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**IGBOSCHOLARS JOURNAL OF IGBO SCHOLARS FORUM Nigeria** calls for well researched papers from authors in areas that borders on Igbo in relation to other people's cultures. We welcome articles or proposals from all perspectives and on all subjects pertaining to Igbo, Igbo/African people's and others' relations on Public policy, Language, Religion, Philosophy, Education, Medicine, History, Economy, Sociology, Culture, Engineering, Business relations, Comparative politics, strategy and environment, etc. Submit manuscripts as e-mail attachment to the Editorial Office at: [igboscholars@yahoo.com](mailto:igboscholars@yahoo.com) or send two hard copies of your papers to any of the editors. Referencing style is MLA or APA. The Journal wishes to publish the results of her researches annually.

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## FROM EDITORIAL DESK

**Igboscholars International Journal** is one of the brain children of Igbo Scholars Forum born out of the zeal to get the young Igbo scholars together so as to start thinking like Igbo sons and daughters through paper publications, meetings and symposia. As a matter of fact, Igbo Scholars Forum was founded by Dr. Onukwube Alexander Alfred Anedo and born at the launching of a festschrift in honour of their life patron, Prof. Obed Muojekwu Anizoba (Ozonwa) on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2012. In his kind gesture, Prof O. M. Anizoba therefore established a website <http://www.igboscholarsforum.com.ng> for them to use in telling the world who the Igbo people are, about their life, what they believe in and their relationship with people and other cultures of the world outside theirs. Other journal outlets through which this Forum wants to let Igbo people and their culture out to the world are Ideal International Journal and Ekwe International Journal which is solely written only in Igbo language.

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## Why Igbo Tales Lack Trickster Heroines

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### Abstract

It is generally assumed that all traditional societies marginalized their women who they took as minors. However, this is not the evidence that is portrayed in Igbo trickster tales for such tales appear in societies with a lot of socio-religious restrictions for the weak and the less privileged. If actually Igbo women who from time immemorial have been in control of such tales were marginalized or maltreated as modern scholars want us to believe, these women would have inserted their experiences in the tales. The evidence in the tales is that there are few female tricksters who can represent the few women who did not have it rosy. But this is not how it is in some Muslim societies for in them are socially sanctioned restrictions on women. Therefore, in such societies, there are many female trickster heroines. But since there is nothing of such nature among the Igbo, the conclusion is that originally, there was nothing like women subjugation in the land. If there was, these women did not see it as such.

**Keywords:** Tricksters, Heroes, Marginalization, Subjugation, Male, Female

### Introduction

The trickster motif is one that pervades almost every culture of the world. Trickery is practised mostly when somebody is in a tight situation. Trickster characters appear in the guise of humans, animals, birds and even deities. One thing that is peculiar to them is that they are small in stature and weak physically. However, what they lack in physical strength, they are compensated with cranial ability.

This ability is what enables the trickster to be succeeding and surviving even when conditions make it impossible for others to do so. However, this his ability tilts towards the negative side because for him to achieve his aim, he cheats, lies, causes confusion and can go to the extent of committing murder. His only interest is self aggrandisement no matter what it takes. But to enable him to be winning, the raconteurs make his antagonists gullible and naive. Sometimes, he acts against traditionally approved way of life, and even when caught, he sometimes goes scot-free. In studying this character, S. E. Schlosser has it that a trickster is a mischievous or roguish figure in myth or folklore that typically makes up for physical weakness with cunning and subversive humour. The trickster alternates between cleverness and stupidity, kindness and cruelty, deceiver and deceived, breaker of taboos and creator of culture.

For him to succeed, he uses all the means available to him in order to win his determined, strong but gullible opponents. As in the case of the major trickster among the Igbo who is Tortoise, he is both an elder and a native doctor. As an elder, he knows the culture of the people but he easily twists that culture to his advantage. As a native doctor, he is fully aware of the latent power of African herbs and minerals. When pressed, he puts these into utmost use. Therefore, what Wilda F. Hayward observes does not fully hold among the Igbo people. According to her, folklorists theorize that the absence of magic in trickster tales suggests that the tellers of these tales espouse the power of language and the triumph of wit over military and political might. The trickster who was physically less powerful, not only challenged but also made the larger physically powerful animals appear foolish.

While the present researcher agrees with Hayward that the “tellers of these tales espouse the power of language and the triumph of wit over military and political might, he does not agree that there is absence of magic. Tortoise the Igbo trickster makes use of his ability as a native doctor in order to deceive his opponents and make them to look foolish.

This is exactly how he deceives Lion in one tale in which he is carrying home a parcel of fish (Umeasiegbu 96). When Lion wants to know the content of the parcel, he tells him that it contains the



remains of his (Tortoise's) father. Lion sympathizes with him and insists that traditionally, one person does not carry a corpse. He, Lion, must help. Tortoise agrees and tells him that before they start moving that he would like to empty his bowel. He goes into a bush, defecates and inserts pepper into the faecal matter. After instructing the faecal matter what to say in case Lion calls, he departs to his house. Lion after waiting for some time calls again and again; the faecal matter again and again answers him: "I am coming." The pepper is a metaphor for charms and these charms produce magical feats for the trickster to achieve his aim.

### Conditions that Produce Tricksters

An Igbo proverb has it that if somebody says that all heads are equal, that person has merely committed a verbal emission. In other words, there must be inequality in existence. There must always be the poor, the weak and all those who do not measure up socially, financially, physically, etc. That somebody belongs to the lower class does not mean that it is all over with the person. One has to put into use whatever that is available for survival. However, that which is available may not be honourable but the emphasis in such tales is survival at all cost. To survive adverse conditions using any available means can explain why Harris and Sitterson have it that trickster often attempt to level the playing field in order to reduce the inequity in social and power situations. Further, they say that persons of lesser social status such as African Americans during slavery and immediately following, could work indirectly to bring about whatever measure of equality they could manage

In other words, for one to be a trickster, one has to be at a disadvantageous position--either financially, physically, etc. but not cranially deficient because the brain is the only endowment of the trickster. It is with his brain that the trickster has to narrow the gap between him and his antagonists. That can explain Hayward's observation that trickster tales depict a hierarchical social structure wherein the privileged group had the military and political power but not much intelligence. Conversely, there was a group at the lower state with no recourse to political and military power able to survive because of cleverness and sheer common sense.

Because trickster tales are meant to teach the underdog how to survive, one can say that this is how society gives a tacit approval for people to commit misdemeanours as far as they can escape detection. In popular jargon, there is a saying which has it that "*Wayo* is a game if you can play better". *Wayo* which is an illiterate way of saying tricks is approved if it is done with finesse, or how do you expect Tortoise, Spider, Ant, Squirrel, et cetera to survive in the jungle with such gigantic and ravenous animals like Elephant, Leopard, Puff adder, et cetera prowling around? Can any of such animals survive the ponderous tread of Elephant? This condition must have motivated Uchenna D. Uwakwe in his observation that:

The conception of the animal world is the forest which is particularly identified with the *law of the jungle*. In this regard, power is present as a survival strategy. This accounts for the audience's interest in the trickster figure who manipulates grave situation to his favour despite the outlook which places it in a marginalized circumstance (3).

Such is portrayed in folktales as can be seen in the tale "The big test". In that story:

There were many reports of murder coming to Chief Nkapi, the chief and ruler of all the animals. A new law was made that no animal had the right to kill another animal. Offenders would be punished by hanging them in the market square. The little and weak animals were particularly delighted. Before this legislation, carnivorous animals such as the lion and the tiger could and did kill little innocent ones (Umeasiegbu 72).

Under this dangerous and chaotic system, these little, weak and innocent ones have to device means of survival. Since nature never imbued physical prowess into them, their only survival strategy has to emanate from their brains, but most often what they come up with verges on cheating and trickery for these actually can help them faster. This is why it is noted that: "Kindness and good faith do not often pay any dividend in a community where everyone cheats and bullies [as it is in the jungle where these animals live]. One must therefore be shrewd, double-tongued and ready to compromise when necessary. Such, briefly is the nature of *Ifo* [folktales]" (Nwaozuzu 2).

What it boils down to is that fear, inadequacy, persecution, et cetera breed tricksters. Even in real life, children who fear that they will be beaten resort to lies and dissembling just as the tricksters do in the tales. People tell a lot of lies in the court so as to escape being convicted. Employees for fear of being surcharged can even destroy their employers' property such as documents in order to shield themselves and cover their tracks well. That was how it was among the Africans who worked as slaves in America and the Caribbean. As was noted by M. Clay Hooper:

... Nat Turner who at a young age is forced to shed his "kind and docile" manner and adopt the tactics of masking and misdirection that were often the slaves' only defence against the arbitrary brutality of the slave system as well as his only means of personal gratification. In short, he adopts the tricksters' craft of translating weakness into power within a particular set of situational constraints (38).

But why did Turner behave like that? Why did he risk getting into greater problems in case he was caught? Did he think of the moral implications of his actions? But if situation was conducive for him, would he have started misbehaving? These and other disturbing questions might not have occurred to him in their stark enormity because what he was looking for was only to escape from being punished. However, the gravity of his actions can be viewed lightly when compared with the actions of other slaves. One can easily see this in the citation made by Sitterson and Trudier from Lawrence W. Levine's article. According to the scholars in an Internet article, Levine while studying the actions of Afro-American slaves, has it that a significant number of slaves lied, cheated, stole, feigned illness, loafed, pretended to misunderstand the orders they were given, put rocks in the bottom of their cotton baskets in order to meet their quota, broke their tools, burned their masters' property, mutilated themselves in order to escape work, took indifferent care of the crops they were cultivating, and mistreated the livestock placed in their care to the extent that their masters often felt it necessary to use the less efficient mules rather than horses since the former could better withstand the brutal treatment of the slaves.

The article goes on to state that these slaves went forward to create stories in which animal actions mirrored human actions during and after slavery. That accounts for the origin of Uncle Remus stories. For them to get more at their masters, they transformed African trickster stories into an aggressive weapon and a form of consolation in that they saw themselves as the small and weak tricksters, and their masters, they likened to the strong and aggressive but gullible animals. In that case, their masters could only remain at the top for some time and not for ever for with their brains, these slaves would pull them down.

As it was among the slaves, so it is in any society where there are restrictions, for in actual fact: "It could be stated as a general rule and defended fairly well by ethnographic evidence that the occurrence of trickster tales is directly proportional to the degree of oppressiveness of socio-religious restrictions" (Greenway 149).

It is in view of the above observations that one can study Igbo trickster tales in order to see if actually Igbo women in the ancient days were subjugated or marginalized as modern scholarship wants us to believe.

