such as social disapproval regulate norm violation (Zastrow, 2004:286). What constitutes a crime in one society may possibly not be so not in another. Hence, different individuals commit different crimes at one time or the other either in secret or otherwise.

The Western society evolved methods, and institutions of crime control. The main method is through the penal system. This reflected Western intellectual traditions, world-view, expectations, values and rationality embedded in Western culture. Crime control through the western court for instance, is dependent on a number of factors for its effectiveness. Parrillo, Stimson and Stimson, (1989:127-158) explains thus:

Everyone at one time or another has violated some laws. Whether a violator becomes a convicted offender depends on a number of factors, including whether he or she is arrested, how forcefully the prosecuting attorney wants to present the case how effective the defense attorney is, whether there are witnesses and how the offender presents himself or herself in court.

Furthermore, with thousands of laws in the books, police, prosecuting attorneys, and judges have considerable discretion over which laws to ignore, which to enforce, and how strongly to enforce them. This discretionary power offers many opportunities for criminal justice officials to choose whom to arrest and whom to release. The act of applying the law often involves issues of political power and favourable treatment for certain groups and classes. Because power usually resides with white middle and upper classes, the poor and minority groups are often (intentionally and unintentionally) treated more harshly. For example authorities are substantially less vigorous in enforcing white-collar crime than they are in enforcing vagrancy laws... (Kornblum and Julian, 2004: 143-154). This extract explains the nature of crime control used by the Western societies. Obviously, the court attorneys determine which crime or case to prosecute, and in what way, and to what extent an offender is prosecuted. There is the undeniable evidence of selective prosecution in line with the class distinction prevalent in the society. The western methods no doubt, live a lacuna in its effectiveness. It could then be argued that offenders in this western method could easily evade judgment and punishment for the crime committed against, man, society or the land. Again, the moral injunctions within the Christian ethics provide for mercy and grace of God and are therefore less rigid. Christianity comprehensively prescribed methods of controlling crime by its adherents. The biblical injunction prescribes prayer, dialogue and forgiveness for one another; and abhors vengeance (Nnadozie and Uzugbunam, 2010:109). Through the biblical injunctions, grievous offenders could be set free on the plea for mercy or even through state pardon during some recognized national days like, Independence Day celebration and so on. In such situations, the tendency for such freed people to return to crime or even commit more crimes is not entirely ruled out. Some offenders could also stay out of crime.

Igbo society is distinct from the Western society. The belief system is also distinct in all ramifications. Crime control methods evolved by most African societies particularly, the Igbo, are demonstrated in their belief system. The level of morality is so rigid that it is often times seen in the light of “an eye for an eye” or in a retributive sense by societies and cultures outside Igbo land. The moral code of the Igbo, commonly spoken of as *omenani* defines the various aspects of behaviours and social activities that are approved, while at the same time indicating those that are prohibited. (Ilogu, 1974:124) There are certain words or phrases employed by the Igbo to describe activities that could be moral or immoral. A man is branded as *Onye uru-ala, or onye aruru ala* literally, the phrase means one that pollutes or abominates the land, but in effect, it is used to describe a person of wicked intention or having the tendency to crime. (Ilogu, 1974:124) The moral code of the Igbo-*omenani* is believed to have been handed down from the earth goddess and ancestors from time immemorial, the prohibitions- *nso ala* seen to predominate. Like all social and religious injunctions, the Igbo code with its many “thou shall not,” include both purely moral demands of religious nature as well as the purely social, political and economic considerations (Ilogu, 1974:125). These methods in Igbo land, does not respect the status or title of the offender. The Igbo as indicated earlier believe in communality rather than individualism. The result is the rigid and sacrosanct nature of the Igbo moral code. The methods of crime control in Igbo society are not commodious as the Western method for offenders to easily escape judgment and punishment. There is the Igbo emphasis on the double nature of crime, the physical and the spiritual aspects intrinsic on the “thou shall not” replete in the indigenous method of crime control. Some crimes considered generally among the Igbo include *inter alia*:

- a) Stealing yam either from the barn or from the farm.
- b) Homicide
- c) Incest and Murder
- d) Suicide especially by hanging
- e) Poisoning someone else to take his life secretly
- f) Theft of domestic fowls especially a hen in her hatching pot where it can easily be taken away with the eggs.
- g) Theft of any kind by an *ozo* titled person (Ilogu: 1974:125).

There are other forms of crime too numerous to be mentioned here. The fact is that the heavy penalties meted to offenders, deterred people from committing crime. The crime 'rape' seem not be originally associated with the Igbo. The argument in the writer's opinion is based on the fact that there is no exact Igbo word for 'rape' like in; steal-*ohi*, kill- *gbue*, cry- *akwa*, death- *onwu*, sex-*iko* andsoon. The only way to explain rape probably is in a phrase or sentence form, such as rape- *Ikwaso nwanyi iko nike*. This shows that the crime –rape may be said to be alien to Igbo land and offenders are usually not spared. Besides, most of the indigenous methods and institutions of crime control involves the use of strong magical powers and incantations performed by native doctors – *dibia ogwu* or *dibia afa*–diviners. By this arrangement, offenders could hardly escape judgment and punishment. The Igbo implicit belief in the reality of the invisible world meant that many Igbo communities put their main reliance in supernatural modes of defense and crime control (Isichei, 1976:123). For instance, the *EBI* and *IRI MBUBE* methods used by the Mbano and Ezianya- Mbaise are dependent on supernatural forces. In traditional Igbo society, crime was highly regulated not through formal institutions, but through traditional method founded in their culture and traditions (Nnadozie and Uzuegbunam, 2010:107).

The *Ebi* and *Iri Mbube* methods of crime control.

The *EBI* was an indigenous method of crime control used by the Mbano people, while *IRI MBUBE* was the method used by the Ezianya Mbaise of Igbo land. Regrettably, these two indigenous methods of crime control among the people are extinct. These methods may have been borrowed from neighbouring communities, the fact of the matter is that, they originated from Igbo land. The emphasis on the oneness of the Igbo clan, or what Afigbo referred to as the "Isu ama clan" provides for cultural borrowing among the distinct cultures in Igbo land. The *ABI* and *IRI MBUBE* were said to be borrowed from Umunoha and Okrika in Rivers State respectively.

The Ebi, meaning and process

Iwunze Bernard explained in his native tongue that;

“Ebi bu onunu dibia kere eke, gbaa ya na-ibo, kowe ya n’elu. Ubochi aga-acho ihe furuefu, ma obu agugoo, ma obukwanu onye mere ihe ojoo, dibia ewere ya bia. Tinye ya ogba-akaari oshi eji akpali Ebi. Ebi amaghi ijiji anya kporo”

Meaning:

Ebi is a solution prepared by the native doctor tied and hung in a place. On the day of search for missing item or arguments on crime, he would come with it. It does not respect any person. (My translation)

Iwunze, an eye witness and a participant in the *Ebi* method explained that, “*Ebi* is a device made by native doctors used in the pre-colonial, colonial and far into the post-colonial times to detect crimes such as, stealing, child exchange in the womb (Igbawo nwa) in Mbano”

Another eye witness and also a participant, Nwogu, Godfrey described *Ebi* as, “a composition of many consolidated herbs, roots and other materials of magical significance, combined and empowered by **ogba-aka ari orji** to function in a particular way. It functions with the help of the ancestors and spirits to detect any crime in the land”. Again, Onyirimba Godson speaks of the *Ebi* as “as a method of detecting crime in Ehime Mbano that involves the use of a specially prepared concoction by medicine men- *dibia ngborogwu* and when empowered by a liquid mixture called **agbo-aka ari orji**, has the ability of detecting stolen and hidden items or any other crime in the land no matter who or where it was kept. It involves a lot of strong magic powers with the *dibia* invoking the ancestors and the gods. It was sure and fearful in detecting crime.”

From the foregoing, the *Ebi* is spoken of as a preparation by a native doctor, or *dibia* that was magically empowered and has the ability to detect crime and its offenders. *Ebi* is not mindful of whether the crime was committed in the open or in secret. It has the ability to detect the offenders, through supernatural powers or forces.

Furthermore, the process of the *Ebi* is both simple and straight forward. There is consensus from amongst the informants as thus:

After the dibia had prepared the Ebi, he awaits the day it would be applied. In the event of any crime, the dibia selects an energetic young man, who is given the Ebi. The dibia applies a liquid extraction called ogba-aka ari orji and performs some incantation to empower it. The liquid causes the young man bearing the Ebi to forcefully run to the direction as he is led by the Ebi. The Ebi moves him through the bush, stream, thatched fences, until he discovered the offender and or stolen items. In the case of a murder and secret burial it reveals the murderer and the secret burial place. While in the process, the bearer sustains no injury as he marched on thorns and other sharp objects because he was fortified by the Ebi. The bearer would not stop until he found the item and or the offender. The bearer of the Ebi falls to the ground as the search was complete. The dibia disconnects the bearer from the spiritual forces by performing some rituals. The offender was handed over to the community for punishment. Even where the offender goes into self exile, the item was recovered. (This information was provided by, Iwunze, Nwogu and Onyirimba).

Again, Iwunze stated that, some of the prominent but latedibia that prepared the *Ebi* includes, Njoku of Umunakanu, Onuoha Agwu, Nwazode of Umunakanu, Joseph Atashie and Nathaniel Ehosiem. The last of them Nathaniel Ehosiem died in 2008.

There was a common known taboo associated with the *Ebi*. According to Nwogu, “a man that has suffered dog bite does not carry the *Ebi*. The dog is like a spirit, and if it bites anybody, the poison is believed to be in the person’s blood, and the poison prevents the *Ebi* from been empowered. Again a woman does not bear the *Ebi*. Besides the *Ebi* has a multipurpose function. Apart from crime detection, it also detected grave sites of people buried a long time ago who were believed to be attacking its relatives, *Mba-muo* (evil attack) in the land’’. There are instances where they have been effectively employed in a large scale search of a

stolen transformer. In the 1980s, Iwunze who carried the *Ebi* informed that, ‘‘a transformer was stolen and buried in the ground for over two years, and it was discovered through the *Ebi* in Ehime. This was during the time of Ike Nwachukwu, the then military administrator of Imo state, who retrieved the transformer from.’’ Another instance was in 1984, a motor cycle belonging to a teacher, Mr. Eziefule Benedict from Ibeme Ugiri in Isiala Mbano was stolen and buried in the ground, and it was through the *Ebi* that it was discovered. ‘‘*Ebi* does not make mistakes,’’ Nwogu asserted. Onyirimba Godson maintained that, ‘‘the punishment for offenders mainly in the pre-colonial time was death by hanging or banishment from the community. Then, the fear of death by hanging or being buried alive and or banished deterred people from crime.’’ This culture and tradition of the people died with the introduction and growth of Christianity in Igbo land which saw the practice as idol worship. ‘‘Many people were discouraged from learning the process because of Christianity and Western education. Again, the death of most of the medicine men that performed the *Ebi* contributed to the decline and extinction of the *Ebi*. People steal and commit all sorts of crime and buy freedom from the court these days’’, Onyirimba concluded. It would appear that when the western court was introduced into Igbo land, it challenged the processes used by the people in crime control. Despite the resilience exhibited by most of these traditional methods of crime control, western systems had enormous influence on the Igbo methods. The result is the substitution of the indigenous methods with the western methods. The *Ebi* for instance, gave way to the western court.

Iri Mbube, meaning, and process

IRI MBUBE was the indigenous method of crime control among the Mbaise at large. It was also applicable in some other communities like Ife, Umuokirika, Obohia, and Oru. The focus of this paper is Eziamam Mbaise. *IRIMBUBE* literally means, ladder climbing. But it was not just ordinary ladder climbing. Okoro Peter Ogu describes *IRIMBUBE* as ‘‘the traditional way of crime detection among the Eziamam Mbaise people. It is seen as ladder climbing, but it has some supernatural forces that guide it. It is a method that exposes those that committed crimes of various degrees like stealing of any kind, murder, rape and many other crimes against the land.

In a similar manner, Onyirimba Godson speaks of the method thus,

“*IRIMBUBE* was a tradition among the Eziamma-Mbaise, (our next-door neighbours). It was a way of detecting crime and fishing out criminals in the community. The process involves strong *dibi* who performs the *IRIMBUBE* because it involves magical forces.”

The process *IRIMBUBE* involves ladder climbing by all the suspects and youths in the town. The aim of involving all the youths as suspects was to ensure that secret offenders were discovered. However, the suspects were made to sit in a secluded place on the *Eke* Eziamma market. *IRIMBUBE* was usually done on the *Eke* day, and at the market square. The reason was to ensure that offenders were exposed and punished publicly to deter people from committing crime. Innocent people who climbed the ladder and sat on it, declared their innocence, Ogu asserted. Ada Nwanyanwu who witnessed *IRI MBUBE* in Eziamma exhibited savvy when she stated without equivocation,

“...in the days when *IRI MBUBE* was used in detecting crimes in Eziamma. There were hardly cases of crime because offenders were hung alive on the tree or banished from the land. In some cases, offenders were made to perform heavy sacrificial cleansing with local cow, goat and other costly items for minor offences. Offenders were only integrated back into their families and folks after the sacrificial cleansing had been performed. People feared death and banishment, some stayed away from crime. But since, Christianity was introduced; crime has become a routine in the society. People commit all sorts of crimes and pray for forgiveness in the church, only to return to crime the next day”.

Given the situation, it could be argued that the rigid nature of the Igbo moral code was largely responsible for the effectiveness of these indigenous methods of crime control. Besides, the Igbo methods were economical because the process was communally performed. The western system involves huge spending at the court accompanied by protracted court procedures and selective prosecution. The indigenous methods spared no crime offender and it was devoid of “sacred cows”.

Nonetheless, the overwhelming influence of Colonialism remains largely responsible for the collapse of the *EBI* and *IRIMBUBE*. The culture conflict that greeted Christianity and Western culture on one hand, and African traditional religion and belief system on the other hand, created a situation of the survival of the fittest. Western culture was said to have influenced and altered Igbo culture, had introduced alien systems into the society. The British penetration by military force, and the consequent breakdown of law and order resulting from the weakening of the mechanisms of preserving internal order, which in turn created a climate of fear and insecurity. (Ekechi, 1972:25)

Consequently, there were 'good' objects removed from Igbo culture and 'bad' things or ideas or practices introduced into Igbo land from an alien culture. The new introductions were transferred using the planned and unplanned processes. In the case of planned process, the cultural intruders actually nursed the intention to introduce their culture into an area. Hence, they plan for it (provide money for it, arrange personnel etc) and then execute it. On the other hand, the unplanned transfer of objects of culture takes place without a deliberate attempt by those whose culture is being transferred (Ojiakor 2007:49). The result again, is the struggle for supremacy between Western culture implements and those of African culture. This is largely responsible for the collapse and subsequent extinction of most of the indigenous methods of crime control in Igbo land. The Iri Mbube method was a victim of the struggle for cultural survival.

Summary and Conclusion

The paper has been able to demonstrate that the people of Africa had distinct and undiluted culture before the contact with Western culture. African culture was enshrined in the religion, norm and value, and belief system. There were distinct ways through which the African reacted to activities and deeds in the society. The effectiveness of the methods described in the paper determined how crime was checked. Igbo society was regulated through rigid moral codes. These moral codes guided societies in the formulation of laws and policies that governed them. They determined the nature of punishment meted on offenders or victims of crime. Most times, the punishments results to death or banishment. The involvement of ancestral or supernatural forces provided that offenders hardly evaded judgment.

Moreover, laws in pre-colonial Igbo land were largely sacrosanct and so could not be challenged or modified. (Njoku, 2001:32). The above view expressly argues in favour of the *EBI* and *IRIMBUBE* methods of crime control among the people of Mbano and Eziamma-Mbaise. The Western methods were not sacrosanct and could be easily modified. It provided for easy escape for offenders from judgment and punishment. Hence, the method exposes and makes a society vulnerable to crime. The introduction of strange and alien Western methods into Africa and Igbo land, contributed to the substitution of most of the indigenous methods of crime control, with the Western methods. The *Ebi* and *IRIMBUBE* were affected. Apparently, the collapse of the indigenous methods following the introduction of the Western methods, accounts for the increase in crime rate in Africa and Igbo land today. The methods which were purely of indigenous African origin, though not entirely flawless, were substituted by Western methods alien to the African society. Crime has largely become institutionalized in Igbo societies mainly because of the porous and ineffective nature of the alien Western methods of crime control imposed on Africa. In response to the constant and persistent increase in crime rate in Igbo land, it has become common place among elders to say for instance; *O buru mgbe elu bu ala Osa, aru ndia na-eme ugbo a, agaghi eme-* meaning; if it were when Igbo land and its culture were undiluted, all these crimes would not be taking place. My conclusion therefore, is that indigenous methods of crime control were more effective than the western methods. The result is the increase in crime rate in Igbo land today. This has been the greatest challenge facing Africa, and Igbo land in particular up to the present 21st century.

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Oral Interviews

Iwunze, Bernard. 67years, cubbler, interviewed on may 15th, 2011, at Umuoparanume Ama, Umuokwe Village, in Umueze II, Ehime Mbano Local Government Area. (Mr. Iwunze, was involved in carrying the Ebi in his town, he provided first hand information on the meaning, process and effectiveness of the workings of the Ebi method of crimeControl.)

Nwanyanwu, Ada. 76years, trader, interviewed on May 19th, 2011, at Eziamma Oparanadim, in Ahiazu Mbaise Local Government Area. (she was eye witness of *IRIMBUBE* in Eziamma Mbaise).

Nwogu, Geoffrey .C. 72years, retired teacher, interviewed on May 10th, 2011, at Umuoparanue Ama Umuokwe Village, in Umueze II, Ehime Mbano. (He also witnessed the EBI)

Onyirimba, Godson .O. 77years, retired teacher, interviewed, intervirewed at UMunkaro Umudoruegwale, UmuezeII,Ehime Mbano Local Government Area.

Okoro, Peter .O, 85 years retired civil servant interviewed at Eziamma Oparandim, in Ahiazu Mbaise, Local Government Area.

EKWU OOKA AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN IDOMA CULTURE

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Abstract

Ekwu ooka is the chant language of the Alekwu Afia (ancestors) in Idoma. It is a cultural practice that combines both music and language art. Performed on special occasions, it represents Idoma ancestors manifesting in material forms for different purposes like fellowship, adjudication or providing solutions in difficult situations. The chant language is deep in meaning and implications. It presents the Idoma with a rich deposit of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) about their past as a people, their environment and social living. Data for this study was collected through In-Depth Interview (IDI) and Participant Observer methods. This paper discusses the structure and performance of ekwu ooka and the depth of knowledge it offers the Idoma. Globalization has brought about lots of changes, which has undermined very many cultural practices including those among the Idoma people. To this end, the paper also looks at factors that have militated against ekwu ooka, and the consequence of this on Idoma culture in general. Among others, the study recommends that ekwu ooka should be encouraged among children and youths as literary arts to be performed in schools in Idoma land, and concerned individuals should set up Culture Advocacy groups that would educate culture-owners on ways to preserve and develop their cultural practices.

Key Words: *Ekwu Ooka*, Cultural Practice and Indigenous knowledge

Introduction

In global contexts, every one and every group matters. Thus the rights and privileges of every group are as important as any other, no matter where the group is found. In as much as there is a theoretical consensus on this, global interplays as manifest in politics, economy and other areas of social existence show that the reality of the *us* verses *them*

is very real, thereby undermining and threatening the survival of the weaker. Such is the scenario observed in the “global village” where larger societies and cultures swallow up smaller ones. This, therefore, demands that cultural practices of such smaller groups needed to be re-emphasized and strengthened. Every society has a traditional root which was (and still is in different forms) sustained and developed through its Indigenous Knowledge (IK). According to the World Bank (Date unknown), Indigenous Knowledge refers to local knowledge unique to a given culture or society. It facilitates communication and decision-making in rural communities seeing it equips them for survival in their environment. The following are some common characteristics of IK (Ellen and Harris (1996)):

- a) It is rooted to a particular place and set of experiences and generated by people living in those areas;
- b) It is orally transmitted through imitation and demonstration;
- c) It is a consequence of a practical engagement in everyday life;
- d) It is empirical rather than theoretical;
- e) It is characterised by repetition; and
- f) It is situated within broader cultural traditions (etc).

Ekwu ooka is a chant tradition performed by *Alekwu Afia* (a physical e-enactment of an ancestor in a masquerade form) in Idoma society. *Alekwu* chant is an oral tradition which supports the transmission of general knowledge among the Idoma. This agrees with one of the characteristics of IK stated above. According to Izuakor (2001), oral traditions are instrumental in the preservation and transmission of information that relate to history, culture, environment, ideals and value system of a given people, as well as ideological and spiritual heritages handed down by ancestors. Chants are musically stylised forms of vocalization, intoned in manners that are neither purely spoken nor sung (Idamoyibo, 2006). According to Olatunji (2005), the major distinguishing feature of a chant is that it is performed totally in a non-metrical form. By this the choice of rhythm as well as tempo is determined by the performer. As art forms, chants are performed in different societies for purposes like entertainment, worship, ritual or leisure. Jegede (2002) reveals that chants are institutionalised art forms practiced in some royal courts among Nigerian peoples like those performed in the palaces of the *Alafin* of Oyo and the *Atta* of Igala among others.

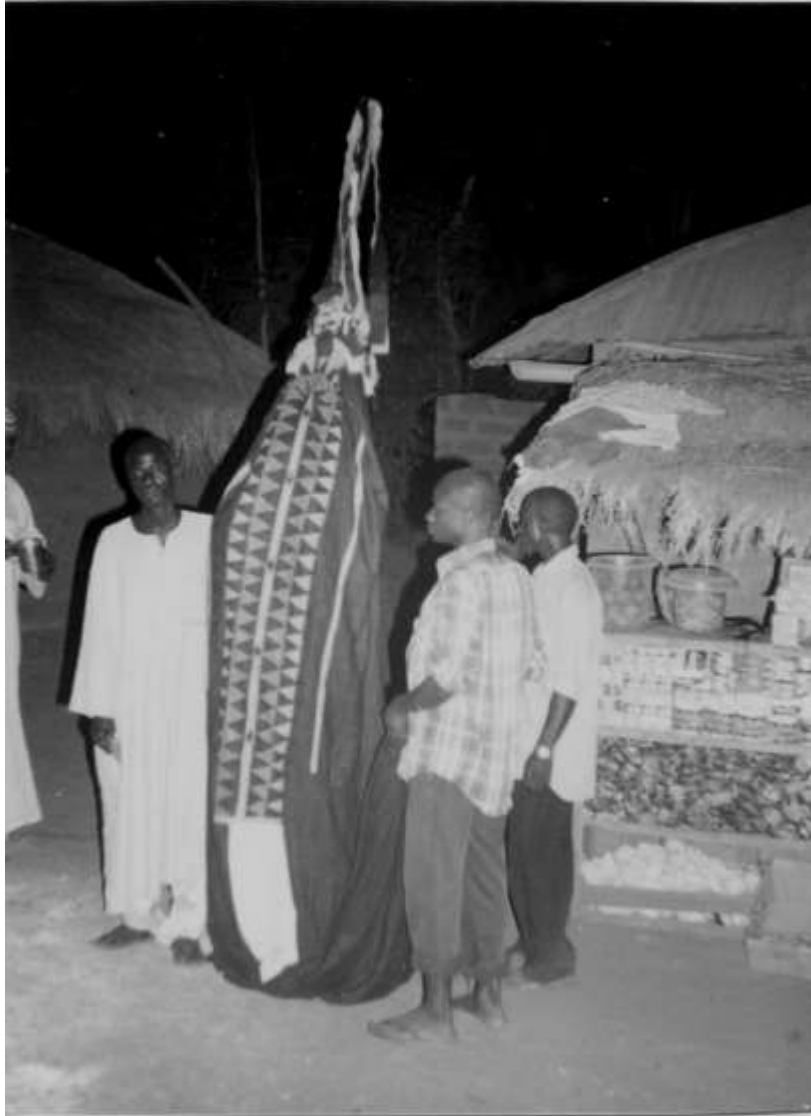
Ekwu ooka in Idoma culture

As mentioned earlier, *Ekwu ooka* is a sacred chant performance widely practiced among the Idoma of Benue state in Nigeria. It is the language of the *Alekwu* (ancestors) when they interact with their descendants and family members. The name *Alekwu* is derived from “*Ale*” and “*kwu*”. While “*Ale*” refers to “those of”, “*kwu*” means “death”. Therefore, *Alekwu* means those inhabiting the world of the dead (Amali, 2000). *Alekwu* is central in Idoma belief system. In Idoma cosmology, originally, belief in God was not as pronounced and celebrated as belief in *Aje* (Earth). Although God is believed to occupy the realm above, and is everywhere and in all things, beliefs and practices associated with the *Aje* cult is very essential because *Aje* is believed to be senior to God (Amali: 1985). Amali supports this by providing an English translation of part of a prayer made to the *Aje* (Earth) at ceremonies:

They took the sacrifice to the East, the East said, “Send it to the West”. They took the sacrifice to the West, West said, “Send it to God”. They took it to God and God said, “Send the sacrifice to Earth, for Earth is Senior”. (p. 9)

But with the arrival of Christian missionaries in Idoma, belief in *Owoicho* (God – the Supreme Being) as one who possesses infinity past, present and future; creator of all things and giver of the vital force began to occupy the apex of Idoma belief system while *Aje* (Earth) became subservient (Okau, 2000). The greatness of God requires that he is approached through intermediaries rather than directly. Therefore, the first intermediary deity is the *Aje* (earth), which is revered, worshipped and supplicated for blessings and prosperity. Next is the *Alekwu* (ancestors) who are also worshipped and supplicated. The ancestors are people who have died but are believed to continue to “live” within and around the community, communicating with their families (Slattery, 2001 and Anderson, 2007). *Aalekwu* (ancestors) who represent the “fundamental” of Idoma belief system occupy a very important category in Idoma religious belief system. The critical sense and cultural idealism of Idoma society ceases to exist without the *Alekwu*. *Aalekwu* provide guidance, protection, prosperity, peace and everything that is good for their descendants.

