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**International Journal  
of Institute of  
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## **LANGUAGE SHIFT AND ENVIRON-MENTALITY: THE NIGERIAN SITUATION**

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### **Abstract**

*A fact in language matters is that the world of any group-monolingual or multilingual-depends on their language habits. In everyday life, people are immersed in communication events of different kinds; with themselves, with others, with the media, yet seldom do they reflect on the process as important landmark of being in a community, and being humans. Language ascertains and sustains the reality of every society determining the performative experiences of the users, though the users may not be reflexively aware. Linguistic research, with neurological studies, shows that human speech is highly dependent on a neuronal network located in different, but specific sites within the brain. Thus man's language, mentality, environment, and being can not be easily separated. Discussing language shift is one of the interesting components for discussing the ways in which language reflects in its users, their values, and the puzzles that are deeply rooted in the logical structures of such language. Problems can arise from value conflicts within the individual, and with others who obey different culturally based communication rules. This paper examines the Nigerian linguistic environment, and its effect on the mentality, and values of many Nigerians. The evidence conclusively implies that the shift from our cultures and languages has influenced the attitudes of many Nigerians, thus the identity problems most obvious among the youths.*

### **Key Words:**

- Language shift;
- Environ-mentality;
- Multilingualism;
- Language environment;
- Social problems.

## **Introduction**

A fact in language matters is that the world of any group-monolingual or multilingual depends largely on their language habits exposing the fact that man's world hood is this environment, mentality and intelligible interactions. Language ascertains and sustains the reality of every society determining man's performative experience or form of life, though he may not be reflexively aware of it. Man's environment, language and being cannot be easily separated. A shift in language thus means a shift in human habits and behaviour. Okonkwo (1994:116) thus adds:

It is important to note that language reflects the personality and culture, and helps in turn in moulding the personality...In simple terms, the language of the people stands out as their social mirror... The *bonum commune* of the given people precipitates in culture and language

That man is in the world is not just a spatial juxtaposed enclosure or confinement, but involves a search for the form of knowledge to help him come out of the chaos of perception he faces daily. Thus, in multilingual societies, the conglomeration of languages as a result of environment is unavoidable. Man, being what he is, not just an entity but a project of intellectual involvement which is possible only through language, tries to shift to the language of his advantage. Okonkwo (2008) further adds that man's being in the word is a structural circumspensive disposition for meaning, making intelligible ways and means to constitute a meaningful life for himself — thus shifting his linguistic dispositions towards it. Language shift is a term that refers to the choice made by a society, group or individual as to which language to use for which functions — though shifts can be for selfish gains.

The language shifts taking place in Nigeria are best viewed as changing patterns of multilingualism. Such shifts in patters of language use are occurring throughout the nation resulting in threats on the vitality and viability of some of our languages. It must be acknowledged that language and cultural changes are distinct processes of man right from the Darwinian evolution, which can account for the many changes in human behaviour, though the language faculty of the brain accounts for this better.

### **The Crux of the Matter**

Reflex, as change may be, has been part of language and unconsciously people are loosing grip of their most treasured natural advantage and pride of indigenous language. This shift has eaten deep into the marrows of many Nigerians with "Ndi Igbo" mostly affected as is reflected in our youths. I stand to be corrected. This paper is an overview of the dimensions that language shifts cum environment has affected our day-to-day relationship amongst ourselves, our ideologies and the practical exhibition of our already inculcated mentality in Nigeria. Without doubts, there is a vivid mentality that this ugly mayor has engendered into our lives; that is, the development of inferiority and inferior regards for whatever that is ours, and a transcendental elevation of the alien but official language and all that are associated with it. The thought of this has remained disarming and disheartening especially as its practice is taken as ultimate and development.

There is no need to shy away from the definition of the terms of this topic as that would bring the crux of the matter to limelight. The three major concepts (language shift, environment, and environmentality) shall be well discussed, as in their definitions, the discussions of this paper shall be based.

### **Language shift**

A brief reference to the definition of language may do for this paper. It is necessary to state that language is a system of codes for communication. It is the totality of our existence and worldhood, as the articulation of intelligibility and the constitutional mode of meaning.

Language shift automatically becomes the shift from the intelligibility and constitutional mode of meaning. Language shift is often referred to as language replacement or assimilation — a process whereby a speech community shifts to speaking another language. It is the change from the habitual use of one code of expression to another. This means that individuals thus change their language habits. Language shift perfects reduction in competence and performance of the affected people's linguistic ability, thus putting up some pressure on their mentality.

The implications of shift in a multilingual society like ours, the language conflicts and competitions that follow, and the mentality these create in our lives are what this paper refers to as environmentality. There is proof that language shift can cause very serious social and



mental problems in the society as is reported in the Wikipedia. According to Wikipedia — the free encyclopedia (2010):

Language shift can be detrimental to at least parts of the community... sociolinguists such as Joshua Fishman, Lilly Wong Fillmore, and Jon Reyher report that language shift (when it involves loss of the first language) can lead to cultural disintegration, and a variety of social problems including increased alcoholism, dysfunctional families, and increased incidence of premature death. For example, Ohiri-Aniche (1997) observes a tendency among many Nigerians to bring up their children as monolingual speakers of English, and reports that this can lead to their children holding their heritage language in disdain and feeling ashamed of being associated with the language of their parents... As a result of this, some Nigerians are said to feel neither wholly European nor wholly Nigerian.

What could be the state of the individual in this state of life as created by parents and the environment? Philosophers would often say that the limit of one's language is the limit of his world. (cf. Sefler 1974). Thus, the resultant effect of language shift is the shift in the environmentality of the users of such a language which is often not always positive. Essien (1990:155) adds that "crises within the mentality" of people results when any language is excluded from most privileges of any other language. He further adds that the situation commands violence, and more crises. Can the different handfuls of crises in Nigeria be attributed to this then? The linguistic, political, economic and social changes in our society have led to the obvious increases of language shift and consequent crises.

### **Environment**

The environment here is our language environment — the multilingual nature of Nigeria. Nigeria is a large nation in terms of land mass and population, with a large number of languages spoken within her territory — thus multilingual as a result of nationalism. Multilingualism is the norm in many parts of the world today even where one language

dominates. But in the case of Nigeria, it is only through the learning of an additional language/official language can people have access to social mobility with some level of formal education. Obviously, such choice can lead to serious shift and eventual death of some unmaintained national languages. Although official policies recognize the right of different groups to maintain their languages and cultures, there are no provisions for the resources for such activities.

Our environment today creates the bane/base of this language shift by presenting itself as a daily revolving and producing medium. The new language – English – has come with its contributions to a particular way of life, and this new lifestyle is absorbed even unknowingly as the *modus operandi* of the society. This unlivable change is the character and characteristic of our contemporary environment which is continuously open to accept any logical or non-logical, sensible or senseless contributions from any language, especially when it is associated with the “prestigious language”. Holmes (1997:66) supports this view when she adds, “Rapid shift occurs when people are anxious to get on in a society where knowledge of the second language is a pre-requisite for success”.

The environment is not a thing out there but is in us, for us, with us, and about us. Before anything, entity or idea could take any shape; the environment nurtures it into being and thus shapes it. In other words, nothing gains intelligibility without first being exposed to an encounter with man and his environment. Our language environment is what it is because of our intelligible dispositions towards it.

### **Environ-Mentality**

The hyphenation of environment and mentality is as a mark of stress on the different entities that come together to portray what this paper sees as a serious social problem in Nigeria. Environment is as discussed above, but mentally we think that any method or way of life any person adopts or abrogates personally and practices becomes a custom. This may be the reason for which many of us forgo our indigenous and national languages for an alien but official one, accepting and believing that it is the right way of life as it is “developmental”.

It must be noted here that the form of our language of choice shapes our perceptions and cognitions according to the Sapir-Whorfain hypothesis. Also, according to Piaget (1952), there are some innate cognitive abilities in man which the environment helps to make one

develop well even in language — that is why it is said that all human behaviour contain something innate. The language innateness in man and the acquisitions from the environment determine man's perceptions in all, and for all issues.

The brain/mind provides the store and engine room for language and cognition. It can conveniently be said, therefore, that the linguistic and cognitive basis of communication (speech) chain is in the brain and that makes possible the human behaviour called language possible. Every form of information possible is coded, encoded and decode in the brain. Though the brain, above every other thing, is an organ whose purpose is to manipulate the human behaviour in every environment to secure survival; it serves as the engine room for language. It is therefore difficult to separate language from mentality and behaviour. To support this, Agbedo (2003:130) states "The brain is an organ in the head that controls thought ,memory, feelings, and movements, that is made up of mainly neurons 'numbering more than a thousand million".

The location theory further supports this by suggesting that man's language ability takes a part of the brain, which exposes how central language is to the human existence. A philosopher — Ben Ebo — would often say that whatever happens to man happens to him in the mind. Since the mind is that part of the person that makes the person able to be aware of things, and to react appropriately, it thus controls man's thoughts and feelings. Linguistic research with neurological studies shows that human speech and behaviour are highly dependent on a neuronal network located in different but specific sites within the brain, (Agbedo 2003). Thus, whatever affects language affects mentality and intelligence. That is why all human beings exhibit certain behaviour due to genetic code of human existence (language) as well as culture. Malia Knezek (2009) further adds to this by saying that, "Not only must language be able to cause change in the environment (or in our own thinking....), but the language we use must also fit the intellectual; abilities we already have".

Since many Nigerians are shifting in language and culture, which code of human existence should fit the intellectual abilities of Nigerians to give us the all round development for societal growth? There is need to sharpen the cultural eyes of all who aid language shift, or are shifting in language themselves, to observe how culture shift influences the

youths' language skills and their learning of standard English — the so called language of education.

### **Language Shift and the Nigerian Situation**

An individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behaviour so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified.

Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985:181).

It is appreciable that in a multilingual society like ours, people come from cultures that use different language systems. All should be valued and accepted as equally important. The variations of language and background of Nigerians, coupled with the imposed official language make language shift a complicated issue in Nigeria.

In everyday life, people are immersed in communicative events within themselves, with others, or even with the media; yet, seldom do they reflect on the processes involved as an important landmark of being in a community of people and being human beings with others from different language backgrounds. There may arise problems from value conflicts between or among such people who are obeying different culturally based communication rules. Unfamiliarity with cultural communication differences can lead to misunderstanding, misinterpretations, unintentional insults, disagreements or even social upheavals as a result of language shift.

Nationality should be the highest goal of a political social group like Nigeria. Such a society should be non-discriminatory in language, but should be bothered by the development of a language that should be Nigerian so as to have the Nigerian cultures carried along. A pidgin, for an instance, can take care of this. The adoption of the English language whose conscious and unconscious western influence have penetrated Nigerians, to the extent of uprooting us all as the official language; this is not helping out issues in the Nigeria language problems. It has only de-Nigerianised many Nigerians through the gradual acquisition of western mental attitudes and tastes. Akindele and Adegbite (1991:71) stated this clearly by saying "Indeed the education acquired by Nigerians alienated them from their societies and cultures. It became essentially a process of de-Nigerianisation".

Language and linguistic problems have been at the root of many multilingual nations like Nigeria, but it seems that, that of Nigeria is most glaring. For instance:-

- (a) **Politically:** Nigeria is made up of many nationalities (ethnic groups) which according to Akindele and Adegbite (1999:70) still, "...coincide with ethnic group boundaries in Nigeria, e.g. Yourba, Hausa, Igbo, Edo, Tiv, Ijaw e.t.c.". Language as a means of communication used by a speech group exposes the embodiment of their culture, values and mentality. In political situations (which is all about power), the different groups struggle for power to be at the centre of affairs so as to take decisions to suite them, as well as weld power over the nation's resources.

Presently, some groups in Nigeria protest against discriminations and disadvantages. They believe they are educationally disadvantaged and power disadvantaged too; so, they are trying to get at the national resources, which is neither easy nor positive. Thus the political conditions of the nation continue to maintain a powerful sense of ethnic distinctiveness which is marked by a number of other obvious ways, (Oknokwo 1994).

- (b) **Socially:** - The cultural problems of the conflicting cultures in Nigeria are the root problems of our society. Some form of social stigma is attached to some language groups (nationalities) in the nation. It is this social stigma that this nation has been suffering from for sometime now, whereby some groups suffering from the stigma want to share in the natural resources of their fatherland. Obviously, sociopolitical struggles about language in a multilingual society like Nigeria are not merely about languages, but most obviously about lost of identity and sociopolitical power which have been lost through language shift. Suffice it to add here that this language shift also shifted, and is still shifting the values in the society.

Thus, the moral values are nothing to be encouraged by, especially, amongst the youths who seem the most "cut up with" in this situation. There is no much regard for elders or even the Supreme Being as is



obvious in their modes of greetings and dressings. The youths have degenerated to the extent of wearing party wears or even night wears along the streets and even into our classrooms in higher the institutions around. The moral laws of some of our religions have degenerated to self interpretations according to individual wishes and circumstances. The level of de-valuation of our traditional moral laws may not be far from the reasons for the increased rate of moral depravity in our societies today.

A good root in mother tongue (indigenous and national languages) can go a long way in solving these problems, since a child is best equipped socially in his mother tongue. It is getting established that people in many developing countries try to escape from poverty by shifting from their indigenous languages. Malmkjaer (1991) earlier supports this in Agbedo (2003:35) by saying that:

.....in the relationship between man's environment and his behaviour, everything referred to as mental activity, including language use, can be explained in terms of habit or patterns of stimulus and response built up through conditioning — i.e. environment.

In other words, he is trying to say that a specific stimulus demands a specific behaviour. That is to say that poverty demands shift of language. But we should not dance so much to the gains of any elian language at the expense of our languages to the extent of abstention.

**(c) Economically/Educationally:** - The basic language and cultural shift effects are most obvious in our education and consequent economy. What can be the fate of education in a situation where children from different language backgrounds converge in a class with a teacher from a totally different language background from most of the children? Which mode of communication, culture, and social values would be upheld? Automatically English will dominate, and imitations reign.

A nation's developmental grading depends on her economic viability, and a nation's economy depends on her skilled manpower, and level of skilled educated citizenry. In Nigeria, the different ethnic groups regard one another as different people with different cultural traditions including even education. Any attitude towards any language influences any relationship with the users of such language — positive or negative.

The Social Identity Theory (SIT) by a social psychologist (Henri Tajfel) cited in Meyerhoff (2006:70) suggests that people “see contrasts between groups in terms of competitions, and thus try to find means of favouring the group they indentify with” and members of such a group. Thus expertise, knowledge and skill become waste when meritocracy is sacrificed at the altar of ethnicity and nepotism.

If we could maintain, appreciate and uphold our local languages and culture while we use the English language as a means of official communication, the minds set and values of our people would positively improve. To be at home with one’s local language and culture is to be fortified with linguistic competence, and resultant intelligence. Communicative competence is based on one’s knowledge of language rules which depend on the culture of such a language. Devaluation or rejection of our own language, coupled with partial competence (since most of us learn the target language from teachers who learnt from non-native speakers who also learnt from non-native speakers) of the target language result in some sort of psychological and identity problems — (environ-mentality).

In essence, language is meant “to shade lights on not only the mind and how it copes with feelings, perceptions, and intensions, but also people’s social and cultural activities”. (Agbedo, 2003:26).

### **Summary**

With the definition of the major concepts in the tittle of this paper, a good insight in the crux of this paper is given. Language shift is a good and interesting component for discussing the ways in which language reflects its users. This paper has tried to expose the linguistic problems caused by the shift from our national languages as a result of environment. It establishes that the Nigerian language environment has created linguistic prejudice, exposing positive and negative attitudes towards some language. The linguistic prejudices are inflicted by the language environment resulting into environment influenced mentality.

The way many Nigerians perceive their environment reflects in their actions and responses to societal values. A good support of this can be found in Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) by Howard Giles (1973) cited in Meyerhoff, (2006:72) which suggests that “all human beings attune their behaviour according to interaction”. The mind is at the center of all these. It takes in impressions, processes them, and

fits them into certain symbolic referent which helps it understand its environment by constructing a coherent picture of reality reflected in behaviour. The mind deals with language by using and manipulating it, not in vain though, but guided by the environment which gives the language functions.

In conclusion, it is the environment (multilingual situation) that creates a whole in the mentality of the people which subdues the usefulness of any of their languages, influencing their attitudes — Nigerians — especially the youths.

### **Recommendations**

Problems centered round mentality may not have a razor cut solution. But first and foremost, we must all start the process of disabusing our minds and begin to have positive attitudes towards our local languages.

A most clarion call is on parents, as custodians and teachers of indigenous languages, to change their attitudes towards our languages and cultures so as to teach the children aright. The children should be encouraged to use their mother tongues, at least in our homes, to equip them with the rudiments of linguistic competence, and resultant intelligence.

Efforts to document facts on the local languages and cultures should be encouraged by the government as well as everybody. This would encourage and perpetuate our moral values and cultures.

Study fellowships, scholarships, and other forms of aids from all tiers of government should be availed by government to encourage research and development in our languages. Experts in our local languages should also be innovative in facing the challenges in our languages and cultures.

The Nigerian schools should be decolonized to reorient the perceptions of the youths. In some schools, the speaking of any form of vernacular is “banned”. Proprietors of such rules should refrain from such acts of “de-Nigerianisation” of Nigerians.

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## **A LINGUISTIC INTERPRETATION OF VALUE CRISIS IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The basic importance of values and language and the way they affect people's lives can never be adequately highlighted. The focus of this paper is on language because it is the major, if not the only, means through which the younger members of a society are socialized. It also bemoans the fact that our value system has been bastardized. It notes that verbal language has been abused in many diverse ways; morals have degenerated as a result of the misuse of verbal communication. It believes that all hopes are not lost, if we could return to the practice of upholding the erstwhile verbal taboos. It concludes by advocating that the adult Nigerians be wary of their conduct in order not to use their verbal and non-verbal messages to pass wrong signals to the young, malleable and naïve Nigerians.*

### **Introduction**

Let us begin by recognizing that value and languages are constructs that deeply and totally affect human existence. An assessment of human values and languages is equal to an assessment of the quality, nature and future of human life and existence. Remove the sense of values from the affairs of man, and you will have human beasts living in a chaotic society. The same can be said of language. In the light of the fundamental importance of these concepts, the examination of how they affect life and living in contemporary Nigeria becomes relevant.

The intertwining relationship between the two requires deeper philosophical investigation; suffice it to say that language is a human value of inevitable importance. Again, if language does not exist, value cannot exist in the language faculty of man. Despite the apparent primacy of language over values, it must be stated that a man devoid of the right values of his society is unworthy to live, though he possesses language.



Language is our focus of interest in this paper because it is the only means through which we inculcate our values to the young. It is the link between the adult and the younger generations. It is an instrument for both positive and negative enculturation. There is already a rising feeling that the moral atmosphere in Nigeria has degenerated and that all theoretical approaches to the solution of the problem amount to a forlorn hope. However, it is hoped that thorough examination of the concept of language and its relationship to values will yield better clarification and better understanding of the practical implications of language use and the responsibility of adult Nigerians to the innocent younger Nigerians, who need to be well educated.

### **The Concept of Value, and the Nigeria Value Crisis**

Researchers have continued to investigate the concept on human values, its characteristics and impact on human existence. However, the concept has consistently defied a generally accepted definition. Ilori (1994: 74) confirms the problem associated with the generally agreed definition of value when he observes: "There is little agreement among philosophers as how the term 'value' is to be defined." It is important to note therefore that the notion of a human value system can be quantified as a cognitive map, the dimensions of which capture the semantics of concepts and associated values ([www.questia.com/library/book/the-lang](http://www.questia.com/library/book/the-lang)). This rightly presupposes the fact that "value" is somewhat an abstract philosophical, composite concept. Without engaging in any philosophical dialectics, and for our purpose in this paper, we can simply explain/define "value" to mean the quality, nature or appearance that makes an object, person, thing, activity, behaviour, idea, situation or state of affairs good, cherished, desirable, acceptable, likeable or dignified. A thing of value is, therefore, a thing that is morally, ethically, socially, and culturally, likeable and acceptable. It is a thing or an action that is considered to be good. From the negative view point, a quality or an action may not be desirable, and in that case, it constitutes a wrong value.

Concerning Nigerian's value system, vis-à-vis moral, social, political, economic, educational, aesthetic and traditional values, the known truth remains that it is in crisis. In this polity called Nigeria, there is value debacle. In a very mild manner, Ilori (1994:1) laments thus: "Our ends and values are often confused and vague." The confused situation presents us with the dilemma of how to characterize Nigeria's value

system. Shall we take the negative or the positive approach? In other words, shall the description of our value system exactly capture how we live our lives at present, or shall it portray the ideal moral principles and standards of conduct which only a few Nigerians possess and wish to inculcate into others?

It amounts to dishonesty to tell one another that our value system constitutes those values, principles and ideal codes of behaviour which exist only in the imagination of a few people. Common sense teaches that to wish to have a goat does not make one a goat owner, even though goats abound. An analysis of the choices most Nigerians make, their conduct and the opinions they voice will show that Nigerians value dishonesty, sexual immorality, and respect for money, clannishness and other similar things. These “values” result in other countless corrupt practices in our private and public lives. For example, most Nigerians see nothing wrong in embezzling government funds or in profiteering. To hold an opposing view and to behave otherwise is to be looked upon as a demented fool and to be despised by many friends and relations. Some have sadly lost their jobs and lives as a result of their attempts to uphold their integrity and principle.

On the whole, the right values still exist. However, they exist largely as ideals and dreams to be rediscovered and realized. These values include chastity, hospitality, honesty, and respect for elders, sacredness of life, peace, unity, freedom, justice, patriotism, national consciousness, to mention no more. These are the values that motivate good conduct, but many of them have been completely eroded. An insignificant number of Nigerians still treasure and live by them.

The eroded value landscape of today is not a product of chance, but the result of a gradual process of communication. So whatever negative values, principles, or codes of conduct that govern the lives of Nigerians today were transmitted to them by parents, leaders and the entire socio-political context. With this in mind, let us examine the means through which values are communicated.

### **Language and the Transmission of Values**

Some linguists argue that language should strictly refer to words in their spoken and written forms (Halliday, 1989: 14), while others conceive it as a system of verbal and non-verbal signs. Whether verbal or non-verbal, the basic characteristic of any language is its ability to convey

meaning. Each of the two forms can be used exclusively, depending on the context, but most often the two conjoin in message transmission. Just as Hawks (1977: 125) earlier on observed, Trenholm (1986:69) asserts, "We live in a world saturated with signs. In every act of speech, linguistic signs are created and exchanged, and a whole series of non-linguistic signs come into play."

Language is a vehicle for the transmission of material and non-material aspects of culture. Enculturation will not be possible without language. This vehicle – language – is at the disposal of every normal person. It delivers our messages, ideas, emotions, attitudes, beliefs and values to all who are connected to us through a spectrum of communicative channels. And it does not discriminate against any message.

### **Verbal Language**

Verbal language comprises spoken words and their written equivalents. As a tool of socialization, it is used directly to teach or encourage the child to do the right things, or warn him against the wrong ones. This teaching takes the form of *do's* and *don'ts*. Religious values are also imparted through verbal instructions at home or in the church. Apart from the *do's* and *don'ts*, fables and other stories are used to drive home lessons in morality and wisdom.

The written words become useful as soon as a child can read materials in his mother tongue or any other language. Essential values, beliefs, principles of life and codes of conduct are usually articulated, preserved and presented in written documents. These documents may range from byelaws of associations to the country's legal system. Many of the values are also entrenched in books, especially in school texts.

The direct result of a large body of good school and non-school texts belonging to a society is the creation of an "educated public", whose responsibility it is to transmit the shared values to the younger generation. "Educated public" is the term used by Alasdair MacIntyre as he reflects on education and values in his society (Britain). He sees the existence of an educated public as a measure against value loss and maintains as follows:

An educated community can exist only where there is some large degree of shared background beliefs and attitudes, informed by widespread reading of a common

body of texts, texts which are accorded a canonical status within that particular community... This common possession by a community of such texts is only possible when there is also an established tradition of interpretative understanding of how such texts are to be read and construed. So not every literate and reading public is an educated public; mass literacy in a society which lacks both canonical texts and a tradition of interpretative understanding is more likely to produce a condition of public mindlessness than an educated public (1987:19).

The question of whether we have a body of such canonical texts or not is another matter that requires further research. What requires emphasis now is the point that readers are surely affected by whatever they read, whether they know it or not (Egonu, 1988:146).

Verbal language can also be abused by directly using it to teach wrong beliefs and wrong attitudes. Many parents have advised their sons and daughters to do whatever it is that others do to get money. Some people have openly expressed the views that the end justifies the means, while others also openly express that government work is nobody's work and, therefore, can be done in any manner. This uninformed and corrosive opinion encourages some workers to engage in all manners of cheating in their offices. Added to this is children's exposure to indecent and harmful printed and audio materials.

Another way verbal language has been abused is the mishandling of taboo and sacred expressions. Taboos refer to "acts, objects or relationships which society wishes to avoid and thus to the language used to talk about them. Verbal taboos are generally related to sex, the supernatural, excretion, and death, but quite often they extend to other aspects of domestic and social life" (Crystal, 1989: 8). This does not mean that taboo matters are never discussed. They can be discussed whenever it is imperative, but only figuratively. Such caution and reverence existed in the past. Morals are now very weak because of what people read and listen to. In imitation of Western civilization most Nigerians have found it fashionable to freely and publicly talk about sex and other culturally taboo subjects.

It is common knowledge that the level of chastity among men and women in Igbo land was high in the olden days when the subject of sex was a taboo. But today it is a familiar subject. It is heard on the radio and television; it is read and seen on newspapers and magazines; it is advertised on dresses; it is watched on the video and discussed in classrooms, shops, along the way to streams, and hostels. Advice is even offered publicly to everybody on how to do it safely. It is no wonder then that a good number of Nigerians are immoral, and this is the result of the misuse of the gift of verbal communication.

Also, the divine and holy names of God and Jesus are not handled as sacredly as they should. Too frequent and unnecessary repetition of the names is a mark of disrespect. It can be recalled that some scholars sought to discover the real name of God in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This quest led them to erroneously translate the coded YHWH as Jehovah (Cristal, 1989: 9). This act and the manner many people call the divine names amount to violations of the long-standing prohibition against misusing divine names, especially the name of God, who is both the ultimate value and the source of all eternal values.

### **Non-verbal Language**

This includes all means of communication other than spoken and written words. Agreement on what should constitute non-verbal language is not yet common. Graddol *et al* have a list of six: gestures, proxemics, body contact, posture and body orientation, facial expression, and gaze (1987:135). Trenholm (1986: 74) quotes Knapp who presents taxonomy of seven: body motion or kinesics behaviour, physical characteristics, touching behaviour, paralanguage, proxemics, artifacts, and environmental factors. In spite of the division into discrete units, it is simpler to refer to them in general as actions or behaviour.

In the matter of communicating values, non-verbal language plays an invaluable role. Graddol *et al* (1987: 135) have summarized the communicative functions of non-verbal language as follows:

- (a) it can communicate a specific meaning;
- (b) it can expose people's emotional dispositions; and
- (c) it enables speakers to add emphasis.

In a restricted sense, they believe that "our understanding of face-to-face conversation ... may be impoverished if we do not take account

of the non-verbal component.” Stewart and Moss (1994) aver that “sometimes we rely exclusively on non-verbal messages to reinforce verbal messages.”

Non-verbal messages most often convey meanings contradictory to the verbal messages, or meanings that betray the real emotion, beliefs and values of the transmitter. That is why people say that actions speak louder than words, and that examples are better than precepts. When words and actions convey contradictory information, it becomes extremely difficult to accept the verbal message of the communicator or the communicator himself. Indeed, non-verbal messages exert an overwhelming influence on receivers of the messages. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in Stewart and Moss (1994), has been quoted as having said, “What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say”.

The wrong values which govern the lives of Nigerians today have been largely transmitted to them through the actions of parents, government officials, and government itself. Parents teach their children that honesty and hard work are useless when they assist their children to succeed in examinations through dishonest means. Government officials have been very consistent in teaching that corruption is normal by freely engaging in it with impunity. In recent times none of them has been punished by the law of the land. Mothers, too, teach their daughters that decency and modesty in dressing and behaviour is old-fashioned by wearing dresses that unduly expose their erogenous zones. By neglecting the welfare of teachers and students, and by ignoring the dilapidation of buildings and facilities in schools, the government is saying that the education and education system are of no consequence. The government, too, teaches the people the art of deceit and equivocation when it fails to carry out its responsibilities but turns round to claim and prove that it has performed wonders. Of course people do not need any minister to inform them that local roads are tarred, that pipe-borne water runs in the villages, that the poor eat three square meals a day, if all these are ocular facts.

Also, film and music video producers mindlessly dish out erotic materials to the public. The government keeps quiet. When you query any producer, he will tell you it is all about economics, and that they give society what it wants. The truth is that the producers are corrupt and can only give what they have. This is because decent films and good gospel

music videos sell in millions and the consumers are mostly the youth. The producers are indeed abusing the enormous power they have.

It will not be possible to have a comprehensive catalogue of the ways our actions have perverted the youth. The summary of it all is that the kind of life which the young lead today is largely a mirror of the values and moral dispositions of the adults. It is sad that genuine role models are fast disappearing. The present leadership class largely comprises men and women of reprehensible ugly character that negatively influence the youth.

### **Implications and Suggestions**

The present value situation, vis-à-vis the dominant role language plays in communicating values, has some overlapping implications. In the first place, the pervasive influence of the present value crisis portends complete moral eclipse in the near future. It requires that teachers and men of God should, for no reason, be it hunger, dearth of teaching facilitates, threats from government and cult members, compromise the right values, the truths and standards that govern good life. Hope will still be kept alive if there is/are one/two individual(s) who know(s) the right things to be done.

Secondly, parents and leaders should match their verbal instructions with appropriate moral conduct. Government should ensure that its policy pronouncements are properly implemented so as to achieve the desired objectives. If words are not matched appropriately and morally accepted actions, a situation referred to as “communicator unacceptability” will result. Communicator unacceptability attracted the attention of Aristotle over 25 centuries ago. He maintains that a communicator should, among other things, possess good-will and good character in order to make him/her credible and acceptable to the audience (Trenholm, p. 208). “If listeners believe a speaker is (inordinately) ambitious, vain, selfish or ... morally reprehensible, they will be unlikely to accept his or her message” (Trenholm, p. 208). This might be the reason many Nigerians sigh and turn off their radios, and television sets any time the Nigeria president, minister or state governor begins a public speech.

Again, there should be a return to the practice of upholding verbal taboos, especially as it affects sexual matters. Before we became “civilized”, verbal taboo was a strong protective mechanism against



assaults on the virtue of chastity. Although society has changed, there is still the need to set a limit to which open discussions on the subject of sex can be allowed. This presupposes that all pornographic materials, immodest dresses and the advertisement of condoms should be banned. It is common knowledge that the unexpurgated *Lady Chatterly's Lover* by D.H. Lawrence was the cause of court cases in America and Britain, because it contained just a taboo word: *fuck*. This edition was eventually banned in the two countries in 1959 and 1960 respectively. This shows that obscenity should be fought vigorously by every society, because it corrupts the mind and weakens morals. The fact that western societies have now lost the battle does not suggest that Nigeria will also lose.

Furthermore, further studies in the area of non-verbal communication are necessary. Such aspects as proxemics, objectics, haptics, paralanguages, and kinesics behaviour can be used to convey so many messages and ideas. Very many people appear to be ignorant of their power and role in building and shaping good and virile society.

### **Conclusion**

The attempt in this paper has been to authenticate the fact that the sense of value, especially moral values, which most Nigerians exhibit today is appalling. The acts they perform, the ideas and wishes they express and the dispositions they display make their poor sense of right values evident. This poor sense of values, however, is not innate but the consequence of decoded and imbibed verbal and non-verbal messages transmitted by parents, people in positions of civil and political authority, books and the entire socio-political, economic and cultural contexts. Since wrong values cannot be received unless transmitted, adults should be cautious of every aspect of their lives to ensure that they stop sending wrong signals to the young ones, the innocent Nigerians who represent the future.



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## **MOTHERS' ATTITUDE TO SEXUALITY EDUCATION AS A CHECK TO SEXUAL ABUSE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL GIRLS.**

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### **Abstract**

*In Igbo land, it is customary to protect young people from sexual matters in the erroneous belief that ignorance will enhance chastity. Ironically, due to the same ignorance, many primary school girls are sexually abused by peers, teachers and relatives thereby exposing them to psychological trauma, unwanted pregnancy, physical injury, and sexually transmitted diseases. The present study is an attempt to find out the attitude of mothers to giving Sexuality Education as a check to sexual abuse of primary school girls in Isuikwato Local Government Area of Abia State. Three research questions guided the study. Quota sampling technique was used to sample 24 women from two randomly selected communities in the local government. The instrument for data collection was a Focus Group Discussion Schedule based on the purpose of study and research questions. Data collected were qualitatively analyzed. Results show that there is high prevalence of child sexual abuse, mothers do not know what constitute Sexuality Education, and there is fear that Sexuality Education promotes promiscuity. Based on the findings, some recommendations were made.*

### **Introduction**

Child sexual abuse is forcing a child to engage in sexual activity. This can range from kissing, touching of the sex organ to forced intercourse. Adeosun(2010) defined child sexual abuse as any forced sexual contact on a child by an adult, and Karen and Talon (nd) saw it simply as maltreatment that involves the child in sexual activity to provide gratification to the perpetrator. Adeyinka (2010) called it all forms of unwanted fondling, forced anal or oral contact, sexual acts which are the result of coercion for food, clothing, shelter or employment. For the purpose of this study, child sexual abuse is operationally defined as any sexual act with a child by an adult, which include;

- Oral or anal sex;
- Touching of intimate parts of the body, whether clothed or not;
- Encouraging a child to engage in sexual activity, including masturbation;
- Showing pornography to a child or using a child to create pornography;
- Encouraging a child to engage in prostitution and finally,
- Rape.

Child sexual abuse, like all matters relating to sex and sexuality is surrounded by a culture of silence and is rarely reported, although there is evidence to show that this injustice against children occurs on a daily basis. Nearly all sexual abuse offences are committed by males but men and boys could also be victims of sexual abuse. Although what constitutes a normal way of life in one culture may be frowned at in another, sexual abuse of children is unacceptable in all cultures. Culture according to Akubue and Okolo (2008), is what is socially learned, socially shared and socially transmitted from one generation to another.

Child sexual abuse is so widespread that Kennedy (1997) noted that one in every ten girls is or have been sexually abused and he also revealed that seventy five percent of girls who engage in sexual activity before age fourteen were sexually abused. Most of the reported cases of child sexual abuse were committed by people who are well known to the victim. For example, Udo (2010), reported an incident where a man was having carnal knowledge of his two daughters aged below 12 years, and threatened to kill them if they reported to any one. In another report by Udo (2010), a 39-year-old headmaster raped his pupil in the school's library; a teacher raped his 4-year-old niece; and a 45-year-old man raped a girl of 8 years. Sampson (2010), reported a similar case of an Ohafia man that was ostracized by his community because he impregnated his own daughter. In another report, Aminu and Oche (2011), also wrote about a Deeper Life pastor that raped his landlord's 3-year-old daughter. Wood and Jewkes (1997), in an earlier study on rape and sexual coercion of children, found out that 51 percent of children between 6 months and 14 years receiving treatment for sexual abuse were abused by either a neighbour, a relative, a visitor to the house or a teacher.

Sexual abuse of children is frowned at because the victims are too immature to comprehend the actions meted to them, and are unable to

give informed consent or disapproval. Unlike victims of sexual harassment, victims of child sexual abuse lack the social power to resist or avoid it. Child sexual abuse is an infringement on the fundamental human rights of the child as most children abused have been victims of teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDS. Infact, Ohia and Azikiwe (2009), in a study on the effect of sexual harassment on teaching and learning found that emotional instability, traumatization, and desire for more sex are some of the effects of sexual harassment. These, in effect, may make a child lose the opportunity of schooling when every child has a right to education. This is more so as in many instances ignorant men rape children in the belief that unprotected sex with virgin girls would cure HIV/AIDS (Treger, 2002), thereby violating their right to the principle of life, survival and development to the highest attainable standard of health.

Parents have the responsibility to their children in child rearing, upbringing, protection, and education which includes sexuality education. Hence, there is the need that parents give Sexuality Education early enough to their children but research evidence show that parents shy away from this responsibility thereby leaving it to uninformed peers and even househelps. This attitude of parents may have contributed immensely to experimentation and risky behaviour among school children.

Many studies have identified Sexuality Education as a panacea to child sexual abuse (Omeje and Nwosu 2007, Ohia 2007, Omeje 2009 and Okafor and Agbonna 2010). Sexuality Education is that aspect of education which helps individuals understand and prepare for those experiences in life that deal with the physical, emotional, social growth and maturation pertaining to sexuality and family life. It is the orientation given formally or informally for the purpose of making the recipient develop the right attitude towards all sex related matters in human relations. While Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) defined Sexuality Education as giving the right information on biological facts of the human body and the basic principles of wholesome human relationships, Obanor and Omoera (2009) saw it as a lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs and values about identity, relationships and intimacy.

It is worth mentioning that the aim of Sexuality Education, according to Action Health Incorporated (1996:7) include:

- Development of interpersonal skills that include decision making, assertiveness and refusal skills;
- Helping children form attitudes in order to develop their own values, to enhance self esteem, and to develop insights concerning sexes and relationships with members of both sexes and understand their obligations and responsibilities to others and,
- Helping children on how to resist pressure to become prematurely involved in sexual matters.

Hence, the concern of the researcher is to assess mothers' attitude to sexuality education as a check to sexual harassment of primary school girls. Such assessment will provide information on the prevalence, teachings that constitute sexuality education and when sexuality education will commence.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Although children are confronted everyday by sexuality -in movies, tv shows and books, Sexuality Education and services to adolescent girls remain controversial issues. This is due to the belief that ignorance of sexual matters encourage chastity but newspaper reports and research findings show that girls are exposed to sexual abuse sometimes, even before they start attending school, thereby making them victims of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. To avert such problems, parents, particularly, mothers have enormous roles to play in this regard since the home of the child is the first school of socialization. There is, therefore, the need that parents socialise their children early enough to at least let them know when somebody touches them "in a bad way". It is unfortunate that parents, who should be the primary sexuality educators to their children shy away from this responsibility leaving them to be educated by their equally uniformed peers, and the school which provide little or no education in this regard. This could be that the teachers themselves, even as parents, lack knowledge in the subject. Worse still, the strong influence of culture and religion seems to make open discussion of sex related matters a taboo hence parents seem to abstain from such discussions. The problem of this study therefore, is to investigate the attitude of mothers toward giving Sexuality Education as a check on sexual abuse of primary school girls.

Specifically, the study aimed at

- 1) Finding out the prevalence of sexual abuse of the girl child;
- 2) Identifying the teachings that constitute Sexuality Education;
- 3) Ascertaining if and at what age Sexuality Education should be given.

#### **Research Questions**

- 1) What is the prevalence of sexual abuse of the girl child?
- 2) What are the teachings that constitute Sexuality Education?
- 3) Should Sexuality Education be given and when should it be given?

#### **Methodology**

This study is a survey and was done using mothers who took part in the 2010 August meeting in two autonomous communities (Umuasua and Amaba) randomly selected out of the six communities in Amawu town in Isuikwuato Local Government Area of Abia State. Amawu town was purposively selected from the three clans that make up Isuikwuato because of high incidence of teenage pregnancies and consequent dropping out of school by girls below eighteen years. In each of the autonomous communities, quota sampling technique was used to sample 12 women out of the 150 and 168 in each of the communities to ensure that both educated and not so well educated, urban and rural dwellers, young and middle aged mothers were included in the study. A total of 24 women participated in a focus group discussion of one session for each of the two groups. The average duration of the discussion was 90 minutes. The instrument used for data collection was a focus group discussion schedule which was developed based on the purpose of the study and the research questions. The guideline included:

- 1) Sharing experiences or stories of childhood sexual abuse experiences;
- 2) Meaning of Sexuality Education;
- 3) Whether Sexuality Education should be given;
- 4) Who should give Sexuality Education, and at what age?

Before the discussions commenced, the researcher explained the need for the study based on the increasing incidence of sexual abuse of the girl child, and teenage pregnancies. After this, a focus group discussion was held with the discussants by the researcher with the help of one research

assistant who helped to record the discussions. Data collected were qualitatively analyzed.

## **Results**

### **Research question 1**

The first research question sought answers to the prevalence of sexual abuse of the girl child. The discussants were asked if they have ever heard of, or were victims of child sexual abuse themselves. Almost all the discussants have heard about cases of child sexual abuse. Those who were victims said that they did not realize what the actions meant then. As children, they thought it was just a kind of play with adult males, or older children (male and female). All those who reported being victimized as children said that it was much later that they realized what the actions meant. Below are some of the experiences shared by the discussants.

#### **Discussant I**

“There used to be a boy (Augustine) that lived with his master (Teacher) in our yard. He was fond of carrying me on his laps. Each time he carried me, there used to be this hard thing between his legs that press on my buttocks that kept me uncomfortable. While carrying me, he used to touch my private part. As this will be going on, he will be giving me sweet or biscuits. Although I did not like what he does to me, the biscuits and sweets he gives me made me go again each time he calls me”.

#### **Discussant II**

“One Miss (a female teacher) lived in our yard and I used to do little chores like washing plates and sweeping the house for her. There was a time her brother visited. Each time Miss went to school, he will call me on the pretence that he wants to send me on an errand. When I get into the room, he will be showing me erotic pictures in Drum magazine. He tells me that he does the things in the magazine with Miss and will like to teach me to do it when I grow up. Actually, he did not for once touch me in a bad way but those pictures and the things he used to tell me aroused my interest in sex quite early in life”.



**Discussant III**

“When I was eight years old, precisely in 1977, not many people owned television sets. Only our landlord had one in our yard. In the evenings, especially on Tuesdays, that was when they used to do *The Masqurades (Zebrudaya)*, we go to watch television in the landlord’s house. One day, there was a scene of a man and woman cuddling each other and I was so excited and announced to the crowd that our teacher does that to me and the other girls in the class. Because I believed that whatever our teacher teacher did was right, I did not know that carrying me on his laps and touching me intimately when I go to drop the register in his house was wrong. It was the beating Mama gave me, her visit to the headmaster and the sudden transfer of the teacher that gave me an idea that something was wrong”.

**Discussant IV**

“Actually, this did not happen to me nor any of my girls. My husband is a police man. One day, he came back from work and told me to be very vigilant where my girls are concerned. I became confused because my eldest girl was just eight years old then. I then demanded know what he meant and he narrated how they investigated the case Of a man that teaches in a nursery/primary school in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State, who was caught while he was having carnal knowledge of one of his pupils. He said that the teacher confessed to have done it to other pupils whose ages range between seven and twelve”

**Research Question II** sought answers on what teaching constitute Sexuality Education. Nearly all the discussants thought that it is just teaching how to engage in sexual intercourse. Just one teacher in one of the groups said that it is teachings that have to do with teaching children how to take care of their bodies so that they can function well as adult men and women. Below are some of their contributions.

**Discussant V**

“We all went to school but nobody taught us how to engage in sexual intercourse during our own time. We were only taught that getting too close to the opposite sex portend trouble and should be avoided”

**Discussant VI**

“In my own little understanding, I think that it is teaching Children the functions of the different parts of their bodies and how to take care of them. At least this is what I try to do. I am a teacher and the authorities have been talking to us about this. It was not there during our own time. Even if we were molested or abused, we did not understand what it meant. Telling children the whole truth as it is is dangerous considering the fact that they already have experience from what they see on television”.

**Discussant VII**

“Whether Sexuality Education or Sex Education, all of them mean that somehow you will tell a child the truth about getting pregnant and having babies. During our own time, the half truths we were given was enough education. Children are taught that they see with their eyes and should not put sharp objects in their eyes. They are taught to clean their teeth so that they don't get bad. If children are also taught what their sex organs are for, it will be good.

**Research Question III**

This research question dealt with finding out at what age Sexuality Education should be given. Many discussants felt that this education should not be given at all because they will not be comfortable discussing such a sensitive matter with their daughters and that such teachings may cause the children to experiment on sex. The discussants who were in favour of giving Sexuality Education were of the opinion that it should be given when the child is about getting married, some said that the best time to start should be at the onset of menstruation. Some of their contributions include the following:

**Discussant VIII**

“There is no need asking when this teaching should be given because I will not sit my daughter down to tell her to go to bed with her husband. Nobody taught me. These things come naturally”.

**Discussant IX**

“The only education we were given during our own time was how to keep our homes and relate well with our in-laws. The other one should be left alone. As children are growing they will understand. After all unlike us, they now have things to read”.

**Discussant X**

“I think that it is good to start early to demystify matters relating to sexuality. If Sexuality Education starts very early, it makes a child to discuss freely with the parents if somehow something goes wrong”.

**Discussant XI**

“It will be embarrassing to engage my children in such discussion. If it has to be done at all, let their teachers do it”.

**Discussant XIII**

“We have to let the sleeping dog lie at least until the girls start menstruating or at best, when they are getting married. It is true that I was a victim as a child but because I did not understand, it was not much of a problem. Telling them about this when they are too small may make them to be inquisitive”.

**Discussion of Findings**

Result of research question I indicated that there is a high prevalence of child sexual abuse. This is because every participant in the focus group discussion has heard stories of child sexual abuse or was once a victim, although without realizing it then. The findings from this

research question also revealed that the abuses were perpetrated by people who were well known to the child and her family.

This finding is corroborated by Adeosun (2010) in a study to ascertain the prevalence of child sexual abuse, which found that 52% of discussants confirmed having experienced abuse. Also, Woods and Jewkes (1997) found that 51% of children between 6 months and 15 years receiving treatment as a result of sexual abuse, were abused either by a neighbour, a visitor to the house, a relative or a teacher. The findings from research questions I also revealed that experience of sexual abuse during childhood encourages premature interest in sexual activity. This finding is in line with the findings of Lasen, Chapman and Armstrong (1996) in a study conducted on child sexual abuse in rural populations of South Africa. Their study found that there is a positive correlate between risky sexual life and premature sexual activity, and child sexual abuse. In another study to ascertain the relationship between child sexual abuse and sexually active primary school girls, Larsen, Chapman and Armstrong (1996) also found that 49% of the sexually active primary school girls reported having been sexually coerced and abused. Likewise in a related study, Trocme and Wolf (2001) found that there is a positive relationship between sex abuse and precocious sexual activity like exhibiting seductive behaviours.

Findings from research question II show that many mothers, themselves, do not know the teachings that constitute Sexuality Education. This is probably because of the culture of silence on sexuality and, sex related matters, and the misconception that sexuality is equivalent to coitus (Ohia, 2007).

Research question III findings show that many mothers are not in favour of giving sexuality education. Their stand may probably be as a result of religion and culture which teach that sexuality matters, if discussed at all, should be between husband and wife, and behind closed doors. The findings further show that the mothers who were in favour of giving Sexuality Education feel that it should be given at first menstruation or when the child is about getting married. If human sexuality is portrayed as a healthy normal part of life that is not derogatory, there should be no need delaying such important aspect of education. This is because there research evidence that many children are now sexually active even before they start mensurating NTA (2007) and

because of ignorance, do not know that they can get pregnant after just one exposure to intercourse.

### **Conclusions**

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made

- There is a high prevalence of child sexual abuse.
- Many mothers do not know what constitute Sexuality Education.
- There is the fear that Sexuality Education promotes promiscuity.

### **Recommendations**

- Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.
- There should be a massive re-orientation programme, involving the church, ngos ,traditional rulers and women associations to change the misconceptions about Sexuality Education.
- Sexuality Education should be included in primary and secondary school curriculum and in the General Studies for undergraduates so that they will use the knowledge acquired to educate their brothers,sisters,and children.

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**AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT OF RURAL COMMUNITY  
DWELLERS IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION  
INITIATIVES/PROGRAMMES IN AYAMELUM L.G.A**

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and  
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**Abstract**

*The study sought to find out the extent of awareness and involvement of rural community dwellers in Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPS) in Ayamelum Local Government Area. The design of the study was a simple survey. The study was carried out in Ayamelum Local Government Area of Anambra State. The population of the study is approximately three hundred and fifty eight (358) male adult rural dwellers in the eight communities that made up Ayamelum Local Government. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 50% of the target population. Four (4), out of the eight (8) communities in Ayamelum LGA were sampled. The sample for the study however is comprised of 160 respondents. However, 40 respondents were sampled from each community. Questionnaire instrument which has a four point ratings scale of Very Great Extent, Great Extent, Low Extent and Very Low Extent, was used to collect data. Data were analyzed using mean to answer the two research questions. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations among others were made:- newly established PAPS initiatives should be communicated to the rural dwellers through the mass media, churches, NYSC members, and non-governmental organizations for proper awareness and involvement. The governments should monitor the implementation of on going PAPS to ensure they reach the rural poor. It concludes that proper awareness and involvement of the rural dwellers in PAPS initiatives of the governments can accelerate the development of the country.*

**Introduction**

Poverty which is a situation where people are unable to obtain an adequate income, find a suitable job, own property or maintain healthy



living conditions (Obadan, 1996) has been a worrisome and serious challenge to governments in Nigeria. Its effects, which includes lack and deprivation in the basic necessities of life, is irritating and or regrettable. Poverty humiliates and dehumanizes its victim. As Ukpong (1996:1) puts it, “poverty has earned recognition in the extent of its ravaging society and the affairs of humanity at the international, national and local levels...”

In an effort to overcome poverty and its devastating effects, Nigeria government at various times has established Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPS) (Onah 2010:86). This effort continues to the level that many policies and programmes aimed at poverty reduction were initiated between 1970 and 2004. Although in the period between 1970 and 1980s there was oil boom but the Nigerian governments, did not rest on its oars but was making efforts to ensure that poverty did not ravage the nation, hence the establishment of Poverty Alleviation Initiatives (PAIS). Some of these programmes include –National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP). Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution Programme (GRP), Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Better Life Programme (BLP) National Directorate of Employment (NDE), People’s Bank of Nigeria (PNB) Community Bank (CB), Family Support Programme (FSP), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP); Poverty Eradication Programme (PEP); National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP); and National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS).

The General Yakubu Gowon’s administration established the two earliest PAPs in Nigeria in 1972 (Onah, 2010). The programmes were National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) and Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB). The essence of the establishment of the two programmes above was to guarantee food security as to alleviate poverty. Although, the programmes were short-lived. It did not achieve its set objectives. Summarizing the Gowon’s Poverty Alleviation Programme, Maduagu in Onah, (2010:87) maintain that,

*The programme turned to be a colossal waste and nothing was achieved; the funds were made available to the elite and not the poor; the elite, who had access to the funds, diverted the funds to*

*other sectors rather than agriculture and at the end, the main focus of the PAPS were not achieved and poverty was not alleviated, the poor increased in number and the agricultural sector faced a severe set back.*

Upon the failure of the NAFPP and NACB, General Obasanjo's administration established in 1976 a Poverty Alleviation Programme called Operation Feed the Nation (OFN). The attempt was towards food security to reduce emigration and to alleviate poverty. The Obasanjo's OFN tried in provision and distribution of fertilizers, improved seedlings, pesticides and necessary support services to the farmers for food security; mass mobilization through radio, jingle, music, television advert etc and regulation and stabilization of basic food prices and so on (Onah, 2010). Despite its lofty goals, many rural dwellers were denied the fertilizers. Few that received it could not see the impact due to conservatism, did not use it. Some believed it would kill the fertility of the soil that their crops could do without it since they have rich agricultural soil.

Green Revolution Programme (GRP) was established at the inception of Shagari's Civilian regime in 1979 and the aim was towards reducing hunger in Nigeria by empowering and improving the agricultural sector through giving loans. This did not benefit the rural poor. It only helped wealthy individuals who acquired landed property with the loan which they used as collateral security for loan for other investments. GRP could not reduce poverty, rather it induced poverty by promoting income inequality and poverty in Nigeria (Onah, 2010).

Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) which was established in 1986, was an agricultural programme of Babangida administration. It aimed at bettering the life of the rural poor. Among the aims of DFRRI were provision of rural roads, rural water sanitation; and rural electrification programme. The projects gulped ₦1.9billion without Nigerians benefiting from them. (Okwueze, 2010).

The Better Life Programme (BLP) was formulated in 1987 by Mrs. Maryam Babangida during Babangida's military administration. The better life supports a multitude of programmes targeted at women, including agriculture and extension services, education and vocational training, cottage industries and food processing, primary health care delivery, enlightenment/awareness and co-operatives (Obadan 2011).

Viewing unemployment as the cause of poverty in Nigeria, the National Directorate of Employment was established in 1986. Agedah (1993), and Onah (2010) opine that the NDE was established in response to the Federal Operation Service's (FOS) release in September 1985 that one in every 12 Nigerians was unemployed in both urban and rural areas. It was established to create jobs for Nigerians as a way of reducing poverty. Thousands of jobs were generated for Nigerian youths and many Nigerians benefited from the NDE job wise.

The People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN) was established in 1989. The essence of its establishment was to extend credit to the poor who could not have access to the credit facilities available in the commercial and merchant banks. The PBN did not last long because of corruption on the part of the leaders. Consequently, the establishment of the Community Banks in 1991, was to alleviate the plight of the rural poor. Although it has made tremendous achievements in bettering the lots of the poor in some communities in Nigeria, still, some communities have not enjoyed its benefits. For instance, the Ayamelum rural poor have not tapped much advantage from the CBs. There is no one CB in Ayamelum Local Government Area.

The Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) was established in 2000 to respond to the problems of rising unemployment and crime wave particularly among youths. The main aims of the PAP were to:-

- Reduce the problem of unemployment and hence raise effective demand in the economy;
- Increase the productiveness of the economy; and
- Drastically reduce the embarrassing crime wave in the society (Obadan, 2011).

However inspite of the laudable aims of the PAP, much have not been achieved in some communities. The unemployment wave has reached its crescendo to the level that many university graduates are still jobless.

Let us look at NAPEP-The National Poverty Eradication Programme which was established in 2001. The aim of NAPEP was the provision of strategies for the eradication of absolute poverty in Nigeria (FRN, 2001). Lamenting on the status of NAPEP in Nigeria, Onah (2010:96) asserts.

*Several attempts have been made by the NAPEP as marks to fight poverty. It has several schemes (about 14 schemes) and projects aimed at achieving its objectives. Unfortunately, despite the numerous programmes, the poor are yet to see the actual impact of the programme, despite the huge financial allocation to the problems by the government. The programme has good intentions, but the focus is doubtful ...*

The aims of every poverty alleviation initiative were to ameliorate the suffering of the people by providing them employment opportunities and access to credit facilities, to enable them establish their own businesses. In spite of the expressed concerns of past governments and the plethora of programmes and policies that have bearing on poverty, the incidence and scourge of poverty have worsened over the years. The factors which have constrained the effectiveness of the poverty alleviation initiatives are the following among others:-

- Lack of targeting mechanisms of the poor and the fact that most of the programmes do not focus directly on the poor;
- Political and policy instability have resulted in frequent policy changes and inconsistent implementation which in turn have prevented continuous progress and
- Inadequate co-ordination of the various programmes has resulted in each institution carrying out its own activities with resultant duplication of effort and inefficient use of limited resources.

However, analyzing Poverty Alleviation Initiatives in Nigeria, Onah (2010:87) laments in the following lines, "approximately, what all the rural development policies and programmes so far embarked upon by successive Nigerian governments have in common is that they have failed to achieve their stated objectives. It can be adduced that the PAPS failed to alleviate, instead elevated poverty in the country". The reasons for the above contentions include corruption in government and neglect of the target group (the poor) who were never considered during formulation of these policies. In this vein, Onah (2010:100) posits that:

*The problem of poverty is poverty. When these noble programmes meant to alleviate poverty are*

*left in the hands of poor and very hungry politicians and bureaucrats ... the result is that they will alleviate their own poverty, increase their fortunes and the poor will remain poorer.*

Not only has the failure to ensure the successful implementation of the various programmes, and policies made the incidence of poverty to loam large, the phenomenon has continued to spread and deepen.

Indeed, the effects of poverty seem to be more noticed in the lives and activities of rural community dwellers. Rural community dwellers are about 70% of Nigerians that reside in the rural areas who seem to be denied some laudable policies and programmes of the governments. This group of people is mostly agrarian population of less literacy and exposure to tackle their social, economic and political denials by some corrupt elements. Large segment of the population lives in rural areas as peasant farmers (Uwakah, 1976). Okoli and Onah (2002:157) further add that;

*The rural community dwellers have fewer opportunities for education, employment and good living. They lack economic and social amenities such as good roads, electricity, pipe born water, hospitals, bridges, banks, industries, telephone ... generally, the rural communities are poor and economically live below poverty line and are therefore, referred to as economically underdeveloped.*

Based on the foregoing, this study aimed at finding out the extent of awareness and involvement of male adult Ayamelum rural community dwellers in some Poverty Alleviation Initiatives/Programmes.

To carry out this study, therefore, the following research questions guided the study:-

- 1) To what extent are the male adult Ayamelum rural dwellers aware of the Poverty Alleviation Programmes/Initiatives in Ayamelum Local Government Area?
- 2) To what extent have the male adult Ayamelum rural dwellers been involved in Poverty Alleviation Programmes/Initiatives in Ayamelum Local Government Area?

### **Method**

The study was a simple survey; hence the study aims at eliciting information from the respondents on the extent they are aware and involved in Poverty Alleviation Programme initiatives.

### **Area of the Study**

The study was carried out in Ayamelum local government area of Anambra State.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study is made up of all the male adults of 60 years and above rural community dwellers in eight (8) communities that make up Ayamelum Local Government Area. This includes stranger elements that have lived in Ayamelum LGA for a long period of time and are still there, that can provide answers to issues affecting Ayamelum rural community dwellers. The numbers of the male adults between the age of 60 and above are approximately three hundred and fifty eight (358).

### **Sample of the Study**

Simple random sampling technique was used to select 50% of the male adults between the age of 60 and above. The male adults within this age bracket in four communities in Ayamelum LGA were sampled. The total number of sampled subject was one hundred and sixty (160).

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

Drafted questionnaire and interview schedule were used for the data collection. The questionnaire instrument consists of two parts – part 'A' elicits information on the personal data of the respondents while part 'B' is divided into two – section I and section II. Section I, which has 11 items sought information on the extent of awareness of the PAPS initiatives by the male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum LGA. Section II which has 7 items sought information on the extent of involvement on poverty alleviation initiatives among the male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum LGA. The instrument was rated on a Likert's 4point rating scale of VGE, GE, LE and VLE, with the values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

### **Validation and Reliability of the Instrument**

Structured questionnaire was face validated by an expert in the Department of Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The instrument was later administered by the researchers with the aid of other four research assistants.

### **Data Analysis**

Data collected were analyzed using mean scores to answer the research questions.

The bench mark for the acceptance value is from 2.50 and above while the mean score of 2.49 and below is regarded as not acceptable value. Therefore, any item with 2.50 and above will be taken as being aware or involved, while any item with the mean of 2.49 and below will be taken to be unaware or not involved. 160 completed questionnaires were collated and used for the analysis.

### **Results**

The findings of the study are presented in tables 1 and 2 below

**Table I:** Extent of Awareness of the PAPS initiatives by the Ayamelum rural dwellers.

S/N	Items	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	DECISION
	As a member of Ayamelum rural community, I am aware of the following PAPS initiatives						
1	National Accelerated Food Production Programmes (NAFPP)	320	186	20	8	3.34	GE
2	Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB)	280	255	4	3	3.39	GE
3	Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)	344	192	14	3	3.46	GE
4	Green Revolution Programme (GRP)	240	210	40	10	3.13	GE

5	Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)	320	150	50	5	3.28	GE
6	Better Life Programme (BLP)	60	48	160	49	1.98	LE
7	National Directorate of Employment (NDE)	80	180	100	30	2.44	LE
8	People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN)	12	12	200	53	1.73	LE
9	Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP)	4	24	220	41	1.81	LE
10	Poverty Eradication Programme (PEP)	360	120	34	13	3.29	GE
11	National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS)	120	150	120	20	2.56	GE
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>					2.76	GE

The findings from table 1, show that male adults rural dwellers in Ayamelum Local Government Area are aware of early PAPS initiatives like NAFFP, NACB, OFN, GRP, and DFRRI, and recent ones like the PEP and NEEDS to a great extent with the mean scores of 3.34, 3.39, 3.46, 3.13, 3.28, 3.29 and 2.56 respectively. The grand mean score 2.76 as well reveals this. On the other hand, the male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum LGA are aware of the PAPS initiatives like BLP, NDE, PBN and FEAP to a low extent with the mean scores of 1.98, 2.44, 1.73 and 1.81 respectively.

**Table 2:** Extent of involvement in PAPS initiatives by the Ayamelum rural dwellers

S/N	Items	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	DECISION
1	I obtained loan from the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB)	80	234	92	16	2.64	GE



2	The loan from the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB) helped me in my agricultural production	20	18	100	99	1.48	VLE
3	I obtained fertilizers, seedlings and pesticides from Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) Agencies	280	60	56	42	2.74	GE
4	I used fertilizers, seedlings and pesticides from the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) for my agricultural production	16	24	120	88	1.55	LE
5	We got our area electrified through DFRRI	0	6	40	138	1.15	VLE
6	I used credit obtained from NAPEP to set my business	16	24	90	103	1.46	VLE
7	I benefited from the Green Revolution Programme's (GRP) Facilities	40	45	76	97	1.61	LE
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>						1.80	LE

The findings from table 2, reveal that the male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum LGA were involved in early PAPS initiatives like NACB and OFN to a great extent with the mean scores of 2.64 and 2.74 respectively. They were involved in PAPS initiative like GRP to a low extent with the mean scores of 1.61, while they were involved in PAPS initiative like NACB loans, DFRRI, NAPEP to a very low extent with the mean scores of 1.48, 1.15, and 1.46 respectively. However, grand total is

1.80. In summary, male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum LGA were involved to a low extent in the PAPS initiatives.

### **Discussion**

The findings in table 1 shows that male adult rural community dwellers in Ayamelum LGA are aware of most of the early poverty alleviation programmes initiatives and few recent ones in Ayamelum LGA to a great extent. They are aware of the NAFPP, NACB, OFN, GRP, PEP, GRP, and recent ones like the PEP and NEEDS. Buttressing this finding was Ovuigbho in Okwueze (2010) who states that, Operation Feed the Nation's only success was in creating awareness of food shortage and the need to tackle the problems. However, the research documents, that the rural dwellers in Ayamelum LGA have low awareness of the PAPS initiatives like the Peoples Bank of Nigeria, (PBN), Better Life Programme (BLP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP). This findings is in coherence with the view of Mgbemena (2009) who avers that wrong approach to the programme design which emphasized "top down" approach rather from "bottom up" approach hindered effectiveness of several past Poverty Alleviation Programmes.

The research findings on table 2, reveal that male-adult-Ayamelum rural dwellers were involved in the early Poverty Alleviation Programme initiatives like the NACB and OFN to a great extent. However, the responses from the respondents from the interview schedule showed that the opportunities were not effectively utilized for some farmers used the loans they were given to drink on every market day until the money got finished. They further maintained that some farmers used their own loan from the NACB for buying bicycles, and others used theirs to marry while only few used the loan for the purpose it was meant for. The ugly paraphernalia seen above made some farmers that benefited from the NACB loans to be unable to settle the debts. The loan from NAFPP and NACB subsequently stopped coming due to the inability of people to pay back the loan. This very phenomenon is in line with the view of Okwueze (2010) that NAFPP turned out to be a colossal waste and nothing was achieved.

Some respondents in oral interview with the researchers reported that the rice seedlings given to them by the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) agency were parboiled, processed and consumed by some farmers

instead of planting the improved seedlings. Fertilizers were reported to be packed inside the bushes for they fear it could destroy their land and kill its fertility when used; some used the bags of fertilizers to block drainages in the field while some preferred using the sacks of the fertilizers while pouring away fertilizers content of the bags. What an ignorance? However, few that used the fertilizers, witnessed improved farm yields.

On the part of DFERRI in the area of providing infrastructural facilities to the rural communities, it did not try at all in Ayamelum Local Government. Till the time of this research, some communities in Ayamelum LGA of Anambra State have not witnessed tarred roads, electricity and other basic amenities. May be the funds made available for that was embezzled by some unscrupulous elements among the facilitators. Collaborating this finding, Mbaebie (2009) stresses that DFERRI was 70% failure because of the then embezzling spirit of the facilitators and lack of proper strategizing for maximum implementation.

The results of the findings also show that NAPEP has not favoured the male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum Local Government Area. This finding is in line with the view of Mbaebie (2009) who laments that, for records, NAPEP failed in its co-ordination amongst member ministries and agencies due to lack of honesty, transparency and poor communication system". Adding to this, Ikwumelu (2009:46) asserts that;

*All the poverty alleviation programmes which held sway at various periods of Nigeria existence failed not as a result of poor conception but on account of haphazard, non-focused and blurred implementation by the leaders. They failed because the money never went to the beneficiaries; it was completely hijacked by a clique who then dispensed it amongst themselves, their friends and cronies.*

Finally, the findings revealed that the GRP was a total failure in Ayamelum LGA. Buttressing this finding, Okwueze (2010) avers that many senior civil and military officers both in and out of office used their access to the state to the advantages of the wide range of facilities committed to the Green Revolution. He further maintains that these

bureaucrats' cum farmers were also joined by many private business men. Some new-breed farmers' were only interested in getting certificate of occupancy for large tracks of land. The land could then be used for speculative and other purposes, such as, collateral for security loans. A visit to Omor-Adani road can make the findings of these studies on GRP more authentic for such lands are still there in intimidating hectares. Akinsanmi in Okwueze (2010) also adds that there was untimely arrival and indiscriminate distribution of inputs such as fertilizers.

### **Recommendations**

1. Newly created Poverty Alleviation Programmes should be communicated to the rural dwellers through Non-governmental organizations, churches, NYSC members, television, radio, other media and government agencies to ensure that the rural poor are fully made aware of their existence. This will enable those who are willing to benefit from the programmes.
2. Governments at all levels should monitor the implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programmes in the rural areas to ensure that the programmes get to the people it is meant for. This, when done, will reduce the rate at which some poverty alleviation programmes are denied the rural poor.
3. Government at all levels in Nigeria should consider the pros and cons of a particular programme (policy) before establishing it to reduce the incidence of having poorly implemented programmes.
4. Participants to any Poverty Alleviation Programmes should try and keep the tenets for the survival of the programme. That is, both the facilitators and the beneficiaries should obey the rule of the game.
5. People of the rural areas should try and gain western education, for illiteracy was the reason for some rural dwellers not benefiting from the Poverty Alleviation Initiatives. Illiteracy is poverty and poverty is underdevelopment.
6. The rural community dwellers should be involved in making policies/programmes that affect them.

## **Conclusion**

The research findings have shown that the male adult rural dwellers in Ayamelum Local Government Area are aware of some certain Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria and have involved themselves in some of them. It reveals that there were cases of poor involvement in some PAPS initiatives due to illiteracy and ignorance and that they were denied benefits from some PAPS initiatives by the facilitators of such programmes.

Nonetheless, the research has been able to establish a link between awareness and involvement in a programme. That awareness necessitates involvement, although at times people can be aware of certain poverty alleviation programme, but may not want to be involved in them. People's involvement in PAPS initiatives brings about development hence the governments of all countries' resolve to establish PAPS that can better the lots of the rural areas where about 70% of the people live.

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## **SOME LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE PRODUCTION**

**Nwokolo Peter N.**

### **Abstract:**

*In every human society, law serves as one of the instruments of social control. It is the equilibrating strategy by which societal forces and institutional functions are managed to ensure peace and harmony. Hence, every field of human endeavor has a set of rules that guides its action. Without the civilizing effect of law, man will be left in a state of nature in which Hobbes observed life is brutish, nasty and short. In every civilized society, there are for instance laws guiding the banking industry, legal practice, medical practice, industrial production etc. In the same way, there are laws guiding the production of newspapers and magazines. Such laws provide the bulwark against newspapers engaging in defamation of persons, contemptuous, scurrilous and mendacious publications that provoke dissension and crises in society. Similarly, every profession worth its credibility provides a set of ethical dos and don'ts that guide its members. Unlike laws that are externally directed and enforced, ethics is inner-directed and self-enforced. It is a normative science of conduct that is self-determined and voluntary. The teaching profession, the legal and medical professions each has its own ethical codes that serve as a guiding principle of professional practice. Ditto for the journalism profession, The newspaper, being both a business venture and a quasi-public institution, must observe both the laws of the society in which it operates and ethical imperatives necessary for its existence and credibility. This paper examines some of these legal imperatives and ethical principles that guide newspaper/magazine production in Nigeria. It relied on secondary sources which include: newspapers, magazine, books, journals as well as archival and historical materials in its methodology and data collection.*

### **Introduction**

The print media (which include the newspaper, magazine, books etc) are an indispensable tool for social education and political enlightenment. According to Ogunsiji (1989:6) print journalism started

in Nigeria in 1846 with the installation of a printing press at Calabar by the Presbyterian Mission. The purpose of this, he noted, was “to increase the level of literacy among local people so that they would be able to acquire more knowledge through reading of short stories and essays on various subjects, particularly religious matters.” This resulted in the establishment of the first newspaper known as *Iwe Irohin* in Nigeria, five years later.

Four historical epochs were identified by Ogunsiji in the establishment and growth of newspapers in Nigeria. They include: the era of missionary journalism; the era of the alien-dominated press; the emergence of the indigenous press and the dawn of modern Nigerian newspapers. But it was from the period of indigenous press that the laws guiding the production of newspapers became more stringent. This was due to the intense political activities as marked by the struggle for independence by the indigenous Nigerian newspapers. Surprisingly, some of these stringent and draconian statutes and legislations are still used years after independence by our indigenous government to gag and muzzle the press. For until recently, the law of sedition has hung like the sword of Damocles on the Nigerian press. But thank goodness, with the coming of the freedom of information law, one hopes there is now a silver lining on the dark cloud.

The press serves both as a social institution and a business outfit. For instance, McQuail (2004:160) identified newspapers as private, profit-making, businesses with a special role. They are the basic instrument for information delivery as well as a market place of ideas. As a quasi public institution, the newspaper serves as the watch-dog of the public interest, holding those in authority accountable to the people.

As a business venture, the following organizational structures are possible namely: sole-proprietorship, partnership, limited liability companies and incorporated trustees. Hence, before one engages in newspaper production, one has to have a clear definition of which way he wants to go. But this is not our concern here. Our focus is on the production of newspapers and magazine as a quasi-public institution and the laws and ethics that guide this activity.

According to Section 2 Cap 291 Laws of the Federation, 1990, a newspaper which includes the magazine is defined as “any paper containing public news, intelligence or occurrences or any remark, observation or comments thereon printed for sale and published



periodically or in parts or numbers.” And, being a matter within the concurrent list of subjects in the constitution, both the federal and state governments can authorize the publication of newspapers. But despite this concurrent power, the definition of newspapers and magazines appears to be similar. For instance, Section 2 Cap. 118 Vol. V, Revised Laws of Enugu State, 2004 and Section 2 of the Newspapers laws of Cross River State define newspapers as: “any paper containing intelligence or occurrences or any remarks or observations thereon published periodically.”

Having grappled with what a newspaper is, which applies also to the magazine, we now look at the laws guiding their production. This will be followed by the discussion on the ethical codes that must be borne in mind in newspaper and magazine production. Both the laws and the ethics serve as sign posts to publishers and producers of newspapers.

#### **Theoretical discussion on the nature of mass communication laws relevant to newspaper production:**

As stated earlier, law in every society provides the enabling environment for the production and dissemination of public information. Goodhart in Ihome (1995:4) defines law as “any rule of human conduct which is recognized as being obligatory.” To him, this definition accords with Marett’s position that law is “the authoritative regulation of social relation.” He observes that law is a rule of conduct of which the existence of the society is based, and the violation of which, in consequence tends to militate against the society.