### **Occurrence of Female Tricksters**

In the traditional society, women are said to be deprived of a lot of their rights. They were to be seen and not heard. They had to fulfil their desires either through their sons, brothers, husbands or fathers as the case might be. As it is observed:

Whereas in patrilineal society, a woman cannot own land or cattle, neither can she in a debate or negotiation concerning property to a legal action.... She has always got to be represented by her father or brother or husband or son. Also, she often participate has limited authority even over her sons who are above a certain age (Ngcob 536).

To add to this apparent distressing situation, this researcher some years ago when he was far below ten years of age, as in the midst of some married women one of whom was his mother. These women wanted to break a cola nut. One of them raised the issue of a man who would break it for them. That was how he was called to do so but since he did not know how to do it properly with the

necessary prayers, he was told to touch it and give it back to them. In short, there are numerous cases which modern people view as the subjugation of the traditional woman. Some scholars are of the view that she was dehumanized. In short, the editors of *Encarta* opine that feminists are united by the idea that women's position in society is unequal to that of men and that society is structured in such a way as to benefit men to the political, social and economic detriment of women.

Probably, this view may be true but the question is: If trickster tales are used to portray the lives of subjugated people, why is it that only few female characters are showcased as tricksters and none of these is a heroine? If actually women were the endangered species, why do our tales not portray them as they struggle for survival? They were like the Africans sold into slavery but the slaves in their bid to survive resorted to trickery. After, they coined these tricks into tales.

This situation is more glaring when it is on record that these women as mothers and grandmothers have been the main raconteurs who for ages have been handling these tales. Therefore, they had all the time and every needed tool at their disposal to show their grievances. For one, the raconteur can take any story of her choice and turn it to suit her purpose. For the other, many men pretend and some actually believe that these tales are for women and children. In that case, any woman that wants to show her grief through these tales will have no interference from men. Yet, in all Igbo trickster tales, all the regular tricksters (Tortoise, Ram and Sunbird or sometimes Wren) are depicted as male characters. It is on very few occasions that female tricksters are portrayed as irregular or occasional tricksters for none is a regular one.

But this is not how it is in all cultures, for in some, as it is in Muslim societies, women are depicted as arch-tricksters. As it is observed by Margaret A. Mill:

The topic of women's tricks--*Makr-e Zain* or *Kayd un-nisa*--is a particularly rich one in Islamic literature, written or oral and in popular thoughts. Women are considered to excel even the devil himself in trickery as various Persian proverbs and aphorisms attest (158).

Why do these Islamic women insert their woes in trickster tales and Igbo women raconteurs do not? Does it mean that Igbo women were well off and so had no need to start crying when nobody was beating them? Were they terrified of the repercussion from their domineering men? But since Nat Turner did not care about such repercussion, why should they be afraid? Since they were enjoying the stories alone with their children, why would they be afraid of male interference? In addition, the events of Aba riot of 1929 indicate otherwise for in actual fact, these women were as fearless as a wounded lioness. They were even more daring than their men.

If these women were weak and were subjugated and so were incapable of challenging their male counterparts, and at their disposal were innumerable tales, they would have created more female tricksters than male ones for in actual fact:

Guile (*Makr*, *Kayd* in Afghanistan language) or trickery can be categorized as a weapon of the weak and thus quintessentially of women. Tricks work best for underdogs though not only underdogs are tricksters. Trickery as a concept, including duplicitous persuasive techniques (deceptions, sleight of hand, and conjuring) ... may in some cases cross over into *jadu* (sorcery) and of course, disguise (which may include magical disguise or shape-changing) (Mill 238).

However, it is not only in the Igbo nation that the greater number of tricksters is male. In other words, whatever we come up with in this discourse can apply to many people because in actual fact, many of such nations were at the same level of development and so were experiencing similar problems.

This puzzle over the paucity of female tricksters has been noted by Ash Silverlock who states that it is interesting to note that the vast majority of trickster figures are male even though, lies and duplicity are hardly limited to one gender. Even the few examples of female tricksters rarely enjoy the same status as their male counterparts. The reason for this is hard to say. Perhaps it is because the first trickster myths originated in traditionally patriarchal societies or perhaps it is because of some deeper level these tales articulate some distinction between men and women. No one really knows, and this is but one more mystery that can add to the greater enigma that is the trickster.

However, one can get near the reasons by studying the society involved because what motivates one society may not motivate another, for contrary to the above view, Afghanistan has more female tricksters than male. Why? The occurrence of that type of tales that feature trickster characters is directly proportional to the degree of socio-religious restrictions. In other words, where there is less restriction, there are few tricksters.

That the relationship of the sexes in the traditional society is being misconstrued today as being similar to that of a slave master and the slave is as a result of the influence of the West. In those days, the role of every member of the family was clearly defined. Each person knew what was expected of him or her. In all, the sexes complement each other. Even, where there was a failing from one side, the other would try to help out. That explains why some women in those days had to go to their people to help them raise some money for their husbands to marry other wives. That also explains why the man had to cultivate the greater part of the farm with yams and the woman would plant vegetables and coco yams for these were seen by society as belonging to women. Therefore, for the absence of women as regular tricksters which means that women were not maltreated, a lot of reasons can be adduced, the most obvious being that these women were not over restricted.

Another of such reasons is that the Igbo people from then till now have certain expectations from women. In that society, no woman even today is expected to be rough or be a rogue as the life of the trickster entails. It is not that society approves such behaviour for men but the women as the custodians of propriety as can be seen in the goddess of propriety, Ala or Ana or Ani (depending on the dialect) is expected to be the embodiment of good behaviour. That which she has is what she can use in training the children for she is nearer to them than the husband.

The influence of this expectation on women can be seen in the tale “*Agadi Nwaanyị Uru na Ewu Ohi Ya*- The Old Woman Pilferer and her Stolen Goat” (Nwaokoro 61). This old woman’s husband steals a goat, kills it and puts the blood in a container. When the people start tracing the whereabouts of the goat and other missing items, the woman seizes a child who comes to her house to get fire embers. She covers the child with a cloth and pours the blood on him, thereby transferring the odour of the goat to him. When the people want to go from house to house in order to search for the animal, she convinces them that it is a waste of time. They would rather be sniffing on people to know who has the odour of goat on him. That is how they catch the unfortunate child as the thief that stole the goat. The social expectation manifests clearly because it is the husband that stole the goat and he is not referred to as a pilferer. It is only her that the raconteur calls a pilferer when she is just an accomplice. This stand of the Igbo is similar to the observation of Brenda Sutton. In her observation the trickster is almost always male, though some female trickster characters are well known. In a recent conversation with writer Ellen Kushner, she learnt that we probably do not have many trickster figures because the most obvious outward symbol of woman is that of mother and wife. Trickster is so very undependable, devious and at times wicked. The idea of mother or wife imbued with these characteristics is more than most humans want to consider.

It is in view of this societal requirement that women nicknamed themselves “*Ugegbe ezi na ulo* -the mirror of the home”. No family wants to be portrayed in a very bad light. Unlike the child who resorts to lies on sensing that he may be beaten if he tells the truth, these women if they are hard pressed may not easily turn to become tricksters.

Another reason why women do not feature as regular tricksters is that naturally, they are weak and so cannot resist in case there is a boomerang after the trick. That can explain why they are debarred from certain activities such as climbing palm trees, iroko trees and other gigantic trees. Disobedience many result into death and since folktales do not contain many deaths, they are not featured in dangerous episodes. When danger looms before a woman, “... she has always got to be represented by her father, brother, husband or son”. What Western feminists see as an affront against women are what the Igbo created to safeguard the mirrors of their homes for if they are left unprotected, these mirrors would crack into pieces.

Here, consider the case of the tale “Strength and Reason” (Chukwudum 78). A gorilla in the tale catches a woman in a forest and throws a wrestling challenge at her. She accepts the challenge because she has no option. But then, she advises that she plait his hair first. He gullibly agrees and they go under a tree. She then ties his hair to a branch of the tree. After doing so, she tiptoes away to call the husband.

It is with great anger that the beast blurts out:

Weak but intelligent woman!

Weak but intelligent woman!

She has tricked me and run away!

She has left her firewood and ran away!

She is afraid of wrestling! (82).

Which Igbo woman can be a wrestler seeing that they, from time immemorial, have been well protected? Wrestling with all its inherent danger is for men. How can it be said that a society that debars its women folk from being wounded is marginalizing them? Why can the good heartedness that is embedded in protection be misconstrued as wickedness and marginalization? In order to show what is expected of the woman, the one in the tale goes and calls the husband. Under that condition, trickery is allowed and this tale now becomes one of the few tales that depict an occasional female trickster.

That women cannot become trickster heroines due to certain endowments is also the opinion of Helen Lock. According to her in the patriarchal societies that produce the archetypal trickster, the very qualities that enabled the trickster to operate belonged culturally to men or as Looday puts it, “In a sexist society, the male trickster has the advantage of masculinity: mobility, autonomy, power, safety”. These advantages are in themselves gender-neutral but are gendered by cultural association. Trickster is not gendered—only cultural perceptions of the freedom and mobility necessary to be trickster. Thus, pre-modern tricksters were imagined as primarily masculine though with gender-changing abilities.

Since these tales serve the people in teaching them survival strategies when they are pressed to the wall, they do not teach them how to get themselves destroyed. As it is in these tales, so it happens in real life. Which woman will confront a boa constrictor or any other wild animal without alerting her brother, father, husband or son if any of them is available? By helping to safeguard her life, can the person who helps her be rightly accused of marginalizing her? What it boils down to is that Igbo women do not feature as regular tricksters because already their problems are being solved for them.

That Igbo women are seen as being subservient to their male relatives is because they are just supports in the respective families where one finds them. They are not the pillars of such families. Pillars carry the weight of the house and so can be bent by such weight to any shape. That weight can force them to do anything so as to survive. That women now have to earn in order to help is due to present economic conditions. As it was before, working in order to earn a living was not expected of her because “a woman’s greatest aspiration is finding a mate and thereafter bearing children. Every other thing is secondary: education, a career, material wealth, social acclaim. All these are subs mated to marriage and motherhood” (Chukwuma x).

If society only expects her to deliver her duties which nature endows her with, can we say she is seen as a minor? Which man will be happy exposing his female relatives to the vagaries of life? If he shields them, how can he be accused of being domineering? That explains why women are not trickster heroes for already that problem or condition which would have forced them to be such has been solved for them. It is only nowadays that they “... are expected in addition to their traditional wifehood and motherhood to equip themselves for life in the modern times by being not only consumers but producers and co-producers of the family income” (Chukwuma x).

