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ABSTRACT: This should be between two hundred (200) and two hundred and fifty (250) words summarizing main points of the work with the research methods used.

KEYWORDS: Four (4) to six (6) important words are required

INTRODUCTION: Different from the abstract, it “sets the stage” for the content of the article.

MAIN BODY: The original paper should not exceed seven thousand (7,000) words of about 14 (1.5 spacing) typed pages.

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New Perspectives on Language and Literacy in Africa and Asia

By

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Abstract

This paper looks at the contribution and uneven acknowledgements of indigenous languages and how this affects education and development processes. It addresses the successes and failures in selected countries, one in Asia and one in Africa that have chosen to use English as the Language of Instruction (LoI) in the secondary levels of education. It examines the choice of LoI for development, linking LoI to national and cultural identity, work prospects and integration into the global economy. It focuses on two countries, India and Tanzania. India has experienced rapid economic development, while Tanzania is an economically disadvantaged country. India with a multiplicity of languages uses local languages as LoI in lower levels of education and English in secondary schools and universities, though in India there is an option in most states to use a local language as LoI at upper levels. In the United Republic of Tanzania, KiSwahili is spoken by 95% of the population, yet English is taking over as a LoI of most schools in both countries. However, my research in Tanzania shows that local languages need to be valued at all levels of education in order that children will be prepared for engaging with the world in a language they understand. The use of a local LoI should be considered a right of the child and language as a Human Right. This paper will have relevance for researchers examining the synergy between language and cultural identity. It will also be relevant for frontline researchers and policy makers concerned with developing measures in Africa for resisting the processes of exclusion and marginalization impacting on the lives of so many today in the wake of globalization.

Keywords: Language of Instruction, Cultural identity, Development, Africa, Tanzania, India, Language policies, English, KiSwahili, Hindi, Local languages, Local knowledge.
Introduction

In this paper, I address the successes and failures in two selected countries, one in Asia and one in Africa that have chosen to use English as the Language of Instruction (LoI) in the secondary levels of education. I examine the choice of LoI for development, linking LoI to national and cultural identity, work prospects and integration into the global economy. I focus on India, which is experiencing rapid economic development and is included in the BRICS countries - namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - as well as an economically disadvantaged country, The United Republic of Tanzania, where I extensively researched the use of English versus Kiswahili as a LoI. India has a multiplicity of languages, use local languages in lower levels of education and uses English in secondary schools and universities, though in India there is an option in most states to use a local language as LoI at upper levels. In the United Republic of Tanzania, KiSwahili is spoken by an estimated 95% or more of the population (Brock-Utne and Qorro, 2014), yet English is taking over as a LoI of most schools. The use of a local LoI should be considered a right of the child and language as a Human Right.

The case of India

India is the second most populous country in the world, with a population of over 1.21 billion and is the largest democracy in the world. The country is divided into 27 linguistically organized states. There are two national languages, Hindi and English. The language policy issues that evolved after Independence in 1947 have generated controversy regarding the LoI at primary, secondary and university levels. Most Indian States have adapted the “three-language-formula” which means that either a local language or one of the two national languages can be used as the LoI. The Three Language Formula emerged as a political consensus on languages in school education to accommodate at least three languages within the ten years of schooling.

With regard to number of languages taught, 90% of schools at the upper primary stage follow three language formulas, at least three languages are taught, 85% of schools follow the formula at the secondary stage (NCERT, 2007). Forty-seven languages are used as LoI in schools and forty-one languages are taught in schools
A general consensus has been that students opting to be educated in English take the local language as a subject, while students opting to be educated in Hindi or their local language study English as a foreign language from grade 5. While public schools tend to go with either Hindi or another local language, private schools usually prefer English.

Language policies in India today have to be seen in light of post-independence policies, in which Mahatma Gandhi played a major role. Gandhi believed that the use of an Indian language was essential to empowerment and maintenance of Indian identity. According to L. Chatterjee (1992), English was not considered desirable because it was seen as undemocratic and divisive. He wrote that it divided “the Indian people into two nations: the few who govern, and the many who are governed” (p. 300). Gandhi’s pro-indigenous stances can be seen as part of his call for freedom and national unity, tied indivisibly to his views on LoI. He consistently maintained that a new, liberated India could only fully emerge if it completely embraced indigenous culture and gave up being enslaved by all things British, including, of course the crucial instrument of colonization: the English language. His primary goal was to create an environment where poor could be empowered, working in local communities and building on indigenous roots. Gandhi advocated the use of indigenous knowledge in all realms of existence. Furthermore he argued that the foreign LoI made children imitators, discouraging original work and thought, and disabling them from passing their learning on to the family or the masses. He argued that ‘the foreign medium made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our indigenous languages’ (Gandhi, 1954 transl. by B. Kumarappa).

Many Indian teachers today are aware of Gandhi’s ideologies related to learning and local language. A school teacher interviewed by Vaidehi Ramanathan in 2004 referred to Gandhi when she made the claim that key terms in Mathematics and science will not be developed in her state’s language, Gujarat, if Gujarati is replaced with English as LoI. Ramanathan (2005) interviewed another secondary school
literature teacher who gave a good description of the impact of the local LoI, arguing that her job is to stress indigenous ways of thinking, reasoning, and believing, which through the use of a mother-tongue allows students to experience literature in a way that can be quite different from English. The way she sees it, the indigenous language empowers learners, English does not. A general sense that emerges from statements such as these is that many teachers view their ways of teaching, learning, and living as diametrically opposed to English language teaching and its general associations. In the words of Ramanathan (2004, 2005), the implication is that in India in all things English “suppress,” “disempower” and “devalue”.

Others contend that there is an “English craze” in India, reflected in everything from English programs on television, and through state-level policies to introduce English instruction in indigenous medium schools, westernized ways of dressing and using language. Ramanathan (2004) quotes a Gujarati faculty member who said that his children are crazy about English because of their interest in British and American programs on cable TV. This English craze is also reinforced by job announcements that require applicants to be fluent in English. The students who are studying in an indigenous language recognize that they run the risk of being left out of the country’s growing computer industry.

The proponents of English argued by Ramanathan is that Indians have a lot to gain from knowing English, and the world has a lot to gain from Indians knowing English. In his view, rather than worrying about whether or not English should be used, people should focus on extending education to more children which permits them to learn and use English, but which also puts heavy emphasis on using and understanding their native languages. In the 1980 census, it was recorded that only 3% of India's population spoke English. 25 years later the data from the 2005 India Human Development Survey estimated that 4% of the Indian population spoke English, an increase of only 1%. Nonetheless, with India's massive population, that 4% puts India among the top four countries in the world ranked by number of English speakers. English confers many advantages to the influential people who speak it. This has allowed English to retain its prominence despite strong opposition, which rises
periodically. Private schools have mushroomed in recent years following the economic liberalization policy, most of which have English as a LoI.

Vedpratap Vaidik (1973) analyzed the efforts to make English a LoI in Indian schools and concluded that it has rendered hundreds of thousands of children handicapped. He argued that only a very small percentage of the country’s population has control over the country’s resources. English has divided Indians. Furthermore Vaidik argues that without removing English as a LoI, we cannot eradicate poverty since those who believe that English should be the LoI also believe that the world’s knowledge is produced only in English, whereas in reality there are all kinds of domains in which progress has been made in a range of other languages. The result of India’s LoI policies is a vast disparity in quality and access to education, a gap the government is trying to close. Despite this larger challenge, the Indian government has realized that preparing students for the global economy is important and must be a part of their reform. However, according to Ramanathan (2005) India should remember that the development of India today has been made on what “we know best: our languages, our culture, and our people”. In my view, this should be a lesson for other multi-linguistic countries. Local languages have the potential to empower if teaching and learning give nourishment and self-respect that bring confidence to teachers and learners. Therefore the use of a local Language should be considered a right of the child and language as a Human Right.

The case of Tanzania

In East Africa, a movement to promote Kiswahili began in the 1930s. Between 1930 and 1964 an Inter-territorial Language Committee promoted the standardization and development of Kiswahili in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Kiswahili became one of the official languages of the African Union in 2003. A few years after Tanzanian independence, The National Kiswahili Council, ‘Bakita’ was founded in 1967 by a government act. It was given a budget and a staff with the mandate to develop Kiswahili and make sure the language is used properly in the media. In 1964 Tanganyika and Zanzibar united and became the URT in 1967. KiSwahili became the official national language and the government started to contextualize its curriculum.
At the end of the 1970s President Julius Nyerere, appointed a Presidential Commission on Education to review the entire education system. The contextualization started with Nyerere’s notion of Education for Self Reliance with his famous book Ujumaa, where he wrote “Our national songs and dances are once again being learned by our children; our national language has been given the importance in our curriculum which it needs and deserves…changes have been introduced to make our educational system more relevant to our needs” (Nyerere, 1968, p. 49) and the LoI in primary school is KiSwahili with English taught as a Foreign language from Grade 1 in 1967. However, English has been maintained as LoI in secondary schools. The Commission recommended changing the LoI in schools to Kiswahili from January 1985 and in universities from 1991. Nevertheless, in 1983 the Minister of Education declared that the Ministry was not yet ready for the change. The implementation of Kiswahili was delayed, but in 1997 the government categorically reaffirmed its intention to make the change to Kiswahili. By 2009, the policy had still not been implemented and in fact was reversed by the Education and Training Policy of 2009, which suggests that even government primary schools may choose English as the LoI.

Before the colonization of Africa, the usual practice was that each social group educated its children in its own language (Babaci-Wilhite et al., 2012). Throughout the colonial period (1885-1962), education was formalized and the use of colonial language as a LoI was promoted by both colonial administrations and Christian missionaries (Kimizi, 2009). A reaction to this change began in the early 20th century, as African pride and a desire for self-determination began to assert themselves. Though even if the language at home is either the Mother Tongue or KiSwahili, in primary School KiSwahili is the LoI and in secondary School and onwards English is used at the LoI. One of my informants told me that: “It is unfortunate that those kids cannot speak their mother tongue, you introduce them to KiSwahili in primary school and then before they master this language, you switch them to English, a foreign language, in secondary school” (Babaci-Wilhite, 2010). One problem is that cultural subgroups champion their own local languages (mother-tongues) at the expense of a national or regional language (Alidou and Brock Utne, 2011).
In my findings from my extensive research in Tanzania in Babaci-Wilhite 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, the local arguments for English are:

- The language of globalization is English.
- The government does not want Tanzania to be isolated from the world.
- Parents want their children to learn English because English will give opportunities to find work.
- It will be too costly to change the secondary syllabus from English to KiSwahili and train all the teachers in KiSwahili.

The counter arguments for KiSwahili are:

- Why do we need English to find a job in a country where only 5% of the people speak English well’?
- ‘If we use our language, we will stand to win in the long run’.
- It is a terrible mistake to assume that English is equivalent to knowledge.

I have interviewed several officers and Professors and here are some of their quotations:

The Director of the national KiSwahili Council told me that “If African culture and language is not equated with ‘development’, it will be impossible to encourage development on African terms. The Japanese and the Chinese started from scratch but not us”. Professor Mulokozi who teaches and does research in KiSwahili at the UDSM said: “Many of the officials and politicians who make decisions on educational matters were educated under the colonial system and still retain a colonial hangover regarding the language of education. They tend to see Britain as their model regarding curricula and education generally”. The former Dean of the Open University of Dar es Salaam argues that “The government says it is the parents who are interested in sending their children to English medium. However the government should analyze the situation in other countries and question whether there is any country, which has made progress by teaching their children in a foreign language. From time to time I go on Internet and look at Asia, Europe, and countries of the former Soviet Union, such as Latvia and Ukraine, and find that they use their national language. Why not us?” (Babaci-Wilhite, 2010). See below the punishment for speaking the mother tongue on the school grounds:
Africa is the only continent in which every country uses a non-local LoI from secondary school onwards. The majority of Africans associate school learning with English, French and Portuguese (Brock-Utne, 2006; Babaci-Wilhite, 2013a). This choice of LoI is extremely important not only because of the implications for quality learning, but also because of the intimate ties between language, cultural identity and quality learning. In the global context, English is taught as a foreign language in most countries today. This is because a global language is essential as a communication tool and increases the capacity to move from region to region. However, many Africans confuse the importance of learning a foreign language with the choice of LoI. Learning in English may result in improved English skills, but the evidence clearly shows that learning in a non-local language is detrimental to learning and knowledge acquisition (Babaci-Wilhite, 2012, 2013, 2014).

Discussion and concluding remarks

Drawing together the threads from language and learning issues in these two countries, the reasons for the increasing use of English in education at all levels have to do with misplaced associations of development with modernization, where emulation of Western development and Western educational systems are regarded as the way forward. According to Macleans A. Geo-JaJa and Steve Azaiki (2010), this
does not form a basis for capability-based educational development, nor does it bring social justice and quality in education. Education is a tool to increase Human Rights effectiveness as it increases human capabilities, functions and opportunities in societies (Babaci-Wilhite et al, 2012). Therefore, I argue that it is time to recognize the wealth of African knowledge in education and to promote its local languages at all levels of education, including secondary and university. This would make a significant contribution to African development on its own terms and for the benefit of the majority of Africans as a right in education (content) that includes the right to education (access) see Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2012) and Babaci-Wilhite (2012, 2013).

The use of English at upper levels of education in African and Asian countries serves to increase socio-economic inequality. In many African countries, English is the language of secondary and tertiary education for the vast majority. While English has produced an elite, we have to find ways of bridging the gaps between the rich and the poor and of empowering average people so that they too can participate in their country’s development. A ‘bridging’ policy to enable children to make this move from the use of the mother tongue in the early years of their education into using a national local language at a later stage of schooling could be the answer. As Kwesi-Kwaa Prah (2003) notes it is not an exaggeration to say that African nations which have many local languages but which make use of the former colonial language as their national language look with envy at countries such as Korea, Japan or China which possess their own well developed national language.

The rationale for wanting to teach other subjects through English in order to improve the quality of English is an approach which carries many risks with it. Moreover this approach is resource intensive, requiring for example the employment of large numbers of foreign teachers or the re-training of even larger numbers of local teachers. Alastair Pennycook (1995) notes that English acts as a gatekeeper to positions of wealth and prestige both within and between nations, and is the language through which much of the unequal distribution of wealth, resources and knowledge operates.

The World Bank sees education as a market: a notion which rests on private investment in global English as the source of individual advantage and an investment
pursued without regard for the development of the nation as a whole (Geo-JaJa, 2006; Babaci-Wilhite and Geo-JaJa, 2011). One problematic result is that global English and international education are seen as the source of quality in education. Public schooling and local university are relegated to lower status, unable to hold the social support of the elite or attract sufficient government investment. It is vital that national policy secures more effective control over educational development (Okonkwo, 2014).

In closing, some central questions remain unanswered: What does the English language have to do with development? Or why does one country need to adopt another’s language and identity in order to achieve ‘development’? Is it not possible to develop within one’s own language and identity? It is high time for the non-English speaking developing countries to ask questions about whose political, economic and cultural interests are being served through this language promotion mission and what measures can be taken to balance the situation.

A language policy is not an end in itself. The rationale for it must be what it can contribute to the overall cultural, human and socioeconomic development of a country. In this connection, it is not enough to place emphasis on Western innovation, knowledge and language at the upper levels of education to the detriment of local languages through which most of the population can participate and make any meaningful contribution to national development as a right in education.

References


Igbo-African Traditional Rational Proofs of the Existence of God

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Abstract
The Igbo-African is born into a religious atmosphere that makes the presence of God a living fact. He thus has not the least doubt that God exists. As such, he does not border about the proofs of the existence of God as we see scholars in the pages of the historical evolution of Western philosophy trying to proof, with much argument that God exists. This is not to say that there are no proofs of the existence of God among Igbo-Africans. However, they do not depend on proofs like the westerner in order to believe in the existence of God because God is so near to him that he needs no proof of his existence. But questions about the Supreme Being in Igbo-African ontology have led to the study of the traditional rational proofs for the existence of God among the Igbo-Africans. These proofs were drawn from, Pre-Christian names, analysis and deductions from Igbo proverbs, critical analysis, interpretations and deductions from Igbo myths and folklores, existence from art-forms and evidence from Interviews. This piece study discovers that the Supreme Being is not a stranger to the Igbo God-talk, and was not imported by the Western missionaries from the West to Igbo land. It establishes that the concept of Supreme Being is part and parcel of Igbo traditional ontology.

Keywords: Africa, Tradition, Religion, Rational, Proofs, Existence, God.

Introduction
The idea of the proof of the existence of God is more of a Western than African issue. The African believes that God exists and does not need anyone to proof to him. God is part of his daily life. Edeh (1985, p. 118), while speaking of the Igbo’s relationship with God, wrote,

... the Igbo is born in a religious atmosphere that makes the presence of God a living fact, he has not the least doubt that God exists. Consequently, the Igbo normally does not bother
about a proof of God’s existence. God is so near to man, so involved in man’s existence, that one does not question Chukwu’s existence.

Corroborating Edeh, Mbogobu (2012, p. 246) wrote,

It would be grossly baseless to suggest to an Igbo traditionalist that all his thoughts of the Supreme Being which are his own creations encapsulated in these names and attributes of Chukwu or God are false and misguided; worse still, if such natural creations are misappropriated to be the exclusive reserve property of the Christian missionaries. The earliest Igbo people possess the concept of the Supreme Being as a real existent being in their traditional ontology.

This observation by Mbeagbu questions the perspective that the idea of Supreme Being is a stranger to the Igbo God-talk, believed to be imported by the western missionaries from the west to Igbo land. It establishes that the concept of Supreme Being is part and parcel of Igbo traditional ontology. While discussing the concreteness of God among the Yoruba people, Jahn (1961, p. 97) wrote that,

God may be banished from Greek thought without any harm done to the logical architecture of it, but this cannot be done in the case of the Yoruba. In medieval though, science could be dismissed at pleasure, but this is impossible in the case of Yoruba thought, since faith and reason are mutually dependent. In modern times, God even has no place in scientific thinking. This was impossible for the Yorubas since from the Olodumare an architectonic of knowledge was built in which the finger of God is manifest in the most rudimentary elements of nature. Philosophy, theology, politics, social theory, land law, medicine, psychology, birth and burial, all find themselves logically concatenated in a system so tight that to subtract one item from the whole is to paralyse the structure of the whole.

This is not to say that there are no proofs of the existence of God among Africans. However, they do not depend on proofs like the westerner in order to believe in the existence of God. The first attempt at providing Igbo-African proofs of the existence of God was done by Edeh (1985). This he was able to build from the responses he got from the questionnaire he gave Mr Ede Ani Onovo, a native of Nkanu and a man well known for his wisdom and knowledge. He refers to his proofs as five ways of coming
to know about Chukwu, which include: the existence of things in nature, Igbo nomenclature, the Igbo concept of Chi and the Igbo idea of life and death. Mbaegbu (2012), building on Edeh’s, went further to develop the proofs of the existence of God in Igbo ontology. However, contrary to Edeh, he was motivated to develop these proofs to prove to missionaries that there was the idea of the Supreme Being in Igbo traditional ontology, and that the idea of Supreme Being was not influenced by missionary activities among the Igbos. While Edeh refers to his proofs as possible ways of arriving at the existence of God, in Mbaegbu the concept for describing the proofs attains systematization, he referred to them as: Traditional rational proofs for the existence of God, and by the use of the phrase ‘Traditional rational proofs’ Mbaegbu (2012, p. 24) intends to emphasize that the Igbo concept of the Supreme Being,

... comes basically from the natural light of reason, in the sense that his reason leads him to wonder about the mysteries in the world and to recognize the maker of all things. But because there are neither sacred writings, nor formulated scientific, philosophic proofs or ways of demonstrating the existence of God as in Christianity and western philosophy, knowledge of God is contained in the indigenous or natural expressions of the people, popularly known as oral tradition which are easy to remember and pass on from generation to generation.

This emphasizes that the Igbo concept of the Supreme Being was not born from cultural or missionary influence but rather from the light of reason. The traditional rational proofs are: a. demonstration from pre-Christian names, which corresponds to Edeh’s ‘through Igbo nomenclature’; b. Analysis and deductions from Igbo proverbs; c. Critical analysis, interpretations and deductions from Igbo myths and folklores; d. existence from art-forms and e. evidence from Interviews. While the first is based on Edeh’s first proof, the second to the fifth are new, but in one way or the other related to other proofs of Edeh. However, after the study of the two perspectives, while collapsing some ideas into one and other African ideas on God, I have developed six African traditional proofs of the existence of God.
Based on the Presence of Contingent Being
The African comes to the belief in the existence of God as a result of the presence of contingent beings in the world. Thus from the reality of thing which we see around us, we construct a demonstration of God’s existence. Edeh (1985) articulated this position thus, “If there were no Chukwu, the source of beings, there would be no being. But beings are, that is, things are, since we perceive and experience them around us. In other words, the fact that beings are is a proof that Chukwu, the source of being, is” (p. 120). This explains why when Edeh asked Mr Ede Ani Onovo in his questionnaire if God exists and how we know that he exists, his answer was, “This is obvious even to goats and to fowls. If it is said that there is no God, then being would not be. Nothing would exist”.

All the imperfect things in the world do not have the capacity to make themselves because (nemo dat quod non habet) a thing cannot give what it does not have, even though they could have the capacity to reproduce themselves. The fact that objects are generated, and that they degenerate shows that it is possible for them to exist and also to be nonexistent. The fact that they come into existence shows that it is possible for them to be and for them not to have been. Hence, the things that we see around us exist contingently. If everything cannot-be, then at one time there was nothing in existence. Assuming that the world has been going on for an indefinite length of time, there must have been a time before each object came into being, and hence a time when it was not. If each object is only possible, then there must have been a time when none of the objects existed. If this state of affairs had ever occurred, there would now be nothing in the world, because the things in the world would have had to be brought into existence by something else. Thus, the African believes that something in the world must have a necessary and not just a possible existence (otherwise everything would have been non-existent at some point in time). Its necessity must in turn be caused by something else that also exists necessarily. For the same reason that there cannot be an infinite regress of efficient causes, there cannot be an infinite regress of necessary causes of the necessary existence of certain things. Therefore, we have to admit that there must be some being which is the cause of its own necessary
existence, and which causes the necessary existence of other beings. This all men speak of as God. This is expressed in Igbo folklore thus:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Igbo Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Onye Kugbulu nwankelu?</td>
<td>Who killed nwankelu?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerere Nwankelu (reframe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukwa kugbulu nwankelu.</td>
<td>The bread fruit killed nwankelu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini mere ukwa ahu?</td>
<td>What happened to the bread fruit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obi mara ukwa ahu.</td>
<td>A digger pierced the breadfruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini mere obi ahu?</td>
<td>What happened to the digger?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akika kporo obi ahu.</td>
<td>The digger was infested by a termite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini mere akika ahu?</td>
<td>What happened to the termite?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okuko tuga akika ahu.</td>
<td>A cock was eating the termite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini mere okuko ahu?</td>
<td>What happened to the cock?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ufu chuga okuko ahu.</td>
<td>A hyena was pursuing the cock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini mere ufu ahu?</td>
<td>What happened to the hyena?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mmadu chuga ufu ahu.</td>
<td>A man was pursuing the hyena.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini mere mmadu ahu?</td>
<td>What happened to the man?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chukwu kere mmadu ahu.</td>
<td>God created the man.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)

Gini kere Chukwu ahu? What made God?
Kerere Nwankelu

_anyi amaghi ihe kpuru Chukwu, Chukwu kpuru mmadu, mmadu chuga ufù, ufù chuga okuko, okuko chuga akika, akika turu obì, obì mara ukwa, ukwa kugbulu nwankelu-
Kerere Nwankelu: (we do not know what made God, who made man, man was in pursuit of the hyena, the hyena that was going after a cock, the cock that was eating termite, the termite that infested the digger, the digger that pierced the bread fruit, the bread fruit that eventually fell and killed wankelu- Kerere Nwankelu). This song speaks of the African philosophy that traces the existence of everything back to God.

Based on the Eternity of God
The existence of God for the African is based on his eternity. When Edeh (1985) gave out a questionnaire enquiring about the existence of God, precisely how the people came to know about the existence of God, they replied “Chukwu diri adi, odifu, oga na adilili” (God was existing, he still exists, and he will continue to exist). This is to say that the eternity of God implies his continuous existence. For if God is eternal, why ask if he does exist, for a thing that is eternal cannot cease to exist again. Eternity is the total simultaneous and perfect possession of life without limits. This implies that God has no beginning or end. The sensible world expresses the reality of the eternity of God. He is always the self-same and His years do not fail. He is in fact eternal. Indeed, the very substance of God is eternity. God possesses His being all at ones, totally and perfectly. He transcends time and any type of succession or transition, since they imply change. Indeed, the very substance of God is eternity. It is in this regard that the Yoruba refer to him as Oyigiyi Ota Aiku (The mighty immovable, hard, ancient, durable rock that never dies).

Based on African Theophorous Names
The names that Africans give themselves are a proof of the existence of God. One of the responses to the questionnaires of Edeh (1985) about the existence of God is “Asina Chukwu adiro, ndi Igbo agaghi na aza Chukwudi” (If it is said that God does not exist, the Igbos would not be answering God exists as a name). Thus the names
that the Igbos and other ethnic groups in Africa answer are themselves proofs of the existence of God. These names are proofs because as Anozie (1968) and Obiego (1971) have indicated, that Igbo-African names are not mere tags to distinguish one thing from another, say a plate and a spoon, but rather they express the nature and significance of what they stand for.

Among the Igbos

a. *Chukwu di:* There is God
b. *Chi azor:* God saves
c. *Chi jioke:* God holds the share
d. *Chi amaka:* God is good
e. *Chi wendu:* God owns life
f. *Oge chi:* God’s time
g. *Chi nonye:* God stays with me
h. *Chi merem:* God should do for me
i. *Chi dera:* God has written
j. *Chi naza ekpere:* God answers prayer
k. *Chim dindu:* My God is alive
l. *Chi nedum:* God leads me
m. *Chi azokam:* God saved me
n. *Chi di bere:* God is merciful
o. *Amara chi:* Grace of God
p. *Ifeanyi Chukwu:* Nothing is impossible with God
q. *Onuchukwu:* The voice of God
r. *Onyekachukwu:* Who is greater than God
s. *Chukwuebuka:* God is great
t. *Chukwudiegwu:* God is awesome
u. *Udechukwu:* The glory of God
v. *Uzochi:* The way of God
w. *Ajuluchi:* Was God asked?
x. *Nke chi yere:* The one given by Chi
y. *Gwa chi:* Tell Chi
z. *Kene chi:* Greet God
aa. *Arinze chi:* Were it not for God
bb. *Golibelu chi:* Rejoice unto God

Among the Yorubas

a. *Oluwa seun:* thank you God
b. *Oluwa Tosin:* God is worthy to be praised
c. *Oluwa segun:* God has conquered
d. *Oluwa Gbemiga:* God has lifted me up
e. *Oluwa kemi:* God has cared for me
f. *Oluwa timileji:* God is protecting me
g. *Oluwa somili:* God has woken me up

In the contention of Arinze (1981), these names are key to the understanding of the African concept of God, and for Mbaegbu (2012), they are traditional rational proof of the existence of the Supreme Being in pre-Christian African life and culture. Even though these names are dogmatic and may not suffice in proving the existence of God, names like *Chukwudi* or *Chukwudifu,* according Obiego (1978) assert that he exists, and based on the African’s observation of the mysteries and wonders of nature. When the Igbo-African observes all these, he ends his observation, as the finding of his observation, with *Chukwudi.* However, the absence of theophorous names in pre-Christian times in places like Mbaise in Imo State, and Uzo-Uwani and Eha Amufu of Enugu State stands against using this argument to proof the existence of God among before the advent of Christianity.

**Based on African Prayers**

African prayers are store houses of African worldview, aspiration, hopes and fears. In them are codified our belief in God and man’s expression of this belief. Although none of the prayers and proverbs says categorically that God does exist, there is something about his attributes and these attributes point to his existence, for only that which exists has attributes.