Explaining the latin maxim *Ubi societas ibi jus*, Ibekwe (1993:59) noted that there is no society without law to direct social intercourse. In his words, “Without the law men’s freedoms are bound to be encroached upon by other men in the same or other society.” Emphasizing the pre-eminent position of law to the existence of the society, Aristotle said: “he, therefore, who has the law rule, seems to advocate the exclusive rule of god and reason; but he who would commit the government to man adds a brutish element.” Hence Philip of Macedon’s grandson’s remark: “We Greeks are ruled by law, not by men.” Ditto for Nigeria as every part of our society is governed by law. We now define mass communication law as the law that governs the practice of mass communication and prescribes the duties and liabilities of the mass

communicator, (Umoh:223). As stated earlier the tools of mass communication include: newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the new media. Each of these communication media is regulated by the law.

In the production of newspapers, and magazines, the law ensures restraint to guarantee harmony. Hence, journalism must be practised with responsibility. As posited by Aristotle, virtue lies in the mean. And in his Categorical Imperative theory, Kant (cited in Nwammuo, 2006:349) stated that people should behave only as they wish everyone else to behave. And according to Utilitarian theory developed by Jeremy Bentham and redefined by Stuart, journalists should judge what is right by asking what will give the greatest good for the greatest member. This is in tandem with the Golden Rule which enjoins journalist to “do unto others as they would have them do unto them.” (Lorenz and Vivian 2005). This, to me, is the main thrust of both the law and ethics that guide the production of newspapers and magazines.

It is the journalists that are responsible for the production of newspapers. The proprietor may produce the money, and there may be other support staff, but the task of newspaper production is that of the journalist and all the laws and the ethical codes are for him to observe. Hence, the Social Responsibility theory, most apt for this work, imposes on the reporter, the editor and indeed other media workers, the duty to be socially and ethically responsible as they carry out their duties in line with the societal values. They must obey the laws of the society that govern newspaper production.

There are many laws governing the newspaper enterprise. According to Umoh (1990:225) the nature of newspaper law falls into three parts, namely, the part that governs the establishment of the outfit, the part that prescribes the conditions of their operation, and the part that seeks to protect third party interest. It is this third party interest that concerns us in this work.

We just mention in passing that before establishing a newspaper or magazine, the proprietor will be required to do the following. In some states of the federation, for instance, the proprietor and publisher cannot produce a newspaper unless he files an affidavit disclosing the name or title of the paper and the house or building where the paper is to be printed. In addition, he has to disclose his name, address and occupation, pay a monetary deposit or execute a bond and provide sureties.

To keep a printing press, one must also swear to an affidavit stating the name, address and occupation of the owner and the house or building where the press is located (see sections 4 and 5 of Lagos State Newspaper law 2004 and the Printing Presses Law of the Cross River State).

Having established a newspaper, the publisher must ensure that his newspaper avoids libelous publications, contempt of court, and the like. We take them one after the other.

### **Legal issues in newspaper production**

Newspaper production is a serious enterprise. In his book, *Contemporary Editing*, Friend et al (2000:367) provides the following general guides to newspaper producers. First, he advises that editors must develop a basic knowledge of media law and an ability to recognize stories, photos and language likely to cause legal problems. He identified libel as central to most damaging legal cases: inaccurate information that damages someone's reputation.

Second, professional ethics and codes of conduct should guide editors in developing a sense of fairness and integrity that serves the long term interests of the news community. A good editor should be the conscience of the newspaper.

Third, a good editor should work to eliminate biased language, assumptions and stereotypes from news stories as part of their commitment to ethics.

Finally, he cautions that legal, ethical and bias problems are more often, found in routine stories than long and controversial ones. He maintains that legal and ethical issues are closely related. However, for the sake of clarity, we identify the legal issues to include:

#### **(1) Defamation**

A newspaper to survive and be a going concern must avoid defamatory publications like a plague. Defamation says Winifield in *Enemo* (2007:237):

*Is the publication of a statement which reflects on a person's reputation and tends to lower him in the estimation of right-thinking members of society generally or tends to make them shun or avoid him.*

In *Sketch publishing Co. Ltd. and Anor. v Alahaji Azez Ajagbemokeferi* (1989) the Supreme Court said defamation refers to.

The publication of a statement concerning a person which is calculated to lower him in the estimation of right thinking persons or cause him to be shunned or avoided or expose him to hatred or ridicule or convey an imputation on him disparaging or injurious to him in his office, profession, calling, trade or business.

According to Enemo (2007:240) publication of the following without verification could land a paper in trouble. They include: imputation of a criminal offence, imputation of certain types of diseases, imputation of unchastity or adultery to a woman or girl, imputation affecting office, profession, calling, trade or business.

**Essential elements of the tort of defamation:**

- (1) The words must be defamatory. For instance, it is defamatory to publish that a legal practitioner defrauded his clients or that a medical practitioner has a false degree and that he exploited the public. In *African Press Ltd. v Ikejiani*, the defendant, *African Press Ltd* published an article alleging that Dr. Ikejiani, the plaintiff was “dishonest” “fraudulent” and a “quack.” The article added that the plaintiff had a fake degree in medicine for which he was “kicked out of the university” whereas he obtained a degree in medicine.

In libel suits, the plaintiff does not need to prove that he has suffered damage. The law presumes this in his favour as was held by the court in *Williams v The West African Pilot*. This is in contrast to slander where the plaintiff has to prove special or actual damage, for example, that he lost a prospective wife or that he has been dismissed from work as a result of the slander. Slander is the second limb of defamation and is transient in nature as it is often through the medium of spoken words or gesture.

Libel is actionable per se and it is usually taken more seriously. This is because libel has greater potential for harm and is more likely to be premeditated. There is a tendency for most people

to believe anything they see in print, especially newspapers and magazines. And where such publication happens to be a lie, an apology in succeeding edition of the same paper will not cure the damage as many who read the defamatory edition may not all be opportuned to read the ones containing the apology.

Libelous publications could come in newspapers, books, letters, notices, articles, paintings, photographs, cartoons, statues, films etc. Defamation can also come in form of what is referred to as innuendo. In this case, the words may not be defamatory on the surface or their literal meanings, but may bear an inner connotation which renders them defamatory. For instance, to write that "John is a thief" or that "Chika is a prostitute" poses no problem to the judge as the words in the natural meaning are defamatory. But to publish that John is a regular visitor to the "Slaughter Road" in Nsukka has a deeper meaning to those who live in Nsukka. This is so because "Slaughter Road" is the home of prostitutes. This may sound innocent to a visitor but may be defamatory to the person referred to. Similarly, a statement that one is a regular customer to No 6 Okene Street, Enugu is defamatory to persons who know the fact that No 6 Okene Street Enugu is inhabited by harlots.

In *Cassidy v Daily Mirror Newspapers Ltd* the defendants published a picture of the plaintiff's husband with another and announced their engagement. The plaintiff then brought an action alleging an innuendo claiming that those who knew her would, based on the publication, see her as a mistress cohabitating with a man without being married to him. Hence, every newspaper organization requires the services of a lawyer or a seasoned editor to detect defamatory matters in any article, news-reports, letters to the editor and other editorial matters.

2. Another important ingredient of defamation is that the words, apart from being defamatory in their ordinary or inner meaning, must refer to the plaintiff to justify an action. According to *Enemo* (2007:255) "Having proved that the words are defamatory, the plaintiff must also prove that such defamatory words refer to him, and not to some other person, real or imaginary."

It must be observed, however, that it is not only when the plaintiff is identified correctly by his name as in *Akintola v Anyiam* that a publication becomes libelous. According to the court, if

reasonable persons believe that the words complained of referred to the plaintiff, that is sufficient. Hence, identification by initials, nickname, photograph, office, or post etc would satisfy the requirement. In *Dafe v Teswinor*, the court held that a certain defamatory statement made about “a Minister from Abor” by The Service Press Ltd, were capable of referring and indeed did refer to the plaintiff, who was a Minister of Finance and the only Minister from Abor in that regime.

Similarly, in *Ukpoma v Daily Times Nigeria Ltd*, a report in the defendant’s newspaper that “a retired Assistant Director of Works in Lagos” had been arrested by officials of the Federal Corrupt Practices Bureau contained sufficient reference to the plaintiff, who was a retired Assistant Director of Works. And in *Bakare v Oluwide*, it was held that a cartoon, which strongly resembled the plaintiff, was sufficient, given the context of the article.

3. A third element of defamation is that the words must be published to a third party. Publication, the gist and life wire of slander and libel, is the making known of the defamatory matter after it has been written to some person other than the person of whom it is written. (See *Obakpolor v Oyesofa*). Hence, in *Nsirum v Nsirum*, the Supreme Court held thus:

*An action for libel must fail, if publication is not proved... it is the publication that gives a cause of action. The material part of the cause of action in libel is not the writing but the publication of the libel.*

It then follows that a letter to the editor of a newspaper, for instance, will not ground a cause of action unless it is published. In the case of publication, the writer, the editor, the publisher and even the vendor are all partners in the offence.

Also of note is that every repetition or republication of a defamatory matter constitutes a fresh cause of action. In *Yusuf v Ghdamosi*, the court held that the defamatory publication of 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1985 which was repeated on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1985 each constituted a separate cause of action.

Similarly, a speaker who knows that his words will be reported by the press and who expressly or impliedly authorizes such publication, can be sued for libel and not for slander. The speaker, the publisher, the printer, the newspaper proprietor are each liable for the publication. Hence, newspapers must be wary especially when politicians give press conferences. For as was held in *Obakpolor v Oyesofa*, there is implied authorization to:

*...Publish a speech made at a press conference. Thus, a request to print or publish may be inferred from the defendants conduct in sending his manuscript to the editor of a magazine or making a statement to a reporter of a newspaper with the knowledge that they will be sure to publish it without any effort to restrain their so doing. He will be taken to have authorized the libel.*

However, where there is a wrong there is remedy. What are these possible remedies? To ensure that these remedies are considered seriously, we first look at the dire consequences that follow defamatory publications. According to Friend et al (2000:370) a news organization may lose its credibility, the most valuable attribute. Reporters and editors of such media outfit may lose the trust of their audience for just a single error. Also, libel suits can cause an organization exorbitant amount of money. A historic example is the *West African Pilot* that was almost crippled by heavy damages arising from libel suits. Small media have been bankrupted and shut down after losing libel and privacy suits involving millions. In fact, even a successful legal defense by the media is never a victory but the lesser of two evils as huge lawyers' fees can damage a company for years.

Also, major suits produce a ripple chilling effect on newspapers as others become more reluctant to aggressively pursue controversial public interest issues. The chilling effect, observed the authors, is most obvious when a news organization loses a suit as the court ruling may engender more restraints on the media in general.

Legal and ethical lapses hurt not only the media, but people who are reported. False and misleading information may ruin the reputation of an individual or a group, damaging lives, families and careers. Hence, defamatory publications have been regarded as a mortal sin to media organizations.

**Defences against defamatory publications:**

From experience, it has been proved that the single best defence against a charge of libel is truth, known as justification. It is not just truth but provable truth fully documented through meticulous sourcing of evidence by reporters and editors. Some media houses observe a two or three source policy to ensure accuracy.

A seemingly small and innocuous mix-up can cause great inconvenience and anguish to individuals and the organization. An example is the case of Kim A Barnes and Kim S. Barnes. The latter nearly lost her job whereas the former committed the offence of driving under the influence of alcohol. A seasoned reporter or editor would have gone beyond official police document to cross-check the middle initial lacking in the police report.

In case of such unintentional defamation, the news medium may make an "offer of amend." The publisher can escape liability by stating that he did not intend to publish the words of and concerning that other person and did not know of circumstances by virtue of which they might be understood to refer to him. The offer of amends would be a request to publish a suitable correction of the words complained of and a sufficient apology to the person aggrieved in respect of the words.

Where the victim has already gone to court, the defendant newspaper may request for out of court settlement on the terms acceptable to the parties. Also, the defence of fair comment and a matter of public interest can avail the newspaper. According to Gately (1974) (cited in Enemo (2007:267) matters of public interest include affairs of government, national or local, administration of public schools, hospitals, prisons, published books, movies, plays, musical performances, church matters etc.

However, a fair comment based on public interest must be an expression of opinion and not an assertion of facts. Also, the comment must be honest and based on true facts first clearly stated before the comment. Facts are said to be sacred while comments are free.



Comments must not be malicious as this will destroy the claim. For this, see *Bakare v Ibrahim and African Newspaper Ltd v Coker*.

Another important defence to news organizations is that of privilege. Here, the law recognizes that there are occasions when freedom of speech or communication is more important than the protection of a person's reputation. Such occasions are said to be privileged, and may be absolute or qualified. Such privileged occasions include: judicial, legislative and executive privileges and may be absolute or qualified depending on the circumstance of the case.

Let us now turn to another legal issue in newspaper production known as contempt of court.

#### **Contempt of court:**

Another land mine newspaper producers must watch is the issue of contemptuous publications that offend the court. In *Rex v Thomas Horatius Jackson*, the court defined contempt of court as "any act done or writing published calculated to bring a court or a judge of the court into contempt, or to lower his authority..." or "any act done or writing published calculated to obstruct or interfere with the due course of justice or the lawful process of the court." *Lord Hardwicke in Roach v Garvan* reiterated that "to prejudice the minds of the public against persons concerned as parties in causes before the cause is finally heard" constitutes a serious contempt of court that will not pass unnoticed or unpunished. According to Elias (1969:55) the gist of the offence is not whether the publication in fact biased the mind of the trial court but whether such publication is capable of doing so.

In *Pennekamp v Florida*, the supreme court of the United States observed that the true test of contempt is whether the publication "poses a clear and present danger to the fair administration of justice." It noted that a newspaper may criticize, harass, irritate or vent its spleen against a person who holds the office of judge in the same manner that it does a member of the legislature and other elective officers, but it may not publish scurrilous or libelous criticisms of a presiding judge as such or his judgments for the purpose of discrediting the court in the eyes of the public. (See Trager and Ross 2007:29).

Contempt could either be in the face of the court (in facie curiae) or outside the court (ex facie curiae). Direct contempt or contempt in face

of the court refers to words spoken or act done within the precincts of the court that obstructs due administration of justice or is calculated to do so.

Contempt ex-facie curiae may be described as words spoken or otherwise published or act done outside court which are intended or likely to interfere with or obstruct the fair administration of justice. (See Re: *Dr Olu Onagorowa: FCA/E/117/79 No 5/2/80*).

Of the two types, the one that affects journalists most is contempt outside the court. In *Rex v Horatius Jackson*, the defendant published an article in his Lagos Weekly Record titled, "Dangers of the Judicial System in Nigeria." In it, he referred to the decision of the Acting Chief Justice and other decisions of the court which he said were influenced by the fear of the Executive, and that, the Judges had been compelled to invent plausible arguments in order to be able to pander to the wishes of the Executive. Consequently, the accused was summarily committed to prison for two months and also ordered to pay costs for the proceedings. This shows how serious the offence of contempt can be.

#### **Some ethical issues in newspaper production:**

There are many definitions of the word "ethics." For instance, *The Webster Seventh New Dictionary* defines ethics which is from a Greek word, Ethicos" to mean the discipline dealing with what is good and bad, and with moral duty and obligation. It is a set of moral principles or values, a theory or system of moral values and principles of conduct governing an individual or group. Merrill (1982:9) describes ethics as the branch of philosophy that helps determine what is right to do. It is a normative science of conduct, voluntary, self-determined, self-legislated and self enforced.

We shall not dwell much on the theories of ethics here. Rather we shall show empirically what constitute ethical do's and don'ts in newspaper and magazine production. This, as observed Merrill (cited in Egbon 2007:63) is because what the journalist communicates is in a very real way what he himself is. If a journalist is amoral, there will be no need talking about ethics. Hence, an ethical publisher or editor is the one who should:

1. Avoid sycophancy: A sycophant says Hornby (1984) in Okunna (2003:86) is one who tries to win favour by flattering rich or powerful people. The sycophant journalist indulges in excessive praise especially of political office holders, wealthy

citizens, traditional rulers, owners of media houses, who as their employers have overbearing influence over such journalists. This is very common in Nigeria today due to economic difficulties, poor remuneration and lack of ethical principles. A good publisher should guard against this unethical practice. It kills.

2. An ethical publisher should avoid pressures from advertisers, politicians or even friends and families to publish unethical matters and canned editorials that run counter to good public taste.
3. Character assassination is a double-edged sword that can ruin both the victim and a media organization. For whereas sycophancy attracts no legal sanction, character assassination is both unethical and illegal and could found an action (see *Enahoro v Southern Nigeria Defender*).
4. A maxim says, "Keep our secret, secret." Confidentiality of source also known as professional secrecy is vital to the success of newspaper production. According to Sandman et al (1976) in Okunna 2003:92) once a reporter gets a reputation as one who won't keep a confidence, such a reporter is finished as an investigator, and the public loses in the end. This also rubs off negatively on the newspaper for which the reporter works.
5. Another ethical plague to guard against is bribery and acceptance of gifts. Accepting money and free services compromises the integrity of journalists and media organizations. The commonest type, known as 'brown envelop' is used to pressurize the journalist into doing what the bribe giver wants. It attracts embarrassment to the journalist who fails to perform as he could be accosted and sometimes beaten up openly in the street by the bribe giver or his thugs. And once monetary bribes and other gifts are accepted, the hands of the journalist are tied and objectivity is thrown to the wind. In the end, the credibility of the newspaper wanes and the paper may gradually die.
6. Another mortal sin in newspaper production is plagiarism. Hornby (1984) defines plagiarism as to "take and use somebody's ideas, words, etc. as if they are one's own." This

obtains often when a lazy journalist fails to cover his or her beat as a condition precedent for obtaining an original copy. He tries to beat the deadline and as he battles for time, ends up producing verbatim report without acknowledging the original source. This is both illegal and unethical.

7. A newspaper that wishes to be a going concern should eschew sensationalism in reporting. Okunna (2003:100) explains this to obtain when newspaper/magazine presents facts in a way that produces shock, anger or incitement, making a situation more shocking or worse than it truly is. A newspaper should apply a modicum of moderation in portraying events rather than embarking on unnecessary exaggeration and explosive reports that over heat the society. Such newspapers are not good watch-dogs and cannot effectively hold those in authority accountable, as their reports could easily be dismissed with a wave of the hand.

In sum, the advice of Azikiwe (1970:348) to newspaper editors is germane. To him, "the duty of an editor is to produce a readable newspaper whose literary flavour will induce respect and patronage; to prevent the insertion of libel or any illegality in newspaper; to implement the policy formulated by the owners of newspaper; and by his personal demeanour etc. to safeguard the reputation of the newspaper."

#### **Conclusion and Recommendation:**

Observing the fundamental rules and ethical codes in newspaper/magazine production is indispensable. Aristotle in his work *Nicomachean Ethics* noted that "justice exists only between men whose mutual relations are governed by law, and law exists for men between whom there is injustice." (Trager and Ross 2005:3). According to this view, humans are prone to injustice, prejudice and caprice. This is the foundation for adopting legal rules and ethical principles to govern relationships discourage injustice and enhance fairness.

The media, especially newspapers/magazine, are a potent tool for social redemption if used prudently. But when used without restraint and care, they can set the society ablaze in mutual attrition. Hence, a newspaper that wishes to keep afloat as a business venture and a quasi-public institution should avoid defamatory, obscene, sensational and

other legal and ethical bobby-traps that could endanger its existence. As a powerful organ of information, education and social mobilization, it should know that restraint is said to be the better part of valour. For instance, one of the “bobby traps” to be avoided like a plague by press organizations is the ethical problem known as plagiarism. To plagiarize as explained earlier, according to Hornby (cited in Okunna, 3003:101) means to “take and use somebody else’s ideas, words, etc as if they are one’s own.” To him, plagiarism is a very serious ethical problem in mass communication because journalism is a profession whose foundation rests on the dissemination of words and ideas. Plagiarism, he noted, is most prevalent among lazy journalists who, on failing to cover his or her beat effectively and timely, decides to plagiarize in order to meet the deadline.

Another dangerous mine that destroys both the journalist and media institutions is the issue of bribery. As observed by Okunna (2003:99) ... the commonest type of bribe in journalism is the so-called ‘brown envelop’ which is a monetary bribe handed out to an unethical journalist to pressurize him or her into doing what the bribe giver wants.” The commonest source of the temptation is the politician, especially in Nigeria. An American journalist, Karl Maier (2000) observed this much when he wrote:

*Paying journalists has become a tradition in Nigeria. It is the brown-envelope syndrome. Journalists covering politician’s press conference, for example, often receive a little brown envelop. The more important the person, the greater the amount in the little brown envelop, and of course the more extensive the coverage to be expected.*

Another mortal sin in the media institution that should be avoided and requires emphasis is sensationalism. Some news-organizations deliberately indulge in sensational headlines so as to attract buyers. Such headlines are intended to arouse shock, anger and incitement by blowing issues and events out of the true proportion. Such media organizations shout wolves when there is none forgetting that if the nation goes ablaze, they too will be involved. And such organizations once noted for

sensationalizing events often begin to be treated as a leper and fold-up in record time.

In addition, the press to be a going concern as a business organization and enjoy credibility as a social institution whose voice carries weight, should be wary of biased reporting, deception, inaccuracies, lack of fairness, invasion of privacy, sycophancy and Afghanistanism.

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## **DUE PROCESS AND EXECUTIVE DECISIONS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN NIGERIA.**

**Dr. Iwundu Ifeanyi**

### **Abstract**

*Due Process guidelines are intended to ensure value-for-money in the process of handling the affairs of the state, while the involvements of stakeholders are imminent. The overall objective is to ensure that service delivery is both effective and efficient – that is, getting the right output and outcomes at the right cost to be enjoyed by the right people. But the event of today in almost all the states of the federation differs from the due process policy. The executive decisions taken by the state governments are implemented by the local governments without question. This has been worrisome and embarrassing. This study was set to finding the challenges of due process by executive decisions for the development of local government areas (LGAs). The study was a survey and made use of content analysis in analyzing the data. It found that due process was effective in ensuring that goals and objectives are achieved when appropriately directed, executive decisions lacked the involvement of the local government stakeholders, and there was no probity, accountability and transparency in the management of the LGA's funds hence poor procurement process directed by the states executives. The study therefore, recommends the need to engage the local government councils in the initiation, execution and management of council affairs.*

**Key words:** Due Process, Executive Decisions and Local Government System.

### **Introduction**

The government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for many years had evolved varied principles and theories aimed at putting in place a local government system that is virile, efficient, effective, innovative and productive. In all these efforts, it was the 1976 local government reform in Nigeria that sought significantly to restructure and revamp the system so that it can respond adequately to the role of promoting, co-ordinating and implementing community services, enhancing citizens'



participation in government and maximizing the use of scarce resources, (Ashiru, 2004:1 and Gamadi, 2008:23). This is important because local government initiative was intended to bring about rural development. This type of rural development entails not only the provision of basic infrastructure and appropriate technology of production, but also effective organization of rural producers into viable cooperatives. The key objective must be to lift the Nigerian rural economy from being a dependent, peasant and largely agricultural economy, to a modern agro-industrial economy capable of sustaining an improved quality of life in the rural areas, (MAMSER, 1992:374).

To achieve the above objectives for local government system in Nigeria, and to ensure that judicious use of the funds provided for the services of the local government are made, funds are disbursed to local governments monthly to help actualise their goal in the local government areas. And to ensure that the funds disbursed to institutions in Nigeria are properly managed, the federal government employed a 'Due Process' policy, which is a mechanism for strict compliance with the openness, competition and cost accuracy, rules and procedures that should guide spending of public funds and contract award within the Federal Government of Nigeria, (FRN, 2009).

State governments or local government managers used to enter into financial expenditure, award contracts, procure materials and commit much of the government's funds without reference to any rule or committee consultations. This, according to Nweke (2008:29) "Led to the misappropriation of huge sums of money in many institutions both private and public". The local governments have been victims of this kind of misappropriation through the executive direction by state governors on funds remitted for the grassroots development in Nigeria. The manner in which the joint account of states/local governments is presently operated is actually giving serious concerns as most of the State Governors use the account to settle political cronies, finance clandestine operations in the grassroots leaving the LGAs unable to deliver services to the citizens. In Bauchi State, for example, the State Governor only uses the LGA funds through the joint account to plan but not execute phantom projects while the State's allocation is systematically siphoned, (Okolie, 2011).

The President of the Federal Government of Nigeria has as a result of this scenario called for an amendment or the scrapping of the

state/LGA account. According to Okolie, (2011), this was a right step in a right direction. State/Local government's account should be scrapped off to enhance monitoring of local government activities as well as the state. A lot of things go wrong when governors are almost in full control of local government funds. The proposal to scrape off the joint account of state/local government will be beneficial because it will help Nigerians to know the actual amount which federal government allocate to each local government and the impact of the allocation on the grassroots.

The Due Process streamlines, curtails and reduces wastes which occur when individual(s) do the business of the government alone without guide or third party. These became rampant leading to diversion and loss of trillions of Naira annually to private accounts of the stakeholders. In 2007 Public Procurement Act was made with the view to bring to openness the transactions of the government as it requires honesty, fairness and accountability. No. 14 of the Act, as in FGN (2009) states viz: "To establish the national council on public procurement and the bureau of public procurement as the regulatory authorities responsible for the monitoring and oversight of public procurement, harmonizing the existing government practices by regulating, setting standards and developing the legal framework and professional capacity for public procurement in Nigeria and for related matters". *Due process* policies are those prescribed procedures expected to be adhered to in transactions especially in matters of the state and public in general.

Those prescribed procedures have been persistently ignored by the state executives whose control on the LG. programmes left much to be desired. The due process constrains stands against inhuman treatment, intoxication and abuse of powers, out-lawism and excesses. The due process was set to assure financiers, that any money budgeted and spent on any project was well utilized and judiciously managed. Afemikhe (2006:6) specified the establishment of due process to cover more of the areas of government contract award and public procurement.

However these rules, there seem to be executive decisions which stand against the principles of due process. The way in which the state executives interfere with the funds of the local government is a traceable decay in the implementation of Due Process in the management of funds and material resources of the local governments in the country. The action has resulted to low development of local government areas, lack of proper accountability, embezzlement of public fund, misappropriation of

funds, deterioration and waste. As the system tries to avoid financial waste arising from the day to day running of the local areas, it was noted that more of the inadequate funds and materials are wasted due to the state governments' undue control of local government.

Against this background, the study seeks answer to the following questions:

- a. What is executive decision in Due Process?
- b. What are the challenges of due process in executive decisions for the development of LGAs?
- c. What are the ways forward?

### **Clarification of Concepts**

#### **Due Process**

Due process is the means by which ethical constraints are placed on administrative decision-making, (Alan 2008:1). It refers to the procedures and safeguards that constrain administrative decision-making, and a means by which we ensure the ethical use of power by administrative and judicial bodies. The constrain stands against inhuman treatment, intoxication and abuse of powers, out-lawism and excesses. The due process was set to assure financiers, that any money budgeted and spent on any project was well utilized and judiciously managed. Afemikhe (2006:6) specified the establishment of due process to cover more of the areas of government contract award and public procurement. Public procurement he believed "Is the process of acquisition of goods, services, works and projects from third parties by government". Transparency is the central characteristic of a sound and efficient public procurement system. This, Afemikhe (2006:6) believes "Is achieved by: Well defined regulations and procedures open to public scrutiny; Clear and standardized tender documents; Bidding and tender documents containing complete information, Equal opportunity for all in the bidding process guaranteed by open competitive tendering (OCT). The due process therefore, is the application of bureaucratic rules and regulations to the management of economic resource to a given institution. Bureaucracy means "a system of official rules and ways of doing things that a government or an organization has, especially, when these seem to be too complicated' (Hornby 2001:146). Due process allows approved official protocols to take place in the spending of government funds and resources and handling of government business. The word due process

and bureaucracy are used interchangeably in this work, (Iwundu, 2011: 900-914).

### **Executive Decision**

This refers to a decision made and implemented by a person in power or of authority, especially one without the agreement of others. Such a person, who exercises control, influence, or authority, holds a power in the state, (Wikipedia, 2012). The executive decision of the state is usually taken by the governor who is the chief security officer of the state. The control, command, or determination of matters for the local governments in the states for their smooth running or as desired by the chief executive without regard to constitutional means, is said to be an executive decision. In other words, a person or body of persons in whom authority is vested, as a governmental agency to take such decisions must hold the state powers, (Akinlorin, 2010:24). The example of this can be seen in relation to the award of contracts in local governments; the amount of money which the state executives release from the federal monthly allocations; the appointments, elections and dissolution of local government managers; the excessive monitoring and control of the local government officials without regard to constitutional provisions. Executive decision can come from a person or body of persons in whom authority is vested, as a governmental agency to discharge and exert order as deemed right by him or her.

### **Local Government System**

In almost all contemporary states in the world, there are two, three or more recognised tiers government. In Nigeria, for instance, the tiers of government are local, state and federal governments. These tiers or levels also have distinct functions, powers and statutory allocation of public funds for their management. Local government is the lowest of the tiers. It is the grassroots government. The government that is nearer to the people, having daily and constant touch with the grassroots populace. Iwundu, (1997:2) defines local government in the words of Awa (1980) as a political authority for the purpose of dispensing or decentralizing political powers. This act of decentralization of powers may take the form of deconcentralisation or devolution.

Local Government as discoursed by Essien (2010) is Government at Local level exercised through representative councils established by

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law to exercise specific power within a defined areas” (Government print: 1976). The United Nations Office for Public Administration explained Local Government as: “A political division of a nation (in a Federal or State system) which is constituted by law and has substantial control of Local affairs including the power to impose taxes and to exact labour for prescribed purposes.

W. A. Robson, in the Encyclopedia of the Social Services, defines Local Government as involving: “The conception of a territorial, non-sovereign community possessing the legal right and the necessary organ to regulate its own affairs. This, in turn, presupposes the existence of a local authority with the power to act independently of external control as well as the participation of the local community in the administration of its affairs”, (Essien, 2010). The Encyclopedia Americana, international edition (1978), volume 17, defines Local Government as: “a political subdivision of national government or in the case of Federal Systems, a subdivision of regional Government”. The New Columbia Encyclopedia (4th ed.), defines it as the: “sub-political administration of the smallest sub-divisions of a country’s territory and population. Ugwu (2000) defines local government as “the lowest unit of administration to whose laws and regulations communities who live in a defined geographical area and with common social and political ties are subject.

Though these definitions according to Essien (2010) may tend to vary, yet they expose features and characteristic of Local Governments, among which are that:

- i. Local Government is government at the local level;
- ii. It has its autonomous existence and endowed with a legal status;
- iii. Specific powers are reserved for it;
- iv. It can impose taxes and incur expenses;
- v. It exists within a defined territory;
- vi. It is seen as a distinct tier of Government;
- vii. It must provide authority over a given population;
- viii. It must provide avenues for the promotion of the welfare of the members of the community;
- ix. It comprises elected members, such as chairmen and councilors.

The 1976 Local Government Reforms entrusted political responsibility to the people at the grassroots level. It also sought the



social and economic development of and the effective delivery of service to the respective local population scattered all over the country (Orewa and Oduwumi: 2001: 22). On these bases also, adequate arrangement were made through federal and state tiers for funds to be recouped monthly for the management of the local governments.

### **Theoretical Considerations**

An elite theory was used as the framework of analysis for this study. It was used to examine the key ideological, economic and institutional preferences of the political elite in the states of the federation as it relates to the handling of local government matters in the country's present democratic regime. Elite theory is to examine several crucial dimensions of state executives' attitudes, preferences concerning the fundamental economic model, direct control of local government funds, preference on appointment /removal and other executive decisions which leave no chance for grassroots contributions. On many of the issues, there has been outright disregard on the dimensions of due process which remains the issue of decreasing polarization in the states, (Cesar and Power 2012).

Elite is defined as a group or class of persons or a member of such a group or class, enjoying superior intellectual, social, or economic status, (The Free Dictionary, 2012). In political science and sociology, elite theory is a theory of the state which seeks to describe and explain the power relationships in contemporary society. The theory posits that a small minority, consisting of members of the economic elite and policy-planning networks, holds the most power and that this power is independent of a state's democratic elections process. Elite theory stands in opposition to pluralism in suggesting that democracy is a utopian ideal. It also stands in opposition to state autonomy theory, (Wikipedia, 2012). Dye (2000) in his book '*Top Down Policymaking*', argues that U.S. public policy does not result from the "demands of the people," but rather from Elite consensus found in Washington, D.C.

Elite preferences and executive decisions on the control of local governments remain independent of public attitude on this issue. The highest political elites in the states have repeatedly stated their policy preference against the development of local governments over the past years. While they all share the same position, they tend to frame their



opposition to the control of local governments in different terms, (Bayyenat, 2011).

Regardless of the type of framing that executives or political elites in the states used to represent their executive decisions toward local government control, it is evident that states interlocutors require more than an appropriate language to trust the executive's intentions. The local government chairmen, the public and the ALGON in general have consistently opposed the state financial oversight or otherwise, their abysmal cuts on the federal funds allocation to the local governments as well as awarding and execution of contracts in the local governments areas without reference to local authorities. While this view appears fair and reasonable, there is no better alternative for the political elites and state governments to trust their intentions.

The Federal Government of Nigeria, were however, not happy with the state's executives might on the affairs of the LGAs in Nigeria. As a result of this, there was unanimously resolved by the members of the House of Representatives to grant financial autonomy to local government authorities (LGAs) in a bid to fast-track development of rural areas. The resolution was reached after a robust debate on the bill which seeks to "alter the provisions of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to ensure efficient operations of the local government councils in Nigeria for social, economic and political development and for other matters connected, (Akintola,2012).

The choice of this framework was dependent on the Aristocratic version of elite theory, that is, the classic elite theory which is based on two ideas: power lies in position of authority in key economic and political institutions and secondly, the psychological difference that sets elites apart is that they have personal resources, for instance intelligence and skills, and a vested interest in the government; while the rest are incompetent and do not have the capabilities of governing themselves. The elite are resourceful and will strive to make the government work. For in reality, the elite have the most to lose in a failed government. Since he that pays a piper dictates the tone, it is obvious that the state executives who appoints or arranges for those to be elected to office should have greater control of the LGAs resources. These of course run counter to the principles of democracy, due process, good governance and development. Today almost all the LGAs in Nigeria suffer this fit of executive decision.

The executive's decisions therefore, do not tally with Due Process which is a crucial dimension of the functioning of standard-setting. Due process was set "to prevent the abuse of authorities" (Belton, 2005). In the management of public funds and property, exercise of public or state powers is required. Any exercise of state powers under the 'rule of law' must be subject to "due process" to prevent the abuse of authority. Secondly, standards have distributional effects in society. It is subject to conflicting demands and the legitimacy, which depends on the participation of those affected in the process, (Leuz 2004:2). Thirdly, standard setting is a complex activity with often unexpected consequences, which thus, improve technical efficiency and effectiveness of process, (Taylor and Turley, 1986: 3).

The above implies that the recent move by the House of Representatives is a right step in the right direction. There are decisions taken for the local governments in this democratic dispensation that does not regard the inputs of the local government managers. The managers, receives orders rather than due process considerations of matters in their jurisdictions.

#### **Executive decision in due process**

Section 162 subsection 6 of the 1999 Constitution as Amended provides that: "Each state shall maintain a special account to be called "State Joint Local Government Account" into which shall be paid all allocation to the local government councils of the state from the Federation Account and from the government of the state," (FRN, 1999). As a result of this provision, funds meant for the councils from the Federation Account now get to most of them based on the whims of governors of the states while allocations that should go to them from the states' resources are scarcely mentioned. This, from all indications, has not helped the development of the grassroots.

The constitution also spelt out functions that the local government councils are mandated to perform. They are not able to do so because the councils are not properly and directly funded. Some of these functions include the establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, markets, motor parks and public conveniences, as well as the construction and maintenance of roads, streets, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces or such public facilities within their localities,

(<http://allafrica.com/stories/201110190736.html>).

The mismanagement of funds and priorities arising from executive decisions of state governors in matters relating to LGAs can never be over-emphasised. What is happening presently in Nigeria deviated from Due Process Fiscal Responsibility Act No. 31 of 2007 (FGN, 2007), which provide:

Prudent management of the nation resources, ensure long-term macro-economic stability of the national economy, secure greater accountability and transparency in fiscal operations with a medium term fiscal framework, and establishment of the fiscal responsibility commission to ensure the promotion and enforcement of the nation's economic objectives; and for related matters.

Behind the curtain lies the inability of the state executives to allow the LGAs make full use of the federal allocation to award contracts based on people's felt need projects and procure materials for their operations. In pretence to obeying the tenets of due process, the state executives order the LGA chairmen to supervise the projects undertaken in their respective local authorities whether they are aware or not. These projects in local areas were made by states executive to make sure that the amount in the LGA's account is fully engulfed in the process. With that also reasonable evidence will be presented for use of councils' funds. This agree to the view of Nnadozie, (2010:27-28) that,

Indeed, it can be asserted without fear of contradiction that corruption is today a way of life in Africa. ....there is hardly any issue or situation that is not overly or covertly associated in one form of corruption or the other. But perhaps what makes corruption in Africa a special phenomenon is that it is being coveted and exemplified at the highest level of the state.

Government property, fund or financial resources are embezzled by those to whom such things are entrusted with. And for the authorizing officers in the states to be part of the national breed, they join the band

wagon of corrupt society to make gain and twist their Prebendalism on due process.

The elections in the local government areas have been at the desire of the states governors. During the 2007 to 2011 period very few states were able to conduct elections for their council areas. Those who were able to do so did it towards the end of the four year tenure so that enough support can come from them. There is lack of political autonomy in the local government councils in Nigeria. Such autonomy from the state governments is needed in order to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections as and when due. Even though, the principal act in section 7 of the 1999 constitution has given the Governors undue advantage over the third tier of government there is a need for the amendments in the tiers of government that are not producing the desired result to be made now. As a result of this right of state governors, "most of the local governments have become gloried parastatals in the hands of the state governments" who rather than conduct elections preferred to put in place caretaker committees and shutting down development at grassroots.

Political actors like Samson Osagie, Minority Chief Whip in the House of Representatives, berated the imposition of state governments on local government councils and argued that such impediments made it impossible for local governments to bring government closer to the people, (Daily Champion, 2011). Osagie who called for the removal of all legal impediments hindering effective and efficient running of local government councils, maintained that most local governments at present can only pay salaries but are unable to deliver socio-economic services to the people in rural areas, adding that there was no reason why funds should not be paid directly to local government accounts.

The above view points are summarized in the table 1, showing the characteristics of the two variables – executive decision and due process.

**Table 1: The Characteristics of Executive Decision and Due Process**

<b>Executive Decision</b>	<b>Due Process</b>
Personal opinion of the state executive takes care of determinable action.	Committee reviews should be conducted and decisions made in a reasonable and determinable time frame
Executive downloads of decision to be implemented at the local	The opportunity to consult with authorities at key stages of the

government levels.	contract award or initiation.
Decisions are determined by the executive inclination and wills.	Conducted in a manner that promotes effective, efficient, transparent and predictable merger review process
Does what he deems right.	Seek to avoid imposing unnecessary or unreasonable costs and burdens to the polity.
Action packed without reference to any rule.	Detailed verification and authorization required in due process
Diversion of federal allocations by the state governors,	The Principle of transparency in policies and rules, and in the implementation of projects.
Violation of due process and the <u>rule of law</u> .	Protects individual persons against governmental violation of the <u>rule of law</u> and citizens right.
Suspension, dissolution, appointment of caretakers in local governments' areas without reference to the rule of law.	Constitutional procedure without inhibition to personal right and privileges.

*Source: Initiated from the due process rule and executive decision, 2012.*

The two variables run in opposite directions. There is no meeting point for the two. In this respect, the orders or decisions from the executive governors contradicts due process and lowers the implementation of relevant grassroots needs.

### **The challenges of due process by executive decisions for the development of Local Government Areas (LGAs)**

The presumption of constitutionality in economic regulation cases goes even further than one might think. The constitutional right of states government to oversight the functions of Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Nigeria, gave undue right to cripple the functions of the councils through many means. The local governments, according to Onah (1995:36) and Wikipedia (2011) were established with the full purpose of:

- i. Making economic recommendations to the State for the good of the grassroots;
- ii. Collection of taxes and fees;
- iii. Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
- iv. Licensing of bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks), canoes, wheel barrows and carts;
- v. Establishment, maintenance and regulation of markets, motor parks and public conveniences;
- vi. Construction and maintenance of roads, streets, drains and other public highways, parks, and open spaces;
- vii. Naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses;
- viii. Provision and maintenance of public transportation and refuse disposal;
- ix. Registration of births, deaths and marriages;
- x. Assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a State; and,
- xi. Control and regulation of out-door advertising, movement and keeping of pets of all descriptions, shops and kiosks, restaurants and other places for sale of food to the public, and laundries.

These were the exert residual functions of the LGAs but they rarely have the powers to do so. The executive decisions by the state governments in the country have given rise to their inability to perform. To draw inspiration from the definition of Due Process: "the exercise of government power under the rule of law with due regard for the essential and fundamental fairness rights of individuals." Rule of law refers to the rules being announced beforehand. Essential and fundamental fairness refers to how important something is for maintaining democracy, (Instructor e, 2003).

The inability of the local governments to perform their constitutional role hinges mostly on the exercise of executive decisions by the state governments as against the due process in the following ways:

#### **Lack of Autonomous Financial Power**

Local Governments in Nigeria lacks autonomous financial power due to their inability to access the federal monthly allocations to them.

This aggrieved the councilors in all the 774 local government councils in Nigeria, according to a communiqué from their recent workshop in Calabar, Cross River State, and called on both the Presidency and the National Assembly to ensure the abrogation of the State Joint Local Government Account which is currently being controlled by the states. They insisted that the abolition of the account was long overdue, alleging that governors had through it, been siphoning funds meant for the councils, thus hampering the capacity of the third tier of government to deliver democracy dividends to the people at the grassroots, (Daily Champion(2011). This call by the councilors if implemented will not only stop the executive decisions in handling funds meant for the councils from the Federation Account which now get to most of them based on the whims of governors of the states. It will also allow the due process and financial control to be held by the local government councils in Nigeria for the good of the people. Before now, overwhelming evidence points to the fact that most, if not all the councils, have been failing in their constitutional mandate to the people, largely due to paucity of funds, occasioned by thbne diversion and, indeed, massive looting of the money allocated to that tier of government by some governors and political godfathers.

### **Undue Interference**

The degree of external influence and intrusion in local government affairs by the higher levels of government is worrisome and needs re-evaluation. Situation where the state governor unconstitutionally dissolves the entire elected council's officers without proper investigations on spurious allegations is not good for the future of local government administration in the country. Such external interference indeed subverts democratic process and undermines constitutional authority at the grassroots level, (Google, 2008). This undue interference has incapacitated local government from effective functioning on the one hand, and alienated grassroots from enjoying social services delivery expected of local government on the other.

### **Political Control**

Local government chairmen in Nigeria faces undo political control by their respective state governors. The way in which the council officers were elected, appointed or sponsored gives room for any

executive decision by the state governors. Sometimes, the chairmen and councilors are handpicked by the state governors rather than being elected. It is a clear case of who pays the piper dictates the tune. This again creates a problem of diversion of local government funds by state governors. Some chairmen who seemed to assert their political rights are removed from the office and replaced with 'more loyal boys' whether qualified or not.

### **Tenureship of Local Government Councils**

The present two years tenure of some elected local government chairmen in Nigeria and the determination of the state governments to have it so is another indication of executive decision of the states in local government areas in Nigeria. The tenure of the council chairmen was initially three years before it was reduced to two years through the amendment of the laws of the House of Assemblies. This had been noted to have adverse effect on the development of grassroots due to low tenure. To address this, the newly elected chairman of Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON), Enugu State chapter, Mr Nwabueze Okafor, canvassed for the extension of local government chairmen's tenure. He posits that two years' tenure was insufficient for an elected chairman to translate goals and vision for the benefit of the people, (Nigerian Tribune, 2012). Against these backdrops, equal years with the states elected officers will be sufficient enough to improve on the wellbeing of the grassroots.

### **Economic Base**

The major purpose of creating local government is to bring developments to the grassroots. The local governments in Nigeria are unable to do this owing to the handicaps created by the over ambitious governors who purposely sabotage their economic efforts. In order to perform this adequately, there is need for local councils to have strong economic base. In this connection, it is suggested that statutory allocation to local councils be taken out of the reach of the state governors and reviewed up as well as ensure prompt releases to the local governments.

### **Recommendations**

Local governments' chairmen in the federation should be allowed to initiate projects that will be of benefit to their people with the money



from the federation account as well as the state allocation. The current practice whereby the state governors control the local government funds, do not make way for the development of grassroots.

Due process should be used in any decision involving joint action of the states and local governments. This will enhance input from both ends and ensures probity and accountability of the states and local government functionaries. To harness the core values of due process in government establishment, bureaucracies at any level should be guided by the principles of due process in their awarding of contracts, budget and budgetary processes, approving of funds and implementation of agreed programme/projects. These will enhance efficiency, accuracy, actualization of value for money and project accomplishment.

There is need to engage in a greater surveillance on the holders and managers of our national resource. Although, there are state oversight functions on the local governments, a check on those functions will increase the quality of their work and observance of due process rule in the management of the local government areas in Nigeria.

Similar to the above, is the need to have strict penalty for the breakers of law. Any governor who embarks on any project, contract or programme without the due process for the local councils should be made to suffer for it. To further strengthen it, the offending states should be made to lose their federal allocation for that month. This should also, make for a greater impact on good governance and financial management as well as “prevent the abuse of authorities” (Belton, 2005), in a democratic country like Nigeria.

The National Assembly should spearhead a deadline for the states/local government relations to further prevent the continuous manhandling by the states’ executives. There is also the need to engage the local government councils in the initiation, execution and management of council affairs. The present situation does not make for development; hence there should be an urgent reverse to better the functions of local governments in other to ensure there are dividends of democracy to the grassroots. To this end, the above mention tenureship, economic base, political control, undue interference and autonomous financial powers should be addressed by those involved if the development shall indeed be in bottom – top approach form.

## **Conclusion**

The governors in their executive decisions in Nigeria have not put into considerations the due process discussed as mechanisms which constrain was directed to ensure that powers are not abused at any level of governance. We have ex-rayed the issues involved in executive decision of the states government, due process and its positive/negative impacts on the development of local government areas in Nigeria. The study was of the opinion that Due Process which enhances good governance was abandoned by the states governors. There were imposition of states might on the functions and funds of the local governments in Nigeria. This attitude rendered the LGAs incapable of achieving any meaning result at the grassroots.

There were also no compliance to due process (DP) to ensuring the application of fair, competitive, transparent, value for money standard for the procurement, disposal of public assets and services for the projects downloaded to the local councils by the executive decisions. These resulted to encouragement of waste of public funds and property as against due process. Some of the contractors handling major projects initiated and executed through executive decisions for the local councils were politicians who sponsored or supported the governors. Their works were found unsatisfactory and worthy because of their selfish interest. Local councils were not consulted for such projects, hence there were no insistence on due process for better development.

The study recommends ways in which the compliance to due process could remove the errors inherent in executive decisions of the state governments. This will ensure fairness, equity, probity and accountability in the development of local government areas in the present democratic rule.

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## **SYNTAGMATIC FOREGROUNDING IN CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE**

**Isidore C. Nnadi, Ph.D**

### **Abstract**

*Conspiracy of Silence is Chukwuemeka Ike's novel that chronicles aspects of Igbo traditions as practised in parts of Igboland. To achieve this, Ike employs several linguistic means, prominent among which is syntagmatic foregrounding. Foregrounding, as we use it here, is semantically a prominence-related phenomenon, a means of linguistic highlighting. The density of lexical, syntactic and semantic foregrounding, both in the context of the traditions and in the interplay of personal experiences of the characters, provides the indices for determining the message structure of Conspiracy of Silence. Exploring this is the thrust of this paper.*

### **Introduction**

*Conspiracy of Silence* is a reasoned documentation of, and a sad comment on, certain objectionable traditions prevalent within the author's area of Igboland – Enugu, Awka, Ndiagu, Umunwanguma, Onitsha and Aro-Ndizuogu. The plot of the story takes off with Nwanneka (who has been pining away for her fatherlessness and her mother's refusal to disclose who her father is) and her friend, Gozie, approaching Femi Ayo to do a novel on Nwanneka's life, using her unpleasant experience to draw public attention to the problems of fatherless children. 'A novel woven around her fatherless life could serve as a mirror of the trauma some traditions inflict on innocent young people....' (11). Ayo, having accepted the deal, sets his machinery in motion for the gathering of material – from all and sundry, from Nwanneka's friends and relations, from newspaper responses, from traditional ceremonies and from all manner of second-hand informants. Gozie's assessment of the situation leaves nothing unsaid.

'I am alarmed, sir, at the rate at which the number of fatherless children is growing. Unless something happens before long, fifty to sixty per cent of the children in any village may be "fatherless". The



implications of this for the future of the Igbo as a people are frightening....' (18)

So, with the idea of an impending novel by Ayo, Chukwuemeka Ike pools together, the flood of information gathered on the 'many fatherless children in Igbo society... subjected to varying degrees of psychological problems' (18). The entire package (of the story) is brought home to the reader through the author's good sense of foregrounding: lexical, syntactic and semantic.

### **The Traditions as Invaluable Ingredients of the Story**

The text is an exposition of the controversial traditions of Igbo people that have to do with marriage and paternity rites, inheritance and continuity of family lineage. To understand the text more, one has to be acquainted with the said traditions, which for the purpose of clarity, have been abstracted as follows.

- i) An impotent husband could consent to his wife's 'discreetly' getting children from other men of her choice. This, of course, is kept secret. One of such stories in the *Vanguard*, as quoted by the author, has it that:

'... Their so-called father was impotent. She had married him nevertheless because she loved him intensely, and believed that God could change everything for the better. He too loved her deeply and when the facts stared them in the face five years after their marriage, he had consented that she could discreetly get children from other men of her choice' (20).

- ii) At the demise of a man, his wife could be allowed by members of the family to stay in the family and bear children for him (the dead husband). Such children belong to the dead husband and they bear his name as their father. Gozie's case (21) and the case of 'the children's factory' at Ndiagu are examples. Ayo wonders whether the incidence is on the increase.

Ugo thought so, particularly as a result of schoolgirl pregnancies. He cited one of the fatherless children's factories at Ndiagu, founded by a woman whose husband died before she could bear him a child. The woman stayed on in her late husband's compound to

make children of her own. Soon, a non-indigene of the town, acknowledged as a common criminal, made a daughter with her. Before the daughter could tell her right from her left, she had become pregnant without knowing which boy was responsible.

With encouragement from her mother, she made two daughters and a son. The two daughters grew up to join the production line (128).

- iii) If a pregnant teenager discloses who is responsible, her people would prevail on the man's family to undertake the traditional marriage rites, so that when the child is born, it becomes his own. That is, if the family of the man is acceptable to them. If the girl refuses to disclose the man, or the man is unacceptable to the family, the child becomes a child of the mother's father, and bears their name, even if the man comes forward to undertake the traditional marriage rites. The following excerpt, which is Mazi Obioha's contribution in a conversation involving him, his wife and Ayo, exemplifies the above tradition.

'Okay, let me answer you,' Mazi Obioha responded. 'If my sister-in-law had named the father of the child, two courses of action would have been open to the family. One would have been to establish contact with the man's family. If it was a family acceptable to them, they would have prevailed on the man's family to go through the traditional ceremonies for taking a wife after the girl had given birth to the baby. That way, she would become his wife and the child would become his.... If the girl refuses to disclose the man's identity, or if it is a man unacceptable to her family, the child will be treated to all intents and purposes as a child of the mother's father and bear his name. Even if the child's biological father comes forward to claim the child, he would not be allowed to do so because he did not pay the traditional bride price on the child's mother.... The second would be to absorb the child as a member of the family and give him the family name....' (32 – 33)

- iv) A father could go through marriage rites on behalf of his son, and after paying the bride price, send the bride to his son wherever he is. Where the son rejects the bride, she is kept in the family, and a trusted family member is secretly arranged 'to make babies' with her for the real husband. The children belong to the man for whom the bride was married, and none of them would be allowed to call the arranged family member father just because he fathered them. It is the owner of the wife that society recognizes as their father, even though he is not their biological father. A good example is Chijioke Madu's fatherlessness, which he contrives as the story of his friend's fatherlessness and guilefully presents it so to Ayo (37 – 40).
- v) Any offspring of a relationship between a man and a woman on whom he did not pay any bride price is automatically fatherless; bride price implies that the man can claim paternity (68).
- vi) Tradition forbids the parents of a married woman from accepting bride price from another man until they first pay back to the previous husband the bride price they had earlier received from him (68); otherwise, any child born thereof belongs to the former husband.

'Another option,' Ugo went on, 'was to prevail on the woman to name whose child she was carrying, and get the man to accept responsibility for the baby. This, however, runs counter to Igbo tradition. A man who did not pay bride price on a woman has no claim over any child he and the woman make. As if to further compound matters, tradition forbids the parents of a married woman from accepting bride price from another man until they first pay back to the previous husband the bride price they had earlier received from him' (68 – 69).

- vii) In cases of established infidelity/adultery, the woman is punished in customary law by imprisonment, and *isa ifi* ritual, and the child from such a relationship remains the woman's husband's.

'I've heard of two traditional rulers from two different towns who caught their wives redhanded and sent them to the native authority prison for adultery. After serving the prison terms, the women

were subjected to the isa ifi ritual before their husbands took them back. The ritual required each woman to admit publicly that she committed adultery, and to name the man with whom she did it' (100).

- viii) There is an absence of the concept of illegitimate child in Igbo culture. Ugo explains to Ayo.

'You know what I mean, sir! The incidence of fatherless children is on the increase because, in my humble opinion, Igbo society attaches undue importance to children. A child is seen as a priceless asset, always welcome no matter from what source. The Igbo man is happy to litter his compound with children, regardless of whether or not he can take care of them. We have a saying at Ndiagu that the ruler or the great man derives his prestige from the number of children he fathers. How he fathers them is of little consequence.

The absence of the concept of an illegitimate male child in Igbo culture is a reflection of the importance attached to the child. Until Igbo society reviews this attitude to children, until it appreciates that the existence of a male issue is not the only way to perpetuate the father's name or the family name, until a man is made to accept responsibility for any child he fathers, and until the Church puts its foot down on all acts of sexual immorality, fatherless children may be with us for a long time' (130).

- ix) Igbo culture does not confer rights of inheritance on a child who (somehow) is made to answer the name of his biological father, when by tradition he is not. Also society does not confer paternity rights on the person who fathered such a child (68 – 69).
- x) In traditional Igbo society, a will is an oral declaration in the presence of witnesses, and by the same tradition, the man's next-of-kin is empowered to modify the declaration after the man's death. Ugo explains:

'Igbo tradition makes provision for a man to spell out in his lifetime how his property is to be

apportioned when he dies.... He would normally make such a declaration orally in the presence of witnesses. But the same tradition also empowers his next-of-kin to modify his declaration after death!'  
(71 – 72)

- xi) A hitherto fatherless child who is told who his father is could legitimize his identity by performing the traditional ceremonies, so that his mother acquires the status of his biological father's wife. We refer to the case of the newspaper features editor who was 'born fatherless', found himself "a fatherless child, ...suffered the pangs of fatherlessness, and ...decided to set things right instead of grumbling perpetually!' (77). The Akukalia case is another example (116).
- xii) A woman could marry a wife. Tradition permits this. The Umuada woman is a typical case (44 – 48). She is one of the wives of a deceased polygamist. She had no son, but the other wife had. She wanted a son to guarantee a permanent place for herself in her husband's compound. She commissioned three males within the family circle to make babies with the bride. It is kept top-secret. Such children are brought up to call the woman's husband (deceased as in the Umuada case) their father. Ugochukwu refers to this as 'fatherlessness by design' (46).

### **Lexical, Syntactic and Semantic Foregrounding in the Text**

These traditions, as they exist in Igboland, are fraught with loopholes. The inherent flaws, ambiguities and anomalies of the traditions are a result of semantic mix-ups whereby some lexical items are forced by tradition to acquire meanings contrary to what they originally denote. As a result, characters and performances in the novel become despicable and unnatural. People exploit such semantic conflicts to commit adultery, fornication, incest, covetousness and all manner of aberrant behaviour. Community leaders, the government and the Church appear to keep mum in the face of a pandemic that challenges the role of the family, the role of government, and the role of the Church as moral and spiritual builders of the society. Ayo's jottings reveal 'The conspiracy of silence by government, the Church, community leaders... (172)'. The case of the deceased 'woman husband' at Umuada is one of the many such cases of a woman marrying a fellow woman who then is let loose as a sexual prey

to men just because the 'woman husband' wants to get children, especially males, to ensure a continuity of her line when she dies. At the funeral of the deceased Umuada woman 'husband', Ayo notes that 'The Bishop himself presided over the service ...implying that his lordship is fully aware of the bogus marriage (meaning) that the church approves of a marriage between a woman and another woman' (48). The procession of the clergy, 'led by the diocesan bishop' is made up of one bishop, two archdeacons, fifteen priests, five lay readers – two of them female, and six church teachers (44). There is also a cited case of a parish priest who fathered a child by a married woman in his congregation, and Ayo wonders why he is left to continue administering the sacrament to people. Gozie's consternation is registered in her proverbial comment:

'I, too, am baffled by the role of the Church in these matters... I don't know whether it is the reluctance of the pot to call the kettle black that results in a conspiracy of silence on the part of the Church' (102).

The complicity, duplicity and hypocrisy of the Church is further analysed by Chijioke Madu, and corroborated by Gozie and Ayo. The writer narrates:

He began with the issue of polygamy. Christianity proclaims one man, one wife. Igbo culture permits a man to marry as many wives as he wishes, provided he performs the requisite traditional ceremonies on each of them. The Church, he claimed, enforces its teaching halfheartedly. A man who marries more than one wife is barred from the sacrament; when he dies, some refuse to conduct a funeral service for him in the church but may do so in his compound. In the books, unless he drives the extra wife or wives away, his sin will never be forgiven. Yet every year the Church accepts his princely donations and special thank-offerings...(102).

'Then comes the issue of women bearing children without being married,' Chijioke went on. 'The Church simply turns a blind eye at them, resulting in the proliferation of fatherless children. Unmarried women bear children at will, to the knowledge of every member of the congregation, including the

priest. Their children are baptized without the officiating minister asking questions about their natural fathers. Single mothers receive the sacrament; they are admitted to the Women's Guild....What inspiration is a woman who produced three children to three different men in adulterous relationships expected to give to young unmarried girls?'.... 'This attitude to single women making babies outside marriage,' Ayo suggested, 'probably explains why the Church shuts its eyes to the adultery being committed by second, third, fourth and so on, wives of polygamists....The issue of fatherless babies cannot be tackled in isolation. The Church is in a unique position to reduce its incidence, through massive public enlightenment programmes and through the strict application of its sanctions, not on a selective basis, but on all parties involved. Would you agree?'(103-104).

Chijioke and Gozie agree completely.

However, this appears a mere dream, for, the germ (of fatherlessness) has permeated the ecclesiastical realm and contaminated the Ministers of God, putting the sanctity of Christianity in jeopardy. Nobody seems to be saying anything as the phenomenon of fatherlessness becomes so rampant in the society that the next person speaking with you in the street could be your child. This posture is exemplified by the fact that Ayo's sources of data, unknown to him, are secretly fatherless: the newspaper features editor was 'born fatherless'; Barrister Ejindu is also fatherless; Architect Chijioke Madu and his wife are both fatherless, but told lies to each other about their paternity, that is, they used some clever subterfuge on each other to mask their fatherlessness so as to get married, and subsequently mask the truth from the children. The Obiohas, Nwanneka's foster parents, do not know her father; the person who knows (her mother) keeps silent about it. Thus, from the individual level to the larger society, the tendency is to remain unanimously silent to those 'evil' traditions that breed fatherlessness, and people go ahead to 'create a credible lie, and stick to it consistently' (104). When there is an agreement among a group of people to remain quiet about some state of affairs, which is not supposed to be kept secret,

because its disclosure could prove damaging, especially to them or their associates, we have a situation of conspiracy of silence. The title of the text is *Conspiracy of Silence*; the theme is pandemic sexual promiscuity and adultery in every facet of Igboland resulting in fatherlessness and its psychosocial effects, with the culture apparently endorsing it, the Church keeping guilty silence, and by half-hearted application of sanctions, gives a tacit approval to the overt and covert immoralities.

The effect of fatherlessness on the child can be traumatic. Ayo observes that their stories may be different, 'but they share one thing in common: despondency. Each suffers bouts of depression' (127). Other psychosocial effects include a constant demure carriage, frigidity, and self-denigration. And for Nwanneka, hers assumes a paranoid level; for Uzoamaka, it is near-suicide. Uzoamaka explains, 'All these things make me look like stockfish all the time...' (121). In one of their discussions, Ayo counsels Nwanneka:

'If you don't mind, I would like to make a few more frank comments.... I have observed that something appears to be running you down.... I've noticed that you don't wear trinkets. I've noticed that you've never let go even the faintest smile in my sessions with you, including this session. Your dress is always formal, which is all right when you are at work, but I was surprised to find you in a formal trouser suit at home.

Do not allow one accident over which you had no control ruin your life. Forge a new life. Play games. Socialise....

And, please, when any eligible young man comes around, or, if there is one hovering around the corner, don't send him away' (95 – 96).

The linguistic scaffold through which the author conveys the entire story is syntagmatic foregrounding. Leech and Short, discussing 'Style, Text and Frequency' say:

'...we may define deviance as a purely statistical notion: as the difference between the normal frequency of a feature, and its frequency in the text or corpus. Prominence is the related psychological notion... the general name for the phenomenon of linguistic highlighting, whereby some linguistic feature stands out in some way....' We assume that prominence of various degrees and kinds provides the basis for a



reader's subjective recognition of style.... We shall associate literary relevance with the Prague School notion of *foregrounding*, or artistically motivated deviation.... Foregrounding may be *qualitative*, i.e. deviation from the language code itself – a breach of some rule or convention of English – or it may simply be *quantitative* i.e. deviance from some expected frequency...' (48-49). Wales also says:

... within the literary text itself linguistic features can themselves be foregrounded or 'highlighted', 'made prominent', for specific effects, against the (subordinated) background of the rest of the text, the new 'norm' in competition with the non-literary norm. It is this 'internal' foregrounding that critical attention is largely focused.

Foregrounding is achieved by a variety of means, which are largely grouped under two main types: deviation and repetition, or paradigmatic and syntagmatic foregrounding respectively. Deviations are violations of linguistic norms: grammatical or semantic, for example. Unusual metaphors or similes (the traditional tropes) produce unexpected conjunctions of meaning, forcing fresh realizations in the reader. ...Repetitive patterns (of sound or syntax, for example) are superimposed on the background of the expectations of normal usage, and so strike the reader's attention as unusual (182).

There is a remarkable level of lexical foregrounding both in the context of the traditions (afore-mentioned) and in the interplay of the personal experiences of the characters and others as they are narrated to Ayo. First, the writer, Ike, wants special attention focused on the two young women in his story: Nwanneka and Gozie, the former "to play the role of a guinea pig", (18) the latter to play the catalyst – corroborating the role of the former. Nwanneka is the first to come on board, and Ike adorns her with captivating descriptive words: 'A slim, young woman in a beige jacket and black skirt suit, with a pretty, expressionless face....' Around to see Ayo, 'she settled into the lounge chair, screened off both knees with her skirt, and discreetly positioned them away from Ayo's eyes' (1). And as she speaks to him, 'She guided her knees from right to left of Ayo's eyes....' (2). She is a remarkable beauty, no doubt, and this

stuns Ayo so much that talking to his colleague, Ugo, he describes his visitor as 'A charming young professional woman' (13). And within a space of five pages, this description, without any lexical or semantic alteration, is repeated *eight* times. This syntactic order is retained unaltered for the first four times, thereafter, a minor syntactic (without semantic) alteration occurs, and we have, 'the young, charming professional woman'. We are aware that there are rules for the correct order of adjectives, and that an adjective of age should precede a participle adjective. The syntactic rearrangement in the first four does not imply semantic alteration; it is characteristic of the flexibility of the spoken, informal style of language. Ike is aware (and wants his reader to note it) that the pretty Nwanneka is conscious of how she sits, to cordon off parts of her body she does not want the prying eyes of a man to see. This is an immediate demonstration of a woman whose psyche is conditioned by bitter experiences, who has come for business and not for any indecent seductive exposure whatsoever. When the discussion with Ayo is over, Ike concludes the chapter with 'She withdrew without a smile' (7). During her second visit to Ayo in his office, the narrator says, 'Ayo had hoped for a smile of appreciation, but Nwanneka's face remained as placid as ever' (52).

Immediately Gozie arrives in the story, Ike says that 'her figure reminded Ayo of Dr Nwanneka Ofoma, the young, charming professional woman'. She is slightly bigger without being overweight....' (Hers is a) 'captivating outfit... and the warm disarming smile she beamed at him as they shook hands, suggested the addition of two extra adjectives, elegant and vivacious,' to those used to describe Nneka: 'Young, charming, elegant, vivacious, professional woman!' (17)

What Ike is doing at this early stage with these two women is purely artistically motivated foregrounding, the quantitative foregrounding referred to by Leech and Short, which K. Wales puts forward as syntagmatic foregrounding. With this, he focuses attention on the two women, one to play the role of a guinea pig to unearth the problems of fatherlessness throughout the novel, while Gozie is to play the catalyst – a corroborative role which exposes another way of tackling the problem of fatherlessness. This she does by creating a credible lie, and sticking to it consistently, by which subterfuge, the fatherless can get married, and live out their lives normally without the usual bouts of

despondency, depression and other psychosocial outcome of fatherlessness.

When the novel is read against the backdrop of these Igbo traditions, the semantic interpretations of certain lexical items quickly reveal the underlying ethical muddle plaguing the Igboland of Ike's novel. We see such words/lexical items as *biological father* (26, 41), *natural father* (20, 67), *natural kids* (30), *de facto father* (56, 83, 84), *foster parents* (10), *wife* (45) *widow* (45), 'woman husband' (twice 132), *bastard* (22, 75, 94), *incest* and *fatherless*. *Biological father* and *natural father* mean the same: real father, not adoptive. *Natural kids* are the real kids, not adopted. *De facto father* implies the father figure, playing the role of a father, but not legally the father. Foster parents, like *de facto* ones, play the role of parents – taking care of the child without becoming the legal parents. Etymologically, *wife* means a woman to whom a man is married; *husband* being a man that a woman is married to; *widow* presupposes demise of a husband, that is, a woman whose husband is dead and who has not remarried. But 'woman husband' is a complex coinage the import of which does not exist in the semantics of English. A bastard is a child born of parents not married to each other. The concept of *fatherless* implies without a father, either because he is dead, or does not live with the children. An illegitimate child is the child born to parents who are not married; this implies that the child is a bastard. But in the society in question, there is an absence of the concept of illegitimate child (130), which tends to cancel out the concept of *bastard* in that society. So, one wonders why Gozie thinks that 'she cringes like a bastard' (22), or the features editor referred to as a bastard by his biological father's wife (75), or why Nwanneka keeps referring to herself as a bastard while talking with Ayo. By fashioning out ancillary and contradictory meanings for *wife*, *husband* and *widow*, such that a woman can become 'husband' to her fellow woman; can become wife to her fellow woman; can become a widow at the demise of her woman 'husband', Ike's Igbo society perpetuates the cultural aberration that results in fatherlessness.

These foregrounded lexical items, like essential arteries in human anatomy, provide a sense of direction for the plot and theme of the novel, and the semantic conflict between the denotation and the society-imposed connotation of some of them is responsible for the general mood of despondency and depression which those regarded as fatherless have in

common. The syntagmatic foregrounding Wales is talking about has to do with the prominence achieved by the repetition of these lexical items. These lexical items are of uppermost importance in realizing the message of the novel. The frequency ratio of *fatherless*, for instance, in a novel of just 189 pages, underscores the importance the author attaches to that phenomenon. The adjective, *fatherless*, the noun *fatherlessness* and their phrasal forms (*no father, without a father*) occur no less than 160 times in the novel, thus highlighting them as the hub around which the title and the message rotate.

From the traditions, we see that there is the 'unnatural' practice of a woman (married or unmarried) marrying her fellow woman; thus, there exists a nomenclature as 'woman husband', which implies the existence of 'wife of a wife'. But the tradition has no place for a man marrying a man, so there is nothing like 'husband of a husband', for that is purposeless as far as the culture of the author's Igboland is concerned.

And curiously enough, nothing in the tradition reflects the problem of incest. One may argue that semantically, *incest* can be subsumed under *adultery* or *fornication*, which has a place in the tradition, but the truth is that *incest* has a shade of meaning much darker than *adultery* or *fornication*. It does appear that hitherto the practice of incest is almost non-existent in the society; hence, it is taken for granted in the mores of the people as gathered by the author. This is deliberate. The structure of the novel survives on a robust technique of suspense. The suspense hinges on the single word, *incest*. To sustain the suspense to the end, the writer deliberately avoids the word, even in his weaving of the traditions of the people. But immediately the suspense is broken by the 'carrier' of the suspense (Mrs Ukamaka Okafo – Nwanneka's mother), the word rolls out 10 times within a space of eight pages, and the story winds up. We note that it is Nwanneka that first used the word in a hysterical outburst: 'Mummy, you are a beast! Oh my God! You drugged Uncle Ik and went on to commit incest with him! I feel like killing you (180)!' We note also that her mother never used the word, instead, she and the narrator articulate the intensity of the offence with such words as *abominable*, *horrible*, (183) *heinous*, *damnable*, *despicable*, (185) *grievous* (186). With the revelation comes a serious interior dialogue highlighting the level of anguish Nwanneka is plunged into by her mother's incestuous act. She finds herself wrangling with an inner voice which argues with, criticizes and admonishes her for every

step she took to uncover the truth about her paternity, from not letting sleeping dogs lie since the incidence of fatherlessness is a common phenomenon in the society, to the attempted suicide. Like a final verdict, the inner voice wakes her to the stark realities ahead of her:

“Talking about children, have you considered that any child you bear will carry the incestuous imprint for life, and so will any children born to your children, and children born to your children’s children, and so on down the line (187)?”

And this inner voice verdict informs her final decision to flee to London, become a missionary doctor, to minister to the medical needs of children in any Christian hospital or relief agency in any part of the developing world. And to minimize distractions, she decides to remain celibate and childless for the rest of her life.

### **Conclusion**

*Conspiracy of Silence* deals with the objectionable traditions of Chukwuemeka Ike’s circle of Igboland. He does this story with a good sense of syntagmatic foregrounding. The semantic interpretations of selected lexical items used vis-à-vis their society-imposed meanings reveal the underlying ethical muddle plaguing Igboland. In the text also, Ike, just as he does in several of his novels, demonstrates a flair for neologistic style with such obscure negative noun coinages as *familylessness*, *parentlessness*, *husbandlessness*, *wifelessness* and *moneylessness*. The relative statistical frequencies of certain key words, unusual phrases and neologisms are a guide to the understanding of the crux of the message.

We have also noted how the author craftily avoids the use of his final arsenal, the key lexical item, *incest*, until the end when the bitter truth is out. With this craft, he succeeds in sustaining the robust suspense upon which the story structure is built.

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## **ETHNOMATHEMATICS: AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR TEACHING MATHEMATICS TO IDENTIFIABLE CULTURAL GROUPS IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

**Unodiaku, Stanislus S.**

### **Abstract**

*Ethnomathematics can be defined as indigenous (cultural ) mathematical knowledge or practices. The place of Ethno mathematics as innovative strategy is central to the achievement of the National Policy on Education, and specific objectives of secondary education in Nigeria. The paper examined the concept of ethnomathematics as an art of learning mathematical practices that exist among the Igbos of South-Eastern Nigeria, with particular reference to the Nsukka cultural group in the course of solving their environmental problems and activities. The paper highlighted that among the vital and numerous roles ethnomathematics plays in mathematical life of the society, it has greater impact on implementation of the mathematics curriculum standard of the society. Ethnomathematics has implications on our secondary school mathematics curriculum and mathematics pedagogy. Lack of trained mathematics teachers in using ethnomathematics materials appropriately in teaching mathematics concepts/topics were identified as serious handicaps to its effective implementation. It is recommended that ethnomathematics be entrenched in Nigerian secondary school mathematics curriculum and its approaches adapted in strategically teaching and learning mathematics concepts/ topics, because it is child-centred and culturally oriented.*

### **Introduction**

Development in all areas of human endeavor is centered on comprehensive knowledge of science and mathematics. There is no meaningful development in any aspect of human life that can be attained or sustained in any country without proper knowledge of science and mathematics. Actually, mathematical competence is vital to every individual's meaningful and productive life. This is because mathematics is used for analyzing and communicating information and ideas to address a range of practical tasks and real life problems (Gray and Tall,

1999). The line of demarcation between the developed (industrialized and wealthy) and developing nations, according to Ale and Adetula (2010) is based on the level of Mathematical attainment and ingenuity. Indeed, without science there is nothing like modern technology and without modern technology, there is absence of modern society. It is owing to these crucial reasons that the Nigerian government in consideration of her development put a great deal of emphasis on study of mathematics by making the study of the subject (Mathematics) compulsory in pre-university education. Although the importance of mathematics is seriously felt, and a great deal of efforts made by researchers and mathematics educators failed to achieve positive performance of students on mathematics. The question then is, what innovative strategies can teachers undertake for effective mathematics instructions and enhancement of learning to students in Nsukka cultural group of the Igbos of South-Eastern Nigeria, in particular and generally for Nigeria to achieve success in her noble educational aims and objectives in line with her national philosophy of education?