Picture 1: An *Alekwu Afia* with some worshippers



Source: Field photograph taken by the author

They represent the bond between the past and the present. Okau (2001) succinctly described the place of ancestors in Idoma psyche when he said:

The importance of ancestors in the life of the traditional Idoma cannot be over emphasized. There is no explanation of any event in a man's life that is not with reference to the ancestors. Misfortunes are ascribed to ancestors' anger while prosperity is viewed as an expression of the ancestors' approval of the activities of the living. (p. 101)

The first physical manifestation of an *Alekwu Afia* is the climax of a veneration rite performed for several days for a dead elder who qualifies for such in the community. The time and items for the rite are prescribed by tradition. As a sacred institution, *Alekwu* is both greatly revered and feared. The *Alekwu* institution is organized along clan lines. Therefore, each clan has an *Obi'Alekwu* (otherwise known as *Ad'Alekwu*) who oversees the institution within his clan and a central *Ikpodoko* (a grove) where the *Alekwu Afia* usually emerges from.

Alekwu Afia is an all-men specialized group which represents the spirit of ancestors uniting with the living. As seen in Picture 1 above, *Alekwu Afia* (the spirit manifest of an *Alekwu*) is a tall and hooded masquerade with part of the hood sweeping behind the main figure, which exudes both splendour and authority. It is a specialized institution with a highly restrictive membership. It is believed to be the custodian of Idoma history. Whenever *Alekwu Afia* manifests, it speaks in form of chants called *Ekwu*. *Alekwu Afia* speaks in proverbs and satires, making its language intelligible only to the initiated in the community because it is believed that the ancestors speak in a higher vocabulary like chants which is higher than general Idoma language. These chants are exceptionally colourful and unique narrative tradition, which combines both artistry and religious rites. Its public appearances are very occasional as it represents a visible, material manifestation of the ancestors to the living descendants. Therefore, *Alekwu Afia* does not appear for entertainment purpose but for special occasions like burials of Idoma adults, feasts or festivals, traditional religious worship and times of social emergencies like drought, famine or epidemics. *Ekwu ooka* employs dialogue to negotiate relations between humans and their ancestors.

Structure of *Ekwu ooka*

Ekwu ooka is a culture-sustaining art among the Idoma. It is an expression of deep insight and philosophical truths which represents both the past and the present. Each performance of *Alekwu Afia* chant is different, representing a fresh visitation from the world of the ancestors to tell their descendants about themselves. In this sense, no *Alekwu Afia* is a repetition of a previous one, for representation requires creativity. According to Drewal (1992:1), representation means “a re-presentation”, which denotes a recurrence of a phenomenon in time. Therefore, every repetition is in itself an “original” because the performance in time, the audience (and even if the same), and the performance experience is not the same. This is what Artaud (1958) expressed in the following:

An expression does not have the same value twice, does not live two lives; ... all words, once spoken, are dead and function only at the moment when they are uttered, a form once it has served, cannot be used again and asks only to be replaced by another, and a gesture, once made, can never be made the same way twice. (p. 75)

There are two modes of repetition which need be understood as it applies to *ekwu ooka*. The first is the broader mode which seeks to restore an entire performance as obtainable in annual rituals scheduled to correspond with particular seasons. In this case, there exist long gaps between the repetitions. Thus, an *Alekwu Afia* manifest seeks to re-enact the time of the ancestor as well as connect the world of humans with that of ancestors. The gap in time is temporarily obliterated while the gap between each repetition renews the experience and excitement of participation. The second is repetition that occurs within a single ritual, as in regular drumming or vocalizations (Drewal, 1992).

Analysis of *Alekwu Afia* chants reveal that it possesses unique performance and musical structures which mark it out from other Idoma oral art forms. Although Amali (2000) considers these chants as simply poetic art forms, they are also musical art performances like chants from other cultures. Idamoyibo (2006) supports this when she observed that the *Ijala* chant among the Yoruba is a linear musical form. This implies that the musical activity is essentially the variation of a single rhythmic pattern in various ways by a single instrument. Further still, Halstead

(1994: 147) reveals that in Islam, *qira'ah* (the art of Quranic recitation) and *adhan* (the call to prayer) are considered to be *taghbir* (raising the voice). According to him, the *taghbir* represents “not merely one among many musical genres in the Muslim world but the pinnacle of Islamic musical tradition.... If we wish to look for a musical ‘Great Tradition’ in the Muslim world, then it is to the cantillation (chant) of the Qur’an and the call to prayer to which we should look.” Olatunji (2005) also stated that chants are poetic forms which are recognized primarily by the musical manner of the performance. He believes that a study of any chant without the musical aspect will present only a mere shadow of the living art of the owners.

A discussion on *Ekwu ooka* would necessitate its transcription and analysis in a form that is largely discernable by readers outside Idoma culture. Although these chants are not conceived based on western musical scale system, the western musical scale system is used here for the purpose of analysis and discussions only, the shortcomings notwithstanding. Using the western tempered scale, most *Alekwu Afia* chants do not exceed the range of a 12th, subdivided into three sections: the lower. The lower register is between B³ (B natural below middle C) and E⁴ (E natural above middle C); the middle register ranges from F⁴ (F natural above middle C) to A⁴ (a 3rd above F⁴), and the upper register ranges from B⁴ (a 7th above Middle C) to E⁵ (a compound 3rd above Middle C). The chanter generally introduces his chant with an attack at the upper register, at which point he also declares the subject of his chant. The chanter could also introduce the performance by a declaration of his identity and personality. If the introduction is a call for assistance from the ancestors, such serves as an indirect way declaring the chanter’s pedigree. In the following introductory example, a standard keyboard was used to determine the pitches of the performance. The key signature used is to aid notation and understanding and not part of the performers’ musical practice.

Musical Example 1: An introductory excerpt of an *Ekwu ooka*



The last note of the introduction is usually sustained for emphasis, after which the next line either gradually descends to the middle register or makes a sharp descent to the lower register as seen in the musical example above. In the introduction above, the chanter appealed to his progenitors by calling on his direct father (Oko) and his grand father (Obeje), as way of seeking their assistance in the performance task before him. The main body of *Alekwu Afia* chant is primarily performed at the lower and middle registers. Occasionally, some of the chants employ continuous attack at the upper register, released by descending to the middle register which affords the chanter a moment of rest before returning to note at the upper register. Whenever the body of a chant is performed in the lower register, it gradually moves up to the middle register as it approaches the end. *Alekwu Afia* chants seldom end in the lower register; they either end with an attack at the upper register with a sustained final note or in the middle register without a sustained final note. *Alekwu Afia* chants are non-metrical, therefore, the performer has the freedom to sustain any note considered important or observe moments of rest where he deems it necessary. Olatunji (2005) refers to this style as free rhythm. Furthermore, the rhythm is characterised with close pitches that do not exceed a third within a register. The transition between one register and another is marked by wide leaps and (or) a period of rest.

More so, the chants are notably different from spoken language or song in two major ways: firstly, the rapid succession of words often does

not allow breaks between words to make them discernable. Therefore, three words could be spoken as if it is a single word. e.g.

AdahwofukoyiyikewofuAdanuma

Instead of

Adah w'ofu k'oyi

Oyi ke w'of' Adanu ma

Translation

The father is the strength of his child

The child is the strength of his (her) father

Secondly, *Alekwu Afia* chants do not follow the normal tonal pattern of Idoma language as observed in Idoma songs. Thus, different words could be performed on the same pitch, thereby making the comprehension difficult.

In spite of the fast tempo in performing *Alekwu Afia* chants and the performance technique that makes it generally difficult to comprehend, skill and excellence in its performance is highly regarded. Although some chanters are believed to be naturally endowed, the skill is developed through constantly following and listening to *Alekwu Afia* masquerade whenever it performs, and personal practice. It is not uncommon to see men chanting *ekwu* while going to farm, at work or periods of relaxation.

Knowledge transfer through *Ekwu ooka*

Alekwu Afia chants engage both the world of ancestors and humans. Allusions are generally made to ancestors, ancestral home, Idoma kings (past and present), as well as social issues like death, hunger, wealth, strength, valour, witchcraft, animals and nature in general. These allusions exploit various language resources like proverbs, metaphors, similes, parallelisms (etc) which aids them to present their thoughts in unusual expressions that are not easily understood by a novice. Although chanters use Idoma language as their primary medium of performance, they occasionally include expressions in Igala and Ebira languages as spices in their performance. The occasional use of these languages for expressions also suggests the close relationship that exists

between Idoma culture and that of these languages. The following Igala expression is part of a funeral chant:

Una ikpogu Akoji jogwu odudu The fire blazed, Akoji shouted in the morning

Expressions like this and other references to elements in these sister cultures help to educate the younger Idoma that his Igala neighbour is actually his brother. Igala form the western neighbour to Idoma land while Ebira is further away from Idoma land. The close affinity that exists between Idoma and these groups is said to date back to pre-colonial times when they co-inhabited the Kwararafa kingdom around the Gongola basin. The same chant ended with the following Igala expression:

Egwu udajo eremu kaa The ancestors are gathered let the journey commence

This chant is performed at the lie-in-state of the body of a dead Idoma adult who qualifies for this rite before interment. Thus, the statement marks the end of this particular rite as the chant indicates that the ancestors present were ready to commence their journey to their world with the spirit of the deceased.

Traditional Idoma kings are also praised as way of acknowledging their personal exploits or achievements as well as acknowledging the districts or lineage they govern. In the following excerpt provided by Amali (2000:48), the king of Otukpo is acknowledged and praised by his titles and quality of bravery:

<i>Och'Otukpo odu</i>	The king of Otukpo adz
<i>Odu b'ogena</i>	The adz which digs scorpion hole
<i>B'og'egwa</i>	Digs the whole of snakes

The Och'Otukpo is herein praised for his personal quality of strength and toughness. These qualities are compared to an adze by being called an adze because the adze is used to shape wooden objects and also to dig tough ground.

<i>Och'Agadagba ko Agboo</i>	The king of Agadagba be Agboo
<i>Aokpa nehi</i>	Those of the great river

Noo jagwa

The stream which is enough for swimming

Agwa le ta

And swimming is done

This chant acknowledges the king of Agadagba by saluting him with *Agbo*. However, it went on to tell of the “great river” which represents the presence of a river within his territory big enough for swimming. By this second example, every Idoma child who listens to this chant is informed of the presence of a reasonably large body of water in Agadagba.

The mention of names in chants is another style used for declaring the chanters lineage. It may also serve to identify prominent ancestors in the clan as well as their lineage. The following excerpt exemplifies this:

Ọ Okp’ Adeji m’ol’ow Okpe

Okpe Adeji that fill the ancestral home of Okpe

Okpe Ode, Ode m’Ode

Okpe Ode, Ode gave birth to Ode

Both Okpe and Ode are very important ancestors among the Idoma of Otukpo. This chant highlights the relationship between these two very important names in Otukpo lineage. Okpe is the son of Ode, who himself is also the son of Ode. Although Okpe might have had a large and prominent family during his life time, he descended from Ode. This is necessary for clarifying seniority and hierarchy in Otukpo traditional community affairs where age is highly regarded. In the same vein, the following mentions names of family members closely related to the ancestor chanting:

Ọnyami, oy’out

My wife, the daughter of night

Ọnyẹbẹ oy’Ijegwa

Ọnyẹbẹ the daughter of Ijegwa

Ọgbogbo Ijagw’ Ada ne mum
begat me

Ọgbogbo Ijagwu the father that

Ọnyẹbẹ oy’Ijegwa

Ọnyẹbẹ Ijegwa’s daughter

The ancestor chanting here vividly mentioned the names of his wife (Onyebe), his father in-law (Ijegwa), his own father (Ogbogbo), and his grandfather (Ijagwu). This simplifies re-constructing family history and tracing the line of relationships within a clan.

Further still, basic knowledge needed for day-to-day living as pertains to appropriate seasons are also captured in chants. The major occupation of the Idoma people is agriculture. Traditionally, crop farming is the primary type of agriculture they engage in. However, virtually every family keeps some local birds especially for consumption, which are left on free range. This exposes the chicks to their worst enemies – birds of prey like kites and falcons. Seeing the farmer goes to his farm, he is unable to keep a protective eye on his birds against the birds of prey. Therefore, the farmer must know the best season for allowing his birds to left free even when he is not at home. Thus, the following excerpt reveals the seasons when chicks are most threatened in their life:

<i>Ogọ chabọ l'ada ne m'ogọ</i>	Kite gave direction to the father that bore kite
<i>I t'iba nyọ</i>	Went to the wilderness
<i>En'ugwu l'oyi bije ọlẹ</i>	The hen raised up its chicks at home
<i>Ogọ piyeyi iwọtu I wond' ol'ugwu</i>	The kite returns, the owner of the hen becomes sad

Chicks would only have peace at home and be free from the danger posed by kites only when they are not around. There are seasons that kites are known to migrate out of Idoma land. The farmer would have less worry for his birds at that time, therefore, he must understand the best season to allow his birds be free in his absence.

In the same vein, the chant teaches on the need for caution and tact in carrying out tasks that have some potential risks. In Idoma natural environment, wasps are a common experience both at home and in the farm. A wasp sting is very painful, which requires carefulness in handling it. More so, children are wont to playing with it. Therefore, farmers and fathers must seek for every way possible to eliminate the wasps that are known to defend their territory aggressively by attacking any intruder. The following lines therefore teach on ways to handle wasps without being stung:

<i>Oy'och' olikpo ne ge h'amulukpa</i>	It's the branch of a long stick that is used to cut off the wasp
--	--

Ajebe hen amulukpa lo che

If you are not skilled, the
wasp will sting you

This expression has a double application to its literal meaning of dealing with wasps in real life as well as applied meaning as in proverbs. This teaches the Idoma the need for common sense handling of situations to forestall further damages that could arise from seeking for solutions to a given problem.

Idoma chants also teach on the need to be realistic on the people's attitude about death. Death is pictured as inevitable although feared and dreaded. This is seen in the following:

Aje ko chum l'ikwu gbo koo jum onya

Let the earth goddess help me
tame death and bear me on its
back

Aje k'Ofana, aje k'ijuwa

Earth goddess of Ofana, earth
goddess of Ijuwa

Aa wa Ij'onya l'oyi memẹ

Come fetch the horse for a babe

Aje k'Okalegbo aa tegbla jilam

Okalegbo earth goddess, come
to my aid

Whereas the ancestor pleads with the earth, extending his appeal to other earth goddesses to tame death, yet he followed it up by making a prompt request for other ancestors to bring the horse to bear the spirit of the dead to the abode of the ancestors. The Idoma is to learn that once death occurs, it becomes rather irreversible. However, the living should continue to supplicate and do what ever is necessary to avoid death, yet bearing in mind that death is inescapable after all.

In Idoma culture, the death of an aged member of the community is celebrated but that of young people are mourned and lamented. This borne out of the belief that the aged citizen had lived a long and fulfilled life while any the young member of the community who dies did not life a full and fulfilled life. In the funeral chant under focus, the chanter continuously solicited for the assistance of other ancestors to bring the horse for "a babe" or "an uncooked babe", referring to an immature child.

Ogo oloda otu

Aa wa Ij'onya gam ka

Kite that devour things in the night
Come fetch me the horse

<i>Ọch'ọhi ne hi l'Akumana</i>	The prince of beauty called
<i>Akumana</i>	
<i>Ọy'Akumana ne le chọnya le j'okwu</i>	Akumana's child that is placed
	on the horse, that bears the
	corpse
<i>Aa tẹgba jilam papapa</i>	Come to my aid quickly
<i>Ọgẹbẹ ẹnẹ ne mum l'ọnya biwa</i>	Ọgẹbẹ my mother, bring the horse
<i>l'ọyi mẹmẹ</i>	for a babe

He even appealed to personalities in the community who are dreaded and so not openly sought for assistance to help him. The allusion to “kite that devour things in the night” is an indirect reference to witches and wizards. By this, the chanter attempts to uphold Idoma tradition of showing sympathy and concerned to the bereaved even when there may not exist the best of relationship with the person.

Challenges to *Ekwu ooka* in contemporary times

The effect of globalization as manifested through western religion, education, and ideology are too obvious than can be waved aside. As earlier stated, *ekwu ooka* is a sacred art which is not performed for recreation or entertainment like in other cultures. It is a religious rite which has deep cultural meanings. Its performance is an indication of the ancestors' material manifestation for a serious purpose – usually worship, festival or in response to a crisis. The deep religious implication of this chanting tradition has been observed to have become the major obstacle militating against its practice in contemporary times. With the majority of Idoma indigenes becoming Christians and Mulims, resulting in a new generation with a different religious belief, *ekwu ooka* is now considered as idolatrous. Their new religious affiliations frown at any form of involvement with these chants. The implication of this development is that *ekwu chant* is not appreciated as before. Apart from conversion to Christianity or Islam, the urban migration of many young Idoma men to search for white collar jobs has left a big vacuum in the rural areas begging for whom to fill it. Even the youths left behind in the rural areas are bombarded with western entertainment through watching foreign and locally made films which are readily available for purchase in our cities, satellite transmissions and radio broadcasts, which erodes any contemplation for getting involved in *Ekwu ooka*. As the generation of

the elders who continue to hold on to traditional religious practices continue to decrease in number as a result of death, the practice is slowly but surely drifting into extinction. Even during the annual *ej'Alekwu* festivals which show-cases virtually all musical types in Idoma land, ancestors representing many clans are conspicuously absent because of lack of practitioners.

Strategies for sustaining *ekwu ooka* in Idoma

Whereas the major form of education which provided the platform for the development of *ekwu ooka* in the past was informal education, the role of the formal educational system in sustaining cultural practices cannot be overemphasized today. The most reliable option for sustaining *ekwu ooka* is introducing it into formal education in schools in Idoma land. Students in both primary and secondary schools should be exposed to it by showing them documentaries of past chants. Furthermore, teachers or resource persons invited from the community should educate the students on the cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge inherent in the chants. This is intended to develop a sense of cultural identity and appreciation among Idoma youths, in order to promote practices that would help sustain Idoma culture. Notwithstanding the new performance context, this chant performance will make a strong cultural sense as the content still provides the education and socializing tools needed for cultural development. Therefore, introducing *Ekwu ooka* in schools within Idoma land would be, essentially, for its educational and cultural values rather than its religious implications. To further encourage participation, non-governmental and other interest groups should sponsor competitions among students of different schools as a contribution to cultural development and sustenance. Furthermore, the Idoma society must realise that the chants have been a great knowledge base in their society. Therefore, they must do everything possible to save it from extinction. This include coming to terms with the fact that change is the most constant phenomena in life, and that positively responding to change itself is the most effective strategy in coping with the forces of change. The implication is that *ekwu ooka* must not be restricted to religious practice alone but be appreciated and embraced as art that could be practiced outside the hitherto prescribed context.

Furthermore, the broadcast media in Benue state should continue to play records of past *Alekwu Afia* chant performances to build the

interest of all Idoma listeners in the art once again. Such programmes should include analysis of the chants by those who understand it to make plain the content of the chants. Understanding what the chant is all about is capable of increasing listeners' appreciation of this age long oral art among the Idoma. In the same vein, concerned individuals in the society should set up culture advocacy groups that would enlighten communities on their heritages and ways to preserve them from extinction.

Conclusion

The depth of a people's culture can only be understood through the various channels they had evolved in time to pass it on to their younger generation. *Ekwu ooka* is one of those practices in Idoma designed to both worship and educate. The educational benefits inherent in the chants make it very central to the development and sustenance of Idoma culture. In the face of global changes arising from so many factors, every step possible must be taken to safe guard cultural practices that had sustained such societies to this moment. While it may be practically impossible to re-enact all cultural practices as obtainable in the past, practices that may be considered obsolete and inconsistent with contemporary society could be modified to make them more acceptable by many.

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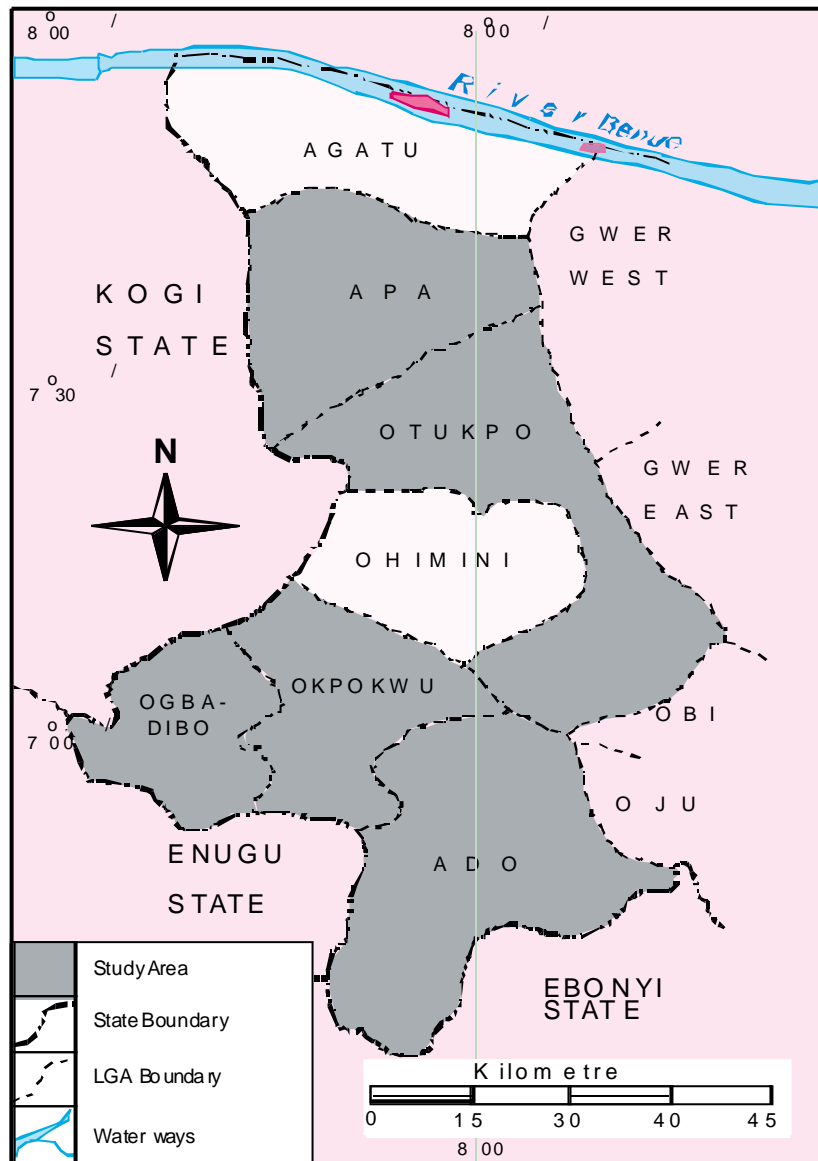
WOMEN AND MASQUERADE TRADITION IN IDOMA INDIGENOUS THEATRE

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Abstract

This chapter interrogates a problem of an intra-cultural interface and how succeeding contradictions provided a tradition that became the cradle of Idoma civilization. The problem is that of a society that defines itself in paradoxical terms through traditional dialectics. The study area is central Idoma. The work attempts to present the problem through the study of women and masquerade tradition in central Idoma. It notes that although the masquerade, a theatre culture, is practiced in many parts of the world, the differences in history, philosophy and religion have accounted for different perceptions of the form. This chapter highlights one of such differences in the example of the Idoma practice of the art. It notes that heterogeneity connotes diversity. Peculiar cosmological purviews inherent in cultural practices of different peoples tend to highlight some idiosyncrasies in these cultures. One of these peculiarities can be found in the gender relations in masquerade tradition. Using the Idoma example, this chapter deals with the gender perspective of masquerade art, and proves that masquerade tradition is not totally the prerogative of men. Women play fundamental roles in the tradition. The research used qualitative approach to methodology. We relied on participation observation and interviews mostly. The work concludes that in some masquerade traditions, gender roles may seem blurred, but they remain fundamental and empirical.