**a. Prayer over Married Couple**

Prayer obtains among the spirits and among men
God treat me well, I am asking for goodness
My son in-law shall give me things that I shall eat
Love will exist between us
God that is what I ask for
Spirit of Ihe, God the creator
I thank you
I have finished
(Ekwunife 2007, p. 55)

**b. Morning Prayer**

God, the creator, eat kola.
Almighty God, take sweet white chalk
Lord of heaven, greetings!
Sun, King of heaven, greetings!
Earth deity of Nnewi, take kola, water spirit, take kola.
Great and small ancestors, eat kola.
He who brings kola, brings life.
God come and break this kola for us for we have no hands.
If you tell a child to wash himself, he washes only his stomach.
But the fire given to a child does not hurt it.
We ask for life. Give us children, give us money.
Whatever man does let him prosper.
Let both the kite and the eagle perch together.
Whoever tells the other not to perch let his wings break.

c. **Prayer Before Announcing the Decision of the Council of Elders**

Ala come and eat kola. Achichi come and eat kola.
God the creator come and eat kola.
Ancestors come and eat kola
If what I am about to say is not then decision of the elders
And it is contrary to our custom then,
May the earth deity follow me. May Achichi follow me
May God the creator of man follow.
May Omeje and Ndichie follow me.

d. **Prayer During Sacrifice for Marriage Couple**

God created man
behold this fowl
God created man
behold Ugwuaku my child
protect her for me
offspring is the main thing in the world
God you act as you have designed
give her children
preserve this young man
her husband to be
give him the means
of giving me wealth to eat
if she gives birth to a female child
it will live
if a male, it will live
may she not have difficulty at childbirth
may her health be good
may the health of her husband be good
prayer obtains among the spirits
and among men
God treat me well
I am asking for goodness
my son in-law shall give me
things and I will eat
love will exist between us
God this is what I ask for
Spirit of Ihe, God the creator
I thank you
I have finished.
(Metuh 1985, p.132-133)

Based on Igbo-African Proverbs

a. When God means a creature to fly, he gives him wings.
b. When God intervenes to resolve a problem (to stop and settle a fight) the
c. dibia’s powers cannot be gainsaid
d. The god of a child is first put into consideration before assigning a particular
   job to him
e. God swats flies for the animal (a cow) that has no tail
f. The drum prepared by God does not break
g. If you curse a barren woman you have cursed her God
h. The gods scare the flies for the cow that has no tail
i. If a person agrees, his god will agree
j. if a person gets ready to go on a journey, his Chi gets ready too
k. the person that God helps also helps himself

If God does not exist, Africans wouldn’t be giving him a significant place in their
proverbs and prayers. Moreover, drawing from the fact that African proverbs and
prayers are born out of experience and deep reflection, they support the fact that God
exists.

Based on Igbo-African Myths

Myths contain traditions about Gods, minor gods, ancestors and their relationship
with human beings. While the world casts myths into the bin of fables as a result of
the developments in philosophy and later science, myths are not fables. Myths belong
to an indispensable period in the development of human history. Myths belong to the
realm of the forgotten or non-remembered, non-recorded history of humankind.
Tikpor (1998) refers to this period as primeval age of humanity, when we walked
about in paradise with uncovered nakedness and unadorned beauty with our creator,
and with animals around us. Then we were nature’s master. How are human beings
able to recall these stories? We recall them because they are our stories, and although
they have gone back and far into the world of the non-remembered and unrecorded we have the wisdom and ability to bring them back in bits and pieces in the form of myths. There is a very wide lacuna between history and myths which can never be filled until the return of the primeval golden, when there will be a restoration of all that humanity has lost, including the non-remembered history.

a. Myth of Separation

Mbaegbu (2012) avers that there was a time the sky lay just above the earth. Thus, human beings could reach Chukwu (God) through a rope which hung down from the sky. There was no death at the time God created the world and human beings. Human beings never lacked anything, as God was involved in their affairs: associated with them and provided for all their needs. In that world, the spirits and human beings were one. However, it happened one day that a woman spat into the eyes of God. He picked offence and thus withdrew into the sky where he now dwells. The result is that human beings were punished and could now die. Since then suffering came into the world, and evil and sin spread throughout the world. The association of God with the sky has earned Him names in this direction. He is called Eze Igwe (King of the Sky) or Igwe ka Ala (the sky greater than the earth). It is from this perspective that they can be referred to as evidence for the existence of God.

b. Myth of Origin

The Nri hegemony and its influence on Igbo history cannot be over emphasized. It is in this regard that Madubuko (1994) observes that the story of the Igbo people, no matter how briefly considered, would be incomplete if one omits the Eri-Nri contribution. Afigbo (1981) shows Eri clan as originating from the regions of Anambra River, at Aguleri; from there they fanned eastward and established various communities. According to Uzukwu (1988), Eri is the father of all Nri; and tradition says that he came from Chukwu. It is reported that the earth was not firm when he came to the world. To solve the problem of flood, he employed blacksmiths from Awka to use their bellows to dry the flooded land. There was no food as well for the people. To provide food, he prayed to God and He demanded that he should sacrifice
his first son and daughter to him. After the sacrifice and burial of his son and daughter, as though all were lost, yam and palm tree began to grow out of the place where he buried his first son while vegetables and cocoyam grew out of the place where he buried his daughter. If yam germinated from where Eri’s first son was buried, it means that yam is the resurrected son of Eri, and since it was given to man to sustain life, it is regarded as life itself.

Madu (2004) observes a cosmological drama in the whole myth. It reveals the dynamics of the cosmic drama between god, man, land and crops. Eri, the civilization hero enjoys a special relationship with Chukwu, and through Eri’s sacrifice, humanity now enjoy a special relationship with the land which offers food for his sustenance. The ritual act performed by Eri established a covenant between Eri, his descendants and Chukwu. From the sacrifice of Eri, we come to discover why yam is very prominent in Igbo sacrifice and life, a situation which warrants its annual elaborate festival throughout Igbo land. The growing of yam from the spot where Eri’s first son was buried accounts for the respect given to okpara (first son) in Igbo life, he is in fact considered to be closer to the ancestors.

c. Myth of the Origin of Death

Obiego (1978: p. 30) gives a beautiful cosmogonic myth about the origin of death among the Igbo people:

At the beginning of things, when there was nothing, neither man nor animals nor plants nor heaven nor earth, nothing indeed, nothing was, only one very powerful person was and his name was Chukwu. Then he came and created both water below, animals and everything as we see it today. Afterwards, Chineke created man, man was the head of all things, but Chineke and Ala own man. After a long time, death entered the world and began killing men. Men sent a messenger to him asking whether the dead could be restored to life and sent back to their homes. They chose a dog as their messenger. The dog however, did not go straight to him; rather he dallied on the way. The toad had however, overheard the message and he wanted (wished) to punish mankind. He overtook the dog and reached Chineke first. He said that he had been sent by men to say that after death, they had no desire at all to return to the world. Chineke declared that he would respect
men’s wishes and when the dog arrived to Chineke with the true message, Chineke refused to alter his decision. Thus human beings might be born again but cannot return with the same body and the same personality.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, we can draw out what we can regard as the ‘Six Ways’ of the Igbo-African traditional rational proofs of the existence of God. The first is based on the Presence of contingent beings in African ontology; the second is based on the eternity of God; the third is based on African names; the fourth is based on Igbo-African proverbs, the fifth is based on Igbo-African prayers and the sixth on Igbo-African myths. The idea of Igbo-African myths emphasizes that the Igbo concept of the Supreme Being emerges from the natural light of reason, in the sense that his reason leads him to wonder about the mysteries in the world and to recognize the maker of all things. The knowledge of God is contained in the indigenous or natural expressions of the Igbo-African people. Since it was borne from the natural light of reason, it further emphasizes that it was never an imported concept of image, imported by the western missionaries.

References


Multilingualism and National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract
The objective of the study was to examine the concept of multilingualism and situate Nigeria as an example of a multilingual country as well as to ascertain the inter relationship between multilingualism and national development. Through a purposive sampling process, a total of 750 copies of questionnaire were distributed to a variegated population of Nigerians comprising 523 students, 102 civil servants, 64 businessmen and 20 others with no specific occupation, aged 16 years and above and drawn from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Pretested and revised questionnaire written in English was administered to each respondent. Questions were written to elicit a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. In all, 709 copies of questionnaire were duly completed and returned. Analysis of data showed that the majority of respondents agreed that multilingualism enhances communication ability; a good number equally agreed that multilingualism encourages national unity. Similarly, nearly all the respondents agreed that multilingualism reduces conflict among the people. Conversely, a high percentage of respondents are of the opinion that multilingualism does not promote the development of a national language, as against a fraction who think otherwise. In conclusion, the findings of this study show that multilingualism is a national resource that fosters national development as against the belief of some Nigerians who do not share this view. It is therefore recommended that every individual, linguist and government have important roles to play in bringing a total realization of a multilingual policy in Nigeria to foster development and national unity.
Introduction

Language may be defined as a system of communication, a medium for emotional expression, a channel of thought, an indispensable foundation of socio-economic/political development and indeed a way of life (Sleigh 2003). Several other definitions of language are documented by other authors. According to Emenanjo (2007), language is an essential element of ethnicity with religion and culture. It is also a future for both differentiation and Identification. He explains that all these cut across all politics, whatever are their internal geo-political and sociolinguistic profile, arrangement and configuration (125). Similarly, Agbedo (2009), remarks that language provides a unique medium through which the believed system, world view, moral values and other basic ingredients of any given society is handed down to the young ones from generation to generation. Language plays an all important role in the life of a people. It serves not only as a medium of communication, but also as a symbol of group identify and solidarity. Language enables different groups of people to know who they are and to what ethnic and linguistic entities they belong. Overall, it is a great asset to the society as every single need of man in and outside his society depends on language and man’s needs and aspirations find their expression in language. Ukah (2010, p.119) states categorically that: Language was seen as holding the picture of the world. The structure of language was the structure of the world. The logic of language, similarly, was the logic of the world. Language was therefore seen as the veritable key that can unlock the ever eluding mystery of the reality of the world.

Multilingualism is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that arises as a result of the existence of a number of dissimilar languages within a language community. Trudgil (1983) defines multilingualism as the ability to speak more than one language with a fair degree of proficiency. He noted that multilingual nations exist in all parts of the world. However, Trudgil points out that there are multilingual societies where speakers never become bilingual to any significant degree, this, he attributes to the fact that the vast majority of the nation-states of the world have more than one language spoken indigenously within their frontiers. Crystal (2003, p.305) points out that multilingualism is a term used in sociolinguistics to refer to a speech community
which makes use of two or more languages and then to the individual speakers who have this ability. Similarly, Chinagorom (2004) refers to multilingualism “as a term relating to many languages or tongue, more than one, more than two”. This, he stresses has to do with linguistic diversity or plurality. According to Wardhaugh (2006), multilingualism is a remarkable ability to speak more than one language. In fact a monolingual individual would be regarded as a social misfit, lacking an important skill in society, the skill of being able to interact freely with speakers of other languages with whom regular contact is made in the ordinary business of living. This author reiterates that in many parts of the world it is just a normal requirement of daily living that people speak several languages: perhaps one or more at home, another in the village, still another for purposes of trade and yet another for contact with the outside world of wider social or political organization. These various languages he claims are usually acquired naturally and unselfconsciously, and the shifts from one to another are made without hesitation. It may be very imperative to mention that much as we tend to view multilingualism as a sociolinguistic phenomenon, it would be fair to point out that multilingualism may arise out of people’s choices, colonial administration, natural disasters (migration) etc.

The concept of national development would be better appreciated by an articulation of the meaning of the words: ‘nation’ and ‘development’ Rosenbaum (1975, p.46) refers to a nation as “a group of people living within a geographical area and united by common political values, attitudes and loyalties. It is a political community held together by a consensus on the baric procedures governing political life”. According to Appadorai (1995), a nation refers to “a population of people with ethnic unity”. The nation in question here is Nigeria. Therefore, a nation can be considered primarily as a group of people from same or different ethnic groups that have common cultural bonds, economic orientation and political values that give them a shared identify. Development on the other hand is a human centered process. It is the process whereby an invention is given social, economic and political features that will help it survive. It details a process in which man transforms himself and acquires the capacity to live a better, more rewarding and more fulfilling life (Giddens 1993).
In Nigeria, multilingualism is part and parcel of our existence considering the many cultural and ethno-linguistic group that abound in the nation. According to Kari (2002) out of the more than 400 languages spoken in the country, only three so-called major languages are accorded recognition as indigenous national languages. The rest of the others are labeled minor languages. English, which is also one of the languages spoken in the country an inheritance from Britain its colonizer, is accorded the status of official language. Adedimeji (2004) adds that: Factors such as political annexation, marital relation, economic transaction, cultural association, education acquisition and religions affiliation bring about multilingualism. All these factors underpin the socio-political landscape of Nigeria today even though the combination of political annexation and economic transaction or exploitation originally brought the people referred to as Nigerians today in contact with the English people. Although studies have been conducted in Nigeria on the social phenomenon-multilingualism as shown above, there is a further need to appreciate multilingualism and national development in Nigeria. This is as a result of the use of language as a tool to drive all human activities in the nation and beyond. Furthermore, it is believed by Elugbe (1990) that “most Nigerians view linguistic may with dismay and make language a ready scapegoat for Nigeria’s lack of internal unity and cohesion. But the truth is that linguistic diversity need not always be a serious disadvantage”. The thrust of this paper therefore is to examine multilingualism in relation to national development.

**Objectives of Study:**

i. To examine the concept of multilingualism and situate Nigeria as an example of a multilingual nation.

ii. To ascertain the inter relationship between multilingualism and national development.

**Method:**

The study participants were secondary school students, university students, civil servants and businessmen in the country. They are Nigerians of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds drawn from Imo State, Oyo state, Nassarawa state, Cross River state, and River state. The backgrounds of our study participants reflects one
predominantly Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa speaking state respectively and two minority language dominated states of the Niger-Delta. They were aged 16 years and above. A total of seven Hundred and Fifty (750) respondents were sampled from the chosen population. The samples were purposively picked from their schools. Willing teachers were enlisted as research assistants to administer the questionnaire to the secondary school students. The university students, civil servants businessmen and others alike were also purposively sampled.

A total of Five hundred and twenty three (523) students were sampled, one hundred and two (102) civil servants, sixty four (64) businessmen and twenty (20) others were sampled. The major instrument for data collection was a thirty-item questionnaire constructed by the researcher, vetted and pretested in the Owerri Metropolis.

**Data Presentation and Analysis:**

The results obtained from our respondents’ opinions on key aspects of multilingualism and how they help or affect national development are presented below.

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaire and Response Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother tongue</th>
<th>No. of Questionnaire Distributed</th>
<th>No. of Questionnaire Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Igbo</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Table 1 shows that the success rate of 94.53% was recorded in the return of the questionnaire distributed. This can be assessed as very high.
Table 2: Distribution of Respondents’ according to number of Languages spoken

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Languages</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only two</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>62.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only three</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>30.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four and above</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that 62.20% of the respondents speak English language and one other language; 30.04% speak English and two other languages, while 7.76% speak English in addition to three or more other languages.

Table 3: Respondents have preference/motivation to speak.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>24.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>43.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another Indigenous language</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>15.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another foreign language</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pidgin</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>10.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that 24.26% of the respondents are strongly motivated to speak their mother tongue; 43.02% are motivated to speak English; 15.09% are inclined to use another indigenous language; 7.62% have a preference for another foreign language and 10.01% prefer to speak pidgin.
Table 4: Extent of use of Languages other than mother tongue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quite often</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>87.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that 87.31% of our respondents use languages other than their mother tongue; 13% rarely speak other languages while none do not speak other languages at all.

Table 5: Respondents’ preference for Multilingual to Monolingual situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother tongue</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Igbo</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that 91.96% of our respondents prefer a multilingual situation for Nigeria as opposed to 8.04% that show their preference for monolingual situation.
Table 6: Respondents’ knowledge and use of multiple indigenous languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Igbo</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Hausa</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Yoruba</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Igbo</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>58.13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14.53</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25.61</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>74.87</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17.80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29.41</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>63.64</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.05</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: shows that 58.13% of our respondents whose mother tongue is Igbo cannot speak any of the Nigeria’s indigenous languages. 14.53% speak Hausa; 25.61% speak Yoruba, while 1.73% speaks other indigenous languages too. On the other hand, 74.87% of those that speak Hausa as their mother tongue cannot speak any other indigenous language; 6.28% speak Igbo, 17.80% speak Yoruba and 1.05% speaks other indigenous languages. Also, of those that have Yoruba as their mother tongue, 63.64% cannot speak any other indigenous languages. However, 4.81% speak Igbo; 29.41% speak Hausa and 2.14% speak any of the other indigenous languages.
Table 7: Respondents’ Opinions on the Positive Impact of the use of multiple languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Effect</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhances communication ability</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>98.45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes development of indigenous technology</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>88.80</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>17.21</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes cultural integration</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>82.28</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9.03</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages national unity</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>90.97</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages mutual tolerance</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>97.04</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>10.58</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes child learning and education</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>89.42</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduces conflict among the people</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>99.01</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>93.51</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes growth of indigenous languages</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes the development of a national language</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>8.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4687</td>
<td>73.45</td>
<td>1694</td>
<td>26.55</td>
<td>6381</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that 98.45% agree that multilingualism enhances communication ability of citizens, 88.80% insist that it promotes development of indigenous technology, while 82.28% believe that it can promote cultural integration. Also, 90.97% agree that it encourages national unity; 97.04% are of the view that it encourages mutual tolerance; 89.42% view it as a vehicle for promoting child learning and education. On the other hand 99.01% agree that through multilingualism, conflict can be reduced. However, 93.51% of the respondents are of the opinion that Multilingualism cannot promote growth of indigenous languages and 91.11% maintain that multilingualism does not promote the development of a national language in Nigeria.
Discussion:

The present study shows that none of our respondents spoke only one language. In fact a good number of them spoke three languages while a significant percentage spoke as much as five languages. This goes to confirm that languages are bound in Nigeria and supports an earlier study by Elugbe (1990):10 that Nigeria is thoroughly a multilingual country. Thus, he reported multilingualism as one of the better-known attributes of Nigeria which is recognized by the composers of our national anthem who agree that “tribe and tongue” differences exist in Nigeria. Our results further corroborate the studies by Alamu and Iloene (2003, p.319) who noted that Nigeria is a linguistic state where numerous languages are in use by one individual in the same nation.

The result of our study also shows that in spite of the originality of the mother tongue, respondents had stronger motivation to speak the English language which recorded the highest percentage in its category. This is attributable to the neutrality of the English language and its status as the language of education and of government. This fact is a confirmation of previous studies that in most cases, the dominant language in the Nigeria multilingual language is English language which is deliberately chosen as the symbol of oneness and unity and of achievement of independence in an erstwhile colonial situation and of the state of nation hood. This could be linked to the exaggerated importance of this language and the consequent institutional support it enjoys in Nigeria (Ahukanna 1990; Akindele and Adegbite 1992; Osuafor 2002). Also our study reveals that an appreciable percentage of respondents are motivated to speak pidgin which according to Akindele and Adegbite (1992, p.52) is that which is generally understood to be a simplified language whose grammar is very different and formed when speakers of one language engage in trade with speakers of another language and neither knows the other’s language. They report that pidgin is a blend of indigenous languages of the West African coast and those of the foreign traders. This fact is corroborated in earlier studies by Gani-Ikilama (1989) and reported by Osuafor 2002: 200 that “Nigeria’s multilingual setting has enhanced the use and growth of pidgin English in Nigeria so much so that it has become a Creole in such areas like Sapele, Warri, Port Harcourt and Benin”.

As established by previous studies (Elugbe 1990; Akindele & Adegbite 1992; Clyne 1997; Kari 2002; Osuafor 2002; Alamu & Iloene 2003; Chinagorom 2004; Wardhaugh 2006), our study is a further confirmation that there is a high level of active participation in the multilingual setting of the nation, which goes beyond the knowledge of two or more languages but also the zeal to use them extensively. However, Elugbe (1990:13) reiterates that “linguistic diversity should not scare us, it does not automatically spell doom, and the kind of political system in operation in a country will not determine the successful involvement of national language and national development.

In addition, based on our findings, there is an overwhelming preference for a multilingual situation for Nigeria as opposed to a handful that showed their preference to a monolingual situation. This result buttresses Hudson’s (2003) view that the need for communication with the neighboring communities and government agencies makes members of most communities largely multilingual. This indicates that multilingualism is likely to have a significant positive impact on Nigeria’s development.

In view of the need to promote the use of multiple indigenous languages, our findings showed that the Igbo cultural group had a higher tendency to learn and use multiple indigenous languages. The Hausa cultural group equally enjoys a certain degree of knowledge and use of multiple indigenous languages but not as much as the Igbo cultural group. The Yoruba cultural group also presents a considerable knowledge and use of multiple indigenous languages but not as much as the Igbo and Hausa cultural groups. We may therefore state that our findings show that the Igbo speaking group is the most multilingual of the language groups.

Finally, based on our respondents’ opinion on the positive impact of the use of multiple languages, our study revealed that multilingualism enhances communication ability as reported earlier by Bhatia and Ritchie (2006, p.9) that multilingualism opens up an individual’s competence and performance in language use as the individual is exposed to more languages and cannot be said to suffer inhibitions in terms of communication. A greater percentage of our respondents also affirmed that multilingualism is a culture promoter since it recognizes that language is culture and
both are inextricable. A high percentage also agrees that multilingualism fosters national unity. It is also believed by many that multilingualism encourages mutual tolerance since language aids communication among people of diverse linguistic and cultural background. A very high percentage also sees it as a medium for promoting child learning and education and in which case, child learning and education may come in diverse indigenous languages. This view further confirms an earlier study by Arohunmolase (1997, p.108) that “since education begins with the child’s mother tongue, Nigerian languages are therefore the ‘defacto’ promoter of national unity. The present study also showed in unison that the existence of multiple languages reduces conflict because the language of communication is not limited to one and it is easier to get the desired goals using the indigenous languages of the people. However, 93.51% of our respondents are of the opinion that multilingualism cannot promote the growth of indigenous language and 91.11% maintain that multilingualism does not promote the development of a national language. These views had been debunked in previous studies by Elugbe (1990, p.13) who observed that: “most Nigerians view Nigeria’s linguistic map with dismay and make language a ready scapegoat for Nigeria’s lack of internal unity and cohesion. But the truth is that linguistic diversity need not always be a serious disadvantage”. In any case, the opinion of this percentage is not questionable because, though multilingualism presents a lot of advantages, no doubt, it must have its short comings. But, it is very important to note that the growth of indigenous languages as well as the development of a national language is an aspect of the totality of national development. More so, if multilingualism presents ten visible advantages and two disadvantages which are not totally negligible, we may conclude that multilingualism is an asset to Nigeria and impacts positively on national development.

Conclusion:

This study has shown without doubts that multilingualism is a global phenomenon and Nigeria, in particular is a multilingual nation with an estimation of more than four hundred languages spoken natively by more than two hundred and fifty ethnic groups that inhabit the nation. Multilingualism may be defined as the mastery of two or more languages which arises as a result of language contact. It is a norm in the diverse
communities of Nigeria. It is seen as a source of strength, for it enables speakers or various linguistic backgrounds to maintain contact with one another. Multilingualism is a social reality which manifest on the grounds of context as Nigerians tend to use different codes as the need arises to express their wish to belong and from which they seek acceptance. Thus Nigerian society has remained multilingual in practice and principle. National development in Nigeria would imply the optimum promotion of the total well-being and security of the people in such a way that they are able to take advantage of what is available to them in order to realize their individual potentials. The people’s language remains the most effective access to information. The multilingual nature of Nigeria would not permit the description- the people’s language because the nation is dotted with languages, some termed major and others termed minor. The selection, approval and use of one indigenous language as national or official language of education and government will be tantamount to national crises. This accounts for the pride of place which the English language enjoys in Nigeria at all levels of government and education as it is seen not only as the official language but as a neutral language which no one can lay claim to. Therefore, it should be emphasized that one’s language is part of one’s identify. As a result, it must not be traduced. To do so means being so cruel as to deny one a favour so easily and unconsciously acquired yet so highly prized. Hence the need to adopt a multilingual approach in solving what appears to be Nigeria’s linguistic challenges in public and social life. Far from being a nuisance or calamity, multilingualism in the country enhances communication ability, promotes development of indigenous technology, promotes cultural integration, encourages national unity, promotes the growth of indigenous languages, enhances child learning and education among others. It is a source of power which if properly harnessed and managed will act as a hallmark for a more effective and vibrant evolution of a modern, economically viable and technologically developed nation.
Recomendation:

The role of language in national development cannot be over emphasized. This will depend on how much a government puts into the development of Nigerian languages by reducing them to writing and developing materials in them and much largely on every individual because one’s determination to learn a second, third or fourth language depends on mindset and not necessarily on enforcement by government. For Nigerian languages to play crucial roles in national unity and development, we recommend the following:

i. A national language survey is needed to identify the exact number of languages spoken within the nation not mere speculations.

ii. There is a further need to investigate where exactly within the nation these indigenous languages are spoken.

iii. A proper language policy should be put in place for the actualization of our set goals.

iv. Every language, be it major or minor indigenous or not must be assigned a function.

v. There is need to develop a standard orthography of these languages.

vi. Government must realize that language planning and development is a feasible but long term project and must not be in hurry to draw up ideas only to abandon it mid way.
References


Socio-Cultural Solutions in the Perception of Infertility among Involuntary Childless Couples in Okigwe Zone, Imo State

By

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Abstract

The study examined socio-cultural solutions in the perception of infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone, Imo State. Four hypotheses based on the following variables: social solutions, religions belief, traditional medicine and selected socio-cultural solutions were raised and tested. Survey research design was employed for the study purposive sampling technique was used to obtain a sample of involuntary childless couples consisting of 84 women and 32 men seeking solutions of specific centres in Okigwe zone. A self-developed and validated structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Reliability coefficient of 0.79 was obtained for the instrument using Crombach’s alpha. The descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the demographic information of the participants while the inferential statistics of chi-square ($\chi^2$) was used to test the null hypotheses of 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that, all the four null-hypotheses were statistically significant and consequently rejected. The following results were obtained: social solutions ($\chi^2 = 9.03$, table value = 7.81, df = 3, $p < 0.05$); religious belief ($\chi^2 = 8.15$, table value = 7.81, df = 3, $p < 0.05$); traditional medicine ($\chi^2 = 11.19$, table value = 7.81, df = 3 $p < 0.05$) and selected socio-cultural solutions ($\chi^2 = 10.71$, table value = 7.81, df = 3, $p < 0.05$). Based on the findings, the study concluded that all the socio-cultural solutions variables examined influenced infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone, Imo State. The study therefore, recommends promoting infertility education programme that should be written in local language as well as reproductive health education in primary and post primary school curricular.

Key word: Socio-Cultural, Solutions, Influence, Infertility, Childless Couples, Okigwe Zone
Introduction

Yearning for children and the heartbreak of barrenness have been a part of the life since the beginning of mankind, chronicled throughout history by religious account, myths, legends, art and literature (Noyes & Chapnic, 2004). The authors noted that whether driven by biological drive, social necessity or psychological longing, the pursuit of a child or children has compiled men and women to seek a variety of remedies, sometimes even extreme measures. In fact, in all cultures childlessness is recognized as a crisis that has the potential to threaten the stability of individual’s relationships and communities.

According to Wright (2003) and Watkins and Baldo (2004) a clinical diagnosis of infertility is made if a couple fails to become pregnant after regular, unproductive sexual intercourse for a minimum of twelve months. They explained that primary infertility is infertility in a couple, who have never had a child. While secondary infertility is failure to conceive following a previous pregnancy. In rural Nigeria, the prevalence of primary and secondary infertility has been reported to be 12.9% and 54.1% respectively (Aghoja, Okonofua & Onemu, 2007). Oyekan (2009) affirmed that the proportion of couples experiencing infertility has apparently changed since 1990.

The World Health Organization has acknowledged the magnitude and significance of infertility as a public health issue of global concern, especially in developing countries (Burns & Covington, 2006). Epidemiological studies show infertility to be a significant problem in Africa, with provincial prevalence rate ranging from 30 to 40% (Leke, Oduma, Bucha & Grigor, 2003). The findings of a recent review indicates a 9% prevalence of infertility international estimate), while 56% of couples are seeking medical treatment for infertility (Boivin, Buriting, Collins & Nygren, 2007). Yearly, approximately 1,000 couples are seeking medical treatment for infertility (Orji, 2008). These statistics show individuals experiencing infertility make up a considerable proportion in our society.