In recent times, a great deal of interest on research is centred on Mathematics of different cultures—ethnomatematics. The majority of research in this area has been about the intuitive mathematical thinking of small-scale, traditional, indigenous cultures (D'Ambrosio, 1985), like aboriginal Australians (Harris, 1991), native Americans in North America (Asher, 1991), and tribes in Africa (Gerdes, 1991). Literature search revealed that in Nigeria, the Igbo race and Nsukka cultural group in particular are non-inclusive among such researched areas.

Research evidence (Boaler, 1993; Masingila, 1993; and Pinxten, 1994) have found out that there are significant contrasting situations that exist between the type of Mathematics practices carried out in the everyday situations within cultures and the way school mathematics are taught in schools. Such mathematics practices carried out in the everyday situations within cultures is ethnomatematics. Ethnomatematics is considered both as the cultural or everyday practice of mathematics of a particular cultural group including those of school children, and a programme that looks into the generation, transition, institutionalization and diffusion of knowledge with emphasis on the socio-cultural environment. D'Ambrosio (1990) and Pinxten (1994), have found out that there are significant contrasting situations that exist between the type of Mathematics practices carried out in the everyday situations within



cultures and the way school mathematics is taught in schools. Such mathematics practices carried out in the everyday situations with cultures is ethnomathematics.

Furthermore, since ethnomathematics is considered both as the cultural or everyday practices of Mathematics of a particular cultural group including those of school children, and a programme that looks into the generation, transmission, institutionalization and diffusion of knowledge with emphasis on the socio-cultural environment (D'Ambrosio, 1990 and Pinxten, 1994), then it has a role to play in the context of the teaching-learning process in the formal classroom. This is so because ethnomathematics is both context-relevant and problem-specific, which school mathematics is not, thus providing the necessary linkage between the everyday cultural practices of mathematics and the teaching of school mathematics (Boaler, 1993; and Masingila, 1993). Introducing ethnomathematics in Nsukka secondary school classrooms will help in realizing the prospects of the national educational aims and objectives which demands that children should be exposed to education system that is content-relevant and has problem-solving potential. This can inspire them with a desire for self-improvement and achievement both at school and in later life.

Areas to be discussed are instructional goals/objectives in relation with national philosophy- and policy of education, national educational aims and objectives, poor state of secondary school mathematics instruction and learning, brief history and concept of ethnomathematics, the role of ethnomathematics in assisting Nigeria realize her noble national policy-and philosophy of education in relation with the secondary school Mathematics curriculum and pedagogy, the major handicaps to effective implementation of ethnomathematics in secondary schools in Nsukka cultural group of Igbo land, and recommendations on implementation of ethnomathematics in mathematics classrooms.

#### **Instructional Goals/Objectives in relation with national philosophy-and policy of Education.**

Ideally, all educational institutions (schools) have broad educational goals. These educational goals are derived from the broad/general educational goals of the larger society in which they operate. Moreso, the broad educational goals of the society are to a large extent complementary to the general principles or national philosophy of

- (b). the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
- (c). the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around; and
- (d). the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society.

All the various educational programmes in Nigeria must have goals to be attained and such goals are derived from these national objectives or philosophy. That is to say that in specificity, the aims of our secondary school education system is geared towards;

- (a). developing and projecting Nigerian language, art and culture, and world's cultural heritage.
- (b). equipping students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology;
- (c). diversifying its curriculum to take care of the differences in talents, roles and opportunities acquired by or open to students after their secondary school programme;
- (d). providing an increasing number of primary school pupils with the opportunity for education of a higher quality, irrespective of sex, or social, religious, and ethnic background;
- (e). inspiring its students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement both at school and in later life;
- (f). raising a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and teachings of others, respect the dignity of labour, and appreciate those values highlighted under our broad national aims, as well as live as good citizens;
- (g). fostering Nigerian unity with particular emphasis on the communities that unite in diversity.

Unfortunately the above national aims and objectives of secondary school education were not achieved at all in secondary school mathematics instruction and learning. The causes of the failure to realize the aims and objectives were discussed in the sub-heading below.

#### **Poor State of Secondary School Mathematics Instruction and Learning;**

National policy on education enumerated educational goals and specific objectives of secondary school education programme to be attained. Incidentally mathematics instruction and learning have seriously

the nation. Specifically, the five main national objectives of Nigeria as stated in the second National Development Plan and endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education (1981), are the building of:

- (a) a free and democratic society;
- (b) a just and egalitarian society;
- (c) a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- (d) a great and dynamic economy;
- (e) a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizen.

The Nigeria's philosophy of education therefore is centered on integrating the individual into a sound and effective citizen as well as offer of opportunities for equal education for every Nigerian citizen from primary through secondary to tertiary levels, both within and outside the formal school system. In view of this notion, the quality of instruction at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the under listed values:

- a. shared responsibility for the common good of society;
- b. promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children;
- c. respect for the dignity and worth of the individuals;
- d. respect for the dignity of labour;
- e. moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and human relations; and
- f. faith in man's ability to make rational decisions.

It is of paramount importance that these philosophical values should be in harmony with Nigeria's national objective so as to actualize effective citizenship, national consciousness, enhanced human relationship, individual and national efficiency, political, cultural, social, economic, scientific and technological progress. The kind of mathematics that can help us achieve all these is ethnomathematics because it is culturally oriented and child-centered. Its activities and materials are based on the students' cultural background and environment.

The aims and objectives of Nigeria education to which the philosophy of education is concerned are therefore listed below:

**National Educational aims and objectives.**

- (a) the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society;

fallen short of achieving these educational goals and objectives required, and therefore cannot achieve success in technological development.

There is ample evidence to show that majority of secondary school students' performance in mathematics have been variously reported by individuals and group of persons to be generally poor. For instance, reports on students' poor performance on mathematics were noted (Agwagah, 2000; Raimi, 2001; Igbo, 2004; Aguele, 2004; Chief Examiners' report, 2001 – 2006; and Olosunde and Olaleye, 2010). Reasons have been offered for this persistent poor performance in mathematics among our secondary school students.

In consideration of the methods used in teaching mathematics, Obioma (1989) explained that mathematics teachers often ignore approaching mathematics through investigating the topics by inductive activities of science. Teaching of science subjects in combination with activities keep students over working and thinking. In this regard, mathematics is turned out to be an enjoyable activity, not the hard type of learning stuff meant for specially gifted ones. Moreso, mathematics teachers have been using rote memorization in teaching mathematical concepts and even quadratic equation thereby making it difficult if not impossible for students to apply their knowledge to real life situations (Ozofor, 1993). Still commenting on traditional method of teaching mathematics, Obodo (1990) and Agwagah (1993) confirmed that mathematics teaching today still follow traditional pattern which is identified to be ineffective and a major factor responsible for the poor performance of students in mathematics. Ubagu (1992) advocated that new instructional models to be devised for effective instruction in mathematics. Similarly, Olosunde and Olaleye, (2010) advocated for new instructional strategy to be adopted by the teachers. Olosunde and Olaleye (2010) further confirmed that teaching method is a major contributory factor to students' achievement and attitude to mathematics. Such new models should be put to use especially in teaching of different topics in mathematics like algebraic processes, probability, geometry proofs, number and numeration and further mathematics (Osibodu, 1981). The four advocates (Ubagu, 1992; Osibodu, 1981; and Olosunde and Olaleye, 2010) appear to suggest the use of an innovative strategy such as ethnomathematics for teaching mathematics to, for instance, the Igbos of South-Eastern Nigeria, with particular reference to the secondary school students in Nsukka cultural group. Thus, there is need

to find methods and techniques to make learning more meaningful so as to improve students' achievement especially in secondary schools (Olosunde and Olaleye, 2010) like in the secondary schools within Nsukka cultural group.

Furthermore, in search of such alternative method we should recall that many third world educational practices are based on conceptions that education in general and mathematics education in particular, is based entirely on colonial experience and practices. Obviously, there is absence of indigenous knowledge in the mathematics educational practices in Nigeria leading to continuous poor performance in mathematics among the students. New conceptions of knowledge that are inclusive of both international and indigenous knowledge must inform educational practices (Ikeazota, 2002), be it mathematics that is part of our culture (Harbor-Peters, 2001) and mathematics of cultural practice (Presmeg, 1996). The introduction of ethnomathematics will help to achieve all these (Ikeazota 2002), in our secondary school education system. At this juncture one may need to ask, what is the concept of ethnomathematics and its historical perspective?

### **Brief History and concept of Ethnomathematics**

Ethnomathematics was first introduced in 1977 by a Brazilian educator and mathematician, Ubiratan D' Ambrosio during a presentation for American Association for the Advancement of Science. In 1984 the members of International Congress of Mathematical Education organized their fifth international congress in Adelaide, Australia. The congress often considered the launching of the field of ethnomathematics following the presentation of the topic "The social-cultural Basis of mathematics Education" by Ubi D 'Ambrosio. In 1985 a study group was formed to look into the field of ethnomathematics. Now, ethnomathematics is practiced in different parts of the world (Ascher, 1991 and Ascher, 2002) and even Zaslavsky's work on African mathematics opened this part of the field (ethnomathematics) (Shirley, 2006). Now, nearing the quarter-century mark, the challenge is to decide the direction for the field to move in the next quarter century (Shirley, 2006). So, while Africans are sleeping, ethnomathematics is being implemented in the western countries along side further researches on it by them.

Ethnomathematics is a broad conceptualization of “ethno” and “mathematics” “Ethno” comprises “identifiable cultural groups” such as national – tribal societies, labour groups, professional bodies, religious and traditional group. Identifiable cultural group include group of people (ethical group) who share common and distinctive civilization characteristics such as jargon, codes of behaviour, hopes, fears, language, motivation and culture (Carss, 1986 ). “Mathematics” is an art or techniques of doing activities such as counting, designing, locating, measuring, explaining, and playing (Granada, 1998). These activities are developed by each cultural group of people as they find the need for applying them in solving their environmental problems. The arts or techniques for these activities link with each other to provide an understanding of the socio-cultural and natural environment (Rajagopal, 1993). Mathematical practices include mathematics in the environment or community, spatial designs, practical construction techniques, symbolic systems, specific ways of reasoning and other cognitive activities which can be transmitted to formal mathematical representations (D’ Ambrosio, 1998). Based on the above conceptual framework, it is pertinent to look into some aspects of ethnomathematics in the cultural practices of Nsukka cultural group.

#### **Aspects of Ethnomathematics in the cultural practices of Nsukka people before the advent of western Education in Nigeria**

The development of mathematical ideas and practices among Nsukka people of South– Eastern Nigeria was influenced by the culture and needs of Nsukka people. Ethnomathematics, expressed by Nsukka people are found in bead- making and clothes –weaving used masquerade festivals, metal –gongs, wooden –gongs, drum, art works (eg decorations) patterns in carving and singing (Nsukka indigenous songs) which they sing during festivals and funeral ceremonies. Ethnomathematics also manifests in their farming. In their farming system, cultivation was made in heaps and used to form rows of ten–by–ten heaps (ie square of 100 heaps) which they called a plot or ten –by–five which they called half plot, and so on. So when a native farmer tells another that he has a plot of farm land, it is understood that he has about hundred heaps in that plot or that the space contain about hundred heaps. Obviously, their ethnomathematics practices and culture follow the

concept of counting (number and numeration) as found in the modern mathematics.

Furthermore, the concept of volume was found in their activities of using calabash in measuring the quantity of palm wine and native pots in measuring quantity of palm-oil. Both pots and calabashes were made of different sizes and volumes. Various sizes and volumes of pots and calabashes used in measuring palm-oil and palm-wine lessened the problems associated with trade-by-barter in the pre-colonial era in estimation of volume. They were also used in measuring quantities of different kinds of seeds like black-beans, cowpea, melon, and so on.

Another aspect of cultural practices of Nsukka people that is also directly related with ethnomathematics is found in their counting mode. Their mode of counting followed binary number system. For instance, in the storage system of their yam tubers, the tubers were tied in twos and each column contains a pair of ten tubers to make what they called "eriri ji", meaning one unit of a "ban". When these units are lined up, a man will come and embrace the lined up units starting from one end of the unit. He will then stretch his hands and fingers and face the lined up units. The measurement from his left longest finger to the right longest finger is called "nti-obi" meaning "one chest". Ten of such "one chest" is called a "ban". In the concept of estimation of length, quantity etc. approximation when "nti obi" or "eriri ji" or "ban" is being mentioned, one could easily imagine the approximate quantity of yam it contains depending on the size of the tubers. And can even discuss price for the quantity of a product without seeing it.

Introducing ethnomathematics into the teaching/learning situation in mathematics classrooms in Nigeria, and in secondary schools in Nsukka cultural zone, in particular, will assist our students to establish meaningful connections between the school mathematics and their own everyday mathematics experiences in real-life situations. In other words, ethnomathematics complements the efforts of both the teacher and students in the learning of formal school mathematics in terms of being meaningful to somewhat abstract mathematical ideas which are otherwise difficult for students to learn and understand (D' Ambrosio, 1991). Mathematics teachers should therefore build upon the students' ethnomathematical knowledge that they bring to school from their everyday experiences.



Basically, the people of Nsukka cultural environment have been practicing and applying mathematical principles, ideas and skills in solving their entertainment, farming, sharing of land, trading, art, recreation, domestic, among other environmental problems, before the advent of western civilization in Nigeria. In other words, ethnomathematics have found expression in almost all facets of life styles and activities of Nsukka people before the coming of the colonial masters that brought with them western education to Nigeria. At this juncture, one may be tempted to ask, what role(s) can ethnomathematics play in assisting Nigeria achieve her noble national policy –and philosophy of education through enhancement of secondary school mathematics teaching and learning engagement?

**The roles of Ethnomathematics in assisting Nigeria realize her noble national policy- and philosophy of education in relation to the secondary school mathematics curriculum and pedagogy.**

The roles of ethnomathematics are discussed in line with the well – known most fundamental educational theories of learning. They are theories associated with teaching a child new knowledge from the simplest aspect of what the child has not known. These roles are discussed below.

In the first place, ethnomathematics exposes students to how cultural values can be integrated into mathematics teaching and learning. For instance, in basket making, students can easily see the direct relation with contour in map reading in Geography class. Concepts of even and odd numbers in laying the sticks used in basket– making have also been learnt informally. Again, concepts of circle or sphere, hemisphere and frustum were earlier known from clay pots, clay plates, baskets, cups for drinking water and palm–wine, musical instruments such as drums, among others. If ethnomathematical concepts and ideas can be expressed or taught using these local materials students are familiar with, students' interest, achievement and participation will be high.

Secondly, ethnomathematics is the only kind of mathematics teaching/learning approach that can expose students to multicultural mathematics learning. In this situation, students are exposed to the mathematics that is full of a variety of different cultural contexts. It is a good way of capturing and or increasing the social awareness of the students as well as offering students alternative methods of solving



conventional mathematics operations problems, such as in multiplication problems. This can help Nigeria to achieve the national aims and objectives if her students can be taught mathematics from experiences based on their social and ethnic backgrounds. Mathematics that is ethnomathematics based, will enable students acquire appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical since it deals with objects students are familiar with and can manipulate.

Thirdly, ethnomathematics has made attempt for the first time in the history of mathematics instruction to bring together culture and mathematics in the classroom, thereby promoting the national educational aims and objectives of developing and projecting Nigerian language, art and culture, and world's cultural heritage. And the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes as well as diversifying the mathematics curriculum with which the differences in the students' talents, opportunities and roles opened to the students after schooling can be taken care of. Ethno mathematics is instrumental in implementing these standards and also vital to implementing curriculum standard (D' Ambrosio, 2001).

Fourthly, it guarantees connections among mathematics topics and among mathematics and other disciplines. For instance, basket making which exhibits the concepts of circle, radius, diameter, volume, hemisphere, and so on, taught in mathematics class can also be found in contour of Geography class. moreso, the concept of volume taught using native Nsukka pots and cups can also be used to teach the same concept of volume in Physics or Agricultural Science. Again, different colours of equal sized objects used in teaching probability in mathematics can as well be used in teaching colours and decoration in Fine and Applied Art.

Fifthly, and more importantly, it addresses the students' learning difficulties where emphasis on teaching of mathematics is concept – oriented. That is to say that ethno mathematics follows the most basic educational learning theories of teaching from known to the unknown, simple to complex task and even concrete to abstract. It reveals that mathematics learning is more effective and meaningful if the teaching of mathematics progressively begins with the more familiar learning situations/materials embedded in the every day mathematics practices of the student's own socio-cultural environment. Teaching with materials

that come from students' socio-cultural environment, that those students are familiar with will lead to inspire the students which will lead to self-improvement and achievement both at school and in later life. It ensures effective and comprehensive learning, thereby making it possible to achieve the National education aims and objectives.

Ideally, introducing and adopting ethno mathematics approach to mathematics learning and pedagogy in our secondary schools will necessarily reverse the poor state of mathematics performance among students. Consequent upon that our national educational aims and objectives can then be achieved. Although the roles of ethno mathematics are being serious felt, yet some impediments to its implementation in the classroom need to be highlighted. The major ones are discussed below.

#### **Major handicaps to effective implementation of ethno mathematics in secondary schools in Nsukka cultural zone of Igbo Land.**

The major handicaps come from teachers, textbook authors, the government, associations such as Science Teachers' Association of Nigeria (STAN) and Mathematical Association of Nigeria (MAN) and curriculum workers.

It is the ability of the mathematics teachers to draw mathematical examples from the cultural background and environment of the students that make ethno mathematics meaningful and successfully implemented. My personal enquiry revealed that almost all mathematics teachers in the cultural zone of Nsukka have little idea about the concept of ethno mathematics. Shirley (2006) noted that since many ethno mathematicians come to the field as mathematics teachers, much of the interest is in finding ways to incorporate ethno mathematics examples into classroom mathematics curriculum. One may then ask, how can a teacher who knows nothing about ethno mathematics incorporate its example(s) into mathematics class? Ideally, there is lack of awareness on the part of the teachers largely due to lack of workshops /seminars organized for them.

Ethno mathematics is not depicted in any secondary school mathematics textbook. In locally written mathematics textbooks, the authors do not include the cultural background of the students in their illustrative examples, and even fail to include related cultures. In the international scene, increasingly, school textbooks have included sidebars or even direct text content of mathematics in other cultures (Zaslavsky, 1996). Invariably, the absence of ethno mathematical examples in our

local mathematics textbooks is a handicap to both formal and informal learners.

Another handicap that is closely related with that of the textbook discussed above is that ethno mathematics materials or cultural values related to mathematics are not entrenched in the curriculum. The curriculum workers overlook the cultural setting of our indigenous schools and the environment where an ethno mathematical point of view contributes directly to their work. Otherwise probably the textbook authors would have included ethno mathematics materials in illustrating mathematics examples in the mathematics classes.

In Nigeria, associations, such as science teachers association (STAN) and mathematics association of Nigeria (MAN), organized by teachers have not made any attempt to include in their so many years workshops on the issue of ethno mathematics. This may be the chief reason why no work on ethno mathematics is available in any of their published journals. They are the two giant bodies that the government look forward to for developing, introducing and recommending science teaching materials (such as ethno mathematics materials) that can enhance teaching and learning of science subjects (such as Mathematics)

Considering the above enumerated handicaps facing the implementation of ethno mathematics among the Igbos of South –Eastern States of Nigeria, and Nsukka cultural group in particular, it is necessary and urgent too to make some recommendations for its successful implementation.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made strategically for effective teaching of mathematics to secondary school students of Nsukka cultural group.

The recommendations are itemized as follows:

1. Ethno mathematics should be entrenched in Nigerian secondary school mathematics curriculum. The curriculum should reflect the ethno mathematics materials and activities and,
2. how the materials can be effectively used to strategically teach secondary school mathematics concepts/topics. Based on this, Nsukka cultural activities and culture can be used to teach mathematics to students in secondary schools in Nsukka cultural environment.

3. Nsukka local government in conjunction with Post Primary Schools Management Board, Nsukka zonal office should sponsor secondary school mathematics teachers to attend workshops, symposiums and seminars organized in respect to ethno mathematics integration into the classroom.
4. Science associations and associations of mathematics teachers such as STAN and MAN respectively should be effectively used by governments (local, state and federal) as agents for sensitizing and training mathematics teachers in Nsukka cultural group towards using their cultural connections, materials and activities in teaching mathematics to secondary school students in Nsukka cultural environment.
5. Institutions training mathematics teachers (like Universities, Colleges of Education etc.) should include ethno mathematics in their curriculum. This will enable us see the impact ethno mathematics can make ranging from the schools mathematics curricula, down to the students. All geared towards attaining the national policy on education and specific objectives of secondary school education in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion.**

So far, all efforts and resources that have gone into research in addressing the problems of poor achievement in secondary school mathematics have failed to yield positive results. Individuals, associations/organizations, governments and institutions should encourage the implementation of ethno mathematics practices in the secondary schools in Nsukka cultural group. This is paramount – because presently, ethno mathematics is the only approach to mathematics pedagogy, that is child– centered and culturally oriented.

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**UNDERSTANDING GENDERED VIOLENCE IN IGBOLAND:  
THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT,  
AGE, AND ASSERTIVENESS.**

**Ugwu, J.J**

**Abstract**

*Gendered violence has been adjudged a global problem which cuts across borders, classes and cultures. It is considered a human rights issue and seems to be the most pervasive but least recognized. The unjust structures in the society seem to promote gendered violence. Literature reviewed on gendered violence reveals the different forms it manifests like domestic violence, sexual enslavement, rape, genital mutilation, murder, extreme neglect and abusive behaviours. Evidence from the literature also reveals that certain factors have been found to affect gendered violence. Among other factors, this paper examines the influence of educational attainment, age and women assertiveness on spousal abuse (a form of domestic violence). A sample size of 200 women between the ages of 20-65 years was drawn from Nsukka urban in Enugu state, using random sampling technique. It was hypothesized that age and educational attainment of women will significantly influence spousal abuse. It was also hypothesized that assertiveness of women will significantly influence spousal abuse. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection and data were analyzed using Analysis of variance. Results supported the hypotheses and suggested that high assertiveness and high educational attainment of women reduce incidence of spousal abuse.*

**Introduction**

Gendered violence, a form of human rights abuse, a social problem and a public health issue refers to violence that is directed at women for the very fact of being women and therefore being considered by their attackers as lacking the basic rights of freedom, respect and decision making capability (Organic Law 1, 2004). It otherwise refers to any act which would be punished if directed at men but would go unpunished if directed at women and girls because of their sex especially within the family (Onyeneho,2005). According to Peterson, Wunder and Mueller



(1999) a wealth of evidence indicates that being born female means that you are treated differently and less fairly than if you were born male. Gendered violence occurs in homes and outside homes.

Article 1 of United Nations declaration (1993) defined the scope of gendered violence as any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. In private life, it manifests as spousal abuse and the abuse of the girl child (Article 2 of UN 1993 declaration). In public life it manifests as sexual harassment, international sexual enslavement, rape, sexual mutilation, extreme neglect, widowhood rites, early and forced marriages, child marriage and betrothal, female infanticide etc (Heise,1989; Weiten and Lloyd 1994). However, spousal abuse, the commonest form of gendered violence according to Onyeneho (2005) will suffice in this study.

In general terms, spousal abuse refers to violence between spouses, but as a form of gendered violence it refers to a situation where husbands attempt to physically or psychologically dominate their wives. In other words, it refers to the use of physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse by husbands on their wives with the intent of instilling fear, intimidating and controlling behaviour (Harway & Hansen 1994).

According to U. S. Office on Gendered Violence (as cited in Wikipedia of Domestic Violence), spousal abuse is defined as a pattern of abusive behaviours in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. As implied in this definition, men use a pattern of abusive behaviour to gain or maintain power and control over women in marital relationships. Onyeneho (2005) also defined spousal abuse as violence against women by their husbands aimed at bringing them under their control. It occurs in different forms such as physical abuse (hitting, slapping, punching, pinning against the wall, destruction of objects), and psychological abuse (humiliation both publicly or privately, controlling what the victims can do or can't do, withholding information from the victim, isolating the victim from friends and family, denying the victim access to money or other basic necessities, unwanted or forced sexual activity ie rape, false accusation of sexual infidelity etc).

Basically, spousal abuse occurs in all countries and surpasses social, religious, economic and cultural groups (Watts & Zimmerman,

2002) particularly those with strong male dominance ideologies. Evidence shows that different cultures have different beliefs, norms, and social institutions that legitimize and perpetuate spousal abuse. Historically, mild wife beating as a disciplinary measure was condoned in western societies (Peterson, Wunder & Mueller, 1999). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century physical abuse of wives was legalized in United States and England (Peterson, Wunder & Mueller, 1999). Obviously, such abusive behaviour is seen in virtually all countries of the world. Due to certain cultural values as unequal power balance in the family legitimated by patriarchy as stated above, such behaviour virtually go unpunished in many nations. In countries like Russia, Japan and Chile spousal abuse is endorsed by certain cultural values (Baron, 2001; Elisberge, Caldera, Herreta, Winkvist and Kullgren 1999; McWhiter, 1999). Evidence by Federal Bureau of investigation (1993) shows that in the United States, thirty percent of women who are murdered are killed by their husbands. According to Gelles (1997; 2000) researchers estimate that about 3 million women are severely assaulted physically and psychologically each year by their spouses in New York. In Bangkok, Thailand, it is reported that 50 percent of wives are physically and psychologically abused by their husbands (Heise, 1989). Heise also explained that 80 percent of women are said to have been physically abused by their husbands in Ecuador, while in Nicaragua, 44 percent of men admit that they have beaten their wives. Evidence also indicates that thousands of young wives each year are physically/psychologically abused and often murdered in India by their husbands and husband's families due to dowry related problems. A phenomenon in India called 'gifts' death resulting from inability of the bride's family to fulfil the obligation of 'gifts' (large sum of money the bride's family is expected to pay as dowry). In Nigeria, cases of spousal abuse abound but cannot be estimated because they are not always reported to the appropriate quarters. This perhaps could be due to cultural values attached to marriage. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that spousal abuse is the most frequent cause of serious injury to women (Harway and Hansen 1994; Jones, 1990; Rennison, 2003).

However, as concern about wives being abused by their husbands gained attention, certain efforts began in women movement particularly Feminism and women's rights in the 1970s. In 1993 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of

Violence Against Women (Heise, Elisberge & Gottemoeller, 1999). The Beijing conference of 1995 was part of such feminist movement.

Many different theories have been advanced to explain the causes of spousal abuse (Onyeneho, 2005). These theories include psychological and social theories. Psychological theories focus on personality traits and mental characteristics of men that predispose them to perpetrate abuse on their spouses (wives) and of women which predispose them to be victims of spousal abuse.

Various psychological theories, for example the psychodynamic theory suggests that psychopathology and other personality disorders are factors that increase the risk of spousal abuse. According to psychodynamic theory, spousal abuse results from the personality disorders of the abusers (men) such as sudden burst of anger, poor impulse control, poor self-esteem, experience of child abuse that results into becoming violent adult etc.(Dutton, Hart & New Loves, 1993). Similarly, it results from personality disorder of the abused (women) such as unassertiveness or ingrained passivity which results in low self-esteem, self blame, change of their own behaviour to minimize abuse than try to change that of their partner and denial of being abused (Sigler, 1989; Walker, 1984). The assumption of the psychodynamic theory is that these personality disorders of the abusers are facilitated by the passivity of the abused which appears to mean willingness to be victims of spousal abuse. In other words, women are abused by their spouses because they radiate a certain kind of vulnerability-unassertiveness or passivity. Assertiveness is the opposite of unassertiveness and it refers to ability of women to make overtures to their husbands, to stand up for themselves in non aggressive way, to speak up to husbands when they have demands, and to make suggestions or requests to husbands when necessary (Hara, 2004).

Social theories focus on the external factors in the offenders (abusers) environment that increase the risk of spousal abuse. Such factors include family structure, conflict of power and control, social learning etc. Families structured in a way that couple share power equally are likely to experience lower incidences of spousal abuse. But families that are structured on unequal power balance legitimated by patriarchy experience higher incidences of spousal abuse. Such inequality according to family structure theory encourages spousal abuse as men see

themselves as lords and see women as objects of violence (Henslin, 2007; Peterson, Wunder & Mueller 1999).

Moreover, conflict theory explains that spousal abuse emanates from perceived conflict of power and control. Reiser (1999) stated that men are losing power and control and in a bit to reassert their declining power and control resort to spousal abuse. Also, stress theory emphasizes that social stresses such as inadequate finances or other such problems in a family increase the risk of spousal abuse. Thus men who have economic stress tend to abuse their spouses more as such handicap is speculated to hinder their ability to live up to their idea of "successful manhood"(Wikipedia on domestic violence).

In addition, social learning theory explains (Wikipedia on domestic violence) that people learn from observing and modelling after other's behaviour. With positive reinforcement, behaviour continues, with punishment, behaviour discontinues. The theory assumes that if one observes abusive behaviour, he is more likely to imitate it if there are no negative consequences(e.g. victims accepts the violence with submission). Based on this theory, spousal abuse is transmitted from generation to generation in a cyclical manner as men have observed over the years that such behaviours go unpunished

Despite the UN declaration and the feminist movement, and other several efforts geared toward elimination of gendered violence, it is evident that we still live in a society that devalues women and glorifies power and the use of force. Hence, the high incidence of spousal abuse in Nigeria and beyond. Consequently, there is a serious need to address factors that contribute to spousal abuse. Thus, such variables as educational attainment, age and assertiveness have been selected to investigate whether any significant relationship exist between them and spousal abuse. Also effort is made to find out whether there is any interaction between these variables in influencing spousal abuse. Hence, it is hypothesized that educational attainment will significantly influence spousal abuse. This is based on research finding of Hornung, McCullough and Sugi (1981) that educational attainment is associated with increased risk of physical, psychological and life threatening violence. However, it is predicted that educational attainment would interact with assertiveness to influence spousal abuse This prediction is based on Onyeizugbo (2003) finding that women with high educational qualification tend to be more assertive than those with lower level of

education. Therefore, it is assumed that women with higher educational attainment who tend to be more assertive will experience less spousal abuse than women with lower educational attainment.

It is further hypothesized that age of women will significantly influence spousal abuse. This is based on Olson and Defrain (2006) statement that age and spousal abuse are statistically related and that spousal abuse has been found to be more common among young couples. However, it is predicted that age would interact with assertiveness. This, according to Onyeizugbo (2003), is due to differential role expectations of women in Nigeria, especially in Igboland where submissiveness is expected of younger married women, but as they grow older, they are given more respect and more social recognition. This recognition and respect help older married women to be more assertive than younger married women who are rather more submissive. Therefore, by implication it means that older married women will experience less spousal abuse than younger married women by their virtue of assertiveness. It is further hypothesized that women assertiveness will significantly influence spousal abuse. This is based on Asai and Olson (2004) finding that abused spouses had lower levels of assertiveness, self-confidence and higher levels of avoidance and partner dominance.

The purpose of this study however, is to determine whether educational attainment, age and assertiveness of women will influence their spousal abuse. Three research questions were generated : will educational attainment of women significantly influence spousal abuse? Will age of women significantly influence spousal abuse? and will women assertiveness significantly influence spousal abuse? It was hypothesized that educational attainment will significantly influence spousal abuse, that age of women will significantly influence spousal abuse and finally that women' assertiveness will significantly influence spousal abuse.

## **Method**

### **Participants:**

The respondents were 200 married women in Nsukka urban. They were selected through random sampling from women at University of Nigeria, Nsukka (U.N.N.) and Enugu State Ministries of Local Govt., Finance, Education, Health and Justice (also in Nsukka, Enugu, Nigeria). At U.N.N., 30 respondents each were drawn from the following faculties:

Social Sciences, Arts, Education, Physical sciences and Biological sciences. At the ministries, 10 respondents were drawn from each ministry except ministries of Education and Local Govt. where 20 respondents were drawn because they had more population.

Seventy respondents with post primary education constituted the lower educational attainment group. One hundred and thirty respondents with tertiary education (OND and above) constituted the higher educational attainment group. The age range of respondents was 20-65 years. Respondents in the age range 20-39 years (Mean age 29.5 years) constituted the younger age group, while those in the age range of 40-65 years (Mean age 52.5 years) constituted the older age group. Younger group consisted of ninety-eight respondents while older group consisted of one hundred and two respondents. Assertiveness consisted of two levels: high and low which was determined by the mean score derived from assertiveness Scale developed by the researcher. The participants' responses on the assertiveness scale showed that ninety-seven respondents emerged as high assertive group while one hundred and three emerged as low assertive group.

### **Instrument**

The dependent variable, spousal abuse was measured with Spousal abuse assessment scale(SAAS) developed by the researcher. A 15-item SAAS was developed and validated in women with at least post primary education. It is a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 4-1(very often-never) for positive statements indicating abuse. Negative statements were scored in reverse direction (10,11, 13, and 14). The SAAS 15-items were derived from forms of spousal abuse reviewed in the literature. Four psychologists examined the instrument for face and content validity and approved it. The internal consistency of the instrument was established through item analysis, resulting in 12 items out of 15. The spousal abuse scale has full scale reliability Coefficient Cronbach's alpha of 0.81.

The assertiveness scale consisted of seven items developed by the researcher. The 7-item Scale was validated using fifty married women drawn from Obukpa community (also in Enugu State) with at least post primary education. It is a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from very often-never. Positive statements indicating assertiveness were scored as very often-4, Often-3, Sometimes-2,and never-1. Negative statements indicating low assertiveness were scored in the opposite direction

(numbers 2,3,5,6). The scale was earlier vetted by three psychologists for face and content validity. The assertiveness scale has Cronbachs' alpha coefficient of 0.70.

### **Procedure**

The spousal abuse assessment scale and the assertiveness scale were administered as self- report inventory. In the questionnaire there were provisions for demographic data such as age, educational attainment, marital status etc. Two hundred and twenty copies of the instrument were administered to respondents individually in their respective offices. Two research assistants helped the researcher to administer the questionnaire. The researcher gave the assistants adequate instructions on how to administer the questionnaire. Respondents were informed that participation was voluntary. All 220 copies of questionnaire were returned. Though 20 copies was dropped due to incomplete information leaving a sample size of 200.

### **Design and Analysis**

The design of the study was a cross- sectional survey research. A 2x2x2 analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses that age of women will significantly influence spousal abuse, that educational attainment of women will significantly influence spousal abuse, also, that assertiveness of women will significantly influence spousal abuse. ANOVA was also used to test the interaction of assertiveness and age, assertiveness and educational attainment, age and educational attainment in influencing spousal abuse and also to test the interaction of assertiveness, age and educational attainment in influencing spousal abuse.

### **RESULTS**

The results of the study are presented in Table 1 and table 2 below.

**Table 1:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Various Groups on Spousal Abuse.

		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Educational Level</b>	High	22.19	2.44	130
	Low	24.74	4.11	70



<b>Age</b>	Old	24.00	3.64	102
	Young	22.13	2.73	98
<b>Assertiveness</b>	High	22.07	3.08	97
	Low	24.04	3.31	103
<b>Total</b>		23.09	3.35	200

The mean table above indicates that women with high educational level reported lower level of abuse (M=22.19, SD=2.44) than those with low educational level (M=24.74, SD=4.11). With regard to age, younger women reported lower level of abuse (M=22.13,SD=2.73), than older women (24.00,SD=3.64). Also, women with low level of assertiveness reported higher incidence of abuse (M=24.04,SD=3.31), than those with high assertiveness (M=22.07,SD=3.08).The test of significance of the means is reported in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Analysis of Variance Summary Table showing the influence of Education, Age and Assertiveness on Spousal Abuse.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	256.50	1	256.50	29.36**
<b>Age</b>	107.38	1	107.38	12.29**
<b>Education X Age</b>	47.11	1	47.11	5.39*
<b>Assertiveness</b>	21.95	1	21.95	2.51#
<b>Education X Assertiveness</b>	1.00	1	1.00	.12#
<b>Age X Assertiveness</b>	3.40	1	3.40	.38#
<b>Education. X Age X Assertiveness</b>	14.51	1	14.51	1.66#
<b>Error</b>	1677.31	192	8.74	
<b>Total</b>	2237.56	199		

**Key:**

\*= p< .05

\*\*= p< .001

#= Not Significant



ANOVA result revealed statistical differences in spousal abuse between participants with low level of education and those with high level of education  $F(1,192) = 29.36, P < .001$ . The result also revealed statistical differences in spousal abuse between younger and older women  $F(1,192) = 12.29, P < .001$ . With regards to the influence of assertiveness on spousal abuse, ANOVA result showed significant differences in report of spousal abuse between women with high level of assertiveness  $F(1,192) = 5.39, P < .05$ . The result however revealed no significant interaction of any sort.

### **Discussion**

As hypothesized, there were significant influences of educational attainment, age and assertiveness on spousal abuse. The ANOVA result revealed statistical differences in spousal abuse between women with high educational attainment and those with low educational attainment. This confirms the first hypothesis that educational attainment of women will significantly influence spousal abuse. The low educational attainment group reported more abuse ( $M = 24.27, SD = 4.11$ ) than the high educational attainment group ( $M = 22.19, SD = 2.44$ ). This implies that educational attainment is related to spousal abuse. In other words, the more educated women are, the less they experience spousal abuse.

This present result does not support the study by Hornung, McCullough and Sugi (1981) on Status relationships in marriage: Risk factors in spousal abuse. In the study it was found that educational attainment is associated with increased risk of physical, psychological and life threatening violence. The finding that the more women are educated, the less they are abused by their spouses points to the direction that education could buffer women from abuse. The result supports the study's prediction that highly educated women by the virtue of their assertiveness will experience less spousal abuse than less educated women.

In the present study, it was also found that age significantly influenced spousal abuse. This result is in line with the study hypothesis that age of women will significantly influence spousal abuse. The result showed that older women reported more abuse ( $M=24.00, SD=3.64$ ) than younger women ( $M =22.13, SD=2.73$ ). This supports Olson and Defrain's (2006) statement that age and spousal abuse are statistically related. The result does not support the study assumption of

Onyeizugbo's (2003) position about differential role expectations of women in Nigeria which implies that older married women by their virtue of their high assertiveness will experience less spousal abuse than younger married women. Equally, this result does not support Gelles (2000) statement that younger women are twice as likely to experience spousal abuse than older women, meaning that spousal abuse is more common among younger women. This result of the study rather implies that experience of spousal abuse is sensitive to age and older women experienced spousal abuse more than younger women. This result has implications for women development. It shows that as women stay in marriage (which is correlated with age), they are likely to experience abuse.

The result also supported the third hypothesis that women's assertiveness will significantly influence spousal abuse. The significant influence of assertiveness on spousal abuse indicates that highly assertive women both young and old experienced less spousal abuse with total mean of 22.07, SD= 3.08 than less assertive women who experienced more spousal abuse with total mean of 24.04, SD=3.31. This ANOVA result supports the assumption of psychodynamic theory which states that women are abused by their husbands because they radiate a certain kind of vulnerability-unassertiveness or passivity. Therefore, less assertive women experience more spousal abuse simply because they are not assertive. Also ANOVA result aligns with the definition of assertiveness by Hara (2004) which explains that assertiveness refers to the ability of women to make overtures to their husbands, to stand up for themselves in non aggressive way, to speak up to husbands when they have demands, and to make suggestions or requests to husbands when necessary. This however indicates that women who are in control of their homes by the virtue of their assertiveness influence their husbands more. Therefore, these highly assertive women experience less spousal abuse than the less assertive ones.. This result is also in line with Asai and Olson (2004) research finding that abused spouses had lower levels of assertiveness, self-confidence and higher levels of avoidance and partner dominance. According to this finding, abused women are passive and their passivity is what facilitates perpetration of spousal abuse on them. Olson and Defrain (2006) also affirmed that women are abused by their dominating husbands because of their passivity rather than assertiveness. Just as it has been revealed by this result that lack of assertiveness in women leads

to experience of spousal abuse, lack of assertiveness in men has also been found to be responsible for their perpetration of spousal abuse (Florida Jewish News, 2006).

The limitation of this study lies mainly on the fact that very few studies among the ones reviewed investigated the influence of these factors: age, education and assertiveness on spousal abuse. Also the limitation as Onyeizugbo (2003) found in her own study that broad categorical variable such as age, education and assertiveness are often “packaged” variables, that is to say they are made up of many components, each of which might be affecting the dependent variable. This is substantiated by (Epstein, Fullerton, and Ursano, 1999) statement that “an individual’s level of education is a multi-determined characteristic that is likely to be related to other factors such as intelligence, level of experience, level of authority, and sense of environmental mastery”. It is therefore recommended that some of these intervening variables investigated in this study, should be controlled in further studies. Another limitation of the study lies on the fact that marriage is considered to be sacred in Igboland and as such many women were reluctant to participate in the study.

### **Conclusion**

It has been established that spousal abuse has wide ranging and sometimes long-term effects. The effects can be both physical and psychological. The physical effects could be physical injury (head injury, broken bones, bruises etc.) while psychological effects could be depression and sometimes Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which is characterized by symptoms such as flashbacks, intrusive imagery, nightmares, anxiety, insomnia etc.

However, due to these numerous effects of spousal abuse, it is suggested that psychological treatment may be helpful to women in the aftermath of spousal abuse. According to Hattendorf and Tollerud (1997) it is recommended that a feminist therapy should be adopted for the physically abused women in which case traditional gender roles are challenged and empowerment of women is a primary focus.

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## **ANNUAL REPORT AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL OF FINANCIAL RELATIONS**

**Anthony Chinedu Ekwueme**

### **Abstract:**

*In the fast changing world of business, organizational leaders need to communicate effectively with their various publics especially in the area of financial information and disclosure. This is more so as investors are becoming more interested on how their investments are managed and becoming more critical of corporate sharp practices. The annual reports is one tool at the disposal of the financial relations officer that could help keep investors and other publics of the organization properly informed of the financial performance and other activities. Using the analytical approach, this study critically examines financial relations, annual report: its history, purposes, preparation, functions and constraints. It also makes recommendations on improving the use of annual reports as tool of financial information.*

### **1. Introduction**

In the present information age, it is imperative that any business organization wishing to be taken seriously, particularly those in the financial sector, simply has to communicate. It is not just enough to communicate but to do so clearly, persuasively and consistently using various relevant channels. This is because the centrality of money in societal and individual's well-being is such that any issue related to it attracts more than a passing attention. Second, in today's globalized world that is struggling with one form of economic crisis or the other including the recent global economic meltdown, it amounts to suicide not to communicate. Importantly too is the fact that not only are investors taking more interest and critical look at their investments, they are becoming more difficult to convince to invest their hard-earned money in any business that lack adequate information about itself and operations. Jones (2003, p.2) believes that, "in the rapidly expanding age of online communications, the stakes are high for those who fail to tell their company's investment and governance story effectively. On the other hand, those who do rise to the occasion will gain a strategic

communications advantage and enjoy the spoils of lower costs and a more accurate valuation based on a better understanding of their business by their investors - and potential investors.

The concern expressed above calls for effective financial communications with investors through the use of appropriate media channels and efficacious use of language. Accordingly, one of the tools of financial communication is the annual report. The main goal of this study is to examine how the annual report can be used in communicating effectively with financial stakeholders of an organization. To realize this objective, this study thoroughly examines financial relations; the annual report as a tool of financial relations: its history, purposes, functions and constraints as well as make recommendations.

## **2. Financial Relations:**

In essence, financial relations management is an offshoot of modern public relations management and includes all the planning, organizing, directing and controlling of effective and planned two-way communications required to create and maintain understanding, goodwill, public interest and sympathy of all the financial publics of an organization. Hence, Nwosu (1996, p.132) was right in defining financial relations as, "that special area of public relations management that is concerned with all matters which affect or could affect the financial existence, standing or survival of any organization." It is an organized, planned and systematic programme of action geared towards building and sustaining mutually beneficial relationships with all the publics of an organization which contribute or can contribute to the organization's financial survival, growth and stability. Financial relations therefore, is a professional art and science in financial communication aimed at creating, expanding and sustaining a profitable clientele base for an organization through continuous, deliberate, conscientious communication (Okoro et al, 1999 p.96). It encompasses all the planned, deliberate and sustained communication efforts made by an organization to maintain excellent mutually beneficial relationships with its financial publics using different tools, avenues, tactics and strategies open to the financial relations manager. Nwanwene (1993, p.1) argues that:

Financial public relations practice in Nigeria has been in the quiet corner of public relations profession. During the 80s



however, this highly specialized field sprang into remarkable position of prominence. Major companies, most importantly, financial institutions across the country are establishing financial public relations outfits or have expanded the existing public relations departments to undertake the demands for better relations with shareholders, security analysts and the financial press to mention but a few.

But over the past few decades, organizations, especially financial institutions have realized the very important place of financial relations in the continued survival, growth and stability of their businesses. This realization has led to a tremendous upward swing in the use of financial relations strategies and tactics by different organizations. Miller cited in Nwanwene (1993, p.7) attributed this phenomenal growth of financial relations within such a short period of time to eight cardinal reasons namely:

- The increasing number of companies or corporations going public;
- The increasing number of companies listed on the stock exchange;
- The higher rate of corporate mergers and acquisitions and the desire for higher stock prices;
- The increasing number of security analysts and their growing sophistication;
- The growing sophistication of the investing public;
- Demands for better management performance as demonstrated by higher stock prices;
- Tougher requirements for disclosure of information by both the Stock Exchange and the Securities and Exchange Commission;
- The growing realization of the need for expert guidance in financial matters, particularly in view of possible court cases.

Besides, there was a growing need for provision of accurate financial data, statistics and information needed to procure or give out loans, sell securities, go public and operate smoothly and successfully in

the Stock Exchange market. In addition to the above is the wind of globalization sweeping across the world resulting in business realignment and thence, the realignment of the world economy. The shrinking space and time has led to tremendous increase in Foreign Direct Investment. With the large multinationals daily diversifying their operations, there arose the need for mutual and reciprocal understanding and cordial relations between these organizations, their different foreign publics which only a well-trained financial relations officer can help put in place. These financial publics of an organization, according to Nwosu (1996, p. 133) include: financial institutions; stock Exchange; investment agencies; stock exchange members; stock brokers; insurance companies; employees of the company you are consulting for; customers; relevant government ministries and parastatals; opinion leaders; financial press; trade unions; shareholders and potential shareholders; security analysts; suppliers; relevant research institutions; institutions of higher learning; the general public, etc.

### **3. Annual Report**

The large and various financial publics of an organization demand that attention be paid to channels of communication that quickly, accurately and clearly delivers a message to them all. The annual report fulfills these functions adequately. According West's Encyclopedia of American Laws:

An annual report is a comprehensive report on a company's activities throughout the preceding year. Annual reports are intended to give shareholders and other interested people information about the company's activities and financial performance. Most jurisdictions require companies to prepare and disclose annual reports, and many require the annual report to be filed at the company's registry. Companies listed on a stock exchange are also required to report at more frequent intervals (depending upon the rules of the stock exchange involved).

It adds that, “annual reports measure a corporation's financial health. They focus on past and present financial performance, and make predictions about future prospects. By law, any corporation that holds an annual meeting for stockholders or security holders is required to issue an annual report.” Annual report, in layman's language is simply a report card or a score sheet of an organization's performance, especially its financial performance in the preceding year.

As a unique tool of financial relations, the annual report provides the public an important window into organization's activities and corporate governance and provides the organization a wonderful opportunity to tell its own story especially its financial performance. It is a key tool of corporate communication and financial relations in that unlike the press release, it is detailed; unlike the press conference, it is written, edited and produced by the organization itself and unlike the house journal, it focuses on the core financial publics of an organization and gives an insight into the entire organization's performance and not a part thereof. It provides the shareholders details of all the important financial information including such non-financial information like plans for the future.

Dias and Fonseca (2004) citing Subramanan, Insley and Blackwell (1993) agree that annual reports are usually composed of two types of data, quantitative data (accounting and financial data) and qualitative data (narrative texts), where the combination of both types allows the organizations to disclose the necessary information to stakeholders.

The beauty of the annual report comes from the fact that it reaches the shareholders before the annual general meeting. Because of this, the shareholders are given ample time to study it before the general meeting where it is discussed. The use of Internet in distributing annual reports has removed its habitual late arrival by post experienced mostly by investors in developing nations.

The annual report usually shows such financial information and non-financial information chairman's statement; CEO's report; auditor's report on corporate governance; mission statement; corporate governance statement of compliance; statement of directors' responsibilities; invitation to the company's AGM as well as financial statements including; auditor's report on the financial statements; balance sheet; statement of retained earnings; income statement; cash flow statement;

notes to the financial statements; accounting policies and others (Wikipedia, 2009).

In the time past, most organizations, including banks, see annual report just as an annual ritual, indeed as an unnecessary frill. The primary purposes of the annual report, they believed, were to carry organization's financial performance and give information on composition of the board and the sort, which most shareholders did not read anyway. The annual report was then a drab, unexciting sheaf of papers. This opinion of annual report has since, changed. Annual report has changed in character and in content. It has become more corporate in outlook, more persuasive in contents, detailed and focused. Kahler (1994, p.1) agrees that in recent times, "business organizations including banks are discovering that annual reports, if well-designed and well-written, can be an important communication tool... In the highly competitive financial services environment of the 1990s, many companies repositioning themselves for the future, the annual report - with its extended communications shelf life - is a key tool for explaining these restructuring, segmentation and business-line strategies to shareholders and analysts."

In past three decades or more, annual report has grown to assume a new status and importance in the organization's well-being as they are no longer considered just another obligatory organizational publication or a mere report card or score sheet of an organization's performance in the preceding year. Annual report has become one of the prime tools of effective organizational communication and financial relations. Hynes [2004, p. 1] agrees that annual report was previously merely used to "evaluate financial performance of a company during the previous year. However, over the seventy-year history, annual report has taken on more complex function. Today, it is an essential communication tool for improving a company's public relations, credibility, and investor relations as well as for financial disclosure." The foregoing is borne out of the overall strong belief of the public and many organization's leaders that organizations and corporate bodies should be more accountable, more transparent and more open to public scrutiny.

#### **Annual Report: Historical Background**

Annual report was the brainchild of the New York Stock Exchange. There arose a need for quoted organizations to make public their earnings and annual accounts because of the need of the investing

public to know the fate of their investment. According to Hynes (2004:2), "... in 1860, the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), began asking companies for regular reports. After decades of this call, it received different responses. While companies (Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad), simply refused to comply saying, their companies make no reports and provide no statements, others (Northern Pacific Railway company), readily provided extensive information." Later, more companies responded to the call and made public their financial operations as required but some still refused to comply.

The then prevalent fraudulent activities in business organizations with huge public investments led to an outcry for organizations to disclose their financial deals over a period of time preferably, one year. The big financial (e.g. matchbox) scandals of the 1920s and the accompanying public outcry for proper disclosure forced the hand of the government to make some laws to this effect.

In 1933, the United States Congress in response to the continued public demand for public organizations to disclose their finances passed the 'Truth in Securities law.' This Act required that corporations provide investors with financial information about securities that were publicly offered for subscription. The law also looked into the issues of deceit, misrepresentation and fraud in the sale of securities. A year later, precisely in 1934, the Congress passed the Securities Exchange Act that established the Securities and Exchange Commission. This law equally mandated that corporations with more than \$10 million in publicly traded assets must issue independently audited annual reports (Plung & Montgomery, 2004). This law required that some key issues be clearly shown in the annual reports. These include: statement of earnings or income, the balance sheet, cash flow, statement on shareholders' equity, other relevant qualitative and quantitative information necessary to understand the data.

Some years later, some organizations' leaders saw a unique opportunity that the mandatory annual report offers them to really showcase and market their organizations and their activities to the public. Besides, nothing in the law mandating the publication of annual reports restrained an organization from using it to achieve other beneficial ends. It became an effective tool for organizations to enunciate and publicize their philosophies, strategies, core values and successes. It became a tool for organization to tell its own story, in its own way every year. The

annual report then took a more corporate outlook, appeared in magazine form with beautiful glossy papers, decent photographs, beautiful graphics armed with statistical tools like graphs, charts, tables adorning the pages and aiding in explaining the complex financial figures.

These years of flamboyance in the annual report came with a big financial cost to the organizations even though the level to which it helped in planting the name and image of individual organizations cannot immediately be quantified. For instance, in 1984, it cost the H.J. Heinz a whopping \$8 to produce a copy of its 40-page annual report (Burrough, 1986). In summary, a historical review of its use to professionals and students shows that annual reports have gradually developed from modest beginnings to become elaborate, slick, sleek, and purposeful documents, bending in time to economic conditions, adapting to a changing and complex audience and responding to new rules and government regulations. The first annual report issued in the United States was in 1837 by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. (Myers, Marshall [www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov)).

#### **Purposes of the Annual Report**

The primary purposes of preparing the annual report as a tool financial relations are to:

- Educate financial publics of an organization on financial trends in the industry;
- Persuade share/stockholders to continue their investment in it;
- Create good public image for the organization through beneficial activities;
- Improve and stabilize the value of the organization's securities in the market;
- Create and maintain mutual beneficial and reciprocal relations with the host community including community neighbours;
- Create understanding and goodwill between the organization and its various publics: shareholders, employees, the media; government and others;
- Ensure that share/stockholders were adequately informed of the organization's financial performance and other sundry information and thus maintain their continued interest in the activities of the organization.

### **Preparing the Annual Report**

Writing and packaging the annual report is as important as the report itself if not more. However, the philosophy guiding the production of individual report is consequent upon what the organization has in mind at that period in time and the prevailing economic and market situations besides disclosing their performance.

One daunting task of those writing the report is clarity, credibility and readability. Hynes and Bexley (2004) are of the opinion that intuitively, shareholders assume that clear and informative financial statements improve the corporation's credibility while unclear and confused writing and mindless marketing efforts damage credibility. The organizations, particularly the bigger ones, want to ensure that the shareholders and the stakeholders read and understand the contents of their reports so that it will not face criticisms from their investors and hence attract some sanctions from government. To make shareholders read the annual report, organization's communication directors now employ different strategies including packaging the report very attractively, using attention-getting pictures, glossy papers and creative use of other pictorial and typographic elements both in the cover page and inside pages. Burrough (1986) concurs that annual reports are skillfully written and designed to gain readers' and leave a positive impression. Millman (1990) asserts that the annual report should be able to say: "Here is why our company is a worthwhile investment."

The second and importantly too is clarity in language use. To the writers, clarity in language and ability of the readers to understand the contents is paramount. In order to achieve this objective, short and correct sentences are used, simple words are preferred to difficult vocabularies, technical words are avoided and when unavoidable, clarifications are made. Hynes and Bexley (2004, p.2) advise that while the annual report continues to be recognized as a communication tool for financial reporting, it is important that its writers have rhetorical skills to compose a document that is clear and understandable because first and foremost, the annual report must be credible.

The third is credibility. Credibility answers the question of believability and truthfulness in the facts and figures contained in the annual report. Jacobson (1988) show that lack of credibility is a major accusation of the annual reports. Critics of organizational leaders have often insisted that the annual reports are long in inconsequentialities but



short in substance. The objective to achieve is to ensure that the shareholders and stakeholders believe the facts and figures contained in the annual report. Credibility is required to douse the doubts of shareholders in the report. Courtis (1982) believes that the Chief Executive's (Chairman's statement) letter for instance, should convey trust and credibility. If the readers of the report consider it credible, then the writers of the report had done a good job and if otherwise, serious problem develops. To achieve this, Millman (1990, p.52-55) developed an eight-point paradigm that should guide the writing of annual report. These are:

- Define the message and the themes;
- Speak directly to your audience;
- Face up to disappointing results. Take responsibility for problems. Proffer solutions;
- Admit that there are competitors and tell what is being done to maintain market share;
- Make your projections real and meaningful;
- Use clear language, graphs and charts to make information and financial understandable;
- Use design that reinforces the message and the corporate identity;
- Invite your 'partners' – the audience into the discussion. Make sure you discuss what they want and need.

Another task is that of disseminating the relevant and pertinent organizational information as clearly as comprehensively as possible without running into prohibitive costs and without missing the organization's core message. This is a very daunting task as often; the readers of the report spend very little time scanning through the entire report before dropping it. So it becomes important to the writers of the report that within the time the reader spares his report, he gets as much information about the organization including its core message as well as its performance. To achieve this objective, the writers may opt for bold graphic letters and beautiful pictorial elements which help advertise the organization apart from giving the necessary information.

It is also helpful to include CD-ROM or diskette of the annual report for people to read even when in their cars or at any convenient place. Some organizations have also posted their reports in their websites



just for convenience purposes and used different styles to achieve this. American Law encyclopedia says that:

In some respects, annual reports are like fashions. Certain techniques, formats, and designs are popular for a few years and then new ideas displace the old. Several years later, the old ideas are back in vogue again. Other formats are 'classic,' never seeming to go out of style or lose their power. A key to a successful annual report is not getting caught up in a trend, and instead deciding what works best for conveying the message.

#### **Functions of the Annual Report**

It has been discovered that publications directors use annual report to achieve diverse ends ranging from fundraising to public relations. Briefly, a skilled financial relations officer can use the annual report to achieve the following financial relations objectives.

#### **Communication tool of financial disclosure:**

The annual report is a veritable communication tool that could be used to discuss diverse issues concerning the organization with both shareholders and stakeholders of the organization. The beauty of the annual report is that it addresses a well-segmented audience with a focused message. It does not need to worry about those who are neither shareholders nor stakeholders. It directs its attention to this specified group with core messages concerning the survival, performance and well-being of the organization. To communicate effectively with its publics, the organization may opt to include Summary Annual Report, SAR, which gives brief but clear financial information to the shareholders. Kulkosky (1987, p.38) agrees that the inclusion of SAR makes the report compact, concise and readable and moved footnote material into narrative, used more graphs and wrote financial information in layman's terms.

The report is a good tool of financial disclosure in that it gives details of the financial performance of the organization in the preceding year and makes projection for the new financial year.

**Image-making and Credibility tool:**

In terms of contents, achieving credibility and reputation for the organization should be an over-riding goal of the annual report. Coulson-Thomas (1979, p.13) rightly observed that:

The general reputation of a company will depend upon many factors: its sheer size, the industry it is in, the personality of the founder, its history, how well its products are known and their quality, its location and how it treats its employees and customers. Financial reputation will depend in part upon these factors, as few people receive just financial information, and will therefore, be enhanced by a good public relations programme.

Right from the outset, the public had complained against the prevalent fraudulent and sharp practices in public-owned organizations and lack of credibility in their financial annual financial reports and the law making annual reports obligatory. The purpose of the law was to ensure a measure of credibility and transparency in organizational operations and performance over a given period of time. Companies strive these days to make their reports as credible as possible in order to obtain good image and reputation with its publics.

Thomas (1997) have found that the chairman's statement in the annual report has determined to a large extent the credibility or otherwise of the report among its publics. It has also been discovered that the CEO's letter that gave credible information has helped improve the image of his organization immeasurably. Annual report when skillfully done, contributes a great measure to this because it describes the company's vision, short term and long term objectives to the public and not just its financial standing. It provides about the only credible window to the public into the thinking and aspirations of the organization's leaders.

**Tool of Investor Relations and Fund-raising**

Annual report is an invaluable tool of investor relations for it communicates directly to investors who may be interested in the

organization's stocks. Annual report when made informative, clear and credible could help build public trust and confidence for the organization among potential investors. This is why analysts or consultants to an organization should not be overly strict in restricting the public relations personnel from making significant contribution in writing the annual report. This is perhaps where the Summary Annual Report (SAR) is most useful for in providing the summary of the entire report, communications experts are offered very great opportunity to be as persuasive, convincing and readable as possible.

It is when this objective in mind is achieved that the annual report becomes a good tool for indirect and direct fund-raising.

### **Community Relations**

The members of a host community constitute a very vital public to any progressive and forward-looking organization and as such should be given their deserved attention. The annual report is an important tool in distributing organization's information and performance including its programmes of social responsibility to the host communities as well as community neighbours. It is common practice among organizations to invite some key members of the host communities and opinion leaders to their annual general meeting where copies of the annual report are distributed to them. The annual report, when read by these people sort of demystifies the inner workings of the organization to the members of the host communities. It shows them what programme(s) the organization has for them, what it intends to do as well as what it has done in past. These people will expectedly inform other members of the host community what they have learnt from the reports and in this way build a very strong goodwill and support base for the organization among the members of the host community.

### **Government's Relations**

Government is a vital public which any organization operating in its area of authority whether national or multinational would always want to maintain good relations with for obvious reasons. The government makes the laws, executes and interprets the laws. It regulates the operations of business organizations. In the hands of a skillful financial relations officer, annual report can be a strategic tool of government's relations. Using the annual report, the organization can effectively

showcase itself as a good and responsible corporate citizen that pays its taxes promptly, that partner with the government in her developmental efforts; that identifies with good intentions of the government; that carries out programmes of corporate responsibility among others. The annual report does this by citing its organization's efforts in providing the rural people, for instance, with such infrastructural facilities like water bore-holes, rural access roads, building maternities and award of scholarships to students and instances of events sponsorship. This invariably puts the organization in the good books of the government.

### **Institutional Relations**

A good financial relations manager uses the annual report to achieve a variety of objectives including maintaining good relations with other institutions particularly those whose activities directly or indirectly affect his organization. These institutions that he should pay close attention to include the press or mass media; stock exchange, office of budget, central bank, commercial banks and other financial institutions, Securities and Exchange Commission and others. It is in the interest of any organization to maintain good working relations with these institutions because all their activities impacts positively or negatively on his organization.

### **Criticisms**

Useful as the annual report undoubtedly is, it has nonetheless ran into scathing criticisms from investors and corporate financial officers alike. These criticisms are hinged on two main planks: production and cost. The first is poor and shoddy way some annual reports are written. For some time now, annual report has borne the brunt of sarcasm and criticisms more than any other modern corporation's financial communication programme. These critics have argued that most corporate executives would lose their jobs if they ran their businesses the way they put out the annual reports.

The cost of production of annual report is a very nagging one. Being part of an organization's public relations efforts that does not yield immediate, measurable profits, organizations' investors are often critical of allocation of appreciable funds to this area. Matters are not helped by the tendency of the modern annual reports to be beautifully produced with glossy papers, exotic pictures and other attention-getting devices

that cost money. Hutchins (1994) found that a staggering amount of time, energy and money are invested in annual reports - more than \$5 billion every year in the U.S. Unquestionably the most expensive and management-intensive tool within the typical financial communication program, today's average 32-page report costs in excess of \$500,000 to produce, or as much as \$8 per copy.

### **Conclusion**

The annual report is, without doubt, a succinct, informative and necessary tool of financial relations. Despite all criticisms to the effect that it is unnecessary waste of investors' money and an ego trip for self-centered corporate CEOs, it has equally been found that most people view annual report as informative and useful. According to Hutchins (1994:1), "despite the fact that almost everything published on the annual report over the past decade has been negative; my research found that institutional investors' respect for the informational value of the annual is much higher than the 'Rodney Dangerfield' perception held by many communicators." His study found that:

Specifically, more than half (51 percent) of institutional investor respondents ranked the annual as the most useful and informative of five distinct information sources within a company's financial program. The other four sources were the investor relations officer, the chief executive officer, the chief financial officer and electronic information databases, such as Dow Jones and Bloomberg financial wires.

Moreover, institutional investors displayed a much higher appreciation for the information value of the annual's three major sections than argued by annual report critics. For example, only 10 percent of respondents dismissed the informational value of the financial section and just eight percent said they felt the same way about the MD&A. The low unfavorable ratings demonstrated across-the-board support for the annual's information content.

In view of the fore-going, we conclude by restating the importance and effectiveness of the annual report as financial

communication tool. We however, call on Chief Executive Officers and financial relations officers to be more proactive, clear, credible and meticulous in preparing the annual report so as to achieve its set objectives. Clarity and credibility are the ultimate goals in preparing the annual report. With the above two properly taken care of, the future of the annual report is more than assured.

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## **PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF POLITICAL ADVERTISING IN NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This research investigated public perception of political advertising in Nigeria with a focus on the Etche people of Rivers State. The main aim was to gauge, through survey, Etche people's perception of political advertising, which they were exposed to during the April 2007 Nigerian presidential election. To ensure that the respondents would be able to recall a majority of the political advertisements used by the presidential candidates, 300 respondents were sampled in the week immediately after the April poll. Out of this number, 295 of them, who said that they were exposed to the political advertisements of the presidential candidates, were included in the study. The findings revealed that the respondents felt misled by the political advertising they were exposed to; that they did not trust political advertising to tell the truth; that political advertising was deceptive. These results informed two of the major recommendations of the study – that political advertising give full information based on truth; that politicians keep faith with the claims and promises they make in advertisements. These, the researchers believe, can help restore public confidence in political advertising and politicians.*

### **Introduction**

From yore, advertising has been with us. As Fadairo, in Ogbodoh,( 1990:19) succinctly observes, “advertising is part of the people and our culture.” Ekwelie (1980:215) amplifies this view thus:

Before the emergence of cities and that of the mass media as a coupling link among the people, villages and little neighbourhoods had ways of advertising their wares.

What is, however, different today is the level of sophistication it has attained, the increasing scholarly attention it is attracting, and the



multi-channels available to today's advertiser to reach his target audience. Also, individuals and groups that have got anything to offer have exploited its enormous abilities to reach their targets. This is an era when everybody and everything wants to be noticed – and advertising is providing that platform.

In the sphere of politics, advertising is shouting louder today. Through political advertising, parties seek to sell their programmes, ideologies and candidates to the electorate because they want all the vital votes to occupy the seats of power. This is in line with Jamieson's (1992) observation (cited in Hanson & Maxacy, 1996, p. 89):

Political advertising is now the major means by which candidates for the presidency (and other positions, too) communicate their messages to voters... Ads enable candidates to build name recognition, frame the questions they view as central to the election, and expose their temperaments, talents, and agendas for the future in a favourable light.

In fact, the potency of advertising in influencing voting decision is still the subject of debate. However, this has not undermined the relevance of advertising to the entire political process. In Nigeria, for instance, the adoption of advertising as a sales tool of political candidates has been gaining ascendancy from the first republic till now. But Moemeka (1992) points out that it was in the 1991 elections that political parties first employed the services of advertising agencies to prosecute the battle for men's minds.

Before this time, however, Onwudiegwu (1991:16) had traced the history of political advertising in Nigeria to 1959 when the Awo-led Action Group (AG) employed the services of a British public relations firm "to work out its tactical and strategic campaign plans." The public relations firm devised the skywriting technology, which the party adopted to sway voters to its side.

It is general knowledge that advertising helps the consumer to make an informed buying decision. In the same vein, political advertising should provide the facts on which an informed voting decision should be based. It should provide the electorate with the "political options and

serve “as a positioning technique to show how one politician or party is different from another” (Nzimiro, 1992: 21).

The media provide the conduit for advertising because of their enormous capabilities to reach large and diversified number of voters simultaneously with the same message. As Berelson *et al.* (1954) once noted, candidates now go before the people more through the mass media than in person. The radio is most suited for this in many societies in developing countries because of its relatively high reach and its ability to break the barrier of literacy as messages could be couched in the local dialect of the target audience.

It is expected that political advertising should be decent, reliable and provide full information based on truth. In addition, it should squarely address the issues at stake rather than attack political opponents. Its contents should be ethical and within the confines of what the enabling laws and norms of society permit. This is what political advertising should be. But the public perceives political advertising in different ways. As Sekuler and Blake (1990: 1) note:

Human beings are equipped with specialized machinery for capturing information and for translating it into a language that can be understood by the nervous system. In this translated form, the selected information is digested by the brain, culminating in perceptions of the world. These perceptions then guide people’s action in the world around them.

It is an individual’s perception of a stimulus that determines the meaning(s) he assigns to such a stimulus, and ultimately, his response to it. Similarly, perception colours the sense an individual makes of the political advertising he is exposed to, as well as how he responds to it.

Therefore, this work seeks to investigate public perception of the political advertisements used in the April 2007 Nigerian presidential election. It does so by focusing on the Etche people of Rivers State.

### **The Individual Vote Decision**

The voter's decision for which party or candidate to cast his ballot for has been found to be influenced by several factors. Early studies in this domain have only attributed to the mass media the power to activate latent predispositions or to reinforce existing candidate preferences (Lazarsfeld *et al.*, 1948; Berelson *et al.*, 1954).

A 1954 study of the American 1948 elections revealed that voters systematically ignored information about candidates that did not suit their predisposition, as well as misperceived whatever contradictory information they received (Berelson *et al.*, 1954). Lazarsfeld *et al.*'s 1948 panel study of Erie County, Ohio, voters had equally made a similar finding. The researchers found out that voters exposed themselves primarily to propaganda favouring their initial positions. The voter's social characteristics were discovered to have accounted for his vote. They predicted the respondents' voting patterns using a score called the Index of Political Predisposition (IPP), which added respondents' standing on three demographic variables: region, social class and urban or rural residence. At various levels of this index, the proportion of respondents voting Democratic ranged from 26% at one extreme to 83% at the other, indicating a strong relationship of the index to voting decision.

However, some findings after their work have indicated a shift away from this kind of voting behavior (Oskamp, 1977). Based on the study (Lazarsfeld *et al.*'s) and other related works, Rossi (1966) made some generalizations about voting behavior, which include the following:

- Campaign issues are not important contributors to electoral choice: "by and large voters assimilated their stands on issues to their long-standing loyalties to parties and other candidates;"
- Relatively few voters change candidates preferences during political campaigns, and those that do tend to be the less attentive and knowledgeable;
- The mass media do not change many votes during campaigns; and
- Personality variables have not been demonstrated to relate strongly to partisan choice. The primary determinants of the vote are viewed as being social and long standing.

But Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995:13) demonstrate that campaign advertising is effective. The results of their experiment show that political advertising is persuasive but not manipulative. Specifically, they conclude that the ads “inform voters about the candidates’ positions” and “allow voters to develop differentiated images of the candidates, images that play important role in shaping voting choices.” However, Devlin (1997) maintains that because many things happen simultaneously in a real election, it is difficult to isolate the impact of political advertising.

Personal influence can be a factor in voter decision. In a panel study conducted by Berelson, Lazarsfeld and Mcphee (1954) into the 1948 election (in US), which focused on personal influencing stemming from the voting intention of the respondents’ friends and family members, the investigators found this kind of influence to be strongly associated with the person’s own voting intentions (cited in Kitt & Gleicher, 1950).

Other works have identified party identification as a major determinant of voting decisions (Cambell *et al.*, 1954; 1960; Converse, 1964; Sears, 1969; Campbell and Stokes, 1959). For instance, in US elections from 1956 to 1968, party identification was found to be more highly correlated with voting behaviour than any other factors studied, such as attitude towards campaign issues or towards the candidate (Declercq *et al.*, 1975). However, some researchers have reported a drop in the importance of party identification in determining voter decision. More and more voters these days consider themselves as independent voters and so do not align with any party; hence they switch their votes at successive elections based on personal reasons and convictions (Burnham, 1970; Pomper, 1975).

Some studies have shown parents to wield a considerable influence on their children’s voting behaviour later in life. These studies point at parents as the “most important influences on the development of party preference” in their young children (Campbell, Gurin & Miller, 1954; Hyman, 1959; Lane & Sears, 1964).