The evidence from trickster tales shows that originally there was nothing like women being wickedly treated among the Igbo. They were enjoying the protection of their male relatives. To show that this is historically true, some nicknames among them can be an eye opener: Dimanu [My husband is marrying me well], Obidiya [Heart of the husband], Ugodiya [Eagle of the husband], Dibugwu [Husband is prestige], Dibuko (Husband is pride), Omaobidiya [Knower of the husband’s heart], Oriaku [Devourer of wealth], Enyidiya [Friend of the husband], et cetera If these accolades do exist today with present economic constraints, who knows how it was then! In fact, saying that men marginalized women is wrong although, there could be individual cases of wickedness against particular women. These are the few cases depicted by irregular or occasional tricksters. Since they

were well treated and had no need risking their lives, one sees them only trying to make themselves, attractive as can be seen in their pet or nicknames. Which person battling to survive will start caring about beauty? Or which man has ever answered such names like Achalugo [Elegance of the eagle], Irugo [Face of the eagle], Adaoma [Daughter of beauty], Adaku [Daughter of wealth], Odoziaku [Custodian of wealth], Nwamma [Child of beauty], Mkpulumma [Seed of beauty], etc? They were more interested with their beauty because they had nothing worrying them.

Since these beauties and dependents are the appendages of their men, their problems are solved when those of the men are taken care of. Since they are not directly concerned with formulating survival strategies, there is no need making them tricksters

If actually women were being maltreated as some would like people to believe, they would hate their men. Also, they would be suffering from inferiority complex, and if anything happened in society, they would be unable to speak out. But this was not the situation with them judging from the events of 1929 at Aba. According to the CD-ROM, Microsoft Encarta, when these women saw the high taxes imposed on their husbands by British officials and the low return on their palm kernel crops, the women of the area rose up in mass protests, burning buildings and driving off some of the authorities. Government troops were sent in and approximately 50 women were killed in the conflict.

If their husbands were maltreating them, they would not have risked their lives challenging the imperial power of Britain. Also, if they could risk their lives in that way, what prevented them from organizing and challenging their husbands if they saw any form of affront against womanhood? Since there is no record of such a challenge, the implication is that the women did not see anything wrong with the way they were treated. This is a way of supporting the content of trickster tales where no regular trickster hero is a female. That today's scholarship sees such daring and fearless women of the Aba women riot as being marginalized is due to lack of the knowledge of the social organization of those days.

## Conclusion

Trickster tales portray characters at the lowest echelon of society who can do all that is at their disposal in order to survive. From ethnographic studies, it has been discovered that such stories abound wherever there are restrictions. In this case, these stories become for the marginalized and restricted people a valve for letting the steam off their system. It is in view of this that one can use these tales to study the extent Igbo women were restricted in the past.

In studying these tales, only male characters are regular trickster heroes. There are few occasional female tricksters. If these women were actually marginalized in the days gone by, they would have featured women as regular tricksters for they were in charge of the composition and retelling of the tales. The few occasional female tricksters they tell us about stand for few women who were suffering in some families.

On closer examination, it was discovered that the society of those days had the roles of the sexes spelt out. Therefore, since they were satisfied with what was assigned to them, these women could not protest. In other words, trickster tales among the Igbo show that there was no female marginalization to the extent that it is being assumed today. The few instances of marginalization that occurred could only be seen between some husbands and their wives.

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# AN AWARENESS OF THE PRGMATIC SENSE OF BHĀVANĀ: AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW

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## Abstract

Misinterpretations and misconceptions regarding ‘bhāvanā’ prevail among many people in the contemporary society. The word ‘meditation’ is a very poor substitute for the original term bhāvana which means mind development. According to the Early Buddhist discourses, bhāvanā, in its pragmatic sense as a whole, is arising, association, application and development of wholesome thoughts (kusalacitta). Hence, this research article exposes in analysis the central and overall theme of bhāvanā in order to dispel its misconceptions for a practical initiation of mental development in quotidian life.

## Introduction:

Prior to engagement in Buddhist meditation, it is of utmost significance to clarify Buddhist meditation in its true aspect as reflected in Theravāda Buddhism since multifarious misconceptions and misinterpretations of meditation even with regard to the term ‘meditation’ prevail in the contemporary society.

According to the etymology, the English word ‘meditate’ is derived from Latin *meditat* ‘contemplate’, from the verb *meditari* from a base meaning ‘measure’; related to ‘mete’ – mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of Buddhism also shows that the English word meditate is derived from the Latin *meditari* which connotes deep, continued reflection of a concentrated dwelling in thought. It further mentions that the Oxford English Dictionary defines the word meditation thus, “Continuous thought or musing upon one subject or series of subjects; serious and sustained reflection or mental contemplation”<sup>2</sup>

The English word for the Pāli word *bhāvanā* is “meditation”. The definition of the word “meditation” given in the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary indicates, “The practice of thinking deeply in silence especially for religious reasons or in order to make your mind calm”<sup>3</sup> The Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary says that meditation is the act of giving one’s attention to only one thing, either as a religious activity or as a way of becoming calm and relaxed.<sup>4</sup>

According to the New Encyclopaedia Britannica defines meditation thus, “meditation, Buddhist, the practice of mental concentration leading ultimately through a succession of stages to the final goal of spiritual freedom, Nirvāna. Meditation occupies a central place in Buddhism and combines in its highest stages the discipline of progressively increased introversion with the insight brought about by wisdom.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, New 8<sup>th</sup> ed.

<sup>2</sup> Malasekara, G.P., (founder Editor –in-Chief), W.G. Weeraratne (Editor–in-Chief), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. VI. 1996. p. 660.

<sup>3</sup> *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, New 8<sup>th</sup> ed.

<sup>4</sup> *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, Third ed.

<sup>5</sup> Benton, Helen Hemingway, *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. VI. 15<sup>th</sup> ed. 1973 – 1974, p. 750.



The definitions given to the English term ‘Meditation’ are different and not unanimous. Prof. P.D. Premasiri says that the above connotations of the English word for meditation are compatible with the monotheistic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.<sup>6</sup> As a whole, the English translation for ‘*bhāvanā*’ is ‘meditation’<sup>7</sup> which means concentration of mind. Although concentration is an integral characteristic of *bhāvanā*, the English word “meditation” does not adequately convey the wider and deeper meaning of the Pāli term ‘*bhāvanā*.’ He further says in this regard, “The English term ‘meditation’ is often used with reference to Buddhism as the equivalent of the Pāli term *bhāvanā*. Therefore, in any discussion of Buddhist meditation it is considered appropriate to clarify the Buddhist concept of *bhāvanā*. It is important to point out some significant differences between the connotations of the English term ‘meditation’ and the Buddhist term *bhāvanā* in order to clarify the unique features of the Buddhist theory and practice of mental culture. Despite the widespread belief that meditation and *bhāvanā* are the same, from the Buddhist point of view, meditation is rather a partial requisite of *bhāvanā* than its exact equivalent. Most contemporary writers on Buddhist meditation, however, do not recognize any such distinction. Greater clarity regarding this issue can be gained by a closer examination of the family of Buddhist concepts usually associated with the Buddhist theory of mental culture, placing it in the context of the general Indian contemplative traditions of mental or spiritual development.”<sup>8</sup>

According to Ven. Walpola Rahula, “The word meditation is a very poor substitute for the original term *bhāvana*, which means ‘culture’ or ‘development’, i.e., mental culture or mental development. The Buddhist term *bhāvanā*, properly speaking, is mental culture in the full sense of the term. It aims at cleansing the mind of impurities and disturbances, such as lustful desires, hatred, ill-will, indolence, worries and restlessness, skeptical doubts, and cultivating such qualities as concentration, awareness, intelligence, will, energy, the analytical faculty, confidence, joy, tranquility, leading finally to the attainment of highest wisdom which sees the nature of things as they are, and realizes the Ultimate Truth, Nirvāṇa.”<sup>9</sup>

The Pāli word ‘*bhāvanā*’ connotes in a nutshell mental development or mental culture. The Buddhist Dictionary - Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines by Ven. Nyanatiloka defines ‘*bhāvanā*’ as “mental development.”<sup>10</sup> The PTS Pāli –English Dictionary by Rhys Davids says *bhāvanā* means “producing, dwelling on something, putting one’s thoughts to, application, developing by means of thought or meditation, cultivation by mind, culture.” A Glossary of Pāli and Buddhist Terms edited by John T. Bullitt defines *bhāvanā* as “Mental cultivation or development; meditation.” According to “A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism” by Christmas Humphreys, “*bhāvanā* means a ‘making-to-become’, self-development by any means, but especially by the method of mind-control, concentration and meditation”<sup>11</sup> Encyclopedia of Religion mentions, “Meditation is usually rumination on a particular religious subject, while contemplation is a direct intuitive seeing using spiritual faculties beyond discursive thought and ratiocination.”<sup>12</sup>

The book, Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice by Ven. Paravahera Vajirañāna Mahāthera indicates *bhāvanā* means “cultivation” or “development” of mind.<sup>13</sup> “Meditation by means of mind development is called “*bhāvanā*.” Unlike other technical terms, “*bhāvanā*” is used to denote only the practical methods of mental training. It embraces in its vast connotation the whole system, together with the practices that have been developed from it.”<sup>14</sup> “From the commentarial definitions and its use in the Canon, it can be seen that the word “*bhāvanā*” has a meaning that is stronger and more active than that of the English word meditation. The word has various renderings, such as “producing”, “acquiring”, “mastering”, “developing”, “cultivating”,

<sup>6</sup>Malasekara, G.P., (founder Editor –in-Chief), W.G. Weeraratne (Editor–in-Chief), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. VI. 1996. p. 660.

<sup>7</sup>*Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, Seventh ed. p. 954.

<sup>8</sup>Malasekara, G.P., (founder Editor –in-Chief), W.G. Weeraratne (Editor–in-Chief), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. VI. 1996, p. 660.

<sup>9</sup>Rahula, Walpola, *What The Buddha Taught*, ed. 2006, Buddhist Cultural Centre. p. 68.

<sup>10</sup>Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, 1988, BPS. p. 67.

<sup>11</sup>Humphreys, Christmas, *A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism*. Buddhist Society. London, revised ed. p. 25.

<sup>12</sup>Simon & Schuster, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol.9. Macmillan. New York. 1995, p. 325.

<sup>13</sup>Vajirañāna Mahāthera, Paravahera, *Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice*, BMS. Third ed. p. 21.

<sup>14</sup>Op. cit. p. 25.