The consequences of infertility for couples in low income countries, where children are highly valued for economic and socio-cultural as well as personal reasons can be far more severe compared to couples in western countries. Reports from several African countries, mostly west and South Africa, have documented the
overwhelming importance of childbearing and the suffering caused by infertility in these societies (Barden, 2005; Dyer, 2007; Donkor & Sandall, 2007; Hollo & Larsen, 2008). According to these studies, infertility causes loss of marital stability, loss of social status and isolation, loss of social security, problems with gender identity, loss of continuity of family lines and general emotional distress.

Because motherhood is one of the most important ways for African women to enhance their status within the family and the community, childless women often carry the largest burden of the suffering. They suffer from domestic violence, get abandoned by their partner and may end up as second wife in a polygamous marriage (Araoye, 2003; Van Balen & Gerrits, 2001). Orji (2008) also point out that infertility women apply various strategies to have a child, commit adultery in the hope to conceive and apply fostering as a partial solution for childlessness.

Rosenblatt, Peterson and Portner (2003) pointed out that every society has culturally approved solutions to infertility involving either alone or together, alterations of social solutions (e.g. divorce or adoption), spiritual intercession (e.g. prayer or pilgrimage to spiritually powerful sites), or non-orthodox interventions (e.g. taking of herbs or consultation with medicine man). Wischmann (2003) stated that divorce, polygamy and extramarital affairs remain, as they have long been, social solutions to infertility, as do various forms of adoption and fostering. Example of other social solution, he noted include the continuing practice in some cultures of multiple wives in response to infertility or lack of a son.

According to Boivin (2003) since antiquity, the appeal of religious faith and the power of belief in spirits and gods, a remedy for infertility can be found in all cultures. He further added that fertility symbols, special gods and fertility rites and customs is believed to have certain places to enhance fertility in some cultures. Similarly, Rosenblatt, Peterson & Portner (2003) spiritual and non-orthodox remedies for infertility are common and often used early on by infertility couples, social solutions demanding the alteration of relationships have been shown to be the last alternative individual or couples usually consider.

However, Wischmann (2003) pointed out that infertility couples are reluctant to jeopardize or disturb close relationship (perhaps) because social changes are usually
permanently, because the hope or believe infertility will be a temporary problem. In the same vein, Miall (2005) added that reluctant to consider social solutions may be due to the hope and promise often attributed to non-orthodox and/or spiritual interventions. Rosenblatt, Peterson and Portner (2003) collaborated that infertile couples use all the three measures - social, spiritual and non-orthodox (traditional) as remedies for their childlessness throughout history and across all cultures. Singer and Hunter (2003) noted that the medical solutions to involuntary childlessness became powerful and appealing to the infertile by the end of the twentieth century with the advent of assisted reproductive technologies and advanced third-party reproduction. These advances in assisted reproductive technologies can offer hope to many couples where treatment is available, although barriers exist in terms of medical coverage availability and affordability.

**Purpose and Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate socio-cultural solutions in the perception of infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone, Imo State. Specifically, the objectives were:

- Determine social solutions influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

- Determine religious belief influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

- Determine traditional medicine influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

- Determine selected socio-cultural solution influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

**Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated on the basis of the objectives identified above:

- Social solutions will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

- Religious belief will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.
– Traditional medicine will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

– Selected socio-cultural solutions will not have a significant difference on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone.

**Scope of the Study**

The study is delimited to the following: infertility, perceived socio-cultural solutions variables such as social solutions (e.g. divorce, polygamy, extramarital affairs, adoption, fostering); religious belief (e.g. spiritual intercession, prayer or pilgrimage to spiritually powerful sites, the power of belief in the spirits and gods); and traditional medicine (taking of herbs or concoction or consultation with “medicine man”, relics, charm, incantations, special portions); married childless couples of reproductive age (18 – 47) in Okigwe Zone of Imo; descriptive survey research design, purposive sampling technique, structured questionnaire as instrument for data collection, descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, and inferential statistics of chi-square ($\chi^2$) at 0.05 alpha level.

**Significance of the Study**

The empirical result of this study will throw more light and information on various socio-cultural solutions to infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone of Imo State. This information can be utilized to assist couples in coming within infertility and protect the marital relationships from potential negative effects.

The result of this study is hoped will be useful and relevant to researchers, academicians and especially involuntary childless couples who will then be able to use the information inherent in this research to make up for more advanced assisted reproductive technologies, which although barriers exist in terms of availability, medical coverage and affordability.

**Theoretical Framework**

Family system theory developed as a branch of Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s general system theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1968). In order to fully understand family system
theory a basic grasp of general system theory is needed. General system theory
challenged the mechanistic theories that were predominant in the mid-twentieth
century, arguing instead that organisms are complex, interactive and organized (Von
Bertalanffy, 1968). A general system perspective focuses on and investigates the
manner in which underlying components of a system interact with one another in
order to form a whole. A system perspective does not merely focus on separate parts,
but on how all the separate parts are connected, interdependent and interrelated. From
a system perspective, one will examine how any fluctuation in one part of the system
can affect other components of the system, which, in turn, can affect the initial
component. General system theory thus suggests that a holistic view is necessary to
fully understand all the dynamics involved in any situation (Von Bertalanffy, 1968).

A system is defined as a set of objects with relationships between the objects and
between the attributes of the objects (Barker, 2007). Almost any assembly of different
parts will meet these criteria; therefore, a more complex description was needed for a
living system such as a cell or individual organisms. Bertalanffy’s general system
perspective provides a suitable alternative. In recent years, the general conclusion has
been made that the family is an example of an open, ongoing, goal-seeking, self-
regulating social system and that it shares the features of all such “systems”
(Broderick, 1993). In addition, specific characteristics such as a family’s structuring of
gender and generation differentiate it from other social system. Also, each individual
family is moulded by its own specific and unique characteristics (e.g. size, life stage,
complexity), the psychobiological characteristics of the individual family members
(e.g. gender, age, health, temperament) and the family’s socio-cultural position in the
larger society (Broderick, 1993).

Application of Family System Theory to Infertility

A system perspective can aptly be applied to the study of the family as a system
since families consist of individual members who are all interactive, interdependent
and interrelated. A family is a complex system and changes in one part of this system
will have an impact on other interrelated parts or members of the system. Family
systems theory thus creates a framework from which to attempt to understand the complexity as an organized system.

A perspective that focuses on the larger system or context surrounding an individual (in this case, the marital relationship) is ideally suited to a focus on infertility and preferred to an individual perspective or focus, specifically because the experience of infertility is shared by both partners and experienced within this larger context of behaviour (the marital relationship). The level of congruence between the partners’ experiences of infertility-related stress and specific aspects of the marital relationship – the quality of marital communication, satisfaction with the sexual relationship, perceived intimacy and the level of marital adjustment may influence, as well as be influenced by the experience of infertility. On the basis of family systems theory, a partner’s adjustment to infertility will most likely be impacted by the systemic nature of the marital or couple relationship. The couple will attempt to adapt to the challenge of infertility either through morphstasis or morphogenesis. Numerous pervious studies suggest and support the use of a family system approach in infertility research (Peterson, Newton & Rosen, 2003; Ulbrich Coyle & Llabre, 2000).

**Empirical Studies**

Sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria, with its extremely high rate of infertility, has also been the subject of research (Oyekan, 2009 & Larsen, 2009). These studies noted that women in many African cultures have low status and gain value from their capacity to reproduce and/or provide sexual satisfaction to male partner. Consequently, blame for infertility, regardless of its origin, is affixed to the female member of a couple (Ikechebelu, Ikegwuonu & Joe-Ikechebelu, 2002). In their studies, they asserted that infertility in African women frequently causes marital disharmony, leading to divorce. Hollos (2003) collaborated that women are often blamed for the infertility and men engage in polygamy in an attempt to have children. He further pointed out that divorce because of infertility is common among infertile Nigerian women.

The women in the study of Orji (2008) noted that divorce was the result of abuse by the husband’s family, their husband taking a second or third wife, and accusations
of being a witch. Abuse can take place because children are considered a connection between ancestors and future generations and a barren woman provides no such connection for her husband’s family (Oyekan, 2009). He further stressed that cultural issues put African women under greater pressure to reproduce and when they are unable, they suffer more in their marriage and social group.

Throughout history and across cultures, traditional medicine solution to infertility have been diverse and varied such as relics, charms, incantations, eating special foods, vaginal treatments, treatments to enhance male sexual potency and special portions and/or poultics. Whether “primitive” medical treatment or the more sophisticated assisted reproductive technologies of today, medical treatment for infertility have always been actively pursued (Ombelet, Cooke & Dyer, 2008). Rosenblatt, Peterson and Portner (2003) submitted that every society has cultural approved solutions to infertility involving either alone or together alterations of social relationships (e.g. divorce or adoption or fostering) spiritual intercession (e.g. prayer or pilgrimage to spiritual powerful sites); or traditional medicine intervention (e.g. taking of herbs or consultation with “medicine man”).

In many cultures, Boivin (2003) noted the appeal of religious faith and the power of belief in spirit and gods as a remedy for infertility can be found in all cultures. Araoye (2003) and Gerrits (2007) further stressed the importance of faith either as a means of solving infertility or as a means to maintain the stability of infertility couples. Despite evidence that men were infertility as often as women, throughout history and across culture, women have disproportionately borne the medical, social and cultural burden of a couple’s failure to conceive (Araoye, 2003). Infertility in these societies often leads to social stigmatization and abandonment by spouses (Hollos, 2003).

In the past, many myths have arisen regarding the cause of infertility and cures. In some African cultures, infertility is seen as solely a woman’s problem, and thus the diagnosis of male factor infertility is unacceptable. Consequently, there is significant denial and a lack of treatment. The cultural norms are presumably to protect the male ego and the “superego” role of the male in the society and family (Ikechebelu, Ikegwuonu & Joe-Ikechbelu, 2002). Hollos (2008) asserted that in the past, women
were hardly allowed to participate in intensive athletic activities and other energy-demanding events because it was though that they were harmful to the body, thus leading to infertility. Though, direct evidence for this notion is lacking.

Gerrits (2008) also submitted that most infertile individuals believe that their diet, exercise program or other aspects of their lifestyle may be the cause of their infertility. However, there is now significant evidence that the use of tobacco, alcohol and marijuana negatively impact both male and female fertility (Zenes, 2000). According to Larsen (2009) in the past, people believe that the physical or emotional trauma of an abortion or a rape can render women infertile. He further noted that some women who have had an abortion believed God is punishing them by not letting them have another baby. Scientifically speaking, there is no evidence that an abortion or rape will adversely affect one’s fertility any more than a miscarriage or an act of consensual intercourse will unless the abortion or rape involves some gross structural damage to the reproductive system.

Because ovulation is an age-related function, aging can and does have an impact on female fertility (Van Balen & Visser, 2007). Leonard (2002) further contended that female circumcision, a practice common in African countries, can also lead to infection and infertility. He also reported the belief that hot bath reduces fertility.

Today, there are many causes of infertility both women and men, which include disorder of ovulation, abnormality of semen, abnormal fallopian tubes and unexplained infertility. Others are cervical and uterine disorders, immunological problems, infection, sexual dysfunction and endometriosis (Seibel, 1997; Makar & Toth, 2002 & Shami, Imam & Dada, 2011). However, advances in assisted in reproductive technologies such as in vitro fertilization (IVF), can offer hope to many couples where treatment is available, though barriers exist in terms of medical coverage, availability and affordability.

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

The research design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey. This design was chosen because it is very handy for fact finding, and because the entire population cannot be reached hence a representative sample which has all the features and
attributes of the population was discretely chosen. One can also generalize with its results.

**Population of the Study**

The population for this study comprised all involuntary childless couples in the six local government areas which make up Okigwe zone of Imo State. The population is 947,216 people, who are or have been infertile.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample for this study was drawn from Okigwe senatorial zone in Imo State, comprising six (6) local government areas. Three (3) local government areas were randomly sampled. A purposive sampling technique was used to obtain a sample of one hundred and sixteen (116) consisting of 84 women and 32 men (involuntary childless couples) seeking solution at different offices or working places of motherless babies home, religious leaders and traditional medicine healers. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants from a pre-specified group are purposively sought out and sampled (Nwankwo, 2004). Thus, participants have to meet the inclusive criteria for being in the sample.

**Research Instrument**

A self structured close-ended questionnaire was the main instrument of the study. It was structured in line with the variables of the study. The responses were rated on modified likert-type four point rating scale. Weights were allotted so as to enable the respondents indicate the extent of agreement and disagreement with the supplied statements. The positive items were weighted 4 points for Strongly Agree (SA), 3 points for Agree (A), 2 points for Disagree (D) and 1 point for Strongly Disagree (SA) in that order the negative items were scored in the reverse order.

**Validation of Instrument**

The instrument was given to experts in the field of health education for proper guidance and necessary vetting with respect to relevance, suitability, repetition, set
objectives, use of language, ambiguity vis-a-vis content validity. Necessary modification was made before its administration to the involuntary childless couples.

**Reliability of the Instrument**

To ensure reliability of research instrument for this study, the validated and correction version of the questionnaire was administered to purposely selected twenty (20) involuntary childless couples, who are not part of the target population. Crombach’s alpha co-efficient (r) was used to estimate the reliability of the instrument which produced ambiguities in the instrument.

**Method of Data Collection**

The instrument was administered through a team of assistance, comprising officers in-charge of motherless babies home, religious leaders and traditional medicine healers administered the questionnaire on the subject in their various offices, worshiping places and workplaces. Guidelines concerning the completion of the questionnaire were explained. Each subject completed the questionnaire form and this was collected immediately after completion. A total of one hundred and eighty copies of the questionnaire were administered, duly filled ones collected within one month.

**Method of Data Analysis**

This deals with the presentation and analysis of data generated from the questionnaire. The data was coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, and inferential statistics of chi-square ($\chi^2$) to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.
Results

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participants (N = 116)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 – 37</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 – 47</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that 116 (100.0%) involuntary childless couples participated in the study. A total number of 84 (72.4%) were women while 32 (27.6%) were men. It can be seen that the total response rate was low especially from the men’s view points. The reasons provided for not participating were predominantly lack of time, with an additional sentiment being expressed that having to answer questions about one’s fertility problem may be uncomfortable and may lead to undesirable emotions and pain that could otherwise be avoided. Some participants felt that their infertility was a very personal and private experience not to be shared with anyone, regardless of the assurance that the study was anonymous.

As illustrated in table 1, 12 (10.3%), 21(18.1%) and 51(44%) of the female participants were in age categories of (18 – 27), (28 - 37) and (38 – 47) respectively while 10(8.6%) and 22(19%) of the male participants were in age group of (28 – 37) and (38 – 47) in that order.

As is depicted in Table 1, the majority of women 47 (40.3%) work in public sector, 19 (16.4%) are self employed, 13 (11.2%) work in private sector and the remaining 8 (6.9%) were unemployed. Majority of men 17(14.7%) were self-employed, 13 (11.2%) work in public sector and 2 (1.7% work in private sector.
Also, Table 1 showed educational level of the participants. Majority of women 48 (41.4) attended tertiary institutions, 28 (24.1%) secondary, and the remaining 8 (6.9%) attended primary while 19 (16.4%) of the men attended tertiary institutions, 8 (6.9%) secondary and 5 (4.3%) primary respectively. The sample thus represents a high educational level, predominantly female participants. This can perhaps be ascribed to increase enrolment of female education in Nigeria.

Table 2: Demographic Information on Dependent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Women (N = 84)</th>
<th>Men (N = 32)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of Marriage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5 years</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 years</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 11 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of infertility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5 years</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 years</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 11 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of infertility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary infertility</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary infertility</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regards to the length of marriage of the female participants, less than (> 5) years accounts for (49.1%), 6 – 10 years for (14.7%) and 11 years and above for (8.6%), while the man sampled had married for > 5 years (18.1%), 6 – 10 years (6.9%) and 11 years and above (2.6%) respectively. The female duration of infertility for > 5 years accounts for (34.5%), 6 – 10 years for (27.6%) and 11 years and above (10.3%). The results for the men also indicated that > 5 years had (18.1%), 6 – 10 years had (6.9%) and the remaining had experienced infertility for 11 years and above.

Furthermore, it can be seen in Table 2 that the majority of the participants had been diagnosed with primary infertility (44% of the women) and (20.7% of men) while (28.4% of women) and (6.9% of men) are diagnosed with secondary infertility. Primary infertility is diagnosed when a couple has no children, either from a present or previous relationships or marriage. While secondary infertility is diagnosed when a
Data Analysis and Discussion of Hypothesis

Research Question 1

Social Solution will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone

Table 3: Responses on social solutions influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social solutions</td>
<td>Fo</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9.93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(\chi^2 = 9.93, \text{ table value } = 7.815, \text{ df } = 3, p < 0.05\)

Result of the data in Table 3 shows that 42 (36.2%) participants and 37 (31.9%) participants strongly agree and agree respectively, while 23 participants representing (19.8%) and 14 (12.1%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively that social solutions influence socio-cultural perception of infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone. It shows clearly that 79 (68.1%) agree and 37 (31.9%) disagree with the statement.

The calculated chi-square (\(\chi^2\)) value of 9.3 was obtained as against the table value of 7.815 with a df of 3 at 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states social solutions will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone is rejected. This finding corroborate that of Hollos (2003), Gerrits (2007) and Dyer, Abraham, Hoffman and Vander Spur (2002) who identified divorce, polygamy, extramarital affairs, adoption and fostering as a social solution to infertility in most-cultures of developing countries. Similarly, Orji (2008) pointed out that infertile women apply various strategies to have a child, commit adultery in the hope to conceive and apply fostering as a partial solution for childlessness.
Research Hypothesis 2: Religious belief will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone

Table 4: Response on religious belief influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Fo</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belief</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fo</td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 = 8.15$, table value = 7.81, df = 3, p < 0.05

Table 4 above shows that 41 (35.3%) and 26 (22.46) strongly agree and agree respectively, while 27 participants (23.3%) and 22 participants (19%) disagree and strongly disagree that religious belief influences socio-cultural perception of infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe Zone. It shows that 67 (57.7%) agree and 47 (42.3%) disagree with the statements.

The chi-square calculated shows that the calculated value of 8.15 was returned as against the table value of 7.815 with the df of 3 at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that religious belief will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone is rejected. This finding supports that of Boivin (2003) who noted the appeal of religious faith and the power of belief in spirit and gods remains a remedy for infertility throughout history and across cultures. Similarly, in the same vein, Araoye (2003) and Garrits (2007) stressed the importance of faith either as a means of solving infertility or as a means of maintaining the stability of marital relationships of infertile couples.

Research Hypothesis 3: Traditional Medicine will not have a significant influence on infertility involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone
Table 5: Response on traditional medicine influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>healers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fo</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ² = 11.19, table value = 7.81, df = 3, p < 0.05

Table 5 above shows that 29 (25%) and 36 (31%) participations strongly agree and agree respectively while 31 (26.7%) and 20 (17.2%) participations disagree and strongly disagree respectively that traditional medicine influences socio-cultural perceptions of infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone. It evidently shows that 65 (5.6%) agree while 51 participants (4.4%) disagree with the statements.

The chi-square (χ²) calculation shows that χ² is 11.19, which is greater than table value of 7.815 at df 3 at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that traditional medicine will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone is rejected. This corroborates the findings of Resenblatt, Peterson and Portner (2003) who asserted that throughout history and across cultures, traditional medicine solutions to infertility have been diverse and varied such as relics, charms, incantations, eating special foods, vaginal treatments, treatment to enhance male sexual potency and special portions.

Garrits (2007) concluded in his study that whether “primitive” method of treatment or the more sophisticated assisted reproductive technologies of today, traditional medicine for infertility have always been actively pursued and held particular power and influence.

Research Hypothesis 4: Select socio-cultural solutions will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone
Table 6: Chi-square computation on socio-cultural solutions influence on infertility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>Expected</th>
<th>Remarked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social solutions</td>
<td>9.93</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious belief</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional medicine</td>
<td>11.19</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>Significance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 10.71$, table 7.81, df = 3, $p< 0.05$

A variable by variable analysis shows that the chi-square value of 10.71 was obtained as against the table value of 7.815 with a df of 3 at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that socio-cultural solution will not have a significant influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone is rejected. This result once more highlighted the relevance of socio-cultural solutions as a remedy to the problem of infertility, especially in most African countries. Leonard (2002) and Gerrits (2007) have acknowledged the magnitude and significance of socio-cultural solutions as quantitative measures or remedies to infertility throughout history and across cultures. Similarly, Resenblath, Peterson and Portner (2003) submitted that every society has cultural approved solutions to infertility involving either alone or together or alternations of social solutions (divorce or polygamy or adoption or fostering), spiritual intercession (prayer or fasting or pilgrimage to spiritual powerful sites) or traditional medicine intervention (taking of herbs or consultation with “medicine man or woman”).

**Conclusion**

Based on the data analyzed and interpreted, the study concluded that socio-cultural solutions such as social solutions, religious belief and traditional medicine have influence on infertility among involuntary childless couples in Okigwe zone of Imo State.
Recommendations
Based on the result of the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- The government through education should modify the curriculum where necessary to reflect culturally sensitive reproductive health issues such as infertility.
- The government should play leadership role in promoting reproductive health programme which may develop a better understanding of sexuality in the context of infertility, and thus better inform infertility management.
- Health education in schools should give adequate attention to reproductive health including infertility since students are prospective fathers and mothers.
- Establish modest clinic based services and all family planning facilities especially advance assisted productive technologies should be accessible and low-cost in rural and urban areas.
- The collaborative efforts of various professionals such as physicians, psychologists, counsellors, etc if instituted at early diagnosis would go a long way in helping to overcome the challenges of infertility.

References


A Review of the Communicative Roles of English Language in Multilingual/Ethnic Nigeria

By

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Abstract
The multi-ethnic/multilingual nature of Nigeria predisposes it to some far reaching implications such as ethnic rivalry, suspicion, distrust, lack of patriotism and most recently; insurgency. These situations call for sensitization, and re-awakening of national consciousness among its citizens, as well as creating awareness by way of disseminating information across all the ethnic groups within its enclave. To ensure that intended ideas are effectively communicated in a multilingual Nigeria, a common, acceptable and national language should be used. It is against this background that this paper advocates the continued use of the English language as the official/national language in Nigeria. This is to forestall the barriers to effective communication which are bound to arise with the choice of an indigenous (ethnic) language in its place. This paper recommends that a more functional teaching and learning approach should be introduced at every level of English language education; and that English should be promoted by all means possible to foster national unity, integration and effective communication. It recommends also that the English language should remain the official and national language in Nigeria as its removal from this exalted position will definitely mark the disintegration of Nigeria as a nation.

Keywords: Language, Effective Communication, Multi-ethnicity, Culture, Multi-culturalism, and Multi-lingualism

Introduction
The purpose of any form of communication is to convey some form of meaning from the sender to the receiver (Ndimele, 1999, p.2). Messages should be coded in a common language which is not private but one acceptable and known to both the sender and the receiver. According to Hybels and Weaver (1989, p. 93), achieving effective communication is hinged upon the fact that both speaker and listener share a
common and accepted code (language). They argue that effective communication occurs when a desired effect is the result of intentional or unintentional information sharing, which is interpreted between multiple entities and acted on in a desired way. This further ensures that messages are not, in any way, distorted during the communication process.

Nigeria typifies a society that is not only multi-lingual but also multi-ethnic. One of the dominant and pressing problems associated with Nigeria as a multi-ethnic nation is the national language question. Achieving effective communication in Nigeria demands that a National language which is easily and readily assessable is used. This informs the submission of Isayev (1977, p.12) that “language is a Nation’s most obvious and most important attribute. There is no such thing as a Nation without a common linguistic basis”. This submission concludes that for National Unity, Integration, Peace and Development in Multi-ethnic/lingual nation like Nigeria, a Language which cut across the Nation and is generally acceptable to all, should be used in coordinating the affairs of the Nation. This paper explores the unifying /communicative role of the English language use in Nigeria. It seeks also to highlight the point that even at the risk of promoting “language imperialism and colonization”. Nigeria cannot jettison the use of the English language as its National language.

The Relationship between Language and Culture:

Sapir, (1970, p. 207) posits that language and culture share an inextricable relationship which is deeply rooted in every human society. This implies that both concepts are practically inexisten when separated. Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Different ideas stem from differing language use within one’s culture and this relationship starts at ones birth. Language is first of all described as a human social phenomenon utilized by people in their everyday life. Much of our understanding of the world view is determined by language. To this end, Victoria, et al. (2007) while emphasizing the view of Whitman (2004, p. 407) states that “Language is not an abstract construction of the learned, or of dictionary makers, but is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections and tastes of long
generations of humanity”. This further suggests that the language of a particular speech community tells a lot about that community.

Culture on its own is viewed in (Eka, 2000, p.33), as the totality of a peoples’ way of life; as handed down from generation to generation. The understanding of a culture and its people is enhanced by the knowledge of their language. Language being a viable tool used to enforce communication, express ideas, feelings and thoughts by the use of conventionalized symbols, is used to convey and maintain culture and cultural ties.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis opines that language shapes human thoughts (Denhem & Lobeck 2013, p. 355). The hypothesis argues that different thoughts are brought about by the use of different forms of language. It further argues that one is limited by the language used to express one’s ideas / feelings. Different languages will undoubtedly create different worldviews. To this, Emmitt & Pollock (1997), argue that every though people are brought up under similar behavioural backgrounds or cultural situations, but however speak different languages; their world view may be different. Still, language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next.

Culture, as Roothul-Amini (1989, p.5) puts it “has multifarious meanings. Culture meant farming”. It is used every where as rural culture, urban culture, American culture and so on. However, sociological perspective sees culture as the total of the inherited and innate ideas, attitudes, beliefs, values and knowledge, comprising or forming the shared foundations of social action. Similarly, the anthropological and ethnological perspective view culture as encompassing the total range of activities and ideas of a specific group of people with common and shared traditions, which are conveyed, distributed and highlighted by members of the group (Collins English Dictionary 1991, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2003).

These and in fact so many other definitions of culture indicate the fact that culture is shared among a certain group of individual just as language. Thus, where there is multiculturalism in a nation, such as Nigeria, essentially, there is multi-lingualism; since language and culture cannot exist distinctively; but rather function as
complements to one another. More importantly, language is an integral aspect of the people’s culture.

Eka (2000, p.31) concludes that language determines thought and that our thoughts are shaped by the language which we speak and how we think to a large extent depend on our worldviews (culture). Consequently, this paper is of the opinion that language and culture share a deep rooted relationship that is not just interesting but uniquely beneficial in every human society.

**Communication in multi-cultural Nigeria:**

Igbokwe (2012, p. 155) sees communication as the process of conveying information through the exchange of ideas, feelings, intentions, attitudes, expectations, perceptions or commands by the means of speech, gestures, signs, symbols, writings and all other forms of expressions. It equally involves the encoding and sending of messages, receiving and decoding them, and interpreting the information and meaning contained in them. Communication therefore involves the exchange of ideas and meanings between two interlocutors. The whole essence of which is to achieve ‘meaning’ between the sender or speaker and receiver / listener. To this end, Hybels and Weaver, (1989 p. 93) states that achieving effective communication involves three processes. *These are:*

**Thought development:** a thought, concept, idea, feeling or message triggers the urge for communication in the mind of the sender /speaker.

**Encoding:** Next, a message is sent via words, or through other symbols of expression.

**Decoding:** At the receiving point, the receiver translates or interprets the words /symbols into concepts; depending on what he (the decoder) understands from the message.

Communication could be verbal (oral), written or symbolic (signs/symbols). Generally, it is a process by which meaning is assigned and conveyed in order to achieve shared understanding between the speaker and the audience. Hybels and Weaver (1989, p.93) introduced the three levels upon which the efficacy of a communication exchange thrives:

- The actual intention of the speaker
- The information based on what the speaker is saying
- What the listener thinks the speaker is saying.

Communication is effectively carried out by the use of an agreed upon language sign/symbols (of any form) between the speaker and the audience. Language which is a human social phenomenon is utilized by individuals in different capacities. Language determines our models of the world and the way concepts are represented in the world. It is the pivot of communication in the sense that communication depend upon language to succeed.