Another factor in voting decision is candidate image. Repass (1971) reports that candidate image was the best predictor of presidential vote in the 1964 US elections between Goldwater and Johnson. Similarly, Field and Anderson (1969) found that Goldwater’s image was more negative than that of the other presidential candidates of 1960 or 1964. Miller *et al.* (1973) held that the same problem of negative image

plagued McGovern in 1972. Similarly, Sears (1969:369) asserts that “candidate images seem to be particularly important because... voters like to personalize their politics...”

Race, ethnicity and religion have equally been found to be among the several factors that can swing votes in favour of, or against, a candidate or party (Rossi *et al.*, 1966). Studies by both Converse *et al.* (1961) and Pool *et al.* (1964) revealed that in 1960, Kennedy’s Catholic religion became the most crucial issue of the campaign, with large number of anti-Catholic votes going to Nixon and many Catholics switching to support Kennedy. At the last count, it was estimated that Kennedy gained about 3 million Catholic votes, but lost about 4.5 million Protestant votes.

In Nigeria, voting pattern in elections (especially presidential elections) has consistently manifested ethnic and religious bias, with Christians voting for Christians and Moslems voting for fellow Moslems, as well as block votes going to fellow tribesmen (Nnoli, 1980; Uju, 2000; Elekwa, 2001).

Doghudje (1992:103) bemoans the sad story of Nigeria politics in these words:

First, politics in Nigeria is a do-or-die affair. It is full of bitterness, hatred, rancor, intimidation and violence. People vote mainly for members of their tribe or religion. Issues and images do not count. The ideal candidate is always that person from one’s tribe or religion, regardless of the qualities of others from other tribes or religious groups.

In fact, several election outcomes in Nigeria have been predicated on the twin issues of ethnicity and religion that works detailing them have become boring to read.

### **Statement of the problem**

In periods of elections, political advertising has always provided a systematic way of selling a political candidate, a party’s programme, or the party itself. It is this vital role that has necessitated the increasing adoption of advertising by elective office seekers. For example, Nimmo (1970: 3), after noting the high expenses usually associated with political

campaigns, concludes that “politicians are willing to spend these extravagant sums because of their strong belief that electoral campaigns can make or break political career, parties and programmes.”

Political advertising and issues bothering on election have thus become fascinating areas for scholarly investigation, Lazarsfeld *et al.* (1948) study of voting behaviour; media political campaigning in the electoral process engaged the attention of Nimmo (1970), and Patterson (1980). Scholars like McCombs and Shaw (1972) focused on the agenda-setting function of the mass media; while Atkin (1981) dwelt on mass media effects on voting.

All these have been to the exclusion of the perception of the political advertising itself. Yet it is perception, rather than rhetoric and the source through which the message gets to the electorate that has a more profound effect on the sense the individual makes of all the fine talks at election times, as well as his response to those fine talks. It is in recognition of these facts, that the present study investigated public perception of political advertising in Nigeria with a focus on the Etche people of Rivers State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study seeks to uncover public perception of political advertising in Nigeria, with a focus on the Etche people of Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- (i) Find out people’s understanding of the major role of political advertising;
- (ii) Find out the major sources of political message;
- (iii) Uncover the perception of political advertising;
- (iv) Uncover the major factors that influence voting decision.

### **Research Questions**

- RQ 1: What is the people’s understanding of the basic role of political advertising?
- RQ 2: What are the major sources of political messages?
- RQ 3: How do the people perceive political advertising?
- RQ 4: What are the major factors that influence the people’s vote decision?

### **Theoretical Framework**

In this study, the agenda-setting and the individual differences theories shall form the theoretical anchor.

#### **Agenda-Setting Theory**

This is anchored on Cohen's (1963:13) assertion, that the press "may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about." Lazarsfeld *et al.* in McQuai 1 (2005:512) referred to it as the power to "structure issues".

After an empirical investigation into the agenda-setting capacity of the mass media in the 1968 US presidential campaigns, McCombs and Shaw in Hanson and Maxcy (1996:85) assert "that voters tend to share the media's composite definition of what is important" The media in periods of political campaigns have come to serve as sources of relaying political information to voters, as well as helping to focus attention on salient issues raised in the campaigns. People must first, get exposed to political information from the mass media (and other sources) before their perceptions of such messages can be gauged.

#### **Individual Differences Theory**

This theory "views members of an audience as distinct and separate individuals who will, upon giving attention to a message, handle it in ways distinct to themselves rather than as a uniform audience" (Blake and Haroldsen, 1975:121). This theory emerged from studies that demonstrated "that attitudes, values and beliefs were learnt in the context of experience and this resulted in differences in cognition and perception" among individuals. (Folarin, 2005:84). The different psychological composition of people affects the ways in which they make sense out of, and interpret communications they are exposed to. Therefore, perception of political advertising differs from one person to another.

#### **Methodology**

The study adopted the survey research design. This is because the work sought to uncover public perception of the research problem. The aim of survey, as Hansen *et al.* (1998:225) point out, is "to provide empirical data collected from a population of respondents" on which valid conclusions can be made. Therefore, using a survey enabled the

researchers to empirically gauge the respondents' perception of the subject of enquiry.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised all adults of 18 years and above of Etche origin resident in Etcheland in Rivers State of Nigeria who were exposed to the political advertisements used in the April 2007 Nigerian presidential election through any channel of communication.

### **Sample Size/Sampling Technique**

The sample size consists of 300 natives of Etche resident in Etche. The Etche people live in two LGAs in Rivers State: Etche and Omuma. The two LGAs have eight clans.

**Table 1.1: Clans in Etche and Omuma LGAs**

<b>Etche</b>	<b>Omuma</b>
Mba	Eberi/Obiohia
Ozuzu	Umuogba/Umuajuloke
Okehi	Ofeh/Ohim/Oyoro
Ulakwo/Umuselem	
Igbo Agwuru-Asa	

To arrive at the 300 respondents, a two-stage cluster sampling technique was used considering that the geographical area to be covered is vast. At the first stage of sampling, Ozuzu emerged from the eight clans. Ozuzu clan has seven autonomous communities, namely, Ozuzu, Isu, Ihie, Egbu, Ogida, Orwu, and Elele. Egbu community was selected at the second stage of the sampling. The community is further broken down into eight villages.

Stratified random sampling would have been adopted in the selection of the 300 respondents, but the difficulty of obtaining accurate information about the population from which to draw such a sample made it impracticable. Therefore, the quota sampling method was used. Based on estimation, 40 respondents were drawn from each of the four "Mgbu Ukwu" (big villages), while the four small ones provided 35 respondents each.



### **Instrument of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. Hansen *et al.* (1998: 225) remark that a questionnaire “standardizes and organizes the collection and processing of information.”

The questionnaire was made up of structured and unstructured questions with the former constituting a greater percentage, since the researcher intended to elicit a higher degree of factual data and also to facilitate its analyses using simple percentages. For literate respondents, the questionnaire was self-administered, while for non-literate respondents, it was used as an interview questionnaire since they could not fill in their responses by themselves.

Item 7b was adapted from an instrument used by Okigbo (1990). The rest of the items are original to this study. Six trained assistants worked with the researchers in administering the questionnaire.

### **Results**

Three hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered in the week immediately after the April 2007 Nigerian presidential election. This was done to ensure that the respondents would be able to recall a majority of the political advertisements used by the contestants in that election. Out of the three hundred copies administered, 295 respondents, following their “Yes” response to item 9, took part in the study. Item 9 (Were you exposed to the political ads of the presidential candidates for the April polls?) was specifically included to screen out respondents who said “No”. This is because exposure is the first step in the perceptual process, as one cannot perceive a stimulus one has not been exposed to. With the 295 respondents that took part in the study, the response rate stood at 98.33%. There were 201 males (68.14%) and 94 females (31.86%).

Definite questions were raised in the questionnaire to generate answers to each research question posed in the study. The items that addressed each research question are presented and analysed here. Discussion of findings is done simultaneously with the presentation of results to obviate repetition.

**RQ 1:** What is the people’s understanding of the basic role of political advertising?

Items 10 and 11 in the questionnaire were used to generate answers to the first research question.

**Question 10:** Does political advertising help to sell a candidate at an election?

**Table 1.2: Responses on whether political advertising helps to sell a candidate**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	217	73.56
No	56	18.98
Don't Know	22	7.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1.2 shows that 217 (73.56%) respondents overwhelmingly assert that political advertising helps to sell a candidate; 56 (18.98%) people said it doesn't, while 22 (7.46%) don't know whether or not it can help to sell a candidate.

The result is supported by Blood's (1991) finding that advertising can help win an election by persuading voters (especially the undecided ones) to vote for a given candidate or party. It is difficult to imagine any candidate that has ever won an election without recourse to advertising; though advertising may not be a necessary and sufficient condition for electoral success.

**Question 11:** Is advertising a necessity for winning an election?

The responses generated show that most respondents by a margin of 166 to 129 believed that advertising was a necessity for winning an election.

The result agrees with the preceding finding. If not for any other reasons, advertising has been employed by elective office seekers to provide information about themselves and canvass for support. The implication of these findings is that an elective office seeker who despises advertising does so at his own peril. We cannot avoid political advertising in the race for power.

**RQ 2:** What are the major sources of political messages?

The responses to item 8 yielded answers to this question.

**Table 1.3: Sources of political information**

Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	218	73.90
Newspaper	19	6.44
Relatives/friends	16	5.42
Village meetings	13	4.41
TV	11	3.73
Poster/Handbill	9	3.05
Traditional rulers	8	2.71
Churches	1	0.34
Internet	-	-
Magazine	-	-
Telephone	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table shows the summary of the major sources of political information to the respondents. The radio topped the list followed by newspaper, relatives/friends, village meetings, TV, poster/handbill, traditional rulers, and churches in descending order.

The Internet, magazine and telephone were not among the sources of political information to the people for obvious reasons. Internet access to the area is zero; there was no political magazine published in the state; the GSM service providers are yet to cover the area, though a few commercial call centres, employing antenna, exist in the area.

From the results, the dominant source of information is the radio. The radio is cheaper both in its price and cost of operation. It is portable and breaks the barrier of literacy as programmes are produced both in English and vernacular.

The present result shows a marked contrast from that of Atwood and Sanders (1975) who reported that television was the chief medium of political information. There are two possible explanations for this divergence in findings. First, they did their study in Southern Illinois and parts of Missouri, all in the USA, where television has gained high penetration given the advanced level of communication technology development there. But the reverse is the case in Nigeria. Second, Nigeria, a developing country, is still plagued by erratic power supply, as we know that electricity is required to power television in any home.

Conversely, the finding is in consonance with that of Okigbo (1990:57) which showed that the radio was the “highest source” of political information. For one thing, Okigbo’s study and the present one were done in two different rural communities in Nigeria that have all the indices of underdevelopment. The implication is that the political candidate seeking to reach the electorate in Nigeria must adopt the radio more than any other advertising channel if he wants to be heard by a majority of the people.

**RQ.3:** How do the people perceive political advertising?

Items 13, 14 and 15 were analysed to provide an answer to this research question.

**Question 13:** Do you feel you were being misled by the contents of political advertisements you were exposed to?

**Table 1.4: Evaluation of the deceptiveness of political advertising**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	144	48.81
No	132	44.75
Don’t know	19	6.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table summarizes the evaluation of the deceptiveness of political advertising. A majority of the respondents, 144 (48.81%) said they felt they were being misled by the contents of political advertisements they were exposed to; 132 (44.75%) people said they were getting the truth, while 19 (6.44%) persons didn’t know whether they were being misled or not by the advertisements they encountered.

**Question 14:** How often does political advertising tell the truth?

**Table 1.5: Evaluation of the truthfulness of political advertising**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	28	9.50
Sometimes	47	15.93
Hard to say	16	5.42
Rarely	126	42.71
Never	78	26.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table, which summarizes the evaluation of truthfulness of political advertising, indicates that 126 (42.71%) respondents held that political advertising rarely said the truth; 78 (26.44%) persons were of the view that it never said the truth; 47 (15.93%) respondents said it sometimes told the truth; 28 (9.50%) persons maintained that it always told the truth, while 16 (5.42%) persons were uncertain whether political advertising told the truth or a lie.

**Question 15:** What is your perception of political advertising?

**Table 1.6: Perception of political advertising**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Reliable	107	36.27
Deceptive	158	53.56
Don't know	30	10.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

From Table 1.6, 158 (53.56%) respondents believed that political advertising was deceptive; 107 (36.27%) people said it was reliable, while 30 (10.17%) didn't know whether it was deceptive or reliable.

Analysis of the three questions (13, 14 and 15) showed that a majority of the respondents could not trust political advertising to say the truth. Their views, when summed up, are that political advertising is deceptive.

A majority of the respondents may have been influenced to hold that political advertising is deceptive because of their past experiences that politicians in the country have always reneged on most of their campaign promises. People's previous experience tends to colour their perception of events and issues, especially when the new one relates to, or is similar to, a past experience (Hollander, 1976; Crider *et al.*, 1983).

Besides, the result may be pointing to one of the criticisms often leveled against advertising in general – that it is deceptive (Okoro, 1998; Vanden Bergh and Katz, 1999; Arens, 2004). A lot of studies focusing on the use of celebrities to endorse products have equally shown that the audience does not perceive such messages as credible (Aki, 1987; Ozoh, 1991).

One thing stands out from the present findings: advertising cannot continue to mislead and expect to convert voters. The implication is that

people cannot base their vote decision on the political advertising routed to them. They know that such messages are gimmicks – at least in Nigeria.

**RQ 4:** What are the major factors that influence the people's vote decision?

To answer this research question, the responses to items 16 and 17 were analysed.

**Question 16:** Would you vote for a candidate/party because you were exposed to political advertising that promoted him/it?

**Table 1.7: Influence of political advertising**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	94	31.87%
No	183	62.03
Not sure	18	6.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table shows that 183 (62.03%) respondents would not vote for a candidate/party because they were exposed to political advertising that promoted such a candidate/party; 94 (31.87%) people would vote, while 18 (6.10%) were not sure whether they would vote or not.

The result has confirmed once more that advertising lacked the power to convert voters as reported by some previous studies (Lazarsfeld *et al.*, 1948; Berelson *et al.*, 1954). Advertising cannot bully voters into doing what politicians want – support.

**Question 17:** Which factor influences your vote decision?

**Table 1.8: Factors that influence vote decision**

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Merit/competence of candidate	155	52.54
Ethnic affiliation/religion	41	13.90
Political advertising	28	9.49
Financial gratification/gifts	24	8.14
Party identification	22	7.46
Candidate's popularity	19	6.44

Candidate's physical appearance	5	1.69
Others	1	0.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table summarizes the factors that influence individual vote decision. It shows that merit/competence of a candidate influences more than half of the respondents' vote decision, followed in descending order by ethnic affiliation/religion, political advertising, financial gratification/gifts, party identification, candidate's physical appearance. Only one person gave another reason not included in the options: "If the person is my friend."

The finding is a marked deviation from what has been reported and written about the voting pattern in Nigeria since after her independence in 1960. Whereas other works (Sklar, 1963, Nnoli, 1980; Ikejiani and Ikehiani, 1986; Okadigbo, 1987, Uju, 2000; Elekwa, 2011) have demonstrated that ethnicity and religion are key determinants of who Nigerians vote for (especially in presidential elections), the present study has established merit/competence of a candidate as a major consideration that influences vote decision.

The study further confirms that the influence of party identification has continued to wane (Burham, 1970; Pomper, 1975) as a factor that determines vote decision since many people (from the present study) consider merit/competence of candidate more important than party affiliation.

The implication is that, granted that an election was free and fair, a candidate who lacks merit/competence cannot win an election conducted in Etche. If this political behaviour spreads to the rest of the country, merit/competence of a candidate may begin to count in future elections.

### **Conclusion**

The study has shown that Etche people perceive political advertising as deceptive hence they cannot trust it to say the truth. Besides, it has equally shown that advertising doesn't wield considerable influence on the vote decision of the people.

Yet, advertising will continue to be adopted as a tool for marketing political candidates. This is because in the race for power, advertising is indispensable. For one thing, it will continue to be used to

give information and canvass for support for candidates and political parties. A candidate that ignores it does so at his own peril. However, advertising cannot continue to mislead and expect to convert voters. No, it cannot.

The findings of study pose a major challenge to all stakeholders in the country's politics: how to restore public confidence in political advertising.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the researchers make the following recommendations:

- Politicians should keep faith with the claims and promises they make in advertisements. This is one way to restore public confidence in political advertising. This can help change public perception of political advertising in Nigeria.
- Political advertising should give full information based on truth. It should be issue-oriented and avoid making disparaging comments about political opponents. Since political advertising has continued to become increasingly popular, political parties and politicians should adopt it in line with what is permissible by our norms, political ethics and laws.
- Other ethnic nationalities can learn from the Etche people who base their vote decision on merit/competence of a candidate. This can stem the politics of ethnicity and religion that has characterized Nigeria politics since her independence in 1960.

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**INFLUENCE OF QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE ON  
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT PRACTICES OF SENIOR  
SECONDARY SCHOOL CHEMISTRY TEACHERS  
IN EBONYI STATE**

**Igwe, Iheanyi O.**

**Abstract**

*This study investigated the influence of qualification and experience on continuous assessment practices of senior secondary school Chemistry teachers in Ebonyi State. A total of 256 Chemistry teachers participated in the study as sample drawn from one hundred and thirteen secondary schools. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The instrument was face validated by three experts in Chemistry Education and Measurement and Evaluation. A reliability coefficient of 0.88 was obtained for the instrument through Cronbach Alpha test statistic. Two research questions were posed and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using t-test at alpha level of 0.05. The findings showed that both qualification and experience had great influence on the continuous assessment practices of Chemistry teachers in Ebonyi State. The test of hypothesis was also significant. Based on the discussion of the findings and their implications, recommendations were made.*

**Introduction**

The introduction of the 6-3-3-4 (now 9-3-4) system of education came in 1982 in Nigeria with the school wide implementation of the continuous assessment policy to ensure uniformity in Nigeria's educational systems. According to Igwe (2003), continuous assessment refers to the series of impromptu tests or assignment regularly given by the teacher to assess students' progress in the class. It involves frequent tests, proper record keeping of the students' performances and attachment of importance of the three levels of knowledge in their assessment. This no doubt has many benefits if the practice of continuous assessment is implemented with vigour. Fafunwa in Igwe (2003) had noted that it is necessary that existing contradictions, ambiguities and

lack of uniformity in educational practices in different parts of the country be removed to ensure even and orderly development of the country. But the contradictions and lack of uniformity in implementing the continuous assessment still remains one worrisome area particularly in new states like Ebonyi State.

The above stated contradictions are due to lack of manpower both in quality and quantity according to Agwu (2005) and Alumode (2004), as well as teachers' ignorance of the actual meaning and implementation of continuous assessment as opined by Amadi (2005). The problems of implementation may have come also from the use of many unapproved procedures of assessment, improper weighting of tests, lack of rigour and meticulous keeping of records, lack of adequately qualified teachers and lack of experience in continuous assessment in secondary schools (Onwuka, 2002).

The theory and practice of education is sensitive to places and time. It bears different meanings in different countries and it is never the same thing in the rural surroundings as it is in the crowded industrial areas. This makes the observance of educational policies a worthwhile initiative in the course of implementing its programmes. It could be recalled that the assessment of Nigerian education system as it pertains to continuous assessment is such that there was lack of uniformity in the structure of our educational system until the National Conference of September 1969 (Fafunwa, 1985). Prior to this time, the Northern part of the country had 8-6-3 system of education whereas the southern part had 7-5-3 system of education. An attempt in 1954 to unify the two systems yielded the 6-5-2-3 system; that is six years of primary school, five years of secondary school, two years of higher school and three years of tertiary education. All these efforts were meant to remove the lack of uniformity in our educational policies of the different states and to radically restructure the country's educational efforts in terms of purpose, organization and goal.

Actually, the 6-3-3-4 educational policy of 1982 in Nigeria came with one high point emphasis that was laid on the **continuous assessment** in various educational levels and programmes as a means to maximizing effective teaching. This emphasis has continued to be even in the new era of 9-3-4 system under the "Universal Basic Education". The working document for the 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria is the National Policy on Education. Structurally, it represents the number

of years a child should normally stay at various levels of education. For instance, 6 years of primary, followed by 6 years of secondary schools, made up of 3 years of junior secondary school and 3 years of senior secondary school and finally 4 years in tertiary education in the 6-3-3-4 and 3 years of Lower Basic, followed by 3 years of Middle Basic (all primary level), 3 years of Upper Basic (junior secondary school) and 3 years of senior secondary school and finally 4 years in tertiary education giving rise to the 9-3-4 .

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) recognizes the invaluable contributions, which the continuous assessment evaluation technique can make towards the education of the Nigerian child. It also recognises that improvement in instructional strategy will depend on continuous assessment of the progress of students. The same educational policy states that the general aim of continuous assessment is to liberalize the method of educational assessment and the evaluation of students' progress. According to Igwe (2003), the policy points out that in primary schools, teachers and head- teachers will base progress along the educational programme based on continuous assessment. It also asserts government's willingness to look into abolishing the primary school leaving certificate examination when continuous assessment has been worked out and validated. This view has been implemented because as proposed in the 3-3 secondary school, continuous assessment has been incorporated into the common entrance examination for admission and for certifying junior secondary school students. The policy advises the Universities and Higher education Institutions to build in continuous assessment procedures into their assessment and finally that continuous assessment based on a variety of evaluation techniques should henceforth be adopted and some means of ensuring some national standard in public and internal examination established.

Continuous assessment is an innovative assessment procedure accepted by government and required for application at all education programme levels. According to Abonyi, Okereke and Omebe (2005), the general significance of continuous assessment is all embracing as it is **systematic** in that it carefully and regularly monitors and keeps record of progress in specified areas over a given time, **comprehensive** as it monitors all aspects of expected performance area-the cognitive (knowledge), the affective (feeling and attitude), and the psychomotor (manipulative skills) to determine the status of individual 's performance,

**valid** as it involves the use of assessment techniques, samples, many areas of expected behaviour, skills or performance over a long period of time so that any definition of individual can be made in a more accurate, and **reliable** observation of behaviour through appropriate techniques, **diagnostic** as it isolates assets (strengths and successful performance) as well as liabilities (difficulties) failures and weaknesses in expected areas of performance (cognitive, affective and psychomotor), **prognostic** as it predicts the future state of performance or skill development, **formative and guidance oriented** as it provides feedback on identified-strengths and weaknesses and encourages reinforcement, improvement remediation, changes in the strategies used for a better performance results, **developmental** as it relates to the knowledge of the individuals' progress or no progress on continual and regular-basis to enable him to make necessary adjustments in relevant areas of the expected performance on time and as time passes by, and **summative** as it provides feedback data from diagnosis and prognosis towards making contributions for the final decision-making, problem solving, and generalisation about the individuals' progress or performance. Indeed, continuous assessment means different things to different authors.

Chemistry teachers are, therefore, expected to follow laid down procedures for the administration, make use of assessment techniques and keep accurate records of continuous assessment in evaluating the students' performance. This process will help to communicate school related academic information about the wards to parents, employers, guardians, administrators, and to the students themselves. It is for this reason that Ocho (2005) noted that education is constantly changing and adapting itself to new demands and circumstances with respect to continuous assessment. Therefore, qualified and experienced teachers are required in schools to teach chemistry and to implement practices of continuous assessment effectively in order to bring about these changes. Hence, for continuous assessment tests to be effective in chemistry, the teachers should clearly redefine the relevant educational objectives of their subjects, construct and use the appropriate measurement scales to assess their achievement and keep correct data.

Though the National Policy on Education is operational in Ebonyi State, the practices of continuous assessment are known to be variedly implemented with some lapses detrimental enough to warrant an investigation into possible causes (Omiko, 2007). This has prompted this



study. From West African Examinations Council results (WAEC, 2008), poor achievement in chemistry has been observed. This may not be unconnected with the lapses in the implementation of continuous assessment as pointed out earlier by Agwu (2002) and Alumode (2004). Hence, there is the need to investigate the influence of academic qualification and experience of chemistry teachers as correlates to the implementation of continuous assessment in Ebonyi State secondary schools.

### **Statement of the problem**

Chemistry as a science subject plays a vital role in the national development of the country and so requires attention by qualified chemistry teachers who could overcome the constraints associated with poor results due to ineffective and defective implementation of the continuous assessment. Continuous assessment involves frequent tests, proper record keeping of the students' performance and attachment of importance of the three levels of knowledge in their assessment. There are many benefits if the practices of continuous assessment are implemented with rigour, though never without problems. The problems of implementation may have come from the lack of adequately qualified chemistry teachers and lack of experience in continuous assessment in secondary school in Ebonyi State. The problem of this study, when put in question form is, "what are the influences of qualification and experience in the proper implementation of continuous assessment by chemistry teachers in senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State? This is the question this study is out to answer.

### **Research Questions**

1. How does chemistry teachers' qualification influence the implementation of continuous assessment practices in evaluating students' performance?
2. How does chemistry teachers' experience influence the implementation of continuous assessment practices in evaluating students' performance?

### **Hypotheses**

The following two null hypotheses were tested at alpha level of 0.05.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of highly qualified chemistry teachers and less well qualified chemistry teachers in their continuous assessment practices.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of experienced chemistry teachers and those of less well experienced chemistry teachers in their continuous assessment practices.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a survey design because it is aimed at collecting data and treating them in a systematic manner to show the characteristic features about a given population. The study was conducted in Ebonyi State with a sample size of two hundred and fifty six (256) SS I and II chemistry teachers. The researcher developed structured questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire has two sections. Section A dealt with preliminary information on the number of years of teacher's experience which was categorised into two broad distinctions of "experienced" and "less well experienced". The chemistry teachers experience was classified into two in the range of: 0-5 years – for less well experienced and 6- above, for highly experienced. The qualification of chemistry teachers was also classified into two using the following categories: (i). OND, NCE and HND- for as less well qualified, and (ii). First Degree in University education and above as highly qualified.

Section B contains statements on teachers' procedures for administration, assessment techniques and reports/record keeping used in evaluating students' performance. The questionnaire items were constructed using four point scale, thus: strongly agree, (SA) - 4 points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Disagree (D) - 2 points and strongly disagree (SD) -1 point. Three educational experts face validated the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering the initial draft of the instrument to a small group of twenty five chemistry teachers from a local government area in Enugu State, a neighbouring State. Data collected was used to compute the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach Apha, which gave a coefficient of 0.88 for internal consistency.

The instrument was then administered directly by the researcher with the help of six research assistants to the teachers and collected on the spot. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation

for the research questions and t-test for testing the hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested at alpha level of 0.05

### **Presentation of Results**

#### **Research Question One**

How does chemistry teachers' qualification influence the implementation of continuous assessment practices in evaluating students' performance?

**Table 1: Mean Results on Qualification of Teachers in Using Continuous Assessment Practices**

S/No		Mean	S.D	N	Decision
1	Highly qualified chemistry teachers	3.67	0.87	190	Accepted
2	Less well qualified chemistry teacher	2.28	0.98	66	Not Accepted

Results as indicated in Table 1 reveal that chemistry teachers with high qualification display a lot of influence on the practices of continuous assessment as they have a mean of 3.67 which is far above the cut off point of 2.50 for acceptance while chemistry teachers with low qualification have mean value below 2.50 which is not accepted for continuous assessment practices. This results show that if the qualification of chemistry teachers is high, it will influence their continuous assessment practices positively and if their qualification is low, it will influence their continuous assessment practices negatively.

#### **Research Question Two**

How does the experience of the chemistry teachers influence the implementation of continuous assessment practices?

**Table 2: Mean Results of Teachers on Experience in Continuous Assessment Practices**

S/N		Mean	S.D	N	Decision
1	Highly experienced chemistry teachers	3.58	0.85	202	Accepted
2	Lowly experienced chemistry teachers	2.06	1.02	54	Not Accepted

From the results as indicated in Table 2, chemistry teachers with high experience were accepted as having influence on the continuous assessment practices of their school due to their experience while chemistry teachers who are inexperienced were rejected as having any influence on the continuous assessment practices in their school. Therefore, the overall indication of the results is that when chemistry teachers have high experience, it will influence their continuous assessment practices in a positive way and when they have low experience, it will influence their continuous assessment practices in a negative way.

### **Test of Hypotheses**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of highly qualified chemistry teachers and their lowly qualified counterparts in their use of continuous assessment procedures.

**Table 3: t-test results on the influence of qualification on the use of Continuous Assessment Laid Down Procedures by Chemistry Teachers**

S/No	Source of Variation	Cases	Mean	Std Dev	DF	t.cal	t.crit	Decision
1	Highly qualified	190	2.57	1.16	254	5.82	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	3.46	0.74				
2	Highly qualified	190	2.64	0.78	254	4.77	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	3.18	0.82				
3	Highly qualified	190	2.86	0.83	254	3.41	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	2.43	0.96				
4	Highly qualified	190	2.74	0.86	254	3.22	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	2.34	0.88				
5	Highly qualified	190	2.56	0.98	254	1.59	1.96	Accept Ho
	Lowly qualified	66	2.34	0.90				
6	Highly qualified	190	2.76	1.10	254	3.44	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	2.22	1.03				
7	Highly qualified	190	2.66	0.90	254	3.13	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	2.28	0.65				
8	Highly qualified	190	2.41	1.03	254	2.02	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	2.69	0.76				
9	Highly qualified	190	2.38	0.95	254	3.50	1.96	Rej. HO

	Lowly qualified	66	2.83	0.64				
10	Highly qualified	190	2.57	0.95	254	3.06	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	2.83	0.64				
11	Highly qualified	190	2.74	0.81	254	1.81	1.96	Accept Ho
	Lowly qualified	66	2.93	0.57				
12	Highly qualified	190	2.74	0.91	254	3.55	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly qualified	66	3.16	0.57				
			t-test value			3.27	1.96	Rej.HO <sub>1</sub>

From the results of the t-test analysis as shown in Table 3, the statement of hypothesis 1 is rejected; implying that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of highly qualified and lowly qualified chemistry teachers in the use of laid down procedures in assessing the performance of their students. This is because the summary t.cal value of 3.27 is greater than the t.crit value of 1.96.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significance between the mean response of experienced chemistry teachers and their inexperienced counterparts in their use of continuous assessment techniques.

**Table 4: t-test Results on the Influence of Experience on Continuous Assessment Techniques by Chemistry Teachers**

S/ No	Source of Variation	Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	DF	t.cal	t.crit	Decision
1	Highly experienced	202	2.82	0.95	254	1.43	1.96	Accept HO
	Lowly experienced	54	3.01	0.62				
2	Highly experienced	202	2.66	1.06	254	2.45	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly experienced	54	3.03	0.54				
3	Highly experienced	202	2.67	0.87	254	2.17	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly experienced	54	2.94	0.40				
4	Highly experienced	202	2.75	0.94	254	2.25	1.96	Rej. HO

	Lowly experienced	54	3.05	0.40				
5	Highly experienced	202	2.46	0.99	254	6.12	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly experienced	54	3.33	0.61				
6	Highly experienced	202	2.59	0.89	254	0.86	1.96	Accept HO
	Lowly experienced	54	2.48	0.88				
7	Highly experienced	202	2.65	0.92	254	4.35	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly experienced	54	2.05	0.78				
8	Highly experienced	202	2.61	0.88	254	4.36	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly experienced	54	2.05	0.68				
9	Highly experienced	202	2.71	1.00	254	1.03	1.96	Accept HO
	Lowly experienced	54	2.55	0.88				
10	Highly experienced	202	2.37	1.09	254	3.34	1.96	Rej. HO
	Lowly experienced	54	2.55	0.63				
					t-test value	2.83	1.96	Rej. HO <sub>1</sub>

Summary results of the t-test analysis as shown on Table 4 indicates that the statement of hypothesis 2 is rejected which means that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of highly experienced and lowly experienced chemistry teachers in the use of continuous assessment techniques in assessing the performance of their students. This is because the summary t.cal value of 2.283 is greater than the t.crit value of 1.96, hence, the HO<sub>2</sub> is rejected.

## **Discussion of Results**

### **Research Question 1**

The final result showed that chemistry teachers who are highly qualified were efficient in the use of continuous practices due to their qualification which enabled them to use effectively laid down procedures, assessment techniques and proper recording and keeping results. This suggests that qualification is a factor in the use of continuous assessment instruments. This result is in agreement with Amadi (2005) who stated that the quality of the teacher determines the effective learning of students that culminates in his performance in school. According to Igwe (2003), highly academically and professionally qualified are usually competent even in using continuous assessment skills. This type of teachers would deliver the goals of education much better than not so well qualified teachers.

Furthermore, Onwuka (2002) and Omiko (2007) are in agreement that quality of teachers plays vital roles in the realization of educational objectives and enhanced student's effective learning. Quality teachers know how to manage students by adopting humanistic discipline techniques and effective training to effective high standard of learning. It is because of this that Fafunwa (1985) believes that the quality and devotion of teachers are essential to the success of any educational system. There is obvious need therefore, to recruit highly qualified and devoted teachers to handle chemistry teaching to ensure the adequate implementation of the objectives of continuous assessment in schools in Ebonyi State.

On the test of significance, the study found that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of highly qualified chemistry teachers with their lowly qualified counterparts in their implementation of continuous assessment practices. This also means that the gap between the highly qualified and the lowly qualified needs to be reduced possibly through conferences, seminars and workshops.

### **Research Question 2**

On the influence of experience on the continuous assessment practices, whereas chemistry teachers with high experience use the laid down procedures, assessment techniques as well as record and keep students' performances effectively, their counterparts with low experience carry out the practices imperfectly. The finding is not

surprising because experience is sine-quo-non to the best teacher. This result is line with Igwe (2003) who advocated that inexperienced teachers (newly recruited teachers) should work under experienced ones for sometime to gain certain necessary experience and avoid irredeemable mistakes.

It is indeed hardly suitable to expect a less well experienced teacher to be in a position to follow laid down procedures for the administration of continuous assessment. Therefore, in terms of experience, highly experienced chemistry teachers should be engaged so that they can adequately follow laid down procedures for administration of continuous assessment, make good use of assessment techniques (instruments) and keep proper records. It is sometimes difficult to find such teachers wanting in keeping record of continuous assessment and using right instrument to determine their students' overall performance.

On the test of significance, it was found out that there is a significant difference between the mean responses of experienced chemistry teachers and their inexperienced counterparts in their continuous assessment practices. This also implies that urgent steps should be taken to bridge the gap through orientation and workshops on appointment of new chemistry teachers.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the above findings and implications, the following recommendations were made:

1. Less well qualified teachers should be made to work and operate under highly qualified teachers so that they can learn the act properly.
2. Newly employed teachers should be sponsored to conferences; workshop and seminar to gain experience on instrument development and evaluation of students using continuous assessment.
3. Newly employed teachers should be sent on in-service training to acquire additional knowledge on the areas of qualification as well as learn more on continuous assessment practices and module of implementation through interaction with other teachers.



### **Conclusion**

The observed variation in continuous assessment practices in Ebonyi State implies that chemistry teachers have not acquired the necessary attributes such qualification and experience resulting to having inadequate professionally qualified chemistry teachers who also lack experience on applicability of the right instruments. There is the need for the school authorities to implement the recommendations of the study to help improve the implementation of continuous assessment guidelines in senior secondary schools. With this, the implementation of continuous assessment practices might improve leading to high students' performance in school academic programmes.

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**GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM:  
THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE**

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**Abstract**

*Local government is the government of the people at the grassroot. It is the third tier of the government, i.e. the government of the people at the local levels. Grass root development is the development that concentrates and applies to the administration of the people at the community levels for the purposes of maintaining law and order, providing some limited range of social services and public amenities and encourages the cooperation and participation of the inhabitants towards the improvement of the condition of the people. In other words, development is an in-depth increase in physical, mental, socio-cultural and economic standard. It includes such visible expansion as human resource development/capacity building and intellectual ingenuity. It is not only socio-economic growth but growth plus change. Growth, being an empirical existence, is an integral part of development. Grassroot development, therefore, refers to all the indices of growth and development that affect the positive change in the lives of the people at basic level of governance. Accountability, therefore, is the ability of accepting action taken in process of governance. It is the ability of accepting a given responsibility and giving account of any action taken in the course of administration. This paper seeks the intrinsic and extrinsic activities/behavior of authorized officers in the local government system and for the purpose of rendering/accounting for the services therein so as to enhance grassroot development and showcase inside out development (i.e. real development). In carrying out this research, we applied the Ujamaa Socialism theory which has its foundation in family hood, communalism and close relationship as a way of achieving goals through selfless services. Finally different ways of accountability were highlighted and recommendations for a better accountability were also suggested.*

### **Introduction**

Local Government is the government of the people at the grassroot. It is the third tier of government. In other words, it is the government of the people at the local levels. According to Njoku (2005), Local government is the government that is applied to the administrative unit of small local areas that are component parts of the country. In his own comment, Ugwu (2010) maintains that local government is a system of local administration whereby local communities are organized to maintain law and order, provide some limited range of social services and public amenities and encourage the cooperation and participation of the inhabitants towards the improvement of the conditions of living. The 1976 local government reform defines local government as the government at local level exercised through representative council, established by law to exercise specific powers within defined area. The powers should give the Council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff, institutional and financial, to initiate and direct the provision of services and determine the implementation of projects; to ensure that through devolution of functions to these councils and through active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiative and response to the local needs and conditions are maximized (NGR, 1976).

However, the United Nations Office for Public Administration defines Local Government as a political sub-division of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exert labour for prescribed purpose. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected (UN, 1976). In fact, going by the above descriptions and definitions of local government, it is clear that it is an organized administration of the people within their locality. Although it is sovereign by administration, its sovereignty is limited to the reserve list of the constitution or as amended by the law that creates it (FGN, 1999).

Grassroot development is the development that concentrates and applies to the administration of the people at the community levels for the purposes of maintaining law and order, providing some limited range of social services and public amenities and encouraging the cooperation and participation of the inhabitants towards the improvement of the condition of the people. Development is an in-depth increase in physical,

mental, socio-cultural and economic standard. It includes such visible expansion as human resource development/capacity building and intellectual ingenuity.

**Theoretical Framework:** For the purpose of this study, the researcher is applying the Ujamaa socialism theory which focuses attention on African traditional society, whereby the leader sees himself as part of the family of the led (Njoku, 2006). The Principle of Ujamaa socialism theory recognizes African society as a family hood where everybody feels a sense of belonging, with guaranteed security and freedom to contribute for the progress of the society. It emphasizes communalism as a way of building egalitarian society and sustainable development.

This paper will concentrate on the local government revenues and their utilization for grass root development, and take an insightful look at the finances, especially, the revenue sources and accountability, of the third tier of government in Nigeria with a view to identifying amongst other things;

- (a) The sources open to the local government system for the generation of revenue and how to account for such revenue;
- (b) The implications of the State-Local Government Joint Account on the fiscal viability of the local governments in accessing its statutorily allocated revenue from the federation account; and accounting
- (c) Administrative/Technical Process involved in Revenue A
- (d) The problems undermining revenue generation and/or collection at the Local government level.
- (e) The utilization of such revenues for the grass root development of their area of jurisdictions

#### **Financial Duties And Responsibilities of Local Governments In Nigeria**

##### **The Finance Department**

According to the Financial Memorandum (FM 1:8) of the local government, the duties and responsibilities of finance department are;

1. Caring and being in custody of the Local Government finance whether in cash or held in the Local Government Bank Account;
2. Seeing that all revenues due to the Local Government are collected promptly, properly and paid properly into the Local Government funds,

3. Making all payments out of the Local Government funds, and ensuring that such payments are properly authorized and relate to duties entrusted to the Local Government.
4. Participating in the preparation of the Local Government estimates and development plans in the form and manner prescribed;
5. Keeping the prescribed accounts and records of Local Government financial transactions up to date at all times.
6. exercising control over the accounts and financial records kept by other Departments or officials, and seeing that such accounts and records are submitted to the Finance Department for checking and reconciliation at the prescribed times.
7. preparing all financial returns as and when required, so that they can be submitted promptly on dates they are due;
8. Keeping and storing all accounts and records in an orderly manner, and ensuring that they are readily available to the Auditor-General, Internal Auditor and any other persons authorized to inspect such accounts and records.
9. Submitting and responding promptly, to the state auditors, the federal auditors, the internal auditors or any other external auditors as may be directed by the government, all materials as may be demanded by them, in course of their inspection of the local government books.
10. Dealing promptly with all correspondence concerning the financial transactions and financial affairs of the Local Government;

In addition to the above duties of the finance department, the treasurer of the local government and of course, other revenue officers have also some specific duties on revenue collections and accountability. Some of these duties and responsibilities are as follows;

#### **Duties and Responsibilities of the Treasurer**

The Treasurer is the custodian of accounts and records and head of the Finance Department of a Local Government. The treasurer, as the chief finance adviser to the Local Government, shall be in attendance at Executive Committee meetings and other Committees to provide advice concerning the financial implications of proposed policies, the state of

the Local Government's finances and financial matters generally. The Treasurer shall among others,

- (1) Be responsible for the administrative control of the Finance Department of the Local Government.
- (2) Perform duties as Chief Accounts Officer of the receipts and payment of the Local Government.
- (3) Facilitate the work of the Audit Alarm Committee.
- (4) Be responsible for the budgetary control and supervising the accounts of all Departments of the Local Government.
- (5) Be responsible for the sound administration and effective organization and working of the Finance Department.
- (6) Prepare and publish monthly and annual financial statements of the Local Government.
- (7) Be a signatory of Local Government cheques and vouchers, and
- (8) Perform such other related duties as may be assigned by the Chairman; etc

#### **Duties and Responsibilities of Revenue Officers**

All Revenue Officers in the Local Government are under the Treasurer. They shall ensure the collection of revenue and shall continue to account for them and render returns to the Local Government Treasurer in accordance with the Financial Memoranda and other existing Financial Regulations. Specifically, the revenue collectors are in charge of the following responsibilities;

1. Keeping such books of account and other records prescribed by these Financial Memoranda and the Treasurer as needed to ensure that all revenues and other monies due to the Local Government are collected in full.
2. Collect promptly all sums due to the Local Government.
3. Report to his immediate supervisor any instances of default in payment of any sums due to the Local Government.
4. Issue immediately on payment, receipts or licenses in the prescribed form for all payments made to him.
5. Record in a Revenue Collector's Cash Book details of all receipts of revenues and the payments of such revenue collections to the Treasury or a Bank.

6. Pending the payment to the Treasury or a Bank, to safeguard all revenue collected by placing it in the safe or cash tank provided by the Local Government.
7. Keep all his revenue earning books under lock and key when not in use;
8. Pay all revenue collected to the Treasury or Bank at intervals prescribed by the Local Government.
9. Present all his revenue earning books, account books and cash when required, to the person responsible for checking his accounts;
10. Submit used, partly used and unused revenue earning books, license books and relevant documents to the Treasury once a month or at such intervals as may be prescribed, to the treasury, and to return all exhausted revenue earnings books to the official from whom they were received.

#### **Revenue Generation Under The 1976 Local Government Reform**

With the reform in the local government system in 1976, a great deal changed with respect to the structure and general administration of that tier of government. For one, the colonial-imported system of indirect rule gave way for the democratization of the entire social, political as well as economic structure of the local government system. Thus, in the view of Okeke and Obiorah (2007:60), "In the reform of 1976, the local government in the country formed a watershed in the evolution of local government development and administration."

Two major objectives of the government as clearly set out in the Reform Guideline were, (a), to strengthen local governments structurally and financially and (b), to shoulder as effectively and efficiently as possible their statutory function of addressing the development needs of the rural populace.

Consequently, the 1976 Edict on Local Government Reforms enumerated the following revenue sources to local governments:

1. Money derived from community tax and rate imposed by the local government;
2. Money derived from licenses, permits, dues, charges or fees specified by any bye-law or rule made by a local government;
3. Money payable to a local government under the previous or any other enactment;



4. Receipts (takings) derived from any public utility concern or any service or undertaking belonging to or maintained by a local government either in whole or in part;
5. Rents derived from letting or leasing any building or land (or property) belonging to a local government either in whole or in part.
6. Statutory allocation or grants-in-aids out of the general revenue of Nigeria or the States or of the public revenue;
7. Such sum of money as may be granted to a local government by any other local government.
8. Any sum of money, which may lawfully be assigned to a local government by any public corporation;
9. Interest on the investment funds of the local government
10. Such sum of money as may be paid to a local government by a joint board; and
11. Any other moneys lawfully derived by a local government from any other source.

Inclusive in the sources are borrowings from organizations, contributions of International Development Partners and individuals as well as loans from Banks and other Financial Institutions.

#### **Other Sources of Local Government Revenue**

Other revenue sources open to the local government system for generating income includes the following; **Local rates, Property rates, Fees and charges, Fines, Commercial undertakings, Loans and borrowings, Gifts and donations, Grants, and Capitation rates**

**Local Rates:** These are personal taxes which a local government is authorized by Act of the House of Assembly of a State to impose for rendering of specific services either in the entire council area or in a given locality such as rates for provision of water, roads, bridges, culverts, refuse disposal and sanitation services, and so on. Obi (2001), identified other types of rates, explains **Capitation rate** as a rate payable by all adult males from 16 years of age and working class women who are residing and working within the local government so as to defray the cost of services rendered by the local government council.

**Property Rates:** Property rate is another vital source of revenue to local governments; especially city and urban local governments. This involves placing charges on building in various locations and of different

structures. As a prelude to levying of property rates, local government authorities, according to Obi (2004), embark on the following four activities:

- Numbering of houses, especially those in the urban areas;
- Keeping of register of the owners/occupiers of the tenements;
- Description of building types on each plot of land; and
- Assessing of tenement in accordance with the law so as to minimize protests and litigations.

Property rates are also referred to as tenement rates and in Lagos State, the exercise dated as far back as 1915.

**Fees and Charges:** In addition to rating charges, local governments also impose various fees and charges in their bid to raise finances. Fees are charged on such public utilities as public motor parks, markets stalls, open spaces, parking lots, latrines and public conveniences, as well as on such services as conservancy, dispensary, maternity, squatter permits etc. also hawkers and advertising agencies pay taxes for their wares and outdoor displays respectively. Similarly, fees are charged on a variety of licenses issued by the local government authorities such as radio, television, bicycle, wheel barrow, canoes, carts, vehicles licenses, charges for domestic animals and cold room dealers. Also, payments are made to the local governments for issuance of marriage certificate, local government areas identification, fees for registration of birth and death, including allocation of burial space in public cemeteries.

**Fines:** A less popular source of local government revenue is the takings in form of fines and monetary penalties for violating various local government bye-laws, such as sanitary or environmental laws, laws relating to keeping and rearing of domestic animals etc.

**Commercial Undertakings:** In addition to the above sources, local governments equally engage in various lucrative investment ventures so as to raise funds for their developmental projects and programmes. The ranges of business in this respect include construction of business parks and shopping malls, establishment of transport outfit, and small scale industries, buying of shares among others.

**Loans:** Previously, banks and similar financial organizations formed major source of funds to the local government system. However, following the abuse of the practice which put many of the councils in a debt trap, various states have, through legislations, placed a glass ceiling

on what a council can obtain as loan with the state government's approval made a major pre-condition for loan access. The essence was to ensure that loan are only obtained only for use in the implementation of projects that impact directly on the lives and well-being of the populace rather than for the personal aggrandizement of the council heads. However, local governments are expected to operate stabilization accounts with banks other than their regular banks, or different accounts other than their regular accounts in the same banks. In this situation the banks may oblige the local government such loan, based on the 'modus operandi' of the stabilization accounts by such local government. Local governments could also obtain loans through contract financing of projects. These contractors normally build in their interests through mark up of such projects during negotiation of the contract terms.

**Gifts and Donations:** Some local governments have had to rely on their "friends" to raise funds. Such "friends" provide financial succour to them by ways of gifts and donations. For instance, various individuals and communities today carry out self-financed developmental projects which they later handed over to the local government for management. Also, cases abound where the local government enter into partnership agreements with individuals, organizations or towns with a view to having the latter provide agreed percentage of the project sum to the local government.

**Grants:** According to Okeke and Obiorah (2007), grant is financial aids given to a level of government by a person, group or another level of government to enable it meet its financial obligations. Grants could be given by international development partners or even non-governmental organizations in the country. It could also be granted by the federal or state government to the local government. It is pertinent to note that grants are given mostly in situations of disaster or epidemics affecting the concerned local governments.

Government may also make a grant of money to a local government so as to enable it pursue its development objectives or to enhance the general administration of the council.

Four types of grants are: (i). Special grant; which is the financial lifeline given by a state or federal government to a local government to enable it meet the cost of a particular service or project that is of immense importance to the generality of the people such as health, agriculture, education, road etc.

- (ii) Matching grant; which is a kind of grant that serves as a morale booster to forward- looking local governments that have embarked on massive people oriented projects in the key sectors of the economy.
- (iii) Equalization grant; which is meant to help the disadvantaged local government areas to catch up with the rich and prosperous ones,
- (iv) Unit grant, which is money, paid by the states to local government councils for services performed by the latter in their localities on behalf of the state government.

### **Statutory Allocation to Local Government**

The Local Government in Nigeria became the third tier in the hierarchy of governmental structure below the state and federal governments following the recommendations of the 1976 Local Government Reform Committee and in the spirit of federalism, local governments are entitled to receive statutory votes or allocations from both the Federal Government and the States. The Finance Act of 1981, for instance, provided for the allocation of 10 percent of the Federation Account to Local governments in the country. The allocation was, however, subsequently raised from 10 to 15 percent and then to 20 percent following the recommendation of the 1987 political bureau as a way of reinvigorating the financial viability of the Councils to enhance their service delivery.

Section 162 (7) and (8) of the 1999 constitution directs respectively that:

- (a) Each State shall pay to local government councils in its area of jurisdiction such proportion of its total revenue on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly.
- (b) The amount standing to the credit of local government councils of that state shall be distributed among the local government councils of that State in such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of the State.

Deriving from the provisions of the Finance Act of 1981 and the 1999 Constitution, State governments today pay 10 percent of their internally generated revenues to local governments and the sums are "distributed on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of the State" (Section 162(8) of 1999

Constitution). Today, the practice is that as the State receives whatever represents 20 percent of the Federation Account, so also the Local Governments receive whatever amounts to 10 percent of the State's internally generated revenue.

### **Accounting For The Revenues And Grassroot Development In The Local Government**

Accounting, according to Ejisun(1994), is the identification, selection, analysis, measurement, processing, evaluation and communication of financial information to facilitate decisions regarding its activities and resources. He identifies two general types of accounting, namely; (a) Enterprise Accounting and (b) Social Accounting. The former refers to the measurement of economic events and conditions which affect such cardinal considerations as profit or loss of a given organization. While the latter, social accounting, is intended to measure all social activities of the public sector with a view to determining the efficient and effective utilization of resources in the provision of social services for members of the society.

Accounting, in cash management refers to the recording and maintaining of fund in such a way that questions relating to their movement can be satisfactorily answered. Thus, as it relates to revenue, 'accounting' means that an accurate and up date account of monies accruing to an organization is rendered as and when due. Accounting, therefore, is all about holding and ensuring that stewardship of resources, which is not personal, is given accurate and up to date account of such resources that are being taken care of .It ensures that such resources, when confronted with, are not violated, manipulated, or even thwarted, with a view to tampering with the initial objectives of the owners of such resources (Ochijenu in Onyishi, 1995)

The idea of accountability relates with the concept of control which would work towards ensuring that funds, revenues and other resources are well managed efficiently and are put into effective use. Hence, through this process, it would be possible for public organizations like local government to meet up its obligation of service delivery to the people. Ohibumi (1983), in his explanation, suggests that accountability implies control as it provides the owners of the resources with the opportunity to ensure that the resources are utilized in accordance with their intentions. In the same vein, public office holders are held

responsible for either individual accountability or corporate institutional accountability (Onyishi, 1995). Accountability, according to Elekwa, (1988), is the means of promoting public probity. He classified accountability into three;

- (a) Fiscal Accountability which is the regular auditing of accounts to ensure that public funds are spent in accordance with government rules and regulations.
- (b) Administrative Accountability is rendered by subordinate to his superior to ensure efficient management/administration. (in most cases fiscal accountability and administrative accountability are lumped together so as to achieve corporate goal)
- (c) Political Accountability requires holders of public elected officers and political appointees to live up to the expectations of the public in terms of fulfilling campaign promises and responding to the yearning of the people..

#### **Administrative/Technical Process Involved In Revenue Accounting**

According to the local government financial memoranda (FM18), the accounting objectives of the local government include;

- (1). To provide management accounting service to the council, its committees and the department in order to facilitate the reaching of prompt policy and management decisions on the basis of accurate and comparative financial information;
- (2). To provide financial accounting services by means of accurate and appropriately analysed records of funds lawfully received by the local government and detailed analyses of how these funds have been expended in discharging the functions of the local government.
- (3). To provide monthly statements, the end of year statements and periodic statements for specific purpose, summarizing the financial transactions of the local government at the end of the period.
- (4). To provide detailed costs of individual establishments, services and projects to enable the costs so ascertained to be used for control purposes with a view, inter alia, to eliminating excessive expenditure, loss and wastage.

In addition to the statutory registered means of accounting, the financial memorandum (FM, 6) states some internal precautionary

measures of checks through proper recording, custody, responsibility and accountability. For instance, section 6 sub-section 1-3 States that;

All revenue and other monies due to a local government shall be received either by Cashier in the Treasury or by a Revenue Collector. Also a revenue collector shall pay all local government monies he has collected into the treasury, or if so authorized in writing by the treasurer, into the nearest branch of the local government's bankers. Where such authority is given, it shall:

Specify the name and branch of the bank at which payment is to be made; and direct the revenue collector to record separately on the bank paying in-slips details of every cheque received by him as revenue.

The revenue collector shall record all collections made by him/her in a revenue collector's cash book which shall be kept in a bound volume, have a separate page for each type of revenue and show the date of receipt; receipt number, from whom received, amount and daily total. When making payments to the treasury or presenting to the treasury a paying-in-slip in respect of cash paid direct to a bank, the revenue collector shall produce all receipt books, his revenue collector's cash book and revenue collector summary cash book. The treasury cashier shall then check the cash or pay-in-slip handed over by the revenue collector against all the records so produced, including counterfoil of the last receipt issued in each receipt book.

The cashier in the treasury receiving a remittance from a revenue collector shall;

- a. In the case of a direct payment, count the cash and check that it agrees with the amount shown to be paid in according to the revenue collector's cash book; or
- b. Where a bank teller's slip is presented, check that the amount shown on it agrees with the amount shown to be paid in accordance with the revenue collector's cash book, and that the numbers of the receipts issued have been entered as required by financial memorandum
- c. Immediately issue a treasury receipt (Form LGT) for the amount paid in and the cheques must be carefully examined to ensure that before acceptance:
  1. The cheque is made out to a named local government" and crossed.



2. The cheque is signed by the drawer and the name and address of the drawer is written in block capitals on the back of the cheques (unless his name is printed on the front of the cheque).

It has to be note that in no circumstances shall any alteration be made to the amount of money shown on a receipt, whether to the words or figures. If the amount is incorrectly entered, the original and all copies of the receipt shall be marked 'canceled' in red ink, left in the receipt book and a new receipt or license issued.

**Revenue Utilization for Grassroot Development:** One of the major bodies for the approval of budget at the local government is the Finance and General Purpose Committee. This body considers, approves or suggests measures to improve revenue generation, control and the utilization of the fund for the interest of the council (Njoku, 2009). The articulation of projects and their management are mostly moderated by Finance and General Purpose Committee of the local government.

Another important body is the legislative arm, which are the councilors. The councilors are more apt in project articulation and execution, based on their representative interest. The councilors not only participate in development project approval but also follow the implementation of up to its conclusion. For instance, the citing of markets and motor parks or even the establishment of health and recreation centers, etc.

#### **Associated Problems That Hampers Grassroot Development at the Local Government:**

##### **The problems of Revenue Generation/ Collection**

Though the above statutory allocation sounds very encouraging, the operation of the provisions of Section 162 (6) has more than reduced the local governments to an ailing patient whose survival lies in the hands of a physician. The issue of "State Joint Local Government Account" which the section provides for has afforded the states with a shield behind which to lurk in starving the councils of their development funds as well as giving the former the impetus for ridding roughshod on the independence of the local government councils both in policy formulation, project design and programme implementation. In its over six decades of existence; the Nigeria Local government system has had to contend with vagaries of problems which tended to undermine its



operations. These include, lopsidedness in the size of the local government, performance profile of local government officials, administrative arbitrariness accentuated by the perverse attitudinal predilection of the local government leadership leading to the perpetuation of institutional corruption and allied irresponsibility; and dearth of finance.

In this regard, Okeke and Obiorah (200s7:99) observe that "One major problem of local governments (in Nigeria) stems from their fragile financial base and the concomitant incapacitation to perform their statutory functions. "Bowman and Kearney (2002) in the same vein, pointed out that one of the most intractable problems facing the local government in Nigeria involves money, adding that given the cyclical changes in public finance, state and local government finances remain vulnerable.No doubt, with such revenue corridors opened to local governments in the country and with the avalanche of the revenue sources to Local Government Councils, there seems to be no justification for the revenue problems facing most local government areas across the nation today, except for the problems militating against revenues generation.

The problem of revenue collection at the local government level in Nigeria today derive from the general problem of institutionalized corruption and apathy of the public as well as ineffective governmental framework necessary for the enforcement of policies and laws. They range from delay in the release of statutory allocation, interference by some states with the funds in the State Local Government Joint Account, non remittance of internally generated revenues by revenue collectors to the respective local government areas, non-availability of accurate register for taxable adults and consequent poor revenue assessment techniques and tax evasion.(Obi 2001).Other problems include the following:

**General public Misconception and Ignorance** Nigerians are generally averse to tax payment and the payment of other rates, charges and fees due to local government. Whereas this is not unconnected with the abysmal utilization of public funds by most public office holders, the general social and economic conditions of most Nigerians, especially and rural dwellers who suffer various deprivations, including problems of hunger and disease as well as denial of the basic social amenities.

Hence, most people evade payment of taxes and other levies to local governments or at best under-declare their assets in a bid to pay lesser than they should.

**Corruption:** The problem of corruption that characterize the collection and remittance of revenues to local government's councils is no doubt a major inhibition to revenue generation. Most local government revenue collectors are corrupt and usually do not remit the amount collected to the councils. Cases of issuance of fake receipts and even non-issuance of receipts and other untold trade-off are rife. These problems make the local government to be cash trapped and unable to executive some laudable projects as per budget articulation

**State-Local Government Joint Account** This is one of the problems facing most local government councils in the country today as it concerns revenue. Relying on the provisions of Section 162(6) of the 1999 Constitution, most state chief executives feed fact in council allocations. The scenario, as we pointed out before, has resulted in the subjugation of the councils thus giving rise to face-offs and legal tussles between some council chairmen and governors or even the chief executives and the EFCC/ICPC.

#### **Weak Monitoring Mechanism and Enforcement Apparatuses**

Most local government areas have weak taxing system even as some lack the necessary legal backbone for dealing with defaulters. Penalty, we often say, animates a law and a law without corresponding punishment for its infraction is, to say the least, meaningless. For most local government councils, there is absence of enabling bye-laws on taxation. Where any exists, there are no effective enforcement infrastructures.

#### **Recommendations:**

For effective transformation and grass root development to take place, the following recommendations could subsist through the following:

-Effective checks, monitoring and constant orientation and reorientation. For instance, the issue of corruption could be taken care through independent monitoring and engagement of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) or the Independent Corrupt Practice and other related offences Commission (ICPC).

- Public enlightenment and mass education of the electorate on reasons for certain levies and charges could help in fund raising for the local government.
- The Code of Conduct Bureau(CCB) use to be very lackadaisical towards civil servants in Nigeria, especially, the local government staff. For instance, the local government staff up to the position of Head of Personnel Management/Director of Personnel Management (HPM/DPM), the local government Engineers, the Treasurer of the local government council and even the Internal Auditor (IA), are all millionaires even when these officer are officer of grade levels 12 and 15 whose take home pay are less than eighty thousand naira monthly. Yet the CCB that is suppose to monitor and investigate assets of these officers claim to be dutiful.

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**EXPLORATION OF THE CONCEPT OF REALISM IN  
CHARLES DICKENS' GREAT EXPECTATION AND  
GUSTAVE FLAUBERT'S MADAM BOVERY**

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**Abstract**

*We live in a world where events take place: some captivating, others disgusting relative to the perceiver's state of mind, disposition, attitude and value orientation. Most societies are reticent about certain true life events which they consider in line with their conventional morality and norms. However, literary artists have, over the years, devised subtle means of bringing every event to an open forum where it can be freely discussed, analyzed and criticized for the purpose of broadening human knowledge and ordering human societies. Such subtle means come in form of fictional novels, dramas, stories, etc. Since these are fictional reflections of what actually goes on in the real life, they unarguably touch on our world of reality from which springs realism as a system of belief or attitude of mind in which one accepts a situation as it is and deals with it without any pretence. This paper explores the concept of this realism as reflected in the following novels: *Great Expectations* and *Madam Bovary* by Charles Dickens and Gustave Flaubert respectively. The paper highlights the key characters in the novels, examines their actions and relates them to the real world of human experience, with all their implications. The conclusion is a tacit call for one not to run away from reality, or deny it altogether, but rather accept the challenges of dealing with it through adequate reasoning and proper decision making. One must decide. One must make a choice.*

## **Introduction**

### **What is Realism?**

Realism is a philosophical theory that was propounded by Aristotle (384-322 BC). The basic principle of realism is that the things of human experience, the things in the material universe, exist in themselves. They have "real" existence. For a realist, what a man can perceive is the real thing and this real thing exists in itself and does not need a knower in order to actualize its existence (Okafor, 1992). Realism has to do with the belief in truth or what is real not minding the negative implications of such. It is an opposite of idealism.

Alu and Ugwu (1999) state that "to the realist, the existence of anything is independent of the perceiver. It is "ever there". Whatever is true has been there as truth is discoverable and never invented". Aristotle in his theory of realism believed so much in the reality of the objects of our sense-experience. He believed that the best life is based on good conduct and his cardinal virtues as "goodness, justice, courage and temperance" (Alu and Ugwu 1999). In his "golden mean" Aristotle believed that virtue lies in the middle (Ugwu, 1996).

### **Literary Realism**

Realism is a theory in literature or principle in literature which emphasizes realistic presentation of events such that the reader or theatre going audience gets the feeling that it is the representation of life that he is exposed to: that what he reads looks like the truth, the event being presented or the story narrated looks like the piece of life.

Reflecting on the American handbook to literature 428, realism could be seen as:

The faithful representation of reality or verisimilitude, a literary technique practiced by many schools of writing. Although strictly speaking, realism is a technique, it also denotes a particular kind of subject matter, middle-class life. A reaction against romanticism, an interest in scientific method, the systematizing of the study of documentary history and the influence of rational philosophy all affected the rise of realism.

William Harmon and Hugh Holman have something important to say about romanticists, realists and naturalists

Where romanticists transcend the immediate to find the ideal, and naturalists plumb the actual or superficial to find the laws that control its actions, realists center their attention to a remarkable degree on the immediate, the here and now, the specific action and the variable consequence. (cf *A handbook to literature* 428).

Quoting Donald Pizer in his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to American Realism*, many critics have suggested that there is no clear distinction between realism and its related late nineteenth century movement, naturalism.

For Howells to London, the term "realism" is difficult to define, in part. This is because it is differently used in European context from American literature. Pizer suggests that "whatever was being produced in fiction during 1870s and 1880s that was new, interesting and roughly similar in a number of ways can be designated as realism, and that an equally new, interesting and roughly similar body of writing produced at the turn of the century can be designated as naturalism". Simply put, one rough distinction made by the critics is that realism, espousing a deterministic philosophy and focusing on the lower classes is considered naturalism.

In American literature, the term "realism" encompasses the period of time from the civil war to the century which William Dean Howells, Rebecca Harding Davis, Henry James, Mark Twain, and others wrote fiction devoted to accurate representation and exploration of American lives in various contexts. As United States grew rapidly after the civil war, the increasing rates of democracy and literacy, the rapid growth in industrialism and urbanization, an expanding population base due to immigration, and a relative rise in middle class affluence provided a fertile literary environment for readers interested in understanding these rapid shifts in culture. In drawing attention to this connection, Amy Kaplan has called realism a "strategy for imagining and managing the threats of social change" (cf *Social Construction of American Realism ix*).

Realism was a movement that encompassed the entire country or at least the Midwest and south, although many of the writers and critics associated with realism (notably W.D. Howells) were based in New England. Among the Midwestern writers considered realist would be



Joseph Kirkland, E.W. Howe and Hamlin Garland; (cf. [http://www.wsu.edu/r\\_campbelld/amlit/realism.htm](http://www.wsu.edu/r_campbelld/amlit/realism.htm)).

Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* and Gustave Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*, make up a platform on which to explore the concept of "realism". The aim is to help us to be more conscious of the reality of our life situations and use of reasoning to harness and handle our life experience properly and maturely.

### **Realism in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations***

This novel is a Victorian novel that was written between 1832 and 1886. This was the age when British Empire reached its peak. It was the period when the great empire and the British royal navy were the best in the world. The period also saw the rise of the peasant class- a period in English history when all factors called modern came into being. There were reforms in politics, science, arts, education and so on. It was indeed, the age of industrial revolution which brought such new ideas as the proletariat which was the nucleus of Marxism. The guilds were replaced by new institutions and the new capitalists emerged from the land laborers of the previous era. Cities rose like mushrooms because of the rise of industries. Above all, the 19<sup>th</sup> century English was emotionally and intellectually involved in the battle for the betterment of the common man.

For this reason, the function of the novel is perceived to be that of conveying these feelings to the capitalist and proletariat by analyzing society in terms of human experiences and facts on ground (realism). The social situation of the period was portrayed in the novel, especially the poverty in society. In chapter one, we find the symbol of tomb stones to represent the ugliness of the capitalist society and of the masses, even the seven tomb stones belonging to one family which amplifies social destruction.

*Great Expectation* is a moral narrative. The plot simply shows that the poor boy rises from grass to grace and back to grass. The novel is about wealth and social definition. Miss Havisham inherits all the wealth? The answer to this question could be realized as Herber. Pocket told Pip the story of Miss Havisham. He narrates how her half-brother buys Compeyson to jilt her. After the jilt, Miss Havisham ceases to be a human character. She becomes a symbolic character. Her house becomes

a symbolic house and it is known as Satis house representing decadence in the capitalist society.

Decadence stands for dirtiness of the soul, rottenness of the heart and filthiness of the hands. Here in this novel, decadence is more of spiritual decay. This type of society preys on the poor and wretched ones. Sometimes those who are being exploited react in the negative manner. That is why when Pip was invited to Miss Havisham, he found everything including the cake, decayed. Just close to the centre of decadence is a forge (blacksmith shop) inherited by a decent humble man with a very hard wife, and an orphan. To get a victim on whom to avenge her jilt, Miss Havisham looks to the forge (i.e. to the poor: those they can easily get). This victim is Pip. The instrument of revenge is a daughter of unholy affair between a criminal and a mad woman. Havisham picks Estella and makes her to go with Pip and in the end both of them become the dregs of society or the wretched of the earth. So Pip crosses from the forge to Satis house on the intimation of great expectations, and because of this, Pumblechook starts addressing him with "Sir". Fortune has changed Pip's character and this shows the influence of capitalism.

Initially, there is a belief that Pip's benefactor is Mr. Herbert Pocket. This is because he gets some education, but the truth turns out that Magwitch, a condemned criminal is the benefactor. Here, a criminal is the source of Pip's outlook as a gentleman. Magwitch is eventually the father of Estella, the instrument of revenge. The knowledge of them makes Pip to drop a few steps back. He does not attain the height of his dream of becoming a polished gentleman. Finally, Pip marries Estella. We can say that the plot of this novel is simple and the graph of the novel also is that of a morality fable.

### **Realism in Gustave Flaubert's Madam Bovary**

Gustave Flaubert was born in France in 1821. His novel, like that of Charles Dickens, was a 19<sup>th</sup> century novel. Both of them manage realism in different ways. Dickens depicts an elaborate desire while Flaubert concentrates on a few individuals. Dickens gives a broad view while Flaubert gives a narrow but very intimate view.

In applying realism, Flaubert adopts an intimate subject matter (marriage) and uses a clinical approach in the delineation of characters. Marital infidelity is a reality. It is there and not something one can deny.

The death of Emma establishes Flaubert's way of writing. Emma's desire is excess and that makes her to die.

Madam Bovary is a novel which in many ways is problematic. Its themes are at odds with the general sweep of our cultural orientation. Africans are reticent towards sexual experience. In Africa, we do not talk about sex openly. Although there are rustic blunt references to sexual organs, the idea of discussing sexual experience is out of the way of our oral literature. So, it is in this kind of novel that we discuss it. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was not comfortable with this novel and that is why the author went to court, and was eventually acquitted.

The barrier of reticence in Africa must be broken so as to study Madam Bovary. It is not a celebration of marital infidelity. The 19<sup>th</sup> century society was also a reticent one. Justice descended on anyone who made reference to actual sexual experience. Flaubert was brought to court for this and was later acquitted. The expression of sexual experience in fiction came as a result of findings of such psychologists as Freud. With people like Freud, most human behaviours became identified with libidinal energy. Marital infidelity is a reality. Emma is a unique character. She is extraordinary in her vitality, flirtation and foolishness. Madam Bovary is a classical (elevated) novel and, in fact, one of the best half a dozen fictional works in European literature. The life of Emma is painful but it is punished. She has to die but while it lasts proves a fact.

Flaubert is saying that we should not cast stones without knowing the detail. Here there is a conflict between conventional morality and personal morality. Conventional morality (thou shall not steal, commit adultery, etc) is what society keeps, but there is the personal morality. What would you do if you marry such a person as Charles Bovary who is so insipid, who wears undersized trousers, eats with noise and doesn't know how to say "I love you"?

Conventional morality says that one can stay in marriage forever, while personal morality states that you can quit the marriage if you are not comfortable. Emma is careless and that leads her to suicide. Charles Bovary has no reputation and integrity from the very beginning where we see him being humiliated in the school. He carries this shame to the highest level and couldn't pass his exam in medical school and his mother buys answer script from which he crams and passes exams. He cannot work in the city because of this. His mother finds a forty-five year old widow for him to marry because of money. Right from day one, the

widow is uncomfortable because she continues correcting Charles until she gets sick and later dies. This is a relief for Charles who carries his insipidity to his second marriage. He is a spoilt child. His father is also reckless and that is why Charles goes to schools late.

Emma was brought up in the convent. With all the restrictions and activities in the convent and the love novels from the old maid to the bigger girls in the convent, she decides not to continue her life in the convent after the death of her mother. Her queer character attracts her expulsion from the convent. She marries Charles Bovary and while Charles Bovary is cool, Emma Bovary is warm or even fire itself. These are two major characters in this novel. Charles Bovary is the second most important character in the novel. Our attitude to Emma Bovary owes very much to our attitude to Charles. She may have been different if she had married someone else. We meet Charles first in Monsieur Roger's school where he is described as older and bigger than the rest of the children. From the loud colour (or shout colours) of his dress, it is easy to conclude that he is uncouth. His attentiveness to the lesson betrays his peasant upbringing. Here is comment on bourgeois life that makes fetish of success. Charles is put in Dunces' seat and this goes against the principle of exemplary teaching which stresses putting the child at ease. Charles cannot tell Emma that she is charming and adoring. Rodolphe flatters Emma and that is why she falls for Rodolphe who is not actually cooking for a permanent relationship. So, his worry is how to get rid of Emma later. People like this are called rakes.

Rodolphe has a mistress already but only wants to taste a little bit of Emma because she is fresher and prettier. His action towards her appears to be realistic. He imagines Emma standing there in the dining room in that dress... he proceeds to undress her as he says. "Oh! I'll have her!" He detaches himself to test if Emma loves him. Due to the romantic nature of Emma, she does not know how to hide her feeling. That is why Rodolphe intimidates her and she always falls.

When Charles buys Emma a horse, they look for somebody to teach her but he suggested Rodolphe. In the process, Emma felt her knee brushes against Rodolphe's leg which stirs her, but for Charles, it is her clothing that tickles her.