Idoma Speaking Area Showing the Study Area
 Base map obtained from Benue State Ministry of Lands and Survey

Introduction

Theatre is a culture. Masquerade is a material culture. Masquerade performance is an art that is practiced in many parts of the world including Europe, Asia and Africa. As a result of differences in history, environment, philosophy and cultural orientation, masquerade traditions differ from one part of the world to another. In some parts of Africa, masquerades are conceived as spirits. They are understood as ancestral spirits on temporary visitations from the ethereal world. The assumption is that masquerades originate from the spirit world of the ancestors. The justification for this view is essentially cosmological. In the societies that masquerades present as spirits, the prevalent purview is that intermediation is therapeutic for the health of the society. Such societies therefore provide themselves with a medium that has the capacity to intermesh effectively with the two sides of the dome. This perhaps gave birth to the contemplation of the concept of “ancestorism” as a way of facilitating the process of arbitration. The consideration that societies must have continuous filial rapport with their forebears may also have given the masquerade concept much validity among the practicing communities. In this paper, masquerades present as anthropomorphized beings created through society’s system of signification to oil the process of continuity and intermediation between the world of the living and that of the ancestors.

Contemporary European understanding is however different. Contemporary European understanding of the masquerade can be gleaned from definitions provided by dictionaries. For instance, *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* (1997) defines masquerade art as “a social gathering of persons wearing masks and often fantastic costumes...” or “an action or appearance that is mere disguise or show...”. Masquerade is further defined as “to disguise oneself...” or “to go about disguised” that is “appearance of something that is not” (p. 714). In this way European minds conceive the masquerade as way of disguising or concealing the face or a mode of pretence by covering the face with any material like clay or wood. Through such presentations, Western minds define masquerade practices using the perspective of disguises. From this understanding, masquerade performances are presented as acts carried out to disguise the wearer’s identity.

The general impression of this view is that masquerade performances are carried out strictly for entertainment purposes. It is

viewed as an act that is profane and jocular. This reading is in the context of contemporary European understanding. The emphasis on contemporary here is important because past European understanding is quite different from their present interpretations. Records of earlier European theatre practices present the use of the masquerades as art forms that have both social and spiritual content. However, sociological changes as well as the great import of technology on the culture of contemporary European societies have affected the attitude of the people and thus the culture.

It is important to make this point right from the onset because of the temptation to generalize. Often there is the tendency to collocate definitions. The sacred/spiritual perception of masquerade tradition has been viewed by some schools of thought as culturally African. This is not likely a correct presentation of the fact on ground. The history of other peoples of the earth have provided much evidences of idolatry and related fetish references even in parts of present day Europe. These notwithstanding, peculiar cosmological purviews inherent in cultural practices of different peoples tend to highlight some idiosyncrasies identifiable in these cultures. One of these peculiarities, which will form the crux of the discussion in this paper, can be found in the gender relations in these cultures. While there may be obvious similarities in the male/female interconnectivity in ancient European and contemporary African interpretations of the masquerade, this paper deals with an African perspective of the form. By concentrating on an African elect society's perspective of masquerade performances, the paper zeros in on women and masquerade performances in Idoma theatre tradition.

Some Basic Assumptions

The concept of the masquerade derives from the natural tendency of man to self extend his thought through phenomenal abstractions. The process of representing contending issues in human lives, especially those issues that deal with some incomprehensibles of life necessitated the elaborate use of symbols. For instance, the need to rationalize societal mythos, the process of giving dramatic and larger than life characters to beings that occupy the legendary cosmos are contingent issue in the conceptualization of masquerade as a form. By giving emphasis to "social cosmological rationalizations of a given community

in order to vitalize and regenerate the issues of survival” (Nzewi, 1979) one is utilizing a people’s essence which provides necessary cultural documents for the understanding of such people. Using the masquerade phenomenon to explain the mysteries of the cosmos may provide a better comprehension of the symbolic structure of the culture of the people under observation. Because symbols have the ability to give visual clarity, it presents a good methodology for the artist to express himself.

What is being contemplated is the presentation of masquerade as a symbolic configuration of the many processes of man’s attempt to express himself through audio visual means. Thus, it is possible to conceive the masquerade as an abstraction brought to physical reality. This is perhaps what Embu (2006) meant when he noted,

The masquerade is a marriage between the physical and abstract entity created by man to explain his import of order in his attempt to comprehend his world better as he approximates the spirit of the ancestors and gods.

Traditional theatre, a theatre form, which the masquerade tradition evangelizes, may have been encouraged by such contemplation of a universe ordered by a sense of dependence and collaboration. The necessity of natural symbiosis that permits creativity by giving credit to overt and covert manipulations through an intensely expressive system is a fertile ground for masquerades to flourish. An intuitively secretive and consciously secular yet sacred art can be an interesting experience for many. African masquerade traditions reflect these characteristics.

The configuration of the masquerade, as contained in the Idoma case study of traditional theatre is captured in the attempt by some Africans societies to express themselves through anthropomorphism. The African masquerade is a physical contraption of the mind, religion and art configured into one being - the form. It is art and belief systems structured into a form. The African masquerade is conceptualized as an art form that has a spiritual content. This is achieved through the manipulative abilities of the theatre. Simulation is an essence in theatre. How these coalesce can be explained in the living systems of a people who comprehend a world controlled by spiritualism and secular art.

A brief profile of Idoma

Like many ethnic groups, Idoma speaking people are geographically wide spread among many other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. This means that apart from Benue State where they are predominantly settled, Idoma people according to Neyt (1985) are also found in much population “in Gongola [parts of present Taraba and Adamawa States] near Wukari...were they live in Shigba, Sondi, Riti and Bantaje... Here they are also called Etulo” (89-90). Even within Benue State, Idoma speaking peoples who settled in parts other than Benue South assume other names like “Etulo in the region of Katsina Ala river, in Tiv territory” (Neyt, 1985). In discussing the widespread nature of Idoma art among the Benue Confluence, Neyt identified Idoma people “in Cross River State ... near Ogoja in the north... as well as the Nkum and the Nkim, Iyala subgroup to the east of Ikom on the banks of the Cross River”(p. 90). Intergroup relations leading different levels of cultural modification have affected the nature and practice of Idoma traditions, depending on where they live. This is due to the dynamic nature of culture. With the widespread distribution of Idoma people, it is necessary to specify the geographical limits that this research covers. The coverage of this research is limited to the Idoma of Benue State.

Historical facts backed up by other sources and theories of origin like the ones based on oral traditions and totemism traced the origins of the Idoma people to Kwararafa Confederacy, which existed in c 1535-1745 (Neyt, 1985 p.90). The confederacy is believed to have been ruled by Abakwariga who, according to this source, brought together some multi ethnic groups under a State. According to Neyt, being the “the most southern nation of the Hausa country...Kwararafa was ... a kind of symbol of cultural and armed resistance against Islam, south of the town of Bornu” (p. 90). He presented that Kwararafa was bordered in the north by Bornu and extended to the coast of Calabar in the south. According to the source, Calabar was one of the southern commercial centers of Kwararafa. The kingdom also had trade links with the area called Sierra Leon today (Neyt, 1985 p.91).

Apa, which is regarded as the ancestral home of Idoma, according to Inuaeche (2001), was “a famous settlement in Kwararafa located to the east of Wukarri,” (p. 54). Idoma history and migration, as contained in various *Alekwu* chants, according to Ondoma Adikwu¹, also make constant references to early settlements to the east of Wukarr, a border

town which *Alekwu* chants refer to as *Okali*. What these three sources (Nyet, Inuaeche and *Alekwu* chants) point to is an agreement in historical concord. Even though two are written and the other is oral, the three sources validate the point that “Wukarri” or *Okali* was an Idoma neighbor in distant historical past.

Note that *Alekwu* chant is another source of the Idoma traditions of origin. *Alekwu* chants is one of the performance processes of the masquerade performed in veneration of Idoma ancestors. The chants follow a traditional methodological framework. Since there are several ancestors as there are lineages, each *Alekwu* traces the origin of a particular man to his lineage, and then to his putative ancestor, who once lived in Apa. The methodology of rendition is usually the same, but the roadwork through migration path would habitually take different routes until they meet in track with the single parental trajectory that links the numinous passages to one putative father, Idu.

When therefore, Igboaka (2007) said, “it is not possible for half a million people to have come from a solitary ancestor” (p.13), one notices an inconsistency between his presentation and other historical records. The account (Erim 1981) that Igboaka submits to, posited that modern Idoma is a conglomeration of twelve ethnic groups. The presentation named the ethnic groups as: Yoruba, Ibo, Igala, Bini, Gara, Nupe, Akpoto, Jukun, Bassa, Igbirra, Tiv and Abakwariga. The statement concluded, “Out of this conglomerate and around 1800, emerged the Idoma people” (p. 11). This statement came on the heels of another submission, which opined thus, “Before 1500, the whole area south of the Benue may have been thinly populated by Idoma speaking people” Erim (1981 p.11). While not casting doubt on the scholarly integrity of Erim, this researcher is of the view that based on the above submissions, it is difficult to authenticate the historicity of Igboaka/Erim’s analysis in the way they are portrayed.

These presentations all go to explain the so much trumpeted view that Idoma nationality is a function of political exigencies. In other words modern Idoma Identity, according to the thinking, is a product of diverse and different ethnic groups brought together by the necessities of political circumstances and the calling of history. By implication, Idoma is a political association! What falsehood. Nothing can be more absurd.

While it may not be historically plausible to assume that present Idoma came out of a monolithic origin, at the same time, the

contemplation that modern Idoma was born out of a political necessity of the 18th century is not likely a correct historical presentation. All the people called Idoma today may not have had a common origin, yet the assumption that modern Idoma evolved out of the merger of twelve different ethnic group is doubtful. Moreover, the assumption is inconsistent with the history of language evolution.

The manner of presenting Idoma history often leaves much doubt as to who the Idoma are? Wherever the issues of Idoma origin and identity are presented, the question of proto and non-proto have to be logically foregrounded. Perhaps one can say that reasons, factored by the complexities of sociology and migration may have influenced the variety of dialects. Evidence available to this research show that the Idoma people have a common ancestry but are spread across many parts of Nigeria. This perception is based on the historical, cultural, linguistic presentations available in various accounts. Perhaps, what one can say, however, is that the history and nature of Idoma identity, with particular reference to the existence of different but mutually intelligible dialects, is a subject for further research.

The most recent population of the Idoma of Benue State is 1,998,763 ². Idoma people occupy an area of land that covers “approximately 5,956 sq km and located within the broad valley of the Benue and Cross River basin (Okpeh, 2005). According to Erim (1981), “the main thrust of Idomaland is an elongated belt of territory from the Benue River to the northern fringes of Igboland” (p. 3). The Idoma people have boundaries that flank the Southern part Nassarawa State. They are bounded in the north by the Tiv. To the South, they have boundary with Enugu, Nsukka and Ogoja. The Igala of Kogi State bound them in the West, and Ebonyi to the East (Erim, 1981 p.3); (Okpeh, 2005 p. 21); Ottah, 2002 p.4) and (Igboaka, 2007 p.12).

From what has been said so far, it is possible to say that migration trends, among other factors is responsible for the spatial spread of the Idoma peoples, which further occasioned their different settlements in parts of Nigeria. The spatial locations among different ethnic groups could also have factored the existence of dialectical differences.

Masquerade Traditions in Idoma

The conceptualization of the masquerade form as a media art extrapolating theatre as a visual expression of the mind, religion and art, can be validated in the Idoma examples of masquerade performances.

Masquerade traditions in Idoma underscore the objective of culture in affirming a people's corporate ideals and identity. This theatre form is an intrinsic attribute of Idoma living system. Through masquerade theatre, the Idoma people express themselves as the form provides a platform from which the people explore their cultural aspirations, value essence, history and philosophy. Among the Idoma people, masquerade performance is the most expressive form of art. Masquerade tradition is the core of Idoma theatre.

The most prevalent masquerade whose practice runs across the spatial and temporal divide in Idoma is *AlekwuAfia*. *Alekwu* in Idoma means spirit. According to Inuejulawo (1988) "*Alekwu* is the Idoma word for ancestral spirit, the incarnate beings, the dead fathers visiting their relations in the form of masquerades" (p. 81). (A. P. Anyebe 1980) who agrees with this view posits that "*Alekwu* in Idoma cosmos is actually a spirit appearing in form of masquerade to visit its people". Inujulawo (1988) in making reference to Anyebe, A. P. (1980) noted that even the person who is wearing the mask as *Alekwu* is believed to be transformed into a spirit being while he is wearing the mask (p. 83).

Even though *Alekwu Afia* is the most prevalent masquerade in Idoma, there are many other masquerades spread among the various Idoma communities. Among these are; *Ukpokwu*, *Ekwinokwu*, *Onyonkpo*, *Ogblo*, *Ikyahoho*, *Obagaida*, *Odumu*, *Oglinye*, *Ukpokwu*, and many others. The types of masquerades that are performed per time depend on the occasion and the societal needs at the particular period. As expounded elsewhere Anyebe T. (2006) posits,

The social, political and cultural lives of the Idoma people right from illo tempore, that is, before written "history" began, (Umokoro 1989 39), are regulated and to a greater extent rooted in the nature of their masquerade traditions. There are various types of masquerades and they range from the most secular to the utmost insidious secret masquerades. The secular masking systems are performed by the young adults as well as children. These performances are built around the themes of their everyday lives, whereas the secret masks are the exclusive preserve of the initiates or cults or lineages.

From the submission above, it is being assumed that masquerade performances in Idoma draw collective participation and involvement by people in the practicing societies. The assumption is that masquerade performances imply collective engagement. The word collective presupposes involvement of everybody, that is, male, female, children, young or old, in the given society. In a gerontocratic and purely patriarchal society like the Idoma, this assumption will need further clarification.

The masquerade tradition is the mother of Idoma theatre. What constitutes theatre can be defined not only by public but also by the private experiences of the people who own the art. In Idoma indigenous theatre practice, concealment, the mysterious and indeed the intradermal are useful methodologies. These present as invaluable elements of the people's performance demands. The factors also play key roles in the masquerade theatre. In trying to emphasize this point Angbo³, in a personal interview says;

The issues concerning masquerade performances are not issues for children discussion. You cannot talk about the masquerade in public, for the public is everybody. The ancestor cannot be naked in public. He must be presented as classified (Emphasis mine).

In Idoma theatre, the more the element of "privacy" is connected to a masquerade the more it is appreciated. The more the aura of concealment is achieved in a masquerade performance, the more it is respected. The more an atmosphere of mystery is created around a masquerade the more it is valued. These to a great extent explain Angbo's contention. However, one is tempted to ask; privacy from whom? Concealment from what? And, mystery to achieve what? The answers to these questions can be found in an analysis of the existing gender relations in traditional Idoma societies.

Gender Relations and Masquerade Tradition in Idoma

Traditional Idoma societies are essentially patriarchal. Only male offsprings take authority over family possessions. Women are regarded as part of these possessions. Women are regarded as properties so cannot own properties. From the above one is likely to assume that women are kept off masquerades because masquerades like other prized Idoma

traditions is the sole prerogative of men. Nevertheless, during masquerade performances, women are expected to sing praises, adore and ululate with unconditional display of joy and jubilation. Paradoxical, but these form part of women's cues during masquerade performances in central Idoma. It is also partly for these reasons that masquerades threaten and chase women about during performances. Each time the masquerade brandishes his long whip, women cower, take cover and ululate.

Perhaps there is more to these than meet the eye. From the myth of *Odegwudegwu* there arise many more questions from the above assumptions. Indications that women are deeply involved in Idoma masquerade tradition abound in this myth. Indeed, *Odegwudegwu* is an abridged expression. The exact name is *Odegwudegwu no w'en' Ekwu*. Literally translated this means *Odegwudegwu* that is mother of masquerades. This is how she is usually referred to in Idoma. *Odegwudegwu* in the myth of creation stood for strength, invincibility, courage and transition. This is because, as the mother, she must make provisions for the coming into being of masquerades in the Idoma pantheon. The important place of women in Idoma masquerade tradition is explored in other responsibilities into which they are employed during the reincarnation process of the *Alekwu Afia*. The process includes;

- a presumed virgin having to pass a thread through a needle at midnight;
- the provision of the mythical shroud, the most important costume of the *Alekwu*;
- the act of sitting on the sacred stool that eventually provides the sacred clothing for the newly "born" or "reincarnated" ancestor (*Alekwu*); and,
- the opening ululation by a woman, which signifies the actualization of the "reincarnation" of the ancestor,

All these roles are played by appointed women actors. Usually, the women that qualify for these assignments are very old. Except for the virgin, the other roles are played by women who are for long in their post-menopausal age. All these imply that women play very significant roles in the Masquerade tradition of Idoma. Perhaps, being so intricately involved in the coming into being of some masquerades, they are equipped with much knowledge. Perhaps, one reason why they are often pigeonholed in safe bound. The process through which an *Alekwu*

masquerade is “reincarnated” is the combined efforts of men and women whose roles are clearly defined. The plot is a shared responsibility pooled by men and women who also contribute to a joint responsibility.

Thus, the coming into being of the *Alekwu* masquerade is a collective attempt to ensure an ordered universe where ancestors are made to visit their descendants with good tidings. Beyond the art is religion. The vehicle for propitiation is the theatre. The good reports that the ancestors bring are sufficient assurance that keep the community going. Goodwill from spirit ancestors who make appearances in masquerade forms are signs that all is well. The task to achieve this is communal, collective, a mutual responsibility. Through communal acknowledgement, collective sanction is given to the visiting ancestor. According to Rotimi (1983):

The mask was, and still is, basically not purported to be objet d’art, not a decorative artifact. Born of religion, preserved for generation to generation, the mask is the ‘abode’ of a particular power, the breathing place of the spirit of the departed elders, the resting quarters of the communal secrets: indeed, the sanctuary for the meaning of and memory of a people’s volatile identity (pp.25 – 26).

Women in Idoma are in custody of ancestral secrets. Note that a woman is the mother of the man and knows almost every thing about him. The issue of the woman carrying with her certain dept of knowledge and the associated intolerance by men is a very serious issue in Idoma worldview. Because of this, a man whose mother is still alive will not be considered for kingship. That an aspirant’s mother is still alive is outright disqualification. A living mother is considered too risky. So to qualify as king a man’s mother must die! This is the level of importance to which women are treated in Idoma. The strength of knowledge women have is considered powerful and perhaps, too unsafe. The power and the ability to control forces around the woman is essentialized by the Idoma adage that no one ever actually knows who his real father is until his mother is dead. It is indeed a life of contradiction, an ironic turn of fate, paradoxical perhaps.

It must be noted however that the paradoxical life of women is not peculiar to the Idoma alone. This is true of some other societies in Africa. Ogunba (1975) submission that:

In many African cultures, women are not admitted into the secrets of the masking art; indeed they are often the target of masking and satirical

ridicule, the assumption being that they live a more poetic life than their men folk, have secret powers, are more of spirits than human beings, and therefore are objects of fear or veneration (p. 24).

The situation of fear and suspicion to which women are treated is sometimes segregatory and to a great extent, marginalizing. This has been successfully institutionalized into the mainstream of traditional cultures. The system has been perfected to the extent that even the women folk readily buy the hoax. To this extent, when a woman contravenes some of the laws associated with an *Alekwu* confraternity, for instance, the implementation of punishments for such contravention is often left in the hands of women to carry out. Ironically, the experience over the years has been that when women are given responsibilities of enforcing punishment on fellow women, it is carried out with such high degree of violence that leave the men in awe.

This is the case with the *Alekwu* and Idoma women. In traditional Idoma the entire society is committed to *Alekwu* embrasure. Cocooned in this ancestral worship women are expected live upright. A recalcitrant woman who is caught in adultery, for instance, is readily handed over to the women folk for the implementation of the rule of law. By the time the due process of justice is visited on the erring woman, she is usually a sorry sight. Women in traditional Idoma employ brutality on one another.

The masquerade tradition in most African societies is the highest form of traditional incarnation. The physical manifestation of an ancestral spirit is considered one of the very rare privileges and honor that a community can harvest through the materialization of masquerades. As stated above the manifestation of the masquerade is seen as the condescension of an averter doing a temporary visitation to his living forebears. Men guard it jealously because masquerades constitute unusual phenomena.

While this presentation is true of many Nigerian societies, it must be pointed out that the position of women in the practice of masquerades differs from community to community. Some societies outrightly prohibit women from participating in masquerade performances while others like the Idoma provide places for them, albeit contradictorily. In discussing the issue of restriction and barrier against women, Nzewi (1983) explains:

Traditionally, like everything else of any importance, masquerading and its secrets are the prerogatives of men—and only initiates at that. Women

have been excluded from sharing in the secrets for they are weak and fickle and are therefore not fit to take part in them. They are also mysterious and sometimes unclean. They cannot therefore approach these ancestral manifestations, whose character is diametrically opposed to their own. Any meeting between them could have adverse effects on both parties... and the masquerades would lose something of their virtues (p. 132).

Nzewi's analogy above is referenced to "the Niger Delta and coastal tribes and the Ibo tribe who inhabit the central and northern parts" (p.133). However, the assertion is not limited to Niger Delta and Ibo tribes alone. While Nzewi's example is an outright exclusion, in Idoma women are secretly involved but publicly restrained. The analogy is an expression to existing social relations in Idoma masquerade traditions. Perhaps one can read this as a conflict of values, which is attempting to define itself in a gender sensitive society.

A concise appropriation of the above contention is the proviso expressed in the story of *Odegwudegwu*. In the mythical story, it was sacrilegious for women to see ancestral spirits. Odegwudegwu, commits the abominable act when she accidentally sees the ancestral spirit. She is summarily condemned to death. But in her condemnation Idoma masquerades were created. This perhaps stands the prevailing paradox of women in Idoma in proper perspective.

Conclusion

The prevailing circumstances between Idoma masquerade traditions and women provides a deepening puzzle for the nature of Idoma worldview and cosmology. Exclusion of women from many aspects of public and private life demonstrates the reality of a culture that defines itself through the paradox of sexism. This attitude has been institutionalized in various cultural practices.

As noted above, the masquerade tradition is the core of Idoma theatre. It has also been noted that theatre is essentially a cultural system. Rationalization of women is a value essence mandated by traditional institutions and cultural order. The masquerade tradition has been presented as one of such traditional institutions given cultural mandates.