Multi-lingualism is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that arises as a result of language contact. It is a situation in which two or more Languages operate within the same context (Eka 2000, p.21). This feature as is obtained in Nigeria predisposes the English language as a commonly accepted language at the National level; the use of which have traversed the cultural boundaries in Nigeria. Contributing to the widely acceptance and use of English language, Brumfit (1995, p.14) states “the English language does no longer belong exclusively to those that speak it as mother tongue or first language; but rather, its ownership now rests with the people that use it; no matter their being multilingual or monolingual”. In the same vein, Baugh (1959, p. 61) describes English as “the mother tongue of nations” being the language of politics, economics, social, cultural and education. This captures the obvious roles which English have been playing in achieving communication within Nigeria and indeed, all over the world.

**English use in Nigeria: Role and Importance**

Nigeria is a typical example of a multi-ethnic Nation with an estimated 160 million people who belong to different cultural groups; and who speak different languages as well (Census, 2006). Akindele & Adegbite (1999, p.70) exert that Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups. There have equally been conflicting figures on the number of indigenous languages on the number of indigenous languages exiting in Nigeria. Bamgbose (1971) puts the figure at 400; alongside other foreign languages, like French and Latin. However, it is noted that majority of these languages are spoken and understood only within the ethnic groups where they exist. This has restricted inter-
ethnic/cultural communication within Nigeria; as well as further places the English language on an exalted position. This implies that before effective communication could be achieved between two people of diverse ethnic group, the English language has to be used. Except in situations where the individuals concerned are bilinguals to both indigenous languages. Even when this is the case, the dexterity with usage often varies and still creates doubt in understanding of certain concepts used. This forms barriers in communication and also results in misconceptions /misinterpretation of ideas during communication; this further restricts inter-cultural circulation of information.

In its role as a unifying language in Nigeria, the English language is adopted in cases of integrating /unifying multi-ethnic groups. According to Osuafor, (2002, p. 16), amidst the compounding complexities of Nigeria, a most dominant and persistent problem has been the language question. Agitations have been witnessed from several sectors on the adoption of an indigenous language for official purposes. The question remains: which ethnic group will produce the chosen language without others not feeling marginalized? The issue of marginalization has been on in several other sectors like political appointment, Federal character in employment, infrastructural development etc. Therefore, the adoption of an indigenous official language from any ethnic group will definitely blow the nation up, in the sense that none of the major ethnic groups (Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba & Fulani) will succumb to the relegation of its own language while adopting another in its place. This may give rise to unhealthy rivalry or even war. Consequently, the adoption and acceptance of English language remains a safer option for Nigeria. English cuts across cultural implications and boundaries; and its use have been of benefit to Nigeria; especially in the area of communication. It has successfully been an instrument in wedging language differences.

The National Education Policy (NPE) formulated in 1977 and revised in 1981, 1998 and 2004 respectively, placed English at a much priced position. Despite the apparent encouragement given to the development and adoption of our indigenous languages as national languages, English plays the role of the language of instruction in our school system. It is also the language that links our various ethnic groups.
Perhaps, Nigeria may not have existed as a nation till date without the English language in use.

Accordingly, what this implies is that for national unity, integration, effective communication and growth, a language acceptable to all in the upfront of the Nation’s affairs should be in existence.

**Communicative Roles of the English language in Nigeria:**

So far, discussions in this paper have focused on establishing the link between language, culture and effective communication in Nigeria. We have equally highlighted the notion that for effective communication to thrive among people of diverse ethnicities, like Nigeria, a common and acceptable language that cut across the entire nation must be in existence and in use at the national level. Furthermore, this paper has also asserted that the English language is a viable tool in the enhancement of effective communication in Nigeria, considering its multi-lingual and multi-ethnic nature.

Many scholars and writers among whom are Bamgbose, Ogu, Afolayan amongst others in linguistics and its related disciplines have contributed immensely to the roles/functions of English in Nigeria. Although we do not intend to repeat what is already known and stated, we shall add our own voice to this by showing the importance of this global language in uniting, promoting and integrating the Nigerian nation by ensuring that individuals communicate effectively despite their various language differences.

Bamgbose 1971 captures the importance of English in Nigeria by declaring that of all the heritages left behind in Nigeria, by the British at the end of colonial administration, probably, none is more important than the English language. It is now the language of government, business and commerce, education, the mass media, literature and much more internal as well as external communications.

This assertion aptly describes the various important roles English language plays right from its adoption as the Nation’s official language. Added to these roles, English is the language that not only brings the entire Nigeria nation together, but also limits tribalism and segregation among Nigerians. English has wedged the war of rivalry and
ethnic sentiments which cannot be avoided at the choice of an indigenous Lingua Franca for Nigeria. Moreover, English is the only language that indexes the spirit of unity/togetherness as well as foster national consciousness in Nigerians.

Afolayan (1987) for instance, succinctly posits:

It is unrealistic for anybody in Nigeria today to think that National Unity can be forged in the country without recourse to the utilization of the English language. It has been the language of the creation of the political entity itself and also the language of its politico-economic unification and administration… furthermore, the fact that it is now functioning as the language of Nigerian Naturalism cannot be denied…

English language plays a vital role in creating awareness and enlightenment of the public on national issues. In this era of insurgency in Nigeria, it is the only language that is in use to bring to focus, the ordeal of the victims. Citizens in Chibok, Borno State for instance are able to tell their story using English. They constantly reach out through text messages, emails, and other social network. This wouldn’t have been possible without their knowledge and use of English. Considering the resistance put up by the North on the dominance of English and its values in the early days of English in Nigeria; the implication of this is that English is now acceptable to all Nigerians as a communicative language.

In politics, the place of English language is prominent. Politics has its own distinct features in Nigeria, considering the structure of government, quota system and cultural dispositions. It is used in our legislative houses, conference etc. moreover, the place of English in ensuring that political activities cut across all the ethnic groups in the nation cannot be over-emphasized. (Osuafor, 2002, p. 15) for a politician to sell across to all, in spite of where he comes from or which ethnic group he belongs, he has to be able to influence and convince the citizens; and to this end, communication via the English language is inevitable. This is because English performs the role of enhancing communication among diverse groups with differences in language and culture. The import of which is that although our indigenous languages are here with us, we cannot help but stick to English use if we intend to communicate with people that neither
belong to the same ethnicity with us but also do not speak the local languages we speak.

This unifying role of English extends to sports as well. Sports has remained an area in Nigeria, where the syndrome of ethnicity, tribalism and religious differences have not surfaced; Nigerians unite in sports and in that spirit of sportsmanship, the tribalistic sentiments often witnessed in other spheres do not surface. English language being the language of sporting activities, facilities this absence of ethnic sentiment and ensures that the nation remains intact in celebration.

Communication being a process of sending, receiving and decoding of information involves two or more individuals in discourse. As a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) English has successfully provided that feature of a common linguistic element that constitutes a requisite for the existence of any nation. It is used for phatic communication; information dissemination, ceremonial purpose, embodiment of thought among the various linguistic groups of Nigeria. According to Bamisaye, (2010), with English, Nigerians share a collective sentiment of belonging together despite individual or group differences.

Still on communication, literatures written in English language sell across the multiple ethnic groups; despite the ethnic group being represented in such literatures. As we know, literary books mirrors our society, tells about what is obtainable in the society it originates from. Through this, diverse cultures are learnt and appreciated by even those that are alien to such cultures. This can only happen with the use of a national language of which in this case English serves in Nigeria.

Finally, English marks the unity and strength of Nigeria as a corporate nation. It has held the unity of Nigeria so far. Most of our national symbols such as the National Anthem, National Pledge, and National flag are all designed in English language. The implication of this is that Nigeria, as a country, cannot achieve much not only in the area of communication but also in its continued insistence of “One Nation” if English is substituted with any of the indigenous languages.
Conclusion

For effective communication to flourish in multilingual Nigeria, the English language should be encouraged and seen as a vital agent of unity and communication. The use of the English language in Nigeria has unified the different ethnic groups and has managed to reduce to its barest minimum in almost all sectors in spite of the diversity in culture.

From the mentioned points and discussion on this paper, it is concluded that the role of English in achieving effective communication among the different multicultural groups in Nigeria, cannot be readily replaced by an indigenous language.

Recommendations

This paper recommends the following:

1. That the English language must, as a matter of exigency, continue to play its communicative roles in Nigeria. This is to ensure the sustenance of peace, growth and unity of Nigeria.

2. Considering the roles which English play in Nigeria, especially in the areas of communication and education, focus and attention should be on how to improve its teaching and learning in our schools. In view of the fact that it is foreign language, a more functional approach to learning it should be adopted.

3. Learning English as a second language (ESL) requires more than just a repetition of rules and formation of grammatical sentences. Efforts should be made to expose learners to the basic rudiments of the language; this is to avoid half bridged learning, as well as enhance competence and performance in the language.

4. Regardless of ethnic groups, all Nigerians of school age should be exposed to qualitative teaching and learning of English. Good language teachers should be posted to the remote villages to avoid over concentration of resources in the...
urban areas. This is to ensure that every Nigerian student achieves communicative competence in English usage.

5. Good and illustrative English language textbooks should be made available to both the teachers and the students by the government. This helps to inculcate the rudiments of good English language in the students. Again, workshops for English language teachers are to be organized frequently to equip and broaden the knowledge of the teachers.

6. This paper equally suggests that our indigenous languages should exist side by side with English. The indigenous languages serve as our mother tongue (MT) or first language (L1) while the English is our national language. Through these languages, our cultures, thought and feelings are extolled. Consequently, the study and promotion of these languages should not be jettisoned at all. Who knows? One may ultimately be adopted as an official language for Nigeria in the near future.

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The Use of Indigenous Language in Folktale: A Way of Reviving Culture and Social Morals in the Nation

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Abstract
In a contemporary society where incessant killings, violence, hatred and ranchor are prevalent, the need to re-brand and re-direct the minds of the citizens becomes a *sine que non*. To redirect the minds of people on acceptable norms and eschewing vices through the use of indigenous language in folktale narration Fishman’s 1991 theory of intergenerational transfer was used. 150 First Year (100L) students from Faculty of Humanities were randomly selected based on their states of origin for this study. The study found out that narration of folktale in indigenous language is of vital importance in transference of culture and morals, and should be inculcated in children right from the outset to correct social ills.

Keywords: Indigenous language, Folktale, Culture and Morals.

Introduction
Nigeria as a nation has between four hundred and five hundred indigenous languages, Bomgboshe (1994). Some of these languages stand in between dialects and languages. A typical example is Efik, Ibibio and Annang in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States respectively. Jowitt (1991) observes that the afore mentioned languages/dialect serve as both language and dialect. With this number of languages in mind, it becomes imperative that these various indigenous languages should be used to educate the indigenes through folktales.

It is unfortunate that the advent of civilization and development of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) have made folktale anachronistic to many. To this effect, Mbunba (2007, p.178) asserts that;
It is natural for one generation to pass on its stock of symbols, images and thoughts to another, but this natural order has been disrupted in Nigeria… their life is still to a large extent oriented towards the study of Western arts and models, to the extent that they are almost like albinos who are neither whites nor blacks.

Folktale is an anonymous story told in a given community for the growth and development of their culture and transference of norms, virtues and values of a given community. The use of folktale can be a re-director of minds in a multi-lingual nation like Nigeria. In the use of folkale, literary heritage is gained and culture is promoted. To this effect Eliot (1964) adds that people who ceases to care for its literary heritage becomes barbaric, ceases to move in thought and sensibility. Through folktale children are inducted into the culture, ethical principles, moral values as well as rules of conduct in turn taking. The word folklore (folktale) has come to mean the “social, materials, and oral tradition” of traditional societies (Crystal 1990, p.454). Onuekwusi (2007, p.2) defines languages as:

A system of arbitrary sounds and symbols to which a people in a geographical area or more specifically in a linguistic area have conventionally assigned meaning mutually understood, learned and shared through which they influence the actions, thoughts and feelings of one another.

In the same vein, moral is concerned with principles of right and wrong behaviour, standards or principles of good behaviour. Culture on the other hand is the customs and beliefs, art, way of life, and social organization of a particular country or group (Hornby 2000, p. 284).

A critical look on these concepts; folktale, culture and morally will discover that the viable medium of transfer is language. They (folktale, culture, moral and language) are oftentimes unconsciously acquired or transferred from one generation to generation. Ohaegbu (1992) sums that up by adding that: “Irrespective of the language involved, there is an indispensable and inseparable relationship existing between man, society and language… as a means of interacting … expressing thoughts and understanding one another”.

In confirmation to this Obinna (2012) writes that the possibility of cultural growth and survival remains debatable for a people whose language is considered “dead”
(while the people are still alive). Folktale sometimes is used as source of leisure, to ease off stress from day-long tiresome economical endeavours. The performer tells the story to entertain, educate, excite and give information to his audience. This is done in his indigenous language to drive home his aim. He uses images around him to illustrate his story. When folktale loses its milieu, it equally loses its original humorous, exciting, educating and entertaining role and leaves its audience to imaginations in their minds. Indigenous language, folktale, culture and morals are interwoven and should not be separated to achieve the set goal. It is the moribund state of morals in the nation that inspired this study.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how use of indigenous language in folktale narration can help to curb the social vices in the nation. It is geared towards encouraging the use of folktale to impact culture and morals in the minds of the youths right from cradle. Looking at the present situation in the country there is the need to amass the citizens to the customs and traditions of each ethnic group and to orientate them through folktale which is common to all people no matter how simple their technology or remote they may be.

**Indigenous Language and Folktale**

Language in its broadest definition is anything that communicates. Anyadike (1995) defines it as something that ensures the survival, development and growth of the culture of the human society. Anyahuru (1996) also defines it as a method of communicating ideas, feelings and desires by means of sounds and sound symbols. Also Merriam (2002) describes it as a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures or marks having understood meanings, by a community.

Every community has a language or dialect of a language for which it is known. Communication in this community is done in this existing language. In pre-literate societies the folks had traditional ways of educating and entertaining themselves especially during the night when they had come back from their daily work such as
hunting, farming, fishing etc. These traditional ways by which the people of a given community entertained and educated themselves metamorphosed to written literature with the advent of literacy.

According to Merriam (2002) literature is writing in prose or verse; especially writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest. It is the last part of this definition- “expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest” that is the focus of this work because right from creation speech existed before writing. Language can be vocalized, sign, music observation or body language and not mainly the written form. In agreement to this, Onuekwusi (2001) groups folktales, myths, legends, riddles, proverbs and libations, incantations and songs of all types as forms of oral literature. In other words oral literature existed before the written form.

Folktale is characteristically anonymous, timeless and placeless tale circulated orally among a people. It is a very old traditional story from a particular place that was originally passed on to people in a spoken form. Folktale came into existence orally and developed among a given people or community. Onuekwusi (2003) affirms this thus: Indeed literature, whether written or oral, is an imaginative and beautiful creation in words which provides enjoyment, entertainment, experience, education, information and excitement to an audience.

Folktale has no known author. Its originality is masked in traditional introd “our elders say or my father said”. It usually has a narrator or performer and for the performer to achieve artistic aesthetics, the audience has to be directly involved; that is he is present, visible, living, and definable and a veritable part of the literary situation. The narrator is highly imaginative. He uses limitless creative imagination as he strives to be an acceptable one man theatre playing the roles of animals, men, spirits and anything through voice modulation and histrionics (Onuekwusi 2013).

The narrator’s audience influences his performance remarkably. To this effect Onuekwusi (2013, p.31) writes:

In respect to age and maturity of his audience, the folktale narrator can increase the complexity of verbal expressions, spicing the narration with proverbs, riddles and other gnomic patterns for adults and retaining for children plain declaration
statement in order to ensure that the core lessons of the narration are not lost.

There is usually a story line and a lesson that will be derived from it which the audience is expected to pay attention to. The mood, desires, age and other characteristics of the audience can influence a performer who is always out to please it.

The Folktale Performer and his Language Use

Wrong choice of words can lead to ambiguity and misinterpretation. In support of this view, Uwadiegwu (2010) writes that communication is of vital importance in our everyday life-socially, morally, culturally, religiously, emotionally etc. Therefore, the narrator tries hard to maintain the story line and the lesson that will be derived from it. In its educational value, it is used to teach children the norms and values of a given community. To the adult, it is used to reprimand a villain or praise a hero. Based on the audience before the performer, he is faced with challenges of how to communicate effectively.

For children audience, the narrator tries to water-down his diction, uses imagery and analogy of immediate environment largely to drive home his narration. He pauses at various intervals to answer interrupting questions from the children all in the bid to help them understand his story and keep awake. To the adult audience, he mixes proverbs, idioms and figurative expressions to drive home his subject matter, (Onuekwusi 2013, p. 35).

The performer tries as much as possible to hold the interest of his audience till the end of his narration. He tries to stress words he wants to lay emphasis on, mimics different characters in his narration to win the admiration of his audience and sometimes may pause abruptly to check whether his audience is still awake or attentive. The performer tries very hard to keep his audience very lively because it is the interest his audience has in him and his narration that sustains the story. He sometimes uses songs or questions to reawaken his audience especially if his audience is children. He raises his tone or lowers it to capture his audience, gesticulates and demonstrates in order to communicate vividly with his audience.
Language, Folktales, Culture and Morals

Fishman’s (1991) theory of intergenerational transfer is used to prove that language, folktale, culture and morals are generationally transferred. In a nation like Nigeria where social values are flouted with impunity (Mbunda 2007, p.182) culture almost going into extinction (especially among the Igbo ethnic group) folktale can be used to revive culture and reward good morals. This can only be achieved where there is generational inter-play between the old and future generation. Njemanze (2007, p.112) adds that “in every culture, children are the vital link for transmission of language and culture from the older to the future generation”.

Language is specie specific and culturally transmitted. Folktale is also culturally bound and is credible in its environment. Language and folktale can be used to teach, communicate, educate, persuade and entertain. Folktale loses its significance when it is translated into different language of origin. For instance, the Igbo performer usually announces the beginning and end of his story with ufere/ifo chapi! While the audience responds họọh!. This opening and closing remarks may not have direct translation.

In Igbo folktale the predominant trickster is Tortoise (Mbe) while in Ghana it is Ananse (spider). If these two animals change milieu in narration definitely the impact will be lost. In Achebe’s (1958) Things Fall Apart, he tells the story of the tortoise and the birds of the air. The impact this story will make on the listener if told in Igbo greatly reduces as the narration is done in English. The meaning of certain nuances, paralinguistic structures that are significant to the Igbo speaking audience will be lost to the English speaking audience. For instance, an Igbo narrator drives home the birds retaliation by saying “nyeghachi m nku m’ (give me back my wing). He says this besieging the imaginary tortoise, plucking wings from him. The indigenous language performer easily creates images because he is familiar with the environment and this helps the audience to understand him faster because they are conversant with the images used in the narration.

In folktale, we have fables, where animals are personified and they perform all manner of human functions and characters as dupes, tricksters, interveners or hinderers. We also have stories involving human and supernatural characters, and
stories involving human, animal and supernatural characters. The performer can only achieve his full function if he drives his images home. It is easier for an Igbo child to understand what a dog (Nkịta) is than a monkey (enwe) which he may not have seen before if the performer wants to describe a fast running animal in his story. The dog also functions as a hinderer or an intervener in animal stories.

**Some Folktales and their Moral Lessons To discourage ill treatment**

In a story like “Nwa enwee nne” (the motherless) and “Nwunye nna ya” (her step mother) the feeling of ill treatment is greatly felt when the story is told in Igbo which is its milieu. *Nwa enwee nne* appeals to her *udara* (African apple) to sprout, grow, fruit, ripe and fall down for her because her step mother bought *udara*, gave her children and never gave her any. After telling the *udara* to sprout, grow and bear fruit, she sings thus;

(Narrator sings with oppressed voice)   (Audience response)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Udara mụ chaan</th>
<th>nda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Udara mụ chaan</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaa chaa chaa</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nwunye nna mọoo</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zụta ụdara n’ahia</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racha racha racha</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racha enyeghị nwa enwe nne</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mkpụrụobi ya ọ jọka</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eluwa bụ olijị</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onye ọchaa ọ laba</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this type of narration, the narrator not only holds the interest of his audience but also arouses the feelings of his listeners who are griped with sorrow and sympathy for *Nwa enwee nne* and hatred for *Nwunye nna ya*. But when this story is translated into English, the story not only loses its melodic tune but also loses the ability to arouse the sympathy of the listener. Oftentimes, the writer has no word equivalent to substitute in his translation. It is only in Igbo environment that the meaning of ‘nda’ is better understood as ‘let it be’. Most Igbo interjections have no English equivalents.
and this makes it difficult for a narrator using a foreign language to narrate an Igbo folktale. In doing this, he can only maintain the story line or theme.

To discourage gallivanting

Again the story of “Ada ama” (gallivanting daughter) can be used to caution female children. *Ada ama* never helped her mother in the kitchen until she was about getting married. The mother deceived her and told her to tell the ingredients to fly into the pot whenever she wants to cook. This she did at her husband’s place when her mother-in-law told her to cook but it did not work. She was sent home. When she came back crying, she told the mother that she did what she asked her to do by telling the ingredients thus;

Ede feba
Nnụ feba
Ụgụ feba
Ose feba
Mmanụ feba
Ihe nịle feba
But none obeyed her. Therefore, the mother-in-law sent her home.

This story will go a long way to teach young girls that gallivanting can make them loose their marriages.

To discourage stealing

The folktale performer can discourage stealing in his audience by narrating the story of tortoise and the sheep. Tortoise successfully stole the sheep’s yam farm severally until the sheep place charm on a smiling gummy doll (Nwabebi) in his farm. When the tortoise wanted to take the rosted yam from the doll his hand and feet gummed to the doll and he started shouting:

Nwabebi haa mụ ọ
Nwabebi asi m gị haa mọ
Nwabebi ndo biko hapụ m
Agaghị m ezu ji gị ọzọ
The tortoise was there until the sheep came and caught him. The sheep took him to their king (Lion) who punished him.

This will make the children to know that stealing is punishable by law.

**To encourage wisdom, co-existence and eschew wickedness**

To pass across the morals above the folktale narrator can tell the story of “Ebulako” the son of Tortoise (mbe). “Agu” (Lion) came to tortoise and requested that one of his children should come and stay with him. The tortoise sent his son Ebulako to Agu as a baby nurse knowing that he may wish to kill his son, Ebulako. Ebulako was the wisest of his sons.

In the night Agu painted Ebulako black and painted his own son white. Ebulako being apprehensive changed the paints. This he did in each of Agu’s attempt to spot him in darkness until Agu killed his only son unknowingly and Ebulako ran away.

This story not only makes children to eschew wickedness but also makes them to live in harmony.

A similar story to this is the story of the squired that hid his mother in the time of famine in the land of animals while other animals killed their mothers for food. This will make the children to act wisely.

**The Moral Lessons**

The first story teaches that ill-treatment especially to orphans is bad.
The second story condemns gallivanting and laziness, and encourages carefulness, humane spirit and being homely.

Story three will not only discourage stealing but will also make the children know that offences are punishable by law and this will serve as a deterrent for future occurrence. Story four encourages peaceful harmonious co-existence (which Nigeria needs most now), love, wisdom, carefulness and eschews wickedness and craftiness which made the lion to kill his only son.
Methodology

This study took a survey of 150 (100L) respondents from Faculty of Humanities, Imo State University, Owerri. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select respondents. The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. Likert modified rating scale was used for the analysis. A total of 200 questionnaires were administered and only 150 returned in usable condition. The results were converted into simple percentage.

That is \[\frac{x}{n} \times 100\]

From the result 50% response and above are accepted as response in support that folktale should be told in indigenous language.

Research Questions

1. To what extent is folktale narration important to the present day Nigeria?
2. Is there any relationship between folktale and culture?
3. Which language is suitable for cultural and moral inculcation in children?

The following results were obtained from the data

**Research question 1**

What is the importance of folktale narration in the nation?

**Table 1: Importance of folktale in the nation.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Folktale is of vital importance in transfer of culture to younger generation</td>
<td>100 (66%)</td>
<td>35 (23%)</td>
<td>15 (10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Folktale is rich in culture and should be revived</td>
<td>75 (50%)</td>
<td>40 (23%)</td>
<td>20 (13%)</td>
<td>15 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Folktale narration is boring because it is mainly characterized by one man performer</td>
<td>20 (13%)</td>
<td>10 (6%)</td>
<td>80 (53%)</td>
<td>40 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Folktale depicts laziness and should go into extinction</td>
<td>23 (15%)</td>
<td>22 (14%)</td>
<td>95 (63%)</td>
<td>10 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Folktale should be revived in school</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Use of Indigenous Language in Folktale: A Way of Reviving Culture and Social Morals in the Nation

Respondents agreed to items 1 and 2, and strongly agreed to items 5, 6 and 7, and disagreed to items 3 and 4. This shows that folktale is important in transference of culture to younger generation and should be revived. Folktale does not encourage laziness and should be revived in the school curriculum. Parents and children also encourage folktale narration.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between folktale and culture?

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indigenous language projects the symbiotic nature of culture and folktale</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(40%)</td>
<td>(53%)</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Folktale inculcates social morals in children</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(63%)</td>
<td>(23%)</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Culture, morals, folktale and language are interwoven and should be maintained</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(6%)</td>
<td>(93%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rural dwellers enjoy folktale more than urban dwellers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8%)</td>
<td>(86%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Children learn more about culture from folktale than television</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0%)</td>
<td>(98%)</td>
<td>(0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Folktale teaches children mischievousness more than culture</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Folktale teaches children to lie because it is full of fables</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2%)</td>
<td>(1%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td>(91%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to relationship between folktale and culture respondents agreed to item 9 that it inculcates culture in children and strongly agreed to items 8, 10, 11 and 12 that folktale, culture, moral and language are interwoven. Rural dwellers enjoy folktales
and children learn more about culture through folktale. This shows that they agree that folktale does not teach children mischievousness and lies more than culture.

Research Question 3

Is indigenous language suitable for cultural and moral inculcation in children?

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Indigenous language is most appropriate for folktale narration</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(25%)</td>
<td>(63%)</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Folktale instills fear in children and should not be told in indigenous language</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>(13%)</td>
<td>(56%)</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Use of indigenous language in folktale narration reminds children of their origin</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(16%)</td>
<td>(80%)</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Indigenous language can be used to correct social vices through folktale narration</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13%)</td>
<td>(86%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Most children prefer listening to folktale when told in indigenous language</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(53%)</td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>To transfer culture and good morals to children folktale should be narrated in indigenous language</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(70%)</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents agreed to items 19 and 20 that children prefer listening to folktale in indigenous language and that culture and good morals are transferred to children when folktale is narrated in indigenous language. They also strongly agreed to items 15, 17 and 18 that indigenous language is most appropriate in folktale narration. This reminds children of their origin and helps to correct social vices. They also debunk the idea that folktale instills fear in children.

Findings

From the data collected and analyzed the researchers found out that folktale is of vital importance to the nation. For instance 66% agreed that folktale is of vital importance in transfer of culture to the younger generation 66% also strongly agreed that folktale should be revived in our school curriculum. To this effect Tiffen (1973:9) adds that; “the child should not through education become divorced from his
background and culture”. It was also observed that folktale and culture are symbiotic in nature. For instance, 93% strongly agreed that culture, morals, folktale and language are interwoven and should be maintained. 98% strongly agreed that children learn more about culture from folktale than television.

The analysis also proved that indigenous language should be used to transfer culture and morals to younger generation through folktale. For instance 80% strongly agreed that use of indigenous language in folktale narration reminds children of their origin. Also 86% strongly agreed that indigenous language can be used to correct social vices through folktale narration. As Adams (1984) says that folktale is used to educate cultural norms, diligence, respect and perseverance. When cultural norms are impacted in children from cradle it yields a better future society.

**Conclusion**

Daniel Kunene regards language as the sine qua non of literary activity and therefore the means through which the writer reveals his/her soul as well as the vehicle through which the depth of the writer’s feeling could be appreciated (Diala 2002, p. 267). The folktale narrator should narrate a folktale as produced in its indigenous milieu before translating it into another language so as to give it its natural background and significance.

While the natives enjoy the tale in its entirety, a foreigner also tries to understand the story through his imagination. This will help in sustaining the culture of a people since language and folktale are culturally bound and transmitted. The foundation or origin of Igbo literature is oral performance that includes the folktale.

Dorson (1972) agrees to this by associating folktale with the culture and practice of any group. Folktale and language can not be disintegrated from their milieu and any attempt to do this brings breach or distortion in meaning. Both only thrive very well in the environment they belong to.