Meeting in the garden at night confessing love continues until Emma suggests that they should elope. Rodolphe allows her to go on with the thought that it is possible for them to elope. However, Rodolphe

disappoints her on their scheduled date. He does not appear on the agreed date and time and as a result, Emma breaks down, but was later revived by Charles.

Charles' is a traumatic experience. M. Roger contributes in undermining his personality. Added to this is the feeling he gets from the boy and teacher who asks him to write 20 times. M. Roger would have been more cautious, and Charles would have been able to adjust and develop greater confidence. M. Roger, being a social realist, believes that education and family circumstance shape the individual permanently. Charles is a product of heredity and environment and his education is haphazard. The family has been struggling for that and this is another case of realism. The school exists for education for all, but only the affluent can afford it. The rich send their children to good schools but the poor must seek contentment in half measures. This is Charles' dilemma. Bourgeoisie elegance is absent in Charles' education and he carries it into his adulthood.

This is the thing that bores Emma who is the heroine of the novel because her "Joie de vivre" (joy of life) is distinct from that of anybody else. She is in full control of the situation but she is like a keg of gun powder. When she is happy, she is a bundle of vitality (when with Leon and Rodolphe). She puts everyone who comes to herself. She sees the insipidity of her husband and concludes that he does not love her. Leon and Rodolphe are meant to have absolute love i.e. doing it the way she wants it. She dictates the pace in her romantic life.

So far, we see the story from Emma's point of view. We shall defend the author's attitude to Charles' from that of Emma. Emma's feelings never go beyond that of adolescent and her demands are too high and too unrealistic. So, she fails because she chooses the wrong people, i.e., the rakes. A lawyer's clerk, Leon, is the last man to throw off all cares and love to a married woman without reservation. A clever gold digger Rodolphe is not the one who can throw everything to the wind in the pretence of loving a married woman. So, he refuses to elope with her and this amounts to what is called ironic misjudgment as may always be the case when we want a thing so much that we go to the wrong person for it.

The only person who can love Emma without reservation and does love her to the end, though in his peculiar way, is Charles. Flaubert has given us a sign post with which to reject Emma's attitude to love.

Her view of life is inadequate. The author does not say that everything in life has to be crowned sensor veil. For instance, Charles Bovary's first marriage is based on wealth and so is his father's marriage. The love between Charles and his widow wife is fragile. It is maniacal love but it does not exist because it is cannibalistic. A man wakes up in the morning and tries to have sex with a woman just to satisfy his lust. This is characterized as desperate love. It is materialistic and there is a form of disgust in Flaubert's voice for this kind of love which capitalist morality sees as respectable.

Flaubert seems to be asking to know which is better: seeing respectability or Emma's unrestricted immorality. The elder madam Bovary's state is another case of reality. Charles' mother starts by loving Bartholomew Bovary (Charles' father) and she tolerates all his feelings initially. She breaks into furry. Yet, much better, she swallows all her fumes and builds a cocoon around herself. And this remains her position till her death. The bourgeoisie scale of value even sacrifices happiness for respectability.

### **Conclusion**

In our society today, wealth is increasingly becoming a basis for social definition. However, the truth that should be borne in mind is that without moral rectitude, no amount of affluence can take man far in the right direction. Decadence sets in once wealth is amassed without morality.

Respect should be accorded to the person, not his wealth. This is openly ignored in our society today. This is what the situation around Havisham, Pip, Pumblechook and Magwitch represents in Charles Dicken's *Great Expectation*. Pumblechook starts addressing Pip with "Sir" simply because he thinks Pip has made it financially through his marriage with Estella, but it turns out that the figure behind Pip's apparent fortune is a criminal, by name Magwitch.

To face the reality of life, one should be oneself and have one's basic and personal convictions in line with objective values. One should be convinced that another's misdeeds or shortcomings should not be an excuse for one to engage in unwholesome behaviours. This is a lesson from Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*. It is obvious that this lesson eludes Emma, hence she indulges in unrestricted immorality in reaction to her husband's insipidity and general dullness of character. One should not

run away from reality. In the final analysis, one has to decide and make a choice for oneself. Wrong decisions and choices inevitably lead to frustration, with its attendant consequences, as in Pip and Emma in the two respective novels.

From the above discussion, one is faced with two challenges. It is left for one to choose the way to follow. If one chooses the part of stability and respectability, one can live one's life out to the fullest in society like ours. If one chooses the volatile, the way Emma does, there are chances of one dying prematurely. We have to bring reason to bear on our world of realism and ordinary human experience.

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## **POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CRISES: IMPLICATION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA (1999-2010)**

**Ibenekwu, Ikpechukwuka E.**

### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the incidences of violent religious and political conflicts in Nigeria. Contrary to the widespread expectation that the inauguration of the civilian administration would usher in democratic stability and enthrone good governance, incessant crises leading to widespread killings and wanton destruction of property have continued to re-occur. The paper looks at the ways these phenomena have affected good governance relying on the system theory. The finding is that the incidences of crises of either political or religious nature have always distracted governments resulting in the diversion of resources to security maintenance thereby robbing the people of dividends of democracy. The paper concludes by affirming that political and religious conflicts have impeded the delivery of good governance.*

### **Introduction**

In the West African sub-region, Nigeria appears to rank top among the list of countries that have witnessed the most disturbing and unprecedented rise in religious and political crises in recent times (Ajakiye, 2010). The phenomena seem to be on the rise with the inception of civilian democratic rule in 1999. In fact, religious and political crises have continued to pose grave challenges to peace and security of lives and property in Nigeria. It has also raised doubts over the peaceful co-existence and co-habitation of the different ethnic nationalities/groups that make up the Nigerian entity. Not only that, the spate of these crises also make the much chorused "unity in diversity" meaningless.

It does appear that religious and political crises in Nigeria draw strength from geographical divisions in the country. For instance, Northern Nigeria is predominantly populated by the Hausa/Fulani who are mostly Moslems. Southern Nigeria, on the other hand, is dominated by the Igbos and Yorubas who are mostly Christians. With regards to political party affiliations, the political parties that existed before and



after Nigeria's political independence (up till 1993) were mostly along this geographical divide. Instances are the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which drew its membership mainly from the North and the Action Congress whose membership was drawn mostly from the West. Even though the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) has widely been described as the first national party, its membership was drawn mostly from the Igbos of the Eastern Region. Even when crises erupt as a consequence of religion or contested electoral results, combatants are usually split between Christians and Moslems and between Southerners and Northerners as the case may be. Summing up the place of colonial geographical divisions on happenings in the country, Anugwom (1998:12) declared that *...religious conflicts and divisions arising from them are inter-twining phenomena in contemporary Nigeria.*

Past attempts to check this anomaly through bureaucratic mechanisms are yet to yield practical and lasting results. In consequence, several lives have been lost, others maimed, many others displaced and properties worth billions of naira destroyed in the uprisings in the country (Anugwom and Oji, 2004). These crises have, therefore, degenerated into a clog in Nigeria's national development given the fact that meaningful development cannot be possible in an atmosphere of rancour.

It therefore becomes necessary to examine the origin and remote causes of religious and political crises in the country with a view to illustrating its implication for good governance in Nigeria. Efforts will also be made to adduce measures aimed at finding lasting solutions to this cankerworm threatening the continued existence of Nigeria as one united indivisible entity.

### **Instances of Religious Crises in Nigeria**

The first major religious disturbance in Nigeria occurred in Kano in December 1980. Maitatsine started in the late 1970s and operated throughout the 1980s, springing up in Kano around a mystical leader from Cameroon who claimed to have had divine revelations superseding those of Prophet Mohammed. The cult had its own mosques and preached a doctrine antagonistic to established traditional Islamic and societal leadership. Its main appeal was to marginal and poverty-stricken urban in-migrants, whose rejection by the more established urban groups fostered this religious opposition. These disaffected adherents ultimately

lashed out at the more traditional mosques and congregations, resulting in violent outbreaks in several cities of the north. The crisis was championed by Muhammed Marwa Maitatsine who hailed from the Kotok tribe in Cameroun. Maitatsine came under security searchlight in 1962 when he was arrested for fanatical activities. He got a three months jail term and was deported. However, with the ouster of the then Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi, Maitatsine returned to Kano stealthily. By 1973, he had raised a fanatical band of over ten thousand (Obinwoke, 2007). He occupied Yan Awaki Quarters Kano and transformed schools and market places into camps. He struck towards the end of December 1980 following the two-week ultimatum given to him by Governor Abubakar Rimi to quit the illegally annexed parts of Kano State. Capturing the severity of the December 1980 attacks, Adebayo (1991:14) asserted that *Maitatsine attacks in Kano was grave and savage. About 4,177 people were killed in the carnage and the state government paid more than eight million naira as compensation to various victims of the disturbance.* With the killing of Maitatsine in the crisis, his followers went underground.

In 1982, followers of Maitatsine that had gone underground after the 1980 menace resurfaced again, this time in Maiduguri, Borno and Kaduna States. About 400 lives were reportedly lost and property worth more than three million naira destroyed. The Maitatsine cult equally visited their wrath on Jimeta in February 1984. In these attacks, 763 people lost their lives and over 5,913 were displaced. Maitatsine attacks were also witnessed in Gombe and Bauchi in on April 25, 1985.

Citadels of learning were not immune to religious fundamentalism. This was proven right in May 1986 when the Moslem Students Society of the Uthman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto went on rampage over the programme of activities drawn up by the students' union body for the commemoration of the achievements of Nana Asmau, the daughter of Uthman Dan Fodio. The office of the Vice-Chancellor of the university was razed down by the rampaging students. While the crisis in Sokoto was still raging, a number of fundamentalists infiltrated the Chapel of Resurrection of the University of Ibadan and burnt a wooden sculpture of the risen Christ on May 5, 1986. On Monday, April 22, 1991, there was an outbreak of hostilities over the use of a community abattoir in Bauchi State. Moslem butchers tried to prevent Christian butchers access to the abattoir. The ensuing crisis left about 100 people dead and properties

worth millions of naira destroyed. One of the fallouts of this crisis was the disruption of the 9<sup>th</sup> National Sports Festival which was being hosted by the State.

Still in April 1991, echoes of the *Maitatsine* and the memories of the havoc they unleashed on society gripped many people. But it had nothing to do with Marwa, the *Maitatsine* leader. The fellow this time was a man called Yahaya Yakubu. He was identified as the head of the *Shi'ite* sect in Katsina who, with his members, masterminded a bloody protest in the town. And no sooner had the Katsina crisis died down than the Bauchi own erupted. According to a *Newswatch* report which appeared in the May 6, 1991 edition of the magazine, the Bauchi riot was "the worst religious crisis the country has witnessed since 1984 when the *Maitatsine* religious fanatics struck in Jimeta, Gongola State, and about 764 Nigerians were killed (Adebayo, 1991; Salawu, 2010). For four days, Bauchi State was engulfed in the fire of religious violence. Thousands of hoodlums, many of them teenagers, using religious cover, went on rampage in some towns, including the state capital, Bauchi. The tale of terror was beyond comprehension as casualty figures mounted and scores of homes, churches, hotels and some public property were torched.

Kano State came under the spotlight again on October 13, 1991 with the invitation of Reverend Reinhard Bonke to officiate in a four-day crusade organised by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Nzeugwu (2009) noted that Kano continued to make headlines as a haven for religious crisis. Kano also made headlines in December 1994, when an Igbo trader, Gideon Akaluka, was beheaded by Muslim fundamentalists and had his head paraded on a spike on the streets of Kano after he was accused of desecrating the Koran by inscribing some blasphemous words against Mohammed in his shop at the Sabon Gari area of the town (Nzeugwu, 2009). More religious riots followed in May 1995, July 1999, October 2001 and May 2004. Zangon Kataf, Funtua, Yelwa- Shendam, Wase and Jos equally have their own share of the milee.

### **Political Crisis in Nigeria**

The first major political crisis after Nigeria's political independence can be said to be the Action Group (AG) crisis of 1962. The leadership of the Action Group, which formed the official opposition

in the federal parliament, had some internal contradictions which made the party to split into two in 1962 as a result of a rift between Awolowo and Akintola, then Prime Minister of the Western Region. Chief Obafemi Awolowo favoured the adoption of democratic socialism as party policy, following the lead of Kwame Nkrumah's regime in Ghana. The radical ideology that Awolowo expressed was at variance with his earlier positions and was seen as a bid to make the Action Group an inter-regional party that drew support across the country from educated younger voters, whose expectations were frustrated and punctuated by unemployment, poverty and the high cost of living. Following the resignation of Akintola in May 1962, bloody rioting sparked off in the Western Region and brought effective government to an end as rival legislators, following the example in the streets, introduced violence to the floor of the regional legislature.

Another source of political crisis in the country was the controversial census figures released in the 1952-1953 census as well as that of 1962-1963. Because seats in the House of Representatives were apportioned on the basis of population, the constitutionally mandated decennial census had important political implications. Salawu (2009:17) surmised this scenario by asserting that:

The Northern Region's political strength, marshalled by the NPC, had arisen in large measure from the results of the 1952-53 census, which had identified 54 percent of the country's population in that area. A national campaign early in 1962 addressed the significance of the forthcoming census. Politicians stressed the connection between the census and parliamentary representation on the one hand, and the amount of financial support for regional development on the other.

The 1962 census was taken by head count, but there was evidence that many enumerators obtained their figures from heads of families, and many persons managed to be counted more than once (Salawu, 2009).

Southern hopes for a favourable reapportionment of legislative seats were buoyed by preliminary results, which gave the south a clear

majority. A supplementary count was immediately taken in the Northern Region that turned up an additional 9 million persons reportedly missed in the first count. Charges of falsification were voiced on all sides and led to an agreement among federal and regional governments to nullify the count and to conduct a new census.

The second nationwide census reported a population of 60.5 million, which census officials considered impossibly high. A scaled-down figure of 55.6million, including 29.8 million in the Northern Region, finally was submitted and adopted by the federal government, leaving legislative apportionment virtually unchanged.

Demographers generally rejected the results of the 1963 census as inflated, arguing that the actual figure was as much as 10 million lower. Controversy over the census remained a lively political issue. NCNC leaders publicly charged the Northern Region's government with fraud, a claim that was denied by Balewa and by Bello, the regional Prime Minister.

The incursion of the military into Nigerian politics heralded an era of success political crisis. According to Tinubu (2010:3):

The reason for this fiasco was simple. Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and his corps of army majors that staged that first coup succeeded in eliminating prominent political figures. But they failed to take power, as the putsch ended in a stalemate of sorts. So, those who staged the coup did not take power; and those who took power did not share the ideological fervour (if indeed there was any) of the young majors. The result was disaster of prodigious proportions.

To begin with, the first military coup of 15 January 1966 led to the counter-coup of 27 July 1966. In-between these two insurrections were revenge ethnic killings (since known as pogrom in that dark side of Nigerian contemporary history), springing from allegations that the killings from the first coup were targeted at some sections of the country. Major Gen. Thomas Aguiyi-Ironsi, the Chief of Army Staff, who the

civil political order ceded power to, was caught in-between two bitter but passionate tendencies.

Successive military juntas were ousted for one reason or the other. While some were usurped due to alleged widespread corruption, others were toppled due to their inability to conduct free and fair elections. In the words of Tinubu (2010:4), *but if the Second Republic fell because this country just could not implement basic electoral law and guarantee free elections, the Third Republic was aborted because the might of the Nigerian state could not guarantee that a winner of a free election take power. And yet, that election was adjudged the freest and fairest so far in Nigerian history.*

Political crisis in Nigeria manifests more during elections. Hence the conduct of elections in Nigeria since independence in 1960 has been unpalatable as this is usually characterized by conflicts (Mudashiru, 2005). The crisis was sparked off by allegations and counter-allegations of electoral fraud. Buttressing this fact, Olaitan (2005:49) noted that:

Nigeria's First Republic which is dated from the time of independence in 1960 did not collapse until after the 1964 and 1965 elections which results were greatly disputed by many parties with accusations and counter-accusations of rigging and manipulations of results.

This scenario raised questions over the legitimacy of both the Federal and Regional Governments. It was the dispute and violence that followed the 1964-65 general elections that led to the collapse of the First Republic and the seizure of political power by the military. Similarly, the Second Republic did not collapse as a result of the myriad of problems besieging it. Rather, it caved in under the pressure of crisis and disputes accompanying the 1983 General Election results.

### **Literature Review**

A good number of scholars have discussed crises in Nigeria and its effects. For instance, Salawu (2010) discussed *Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Causal Analysis and Proposals for New Management Strategies*. According to him, there is a consensus of opinion among observers that Nigeria provides one of the best case

studies of ethno-religious conflicts. Salawu's analysis began on the theoretical stand point that ethno-religious conflicts which are widespread in Nigeria have a long history and are characterized by violent confrontations among the various ethnic and religious groups that make up the Nigeria nation. He argued that the causes of these ethno-religious conflicts are multi-dimensional. Some of these causes include accusations and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry; the inability of the Nigerian leaders to establish good governments; breakdown of traditional vehicles of social control; the long history of military intervention in politics, which legitimizes the use of force and violence as instruments of social change and attainment of set goals and demand; and historical antecedent, Salawu concluded.

In the same vein, Abdulahi and Saka (2007) discussed *Ethno-Religious and Political Conflicts: Threat to Nigeria Nascent Democracy*. The scholars examined the persistent waves of ethno-religious and political conflicts and the threat they pose to Nigeria's nascent democracy. They argued that the history of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria and the foundation of ethno-religious and political conflicts was laid by colonialism, boosted by military dictatorship and strengthened by the contradictions embedded in the Nigerian federalism. Adopting the ideas of conflict theorists, they contended that conflicts, whether political, communal, ethnic or religious are often influenced or motivated by disparity rather than similarity among the people especially unequal ones. The central thesis of Abdulahi and Saka is that *colonialism laid the foundation for ethno-religious and political conflicts that have continued to endanger the unity of the country and the nascent democracy. This was made so because colonialism did not take cognizance of the differences in culture, politics, and religions of the diverse entities during the forceful marriage of 1914* (p. 12). The scholars also see military intervention as a threat to democracy in Nigeria as well as a phenomenon that has contributed to the fear of domination and its underlying conflicts.

Given the above, it is germane to explore the implications of political and religious crises for good governance in Nigeria within the context of democratic governance between 1999 and 2010.



### **Theoretical Explanations**

Our explanation of religious and political crises in Nigeria and its impact on good governance will be premised on David Easton's system theory. According to Easton, a political system is a set of inter-related elements and the interactions among them which are distinguished from those elements not in the system by unambiguous analytical boundaries. Boundaries consist of those components, groups, persons or area where the frequency of a particular pattern of interaction fails off to an observable degree. Each system has an environment itself and its environment and the interactions between each of its dynamics and promotes both its adaptive behaviour and its goal-seeking functions among them. It possesses the characteristic of distinctiveness, coherence, endurance and interdependence. A system therefore, is an organized whole in dynamic interaction. The concept of system was adopted from the biological sciences and applied to social science.

The appropriateness of Systems Theory to this paper is premised on the fact that the central aim of every system is to achieve systemic stability – that is harmony and peace. To begin with, a system has been given myriads of definitions as a set of elements standing in interaction, set of objects combining effectively with relationship between objects and their stands to give an idea of a group of elements standing and with some homogenous structural relationships to one another and interaction on the basis of certain characteristic process.

**Table 1 Showing Easton's Systems Analysis of Political Life.**



(Culled from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/file:Easton-System\\_of\\_political-life.PNG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/file:Easton-System_of_political-life.PNG))



The concept of political system has acquired wide currency because it directs attention to the entire scope of political activity within the society, regardless of where in the society such activities may be located. While precise language of their definitions may vary considerably, there is some consensus.

David Easton's work - *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (1965) explored the possibilities of viewing political life in systematic terms. First of all, system is a "totality" simulating concept. Viewing political life in systemic terms organizes our findings around a single focus: the co-variance and interdependence of the units that make up the system. Systems theory postulates axiomatically that changes in one element will not be limited to that unit alone; there is a presumption that they will influence other proximate elements in the system.

Politics organizes collective decisions such as these and announces the victors and the vanquished. And because human interests are often as incompatible as they are highly charged, these distributions cannot be voluntary. Politics is a world in which there must be a last word and it must be binding. To speak of a political system, therefore, is to distinguish activity that is directed to the "authoritative allocation of social values" from other systems of human activity (for example, the economic system) that revolves around a different axis. Unregulated demands spell the doom of a political system. Were these protean demands to come pouring into a political system unselectively it would very rapidly suffer from flooding, overload, and breakdown. "Systems maintenance" requires that demand processing be kept to a manageable level. To accomplish this end, all political systems establish filtering devices that select and limit the demands that actually enter the determining stages of the political process. Institutional, cultural, and structural "gatekeepers" of various kinds guard the entrance to the conversion process. They disqualify those demands that do not conform to very severe specifications of importance, consensuality, feasibility.

Outputs need to travel full-circle and return, via the feedback mechanism, to the input side of the conversion process. Outputs that are deemed satisfactory by major elements within the system generate renewed supports and put to rest the original demands that set the conversion process into motion. Out-puts that are judged inadequate may well erode supports and dangerously intensify the level of demands. The

interdependence and co-variance of the various units that make up a system are nowhere more clearly visible than here.

The fecundity of David Easton's System's Theory to this paper lies in the fact that it acknowledges that the political system is subject to the happenings of its environment. In other words, the environment exercises great impact on the political system. In the case of crises in the environment, the political system will be preoccupied with how to restore peace to the system. In the course of doing this, attention shifts from other issues like the provision of social amenities as well as the enactment of laws. As it concerns religious and political crises in Nigeria, the attention of the Nigerian State has severally been shifted from using funds to better the living conditions of its citizenry to committing same to quell uprisings as well as replace damaged or destroyed properties and projects. An instance is the Maitatsine massacre of 1980 in which the Kano State Government was reported to have paid eight million naira in compensation of those affected by the bloodbath.

### **Governance in Nigeria**

Governance, according to Obi (2010:3) is *the process of exercising political, economic and administrative authority, especially over a State*. Embodied in governance are also mechanisms, processes and institutions put in place through which citizens articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. Continuing, Obi (2010:3) asserted that:

Governance evolved from the need to organize society towards the achievement of a common goal. An opinion, worth considering, is that society derives its roots from the solitary man who later got transformed into a family person to fulfil the need for socialization. Within this union, he enjoyed the love, care and company of family members and recognised their inherent and inalienable rights in order to preserve the love, harmony and cohesion within the family.

The emergence of the Society was from the family. The rise of the society was in response to the need to fulfil the collective needs and the collective aspirations of the people, such as security, economic well-being and survival, through negotiations and the formation of social contract between the leaders and the led. Modern States emerged, thereafter, according to Ogunmodede (1986:108) as *the most perfect machinery to be created by man in his intellectual, socio-economic, political and cultural history etc. for his well-being and happiness*. This is in recognition that *in a well run and well organised State, the people, individually and collectively, will be prosperous, happy, united, loyal and patriotic to the cause of the State*. Accordingly, “the desire of all peoples of this world, from time immemorial, is for them to be governed well. This is what confers legitimacy on any government for directing the affairs of nation-states” (Rotberg and Gisselquist, 2007:7). This assertion underscores the importance of good governance as an essential foundation for national progress and sustainable development.

Good governance, therefore, does not lay emphasis on the system of government involved; rather its emphasis is on whether the government delivers the needs and aspirations of the people. Commenting on the import of the concept of good governance in political discourse, Azeez (2009:59) disclosed that:

the concept of good governance could invite judgment about how a particular country, city or agency was being governed or should be governed, with a view to showing the relationship between the state and civil society, and how to establish the ideal balance between them, in order to achieving a stable political system that encourages consolidation of democracy.

Thus if governance, according to Lynn et al (2000:3), is generally referred to as *the means for achieving directions, control and coordination of wholly or partially autonomous individuals or organizations on behalf of interests to which they jointly contribute*, the idea put forward by Healey and Robinson (1994:44) that *good governance implies a high level of organizational effectiveness in*

*relation to policy formulation and the policies actually pursued, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its contribution to growth, stability and public welfare is justified. The World Bank (1992:70) sees it as the means by which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.*

In order to measure good governance, certain indicators have been drawn out by several governmental and non-governmental bodies. Thus the World Governance Indicator is based on six indices of measurement, namely: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence; government effectiveness; regulatory quality; rule of law; and, control of corruption.

The Global Competitive Report on its part uses twelve indices of measuring the competitiveness of nations. These include: institutions; infrastructure; macro-economic environment; health and primary education; higher education and training; goods market efficiency; labour market efficiency; financial market development; technological readiness; market size; business sophistication; and, innovation.

The Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance employs five criteria in its judgement on good governance. These include: Safety and Security; Rule of Law; Transparency and Corruption; Participation and Human Rights; Sustainable Economic Opportunity; and, Human Development. Drawing from the above, Okeke (2010:7) listed her own distinguishing features of good governance as: "Accountability; Inclusiveness; Equity and Social Justice; Observance of the Rule of Law and Due Process; Legitimacy of Political, Economic and Administrative Authority; Effective Institutions; Purposeful Leadership; and, Security and Order". Governance effectiveness is also predicated on effective coordination of sectoral interventions which are critical to the objectives and targets of the Government. This requires the right blend of persons, at various levels of authority, with the right mix of technical, conceptual, political and administrative skills and competencies, to effectively drive the engine of governance. It can be seen that all the above indices are mutually reinforcing as the absence of one will most likely tell on the others.

In full recognition of the necessity of good governance, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria reinforced the elements of good governance under the Fundamental Objectives and Directive

Principles of State Policy segment. Thus, Chapter II, Section 14 (1) provides that *the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principles of democracy and social justice*; and in (2a) further states that *sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria from whom government, through this Constitution derives all its powers and authority*.

Similarly, Chapter II, Section 14 (1) 2b and c, further provides that *the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government; and the participation by the people in their government shall be ensured in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution*. The essence of these provisions is to ensure the full participation of the entire citizenry in the governance of Nigeria. This is done through the guaranteeing of equality, freedom, justice, rule of law, transparency and accountability. This is so as to ensure that the freedom and welfare of the citizenry are achieved.

Given the above meaning and essence of good governance, it is understandable that the task of achieving good governance in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular are faced with a number of challenges. These challenges must necessarily be surmounted or the task of good governance will remain in jeopardy. In the Nigerian case, such challenges to good governance are posed mainly by ethno-religious and political crises.

### **Effects of Crises on Good Governance**

Nations that witness incessant religious and political crisis cannot be said to be a stable polity. To start with, the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War was credited to the mass slaughtering of Igbos in the North while the government took no action to protect the victims. This inaction of the government was interpreted as a form of support for the offensive party. Ajimotokin (2003:4) observed that *thousands were left dead including soldiers and civilians that would have done the country proud*. These lost lives represented human assets to the government. The Nigerian Civil War made for instability of government in Nigeria and further entrenched marginalization against the Igbos. The aftermath of the war is still being felt today especially as it concerns the deplorable state of infrastructures and high cost of living in the East. The war also negated human development, safety and security of lives and properties which is very crucial to good governance.

This lack of security occasioned by religious and political crisis has implications for good governance. This is so because it takes an educated citizenry to ensure that there is good governance. Crisis impedes educational development in the country due to the destruction of school properties, incessant closure of schools in times of crisis. As a result of these incessant crises, education of the youths is disrupted and the parents and guardians of these youths are forced to relocate. These people automatically become refugees wherever they migrate to and it takes them time to get used to the new environment and for their children and wards to adjust to their new environment.

The greater impact of crisis on good governance is felt in what Adebayo (2010:221-222) described as BDR – Build, Destroy, and Rebuild. According to him;

...no remarkable development could be recorded in an atmosphere of BDR as it amounts to cycling within the circle. In essence, it gulped the government millions of naira or dollars to put in place numerous amenities which were destroyed during crises. Resources, which could have been used to improve these amenities and embark on other developmental projects, would have to be used on restructuring and replacing what had been damaged during the crises. In most cases, government compensated victims of these crises and this gulped millions of naira, which could have been used for other developmental projects.

The above observation captures what has been the usual case in the aftermath of religious and political crisis in the country.

Another aspect of crisis which has grave implications for the country is the Niger Delta Crisis. The crisis in the Niger Delta does not have implications for good governance alone, it also impacts on the economic sphere. As Traub-Merz and Yates (2004:12) notes:

Nigeria has indeed become the very symbol of oil-related violence. The Niger Delta where most of the oil is produced is literally aflame with forceful occupation of flow stations, vandalization of pipelines, kidnapping of oil managers, bunkering

(stealing oil), clashes between heavily armed militias, and retaliation by armed forces. Between 1990 and 2010, oil-related conflict escalated to unprecedented height.

In a bid to find a lasting solution to this seemingly intractable crisis in the Niger Delta, the government of late President Umaru Yar'Adua introduced Amnesty Programme for the militants. The Amnesty Programme, among other measures was introduced on June 24, 2009 by the late President Umaru Yar'Adua. Thus after announcing it on April 6, 2009 he implemented the three month amnesty on August 6, 2009. The Amnesty Programme is expected to gulp billions of naira. In the 2009 Budget, N444.60 billion was allocated for security in the Niger Delta region and for a programme of sustained dialogue between the communities and the Federal Government. The government has budgeted about \$63 million for rehabilitation and reintegration programs, and for allowances for thousands of militants (Connors and Swartz, 2009). These are funds which could have been geared towards the provision of social amenities to the public.

Crisis equally affects the successful and timely completion of projects. A situation whereby crisis erupts, the contractors are likely to abandon the project and flee only to return long after the crisis has abated. In a situation like this, the project is delayed and may be entirely denied if the contractor refuses to return citing threat to lives and properties. On the other hand, the government may lose interest in seeing to the completion of a contract already awarded prior to the outbreak of crisis. This is so because after committing huge sums of money to quell such unrest, the government may be left with little or nothing to finance capital projects. In this way, the people are denied social amenities like roads, pipe borne water, electricity, primary health care facilities etc. Budgetary allocation for such social amenities may be devoted to the provision of security like the setting up of vigilance groups which is capital intensive.

Crisis equally leads to population displacement. Those living in a particular area will most likely be forced to relocate due to the unconducive atmosphere created by the crisis. Wherever they relocate to, it will take them time to settle down. More often than not these displaced individuals usually escape with nothing like food, enough money etc thus



they become subjected to abject poverty where they migrated to. The government is often compelled to aid such people by providing shelter, food and clothing for them. The resources committed into settling internally displaced people by the government could equally have been used to fund other things. In all, crisis, be it religious or political is inimical to good governance.

Political crisis occasioned by god-fatherism in Nigeria politics was manifested clearly during the administration of Dr. Chris Ngige in Anambra State between May 29, 2003 and 2007. Obinwoke (2007:3) aptly captured this fact when he asserted that:

Nothing could have deprived the people of Anambra of the dividends of democracy more than the Ngige-Ubah saga. Ngige had laudable programmes to implement for the general welfare of Anambrarians but he was largely constrained by the incessant political pressures and conflicts. A situation whereby a single individual enjoys at least 70% of a State's resources is inimical to development as proved by the Anambra saga.

Indeed, at some point in the Anambra debacle, the state-owned Anambra Broadcasting Station (ABS), Awka was torched by political thugs and properties worth millions of naira wantonly destroyed (Anyanwu, 2009). Commenting further, Anyanwu remarked that it took the Anambra State government not less than fifty million naira to rebuild the Anambra State Broadcasting Station (ABS). Nzeugwu (2009) lamented that funds spent on rebuilding or repairing destroyed government infrastructure constitute a drain on the coffers of the government and a deprivation on the part of the masses whose welfare are seconded to the repair of damaged or destroyed infrastructures.

In the same vein, the government of Plateau State has on several occasions been prevented from providing welfare services to the people. This is succinctly captured by Waziri (2010:3) when he asserted that *each time crises erupts in Jos, socio-economic activities are paralysed, banks close indefinitely, marketers seat at home and buyers are denied*



*access to money and goods. To be in Jos and witness total paralysis of economic activities is not something to be desired.* This postulation by Waziri lays credence to the latent and underlying fallouts of crises not just on good governance but also on the citizenry. Thus as the government battles to keep the crisis situation under check, the public is placed in a state of insecurity and fear. They go into hiding and businesses are stalled. This does not augur well for development.

Mention should also be made of the fact that religious and political crises often see to the destruction of lives and property. An individual whose properties are destroyed during violent activities is thrown into poverty and condemned to start from the scratch all over. In the wake of the 2011 post-election violence that erupted in Kaduna, Newswatch Magazine (May 9, 2011) reported that Janet Ayuba had no home to return to even if she wanted to. This is so because her home was vandalized and razed. According to the report, *after they looted everything in sight, the house was set ablaze. For me, it is not a question of not wanting to return home; there is no home to return to.* Ayuba and her family, by having their home destroyed, will be an addition to the swelling number of the poor in Nigeria. This condemnable scenario is just one in several witnessed in Nigeria at one point or the other.

### **Conclusion**

This paper x-rayed religious and political crisis and its implications on good governance in Nigeria. It traced the origin of religious crisis in the country to the Maitatsine uprising of 1980 while the political crisis in Nigeria is rooted in the census controversy of 1962 as well as the general election crisis of 1964-1965. Since then, the history of Nigeria has been regularly punctuated by cases of religious crisis especially in Northern Nigeria and a number of political crises.

Adopting David Easton's System's Theory, the paper contended that religious and political crisis constitute a threat to the balance of the political system. The system will therefore concentrate on restoring systemic balance through the resolution of the crisis in its environment. In the course of doing that, other outputs which should have been injected into the environment is withheld or even committed to the restoration of systemic balance. In other words, while the government is struggling to control crisis, attention is diverted from the provision of some basic amenities. Instead of increasing budgetary allocation for

social welfare programmes and services, security votes are increased knowing fully well that no meaningful development can take place in an atmosphere of rancour.

The paper concluded by positing that the spates of religious and political crises in the country are detrimental to good governance. Thus while blame is heaped on inept leadership for Nigeria's underdevelopment, efforts should also be made to take into cognisance the ignoble role played by crisis in Nigeria's underdevelopment. No nation can fully develop given Adebayo's build, destroy and rebuild syndrome.

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## **MOVEMENT TRANSFORMATION: AN IGBO LANGUAGE TEACHING APPRAISAL**

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and  
**Benjamin C. Igbeaku**

### **Abstract**

*This paper examined the movement transformation in Igbo language. It is designed to investigate the relevance of the syntactic phenomenon in the Igbo language studies. It also examines the application of T- rules within movement transformation using Igbo. In doing this, the authors adopted the theoretical framework of Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG). This framework had its debut in Chomsky's (1957) Syntactic Structures. In principle, TGG upholds that different types of sentences can be economically derived by supplementing the constituent analysis rules of Phrase-Structure Grammars (PSG) with rules for transforming deep structures into surface structures. The paper found out the inestimable value of movement transformation in the study of Igbo language. However, some of the T- rules of movement transformation like passivization and dative movements fall short of this value in Igbo syntax. Conversely, in topicalization, affix – hopping as well as question formation, there are traces of movement transformation between deep and surface structures using the Igbo language.*

### **Introduction**

Over the years, scholars in linguistics have evolved many theories in their study of language. These theories are grouped into three periods; the traditional or classical, structural and modern periods. Each was introduced basically to take care of the observable shortcomings of the other. Incidentally, movement transformation is one out of the four major types of transformational rules (T-rules) which emerged from the modern period of grammatical analysis. Other T- rules are deletion, adjunction or insertion, and copying or substitution rules.

Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010) observe that transformations do not just take place. A lot of assumption is made by the speakers depending on their relationship. According to the authors, when speakers

are familiar they presume many things and may delete any lexical items from their speech. It is believed that the more conscripted the deep structure, the more informal the relationship between the speakers and the more elaborate the surface structure, the more defined the subject under discourse. TGG, note Allen (1975) and Ndimele (1999) link deep and surface structures with T- rules. These rules contain two parts; the first part of each rule is a structural analysis specifying the uses of strings to which the rules applied while the second part of the rule specifies the structural changes.

T- rules make it syntactically possible for some elements of the deep structure to move from their original syntactic position to a position before or after their original position. The transformational phenomenon of moving some elements from their original position to a different position is one of the functions of movement transformation. It is against this background that this paper investigates the applicability and value of the movement transformational rules in teaching the Igbo language. By so doing, the authors adopt a descriptive approach using the theoretical framework of TGG.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section which is the introduction presents general overviews of the study. Section two reviews the available literatures and it was done under three perspectives; theoretical framework, theoretical studies, and empirical studies. The third section analyses the movement transformation using Igbo. The penultimate section estimates the value of movement transformational rules in the study of Igbo language. The last section is the summary of the findings and the eventual conclusion.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, the paper reviews available literature in the field beginning from the theoretical framework, theoretical studies and finally to the empirical studies.

Transformation Generative Grammar was derived from PSG. This theory was introduced by Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* (Chomsky, 1957) and revised in *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, (Chomsky, 1965). According to TGG, the native speaker of a language has internalized a set of rules which form the basis of his ability to speak and understand his language. It is the knowledge of these rules that is the object of the linguists' attention, not the actual sentences he produces.

TGG is a rule- based grammar and the rules are rewrite rules. That is to say, they rewrite one symbol as another or as several others or one set of symbols by another until the sentences of the language are generated. Allen (1975) observes that the rules generate sentences without having to utilize a native speaker's intuitive knowledge of language in the process. Mbah (2011) notes that T- rules relate the changes at the surface structure to those of the deep structure and reduce same to a minimum of rules.

The rules start with symbols "S" sentence and then a sequence of rules rewrite this symbol until a sentence is produced. Thus:

A  $\longrightarrow$  B C, means rewrite A as BC. A simple set of rules is as follow, if we wish to generate a sentence like; (1) A queen read the letter

S  $\longrightarrow$  NP + VP

NP  $\longrightarrow$  D + N

VP  $\longrightarrow$  V + or NP

V  $\longrightarrow$  read

Det  $\longrightarrow$  the

N  $\longrightarrow$  letter

If we apply the rules in sequence, we generate the following strings.

N

NP + VP

NP + V + NP

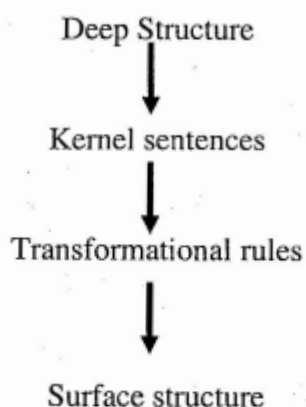
Det + N+ V\_+ Det + N

Det + N+ read + Det + N

A queen read the letter.

Characteristically, TGG must contain not only Phrase Structure rules but also T- rules. These T- rules contain two parts. The first part of each rule is a structural analysis specifying the uses of strings to which the rules applied while the second part of the rule specifies the structural change. TGG has a number of peculiar properties that distinguish it from

the other theories of grammar. One, it generates only the well- formed or grammatically correct sentences of a language. In addition to this, TGG has recursive rules. This property of recursiveness is the capacity of a rule to be applied again and again in order to generate an infinite set of values. In other words, this rule accounts for the creation of endless well-formed sentences in a language. It is worthy to note that TGG has a peculiar property of meaning preservation (Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010)) TGG retains its meaning no matter the kind of rule in operation. Yule (1987) draws a diagrammatic representation of the process of transformation as thus:



(Adapted from Carnie, 2007)

The relevance of TGG in grammatical analysis abound. Some of them are its skill of creating awareness on the nature of language to language teachers and learners alike. It also explains the intrigues involved in the process of child and adult language acquisition. It also has a unique capacity of avoiding errors by automatic checking and has infinite creativity in sentence formation.

Movement transformation in the work of Crystal (2008), is a term used within the framework of transformational grammar to refer to a basic kind of transformational operation. Movement transformations have the effect of moving constituents (usually one at a time) from one part of a phrase- marker to another (the landing site), as in the formation of passive sentences. Mbah (2011) observes that movement transformation is the type of transformation which moves elements of a sentence from one position to another within the same syntactic structure.



In the view of Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010), movement transformation involves the movement of some elements of the surface structure from their original syntactic position to a position before or after their original position. According to the authors, when the landing site is before their original position, it is called focusing or raising. The result of raising may be topicalization but if the landing site is a position after their original position, the movement is called extraposition or demotion.

Agbedo (2000) remarks that all the movement transformations in English have the effect of moving constituent(s) from one part of the PS tree to another. On this note, Asher (1994) notes that the rule of movement transformation can be specified as simply 'move  $\alpha$ ' where  $\alpha$  can be any linguistic element.

In derivational theory of grammar as observed by Trask (1993) movement transformation relates two sequential levels of representation in such a way that a constituent present in one level is present in a different place at the other level. Yusuf (1998: 99) points out that "a major syntactic process is the movement transformation, where an item is moved from its original site to another site."

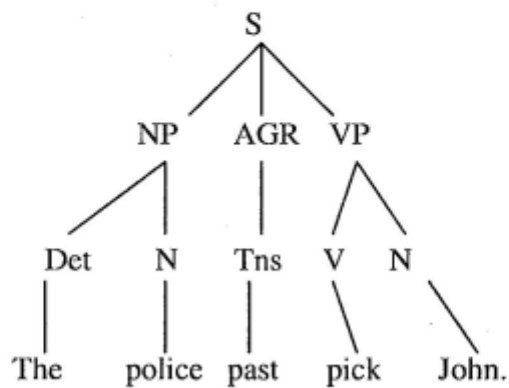
Drawing inferences from the works of early scholars in the subject matter, movement transformation is a grammatical phenomenon whereby elements of a given syntactic structure are moved from their original position to another position within the same sentence. This could be focusing if the landing site is after the original position. This transformational process revolves around the deep and surface structures. By convention, the changing position of a constituent(s) from a position before or after their original position does not affect the inherent meaning there in. Movement transformation therefore, maintains a feature of meaning preservation, a standard established by TGG.

Movement transformation is categorized into many types. Some of them can be exemplified using the Igbo language while some cannot be analysed using Igbo. According to Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010) the first example of extraposition could be seen in passive movement which involves the addition of some grammatical elements to the deep structure to make it meaningful e.g.

1. (a) The police picked John  
(b) John was picked by the police

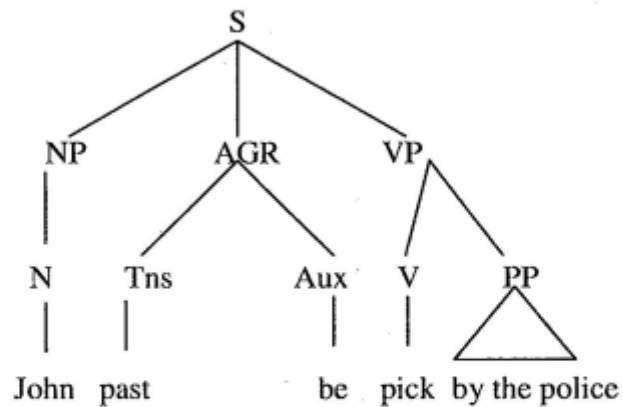
As a condition for passivization, there is the insertion of be, -en and by. Thus, it involves both movement and adjunction e.g.

Fig: 1



Surface structure: The police picked John  
b) John was picked by the police

fig 2.



Adapted from Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme(2010)

Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010) state that this passive movement transformation is not possible within Igbo syntax. Mbah (2011:62) confirms that “in Igbo syntax as in the syntax of many African languages, passivisation is not possible. They do not have the appropriate morphology for passivisation”. Agbedo (2000) observes that transformations that involve movements of constituent(s) include dative movement, passive formation, affix hopping (flip- flop), and question formation. In his discussion of dative movement, he says that it is a process which moves the direct object of the sentence to a position immediately after the ditransitive verb thereby making it the new direct object. Thereafter, the preposition to or for which is associated with the indirect object is deleted e.g.

- 2a, Amaka gave a present to Emeka  
b, Amaka gave Emeka a present

2a, is the input structure (SD) upon which the dative movement will apply to yield 2b, as the output structure (SC): The above can be represented in the following phrase structure configuration.

- 2a, NP<sub>1</sub>- Aux- V- NP<sub>2</sub> – Prep – NP<sub>3</sub> →  
2b, NP<sub>1</sub> – NP<sub>1</sub> – Aux – V – NP<sub>3</sub>- NP<sub>2</sub>

Dative movement transformation does not involve any change in the logical function of any of the arguments. Rather, it revolves within the domain of the verb phrase.

### **3. Data Analysis**

The data is analysed within the domain of movement transformation categories where examples are possible within the Igbo language structures. Believing that the thrust of the paper is the estimation of the value of the transformational rule in the study of the Igbo language, analyzing a data outside the scope of Igbo may not be of paramount importance in the investigation. The authors examine this rule under topicalisation, affix- hopping and question formation.

#### **Topicalization Movement Transformation**

This refers to movement of a constituent from a position before its original position e.g.

- 3a, O zighi ezi na m kelere ha.

- It ideal not that I greet past them  
It is not ideal that I greeted them
- 3b, Na m kelere ha ezighi ezi  
That I greet past them ideal not  
That I greeted them is not ideal.
- 4a, O wutere m na i zaghi oku  
It annoy past I that you answer not invitation  
It annoyed me that you did not honour the invitation
- 5a, O kwesighi na unu ga na-eme mkpotu  
It fit not that you will not -ing make noise  
It is not supposed that you should be making a noise
- 5b, Na unu ga na-eme mkpotu ekwesighi  
That you will be- ing make noise fit not  
That you will be making a noise is not suppose

In the above, examples 3, 4 and 5, the complement clauses were moved from their predicate positions to the subject positions. The constituents occupying the predicate positions in the deep structures were moved to the positions before their original positions in the surface structures. In movement transformation, topicalization results in deletion of pronoun. This led to the deletion of the third person singulars found in the deep structures (DS) to realize the surface structures (SS) as exemplified in the b part of 3, 4 and 5.

#### **Affix Hopping Movement Transformation**

This is a kind of T- rule in which inflectional affixes are positioned after relevant verbs in readiness for their combining together through the application of the appropriate morphophonemic rules e.g.

6. X - Affix - V - Y  
DS 1 2 3 4  
SS 1 Ø 3+2 4  
Onyinye -re te ofe  
Onyinye past cook soup  
Onyinye cooked soup

Onyinye tere ofe  
Onyinye cooked soup

In the above, the hopping of tense over the verb resulted in the marker –rv being a suffix on the verb. Igbo generally is not as inflecting as English but Igbo verbs in specific are more inflectional than the English verbs e.g.

- 7a, Onyinye gafere – Onyinye passed
- b, Onyinye churu mmiri – Onyinye fetched water
- c, Onyinye chiri ochi – Onyinye laughed

The example 7a – b can be represented in the following transformation

Deep structure	past	v
	1	2
Surface structure	Ø	2+1

The attachment of suffix CV on the nearest verb resulted in the past constructions. Also, affix hopping exists in construction involving proper names and pronouns such as the first person, second person plural and third person plural pronouns. In this situation, the verb takes a prefix to realize a meaning at the morphophonemic level e.g.

- 8, Onyinye echuola mmiri – Onyinye has fetched water
- Oku anyuola – light has faded
- Onyinye eteala ofe – Onyinye has cooked soup

The above has the following verb structure:

	Affix	V
DS	1	2
SS	Ø	A-2+1

The presence of prefix on the verb resulted in the perfective construction. However, affix – hopping in Igbo is limited only to the verb and this type of T- rule is more pronounced in the past and perfective structures in the Igbo language. Every affix has added meaning attached to the verb root. This attribute justifies the view of Emenanjo (1978) which states that Igbo affixes are extensional affixes because they extend the meaning of either the root or stem word and add some elements of meaning to the original root or stem. However, the extension or addition of meaning to the deep structure does not violate meaning preservation, a feature of T- rule when it is realized at surface structure.

### **Question Formation Movement Transformation**

Movement Transformation involves formation of different kinds of question in the Igbo language. In Igbo syntax, three main kinds of question that involve movement transformation are: tag question, yes/no question and wh-question.

#### **Tag Question**

This involves movement of the subject to the end of the sentence leaving the original constituents behind. Forming the tag question involves the movement of the entire question form to the end of the tag question e.gs.

- 9      Ọkụkọ nwurụ:      Ọ bụkwa ya nwurụ?  
        Fowl died:          is it not true?
- 10     Onyinye siri nri:      Ọ bụkwa Onyinye siri nri?  
        Onyinye cooked food: isn't Onyinye cooked food?

In the above examples, the subjects of the structures were moved to the predicate positions. In 9, the tag question was derived by "ya" the third person singular. In tag question formation, low tone is obligatorily needed on the NP and Aux that complement the tag questions.

#### **Yes/ No Question**

In this kind of question formation, the subject of the sentence moves to the specifier e.gs.

- 11     Onyinye dere ule:      Onyinye wrote exam  
        Onyinye o dere ule?      Onyinye did she write exam?
- 12     Ọkụkọ nwurụ ụnyị:      fowl died yesterday  
        Ọkụkọ o nwurụ ụnyị?      fowl did it die yesterday?

In 11 and 12, the subjects of the two examples were moved to the specifier position following the introduction of the resumptive pronouns. Thus, the pronoun it yields agrees with the vowel harmony of the verb it precedes.

#### **Wh-Question**

In wh-question, topicalization movement is observed where the objects of the constructions are moved to the position before the original position e.gs.

13.    Ngozi mara onye ụra?      Ngozi slapped who?  
        Onye ka Ngozi mara ụra?      Who did Ngozi slap?

- 14 Ngozi nyere onye ego? Ngozi gave whom money?  
Onye ka Ngozi nyere ego? Who did Ngozi give money?

In 13- 14, the subjects of the sentences moved to the object position to enable “onye” the Igbo wh- equivalent to take the subject positions.

#### **4. The Appraisal of Movement Transformation in the Teaching of Igbo**

Drawing inferences from T-rules’ analyses within movement transformation, it is observed that movement transformation is a generative grammar strategy that sees the movement of constituents from one position to another within a given syntactic structure. In discussion so far, T- rules found the deep and surface structures useful in Igbo syntax as a means of understanding the true nature of language and the transformational relevance of the various syntactic structures. Thus, T-rules use meaning preservation to reconcile the syntactic dissimilarities inherent in the structural changes in a sentence. In addition to this, the analysis of both deep and surface structures of sentences and the representation of such in transformational processes brought disambiguity in the study of Igbo syntax.

In the light of this, movement transformation has an inestimable value in the study of Igbo grammar. The model helps language writers to write books for all categories of language learners. It is also important from the perspective of searching the Universal Grammar (UG) which would reveal the mastery of language and perhaps make it possible to feed into computers to give desired sentences for pedagogic and other purposes. UG observes Chomsky (1988) is a deductive science concerned with the immutable and general principles of spoken or written language, principles that form part of common human nature and they are the same as those that direct human reason in its intellectual operation. T – rules are in alliance with the principles of the UG as they (T-rules) basically investigate the effect of moving constituent(s) from the deep structural position to other position within the structure.

#### **5. Conclusion**

It is reaffirmed from this investigation that movement transformation occurs in Igbo grammar. Thus, movement transformation

is not an exclusive preserve of the Indo- European languages. Rather, it is a linguistic universal phenomenon. Essentially, the study observes inter alia that passivization and dative movement are not obtainable in the Igbo language. This restriction is attributable to the inappropriate morphological nature of Igbo. to fit into the transformational rules. However, substantial analyses made using topicalization, affix- hopping, and question formation are glaring enough to justify the relevance of the subject matter in the teaching and learning of Igbo syntax.

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## **FACTORS THAT NEGATE STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE STUDY OF CRK IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EBONYI STATE: IMPLICATIONS AND WAY FORWARD**

**Njoku Nkechi C.**

### **Abstract**

*This study, "factors that negate students' attitude towards the study of CRK in Ebonyi State", was aimed at finding out reasons for students' negative behaviour towards the study of CRK. Four research questions guided the study. The study is a survey and the sample consisted of five hundred students who were selected using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection. Mean was used to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that attitude of the government, as a result of greater emphasis on science related courses predispose students' negative attitude to the study of CRK, societal values affect students' attitude, poor teaching strategies of teachers of CRK negate students' attitude towards the study of CRK. Ways of improving the students' attitude were also highlighted. Based on the findings four recommendations were made and conclusion drawn.*

### **Introduction**

#### **Background of the Study**

Christian Religious knowledge (C.R.K) is one of the subjects taught in secondary schools in Ebonyi State. CRK is an academic discipline that is concerned with the values and direction of life. It aims at inculcating in the growing child the desired intellectual training in Christian ethics and moral. According to Ilori (1992), CRK upholds the highest level of ethical and moral standards that encourage development of conscience and consideration for other people. Obilom (1995) view CRK as a subject that aims at educating the child both morally and intellectually as well as instilling in him the desire to be a good citizen. However, the children acquire this knowledge through proper guidance and supervision of their conduct which in turn enhances the development of the right attitude towards life and community relationship.

Consequent upon this, CRK was given a priority in the missionary era, but with the government take over of schools, emphasis on the teaching of CRK shifted to sciences and technological subjects. Teachers' attitudes and approaches to the teaching of CRK declined. Studies by Hillard (2003) and Njoku (2011) observed that in the recent times (between 2005 and 2009) there has been acute decline in students' enrolments in CRK, and performances have been poor as well, even to the tune of approximately 65 % . Anyanwu (1998) observes that students' negative attitude to the study of CRK could be as a result of societal value and lack of recognition of CRK by the government. Anyanwu further suggests that CRK ought to be made compulsory for every student in both junior and senior secondary levels as a means of emphasizing its usefulness in terms of shaping students' moral behaviour.

Moreover the teachers' poor attitude to CRK and teaching approaches are considered by Gbenga (2004) as major factors in students' attitude to the study of CRK; hence most teachers do not take the teaching of the subject seriously thereby making the student dislike the subject. Thus, the teaching of the subject is left in the hands of non-professionals and this affect the teaching and learning of the subject, hence student's negative attitude (Obilom 2005).

Consequently there is a felt need to find out factors that affect these students' attitudes toward the study of CRK in Ebonyi State. Therefore, the problem this paper tends to address is finding the factors that negate students' attitude towards the study of CRK in secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

The study was guided by four research questions which include:

1. How does government emphasis on science and technology affect the students' attitude towards the study of CRK?
2. How does societal value affect students' attitude towards the study of CRK?
3. How does the teaching strategies of teachers affect students' attitude towards the study of CRK?
4. In what ways could the students' attitude be improved in the study of CRK?

### **Theoretical Model**

The study adopted social learning / modeling theory by Bandura and Walter. According to Nwachukwu (1995), social learning theories emphasize the relevance of reinforcement. For instance in any learning situation where a person observes the action of another person (model) who is reinforced or punished; the tendency for the person to repeat or avoid that action is there. Modeling theory according to Bandura however expanded his work to imitation and modeling which can be used to modify behaviour and help learners to adequate new behaviour. Modeling here involves two groups, real life models and symbolic models. Real life models include the teachers, parents and friends as stimulants while the symbolic models are visual materials like pictorial representations. Nwachukwu emphasized that teaching and learning demands a motivator and a good model from which the students will imitate. This demands that CRK teachers need to stimulate learning conditions by employing models in their teaching.

Akubue (1992) and Adukwu (2004), noted that for students' interest in the study of CRK to be improved, teachers must be ready to influence students behaviour positively by their teaching approaches, use of incentives and exhibition of good teacher behaviour. Consequently teachers of CRK could help the learners to appreciate and develop favourable attitude towards the study of CRK by applying the techniques of learning by example (imitation); and the use of models while teaching abstract concepts in the subject (Akubue, 1992; Adukwu, 2004). If this is achieved many students may opt to read CRK in school thereby increasing chances of young learners behaving well. Thus, this therefore created the gap which the current study seeks to bridge.

### **Methodology**

The survey research design was adopted in this study to gather data from senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 50 senior secondary schools out of 176 government owned secondary schools. 10 students were chosen from each of the 50 sampled secondary schools in the state through accidental sampling and this brings the target population to 500 students. The questionnaire titled "Factors Affecting Student Attitude" (FASA) with 42 items was the major instrument for data collection and the instrument was face validated by some experts in Educational

Measurement for usability and clarity of content. The researcher visited the sampled schools and personally distributed the questionnaire to the students, and also collected the answered questionnaire immediately after completion to ensure instrument immortality. Frequency and mean scores were used to analyze the data. The decision point was gotten by adding the assigned values of the modified Likert rating scale and dividing it by the number of response scales, therefore any score below 2.5 is rejected while 2.5 and above are accepted as factors affecting students' attitude towards the study of CRK.

**Data Presentation**

**Research Question One:** How does government emphasis on science and technology affect students' attitude towards the study of CRK?

**Table 1:** Mean Scores on Government Attitude towards the Study of CRK

N= 500

S/N	Items	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	∑F	Mean	Decision
1	We have more than two CRK teachers	30	50	320	100	1010	2.02	Rejected
2	In my school we do not have CRK laboratory or workshops for practical classes.	100	400	-	-	1600	3.2	Rejected
3	We have less than three CRK teachers in my school	380	111	10	9	1762	3.52	Accepted
4	Scholarship is awarded to best student in CRK	305	190	5	-	1800	3.6	Accepted
5	My Schools administrators advocate for a	210	220	70	-	1640	3.14	Accepted

	credit pass in English, Math and any Science subject before one is promoted to the next class unlike CRK.							
6	There are fewer or no text books for teaching CRK	82	418	-	-	1582	3.16	Accepted
7	For entrance into university education as other science course which are usually made compulsory	312	170	18	-	1790	3.58	Accepted
8	Credit in CRK is not compulsory for promotion to the next class	400	100	-	-	2000	4.00	Accepted
	Grand mean						3.44	Accepted

Data on table 1 with a grand mean of 3.44 shows that greater emphasis on science and technology affects students' attitude towards the study of CRK. This implies that respondents agreed that greater emphasis placed on the study of science and technology courses compel the students to prefer science courses and as such show less interest in the study of CRK.

**Research Question Two:** How does societal values affect students' attitude towards the study of CRK?

**Table 2:** Mean Scores on Societal Values as a Factor that Affect the Study CRK

**N = 500**

S/N	Items	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	$\Sigma F$	Mean	Decision
9	People reading CRK or religion in tertiary institution, are look down upon.	310	160	20	10	1770	3.54	Accepted
10	Students reading Religion are seen as those that cannot pass JAMB very well.	250	160	60	30	1630	3.26	Accepted
11	Religion is seen as a course that cannot fetch one employment in an industry or company.	250	200	30	20	1680	3.36	Accepted
12	Graduates of CRK (Religion) are only seen as those that can only teach CRK in schools.	150	300	31	19	1581	3.16	Accepted
13	CRK is seen as a subject that has nothing to	170	270	30	30	1580	3.16	Accepted

	offer for the development of the nation							
14	CRK is seen as a course that can only offer one teaching or ministerial jobs after schooling.	59	291	50	100	1309	2.61	Accepted
15	People consider the study of CRK as only necessary for those who wish to become pastors/Revered Sisters.	60	295	45	100	1315	2.63	Accepted
16	Parents wish their children to read professional courses such as engineering, medicine, computer science.	410	80	10	-	1900	3.8	Accepted
17	People view the 21 <sup>st</sup> century as a computer era that has nothing to do with religion.	200	180	80	40	1540	3.08	Accepted
	Grand mean						3.20	Accepted

Data on table 2 shows that each of the items from 10-18 has a mean score that is above 2.50. This may indicate that societal value affects students' attitude towards the study of CRK. This implies that the



respondents rated societal value as a factor that discourages them from studying CRK in the school.

**Research Question Three:** How does the teaching strategies of teachers affect students' attitude towards the study of CRK.

**Table 3:** Mean Scores on Teachers Teaching Strategies that Affect Students' Attitude.

N = 500

S/N	Items	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	$\Sigma F$	Mean	Decision
18	Most of the CRK teachers employ discussion method of teaching only	250	130	100	20	1610	3.22	Accepted
19	Few CRK teachers make use of instructional materials such bible and map.	150	300	30	20	1580	3.16	Accepted
20	CRK teachers do not make use of ICT instructional materials	100	350	50	-	1550	3.1	Accepted
21	CRK teachers adopt the use of drama while teaching	200	250	35	15	1640	3.28	Accepted
22	CRK teachers do not employ the use of themes while teaching	200	200	50	50	1550	3.1	Accepted

23	Only story telling methods are used by most teachers of CRK	250	150	80	20	1630	3.26	Accepted
24	The use of concrete example is rarely used by teachers	150	250	50	100	1550	3.1	Accepted
25	Most teachers dwell much on telling the biblical story.	50	300	100	150	1450	2.9	Accepted
26	Most teachers employ role-playing method	50	150	200	100	1150	2.3	Rejected
27	Adoption of modeling approach is very strange to most CRK teachers	130	270	60	40	1490	2.98	Accepted
28	Most teachers of CRK do not have good teaching behaviour.	190	215	75	20	1575	3.03	Accepted
	Grand mean						3.04	Accepted

Data on table 3 which has a grand mean of 3.04 shows that teacher's teaching strategies could also affect students' attitude towards the study of CRK. The grand mean of 3.04 falls within the real limit of agreed and this means that respondents agreed that teachers' teaching strategies affect students' attitudes towards the study of CRK

**Research Question Four:** In what ways could the students' attitude be improved in the study of CRK?

**Table 4:** Mean Scores on Ways of Improving Students Attitude in the Study of CRK

N = 500

S/N	Items	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	$\Sigma F$	Mean	Decision
29	Recruitment of only professionally qualified CRK teachers to handle the teaching of CRK.	39.5	105	-	-	1895	3.79	Accepted
30	Creating awareness on the need for Religion Education.	150	150	200	-	1250	2.5	Accepted
31	Making CRK compulsory at both junior and senior secondary schools	201	252	7	40	161	3.22	Accepted
32	Provision of adequate instructional materials	371	129	-	-	1871	3.74	Accepted
33	Adoption of good teaching behaviour	250	210	40	-	1710	3.42	Accepted
34	Appropriate selection and use of teaching methods	411	89	-	-	1911	3.82	Accepted
35	Through the use of teaching models	210	100	150	40	1480	2.96	Accepted

36	Placement of the subject in the time table early before break.	120	250	100	30	1460	2.92	Accepted
37	Scheduling of the subject to hold three times in a week	190	300	70	40	1840	3.68	Accepted
38	providing good counseling services	250	210	21	19	1691	3.38	Accepted
39	Reviewing the vast curriculum of CRK	200	270	10	20	1650	3.3	Accepted
40	Credit in CRK a prerequisite for advancement into another class level in secondary schools	200	300	-	-	1700	3.4	Accepted
41	Provision of varieties of CRK textbooks in the library	250	245	-	5	1740	3.48	Accepted
	Grand mean						3.35	Accepted

Data on table 4 show that all the items on various ways of improving students' attitude in the study of CRK have a mean score above 2.50 and a grand mean of 3.35. This indicates that the respondents agreed that the items in the table are ways of improving students' attitude in the study of CRK if appropriately applied.

### **Findings of the Study**

Base on the data of the study the following findings were made:

1. That government's low interest on CRK compels students to loss interest on the study of CRK.
2. That societal lack of value on CRK contributes to students' negative attitude towards the study of CRK.
3. Poor teaching strategies of CRK teachers are also factor that negate students' attitude towards the study of CRK.
4. That recruitment of professionally trained CRK teachers to teach CRK, creating awareness on the need for religion education, making CRK compulsory in all classes of our secondary education, provision of adequate instructional materials, appropriate placement of the subject in the time table, adoption of good teaching behaviour and methods will improve students' attitude in the study of CRK to a greater extent.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings on table I showed that the government's attitude towards the study of CRK is a contributory factor to students' negative attitude on CRK. This is in agreement with Anih (2005) who lamented on the problem of reduced importance on CRK by the government and her zeal to establish many universities of sciences and technologies as an open commitment to the development of science and technological subjects. The finding is not surprising because nowadays children pass through their academic careers without sharing in religious instructions. Likewise on the issue of recruitment of teachers conducted by Ministry of Education throughout the country in 2007 and 2008, CRK teachers were not recruited in some states like Enugu, Ebonyi, Cross River and River states (Njoku, 2011).

The findings of table II showed that the society does not value the study of CRK. This is in agreement with Igwe and Ugwu (2005) that the society looks down on CRK, and as such see it as a subject that can not fetch good job opportunities to its graduates. This however, explains why most parents do not encourage their children to choose and read CRK /Religion Education in schools. The finding is quite interesting in that it is evident that most parents prefer their children to read courses that will enable them become Lawyers, Doctors, Engineers and Communicators. Wright (1971) observed that some parents and teachers show derogatory

attitude towards the subject; this in turn make the teachers of CRK feel inferior, uncomfortable and not confident in discussing moral and religious issues.

The findings on table III shows that poor teaching strategies of CRK teachers affects students attitude towards the study of CRK in secondary schools. This is in agreement with Njoku (2011) that teachers' teaching strategy is a contributing factor in their appreciation of the subject. Njoku observed that improvement in teachers' teaching behaviour will go a long way in boosting interest in the study of CRK. To buttress this point, Ezeme (2003) stated that teachers occupy a central place in the teaching and learning process, therefore well adjusted, intelligent and experienced teachers with necessary professional confidence required for effective teaching stands better chance of achieving desired result with students than a non qualified teacher. The result here is not surprising hence some of the teachers teaching CRK in many secondary schools have no professional certificate on Religion Education. Thus, transferring of knowledge into the learner becomes difficult as one can not give out what he does not have.

The findings of table IV showed ways of improving students' interest in the study of CRK in secondary schools in Ebonyi state. The ways include provision of good counseling services to guide the students, (for instance diverse information for differences in talents, abilities, opportunities and roles) recruitment of only professionally qualified CRK teachers to handle the teaching of CRK, creating awareness on the need for Religion Education, making CRK compulsory at both junior and senior secondary schools, provision of adequate instructional materials, adoption of good teaching behaviour, appropriate selection and use of teaching methods, through the use of teaching models, reviewing the vast curriculum of CRK, crediting CRK a prerequisite for advancement into another class level in secondary schools, and scheduling of the subject to hold three times in a week. The finding is in agreement with Redman (1987) who observed that the effectiveness of any strategy depends greatly on the teacher handling it. This suggests that teachers' adequate knowledge of the subject matter offers them good opportunities to teach well. Likewise, Goldman (1992) shared the view that the teaching behaviour of a teacher matters a lot in the learning process and so stressed the need for teachers of CRK to be embodiment of religion.

### **Educational Implications**

The findings of the study have implications for all involved in educational enterprises via teachers, students, educational planners and the government. The findings suggest the need for awareness on the importance of religion education in order to have morally trained students, improvement on teachers' behaviour and strategies, and reorientation of value placed on the study of CRK. Moreover modification on these factors will enhance the prestige expected of CRK in shaping moral behaviour of students and as such improve students' attitude towards the study.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded from the findings that government's lack of interest in the subject, poor societal value of the subject and poor teaching strategies are factors that negate students' attitude towards the study of CRK. And that adequate recruitment of professionally trained CRK teachers and provision of good counseling services would enhance students' attitude towards the study of the subject.

### **Recommendations**

It is therefore recommended that the government and all stakeholders in education planning should emphasize the study of CRK as a need since it is the only subject that deals with human morality and value orientation.

Secondly that CRK should be made compulsory at all classes of our secondary education and as such only professional trained CRK teachers should be engaged to handle the teaching of CRK.

Thirdly awareness of the objectives of CRK as one of the subjects capable of shaping human behaviour should be considered as pertinent by the school counselors as well as correcting the ill belief of students that CRK does not offer job opportunities to its graduates.

Finally CRK teachers should up date their knowledge as to keep abreast with the modern methods of teaching by attending seminars and workshops thereby improving on their teaching strategies.

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## **DISEASE AND ITS CONDITION IN AFRICAN LITERATURE**

**C.L. Ngonebu**

### **Introduction**

African literature right from the time Chinua Achebe wrote *Things Fall Apart* has developed “in such a way as to express the African experience effectively” (Achebe, 1965). Although humanity may have many things in common, people differ in the way they perceive their environment and the world at large. One aspect of this difference in perception is the view of disease conditions in traditional African societies. This paper examines disease conditions in African literary texts, its conceptualization and representation, as a basis for exploring the social realities African writers perceive.

To make an in-depth analysis of the thesis of this paper, we would begin with a look at the underlying assumption about disease conditions in traditional Africa. This implies examination of the concept of world view and the Africa world view specifically. The reason for going into this detail is because the way disease conditions (or any other aspect of life) is appraised and handled by a people is an offshoot of the people’s view of the universe. Consequently, we have to examine the African world view relevant to our purpose and how it influences the disease conditions identified in African literary creations.

Having done this, there would be a simultaneous examination of the aetiology of diseases and ethnomedical practices in Africa. This would give us enough background to appreciate the collective modes of representation of disease conditions in twenty select prose fictions across the continent. Lastly, we conclude with a critical analysis of the aetiological and therapeutic modes linked to the fictionalized diseases. The objective of this paper is not “to undermine and discredit African literature by denying the validity of any experiences and sensibilities that are not Western” (Nwodo, 2005). Rather it is to foster adequate understanding of the treatment of health and illness in the corpus of African writers.

### **What is World View?**

Simply defined, world view is the way a person perceives the environment and responds to the world around him. Dundes (1980), quoting Robert Redfield, defines world view as "the way a people characteristically look outward upon the universe". Geertz, in the same work, defines it as people's "picture of the way things, in sheer actuality are, their concepts of nature, of self and of society".

The anthropologists explain world view as people's essential or basic outlook on life, reality as a whole and man's place, role and prospects in it. It thus gives unity and purpose to a people in their triple relationships to God or supernatural realities, nature or the physical reality and to one another (Okolo, 2000). For the anthropologist, therefore, a world view has several functions such as explaining and evaluating culture, giving psychological reinforcement to the various cultural groups, helping the people to integrate their own perceptions and guiding culture to adapt to various changes (Kraft, 1979).

To the sociologist, a world view is

A conceptualization of the universe providing a structured and unified picture of the cosmos and defining man's place and role in it. It comprises a set of values, concepts, attitudes and images, which guide man's perception and interpretation of facts and events. It is a mental map of the universe (Onuoha, 1985).

For the sociologist, world view gives purpose and sense of direction to man and "enables us to act purposefully in and exercise a minimum of control over our environment. It is our subconscious guide through life" (Onuoha, 1985).

The characteristics of world view are that it is pervasive in any given culture and it changes as situations change. Because world view is pervasive, we find attributes of it in people's occupation, religion, social life, and language (Okebalama, 1998). World view is also revealed in people's myth, beliefs, proverbs, folklore, ritual, literature, personal names, ceremonies/festivals, and also medical practices.

World view equally goes beyond interpretation of reality. The prayers of a people embody their assumptive view and mutual expectations. For instance, the African belief in reincarnation and in the continual presence of the ancestors-referred to as "the living-dead"

(Nwaozuzu, 1980), can be deduced from the following Igbo man's libation to his dead grandfather:

Grandfather, do you see this water? Please take it to Ala  
That he may pour libation to those  
Who are asleep at Umu-Mmuo  
This will keep them in the know of  
All that we are doing here  
So that whatever we do,  
Should bring us peace (Kalu, 1978)

World view, therefore, is the "central control box" (Kraft, 2000) which governs the applications of the people's conceptualizations of their relationships to reality.

### **The African (Igbo) World View**

The African world view is firmly encapsulated in the various features of African cultural heritage. The African world view is fundamentally religious in orientation. Echeruo (2003) identifies two separate worlds in Igbo religious thought: the world of the spirits and that of humans. There is continuous interaction between the two worlds. But in spite of this interaction, man's relation to the Supreme Being is that of absolute dependence (Anyika, 1988). One Igbo proverb, Anyika says, is "*Chukwu ji mma jide ji, onye owanyelu olie*" (God holds both the knife and the yam, he for whom He slices a piece, eats). The proverb summarizes the dependence of man on Chukwu, as all things come from Him. He, who is not fed by God directly or indirectly, faces death through starvation.

Anyika further illustrates this complete reliance on God with another Igbo proverb- *Oji ututu akpo ubo sina obu Chukwu ka odi in' aka* (The man who plays his harp in the morning says it is all in the hands of God). It is most unusual to find an Igbo playing musical instruments in the morning – a time when he should be engaged in his daily business, most probably farming. A situation of this type typifies laziness. But the proverb indicates that even in sloth a man rallies round divine providence. What this implies is that the creature is by its nature permanently dependent upon his Creator for existence and means of survival (Aja, 2001). Events are determined by the will of spiritual

beings, the operation of “automatic forces” (Aja, 2001), the influence of the ancestors.