“reflection”, and “meditation”<sup>15</sup> Godwin Samararatne, a veteran meditation teacher at the Nilambe Meditation Centre, says in a talk on ‘Why We Should Meditate’ on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 1997 that the word meditation translates the Pali word *bhāvanā* which means cultivating the mind, developing the mind, mental culture. He also cites the idea of meditation expressed by a writer in these terms: Knowing the mind, shaping the mind, and freeing the mind.

As Prof. P. D. Premasiri emphasizes; “The term *bhāvanā* has a wider connotation than meditation and signifies all aspects of personality development or cultivation. The development or cultivation envisaged is not confined to the development of the mind or the intellect, but to all aspects of personality development including speech and bodily actions. *Bhāvanā* involves an active, willful, and deliberate exercise that seeks to alter the unreflective and mechanical flow of mental, verbal and bodily behaviour. According to the Buddhist theory of human behaviour, causal inter-connections can be observed between the mental, verbal and bodily processes of personality. Inner mental states and processes determine overt verbal and bodily activity and overt bodily and verbal activity in turn condition inner mental states and processes.”<sup>16</sup>

ArahantNāgasenaThera explains the characteristics of meditation to king Milinda by means of illustrations and citations from the Buddha thus; “Being the leader, O king. All good qualities have meditation as their chief, they incline to it, lead up towards it, are as so many slopes up the side of the mountain of meditation.” “As all the rafters of the roof of a house, O king, go up to the apex, slope towards it, are joined on together at it, and the apex is acknowledged to be the top of all; so is the habit of meditation in its relation to other good qualities.”<sup>17</sup> “It is like a king, your Majesty, when he goes down to battle with his army in its fourfold array. The whole army – elephants, cavalry, warchariots, and bowmen – would have him as their chief, their lines would incline towards him, lead up to him, they would be so many mountain slopes, one above another, with him as their summit, round him they would all be ranged. And it has been said, O king, by the Blessed One: “Cultivate in yourself, O Bhikkhus, the habit of meditation. He who is established therein knows things as they really are.”<sup>18</sup>

The Seeker’s Glossary of Buddhism says, “The Western reader is liable to misunderstand what the Buddhist means by meditation, and to imagine that it implies a ‘relaxed’ or ‘inactive’ state. But in the Buddhist view, meditation is an activity in which one is engaged in subduing discursive thought, destroying or discouraging unwholesome mental states, and initiating or nourishing wholesome mental states.”<sup>19</sup>

The MahānidānaSutta<sup>20</sup> says that all the actions of person are based on mind. Development of mind is the development of person. According to the MahātaṇhāsankyaSutta,<sup>21</sup> a conclusion can be drawn that meditation is the development of mind through the destruction of craving. According to the Suttas like Sāmaññaphala<sup>22</sup>, Mahāli<sup>23</sup> of the DīghaNikāya, Sabbāsava<sup>24</sup> Kandaraka<sup>25</sup>, Ariyapariyesana<sup>26</sup>, Atthakanāgara<sup>27</sup>, JhānaSaṃyuttaya of the SaṃyuttaNikāya, the Mahā-SatipatthānaSutta<sup>28</sup> and the SatipatthānaSutta<sup>29</sup>, also Dhammasaṅgani and Vibhaṅga of the AbhidhammaPiṭaka and Commentaries like Visuddhimagga, Atthasālinī, the basic meaning of *bhāvanā*, as a whole, can be rendered as **the development of spiritual qualities or wholesome potentialities or development of wholesome doctrines** *Bhāvetikusadaladhammevaḍḍhetītibhāvanā*.<sup>30</sup> According to the SabbāsavaSutta,<sup>31</sup> *bhāvanā*

<sup>15</sup>Op. cit. p. 26.

<sup>16</sup>Malasekara, G.P., (founder Editor –in-Chief), W.G. Weeraratne (Editor–in-Chief), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. VI. 1996, p. 661.

<sup>17</sup> Davids, Rhys, T.W., *Questions of King Milinda, Book II. Ch. I.* Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1890, p. 116.

<sup>18</sup> Davids, Rhys, T.W., *Questions of King Milinda, Book II. Ch. I.* Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1890, p. 117.

<sup>19</sup> The Van Hien Study Group, *The Seeker’s Glossary of Buddhism*, Third ed. 2003, pp. 418 – 419.

<sup>20</sup> The Long Discourses of the Buddha (DN), 15. Wisdom Publication, Boston. p. 223.

<sup>21</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), 38. Buddhist Publication Society. p. 361.

<sup>22</sup> The Dialogues of the Buddha (DN), 2. Vol. II. Pali Text Society. p. 66.

<sup>23</sup>Op. cit. p. 198.

<sup>24</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), 2. Buddhist Publication Society. p. 96.

<sup>25</sup>Op. cit. 51. p. 444.

<sup>26</sup>Op. cit. 26. p. 260.

<sup>27</sup>Op. cit. 52. p. 454.

<sup>28</sup> The Long Discourses of the Buddha. 22. Wisdom Publication, Boston. p. 355.

<sup>29</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), 10. BPS. p. 145.

<sup>30</sup> Galmangoda, Sumanapala, *Buddha Bhāvanā krama Saha Manochikithsāva*, 2006, p. 17.

means the development of spiritual qualities or wholesome potentialities (*sattabodhyaṅga*). *Bhāvanā* as defined in Suttas and Commentaries in its profundity is found only in the practice of Buddhism.

The sub-commentary, *Abhidhammāvatāra Purāṇaṭṭhikā* mentions “*Bhāvetikusaladhamme āsevativadāhetietāyātibhāvanā*.” *Bhāvanā*, according to this statement, means development, association and application of wholesome doctrines. When taking all the above factors in a nut shell, *bhāvanā* means development of skillful qualities in the mind.

The form of meditation found in other religious traditions such as Brahmanism and Jainism is based on Eternalism (*Sāsvatavāda*) and Annihilationism (*Ucchedavāda*) respectively. In other words, the form of meditation or mental concentration in other religious philosophies is totally based either on Self-Indulgence (*kāmasukhallikānuyoga*) or Self-mortification (*Attakilamātānuyoga*), the Two Extremes refused in the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. The Buddhist Meditation is based on The Middle Path (*Majjhimā Paṭipadā*) which leads to self-enlightenment, the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Path of Moderation or *Majjhimā Paṭipadā* that avoids the Two Extremes is none other than The Noble Eightfold Path which constitutes The Threefold Training or The Three Groups (*Tividhā Sikkhā* or *Tayo Khandhā*) Morality, Concentration and Wisdom (*Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā*). Hence, Buddhist meditation can be practised by a person who wishes to lessen worldly desires avoiding gratification in sense pleasures and by one who avoids fanatic ascetic practices or extreme asceticism. Buddhist meditation is mainly of two aspects: *Samādhi - bhāvanā (samatha - bhāvanā)* and *Vipassanā - bhāvanā (vidarsanā - bhāvanā)*.

According to the Suttas like *Mahāparinibbāna*,<sup>32</sup> *Gaṇakamoggallāna*,<sup>33</sup> *Cūlahatthipadopama*<sup>34</sup>, *Rathavinīta*<sup>35</sup>, *Sīla* or morality lays the foundation for both *samathabhāvanā* and *vipassanābhāvanā*. Thus, morality is the leading prerequisite for Buddhist meditation.

The **Right Mindfulness** and the **Right Effort** in the Noble Eightfold Path are the two main prerequisites that lay the foundation for the entire field of meditation common to both systems – *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*.

The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*<sup>36</sup> introduces the Threefold training with *Sīla* as the preliminary phase, the practice of *Samādhi* as the second and *Paññā* as the means of attaining ultimate release from *Āsavās* (mental taints). *Paññā* is developed by Insight. The *Sabbāsava Sutta*<sup>37</sup> deals with seven ways of eradicating defilements that cause mental and physical problems. Among them, the first method is *dassanā* – understanding and the last method is ‘*bhāvanā*’. The highest stage of understanding is wisdom which is the realization of all the mental and physical phenomena.

Ascetic Gautama, before the attainment of the Buddhahood or Enlightenment, developed supra normal skills based on yogic practices. This type of meditation is known as *Samatha* because one’s mind reaches supra normal states or *dhyāna* by calming down one’s thoughts and by cultivating the power of concentration. Thus, *Samatha* meditation is derived from the pre-Buddhist practices. What actually led Ascetic Gautama to the Buddhahood was his own experimentation in meditation. This new meditation is known as *Vipassanā* which means insight or penetration into reality. It is through *Vipassanā* that one can attain *Nibbāna*, the goal of Buddhism. Even the one who has mastered *Samatha* does not attain *Nibbāna*; he has to develop *Vipassanā* in order to attain *Nibbāna*. An essential step of *Vipassanā* is *satipaṭṭhāna* (i.e. mindfulness or awareness). Through *satipaṭṭhāna*, the meditator becomes aware of the present moment of life, each and every movement of his or her physical and mental existence. That kind of awareness is essential to have penetrating insight into the physical and mental phenomena which encompass the whole world. Being aware of one’s own feelings is traditionally known as *vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*. When the process of feeling is seen clearly with *satipaṭṭhāna*, the feeler disappears. In the absence of the feeler, observant, or ego, the meditator becomes in touch with the flux of life or the stream of existence. Normally one does not notice details in one’s activities. Only when one becomes mindful, one sees the minute details of one’s activities. Similarly in being fully attentive, one can take note of all the movements taking place in daily living. A step beyond the physical movements is thought. The meditator begins to see his or her thoughts, he or she begins to recognize the rising, continuing, and the fall of each thought. Thus, characteristics like impermanence of the physical and mental entities become revealed to the meditator. Seeing these

<sup>31</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), 2.BPS.p. 91.

<sup>32</sup> The Long Discourses of the Buddha, 16. Wisdom Publication, Boston. p. 234./ DB, 16. PTS.p. 85.

<sup>33</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), 107. BPS.p. 874.

<sup>34</sup> Op. cit. 27.p. 273.

<sup>35</sup> Op. cit. 24.p. 240.

<sup>36</sup> The Long Discourses the Buddha, 2. Wisdom Publication, Boston. p. 99 – 100.

<sup>37</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, 2. Buddhist Publication Society.p. 91.

characteristics is *vipassanā*. This way *satipaṭṭhāna* leads to *vipassanā*. One's progress towards enlightenment depends on *vipassanā* meditation.