Our folklorist should borrow a leaf from Emmanuel Obike’s ‘Eke Une; Okebalam (1989, p.82) an epic written in Igbo. This has won the admiration of other African writers. He uses Igbo language in this epic to describe vividly *Eke Une* (boa), how dangerous and fierce it is. He finally warns the boa (Eke une) never to step into his
compound. An Igbo indigene will reason the way obike did because boa is not a creature to befriend.

Mbunda (2007, p. 182) sums up this work thus:

In an age like ours and in a society like Nigeria where social values are flouted with impunity and anything of Nigerian origin is looked down on even by Nigerians the only way to foster social propriety and national pride is through a revival of, and a tapping from our oral tradition.

The Nigerian orature expresses social values, values that determine what is accepted and what is not accepted; what are proper social norms and what constitute deviance from these norms (Mbunda 2007, p.182). If Nigerian youths have been nurtured from cradle on social norms and vices, the incessant killings in the country will be at the barest minimum. As Ijeomah (1973, p.62) succinctly concludes “language is the vehicle through which culture does its welding work. How a language is used determines the fate of the society since one misplaced sentence in a process of decision making can shatter the image of a society and in fact of a nation”.

**Recommendations**

This paper makes the following recommendations:

1. The oral literature scholars should write folktales in their indigenous language so as to maintain their originality and reduce the amoral condition in the nation and beyond.

2. The folklorist should do a comparative work on Nigeria from 1900 to 2000 to measure the level of moral moribund in the country. Such a comparative work will help the nation to know how far we have lost our culture and social morals to amoral life and indiscriminate shedding of blood.
The Use of Indigenous Language in Folktale: A Way of Reviving Culture and Social Morals in the Nation

References


Re-defining Culture and the Ecology of Barrenness in Gloria Ernest-Samuel’s

...Ihuoma My Dear

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Abstract

One of the major interests of literary writing is the recreation of human society. However, the manner of the recreation often varies. While some may recreate to entertain or cause amusement, others may beam critical lights on the society, to the extent that, such works expose and sometimes offer paths to alternative modes of human existence. ...Ihuoma My Dear as a novel belongs to the latter group. It exposes culture and gender conflict and how they negatively affect the feminine in the African society. This study examines the novel from the perspective of how the writer has recreated and redefined culture and the ecology of barrenness. The word ecology has been adopted in this study from the ambience of ecocriticism. Relying on ecofeminism as an aspect of social ecological discourse, the study re-examines the concept of barrenness, and analogously examines the devastation of the woman by the man, and the devastation of nature by human being. Using text linguistic analysis as its theoretical framework, the study explores the writer’s use of linguistic resources available to her in the re-definition of African and European cultural perceptions of barrenness. Thus, the novel has been examined as a text, and the linguistic elements have been examined and described as the tools that have been manipulated to propagate the writer’s messages.

Key words: Re-defining, Culture, Ecology, Barrenness, Linguistic Reading.

Introduction

This paper is a critical appraisal of the novel ...Ihuoma My Dear by Gloria Ernest. Modeled along the epistolary genre of literary writing, the novel is a reply to another epistolary writing entitled Dear Kelechi by the same author. When examined along this perspective, the novel could be read as a personal response of a writer, supposedly Kelechi, to the issues raised by her receiver, Ihuoma, in her own letter. The writer and
the receiver are age-long friends. They were together in school, dreamed along similar visions for themselves and their society, as well as for their future acquaintances. But reality seems far from their dreams. Both of them have been caught in the same net of a chauvinistic society. According to Chukwu and Aigbologa (2010, p.17), the novel *Dear Kelechi* “recalls the dreams so formed, vis-à-vis the realities after marriage…As school children, they had detested pre-marital pregnancy, gender ego, lack of trust, broken marriages, and had in fact looked forward to a marriage which will be the envy of everyone.”

In the novel *Ihuoma My Dear*, the major incidents revolve around four major characters: Kelechi and her husband Tony, Ihuoma as Kelechi’s friend and Andrea as Tony’s colleague in the office who also later becomes his second wife. Kelechi, Tony and Ihuoma are Africans, while Andrea is from one of the European nations.

Kelechi and her husband had a happy home in Nigeria until providence from Tony’s job took them to Kenya where they met Andrea. Tony and Andrea were working for the United Nations in Africa. Kelechi had innocently accepted Andrea not only as a harmless colleague to her husband, but also as a lonely foreigner who needed company. But Kelechi’s hospitality and magnanimity turned sour when Tony entered into a relationship with Andrea, a relationship that cost them their marriage. So as a reply to the letter in *Dear Kelechi*, *Ihuoma My Dear* recounts Kelechi’s devastating experiences in Kenya, both as an individual and as an African woman.

The novel *Ihuoma My Dear*, therefore, raises many fundamental questions about the society, interrogating the rationale behind some issues that affect gender coexistence, cultural tenets, and relationship between and among nations. More specifically, from the ambience of natural order and man-made impositions on social coexistence, the novel subjects nature and human activities to examination and offers re-definitions to pertinent matters. Thus operating from the polarity of fertility, fecundity and other forms of richly endowments on the one hand, and barrenness, aridity and disappointment on the other, the author manipulates the language of the novel to propose the need for a re-examination of culture, belief systems and general human co-existence. In all these, there is the call for literacy and proper education especially on the part of the women and the developing nations. The objective of this
study is therefore, to examine how the writer has harnessed linguistic resources and techniques in the expression of these literary messages

**Explication of concepts**

**Ecology:** The word ecology is one of the concepts that have continued to broaden in scope in terms of use and application. Though originally used within the context of environmental and biological studies, currently, it receives various definitions from various disciplines and applications. To Uwadiegwu & Nkwa, it is “the branch of biology that deals with the total complex interrelationships or interactions between or among the different living organisms and the environment in which they live”(2012, p.49). They also go further to define environment as “the circumstances, objects or conditions by which one is surrounded”(2012, p.53).

The concept of ecology presupposes that organisms, human and non-human that co-exist in an environment interact. However the form and manner of the interaction constitutes subjects of discussions in various fields of study. In eco-literary discourses for instance, the idea often projected is that human being and the environment interact in a manner that suggests disequilibrum. Eco-literature therefore is that which centres on man’s relationship with his/her environment, where most often, the environment receives a voice from such writing to criticise its age-long domination by the human. The voice is usually that of complaint, protest, and call for justice. Thus, writings classed as eco-literature centre on ecological justice, as a departure, no matter how slight, from the romantic tradition.

Although, several scholars have been credited to have used the term ecocriticism, the American scholar, Cherryl Glotfelty receives greater credit as the major proponent of this brand of literary discourse, in her seminal work entitled *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. However, scholars have so far continued to expand the scope of eco-critical study, so much so that today, it is no longer limited to literature about environment in terms of the flora and fauna, the aquatic and the terrestrial. In current discourses, such are designated to only the deep ecology aspect of study. There is also the view that man’s existence constitutes in his or her other aspects of environment, which include the social, political, economic and cultural.
These are all parts of his or her living environment, and they constitute what has been branded social ecology. Thus, both the deep ecology and the social ecology currently constitute aspects of eco-critical discourse.

The thrust of this study is on social ecology. It relies on the assumption that domination is not limited to man over nature through degradation, pollution and other forms of anti-environment participations. Domination of the undeveloped nations by the developed nations, gender domination, imposition of culture, all constitute aspects of social ecology, with their implications on the existence of man. All are forms of departure from the natural order of existence. Thus, eco-feminism which bothers about the impact of gender domination forms part of the major focus in this study.

The word eco-feminism is a complex word derived from ecology and feminism. Thus, eco- in the word is used as a prefix clipped from ecology. In the opinion of an online article by Val, available @ www.ecofem.org, eco-feminism draws a link between the oppression and subjugation of nature with the experiences of the woman in a patriarchal society. It identifies three levels of domination: human over nature (environmentalism), class and race exploitation (capitalism), man over woman (sexism).

The view of eco-feminists is that patriarchal thinking divides the order of the world into opposing pairs and forms the foundation of patriarchal dualism of sexism and imperialist ideologies for instance. According to Val, “dualistic thinking construes and constructs thinking of differentiation, logic of colonization in terms of power versus inferiority and alienation” (www.ecofem.org). The interest of eco-feminists is therefore to assert that eco-discourse of degradation and devastation should not be limited to man and environment relationship but be expanded to other spheres of life. To him,

Gender, class, race and nature all must be theorized together if we are to finally move beyond these oppressions... By being aware of how oppressions focus on embodiment, we can also theorize other related oppressions such as those against the aged, the disabled and against alternative sexualities. The potential then for ecofeminism to be a radically inclusive liberation theory are considerable. (www.ecofem.org.)
Notably, eco-feminism does not vent attack on men. Rather, it is patriarchy as a way of thinking that is under attack. Thus, eco-feminism could serve as a common ground for both sexes to interrogate oppression by one of the pairs over another: man over woman and vice versa, developed over the underdeveloped and the undeveloped nations. It is from this perspective that this paper takes its survey of the novel under study.

Therefore, the re-definition of culture and perception of barrenness in the novel are viewed from a more holistic dimension as it transcends biological deficiency which is tied around the waist of the woman. Barrenness is discussed in the novel as part of the ecology of erosion with the attendant consequences of aridity, emptiness in psychology, feeling, emotion, physical strength, self esteem and identity.

This paper as a linguistic study is interested in examining how language has been used in the communication of this re-definition. The paper views the writer of the novel as a teacher, a social reformer who is set to educate the reader.

**Barrenness:** This is a noun derived from the adjective barren. *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (5th ed.) talks about barren as “land or soil that is barren has no plants growing on it. Old fashioned, unable to produce children or baby, animals used of a woman and fertile person as the opposite”. Finally, the dictionary expands its description as “used to describe education or period of time during which you do not achieve anything or get any useful results. From the dictionary explanations, no mention is made of a male being barren, either as animal or human being. Rather, its semantic field is limited to the female. Even where it expands the definition, a period or time becomes barren because it produced nothing. It is the period that is barren, not the individual. All these are in an attempt to exempt the male.

No doubt, the definitions are protective of the male, and allow them to determine who and what is barren. But to the novel under study, both sexes can be barren. Moreso, culture, race and perception could also be barren. And to what extent the language of the novel does this expansion forms the thrust of the paper.

**Culture:** Like many other concepts, culture has received various definitions. For the purposes of this study, it is taken as a way of life of a group of people, their
behaviours, beliefs, values that they accept generally. Scholars agree that culture is usually passed from generation to generation through different forms of communication as well as imitation. The purpose of this study is to examine aspects of the culture of barrenness discussed in the novel under study.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is the text-linguistic analysis. The major notion of text-linguistics is that every text, written or spoken is a communication system. “The text is a unit of language that has been used in a specific context by a text producer with the purpose of communicating a message through the use of the linguistic signs existing within the language’s semiotic universe” (Adejare, 1992, p.6). The idea is that since a writer writes for the reader to read, what constitutes in the text is the message of the writer for the reader, because no writer writes without intention.

In text linguistic analysis, language is the vehicle that conveys the message from the writer to the reader. Thus, the interest of the analyst of a text is to examine how this has been done, bearing in mind that different linguistic techniques are open to the language user to select from. It is the interest of this study to examine what messages of barrenness exist in the novel, what, and how are language techniques manipulated to communicate this message.

Linguistic Text Analysis of the Novel: The analyses in this study have been segmented into the following: nature and human interaction, barrenness in man, and racial barrenness. The segmentation is purposely for the sake of orderly presentation of ideas. Again, the analyses recognise the epistolary form of the novel hence the use of the letter and the novel simultaneously. The analyses also make use of the term the addresser in a similar context to refer to the character, Kelechi, who supposedly has written the letter to her friend Ihuoma.

Nature and Human Interaction: There is no doubt that reading the novel presents the reader with various literary messages. One of the messages is the interaction between human being and nature. The language of the poem presents a juxtaposition of these two in a manner that implicates judgment against the human. In the
interactions, nature is presented as complete, and human being is presented as a source of inadequacies. By implication, it is human activities that have barrened the society. The activities of human beings have continued to push the society to irrationality even where nature had placed order and rationality. Let us examine some excerpts from the novel for a clearer and contextual understanding of the argument.

The subject matter of the novel is the story of a couple, Kelechi and Tony, with their children, who left their country Nigeria for Kenya on a diplomatic duty. Before this trip, the family experienced love and mutual trust. Each member was ready to make sacrifices for the other’s comfort. There was cohesion as nature made it. This situation is what the addressee presents in page 2 of the letter as:

Ihuoma, you know how much I loved Tony. I thought where there was much love, there would be much to love. So, every action I took in life revolved around making him happy so that he could love me as much. Tony was the reason the sun set for me. His smiling face warmed my soul and was enough to shower rays of joy and happiness.”(my italics)

In this excerpt, the messages of the expressions in italics could be properly comprehended by comparing the verbs was and would be. While the first suggests emphatic presence, the latter suggests expectation. Thus, at the onset, nature built love in both parties: “I loved Tony.” “His smiling face warmed my soul...” These statements suggest acts of giving and reciprocation. Therefore, the disappointments encountered in the course of the story should be blamed on human deficiencies, as nature had ab initio played its role by giving both parties what it takes to experience joy, harmony and peace.

Similarly, consider this excerpt where the addressee expresses regret over not utilizing the gift of nature:

“Before Tony got that fateful appointment that took us to Kenya, I had a premonition: my sixth sense warned me. I had dreadful nightmares that forewarned me about our marriage, but I was blind because I wanted him to be happy”(p13, my italics).

The words in italics are read in paradigmatic relationship as gifts of nature. Notice that in them, nature played its role, but the addressee failed in hers; “I was blind because I wanted him to be happy”. Notice that the state of blindness here is not
natural or biological. Therefore, the qualifying clause which offered the reason for the action, exonerates nature from blame. The addresser could not utilize the psychological power which nature has offered her.

Again, in the addresser’s description of the physical environments, she carefully selects her language in a manner that exempts nature from the woes of the environment. Examine this excerpt that describes the environment of Kenya: “endowed with natural tourist sites like Mount Kenya, the Kilimanjero, the Tana River and part of Lake Victoria, the beauty of Kenya was enough to ease any ugly fear that could lurk in the mind of an apprehensive wife”. (p13)

Nature provided such beauty for the comfort of man, but the opportunity is abused. As the addresser further writes in the novel, “when we arrived Nairobi newly, it was common for us to drive through the city of Mombassa, where we stayed and overlooked the beautiful Indian Ocean. When Andrea joined my husband’s office, trusting my husband, I let him invite her to our numerous cruises. That was a grievous mistake, and I have worn a mask ever since. The mask was deception that robbed me of peace of mind, and caused me a lot of sorrow” (p14)

Two periods could be deduced from this excerpt: “when we arrived newly”; “when Andrea joined my husband’s office”. The two periods are contrasted by their characteristics buried in the lexical choices of the writer:

(a) When they arrived newly, they drove through the city, they stayed and overlooked beautiful Indian Ocean.

(b) When Andrea joined them, it was a grievous mistake, they were robbed of peace of mind, a lot of sorrow came.

The lexical choices convey the contrast that characterize the two periods. The first was the period of encountering nature, and the second was the period of encountering human being. The consequences are not the same. Nature offered freedom to drive freely, to see the beautiful things clearly. The coming of a human being corrupted and polluted the freedom and beauty with mistake, masked the vision, robbed them of peace and replaced all with sorrow.
Also, this contrast could be witnessed in the description of the psychiatric hospital where the addresser was bundled to by her husband, on the pretext that she had become insane. In the descriptions, two environments existed in one. Consider the following excerpts:
“\text{I savoured the beautiful compound, well trimmed flower gardens, neat walkways and immaculate painted kerbs...I walked into the gardens and breathed in some fragrance of the flowers. Having seen all that, I consoled myself that possibly I was not actually as insane as I thought}” (p57-58)
Then there is another aspect of the same environment that bear man-made encumbrances, opposite of the beauty, peace, order and fragrance offered by nature:
“I heard faint humming sounds, unsteady and unreasonable laughter once in a while. The section was built with bars. The entrance door to the wings was metal, but for a two-inch by one-inch glass affixed to the middle of the metal. I peered through the thick glass to have a look at the large cubicles where the inmates were kept. I saw them, some were so mad it was obviously written on their eyeballs”, (p60).
It may be rewarding to also pair the lexical items in the two descriptions in order to understand the import of the contrast.

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Environment A} & \textbf{Environment B} \\
\hline
Savoured & faint humming sounds \\
Beautiful & unsteady and unreasonable laughters \\
well trimmed flower gardens & bars \\
neat walkways & metal \\
immaculate painted & thick glass \\
breathed & peered \\
fragrance & mad \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

A study of the two environments no doubt, suggests human inflicted inhibition and disorder in an ordered world. The writer uses such lexical selections to pass judgment on the human specie as responsible for human predicaments. Notice the last statement about the first environment in the excerpt from pp.57-8: “I consoled myself that possibly I was not insane as I thought”. This statement implies a difference between thought and reality. Reality is that she is not insane. Nothing has happened to
her natural gift. At least, she could still differentiate between reasonable and unreasonable laughter. But she exists in an unnatural environment, corrupted, polluted, full of inhibitions hence the deceptive thought that she is insane. The insanity is human inflicted, and has nothing to do with her natural state. Thus, there could be two types of insanity, imagined insanity and real insanity.

From the context of the novel, the first comes from the imagination of the society. Here, it is the society that is insane, where one refuses to conform to the expectations of the deviant values of an insane society. The second affects the psyche and biological functions of the victim. No doubt also, that the first is capable of pushing one from the first stage to the second and this is what the message of the novel advises against.

In the novel, the addresser is a victim of the first form of insanity. It is the society that has gone insane in its cultural values and perceptions about issues. It is this aspect of insanity that the addresser wants to cure the society of through her re-definitions of barrenness. As a teacher and crusader, the addresser offers fresh insights about certain assumptions in the society about barrenness, which need to be corrected. Let us examine some excerpts from the novel.

In page 10 of the novel, the addresser writes:
“a woman cannot be barren without barrenness being written on her body. You see barrenness in her dry body physiology, dry humour, dry attitude to life. That’s not you Ihuoma”.

In page 11, the addresser also writes:
“I admire your decision to address yourself as a childless woman, not a barren woman, for truly you are not barren”

These excerpts are targeted at re-defining perceptions about barrenness. They draw a marked contrast between it and childlessness which the society takes as its closest synonym. The contrast requires biological and psychological considerations. Consider the following as implicated in the excerpts:
Barren

childless

cold production

dry body

dry physiology

dry humour

lack of good attitude to life

Notice the use of “dry” as a qualifier in the first excerpt: dry body, dry humour, dry attitude. Dryness thus characterises barrenness and not childlessness. Childlessness does not mean dryness, but barrenness does. Childlessness is a specific explanation for lack in specific expectation. One is barren where one is dry and has nothing to offer, biologically, physically and psychologically. Notice that childless is a compound that its morphological structure contains it meaning

child  root

-less  negating morpheme

Therefore, the opinion of the addresser is that barrenness is a superordinate choice that presupposes total lack. As the dictionary specified in our definition of concepts, it has nothing to offer. A woman that is childless may be productive elsewhere and should be appreciated for that. To the addresser, barrenness has no gender limitation nor is it specie specific. It is a state of aridity that cuts across race, colour, gender and so on.

Barrenness in Man: Several passages in the letter implicate that the writer is of the opinion that a man (male specie) could be barren, contrary to the opinion of the society that ties barrenness to the waist of the woman. Let us examine some excerpts from the novel to illustrate this.

In the letter, the addresser writes about her encounter with Tony at the early stage of their relationship. The addresser operating against the background of what the society had taught her about man being strong both physically and emotionally expresses this: “I’m disappointed that you could stoop so low as to propose to me after a few days, just because you want to get in-between my laps” (p.15). Note that the
choice of the phrase “stoop so low” expects some form of logical reading. First, it creates a discourse tenor of high and low positions. Stooping so low therefore implicates abuse of position or class. It implicates doing the conventionally unexpected that produces an unexpected result that is usually disappointing. Notice also that in the excerpt, there is a clause that contains the ludicrous reason for this disappointing outing: “just because you want to get in-between my laps”. This suggests lack of pride and integrity on the part of the addressee, thus a form of barrenness.

Again in letter, the addresser describes a bizarre scene she once witnessed. It was supposed to be one of the illicit sexes that her husband had with Andrea. Examine this excerpt.

“I heard faint grunts and moans stifled by the sound of a nearby television. Just a few steps into the sitting room, I stopped abruptly at a sight of the nude occupants. Before me on the rich Persian rug lay two huge mammals of different colours. One was white, the other black. The white one was a woman, the black a man. The man had his eyes, arms and legs bound with black tape as if under severe punishment and pain, while the woman was the one inflicting the pain on him with a belt and on top. The difference was that both were actually enjoying the exercise, the moaning and the groaning were too pleasurable to be pains. The man was my husband and the woman Andrea: two people from different backgrounds, who claimed they were working for the good of African nations at war. I was shocked” (p.18-19).

The writer has consciously chosen both lexical elements and narrative style in this scenic description. The presentation is pictorial and imagistic. Consider the following choices of lexical items and their impact in the mind of the reader: faint grunts, moans, stifled, nude occupants, two huge mammals of different colours, arms and legs bound with black tape, pain. They are both expressive and emotive, as they create images of horror, hence justify the shock experienced by the addresser. Also, the mode of narration exemplifies the shock as it intentionally creates anxiety. Notice that the narration consciously avoided mentioning who the actors are until about the end of the narration. Thus, the use of huge mammals, one white one black, the white one was a woman and the black a man, in place of my husband and Andrea is intentionally to
arouse the curiosity of the reader to this deviant actions. Thus, the narrative mode is read as a technique that foregrounds the deviant behaviour. The actions of the scene are deviant in many ways, and suggest aridity, weakness and barrenness in the man who is supposed to be in control of the actions.

**Cultural and Racial Barrenness**

There are also indications in the letter that barrenness transcends gender and specie to include culture and race. Let us examine some excerpts from the letter to illustrate this assertion.

In pages 14-15, the addresser draws a comparison between Andrea and herself. The comparison involves a redefinition of beauty.

“Ihuoma, white or not, your Kelechi is more beautiful than Andrea, I mean internally and externally more beautiful”.

The use of “internally” and “externally” presupposes two types of beauty. This puzzle could be resolved by referring to physiological and psychological barrenness earlier identified in this study. It is therefore weakness the in Tony that pushes him to substitute Kelechi that possesses both the internal beauty (emotion, love, care) and the external beauty (physiological beauty) with Andrea who possesses only the physiological. Beauty does not reside in colour. It is dangerous to be physiologically beautiful and emotionally empty like Andrea. Note that it was lack of emotion that pushed Andrea to divorce three times. Thus her relationship with Tony is predicated on sexual satisfaction only. Any culture that permits this is barren hence, Andrea’s culture is barren. As the addresser puts it, “I bet, Tony’s relationship with Andrea exposed him to what I choose to call ‘western bedmatics’ which I lacked. Having been married to three different men, need I ask where Andrea got her endowment” (p.16).

In page 17, the addresser also writes: “Ihuoma, the traditional norms and values of our people are for women to be virtuous and reserved, but when we lose our men to our western counterparts over an issue of copulation, then, there is grave danger for us, for our norms and values”.

The above excerpts suggest culture pollution, erosion and aridity. The choice of language contains significant contradictions between natural love and sex. The
addresser presents the contrast between love and sex more vividly in page 17 thus: “if sex has the power to tear apart a relationship that produced children, if it has enough muscles to dissolve love, if it has the fibre to wipe a bond, then it is strong indeed”. Notice that in this excerpt, love builds, binds, and produces. But sex tears apart, dissolves, wipes, and is unproductive. While love is natural and emotional, sex is physical hence its humanization as having the power to tear apart, enough muscles to dissolve, fibre to wipe.

In all therefore, the addresser presents what sounds like her thesis statements in pages 89 and 93. In page 89, she writes that, “in Nigeria where I come from, husbands and wives copulate like human beings, and not like masters and their slaves, or monsters and beasts. Women submit to their husbands and not torture them in bed. Bed torture is a pervert culture with its origin somewhere outside of the African continent”. In page 93, she also writes, “dear friend, I will not assimilate any nonsense in any disguise. I equally refuse to accept certain levels of humiliation, corruption and pollution. Every nation with real pride must be able to spell out the extent of its culture it wants to change and preserve”.

These are declarative and literal statements, and not in any way figurative. The addresser having discussed certain cultural practices she deems deviant and pervasive calls for courage. Consider the following assertive expressions: “I will not...” “I equally refuse...” “Every nation must be able...” These are statements that contain strong commitments which the addresser intends to pass to the society, especially the young generation, as she writes in page 17, “I will be wise enough to educate my poor daughters on its importance”.

**Conclusion**

From the discussion so far, it is evident that the major thrust of the novel under discussion revolves around redefinition of culture and rehabilitation of battered psychology. This study has examined how the choice of language has helped the writer to communicate these as messages to the reader. Thus, the study has viewed the writer as one involved in literacy development, with the set goal of educating the
society, particularly the younger generation to be wary of culture pollution and its attendant barrenness.

References


The Relevance of the Environment to Ceramic Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

By

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Abstract
The environment is man’s habitant and his greatest asset. This explains why he has been on an unending quest to modify it. Right from the pre-historic era, man has depended entirely on his surroundings for subsistence. As time moved by, he did what he could to increase his consciousness about his ambient because, he found out that he could do nothing without it. His environment became indispensable to him like his own blood. Therefore, the ceramic entrepreneur like any other man is dependent on his/her surroundings (environment) for economic and other activities. The environment provides him/her with an array of minerals that play prominent roles in the national economy and the people’s general well-being. Prominent amongst the minerals is clay which is put to a variety of uses by ceramic entrepreneurs for sustainable development and self-reliance. This paper highlights the importance of clay to ceramic entrepreneurs in Nigeria. It examines the positive innovations and transformation of clay in producing ceramic wares and glazes. The paper concluded by stating that a Nigeria ceramic entrepreneur depends solely on the readily and cheaply available environmental raw materials (clay) for its production. Finally, it recommended that ceramic unemployed graduates should be empowered by the government to set up their own businesses and become employers of labour for sustainable developments of the Nigerian economy.

Key words: Ceramics, Entrepreneurship, Clay and Environment.

Introduction
The potentialities of the human mind do not develop isolated from a fertile environment, but in interaction with it. Ekwueme, (2014, p. 60) the kind of opportunities the environment provides shape the form of consciousness and the kind of intelligence human beings can employ in dealing with the world. Visual literacy is
developed and fostered by environmental factors. Certain opportunities, certain cultural tools, certain qualities in an environment make possible the individual’s ability to think within and through such forms. The products of the environment in which man finds himself promote his/her inmate sensibility to creativity. The environment harbours a lot of natural resources amongst them is clay in which the ceramist full of potentials harnesses and channel properly to the production of ceramic wares. Agreeing with the above, Talabi (1985, p. 35) sees ceramic art as a process and a product”. As a product, it signifies doing, making and putting materials together and as such is accomplished by human skills. When such action is accomplished, it is visible and becomes end result which is the product. Through ceramic art, the ceramic artist brings to play his imagination and experiences with his environment.

The thrust of this paper is to show that by thinking creatively and constructively, mere clay which is abundant in the environment can be excavated from the soil, processed, harnessed manipulated and developed by ceramic entrepreneurs to form a virile society. The study also highlights that ceramic uses clay which is abundant in the environment to boast the economy and the overall development of Nigeria by producing wares for utilitarian, aesthetic, religious, political, cultural, technological, economical, historical and records purposes. It is the goal of this paper to examine how a ceramic art graduate can articulate him/herself to create vocations by becoming ceramic entrepreneurs using different methods of clay production to raise themselves and their society out of poverty to a condition of relative material affluence and at the same time raise the standard of living of their community.

As a result of the above mentioned, the writer discussed the qualities of clay. The processes involve in sourcing, excavating, processing, harnessing and manipulation of clay before it can be used for ceramic production. Various methods of clay production for different functions in the society were enumerated and discussed. The author explained that the various processes involved in processing and production of clay enables ceramic young graduates to find vocation for themselves and become entrepreneurs who can raise the standard of living of their society. Finally, the author discussed briefly, the concept of environment, entrepreneurship, art, ceramic art and clay.
The Relevance of the Environment to Ceramic Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

Theoretical Studies

Generally, Environment refers to our surroundings especially materials and spiritual influences which affect the growth, development and existence of beings. Nwanna, (2014, p. 3). Nwanna, (2014, p. 4) further said that the word environment means the totality of the air, water, land, forest and wildlife of a people. It will be revealed that the United Nation’s Conference, on environment and human development (1972) held in Stockholm opined that man is both creature and molders of his environment which gives him physical sustenance and affords him the opportunity for intellectual, moral, social and spiritual growth.