For the Igbo, for example, Arubalueze (1990) reports that although God is universally acknowledged as “the source of life and welfare who orders events in the world of his creation, He is not often regarded as the direct source of misfortunes like death, fatal accidents, epidemics, loss in business, and disease. Such misfortunes are rather attributed to spirits who are functionaries of God or to other numerous spirits of human origin who delight in causing harm to people”. The divinities, as senior functionaries of God and the ancestors next in rank are believed to be ambivalent as they can bless or punish (Arubalueze, 1990). An example is the Earth goddess, *Ala*, which the Igbo regard as the “owner of men and the custodian of public morality” (Arinze, 1970). The Earth goddess, very much consistent with Butt’s ancient fertility goddess Persephone, “harnesses both good and evil, redemptive radiance and threatening darkness” (Radford, 2006). Thus, it protects and at the same time destroys. This is why Opata (2005) asserts that in Igbo cosmology even evil spirits are not inherently evil in the moral understanding of the word. According to him, evil spirits among the Igbo do not just go about seeking persons they want to bring to ruin. Rather, the Igbo’s believe that before evil spirits do harm to human beings, they must have been offended in one way or the other.

In addition to this is the traditional African conception of metaphysical causality (Aja, 2001). This is the concept of a universe in which all events are caused and potentially explicable (Ahyi, 1997; Aja, 2001). Hence, any act of transgression or infringement against an established law or tradition or breaking of natural order of things is considered an abomination against God or against society and poses a threat to societies cooperate existence. The person pays the ultimate price-struck by such offended spirit. Take the example of the tragedy of Orukorere in J. P. Clark’s *Song of a Goat*. Orukorere, Zifa’s half-demented aunt, is said to be afflicted by the gods for disregarding their oracle. In Yoruba religion, for example, the individual may commit the sin for which the whole community suffers (Ademilokun, 1990). This is the point Ola Rotimi makes in *The Gods are Not to Blame* where the plague that befalls Kutuje is divined to be the outcome of the murder and incest King Odewale commits. For this reason, life in traditional Africa is geared towards maintaining a harmonious relationship with all

forces in order not to destabilize the ontological order, which will in effect jeopardize the collective existence of the community.

### **Aetiology of Diseases in Traditional Africa**

Aetiology of diseases in traditional Africa is deeply embedded in this worldview. This is because as Ahyi (1997) contends,

Since human beings are products of their culture, which is itself a way of life, of sensing and perceiving the social and human organization of the world, we arrive at an understanding of the ways in which a given society construes and explains (mental) health and illness by examining specific factors identified or blamed in that society, as causes of illness.

Uppermost in traditional aetiology of diseases is the belief that illness is a punishment for breach of religious/moral law and an indication that a taboo or a rule has been violated. Ill health, for the African, is a disruption in cosmic harmony which could have both natural and supernatural causation (Achebe, 1989), and because the individual has transgressed certain laws of nature or society, he becomes vulnerable to attacks by other persons and spirits. This is why Hountondji (1997) conceives ill health as

A call to order, a message signaling that something abnormal has happened in the dynamics of the family or social group, that there has occurred a rupture which can be overcome only through special rituals which the healer, a priest of a kind, will as a duty prescribe.

This explains why the Igbo's say *Mmuo anaghi egbu onye omaro*, a spirit does not kill one whom he does not know (Opata, 2005). In other words, as Opata explains it, it is only those who know the do's and don'ts of a spirit that can fall foul of it and in the circumstance offend it.

Thus, it was not germs that explained illnesses but some *quo numine laeso*—what god was offended? (Okere, 2002). In our reference societies, therefore, there is no event without spiritual/metaphysical origin and most ailments are caused by evil spirits. Hence, in sickness man must look beyond physical events to their spiritual etiology (Imasogie, 1985).

Adjido (1997) and Ahyi (1997) add another caveat to the aetiology of diseases in traditional Africa: the influence of living persons. Ahyi, for instance, notes that there are cases in which sources of illness are as a conflict between two parties; while Adjido (1997) argues that in magical thinking, illness is the result of operations mounted by a personalized instigator exercising some evil power over the patient. Igbo discourse is in this regard replete with the people's chastened awareness, even horrified apprehension, of the working out of tragic fate (Diala, 2005). For instance, a man may be mad but only because someone or something has attacked him (Ahyi, 1997); a young woman miscarries after some months of pregnancy not because of strain but to some restless and unknown spirits who have ganged up to obstruct progress in the family (Arubalueze, 1990).

Everything from the mere twitching of the eyelids to the hooting of an owl in the night is given symbolic interpretation. It is a life ruled by fear "the fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and the forces of nature, malevolent, red in tooth and claw" (Achebe, 1980).

This is why health for the Igbo is a harmonious integration of forces with the individual coupled with a corresponding harmony in his relationship with other persons and the spirit world (Achebe, 1989). Consequently, purity and moral order must be maintained so that the anger of the gods and the forces will not be at bay.

### **African Ethnomedical Practices**

Healing practices in traditional African settings are based on the religious beliefs that underlie the conception of diseases in those communities. According to Ijeh (1997) diagnosis for the traditional healer is both organic and spiritual. Their goal is to restore the client's harmony within himself, with his group as well as the spirit world (Achebe, 1989). That is to say, restoring the physical, the spiritual, the psychological and moral order in the individual as well as the society-realigning the individual or group of individuals to the cosmic and ontological order of the society (Uzoma, 1989). Therapy, therefore, basically involves finding out the instigator of the illness and combating the source of aggression.

If the instigators are spirits, they must be pacified. And if they happen to be mischievous, evil spirits, genies of a

particular location, efforts are made to placate them, shift them, or drive them out. The operative field of therapy, in other words, is located in some other being, some other environments, within the social group, or in the imaginary world (Ahyi, 1997).

This is why the role of the diviner is paramount in our reference societies, and they are consulted about every aspect of life. Consequent on the above, traditional ethnomedicine does not follow the mechanistic and dualist approach of the western orthodox medicine (Ijeh, 1997). Because traditional ethnomedicine is greatly intertwined with religion and because the belief system holds that physical ailments are caused by evil forces, or spirits, the process of healing greatly involves rituals, incantations and herbal treatment. The traditional healer mediates between the patient and the spirits who are believed to be the source of the affliction. Thus, as Ijeh (1997) notes, the native healer acts both as healer, herbalist, judge, and an embodiment of the collective will.

However, in spite of the fact that the traditional healer has great power to diagnose and treat diseases, some communities of our reference point regard certain ailments as anathema to both gods and men. Such a situation occurs in Igbo traditional society where diseases like swollen stomach and leprosy are dreaded. Victims of such diseases are banned from the human community if they are alive. If they die from such disease, they are not given full burial. According to Opata (1998), they deserve no sympathy and solidarity because it is believed that this may incur the anger of ancestral spirits and deities against the living; and they are not buried because their death is regarded as abominable and shameful: that which disturbs the ontological order. Hence ethnomedical practices hold that "a man's well being consists rather in keeping in harmony with the cosmic reality" (Taylor, 1989).

African medical and healing practices, because they are intertwined with religion, are erroneously viewed as magical and unscientific. That disease is given spiritual and esoteric interpretation does not detract from the fact that African ethnomedical practices involve close observation of the patient and his or her ailment as well as the use of remedies that sometimes baffle western medical practitioners. African healers provide both curative and preventive medicine renowned for their potency. Now, traditional bonesetters, for example, are known to work in



collaboration with modern orthopedic surgeons. And cases that have proven difficult to orthodox treatment have sometimes been successfully treated by herbalists. What, therefore, we should bear in mind is that African medical and healing practices have a deep religious basis, and work for the people who believe strongly and totally in their potency. With this background, we can now go over to the thesis of this paper: depiction of disease conditions in African literary creations.

### **Literary Depiction of Disease Conditions in African Literature**

Our purpose here is to present a selective description of the ways African writers fictionalize disease conditions in literary texts. In the process, we shall analyse and discuss the operative mix of aetiology and therapy in twenty randomly selected prose fictions across Africa. For clarity, we shall follow this structural pattern in the analysis:

- 1) Psychotic Disorder
- 2) General Malady
- 3) Anathemized Diseases

#### **Psychotic Disorder**

Pervading the fictionalization of psychosis in most of these texts is the belief that supernatural forces are at work due to the violation or neglect of some social or moral laws. This supposition is brought out in Ezeulu of Achebe's *Arrow of God*, Obiaku and Nwokocha Egenenge's family of Nwapa's *Idu*, Mahmoud Fall of Ousmane's "The False Prophet", etc. One can therefore understand the reaction of the people of Umuaro in Achebe's *Arrow of God* when Ezeulu goes down with insanity:

To them the issue was simple. Their god had taken sides with them against his headstrong and ambitious priest and thus upheld the wisdom of their ancestors—that no man however great was greater than his people; that no one ever won judgement against his clan (230).

In the traditional view, forces external to the individual, more specifically spirit intrusion in the affairs of man, are fundamental to the break not just at the individual level but more broadly cosmic harmony (Achebe, 1989). It is this belief that underlies Umuaro's view presented above. It is equally this belief that underlies Ezeulu's confusion at the

tragedy that befalls him. Ezeulu could not understand why Ulu would strike him such a blow when he believed he had served the deity well:

But why, he asked himself again and again, why had Ulu chosen to deal thus with him, to strike him down and then cover him with mud? What was his offence? Had he not divined the god's will and obeyed it? When was it ever heard that a child was scalded by the piece of yam its own mother put in its palm? What man would send his son with a potsherd to bring fire from a neighbour's hut and then unleash rain on him? Whoever sent his son up the palm to gather nuts and then took an axe and felled the tree? But today such a thing had happened before the eyes of all (229).

Another good illustration of the working of the traditional African theory of causality occurs in the insanity that strikes Nwokocha Egenenge's family in Flora Nwapa's *Idu*. Nwokocha Egenenge's forefathers are said to have committed murder and since then no man of substance has ever come from that family. The same theory of causality is at work in the fictionalization of the mad Obiaku in the same novel, whose madness, the villagers claim, was afflicted by the Woman of the Lake as a punishment for prostitution – a taboo in the land. Other glaring instances of the working of the principle of metaphysical causality in psychotic disorder are brought out in Sembene Ousmane's short story "The False Prophet", and Festus Iyayi's *The Contract*.

In Bessie Head's *A Question of Power* we have a complete break from spiritism to an aetiological concept that is equally significant to Africans: apartheid. In *A Question of Power*, insanity is precipitated by the dehumanizing apartheid in South Africa. To our hero, Elizabeth, "it was like living with permanent nervous tension, because you did not know why white people there had to go out of their way to hate you or loathe you" (190). "One day of it set her nervous system screaming. A week of it reduced her to a total wreck" (47). Hence, though Elizabeth tries to maintain her sanity in the "back-breaking life of all black people in South Africa" (19) by migrating to Motabeng in Botswana, yet, it does not take time for her to crack up:

It was barely three months after her arrival in the village of Motabeng when her life began to pitch over from an

even keel, and it remained from then onwards at a pitched-over angle (21).

It is the viciousness of racial segregation that leads to Elizabeth's mother's insanity and to such mental and physical wreck as we find in Joe of Alex la Guma's *A walk in the Night*.

Disillusionment and moral degeneracy in post – independence Africa also precipitate mental breakdown as is seen in such novels as Ayi kwei Armah's *Fragments*, Mattias Njoku's *Beyond Words* and, to some extent, John Munonye's *Oil Man of Obange*. In *Fragments*, frustration and despair about the social and moral decadence in Ghana are the sources of Baako's mental disintegration. Dr. Ade Cole's "nine weeks in the twilight of insanity" (119) in *Beyond Words* is the product of shattering experiences. The last straw for Dr. Cole occurs when the child for whom he prescribes ampicillin capsules dies and the ampicillin capsules, upon examination, turn out to contain latrite dust. The titular hero of *Oil Man of Obange* goes mad and subsequently dies when he is defrauded of his hired bicycle, borrowed money, and entire life's savings. So, even in these post-colonial novels, we see the principle of causality at work. A break in the natural order of things acts as the instigator of insanity in the life of the major characters. This break boards on the painful realities of the post-colonial nation-state and on the blatant erosion of the traditional beliefs of brotherhood, justice, and well being. Erritouni (2006) paints the picture thus: "the very nationalists who mobilized the masses against colonialism... have treacherously betrayed the people... have forsaken a common vision that upholds the interest of the masses... and barricaded themselves in the ivory tower of privilege".

### **General Malady**

The general maladies fictionalized in the sampled texts are attributed to affliction of the gods and the diverse deities holding sway over the land. Treatment for these diseases are equally steeped in superstition and apart from herbal mixtures, sacrifices to deities, placation of spirits, divination, charms and rituals form the mainstay of the therapeutics. The dibia of Umuosuma village in Flora Nwapa's *Idu* succinctly portrays this world view when, after attending to the sick

Adiewere, says

In two days he shall be well, then we shall probe into it. Sickness cannot just come like that without a special meaning (161).

And so the cause is probed into. The dibia attributes Adiewere's illness to envious neighbours and recommends sacrifices to placate the ancestors and the Woman of the Lake. This diagnosis is a reflection of the traditional philosophical position which makes the African believe that everything that happens to him has some input of mystical or magical manipulation even if he falls from a palm tree and breaks his leg (Ijeh, 1997). Madume of Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine* who hurriedly seeks out a dibia when he stubs his big toe against a stone and Chief Okehi of *The Great Ponds* who also does the same when his son catches two birds without hitting them are few manifestations of this belief system. One can, therefore, understand why Ahyi (1997) asserts that

Healers normally do not focus much on symptoms, the clinical signs of diseases. Instead they are primarily interested in pointers leading to a diagnosis. Their primary aim, in other words, is to find out who the instigator of the illness, the aggressor, might be. The problem is not in the victim's body or personality. It originates in an act of aggression.

Perhaps, a detailed evocation of the conceptualization of the universe as filled with ubiquitous gods and ancestors sometimes wrecking havoc on humans is embodied in Elechi Amadi's *The Great Ponds*. When the villages are ravaged by "wonjo" – the epidemic – it is believed that the god, *Ogbunabali*, is on rampage:

Eze Diali reviewed the situation on his sick-bed. Yes, it was glaringly true. *Ogbunabali* was executing judgement and in a way that four hundred future generations would talk about it (185).

Innumerable divinations and sacrifices to both *Ogbunabali* and to other gods and deities are carried out to no avail. The god, it seems, is too angry to be pacified.

We have similar conception of sickness in another of Elechi Amadi's novel *The Concubine*. First, Emenike dies of what the villagers call "lock-chest" – which they attribute to the fight with Madume over a piece of land. So, even when Ihuoma argues that her husband died of "lock-chest", her mother insists otherwise: "we know what happened to him. Amadioha will kill them one by one" (21). Second, when Madume is blinded by a spitting cobra, the villagers believe it is a punishment from the gods. The dibia sought to treat him asserts this:

I dare not treat your husband until the gods have been appeased with a suitable sacrifice (70).

Though the sacrifices are carried out, the gods are not appeased. Madume remains blind and eventually commits suicide.

This supposition that most physical ailments are caused by spirits and paranormal forces is also adopted in Achebe's fictionalization of Ogbuefi Amalu's illness in *Arrow of God*. Ogbuefi Amalu is afflicted with "aru-mmo", the sickness of the spirits. One of the treatments the herbalist employs is firing of guns whose noise it is believed would drive away the spirits afflicting the stricken man. This improbable therapeutic model arises because since the assumption is that spirits have taken possession of and incapacitated Amalu's body, the next logical step is how to dispel the spirits from the body. It is, therefore, not surprising that noise – which by popular belief spirits abhor – is generated to scare them away with the hope of restoring health to the diseased man.

Again, we see some type of animist belief in Tayeb Salih's "The Doum Tree of Wad Hamid". To the villagers, the doum tree of Wad Hamid has mystical powers to protect men, heal serious illness, deliver from any form of affliction, etc. The narrator tells his son:

Yes, my son, we are people who have no experience of hospitals. In small matters such as the bites of scorpions, fever, sprains, and fractures, we take to our beds until we are cured. When in serious trouble we go to the Doum tree (13).

The narrator then tells the story of how his sick neighbour gets instant cure on imploring Wad Hamid at the doum tree (11).

One can equally understand why The Fitawrary of Daniachew Worku's *The Thirteenth Sun* undertakes a pilgrimage to an Ethiopian shrine in search of a cure. Because superstition still upholds in spite of the people's attempt to keep to the ancient Christianity of Ethiopia, the Fitawrary seeks a cure for his heart problem from the conjure woman. The woman carries out some sacrifices involving a red and white fowl cut up and thrown on a road leading to another direction. The assumption is, as in the firing of guns at the sick Ogbuefi Amalu's house of Achebe's *Arrow of God*, to misdirect the devils believed to be attacking the sick man to another place, and prevent them from tracking down the sick. It is also not surprising that when the conjure - woman's husband is accidentally shot dead, the woman believes that either she or her husband has violated one of the laws and the "unnameables" have thus exacted vengeance. And like Ezeulu of *Arrow of God* who does not understand why Ulu should strike him such deadly blows after he had divined the god's will and obeyed it, the conjure - woman does not know the point where she had gone wrong:

But now, sitting here and keeping vigil over the bodies, and going back over and over again on the things I had done till now, I wonder at what point I went wrong. And at what I have done to merit all this. Were they all in vain - the fasting, the incense burning, the offering of sacrifices, the exorcising of demons in the name of God. Why should this be my reward? (166-7).

Thus, we notice that from the cape to the horn of Africa, "illness always implies certain meanings not merely bodily pathology" (Achebe, 1989); and as the African sees life as a mystery to be lived out on a mysterious planet ruled by spiritual forces of good and evil (Imasogie, 1985), the traditional model operates "from a sense of certainty of the rightness of a system, whose order will necessarily recoil in order to restore balance" (Akwanya, 2006).

Hence, even in dreamland, as in Dambudzo Marechera's short story "Protista", the strong belief in the occult, in ancestral influences, and in paranormal powers still pervades diagnosis and treatment of diseases.

consensus then is that the victims must have committed an offence so abominable that the gods cannot be appeased. Caring for those victims, it is believed, would incur the wrath of the gods not only on the family but on the entire community. Hence, the victims are cast away. As we saw in the section on African world view, one reason for this is the conceptualization in African cosmology that an individual's act or behaviour, by extension, affects the ontological order and consequently, the being of the entire human and non-human community (Aja, 2001). It is, therefore, in a bid to maintain the ontological balance in creation that offending individuals are ostracized.

### **Critical Analysis**

When we examine some of the ethnomedical practices in our select novels, we have ample evidence of sophistry and illogicality in them. The first query we raise concerns Ezeulu's insanity in Achebe's *Arrow of God*. The consensus that Ezeulu is punished for contravening the dictates of Ulu may not after all hold water if we recall Ogbuefi Nwaka's hint on the trait of lunacy in Ezeulu's lineage:

The man is as proud as a lunatic. This proves what I have always told people, that he inherited his mother's madness (176).

In Nwaka's statement, Achebe hides the fallacy in some preliterate belief, since the trait of lunacy is a significant factor in Ezeulu's case. It is significant because latent traits in an individual can be triggered off by environmental and psychological forces. Modern psychiatry holds that "powerful emotions can cause mental illness, whether they are pleasant or unpleasant" (Ahyi, 1997).

Thus, there is strong reason to posit that the tragedy that befell Ezeulu triggers off the trait of lunacy he may have inherited from his mother but which had been latent due to erstwhile stable conditions. However, "while the modern explanation focuses on the strength of the emotional shock received, traditional explanations on the other hand make no room for simple change. The factual truth or falsehood of the supposed 'root' of the problem is beside the point" (Ahyi, 1997). Moreso, unlike ethnomedical beliefs, modern science has established the correlation between emotional states and immunity levels (Adjido, 1997). According to Adjido,

Certain events in the lives of individual persons might play a significant role in the sense that they can lead to the eruption of an illness previously present in a latent state but kept in check by the individuals' normal defences. The triggering event happens when these defences are in a state of exhaustion.

Two incidents in the life of Ezeulu act as the triggering event: Obika's sudden death and the abandonment of Ulu – too powerful for Ezeulu to bear. No god, therefore, may have been at work here.

Obika's death equally reveals similar fallacy of traditional aetiology. If we recall that Obika had a severe attack of malaria from which he had not fully recovered before the *Ogbazuluigbo*, then we would appreciate that intense exhaustion may have contributed to his death. The general belief that he is a victim of Ulu's vengence spree on Ezeulu points to the same illogicality in traditional conceptions of diseases as is apparent in the interpretation of Ezeulu's insanity. That Obika's death occurred at the same time as the desertion of Ulu by the villagers may be merely coincidental. Similar misconstruction in traditional etiological models is also revealed in Ogbuefi Amalu's sickness in *Arrow of God*. First, Ogbuefi Amalu exhibits some of the symptoms of cerebral haemorrhage (commonly called stroke), but which in traditional diagnostics is known as "arummo" – an affliction by the spirits. Second, apart from herbal mixtures administered to the sick man, the other major – and significant – treatment the dibia employs is firing of guns which is believed would frighten the spirits away from the afflicted man. Achebe finds this absurd enough to isolate for comment:

The gun – shooting is no more than a foolish groping about. How can we frighten spirits away with the noise of a gun? If it were so easy any man who had enough money to buy a keg of gunpower would live and live until mushrooms sprouted from his head (112-3).

Just as preposterous is the example from Daniachew Worku's *The Thirteenth Sun* where The Fitawrary seeks a cure from the conjure – woman. Having ordered a sacrifice of a red and white fowl, the conjure – woman directs the servants "to throw it on a road that led in another direction – to misdirect the devils to another place, and prevent them



from tracking down the sick” (63). This is a man diagnosed with a heart problem and yet clings to the presumption that evil spirits are the cause of his ailment. Such spurious reasoning gives credence to Ahyi’s (1997) assertion that:

The African aetiology is very much like a big joke an efficient joke, a lie that works somehow.

This “big joke” is glaringly pictured in Elechi Amadi’s *The Great Ponds* where Chiolu and all neighbouring towns are afflicted with a plague the villagers call *wonjo*. As *wonjo* ravages families upon families and all divination and sacrifices for appeasement fail, the villagers attribute it to *Ogbunabali* the god Olumba swore to. It is only at the end of the novel that the author lets us into the cause of the epidemic that has been so easily linked to the wrath of *Ogbunabali* – the great influenza of 1918.

Other realities which traditional aetiology misconstrues can be seen in such anathemized diseases like swollen stomach and smallpox. Swollen stomach, which is the swelling of the limbs and the lower abdomen, arises mainly from such kidney or liver related disorder as renal failure, liver cirrhosis, Ascitis or nephritic syndrome. The absurdity of the interpretation of and reaction to this ailment is the central point Achebe makes in his short story “Akueke”. The fact that Akueke is cured of her swollen stomach after she was taken to the evil forest to die underlies the covert meaning of the story. This by analogy extends to smallpox – the “dread artist” of Achebe’s “The Sacrificial Egg” or “the good thing” of Elechi Amadi’s *The Concubine* – for which modern science has found both a cause and a cure. Similar exhibition of the modicum in traditional therapeutics and aetiology occurs in *The Concubine* when Emenike is said to have died of “lock – chest” and Flora Nwapa’s *Idu* where Adiewere’s illness is attributed to jealous neighbours and an angry goddess. “Lock – chest” creates the image of constriction of the chest cavity – leading to difficulty in breathing. As Ihuoma insists that “he worked too hard in the rain” (21), we might infer that Emenike dies of pneumonia infection of the lungs. “Lock – chest” is a preliterate interpretation of an in-comprehensible pathological phenomenon. Similarly, Adiewere’s ailment – vomiting and stooling of blood-is the clinical sign of diverse diseases ranging from peptic, or duodenal ulcer to colon or rectum cancer, amoebic dysentery etc. There is no way the woman of the Lake would have instigated any of these maladies or the

clinical sign Adiewere exhibits. Knowledge of pathology and biological/physical factors provides adequate and satisfactory answers to many questions of illness identified in the literary texts.

Perhaps, it is greed and inordinate quest for wealth that underlie some conceptions of diseases among the people. The reference to some of the dibias in our sampled texts is remarkable enough for us to isolate for comment. If their claim to psychic power is anything to go by, one wonders why these so-called diviners could not decipher that Enekele of Ada Ugah's "Daughters of Apa", Amos of "Chike's School Days" and Nwibe of "The Madman" – both short stories by Achebe – were not really insane. The second dibia Nwibe is taken to sum up the mediocrity and fraudulence of some of his kind when, upon hearing that Nwibe has been turned down by the first dibia he was taken to muse: "If doctors were to send away every patient whose cure they were uncertain of, how many of them would eat one meal in a whole week from their practice?" (11).

But the villagers who are easily gulled by the tricksters who call themselves dibias are as guilty as the dibias themselves. Is anyone insane merely because the person's husband ("Daughters of Apa"), mother ("Chike's School Days") or townsmen ("The Madman") says so? We are entitled to conclude that the validity and authenticity of diagnostic and therapeutic practices exhibited in some of the depiction of disease conditions in our literary texts are suspect.

These notwithstanding, the reason behind the efficacy of many traditional techniques are beyond the comprehension of western medical practitioners. As examples from our select novels show, some ethnomedical practices have proven to be potent. Achebe's Chielo of *Things Fall Apart*, for example, is a testimony of the profundity of traditional healing techniques. Chielo is a priestess and a healer who employs baffling methods in handling Ezinma's ailment. Herbal treatment remains the undisputed remedy for many diseases as we see in the successful treatment of "Iba" by Okonkwo of *Things Fall Apart*. Perhaps, a great testimony of the mystery and potency of African medical practices is the Ogbanje phenomenon. The Ogbanje is a spiritual and mystical condition involving a cycle of continuous illness, nightmares, early death and rebirth. Achebe's description of this complex and mysterious issue and Ezinma's successful treatment establish the validity in some preliterate therapeutics.

We can, therefore, conclude that African writers have made great efforts to fictionalize the good and the bad in the depiction of disease conditions in their literary texts. They have not tried to paint a glowing picture of the system or demonize it. Rather, their objective remains to write as much as possible all about a people.

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## **OFO AS A GLOBAL CULTURAL RESOURCE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN IGBO CULTURE AREA**

**Ikegwu, Jacinta Uchenna**

### **Abstract**

*Ofo – the branchlet of the Detariumsenegalese/elastica or Detariumguiniensis has different classification and usage in Igboland. Its consecration and ritualization make it a sacred object. It signifies a symbol of authority, justice and decorum in the Igbo societies and culture areas. Its equivalent globally could be seen in the staff of office held by public office holders in the Senate and House of Representatives throughout the world. The global nature of Ofo is overwhelming as parliamentarians all over the world see it as a token of authority and its verdict on a particular decision is final. The idolatry notion been propagated by the modern day Christians, and as ignorantly portrayed by the colonialists in Igbo culture area should be ignored and disregarded. Ofo, therefore, builds a “total man” and aids in controlling the affairs of any nation. This write-up stresses the imperative of Ofo and to accord it its rightful place as both a cultural resource and leadership tool for those in the helm of affairs in any society.*

### **Introduction**

Igbo culture has been jeopardized by colonialism and globalization and is on the precinct of dilapidation and extinction as a result of ignorance and disdain for cultural practices. It thus demands urgent redress and revival. Among the various ethnic settings in Nigeria, the Igbo cultural practices are mostly facing extinction, probably by the effect of the Nigeria civil war and acculturation. Many cultural practices such as facial marks, traditional child births etc. are extinct. Other cultural practices like *Ofo* usage and commission are dying in Igbo society. Yet the Mace (*Ofo*), a staff of office, is still in use both in the national and state Houses of Assembly. Again, Gavels, another form of *Ofo* is used by the judges all over the world. Also, the Yorubas use ‘*Ofo*’ called “*OpaOranyan*,” while the Hausa call it “*Taura*” and all other groups use one type of *Ofo* or the other.



Individuals use *Ofo* in their daily life utterances. Once an individual swears by *ofo*, either by beating hands on any object or swearing using any name, *Ofo* usage is specified. Despite the renowned usage of *Ofo* by our forefathers, especially the symbol represented by the stick, there is lack of awareness on its merit in the present day Igbo society. Many Igbo sons and daughters attribute the oblivious nature of *Ofo* to the fetishness of the symbol and thus demand complete destruction. But its global nature mentioned above reconciles the instrument as a symbol of authority, justice and decorum in Igboland in particular and the world over. Little wonder the Igbo always emphasize on '*Ofo na Ogu*' referring that "*oji m Ofo; oji m Ogu n'okwu a*" literally meaning, "I am following this case with justice, equity, honesty and truth". Again, the Igbo will also say '*oji m Ofo aga*', meaning I am going with authority and justice. Since '*Ofo*' can lead one into purity and escape from troubles, there is need to study the tree, both its tangible and intangible natures. There is, therefore, need to classify *Ofo*; its usage and relevance in different spheres so as to be able to appreciate the cultural significance of the object. This is to equip the total man with some effective tools for leadership.

#### **'Ofo': Its Concept and Review**

'Ofo', one of the cultural practices and symbols is defined by Ortner (1979) and Turner (1970) as a ritual symbol. Ifesieh (1989) posits 'Ofo' as the fundamental ritual symbol for many traditional rites in Igbo religion. Dalzie (1971) mentioned that *Detarium Senegalense*, among the Ibo around Awka is called 'Ofo'. Jeffrey (1956) says *Detarium elastica* is called 'Ofo' by the Ibo and it is their sacred tree just as the sycamore in ancient Egypt was sacred to "Osiris". Arinze (1970); Njaka, (1974); Metuh (1981) and Nzekwu (1977<sup>B</sup>) conceptualized 'Ofo' as a wood made from the botanical tree called *Detarium Senegalense* while Ejizu (1986); Uchendu, (1965); Onyeocha, (1992) and Aligwekwe, (1991) identified the same very 'Ofo' tree as *Detarium Elestica*. 'Ofo' from *Detarium, microcarpum* tree is identified as the most likely correct botanical name (Keayet *al.*, 1964). Nwaorgu, (2001) listed the major differences between *Detarium microcarpum* and *Detarium Senegalense* in a tabular form as shown below.

In most communities in Igbo land, *Ofo* is made from *Ogirishi* tree. According to Abanuka (2004), *Ofo* is made from a piece of wood

from the *Ogirisi* tree (*Newbouldia Laevis*) and stands as a symbol of truth, while Ojike (1947) asserted that *Ofo* is a sacred symbol of truth, justice, law, and authority among the *Igbo*.

There are divergent views by different scholars about *Ofo*. Meek (1937) posits *Ofo* as symbol of the ancestors among the *Igbo*. Meek's definition alongside with the above authors' classifications and specifically those that classified *Ofo* as *Detarium Senegalense* belongs to the pre-colonial definition. The colonial definition emphasized that *Ofo* is the status of its "would-be-holders". *Ofo* is held by the most senior member in "Umunna" clan as the rightful judge in native courts and the political organization. Here *Ofo* stands as a guardian of the moral code. Nwaorgu (2001) conceptualized *Ofo* as a spiritualized socio-political symbol of leadership, authority, truth and justice. The works of Horton (1957), Jeffrey (1935<sup>a</sup> and 1935<sup>b</sup>) and Green (1964) are peculiar within this period. The post-colonial 'Ofo' definitions belong to some indigenous *Igbo* Sons. Examples are Arinze (1970); Ilogu (1964); Onwuejeogwu (1981), Metuh (1986) etc. These *Igbo* indigenous scholars discussed *Ofo* and its concept within the framework of *Igbo* traditional religion and political symbol in *Igbo* culture area. For instance, Arinze (1970) advanced that *Ofo* is the symbol of ancestral authority when it has been handed on to the first born son (Diokpala) for several generations and thus the most vital aspect of *Ofo*. Ilogu (1964) and (1974) agreed with the belief that *Chukwu* (the great God) created this *Ofo* tree purposely and made it sacred for man's usage. Thus he said.

..... *Ofo* made out of these branches (*Detarium senegalense*) is the abode of the spirit of dead ancestors, hence its authority and sacredness as well as the special place given to it as the emblem of unity, truth and indestructibility for the individual or the group possessing it (Ilogu, 1964).

All the post colonial indigenous scholars unanimously believe that *Ofo* stands for truth justice and authority. Their definitions and beliefs are in agreement with Ejizu (1986) and Metuh (1986) thus:

*Ofo* bụ akara nke eziokwu, ikpe nkwumọto, ikike ọchịchị, inwere onwe, ekpere ruru chineke ntị, n'ike dị' n' aka ụmụ nwoke, na Umunna bụ ude; na *Ofo* bụ akara nkeeziookwu,

ikpe nkwumoto, ikwụwa aka ọtọ, ike ọchịchị,  
na ikike ịgọ ma ọ bụ ikpere chineke na ndị  
mmụọ ekpere”.

The above citation literally means that “*Ofo* is the symbol of truth, justice, power of leadership, freedom, prayer that reaches God’s ear, reserved power for the men and strength in kinsmen and *Ofo* is the symbol of truth, justice, righteousness, power of leadership, worship and prayer to God and the spirits”.

From the discuss above by different scholars, it is evident that the origin of *Ofo* is uncertain among the *Igbo* traditional society and is as old as *Chukwu* who gave *Ofo* to the *Igbo* people to administer justice. This explains the fact that among *Igbos*, *Ofo* remains the link between the living, dead, gods, and the ancestors, and is used only by men, while women are forbidden from its usage.

#### **Classification of *Ofo***

There are two major classifications of *Ofo* (a) Tangible (b)Intangible. Both classifications in *Igbo* culture area come from the manner of usage.

**Tangible *Ofo*:** The *Ofo* trees (*Detarium senegalense*, *Detarium elastica* and *Detarium microcarpum*) and its sticks or branchlets are said to be classified as the tangible *Ofo*. They are one of the material aspects of cultural practices in *Igbo*land. All tangible *Ofo* trees are not found within a locality in *Igbo*land. The *Detarium elastic Ofo* tree is located within Anam, a riverine zone in Anambra state. The *Detarium senegalense/guiniensis* is commonly found in Awka, Nsukka and RiversState, while the *Detarium Microcapum* is also found in many areas of *Igbo*land. Examples are Ngor-Okpala, Afikpo, Abakiliki, Ezza etc. The *Ofo* trees and their branchlet are regarded as sacred. It is a taboo for the *Ofo* tree to be used as timber or firewood. In some localities, women are prevented from plucking its branches or picking up any fallen twigs for firewood. This attribute of *Ofo* made it to be symbolical mummies (Jeffreys, 1956). According to the response from one of my respondents at Oba Nsukka, this tree(Referring to *Ofo* tree) when asked “why don’t you cut the tree despite its age? The reply was that the tree grows without being troubled by men; it is a sacred tree. Another respondent claimed that other taboos regarding the *Ofo* tree are as follows:

- a) No one should climb the tree
  - b) No one should cut the branches, and
  - c) In most cases, only old men are allowed to touch it. When the tree was closely observed, one finds out that the branches are not made on one solid straight piece of wood. There are many pieces of wood in one branch and they are jointed at intervals. The *Onyishi* of that village of *Oba* where this research was conducted rightly affirmed that the old men only picked up these joints from the main stem when the branches were dried up. It is actually the joined stem picked up by the old men that is consecrated by the chief priest of the community as *Ofo* sticks. It is held in high esteem by the leaders of the communities. Hence terminologies such as:
    - a. ***Ofo Anaigbo***: This is the original *Ofo* which *Eri*, the traditional head of Igboland brought from Heaven. It is the premier *Ofo* for all Igboland as well as used in the African way of worship.
    - b. ***Iwa Ofo***: This refers to individuals, institutions and deities that are consecrated by placing a piece of *Ofo*-wood on the *Ofo Anaigbo* as the chief priest recites some rituals. Then the new *Ofo* becomes a very potent sacred object.
- Ifesieh, (1989) itemized some tangible *Ofo* as follows:
- i. *Ofo* - (a tree – *DetariumSenegalense/Detarium elastica*).
  - ii. *Ofo-Nri-eri* – held by the first Igbo sacred and ritual – symbolic persons and sons.
  - iii. *Ofo-Okpale*- For one of the sacred persons in Ora-Eri who takes part in installation of Nri.
  - iv. *Ofo-Ala*- For the mother earth in every community or for each town.
  - v. *Ofo-Umunna*- For agnatic and cognates concerned.
  - vi. *Ofo-Obodo*- For each town in Igboland
  - vii. *Ofo-Ibenne*- For those who have consanguine ties.
  - viii. *Ofo-Oku*- For livestock, agriculture etc.

These are just to mention but a few. Better still on the tangible classification of *Ofo*, there are *Ofo* made in bronze and iron in some parts of Igboland. This means that *Ofo* is not only made with wood as often believed and thought of by many individuals; but whatever medium and

material used in the making, the most important thing is its consecration and ritualization (Ifesieh, 1989). Nwaorgu, (2001) summed up the tangible 'Ofo' as a cult symbol of ancestors which leads to eternal idolatry (Exodus 24:4).

On the other hand, **intangible Ofo** refers to the Igbo daily life activities and speech; that is, the power of spoken word. This activity is regarded as their *modus Vivendi, or agenda et Loguendi* in Latin. The Igbo knowingly or unknowingly show their uprightness in justice by always referring to *Ofo* based on non-material usage. This non-material cultural practice had permeated every Igbo man's blood, whether young or old. The Igbo would say; *jide Ofo* ( have justice in doing whatever you undertake): *Oji Ofo ga-ala* – he/she who has truth and justice will be safe both in going and returning (Ifeseih, 1989). The Igbo man values this intangible *Ofo* to the extent of giving it as names to their children. For example; names such as *Ejimofo* – I have justice; *Ofoma* – justice begets its beholder; *Ofoka* – justice is greatest; *Ofokansi* – justice is better than poison; *Ofor-egbu* – may justice never kill me; etc. Nwaorgu (2001) also summed up the Igbo intangible *Ofo* as "the Igbo god of justice residing in *Ofo* "which leads to mental or internal idolatry (Exodus 20:3). But Nwaorgu's ideology with respect to associating *Ofo* with "idolatry" poses a fundamental question. The evaluation of its right of usage, "dos and don'ts", and the call for righteousness, justice and uprightness are keys to determining the right answer.

Although we should bear in mind that symbolism; either in the tangible or intangible forms is always the framework of human communication, be it in the past or present. The symbolism for communication has extended to global communities. Ejizu (1986) posits that "Man is a *homo* symbolicus, a symbolism, conceptualizing and meaning – seeking animal". Thus, Ejizu's view clarifies more on the informative symbol of the relevance section.

Nevertheless, Ejizu (1986, 2002) and Nwaorgu (2001) enumerated different types of *Ofo* such as personal, institutional, titular, lineage, professional, and spiritual *Ofos*. The personal *Ofo* (*Ofonkeonwe*) is an *Ofo* symbolic object that is owned and personal to an individual and may not be transferred at the death of the person. Every male child possess personal *Ofo*, and though the ritual objects grants the holder access to the territory of the spirits, it does not necessarily confer much power to and authority to the young male holder and the youth is not

bound under any strict norms on the account of *Ofo Okolo* which he possesses. Nwaorgu (2001) distinguished between personal *Ofo* and individual *Ofo*. According to him, individual *Ofo* establishes a link between its owner and the patron deity or the power of darkness e.g. communication between the possessor and *Ibini-Okpabi* or *Agwudeity*. Titular *Ofo* (*Ofoechichi*) is given to men of affluence or wealth in Igbo societies and is not directly associated with ancestral authority. Ejizu (1986) posits that titular *Ofo* discriminates men of achievement who could pay for usually expensive titles from the rest of the population and is achieved through effort and personal enterprise. It may be divided into *Ozo-Oha* and *Ozo-Agbara*. *Ozo-Oha* could be given to any person and serves as paraphernalia of *Ozo* holders, while *Ozo-Agbara* is associated with the numerous notable deities. The deity decides who takes the next *Ozo* title in the southern part of Igbo land.

Institutional *Ofo* is the oldest form of *Ofo* in Igbo society. According to Oforchukwu (2011), there are some deities that perform certain functions in Igbo society and have a peculiar *Ofo* that symbolizes its functions for the Igbo people. Only death can destroy the union between the bearers of institutional *Ofo* and the deity e.g. *Ofo Edo*, *Ofo Igwe*, *Ofo Ulasi*, *Ofo Ani*, *Ofo Arusi* and *Ofo Njaba*.

Professional *Ofo* is given to some people to symbolize their profession. The holder of professional *Ofo* uses it to pray or offer sacrifices to the gods and ancestors. Examples are traditional medicine men, diviners, rain-makers, black-smiths, wood-carvers, and teeth-fillers keep *Ofo* symbols which go by the names of their respective professions (Ejizu 2002). The lineage/ethnic such as *Ofo-Ebo* or *Ofo-Ndichie* could be differentiated from the personal *Ofo* because it represents the entire family or kindred. It is a symbol of unity for the kindred. The head of the kindred at every level of the social organization e.g. family, village, or clan possesses the lineage *Ofo*. The lineage *Ofo* represents the kindred or village gods and ancestors. The head of the lineage, family or community could offer sacrifices to the ancestors with the lineage *Ofo* and it is inherited by the eldest son (family *Ofo*) or the eldest man of the community.

#### **Uses of *Ofo***

*Ofo* is put in to many uses. It is the means of prayer to both gods and God. In the normal Igbo society, a man begins his day by stiking his

*Ofo* on the ground. The stiking of *Ofo* to the ground is also accompanied by other items of prayer like kola-nut, alligator pepper, Nzu and palm wine. Communications start immediately between the man in question, the invisible beings, and after a chant, *Ofo* would be ordered to continue interceding while he goes out in search of his daily bread. Ejizu (1986) sees *Ofo* as a symbol of sacred stick of prayer among the traditional Igbo.

*Ofo* is also used for swearing in all grave cases. Oath-taking is initiated to both the accused and plaintiff. Each person taking the oath either for or against, takes the *Ofo* in the right hand and swears according to the tradition. According to Ejizu (1986), *Ikpo Ofo* is the greatest form of oath-taking in many parts of Igboland. He further observes that when an *Ozo* title holder speaks and kisses his *Ofo*, it is a sign of a solemn protestation as to the gravity or the truthfulness of what he (*Ozo* title holder) says.

The *Ofo* could be used to settle disputes. Settlement of disputes either for minor family quarrellings or major land disputes requires *Ofo* sticks. Here, *Ofo* is seen as insurance, insuring truth. Ejizu (1986) sees *Ofo* as the highest guarantors of truth. The settlement is done when all the members of the disputing families gather. In the final analysis, everyone goes home happily.

In Igbo culture area, *Ofo* is used in sealing covenants. *Igbandu* (blood covenant) covenant, traditional marriage covenant etc are most commonly known in Igbo culture area. The sealing of both lives is normally done with the aid of *Ofo* popularly called '*Ofo-Ukwu*'. When done, life is at stake. No one would dare dream of violating the seal or when mistaken either by omission or commission, the offender listens and dances to the music. In most cases, in Igbo culture area, the breaker normally runs mad.

*Ofo* could be put to use for Magico-religious purposes. Some specific *Ofo* like *Ofo-Anunu\_Ebe* in Nnewi, *Ofo-Atu* in Enugu-Ukwu, *Oke-Ofo* in Ideato and *Muo-Ofo* held by some dubious masquerades are designed to cause havoc. *Ofo* and its Magico-religious use bring negativism to the people targeted. Ilogu (1964) says *Ofo* is used for cursing people. Ejizu (1986) also says that *Ofo*-Magico-religious uses are symbolic when the holder of *Ofo* pronounces some curses on his enemies, thereby causing havoc. Disaster and doom work for the believers according to the traditional Igbo communities. There are other



numerous uses of *Ofo* such as in naming ceremonies, ritual scarifies, affirming moral uprightness etc.

### ***Ofo* as a Dying Cultural Resource**

In 2010, while conducting research on '*Ofo*' among some Igbo Communities noticed that *Ofo*, mostly the tangible cultural resource had been dead while the intangible *Ofo* usage still persists within individuals. Its dying nature came with the influence of colonials, western religion and acculturation. These influences led to lots of negative beliefs towards the cultural symbol. Most Igbo Christians reckoned with pioneer European Christians that the objects are occultic symbols. Many scholars such as Basden (1938) and (1966); Jeffrey (1986); Nwaorgu (2001); and Sayce (1933), were of the view that *Ofo* represents cult object, and as such, should be discarded. In essence, the '*Ofoism*' which centres on Igbo religious democracy is a sensitive religion that caters for the spiritual, moral and social dimension of man and had dwindled to the grass root (Okafor, 1992).

However, *Ofoism* is gradually fading off in names and cultural practices due to negative influences. In the past, a good number of these names show the necessity, importance, effectiveness and superiority of *Ofo* as a virtue of justice over other virtues, thus names such as *Ofoka* (justice is supreme), *Ofodile* (justice prevails), *Ofoma* (justice knows) were commonly found in Igbo naming ceremonies. Today, these names are hardly found among Igbo naming practices, which may be adduced to the retrogressive western and Christian influences on the Igbo traditional belief. It is in the light of the degeneration of *Ofo* cultural symbol that Okafor (1992) posited that the object is regarded as a progressive and senseless religion by Christendom. For instance, Nwaorgu (2001) opined that believing in the symbol is simple idolatry, taking his reference from the Christian Bible in Exodus chapter 20 verse 3. The remark made by Sayce (1933) and Jeffrey (1956) towards *Ofo* as a dying cultural symbol are clearly indicative: While Sayce, (1933) ,noted that

“There are many instances of objects, when used as votive or funerary offerings, becoming reduced in size, degenerating in structure, or even being replaced by cheap imitations” .



Jeffrey,(1958) in studying the *Ofo Anam* during the earliest period of colonialism said that:

“The ‘*Ofo*’ among the Ibo is not evolving, but devolving”... the odd working objects, (*ofo*) are not the beginning of the “*Ofo*” cult but its end”.

### **Significance of the Study of *Ofo* as a Global Cultural Resource**

The *Ofo* is just like any other object until after the ritual of consecration. The consecration of the *Ofo* is carried out by the eldest title holder in the town. According to Oforchukwu (2011) the ritual blessing is done by the chief priest in some Igbo communities. In Oshiri community, the *Ofo* is consecrated with *Oji*, *Nzu*, *Ose Oji*, *Detarium senegalens* tree, and some other objects. The would-be title holders should be present for the consecration of *Ofo*.

The significance of *Ofo* (tangible and intangible) is as follows:

#### **a. Mace Symbolism**

*Ofo*, Mace and Gavel are the symbols of authority, justice and truth in both the traditional and modern Nigerian society. All the symbolism pointing to the real thing – the powerful, the meaningful, the component, the living is tantamount and commensurate to the sacred. Surely, the symbols are regarded or indoctrinated right from tutelage to be sacred. No profane hands are allowed to touch the traditional *Ofo*, or the modern *Ofo* called Mace and Gavel except when the hands are purified. For any *Ofo* to be touchable, certain initiation must be performed. Be it ancestral *Ofo* or personal *Ofo*. When this is done the holder now qualifies to communicate to ‘Chineke or Chukwu’ and his ancestors. This initiation to ‘*Ofo*’ entitlement enables the male or holder’s individualism to function effectively (Okafor, 1992). The Gavel is only held by the chief magistrate, judges, etc as a better person likely to relieve/release and sentence a culprit. The Mace only authorized by the mace bearer or sergeant-At-Arms, while following the speaker of the house or the senate presidents, inspiring both men (speaker and senate president) with authority to bind laws, to the nation. Another Nigerian modern ‘*Ofo*’ is the constitution. This ‘*Ofo*’ constitution acts as rules and regulations binding the nation. Anyone caught violating any aspect of the constitution faces the consequence. The intangible *Ofo* signifies symbolic

action to global communities. Actions such as punctuality, truthfulness, good character formation (moral uprightness), obedience, regularity etc are expected of the bearers of the symbol. They are prevalent symbols used in making actions 'the total man' thereby restoring them to a perfect dignity.

**b. Informative Symbolism**

*Ofo* has potent store-houses of information. The totality of this ritual symbol (tangible and intangible) is a make-up of the traditional universe, providing a network of data. The traditional tangible *Ofo* is a portfolio of truth. Ray (1976) maintained that:

"African traditional religious symbols are used to re-enact the deeds of the gods, to become possessed by divinities, to manipulate sacred objects, to speak sacred words, to conform experience... and to control, and renew the shape and destiny of the world".

While the intangible *Ofo* conveys to the masses the real meaning of relationship; the rationale is in the spoken words. The Igbo would always say '*Ejim Ofo*' – meaning I am holding with me, justice, when referring to any kind of relationship or association that might result into conflict. Symbols such as: words, hands rising to the sky, hands folding together or any objects at hands at that point in time stands as intangible *Ofo* symbol of information. In Yoruba land, '*Opa Oranyan*' signifies to both tangible and intangible *Ofo*. They use it during incantation. The Hausa call their *Ofo* '*Taura*', in Fulani it is called '*Ronkeli*', Kanuri calls it '*Gatapo*'; ShuwaArabie refers to it as '*Abudeile*', Nupe calls it '*Qunquorochi*', Tiv calls it '*Agashidam*', Etsako calls it '*Aikperiarimi*', Ikwere in Rivers State as well as Ezza and Egbema people call it '*Osisi-Ofo*'. In terms of pronunciation, *Ofo* is pronounced as '*ofo*' in Igboland. Only dialectical usage make it to sound different. For instance, the people of Abakaliki and their surroundings pronounce the sound as '*Opho*'; Ikwere, Etche, Ohaji and Egbema pronounce it as '*Owho*'. Onyeocha (1997) observed that *Ofo* usage stands as covenant among the Urhobo people in Delta state. Nwaorgu (2001) observed *Ofo* usage in connection with the members of the *Kwa* sub-family of Niger-Congo. Igbo, Yoruba, Urhobo, Edo, Ikwere, etc. Hence, Firth (1973) portrays *Ofo* and other

ritual symbols as "instruments of expression, of communication, of knowledge, and of control".

**c. Artistic and Aesthetic Symbolism**

Most of the tangible *Ofo* are represented in stick form while others are made in bronze and iron. Whichever format it is made depicts arts and aesthetics. An art is a medium that brings forth aesthetics, and concerns beauty. African art, according to Cordwell (1959) in Agujiobi – Odoh (2005), expresses wealth, status, social and political symbolism. African art found in *Ofo* (tangible) expresses both socio-cultural and organized society. The bronze and iron tangible *Ofo* shows aesthetics; excellence of an organized sedentary society, and a society without much western interference in their technology, economy and leisure. The work of bronze and iron *Ofo* is a spectacular means of livelihood. Tangible *Ofo* object is an instrument of value, moral, beauty, etc which is made by Igbo local renowned artists. Ejizu (1986) summed up, thus:

“*Ofo* as instrument of expression of value, symbols,( whether as object or words), are great tools in the hands of artists. Besides the stylistic concerns, they avail of symbols to convey values of great emotional and intellectual importance to a given group. These include elite values, interest-group values, ideas and aspirations approved in the particular society, and so forth. And once the symbols which express the values appear in their proper context, they provoke the kind of sentiments and reactions associated with their referents”.

**d. Communicative Symbolism**

*Ofo* value of communication is superb. Human beings are quite different from lower animal in the areas of symbolic thought and behaviour. Malefijt (1968) ascertained that human beings “do not need physical experiences in order to acquire knowledge about something”. Interactions on the abstract connotation and meaningful messages are obtained through objects, words, gestures and, events. These are regarded as storehouse/warehouses of man and actions. Symbols like *Ofo* (tangible and intangible) as a means of interactions /abstractions or objects stand as

a means in maintaining our culture and noble institutions. It therefore, transfers the value from generation to generation.

**e. Demonstrative Symbolism**

The intangible *Ofo* is demonstrative, based on the dramatic and ritual expression of idea. Here, verbalization is strictly to what comes from the mind and stands as '*Ofo*'. The peoples' '*Ofo*' are their power of interaction, and freedom of speech as enshrine in the constitution. The justice is in both demonstrative symbol in language and structure. Peoples' minds become the tangible '*Ofo*' object that abides for intangible '*Ofo*' objects. Ejizu (1986) posits that visible things stand for invisible things, just as masks evoke and makes ancestral spirits present. Turner (1968) observes "the African mind perceives the universe as a forest of symbols".

**f. Knowledge Symbolism**

"What the process of symbolic representation presumably does is to abstract quality common to both referent and symbol and allow one to perceive more clearly, more imaginatively, a particular type of relationship, uncluttered by details of the referent, or reduced in magnitude to comprehensible dimensions" (Firth, 1973).

The knowledge revealed by *Ofo* is under global-religio-cultural sacred symbols of modality of life. Eliade (1959) posits this modality symbols as the structure that unveils the miraculous, inexplicable side of life and at the same time the sacramental dimensions of human existence. Eliade's view about the instrument of knowledge is commonsensical with instruments of control. A symbol such as *Ofo* (tangible or intangible) does not control or manipulate man rather *Ofo* symbol acts as an agent of support, reference point and behavioural point in all spheres of life (socio-cultural, political and religious) in the society. *Ofo* symbol also educates us. It is also an agent of repositories of values seemingly in the different groups of interactions in the traditional society (Ejizu, 1986). Tangible and intangible *Ofo* are involved, and correlate between groups and sub-groups. Examples are the *Umunna* clan, Age-grade forum, rites of passages, etc. It regulates and controls these associations

to the present modern Igbo society. Besides fear of God – the Preeminent and the Supreme Being is the ultimate *Ofo* as the supreme symbol regulating and controlling people who are under various guises.

### **Conclusion**

The *Ofo* in the traditional Igbo society is the replica Mace and Gavel in the modern Nigerian society. *Ofo* knowledge as a global cultural resource would aid in equipping our future leaders the tools for a better leadership, in an attempt to hold their *Ofo* always. *Ofo* – an instrument of authority, justice and truth should not be taken with disdain or disrespect; as an object for fighting, rather, it should be accorded its due respect. The Mace in the House of Representative and Senate has been seen as an object of fighting. Little wonder the blessed Tai Solarin lamented in an article, in the Daily Times of 1962 about the evil done to our sacred Mace, using it as a fighting weapon. According to Tai Solarin, Mace is the same as Igbo *Ofo* and Yoruba *OpaOranyan*. He suggested that the House should stop using the British imitated Mace; rather Igbo *Ofo* and Yoruba *OpaOranyan* should be in use. Perhaps, greater and adequate honour and respect would be accorded to such noble symbols of authority, justice, truth and decorum. Therefore, *Ofo* in Igbo culture area stands for a symbol, a point or medium through which traditional African man communicates with God. It is a religious value and a symbolic representation (Okafor, 1992) of good over evil, right over wrong, and righteousness over wickedness that are the cardinal points of bible doctrines. God himself instructed Moses to mould replica '*Ofo*' in the form of a metal bronze serpent. This becomes a healing point against life serpent, if anyone is bitten (Number 21 verse 8). Christ's death on the cross – that cross is an '*Ofo*' to the entire Christians. Anyone who deliberately sinned against God, died and goes to hell has himself to blame. This is because the *Ofo* which is the cross is the surest and fastest means to make heaven. Therefore, the mediocre, referring to the *Ofo* as fetish should be corrected and it will help to reinstate the symbol to a balance level of its authoritative nature and justice. People in the helm of affairs (House of assembly and senate) should accord utmost respect to the Mace as a symbol of authority, justice and truth. No more fighting with the weapon.

As a worthy tool for the 'total man' in leadership positions, globally, and for the restoration of man's dignity, it is significantly

necessary and imperative that *Ofo* should be accorded its place of honour in the society, especially in Igbo culture area, where the colonial masters brought disrespect and disdain to the cultural symbol, while at the same time, they holds it in high regard in their own country.

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## **LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING STRATEGIES: A CASE STUDY OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Ijeoma Ogbonne**

### **Abstract**

*Leadership is a key issue not just in the legislature, but in every sphere of human endeavour. With the inception of democratic rule in 1999, the leadership of the national legislative body was seen as being in a strategic position to cement Nigeria's nascent democracy by serving as a watchdog over the excesses of the executive. The performance or non-performance of this duty boils down mainly on the issue of leadership. This paper evaluates leadership and decision making in the National Assembly with a view to finding out whether the leadership structure of the assembly inhibits its effective performance.*

### **Introduction**

The centrality of leadership in every facet of human organisation has continued to engage the attention of scholars in the Social Sciences. It is leadership that mobilises the people and arouses in them various levels of political consciousness (Chikendu, 1998:1). Leadership sets the goals of a particular political community. Whether for good or bad, leadership represents the pivot that connects every society's aspirations and equally accounts for the progress or decline of any social system both in the short and long run.

Leadership and Decision-Making is vital for the successful accomplishment of the goals of any institution, organization or group. Leadership is required everywhere people work in groups for the attainment of set objectives. Leadership and Decision-Making are means of providing guide. The leadership of any group, organization or institution is entrusted to a selected few while the followers are expected to be subject to decisions taken by the leadership on their behalf.

Leadership exists at all levels of the society be it in the family, age group, community, Local Council, State or at the Federal Government levels. Even in the international community, leadership exists. Leadership is an important variable in the traditional and religious spheres, each with its unique leadership structure. What may be different

is the structure of leadership. The structure of leadership may also be based on the size of the population, aims and objectives of the population or simply, the level of application.

Leadership is essential in the life of a nation. Nigeria, being a federal state has three levels of government – Federal, State and Local Government. Each of these three levels of government has three organs – executive, legislature and judiciary. At the federal level, the President is the head of the executive while the legislature has two chambers (Senate and House of Representatives) each with its own leadership. The National Assembly is entrusted with making laws at the federal level on issues contained in the exclusive legislative list.

The success or failure of any group is often blamed on the strength or weaknesses of leadership. It was Chinua Achebe who made it clear that the trouble with Nigeria is that of political leadership. What Achebe implied was that in as much as Nigeria has all it takes to progress, the failure of political leadership has been inimical to development in Nigeria. Political leadership does not just involve the executive, the legislature is also involved. However, it should be noted that the executive often plays a central role in the composition and operations of the legislature. This is often done to check opposition and prolong executive lawlessness. In the Nigerian context, there have been cases whereby changes were effected in the leadership of the National Assembly simply because the Chief Executive has fallen out with the House leadership. The executive therefore, does all within and without its powers to induce members of the House to overhaul the House leadership. Once this is done, a stooge leader will be installed. This is in contrast with the kind of leadership needed at all levels in Nigeria which are those that would have the courage, integrity and ability to address, once and for all, those factors that have allowed corruption, inequality, nepotism, poverty, identity politics among other societal ills to be institutionalised, in the country.

This paper will evaluate the Leadership and Decision-Making strategies in the National Assembly with a view to finding out whether the leadership structure of the National Assembly constitutes a problem to the system. The structure of the National Assembly leadership as well as how decisions are made in the National Assembly will be thoroughly examined.

### **Theories of Leadership and Decision-Making**

Leadership does not have any consensus definition. As Bedeian (1986:464) observed:

To some, it is synonymous with holding an upper-level position. Thus a president, governor, or chief executive is a leader by virtue of holding a high office. Others use the term leadership to mean the possession of certain personal characteristics such as alertness, perseverance, maturity, and intelligence. Finally, to some, leadership is used to describe a category of behaviour. According to this view, it is a dynamic process in which an individual behaves in a certain manner, thereby influencing others to follow.

Bedeian concludes by asserting that leadership is the art of influencing individual or group activities toward achievement of enterprise objectives.

In the same vein, Koontz et al (1983:660) defines leadership as *influence, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly toward the achievement of group goals*. To Nwachukwu (1988:146), Leadership is a social influencing process for the attainment of goals. Leadership provides direction, guides group activities and ensures that group objectives are attained. An ideal leadership is enthusiastic and persuasive in order to effectively mobilize the led towards the achievement of set goals. To this end, Tilley and House (1969:391) conceptualized leadership as a process where one person exerts social influence over the members of a group. Leadership must have influence, provide direction and help in the realisation of goals. Leadership, therefore, occurs in a social setting where there is a person, position and situation (Massie and Douglas, 1977:296).

In sum, Leadership can be viewed as a focus of group process, a set of personality characteristics, the act of inducing compliance, the exercise of influence, an act or behaviour, a form of persuasion, an

instrument of goal achievement, an effect in interaction, a differential role, and, the initiation of structure (Goulter, 1950:34). Thus leadership can be said to transcend power or authority. This is so because it involves some degree or level of voluntary compliance on the part of the followers.

Max Weber (1948) in his leadership theory identified three types of leaders – Bureaucratic Leaders, Charismatic Leaders and Traditional Leaders. Weber recognized that leadership was situational in nature, and that true leaders needed to move dynamically from one type of leadership style to another to remain successful and relevant in a changing society. Bureaucratic leaders are those who acquired power by virtue of the position they occupy in an institution while charismatic leadership is based on the recognition and devotion to the special qualities of a leader by his followers and their readiness to follow him. Traditional leaders are those who acquire authority based on the sanctity of ancient traditions and customs of the people and the right of the people endowed with such traditions and customs to give command and leadership (Ofobuikwe, 2002:7-8).

Weber equally postulated that there were two basic paradigms within which leaders worked – transactions and transformations. Transactional leaders were those that worked within the existing systems or environment to achieve results. For example, he theorized that the bureaucratic leader was a transactional leader that was effective in using their knowledge, or legal authority, to achieve results. On the other hand, Charismatic leaders were transformational leaders according to Weber's model.

Ezeani (2005:160-164) identified three major groups of theories of leadership which seeks to explain the factors involved in the emergence of leadership as well as the nature of leadership. These theories include the Trait Theories, the Behavioural or Style Theories and the Situational Theories of leadership. The Trait Theories emphasize that leaders are born and not made. Leadership is inherent in individuals through generally distinctive physical or psychological characteristics that account for a person's behaviour. Trait Theorists give instances with Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Hannibal etc as natural leaders.

In the same vein, Behavioural or Style Theories characterize leaders by how they behave and not by their personal traits. The theory is based on the assumption that effective leaders utilize a particular

behavioural style that makes others to follow them (Bedeian, 1986:468). Leadership, in this sense, can be learnt.

Situational theorists like Fiedler (1967) postulate that leaders are the products of given situations. This is to say that leadership is strongly affected by the situation from which the leader emerges and operates. Factors which affect leaders, according to this theory include organizational tradition, the nature of the task to be completed as well as cultural factors. The interaction of the leader and the group equally exercises grave impact on the leader.

A study carried out by Lewin, Lippit and White (1939:271-299) identified three natures of leadership. First is Autocratic Leadership. Autocratic leadership sees the leader determining all general policy and all the choice of means alone. There is no room for delegation of leadership function. A distance equally exists between the leaders and the subordinates. This discourages exchange of ideas on issues affecting members of an organisation. This is not so in Democratic Leadership. This is because Democratic Leadership is centred on people-oriented supervision. There is group involvement in planning and pursuit of objectives. Group members are also encouraged to demonstrate creativity and initiative. Functions are also delegated to subordinates especially when complex tasks are involved. The Laissez-Faire leadership act more or less as channels through which information is passed to the group. The group members are given leverage to plan, organise and develop their own techniques for the accomplishment of organizational policies and objectives.

It is the contention of this paper that leadership in the Nigerian National Assembly can best be described as democratic in nature. This contention is informed by the fact that two degrees of participation involved in Democratic Leadership play itself out in the National Assembly. The first degree of participation involves the collective deliberation of issues on the floor of the House by all present. No one is excluded. Here the Senate President or Speaker of the House of Representatives only plays the role of a moderator. After due deliberations, decisions are often taken through voice votes or by the raising of hands.

The second degree of involvement which is a clear indication of the democratic nature of leadership in the National Assembly is the situation whereby the Senate President or Speaker of the House delegates

duties to a group of honourable members for incisive and in-depth deliberation. This sort of delegation is indeed a step involved in the law-making process. In this case the members will return to the House on an appointed date to disclose its findings to a Committee of the whole House. In either case, issues are collectively decided upon.

Decision-Making is, therefore, an essential element of leadership. Indeed, the leadership is entrusted with the making of decisions on behalf of the followers. To Croft (1996:201), Decision-Making is a resolution to adopt a particular course of action in preference to alternative policies. Bedeian (1986:185) defines it as the act of choosing between two or more alternatives. Taylor (1965:48) conceptualizes it as thinking that results in the choice among alternative courses of action. Decision-Making is the process of selecting alternative course of action from the available alternatives in order to achieve a set objective. Decision-Making is structured by the unique environment of the decision-maker, his position in the organisation or institution as well as available knowledge and experience in the decision-making process.

It should be noted that decision-making is often a conscious and deliberate action. Decisions are said to be rational to the extent that they are deliberate and conscious acts. More often than not, decisions are routine choices which are made on daily basis.

### **Nigerian National Assembly and Structure of Leadership**

Prior to independence, Nigeria's legislature was attached to the British parliament. The Imperial Parliament lost their powers to legislate for the colonies without their consent once the colonies became self-governing. The statute of Westminster in 1931 marked the formal recognition by the Imperial Parliament of limitations on the powers of Her Majesty over the colonies. In order to ensure the supremacy of British Parliamentary Acts superior to colonial laws, the Colony of Lagos earlier passed the Colonial Laws Validity Act, 1865 which provided in express terms, that such Acts should extend to the colonies (Edeh, 2002:51). In the case of conflict between the provision of a colonial legislation and those of the British Parliament, the British Parliamentary Act took precedence while the colonial legislation to the extent of such inconsistency became void.

The Independence constitution of 1960 provided for a House of Senate and a House of Representatives. The Senate then comprised of 44 members while the House of Representatives had 305 members. As at

independence, the National Assembly was made up of the Queen in England, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Queen was also part of the Regional legislatures.

The Governor-General was empowered to appoint as Prime Minister, who, in his opinion, appeared to command the support of the majority of members of the House of Representatives. The other ministers were equally appointed by him on the advice of the Prime Minister. The National Assembly was also bicameral. Each region had a House of Assembly and a House of Chiefs. The regional governments chose the Senators whose appointments were confirmed by the regional legislatures.

The main legislative functions in the country then lay with the House of Representatives. The Senate was supposed to criticise, constructively, the activities of the House of Representatives.

Nigeria's National Assembly is thus a product of the nation's historical past. This is so because the First Republic legislature was structured like that of the British. The Upper House had nominated members and is called House of Senate while the Lower House is known as the House of Representatives. The Second Republic marked a drift towards the American Congress model. Just like that of America, members of the National Assembly are elected.

Section 48 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provided for 3 Senators from each State of the federation, with one from the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Equally, Section 49 of the Constitution provided for 360 members for the House of Representatives, representing the different federal constituencies of relatively equal population. A person is qualified for membership of the House of Senate if he is a citizen of Nigeria, has attained the age of 35, holds at least, the school certificate or its equivalent and is sponsored by one of the registered political parties. The same also applies to membership of the House of Representatives. However, the age limit is 30.

The National Assembly has exclusive powers to make laws on all the items contained in Part I, Second Schedule of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, while it has concurrent jurisdiction with State Houses of Assembly on all items listed in Part II, Second Schedule of the Constitution.

During the First Republic, the Senate consisted of nominated men and women of proven integrity who were supposed to criticise



constructively, the activities of the House of Representatives. On the other hand, the House of Representatives consisted of elected members who held real legislative powers. This is in contrast with the current position where both the Senate and House of Representatives members are elected and wield substantial legislative powers.

Leadership is essential for the effective and smooth functioning of the legislature. The leadership structure gives balance to proceedings in the legislature. As Onuoha (2010:11) rightly pointed out, *leadership helps to organize orderly consideration of legislative proposals promote party support for or against legislation, attempt to reconcile differences that threaten to disrupt the chambers, plan strategy on important Bills, consult with the president, and publicize legislative achievements.* As will be demonstrated below, all categories of leaders in the National Assembly play exclusive, albeit mutually inter-related roles in the passage of Bills. The leadership structure of the National Assembly which will be discussed below can be represented as follows:



#### **The Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives**

In a bicameral legislature, while the Senate is presided over by the Senate President, the House of Representative is presided over by the Speaker. The Senate President or Speaker of the House is known as *prems intre pres* (first among equals). At the State level, where unicameralism operates, the Speaker of the State House of Assembly



presides. Although some legislators may assume leadership position as Senate President, Speaker, Deputy Senate President, Deputy Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders, Chief Whip, etc, none of them is primarily elected to such offices "ab initio" from his constituency. This is why the Speaker, for instance, is regarded by his colleagues as first among equals and each member's vote is customarily weighed equally. Most leadership includes not only the floor leaders and whips, but also the caucus chairman and committee chairmen. Senators, or House members respected for their expertise or acumen, may also be brought in on specific questions to provide guide, on how to handle explosive issues (Ede, 2002, Ede, 2007, Onuoha, 2010).

The Senate President's or speaker's primary formal powers are presiding over the Senate or House, deciding points of order, referring bills and resolutions to the appropriate House committees, scheduling legislation for floor action, and appointment of members to committee posts. In addition, the presiding officer exercises a general control, preserves order and decorum, control the House as stipulated in the 'Rule of Debate'. In case of disturbances or disorderly conduct in the galleries, or in the lobby, he may cause the same to be vacated. The Senate President or the Speaker interprets the Rule in case of ambiguity. He signs all acts, addresses, resolutions, writs, warrants, and subpoenas of the House.

In the absence of the Senate President or Speaker of the House, the Deputy Senate President or Deputy Speaker presides over legislative deliberations. In the absence of the Senate President or Speaker and their deputies, such member of the Senate or House as members may choose for that purpose presides over. Such member is known as "Senate President or Speaker *pro tempore*".

Although, the Senate President or Speaker may participate in debate, he does so seldomly, and usually when his remarks may affect the outcome of a crucial vote. He also may vote, but most seldomly votes except to break a tie. Modern Senate Presidents or Speakers exercise overwhelming influence. Their influences are achieved largely through personal prestige, mastery of the art of persuasion, legislative expertise, maintenance of legislative independence and the support of the members (Ede, 2002, Ede, 2007, Onuoha, 2010).

### **Majority and Minority Leaders**

The Majority leader is elected from the majority party in the Senate. The Majority Leader directs the legislative schedule in consultation with the Minority Leader and other Senators. He is also the spokesperson of his party. Both the Majority Leader and Minority Leader are elected by the caucuses of their parties respectively. They strive to have loose alliances so as to influence the passage, defeat or amendment of bills or motions.

The Standing Rules of the Senate stipulates the duties of the Majority and Minority Leaders. The Majority Leader is empowered to formulate the party's legislative programmes in collaboration with the President of the Senate and other party leaders. He hastens the flow of his party's legislation and the programme. He works to ensure that the various committee chairmen take actions on bills important to the party and acts as spokes person of the party on the floor of the house. The Majority Leader is responsible for securing the attendance of party members at important floor sessions and knowing in advance how Senators are to vote on issues.

### **Whip**

The word 'Whip' originated from fox hunting sport in England. The Whip is the person responsible for whipping all the hounds involved in the sport into a pack and points them in the direction to chase a fox. The word Whip was brought into legislative lexicon due to the similarity of the activities of the Whip in Fox-Hunting and that of the person who organizes the activities of his party members in parliament (Parliamentary Education Office, 2009). In his book entitled *The House of Commons in the Eighteenth Century*, Thomas (1971) presents two instances of the use of the term Whip in parliament. According to him:

It was within the context of such summonses to members out of town that the first known Parliamentary instance of the use of the term 'whip' occurred. In the debate of 8 May 1769 on a petition from some Middlesex freeholders against the seating of Henry Luttrell instead of John Wilkes, Edmund Burke mentioned that the

ministry had sent for their friends to the north and to Paris, 'whipping them in, than which, he said, there could not be a better phrase'. Although Burke's particular emphasis on the expression implied its comparative novelty, the hunting term had been used in this political context for at least a generation: on 18 November 1742 Heneage Finch remarked in a letter to Lord Malton that 'the Whigs for once in their lives have whipped in better than the Tories.

Whips are experienced members of the legislative house who is respected and trusted by other party members. While in the house, the Whip always sit at a vantage position where he can see all members present as well as confer with the clerk of the house and party advisers. This strategic positioning is equally to grant party members easy access to him for on the spot advice.