Two kinds of meditation designated in Buddhism are development of tranquility (*samatha – bhāvanā*), i.e. concentration (*samādhi*) and development of insight (*vipassanā – bhāvanā*), i.e. wisdom (*paññā*).<sup>38</sup> A sound knowledge of *samatha* and *vipassanā* is an essential prerequisite for successful initiation of Buddhist meditation with understanding. Ven. Walpola Rahula says, “There are two forms of meditation. One is the development of mental concentration (*samatha* or *samādhi*), of one-pointedness of mind (*cittakaggatā*, Skt. *cittaikāgratā*),.....He therefore discovered the other form of ‘meditation’ known as *vipassanā* (Skt. *vipaśyanā* or *vidarśanā*), .....”<sup>39</sup>

Bhikkhu Bodhi in the introduction to the third edition of the translation of the Middle Length discourses of the Buddha (*Majjhima Nikāya*) says that the methods of meditation taught by the Buddha in the Pali Canon fall into two broad systems. One is the development of serenity (*samatha*), which aims at concentration (*samādhi*); the other is the development of insight (*vipassanā*), which aims at understanding or wisdom (*paññā*). According to the Buddhist system of mental training (*bhāvanā*), the role of serenity is subordinate to that of insight because insight is the crucial instrument to eradicate the ignorance.<sup>40</sup>

In the *Dasuttara Sutta*,<sup>41</sup> Ven. Sāriputta says there are two states which are true dhammas, real phenomena which have to be developed. In Pāli, it is *dvedhammābhāvetabbā*, which is translated as “the two dhammas to be developed.” They are *samathacavipassanāca* – tranquility and insight. This development is called cultivation, *bhāvanā* for which we often use the term meditation. The *Mahāvaccagotta Sutta* says that the two dhammas – tranquility and insight should be developed or cultivated. When these two dhammas – tranquility and insight are developed further, they will lead to the penetration of many elements.<sup>42</sup> “*dvedhammāuttaribhāvitā – samathacavipassanāca – anekadhātupaṭivedhāyasamvattissanti*”.

*Samādhi* is derived from the root “*saṃ-ā-dhā*” which means ‘to put together’, ‘to concentrate.’ *Samatha* or *samādhibhāvanā* is the method of meditation that leads to a tranquility which is the concentrated, unshaken, peaceful state of mind in which mental agitation, wandering and distraction is absent. Ven. Nyantiloka mentions in his *Buddhist Dictionary Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* that according to *Sankhepaṇṇāna*, the Commentary to the *Abhidhammatṭhasaṅgaha*, the concentration of mind bestows a favorable rebirth, present happy life and purity of mind devoid of the five mental defilements – the Five Hindrances (*pañcanīvaraṇa*).<sup>43</sup> Therefore, concentration is the obligatory basis and prerequisite for insight. He cites here, “May you develop concentration, O monks; for who is mentally concentrated, sees things according to reality. (S.XXII.5).”<sup>44</sup>

Bhikkhu Bodhi says regarding serenity (*samatha*) thus, “The attainments possible through serenity meditation were known to Indian contemplatives long before the advent of the Buddha. The Buddha himself mastered the two highest stages under his early teachers but found that, on their own, they led to higher planes of rebirth, not to genuine enlightenment (MN 26.15 -16). However, because of the unification of mind induced by the practice of concentration contributes to clear understanding, the Buddha incorporated the techniques of serenity meditation and the resulting levels of absorption into his own system, treating them as a foundation and preparation for insight and as a “pleasant abiding here and now.”<sup>45</sup>

According to Ven. Walpola Rahula, *samatha* or *samādhibhāvanā* is the development of mental concentration of one-pointedness of mind by various methods prescribed in the texts, leading up to the highest mystic states such as the Sphere of Nothingness or the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor Non-Perception.<sup>46</sup> According to Ven. Narada, *samādhi* is one-pointedness of the mind. It is the concentration of the mind on a one object to entire exclusion of all else.<sup>47</sup> Tranquility meditation (*samathabhāvanā*) is the concentration of the tranquil and peaceful mind. It involves the very

<sup>38</sup>Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, 1988, BPS. p. 67.

<sup>39</sup>Rahula, Walpola, *What The Buddha Taught*, ed. 2006, BCC. p. 68.

<sup>40</sup>The Middle Length Discourse of the Buddha (MN).WP.p. 38.

<sup>41</sup>The Long Discourses of the Buddha (DN), 34.WP.p. 512.

<sup>42</sup>The Middle Length Discourse of the Buddha (MN),73. WP.p. 600.

<sup>43</sup>Sensuous desire, ill-will, torpor and sloth, restlessness and mental worry and skeptical doubts.

<sup>44</sup>Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, 1988, BPS. p. 68.

<sup>45</sup>The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN).WP. p. 38 – 39.

<sup>46</sup>Rahula, Walpola, *What The Buddha Taught*, ed. 2006, BCC. p. 68.

<sup>47</sup>Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, 2008, Jaico Publishing House. p. 519.

controlled or mindful action of holding the mind to an object, and does not allow the mind to wander. The mind remains completely still, like a stilled candle, neither flickering nor fluttering. This is the nature of tranquility meditation. When this happens, the mind becomes very peaceful and powerful because it is a concentration of pure states of mind.

Samathabhāvanā is based on the Right Concentration which in its widest sense is the mental concentration present in every wholesome state of consciousness (*kusala-citta*), and this is the reason why The Path of Purification (*Visuddhimagga*) mentions it as *kusala-citta-ekaggatā*. The culmination of Right Concentration is the profitable unification of mind or one-pointedness of mind (*cittaekaggatā*) which is the agreement of consciousness and its concomitants in focusing evenly (*samaṃ*) and rightly (*sammā*) on a single object.<sup>48</sup> This state of mind is manifested as non-wavering, non-distraction and non-agitation, steadiness and steadfastness of mind or unscattered mentality which establishes inward tranquility or calmness.<sup>49</sup>

The attainments reached by the practice of *samathabhāvanā* (serenity meditation) are the eight absorptions – the *jhānas* and the four immaterial states. *Samathabhāvanā* develops a concentrated and unified state of mind in which all the mental power is converged towards one point and concentrated on one object developing one-pointedness in mind. This helps to calm the mind, control and reduce the arising of mental impurities and to gain absorptions (*jhāna*), the high stages of concentration. When the mind is calmed and strengthened through *samatha*, there occurs certain mental purification which can influence the mind to attain certain psychic powers over natural phenomena. However, the attainment of calmness or tranquility of mind is not the ultimate realization. The tranquility of mind is a precondition or prerequisite for developing insight. For instance, the highest mental states like the Sphere of Nothingness or the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor Non-Perception are mind created mystic states, conditioned states (*saṅkhata*), and they do not provide insight into the ultimate reality. As Ven. Walapola Rahula says, the Buddha considered these mystic mental states as ‘happy living’ in the existence (*diṭṭhadhammasukhavihāra*) or ‘peaceful living’ (*sāntavihāra*).<sup>50</sup> Ven. Narada says in his book, “When the *Jhānas* are developed by temporarily inhibiting the Hindrances (*Nīvaraṇa*), the mind is so purified that it resembles a polished mirror, where everything is clearly reflected in true perspective. Still there is not complete freedom from unwholesome thoughts, for by concentration the evil tendencies are only temporary inhibited. They may rise to the surface at quite unexpected moments.”<sup>51</sup>

According to tradition, Prince Siddhārtha, at the age of five, entered the first *jhāna*. The ascetic Gotama practised attaining *jhānas* under the famous religious teachers in India. He practised *ĀkiñcaññāyatanaCitta* and *Nevaśaññā-n’asaññāyatanaCitta* under Ālārakālāma and Udakārāmaputta respectively. These *jhānic* attainments were taken as permanent. Buddhism also accepted these *jhānic* attainments but not as the final permanent attainment. For instance, (i) *Ākāsānañcāyatanacitta*—the state of the infiniteness of space, (ii) *Viññāṇañcāyatana*—the state of limitlessness of consciousness, (iii) *Ākiñcaññāyatana*—the state of voidness or nothingness and (iv) *Nevaśaññā-n’asaññāyatana*—the state of neither- perception-nor non-perception.

These *jhānas* or trances are not permanent. They change sooner or later therefore they are to be confirmed by insight—wisdom. Although these trances are impermanent, they are important to suppress desire (*rāga*). Insight or wisdom is used to eradicate ignorance (*avijjā*). *Nirodhasamāpatti* is the total eradication of perceptions and feelings. A detailed description is given in the *JhānaSutta*: “The ending of the mental fermentations depends on the first *jhāna*... the second *jhāna*... the third... the fourth... the dimension of the infinitude of space... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of nothingness. The ending of the mental fermentations depends on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.”<sup>52</sup>

The *SubhūtiSutta* says that the Buddha praises a monk for practising *Jhāna*. Although the Buddha praises *jhānic* attainments, adherence to them as permanent attainments are rejected.<sup>53</sup> But they are accepted and recommended as the gradual path to the ultimate knowledge. For instance, *pādaka-*

<sup>48</sup>The Path of Purification (*Visuddhimagga*), Ch. III. Para. 2 – 4. p. 83 – 85.

<sup>49</sup>VajirañānaMahāthera, Paravahera, *Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice*, Third ed. 987, BMS. pp.17 – 19.

<sup>50</sup>RahulaWalpola, *What The Buddha Taught*, ed. 2006, BCC. p. 68.

<sup>51</sup>Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, 2008, JaicoPublishing House. p. 543.

<sup>52</sup>The Book of Gradual Sayings (AN), Vol. IV. 9.36. PTS. p. 284.

<sup>53</sup>Verses of Uplift (*Udāna*), 6.7 (71). London Geoffrey Cumberlege (Oxford University Press). p. 86.

*jhāna*—foundation—forming absorption (as starting point) for higher spiritual powers (*abhiññā*) or for insight (*vipassanā*) leading to the supra mundane paths.<sup>54</sup>

Both Tranquility meditation (*samathabhāvanā*) and Insight meditation (*vipassanābhāvanā*) develop one –pointedness of mind or absorption into its objects because both need to hold the mind its object for long periods to give it strength, to serve their purpose. But they are not exactly the same. The main aim of concentration meditation is to develop right concentration – concentration of the pure mind. As a result of this, deep states of concentration or absorption (*jhāna*) can be attained. When these are further developed, they can give rise to supernormal powers – like levitation, mind reading, recollection of past lives, and so forth. In the final stage, because of the powers of concentration, you will find rebirth in the Brahma realms. These realms are above the sensual heavens – very high and lofty forms of existence. In Insight Meditation or *vipassanā*, the concentration is used to develop understanding into the nature of the world, the nature of mind-body processes. Everything in the world is a mind-body process. And they are realized in their true nature as impermanent, suffering and non – self. When one finally transcends all these, the mind finds union with the absolute, the unchanging and the unconditioned, or as we say, the everlasting peace. Firstly, the aim is different. Secondly, the object is different. The object in *samatha* meditation is a concept conceived by mind. It is not real. It is something that is created by the mind. But in insight meditation, the object is real in the sense that it is a mind-body process. The mind does not think or conceive the reality. It is thereby the virtue of its existence.