Entrepreneurship

On the other hand, Hasty and Readon (2007, p. 6) understand entrepreneurship to mean the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. The wealth in this regard is created by individuals who assume the major risks in terms of equity, time and in career commitment or provide value for some products or services.

Entrepreneurship therefore is the process of identifying, developing, and bringing a vision to life. Here, the vision may be an innovation, idea, product, service, concept, an opportunity or a better way of doing something. One who carries out all the above is an entrepreneur. He/she introduces new ideas, new products, new techniques, opens up new markets, etc. She also perceives business opportunities and takes advantages of the scarce, resources to use them. He bears the non-insurable risk alone in the enterprise and directs the human and material resources towards the business objectives.

Visual Arts

Visual arts according to Ikwuegbu (2012, p.10) are those expressions from the artist which can be perceived through human optical activities; such as touch, emotion, senses and others which tend to effect aesthetic judgement. Visual arts exhibit the creative ingenuity of an artist or group which is open to man’s perception of aesthetic judgement, appreciation, utility, awareness and preservation. Visual arts
involves artistic expressions of one’s self with tangible materials to create work of art which is the construction of the mind with space/time aided by creativity, imagination and innovation processes.

**Ceramics:** Another name for ceramics is ‘Keramics ‘. The word comes from the Greek word which means “Potters Clay” and the wares made from it. It also comprises all products from non-metalic, inorganic earth materials using silicates or other oxides (New Age Encyclopedia 1981). Ceramics is the art and science of making objects from inorganic, non-metalic materials by the action of heat. Dictionary of contemporary English (2000) notes that ceramic is the art of making pots, bowls, electric insulators, tiles etc. by shaping pieces of clay and baking them until they are hard. Rhodes defined ceramics as the art of making permanent objects of usefulness and beauty by the heat treatment of earthy materials. A specialist in the above area is called a ceramist, but if he concentrates in the making of pottery wares, he is called a potter. To examine the role of the environment to ceramic entrepreneurship in Nigeria is the goal to which this paper is set.

**Clay:** Scientifically clay is made up of other materials like alumina, oxides, silica and chemically combined water. The chemical formula for clay Al$_2$O$_3$.2SiO$_2$.2H$_2$O. Clay is found on earth’s surface and is used as a means of expression and creativity. With clay, ceramic entrepreneurs express themselves in either two or three dimensions.

**Review of Related Literature**

Clay appeared on earth long before human beings. It was therefore inevitable that humans would eventually begin to examine and to apply their imagination to the abundant amorphous material Green (1960, p.125).

The relevance of clay to ceramic entrepreneurs in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized because it has been playing important role in man’s life since his existence. Due to the plastic nature of clay, it can be easily modelled into any shape and then fired to permanency. It continued to be used as both a form of expression and a practical convenience Abbas (2012, p. 43).
In many instances, the only remaining evidence of by gone civilization is fired clay objects revealed in archaeological digs. These broken pieces of clay provide the barest hints of the growth and decline of many nations.

During the Neolithic Age, clay is an important aspect of human life. It has been playing important roles to man since his existence. It is obvious that without clay, man’s existence on earth would have been very unpleasant. Without clay, there would not have been pottery/ceramics hence, some cultures and people might have passed away unremembered Rhode (1972, p.18). Therefore, ceramic objects serve as the link between the past and the present.

Ten or twelve thousand years ago, the growth of agrarian civilization produced an ever increasing demand for storage containers and cooking utensils, which were often carved stone, vessels, and woven hemp baskets. Unfortunately, carved stones were laborious to make and the hump baskets had a short life span. To make baskets more durable and waterproof, people lined them with mud, but eventually, these baskets rotted and new ones had to be made. At some point, a useless basket was probably cast on an open fire and later, in the smoldering ashes, small hard pieces of clay were fond. This became the way pots were first made - by pressing clay into baskets which were then burned away Charlotte & Toki (1995, p.7).

This discovery by coincidence that clay will become hard and durable when fired ranks as one of man’s most important early finds. The domestic life of primitive man was immeasurable enriched by the possession of fired clay vessels for storing grain, carrying water, cooking, washing, holding food and for ceremonial and purely aesthetic to which clay objects were put. Hence, any ancient civilization can be gauged by the quantity and the quality of the pottery which it produced Charlotte & Toki (1995, p.8).

The Relevance of Clay to Ceramic Entrepreneurs

As earlier mentioned, clay is put to a variety of uses by ceramic entrepreneurs to enmass wealth to the Nigerian nation and for the overall development of the country. The relevance of clay to ceramic entrepreneurs are summed up in its social, utilitarian,
aesthetic, religious, political, medical, cultural, technological, economical, historical, moral and records keeping purposes. It will be pertinent to discuss them one on one.

Clay is used by ceramic entrepreneurs to produce articles such as Mugs, dishes, jugs, tea pots, flower pots, table wares, and tea pots which serve utilitarian functions in Nigerian. Such utilitarian wares are: flower vases, wall tiles and floor tiles. Others are, wash hand basin, lamp holders and a host of others.

教育上, Hurwitze (1972, p. 11) 相信粘土暴露了孩子对材料和工具的使用。他指出, 孩子们喜欢玩粘土, 这种材料是可塑的。同意他的说法, Konkwo (2013, p. 50) 指出, 与粘土工作有助于儿童了解其形体长度、宽度和深度。Ikwuegbu (2012, p. 11) 认为，与粘土互动可以提高孩子的认知和知能能力，并专注于大脑的生理学，特别是在大脑皮层发生高级认知过程。他进一步指出，与粘土工作使孩子们能够发挥创造力、想象力和创新性。Ikwuegbu (2012, p. 11) 也认为，当孩子们在良好的学习环境中发现自己时，他们可以探索他们的创意思维与粘土，这种儿童可以为自己思考，特别是当他们在一起时，他们可以互相学习。Wangboje (1990, p. 32) 认为，在粘土上学习使学生发展他们的技能、潜能、能力和才能，目的是成为好公民，能够为国家的发展做出贡献。

Ceramic wares made from clay is the most profound means by which age after age, man records his past experiences in the art galleries and museums. Clay has effectively served as canvas which ceramists use to record historical events, express ideas and observe their environments and societies.

The Egyptians wrote the biography of the death in ceramic wares. They also wrote war history and their successes in wares and other events in ceramic objects.

A ceramist’s work art anytime or place is always influenced by the cultural environment, in which he/she works. Ceramic entrepreneurs produce wares used in projecting people’s culture as it mirrors their life style. Ceremonial pots, kola nut
dishes etcetera are used during cultural activities. Ceramic wares are forms and languages that immediately tell a visitor the tradition or culture of that particular area.

Historically, the study and practice of ceramics which are products of clay has contributed to the historical development of some ancient cities such as Mesopotamia, Egypt and some modern cities such as, Britain, Germany, America, France to mention but a few. Clay has enabled ceramic entrepreneurs to develop people who contribute to the development of their countries. Such people include Josiah Wedgwood of North Stafford shire who was credited with the industrialization of pottery. His unique glazes began to distinguish his wares from anything else in the market. Also Bernard Leach, (1887-1979) established a style of pottery influenced by Far-Eastern and medieval English forms. Other ceramists of great repute are; William Satiate Murray, Dora Burlington, Lucie Rie and Hans Coper. Ladi Kwali, a Nigerian potter who worked in the Gwari tradition, made large pots decorated with incised patterns. Her works are interesting hybrid of traditional African with Western studio pottery. Magdalene Odundo is a Kenyan-born British potter whose ceramics are hand built and burnished.

Technologically, working with clay develops the intellect, insight and imaginations of ceramic entrepreneurs to discover new methods and solutions which will help the society solve some problems facing it. Clay has contributed to the development of ceramic technology as the entrepreneurs carry out researches on clay bodies, glazes, throwing wheels, construction of different types of kiln and kiln furniture, others are production of modern electrical insulators, sewage pipes and sanitary wares. Ceramic entrepreneurs also produce various types of ceramic tools as well as adequate and apply such newly acquired technology to the production of ceramic wares to enhance productivity: Ndibelie (2007, p. 5) states that technological advancement by ceramic entrepreneurs is a means of creating wealth, generating employment to the society and reducing poverty.

Clay is a healthy source of income which has helped to improve the economy of the Nigerian nation. It is used in the production of ladies powders, soaps, beads, bangles, ear-rings and some drugs. Most jewelries used by ladies to adorn themselves are products of clay. Clay is also used in producing ceramic bricks used in
architectural building and construction. Commenting on the innumerable roles of clay to man Balley (1998, p.150) said, “surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not”.

Clay fulfills religious and moral functions. The learning and practice of ceramics inculcates in the entrepreneurs some values such as hard work, (industry) patience, perseverance, concentration, honesty and faithfulness. Furthermore, skills, orderliness and accuracy are equally learnt while using clay to produce wares. Religiously, ceramic vases are used to decorate alters in churches. Some churches are also built with ceramic bricks all of which were made with clay.

Clay is used to communicate ideas. Ceramic entrepreneurs from one society to another make indelible inscriptions, symbols and figurative representations in some of their wares which communicate ideas or tell stories which can provoke thoughts and stir emotions.

Aesthetically, clay is used to produce flower vases, wall plaques which make our environments look beautiful. Ladies adorn themselves with bangles and jewelries made with clay. Some people have broken teeth which were made whole again or replaced by artificial teeth made of clay; hence, they are saved for life from what would have been an embarrassment to them. Clay is also used in producing ladies powder.

Clay has the following properties: shrinkage, verification, Porousity, malleability and durability. These qualities make it relevant for production to ceramic entrepreneurs. Shrinkage occurs in stages. The initial shrinkage of clay takes place when it dries as water evaporates. Additional shrinkage happens in the bisque or first firing when chemically combined water is driven out. Further shrinkage occurs in the upper heat ranges when chemical compounds in the clay begin to fuse. According to Egbeji (2000, p.25), during firing, fluxes such as feidspathic minerals begin to meet together with the pure clay particles and other minerals present, and a glossy bond is formed. As this fussion occurs, the particles draw closer together and fired, shrinkage occurs. The clay becomes vitrous or hard rendering it impervious to water.
Egbeji (2000, p. 26) opined that clay has the property of being porous. Porosity is the measure of maturity of fired clay. The more vitrified the clay, the less water it will absorb. Ceramic entrepreneurs are not interested in clay for what it is in the natural state (green state) they are more interested to what it will become after firing.

Another quality of clay which ceramic entrepreneurs are very interested in is its malleability. Unlike stone or metal, clay can be modelled with few tools. Ceramists can only use their hands to pinched, to coil or make slabs into a pot or sculpture of almost any size. Charlotte & Toki (1995, p. 23) in their book “Hands in clay” spoke of the malleability of clay thus: “I can’t think of another ceramic medium that has such a vulnerability to force”.

Working with clay develops the intellect, insight and imaginations of ceramic entrepreneurs to discover new methods and solutions which will help the society solve some of the problems facing it. Konkwo (2013, p. 48) states that “its practice has been a means for reducing poverty, creating wealth, and generating employment to the society”. Ceramic techniques and processes are well developed and utilized to satisfy the needs of the society in areas such as floor and wall tiles, bricks, mugs, vases, dishes, electrical insulators and a host of others. Apart from providing practical utility and aesthetic wares for man’s use, clay which is put to use by ceramic entrepreneurs has been and is still a healthy source of income and has helped to improve the economy of Nigeria and many other countries of the world.

There are many ways of forming a finished shape from a lump of clay. The methods are briefly stated thus: Pinching, Coiling, Slabbing, Modelling, Moulding, Wheel Throwing, Jiggering Methods and a host of others.

- **Pinch Method:** This is the most primitive technique. Take a piece of wedge clay about the size of an orange and shape it with your thumps and balms until your desired shape is got. Pinching is used to produce some objects like cup. The problem with this method is that it can develop crakes which could be repaired by slightly moistening the clay.

- **Coil Method:** To make pots by coil, roll pieces of clay into long-thin coils. Make several coils before you start to build so that you do not have to stop
building to roll more. Keep the extra coils under a damp cloth to prevent them from drying out while working. As you build, make joints between the coils by scoring and joining with slip. We use coil method to produce big pots, flower vases etc. The disadvantage of this method is that the pot can stagger due to its weight. Beating with a stick will help check the staggering.

- **Modelling Technique:** Heap a lump of clay to take the form of the intended model. Add more lumps of clay of similar consistency until the rough model of the design is achieved cut the model into small pieces with harp or cutting wire and scoop with a scooping tool. This enhances even thickness. Join the pieces in the order in which they were cut so as to produce the original model with soft plastic clay. We produce different objects by modeling like animals, human beings and objects. The problem in modeling is that cracks can develop from the joining. In such a case, use slip to cement the cracks.

- **Jolleying and Jiggering method:** Is another means of transforming a lump of clay to a finished ceramic products/wares by ceramic entrepreneurs. Jiggering is a process of forming wares by using spinning mould to form the inside and a metal profile which forms the back and the front of the ware while Jollerying is the process of spinning mould to shape the back foot and the inside of wares.

**Decoration**

As ceramic entrepreneurs are out to make gains, they ensure that wares produced are in fine state. Decoration of wares is an interesting aspect of ceramics production. Decorations are done when the wares are dried up and leather hard. Decoration gives finishing torch to wares. It serve the function of completing, beautifying and giving aesthetic value to a ware and in some cases, serve as symbolic expressions as well as fortressing the strength of the ware.

The most popular way to decorate wares is to glaze them after they are bisque fired, but there are many attractive and interesting ways to decorate unfired wares or green ware: These methods are enumerated thus: Applied, Impressed, Incised or carved, graffito, marbling, mashima, emborsed methods. As mentioned earlier ceramic wares can also be decorated by glazing, wax, resist method, ship trailing and
stenciling methods. Some wares can be decorated by brushing and painting examples are engobes, oxides, enamels and oxides. It is worth mentioning at this juncture that in some cases, the wares may not require any decoration.

Furthermore, the type of decoration given to any ware depends on its shape and the function it will serve.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, the writer explained that clay which is abundant in the environment can be excavated, processed and put to variety of uses by ceramic entrepreneurs. She also explained certain concepts that are central in her essay such as environment, entrepreneur, visual arts, ceramics and clay. She enumerated the stage by stage methods of manual preparation of clay and discussed extensively the relevance of clay to ceramic entrepreneurs. Various methods of ceramic production and decoration were stated and discussed.

In conclusion, the paper indicated that clay, which is found in the environment, provides enabling opportunities for ceramic entrepreneurs to independently explore and create wealth and employment to unemployed youth which will in turn raise the standard of living of the Nigerian nation. Clay have educative, social historic, religious, political, economic, aesthetic, cultural, medical, communication, technological, as well as moral, records keeping functions to play in the society. Konkwo (2013:p 50) states that its practice has been a means or reducing poverty, creating wealth and generating employment to the society

**Recommendations**

In view of the aforementioned, the following recommendations are hereby proffered:

- Visual art should be made compulsory core subject from nursery, primary and junior secondary levels.

- Government should empower ceramic entrepreneurs by given them loans and other incentives like modern equipment for processing and production of clay.
➢ The society should be educated about the importance of clay.

➢ Government should ensure that our environment is not destroyed by vandals so that abundant clay will be readily available to ceramic entrepreneurs.

References


The Moon in Igbo Culture and Education

By

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Abstract

This work examines the place of the moon in Igbo culture and education. The scope of this paper includes Igbo people, culture and education. We also examine the moon as a universal phenomenon, together with its symbolic facts and meanings. Moon is viewed as the maternal (female) influence in terms of guidance whereas the Sun is the paternal. The lunar calendar is guided by the monthly appearance of the moon. This is exemplified by ‘igụ Arọ Ndị Igbo’ (marking the year of Ndị Igbo). The paper uses the ‘Use Theory’ as its framework. The choice of this theory is as a result of the fact that in Associative Meaning, words are viewed from the context, time, background of speakers or hearers, and the Use Theory promotes the idea that the meaning of a word or an expression is determined by the context of its use. For instance, moon is celebrated in varied ways such as the moonlight games (Egwu Ọnwa). Egwu Ọnwa itself involves various activities which promote Igbo language, culture and education, such as the riddles, folktales, and poem. This work is woven with materials from books, the Internet, interviews; and the writer of this paper who is born and bred within the Igbo culture and of course, a competent speaker of the Igbo language. With data collected, we are able to present works done by scholars on moon in different places and in Igbo. Some Egwu Ọnwa activities and their relevance are presented. Finally, a simple conclusion is made.

Introduction

Language is a special gift of God to humanity. It comes as a natural endowment and develops with time through acquisition or learning (for second language learners). Just like language, moon is among the free gifts of God to His creatures. As the mystery of language is impressive and not fully understood, so also is the mystery of the moon. Moon is a universal phenomenon which is generally used as a
time marker. For instance, the Moslems need the moon in order to pronounce the Ramadan fast (Ramadan, June 29 2014, Kwara News @Ilorin.Info Mobile). The Native Americans use the moon to mark the activities of a period of time (Venefica, 2014). This is also seen in ‘ịgu Arọ Ndị Igbo’ (Igbo Calendar) (Abiyamo, 2013). In both Native America and Igbo Calendars, every new moon is named according to the activity carried out during that moon circle. Ezeulu, in Arrow of God by Achebe, (Grate, 2002), needs to sight the moon before the sacred yam is eaten, and activity for that moon circle is announced to the people of Umuaro. However, in some cases, the moon has a particular symbolic meaning to various people, religion, tribe or culture. In the Holy Bible, the pregnant woman of Revelation, chapter 12 has moon under her feet. The Islamic religion has the crescent moon as one of their symbols (Huda, 2014). Native Americans have various symbolic moon meanings representing conditions like fertility, psyche, balance, and others (Venefica, 2014).

In Igbo land, for instance, moon is highly regarded and it helps in the promotion of Igbo culture and education. This can be realized through moonlight activities (games) popularly known in Igbo setting as ‘Egwu Ọnwa’. Unfortunately, this aspect of culture has been swept aside by modernity and its effects such as televisions, home videos, computer and mobile phones. This modernity also possesses some negative effects such as armed robbery and kidnapping, for which young people are the worst hit. However, as the world continues to advance in science and technology, old things in our culture can be updated and modernized for the sake of continuity and avoidance of their extinction. Hence, this paper by way of suggestion, advocates the presentation of the moonlight activities (Egwu Ọnwa) in our media houses as a way of promoting the culture and education of Igbo Language.

**Literature Review**

Literature review of this work presents the theoretical framework used in this paper. It also reviews the various works done on moon as well as cites the works concerning moon done by people.
Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on Use Theory. It can also be referred to as ‘Usage Theory’ or ‘Meaning as Use’ (Mwihaki, 2004; Ogbulogo, 2005). The Use Theory is a semantic theory developed by a German scholar, Wittgenstein, in 1953, and further developed by J. Firth and M.A.K. Halliday (Ogbulogo, 2005). In Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010:231), ‘The Use Theory contends that the meaning of anything is the use it is put to. In other words, it is what each society makes of it. Ogbulogo (2005) presents the Use Theory, also referred to as the Contextual or Operational theory of meaning, as when the meaning of a word or an expression is determined by the context of its use. It is the effect created by a linguistic unit within a given context that expresses its full meaning.

Mwihaki (2004) refers to Use Theory as ‘Meaning as use’. Meaning as use refers to speaker’s meaning and particularly the intention of the speaker or the desired communicative effect of the utterance. This approach to the notion of meaning is validated on the basis of the conviction that language is purposive: when we speak, we intend to achieve particular ends. Language use therefore implies making the appropriate choices of linguistic forms for the appropriate communicative setting and cultural context. The Use Theory, observes Mwihaki (2004), takes into account the various forms of linguistic function as expressed in descriptive and performative sentences, including the great flexibility of word meaning.

Theoretical Studies

The moon as a universal phenomenon is defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (8th edition, 2010) as ‘the round object that moves around the earth once every twenty-seven and half days and shines at night by light reflected from the sun’. There are fourteen entries made about the moon in this dictionary. The moon is recognized universally owing to the fact that it is found everywhere. The Igbo riddle asserts the universality of the moon thus, “Gwam, gwam, gwam, gwam otu ibe ji zuru uwa ọnụ?” Aziza: Qnwa. (Tell me (3x) a slice of yam that feeds the whole world? Answer: Moon).
Throughout nature, we find a chain of energetic opposites such as Light/Dark, Male/Female, Increase/Decrease, etc, and the Moon takes her place in the balance as the opposite to the Sun. The sun is symbolic of the fraternal (male or yang) aspect of guidance; and so logically the moon stoically stands as the maternal (female or yin) influence. Nwadike, I.U. (2005) in his Œké na Ògwýûrwù ‘Why’ Tales, asserts that the moon is feminine while the sun is masculine.

This gender association is a generalization, and (as with most symbolic meanings) there are departures. Moon symbolism in Native American tribes such as Navajo, Eskimo, Pueblo, as well as African, Japanese, Maori, Teutonic, Oceania, and Sumerian-Semitic groups refer to the moon as a masculine force (Venefica, 2014). Venefica (2014) observes that what is intriguing about the moon than the gender is the means by which she wields her force and influence. The moon is regarded as a luminary, yet she produces no light of her own accord. She is dependent on the sun’s light to reveal her image to our earthly eyes. This method of projecting light makes the moon a symbol of subtlety. Through passive means, the moon gains indirect deduction, clarity and reflection. While the sun boldly bears down its blaze upon a given philosophical subject, the moon softly enfolds our attention- illumining our psyche in a gossamer glow that is more open to esoteric impression.

**Empirical Studies**

Extensive work has been done concerning moon in different parts of the world. In these empirical studies, various works done by people in relation to the moon will be reviewed.

- Asare Konado, a Ghanaian novelist, (2007, p. 86), confirms the presence of the moon in Ghana when he writes, “The moon deceived us… when my eyes cleared, this whole village was gleaming with light. How was I to know that the moon was not telling the time right?”

- A writer from Igbo land, Chikwendu Anyanwu in ‘Before the Rain’ (2000, p.2) also has something to say concerning the moon.

  **‘Before the Rain’**

  The moon was cool

  **‘Tupu Mmiri Ezoo’**

  Ṭnwá di juụ
Sweet and graceful   Dị ụto, maakwa mma
In a friendly sky.  N’ụrụkpụ ọma.

We sang; we danced   Anyị guru egwu
In a perfect circle  anyị gbara egwu
Holding hands.    N’okirikiri zuru oke
Jidechaa onwe anyị aka.

We sat on the ground  Anyị nọdụrụ n’ala
In a perfect circle  N’okirikiri zuru oke
Told fairy tales.    Kọọ akụkọ ịfo.

A firefly twinkle around  Otu mmụmụwarị
Like the ụmụna spirit  Biara na-amuke n’etiti anyị
That gave us perfect circle  Dika mụọ ụmụna
Nke nyere anyị ọgbakọ zuruoke.

Tired, we lay on the ground.  Mgbe ike gwụrụ anyị
Together, we fell asleep  Anyị nọdụrụ ala,
Safe in the street  Rahụkọta ụra.
We slept.  N’enweghi nsogbu ọbụla
N’okporoama. (Translation by Chikwendu Anyanwu)

In the above poem, the moon is presented as a symbol of peace and stability. This is, according to the author, the type of serenity and solidity experienced by Igbos before the Colonial era represented by ‘The Rain’.

➢ In Native America, according to Venefica (2014), moon can be used to represent the following:

- Time       -Mystery      -Fertility   -Femininity  -Psyche
- Cycles      -Emotion      -Wonder     -Intuition  -Passivity
- Shadow      -Influence    -Balance    -Transition -Progressing
- Perception  -Renewal      -Receptivity -Illumination.

The alchemical teachings regards moon as a facet of silver. In the world of a practicing alchemist, silver is symbolic of clarity, purity, and brilliance. Silver is one of the three foundational metals of the Prima Materiel and so the ‘silver-personified moon’ is prominently myth, lore and culture as we see lunar associations tied with deities and cyclical events in human collective consciousness. For instance, Venefica
Chikezie, MaryQueenolia Chinwendu

(2014) opines that the moon is associated with some symbolic archetypes. The following are a few of the numerous archetypes.

- **Virgin Mary**: Christian symbolism features her with the new moon where she resonates with the concepts of purity, peace, illumination, and perfection.
- **Artemis** is a Greek hunter goddess whose personality highlights includes chastity, protection, avengement and childbirth.
- **Diana** is also a huntress archetype, and woodland goddess of the Romans. She is the protector of women and animals.
- **Thoth** is an Egyptian god (male) of the moon. It has connections with magic, wisdom, writing and hidden meanings (associated with Hermes in Greek myth, who like Hecate is a figurehead of crossroads too).

The moon is highly regarded in the religious world. The archetypes mentioned above are divine beings such as the Blessed Virgin Mary, goddesses and god (Venefica, 2014).

- Islamic religion depends on the moon to announce the Ramadan Fast (Ilorin.Info, 2014).
- In *Arrow of God* by Achebe, Ezeulu, the Chief priest of Ulu, responsible for safeguarding the traditions and rituals of the people, religiously looks out for the moon before the ‘sacred yam’ is eaten. This ritual helps him to name the day for the feast of the Pumpkin Leaves or for the New Yam Feasts which ushers in the yam harvest (Grate, 2012).

Venefica (2014) also presents the symbolism of moon phases and moon names according to their monthly appearances. The phases of the moon serve as another glimpse into her intricate meanings.

- **New Moons** are a symbol of new beginnings, a fresh start, and rebirth.
- **Waxing Moon** is a symbol of growth, manifestation, attainment, gravidity (heavy with child-both philosophical and literal).
- **Full Moon** is symbolic of the height of power, the peak of clarity, fullness and obtainment of desires.
The Moon in Igbo Culture and Education

- **Waning Moon** is symbolic letting go, surrender, release, quiet time, contemplation, and a time of incubation.

Venefica (2014) asserts that names are given to the Native American full moon, as established by eastern and northern tribes such as the Algonquin and the Iroquois Confederacy. These names are peculiar to them alone. Other tribes also have symbolic references made about the moon.

- **January** is referred to as **Wolf Moon**. The full moon in January is called Wolf Moon because wolves are out in the bright light this time of the year, anxious and hot on the trail for food. **April** is **Egg Moon or Pink Moon**. Both names indicate the sprouting of seed and the explosion of bright beauty found in the phlox (pink) and other flowers rising for the spring debut. **July** is **Thunder Moon**. This name ‘thunder moon’ is got from the observation that this month is notorious for big booms of thunder and storms. This moon is also referred to as Buck moon because deer begin to form their anther at this time of year. **October** is **Hunters Moon**. This is another symbolic moon name that is obvious because this time represents the onset of prime hunting season: heavy foliage is drifting away as quick as the season, and deer are a bit chubby at this time. Hence they are easily seen and hunted. **December** is referred to as **Cold Moon or Long Night Moon**. The December moon is thus referred as a result of the frigid realm of winter the Natives find themselves. This is the month when some of the coldest and the longest nights live.

- **Igbo Lunar Calendar**

Venefica (2014) rightly observes that every tribe can have moon names peculiar to their customs and traditions. This is seen in the Igbo Lunar Calendar as presented by Abiyamo (2013). Arọ or Afo simply means year when translated. ‘Igụ arọ’ in English means ‘counting of year’. Igụ arọ is a very significant ritual carried out annually, especially by the Nri people in Anacho Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Igụ arọ as presented by Abiyamo (2013), is a yearly festival of the Nri people. At this festival, the EzeNri (the priest-king who manages the trade and diplomacy of the people, and believed to have divine authority in religious matters), proclaims the
New Year to all the Igbo communities under his jurisdiction, and announces the Nri calendar to the people. The calendar is made up of thirteen (13) months, seven (7) weeks in a month and four (4) days in a week plus an extra day at the end of the year. Ibe and Megwa (an Interview, 2014), assert that Western calendar has 7 days in a week and 12 months in a year, but Igbo calendar counts 8 days referred to as ‘Izu’. Thus Igbo calendar has 13 months in a year. In Igbo language, month is referred to as Qnwa, and Qnwa simply means moon. Each month (moon) comes off with credit either to the Mmxq (Spirit) or Alụsị (Deity) of the land that has in the past blessed the land with wisdom or riches or protection against their enemies or even long life. Each month has a significant meaning as presented below.