The Idoma, like many other cultures rationalize a cohesive fission, a mutual collaboration between religion and art, between the spiritual and the secular, and between the mundane and the metaphysical.

The masquerade tradition comes alive through a physical manifestation of these fusions. Masquerade performance is a cultural interpretation of the people's living systems. It is a manifestation of a concept of life, which views the future through the eyes of the past and the past through the realities of the present. The Idoma masquerade tradition is able to realize society's mandates through the composite nature of the masquerade form, which presents through tactical commands of traditional improvisation and cultural pedagogy.

Most importantly is the thesis of pragmatism that forms the centerpiece of this paper. The script of Odegwudegwu is more than just a myth in the pantheon. When the script is placed on a supportive crucible in the social substratum, it plays out well as an impressive analogy. Odegwudegwu plays out as representation of all the oppressed people. Oppression is a social phenomenon. It is blind to sex or gender. Odegwudegwu is therefore a scenario in the theatre of oppression. The script of Odegwudegwu provides us with a proviso. All the oppressed people around the world must begin to change their attitudes to institutions of oppression. Rather than bemoan their lot, women, and indeed all oppressed peoples should perceive repression as an opportunity to look inwards. Cultural tyranny can serve as catalyst for change. Rather than resign to fate, women and all the oppressed should see marginalization as opportunities served on the altar of creativity. In this way, the people could draw positive lessons from a negative tradition. Oppression can be read as stimulation to resourcefulness. When the oppressed become more creative and ingenious, they can wrest themselves out of the situation. To resign oneself to fate is self-destruction. Victims of oppression and marginalization are ironically the workforce that support most systems. They can convert their energies to creative forces that can turn situations in their favor. History has proved this right elsewhere.

Notes

1. Ondoma Adikwu is an elder in Upu Otukpo. He spoke to the researcher about *Alekwu's* constant invocation of "Okali" and its importance as a neighboring town that provided refuge to Otukpo people in times of emergency during the period of migration. Ondoma was about 77 years old as at the time of interview. He spoke to me on 12.3.2006.
2. The document which provided this information on Idoma population is the *FRN Official Gazette*. Lagos: The Federal Government Printer, no. 24 vol 94, May 2007. As at the time of this research, the document was still in the gazette phase and final publication being awaited.
3. Angbo Micheal is the *Akpala* of Adim-Apka. *Akpala* is the position of headship given to the leader of all the secular masquerades in Adim/Akpa. Michael was about 54 years old as at the time of interview, and of Akweya origin. In the process of my field research, we had to initial discussion with leaders and custodians of different masquerade groups. Michael, at the time of interview, worked as a Director of Community Health in Otukpo Local Government. He is also fairly read.

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THE ROLE OF ICT IN DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract

Information and communication technology (ICT) is a major vehicle for stimulating the flow of technology knowledge. This paper discusses how ICT can provide an enabling platform for linking and integrating indigenous technical and vocational competences to global knowledge. An identification of relevant structures available for implementing of ICT-based indigenous knowledge development was made. The paper also examined some unavoidable challenges of applying ICT to the process of gathering, storing and dissemination indigenous technical and vocational knowledge. It finally suggested viable steps for developing ICT-assisted integration of local technology efforts to global science and technology.

1. Introduction

What is indigenous knowledge?

Indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge - knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It contrasts, with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities. (Warren 1991) Indigenous Knowledge is the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems. (Flavier et al. 1995: 479). Indigenous technologies, practices, and knowledge systems have been studied extensively by sector specialists and even more so by social anthropologists. However, most studies are descriptive; they concentrate primarily on the social or

ethnological aspects of knowledge rather than on the technical ones. Most literature in this area contains limited information regarding the basic technical and vocational platforms that sustain social and economic lifestyles of the people. Yet, there is considerable impressionistic evidence of ITVK transfer from traditional societies to industrial countries (e.g., acupuncture, herbal medicine, rehydration salts, etc.).

Indigenous Technical and Vocational Practices

Indigenous technical and vocational skills are those skills that utilise natural resources in the production of objects which satisfy the needs of humanity. Thus, indigenous production is the transformation of available indigenous resources into products that will be of use to the society. These resources include local exploitable raw materials (minerals, animals, tools, etc.) and the gifted or trained local experts in various vocational areas among the people. Some technical and vocational practices in Nigeria include:

Tie and Dye:

Among the Yoruba, the art of producing adire cloth from the designing through the dyeing to the marketing and wearing is done almost exclusively by women, using traditional technology.

Cloth Weaving

Another outstanding craft of Nigeria is cloth weaving. The popular Akwete cloth woven in a town of that name in Abia State is fast changing the dress fashion of many women who live in, or come to the country. Produced on a broad loom, Akwete is usually about 1,200 millimetres wide. It is produced in attractive designs and rich colours. There is also the "Aso-Oke" woven on narrow looms notably at Iseyin in Oyo State, the Ebira weaving at Okene, Kogi State.

Leather products and Tanneries

There are commercial activities in every aspect of the hides and skins production and transformation in Nigeria. The leather products industry, from raw materials (animals, hides and skins processing) through to the manufacturing of various leather products (shoes, handbags, upholstery) has tremendous potential to generate foreign exchange and create employment. The resources for tanning and producing leather products

are available locally, including a large domestic and regional animal population. Most dyeing is done in the traditional manner, using red dye produced from corn stalks and blue-black from the baba (indigo) plant which grows locally. This technology has been developed.

Metal works

The metal workers were originally the armoury designers in many parts of our country. Their art is now applied to the production of skillfully fashioned and decorated trays, bowls and pots, rings, bangles and the like. Nnewi craftsmen/artisans in Anambra state use this local technology to fabricate local guns and motor spare parts.

Glass beads and bangles

There is metal works, glass beads and bangles at Bida. The bead makers preserve their ancient skills as a family tradition.

Grass

Craftsmen and women spread across the country make grass and cane wood baskets, hand fans, tables and floor mats. Grasses are also used as roofing materials in the villages and as drinking huts in entertainment spots that spread across the country.

Cane wood weaving

There are beautiful chairs, baskets and tables of different shapes and sizes for homes and gardens beautification, especially for the hospitality and entertainment industry.

Pottery

Pottery is another very important Traditional technology in Nigeria. Excavations have shown that pottery attained a high level of development in Nigeria several hundred years ago. The tradition has been maintained and Nigerian pottery today ranks among the most artistic in the world. The art of pottery is deeply rooted in Africa, where earthen pots have been used since ancient times as cooking and storage vessels and even as caskets/burial vessels.

Fish Processing

Fishing communities are found in the Riverine areas of Nigeria (Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States) and also in Yola, Maiduguri, Taraba and Lokoja, which are along the river Niger and Benue. Different types of preservation methods; drying, smoking, freezing, chilling and brining are used. But the most prominent fishpreservation in Niger Delta is smoke-drying, using traditional drying techniques and technologies.

Palm oil processing

There are various traditional methods of extracting palm oil in different palm producing communities.

Cassava processing

One of the main reasons for cassava processing is the removal of the toxic cyanide from the products. Methods also vary from community to community and according to the type of product desired.

Traditional medical knowledge, sciences and technologies

Over the years, it has been recognized that traditional medical knowledge, sciences and technologies has great potentials for drugs discovery and development. The Nation has a huge bioresource and biodiversity that can be exploited by the manufacturing sector as Raw materials, galecials (semi process pharmaceutical raw materials) for the pharmaceutical, beauty and cosmetic industries. Traditional medicine has sustained mankind since inception and it is known that over 85% of the people in sub-Saharan African depend/utilize traditional medicine. For most, it is the only source of healthcare delivery available, affordable and acceptable.

Indigenous Vocational Training and Education

Competencies required to fit one into any of these trades are delivered through informal apprenticeship system that may be referred to as vocational training. In the non indigenous setting, (formal, informal and non formal) vocational education refers to skill-based programmes designed for lower level of skills education and focuses on a specific vocation for workplace entry especially in relation to their present or future occupations. Technical education, on the other hand, facilitates the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic technical and

scientific knowledge. The major difference between the two terms is that, whereas vocational education is designed for a particular vocation, technical education does not target any particular vocation but gives general technical knowledge.

Technical and Vocational Education is the merging between the Technical Education and Vocational Education i.e. the inclusion of basic technical and scientific knowledge with the skill-based vocational programmes. This is the necessary skills and knowledge required to be taught as advanced learning prior to workplace entry to cope with the emergence of technologies in the workplace. It is a near absence of this formalised technical and scientific component in indigenous vocational education programs that limits the universal applicability of vocational knowledge systems. A step to ameliorate this situation is for the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and similar bodies in other non industrialised countries to expand the number of Occupations that are formally recognized as Trades. This is a matter of agreement to formally acknowledge some occupation's set of skills and experience and to standardize the requirements for Certification. This will provide a viable background for developing a comprehensive Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs for indigenous technology systems.

TVET refers to non-academic technical education and-practical training that develop the skills and knowledge of apprentices (learners of trades or crafts) working in different sectors of industry and trainees / students trained in different technical and vocational institutes, centres and schools. It is used as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of Knowledge, practical skills, and attitudes relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

2.The role of ICT in development of indigenous technical and vocational knowledge

Information and communication technologies play major roles in improving the availability of indigenous knowledge systems and enhancing its blending with the modern scientific and technical knowledge. ICTs include telecommunications technologies such as

telephony, cable satellite and radio, as well as digital technologies, such as computers, information networks and software. ICTs can be used to:

- Capture, store and disseminate indigenous technical/vocational knowledge so that such knowledge is preserved for the future generation
- Promote cost-effective dissemination of indigenous technical inventions.
- Create easily accessible indigenous knowledge information systems.
- Promote integration of indigenous knowledge into formal, informal and non-formal training and education
- Provide a platform for advocating for improved benefit from ITVK systems of the poor countries.

Relevant Information And Communication Infrastructure For Indigenous Technical And Vocational Knowledge Systems

A reliable and accessible infrastructure (radio, TV, telecommunications, Internet) is a prerequisite for modern information exchange. The starting point for economic development in the information age is the existence of a suitable ICT infrastructure. There is no specific software designed for indigenous knowledge. Some attempts have been made by different projects to set up open source software tools to enable indigenous communities to protect their unique cultures and knowledge through digitization. Different software tools and platforms ranging from database management systems, Geographic Information Systems to text and speech and character recognition tools, graphical touch screens, audio and video editing tools may be considered for the management and dissemination of indigenous technical knowledge.

Knowledge management tools and platforms ranging from content management systems to group collaboration tools, synchronous and asynchronous communication can also help to capture and share indigenous knowledge. More advanced and new tools like wiki (collaborative authoring), blogging (personal journal, commentary and online diaries) and podcasting (syndication of digital media for playback on portable players and computers) could also be adapted to capture and disseminate information relating to indigenous technical and vocational products.

Categorically, the following two major groups of media technology are most relevant here:

(a) Backup and Archiving

From simple flash disks and rewritable compact Disks, DVDs, and memory cards, mass storage and archiving devices can be of tremendous usage. A recently web-based tool that has been used very significantly for educational purposes is the Wiki. These according to Neumann (2009, 387) are "interlinked WebPages based on the hypertext system of storing and modifying information. Each page can store information and is easily viewed, edited and commented on by other people using a web browser". Through Wikis, individuals can update web-based information on a collaborative fashion to add new information and to create links between pages. Mass shared storage devices can also be used to share, organize, archive digital media collections (photos, music, and video). They include built in support for media streaming to set top devices. The main feature that makes this useful for storage of indigenous technology information is its ability to spread files across multiple physical drives and be able to recover if one drive fails. This uses a technology called Redundant Array of Independent Disks (RAID).

(b) Data Capture and Transfer

These group of technologies enable the capture (live recording) of events and transferring the data to storage media where it can be used for educational purposes. The technologies in this area include those that use high speed USB HD digital video recorder with notebook or desktop PC, convert video for portable media player; capture from VCR or camcorders; combo tuners that watch analog TV while recording digitally; video transfers devices such as consumer webcams which deliver video over USB connection to computer.

3. Challenges To ICT Application

At the interface of ICT and indigenous technology is the challenge of culture and language. It is difficult for information and knowledge to be effectively disseminated to communities who need it if language issues are unresolved. In response to these challenges, an Open Source Software Translation Project⁴, a South African-based NGO project, has been working on translating computer applications to local

languages in order to overcome language barriers in the use of computers. Mutula (2003) reports that "the computer applications covering the full desktop, web browser, word processor, spreadsheet and email have been translated into some local languages such as Xhosa, Zulu and Venda".

The duality of technological effect demands holistic visions of ICT initiatives. For example, "to funnel large sums of investment into ICT initiatives without complementary investments in building adequate education infrastructures would be a recipe for the failure of development and could further frustrate millions of people in the developing world" (Ngwenyama et al 2006). In other examples Gillwald (2005) points out that "a certain threshold of national communications infrastructure rollout and skilled individuals have to be in place for the positive network effects of these technologies to reach a takeoff point and multiply through the national economies" (Gillwald 2005).

In a two-year study on the effects or changes experienced by ICT users in communities conducted in Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and South Africa Thioune reports that, "the process of appropriating and using ICTs on a large scale in poor communities was hindered by many institutional, technical, economic, and socio-cultural constraints" (Thioune, 2003). Some of the constraints facing ICTs application to basic social and economic life is poverty. This, according to Elijah and Ogunlade's (2006) constitute serious technological and socio-cultural constraints. The technological constraints are: lack of access to electricity or unstable supply of electricity and lack of adequate technical support. These constraints have huge ramifications as Ngwenyama et al (2006) caution: "in Africa, three quarters of the population is illiterate and lives in rural areas that lack basic facilities such as electricity and to expect effective utilization of communication technologies like the Internet in all areas, by all people, would be unreasonable" (p.4).

The application of information and communication technologies for managing indigenous technical/vocational knowledge has other problems. Not all aspects of living traditions of indigenous knowledge can be captured as 'artefacts' using digital technology. The collection of information from diverse indigenous sources is often a laborious, time-consuming and costly process. Those with knowledge may not be willing to share their actual knowledge. Efforts to capture indigenous knowledge by ICTs and setting up databases may not be successful as hoped due to

inadequate frameworks for capturing and making ITVK available in usable formats to the people who need them. Intellectual property right issues are other challenges, particularly if a disseminated indigenous technical and principle and practice leads to profit for transnational corporations. Documenting and publicizing ITVK could immediately lead to their appropriation by others without return to innovators. Currently, various rights management technologies have been developed to apply modern intellectual property law to the Internet. These include the XML-based markup languages XrML and ODRL, as well as Rights Expression Languages (RELs) (Hunter 2002). The problem with these is that Indigenous view their culture very differently as 'collectively owned, socially based and evolving continuously' (Janke 1998, p. 8). Only the community can give permission for others to use their intellectual property, the rules regarding how this is done vary greatly from one community to another, and intellectual property can never be given away, but only shared (Janke 1998). Despite the Western notion of intellectual property behind existing RELs, work has begun on developing extensions to support Indigenous concepts of intellectual property, including community ownership, a person's status and role within the community, and gender and kin-based rights (Hunter 2002). The access constraints defined by the REL extensions can then be enforced through existing XML security methods such as XML Signature, XML Encryption and the Security Assertion Markup Language, together with an appropriate systems architecture involving user log-ins and profiles to determine what material will be displayed.

4. Linking ITVK To Global Knowledge

Three major steps will achieve this:

Articulation of ITVK to the Formal TVET programs and System In order for bodies like NBTE to articulate the ITVK to the TVET programs currently running in various public and private institutions and organisations, you need to make an assessment of the quality of the indigenous TVET to be incorporated using the following set of criteria:

1. Fitness to purpose of TVET System

The aim and objective of the TVET Strategy is to create a TVET system that is: Effective, Efficient, Relevant, Flexible, Modular Respondent, Accessible, Affordable, Accountable, Sustainable, and which fulfils its general obligations towards the society.

2. Cost effectiveness of TVET

All basic indigenous technical/vocational practices may not be economically viable to justify the necessary resources required for inclusion in a formal TVET program.

3. TVET Courses (Curriculum) and Programmes

The nature of TVET Courses (Curriculum) and Programmes are among other most important factors that can influenced the processes of modernization, transformation and adaptation of ITVK into formal Institutions; especially with regard to their planning, development, content, quality and availability. The curriculum and training programmes development should be modularized to be flexible and adaptable to the fast changes in technology. Continuous reviewing, validating and updating the curricula to be relevant to the industrial and individual needs and be matching with the latest technology (demand-driven rather than supply-driven curricula) is a required condition.

4. Infrastructure and Training Equipment.

A new set of appropriate laboratory and workshop tools and equipment will be required to cater for newly adopted indigenous component of the programme. Outdated, inefficient and uneconomical facilities, equipment, machinery previously being used by indigenous technologists must be eliminated or upgraded.

5. New Training Plans

Development and execution of a well-organized and revised training plan is a cornerstone indicator, upon which a successful new TVET programme rests.

6. Revised TVET Assessment Processes

In order to ensure that workers or trainees/students are well trained, assessed, verified, proved to be competent and can effectively perform all

tasks assigned to them, a policy and set of procedures and guidelines should be developed within a robust Competency Assurance Management System CAMS. The credibility and effectiveness of such system is a major performance indicator of the TVET System.

7. Improving the Quality and Competence of new TVET Instructors / Trainers / Teachers

Adequate resources should be invested in educating the Instructors / Trainers / Teachers working in the new TVET system.

In order to assure the Quality and Competence of Instructors / Trainers / Teachers, we should clearly identify the different roles and tasks of the Instructors / Trainers / Teachers, the ways that they are assessed and the issues related to the quality of the continuing TVET they are providing and their professional development.

Conversion of Indigenous Technocrats to Global System Professionals: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The prior learning can be defined as learning from the past and which can be credited against a new qualification and thus gives exemption from taking part of the qualification programme.

Other TVET professionals define the Recognition of Prior Learning RPL as the comparison of the previous learning and experience of a particular individual against the learning outcomes required for the qualifications of a specified occupation /job / trade with a view to recognize what the individual already know and can do. There are essentially two types of RPL:

1. The recognition of prior accredited theoretical learning (Off-the-Job Training / Class Based Training / Instructor Led Training) undertaken in a classroom or formalized study environment.
2. The recognition of prior practical learning (On-the-Job Training /Work Based Training / In-service Training) achieved through workplace and / or life experience.

How and What to Assess in Recognition of Prior Learning

1. Accreditation of prior learning relates to credit and exemption from part of a new training programme of study. It is dependent on the level, content and achievement of previous learning and the harmony between the learning outcomes of the previous learning to the learning outcomes of the programme of study for which credit or exemption is being sought
2. The recognition of prior theoretical learning is relatively simple to implement, provided there is a common means of assigning value to both the learner's previous qualification and the target occupation /job / trade qualification. The recognition of prior experiential learning is far more difficult to implement as it involves designing instruments that will capture, measure and evaluate learning acquired experientially, and often informally, in a range of differing contexts. To achieve this goal, we must develop and agree on the Competency Standards (Levels) and Assessment Criteria to be used. A 4 competency levels are generally used in Competency Based Education and Training (CBET), namely Awareness, Knowledge, Skill and Mastery Levels.

Interconnecting and interacting with relevant technology stakeholders including:

- Other institutions of higher learning within and outside the country,
- Industries that employ the graduates,
- The society within which the product of institutions operate, and
- Developed nations by whom the various technologies would be adopted and adapted for international application.

The integration of ITVK into the development process is essentially a process of exchange of information from one community to another requiring ICT as a modern tool.

Recommended Framework for ICT Intervention

There are signs that ICT1 can contribute to development goals and to the exchange of indigenous knowledge. Proper application of ICT is

essential to stimulate the flow of indigenous knowledge and incorporation of modern scientific and technological understandings to traditional knowledge. This requires understanding of the capacities and contexts. Proper application of ICT requires understanding of the main characteristics of indigenous knowledge and defining tools, applications and services that meet those characteristics. Table 1 provides a list of major characteristics of indigenous knowledge and how information and communication technology tools must respond to these.

Features of ITVK	ICT considerations
ITVK is generated within communities, it works, it is validated and abundant	Community-based resource Centres that can enhance the flow of ITVK must be adopted
ITVK is location and culture specific	Traditional and modern technologies that respond to local culture
ITVK covers focuses on basic needs of human and animal	Services and systems that enhance livelihoods should be considered
Use of ITVK is cost-effective, sustainable and locally manageable, deployment and mobilization is not expensive	ICT services should not add additional burden but make ITVK more sustainable and manageable
ITVK is dynamic, innovative, adaptive and open for experimentation	ICT need to support the move beyond documentation and improve adaptation, adoption and experimentation
ITVK is oral and rural in nature	Focus should be made on tools that promote oral interaction such as audio-visual technologies, text to speech, etc.
ITVK is not systematically documented	Documentation of ITVK without jeopardizing local culture, IPR and other aspects should be considered
ITVK is not integrated into modern scientific and technical knowledge	ICT services should be designed to enhance systematic integration of modern and traditional knowledge.

ICT – assisted indigenous knowledge development requires a number of integrated steps:

- Networking major institutions that have already begun to work on ITVK.
- Study on the indigenous knowledge covering aspects such as ITVK asset at community levels, community structures and networks in support of indigenous knowledge systems and how information and communication technologies may enhance this.
- Research to map out social and cultural barriers to the flow of knowledge Development of pilot interventions to learn how ICT impact on ITVK

Conclusions

In This paper attempt has been made to discuss some of the salient features of ITVK and ICTs and progress in integrating ICTs and knowledge management concepts into indigenous knowledge systems. The integration of indigenous knowledge with modern thoughts, respect for local innovations and improving the exchange of traditional knowledge is essential for sustainable development and for improved livelihoods.

In addition, ICTs can be involved in the following processes for promoting ITVK:

- Creating local/regional/national registers of innovations in local technology.
- Developing intellectual property rights protection systems
- Stimulating the flow of indigenous technical knowledge in schools to increase awareness on innovation and traditional knowledge
- integrating it into the nation's secondary and primary school's curriculum
- encouraging children that have talent right from childhood,
- promoting preference for locally made goods by the Nigeria citizens
- fostering campaign against over dependence on the oil by the government.

- design website where ITV products and works are display
- enhance faster development of ITV product marketing
- developing innovative training programmes that educate business entrepreneurs about how to use collaborative technologies and integrate them into traditional discipline for sustainable competitive advantage.
- promote artisan association and cooperatives
- providing business support services' that consist of organizational infrastructure which is concerned with a wide range of support systems and functions like finance, planning, quality control and marketing ITV products.

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THE USEFULNESS OF IGBO LANGUAGE EXPRESSION OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract

The rate by which Igbo language speaking is fading away from Igbo land calls for concern to all meaningful people of Igbo. In 1988, the Fed govt made these languages Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo to be joined to English language as official language. None was given priority more than the other. In the policy, the federal govt. said that it is very important for every child to learn the mother language from nursery to secondary level. It says that every child should learn one, out of the 3 languages mentioned above. The Yorubas and Hausa sent their people to learn their languages. The Igbos are not ready. They did not see the need for their children to learn Igbo language not to talk of training people in the language. This and other factors made Igbo language to be relegated to the background. If Igbo should be integrated into the global changes in Africa, they should start by developing their language because language is people's identity. There is no other language no matter the extent of its development that can express the knowledge of the people better than their indigenous language. It is the contention of many Nigeria linguists that if our indigenous languages are used as our language of science and technology, our economic and linguistic potentials will be greatly enhanced. There is need for the Igbo language to be used in expression of indigenous knowledge. It is in that sense that this paper sees the need for the Igbo people to develop their language in such a way that it will make impact for the expression of indigenous knowledge which will help in integrating them into the global changes in Africa.

Introduction

Indigenous people may not be difficult to be identified in countries like America, New Zealand and others, but not so in Africa. It

is not easy to speak of Indigenous peoples in Africa as all black Africans consider themselves indigenous to the continent. indigenous language, is used in this write up to mean Igbo language. We shall take the definitions given by Sillitoe (2002), Indigenous knowledge is used in this write-up to mean the vast and largely undocumented body of knowledge, wisdom, skills and expertise that a given community has developed over time and continues to develop as it grapples with the challenges of its environment, with outside ideas and with constantly changing conditions. It represents the heritage of creative thought and practical everyday life which is passed from one generation to the next. It is tacit knowledge, hence the saying that each time an elder dies, it is as if a library had been burnt down, World Bank (2004). This explains anxiety about the threat which modernization poses to indigenous knowledge and the need to systematically collect, analyze, validate, disseminate and protect it from extinction, abuse or piracy and ensure that the original owners of this knowledge are fully acknowledged and equitably compensated.