The Whip is known as the policeman of the Senate or House of Representatives. They maintain law and order in the legislative house. The number of Whips in a legislative chamber is not specified rather it depends on the number of political parties in the legislature. Each political party in the legislative house elects a Whip and a number of Deputies.

The Whip is primarily concerned with intelligence gathering, persuasion and producing votes. He also assists in the development of the party's programme, disseminates information to party members, check attendance before crucial votes, organise counts of party members for and against major bills etc. The Whip is also concerned with the mobilization of members before key votes. May (2004:250) outlined the functions of the Chief Whip to include: *...mapping out the time of the session; for applying in detail the Government's programme of business; for estimating the time likely to be required for each item, and for arranging the business of the individual sitting. In drawing up the programme he is limited to a certain extent by the standing orders, which allot a modicum of time to private Members; and by statute law or*

*standing orders, which require, or may require, certain business to be completed by specified dates; as well as by certain conventions which make it obligatory upon him to consult the Whips of opposition parties and even to put down items of their selection. In carrying out his duties, he is directly responsible to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the House. It is also part of his duties to advise the Government on parliamentary business and procedure, and to maintain a close liaison with Ministers in regard to parliamentary business which affects their departments. He and the Chief Whip of the largest opposition party constitute the 'usual channels', through which consultations are held with other parties and Members about business arrangements and other matters of concern to the House.*

The majority party in the legislature always have a Chief Whip and two other Whips to assist him. In addition to organising the daily minute by minute activities of party members in the legislature, Whips from the majority parties converge to work out procedural details for the day's agenda. They also negotiate for the balancing of numbers between the government and opposition if and when individual members are absent. Also, the Whip prepares the list of party members who desire to speak on specific bills and motions and then hands the list to the Speaker or President before debate commences.

#### **The Clerk of the House**

The Clerk of the House is the chief administrative officer of the Senate or House of Representatives. He is a career administrative officer with expert knowledge on legislative procedure. He is not elected. The Clerk of the House gives advice to the leadership of the House on procedural matters. Being the Administrative Secretary of the House, the Clerk keeps daily record of proceedings. He minutes proceedings of the Committee of the Whole House. He organizes and keeps an order book showing all business appointments for any future day and any notice of questions or motions. He takes custody of votes, records, bills and other documents before the House. Jimoh (1999:31) stated that the Clerk signs addresses, votes of thanks and Orders of the House, endorses bills sent to the House and reads whatever is required to be read in the House. It is also the function of the Clerk to swear in the Senate President or the Speaker before the start of a legislative life span.

Ede (2007:40-42) divided the duties of the Clerk of the House into two – administrative duties and clerical duties. The administrative duties of the Clerk of the House include preparation of the annual budget estimate of the House, controlling the activities of the staff of the House, making representations on behalf of the staff before elected members of the House, coordinating the activities of the House with other Ministries and Departments, acting as the chief accounting officer of the House, directing matters of discipline and welfare in the House. Clerical duties of the Clerk of the House include the preparation of the Order Paper, votes and proceedings; taking votes in the House, certifying the passage of Bills, processing legislation, issuance of letters of summons for those due to appear before the House, reading of Bills to signify completion of each stage, administration of oaths to new members during inauguration (Ede, 2007: 41-42).

#### **The Sergeant-at-Arms**

The Sergeant-at Arms is not an elected member of the House. He is responsible for the custody of the mace. The mace is the symbol of democracy and legislative authority. He is the chief security officer of the House. He enforces the rules relating to the privileges of the House. He is empowered to summon any person who is seen to have contradicted the proceedings of the House to answer for his or her misconduct and to impose penalty as may be prescribed by the House rule (Ede, 2002, Ede, 2007, Onuoha, 2010).

#### **Process of decision-making in the National Assembly: The passage of bills**

The passage of Bills is central to decision-making in the National Assembly. As noted earlier, decision-making as a factor of leadership has to do with making choices among competing alternatives. In the National Assembly, the choice has to do with laws and disciplinary measures in cases of offence. In the law-making process, the role of the Senate President and Speaker of the House are paramount. This is so because more often than not they have the final say on issues raised in the House.

The Nigerian National Assembly is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate is the Upper Legislative House of the National Assembly. It is headed by a President who is elected by his fellow Senators and can be impeached if he is found wanting by them.

He is assisted by a Deputy President. He is the Presiding Officer of the House and all speeches are directed to the President. The Leader of the majority party who is regarded as the Senate Leader, with the Majority Whips tries to accelerate government business by ensuring the cooperation of both their party members and members of the opposition party. The Minority Leader and their Whips equally try to stall government business so as to earn the sympathy of the electorate and perhaps win the next election. A Bill that has been passed by the House of Representatives must also get the blessing of the Senate in order to become law. Sometimes the Senate sits in a joint session with the House of Representatives. At such sessions, the President of Senate usually presides.

The House of Representatives is the Lower Legislative House of the National Assembly. The House of Representatives is headed by a Speaker. He is assisted by a Deputy Speaker who presides in his absence. There are also House Leaders and Whips who are in charge of government business. Each of the Minority Parties also elects their own Leaders and Whips who tries to represent their interests in the House. Any Bill passed by the Senate cannot become law unless it is equally passed by the House of Representatives. At joint sessions of the National Assembly, where the Senate President is absent, the Speaker of the House of Representatives presides.

At each Sitting of the Senate or House of Representatives, members of the National Assembly are permitted to address the House and read their speeches. A Bill introduced to the House is addressed to the Senate President or the Speaker of the House and read out by the Clerk of the House. The procedure for first reading, second reading, referral third reading, amendments and passage are spelt out in the adopted rules of the House. The President or the Speaker does not have any powers to strike unanimously strike out bills or motions introduced to the House without calling for votes from other members of the House. In other words, decision-making in the National Assembly are democratic as it is not vested on the Senate President or the Speaker alone. Buttressing this fact, Edeh (2002:72) noted that *when members of the legislature have thoroughly considered an issue, they usually put the question to be able to arise at a resolution or decision*. This may be achieved in two ways – firstly, the Presiding Officer, either in the Committee or in the Plenary Session, is obliged to put an issue to vote

when no other members has signified an intention to speak further on the subject. On the other hand, a member might move a motion that the question be put.

In either case, the Presiding Officer would put the issue to vote. If majority votes are in the affirmative, the issue is adopted but if the contrary is the case, the case is dropped. Some other issues or questions require two-thirds majority votes of members of the House before a decision is arrived at. Such matters like impeachment of the President as well as the impeachment of any of the principal officers of the House must get the support of two-third majority votes.

It is instructive at this point in time to point out the rules of procedure involved in the passage of Bills as it concerns the passage of budgets. Santiso (2005:15) identifies four major phases of the budget cycle in which the role of parliament is shown albeit at varying degrees. These four major phases, according to Santiso, include the formulation phase, the adoption phase, implementation phase and the control phase. Parliaments generally lack the constitutional powers to formulate the budget. It is the exclusive right of the executive. However, the parliament is empowered to adopt the budget before it can become law. Similarly, while it is the prerogative of the executive to implement the budget, the parliament is empowered to oversee its execution. The parliament can also call the executive to question over the implementation of the budget.

The unique role played by the legislature in a democracy is typified by the rigorous processes involved in the legislative process. The emergence of the legislature can be attributed to the desire of people to get fully involved as much as possible in running their own affairs. The emergence of the legislature can also be traced to the need to keep a tab on government so as to ensure accountability and transparency. It is for these dual reasons that activities of the parliament are open overt and subject to public scrutiny. Equally significant is the ability of the parliament to follow up on legislations to ensure its enforcement so as to be able to amend, strengthen or totally abrogate such legislation(s).

In the course of making law, the two Chambers of the National Assembly are presided over by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House and their Deputies respectively. Outside that, every other member of the National Assembly belongs to at least one House Committee. Most of the detailed work of legislation is undertaken by the Committees, which embark on investigative or fact-finding tours, Public



Hearings among several others. Each House Committee is headed by a Committee Chairman (Edeh, 2002; Onagoruwa, 2009; Onuoha, 2010).

The initiation of Bills can be from any person or organisation within Nigeria. Such a Bill (known as Private Member Bill) can only be presented to either Chamber of the National Assembly through a member of the National Assembly in his or her own name. Only a member of the National Assembly can introduce legislation on the floor of the House or Senate. Legislators, however, more often than not introduce bills suggested by other individuals or organizations. Bills may vary in length from a single paragraph to hundreds of pages.

The Executive Bill, on the other hand, is solely initiated by the President of the Federal Republic or any Department or Agency of the Federal Government. It must however bear the signature of the President and is usually submitted to both Chambers of the National Assembly at the same time.

During the First Reading, the Bill (which has been assigned a number) is read out by title and name of sponsor only on the floor of the House by the Clerk. A motion may be made for the Bill to be read a second time. This could be followed by a debate for the amendment of the Bill. After the Second Reading, the Bill is committed to a Standing Committee or a Committee of the whole House. Committee meetings are supposed to be open to the public. However, this is often not the case in Nigeria even though it should be the practice except when for overriding public reasons certain information ought not to be made public.

After deliberations, a Committee may report a Bill as favourable, with amendments, favourable with committee substitutes, unfavourable, or, without opinion. As a matter of fact, a Committee may change completely the contents of a bill before reporting it out. A Bill can be killed if the Committee to which it has been assigned to fail to act on it.

Committees are at liberty to summon any person or persons to appear before it. Committees may propose public hearings to the House. Under the House of Representatives House Rules of the period 1999-2003, only a full session of the House can authorize public hearing.

The Bill is read by title a second time and sent to the appropriate Committee. The motion for Second Reading is made by the House Leader and kick-starts floor debate on a Bill. Following debate and amendments, a final vote on the Bill is taken. To be endorsed, a Bill must



be approved by a majority of the members present and voting (Edeh, 2002; Onagoruwa, 2009; Onuoha, 2010).

If a Bill is defeated by majority vote, that is the end of it. On the other hand, if a Bill is passed in one Chamber, it is then sent to the other Chamber where it follows the same procedure. Both Chambers of the National Assembly must agree on the final form of each Bill. If either house fails to concur in amendments made by the other, a conference committee of Senators and Representatives must reconcile the difference. Compromises agreed to by conference committees are then subject to approval by both Houses.

A Bill does not just become law simply because it has been endorsed by the two Chambers of the National Assembly. Instead, it is subject to the assent of the Head of State. The President may sign a bill, permit it to become law without appending his signature to it, or veto it. The veto may be over-ridden by a two-thirds majority of the members of the two Houses. The President has 30 days within which to act on a bill after it has been received. After the statutory thirty days, the House leader may present the bill back to the National Assembly.

### **Leadership and decision-making in the National Assembly: Problems and Prospects**

The major distinguishing characteristic feature of democracy that sets it apart from other systems of governance is the presence of a legislature. The legislature does not just exist as a symbolic arm of government. Rather, the legislature, in a democracy, exists as an independent institution with its unique life and process which deepen democracy and ultimately strengthen the polity to a significant extent. In other words, without a functional legislature, there will not be any democracy in the real sense. Hence the legislative process in Nigeria has been structured not just for functional efficiency, but also to further strengthen democracy by exhibiting democratic tenets in its structure and leadership.

Thus leadership in the National Assembly occurs within a democratic setting given that members of the National Assembly are elected to serve specified terms. The leaders of the National Assembly encourage the involvement of other members of the house in decision making. In fact, all members are expected to freely contribute in one way or the other in the official business of the House. Commenting on democratic leadership style, Ezeani (2005:167) noted that there are

degrees or levels of participation involved in the democratic leadership style...ranging from a situation...merely consults with his subordinates before he finally decides on an issue, to a situation...hands the problem over to the group for them to take decision. It is the later aspect that is most prevalent between the leaders of the National Assembly and other elected members.

The primary role of leaders of the National Assembly is to ensure that measures are put in place for the efficient, purposeful, peaceful and harmonious administration of legislative affairs at the national level for the general good of the electorate that elected them. Thus good and effective leadership is a talent. Bereft of good and effective leadership, the National Assembly stand the risk of derailing from its onerous purpose. Given that members of the legislative house represent several political parties, it is necessary to have a leadership which will be all-embracing. Granted that the opposition is expected to question most of the activities of the members of the majority party in the house, such questions and criticisms can be made constructive. A situation whereby the house leadership does not enjoy the confidence and support of both the majority and minority party members, the house will be unable to function efficiently. Rather, it will witness a situation of rancour.

Again, the more the National Assembly is allowed to constitute its own leadership and procedural rules, it will be better placed to effectively check and balance the executive. There have been several cases whereby Nigerian executive Presidents arbitrarily impose and depose leaders of the National Assembly. This is in a bid to install stooges who lack the capacity to question their actions and inactions. Such measures tend to erode the powers and independence of the National Assembly. It makes it difficult to draw a line between where the powers of the Executive President end and where that of the National Assembly begins. Gladly enough, the era of direct executive control of the National Assembly seems to be over.

The democratic process of decision-making in the National Assembly is commendable given that it is all-embracing. Even though the processes of law-making can be tedious and long, it is essential to avoid the passage of haphazard laws or the taking of hasty decisions. Again, educational qualification for those seeking election into the National Assembly should be increased to at least a first degree certificate of any recognized university. This is to ensure that those

elected to the house will be able to make informed contributions to legislative business. Again, measures should be adopted to check absenteeism.

It is pertinent to note that the centrality of the legislature in a democratic set up is often undermined by compromising on their constitutional rights by members of the National Assembly. A situation whereby members of the House refuse to condemn acts of gross misconduct by the executive simply because the chief executive is a fellow party member is simply deplorable. For instance, during the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), the National Assembly on a number of occasions accused the executive of non-implementation of the national budget. To the consternation of Nigerians, the matter was swept under the carpet without the executive being called to give full account. Such situations only serve to portray the legislature as puppets in the hands of the executive.

Since the return to democracy in 1999, the National Assembly has been subject to the whims and caprices of outside forces whose interest in it is purely group and class-based (Arikawale, 2011:34). Politicians with glaring ulterior motives, masquerading as defenders of party and ethnic interests immediately swung into action upon the looming expiration of a phase of government. With their flowing robes which are symptomatic of their pecuniary intents, they brainstorm, articulate and offer their well-packaged selfish interests, which they place at the feet of the unsuspecting legislators. Thus the bane on Nigerian democracy has been individuals who are not groomed in the art of governance and legislative procedures are smuggled cleverly into positions of relevance. The resultant effect is the pestilence of inept and self-centred leadership that the federal legislature is festooned with at the moment. The result is peremptory and quicksand legislations or even total absence of developmental bills that could set off the country into the track of advanced economies just as every Nigerian hopes for.

Pecuniary interests have been at the root of the pursuit of such peremptory leadership. Nsik (2010:12) stated that *we are all living witnesses to what has befallen the parliament in the last few years. The Nigerian people hardly believe that a federal legislator does anything in the chambers other than ask to be paid emoluments in triple millions. The image is so bad that scarcely could any legislator lay claim to be in the chambers to defend the cause of their people. The current seemingly*

*irreparable damage done to the name of the Assembly via the inexplicable award of billions of naira to its principal officers and the N10bn controversial loan secured by the leadership of the House of Representatives are instances of the blight that our hallowed chambers has suffered. As long as this scenario persists, leadership will continue to be seen as the bane of Nigeria's National Assembly.*

### **Conclusion**

This paper examined leadership and decision-making strategies in the National Assembly. It traced the origin of Nigeria's National Assembly as well as examined the leadership structure of the National Assembly. It was discovered that decision-making in the National Assembly is democratic and all-inclusive. The leadership of the National Assembly merely preside over the affairs of the House and does not take unanimous or arbitrary decisions on behalf of the House. In sum therefore, it is concluded that the structure of leadership in the National Assembly do not constitute a problem to the system. However, what constitutes problem to the National Assembly is the underlying power play that ensures that the leadership of the National Assembly is determined by outside forces.

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## **SURVIVAL STRATEGY AMONG INYI, AFIKPO AND ISHIAGU TRADITIONAL POTTERS OF SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA**

**Ali Vincent Egwu**

### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the strategy adopted by Inyi, Afikpo and Ishiagu traditional potters for survival despite the introduction of modern pottery and other related products. It discusses how the potters created new forms and modified old ones as means of dealing with the challenges imposed by modern containers such as glazed pottery, plastics, enamel wares, aluminium and glass introduced into Nigerian markets. It identified modernization or innovation as survival strategy in a competitive market involving production and distribution of similar or related products.*

**Keywords:** Modernization; Inyi; Afikpo; Ishiagu; Survival Strategy, Traditional Pottery, Modern Containers

### **Introduction**

Most writers on Nigerian traditional art and technology have expressed concern over the gradual extinction of traditional pottery in Igboland and indeed in other parts of Nigeria. This is evident in the fact that only very few Igbo women still practise the craft, mainly elderly ones, who, by virtue of their age cannot engage in other jobs. Many factors have been identified to be responsible for this. Most of these revolve around the introduction of western technology and the attendant products such as plastic, enamel, glass, aluminium and modern pottery wares which have replaced most of the traditional pottery products. However, it has also been observed that in spite of the impact of the aforementioned products and other related factors, many pottery communities in Igboland have continued production. Meanwhile, social, religious, and ritual functions of pottery in the traditional society appear to be the only factors so far identified by researchers to be responsible for this.

But, it is yet to be examined how potters from some communities have made certain changes on their pottery forms to ensure the survival of their craft. Afikpo, Inyi and Ishiagu are among communities in Igboland where innovative tendencies have been observed on pottery forms adopted as one of the ways of dealing with the challenges imposed by modern products. Therefore, as a contribution to knowledge, it became imperative to study and document the changes potters in Afikpo, Inyi and Ishiagu made on their traditional pottery forms which contributed to the survival of their profession till the present time.

### **Research Methodology**

In order to identify and ensure effective documentation of the change(s) on the pottery forms occasioned by the introduction of modern containers, field work involving photographic documentation of pottery forms produced in the study areas (Afikpo, Inyi and Ishiagu) was employed. It included photographic documentation of some of the forms produced by the potters in the past.

Forms documented during the fieldwork and those documented by the authors were studied. The study helped to identify and establish the possible changes associated with each form. It provided the basis for analysis of the form attributes and helped in identifying the change(s) that occurred over the years from comparative view point. With the knowledge of the nature of traditional forms, it became easier to identify the forms that are outside the traditional form category inspired by the attributes of modern containers.

### **Concept of Modernization as Survival Strategy**

The term modernization refers to series of processes that lead to cultural change. In this category are diffusion, imitation or borrowing of ideas or traits, innovation, invention or exploration of new ideas and concepts, acculturation, adopted by the society as survival strategies in a changing environment (Hammond 1971, Sharer & Ashmore, 2003, Burke 1992 and Schaefer 2005). As survival strategies, they are of much significance in understanding how the society adapt to series of environmental conditions.

Pottery as an aspect of culture helps to modify the environment for human habitation by providing the channels through which the basic necessities of life (such as water, energy, calories, vitamins and minerals)



are made available for man from the environment in which he lives (Anorld, 1985:127). "In fact, pottery makes it possible to increase the flow of these biologically required constituents from the environment to human beings making it possible for man to adapt to a wider range of environments. It provides pots of various forms and functions used for carrying, storing and processing food items which enable human beings to meet their biological needs" (Ali, 2000:137). Therefore, for pottery to survive it has to change in line with the change in societal needs and aspirations. So pottery making as an aspect of the cultural system is modified or affected by change(s) in the system.

Archaeologists interested in the study of cultural change have established that change in environment could lead to a change in technology. Thus, pottery, being an aspect of technology, is affected by change in the environment and its survival can be achieved by modernization involving one or more of the processes of change. Innovation, invention, acculturation or exploration involves the development or an improvement on existing idea, while diffusion, imitation or borrowing refers to the introduction of entirely new concept resulting from interaction through trade, migration, immigration, conquest, inter-marriage and even slavery, etc. (Burke, p.137&142). Even though the two processes are interrelated, they however, differ in practical terms. While diffusion is conceptual, innovation deals with both the conceptualization of an idea and its transformation into a concrete object. In other words, the innovator is inspired by what was diffused, which he imitates or borrows idea from and modifies to suit the need of his society.

Diffusion of ideas from one place to the other has always existed and has continued to exist even in contemporary societies since societies were/are in close contact with one another. Encounters between cultures is seen as one of the causes of social change. It results to exchange of ideas which can have positive or negative influence on the society, either socially, culturally or economically.

Innovation has been the greatest instigator of growth in technology. It is the best process of creativity essential for the integration of cultural elements in a design, in order to bring about continuity in culture or technology. Change as a product of innovation is not always complete, in the sense that it may not completely interfere with the old. It could mean a marriage of the old and new; that is, taking



what is good in the old technology to marry with what is good in the new. Both are seen as vital elements for sustainable development in a given society or cultural group. Okpoko (1999:3) calls it “appropriate technology”, which refers to the adaptability of a particular technology to the culture and ecology of a society, whether such technology is indigenous or foreign.

### **The Igbo and features of their traditional pottery forms**

The Igbo are located in southeastern part of Nigeria. They are among the three largest ethnic groups in Nigeria with a population of about 10 million peoples. They occupy five states out of the 36 states that make up the present Nigeria. The five states are Anambra, Imo, Ebonyi, Enugu and Abia.

The Economy of Igbo was predominated by subsistent farming, handicrafts and trading. Before the advent of the Europeans, they “had achieved highly developed handicrafts such as weaving, pottery-making and smiting” (Nwala, 1985:45). Virtually every community in Igboland had a tradition of pottery making that flourished and formed an important source of income for the women. Igbo women were among the traditional potters in Nigeria, who had “inexhaustible store of invention, both in form and decoration and the individual touch they” gave to their products (Leith – Ross, 1970:146). The volume of pots produced and marketed in 1970s in Igbo land attest to the flourishing state of the traditional pottery industry before the negative influence of modern containers started affecting it in late 1980s (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1: Pots being marketed at Eke market in Ishiagu in 1972**  
(Photo by Ekeledo, 1972)

The secret of survival of the industry in these communities till the present time in spite of the negative impact of modern containers can be attributed to the innovative approach employed by the potters in dealing with the challenges. But in order to identify and understand the changes the potters made on their forms as means of dealing with the challenges, it is necessary to examine the nature of Igbo pottery forms before the advent of modern containers.

As in most pottery communities in Nigeria, Igbo pottery forms can be classified into two main groups. The first group comprises of dishes or bowls of various sizes and functions, while the second group is made up of pots, also of various sizes and functions. The Igbo refer to them as "Oku" and "Ite" (Ochi 1971:43 & Ebebe 1978:50). These are native names commonly used in Igboland to describe the two groups. Those within the 'oku' (dishes or bowls) group derive their form from the basic shape of hemisphere, spherical or ellipsoidal segment, while 'ite' (pots) group is characterized by the shape of sphere, ellipse, pear or egg (see fig.1 again). Shapes such as rectangle, triangle, square and trapezium, are not common features of Igbo pottery forms. However, a miscellaneous group that derive its forms from outside the two groups can be identified. These were mainly ritual objects with human or animal features.

These forms are characterised by round-base and the absence of handles, spouts, knobs, lids or covers. These features mark them out from modern containers. Those appendages that appear in form of handles found on some of them were not intended to serve as handles, but as decorative elements used to enhance the aesthetic and ritual attributes of the pot. Bowls were used in pairs, one serving as cover. Small bowls served as covers to big pots, while the textured surface characteristic of big pots provided a grip for handling. Because of their character of round-base, a hole dug on the ground, served as a base on which to stand the big pot.

### **Data Analysis**

Data collected during the fieldwork revealed the fact that the introduction of modern products such as plastics, enamelwares and modern ceramics into Nigerian markets led to the diffusion of certain pottery ideas into local pottery communities in Igboland. These ideas were concretized and transformed into objects of reality through

innovation. These products introduced Igbo people to other uses of pottery beyond utilitarian and ritual roles. As a result, the potters started re-designing or modifying some of their forms to fit into the new uses, which gave rise to the production of ornamental or decorative wares. They also embarked on direct copying of the modern forms, all in attempt to find market for their products. Thus the introduction of new local pottery shapes provided new uses of local pottery outside the utilitarian and ritual uses and led to continued demand for their products.

With the report given by Cardew (1952:197) as quoted by Nicklin (1971:20), it is evident that as early as 1952, the idea of innovating new forms by local potters in Nigeria was already in practice:

Local potters are now producing two types of ware: the traditional pot for water or cooking, and imitations of "European" pottery made by the native methods and fired at traditional low temperatures. In some districts, beautiful soup-plates, coffee-pots, tea-pots and other articles with fine polish and very good incised decoration are made.

There is also evidence in some parts of the world, where native potters in response to foreign competition innovated new forms by imitating introduced vessels (Nicklin, p.20). For example, Nicklin reports that

in Fiji, milk-jugs, plant-pots, and flower-stands are made in imitation of foreign vessels and in response to the new demand ... New designs are occurring in Motu pottery, with the stimulus of European demand in port Moresby ... Among the Gbaya of the Camerouns, potters are making non-traditional forms of pottery to order: for example in response to missionary request for flower vases.

Nigel (1994:115) has also observed that in spite of the constraint imposed by tradition on innovation, potters of Fes invented and mass produced ashtrays and planters for the tourist trade.

But when this started in Igboland is not yet known, but by 1966 as reported by Cole and Aniakor (1984:80), Ishiagu potters were already in the business of innovating new forms. Cole and Aniakor (p.14) observe that even though some of these forms show modern

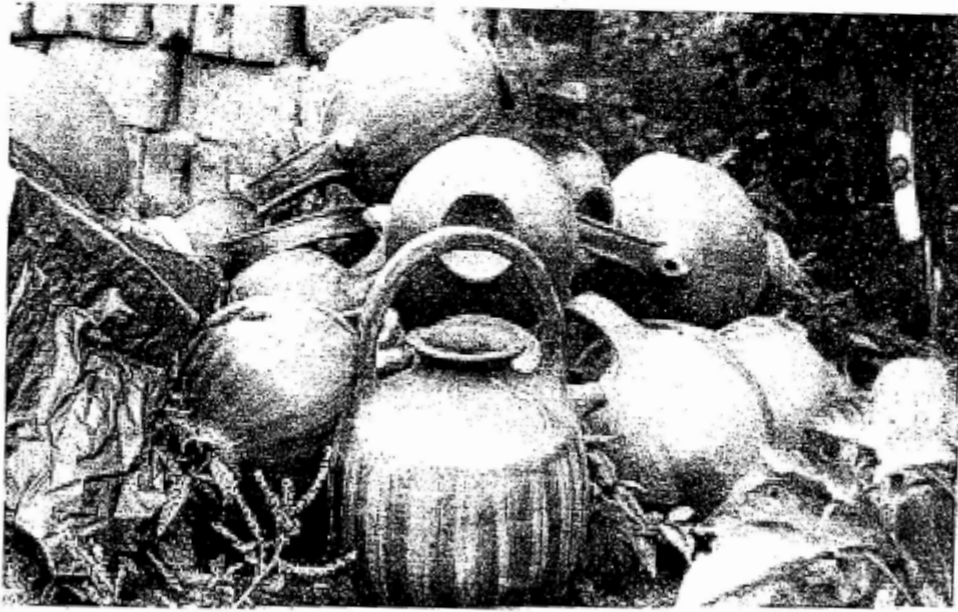
modifications, they were still highly impressive with unique characters. The “potters demonstrated the sustainability of local artistic tradition through the weapon of thoughtful synthesis of “old” and the “new”. They were “able to create new forms and modified old ones in order to fill the widening gap occasioned by the modern fast-changing society without necessarily losing their unique identity” (Onuzulike, 2002:86). In fact, as noted by Moira (2008:5), identity has been an important element for traditional pottery sustainability. Forms that are symbolic or signifiers of culture and identity are likely to persist in production, in spite of modern influence.

Critical observation of forms produced in the three pottery communities: Afikpo, Inyi and Ishiagu, shows that most of the modifications involved ritual pots which lost their functions as sacrificial objects. Madam Cordelia Orijeji Aja, an 80yrs old traditional potter of Amata village in Ishiagu, in an interview, affirmed that most “pots” initially used for ritual purposes were modified or adapted to serve as decorative wares. The influence of modernity affected the usefulness of most ritual pots which the potters modified into ornamental wares for use as flower vases, candle stands etc.

Another aspect of modernization adopted by the potters is the direct imitation of modern forms by simple addition of certain features for which modern forms are known. Wine and water pots or jars, for instance, were modified into coolers (a cooler is English name for containers used to keep liquid substances cool) by the addition of functional handles and spouts to match (Fig. 2). The fact that the word “cooler” has no native name is a clear indication that coolers are foreign to the people of Ishiagu and other parts of Nigeria. Another example is the imitation of modern kettle forms (Fig. 3), cups, cooking pots and bowls (Fig. 4 for instance) by the addition of lids and handles. Ebebe (p.72) believes that these forms are more recent than coolers given the fact that Leith-Ross’s documentation of pots produced in Ishiagu in 1970 contains basically coolers. It is possible both started earlier given the account of Cardew (p.197) as reported by Nicklin (p.20).



**Fig. 2:** Water cooler from Ishiagu. An adaptation of modern container handle and spout design (Photo by the Author, 2009)



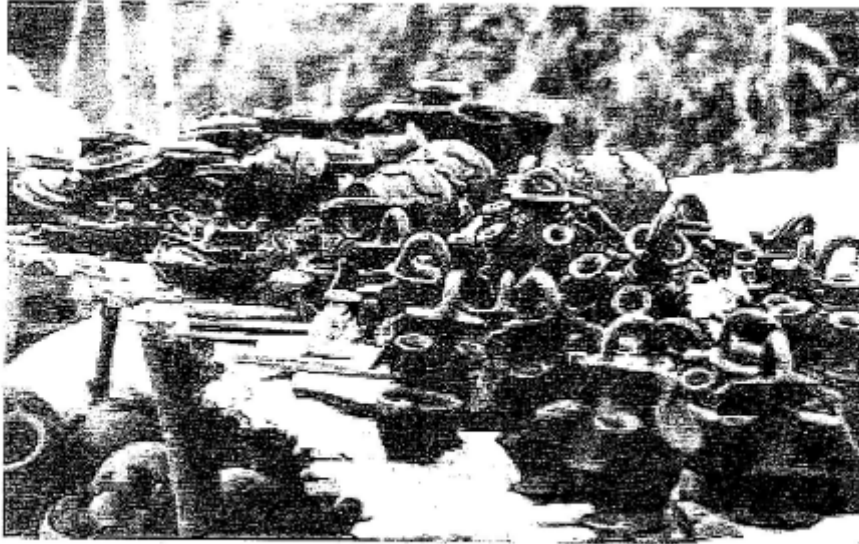
**Fig. 3:** Kettles from Ishiagu. A direct imitation of plastic, aluminum or enamelware forms (Photo by Ochi, 1971)



**Fig. 4:** *Soup pot from Afikpo with cover design of modern containers*  
(Photo by the Author, 2009)



**Fig. 5:** *Ritual pot from Ishiagu now being used as flower vase*  
(Photo by the Author, 2009).



**Fig. 6:** Ishiagu Ornamental wares on sale at Enugu-Port-Harcourt Express Road, Nigeria in 1966  
(Photo by Cole & Aniakor, 1984)

Today, some ritual pots are used without modification as flower vases (fig. 5), for inside and out door use. Most of their forms were adapted to other uses without any form of modifications. Thus, an examination of these forms shows that about sixty percent of the modifications involved mainly the addition of handles, covers or lids, knobs and spouts to improve the functionality of the basic forms for which Igbo potters are known from time immemorial.

With these modifications embarked upon by the potters and the discovery of other uses of pottery, their products which in the past, were patronized only by local men and women (rural dwellers), started receiving patronage from urban or city dwellers. Among the low income earners, who could not afford modern refrigerators, the use of some of these products as storage containers and water coolers became widespread, as people discovered that they have the advantage of keeping water cool which is lacking in glazed wares, enamel wares and plastic containers. This practice can also be found in some parts of the world. For instance, in Lombok, Indonesia, Moira (p.5) reports that local water “pots can still be seen in the courtyards even sometimes when piped water is available”. Some of them became decorative pieces particularly



as flower vases and pots among urban dwellers. As noted by Cole and Aniakor (p.14), some of these vessels became

popular with expatriates and urban Igbo as decorative home furnishing. A brief visit to Ishiagu by one of the authors in 1966 also yielded the information that these open work wares ... for several years have been marketed along the main north south express road near the Lokpanta village group not far from Ishiagu (Fig. 6).

From the above statement, it is evident that the presence of the expatriates also helped to inspire the production of these forms for the tourist markets, some of which they bought and exported to their home countries for use as decorative wares. Therefore, in order to attract the patronage of expatriates or tourists, and urban dwellers, who were not opportuned to buy their needs from local (rural) markets, the potters, in addition, started selling their products along main high ways.

### **Conclusion**

Given the ongoing discourse, it is evident that modernization helped to cushion the negative effect of the emergence of modern products on traditional pottery making. It helped to mitigate the negative effects and freed the craft from sudden collapse. With innovation, the potters expanded their craft, developed new forms, created new market outlets, which have contributed immensely to its survival in Afikpo, Inyi and Ishiagu, and in some parts of Igboland which had a well established pottery tradition before the advent of modernity.



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**OCTOGENARIANS AND SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF ITO-OGBO FESTIVAL AMONG THE OBOSI PEOPLE IN IDEMILI NORTH OF ANAMBRA STATE**

**Ibenwa C.N.**

**Introduction**

A festival is a human activity found in all countries and history knows no people without one form of festival or the other. That means that the festival is a universal phenomenon. But the Ito-Ogbo festival (octogenarian) in Obosi is a unique one in the Eastern part of Nigeria. It is a big ceremony that calls for home coming.

**Definition of Terms**

It may be appropriate to begin this work by looking closely at the key concept that could blur our clear understanding of the research topics which Ugwu (2009:519) refers to as clearing the definitional fogs. Festival, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is "a day or period of the year when people stop work to celebrate a special event, often a religious one". Quarcoopome (1987:87) sees it "as annual gathering at which the whole community meets to honour and give thanks to God, divinities and the ancestors". A more elaborate definition is given by Ejizu (1990:134) in Ugwu and Ugwueye (2004), who defines it as,

any special occasion, observance or celebration which may be religious or secular in nature and which is generally marked by merry making, performance of music and the like.

Suffice it, to say that festival is a moment of merry making when people come together to thank their maker and his intermediaries for their love and care. It is also a period when friends and well wishers from far and near come together to make new acquaintances. It is seasonal and in some instances, work- free, and a period of rejoicing. People, especially the priests, abstain from certain activities to ensure the holiness of the ceremony.

Another term that requires further explanation is "Ito-ogbo". Ito-ogbo (celebration of age) on its own is a celebration of longevity in form of mass birth day party in honour of members of any age grade who attain the age of eighty (80) years. It is a celebration for those who have by the special grace of God attained the age of eighty (80) years.

Ito-ogbo is an age-long festival instituted by our fore-fathers, to thank God for the aged in the society. It is a celebration of age and longevity a "traditional mass birthday party" of the age grade that has attained the grand age of eighty (80) years. It is a thanksgiving day to the Almighty Creator for keeping our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and other relations and friends alive for eighty (80) grueling years, (Nwakobi 2009:12).

#### **Preparation for Ito-Ogbo**

Human beings all over the world celebrate life from birth to death. Fun and merry making therefore, have formed an integral part of human life. For instance, Christians celebrate Christmas:- the birth of our lord Jesus Christ; Easter for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, love feast, Good Friday – the death, the Lord's supper of Eucharistic meal and so on.

The Moslems on their own celebrate, Id-el-Maulud in remembrance of the birth of Mohammed, a prophet and the founder of Islam. Id-el-Fitri is a koranic recommended feast used to mark the end of Ramadan Fast and it is a feast of thanksgiving to God for the successful completion of fasting and prayer. Id-el-Kabir – the three day feast is for sacrifice at the end of the Hajj on the second day of Arafat and finally there is the Lailat at Quadi – the Night of Glory or power. It is the feast for the night of power in remembrance of the night when Mohammed started receiving the revelation from God, (Eneh, 2001:97). The adherents of Africa traditional religion celebrate Iwa-ji festival (breaking of yam), Nta festival (hunting festival), Iwa-akwa festival (tying of cloth). Moreso from my research, it does appear that Africans celebrate life a lot, especially in countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Congo, South Africa and Cameroon. No wonder it did not take (Modum in Madueme 1978:33) time to observe this in his interaction with the people when he said in his telling remarks that: the first thing that strikes the ethnographers about Africa traditional societies is the sheer numerical importance of ritual festival and ceremonies. Indeed, he continues, observing that:

The early Europeans who came to Africa were so struck by the number and frequency of such ceremonies, that they thought that our people had nothing else to do. Modum concludes that in African traditional societies, it is festivals and ritual ceremonies.

Giving credence to this, Bishop Crowther, the founding father of the Niger mission in the Eastern part of Nigeria said,

When we first introduce the gospel to any people we should take advantage of any principles which they themselves admit though the heathens in this part of African posses no written legends, yet wherever we turn our eyes we find them in their animal sacrifices, a text which is the mainspring of Christian faith.

Admittedly, this sacrifice spoken about by Bishop Crowther is an integral part of most ceremonies and festivals in this part of the world.

As a matter of fact, the history of "Ito-ogbo" in Obosi is tied with the activities of various age grades, both past and present. Early in life, persons born within three years come together to form an age grade with the approval of Igwe in council. They choose a name by which they are to be known and called. Worthy of note is the fact that all members of an age grade are not necessarily born the same year, but as long as their birthday falls within the three years range, they belong to one age grade. The table bellow shows that there are thirty three (33) of them as shown below:

**List of Age Grades in Obosi in chronological order**

S/n	Age Grade	Dates
1.	Achobefuru	1882 – 1884
2.	Ochokolu	1885 – 1887
3.	Olimanna	1888 – 1890
4.	Ekwueme	1891 – 1893
5.	Arughalu Achicha/Ozueome	1894 – 1896
6.	Irude	1897 -1899
7.	Odunma	1900 – 1902
8.	Ojiwelugo	1903 – 1905
9.	Edomani/Rubisi	1906 – 1908

10.	Anaga	1909 -1911
11.	Ositadinma	1912 – 1914
12.	Agagboso	1915 – 1917
13.	Umuoyibo	1918 – 1920
14.	Umumma	1921 – 1923
15.	Eziokwubundu	1924 – 1925
16.	Ifeadigo	1925 – 1927
17.	Njikoka	1928 – 1930
18.	Udoka	1931 – 1933
19.	Asika	1934 – 1936
20.	Irugo	1937 – 1939
21.	Igwebuike	1940 – 1942
22.	Oforika	1943 – 1945
23.	Ayigadi	1945 – 1946
24.	Ogadinma	1947 – 1948
25.	Ofuonu	1949 – 1950
26.	Oganiru	1951 – 1952
27.	Ofuobi	1953 – 1954
28.	Ayibuofu	1955 – 1956
29.	Achunike	1957 – 1958
30.	Chiefogo	1959 – 1960
31.	Akachukwu	1961 -1962
32.	Chikwado	1963 – 1964
33.	Nchekwube	1965 – 1966

Having grouped themselves into different age groups as approved by Igwe (His Royal Highness) and members of his cabinet, age grades engage themselves in some useful ventures by embarking on some development projects as enumerated by Nwosu, (2000:13). He said, that age grades perform the following functions.

Age grade is a strong and useful machinery for running the affairs of the town, viz, enforcement of rules and decisions passed by the town. A force to be reckoned with in general development programme initiated by the town such as, provision of infrastructure in institutions of learning, playing a leading role in providing amusement and entertainment to the community by staging different

types of traditional dances including display of various forms of masquerades and attracting to their villages useful innovations from neighbouring towns.

In recent times, the festival of Ito-ogbo has taken an exciting colourful dimension unlike what it was in the years past. The festival is celebrated every three years. One age grade celebrates their own in a particular year and the next three years will be the turn of another age grade that attains the age of eighty (80) years. In (2009), it was the Ifeadigo age grade (light has come age grade) whose age bracket falls between (1927–1929) that had theirs. As the festival draws near, series of meetings are organized at both the family and age grade levels. An age grade committee is set up to work with the age grade concerned and the Igwe in council. The prospective Ogbuehi contributes money to buy cow, which is killed village by the village, but this time it is done at family level (Oral Interview with Enweuzor Ifeanyi 30/12/09). When all the necessary arrangements are concluded, the celebrants now wait for the “D” day, when the celebrants shall gather together with their friends and well-wishers in attendance to be honoured by Igwe Obosi and his cabinet members. The festival no doubt, affords the people the ample opportunity to relax and make merry with relations, friends and well-wishers and to make new acquaintances.

### **Actual Celebration**

The festival of Ito-ogbo in Obosi according to Edekobi (1997:8) dates back to 400 A.D. The ceremony is usually celebrated for three consecutive days running from Friday to Sunday. Friday is seen as the eve of the festival when some families organize cocktail parties for people. Saturday is the festival proper when the octogenarians prepare in their native wears and go to the field with their guests to be honoured before the members of the public. The ceremony is performed by the Igwe with the support of the cabinet members. It is pertinent to note at this juncture that a few centuries back, only men participated in the ceremony. In fact, it was seen as an exclusive domain of men but with the turn of events, women became involved, (Aghaebita, oral interview; 16/01/2010 and Esele, 16/01/2010). These men dress in very primitive manner. They dress in loin cloth that passed through the waist and through the buttock over to the front side to shield the male private part.

This can be said to be reminiscent of the present day, Iwa-akwa (tying of cloth which serves as shorts or knickers). Another loin cloth was passed over the shoulder right down across the chest to the left side dropping down to the waist. These people also wore narrow calabash full of gun power on their waste, (Ibegbu, 1997:7).

It must be stressed here that the pattern of dressing described above is no longer fashionable today. People now dress in more sophisticated manner as a result of western influence. When the celebrants (the Ogbueshis) get to the field, they sit down on the chair arranged for them and people come to admire them, and to exchange pleasantries with them. In short, the atmosphere is rent with shouts of joy and ecstasy on the arrival of the Igwe and his men. The ceremony is declared open with opening prayers and this is followed by the breaking of kola-nuts and speech from Eze Obosi and other eminent personalities who may wish to do so. Thereafter, the celebrants are crowned with red caps for the man and scarf for the female while certificates of honour is issued to them as a congratulatory mark. After this ritual, the celebrants are known and called or greeted with the name ogbueshi tolu-ogbo or Nwanyi-nokwudo-eshi respectively. The men are called ogbueshi tolu-ogbo while the women are called Nwanyi-nokwudoeshi. As the Igwe performs the ceremony, the people present join in cheering them and pouring encomiums on them. After honouring them with their red caps and red scarf's and the accompanying certificates, the ogbueshi now go back to their various homes with their guests to entertain them while the Igwe and members of his cabinet retire to Igwe's palace for their own entertainment. At this point, people go to the Igwe to pay him homage for successful hosting of the year's Ito-ogbo festival.

The celebrants entertain their guests in their various homes. Usually, musical band will be there to entertain while there will be eating and drinking. At the end, the Ogbueshi could give souvenir in form of plastic containers or printed materials like calendars, pocket diaries, umbrellas, bags, among others to their guests. The guests also reciprocate by giving some presents to the celebrants in form of money and other items. Some people in Obosi, answer "Ogbueshi without attaining the age of eighty years and that explains the reason why the prefix "tolu-ogbo" was added to the title "Ogbueshi" to read "ogbueshi-tolu-ogbo". This is to distinguish it from those people who perform some traditional rites, thereafter kill cow and start answering Ogbueshi as title without



getting to the age of eighty (80) years which is a pre-requisite for one to become Ogbueshi-toluogbo, (Anasiudu and Mbedebe, oral interview 08/01/2010).

On Sunday, which is the grand finale, the Ogbueshis are accompanied to the "Eke market square" by well-wishers where they go to receive final blessings from the traditional priest of the shrine. At the market square, the celebrants shoot their guns, as they rejoice for coming to the peak of their celebration. The Christians on the same day go to the church to receive final blessings from the priest. This act brings the ceremony to a conclusion.

### **Relevance of the Festival**

There are some inherent benefits derivable from being Ogbueshi tolu-ogbo. The benefits are as listed below.

The Ogbueshi by virtue of attaining the age of eighty (80) years are exempted from communal labour and taxes. These people are admired by the members of the public, who call them "senior citizens". These people go to churches to offer thanks-giving to God in appreciation of what he has done for them. The Government Issues certificate of meritorious service to them. This fact was further echoed by Nwakobi (2000:6), when he declared that members of "Umuoyibo" age grade are exempted from all communal levies, taxes and labour. At their exalted age, their positions are mainly ceremonial and advisory in nature as they are held in high honour by all and sundry in the community. It was in observance of this truth that Onugha (2000:4) commented thus; "these people are revered as the community assets".

Ito-ogbo, sincerely speaking, is a preview of one's funeral, in the sense that it affords the Ogbueshis the opportunity to witness how their funeral ceremonies will look like when they die. It was in line with this that Ojiaku (1972:2) said that, "Ito-ogbo is practically a preview of the beneficiaries' funeral; hence it affords them an idea of how their well-wishers, friends, in-laws, nephews, nieces, etc. would attend their funeral ceremony". No doubt, this ceremony had sparked off a great desire by every Obosi person to see that the elderly ones amongst them are well taken care of by their children and relations to ensure that they attain the age of eighty (80) years to enable them to celebrate the Ito-Ogbo festival. Hence the lives of the Ogbueshis are being prolonged.

### **What is expected of the Ogbueshi**

It is often said that to whom much is given, much is also expected of him/her. The Ogbueshi are expected to behave well and to conduct themselves in a certain way in their relationships with the other members of the community as stated here under:

- a. To make truth their watchword (oral interview with Enwezor Ifeanyi 30/12/09).
- b. Show greater love than before to any one that comes their way and to bless people rather than curse them as an elder statesman.
- c. To be peacemakers, settling quarrels among people (Okoye, oral 10/01/2010).
- d. To help in the preservation of our much cherished cultural heritage (Obinkpu oral interview 08/01/2010).

### **Reforms/Social Changes**

Reforms and social changes came into our society as a result of modernization brought by colonization and Christianization (Metu, 1985:167). Change is something inevitable, which must come when it will. It is irresistible in any human society. It is simply defined as anything that replaces another and it could be something desirable or undesirable. It may be a process since culture is dynamic. The Ito-Ogbo ceremony as the culture of Obosi people is not left out in this regard. Admittedly, the Ito-Ogbo ceremony in Obosi has undergone various modifications, lending itself to changes in foreign religion, western education and civilization. It was in view of this that Idowu (1973) wrote that; one or two things have happened to man's religion or culture in any given situation, modification with adoption or extinction (cited in Ugwu 2000.5).

However, the underlisted are some of the changes which the presence of Christianity and other agents of civilization have brought to bear on the culture of the people.

- a. The Ito-ogbo is no longer the exclusive domain of men. Rather men and women are now involved.
- b. The usual trip round the villages and to the Eke market square is no longer mandatory on any individual celebrant, more especially the Christians (Iredu oral interview 18/12/09 and Anasudu 19/12/09). This fact was further confirmed by Catechist Ogbueshi T.O. Okoye, in my chat with him, on 8/11/09, when he opined,

- that while, the adherents of traditional religion are going to Eke market so as to cap up the ceremony, the Christians are going to the church for thanks-giving and final blessings from the priest.
- c. Some Ogbueshi on the attainment of eighty (80) years go to the church and receive blessing from the priests without waiting for the mass birthday of Ito-ogbo (Udoh oral interview 29/12/09).
  - d. The pattern of dressing has changed from what it used to be before to something modest (Enwezor oral interview 28/11/09).
  - e. People make the ceremony more elaborate now than before because of influence of western culture by their ostentatious and auspicious ceremonies inviting musical bands, friends and well-wisher both at home and abroad, giving sophisticated gifts to their guests, sowing uniforms among other things.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

It could be seen from the discussion that the Ito-Ogbo festival has won the heart of Obosi indigenes to a point that the ceremony has become that of home-coming. Ejiofor in an oral interview, he further attested to this fact; when he said that Ito-Ogbo draws people from all parts of the world including Obosi people living abroad, no matter how hard the economy may be. For him also, the ceremony is always the most popular and one that attracts the greatest crowd when compared with Christmas, Easter, Iwa-ji (yam festival), Obiora festival and other ceremonies in Obosi. It was in appreciation of this fact that Nwakobi (2003:4) described it as a wonderful gift to the whole world. The Holy Bible in the book of Psalm 90:10 lends credence to the celebration of this ceremony in Obosi, by recognizing in one's life, three scores and ten and by reason of strength four scores". By so saying, the scripture in this chapter and verse, underscores the importance of this celebration in the life of man in general. It is therefore, the general wish of the Obosi people that other towns in Nigeria and all nations of the world would one day join in this celebration of longevity and the dignity of age at eighty (80) years.

In conclusion, Traditional Africans are not, at all, unique in publicly celebrating significant episodes in their life experience. Other groups in different parts of the world both traditional and modern equally commemorate in their own ways a whole variety of prominent events in their histories, most countries of the world for instance, mark their

National Days annually with great funfare. Nigeria celebrates her independence day every first October of every year. For Christians and Muslims throughout the world, the festival of Christmas and Id-el-maulud are occasions for extraordinary celebrations as well as a joyful re-enactment of important religious facts of the historic birth of Jesus Christ and Holy Prophet Muhammad respectively. (Ugwu & Ugwueye, 2004.99).

### **Recommendations**

It is my candid appeal to all Obosi indigenes to see that, this fire their forefathers lit is not quenched in their hands. They should see it as their moral obligation and a sacred duty to pass it from generation to generation. Infact, this is a legacy that cannot be toyed with.

On the part of the government, traditional festivals should be given national recognition, as that of Islamic and Christian Festivals. This can be done through the declaration of public holidays, or work-free days by the Federal Government as it is done during the celebrations of Islamic or Christian Festivals. This will create opportunity for effective attendance and participation of all, in the cerebrations of traditional festival, (Ogbobe 2009: 21-22).

The government should redesign the primary and secondary school curriculum to include the teaching and learning of African Traditional Religion/Culture as is the case of Islamic and Christian Festivals.

Furthermore, the federal government should give African Traditional Religion/Culture a pride of place in the scheme of things. This can be done by providing fund to sponsor research works in our institutions of higher learning and if possible constitute a pilgrim commission/board as is the case of Islam and Christianity.

Since the white men are not so much interested in sponsoring research project in African Tradition, our rich men should team up to sponsor research project in African Traditional Religion/culture.

Finally, both the local, state and national government should organize cultural festivals at intervals like FESTAC of 1977 so as to save our much cherished culture and traditional ceremonies from going into extinction.

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

In view of the acknowledged limitation of the present study, the following suggestions are adjudged by the researcher as appropriate along which further work should be undertaken:

More efforts should be geared towards discovering more elements in our traditional religion/culture that will help in strengthening the peace and unity of our country (Nigeria) in particular and the world in general, especially this time that the world peace is being threatened.

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### **Oral Interviews**

<b>S/ No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Approximate Age</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
1.	Aghaebeta	Civil Servant	65yrs	Obosi	16/01/2010
2.	Anasiudu Emeka	Civil Servant	67yrs	Obosi	19/01/2009
3.	Ejiofor Mike	Business Man	69yrs	Obosi	10/10/2010
4.	Enwezor Christian (Mbedebe)	Business Man	78yrs	Obosi	28/12/2009
5.	Enwezor Ifeanji	Civil Servant	65yrs	Obosi	30/12/2009
6.	Iredu Jeremiah	Civil Servant	60yrs	Obosi	18/12/2010
7.	Esele Okechukwu (Poto)	Business Man	50yrs	Obosi	16/12/2010
8.	Obinkpu Uche	Business Man	65yrs	Obosi	08/01/2010
9.	Ojiaku Ernest (Iyasele)	Business Man	75yrs	Obosi	10/10/2010
10.	Okoye T.O	Catechist	32yrs	Obosi	05/01/2010
11.	Udoh Onwudiegwu (Diokpa Ire)	Civil Servant	50yrs	Obosi	29/12/2009

**WANTON LOOTING AND DESTRUCTION OF POTENTIAL  
CULTURAL MATERIAL OBJECTS IN THE NAME OF  
PROGRESS; IN NSUKKA CULTURAL  
AREA OF ENUGU STATE**

**Agu S. C. , Okagu, G. O., Madu, O. N. and Ugwuoke, C. .N.**

**Abstract**

*The cultural material objects in Nsukka Cultural Areas of Enugu State have been subjected to cultural decline from both the looters and also the inception of the missionaries. Cultural material objects were looted to Europe and America where they serve as tourist attraction. Looting takes place because there is a market for illegal cultural materials (antiquities or artifacts). Looters and those who purchase looted cultural material objects are the real enemies of all people who want to preserve the past. Ironically many of these artifacts that attract tourists (all over the world) to important museum overseas especially America and Europe originated from Nsukka Area of Enugu State in particular. Some were looted in days of slavery and colonization. In reality, with the advent of Christianity in Nsukka Cultural Area, most of these cultural materials of our people were looted, burnt, destroyed, vandalized, undermined, and were carried to unknown places. Precious masks and priceless cultural objects associated with the masquerades such as "Ekwe" "Arigo" "Ebune" "Ugbu-Dina-Nwahobie" etc were pillaged. These precious cultural objects carved for such worship as well as the masks for the masquerades just disappeared. This paper therefore, is an attempt to highlight how religious iconoclasm have rendered great influence on the cultural life of Nsukka people and this led to the gradual fading away of some cultural activities in Nsukka cultural Area. Nsukka people have recognized cultural materials such as festivals, groves, shrines, historic features (Okiti) or (Ulo-maa), cultural dances, masquerades, among others. Some of these cultural materials were defaced and some festivals have gone out of existence as a result of the new belief that they are evil.*

**Introduction**

The past is not dead. It is alive in the prehistoric and historic sites, ready to reveal itself to those who seek its counsel (Rogers, 1988:2 in



Madu, 2007:1). In his own opinion, Cleere (1999:7) pointed out that “contemporary societies were perceived as having cultural links extending back over time, so the relics of earlier phases were seen to be important documents in recording that continuity, and as such, they should become worthy of care and preservation”. However, they should be managed for the future. This should be more so when we realize that with the advent of Christianity, most of these achievements, and great past of our people were destroyed, undermined, misconstrued and vandalized (Madu, 2007:1).

The destruction of cultural material objects in Nsukka cultural area has a great influence on the people. These destructions involved the burning of some of these cultural objects by religious fanatics and the physical removal of some figurines by looters or vandalizers. The destruction of some shrines in Nsukka Cultural Area led to distortion and end of some traditional religious worship in Nsukka area. The society started evolving differently from what formally obtained. The people of Nsukka area are now torn between their cultural heritage and the newly adopted religion. With the destruction of some shrines and cultural objects, Nsukka people are polarized into two classes, the converts and the traditionalists (Madu, 2007:1).

It is noteworthy to state that communities which have not destroyed multiples of cultural material objects in the name of Christianity are not counted as a part of the moving train of Christianity in Nsukka; reverend fathers, gentlemen or women, pastors, or prayer ministers must be invited to come and exorcise the community, village or family of the evil spirits left behind by the forefathers (Eke, 2006:8 in Ugwuoke, 2008:2). The destruction of these cultural materials by Christians is in vogue in every nook and cranny in Nsukka. The effect of this destruction in Nsukka cultural area was numerous although the traditional people did not easily accept change.

Nevertheless, if all these cultural material objects are being destroyed by burning and burial as a means of exterminating them even when they are already harmless after exorcism, what remnant of our past religious and general cultural heritage will be left as cultural legacy for the coming generation? (Ugwuoke, 2008:3). As international organization like UNESCO, ICOM etc and national agencies such as National Commission for Museum and Monument (NCMM), and other Archaeological offering institutions are clamouring for the preservation

and protection of cultural and national heritage, countries in Asia, America, Europe and the Caribbean are seriously exploring such opportunities for economic gains and cultural reserve. Here in Nsukka cultural area destruction of cultural material objects by the churches is rampant, therefore, a documentation of these spates and trends of destructions have become necessary if not for any other thing, but to educate future generations that it has not been this way. (Madu, 2007:2).

### **Definition of Terms**

The key words in this topic are “Wanton”, “Looting”, “Destruction”, and “cultural material objects”.

### **Destruction**

Destruction, as a phenomenon has been approached from different angles with regards to destruction of cultural material objects by different authors. Okoye (2006:10) stated that material objects and sacred forests were burnt down and most of them were looted to Europe and America where they serve as tourist attractions, while others are lying in parishes or cathedrals where they serve aesthetic functions.

This author is defining destruction here from burning and stealing point of view. Eke (2006:8) sees destruction in material cultural objects from iconoclastic angle, which stands as criticizing popular beliefs or established customs and ideas of people so that they can be discarded. Hence, his assertion that, “here in Nigeria, especially Igboland and in Nsukka cultural area in particular, religious iconoclasm geared towards unleashing mayhem on the cultural materials objects.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, to destroy is to damage something so badly that it no longer exists, works etc. therefore, destruction becomes the act of destroying something; the process of being destroyed. Thus, destruction of cultural materials could be the damage, burning and stealing, or removing the objects to unauthorized places.

Aba (1998:42) defined destruction as where “Christianity views ancestral worship and material cultural objects as devilish and need not to be acknowledged for any reason whatsoever”. The definition of destruction in this regard reflects more on how the different authors perceive the attempt to put a stop to the existence of those cultural material objects. Defining destruction, Okoye (2006:10), lamented

that "Our indigenous language, precious traditional cuisines, dress mode, and other priceless heritages are dying off on a daily basis".

As different authors see destruction with regard to cultural material objects from diverse dimensions, it means that the definition has many meanings to numerous authors. Therefore effort has been made to present some of the views expressed by some writers on the subject matter in this work.

### **Culture**

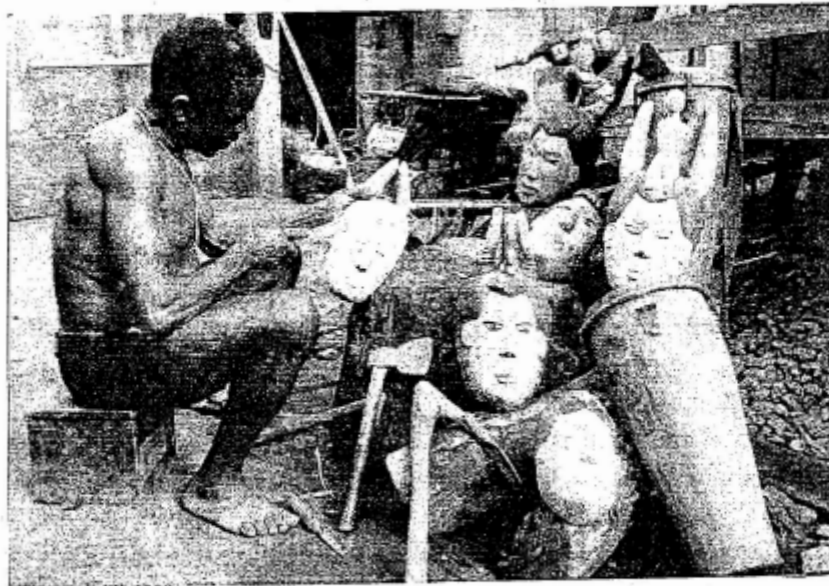
Many authors approached the definition of culture from different perspectives. Culture refers to the dynamic totality of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features which characterize a society or social group. It includes the arts and letters but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions, heritage and beliefs developed over time and subject to change (Bennett Tony, 1998). It is the complex whole, which includes, among other attributes, knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, customs, and habits of a man as a member of society. It is shared system of values and behaviour. In fact, simply stated, it is the you in you that makes you (Nchita Ogbuewu, 2004). Culture is man-made, it is a human response to the biological-environmental conditions and requirements of his existence (Iwe, 1985).

### **Cultural Material Objects**

Cultural material objects are those tangible aspects of a peoples' way of life that can be seen and touched. On the other hand, non-material culture are those aspects of culture that we cannot see nor touch such as oral tradition, beliefs system, knowledge, philosophy, morals, motivation, language, values shared and transmitted in a society. In other words, material cultural objects and non-material culture are the concomitant of culture. Thus, the analysis of the culture indicates that every culture goes with material cultural objects. That is to say that no society has existed without material cultural objects. Therefore, no society has existed without culture, and if there is existence of culture, there must be availability of material cultural objects (Madu, 2007:18).

### **Some cultural material objects and their values**

The people of Nsukka cultural area practice some of the practical arts, and their interest is centered on cultural material objects. Art is the product of creative human activity in which materials are shaped or selected to convey an idea, emotion, or visually interesting form. Many people in Nsukka use art as a vehicle for spiritual expression or to ask for help from the spiritual world. A painter should not paint what he sees, but what will be seen. A people's art is greatest when it most reflects the character of its people. Crafts people in Nsukka cultural area specialize in wood carving, producing cultural material objects as well as masks for use in festivals and religious rituals (See Fig. I)



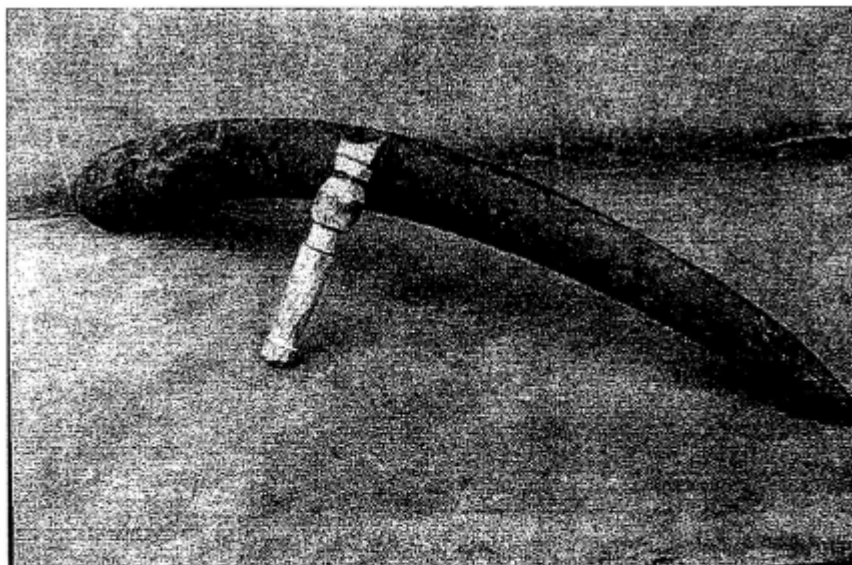
**Fig. I:** "Nsukka Cultural arts are world renowned for their skill in carving wood and painting representations of the local mythical beings. Here a man while on duty in one of the villages of Nsukka, carving, designing and paints masks and other cultural material objects. Around him on the ground are some of his tools he uses for carving. A great work of art bears its-meaning on its face. Nsukka traditional art often served powerful therapeutic needs".

Many material cultural objects existed in Nsukka cultural area before the advent of christianity, though some were looted and destroyed but very few of them survived and has continued to survive with a measure of its

earlier vitality inspite of the serious erosion of its base by colonial impact. Some of them are:

- (a) Ivory horn (opu) and
- (b) flute (Oja)

Most outstanding importance of these material objects are their usage in various ceremonies or occasions. Ivory horn "opu" is used in announcing the death of an ozo titled man in Nsukka area. Ivory horn "opu" and flute "Oja" play unquantifiable role in Nsukka culturally. Nsukka is culturally divided into three zones namely – Igbo Odo, Igbo Omabe, and Igbo Manwu. During the "maa" masquerades, mmanwu, Omabe, Odo, Akatakpa, Ori-Okpa outing and display, the flute "oja" was used to add colour to their performances. Masquerade has played a vital socio-cultural role in the life of Nsukka people. It serves as a mediator between the ancestors and the living. The flute "Oja" and Ivory "Opu" are essential incantation materials that chief priests use during divination. The sound of ivory horn "opu" and flute "oja" alert people of cultural dance outing in Nsukka cultural area (see Fig II).

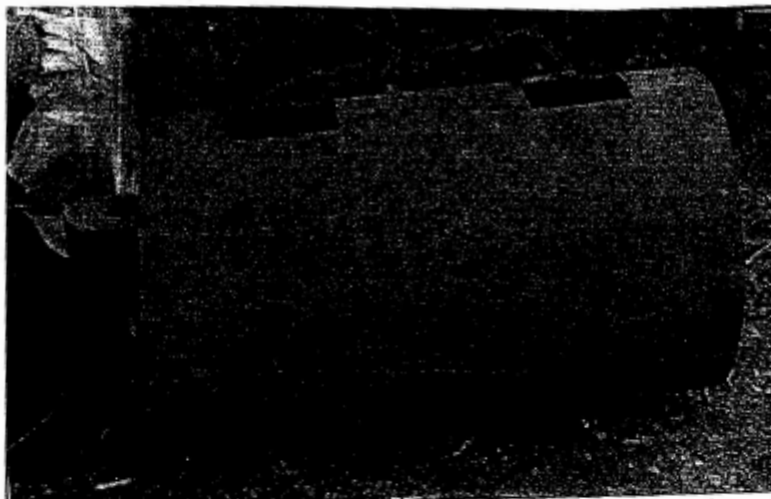


*Fig. II: Showing Ivory horn "opu" and flute "oja" used in Nsukka Cultural Area ever before the coming of the Europeans. They were used in various ways both in ceremonials or occasion. During the "maa" masquerade outing and display, the ivory "opu" and flute "oja" were used to add colour to its performances. They were equally used in cultural dances such as Ode-cultural dance, Ikorodo, Atilogwu etc. They had unquantifiable role to play in the life of the Nsukka cultural people.*

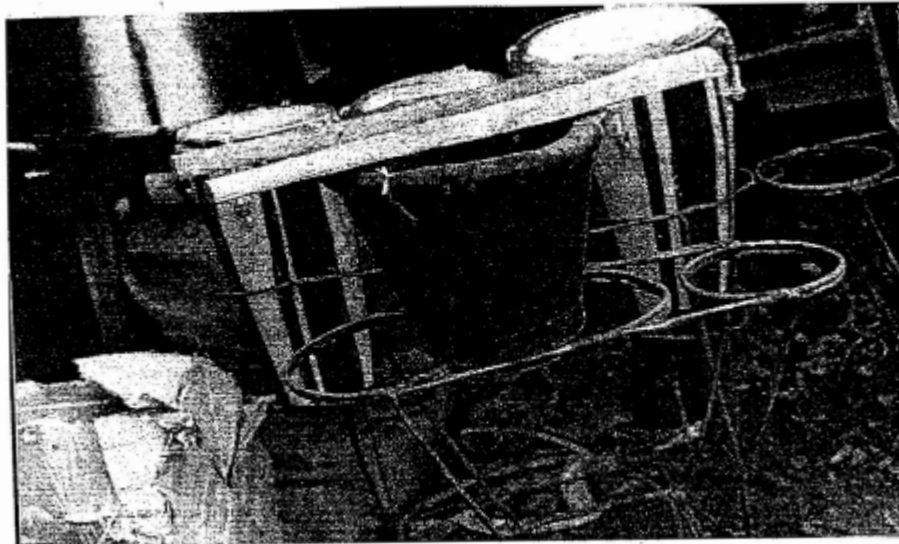
Thus, ivory horn “Opu” together with other musical instruments like flutes “Oja” did give “Ode” cultural dance, “Ikorodo”, Atilogwu etc. the beautiful musical sound generated when they are performed on stage. Ozo title is also one of the cultural ceremonies where ozo titled-men display all their ivory horns “opu” in thanking their gods for all the gods had done for them during the ceremony.

#### **Wooden drum (Ekwe) and Leather drum (Igba).**

These cultural musical instruments are used in the performance of some cultural ceremonies in the Nsukka cultural area. These material cultural objects are made from different types of trees depending on the individual choice. Some are made from “Okwe” (*Ricinodendron heudelottii*) tree, “Okpeye” tree, etc. The leather drum “Igba” is made with animal skins, which give it a unique enticing sound when it is struck, on the other hand, the wooden drum “Ekwe” is made by just carving it out but in different designs, motifs and sizes attributed to it (See Fig. *iiia* & *iiib*)



**Fig. *iiia*:** Showing another cultural material objects used in Nsukka cultural Area. This cultural material objects is made from stems of some large trees such as “Achi” (*Brachystegia spp*) and oil bean “Akpaka”/Ukpaka (*Pentaclethra macrophylla*) which may be hollowed out into drum locally called “Ekwe”. The Ekwe is equally used both for the cultural dance and “Maa” masquerade all the masquerade abode – Ulo-Odo, Ulo-Omabe or Okiti also used for worshipping different deities in Nsukka cultural Area. At one end of this “Ekwe” is a lifting point being constructed for easy lifting or carrying.



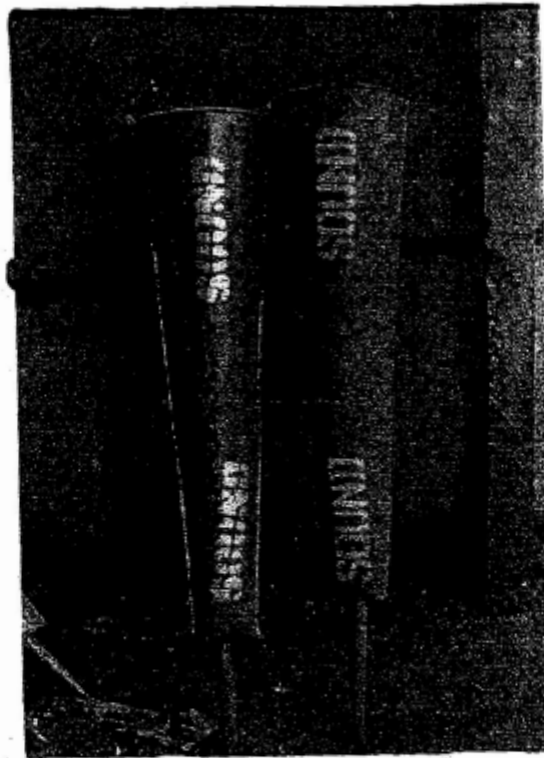
*Fig. iib: Musical or percussion instruments of various types are made from plants in Nsukka cultural Area. Some time a metal or non-wood component is necessary in making the instrument. The xylophone is usually made of strips of wood of African wood oil-nut-tree "Okwe" (*Ricinodendron heudelottii*), which is mounted on two pieces or logs of Banana stems, stems of other trees or on the rims of a large clay pot or similar vessel. The strips of wood act as keys of a piano when struck with drum sticks made from petioles of oil palm or other material. Stems of some large trees such as "Achi" (*Brachystegia* spp) and oil bean "Akpaka" or "Ukpaka" (*Pentaclethra macrophylla*) may be hollowed out into drums and when one end of a cylindrical trunk is covered with leather a kind of drum locally called "Igba" in Nsukka cultural area is the result.*

The important aspect of wooden drum "Ekwe" is that it is used for cultural dances, and also for masquerades in their masquerade abode "Okiti", "Ulo-mma", and also the ones used for worshipping different deities or oracles in their various shrines, such deities as ojiyi Aku, Adoro Alor, Isi-eke Ugbene, Ohe Nrobo, Ogwudinama Nkpologu, Ezugwu-Obimo, Nnumu Obukpa, Asho Nsukka, Amanyi-Oba-Oshimiri Orba, Akpuru-Okwe Ovoko, Mkpume Itchi, Ehuru Idoha, Emukpe, Nkakwu, Idenyi-Nkwo Nru etc.



**Traditional stool (Oche-Okwa) and staff of authority (Ofo) as well as Iron gongs (Ogene)**

These cultural objects are usually found in the shrines and they are used by the chief priest (Atama) in ritual functions. While the staff of authority, and iron gongs are made of metal, the traditional stool (Oche-Okwa) is made of wood. (see fig iv).