1. Qnwa Mbụ (1st Moon: starts from 3rd week of February each year).
2. Qnwa Abụọ (March) (2nd Moon) March to April is mainly for clearing and farming.
3. Qnwa Ife Eke (April) (3rd Moon) April to May is known as Ụ ganị or the hunger period.
4. Qnwa Anọ (May) (4th Moon) May to June sees the planting seed yams.
5. Qnwa Agwụ (June) (5th Moon) June to July: Ịgọchị and Mmanwx (Adult Masquerades), in this month, ‘Agwụ’ the Alxs[ the month is named after is worshipped as instructed by the dibias (priests).
6. Qnwa Ifejiọkụ (July) (6th Moon). July to August is dedicated to the yam deity Ifejiọkụ and Njọkụ and yam rituals are performed in this month for the New Yam Festival.
7. Qnwa Alọm Chị (August to early September) (7th Moon). August to early September is Yam Harvest for the Alụsị alone.
8. Qnwa Ilo Mmụọ (Late September) (8th Moon). September ending is for Qnwa Asațọ Festival.
9. Qnwa Ana (October) (9th Moon). October is the month of Ana Ritual which comes up in honour of Igbo earth goddess ‘Ala’. Hence it is named after her.
11. Önwa Ajana (Late November) (11th Moon) Okike ritual continues in till November ending.

12. Önwa Ede Ajana (Late November to December) (12th Moon). November to early December Okike ritual ends.

13. Onwa Üzo Alusu (January to Early February) (13th Moon). January to early February is when offering to Alusu takes place.

The Igbo, Culture and Education

The word Igbo is used in three senses to describe Igbo territory, domestic speakers of the language and the language spoken by them. The Igbo people, according to Slattery (n.d), are one of Nigeria’s largest ethnic groups with population estimates ranging from 20 to 50 million. However, Professor Pita Ejiofo in his Odenigbo 2013 Lecture precisely said that Igbo both in Nigeria and in Diasporas is 31 million. Also in Nigeria with a population of 155 million, out of every five Nigerian is an Igbo. Out of 6809 Languages in the world, Igbo Language is ranked 41st based on the population of the Igbo (The Leader News Online, 2013). The Igbo, in many circles, are considered the most populated ethnic group with the argument that outside Igbo land, they constitute the second largest population in other states after the indigenes. In Africa, apart from Nigeria, Igbo population is greater than any other country in West Africa. He further posited that in Nigeria, ethnic nationalities are within 200-250 in number, Igbo is ranked among the first three.

Slattery (n.d) further writes that Igbo land is the home of the Igbo people which covers most of Southeast Nigeria. This area is the South East of the modern day Nigeria, with the Niger cutting across to give us Igbo East and West of the River Niger (Anyanwu, 2014). The river however, does not create any barrier to their cultural unity; rather, it serves as a means of easy communication.

Ihuoma (2013) opines that it has been orally and archeologically proven that the Igbos are migrates from the Niger-Benue confluence. This is where blood related groups such as the Yoruba, Idoma, Edo (Bini, Esan, Urhobo/Isoko, Etsako Afemai), and Igala dispersed into various groups. The Igbo come from the nuclear Igbo area of the Owerri-Awka-Orlu-Okigwe axis, which happens to support the archeological
findings. The Igbo are surrounded on all sides by other ethnic nationalities. They include the Bini Warri, Ijaw, Ogoni, Igala Tiv, Yako and Ibibio. The Igbo in Nigeria are found in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi Enugu and Imo, as well as in Delta and Rivers States. Igbo language is predominant throughout these areas.

Mitchel Duncan (1969) presents the definition of culture as the totality of the repertoire of human actions and its products. From Taylor’s point of view, culture can be a set of all historically created decisions for living, explicit or implicit, rational or irrational and accumulated overtime and transmitted from generation to generation as a necessary guide for human behaviour (Taylor, in Nweke, Uzoigwe and Onebunne, 2000). Thus, Nweke et al, (2000) assert that man is a cultural being; a product of culture.

Uzuegbunam (1997) opines that among the characteristics of culture is the material and non-material aspects. The material aspect of culture deals with the physical items (artifacts) in the content of culture such as colour of the skin, fashion, food items and cooking, tools of worship, tools for production, musical instruments, types of houses, work of arts, photographs and type of skills possessed by a group. The non-material aspects of culture are those shared understandings that could not be seen or touched by man. These include language, norms, music, taboos, customs, values, religion, morals, laws, arts, history and literature. It is through the material and non-material aspects of culture that culture is manifested. This paper therefore, presents how an aspect of the moon, which is moonlight games, can help in the promotion of Igbo Culture.

Jackson (2011) in his opinion presents education as a process of how we transmit knowledge in human society and how we think about accomplishing that vital task. Education is viewed by Nigerian Education Community (NEC) (2013) as a social phenomenon poised for the transformation of life transforming life experience from a generation to another, such as the knowledge of good manners and the behaviour in society according to these skills. NEC further asserts that education refers to the assimilation of some theoretical knowledge, and acceptable ethical behaviour in the society. Thus, when we talk about who has a good education, we
mean a person who has an important set of theoretical knowledge through a professional training and an impressive general culture.

From the above definitions of education, we can say that education is the art of transferring one’s knowledge to another following some laid down principles which can be done formally (in school) or informally (outside academic setting). Thus, Egwu Qnwa, in addition to its entertaining and recreational purposes, also serves as a means of educating and creating awareness for both the young and old.

The Moon in Igbo Culture and Education (Egwu Qnwa)

The relevance of Egwu Qnwa in Igbo culture and education cannot be overemphasized. It promotes unity, socialization, good health and enlightenment. This is clearly epitomized on the Eve (Cultural Day) of the annual Odenigbo Lecture of the Owerri Arch-diocese. On this day, there are a lot of cultural displays as seen in the activities of Egwu Qnwa.

KayCee (2014) presents Egwu Qnwa as an Igbo culture whereby people play under the moonlight at night whenever the moon is at its peak. This is in line with the Igbo saying, ‘Qnwa gbawa, ije agxwa (When the moon is out, there is urge for walk)’

There is no stipulated time for egwu qnwa, but it is usually done after the night meals which is around 8p.m. Egwu Qnwa is an old time culture in Igbo land carried out when the world has not gone global as it is presently. Then children had no schools for formal learning, where they could run around, strengthen their veins and arteries as well as build their muscles. Thus, KayCee asserts that the culture of playing under the moonlight serves as a source of enlightenment, entertainment and recreation.

It served as a means of bringing joy to the elders who sat in groups around campfires, sipping and sharing local drinks. They would talk about events of the past and sometimes delight in teasing one another ([ma njakiri]). Some of the elderly ones used this medium and imparted knowledge of the culture of the community on children through traditional tales and folk stories, and sometimes deepened their wisdom and intelligence by playing games of riddles (Gwam gwam gwam) and proverbs (ilu). The sick who sat around the bonfire were reported to have got therapeutic healing through egwu qnwa. The youths use this forum to socialize with
one another as the young maidens delight in some juicy gossip, admire handsome young males and even catch their attention. The young men indulge in wrestling bouts, acrobatic displays, special stunts, dancing and musical performances particularly to impress the young maidens who make up their major spectators.

It is evident that “egwu qnwa” has now been taken over by our world that has gone scientific, computerized and technological. Nowadays, activities such as Bloc Rosary, listening to radio programmes, watching television programmes, use of Internet services and night studies have taken the place of the moonlight games (KayCee, 2014). Since the world has gone modernized, it is therefore my opinion that there is need for us to adjust to, and ensure that egwu qnwa still remains relevant in our culture. For example, we can employ the media to popularize it even to the outside world as done by the National Television Authority (NTA) in their programme ‘Tales of Moonlight’ (NTA, 26 October, 2006).

**Some of the Activities Performed during Egwu Qnwa and their Relevance**

In *Things Fall Apart*, the importance of moon is recognized in the statement made by the oldest member of the xmxnna among Okonkwo’s maternal home using moon, ‘When we gather together in the moonlit village ground it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it from his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so’ (Achebe, 1958, p.118). When kinsmen gather at egwu qnwa, they indulge in activities like:

- **Igba Mgba (Wrestling Contest).** Wrestling contest is a moonlight game done by the male folk, especially the youths. It involves two people embarking on a friendly hand-fight, each person trying to out-smart the other skillfully. When this is achieved, the less smart person’s back touches the ground and the other is declared the winner. Through wrestling contest, capabilities of the young ones are recognized. Such people can develop their skills to become renowned wrestlers. The people sometimes look up to such people as their saviours during fights or dangers.

- **Gwam gwam gwam (Riddle).** Riddles are the metaphorical expressions of the basic concerns and interest of a people. It is an obscure description of
something which the hearer is asked to name. This game can serve as brain twister.

Examples 1. Gwam, gwam, gwam, gwam ihe kxrx aka baa ime ọhịa? Azịzi: Ugba. (Tell me, tell me, tell me, tell me what clapped hand, and ran into the bush? Answer: Oil bean seed).

   (Tell me what fetched water and went up? Answer: Coconut)

- **Okwu Ntabire (Tongue Twister).** This is a type of game where a person is asked to say some group of related words severally in a very fast way. This type of exercise can help football commentators who really need to be very fast (if possible as fast as the ball runs). Examples include:
  
  Example 1. Papa Pita patara pọpọ panye Papa Pọl.
  Example 2. Nwanyị na-akwa akwa, I na-akwa akwa na ọkụkọ yiri akwa n’elu akwa ịkwara dị n’elu akwa.

- **Egwu Qnwa (Songs).** Through songs, talented vocalists are remarked and their interest for music can be enhanced. Some of the songs accompany moonlight plays while some are moon light songs in their own right. Examples of moonlight songs that accompany plays are:
  
  (i) **Mmanwụ anyị**
      Onye elela anya n’azu, mmanwụ anyị na-aga n’azu.
      Onye lee anya n’azu, mmanwụ anyị ga-apịya ya utaịj.

  **Gloss:** *Our Masquerade*
  No one should look at the back, our masquerade is walking at the back.
  Who looks at the back, our masquerade will flog him.

  (ii) **Kpan kpan nkoro**
      Kpan kpan nkoro, kpan nkoro (2x);
      Udu moo, ogene (2x).
      Onye ọmara ụrụ yara yara yara, ụrụ yaa (2x).

  **Gloss:** ‘Kpan kpan nkoro, kpan koro’ (2x);
My pot oo, metal gong (‘ogene’) (2x).

Whoever it falls on, ‘ṣurū yara yara yara, ṣurū yaa’ (2x).

While both songs work on the instincts to react, the first focuses on preparedness and the second on the need for uniformity and acting together as one (Anyanwx, Interview).

Such songs like Uri Qma (Sweet Music) reinforces the Igbo socio-communal ideology which believes that Ìmùnna wụ ike - there is strength in togetherness. The last verse bemoans the betrayal and bastardization of Igbo culture by those who are supposed to be its custodians (Anyanwu, Interview).

a. Uri Qma

Uri ọma lee lele ---Ref: Uri ọma. (2µ)
Onye na nwanne ya kwụrụ jee ọgụ n’ihu agha ---Ref
Ọgụ esie ịke ọ ghara nwanne nke ya o --- Ref
Onye na nwanne ya kwụrụ egwu atụọ ya --- Ref
Agamevu adighi mma n’ajụ unu anula --- Ref
Uri ọma lele, uri ọma onye aghala nwanne ya.

Gloss: “Sweet Music”

Sweet music oh oh oh --- Ref: Sweet music (2x)
Who and his brother went to the war front --- Ref
The war became heated and he left his brother --- Ref
Who and his brother journeyed and he is afraid --- Ref
‘Agamevu’ (a thorn-like plant) is not good to use as load-wage; Unreliable fellow is not to be trusted --- Ref
Sweet music oh oh, sweet music be your brother’s keeper.

❖ Akxkq Ifo (Folktale). Folktale is an old traditional story from a particular place told originally in spoken form (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 8th Ed). In other words, folktales are so much connected to orals. Most folktales are didactically oriented because they teach lessons or correct moral degeneration. Here is an example of Igbo folktale about Nwa Agx na Nwa Ele (Young Lion and Young Antelope) as written into poetry by Anyanwx.
‘Nwa Agu na Nwa Ele’

N’ụbochị nke mbụ

Nwa agụ na nwa ele

Si na mkpuke ha dị iche iche pụta

N’akpagharị n’obi ọcha

Bịa zụte onwe ha na mbara ọma

Dịka ụmụnta na-amaghị ihe.

Ha gwuru egwu
Ha guru egwu
Ha gbakwara egwu.

Chi e jie. Ndị enyi ọhụrụ a laa
Dowe egwu nke foro-afọ
Maka echị na-abịa abịa.

Mgbe anwụ ka yi efe o jiri hie ụra
Nke na-acha obere mme mme-

A nụrụ olu nwa agụ ka ọ biara na-agụ egwu
Ma nna ya gara otu ebe zoo.

“Nwa ele enyi m ọma
Bịa ka anyị gwụrụ egwu
Bịa ka anyị gbarakwa egwu
Bịa ka anyị guru nwa-egwu anyị
Chọkwa ihe dị ọhụrụ mee
N’ụto orokompo a dị n’etiti mụ na ị.”

Site n’ebe tere ezigbo aka
Olu nwa ele biara na-ada

Were Asụsụ nwa-agụ zaghachi ya:
“Nwa āgu, enyi m ọma
Egwuregwu adighikwa
Ịgba egwu adighikwa;
Anyị agaghịa aguzi egwu
Ihe ahụ Nna gi gwara gi,
Nna m agwala m ya.”

(Culled from *I Dance Ala–Igbo* by Anyanwu, 2000:27-8)

**Gloss**  “My Father’s Story” (Nwa Agu na Nwa Ele).
On the first day
The young lion and the young antelope
Walked from their different caves
Through the innocent tracks
And met at the ignorant arena.

They played
They sang
They had a dance.

Darkness fell. The new friends parted
Keeping the rest of the play
For the coming day.

While the sun still wore her pink night gown
The voice of the young lion came singing
With his father crouched in hiding.

“Antelope, my good friend
Come to play and dance
Sing our songs;
Let us try out something new
The sweet romance of you and me.”

From a great distance
The voice of young antelope came ringing
Singing with the tune of the young lion:

“Young lion, my good friend
No more play and dance
No more songs;
What your father said to you
My father has said to me.”
(Culled from *I Dance Ala–Igbo* by Anyanwu, 2000:27-8)

‘Nwa Agu na Nwa Ele’ tale teaches children about the need of ‘opening up’ and ‘listening to one’s parents’. That is why the young antelope is able to boldly tell the young lion in the last two line of the last stanza in Igbo, ‘Ihe ahụ Nna gi gwara gi, Nna m agwala m’.

Other stories also aim at explaining the raison d’être (why) of things in the world. Here comes the story of Okpango (Gorilla) who leaves the human world for the bush.

**(ii) Ihe Mere Okpango Jiri Gbaba N’ime Qhịa**

*Ifo chakpiji! Wọọ! O ruru otu mgbe, n’otu ebe. Enwere otu nwanyị dị uchu n’orụ, gbasie ike ma bụrụkwa nwanyị nwere obioma, a na-apkọ Akwamma. Akwamma müțara otu nwa aha ya bu Ọkpango. Otu ụbọchị, Akwamma yoro Ọkpango ka oduje ya ubi ka ha nwee ike sụcha ya. Mgbe ha ruru n’ubi ha, Ọkpango hụrụ ka ebe nile sịri tojuo n’ahịa wee bido iji nne ya ajụjụ si:*

**Ọkpango:** Mama, ugbua anyị biara k’anị sụchaa ọrụ a. anyị sụcha ya, kedu ihe ozo anyị ga-emе?

**Akwamma:** Anyị akpọọ ya okụ mgbe ọ korọ nku.

**Ọkpango:** O bụrụ na anyị akpọcha ya okụ, gịnị ozo k’anị ga-emе?

**Akwamma:** Anyị akwa achichi, kwado maka iko ihe.

**Ọkpango:** Mgbe anyị kochara ihe, olee ihe ozo k’anị ga-emе?

**Akwamma:** Anyị abọchaa ahịa ugboro-ugboro.

**Ọkpango:** Anyị bọchaa ahịa ugboro-ugboro, gịnị ozo k’anị ga-emе?

**Akwamma:** Anyị eweewa ihe dị n’ubi.

**Ọkpango:** Mgbe owuwe ihe dị n’ubi gachara, kedu ihe ozo k’anị ga-emе?

**Akwamma:** Anyị emechacha ọba ebe a ga-edowe ihe ndị ewetara n’ubi.

**Ọkpango:** Mama, ọpụtaraa on ọrụ a enwghi ogwugwu. O bụrụ otua, o kaara mma kam gaa ebe oke ndọkasi ahụ agaghị adị. N’ihi nkea, Ọkpango esi n’ulo gaba n’ime ọhịa ruo taa. Ifo chapkii! Wọọ!
Gloss: Why Gorilla (Qkpango) Entered the Bush

Once upon a time, there lived a dutiful, hardworking and happy woman called Beauty. She gave birth to a son named Gorilla. One day, Beauty requested her son Gorilla to accompany her to the farm so that they can clear the place. When they reached the farm, Gorilla saw a very bushy sight and engaged his mother in a dialogue.

Gorilla: Mama, now that we have come to clear the farm, after clearing the farm, what next shall we do?

Beauty: We burn the farm when it is dry.

Gorilla: After burning the bush what do we do next?

Beauty: We gather the burnt things and get it ready for planting.

Gorilla: At the end of planting, what next?

Beauty: We weed the farm several times.

Gorilla: When we’re done with weeding, what comes next?

Beauty: Then we harvest the farm produce.

Gorilla: After harvesting, what next?

Beauty: We prepare the barns where the farm produce will be kept.

Gorilla: So Mama, the chain of work continues till ‘when I don’t know’ (infinity).

If that is the case, I better leave you and go to where I will be saved from all these stress. And so Gorilla ran into the bush. That is entered the bush’, teaches us the need to be optimistic, diligent, patient and hardworking.

Recommendation

We commend the efforts of the numerous promoters of Igbo language and culture, such as the following:

- Rev Fr Dr Chikwendu P.K Anyanwu, the Director of the Non-Governmental Organization known as ‘Umụaka Igbo Taa’; and Mrs Chidi Opara Ibeneche, Founder and President of the said NGO. The vision of Umụaka Igbo Taa is to promote Igbo language as well as check moral decadence among youths through the reactivation of Igbo norms and values. Their activities like the
local songs, plays, drama, wrestling matches are like egwu ọnwà, which depict the Igbo culture (Christian Voice News Online, 2014).

- Nnodim and Pierotti (2014) are on the Internet with, ‘Some Moonlight Stories’, where they present moonlight tales.

- Another medium is putting them into writing as done already by some renowned Igbo writers like Professor Inno Uzoma Nwadike in his Êké Na Êgwúrúgwù, (A book of Igbo aetiological or ‘Why’ Tales). Among the tales in the book include, ‘Ihe kpata ra ihu Anyanwụ ji di ka Azīza; nke Qnwa ad[mpekele]’ and ‘Ihe mere Ọnwa na Anyanwụ jiri biri n’elu’.

- The Odenigbo celebration initiated by the Archbishop of Owerri Archdiocese, His Grace, Most Rev Dr Anthony J.V Obinna has also contributed immensely towards the revival of egwu ọnwà. Nwadike (2013) asserts that the Odenigbo Programme is geared at addressing the dwindling fortunes of Igbo language and culture within the framework of Christian evangelization. The eve of Odenigbo is usually dedicated to numerous cultural displays such as traditional wrestling, dance, choral entertainment and other cultural entertainments. These are all part of moonlight games. Thus, Odenigbo also promotes egwu qnwa.

**Conclusion**

The study of the moon has made us realize the various symbolic meanings of the moon. Different cultures and languages celebrate the moon in varied ways. The Igbo, like many other people, celebrate moon by gathering under the powerful illumination of her light and carrying out some heart-warming activities (egwu qnwa) which entertain, heal and enlighten. It is, however, appalling that this culture has been neglected due to modernity. It is necessary to note that through egwu qnwa, some ills of the society among youths could be addressed. For instance, our youths have lost sight of respect for the human body and thrown dignity to the dust. Respect for humanity demands that nobody shows off nakedness in the name of ‘sagging’. Our youths now ‘sag’ and view it as fashion. Other ills, such as armed robbery, kidnapping can be practically addressed through egwu qnwa.
In conclusion, we appeal that individuals, cooperate bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations, Government (Governors) of the Igbo States make serious efforts to revive egwu qnwa and other aspects of Igbo entertainment and education, thereby promoting Igbo language and culture.

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Forms and Content of Onímejò Festival Song

BY

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Abstract

Oníméjo festival song plays a very significant role during Onímejò festival performance among the people of Ìdó-Àjinàre in Êkiti West local government of Êkiti State. The festival is presented principally to an audience whose life and aspirations it reflects, perpetuates and preserves. The festival consists of dramatic activities, which elicit spontaneous participation with joy and satisfaction by the people, which results in a successful realization of event. The festival is a ritual drama used annually for spiritual and communal cleansing of Ìdó-Àjinàre. The study using semiotics as the theoretical frameworks dwells on the forms and content of Onímejò festival song. Data hinges on oral interviews, recording on cassette and print and media materials serve as the secondary source. A participating observer method is also used because the researcher is a native. Findings reveal that Onímejò festival song apart from entertainment dwell on importance of the festival, eulogy, religious tolerance and supplication.

Introduction

Songs, like music, are synonymous with all human activities. As a product of the modulating effects of the vocal chord which produces sounds that vary in tunes, tones and pitch, songs can be produced and rendered individually or communally. In Africa, songs “are known to influence people with regard to events” (Finnegan, 1977). Because they are based on events in individual or communal life, song carry the pulse of individual or communal feelings.

The form and content of Onímejò festival song is the focus of this work. Songs and music propel dramatic action during Onímejò festival. These elements express the
theme of performance and serve as catalyst in creating the desire moods by making
the atmosphere tensed and bringing Onímejò to the living presence of the audience.
According to Olúkòjù (1978:89) there is no occasion in Yorùbá life that is not
accompanied by songs. Birth, marriage and funeral are all occasion for lyrical songs
of great beauty. Everyday life is also accompanied by a great deal of impromptu
singing, a kind of musical thinking in which the singer puts everything to a tune,
which happens to pass through his head.

Song is a universal phenomenon and this is a major medium of exhibiting one
thoughts. In Africa, song is a sub-set of oral poetry and among the Yorùbá, it is a
veritable genre of oral literature. Olúkòjù (1978:89) submits that ‘Orin’ is the generic
term for all types of songs. Most song, texts are regarded as oral poems since Yorùbá
traditional poetic texts form the basis of songs Ogunba (1982) and Ilesanmi (1991). It
should be noted that Onímejò song is a festival song and the song is used for
celebration eulogy, religious tolerance, and supplication.

The Àjìnàre People

Ìdó-Àjìnàre is situated on a very large undulating stretch of land. The town is
bounded on the west by an elongated bridge, separating the town from Òkè-Imesi. Its
bounded on the east by the famous Oṣun River, which is believed to have its source at
the nearby Ìgèdè Èkìtì town. Ìdó-Àjìnàre Èkìtì is characterized by the hot and wet
tropical climate of southwestern Nigeria. It has a common boundary with Erio and
Ẹ̀sa-òkè of Òsun State in the north, Ikoro and Òjéno in the east. Villages and settlements under her include Ajebámidélé, Ìta Ìdó-Àjìnàre, Orílóniṣe, Ayégúnlè, Eléigbó, Odò Igbó and others. Other villages under Olùjódo the
king of Ìdó-Àjìnàre’s jurisdiction include Súgbohùn, Òkè Èísùn, Igbó Elú, Orí Ògún,

Theoretical and Empirical Studies

Semiotics

Semiotics is usually defined as the science of signs. According to Eco (1976:7)
semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as sign. Ogundeji (1988:7)
opines that semiotics identifies and relates the componential significating patterns of the texts to one another before studying the relationship of the textual structure to larger structures (i.e. society) in an attempt as grasping the total meaning. The study of signs has according to Kowzan (1968:52) been popular in the philosophy and history of the sciences. Hippocrates and Stoics, Plato and Aristotle, Saint Augustine and Descartes, Leibniz and Locke, Hegel and Humboldt are among those who are said to have dealt with the idea of signs. According to Kowzan (1968:52) other sciences which the study of signs has engendered include “semiology, semasiology, semantics and sematology.

On the level of theoretical development, one can say that semiotics developed out of structuralism, which in turn evolved out of formalism. According to Eco (1976:8, 22) semiotics studies all cultural process as a process of communication made possible by a base system of signification. Semiotics as a humanistic method of theory is text-centred that is why it is suitable for this work. Izevbaye (1975, 1977) and Irele (1977) have already indicated in their critical comments that an eclectic approach will be more fruitful than any individual approach on adoption of methods for African Literature. Semiotics studies meaning more vigorously and more systematically from different perspectives by emphasizing the code, therefore semiotics investigate meaning from more vigorous dimension by considering the intra-textual, inter-textual and extra-textual significations.

The semiotics approach to literary studies also benefits a lot from its application to other aspects of life. The approach is no doubt more appropriate than others for this research.

**The Performance in Onímejò Festival Song**

According to Babayemi (1980) the Yorùbá people believe in the visitation of their ancestral spirits as a means of communication between the celestial and terrestrial, this attests to the reason why the Àjìnàré people fixed the month of July as the time when the spirits of their ancestor (Onímejò) share fellowship with them on earth. The spirit of Onímejò is usually invited to visit the earth physically in masks. The port of call is the community groove, Ìgbàlè. The “spirit” of Onímejò usually appears in masks. It is
believed that he blesses and protects the community against evil spirits, epidemics, sicknesses, untimely death, famine, witchcraft and evil-doers, thereby ensuring the well-being, prosperity and productivity of the whole Ìdó-Àjìnàre indigenes. The coming out of the spirit of Onímezó in masks is a source of blessing and pride to the Àjìnàre people. It has always been a time of festivity and entertainment.

The annual Onímezó festival performance is normally a three-day festival. The first two days are for propitiation and thank offerings to the ancestors. They are called “Ikọsẹ” (paying homage). The third day, which is the last day of the festival, is the time when the sacred emblem will be carried. The third day of the festival is christened ‘Ọjọ́ úwà Nílá’ (Great day of festivity), when the principal egúngún display in the front of the ọba’s palace (Erèkèta).

The first day of the festival is usually a market day. The venue of the market is shifted from its usual place in front of the Ọba’s palace to (Ogunwá) another place so as to give room for the passing of the masquerades when they are coming out of the groove. The act of shifting the market to another place is called “Ìṣéjàná”.

Early in the morning of the first day the community elders that are members of the egúngún cult leave for the scared groove where they make sacrifices, share ritual food and dress the egúngún. About thirty minutes before the appearance of egúngún from the sacred groove, curfew is imposed on the town. Anyone who goes against this warning faces instant death.

After leaving the groove, the masquerade performs the first ritual at the shrine. People who had earlier keep indoor are summoned together to converge in front of the palace (Erèkèta). The masquerades thereafter proceed to certain significant spots in the town where they pay homage and break kolanut. As the masquerades move about, they do a lot of dancing.

However, the first place to pay homage is the king’s palace. Olúpòtì’s compound is the last point of call where the masquerades pay homage and after which they get prepared to leave for the groove. At this point, non-initiate members of the audience are seriously warned to go back to their various homes. Any non-initiate member of the audience that failed to yield to this warning will be beaten severely by the initiate members of the audience. The return of the masquerades to the groove marks the end
of the first day of Onímjèjo festival. The second day of Onímejò festival drama begins with the appearance of the masquerades from the sacred groove. They assemble in front of the king’s palace to entertain all and sundry with their intricate and complex dancing steps.

The next event that characterizes the second day of Onímejò festival is the flogging exercise. All able bodied youths assemble infront of the palace (Èrèkèta) for the flogging exercise. This flogging exercise is believed to be a source of spiritual empowerment for the youth and the grace to be tolerant is endowed on them.