Igbo language is an indigenous language and one can say that indigenous language is a term used to refer to the language of a particular people or area. It is usually used in explaining the culture, taboo, social and even the knowledge of the people. There are certain terms or conditions or events which no matter how knowledgeable and versatile one is in English language or other foreign language cannot explain. For example, New Yam Festival in Igbo land, kola nut blessing or other belief of Igbo people are explained better in indigenous language which is Igbo language in this write-up. The Igbo says “Igbo kwenu” but English language will interpret it “I greet you”. This does not bring out the meaning of the above. This little one can explain the importance of using indigenous language to express indigenous knowledge.

The need for indigenous language

Every nation especially those in the third world are working towards its growth and development. Effective communication using indigenous language is one of the avenues for achieving such development. It will be highly appreciated if indigenous language is developed so as to enhance reading culture, technology and national development for when rural populace is taught in their local language and communicated same; they learn and understand better which enhances growth. According to Ezikeojiaku (2007) “the need for the use of

Nigerian language in mass scientific education can hardly be exaggerated because the number of those literate in the English Language will continue to be negligible in the society. Hence, the development of the indigenous language is imperative". He went on to say that "many people have been through the school system but cannot make effective contributions either to the humanistic or scientific development of the country through the medium of English language. The same people, if they had been educated through the medium of their mother tongue, could easily comprehend scientific terms and discuss technological processes and contribute through their indigenous language their original ideas on scientific issues. For instance, a traditional doctor who is not learned can write or explain a traditional medical treatise in his local language, a task that will be impossible for him to accomplish in a foreign language. In the same way, a gifted motor mechanic, a welder or tailor, who has been instructed in his mother tongue, can make original contributions to his trade in his own language. In this way, indigenous knowledge will be more useful and will help integrate the nation in the global changes in Africa. It stands to reason, therefore, that scientific literacy in Nigeria's educational system, which has been the subject of much discussion, would be more readily achieved by a greater number of Nigerians if indigenous languages were used as Lingua Franca instead of present use of European languages. Let us take China, Japan, India and other countries of the world as an example. They grow fast and develop faster because they develop their indigenous language and use it to teach and communicate. So everybody no matter the age is carried along. So Igbo language will go a long way in helping her owner develop. Ehindero (1986) has this say, the aims of education language is to serve the society in some important ways which includes: contributing to improvement of the society by helping to refine and redefine national aims and technology (indigenous and contemporary). With the development of Igbo as indigenous language, the Igbos will base her industrial developments on what she has rather than on her tastes for imported foreign goods. Use of Igbo as an indigenous language will enable her scientists to research into our local products, which will in turn become the basis of our industrial growth.

The Usefulness of Igbo Language Expression for Indigenous Knowledge

Effective rural communication is not possible without indigenous language. While we appreciate and grapple with the use of information technologies for better communication within and around the world, our indigenous language remains relevant. Salawu (2006) has this to say, “Technology do not discard our languages. What we rather do is to harness their opportunities and potentials of the hardware and let our language i.e. indigenous language as software uses them as a vehicle for transmission”.

The success of any development message i.e. message of, for example government policy, health care message etc will be determined by the extent to which communication gets to the grassroots. Wallace (1996) notes that cultural context will get a deeper meaning to the understanding of the language and the language used will determine believably or sense of reality. Oladipo (1995) is of the opinion that the meaning of a linguistic expression cannot be established outside the context of the form of social interaction which shapes it. It follows then that indigenous language being a part and carrier of culture is best suited for communicating environmental messages. In Igbo land for example, environmental messages show an alliteration of most of the people who the messages are meant. The reason being that the messages are packaged in the language that most people do not understand – English. It is likened to preacher who is posted to a rural community and his medium of communication is in a language foreign to his audience. The congregation will start to dwindle because the messages could not get across to them. Owen-Ibie (2002) identifies the acceptability of language of communication to the audience as one of the criteria for throwing environmental awareness campaign be it politics, health etc messages. This exposes the importance or significance of indigenous language to environmental communication because it is most acceptable language to the target audience being part and parcel of the culture of the people. The campaign in the indigenous language will make the people interested; this will make them participate in whatever is going on. But, when you address them or expect them to speak in the foreign language they will not show interest at all. This will help in cutting the people off the development because they cannot speak on their problems. Chieka (1982) stressed that local language as a medium of communication is

important to the ordinary folk, especially men and women of the older generation which remains their only verbal medium of expression of self and culture. The unfortunate situation in Nigeria is where people take pride in expressing their inability to read or write in their own language. This is more pronounced among Igbo people where people cannot express themselves in their indigenous language freely without punctuating it with English words. On this, Elugbe (1991) has this say, "people are just as attracted to their languages as they are to other aspects of their culture such as religion. But while people may easily give up a religion, political system etc, it is not easy to make them give up their language". Because of the ever growing means of sharing ideas and attitudes, it is now possible to speak of tradition which is indigenous and modern method of communication, even if the latter is an enormous extension of the former. All the communication is useless if the person being communicated does not follow or understand. This is where the importance of indigenous language comes in. Traditional communication is quite vast. It includes all possible ways of attracting attention which includes dance, music, picture and words spoken that are peculiar to members of a society which is the mother tongue.

In most traditional societies of Nigeria, there are certain instruments used for the purposes of transmitting information to members of the community. For instance, in almost all parts of Igbo land, a good number of instruments have been developed for this purpose and some of them are still in use. These instruments include the talking drum, Igba, Ikoro, Opi, Oja, Ekwe, Ogene, Egbe and Nkponana. In all cases, each community where these instruments are used attaches specific meanings to the sound made by the instruments. The central idea is that, once each of them is sounded, the people in the community will interpret it and understand what it is all about. This is because the indigenous knowledge is expressed in indigenous language.

African literature taught in indigenous language can teach African a true knowledge to themselves, and this is the best education any human being could possibly receive. When we come to Nigeria, we do not have names for most of things like oxygen, space shuttle etc, but take China, English people and others as example, they try to fashion out names for things and their children are taught their languages and everything in their own language. This helps them to develop technologically and otherwise. People without language are frivolous and therefore lack

security and nowhere near their aims and objectives. Igbo language may go into extinction because the youths place emphasis on colonial language. Igbo language may go into extinction if drastic measures are not taking because, according to Ejiofo (2010), people teaching the 3 national languages i.e. Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo in their localities in 1988. Yoruba's 3588, Hausa 1578 and Igbo 1117. Number of people learning the 3 languages in the colleges of Education in Nigeria in 2001/2002 session are Hausa 9421, Yoruba 7726, Igbo 2036. the number of people that got certificates in NCE in the 3 languages in 2001/2002 Hausa 12891, Yoruba 6314, Igbo 2052.

The Sunday Sun September 16, 2007 page 20 and 37 as reported in Ejiofo (2010). According to the Managing Director of Federal Radio Cooperation of Nigeria.

"By the end of next year i.e. 2008 the FRCN will be having a national language channel, a four language channel that will broadcast in English. Hausa, Yoruba and Pidgin English. It is our hope that each of the language channels will broadcast non stop for 24 hours. I believe that when the language channels begin operation, we will give the VOA and the BBC a run for their money"

It is true that when some Igbo people reacted about the above statement, the managing director denied it. The question to ask is, why the omission in the first place.

According to Ejiofo (2010) "in August 3, 2004, Anambra House of Assemble said that they will be using Igbo language as language of communication every Wednesday and wear Igbo attire but it was not practiced. He went on to say that when Anambra state was in Enugu state, the House of Assemble made the same law in October 1979 that they will be using Igbo language for their deliberations but unfortunately, they did not carry it out even for a day." Nigerians are not educated, so, for the message concerning everything ranging from health, politics, etc to get to the grassroots, the campaign should be done in indigenous language. Achebe uses dialect in Anambra State and its environs to identify specific ancestors and deities and to indicate the meaning of specific rituals. He has earned worldwide respect for his spectacular success in conveying African experience in English, punctuated by the use of Igbo words to preserve the African flavour of his writing. This is because his writing is on the culture of a people, the Igbos. Remember that the success of his writing was because his usage of some Igbo words

to bring out what he wanted to say concerning Igbo culture, made his novel unique. Apart from the better understanding and meaning it gives to the people, the emotional nature of language as it relates to the natural liking people have for their native tongue, the sense of pleasure and satisfaction derived in community in their native language makes the use of indigenous language of great significance to communicating environmental messages. So Igbo language as an expression of indigenous knowledge cannot be over-emphasized. The 33rd inaugural lecture by Professor Inno Nwadike on Igbo Studies at University of Nigeria Nsukka will bring home the impact of Igbo language for expression of indigenous knowledge. Hear him, "Before the advent of Christianity, Missions and contact with Western civilization through whose influence and efforts Igbo was reduced into writing, Igbo language was an unwritten one. Like the language, the rich corpus of Igbo literature – folktales, myths, legends, anecdotes, riddles, drama, songs and poems were orally transmitted from generation to generation, from parents to child. Because the language, the literature and the culture of the people were one and the same, no institution was set apart for teaching them to the young and the strangers. But this does not suggest that instructions in these were not taken serious. So serious was this that traditional education in all ramifications in the society started from infancy. The world of Igbo folklore was opened to the young through which they gained a lot in linguistic expressions, common knowledge, honesty, industry, courage, endurance, devotion to duty, philanthropy, respect, truthfulness, common rules and the established etiquette and the entirety of good morals of Igbo society. They were taught the literature, history, geography, civics, of their communities through stories, songs and devices, myths and legends and contact with the environment. They were taught every lesson in the society in practical terms. They were encouraged to observe, explore and interpret their local environment by knowing the names and species of plants, mammals, reptiles, birds, fishes, insects, as well as the description of appropriate periods and seasons, and the forecasting of the weather. Some aspects of education in Igbo language and culture came close to the formal school system of the western world. Specific training in different spheres of life and trades such as home training, farming, blacksmithing, carving, painting, pottery, weaving, medicine etc came under the scrupulous overseer of the appropriate authorities. Accounts and records were kept through the

means of signs on the walls and floors of houses. Achebe's narration in *Things Fall Apart* where Okoye went to Unoka to collect the debt he owned him one early morning was a good example of one of such records". What he said was that the best way to impart knowledge, to preserve culture and achieve development is by learning through indigenous language. Igbos learn better and remember better that time than now because the indigenous language, that is, Igbo is almost abandoned by her owner.

We shall summarize this write-up with what one Dr. Oye said on Thursday May 19, 2011 Guardian which he captioned; why native tongues must be preserved, promoted by experts. It is true that he used Yoruba language but I believe that what is good for the goose is also good for gander. "Nigeria is on the path of being re-colonized if it fails to check the trend in which local language are gradually going into extinct. The youth, as it is popularly said is the future of any community. And for the Yoruba community, (and the Igbo community – this is my own addition), if the youth cannot use the language, before you know it, the language will die". Our social responsibility is to make sure we sensitize our people and let the youths know the importance of their local language so that not only for them to speak it but to be able to perpetuate the language.

He went further to say "if we do not do that, before we know it, we would be experiencing another re-colonization, where people from outside the country especially from America will be coming down to teach the language. We have come to realize that there is what we call a conspiracy theory, because in America, Canada, they are so much interested in Yoruba language and they are sending their children down here in Nigeria to study the language because they know that if the trend now continues, in another 50 years, those who know the language will no longer be alive; they will now be coming to teach our children the Yoruba language..." Where is Igbo language?

Indigenous language is the identity of the people and the best way to communicate is through it. According to Oye (2011), there is no nation that develops without its language because to him, new economies like Japan, Malaysia, and South Korea were able to develop because they use their indigenous language as the media of communication. He further stated that the problem we have now is a gap between the research institutes in the country and the people that are to use the end products of

their research because what they have now is written in English and most of these are cut off from those who should actually use it. But if we have a situation where those things are made available in local languages, definitely we will be able to use the results of those researchers and before you know it, it will have a great impact in the development of our nation. People's knowledge is expressed better in their indigenous language. So for Igbos to be integrated into global changes in Africa should develop their indigenous language.

Conclusion

There is need to promote indigenous languages for proper integration of African values in a globalized world. Igbos must endeavour to promote their own indigenous languages. This will help to integrate their culture, values in the globalized world. It is high time Igbos started to integrate and indigenize their own culture, values and skills through their language and bring it to an acceptable standard to attract international recognition. Apart from the better understanding and meaning it gives to the people, the emotional nature of language as it relates to the natural liking people have for their native tongue, the sense of pleasure and satisfaction derived in community in their native language makes the use of indigenous language of great significance to communicating environmental messages.

There is no way we can wish away our history, our culture, our being, our essence and our reality. This is just exactly as it may be inexpedient for us to wish away the European languages in our national and international lives. What is important for us now is not to allow the legacy of colonialism to continue to threaten the integrity of our culture, our language. We owe this to posterity. Igbo language must be used in expression of indigenous knowledge in their traditional environment if they intend to be carried along on global change in Africa because it is only when people are directed in the language they understand that, they can act positively and when they act, it will bring solution to their problem. This will enhance positive development.

Igbo language which is indigenous to the Igbo people should be helped by her owner to develop and reach international standard like Chinese, French, and English etc. This should be done through Igbo seminars, giving scholarship for the study in primary, secondary schools, conferences, higher institutions and through loving and speaking the

language by the owner etc. Once the languages ascend to international standard, the technology and development will follow. It is when everybody who owns the language contributes and are involved both illiterate and literates that we can make a head way because the illiterate men in the street or in the rural areas have something which he/she can contribute that can bring the Igbo people up. It may be cure for AIDS, Cancer etc.

We shall end this write up with Ezikeojiaku (2007). “During the Nigerian civil war, the Biafrans, relying on their own resources and language, were able to fabricate their own land mines, ogbunigwe, rockets, utaoku and refineries etc. we are convinced that if Nigeria can rely on her indigenous languages, curtail her dependence on her local master or other industrialized masters and use her own initiatives, she will extricate herself from the western, economic strong hold. The rapid promotion of the learning of French and Chinese languages in Nigeria by the federal government poses yet another serious problem on the development of Nigeria languages”. According to the NUC (1997), “the Nigerian French language village, Ajara Badagry alone has so far over 6380 students from twenty nine colleges of education and three hundred and forty eight Nigerian universities and various corporate bodies. The number may have tripled. We don’t have accurate data for Chinese language. Government both federal and state should encourage indigenous language more than foreign languages. They should sponsor students from primary to university and give scholarship also.

Recommendation

The local people who are the custodians and practitioners of indigenous knowledge must overcome doubts and diffidence about the merits of their cultural practices and traditions, they must be encouraged to appreciate the strong and weak points of their knowledge and seek, through experimentation, to improve and modify them appropriately in the light of change and new ideas, especially in the vital areas of agriculture, and food scarcity, medicine etc. We have tried to point out the need for indigenous language to survive and be developed in order to integrate Igbo knowledge into the global changes in Africa. In order to prepare rich ground for the proper implementation of the use of the indigenous language in science education, the medium of instruction for courses in Nigerian languages in the university and other higher

institutions should be in indigenous language. Authors should develop their indigenous language by using it to write. When physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics etc, are discussed using indigenous language, students should understand better. This will make them to be interested.

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**THE INFLUENCE OF GLOBAL CHANGES IN AFRICA ON THE
CONTEMPORARY LOCAL FASHION INDUSTRY OF THE
IGBO OF SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Over time, fashion has assumed different dimensions and directions in Africa. For centuries, the local fashion industry in Africa has been faced with many challenges arising from factors associated with modernity. This paper reports the result of an investigation into the influence of global changes in Africa on the contemporary local fashion industry of the Igbo people of the southeastern Nigeria. The research was conducted in three selected areas of Enugu State, Nigeria – Nsukka urban and Ovoko in Igbo-eze South Local Government Area – as representative local fashion centres in Igbo land. An un-structured interview involving thirty famous designers randomly selected in these areas were used to collect the data analyzed in this paper. The study reveals the followings as the major factors militating against the growth of the industry: imported foreign clothes, depressed economy, seemingly outmoded apprenticeship system, power failure, etc. The paper then argues that unless drastic measures suggested by the designers as well as the writer are taken seriously by government and consumers of these products, this vital medium of expressing indigenous knowledge and culture will continue to face neglect.

Introduction

People in almost all societies have worn all kinds of clothing since pre-historic times (Steele, 2009). Although Brogden (1971: 7) believes that the origin of the term fashion design as we know it started with a highly influential milliner called Rose Bertin about 1770 AD., he nevertheless, did not hesitate to admit that clothing and trimmings for various customers had been prepared in the past (before 1770 AD) by women. In time, industrial revolution brought about better tools for dressmaking. Globalization which is driven by trade and investment liberalization policies, technological innovations, easy transport and communication, entrepreneurship and global social networks infused socio-cultural dynamism and economics of scale into the business of

dressmaking. This development is quite desirable but with many side effects. Hence, Vesset (1998) in United Nations (2001:7) states that the image of globalization as a promise or threat is, in fact, one of the most powerful and persuasive image of our time. Those who see the danger of globalization worry at “the progressive advancement of “frightening” multinational corporations and the control over the world wide resources, manufacturing, finance and culture”. In this paper, the author examined the negative side of the coin. Following the findings of the study, a number of problems affecting local industries can be readily attributed to the influence of global changes. Hence, the Igbo local fashion industry which is one of the areas of expressing indigenous knowledge, has been influenced negatively in no small way by these changes.

The Igbo people are predominant in Enugu, Anambra, Imo, Abia and Imo States, southeastern Nigeria. Their cultural heritage includes among others, masking and new yam festivals. In most of their traditional ceremonies, the people dress gorgeously. The Igbo people have an age long local fashion industry. Of course, textiles and garments have been produced in Africa for coverage and decorative purposes both domestically — for household and village community members — and commercially, for bartering or sale for centuries (Liedholm, 1982 & Khaminwa, 2011). According to Shaw (1978) as quoted by Smith and Eicher (1982: 28) “one of the earliest bits of evidence relating to the clothing in Africa is the loin cloth worn by one of the female Nok figures which dated back to 5th century B.C.” The precise origins of cloth production in Igbo land is lost in time but “the fragments of textile recovered from the Igbo Ukwu archaeological sites (radio-carbon-dated to the ninth century A.D) give some idea of the antiquity of textile wearing and local fashion industry among the Igbo (Dike, 2007:6).

The pre- colonial records show the existence of textile industries in Nsukka, Abakiliki and Nkanu clan of the then Udi division which “received even the most causal mention” (Afigbo & Okeke, 1985:8). Before the early missionaries and mercantilists reached the shores of the Ndoki (the Igbo town where Akwete cloth is produced) in the fifteenth century, weaving was already going on (Nkwo, 1984:107). The local fashion industry before the global changes could be said to have remained at a subsistence level since the Igbo children and youth often appear nude while the adults were scantily dressed. These dresses lacked the sophistication of modern fashion. Little needle work, for instance,

was needed in a typical loin cloth and wrapper fabric – the commonest attire of the period. However, women in particular were preoccupied with the voguish body adornment achieved with the use of *uli* and other locally sourced dyes (cam wood) while scarification and dental reconstruction were fashionable among the men folks in some parts. In this context though, the scope of contemporary Igbo fashion industry being examined is concerned with the local manufacture of male and female garments/apparels whether or not they are of western style or origin.

Fashion remains an integral part of the Igbo society and reflects the society in its entirety, although the data used in the study was collected in Enugu state. The choice of the state is based on the fact that the state has some higher institutions within the towns where the interview for the study was conducted. These schools attract many students and staff from other parts of the nation whose fashion need tend to draw many dressmakers to the region. Besides some notable textile industries in the pre-colonial and colonial periods were found in the area. Furthermore, the cultural significance of dress in Enugu state cannot be over stressed. For instance, the Enugu “Igbo traditional theatre: the masquerade and dance drama”, according to Dike (2007:6) “is replete with [many varieties of colorful] textile materials”. In Amagunze, a village in Enugu State, for example, cloth occupies a special place in the burial tradition such that a corpse is hardly buried without being specially dressed (Nwigwe, 2003:1). Therefore data analysis of this study was generalized to apply to Igbo land as a whole due to the similarity in fashion styles, economy, culture, religion, weather / climate, government, ancestry, aspiration and socio-political experiences among the Igbos.

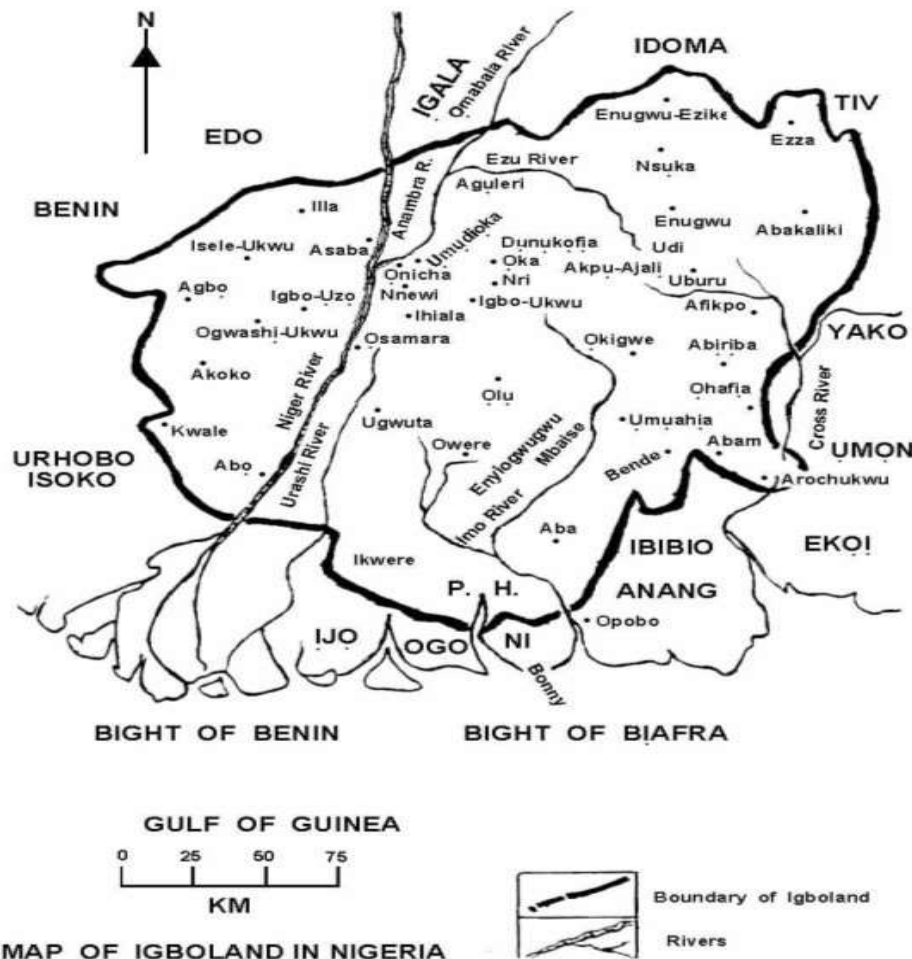
The popular Akwete cloth for example, produced in Abia State has been an essential commodity culturally, economically and socially in Nigeria and beyond. The people of the state have always survived on farming, trading, civil service and dressmaking among others. The tailors in Abia State face similar problems with tailors in Enugu except that Abia State tailors were barred since 2009 from sewing uniforms for members of armed forces following a discovery of some tailors who sewed army and police uniforms and give to criminals. A number of non-governmental organizations such as Stitching Mercy Organization and Geodora Samaritans Inc. train some interested individuals in some skilled works such as hair-making, dressmaking etc. in Imo State. Some dressmakers in

Ebonyi State online their names, GSM number and contact address online. Although fewer tailors in Anambra State do the same, some parts of the state have been known for certain traditional ceremonies that promote indigenous fashion. When the author interviewed a fashion designer at Onitsha whose contact was got online, he said that electricity was not a problem to him.