Faculties concerned in concentration in *samatha* and *vipassanā* are also different. In tranquility meditation, the main faculty concerned is one –pointedness of concentration, with the support of mindfulness. Whereas in insight meditation, the main factor involved is mindfulness and the degree of energy or exertion of activities is much compared with tranquility meditation. Tranquility meditation itself is of many types, depending on what we concentrate on. For instance, when we concentrate on loving – kindness, you think of the person in mind. The person or being is a concept. The person in your mind is a thought. Therefore, you concentrate on the person, which is a concept and you bring loving – kindness to the person. Another tranquility meditation object is visualization. For instance, *kaṣiṇas* are visualized circles. The light *kaṣiṇa* where you visualize is a circle of light. The mind created that circle and holds it there. Thus, the visualized circle in the mind is a mind –conceived, mind–thought –up or mind - created object. *Vipassanā* object is a reality – like “rising” and “falling”, an actual sensation or pain. You do not create it. It is there already in self although you may have to look for it. And as you become more aware of its nature, you will notice that it is not a still or static object. It is vibrant, dynamic, changing, arising and passing away. The more you are aware of it, the clearer the changing nature. It is different from the *samatha* object or visualization where the deeper you go the quieter and motionless the object becomes. The *vipassanā* object fluctuates because of the nature of impermanence. When it changes, the suffering and non-self-aspect also becomes very clear. *Vipassanā* concentration is to be continuously applied on the fluctuating object until insight arises. This insight is the realization with regard to the Three Universal Characteristics (*tilakkhaṇa*). Tranquility concentration is peaceful and powerful. It cannot lead to realization because the concentration developed does not lead there. It is easier to concentrate on a still object than a changing object. *Vipassanā* concentration is unique. It is not common. It is not easy to be developed because the object is of changing nature. The Role of Concentration in Meditation is that no deliberate effort is made to develop concentration in the process of *vipassanābhāvanā* (insight meditation) as the meditator’s attention is not confined to a single object but to the contemplation of the incessantly transient flow or flux of phenomena arising and passing away.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, the arising of concentration at the access level or absorption level is not possible in the practice of insight meditation. However, a spontaneous concentration existing concurrently with itself, scrutinizing with undistracted attention the ever-changing phenomenal process is produced in successive moments of contemplation. This type of concentration which unifies the mind with the contemplation is known as momentary concentration (*khaṇikasamādhi*) and this momentary spontaneous concentration enables the meditator to prevent the disturbances from the hindrances to the constant contemplation which allows the insight to arise. The access concentration helps the meditator of *samatha* to suppress the hindrances firstly and then to develop insight. The momentary concentration that eliminates the hindrances helps the meditator of *vipassanā* to contemplate the four foundations of mindfulness and awaken insight.

<sup>54</sup>Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*, Fourth ed.1988, BPS.p. 226.

<sup>55</sup>Gunaratana, Henepola, *The Path of Serenity and Insight*. MotilalBanarsidass, Reprint 2009, p. 45.

The doctrinal term *samatha* or *samādhi* means concentration, tranquility, serenity, calmness, or one-pointedness of mind (*cittaekaggatā*) and undistractedness (*avikkhepa*). It is the mental state of being firmly fixed. *Samādhi*: *Sam* + *ā* +  $\sqrt{dhā}$  is the fixing of mind on a single object. Thus, *samatha* or *samādhi* is the unperturbed, peaceful and lucid state of mind attained by strong mental concentration. The doctrinal term *vipassanā* or *vidarsanā* refers to insight, wisdom (*paññā*), the light of wisdom that flashes forth realizing the truth of impermanence (*anicca*), the unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and the unsubstantial nature of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence (*anatta*). *Vipassanā*: viz. means the three characteristics of *nāma* and *rūpa* (mentality and corporeality) and *passanā* is the right understanding through deep concentration attained through the mindfulness of physical and mental phenomena. Thus, insight leads to entrance into supramundane state of purity and to the final liberation. Bhikkhu Bodhi says that the task of insight meditation is to sever our attachments by enabling us to pierce through this net of conceptual projections in order to see things as they really are. To see things really are refers to see them in terms of the three characteristics – as impermanent, as painful or suffering, and as not self.<sup>56</sup>

The purpose of the *samathabhāvanā* is the attainment of deep concentration such as *parikamma-samādhi* (preparatory concentration – this exists at the beginning of mental exercise), *upacāra-samādhi* (access or neighborhood concentration – this is the approaching concentration but not yet attaining the first absorption or *jhāna*), *appanā-samādhi* (absorption or attainment concentration – this is present during the absorptions). Thus, the prime purpose of tranquility meditation is to attain deep concentration.

The purpose of *vipassanābhāvanā* is the attainment of not only certain degree of concentration but also the understanding of bodily and mental process in their reality through mindfulness. Thus, the ultimate purpose of Insight meditation is to attain the cessation of all the suffering through the realization of the true nature of mental and physical process (*nāma* and *rūpa*). Prof. David J. Kalupahana says that the ultimate goal of insight (*paññā*) is freedom (*vimutti*).<sup>57</sup> The result of *samathabhāvanā* is the attainment of peace and happiness through deep concentration. Although *samatha* brings certain degree of peace and happiness, it does not enable the meditator to realize the true nature of physical and mental phenomena.

The result of *vipassanābhāvanā* is the attainment of cessation of suffering through the realization of body-mind process in the context of the three universal characteristics.

The difference between serenity meditation (*samathabhāvanā*) and insight meditation (*vipassanābhāvanā*) mentioned in the introduction to the third edition of the translation of the Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (*MajjhimaNikāya*) by Bhikkhu Bodhi can be cited as follows; “Whereas in serenity meditation the meditator attempts to focus upon a single uniform object abstracted from actual experience, in insight meditation the endeavour is made to contemplate, from a position of detached observation, the ever-shifting flux of experience itself in order to penetrate through to the essential nature of bodily and mental phenomena.”<sup>58</sup> The *VijjābhāgiyaSutta* shows in brief the result of *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. The result of the development of tranquility or serenity (*samatha*) is development of the mind. The development of the mind leads to the abandonment of passion or lust. The result of the development of insight (*vipassanā*) is the development of wisdom or discernment. The development of wisdom leads to the abandonment of ignorance. A mind defiled by passion or lust is not liberated and wisdom or discernment defiled by ignorance is not developed. Thus, the fading away of passion or lust leads to liberation of mind and the fading away of ignorance is conducive to liberation of wisdom (discernment–release).<sup>59</sup> Thus, *Samatha* (serenity) and *Vipassanā* (insight) function together to uproot passion (*rāga*) and ignorance (*avijjā*).

The practice of *samathabhāvanā* is based on a single object. Attention or mindfulness is always focused on the object. When the mind wanders or gets distracted, it is not allowed to observe or indulge in the wandering or distracting object but the mind is brought back to the object of concentration meditation. *Vipassanābhāvanā* is based on a variety of objects of mental and physical processes. When the mind wanders or gets distracted during this meditation, it is not brought back to the primary object but lead to observe that object in its real nature. This process of observation goes on as long as that object exists in mind, and it is only after the disappearance of the object which is in focus that the mind is brought back to the primary object.

<sup>56</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), WP. p. 40.

<sup>57</sup> Kalupahana, David, J., *Buddhist Philosophy A Historical Analysis*, The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu. 1977. p. 56.

<sup>58</sup> The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (MN), WP. p. 39.

<sup>59</sup> The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha (AN), 2.31 (11).WP.p. 152.

According the Vijja-bhagiyaSutta<sup>60</sup> the two qualities which have a share in clear knowing are Tranquility (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*). When tranquility is developed, the mind is developed, and when the mind is developed, passion is abandoned. When insight is developed, discernment is developed, and when discernment is developed, ignorance is abandoned. Defiled by passion, the mind is not released. Defiled by ignorance, discernment does not develop. Thus, from the fading of passion is there awareness-release. From the fading of ignorance is there discernment-release. Concentration meditation (*samathabhāvanā*) suppresses mental defilements that cause mental problems and unwholesome behavior. It is a requisite for meditation. Nevertheless, in concentration meditation, defilements remain dormant in mind. Insight meditation (*vipassanābhāvanā*) eradicates defilements uprooting them and leading to the ultimate goal of Buddhism – the realization of *Nibbāna*. However, *samatha* or *samādhi* lays the foundation for *vipassanā* or Insight meditation.

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<sup>60</sup>The Book of Gradual Sayings (AN), 2. 30.3. 10. PTS.p. 55.



## ANALYSES OF SELECTED IGBO PROVERBS: THE IMPLICATIONS ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN MARRIAGE

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### Abstract

*The Igbo people are very conservative about marriage, in terms of choice of marriage mate, social status of the intended mates' family, financial capability of the mate, and the prospect of procreation. A broken marriage is a disgrace especially to the family of the bride, and the groom is looked at as a failure. Truth be said, no marriage is devoid of conflict and these need to be settled amicably. Peaceful families lead to a peaceful society, however, where the family is engulfed in conflict, the society cannot be found to be free of the effects of such conflict. It has been discovered that proper application of Igbo proverbs to conflict situations will minimize misunderstanding both in the society and in the family. This is because proverbs are wise sayings that address the heart of the discourse in any given context, truthfully and objectively. This paper highlights the meaning of Igbo proverbs, their functions, meaning of conflict and conflict resolution, and some Igbo proverbs that are useful in the resolution of marriage conflicts in the Igbo society. This paper adopts the use theory as its theoretical framework for establishing the connection between conflict and Igbo proverbs. This paper concludes by stating that proverbs are inevitable and that proverbs should be properly integrated in the day to day life of people.*

### Introduction

Language is meaningfully patterned to serve as a means of expression of thought, ideas and feelings. It is also used to impart information in a variety of ways and situations which may be used to express the user's feelings or to arouse desires and emotions in other people. Language is the life blood of the people's culture, through which norms, values, traditions of the people are preserved and transmitted from generation to generation. Effective communication makes for intelligent use of stylistic devices to spice up the linguistic utterances and one of such spices is proverbs. Though proverbs are short expressions, they convey a lot of ideas and understanding.

In the words of Lawal (1992:19), proverbs seem to contain the richest pool of pragmatic factor since a proverb properly contextualized, provides data that are at once linguistic, philosophical and cosmological. Proverbs thus have some of the greatest pragmatic constraints on language users. If there is any group in Nigeria that honours the use of proverbs in communication, it is the Igbo people. As language on the macro level is a highly formidable instrument in the formation of human character, so also is proverb required in the micro Igbo society for the transmission of societal norms and values from one generation to the other. This implies that proverbs form a major medium through which the Igbo man artistically expresses his views. Proverbs still form a veritable tool available for the inculcation of the following values in the minds of human beings which include cultural assimilation, conflict resolution, entertainment and sharing of various experiences of positive value.