*Fig. iv: Showing Iron gongs "Ogene" used in Nsukka cultural Area. These cultural musical instruments were used in the performance of some cultural ceremonies in Nsukka cultural Area ever before the coming of the Europeans. They have vital role to play during such ceremonies or on cultural dances such as Atilogwu, Ugeze, Opigwe etc . It was through the sound of Iron gongs "Ogene" that gives direction to the dancers which way or side to follow or when to change pattern or to perform acrobatically. A good cultural dancer(s) listens attentively to this musical sound and understands it and hears what it is talking all about. Iron gongs "Ogene" is simply described as the steering-guide for all cultural dancers.*



It is important to note that iron gong and traditional staff of office are made in black smithing industry in Nsukka Area. "Arua" a long staff with pointed mouth and small bells hung on it, which looks like spear is also used in shrines by chief priests (Atama). Very powerful and dangerous "maa" masquerades in Nsukka area are use this staff till date. The staff of authority (ofa) is also used during festivals by the presiding chief priest while praying for the land.

### **Sacred Rain-Stones (mkpume mmiri)**

Rainmaking involves the use of sacred objects especially "rain stones". In Nsukka area, rainmakers are consulted just as medical doctors. They are consulted prior to the day that their services will be needed so that they might have the chance to collect the necessary items for the rainmaking. The sacredness of the rain stone and the wonderful functions it performs during rainmaking gave it a special position in the heart of Nsukka people.

Rainmaking through sacred stones has caused more good than harm in the socio-cultural and socio-economic life of Nsukka people. This is because so many ceremonial functions have been prevented from being marred by rainfall. The rainmakers are able to preventing rain from coming, as well causing it to come. Rainmaking is an age long activity in Nsukka. Rain-makers in Nsukka cultural area include, among others,

- (1) Umu-Nwugwu Ogoro family of Amogbo Amabokwu Aku
- (2) Umu Ugwu-Iyi family of Ama-Owerre Umurusi Ukehe
- (3) Simon Ugwoke-Ugwomade family of Aguneze, Ajuona Obimo
- (4) Ugwuna Oda family of Umabo Eha-Alumona
- (5) Ugwu-Onugwu of Ezimo
- (6) Idenyi Ugweke of Iheaka
- (7) Umu Egwu family (Ugwoke Egwu) of Owerre Ezeorba (Eke Egwu both late)
- (8) Vin Ugwu and Nwobodo both from Ama-Uffie Enugu-Ezike
- (9) Louis from Umu-Ezediko Nguru Nsukka
- (10) Peter Asogwa from Ama-Elu Edem
- (11) Sunday Okumeh from Ama-Elu Edem
- (12) Martin Obochi (Late) from Ama-Elu Edem
- (13) Ajogwu Ezema Umu-Nwareji Amaezemugo family of Ajayigo village in Nrobo.

### **Festivals**

There are many festivals in Nsukka. Among them, are masquerade display festival “Mmanwu”, New yam festival “Fijioku”, Egorigò, and a host of others. These festivals are celebrated at various periods of the year depending on their aims.

### **Masquerade “Mmanwu” or “Maa” Festival**

The “mmanwu” or “maa” festival (masquerade) is one of the most respected and feared ceremonies in Nsukka Area. It is a sacred institution that goes beyond mere entertainment, it inspires the youth to action and also enforces law and order in the communities (Madu, 2007:48). “Mmanwu” is a cultural, social and religious festival widely celebrated among the people of Nsukka Area. They believe in ‘re-visitation’, that is, the re-appearance of the dead in forms of masquerades possessing human and spiritual qualities and communicating through mask voices. When they visit, they spend some months and collect gifts of matchet, kola-nut, mats, cloths, fowls, goats, food items and livestock to help the dead on their return to the land of the spirit. The “maa” or “Mmanwu” masquerades are saluted as “our father”, “owner of the village”, owner of the soil. The “maa” or mmanwu” masquerades appear in some places singing and dancing and go from house to house both at night and in the day time while the women are strictly confined indoors, and demanded gifts from the householders and then disperse to eat a communal meal.

In order to preserve the illusion that the “Mmanwu” or maa” masquerades are spirits, their characters are completely sealed up in an outfit which nevertheless does not conceal their main physical features. They only see through a thick, closely woven net or through criss-cross woven palm frond or through a thick closely traditional textile woven material “Ajima” and they speak in “piping, treble voices” (See Fig v below).



*Fig. v: Showing one of the mmanwu or "maa" masquerades in Nsukka cultural Area being displayed during "Mmanwu" festival. The "mmanwu" or 'maa" masquerade otherwise called "Odo" masquerade is surrounded by both elderly*

There are different kinds of "mmaa" masquerades in Nsukka cultural area. We have "Omabe" masquerades, "Odo", "Mmanwu", "Ori-Okpa", "Akatakpa" etc. These masquerades symbolize just the broad, general conceptions that there is after-life and that there is a close, active bond, a communion between the living and the dead. In this case, the "mmaa" masquerades are just visitors from heaven. As they leave the world of the living, they leave behind promises of what must come to pass before their next re-appearance.

**"Fijioku":** The New yam festival is a ceremony whereby new yam is eaten collectively, usually at the "Obu" hall, or market place or village square or Onyishi's or Igwe's palace before individuals can go ahead and eat new yam in their respective homes. In Nsukka cultural area, "Fijioku" the new yam festival is commemorated with so many activities like display of cultural troops, wrestling and masquerade display to the spectators. The people of Nsukka give great concern to the spirit force

“fijioku” who is the divinity for yielding crops cultivated in the land. It is the belief of the traditional people of Nsukka area that, if the land divinity is not honoured then, the coming year will not be good for the farmers and that is why when cultivating a piece of land and the hoe breaks then, the pieces of the hoe are kept in the farm to appease the land divinity. More so, the people who offended the god of yam and land divinity by going contrary to the yam taboos like stealing somebody’s yam, defecating in a place where yams were cultivated, purposely destroying somebody’s yam, will bring their fines. And this is determined by the fortune tellers to the thier shrines to appease them, that is the ancestors, and beg them not to retaliate with evil deeds and promise not to offend them again.

Finally, traditional songs accompanied by drumming, dancing and shooting of locally made guns during these festivals provide extra reverence to the gods, deities, spirits and ancestors. Infact, festivals is one of the cultural cores of Nsukka cultural Area before the coming of the Europeans (inception of Christianity) (Ugwoke, 2008”64 – 65).

#### **The significance of festivals to the understanding of Igbo culture.**

From the above discussions, it is worthy of note that the place of traditional festivals in understanding the culture and social life of a group cannot be overemphasized. Family structure, belief pattern, political form, economic organization, hospitality and recreational activities are all aspects of the people’s culture embedded in traditional festivals. The above discussed festivals are very significant to the people of Nsukka cultural Area. For the purpose of this paper, the significance of these festivals in Nsukka will be examined both religiously, socially.

#### **Religious Significances**

In Nsukka, festivals have religious relevance to the people who observe them. It is during these festivals that the people of Nsukka area venerate and offer sacrifices especially to their ancestors as well as the Supreme Being (Ezechitoke Abiama). Nsukka people venerate during “Mmanwu” or “Maa” festival and these periods are the highest periods one can offer sacrifices to the ancestors. The occasion also provides an annual opportunity for reactivating all herbal works in the form of charms, gods and deities. This is done through the sacrifices they give to

the gods of the land, spirit and ancestors who give them power for magic in medicine and charms.

In the case of killing of animals in the shrines of certain deities and pouring of their blood on religious cultic objects, pouring out of blood on the altar or on the ground and cooking the rest for the participation of people, the ceremony is a sacramental communion and eating together establishes a bond of unity among men. This type of sacrifice in which food is shared with the spirits establish a covenant between men and gods because, the part of victim so given to the spirits consist of blood on the ground or on the altar and blood poured out during sacrifice is life.

“Mmaa” or “Mmanwu” festival is a period the people of Nsukka reaffirm and sustain their beliefs in “Maa” or “mmanwu” as an agent of the supreme being. This is a time the people welcome and acknowledge the good things done for them by the “maa” or “Mmanwu” and a period during which gods are asked for more favours. This communication between the living and the dead points to the fact that the boundary between the living and the dead is thin. During the celebration of “Mmanwu” people make sacrifices to the ancestors and they pay libations by pouring out small amount of food to certain parts of the compound like the “Onu-Enyanwu”, or “Onu-Chi”, Onu-Ani, Onu-Okinye uzo, “Ulo-maa” for the spirit of the ancestors. The process of libation and giving of foods to the ancestors is to show a sign of fellowship, hospitality and respect, symbol of family continuity and contact and manifestation of filial love for the ancestors. In addition, the initiation into manhood as “mmanwu” or “maa” cult member is a renewal of fellowship with the ancestors and other non-human spirits, maintaining cordial relationship between the sacred and profane and reenactment of covenant with the deities.

### **Social Significance**

The festivals play a vital role in Nsukka and in Igboland as a whole. Festivals embrace a lot of people’s view, that is, its place in understanding of our life cannot be over-emphasized. To the people of Nsukka, festivals such as “mmanwu” or “Maa” give the entire families the opportunity to discuss their common interests. By and large, festivals help the people to sit down and put ideas together and think for the development of the town or community. It is during these festivals that

the people can declare environmental sanitation or total clean-up in their communities. Men are responsible for the clearing of the roads, pathways, village squares etc while women sweep everywhere including their sources of water supply "Ikpa-iyi" (stream or spring water etc). As a result of this, the communities are able to meet with high standard of environmental sanitation, and so, the communities, to a great extent, are always free from diseases such as cholera, dysentery and other epidemic and endemic diseases during any of these festivals.

During festivals, the sons-in-law visit their fathers-in-law precisely on "Umuada" day as majority of them accompany their wives to their fathers' houses on that day. Many daughters of Nsukka Area who are married to different places, both far and near visit their parents during festivals and thereby providing the people of Nsukka Area the opportunity to see their daughters and sons-in-law. Festivals also give members of the extended families the opportunity to come together and commune and caution themselves if there is any of them misbehaving. They also provide ground for different families to find out how their in-laws treat their daughters. Moreover, festivals are periods of reunion and settlement of disputes. They also create avenue for the people to interact and marry each other. Finally, festivals provide the people with the opportunity for maximum entertainment, masquerading, dances, eating and drinking etc that enhance happiness. They also enhance learning by giving each generation the opportunity to enjoy or share forefathers' cultural heritage.

### **Deities/Shrines**

The number of deities/shrines in Nsukka cultural area are numerous. Before the coming of the Christianity, these deities were used for protection of the people against evil ones as well as against criminal acts such as murder, adultery, theft to mention but a few. The strength of these deities is witnessed in Nsukka area when the above mentioned crimes are committed by the indigenes. Prominent among these deities are "Ojiyi" Aku, "Ohe" Nrobu, "Ogwudinama" Nkpologu, "Adoro" Alor, "Ehuru" Idoha, "Nnumu" Obukpa, "Asho" Nsukka, "Amanyi-Oba-Oshimiri" Orba, "Akpuru-Okwe" Ovoko, "Mkpume" Itchi, "Idenyi-Nkwo" Nru, "Ezugwu" Obimo, "Isi-Eke" Ugbene, "Emukpe" Ogbodu-Aba, "Nkakwu" Enugu-Ezike, "Odietemokeinyi" Edem etc. These deities have

shrines where the worships take place (see Fig. VI).



**Fig. vi:** Showing one of the deities shrine – Idenyi-NKWO Nru where worshipping takes place. The entrance of the shrine is tied with “Umu” leave as mark of sacredness and to avoid people entering anyhow without permission from the “Atama” chief priest. On the floor of the shrine are scattered feathers of fowl killed and used for sacrifices for the deity”.

These deities are worshipped by the “Atama” or “Onyishi” chief priest of the various communities. And some of them are associated with ceremonies. These ceremonies help to unite the indigenes of the various communities in Nsukka area and also to strengthen the deities in order to carry out their due functions. All are the mysterious, polytheistic deities of the Nsukka cultural area. The people of Nsukka cultural area believe in reincarnation. Most children are believed to be the reincarnation of these local deities. As a result of this, the people answer such names to identify the name sake; such as (a) *Nwiyi*, the son/daughter of a deity or a child of a deity, (b) *Iyikwu*, the great deity (feminine), *Iyidobu*, the great deity (masculine), *Eze-ugwu*, the king of hill, *Ugwuja*, small hill, *Ugwuanyi*, our own hill, *Oyima*, the friend of deity, *Omabe* (masquerade), *Odo*, (masquerade) *Manwu-maa*, (Masquerade knows, *Ezikeanyi*, *Ojiyi Agaba Urama*, the sacrifice of deity, *Ugwoke*, masculine hill, *Ezeugwu*, the king of hill, etc. these deities hold the same position in



the hierarchy of powers in the supernatural world. Before the inception of Christianity, anyone who breached the law of these deities (for example adultery) faces the wrath of the deities. These deities were active and continued to be useful until the advent of the Christianity.

### **Agents of Destruction of Cultural Material Objects:**

#### **Acculturation:**

Christian fanaticism and European culture (education) have affected almost all the aspects of African culture and this aspect has affected almost all that they have given way to it. This is because, some of the vast contribution of African traditional religion which had great values to the past generations and forbearers of Africans has today been clothed with Christian and European understone (Nwokolo, 2004:25). Aba (1998:42) in Madu 2007:21, states that "Christians see the ancestor worship and their material culture objects as devilish and need not to be acknowledged for any reason whatsoever". From this indication, it is understood that the hatred these Christians have on the traditional worship and its concomitant cultural material objects, has led to the destruction of the above mentioned material cultural objects of the people of Nsukka cultural Area. According to Okoye (2006:10) in Madu, 2007:21) "at every nook and cranny in Igboland, its indigenes are making bonfire of their priceless heritage due to religious iconoclasm which makes them to see and observe these traditions instituted by our originators as devilish and satanic needed to be destroyed by words of God, through the Christian – fanatics in the name that they are fetish.

Moreover, Aba (1998:42) in Madu 2007:21) stated that "the Christians refer to the traditional worshippers as devilish and do not want to see eye to eye with them and their material cultural objects for any good reason". There is no doubt from the above indication, that the negative intention and feeling the Christians have on the worshippers of traditional religion, obviously, pushed them into disorganizing the religion, and subsequent destruction of the material cultural objects associated with them.

Eke (2006:8) in Madu, 2007:25 asserted that, "at Umugoji village in Ajuona Orba Nsukka, the unrelenting Holy Ghost and physical fire was unleashed on the cultural materials in the village". According to him, it was a total operation wipe the cultural materials. Again, as he stated, "a shrine, gigantic in size, "Ekwe" was burnt with all the material cultural



objects which can fetch millions of dollars in antiquity marketed abroad. This similar incidence took place also in Edem Nsukka where Christian fanatics invading on great-shrines, masquerade and a host of others, the cultural material objects associated with these were burnt and destroyed. Precious masks and priceless cultural objects associated with the masquerades such as “ebune”, “esato” masquerade, “echaricha” masquerade, ‘Ogerenyi” masquerade to mention but a few were destroyed. These precious cultural objects being carved for such worship as well as these masks for the masquerades just went down to abyss like that (Ugwoke, 2008:23). Most of these cultural material objects were looted to Europe and America where they serve as tourist attraction, while some were carried to unknown places. Ironically, many of these cultural material objects that attract tourists (all over the world) to important museum overseas especially America and Europe originated from Nigeria, some were looted in days of slavery and afterwards colonization.

The advent of Christianity in Nsukka cultural Area literally meant a curse to the traditional religion and its concomitant cultural materials. Idowu, (1973:210) in Ugwoke, (2008:26) stated that it has been observed that in many parts of Igboland, traditional religion is fast dying away, and that what used to be shrines and centers of public worship have already been abandoned and almost swallowed up by bushes”. Many gods have gone into retreat. The reason being that the members are so few to maintain the walls of the shrines and priests or priestesses are sometimes not available because they have either reputed or gone to schools or learn new trade. When the available priests of these shrines die away, there are no priests to replace or succeed them. Again, most of the masquerade Abode “ulo-maa” or “Okiti” have become dilapidated and over grown by grasses.

In Nsukka Area, up till today, some prayer groups are consulted in most cases, by individual families to exorcise them of the evil spirit and as a result, it has resulted in the destruction of their cultural materials. Some even prophesied to them that these things are sources of their problems, no progress, no success and devil or abode of devil and make away for the confusion in the society.

### **Civilization/Modernization**

Civilization contributed immensely to the destruction and vandalization of material cultural objects in Nsukka cultural Area. Civilization which its off-shoot was urbanization with its concomitant effect of rural – urban migration started seeing material cultural objects as archaic, devilish and totally against the spirit of development in Nsukka Area.

However, it has been believed that civilization led to exposure where people, precisely Nsukka people, have been influenced by the Western doctrine mostly since the establishment of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, and they started seeing their own acquisition as being inferior to their masters own. Consequent to this was the abandonment of their old ways of doing things and tagged it archaic. On the other hand, urbanization where the cities were, more developed and organized caused a lot of trouble for rural areas. This was because the uneven development caused or triggered off rural-urban migration where the young able – bodied males and females were rushing up to the cities for greener pastures. Consequently, the traditional activities of the village or town were left under the care or detriment of older people. Furthermore, these traditional activities started dying away because the older people had none of the youths again to replace them in one role or the other they had played in the sustainability of those cultural practices and their related material cultural objects. As a result of the above, the cultural objects began to decay away in Nsukka cultural Area.

### **Social Changes**

Social changes in one way or the other contributed to the destruction of material cultural objects in Nsukka. This is because those who remained or stayed back in the village saw the wind of change blowing at every nook and cranny of the society. In that vein, they, the village dwellers started observing those culture, cultural practices and material cultural objects as archaic, devilish and totally against the spirit of development, progress and success. Thus, the resultant effect is the abandonment of the culture and its material cultural objects by the educated elite, who not condescend to take up any cultural position in the village. Rather, they would prefer staying in the cities to coming down to the village in order to participate in cultural activities.

### **Conclusion**

The cultural material objects in Nsukka cultural area have taken a rapid change. This is due to the cultural decline they experienced from the coming of christianity and its off-shoot – christian fanatics. The culture and cultural material objects of Nsukka cultural Area which attained their greatest heights before the intervention of Christianity have been pulled down from these heights and destroyed. This led to the gradual fading away of some cultural activities. For instance, numerous shrines with their deities which were full of philosophical meanings guiding the people and patterning their day to day activities were considered devilish, fetish and destroyed.

This is as a result of superiority/inferiority cultural conflict in Nsukka cultural area. Christians invaded Nsukka cultural area and met them culturally inferior, challenged their culture, condemned and destroyed whatever that was not socio-culturally beneficial to them (i.e the Christians). They claimed that some of these cultural activities were against their faith. These changes that have occurred in Nsukka cultural area have resulted in the condemnation, destruction and in the discarding of our cultural material objects. Most of our cultural material objects which were not destroyed have been neglected as a result of Christianity. It is pertinent for the contemporary Nsukka people to have a psychological analysis of their communities despite these upheavals.

Although some of the culture and material cultural objects have managed to survive this humiliation – condemnation and destruction from christianity or christians fanatics, but they are no longer as active as they used to be . Some cultural sacred abodes like masquerade abodes (Ulo-maa, Okiti, Ulo-Omabe), sacred grooves and shrines and other material cultural objects which have been known to be restricted to the unauthorized or uninitiated members of the society, and as taboo when interfered with in the past have been penetrated today without punishment nor sanctions from the appropriate traditional authorities (Madu, 2007:88).

There is no doubt that christianity, coupled with other factors like rural-urban migration, social change, civilization, modernization, climatic factors etc have compromised our culture. Our cultural material objects have been destroyed, discarded, thrown into abyss by changes that have occurred in the society. Our beliefs, norms and values have changed.

Culture, is one of the agencies of social harmony. No community can exist without culture, else, the community will be regarded as anti-social or irrational community. Therefore, culture being a complex whole should not be neglected. (Ugwoke, 2008:95). Since cultural material objects constitute the basic records of past human activities, protection and proper conservation of the cultural material objects is quite essential so that Anthropologist, Archaeologists and other schools will use them for the present and future generations. In this vein, there is the need for Nsukka people to embrace their culture because, it has gone a long way in maintaining a social harmony for Nsukka indigenes and also it is a part of their history. In view of the above, a man without culture, is a man without history and therefore he is no man, so also, a people without culture is like a people without history, identity and vision.

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## **ANTHROPONYMASTIC ANALYSIS OF MEANING IN IGBO NAMES**

**Okeke, Chukwuma O.**

### **Abstract**

*This paper explores the concept of meaning in the Igbo culture adopting the anthroponymastic analysis approach. The main objective of the paper is to investigate the key role which meaning plays in Igbo anthroponymastics with a view to conscientizing the Igbos on the need and importance of meaning in name giving. Information for the research paper was obtained using questionnaires, oral interviews and documented information. It is observed that Igbo anthroponymastics and meaning are two sides of the same coin and as such none of them should be ignored. Again, names are not mere tags, but labels that refer to a person based on the circumstances surrounding the person's birth or the society where he lives. The findings of the research show that most Igbos no longer consider meaning in name giving as a result of westernization. Children grow up and drop their Igbo names in preference to English names. This is more prominent among the youths. The paper recommends that parents and elders should endeavour to bear the meaning implications in mind in giving a child a name because the name forms a page in the life history of that child.*

### **Introduction**

The study of meaning falls within the branch of linguistics called semantics. Semantics as a level of linguistic analysis examines the meaning of words and sentences in various languages and cultures. The study of meaning is as old as man although according to Ndimele, (1997), it came to popular use about the first half of the 20th century. Meaning is not a stable phenomenon. An utterance can be interrupted in various ways depending on the speaker, the context and the bearer. That is why, Ndimele (1997: 2) says, "meaning is a chameleon, changing the colour of its effect with a change of speaker, hearer, context or setting."

When we look at meaning through the study of anthroponymastics, we will discover that a name has different meanings depending on the giver of the name and the circumstances surrounding

the birth of the child. Anthroponymastics as we know depends on the individual or people involved and the way they interpret events and feelings. In this respect, the Igbos see naming as an important instrument in communicating meanings with pieces of language. Anthroponymastics is therefore, valued so much in the Igbo culture and tradition. It is one of the backbones of their cultural belief. The Igbo do not give names without consultations and considerations; rather names are given by considering the settings, contexts and circumstances surrounding the child's birth. These factors help in deriving the appropriate meaning of a name. This, by implication means that the meaning of a person's name has a link with his historical background. What a child is and what his tomorrow will look like are embedded in his name. Names like *Kaanayochukwu* – *Let us be asking God*, *Kaanaelechi* – *Let us be looking up to God*, among others, show the Igbo man's expectations from the Supreme Being. Some names like *Chukwuemeka* – *God has done well*, *Chidiogo* – *God gives favour*, and *Chimdaalu* – *Thank you my Lord* are meant to show gratitude to God. Igbos see personal names as the identity of the bearer. Algeo (1999: 728) aptly points out that people are almost invariably named; and indeed a human being without a name will be socially and psychologically less than a full human. This is why according to Wieschoff (1941) an Igbo man cannot go without a name. They believe that names are not mere labels by which an individual may be distinguished. But they are associated with events in the life of the individual and that of the larger community. This view according to Ezeanya (1967) is contrary to the views of the westerners who attach little or no importance to the meaning of their names. Against this backdrop, the paper is divided into eight sections. The present section, which is the introduction, provides the introductory remarks to the study followed by sections two and three, which present a brief history of the Igbo people and the background to the study respectively. In section four, the researcher states the theoretical framework adopted in the work while the methodology used in data collection was presented in section five. Section six hinges on data presentation while section seven investigates the findings and deductions from the analysis of data. Finally, section eight of the paper summarizes, recommends and concludes the paper.

### **Brief History of the Igbo People**

The historical origin of the Igbos is not yet certain because of different views by the historians and archeologists. Isichei (1976:3) observes that "the first human inhabitants of Igbo land must have come from areas further north, possibly from the Niger confluence. But men have been living in Igbo land for at least 5,000 years, since the dawn of human history. One of the most notable facts of the Igbo history is its length and continuity." She notes further that "Igbo began to diverge from other related languages, such as Edo and Yoruba 4,600 years ago."

The Igbo language of course is the language spoken in Nigeria by people who are located predominantly in the south eastern part of Nigeria. The south eastern parts of Nigeria consist of five states that are known as the core Igbo-speaking states, which are: Enugu, Ebonyi, Imo, Abja and Anambra States. Igbo people can be seen in few numbers or settlements outside these states that speak the Igbo language. Some of these states are: Delta and Rivers States. According to the 2006 census, the Igbo population is estimated to be around 21 million, while the land area is about 15,800 square miles. They occupy the area between 5.8 degrees north and 6.8 degrees east. **Background to the Study**

According to Iwundu (1973), societies have different belief systems that determine the way they do things. This is because of people's different ways of conceptualizing a particular object. Thus, the choices of certain personal names are derived from our world view. The Igbo man is not an exception to this belief. This belief is embedded in his values, traditions and customs. A name is so much valued in the Igbo traditions that they do not believe that a name is just a group of letters or sounds put together by which a person may be identified. Rather, a name is an entity which interprets the bearer's life. His life style is determined by his name since the society expects him to live up to his name. The Igbos believe that the meaning of a person's name is derived from the interpretation of his life style. This is evident in such expressions as *Aha onye na-edu ya - One is being led by ones name.*

Another important factor in the determination of the choice of name is the speaker's experience. According to Iwundu (1973), the Igbo people view the world from a different perspectives and that is why in Igbo land we have practical experiences expressed through names like *Uwaebuka - The world is big, Uwabuolija - How do we manage the*

*world, Uwadjomimi - The world is mysterious, Uwabunkeonye - Is there anybody who owns the world?*

Our names also mirror the materialistic nature of our society. This is greatly evident with peoples' insatiable love for money and other material things. Thus, we have such names as;

*Akujiobi - may wealth mellow down my mind/wealth comforts the heart*

*Nwajiaku - a child holds wealth*

*Akubue - wealth makes one grow, among others.*

Therefore, Igbo personal names are not just labels; rather they reflect or verbalize attitudes or feelings of society. This paper therefore looks at the role which meaning plays in name giving, especially personal names. Other aspects of onomastics may come in but the study hinges on anthroponymastics. It explores how personal names are derived from the meaning or interpretation of different situations. This is because nowadays many Igbo families bestow names on children without considering their meanings. This has contributed to the loss of Igbo heritage and identity. It is the intention of this paper to re-conscientise the Igbo on the need to bear the meaning of a name in mind while choosing a name for the child, so as to preserve the rich cultural Igbo values and beliefs.

Based on this background information, the main objective of this paper is to study Igbo anthroponymastics as symbols whose referents can be seen in the bearer through the meaning. Ezeudu (2000) also shares the same view when he says that "Igbo names are sometimes loaded with very deep cultural bound meanings that reflect intricate family and/or personal experiences. Therefore, for this objective to be achieved, answers were provided for these research questions. In what way is the meaning of a name an essential element in naming in Igbo land? Does the Igbo society actually regard the meaning of a name to connote the bearer?"

### **Theoretical and Empirical Studies**

Anthroponymastics, which is the study of personal names, is a branch of onomastics which means the study of names. The concept of name is variously defined by many scholars. Duranti (1997:7) says that "names are universal cultural practice. Every society in the world gives

names as tags to its people, but how the names are given, the practices, and rituals involved and the interpretation attached to the names differ from society to society and from one culture to another." The *Wikipedia free encyclopedia* says that a name is a word or group of words that are used to identify an entity; while first names are names a child is given by his parents according to the general universal custom and legal requirements to fill a form of birth certificate.

On the other hand, 'anthroponomy' (personal names) according to *Wikipedia* is a Greek word made up of two words, 'anthropoids', meaning 'man' and 'onuma', meaning 'name'. Therefore, anthroponomy is the study of anthroponomy or personal names. Anthroponomy according to *Wikipedia* is divided into three, first names/given names, middle names and family names/surnames. In the words of Mills (1979), personal names are marks we connect to our minds with the idea of the object in order that whenever the mark meets our eyes or comes to our mind, we may think of that individual/object. Gardner (1954: 40) says that "a personal name is a word or group of words which is recognized as having identification as its specific purpose by means of its own distributive sound from the start or acquired by it through associations with the object thereby identified."

Pulgram (1947: 56) says that a personal name is "a noun used in a non-universal function with or without recognizable current lexical value of which the potential meaning combines with and never exceeds its actual meaning." *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1973: 12), which is more or less closer to the Igbo view of what personal names are, says that personal names are "words or groups of words used to refer to an individual, entity, real or imaginary. The name singles out the entity by directly pointing to it and not by specifying it as member of a class." Ezeanya (1967:131) makes it clear that "Igbo people never adopt the nonchalant attitude of what is in a name; a situation which is mostly noticed in the American and European societies." Igbo names like most African personal names have a high cultural content. They are not simply labels used as baggage tags for mere identification purposes. On this issue too, *Wikipedia* says that in some cultures, the relationship between first names and vocabulary words is transparent, that is, the names are just special uses of ordinary words. This is not the case for European names. It says that English names are mostly opaque. The meaning is not obvious. Therefore, parents choosing English names for their children

rarely do so because of the meaning of the name, but for reasons of polyphony or personality (the name reminds them of a relative, close friend or person in the public domain).

In his own view, Ernest (1947: 56) says that at times, “the names of children in a big family are a short account of the fortunes, tears, joy, hopes and aspirations of the family.” The personal names on the whole, personify the individual or point to the society into which the individual is born. The birth of a male child long expected and prayed for in the family is an event of great joy and satisfaction. The child may be named *Iheanachọ*, which literary means *the thing we’ve been searching for* or in its real meaning, *the family has eventually got what they have been praying for*, (which is the male child). The child could be named *Onyeibọ*, which means that *God has provided a partner for the man*.

A look at the individual in the context by which the Igbo people think of personal names shows that the meaning of our personal names is signaled by the structure of the language. The structure of our names means exactly what is said. It is not like Plato which is a mythological concept when it comes to its derivational history, (Bundyork, 2007). Different communities have various factors that determine the choice of a name. For example, according to *Wikipedia*, in Italy, the Roman Catholic Church has a pronounced influence on her naming pattern. However, a peculiarity of the first name in Italy is that they are usually gender-specific. Male names usually end in ‘o’, for instance Augusto, Enrico, Rachello, while female names usually end in ‘a’, example: Anna, Bianca, Amanda.

Hausa naming convention according to one of my respondents Jubril Agana, is largely influenced by Islam. Examples;

Adamu – *Adam*

Ibrahim – *Abraham*

Idris – *Isaac*

Fatimah – *Daughter of a prophet*

Onukawa (2000) posits that the ‘Chi’ religious concept affects Igbo naming convention. Examples;

Chukwuma – *God knows*

Chiamaka – *God is good*

Chukwunonso – *God is near*

Chidijmma – *God is good*

Chike – *God surpasses*  
Amarachukwu – *God's grace*  
Tochukwu – *Praise God*  
Uchechukwu – *God's wish/thought/concern*

In her explanation of the importance of names, Barbara Kingsolver in her book, *The Poisonwood Bible* cited by *Wikipedia* emphasizes the Congolese concept of 'momme' – "the force that the meaning of a name is so important in defining something", that a child is not said to be alive until he is named. Rhymes, (1996) also writes on the importance of meaning in a person's name. He says that the synchronic meaning of a person's name may or may not acquire a different diachronic meaning as the individual uses that name. This is the reason why some people add name(s) to their original name and some drop their original name for another name. For instance, George Orwell, according to Rymes, was formally named Eric Blair and he writes that it took him thirty years to work off the effect of being called Eric.

Rhymes (1996) further says that the meaning of one's name evolves through a life history imbued with a lot of transformations and may be intimately linked with the concern of an individual or society. The names are meant to shape the children's upbringing, behaviour and socialization.

Names can also be given based on the days of the week. *Wikipedia* writing on names of the days of the week sees them as a tradition of attaching personal names to each day of the week and celebrating the association of particular days with those of whom that day is named. The Igbos believe that one week is made up of four days named after the four market days of the people; which are Eke, Orië, Afọ and Nkwọ. Any child born is invariably born into one of these week days and he/she is named accordingly. Examples;

Mgbafo - *female child born on Afọ day*  
Nwaorie - *male child born on Orië day*  
Mgbankwo - *female child born on Nkwọ day*  
Nweke - *male child born on Eke day*

In Yoruba land, according to Ninyi (1980), there are names associated with twins, events and time. Examples;

Ibeji - Taiwo – *the one that came first*



Kehinde – *the one that came last*

Idowu – *the child that immediately follows the twins*

Alaba – *the child that follows Idowu (i.e. the second child after the twins).*

In relation to time and events they have such names like;

Biona – *born during a journey*

Abiodun – *born at the time of a festival*

Abidugun – *born before the war*

Abejide – *born during the rainy season*

The above examples agree with Isichei's (1976) synchronic and diachronic functions of names in Igbo. She avers that names represent certain events within a given period of time in the history of the people. Examples can be seen in some names given during and after the Nigerian Civil War. Igbo people used names to express their feelings and experiences of war. Examples;

*Ogwejiqfo* – *a just war*

*Aghadięgwu* – *war is terrible, among others*

It is evident from the above review that Igbo personal names are chosen with care, bearing the meaning in mind. This is in contrast to European names whose meanings are opaque. Igbo personal names are not randomly selected, but proper consultations are made before a name is given to a child. But the rich cultural values contained in Igbo names are fast fizzling out because of the negative attitude demonstrated by some Igbos. This is because **Ndi Igbo (Igbo people)** prefer foreign culture to the detriment of their own. Igbo people no longer bear Igbo names. That is why an Igbo girl will drop her Igbo name and take up Sandra (which means little green snakes), while others will pick up names whose meanings they do not know. This paper examines this lack of interest in bearing meaning in mind while giving a name.

### **Methodology**

This paper is a survey research which aims at getting first class information on personal names, their real meanings and the prevailing attitude to Igbo personal names. For this to be achieved, the explanations of the names were directed to the persons bearing the names and to the



parents and elderly people who were consulted during the naming ceremony in order to get this first-class information on the subject matter. The population of the study is the Igbo indigenes residing in Nsukka, which includes elders. The need to uncover the meaning of different personal names in Igbo and the factors responsible for the choice of such names necessitated the choice of the above population. The representative population was got using a clustered sampling method of the five major Igbo States residing in Nsukka. A total number of 200 respondents were selected to represent the entire population. Forty (40) respondents were selected from each cluster, literate and illiterate.

The main source of data was through unsaturated interviews and questionnaires. The writer interviewed relevant people and administered questionnaires to the respondents in an ethnographic field work among the Igbo people residing in Nsukka. The writer also applied his own knowledge as an Igbo man in addition to library research. Analysis of data obtained is made based on different aspects of meaning and Igbo man's philosophical view of the world. The figures were processed, results interpreted and the findings stated.

#### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 1:** Characteristics of the Respondents

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	120	60
	Female	80	40
<b>Marital status</b>	Married	140	70
	Single	60	30
<b>Age</b>	Less than 30	20	10
	31-40	40	20
	41-50	43	21.5
	51-60	47	23.5
	60 and above	50	25
<b>Educational level</b>	Primary	50	25
	Secondary	70	35
	Tertiary	80	40

The result shows that a greater proportion (60%) were males while the rest (40%) were females. Again, a greater proportion, (25%) of the respondents falls within the age range of 60 years and above while the least (10%) were less than 30 years. In addition, the majority (70%) were married. In relation to the level of education, the majority (40%) attained tertiary education.

**Table 2:** Responses of the Respondents as Regards their Attitude in Considering Igbo Name and meaning in Name Giving

S/No	Items	Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
1	Do you bear Igbo names?	Yes	120	60
		No	80	40
2	If yes, do you make use of it?	Yes	70	58.3
		No	50	41.7
3	Do you like telling people your Igbo name?	Yes	45	37.5
		No	75	62.5
4	On what occasion(s) do you use your Igbo name?	Official	30	25
		Non-official	90	75
5	Do you know the meaning of your Igbo name?	Yes	15	12.5
		No	105	87.5
6	Do you have English as well as Igbo names?	Yes	100	83.3
		No	20	16.7
7	If yes, which of the two do you like using?	English	80	80
		Igbo	20	20
8	As a father/mother, do you consider meaning when giving your children Igbo names?	Yes	96	48
		No	104	52
9	Did you change your Igbo name to English name when you grew up?	Yes	90	75
		No	30	25

10	If yes, why did you change it?			
11	Is the change of Igbo names to English names more among the youths or among the elders?	Youths Elders	135 65	67.5 32.5
12	If it is more among the youths, is the incidence of change more among males or females	Male Female	45 90	33.4 66.6

Table 2 above shows the distribution of the respondents on their responses to the questions raised in the paper. The total number of respondents is 200 but it is not the base number for all the questions. There are some questions that are follow-ups to the preceding ones. The distribution of such subsequent question is realized with respect to the number of respondents that responded either positively or negatively to the preceding question. Example: The frequency and percentage of respondents to question 2 in the Table were derived from the number of respondents (120) that responded positively to question 1 and not from the total number of respondents (200) used in the research.

The result in Table 2 above shows that among those who were given questionnaire, majority (60%) of the respondents bear Igbo names while 40% do not bear Igbo names. Also, out of the 120 respondents that bear Igbo names, only 41.9% use their Igbo name while the higher percentage (58.3%) do not use their Igbo names. In addition, majority (62.5%) were not affirmative that they love telling people their Igbo names while the lower percentage (37.5%) like telling people their Igbo names. Furthermore, only 25% which is the lower percentage, use their Igbo names in official quarters, while majority (75%) use their Igbo name in non-official settings; showing that less importance is attached to these Igbo names. Consequently, 15 respondents (12.5%) out of 120 respondents that bear Igbo names know the meanings of their Igbo names while majority (105) of the respondents representing (87.5%) of the entire population do not know the meanings of their names. Again, majority (83.3%) of the respondents agree that they have English as well

as Igbo names. Out of the 100 respondents that have English names as well as Igbo names, only the lower percentage (20%) like using their Igbo names, while the higher percentage (80%) do not like using their Igbo names. With regard to whether parents consider meaning before giving a child a name, majority (52%) do not consider meaning before giving a name, while the lower percentage (48%) consider meaning before giving a child a name. Also, the higher percentage (75%) out of the 120 respondents that bear Igbo names indicated that they changed their Igbo name to English names when they grew up, while only (25%) did not change their names. Furthermore, the 90 respondents that indicated that they changed their Igbo names to English names gave the following reasons for the change(s);

- i. I do not like Igbo names.
- ii. I do not like how it sounds.
- iii. It is my grandfather's name.
- iv. The name is a village name.
- v. I am ashamed of it, etc.

On the issue of whether the change of Igbo names to English names is more among the youths or the elders, the majority (67.5%) were on the affirmative that it is more among the youths while (32.5%) believe the contrary. Finally, among the 135 respondents that said that youths are more vulnerable to the change, the higher percentage (66.6%) indicated that the change is more among females.

### **Findings and Deductions**

The result of the findings shows that majority of Igbo people in Nsukka bear Igbo names. But majority of those that have Igbo names do not make use of the names. They do not know the meanings of their Igbo names because they do not like telling people the Igbo name, neither do they use the names in official settings. What can be deduced from this is that it is only their close friends and relations that call them by their Igbo names. This is because they do not know the meanings of these names (Table 2, item 5), but they just want to be associated with foreign names. The findings also reveal that many parents do not even consider meaning while bestowing Igbo names on their children. It was also deduced that majority of the children grow up to change their Igbo names to English names because they dislike being associated with Igbo names among

other reasons. This phenomenon is more among the youths, especially females.

### **Igbo Names Based on Connotative Meaning**

According to Iwundu (1973), among the names which carry historical information are those that give clues to the background history of the referent's family. Such names are associated with real world experiences of the giver of the names. This belief is also in line with the responses of the interviewed respondents.

**Table 3: Igbo Connotative Names and their Meanings**

S/No	Circumstances	Names
1	Born during the war.	<i>Oguelina</i> – Let war not swallow <i>Aghadięgwu</i> – War is terrible <i>Ogęęgbunam</i> – May I not die in the war <i>Ogęęjięfo</i> – Just war
2	Case of death in the family.	<i>Onwųghalų</i> – Death, please pardon us <i>Onwųbiko</i> – Death, please <i>Onwųdįajęoke</i> – Death is very discriminating
3	Period of childlessness in marriage.	<i>Onyęibę</i> – A companion <i>Amaęchina</i> – The lineage will be extinct <i>Onyękwere</i> – We believed?
4	When parents are not expecting a child.	<i>Atųanya</i> – We never expected it. <i>Eyiuche</i> – Unexpected <i>Nwanka</i> – A child burn in old age
5	When the woman is suffering under the husband and his people.	<i>Amamųęnwa</i> – Do I know the joy of a child <i>Uchemdiya</i> – I am aware of what is happening <i>Ayaenineenu</i> – Will he be buried in the sky?

According to Nze (1984), Igbo names portray the personal real world experiences of the bearer. The above names are typical examples of such personal experiences. For instance, *Ayaenineenu* – 'Will he be

buried in the sky?', according to Mrs. Oğugua Nwaku, who is one of the respondents; is a name she gave to one of her children. According to her story, when her husband died, a portion of land belonging to them was mapped out for his burial. But the kindred refused that he would be buried on that piece of land. She was pregnant during the time of her husband's demise. When the information about the kindred's refusal to bury her husband on that piece of land got to her, she had premature labour. She was rushed to the hospital and she gave birth to a boy. In order to remember the incident, she gave the child the name *Ayaenineenu* – *Will he be buried in the sky?*

Also, a family that had experienced child birth only to females, and wished that there should be a gender mix may also reflect it when a male child is finally comes. Examples of such names from the respondents are; *Nwokeabia* – a male child has finally come.

*Onochie* – he has come to replace

*Okeruo* – he has got his own share (i.e. a male child. This is because things are shared among males and not females in most Igbo cultures).

In families where series of child deaths are experienced, there are also names that reflect man's helplessness in the hands of death as we saw in Table 3, but such names like *Nwaofia*, - child of the forest, *Nwakwuana* – a child for termites, *Anabido* – if I come back and met him alive, according to Mr. Nelson Onuora are given in cases where the families of the bearers have suffered cases of child death, that they naturally expected the bearers to die and be buried to be eaten by termites or thrown into the forest as their older siblings, but they survived. In *Anabido*, the mother is not optimistic that she will come back and meet the child alive. If eventually she comes back and meets the child alive, it shows that the gods have been merciful to her.

### **Igbo Names Based on Collective Meanings**

These are Igbo names which are based on habitual co-occurrence of individuals, things, entities and characteristics. The meaning of such names is conveyed depending on the company the bearer's family keep or based on certain characteristics of the family or based on their life pattern. There are certain qualities which parents may discover in their children at birth. During naming, they name the child according to these qualities. There are also certain qualities, characteristics or features

which friends and relations may discover in a child's parents and when those parents give birth, they bestow names based on the parents' qualities, features or characteristics. Examples from the respondents are:

**Omenudo** – *He applies peace in doing things*

**Nwandundu** – *He/she is plump and short*

**Akwaugo** – *Eagle's egg (Something very precious and beautiful)*

**Egooyibo** – *White man's money*

**Anyanwu** – *Sun (Something very beautiful)*

**Ikenna** – *Father's strength*

**Ezinne** – *Good mother*

The above names also have code definitive description. In some cases the definite description of such names is rendered not directly but by the use of appropriate metaphors. Hence we have such names as:

Ego + Oyibo = Egooyibo – *White man's money (rich)*

Akwa + Ugo = Akwaugo – *Eagle's egg (precious and beautiful)*

Ezi + Nne = Ezinne – *Good mother (epitome of everything good in a mother)*

The point to note about these names is that they illustrate cases in which naming involves definitive description. It is such definitive description that ensures successful identification of the referent. The referent must necessarily fit the attested qualities inherent in the particular personal name. It would for instance be a misnomer for an ugly Igbo girl in the Igbo culture to be referred to as "Akwaugo" given the meaning of the name; something very beautiful and precious.

### **Igbo Names according to the Igbo Man's Philosophical View of the World**

According to Ene (2000), Igbo personal names portray their experiences as a nation, their social sophistication, loyalty to their traditional values and trends and religiosity. Chief Odebatu Patrick, one of the respondents interviewed says that the Igbo man's philosophy about life is reflected in certain names they bear. Examples;

**Ndudi** – *If there is life*

**Igwebuiké** – *Majority is power*

**Onyemaechi** – *Who knows tomorrow?*

**Uyónwa** – *The cry (especially of a child) is limitless*

**Aghaebita** – *War will not stop today*

**Anasjudu** – You can't remove one's aura from him  
**Chidoomebube** – Let God give me his aura  
**Onuoha** – People's mouth  
**Ekwutosi** – Stop condemning  
**Ijenwa** – Things passed through because of a child  
**Gbanite** – Raise up

These names tell us about the Igbo man's life and his relationship with God and fellow man. For example: **Aghaebita** shows that man waging war against his fellow man did not start today and will also not stop today. It has been and will continue to be (the full form of the name is **Aghaebitaata**). Other names that show that from time to time men always clash with one another in the society according to Joseph Ahurukwe are: **Umunnakwe** – *If the kindred will let me be*  
**Ilokanunọ** - *Hatred is more in the house*

The above names show the effect of living together in a society. There is bound to be strife and this reflects on the names people bear. **Igwebuike** shows that the Igbo man believes in unity and togetherness. They so much believe that a tree cannot make up a forest. This makes them to be in unity with one voice. The name **Gbanite** according to Pius Ugwuanyi is seen in families where men are impotent. The full name is **Amu Gbanite** – *let the penis be erect*. They believe that when the penis attains full erection it can impregnate a woman and conception will occur.

## **8. Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion**

This paper has explored meaning using the anthroponymastic approach. Igbo personal names as we have observed from the data analysis are imbued with meaning. They narrate things or circumstances in the life of the bearer or his family. But it may rightly be said equally that Igbo personal names are relative. This means that over and over, the object which it denotes implies in its signification the existence of something else in another circumstance. The analysis also revealed that Igbo personal names are qualitatives, which identify many particulars that make up the community. Around every Igbo man, therefore, is a particular historical framework and the name he receives must fit into this construction and circumstances surrounding his birth. In other words, every Igbo man is a landmark in the history of his family, his name being



his stronghold. This is what makes it foolish and senseless for the Igbo man or woman not to consider meaning in bestowing a name on a child, or for him/her to change his/her name. This is because one cannot retrieve or change the history around one's birth which is a one-time event.

Therefore, parents and elders should endeavour to give their wards Igbo names, especially names with the meaning of circumstances and situations of their life. This is because the name forms a page in the life history of that child. It is the face by which any Igbo man is known, (Maduabum, 2008). Names play an important role in shaping the behaviour of the individual. There is always an aspect of the bearer's life that his name points at. It could be his history, present, past or even his future.

However, this work has just opened another direction for more researches. It is believed that more of such works will go a long way in safeguarding the Igbo cultural value, making Igbo personal names to be better understood and appreciated and conscientize the Igbo people on the need to embrace their own.

## References

### Primary Sources

S/No	Names of respondents	Age last Birthday	Occupation	Date interviewed
1	Ogugua, Nwaku	48	Retired farmer	12 – 9 – 2008
2	Oñuora, Nelson	92	Retired civil servant	15 – 10 – 2008
3	Odebatu, Patrick	76	Self employed	15 – 10 – 2008
4	Ahuruwe, Joseph	63	Trader	17 – 2 – 2009
5	Ugwuanyi, Pius	54	Civil servant	19 – 2 – 2009
6	Jubril, Agana	81	Cattle Rearer	15 – 2 - 2009

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## **KILLING OF CORPS MEMBERS ON ELECTION DUTIES: WERE THE ASSAILANTS OBEYING ORDERS?**

**Philip C. Mefoh, PhD**

### **Abstract**

*Following the 16 April 2011 post presidential election violence in Nigeria, some opinion leaders argued that the violence was an off-shoot of a subtle appeal by one of the aspirants for his supporters to reject the result of the election on the premise that it might be rigged. This belief prompts a re-examination of the question about blind obedience, and the Milgram's obedience study was the best example in literature about blind obedience. The Milgram obedience research was an attempt to explain the conditions and causes for people's willingness to administer physical pain and inflict punishment (even murder) upon others from a superior in an organizational hierarchy. The problem which this paper addressed was whether the assailants really obeyed the aspirant's order? It was explained that while Milgram's participants may have been deemed to obey the explicit commands of the experimenter, the assailants' attack on the youth corps members was perceived to be borne out of prejudice and discrimination. Thus, contrary to the view that the violence was spontaneous; it was argued that the factors that precipitated the violence were brewed long before the aspirant made that uncomplimentary remark. The paper concludes that to reduce the level of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria, societal beliefs must change and new beliefs that are consistent with peaceful relationship developed.*

**Key Words:** Corps member, Obedience, Election, Adolf Eichmann, Stanley Milgram.

Electoral violence in Nigerian political life can hardly be described as nascent. With about 250 ethnic groups and several religious organizations, distributing power among the component Nigerian groups has remained a serious problem. This has consistently led to contentions, crises and upheavals that oftentimes threaten the very foundation of the state (Alabi, 2011). The Human Rights Watch reported that following the disputed presidential election of 16 April 2011, Nigeria was plunged into

violence which, in only 3 days, claimed the lives of 800 people and led to the displacement of 65 000 others (Dufka, 2011). Like many electoral violence before it, the unrest deepened and widened primordial suspicions and flamed mutual hatred among the ethnic and religious groups. This was more so when no fewer than 10 youth corps members (fresh university graduates, who were doing one year national service) were unprecedentedly killed in the violence in northern Nigeria.

The fate of those unfortunate corps members slain during the April 2011 elections ignited a national discourse that considered the utility of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme as an instrument for national orientation. The NYSC scheme was established to, among other things, develop common ties among Nigerian youths, promote national unity and integration and develop a sense of corporate existence and common destiny of the Nigerian people. It was therefore particularly disheartening that youth corps members were caught in the violence. One outcome of that debate was the question about what really caused the violence? Though there were several probable hypotheses as to what might have caused the violence, but one that seemed to require investigation was the allegation that the violence was a consequence of an unguarded remark made by one of the presidential aspirants in the election. The aspirant (Retired General Mohammadu Buhari), after casting his vote for the presidential election, accused the ruling party of plotting to rig the result of the election. The aspirant claimed that ballot papers meant for election rigging were transported by air throughout the night to designated state government houses in several states across the country. Opinion leaders, especially from the predominantly Christian south, frowned at the allegation as capable of fanning the embers of ethnic disunity, religious bigotry, and political intolerance. They interpreted the accusation as the aspirant's subtle invitation to his supporters to take laws into their hands should the outcome of the election fail to favour his party. Proponents of this view believed that obedience to a religious and/or political authority figure was a fairly strong social norm among the youths of northern Nigeria. The northern youths had a tendency to be very submissive and obedient toward those with more authority and very harsh and demanding toward those with less authority (Ikejiani-Clark, 2001). They obey an authority especially if they considered that authority figure to be sympathetic to their cause. As a distinguished northern leader and former military head of state, the

aspirant meets this criterion and is held in very high esteem by the average northern youth.

This hypothesis prompts a re-examination of the question about blind obedience. The Milgram's obedience experiment remained the best in social psychological literature about blind obedience. The obedience studies have maintained its grip on the field of psychology because of their implications for understanding the worst of human behaviours, such as atrocities, massacres, and genocides. The experiment (sometimes called the Eichmann experiment) was named after Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi war criminal, whose response, 'I was only obeying orders' was not deemed sufficient excuse to acquit him for the systematic murder of the European Jewry. This paper contrast the behavioural responses of participants in the Milgram's obedience experiment with those of the 20 suspects charged for the murder of 7 youth corps members on election duties in a magistrate court in Giade, Bauchi state, Nigeria. The Nigeria nation is traumatized; and there is need to understand the conditions and causes for the mindless blood letting of April 2011. Thus, the objective of this paper was to determine whether the assailants actually obeyed the order of the aspirant as alleged by opinion leaders.

### **Milgram's Obedience Paradigm**

The obedience study most researchers are familiar with was Experiment 5 and, it was the prototype described below. The study composed 40 male participants who were aged between 20 and 50 years, from all walks of life. Each experimental session consisted of a naive participant, a confederate, and an experimenter. When a participant arrived, the experimenter explained that the experiment was concerned with the effect of punishment on learning. The participants drew slips of paper from a hat to determine who was to appear in which role. In actuality, the drawing was rigged so that the naive participant always became the 'teacher' and the confederate became the 'learner' in the experiment. The learner was led to an adjoining room and strapped into a chair that was wired to an electric shock machine.

The teacher sat in front of a shock machine; his task was to read a list of paired-associate words (e.g., 'blue - girl', 'nice - day', 'fat - neck') to the learner and later test him on the list by presenting a stimulus and 4 distracters, one of which was correct. The learner was required to pick the correct response from among the 4 alternatives, if he gave a

wrong answer; the teacher was instructed to give him (learner) an electric shock by pressing a switch on the shock machine. The shock machine had clearly marked voltage levels that run from 15 to 450 volts. The teacher was to increase the amount of shock by 15 volts higher than the one before every time the learner made an error. In actuality, the shock was simulated and the learner (an accomplice of the experimenter) only pretended to feel shock. The teacher was not aware of the hoax though, he received shock from the 45 volt switch prior to the study to convince him that the shock machine was real. From the beginning, the learner made errors and the participant (i.e., the teacher) administered ever increasing electric shocks.

The confederate was out of sight of the naive participant, but he could be heard. His responses were standardized on tape. 'Starting with 75 volts, the learner began to grunt and moan. At 150 volts, he demanded to be let out of the experiment. At 180 volts, he cried out that he can no longer stand the pain. At 300 volts, he refused to provide any more answer. The experimenter (then) instructs the naive participant to treat the absence of an answer as equivalent to a wrong call and to follow the usual shock procedure (Milgram, 1965a). Whenever the participant seemed unwilling to continue, the experimenter had a series of statements that the participant was to obey. The first was rather gentle, 'Please go on'. Next was, 'the experiment requires that you continue'. Another was, 'it's absolutely essential that you continue'. Finally, the experimenter said, 'you have no other choice, you must go on'. There were also special prods to reassure the participant that he was not doing the learner any permanent harm: 'although the shock may be painful there is no permanent tissue damage, so please go on' (Milgram, 1963). The result showed that of the 40 participants tested in the obedience studies, 26 of them, representing 65% went all the way and gave the learner the full series of shock. The other 14 participants broke off the experiment by refusing to continue at or after the 300-volts level.

### **Conditions Encouraging Obedience**

The Milgram obedience studies produced a level of obedience that no one had predicted. Prior to conducting the obedience studies, Milgram described to 14 college students and 40 psychiatrists the basic procedure used in the study. When they were asked to predict the result, they predicted that on the average, most people would stop at 135 volts,

and that nobody would deliver the ultimate punishment. The actual study showed that just the opposite was true; all the participants originally tested in the study exceeded the predicted 135 volt level. In fact, 26 out of the 40 participants (65%) gave the learner the full series of shocks. The remaining 14 participants refused to continue at or after they had reached the 300 volt level. People generally assume that a war criminal, like Adolf Eichmann, was an inhuman monster, yet atrocities (murder, rape, kidnap, terrorism, etc) continue to occur. The obedience research showed that it does not take evil or aberrant person to carry out actions that are reprehensible and cruel. Unless there was reason to believe that Milgram's participants are especially heartless and cruel, or unusually obedient, the study suggests that most people would probably obey if they found themselves in similar situation. In fact, according to Benjamin and Simpson (2009), the Milgram's obedience studies revealed the truth about human nature that most people do not want to acknowledge – that the capacity for evil resides in everyone and awaited only the right circumstances to make its appearance. Milgram developed many variations of his basic procedure to determine why the obedience levels were so high. Some features of the situation that probably contributed to the high rates of obedience, include:

#### **The perception of legitimate authority**

That participants showed a dramatically high level of obedience even when the experimenter had no real power over them was quite fascinating. What was it about the experimenter that enabled him to achieve that level of compliance? Perhaps, the participants obeyed the experimenter's orders because they considered him an authority, and humans have a powerful propensity to obey authority (Blass, 2009). In Milgram's research, the experimenter was granted the legitimacy of an authority by the virtue of his association with Yale University. Presumably, this well-known institution would not allow its premises to be used for shady purposes. Also, the experimenter wore a white laboratory coat, which was a visible symbol of a scientist/researcher. Bickman (1974) demonstrated the impact of such visible symbol. When people were told by a stooge wearing a guard's uniform to pick a paper bag, obedience was higher (80%) than when the order was given by a stooge in civilian clothes (40%). Similarly, a substantial proportion of participants did shock the victim when they were asked to do so because



they perceived that the command came from a legitimate authority. When people accept the legitimacy of an authority, certain internal changes take place that makes destructive obedience possible. Milgram (1965b) stated that, 'men who are in everyday life responsible and decent were seduced by the trappings of authority, by the control of their perceptions, and by the uncritical acceptance of the experimenter's definition of the situation, into performing harsh acts (p.74). In variation 10 (institutional context), many participants reported that they continued delivering the shock because the research was conducted at Yale University (Milgram, 1974). The level of compliance obtained was higher (65%) when the experimenter was associated with this prestigious institution. The proportion of obedience reduced (45%) when the experiment was repeated similar to the original in most details, except that it was done in a sleazy office building.

### **Personal Responsibility**

The result of Milgram's experiment pointed to diffusion of responsibility as a possible reason for the high level of the obedience result. That is, a mediating factor that probably made Milgram's participants to continue shocking the learner was their entry into the 'agentic state', the main feature of which was a shift in responsibility from the follower to the leader. Indeed, Milgram's participants asked about responsibility, and the experimenter specifically stated that he himself was responsible for any harm to the learner (Burger, 2009). Thus, obedience to the experimenter's command was predicated on the participant's shedding of responsibility and handing it over to the authority in charge. Indeed, when Milgram's participants were compared with defiants, the participants hold on to a smaller percentage of responsibility and relinquished a greater amount to the experimenter than did defiants. As the experimenter pledged to bear responsibility for harm to the learner, participants took the 'just following order' position in explaining why they continued the shock. In one of Milgram's variations (Experiment 18), obedience rose to 92.5% because the participant presumably attributed responsibility for hurting the learner to the person who actually pressed the switch. However, when participants are told that they are responsible for what happens, obedience was sharply reduced (Hamilton, 1978)

### **Distance and surveillance effects**

Milgram systematically varied the psychological and physical distances between the teacher and the learner. In the original procedure, the teacher and the learner were in adjacent rooms and they could not see one another. But in the proximity condition (variation 3), the teacher and the learner were in the same room. Obedience level under the proximity condition dropped to 40%. That is, as distance was reduced, so was the degree of obedience. In the touch proximity condition (variation 4), in which the teacher had to place the learner's hand on to the shock plate for him to receive shock, obedience further slid to 30%. Obedience was significantly reduced as the victim was rendered more immediate to the subject (Milgram, 1974). Similarly, in remote authority condition (variation 7), obedience level decreased. When the experimenter left the room (having first given the essential instructions), and gave subsequent instructions by telephone, obedience level dropped to 20.5%. In this variation, participants often pretended to deliver shock or delivered one lower than they were asked to. There was indeed a conflict in the obedience experiment, the conflict was between the conscience and the experimenter's instructions, so when the experimenter left the room, it was easier for them to follow their conscience.

### **Witnessing defiance**

The obedience experiment was novel in many ways, and most of the participants had never witnessed that situation before. In fact, some participants reported they did not realize they could disobey the experimenter until they saw someone else do it. Thus, the peer rebel condition (variation 17) was indeed very revelatory – it showed how powerful the effect of *witnessing* defiance to social pressure was. In that variation, the experimenter increased the number of teachers to 3. The drawing of roles was rigged, so that the real participant was assigned the role of teacher 3. Teacher 1 (a confederate) read the word pairs, teacher 2 (another confederate) announced whether the answer was right, and teacher 3 (the real participant) administered the shock. After hearing the learner's protest following 150 volt shock, teacher 1 dramatically refused to participate and moved to the other side of the room. The test continued, until teacher 2 also refused to continue at the 210 volt level. At that point, the experimenter told the real participant to continue the study by himself. The result of the manipulation showed that there was

only 10% obedience. About 7.5% of the participants refused to go on as soon as teacher 1 quitted, 30% refused to continue immediately after teacher 2 quitted. These results meant that seeing other participants disobey showed that it was possible to disobey, as well as how to disobey.

### **Obedience Experiment Versus The Assailants**

One of the initial surprises of Milgram's obedience studies was the extraordinary tension generated by the experimental procedure. Profuse sweating, trembling, and stuttering were typical expressions of this emotional disturbance. At one point, a participant complained, 'oh God, let's stop it' (Milgram, 1963), but the experimenter firmly repeated his commands: 'please continue', 'the experiment requires that you continue', 'it's absolutely essential that you continue', 'you have no other choice, you must go on'. The exceptional distress experienced by Milgram's participants was indeed quite significant. It showed that the participants were not sadistic and/or cruel torturers. Most participants were visibly tormented by the experience of shocking an innocent person. The 26 participants who reached the 450 volt level did not willingly go to that level, but instead they continually argued with the experimenter (Twenge, 2009). The participants explicitly inquired about responsibility and the experimenter specifically informed them that he was responsible for any harm to the learner. The participants seemed therefore to follow the experimenter's order because the experimenter acted as if nothing was wrong and continually reassured them that the shocks were not dangerous and continuing with the procedure was appropriate.

Increasing the proximity to the victim, reducing the proximity of the experimenter and having the social support of rebel fellow teachers all reduced obedience. The different variations of Milgram's obedience research were to show how obedience was responsive to modifications in the immediate situation, and the aforementioned variations demonstrated that Milgram's participants were unwilling to inflict severe pain on a stranger. In the experimenter absent variation, participants pretended to deliver shocks or delivered one lower than they were asked to. Indeed, they were trying to compromise between their conscience and the commands of the experimenter. The touch proximity condition, in which the teacher had to press the learner's hand to receive shock, generated a low level of obedience - an indication that the participants were moved

by the pleas of the learner. In real life combat with an enemy, studies (e.g., Padgett, 1986) had shown that soldiers either do not fire their rifles or do not aim them properly at their victims at close range. Also, that obedience increased with having someone else deliver the shock further demonstrates that, had the participants been given any choice, they would opt not to administer increasing punishment to a victim.

Milgram (1974) argued that participants' willingness to continue shocking the victim was not about aggression but about conformity. Milgram was probably correct, but can a similar statement be made about those who murdered the youth corps members? Not likely. This was because the perpetrators committed the act without any show of emotional remorse. Due to increased exposure to media violence, it was possible that the killing of the corps members was partially based on desensitization to violence and aggression seen in the media (Carnegery, Anderson, & Bushman 2007). However, more than exposure to media violence was the role of culture. The behavior of every human being is potentially determined by a web of complex social and cultural influences. Despite that personality traits and situational variables had dominated obedience studies (e.g. Mischel & Shoda, 1995), research had shown that people are capable of learning prejudice and discrimination on the basis of identification and information and reinforcement provided by parents and peers. The assailants deliberately targeted the youth corps members because they were members of an 'out-group' in terms of tribe and religious beliefs. This widespread societal belief plays a role in prolonged ethnic conflicts and 'once formed, they become incorporated into ethos and are reflected in the group's language, stereotypes, images, myths, and collective memories' (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). The youth corps members were tagged infidels by their assailants, and they rationalized their killings as a necessary thing to do.

How does this cultural attitude develop? Many Nigerian leaders engage in politics of religion and tribal sentiments. Propaganda plays a significant role by painting opponents in the most negative fashion possible, thus perpetuating stereotypes and prejudice. These leaders indoctrinate their followers to believe that unless someone shares the same faith, such a person should not be seen as one of their own, and must not be supported to political office. This kind of diversionary politics breeds a swelter of resentment against the tribe and/or religion of one powerful politician against that of his or her opponent. The fanatical

attitude is sustained as individual behaviour conform to that of his or her significant others, and is unconsciously handed down to the younger generation so that the prejudice is continued. Like in the case of Adolf Eichmann, the killing of seven corps members on election duties cannot be explained with the excuse, 'we are only obeying orders'.

The violence that erupted following the release of the result of April 2011 presidential election in Nigeria seemed to have been orchestrated long before that aspirant made the controversial remark. In other words, the factors that precipitated the violence were a symptom of deep-rooted centrifugal factors ingrained in the Nigerian society. There was no single reason for the conflict; there was ethnocentrism, social injustice, political oppression, ignorance and denial. Perhaps the reason why the aspirant's remark was implicated was because the violence started in the north, where the aspirant has strong support. But why is northern Nigeria very volatile? Many people have argued that the incredible level of poverty, ignorance, denial and selfishness of many northern leaders was the cause of frequent political and ethno-religious crisis in the zone (Offoaro, 2011). Though the bulk of the north lives in penury, there was absolutely no justifiable excuse for the wretchedness. In about 52 years of Nigeria's independence, the north controlled political power for 38 years, of the 36 states in the country, the north has 19. It also has more local government areas and therefore more representation in the National Assembly than any other region in the country. These imbalances in the federal structure have given the north an edge over other regions; as the leadership of the north always votes in bloc on national issues.

Despite this advantage, successive sectarian and political violence begins in the north. It follows that attempt to build peace cannot address only structural problem, but must include important psychological processes. Concerted efforts must be made to increase tolerance and improve intergroup relations while also developing new, nonviolent means of resolving conflicts (Mays, Bullock, Rosenzweig, and Wessells, 1998; Smith, 1998).

### **Conclusion**

This essay reexamined the question about blind obedience; it compared the responses of Milgram's participants with those of the 20 assailants accused of slaying the youth corps members on election duties.

The objective of the study was to provide answer to the question: were the assailants obeying order? Evaluation of responses made by Milgram's participants on the several variations of the obedience experiment suggested that the participants were torn between doing what the experimenter asked them and not wanting to hurt the learner. Although the capacity of Milgram's participants to inflict pains on the learner was extremely high, the participants were fundamentally and increasingly opposed to the orders of the experimenter. The experiment generated moral conflict that motivated the participants to 'find a way out' or to defy the experimenter's command at the slightest excuse. Numerous variations in fact resulted in far less obedience, for example, the 'touch proximity' and the 'experimenter absent' variations. Though Ross (1988) suggested that there was really no precise explanation for why participants behaved as they did in Milgram's experiments, in the discussion of Milgram's obedience studies today, it is the high rates of total obedience and the ethics of research that dominate (Benjamin & Simpson, 2009).

In contrast, the assailants' jubilant disposition revealed absence of guilt in emotional expression. Research has shown that traits, such as, absent of guilt, failure to show empathy, use of others for one's own gain and poverty in emotional expression (generally known as callous-unemotional traits), significantly mediated conduct problem severity and aggression in adolescence (Frick & Dickens, 2006). The Nigerian culture socializes individuals to obey certain authority figures, like the police. Unfortunately, the assailants appeared not to have respect for constituted authorities. The police officer that prosecuted the 20 assailants in Bauchi state, Nigeria, told the magistrate that, 'they conspired, attacked and macheted 7 corps members, one police woman and 2 businessmen to death' (Tsenzughul, May 2011). These acts truly are no acts of obedience. In the 'touch-proximity' and 'experimenter's absent' conditions, Milgram's participants obeyed the least, implying that proximity to a victim elicits sympathy. In comparison, the assailants use machet on their victims at very close range, thus showing evidence of callous-unemotional traits, low level of fearful inhibitions and anxiety and decreased sensitivity to punishment cues (Essau, Sasagawa, & Frick 2006).

Comparison of the 2 scenarios suggested that while participants in Milgram's experiment can be said to harm their victims in respect to

obedience to the experimenter command, it was not likely that the assailants were responding to the aspirant's allegation; rather they responded to a relatively rigid outlook on life, and were intolerant of those with supposedly opposing beliefs. Beyond this perceived dispositions, differences in age, education and socio-economic compositions among the 2 groups may have made the comparison less reliable. Milgram did not provide the ethnic background of his sample, but the demographics of New Haven in the early 1960s suggest that the sample was almost entirely white (Twenge, 2009). Similarly, Milgram's participants answered an advertisement that appeared in a local newspaper, which asked for volunteers for a study of learning. Thus Milgram's participants were educated to read the tabloid and may have some kind of employment.

On the contrary, the assailants composed of young people who are neither in school, nor in the process of being equipped with skills necessary to survive in an industrializing society. These young people known as '*almajiris*' are young people who left their homes at very tender ages to koranic schools where they are abandoned by their parents due to poverty. These children then start to fend for themselves at very tender ages by either begging or doing all manner of menial jobs for survival. Psychologists (e.g., Hall, 1904) believed that obedience was not an inherent trait of humans but must be taught and that this teaching should occur early in child development. Since the '*almajiris*' were raised outside the normal family structure, it was likely they would be less obedient to authority figures. The '*almajiris*' are always found in most violence in northern Nigeria, and because of poverty and misinformation they have become pawns in the hands of opportunistic politicians'. The number of '*almajiris*' in northern Nigeria is about 12 – 15 million, much more than the population of several countries.

For all these factors, Milgram's participants and the assailants may have differed in their orientations to conformity, and this would have reduced the validity of the comparison. However, the writer strongly believes that the 16 April 2011 post presidential election conflict was not spontaneous. Rather, the factors that precipitated the conflict took time to incubate. The country (Nigeria) is at war with itself and efforts must be made to improve the material conditions of the citizenry. Poverty, starvation, and deprivation must be alleviated to curtail aggressive tendencies and bottled up anger of the subordinated (Ikejiani-



Clark, 2000). But attempt to institute peaceful coexistence among the Nigerian ethnic groups needs to go beyond adjusting the Nigerian political structure. Concerted efforts must also be made to increase tolerance and improve intergroup relations. According to Mays and colleagues (1998), research on different cultural beliefs and practices and their implications for ethno political conflict analysis and prevention is essential if the field of psychology is going to be successful in its contribution.

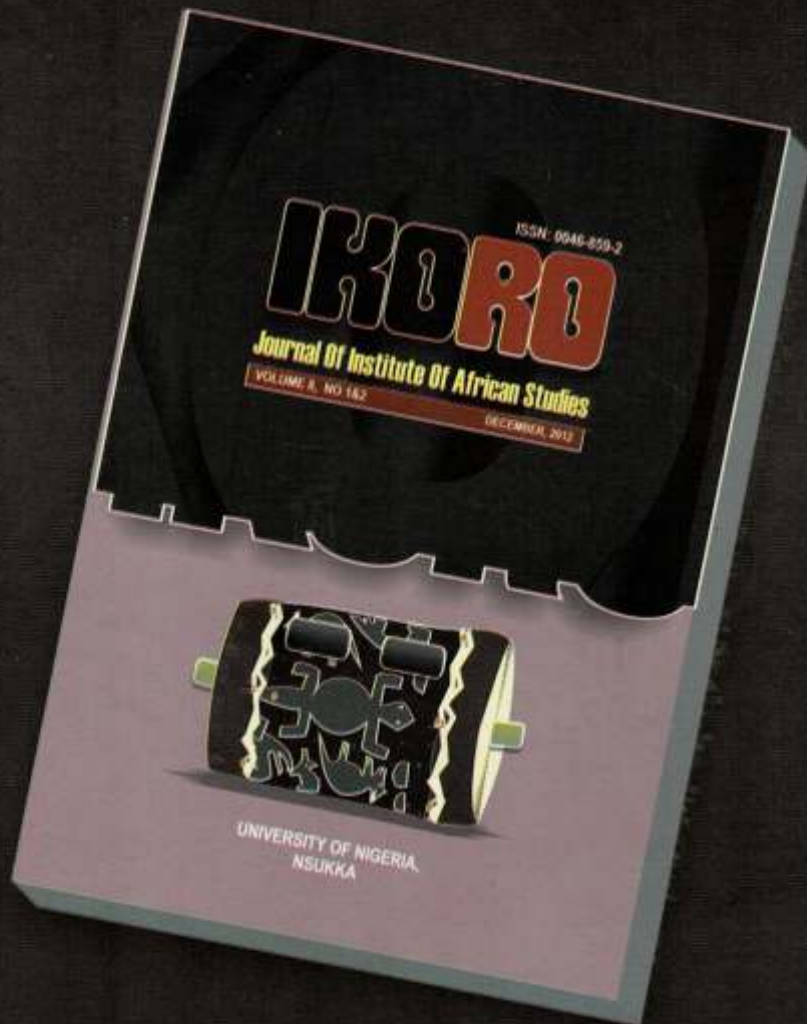
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