The third day is the final day of Onímejò festival. So many activities are featured on this day. The day is christened “Ọjọ úwà Nilà” (Great day of festivity). On the third day of the festival, the king (Olójúdó) and all the chiefs and people of the town assemble in front of the palace (Èrèkèta) very early in the morning awaiting the arrival of the masquerades. The masquerades later appear and dance to the admiration of the audience one after the other.

The next thing that follows is the carrying of the emblems. The emblem is a long wooden rod with a carved image at the end, the emblem carry different images because each emblem symbolizes the four quarters in Ìdó-Àjìnàre.

More on this, as the cultists carried the emblem, Chief Èlemọ, the head of the egúngún cult recites incantations to support them. The essence of the continuous incantation is to stabilize the image that is shaking and propelling the bearer away from the path he is expected to take back to the shrine. It was disclosed that if the image falls, those cultists that carried the image would not witness the next celebration of Oníméjo festival. In order to avert this calamity, Chief Èlemọ, the head of the egúngún cult sprinkles the tranquilizer water (omi èrò) on the emblem bearers in order to stabilize and prevent them from falling down.

This stage is a solemn movement, therefore perfect silence is required. Whoever makes noise during the activity will become deaf and dump. That is why, only adult are allow to watch the carrying of emblem performance. It normally takes the cultists that carried the emblems about thirty minutes to one hour to move from the palace to the shrine. When the cultists finally enter the shrine with the emblems all members of
the audience that witness the carrying of the emblems heave a sigh of relief and rejoice. They also prayed to witness the asset one.

The final events on the third day, which is the last day of Onímejò festival is dancing and singing. The masquerades now dance round the palace and return to the front where the audience gather. The masquerades at this point shower blessings on the king, his chiefs and all members of the audience. The masquerade that rounds up the blessing of the king, his chiefs and all members of the audience is the Ako Eégún. To wrap it up, the king steps forward in his age-long royal regalia and blessed the people. This marks the end of Onímejò festival celebration. The king then hosts the people to a sumptuous dinner.

**Presentation and Analysis of Onímejò Festival Songs**

(1) **Song for celebration**

| Lílé:       | Òyẹ isorò lúlé òyẹ | Solo: Birds make rituals in their homes |
| Gbígèbè:    | Èrèléye o okò       | Respondents: Yes it is true               |
| Lílé:       | Èja isorò lúlé eja  | Solo: Fishes make rituals in their homes  |
| Gbígèbè:    | Èrèléye o okò       | Respondents: Yes it is true               |
| Lílé:       | Òrò ulé rìa là i se o homes | Solo: We are celebrating the ritual of our homes |
| Gbígèbè:    | Èrèléye o okò       | Respondents: Yes it is true               |

In the above song the singers, that is, the solo and respondents who are initiates member of Onímejò cult are telling the people that everybody has one ritual or the other that they normally celebrates, now they are celebrating their own ritual. They are very happy and they are proclaiming to the people that it is time for another wonderful and interesting celebration of their ancestor Onímejò. They are so happy and in joyous mood because they believed that their ancestor whom they are celebrating will continue to watch over them and bless them with good harvest.

(2) **Song of Eulogy**

| Lílé:       | À̀dò ròò Onímejò | Solo: Great Onímejò |
| Gbígèbè:    | Ìbà              | Respondents: We salute you               |
| Lílé:       | À̀dò ròò Onímejò | Solo: Great Onímejò |
| Gbígèbè:    | Ìbà              | Respondents: We salute you               |
Lilé: À ṣà ròò Onímejò

Solo: Great Onímejò

Gbígbè: Ìbà

Respondents: We salute you

Abojú fókífókí fòdédé
Onímejò afìrì wò wò sorò
Ọmọ asorò mú pòpò òpè lùlà
banging of palm fronds
Ọmọ asorò mòmù lóló lùbọko
new yam from farm
Ọmọ asorò mújù ágbò rašè
Ọmọ Ọwá bùdí tabele
Ọmọ Ọwá bùdí ganganyin èsin
like that of a horse
Látòórò kùtù óti hólé ùdí rè iléyín
The one that enter since morning yet his backyard
remains outside

The above song is a chant in praise of Onímejò masquerade it also contains a kind of
allusion that speaks at length about their ancestor Onímejò. The song is impregnated
with deep symbolic connotations. The above song of eulogy reveals important
happenings in the history of the Àjínàre people. It dwells on the events that took place
in the past and that later gave birth to the festival being celebrated annually in
commemoration of Onímejò. These are carrying of sacrificial emblems, the eating of
new yam and the slaughtering of ram at the feet of Akọ eégún who is believed to be an
embodiment of the ancestors. Symbolic communications are made through gestures
and movement or signals, which synchronize with familiar codes in the society. These
modes of expression are explored because they are recognized and acceptable signals,
which help in character impersonation.

(3) Song that indicate Religious tolerance:
Àwa ísorò ulé ria o We are going to celebrate the ritual of our home
Àwa ísorò ulé ria o We are going to celebrate the ritual of our home
Èsin kan ó pé e e káwa má sorò No religion can debar us from celebrating our
ritual
Àwa ísorò ulé ria o We are going to celebrate the ritual of our home

In Nigeria there is freedom of religion, some people detest taking part in traditional
festival due to their newly found religion. The inability of the foreign religion to put
an end to the celebration of Onímejò festival is made known by the singers. Ìdòwú (1962) observed that the Yorùbá people are notoriously religious due to the fact that people are not ashamed of their traditional religion and they uphold their festival celebrations despite the emergence of the foreign religion. According to Adéniyi (1993) the Nigerian society is religiously pluralistic but the people of Ìdó-Ájinàre believe that religion must not become a thing of discord neither must it generate bad blood among the people. Individual should be allowed to practice the religion that he or she believes in without being victimized; there should be freedom of religion. They advocate for religious tolerance so that peace will reign in every nook and cranny of the country.

(4) Songs of Supplication

Ń ṣe la jọ a péjú se é o We shall all witness it
Ń ṣe la jọ a péjú se é o We shall all witness it
Onímejò lódún kẹ i bọ The next Onímejò celebration
Ń ṣe la jọ a péjú se é o We shall all witness it
Mémọ ra sọkọ nu I will not loose my husband
Mémọ ra somo nù nítèmi I will not loose my children
Onímejò lódún kẹ i bọ The next Onímejò celebration
Ń se la jọ a péjú se é We shall all witness it

The above song is a supplicatory one and it is more than an entertainment song. The reason adduced for this is found in Awólálú (1979). He claims that prayers are rendered by people from time to time among the Yorùbá. The Yorùbá people believe firmly in the efficacy of prayer uttered by an individual in private worship or by the priest at corporate worship, so during Onímejò festival some song rendered are suplicatory in nature because people used them to pray to witness another celebration of Onímejò festival.

Prominent feature of Onímejò festival song is dance. During the rendition of the song dance features prominently because it is an expressive medium in African life and culture. Dance in Onímejò festival song is movement oriented and requires concentration and proper articulation. This is because it communicates its message to the observers; the messages are beauty, elegance and chastity. The intricate and
delicate nature of dance movements in Onímejò festival results in their over-whelming power to convey messages with lasting impressions on the mind of the beholder. This account for Bakary (1972:27) observation that:

The dance also, by the use of human body, reproduces the passions and actions of men in order to express a collective motion to teach a religious rite or simply to entertain. It can also enact a legend or a story.

When Onímejò festival song is rendered, the masquerade (Akọ Eégún) moves his body forward and backward, then from side to side and then in a semicircular turns from left to right. His apparel tilts from side to side. Each movements of Onímejò masquerade are slow and majestic. He dances round the arena like a king. The costumes and the dance steps of Onímejò display the status and achievements of the ancestor he embodies. Dance serve as a transitional device during the rendition of Onímejò festival song. It helps the dramaturge in proper role realization and effectively persuades the audience into participating. As the masquerade dance progresses to a climax, the audience responds spontaneously and undergoes the different emotional phases with the dancer.

Significance of Onímejò Festival Song

Songs and music propel dramatic action in Onímejò festival drama. These elements express the theme of performance and serve as catalyst in creating the desire moods by making the atmosphere tensed.

Indeed, music is one of the phenomena that cut across all races and ethnic groups of the world. This is the reason why music is regarded as a universal language and a strong force that binds the people of the world together regardless of their ethnic groups or races (Olúkòjú, 1978).

Music propels dramatic action in Onímejò festival. Membranophones and idiophones musical ensemble were used during Onímejò celebration (Olúkòjú, 1978). The membranophone that was used during Onímejò festival is small skin drum (Bàtági), while the idiophones used are a wooden gong (Àdágbà), and an iron gong (Ọ̀wé rê). The Bàtági plays the role of cantor in some of the responsorial singing in
Onímejò festival. The audience gives verbal interpretations to it because they are attuned to the drum language.

Music provides continuity throughout the celebration of Onímejò festival. The musicians, at times increase the tempo of the music until it seems that no human being can dance it but the Onímejò mask does. The quickening tempo and the dance fill Onímejò mask with super natural strength and enable him to direct all his attention and energy into the performance. Music performs the role of motivator to the community during Onímejò festival. Music established a joyous mood and uplifts the morale of the actors and audience alike.

Songs and chant play a significant role during Onímejò festival in Ìdó-Àjìnàre. Both songs and the chant contribute to the musical aspect of the festival. As the chanter eulogizes Onímejò during the festival he brings him (Onímejò) to the living presence of the audience. Continuous chanting and singing heighten the mood of the audience during Onímejò festival celebration in Ìdó-Àjìnàre. The significance of these songs are that they are used for celebration, eulogizing, supplication and to indicate religious tolerance.

Conclusion

It is worthy of note that the songs rendered during Onímejò ritual festival performance are not for entertainment alone. They also play other significant roles such as importance of the festival, eulogy, religious tolerance and supplication. The songs perform the role of motivator to the community. It also established a joyous mood and uplifts the morale of the people. Some of the songs rendered advocate for religious tolerance and creates avenue for the people to pray for protection, prosperity and abundant provision of material things. The heroic achievement of Onímejò was brought to the fore through the festival songs and the inevitability of the celebration of Onímejò festival was made known. Therefore, it has been established through this work that Onímejò festival songs play other significant roles apart from entertainment.
References


Symbolism, Functionality and Philosophy of Okpesi Wood

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Abstract
The repudiation of almost everything cultural and its denouncement as fetish and devilish with the advent of Christianity has resulted in degradation of Igbo arts and culture. However, displacement has remained a feature of traditional society. This study on functionality and philosophy of Okpesi wood sculptures in Igbo land particularly the Idemili area, endeavours to revive our interest in the Igbo lost cultural heritage and identity. Executed through participant observation method, the study discovers that Okpesi stands in agreement with ofo na ogu which should be seen as an embodiment of Igbo ethics and should form the basis for Igbo National thought. Okpesi symbol stands for the spirit of communism despite individualistic tendencies through westernization. Okpesi is viewed as a social control system and as a generalized artistic medium of social interaction linking individuals to a community of significant others through shared life meanings. Deducing from the interviews, this paper concludes that Okpesi symbol is believed to reform the individual/community ideals – expectations in life and predestination, to achieve self actualization and community development. The study recommends that Ndigbo should not hesitate to search for their identity through Igbo arts as a chart for progress, solidarity and development.

Introduction
The Igbo people (best known as Ndigbo) live in the eastern part of Nigeria and other parts of west and middle-belt region of Nigeria. Up till date, scholars have no single widely accepted belief or myth on the origin of the Igbo (Modo: 2004; Onwuejeogwu: 1975; Afigbo: 1991). However, many believe they must have come from Egypt or from the East following the diffusionist theory. A renowned Igbo slave of the 17th century (a Delta Igbo) Olaudah Equiano traced the Igbo to the Jews. Forsyth (1969) in the book, the Biafra Story and others agreed to the Jewish origin
postulations. Ukpabi (2000) argued that they belong to the Negro stock, and the Negro race is said to have originated at a place, which falls below the belt lying along the latitude of Asselar, North West of Timbuktu and Khartoum. Specifically, the Igbo belong to the Kwa sub-group of the Niger-Congo Negro languages, which include, Ijaw, Yoruba, Edo, Nupe, Igala and others. They began to diverge about 6000 years ago by moving from their central places of Nri-Awka-Orlu region to other places where they are found today (Onwuejeogwu; 1975). There is no consensus on the origin of the Igbo people; however, the use of Igbo arts/artifacts may give archeological evidence and better clue to the origin of the Igbo people.

Ikwuegbu 2010, in an interview on Ndigbo, observed that the Igbo people were noted for their republican spirit, egalitarian nature, industriousness and hard-work with high sense of individuality and communality. He further observed that they are a people rich in traditions, culture and civilization that date back to pre-colonial era. Their civilization according to Esike (2008 p.28) manifests in the philosophy, art, religion, politics, sociology and science of the people which was acknowledged by the colonizers at their contact with them. Okeke and Chima (2007) similarly observe that subsequently international relations, co-operation and trade with the colonizers became the main vectors of cultural transfer. The original conception of life then changed, giving way to completely new perspectives in a foreign outfit.

The above no doubt, made the so called thriving civilization of Ndigbo, as well as the rest people of Africa to be thwarted and subjugated in cultures and civilization. Small wonder, derogatory words like fetish, idolatry, primitive, tribe among others were used to make nonsense of the artifacts, religion, philosophy, language of the people. To better this situation, the literate modern artists, anthropologist, art historians, writers and others who have come to the realization of the dying Igbo cultural heritage have resorted to rediscovery and preservation through research and sensitization in Igbo land. Taking advantage of the resilient nature of Igbo traditional arts Nzewi (2000, p.226) observes that the arts, by their fundamental nature are more resilient than other culture traits when invaded by forces of mental disorientation.

In this regard, this paper shall look at Igbo arts and artifacts as its main focus. Igbo arts are notable for their quality, diversity and quantity. Ndigbo have in the past
expressed themselves in different media such as bronze, brass, wood, fibre, beads, terracotta, ivory, mud and others, but the medium to be discussed in this study will be wood sculptures of the Igbo concept of Okpesi or Okposi (dialectical differences), with special emphasis on the Idemili people of Anambra state.

**Review of Literature – Theoretical and Empirical Studies**

Every scientific research is built upon well-established principles called theories. Thus, adopting a theoretical framework enables the researcher to analyze and relate the variables under investigation with existing relevant theories. Igbo culture involves a lot of elements which are united in one worldview. The Igbo traditional socio-political system represents an interdependence of activities, institutions, rituals and values of the people. To understand the concept of religious worship of deities in Igbo land is to understand the socio-cultural life of the people which includes descent, order, war, medicine, thanksgiving and life generally. To do justice to this, one needs a theoretical framework. Radcliffe-Brown cited in Jha (2001), writes that social structures are human structured in arrangements of persons on relationships institutionally defined and regulated. The elements of social structure are those things which constitute the activities in which relation is significant. The Igbo society believes that life was the business of the living and the spirits. The spirits (deities) must be properly recognized for them to continue to oversee successfully the affairs of man. When people receive favour from the gods of the land, they must show appreciation. Many empirical studies, theoretical orientation and literature were used in the course of this study on Okpesi wood symbol. Okpesi is an artistic expression in wood portraying the Igbo artistic art practice of Idemili people, which is termed art of life and considered more than that of aesthetics arts for art sake of the west. Okpesi art object as a symbolic system, fell fair and square in the symbolic anthropology as well as symbolic interactionism because it was only man that used symbols which will help in interpretation as explanation of Okpesi symbol to sustain its prestigious cultural heritage.

The guild carvers noted the meaning of Okpesi as well as their diverse typology. They traced Okpesi origin to the myth of Nri and Chukwu which was linked with
patrilineal system noted with its originators concerning the Eri and the relationship of
the generic rights and the family concept – the father and his children social structure
such that when a father dies, the eldest son – Diokpala- takes over and is looked upon
by the entire family to lead them. This leads to the concept of a good man and filial
piety. To borrow the words of Fortes, Okpesi is acquired by men who have tried out
their best without success and wished to know the cause of their predicament. They
could acquire the Okpesi ndi ichie (elders’ okpesi) on the one hand, and on the other
hand acquire Okpesi onye uwa (the reincarnated persons Okpesi). On special cases, if
one is a special person like an artist, a diviner or a blacksmith, he acquires the Okpesi
ndi Agwu. The production and procurement of these symbols is predicated by the
believer on ancestorhood. Onwuejeogwu (2007 p.251) argued that the religious
institutions in which it is ritually and socially molded, serves as the medium that helps
the individual to interact with his father, dead or alive. The very father who controlled
his conduct during his life time turns into the ancestors who censor his conduct when
he is dead. Ndigbo, as noted by the respondent of this survey, laments their failure as a
consequence of not acquiring the Okpesi symbol, which has led to performing Okpesi
festival and ritual to mark the union between the living and their dead ancestors - Ndi-
Ichie or ndi oki. Secondly, this festival re-enacts their solidarity in reaching out to
chukwu through supplication for his blessings in sending the food crops – yam,
cocoyam, and others as fertility in all agricultural products for man’s benefit and
general good.

Symbolic interactionalism is used by family scholars today as Modo (2006)
obscerved. He argues that it was popularized by early philosophers and sociologists
such as George Simmel, William James, Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert
mead. Modo noted that, its approach challenged the previous belief and the
understanding that explanatory human behaviour was founded on a set of instincts
peculiar to the human organism. Modo cited Leslie White; korman (1984), who
pointed that it is believed that people rather than being bound by evolutionary instincts
have the capacity to use and manipulate symbols and to think freely and creatively.

Okpesi is carved by the artist (Omenka, Ogbunka, Di nka or Onye Nka according to
dialectical differences,) who is believed to have talent which is a gift from his or her
personal god ‘chi’ – who is a creative emanation of the supreme creator – Chi Okike. Aniakor (2002 p.302) agrees to this and argues that the gift of artistry (ime nka, igbu nka) is believed to be inscribed as lines (akalaka) on one’s palms from birth. This study agrees with Aniakor that through such a gift, the gods give distinction to the status and role performance of the creative artist. It means that the gift of skills and artistry by gods of arts – Agwu nka – to the living derives from the Igbo belief is predestination. This affects individuals in their search for the predestined vocation which when wrongly chosen, leads to failed expectations as a consequence of a forsaken talent, but when correctly discerned would lead to success. The artist wields this power to work for his community targeted at solving social problem such as the one that prompted the making of the Okpesi symbol. This capacity to use and manipulate symbols with their meaning, shared and learned is only possible through interaction with others and has the greatest import and significance within the family unit. So the key to understanding family behaviour lies in the interaction that individuals attributed to these interactions. This is obvious from the myth of origin of Okpesi symbol as related to Eri and Nri.

Origin of Okpesi and its Significance in Idemili

The Idemili traditional cosmology and religious beliefs are interwoven and centred on concepts that had stood the test of time, which helps in the understanding of the basis of their philosophy. Ndigbo believe both in scientific, metaphysical as well as sacred and socio-environmental forces. That is why Ene (2009) argued that in a very tolerant but conservative philosophy, the Igbo philosophy has the capacity for ecumenism, while not yielding an inch to mythical and unproven concepts of life on earth. The Igbo philosophy maintains an elastic but credible concept of the cosmos and its constituents that are rooted in science rather than the traditional myths of some imported beliefs. For an instance, when an adult is faced with constant unsuccessful undertaking in life, and is anxious of what his age-mates, family, community (looking glass self) say, he attributes his failure to predestination because of Igbo worldview. The remedy in this situation is the achievement of the expectation, which if not possible might lead to a state of anomie thereby asking stealing or suicide possible. The
individual, with the help of his family members who are generally worried, seek the services of a diviner (Dibia afa), who will recommend the Okpesi symbol, specifying the type that will help the individual. The individual thus commission the (omenka) artist to get it done for him. The respondents of this survey also reveal that Okpesi is owned by individuals or community and that is why the people celebrate the Okpesi festival.

The Idemili Igbo people are deeply concerned when an individual is faced with failed expectation which leads to the procurement of Okpesi ndi ichei or Okpesi ndi Agwu among others. See the plates below:

![Plate I: Okpesi Ndi-Ichie](image1)
![Plate II: Okpesi Ndi-Agwu](image2)
![Plate III: Okpesi Onye Uwa](image3)

Socialization is important in Idemili cultural explanation which point at interaction. Modo (2004) shared the same opinion, since the family is the primary source of socialization, where the child learns norms, values, symbols and meanings; they become actors as well as reactors. Through this process of socialization, individual with failed expectation as a consequence of their belief in predestination acquires Okpesi symbol as directed by the diviner. This work reveals the paramount role played by the artist as well as the fact that Ndigbo could control the age-long problem of suicide which many sociologist and anthropologists could not solve.

This is still practiced till date. Though due to Christianity people do it secretly to change one’s misfortune to success by secretly acquiring the Okpesi symbol when
faced with the problem of success, predestination and failed expectations. Most Christian adherents under cover enquire through *Afa* – divination - by looking for the cause and possible solution to the problem which will lead to the procurement of the *Okpesi* symbol of a particular typology as the case may be. This consciousness of what people feel about oneself is what Cooley calls the looking glass self. Modo (2004) agrees with Cooley on the ‘looking glass self’ and noted that it depends on the situation at hand and how such a situation is interpreted by all the actors, which the individual chooses from a cluster of roles appropriate to be play.

Humans learn to interact effectively through role-taking and role-playing. Individuals play the roles expected of them for the achievement of the expected goals. One takes the role of the other when one anticipates how they will be received by another, but modifies their behaviour in accordance with these perceptions. One acquired *Okpesi* symbol when faced with such situations like trying to achieve success, victory, wealth, affluence etc. because he expects the family, age mates and community to accord him respect, improved social status with enviable achievements. Similarly, after the socialized person learns to interpret the symbolic environment which consist of norms, values and shared meanings of Idemili people, such a person will be accorded due respect because he has nipped his problem in the bud.

The Effect of Western Culture/Christianity on *Okpesi*

The causes of truancy and preference for western culture as against Igbo culture among Ndigbo, Nigerians and most other Africans are not farfetched. It is because of the advent of Christianity and colonialism with their accompanying acculturation tendencies. This no doubt affects the psyche and worldview of Nigerians on things concerning indigenous social realities. From this survey, it was observed that new Christian converts believe that a good Christian must do away with African cultures which gave impetus to the traditional religion and artifact because they are vehicles for carrying out witchcraft and sorceries. Most of them believe that all the elements and artifacts of African cultures especially that of Ndigbo were forms of idolatry, and so fetish and forever will remain evil. The pastors believe that it is not enough to
denounce an idol and rejected paganism without completely destroying everything related to it. Akunkuwa (2008) narrated how the born again Christians burnt the famous Idezuna shrine in Uke town, which made some of the juju priest hide their deities. The respondents lamented on how such rampages have succeeded in demolishing all the elements of their culture traits and cultural heritage which define them as Ndigbo.

The Christian uninterrupted physical demolition of cultural artifacts to guarantee their extinction, and the entire Igbo traditional system, no doubt, affected the people’s consciousness, preservation and appreciation of the cultural virtues embedded in such artifacts and the political culture which they signify especially that of Okpesi. The sharp practices of Ndigbo against fellow Ndigbo in the name of Christianity help in the total degradation of Igbo arts, artifacts and culture. Due to these changes resulting in lack of good morals as gross gruesome and even cruel aspects such as the Osu/Ohu caste system in the church without discrimination has helped to change the attitude of most Ndigbo which Achebe (1958) was able to capture. Truancy grew from this and preference for western values to their own value grew because Christianity is seen as liberation from discrimination, the (Osu/Ohu), burying alive, cannibalism, witchcraft, sorcery, human sacrifice and other states of awfulness and bondage conditions seen among the people.

Traditional religion and worldview gives every individual as well as the entire community the opportunity to better their lives by creating Okpesi symbol with its ritual and festivals to appease the supernatural forces responsible for the failed expectation in order to achieve success. Okpesi symbol and iconography is born out of the Idemili Igbo holy alliance with nature or environment and in communion with the world of the spirits and ancestors, even in modern times. The Idemili Igbo has essentially a religious worldview, since to be or live is to be religious. This is because their vision of reality is holistically admitting no radical splits between the natural and supernatural as their cosmology reveals. Nature or environment to them is out there for veneration. Thus, Okpesi festival and Ifejioku festival have a ritual sacrificial phase during which cocks are sacrificed to the ancestors and their blood smeared on the Okpesi symbol: a feasting in which feastal communion is achieved between the guests
on one hand and between the living and the dead on the other. Okpesi art form as a ritual symbol should be seen as a meta-social form for expressing the social-relationships of the actors, mediating these relationship to them in the shape of concrete wooden images or symbols. It is made to accommodate the complex cultural meaning that symbols channel into a communication currency, as well as, confer meanings on the social co-implication of the symbols. Okpesi should be viewed as a ritual symbol used as a societal control system, a generalized artistic medium of social interaction linking the individual to a community of significant others through the symbolic mobilization of shared life meanings, especially life expectations of individuals. The symbol reforms the individual/community ideals, expectations and predestinations in life to achieve self-actualization and community development.

In line with the above, it is obvious that such factors like westernization, worldview, religion, imperialism, colonization, ethnocentrism and globalization (Onwuejeogwu: 2007 p.236) have contributed to the final down fall of African technology, and her religious systems. The slave trade, imperialism, colonization, apartheid and racial discrimination are the instruments used to degrade past Africa achievement. This study agrees with Onwuejeogwu and posits that, Ndigbo should not hesitate to search for their lost identity by looking inwards to those lost cultural virtues and values embedded in their art and artifacts as a chart of progress, cohesion and solidarity.

Conclusion

The study noticed that westernization has come to stay and that the Europeans through evangelism introduced western culture and values. Ndigbo were made to accept the white man’s culture as a good way of life, the other side of the coin is the inability of the west to appreciate the positive sides of our culture. They failed to understand the pattern of Igbo traditional religion, psychology, customs, ethics, morals, norms and values which they dismissed as fetish or idolatry worship. Our educated men and women who have forgotten their culture became external model-oriented carriers of the new ways and ideas which contributed to the annihilation of Igbo art in culture. They see western art and culture as the means to better their life in
its quality and quantity to be truly modern and civilized. They forget that the virtues found in Okpesi symbol as communitism symbol, victory, success, consensus can be hanerised to improve technology, science and development as their cultural heritage and identity. Onwuejeogwu (2007 p.225) agreed with the above in the following words:

At present, emphasis should be on technological and scientific thought but efforts should be made to keep the ritual processes alive because they are rich reservoirs from which other processes of thinking such as philosophy, ethic and even science were fed. The foundation of African science, art, technology, music, architecture, drama, poetry etc. is her cosmology, religion and ethic.

The fieldwork observation agrees with the above suggestion and urges Ndigbo and other Africans to keep African ritual process and cultural heritage alive.

Recommendations

1. In the objects and practices lie our identity, origin, social structure, religion, cosmology and worldview as a rich reservoir from which the processes of thinking, technology, philosophy, science, art, religion, sociology etc are fed. Okpesi symbol as one of the objects is relevant for government, the individual, community, the artist, scholars and others. Okpesi symbol and other Igbo cultural objects should be studied by more scholars to help in the reconstruction of the Igbo historical origin, cosmology, life world, religion, history of art and archaeology of the people for posterity and general development.

2. Art and culture under anthropology, sociology or history should be made compulsory for students of all Nigerian higher institution of learning, so as to make the students imbibe their culture, know their history and appreciate their arts in other to fit into the globalized world.

3. The Okpesi symbol should be used as an apt medallion symbol, as its underlying unifying superstructure illustrates the federating units of different interdependent institutions as Okpesi structuralism.
4. ‘For Ndigbo to search for their identity, they should look inwards to re-access those lost cultural virtues embedded in their art and artifacts especially that of Okpesi as a chart of progress and solidarity. This means that when the virtues of Okpesi symbol is taken as a symbol for predestination, and correcting failed expectations, unity, and victory, it will lend a voice to what Eteng’s (2004 p.7) observes as follows:

The vices responsible for the contradictions and resultant conflicts and crises will be considerably eliminated through a powerful moral rearmament and re-orientation in which every Igbo individual will be transformed into either a religious fanatic or a cultural zealot or both.

Eteng argued that this alone will lead the modern crisis-ridden Igbo society to recapture its pristine normative system which has been lost to excessive individualism, intense competition and acquisitiveness, mutual suspicion, hostility and social instability. Thereafter, harmony and togetherness will return alongside the spirit of communitism and every Igbo man will be his brother’s keeper.

Reference


**Interviews**