Proverbs are called "wise sayings" of the ancestors and are highly valued by the Igbo people. When one wants to counsel marriage partners, he does so through proverbs because they throw more light on the subject and convincingly drive points home. Since proverbs are wise sayings of the ancestors, the couple gains by applying the counsel therein. So proverbs are used to resolve marriage conflicts. Conflicts have considerable value when they are managed constructively, and proverbs are an excellent and indirect mechanism for resolving marriage conflict. The main focus of this study is to have an insight on what proverbs are as a crucial and better way of resolving problems in marriage.

### Review of Related Literature

This section will attempt a comprehensive definition of proverbs and its functions in society. It will also examine issues on marital conflict, conflict resolution and conflict theory as applied herein.

## Definition of Proverb

A proverb is an adage, saying, or maxim that expresses conventional truth. Such expressions are generally short and are expressed in words that are simple, entertaining and easy to remember. Esere (2000:13) defines proverbs as a “short clever saying full of wisdom, intended as rules of conduct and behaviour.” It is a short rhetorical saying expressing a general belief. (Onwudufor, 2008:14) opines that a proverb is a saying in a more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense and salt and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it. Proverbs form part of the various figures of speech in language; it is an embodiment of the wisdom and ethics of the traditional societies.

Esere (2000) in her assessment of proverbs in Africa observes that “in many African cultures, a feeling for language, for imagery, and for the expression of abstract ideas through compressed and allusive phraseology come out particularly clearly in proverbs”.

A proverb is a condensed but memorable saying embodying some important facts of experience that are taken as true by many people. According to Macarthur (1996:234) the word proverb is derived from a Latin word “*proverbium*” (a saying supporting a point). “*Pro*” means *on behalf of* while “*verbum*” means *word*. *It is a pithy saying which had gained credence through widespread or frequent use. Most proverbs express some basic truth or practical precepts. A proverb, which describes a basic rule of conduct, may also be known as a maxim.* What this implies is that every Igbo proverb is important especially when it suits the context of usage. Norrick (1985:73) states that proverb is “wisdom of many and the wit of one, the experience and wisdom of several ages gathered and summed up in one expression”. The Yoruba people describe proverbs as the horse that can carry one swiftly to the discovery of ideas, while the Igbo people describe proverbs as “*mmanụ e ji eri okwu*” (the palm oil with which words are eaten).

A collection of proverbs may come to be associated with a person famous for wisdom, just as the book of proverbs in the Bible is attributed to King Solomon. Proverbial sayings are popular in the middle ages and are treated as accepted wisdom. In the present day, usage may often be regarded as clichés; but their persistence indicates their sociolinguistic importance, (Macarthur, 1996).

Wilson and Smith (1970) state that proverbs are ideas made in the conservation of ordinary people, which have been accepted as wise and sensible, and so passed on to the language for use on suitable occasions. They sometimes conveniently express an idea better than the speaker and help him to produce a wise thought. They further add that proverbs express in few words, a truth which is related to everyday experience. They are widely used in traditional society to describe in very few words, what could have otherwise required a thousand words.

Wilson and Smith (1970) posit further that proverbs are multi- functional and flexible instruments of everybody’s reasoning, although they maintain solidified attitudes or traditional modes of thoughts of certain cultures. A proverb is a proposition loaded with hidden feelings, wishes and intentions of the speaker.

Umeasiegbu (1986:45) sees proverbs as any expression recognized by a people as embodying the wisdom and philosophy of their ancestors. He admitted that the definition has its pitfall but the strength lies in the words recognized by people as embodying the wisdom and philosophy of their ancestors. This he believes is important, for an outsider cannot tell the people whose law he is studying what a proverb is. Onuekwusi (2011) sees proverbs as popular, common and numerous, they are pleasant expressions which adorn the rhetoric of a people. Proverbs constitute a part of oral tradition of a people which is unconsciously acquired from generation to generation. In his words, “*a proverb is a philosophical allusive and metaphorical citation that gives credence to a traditional truth and wisdom. It is allusive and metaphorical because it refers to some truth outside itself. It is philosophical because it is product of a long period of reasoning and observation which expresses some timeless truth.*”

Seeing the proverb from other angles of definition, it is said to be a tool for linguistic expression and composition for the purpose of rhetorical adornment and persuasion. (Kewulezi, 2004:17).

## Functions of Proverbs

A proverb might emerge into a conversation for instance, in a conflict situation in order to resolve the conflict, it can be used to advise both parties involved in the conflict, concerning a recommended direction of action. Supporting this, Umeasiegbu (1986) states that proverbs are excellent, indirect, and authoritative mechanism for resolving conflicts. The function as an indirect mechanism is to smoothen the rough edges of communication among individuals. If a person’s guilt is declared in a proverb, he is given an opportunity to take his blame graciously.

According to Adegoke and Esere (1998), proverbs are used in settling disputes between parties in commercial bargaining and in all forms of oratory. It is the language of diplomacy. In the absence of written forms, the wisdom and experiences of the Igbo ancestors were preserved in proverbs. In the words of Alhassan (1988:41), "...proverbs are employed to reinforce and sustain the traditional respect for elders, and they also serve as a potent means of social control. In settling quarrels and disputes, a proverb comes in handy because it is only one who is knowledgeable in words and proverbs that can settle quarrels with the use of proverbs."

Proverbs form a great part of a people's traditional repository of what they consider to be of great value and concern to them. They are the quintessence of a people's collective wisdom sustained and transmitted from generation to generation. Lawal (1992:32) posits that "...proverbs are the veritable horse that conveys one safely to the discovery of ideas." The aesthetic qualities and functions of proverbs can be gleaned from their different poetic techniques.

Igbo proverbs also serve didactic functions, especially for the younger generation. This is why level-headed youths crave the company of the elders so that they can glean linguistic, cultural and historical information usually conveyed in elders' speeches full of appropriate proverbs. As the proverb says, any youth who washes his hands clean shall dine with the elders. People respect the wisdom embodied in proverbs for they strike like arrows into the heart. (Norrick 1985). As well as conveying linguistic reality, proverbs can become an artistic device for giving complexity to narrative; unity of form, coherence and pattern to action, direction to moral and social insight. They can also indicate force and resourcefulness of character, the strong mind can manipulate the repertory of proverb to its own advantage. Kewulezii (2004) also noted that proverbs are used to express the morals as well as the ethics of the society. They are the convenient standards for appreciating behaviour in terms of the approved norms, and because they are potently and cleverly stated, they are suited for commenting on and correcting the behaviour of others irrespective of their age and dignity.

Onuekwusi (2011) opines that:

*a proverb is a tool which African writers use to justify the actions of character, criticize bad, unethical and immoral behaviour. Through the use of proverbs too, they express wealth of philosophy, wisdom and perception of life as they affect and control their communities. The use of proverbs encourages the right virtues in the community.*

### **Marital Conflict**

Conflict according to EDAFE (2008:25) simply means quarrel and or disagreements. Conflict generally is the presence of dispute between two or more persons. The degree of conflict is affected by the nature of dispute between the parties and also by the mood of any of the parties. Marriage is no exception to conflict situations.

Marriage has been described as legal union of a man and woman as husband and wife. It is relationship between two adults of the opposite sex who make emotional and legal commitment to live together. "Marriage involves the coming together of a man and woman to raise a family, and to meet the satisfaction of security and of an enduring affection and companionship." (Esere 2000:86). Marriage as a social institution is cherished and highly approved in every culture of world popular. It is usually contracted amidst joy, happiness and merry-making for the couple, family members and friends. Marriage, being a social-economic background to form a family, probably because of prevalent personality differences, the marriage institution is seen to breed more conflict than most other social institutions. (Alhassan, 1988).

Marital conflict is an ill-wind that blows no one any good. This is because, when there is conflict in the home, the consequences are great for the couple themselves, the children of the marriage and to the society at large. Juvenile delinquency, armed robbery, hooliganism, autism, alcoholism etc are all consequences of marital conflicts. As a result of the role the family unit plays in the overall development of the society, the problem of marital conflict calls for urgent attention because when the home, which forms the cradle of the society is settled, the society itself is at peace (Esere and Idowu, 2000).

### **Marital Conflict Resolution**

According to Adegoke and Esere (1998:69) total and permanent absence of conflict were it possible, apparently would not be a desirable situation even for most intimate situations. This does not imply that a bitter quarrel in marriage is a good thing. People say and do things in anger that can damage any relationship sometimes permanently. But a disagreement between married partners can be constructive and useful if it is handled in the right way. Thus it is not how often couples engage in

conflict that matters but how well they resolve the conflict before it degenerates to separation or divorce. This is where the use of relevant proverbs to interpret the salient issues causing the conflict comes in. It is also used to explain possible options that would help to bring about a peaceful resolution of the conflict. These proverbs, when taken to heart and applied by the couple will help to create an atmosphere of trust and cooperation that is conducive for fruitful negotiation.

### **The Place of Igbo Proverbs in Conflict Resolution**

Proverbs are derived from detailed observation of the behaviour of human beings, animals, plant and nature, and in them are expressed the volkgeist, beliefs, values, attitudes, perceptions, emotions and the entire cultural system of Igbo society. Norrick (1985:62) observes that:

*Proverb is an integral part of Igbo language – an indispensable tool in authentic discourse which embodies matured seasoned philosophy. Proverbs, are short and make for good retention, it functions as device, a teaching device to insult, praise, lament or allude. These various uses which a proverb serves make it enjoy current usage and its presentation to date lies in form and the different functions it fulfils.*

Proverbs are coined from a thought to an emotion or a wish and at the same time to “an intention or an act”. A proverb might emerge into conversation for example, in a conflict situation in order to resolve the conflict. It can be used to advise both parties involved in the conflict concerning a recommended direction of action. It is the situation that determines the choice of proverbs during conversations. Thus Kewulezi (2004) rightly posits that: “when people use proverbs, there is always some relationship between two situations being compared; it is this concantenateness between the human experience and another that give proverbs their relevance.”

### **Proverbs as a Technique for Conflict Resolution**

Though different techniques of conflict resolution exist, the use of proverbs presents itself as a veritable tool for resolving marital conflict. This work examines selected proverbs that are effective in the resolution of marital conflict.