The traditional crafts, however, suffered setback in the colonial period because of the fact that the “colonial administrators had low view of the cultural attainments of the Igbo, especially of their achievements in the sphere of arts and crafts, political organization, religion and cosmological thought” (Afigbo, 1985:7). However, Murray (1939:35) listed some major crafts in Igbo land during the colonial period, noting that the decorative cloth works of the Igbo chiefly included costumes made for plays, appliqué works, bead works and bark cloth. Local fashion industry covers many aspects of clothing or dressing. For in the words of Smith and Eicher (1982:28) “dress defined broadly involves modifying the body by the use of cosmetics, scars, coiffures, textiles apparel, jewelry and accessories held by or for a person (such as canes, fans, and umbrellas)”. Unlike certain local industries such as fishing and pottery which are established in places with the requisite raw materials, the local fashion industry are found in almost all the towns and villages. This explains why locally produced ready-made clothes could be found in different marketplaces in Igbo land hitherto. During the *Biafran* war which lasted over two years (1967 – 1970), the contemporary Igbo local fashion industry suffered major setback alongside other important economic activities such as pottery, farming and blacksmithing. Nevertheless, the persistent problems have always stemmed from the people’s perception or value system, colonization and global changes. The later forms the main thrust of this paper. In this paper therefore, attempts were made to highlight the extent of the influence of global changes on the contemporary local fashion industry of the Igbo of south eastern Nigeria.

The Map Of Igboland.

Source: Wikipedea Free Encyclopedia



Method of Study

Field work formed the primary source of data necessary for the research. It involved an in-depth interview involving thirty tailors and fashion designers in the selected areas – Enugu metropolis, Nsukka urban and Ovoko in Igbo-eze South Local Government Area. Ovoko is not as developed as Nsukka and Enugu. Since some of the tailors were non literate adults, interview questions were also administered some times in vernacular so as to make room for better understanding and to elicit appropriate and reliable responses. Data collected were studied, analyzed and summarized using tables and a bar chart to represent the frequency of each identified factor. Data from available literature were also used to support the validity of these factors as causes of decline of the industry.

Identification and Presentation of Data

A critical analysis of the interview records identifies eleven factors as the major problems facing the contemporary local fashion industry in Enugu state in particular. The degree of their impacts on the local fashion industry was measured by their frequency as reflected on the interview data. In other words, the number of times each factor was mentioned by the respondents determines its degree of impact on the industry. Table 1 explains this more succinctly. It contains the summarized interview data. The identified factors that inhibit the growth of contemporary local fashion industry appear in the middle row. They are numbered serially with the corresponding frequencies in descending order on the last column, while table 2 illustrates the approximate percentage used in the following bar chart

Table 1

S/N	Factors Identified	Frequency of occurrence
1	Inadequate power supply	30
2	Depressed economy (inflation)	29
3	High cost of cotton and other textile materials	28
4	Lack of modern & quality sewing machines & tools	27
5	Absence of apprentices	25
6	Low patronage of locally made goods	23
7	Mass importation of foreign ready-made and “Okirika” clothes	22
8	Unfavorable weather conditions	21
9	Adoption of Western fashion	20
10	Low literacy level	12
11	Decline in cultural activities, eg. Masquerade rituals	3
Total Response		240

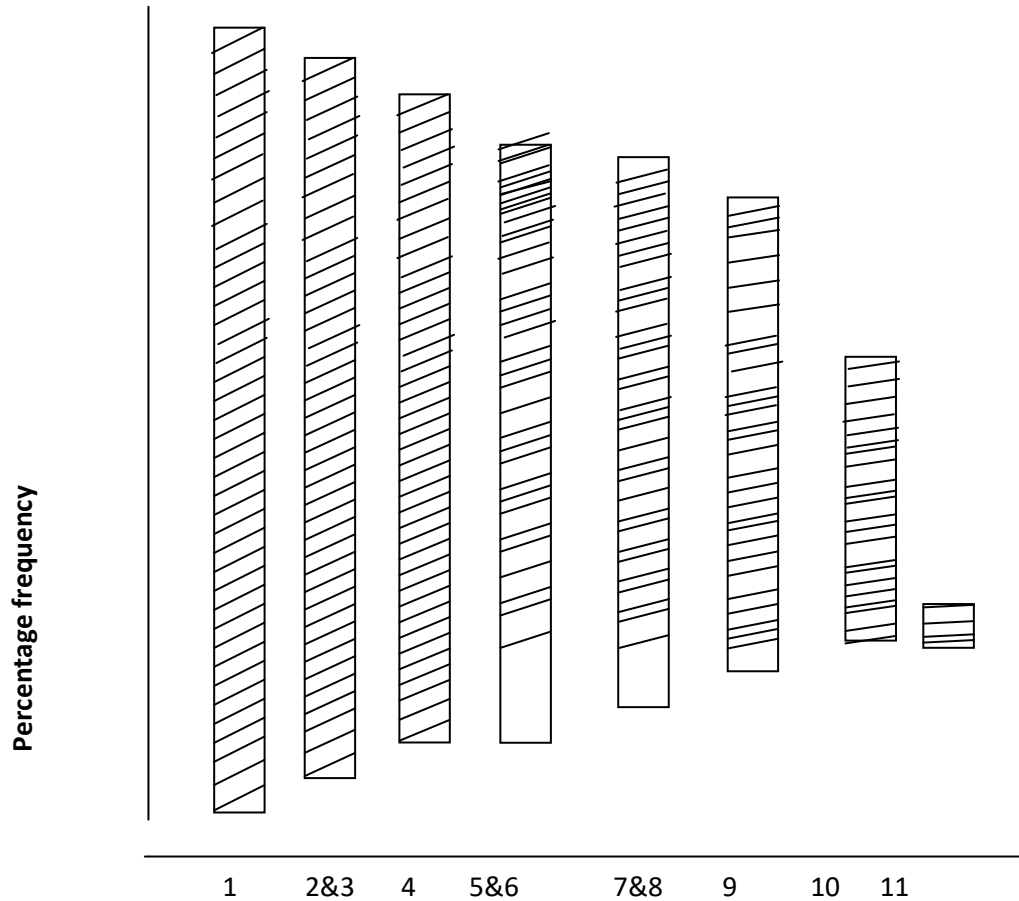
Table 2

S/N	Frequency	Approximate Percentage
1	30	13
2	29	12
3	28	12
4	27	11
5	25	10
6	23	10
7	22	9
8	21	9
9	20	8
10	12	5
11	03	1
	240	100

N.B PERCENTAGE = $\text{Frequency} \times \frac{100}{1 \text{ Total frequency}}$

The bar chart below illustrates the percentage of the frequency of the various factors in the interview data.

Fig. 1



The identified factors are here represented by the horizontal line; their approximate percentages are represented by the vertical line.

Analysis and interpretation of findings

Above analyses indicate that inadequate power supply has the highest percentage frequency of 13%, followed by depressed economy (capital market) and high cost of cotton and other textile materials with 12% each. Lack of modern and quality sewing machines and other tailoring tools comes next with 11% while the absence of apprentices and low patronage of locally made goods score 10% each. Like in other cases where two factors share same percentage, the effect of the absence of

apprentices is slightly more adverse than the problem of low patronage of locally made clothes. This is also the case with mass importation of foreign ready-made and second-hand (*Okirika*) clothes and unfavorable weather conditions with 9% each. It is necessary to note the seriousness of mass importation of foreign clothes over low patronage of locally made clothes. It is also noteworthy the gap between inadequate power supply and importation of foreign clothes. The last three factors (adoption of western fashion, lack of quality basic education and decline in cultural activities) have 8%, 5% and 1% respectively. These factors reveal the extent of the effect of global changes in Africa on the contemporary Igbo local fashion industry.

Inadequate supply of electricity:

The light energy is quite erratic while the petroleum products such as fossil fuel, kerosene and gas remain relatively expensive in Nigeria. Energy problem is one of the major threats to globalization and the growth of modern local industry. For instance, modern sewing and embroidery machines make use of light energy. Most tailors iron out sewn clothes with electric pressing irons. The problem of heat or hot weather often aggravated by confined working space becomes more glaring in absence of functional electric fans. The use of manual machines is seen to be more laborious; hence, many prefer the electric machines. Except those who make use of generators, some local dressmakers who possess only electric sewing machines tend to be redundant at the instance of power outage. This may explain why most people interviewed identified this as the most distressing of all, contrary to the last factor – the decline in cultural activities – which scored 1%. Therefore it can be said that the effect of the last factor on the industry is somewhat inconsequential.

The identification of inadequate supply of electricity as the major problem of the local fashion industry in Igbo land cannot be over emphasized because of its importance to the dressmakers. In *Punch* editorial of May 26, 2008, the declining supply of electricity was attributed to hasty privatization, improper coordination in the power sector and inadequate tariff structure. The nation's daily power generation is said to have plunged to just below 1000mw. Such is certainly inadequate for a population of over 140 million. Ejike Nnamani, one of the tailors interviewed in Ogbete main market, Enugu, lamented

that he spends about three thousand naira on fuel to power his generator every week. Some feel the energy problem can be attributed to poor planning. The government is said to have failed to increase the quantity of mega watts on regular basis and in proportion to the growing population. Interestingly, President Goodluck announced in 2010 plan to reform the power sector and achieve stable electricity in the country. This is hoped to be achieved by privatizing the 18 successor companies of the power holding company of Nigeria (Nwachukwu & Alike, 2010). While the nation awaits the realization of the said reform, it is important to state that meaningful development will take place in the industry unless power supply ceases to be erratic.

Low patronage of locally made clothes:

The problem of low patronage of locally made clothes and other indigenous products is not peculiar to Igbo land. Ogunnaike (2010) discloses that fabric consumers in Kaduna State Nigeria prefer foreign made clothes to the locally made ones. Going by the dressing trend of the students of in tertiary institutions in Igbo land which seems to favour Western wears, it is logical to say that most Igbo youths dress more in Western fashion. Most young ladies especially students love to appear on jeans trousers and these are usually sewn abroad and exported to Nigeria as ready made clothes. Traditional attires are commonly worn on special occasions. The implication is that the imported foreign clothes will continue to attract more sales in the local markets in Igboland. Igbo people are, perhaps, more western fashion minded than other tribes in Nigeria. They always look European in attire.

Today, suits, jeans trousers, skirts, blouses or shirts in English styles among others are in vogue. Some however have to put on these wears because of the nature of their profession. In Igboland for instance, as in some parts of Africa, the odds are that students, military and para-military men and women, bankers, and those in certain religious affiliations among others always appear on western fashion due to the peculiarities of their job. The local dressmakers who specialize in traditional attires have less work to do. Basden (1982:179) clearly states that “foreign cloth, especially certain German lines, has captured the native market” and went on to predict that “in a comparatively short time the local article will be discarded”. Basden believes that the locally made goods cannot compete with European cloth, either in price or

attractiveness. According to Ali (2010:82) European mass-produced goods started to displace local wares since two centuries ago. This is the effect of the industrial revolution, colonization, and globalization.

Depressed Economy (Inflation):

People tend to buy cheaper things whenever there is inflation. There is obvious turbulence in the world's financial market. Prah (2008) observes that depressed economy has walloped America as many state governments are slashing their budget, frantically trying to stay afloat as a result of rapidly stumping economy. Currency devaluations carried out under structural adjustment economic reform programs which made imported materials and clothing more expensive shows that economic conditions are also influencing African clothing styles (Khaminwa, 2011). The present Nigeria situation is a typical example. Comparatively, locally made clothes are becoming more expensive due to high cost of production.

Most tailors complain of exorbitant shop rents charged by landlords/shop-owners yearly or monthly. In addition are the high fees or levies the government through her agencies place on the dressmakers for the business premises and the likes. The chairman of Nsukka Tailors Association, Mr Fabus Ajogwu said the tailors in Nsukka, formed an Allied Union in a bid to fight the high cost of levies placed on the local dressmakers by the government. The Union after negotiation with the government often reaches a compromise with respect to the amount to pay in bulk at the end of the year.

The present state of the economy keeps seems to favour the marketing of used clothing (imported 'okirika') consistently strong in Igboland as in other parts of Africa. Thus most tailors depend on custom made clothes ordered occasionally by their customers. This keeps many local fashion designers and dressmakers at subsistence level as they strive to remain in business. According to Akubue (2004:1), the problems that hinder the effectiveness of dressmakers in Enugu State in the area of pattern drafting include: insufficient capital, poor credit assistance among others.

Low literacy level:

The world is becoming more knowledge driven. Some of the designers or dressmakers are aware of this and aspire to get at certain level of western education. They believe that a certain level of literacy is required for one to be a good fashion designer in the contemporary times. This explains why a number of them are graduates. For example, Mr Jideofor V.C., a former Chief Magistrate of Ogidi and Onitsha magistrate court, is a notable fashion designer in Enugu metropolis (Nwanne, 2006:14). Ironically one dressmaker interviewed attributed the reason for his being in the local fashion business to his failure to go to school. His point, however, is not logical. Fashion design is a trade that can be learnt informally. He probably fell back to fashion design because he lacked opportunity to go to school. Western education is not a threat to indigenous crafts on the contrary, the former promotes the later. One of the seamstresses the author interviewed at Eke Ovoko Market, Miss Ugwoke Kelechi who though she did not complete her secondary education, strongly believes that one needs the knowledge of mathematics to be a good tailor. A tailor interviewed in Enugu metropolis admitted that one can combine going to school on part time basis with dress-making vocation conveniently. Western education somewhat helps one to overcome communication barrier in customer relationship. Nevertheless, scarcity of apprentices in this area can be traced to the growing popularity of western education as many youths within school age either attend schools or take to other occupations. One tailor forthrightly attributed the relatively high cost of locally made clothes to the absence of apprentices. Apprenticeship system provides for a kind of division of labour in the industry.

Mass importation of foreign ready-made and *okirika* clothes:

The influence of trade as one of the key aspects of globalization on African society is succinctly captured in the following words of Khaminwa (2011):

African societies have long incorporated imported materials, textiles, and styles into their own clothing traditions. For centuries, trans-Saharan trade caravans carried cloth back and forth between the city-states of the West Africansavanna and North Africa. After Europeans began plying Atlantic trade routes around the continent, they too participated in the textile trade.

Certain kinds of cloth, in fact, served as currency in West Africa, to be exchanged for slaves or gold.

Importation of foreign clothing into Nigeria heightened at the instance of Nigeria's membership to World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 (Raw Material Research and Development Council, 2002). According to Abernathy et al (2002), the system of trade restraint created by the Multi fiber Agreement (MFA) was replaced by the agreement on textile and clothing (ATC) and became part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement in 1995. In this new system, all World Trade Organizations (WTO) members including Nigeria are to eliminate all quotas on textiles and apparel over a period of ten years which culminated in January 1, 2005. Today most local tailors only sew on order; only a handful of dressmakers sew and sell either directly to consumers or "middlemen or traders who retail the products throughout the country" (Liedholm, 1982:72). No wonder a significant proportion of the used western clothing was originally donated to charities in the United States and Europe are exported to and sold in Africa. Whether new or secondhand, Western clothing is considered fashionable in contemporary Igbo land. Mr Ejike Nnamani (earlier mentioned) said that 95% of textile materials in Nigeria are imported. This may not reflect the true percentage but portrays, at least in his mind, the degree of dominance of the foreign textile products over the locally made ones in Nigeria.

Unfavorable weather conditions:

At instance of extreme weather conditions, consumers tend to be more selective in their choice of wearable materials. This is the effect of climate change. The author while still in the workshop that belong to one of the tailors interviewed heard a client complain about the harshness of weather which had forced her to adopt the use of simple clothes. Afigbo and Okeke (1985:27) recognize the intense heat of Igbo people's climate for most of the year and gave it as one of the reasons for their being scantily dressed. It creates room for the body to be aired adequately. The passage of emission-reducing legislation of developed and developing countries into law is one of the many solutions people proffer to check climate change. National targets are to be implemented through domestic policies which encourage businessmen and women to invest in non carbon-intensive products and processes (The Economist, 2009). Edeh

(2010:64) blames some Nigerian designers who copy western styles wholly when producing clothes for the local market; thereby neglecting the fact that Nigeria has a totally different climate condition from America or Europe. However the demand of clothes is usually very low.

Lack of modern and quality sewing machines and tools:

The innovations in science and technology manifest in the modern sewing machines which many local dressmakers cannot afford. Some tailors said one hardly comes across quality sewing machine in Nigeria. Mr Fabus Ajogwu, the chairman of Nsukka Tailoring Association revealed that there are special machines for sewing jeans material and for creating special button holes. These are not easily found in the local industry. Mr Chimezie Ugwuanyi who specializes in male traditional wears in Nsukka added that there are no competent engineers to repair certain embroidery machines when they became bad. The fact is that there are few competent engineers Nigeria who could render such service.

Other Factors

It is noteworthy that these identified problems including the four factors which are not discussed separately in this paper such as the high cost of textile material, lack of quality modern machines, adoption of western fashion, absence of apprentices and decline in cultural activities made some dressmakers to engage in other forms of craft or business. This case is more glaring in the rural areas. The author, for instance, observed some closed workshops in Ovoko (one of the research areas) as an indication of the absence of apprentices in the industry which is evident in other indigenous crafts in Igbo land. This is one of the possible causes of delayed delivery of goods and services. Considering the tediousness of the process of dressmaking, many tailors now charge their clients so highly making some opt for cheap imported ready made clothes. Another remarkable observation in Ovoko was that female apprentices outnumber their male counterparts. This also brings into focus the issue of gender inequality in the industry. In general, the number of seamstress quite outnumbers that of male. This may be put at ratio 5:1. This rather confirms the observation of Onyekwere (2003:11) who supposes that, "out of every ten tailors, eight are females". Globally, this phenomenon seems to hold true too. According to International

Labour Organization (1994:31), “in most countries, the clothing industry is one of the industrial branches which employs the highest percentage of women”.

During the interview, other issues that boarder tailors were identified. They include lack of government support, different forms of exorbitant levies and rents charged by the state and local government as well as landlords in form of taxes, business premises levy, among others. Another factor has to do with scarcity of appropriate workshops or studios; most indoor shopping spaces are usually not suitable for dressmaking.

Recommendations

Liedholm (1982:74) believes that “government action could ameliorate some of these difficulties” affecting African dress and textile arts. Keeping the local fashion industries active requires affordable energy. The government should increase the quantum of electricity mega watts in the country. To this end, they may consider other alternative sources of power generation. Shah (2011) observes that the recent years and months have witnessed increasing attention being paid to the issue of energy security. *Cheapoil* should be provided to run generators and to ease off transportation problems. The government should show equal concern for both small scale indigenous industries and the larger enterprises. Tariff, for example, could be adjusted to place the locally made clothes and foreign imported clothes on similar pedestal. This can be done by reducing the number and amount of levies to be paid by local crafts men and women to the government. Loans made available to individuals in the industry for business expansion will encourage burgeoning designers who do not have sufficient capital to venture into the business.

The government should ban certain foreign clothes which compete with the locally made ones until the local industry acquire considerable strength to withstand any competition with the foreign textile products in the local and international markets. The CEO of Labanella, a popular Fashion house in Lagos once stated that Government in other parts of the globe does sponsor their designers to international fashion shows where they meet to exchange ideas. This is not obtainable in Nigeria where one is expected to sponsor any project by oneself. It is necessary for indigenous products to be showcased to the

world from time to time in annual or monthly exhibitions. For example, the Okigwe local craft and industries exhibition held in 1951 was well attended by private exhibitors who realized that the exhibition would give them the opportunity to make their products known. Expressing his views about the exhibition, Savile (1951:451), said:

Indeed many people hope that the exhibition will become a regular event, for it gave them a feeling of confidence in themselves and made them realize that Nigeria need not in every thing depend upon imported goods. In all the...private stalls, all the things displayed were made in Eastern Nigeria, and all of them were such as could find ready sale in competition with imported articles.

When local fashion design is given the desired publicity through regular exhibitions and the media, young people leaving schools will cease to resort to the vogueish, seemingly easy but unstable means of earning money after fruitless effort to secure good job. For instance, the use of commercial motorcycle which has been somewhat banned by the government in some parts of Igbo land is one of such means. Nigerian graduates and the youth in general should be empowered to engage in useful venture including fashion design.

The local consumers should be made to realize the nature and uniqueness of African fabrics and motifs through the media. The indigenous clothes are not only made to adorn people gracefully but are also made to suit the climate of the immediate environment. At this juncture, it behooves the author to reassert the unique quality of the locally made cloths in support of Cole and Aniakor (1984:56) and Eicher, (1976:33) who revealed that between 1505 and 1508, "the first Europeans [who visited Africa] bought ... locally made textiles" which they "praised for their fine quality and were sought by explorers" Similarly, Sieber (1972:11) observes that "for about three centuries, Europeans described with accuracy, interest, insight the dress ... of the African they met". In other words, locally made textiles were so aesthetically satisfying that the white appreciated them. Besides maintaining good customer relationship built on honesty, timely job delivery and good job, the dressmakers ought to improve on their skills from time to time. For example, computer literacy is essential especially

in the area of fashion illustration (though many local designers are ignorant of this aspect); it can help the local designers to be more effective. (Steele, 2009) has rightly observed that today's fashion designers now use computers to create clothing patterns.

However, no matter how difficult or depressed the economy may be, new clothes will still be bought and worn (Odigboh, 1992). This is because Nigerians are fashionable. Since local fashion industry is viable. Based on the foregoing, the need to develop it to a point where its presence could be felt in the international market. The case of Chinese clothing industry initially developed to serve domestic needs but made its presence felt in the international market only ten years later is a perfect example (International Labour Organization, 1994). Currently, China seems to be the main manufacturer of clothing materials for the world (Shah, 2011).

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated how some eleven factors ascribable to global changes have affected the contemporary local fashion industry of the Igbo negatively. Inadequate power supply has been identified as the most serious problem which remains one of the major concerns of the present government. The next factor, depressed economy which manifested in inflation has frustrated many dressmakers in Enugu State and may partly explain why the Igbos prefer cheap foreign ready-made (*Okiriki*) clothes which depict western fashion. There are yet five more factors directly discussed in this paper. Four factors could not be explained separately. These include: high cost of textile material, lack of quality modern machines, adoption of western fashion, absence of apprentices and decline in cultural activities. The decline in cultural activities which may be due to the influence of Christianity in the area has the slightest negative impact on the industry. This research is incomplete following the continuing influences and diversity of global changes which the interview questions did not cover. For instance, lack of government support, scarcity of conducive working environment in form of well lighted and spacious workshops or studios, different forms of exorbitant levies and rents charged by the state and local government as well as landlords in form of taxes, business premises levy, rank among other issues identified during the interview. The study nonetheless offers a framework to ascertain the degree of the influence of global changes in Africa on the contemporary local fashion industry of the Igbo of

southeastern Nigeria. The paper finally outlines recommendations that would favour local fashion makers if implemented.

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**INDIGENOUS ART PERFORMANCES AND IGBO
WORLDVIEW IN NIGERIAN LITERATURE**

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Abstract

Africans have a belief that human development from birth to death is influenced by ancestors and worship of gods and deities which are revealed in many festivals and ceremonies. There is a complex relationship between traditional performance arts and these festivals and ceremonies. Therefore in Igboland, performance arts have remained a vibrant aspect of the people's culture. The religious, ritual, social, economic, political and other pre-occupations of the Igbo people are revealed through indigenous art performances such as masquerades, music, songs, dance, drama and poetic chants. These performance arts are not seen as isolated activities but as religious, social and ritual superstructures that attempt to explain the place of man in his society or world and at their ends make man satisfied with their pleasures. This paper examines the traditional performing arts as contexts of Nigerian literature.

Introduction

The conception of performing arts such as masquerade, music, songs, dance, drama and poetic chants is found worldwide. In African traditions, the origin cannot be exactly determined since performing arts are as old as the society. Everywhere in the continent, these performances have been regarded with great respect and admiration because Africans have a belief that such actions of individuals or a group of individuals have great effect on the other members or groups of the society. They give joy to the people and help them to maintain the bond of relationship between man and supernatural beings which they believe give them life. They see human life as the highest value in the perception of reality and they therefore do everything possible for life to be enjoyed on this earth. These performing arts foster the relationship between men in society and with the divine and also their ancestors. These performing arts as they are practiced among the Igbos who occupy the eastern part of Nigeria will be examined in this paper.

The Diverse Performing Arts as an Integrated Whole

In Igbo society, performing arts like masquerades, music, dance, songs, drama and poetic chants are inseparable things which influence each other considerably. They form an integrated whole which merge at occasions like wrestling, marriage, naming and funeral ceremonies,

festivals, title taking ceremonies and during sacrifices to appease the gods.

Traditionally in Igboland, there is a belief that masking is an important vehicle to display other performing arts like songs, music, ritual, dance, drama and poetic chants. C.C. Aniako in his 'Arts in the Culture of Igboland' (2002) stressed that:

When the omabe masker comes into the village common in the Nsukka area accompanied by youthful followers, it is rather the pulsating music punctuated by gun shots, the unceasing cheers of the ovation from the audience which reinforce the spirit of the mask and lead to greater intensification of dance movements which continue to unsettle the audience emotionally.

The Omabe festival which is a festival in honour of the gods of fertility in Nsukka area of Igboland is a very good example of the performing arts as an integrated whole. Omabe cult is a masculine cult even though women who have attained certain level in life and have also reached their menopause can be occasionally admitted into the cult. Other women and children are only involved by being allowed as the audience to watch when the omabe maskers come out to the village square from a distance. Every village has a public square and according to Opata (2000: 163) in traditional African societies these public squares are where dance, masquerade display etc. take place. He also stressed that this public squares are not essentially a viewing center but where the people have clan meetings, children games, religious worships; a place where people simply go to entertain themselves by watching spectacular performance. The omabe masquerades consist of *Ishi Ma* - the elderly masquerade, *Echaricha* - the main masquerade that is named by its aesthetic nature, *Oriokpa* that serves as a police to chase away people from *Echaricha*, and *Edi Ogbene*, which is even more powerful than the *Oriokpa*. The *Echaricha* is made up of a dazzling silver coloured body; its majestic walking steps with its two hands raised above its shoulders, the left hand carrying a white cock or white horse tail while the right hand carries *oji* decorated with pieces of many coloured cloths adds to its beauty. Its agility as it walks displaying its broad chest and its jumping up at regular intervals after walking few steps together with the poetic chants and praise songs and the beating of the *ogene* of the followers,

bring a lot of honour and admiration from the audience. Nsukka town is divided into three communities – **The Mkpunano, Nru** and **Ihe na Owere** in their order of seniority respectively. These masquerades and their entourage from different villages of the communities come out for both their inaugural and valedictory outings yearly. The yearly festival rotates from one community to the other thereby making each community to have her turn once in three years.



Echaricha



Echaricha and the entourage



Edi-ogbene and the entourage



Oriokpa

These Igbo performing arts serve as the means through which their cultural heritage is performed and disseminated. They are still relevant to the society as they serve as the link between the people and the supernatural. Chijioke Agbasiere in support of this pointed out in his 'Igbo Traditional Performing Arts and Sustenance' (2010) that the Igbos still engage in some of their traditional performances only to maintain the link with the supernatural.

Performing Arts as Represented in Nigeria Literature

Nigerian people especially the Igbos appreciate their culture. Some of their literary artists portray their culture by giving insight to it in the way they present these performing arts in the literary texts.

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* gives us an insight of the Igbo people using the villages from Umuofia to Mbaino as a case study. The performing arts are portrayed in activities of the people like wrestling, marriage and funeral ceremonies, breaking of kola nuts, sacrifices done to appease the gods, New Yam festival, Week of Peace and title taking ceremonies.

Wrestling is a competition by two people to see who skillfully throws the other on the ground with force. It does not involve bloodshed but it is only an entertainment and leisure activity to determine the stronger. One of the leisure activities witnessed in *Things Fall Apart* is the wrestling feat between Amalinze, the cat and Okonkwo. The villages of Umuofia to Mbaino occasionally engage the strongest men to wrestle and the man who throws his opponent down brings honour to himself and to his village. He becomes the strongest man in the community. These wrestling matches are usually performed during festivals. Okonkwo, the protagonist of the novel was well known throughout the nine villages of Umuofia and even beyond for throwing Amalinze the cat down. 'Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten from Umuofia to Mbaino and he was called the cat because his back would never touch the earth' (1).

While preparing for the wrestling and when the wrestling is going on, performances like songs, dance, drama and poetic chants go on simultaneously to ginger up the wrestlers and at the same time entertain the audience. It is believed that a wrestler who hears his ancestral names wakes up and summons greater strength to fight. These names come in form of praises like poetic chants and songs using musical instruments like *oja*, *ekwe*, *ikoro*, *ogone*, *udu*, *abia* etc. The tempo and variation pattern of the crescendo of the talking drum or flutes has a way of sending messages which are not ordinary to the wrestlers. In *Things Fall Apart* Achebe depicts this in the wrestling match between Amalinze, the cat and Okonkwo thus:

The drum beat and the flutes sang and the spectators held their breath. Amalinze was a witty craftsman, but Okonkwo was as slippery as a fish in water. Every nerve and every muscle stood out on their arms, on their backs and their thighs, and one almost heard them stretching to breaking point. In the end Okonkwo threw the cat (p. 1).

Also in the wrestling match on the village *ilo* (the village square where assemblies for sports, discussions etc take place) art performances are performed as an integrated whole.

The whole village turned out on the *ilo*. Men, women and children stood round a huge circle leaving the centre of the playing ground free. The elders and grandees of the

village sat on their stools brought there by their young sons or slaves... All others stood except those who came early enough to secure places on the few stands which had been built by placing smooth logs on forked pillars. The drummers start to beat their drums even before the wrestlers come. There were seven drums and they are arranged according to their sizes in a long wooden basket. Three men beat them with stick, working feverishly from one drum to another. They were possessed by the spirit of the drum (p. 33).

Once in a while two young men carrying palm fronds ran round the circle and kept the crowd back by beating the ground in front of them or if they were stubborn, their legs and feet. The two teams involved will dance into the centre and the crowd will roar and clap in excitement. Young boys from the teams will come out and do the preliminary wrestling. They are not the real wrestlers; they merely set the game. The drummers will stop for a brief rest before the real wrestlers commence. When the drummers take up sticks again, the air shivered and grew tense like a tightened bow. The wrestler from one team will dance across the centre to the side of the other team and point to the person he wants to wrestle with. There will be another roar as they come out together to start. The music, dance, songs and poetic chants performed are the real things that cause the excitement before the winner emerges to cause the most thunderous roar. Achebe depicts this by saying:

The crowd burst into a thunderous roar and carry the winner home shoulder high. They sang his praise and the young women clapped their hands
Who will wrestle for our village?
Okafor will wrestle for our village.
Has he thrown a hundred men?
He had thrown four hundred men.
Has he thrown a hundred cats?
He has thrown four hundred cats.
Then send him word to fight for us (p. 36).

Achebe also portrays these art performances in marriage ceremonies as seen when Okonkwo's friend Obierika was giving out the hand of his daughter (Akueke) in marriage to Ibe. During the *uri* – a part of betrothal ceremony when the dowry is paid – there were some art performances because the Umunna are involved the day a suitor comes to pay for his bride's dowry in Igboland. That day the bride price of Obierika's daughter was paid there was no work except the preparation of food and drinks that will be served to the people. During the breaking of kolanut presented by Obierika to his in-laws, his eldest brother and the eldest man from the family of his in-laws made some declarations in form of poetic chants as prayers to the gods for the marriage to prosper. The crowd chanted Ee-e-e! in full support or agreement.

‘Life to all of us’, he said as he broke it. ‘And let there be friendship between your family and ours’.

The crowd answered Ee-e-e!

‘We are giving you our daughter today. She will be a good wife to you. She will bear you nine sons like the mother of our town’.

Ee-e-e!

The oldest man in the camp of the in-laws replied, ‘it will be good for you and it will be good for us’.

This is not the first time my people have come to marry your daughter. My mother was one of you.’

Ee-e-e!

‘Prosperous men and great warriors’. He looked in the direction of Okonkwo. ‘Your daughter will bear us sons like you’.

Ee-e-e!

The kola was eaten and the drinking of palm-wine began (p. 82).

The poetic chants, during breaking of kolanut, are just the preliminaries since the main performances come after the guests have eaten their food and after the wine are served. That is the time the main songs, music, dance and poetic chants are performed.

The food was presented to the guests in the evening and as night fell, burning torches were set on wooden tripods and the young men raised a song. The elders sat in a big circle and the singers went round singing each man's praise as they came before him. They had something to say for every man. Some were great farmers, some were orators who spoke for the clan; Okonkwo was the greatest wrestler and warrior alive. (p. 81)

When they had gone round the inner circle they settled down in the centre and the girls came from the inner compound to dance. At first the bride was not among them. But when she finally appeared holding a cock in her right hand, a loud cheer rose from the crowd. All the other dancers made way for her. She presented the cock to the musicians and began to dance; her brass anklets rattled as she danced and her body gleamed with can wood in the soft yellow light. (p. 82)

The musicians with their wood, clay and metal instruments went round from song to song. And they were all gay. They sang the latest song in the village:
'If I hold her hand
She says, "Don't touch!"
'If I hold her foot
She says, "Don't touch!"
But when I hold her waist beads
She pretends not to know'. (83)

After these performances, the bride is expected to go home to spend seven market weeks with her suitor's family. They will continue to play their music, singing and dancing on the way as they go home and even when they reached home. "They sang song as they paid short courtesy visits to prominent men like Okonkwo, before they finally left for their village. Okonkwo made a present of two cocks to them." (33)

In Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine*, Ekweme's wife, Ahuruole, was to return the calabashes and stay in her husband's house for four days after the traditional wine carrying. The activities went with art

performances as the marriage party trooped back from Ahuruole's village.

Adaku was fully prepared to welcome her prospective daughter-in-law and her train and had prepared a lot of food. ... Singing and dancing took up the rest of the night. Ekweme did not sing but Mmam, Wakiri and other songsters excused him. It was a great night. Wigwe was happy and proud. Nothing revealed his happiness more than the brief dancing he did when Mmam, now twice a genius under the good influence of several blends of palm wine, beat the drum as he had never done before. The audience was thrilled and several neighbours presented Wigwe with money. It was worth doing for who knew when, if ever, he would dance again. (p. 124)

The bride return to her parents' home with a lot of items like waist beads, clothes, etc. When all the marriage rites have been performed, she will be led finally to her husband's house to stay. In most cases other young girls and her mother accompany her home with a lot of kitchen equipment she is will use as a woman. They will sing and dance as they lead her husband's home where they are lavishly entertained by her husband's family as they continue their music, songs and dance. Other relatives are invited and it is another big ceremony. In Achebe's *Arrow of God*, when Obika's bride, Okuata was accompanied by her mother and other girls, there were also some of the art performances.

The girls sang a song called *Ifeoma*, Goodly Thing that come, they said, so let everyone had good things bring them before her as offering. They made a circle round her and she danced to their song. As she danced her husband-to-be and other members of Ezeulu's family broke through the circle one or two time and stuck money on her forehead. She smiled and let the present fall at her feet from where one of the girls picked it up and put in a bowl. (p. 116)

One can clearly see from the performances during Igbo traditional marriages that these traditional performing arts in social events and gatherings promote "collective spirits" embodied in Igbo world view.

They also promote and encourage communal achievements and aspirations.

In Igboland there are also a lot of performances during festivals as seen during the New Yam festival in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and the festival of the First Pumpkin Leaves in *Arrow of God*. The new yam festival is a big feast and is a festival done at the time of harvesting, to thank the gods for a fruitful planting season. In Umuofia, thanks are given to Ani, a deity known as the earth goddess. The festival is held every year and the new yam cannot be consumed until some are offered to the deity. The festival gets everyone busy and excited. The night before the ceremony those who still had the old yams either had them eaten or thrown away. During the New Yam festival, yam is cooked in abundance in every family because the festival entails the coming of a large number of friends and relatives from other villages. On the second day of the festival, different art performances like masquerades, music, song, dance, drama, rituals and poetic chants follow. In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe clearly presents such activities like wrestling matches and the display of the *egwugwu* masquerade. *Egwugwu* is a masquerade that impersonates one of the ancestral spirits of the village.

Every village had its own *ilo* which was as old as the village itself and where all the great ceremonies and dances took place. The drums beat the unmistakable wrestling dance - quick light and gay and it came floating on the wind. (p. 30)

The drums were still beating, persistent and unchanging. Their sound was no longer a separate thing from the living village. It was like pulsation of its heart. It throbbed in the air, in the sunshine and even in the trees, and filled the village with excitements. (p. 31)

Masquerade in Igboland is used for social control and at the same time, it depicts the aesthetic work of art. There is, therefore, a correlation between beauty and function in masquerade performance. It contributes to social functions to ensure justice and peace making. It is sometimes used for political functions; the living ancestral elders/leaders/title men make use of these masquerades to express their authority. They also communicate their ancestors through them and this is the reason why

women and children are not initiated into the cult. The men want the secret of the masquerades to be kept because these masquerades are therefore held in great awe, aspiration and honour. In *Things Fall Apart* Achebe stresses that:

Large crowds began to gather on the village *ilo* as soon as the edge had worn off the sun's heat and it was no longer painful on the body. ... it was clear from the way the crowd stood or sat that the ceremony was for men. There were many women and children but they looked on from the fringe like outsiders. (62)

The *egwugwu* house into which they emerged faced the forest, away from the crowd, who saw only its back with many-coloured patterns and drawings done by specially chosen women at regular intervals. They scrubbed and painted the outside walls under the supervision of men. If they imagined what was inside, they kept their imagination to themselves. No woman ever asked questions about most powerful and most secret cult in the clan. ...

An iron gong sounded setting a wave of expectation in the crowd. Everybody looked in the direction of *egwugwu* house. Gome, gome gome gome went the gong, and a powerful flute blew a high-pitched blast. Then came the voices of *egwugwu*, guttural and awesome. The wave struck, the women and children were already far enough where they stood and there was room for running away if any *egwugwu* should go towards them.

The drum sounded again and the flute blew, the *egwugwu* house was now pandemonium of quavering voices. Aru oyim de de de dei! Filled the air as the spirit of the ancestors just emerged from the earth, greeted themselves in their esoteric language. (p. 63).

Egwugwu is used by the people of Umuofia in *Things Fall Apart* to settle disputes between husband and wife as witnessed between Uzowulu and his wife whom he beat until she miscarried. Poetic chants performance is also seen as the *egwugwu* chanted praises to itself as he greets the people

and gives its verdict which is undisputable. *Egwugwu* trial shows that *egwugwu* is the highest and final court in the land.

‘Umuofia Kweni’, shouted the leading *egwugwu* pushing the air with his raffia arms. The elders of the clan replied, ‘Yaa!’

‘Umuofia Kweni!’

‘Yaa!’

‘Umuofia Kweni!’

‘Yaa!’

Uzowulu’s body, I salute you he said. Spirits always address humans as bodies. Uzowulu bent down and touched the earth with his right hand as a sign of submission.

‘Our father, my hand has touched the ground’, he said.

Uzowulu’s body, do you know me? asked the spirit.

‘How can I know you, father?’ You are beyond our knowledge’.

Evil forest then turned to the other group and addressed the eldest of the three brothers.

‘The body of Odukwu, I greet you’, he said and Odukwu bent down and touched the earth. The hearing then began. (p. 64)

After the hearing, the nine *egwugwu* from the nine villages of Umuofia displayed some outfits and after the dramatic display, their leader called the Evil forest passed the verdict and the case ended.

Evil forest began to speak and all the while he spoke everyone was silent. The eight other *egwugwu* were as still as statues.

‘We have heard both sides of the case’, said Evil forest.

‘Our duty is not to blame this man or to praise that but to settle the dispute’.

He turned to Uzowulu’s group and allowed a short pause.

‘Uzowulu’s body, do you know me?’

‘How can I know you father? ...’

‘I am Evil Forest, I kill a man on the day that life is sweetest to him’.

‘That is true’, replied Uzowulu.
‘Go to your in-laws with a pot of wine and beg your wife to return to you. It is not bravery when a man fights with a woman’.
He returns to Odukwe, and allowed a brief pause.
‘Odukwue’s body, I greet you,’ he said.
‘My hand is on the ground,’ replied Odukwe.
‘Do you know me?’
‘No man can know you,’ replied Odukwe.
‘I am Evil Forest. I am Dry-meat-that-fills-the-mouth. I am First-that-burns-without-faggots. If your in-law brings wine to you, let your sister go with him. I salute you’. He pulled his staff from the hard earth and thrust it back. (p. 66)

During the New Yam festival of the people of Umuaro in *Arrow of God*, there is also the masquerades performances.

The mask arrived appropriately on the crest of the excitement. The crowd scattered in real or half-real terror. It approached a few steps at a time, each one accompanied by the sound of bells and rattles on its waist and ankles. Its body was covered in bright new cloths mostly red and yellow. The face held power and terror, each exposed tooth was the size of a big man’s thumb, the eyes were large sockets as big as a fist, two gnarled horns pointed upwards and inwards above its head. (p. 198)

The kind of masquerade is called an *Agaba*. It will dance round and display its splendour at the beating of metal gongs. It will also go to the area where the elders are seated to greet as it dances around. This dramatic display portrays the beauty of art in the mask and increases the excitement.

Meanwhile the Mask had proceeded to the *okwolo* to salute some of the elders.
‘Ezeulu de-de-de-de-dei,’ it said
‘Our father, my hand is on the ground,’ replied the Chief Priest.
‘Ezeulu, do you know me?’

‘How can a man know you, you are beyond human knowledge?’
Ezeulu, our Mask salutes you,’ it sang.
‘Eje-ya-mma-mma-mma-mma-mma-eje-ya-mma!’ sang its followers.
‘Ora-obodo, Agbala salutes you!’
Eje-ya-mma-mma-mma-mma-mma-eje-ya-mma!’ sang its followers.
‘Have you heard the song of the Spider?’
Eje-ya-mma-mma-mma-mma-mma-eje-ya-mma!’ sang its followers.
‘It broke off suddenly, turned round and ran straight ahead. The crowd in that direction broke up and scattered.
(pp. 199-200)

The traditional art performances also accompany funeral ceremonies in Igbo society. In *Things Fall Apart*, this is seen during the funeral rites of Ezendu, a great warrior in the land of Umuofia. As a great warrior, a feast was held and lots of women and children danced to the music of the men playing drums and flutes. There are also masquerades that displayed their dramatic chants. The funeral is to be talked about for a long period of time. Only one title in the clan which only one or two men in any generation ever achieved as the highest title did he not take. The masquerades (spirits) came to the land to pay their final respect to the fallen warrior and also to welcome him to the land of the dead. This is because in Igboland it is believed that for a man to be fulfilled in this earth, happy in the land of the dead and come back to the earth rejoicing, he needs a befitting burial. Enekwe et al (2002) in support of this stressed that:

Life of a man and his activities on earth take place in a cyclical pattern; that after a child is born, he grows old, eventually dies and depart for the land of the dead from where he returns again as a new born child.

The death of Ezendu was announced by *ekwe*. *Ekwe* is used to talk to the clan in many languages – more than ordinary languages which are left for the people to identify the message that is communicated. The art performances increased as the sound of cannon boomed the same time

the *ekwe* was talking. It still increases as the wailing of the women followed. These kept every ear listening to hear the name of the person. All the performances indicate that a prominent person has gone to join his ancestors. "At last the name of Ezendu was mentioned and people sighed 'E-u-u, Ezeudu is dead'. (p. 85)

After all these traditional art performances to announce his death, much more followed as he is to be accorded the full funeral rites before the burial.

Ezendu was a great man, and so all clan was at his funeral. The ancient drums of death beat, gun and cannon were fired and men dished about in frenzy, cutting down every tree or animal drums and brandishing and clanging of matchets increases. (p. 85-86)

As drums beat violently and men leaped up and down in frenzy. Guns were fired on all sides and sparks flew out as matchets clanged together in warriors' salute. The air was full of dust and the smell of gunpowder. It was then the one-handed spirit came, carrying a basket full of water. People made way for him on all sides and the noise subsided. ... He danced a few steps to the funeral drums and then went to see the corpse. (p. 86)

In Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*, cannons have been prepared for weeks when Obi Nwokocho Agbadi was very sick waiting for the time he will give up the ghost. The cannons will announce his death as a great hunter and a titled man to the world.

Agbadi's sons and their wives, Agbadi's widows all took up the cry. Cannons, prepared weeks before, were fired into the air, soon the whole of Ibuzu and the neighbouring towns as well knew that an important person had left this earth to go to his ancestors. (p. 154)

One-handed Spirit is a masquerade that must come to salute a titled man and make proclamations on his head before he is buried. After its speeches the corpse will be ready for burial. During the burial of Ezendu in *Things Fall Apart*, this One-handed Spirit performed.

Ezendu; he called in his guttural voice, 'If you had been poor in your last life I would have asked you to be rich when you come again. But you are rich. If you had been a coward, I would have asked you to bring courage. But you were a fearless warrior. If you had died young, I would have asked you to get life. But you lived long. So I shall ask you to come again the way you came before. If your death was the death of nature, go in peace. But if a man caused it, do not allow him a moment's rest.' He danced a few step and went away. (p. 86)

In *The Joys of Motherhood* Agbadi was buried on the fifth day of his death. There will be a lot of rituals, music, dance, songs, drama and poetic chants performances before he will be buried as a titled man. Emecheta also stressed that a goat was killed everyday. There was also much festivity just as in title taking in most Igbo communities. Title taking is a very big privilege which comes with ceremonies. In *ozo* title taking, *ozo* dance is displayed together with rituals and other art performances follow the giving of the title. These make the ceremony part of leisure and entertainment activities. The same performances during the title taking ceremony are also repeated at the burial of the titled man.

In traditional Igbo society, a second burial rite is also given to the dead to accord them honour. The time of the second burial ceremony differs in different parts of Igboland. It varies from one month after the first burial to when the family will be able to sponsor it comfortably. This is usually done during dry season, after harvest when there will be enough food to entertain the guests. Elechi Amadi in *The Concubine* pointed out that Emenike's second burial rites was fixed shortly after the New Yam Festival when there would be enough yam to feed the guests. 'This was particularly convenient because at that time there would be enough yams to feed the great number of people who would attend the ceremony' (p 30).

The second burial ceremony in Igboland usually takes many days. The number of days also depends on the part of the Igboland. The people of Omokachi in *The Concubine* celebrate theirs for eight days. Women from the village that married outside the village called the *Umuada* or *Umuokpu* in some parts of Igboland are usually the first set of people to

arrive. In most cases, they come at the eve of the ceremony and they are lavishly fed before they go on to perform. The performances like music, songs dance, drama, ritual and poetic chants are integral part of the ceremony. The deceased age grade and in-laws are also another group that performs. During the second burial ceremony of Emenike in *The Concubine*, his age group displayed a lot of these art performances.

After the midday meal singing and a faint beating of drums was heard in the distance. One, two, and Emenike's age group had arrived at the scene clad in war dress, their sharp knives glistening the sun. They came into the compound with rush, chanting, panting: Half way they paused. The houses shook as they stamped their feet in unison.

Omogu Odukwe

Aye!

Omogu Odukwe

Aye

Their voices grew louder, their faces wilder. Then they went berserk and in a moment the surrounding bushes were alive with men; strong young men, the stuff of heroes, dancing, jumping, cutting, and slashing. Scores of plantain tress fell under their lively matchets. ...

As excitement mounted some of the men wept, others gnashed their teeth, others hawled wildly. Here was a dance of passion, a dance of anger, a vehement protest against the god of death, an appeal for the recall of their departed comrade. (p. 33)

Conclusion

From these discussions on the traditional performing arts in some selected Nigerian literary texts so far, it is evident that the culture of Igbo people is well appreciated. It also goes a long way to show that even while the Igbos work, they create some time of recreational and leisure activities. The joy, fulfillment and excitement of the people from these performances are of great importance. Also the aesthetic of the performances, for instance the *egwugwu* masquerade with decorations of different colours and pattern, the glamorous dancing of the warriors during burial of their age mate, the dancing steps of women and children

to the music of the men playing drums and flutes, the melodious poetic chants are the people's cultural heritage and these make life meaningful in Igbo/African society.

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THE PLACE OF ÌRÈGÚN MUSIC IN THE PROMOTION OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN YAGBA LAND

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Abstract

Scholars and researchers of different backgrounds are examining the place of music as it affects cultural promotion and indigenous knowledge. There is a problem in the society today youths and even adults are no longer aware and in touch with indigenous knowledge due to western incursion and modernization that is causing colossal destructions to our cherish knowledge in the indigenous way. Primary data were collected through three In-depth Interviews, three Participant Observations, three Non-Participant Observations over a period of one year from three publicly recognized *Ìrègún* musical groups in Yagba land. These comprises of *Ìrègún* musical group from Yagba-West, Yagba-East and Mopa-Muro Local Government Areas in Kogi state. This paper is pinned on socio-cultural theory. *Ìrègún* music in Yagba society plays significant roles in showcasing the values, belief system, culture and way of living to citizens. The roles of *ìrègún* music in the promotion of cultural belief and indigenous awareness informs this paper. It presents wealth of knowledge and stimulates learning experiences among its audience. It is often well worded in proverbs, idioms, so that audience is always given food for thought. *Ìrègún* music, for the promotion of culture and indigenous reawakening calls for urgent attention. The paper recommends that government should rise and aid indigenous artistes, create more forums for artistes to perform and give loans for them to function maximally.

Keywords: *Ìrègún* music, Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural promotion, Yagba land.

Introduction

Indigenous music refers to musical practices that are largely indigenous. Omibiyi-Obidike (1975) opines that indigenous music centers on folklore which crystallizes the history, philosophy, arts and literature of the people. Nzewi (1991) explains that indigenous music is a social organizer. It supervises the operation of established government, assists in the maintenance of the land, safeguards and perpetuates tradition. Furthermore, indigenous music discourages the degeneration of personal or corporate morals, promotes social equity and fights injustice, crowns rulers, welcomes births, buries the dead, enforces rule of law and enlivens different purposes of communal get together.

This study focuses on the place of *Ìrègún* music in the expression of indigenous knowledge in Yagba land. *Ìrègún* music is a satirical genre, performed by adult men and women with a lead vocalist, and uses imagery to critique social ills and expose deviant members of the society. In this way, *Ìrègún* music, through satire, has played very significant roles in the functioning of the society. Nketia (1974:195) notes that satirical songs have been especially suited for insult, exhortation, and warning the people in African societies. Those songs, according to Nketia, may be addressed to individuals, either commoner, king, dead or alive or a group in the society. It also brings out individuals who deserve to be criticized, ridiculed or praised. Those who are praised or ridiculed may be mentioned by name. Sometimes, the satire may be presented through the use of appropriate allusions or oblique references.

Yagba is one of the minority ethnic groups in Kogi state, located at the north-central zone of Nigeria (Iyekolo, 2006). It has boundaries with the Nupe and Igbomina in the North, the Ekiti and Ondo in the south and south west, Ijumu and Bunu in the south-east and east. Oral history reveals that Yagba people are Yoruba, descendants of a renowned Princess from Oyo who, in her later life, was called *Ìyá-àgbà* (old woman) from which the word Yagba was derived (Iyekolo, 2000). Yagba settlements suffered incessant and severe raids from Ibadan, Nupe and Fulani, attackers result in the total destruction of many of the settlements then.

Indigenous knowledge (IK), generally refers to the long-standing traditions and practices of certain regional, indigenous, or local communities. Indigenous knowledge also encompasses the wisdom, knowledge, and teachings of these communities. In many cases,

Indigenous knowledge has been orally passed to generations from person to person. Some forms of Indigenous knowledge are expressed through stories, legends, folklore, rituals, songs, and even laws. Warren (1991) defines Indigenous Knowledge as the local knowledge, that is unique to a given culture or society. To him, IK contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, music making, festivals and a host of other activities in rural communities. Gray. (2000) views Indigenous Knowledge as the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems.

Studies that examine the expression of indigenous knowledge litters around. World bank (1998) provides a document for a frame work action for indigenous knowledge development in Africa. The main premise of the paper is that the vision of a truly global knowledge partnership will be realized only when the people of the developing countries participate as both contributors and users of knowledge. There is, therefore, a need not only to help bring global knowledge to the developing countries, but also to learn about indigenous knowledge (IK) from these countries, paying particular attention to the knowledge base of the poor. Ellen and Harris (1996) examine the concept of indigenous environmental knowledge in scientific and development studies literature. Warren, Slikkerveer and Brokensha (1995) study the cultural dimension of development of Indigenous knowledge systems. In all the literature reviewed none of the work emphasize the use of music as a means of expressing indigenous knowledge especially among Yagba people of Kogi state.

The unavailability of documented materials on the promotion of indigenous knowledge through *Ìrègún* music makes cultural heritages, belief system and way of life to be at a pitiable situation today. This paper, therefore, is intended to fill the gap in documentation, and analysis how music is used for the promotion of indigenous knowledge. The present clamour by Africans from all quarters to identify with African culture and indigenous way of life through music and culture and values in its entire ramification will make this study relevant. The primary

objective of this study is to investigate how *Ìrègún* music performance is used for promoting indigenous knowledge in Yagba land and Nigeria in general. This paper will try to answer the following questions; What is indigenous knowledge?, what are the ingredients of indigenous knowledge?, what are the global changes that we have experienced in Africa?, what are the challenges of indigenous knowledge in the 21st century?, and how *ìrègún* music promote indigenous knowledge?

This paper is based on socio-cultural theory. The conceptualizations of socio-cultural theory draw on the work of the first propounder, Vygotsky (1934). Vygotsky (1934) describes learning as being embedded within social events and occurring as a child interacts with people, objects, and events in the environment. According to him socio-cultural perspective has profound implications for teaching, schooling, and education. A key feature of this emergent view of human development is that higher order functions develop out of social interaction. Vygotsky argues that a child's development cannot be understood by a study of the individual, it must also examine the social world in which that individual life has developed. Through participation in activities that require cognitive and communicative functions, children are drawn into the use of these functions in ways that nurture them. Vygotsky's theory emphasized the influence of culture, peers, and adults on the developing child. The foregoing theory is quite relevant to and has been adopted for this paper in its application to the learning of indigenous knowledge, social and cultural life of Yagba. Training the mind of people whether the led or the leader, students or teachers, individuals, adults, children, kings, politician will only produce good result when it is based on the socio-cultural life and belief system of the people. *Ìrègún* songs educate, entertain, warn and correct members of the society on the way of life in the community.

African Indigenous Music: A social-cultural expression

In all societies of Africa, musical practices like other forms of artistic expression represent an integral part of the total culture. Okafor (2002) describes culture as the total expression of life of any given group of people which is usually passed from generation to generation. He went further to state that the music of a given culture is the indigenous music of the people, which is generally a communal composition. Nketia (1974) explains that African music as the music of African societies whose

musical cultures not only have their historical roots in the soil of Africa, which overlap in certain aspects of style, practice, or usage, and share common features of internal pattern, basic procedure, and contextual similarities. Agu (1999) notes that in typical African cultures, music is a rallying point and unifying factor in community life.

Nketia (1974) reports that African music in Ghanaian societies reflect the day – to – day living, and the content and context of African music – making. He said that music and life are inseparable, for there is music for many of the activities of everyday life and that musical verbal texts express the African's attitude to life, his hope and fears, his thoughts and beliefs. Music, therefore, becomes a medium for expressing and displaying cultural and social life of different African peoples. Samuel (2009) asserts that musical activity in African societies is functional and often reflects the socio-economic and socio-political organization of the society. To him emphasis is placed on musical activity as a functioning part of the society and that the music life in sub-Saharan Africa is focused on social events. Omojola, (2006) views that much as diversity is inherent in the music of Africa from one culture area to another, there exist in its features an appreciable level of unity or similarities.

Nketia (1974) explains that indigenous music is a homemade type of music, arising out of older traditions but with a meaning for today. They are sometimes identified as the music of the rural peasant people of a country or community. He notes that indigenous music is an artistic creation, believed to be stored in the singers head but only exists when it is actually uttered. However, the next performer who comes along may utter it differently. It is the most direct and spontaneous expression of human nature. Kebede (1982) in his discussion of music in North Africa argues that indigenous music is ordinarily performed by the common people, not by the professionally trained (literary) musicians; its repertory consists of material that has been passed down through generations orally by word of mouth.

Indigenous music has an art of variation of its own history, just as the fine arts have theirs. Indigenous music mirrors the culture and values of the people who perform it, or from where the music originates. Omojola (2006) notes that in addition to its use in indigenous religious and social contexts, indigenous music is found in such far-flung contexts as house warming ceremonies. Activities such as naming and marriage

ceremonies as well as funeral rites continue to employ indigenous music in the ever changing Africa environment. Music is part of sociological and psychological aspects of life that fulfill specific functions in indigenous ceremonies and occasions such as the life circle celebrations (birth, marriage and death) work, worship, festivals, recreation and entertainment (Omibiyi-Obidike, 1975).

The clash between modernization (westernization) and traditional cultural values could not have been avoided. The traditional cultures have been more or less left to local initiatives. Nigerian federalism, in the process of creating a unified state and national identity from the 250 ethnic communities, has tried to combine the achievements of modern Western democracy and the local cultural traditions. The results are reflected in the cultural productions, institutions and industries as they continually evolve. the influence of Western music is felt through adoption by some Nigerian musicians of Western elements into traditional music or through outright copying and reproduction of Western popular styles (Kebede, 1982). There is now also direct access to Western popular music through satellite TV broadcasts. Whereas the traditional music was in locally based forms played in live performance on locally built instruments, now most categories of musicians seek to earn a living and to find audiences through sale of recordings and in some cases, through direct broadcasts. Such cultural industries, employing the mass media and/or new technologies, are very much influencing cultural life even though traditions continue strongly and are still overall the most popular, especially in rural areas. Local music become more popular, especially for ritual events. The traditions are, however, weakening somewhat in urban areas, where the

Indigenous knowledge in Nigeria

Indigenous knowledge typically distinguishes one community from another. (Iyekolo, 2000) asserts that for some communities, indigenous knowledge takes on a personal and spiritual meaning that reflect a community's interests and survival. Indigenous knowledge, may be perceived very differently by indigenous and local communities themselves. An informant (Iregun drummer) explains that the knowledge of indigenous and local communities is often embedded in the cosmology and their music. Indigenous peoples often say that our knowledge is holistic, and cannot be separated from our lands and resources.

Indigenous knowledge in these cosmologies is inextricably bound to ancestors, and ancestral lands. Knowledge may not be acquired by naturalistic trial and error, but through direct revelation through conversations with the creator, spirits, or ancestors

Indigenous and local communities often do not have strong traditions of ownership over knowledge that resemble the modern forms of private ownership. Warren (1991) notes that many have clear traditions of custodianship over knowledge, and customary law may guide who may use different kinds of knowledge at particular times and places, and obligations that accompany the use of knowledge. From their perspective, misappropriation and misuse of knowledge may be offensive to traditions, and may have spiritual and physical repercussions in their cosmological systems. Subsequently, indigenous and local communities argue that others' use of their indigenous knowledge warrants respect and sensitivity.

Indigenous knowledge provides the basis for problem-solving strategies for local communities, especially the poor. view that it represents an important component of global knowledge on development issues. IK is an underutilized resource in the development process. Learning from IK, by investigating first what local communities know and have, can improve understanding of local conditions and provide a productive context for activities designed to help the communities. Understanding IK can increase responsiveness to clients. Adapting international practices to the local setting can help improve the impact and sustainability of development assistance.

The integration of IK into the development process is essentially a process of exchange of information from one community to another. The process of exchange of IK within and between developing countries and between developing and industrial countries involves essentially six steps: · recognition and identification, some IK may be embedded in a mix of technologies or in cultural values, rendering them unrecognizable at first glance to the external observer (technical and social analyses may, therefore, be required to identify IK), validation; This involves an assessment of IK's significance and relevance (to solving problems), reliability (i.e., not being an accidental occurrence), functionality, effectiveness and transferability; recording and documentation is a major challenge because of the tacit nature of IK (it is typically exchanged through personal communication from master to apprentice, from parent

to child, etc.). In some cases, modern tools could be used, while in other circumstances it may be appropriate to rely on more indigenous methods (e.g., taped narration, drawings), (Gray,2000).

Ìrègún songs that promote Indigenous Knowledge in Yagba land

Ìrègún songs play different functions it identify different indigenous knowledge that is in existence in Yagba land and portray them in the songs and chants.

Maku, an ìrègún singer made it clear that Ìrègún songs promotes the indigenous language of Yagba people. It help objectify the mode of communication especially in greeting. Ìrègún song below is an example of such.

E okun o loke lodo I o mum' moran de be ekun pepe I greet you all my people, I say I greet you *Mo wa'n li kwara li kogi li gbogbo Nigeria* my people

Lokunrin lobinrin lomode lagba gbogbo ghin pata My people from kwara, Kogi, all over Nigeria

Ekun ririn ekurabo e okun Women, men young and old
I greet you all you are all welcome

E okun o lokelodo

E o-kun o lo-ke lo - do i-gho mu-m' mo - ran de be e-kun pe - pe mo wa gbin li Kwa-ra, li Ko-gi

6
li gbo-gbo Nai-ji - ri a l'o-kun-rin l'o bin-rin lo-mo - de la - gba gbo-gbo ghin pa - ta e - ku ri-rin e - ku

10
ra-bo e o-kun.

The chant above expresses the communication pattern in the indigenous Yagba society. *E okun* isa plural way of greeting two persons or more, it also connotes reference for elderly person in Yagba communities. Also the word *e okun pe, pe* , is generally used for elderly man that is not less

than seventy years old *pe* is like saying am greeting you grandfather or someone that is not less than person's father in age. Also, *Ìrègún* song has detailed the communication and greeting ways in Yagba land through the language Yagba dialect is one of the twenty-six sub-yoruba languages. The words *lomode*, *lagba*, *lokurin*, *lobirin* is a way of specification of different types of age and sex groups in Yagbaland. *Ìrègún* songs help citizens learn how to speak and sing with Yagba dialect since the songs are mainly in the dialect. A lot of youths and even young men find it difficult to use their language in communication because of modernization and globalization, but *ìrègún* songs are sung through Yagba language which will help in maintaining the indigenous language from extinction.

***Ìrègún* songs in the promotion of indigenous morality**

an *ìrègún* singer explains that *ìrègún* musicians are very careful in preserving the indigenous knowledge in the area of morality and security and that is why they will do all in their might in terms of singing and performing to correct all the abnormality within the government circle, in community leaders and even on individuals. The following song and chant exemplify this view:

<i>we ri ho lijo gbede loin, bitonran ijoba noin</i>	don't you see my dancers, like our government
<i>I gho moye ijoba nse, era gbe pona kobe</i>	what they suppose to do they will not do, the
<i>Ara gbe kob'o mirin libo janjan</i>	things that they should not do that is what they do.
<i>Igho ye o gba megadi hi, ijoba egba megadi so</i>	For instance if they suppose to construct a road
<i>igho bamoye ogba megadi hi, ke gba megadi so</i>	at a place they will not construct it, if they need
<i>oba ko ofisi hile ako pepa hofisi ara so</i>	to put a security at a place they will not do it
<i>oba ran mirin he wuni ara gba megadi hibe</i>	<i>hun ra so</i> they can put a paper in one office and
<i>oniha noin emo ho ye aso, arun koje so</i>	take heavy security on ordinary paper instead of securing lives, my people

<i>solo : ononi un toju arun re arun jeso</i>	what we should secure is our mouth, secure your mouth its worth securing
<i>chorus : ononi un toju arun re arun jeso</i>	keep your mouth my people it's worth keeping
<i>solo : ononi un toju arun re arun jeso</i>	keep your mouth my people it's worth keeping

The song started with a chant and the chanter was explaining to the audience that the corrupt leaders in government, (both indigenous and democratically elected) find ways of impoverishing the community they govern through unconstitutional award of contract such as road like in line two says *I gho moye ijoba nse, era gbe pona kobe* where they suppose to construct a good benefiting road they will not construct it their showing lack of focus, sensitivity to the need of the populace and enmeshed in corruption because they either divert the money to their pocket or construct a bad road that will need to be repaired In the next few months. The song also talk about good governance entail good security of people, goods and the community in general but the government that is not governing well will still employ *megadi* security officers and instead of securing life the government kept them securing and protecting empty *ofisi*-office which depict the altitude of bad governance. The singer however caution the audience that though the government is not really responsible until they prove themselves wrong with the allegation level against them by *irègún* singers on good governance they have a duty to make security a priority and that starts with *arun jeso* secure or protect your mouth from tail bearing, lying and keeping quiet where necessary so that their life and future can be protected.

Another song explains the need for men not to run after other men's wives because of the charm that is indigenous know as *Mogun*. This charm according to Mekanjuola – (*irègún* chief drummer) is generally placed on house wife who may not know that she has been charmed and any attempt for her to meet with another man will surely make the man to die within that day and some times less than three hours of having sexual intercourse. The song below is an example:

chant	
<i>momo pansaga se teletele latijo</i>	I like chasing women in my early life
<i>alu nla se wegbo</i>	my drummer are you hearing me
<i>momo pansaga se teletele latijo</i>	I like chasing women in my early life
<i>we mo ghe ti jem se pansaga m'wi egbo</i>	do you know why I stop that habit, I will
<i>mo rom se bi ato hi ha mo soun ko</i>	tell you today, I may be thinking that I got STD from the lady and may not and it may be charm
song	
<i>solo: imogun ese batohi pamo</i>	werecharm kill faster than STD that is why I stop
<i>chorus: imogun ese batohi pamo</i>	werecharm kill faster than STD that is why I stop
<i>solo: imogun ese batohi pamo kia</i>	charm kill faster than STD that is why I stop
<i>chorus: imogun ese batohi pamo</i>	were charm kill faster than STD that is why I stop

The chanter tells of his personal story using a Memoir as a women chaser which is used to pass a message to those that still have the habit of womanizing that HIV is in town. HIV/AIDS is one of the threats to life and we must avoid it. Apart from this it generate conflicts in community.

Ìrègún songs in the promotion of indigenous dressing

The song tells of someone with bangles, chains and attire of a harlot. Though prostitution is not mention but the costuming of prostitution is named in the song depicting the character and traits of the person wearing them. An attire that open the chest and boobs of women are strange to Africa way of dressing. The singer in the place is warning youths that dress callously to entice men that the kind of dressing they are importing to the society will surely bring them disgrace since they may be raped.

<i>Solo: Odi bangu ghorì howo ma wo bi ayori hi</i>	she is tying bangles on her head and
<i>Chorus : mawo bi ayo ri hi</i>	hands, I will see where this will

<i>Solo: Odi bangu hori howo ma wo bi ayori hi</i>	end
<i>Chorus : mawo bi ayo ri hi</i>	she will soon get pregnant
<i>Solo: o bo un gbo,yun lode oyun ape ade</i>	without a husband
<i>Chorus: ma wo bia yori hi</i>	I will see where this will
end	

the song satire ladies who dress in an immodest way. Especially wearing of mini dresses.that opens up their sensitive parts.

Ìrègún songs in the promotion of indigenous method of child training

Another song here is mainly for parent. The singer reiterate the need to give early training to their children in an indigenous way:

chant

'oba sobo omo je a be ni ran dan wo if it is a lie let go and try it ,
'oba sobo omo je a be ni ran dan wo I say if I am lying let us go and try it

song

solo: ima run o eja gbigbe emo jaka arun dry fish cannot be bend it will scatter

chorus: eja gbigbe emo jaka arun dry fish cannot be bend it will scatter

solo: eja gbigbe emo jaka arun

chorus: eja gbigbe emo jaka arun

The song and chant is a proverbial statement the chanter stated by telling the listeners that if he is lying we can give what he want to say a trial, that a dry bone cannot be bent that it will scatter. This song is directly to parent that there is time to train their children, when they are tender, easy to control and direct. But as they grow older they will be difficult to control if the right character and virtue has not been built in them. The song actually advise parents so that their children will be useful to themselves and the society.

Ìrègún songs on indigenous Politics in Yagba land

Stone (1998) writes her views concerning chronological references in Africa, where events are mainly linked with earlier natural events. He notes that fundamentally, the activities of the agricultural cycle may impinge, during periods of heavy work, events are less

frequent. Also it could center on the political history of a group of people. The following song typify the history of Yagba people in their political journey in their present settlement.

<i>Igbi tapa noin wi'm ra mewo</i>	
<i>gha, tim'eghe ni,</i>	Etsu of Nupe commanded,
<i>ibon- tapa, o m'ra mo'mo ,</i>	To pay tributary of cowries,
<i>Ibon- tapa, o m'ra mo'mo</i>	When the cowry got exhausted
<i>O'mra mu omo m'di</i>	Etsu commanded that I should give my son
<i>Ibon fe pa yagba run gbingbinrin</i>	Etsu of Nupe commanded that I
	should give my son
Etsu determined to totally ruin Yagba land completely	

Tapa wim' ra mu omo gha

I-gbi ta-pa no'in wi'm me - wo gha ti me ni, i-bon ta-pa om' mo'mo gha i-bon ta - pa om'mo-mo gha

6

— i-bon fe pa run i-bon fe pa-run o fe run ya-gba gbingbin rin

The song details the political imperialism of Nupe people on Yagba. This brought colossal destruction and monumental waste to the economy, political and population growth of Yagba ethnic group through their rule of force.

<i>Yagba egbo ibi gegele</i>	Yagba people listen,
<i>ghe do li'gba ka nko</i>	Where are your hiding-high
<i>Eranti yagba noin mo eranti,</i>	mountains during the invading?
<i>ibi gegele ghe doghi li'gba ka</i>	The mountain tops where you lodge then
<i>Amolo adupe alafia de</i>	But now we thank the gods of yagba for
<i>Emo mo ti joko li'kogi</i>	victory
<i>tori oligbagbo noin wipè</i>	However, you still have battle to fight in
	kogi state

<i>Makojami esorin akunleko</i>	Because Christian song say Pass me not oh gentle Savior is not a song you sing while seating
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The song call on Yagba indigenes bringing the incidence of the past, the cruel dealing of Nupe people compared to what Yagba is passing through in the present Kogi state by been marginalized in different ways and that good governance should be all inclusive and not selective. See an example in the chant in page 14.

<i>Yagba noun koko labe ijoba Kabba,</i>	Yagba people were formally under Kabba province
<i>Atikorelorin, atiba mua ghikogi</i>	moved to Kwara when it was created, now part of Kogi
<i>Yagba eo kun ekunarinka</i>	state, Yagba people I am greeting you, you have really moved around

The traces the political life of Yagba ethnic group as they move from one place government to another with new creation of district, regions, states.

Conclusion

The paper looked at *Ìrègún* music and its place in promoting indigenous knowledge in Yagba land and Nigeria in general. It discussed the elements indigenous knowledge, global changes in Africa, in the challenges of 21st century.

Recommendation

I therefore recommend that indigenous music like *ìrègún* should be empowered by giving some allowances on monthly basis to the artistes. Also, the present administration should reorganize its cabinets so that they can give good and quality education to our children as advocated by Nigerian artistes especially *ìrègún* musicians. Also artistes should be given national honour to encourage them to perform more. Private individuals, NGO's should help sponsor more performances to help lift the indigenous knowledge high.

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People interviewed

Chief Makanjuola O – chief drummer *ìrègún* musical group Mopa-Muro LGA. Yagba Land

Chief Mrs Funke Aduta – chief singer/ chanter and Dancer Ìrègún Musical group in Egbe, Yagba-West LGA

Chief Wemimo Ogunniyi – a singer and chanter *ìrègún* group in Yagba-West LGA

Mr. Maku Sunday- Chief singer Ìrègún Musical Group Mopa-Muro LGA

Mrs. Olu- Tete – she is a dancer and a singer of Ìrègún Musical group from Isanlu, Yagba-East LGA

Chief Mrs. Grace - Iya-Egbe Ìrègún and a chief dancer from Mopa-Muro LGA