1. **Aka nri kwọọ aka ekpe, aka ekpe akwọọ aka nri:** While the right hand washes the left hand, the left hand also washes the right hand. Only one mate cannot make the marriage succeed. The interpretation of this proverb is that unity, understanding and cooperation can strengthen the marriage bond and build trust. There should be cooperation, openness and trust. Keeping secret or failing to support a mate can result in problems. For a marriage to succeed, the couple needs mutual or symbolic relationship.
2. **Nkịta anaghị agbanahụ ọdụdụ ya n'ọsọ:** The dog cannot run away from its tail. This proverb when interpreted means that neither mate can do without the other. The husband and wife are one, and the same body. When one is happy, the other will be happy and vice versa. Proper consideration and application of this proverb will move married couples to declare unfailing or undying love for each other. Hence, resolution of conflict and problems.
3. **Ọkọkọ chị ụmụ rịa elu osisi, o were maka ụmụ ya rịtuo:** If a hen that rears chicks climbs a tree, it is bound to come down for the sake of her chickens. The interpretation of this proverb is that responsibilities cannot be delegated or abandoned. The man cannot abdicate from his responsibility in the home, neither can the parents delegate the responsibility of training their children. When responsibility is executed in the home properly, this will promote peace and unity in the home.
4. **Di na nwunye gbaa izu, ibe ji aghọọ nnukwu nri:** When husband and wife confer together, a piece of yam becomes abundant food. The interpretation of this proverb is that openness to each other will help a marriage succeed. Unity is essential for the growth and survival of a marriage and with planning, consultation and agreement, a couple can make their marriage work, whereas without planning there will be problems in their marriage.
5. **E mee nwata ka e mere ibe ya obi adi ya mma:** If you treat a child as his peers are treated, he will be happy. The society accepts certain general norms and common etiquette. No one likes to be left out or deprived. The above proverb can be applied in a situation where two women are married to one man, what is given to Mrs. A should also be provided for Mrs. B, thus emphasizing the need for equity and fairness.
6. **Nwaanyị mụta ite ofe mmiri mmiri, di ya amụta ipị ụtara aka were suru ofe:** If a woman decides to make the soup watery, the husband will learn to dent the fufu before dipping it into

the soup. A man is expected to know how to handle the affairs of his household and demonstrate headship in all circumstances. To allow a woman to dominate him is unacceptable. He must do all he can to remain the head. In case a particular woman remains incorrigible, the husband will adopt a strategy to counter her actions without hurting her feelings and if she is naughty, he would again adopt different strategies to outwit her.

7. **E kelee onye ntị chiri, elu anughị ya, ala anụ ya:** When a deaf is greeted, if the heavens do not hear, the earth will hear. In other words, let all strive to do the right thing, even when many will not be happy about it, there are those who will certainly appreciate it. In a marriage, dispute or misunderstanding should not make the wife use the situation as an excuse for bad behavior. She should rather play her role dutifully, respect her husband and continue to work to gain his respect, and training their children to do same. Therefore doing what one is supposed to do in a marriage despite indifference on the part of the mate will enhance peace and unity, and reduce conflict between husbands and wives or co-wives.
8. **Mmadụ anaghị ebi n'ala biri n'elu:** A person cannot have everything he or she wants or desires in life. This proverb is indirectly used to advice people against self-centeredness and lack of contentment which implies that one should not expect to have all. No marriage is perfect, no man or woman can possess all the qualities needed for a successful marriage. Both must appreciate each other for the good in themselves, not for the bad they find in each other for this will lead to the failure of the marriage. Proper application of this proverb will help couples to see good in each other and then find happiness and peace.
9. **A gaghi eji maka ụjọ daara enwe n'elu maqbụ agaghị m eji maka na enyi m nwaanyị mara mma wee rịa ube e koro iyi maqbụ arụsị.** This proverb can be used to advice couple to refrain from living a double life. It also condemns the habit of pretending not to know the truth, as a result of fear or whatever. A man should not because of fear of losing his marriage, push himself into debt or more serious problems neither should a woman for fear of losing her husband, put herself into problems like consulting spirit mediums or using charms. Families that experience this type of problem can apply this proverb for easy understanding of life.
10. **Onye ndidi na-eri azụ ukpoo:** A patient dog eats the fattest bone. This proverb implies that with commitment and patience, one can achieve very difficult tasks. It can be used to settle marital conflict. It is not a must that every home shall have everything perfectly. Each mate should exercise patience and have enduring love knowing that overtime they may achieve set goals. The couple should not be in a hurry or compete with friends, family, and neighbours. For example, when a husband suffers financial misfortune and as a result, the wife feels she can no longer bear the pressure of poverty, with this proverb she can be exhorted to remain calm and allow her husband time and psychological freedom to sort things out financially rather than leaving the home.

### Theoretical Framework

We find that indeed proverbs can play a very significant role in the settlement and prevention of conflict or disputes in marriages. The selected proverbs here considered are direct, unambiguous, and versatile. This work uses the use theory of meaning to propound its position. The use theory asserts that the use of a certain word by a person can become adopted and used by that person as well as others to have a particular meaning or interpretation. According to Ndimele (1997:20), a German scholar named Wittgenstein in his book *Philosophical Investigations* proposed this theory as an alternative to other theories on Meaning. To him, the meaning of any linguistic expression (be it a word, a phrase, or a sentence) is determined by the context in which it is used. So, for one to know the meaning of a word, one has to listen and see how it is used by the speakers of that language. Accordingly, one must listen to the proverb as expressed by the speaker, listen to the interpretation given by the speaker, as well as the application of the proverb to the given situation or context. That way the listener benefits and can readily make good use of the proverb.

### Recommendations

The following suggestions are provided whereby if some or all of them are utilized the use of proverbs in resolution of marital disputes can be sustained.

1. Religious leaders should be encouraged to imbibe Igbo proverbs when settling marital disputes as a way of preserving Igbo language, culture and proverbs more so, where the parties involved will benefit from the interpretation of the proverbs side by side the tenets of their religious beliefs.

2. Incentives should be provided by the government and private sector for the development of written works on Igbo proverbs, language and culture. This will provide a rich library and research materials for generations to come.
3. Traditional rulers and town union leaders should document their proverbs as this will provide a “proverb-bank” or reference point for members of the community to preserve their proverbs for future generations.
4. Igbo proverbs and culture should be properly integrated in the general studies curriculum of tertiary institutions especially in Eastern Nigeria.
5. Igbo teachers in all categories of education should be encouraged and sensitized on the need to use Igbo proverbs in their daily conversation as a way of developing their use of proverbs and teaching skills.

Where the above recommendations are adopted, the use of proverbs will be of immense benefit to the youths who appreciate their language. It is vital that youths appreciate their language through effective use of proverbs to enhance smooth communication and marital happiness. It will also reawaken the minds of the Igbo people concerning the use of their proverbs as a powerful and important tool for settling conflicts in marriage.

### Conclusion

In the annals of the history of man, conflict has always existed in human relationship, business, between states or nations and even in marriages. Various mechanisms have been designed and developed to provide avenue for dispute resolution. Manuals have been designed and developed to enable and foster the amicable resolution of disputes. Dispute professionals even exist! Nonetheless, there have been more autochthonous means of resolving disputes. In religion, the Muslims use the Koran, Christians use the Bible for the same purpose. While some may prefer religious fetishes, others preferred the use of proverbs.

Proverbs seem more veritable and effective in dispute resolution because they carry the history and volkgeist of the people. Thus, the people develop the proverbs based on experiences and real life situations. On this pedestal, proverbs make sense over time, they are not built on hypothetical situations but on true happenings over time in the history of a people. The use of proverbs in resolving conflict especially marital conflict was discussed in this work and a number of such relevant proverbs were mentioned and discussed. The analysis of such proverbs highlights how issues can readily and easily be resolved using proverbs.

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## **Traditional Legal System a Paradigm for Judicial System in Nigeria.**

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### **Abstract:**

The traditional legal system which comprises oath taking, pouring of wine, divination, trial by ordeal, witnessing and so on, is saddled with the responsibility of maintaining law and order in the society. It discharges its duty by making sure that there is quick dispensation of justice. There is no doubt that modern legal system in Nigeria is inefficient in the discharge of its duty in terms of fairness, corrupt free judiciary, quick dispensation of justice and maintenance of law and order in the society. Rather, there are bribery and corruption, partiality, delay and denial of justice, exploitation, oppression that characterize modern legal system in Nigeria. Therefore, it is pertinent to uncover the salient attributes of the traditional legal system which will serve as a role model for the modern judicial system in Nigeria. The work used phenomenological method. It was descriptive and analytical. The research discovered that the traditional legal system was not expensive, yet more efficient, reliable and traditional. This accounts for Igbo people's resilience in resorting to the traditional method of settling disputes irrespective of modern legal system's declaration of traditional legal system illegal.

**Key words:** Justice, Tradition and legal system.

### **Introduction**

In the pre-colonial era, the Igbo were not bereft of means of settling disputes among parties which also provided the opportunity of ascertaining the innocence or culpability of the accused. There were various means of determining cases at that time which include, arbitration, divination, oath-taking, handing over the unknown offender to the god of justice (isu agbara). In most cases, divination, oath-taking, and handing over the unknown offender to the god of Thunder, *Amadioha* (divinity who is in-charge of justice) were the last resorts, especially in a situation where the culprit was not known. All these efforts were geared towards ensuring that the offenders were brought to book and rights and property protected. They also aided quick and smooth dispensation of retributive justice.

But, since the advent of modern legal system, there are all sorts of manipulations, exploitations, bribery and corruption and respect for sacred cows. In most cases, the innocent suffer while the guilty are exonerated. Obinna (1999:109) averred that there is "deteriorating condition of justice in most cases lack of it in Nigeria. The denial of justice has resulted to injustice that characterizes Nigerian legal system". Regrettably, the legal system that was set up to address injustice and promotes justice has now become an instrument in the hands of the rich to intimidate and oppress the downtrodden in the society.

The citizens of Nigeria have lost confidence in the legal system which has resulted to the extra judicial killings that are rampant in Nigeria. More often than not, some people take laws in their hands by maiming, killing and burning of the offenders, especially armed robbers and notorious criminals, instead of reporting the matter to the police for prosecution. It is an utter disregard of the Nigerian constitutional provision that declares the accused innocent until he is proved otherwise. In response to the obvious decay in the judicial system in Nigeria, many organizations such as religious bodies have set up Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for the settlement of disputes among their members. They did not set up Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to complement the legal system in Nigeria; rather it was set up to ensure quick dispensation of justice and impartiality in the judgement of cases.

### **The Concept of Tradition among the Igbo**

The term tradition is not an offshoot of English root word. Njoku (nd: 105) avers that "the term tradition came from Latin word *trado tradere* meaning to hand over or to give. Tradition has been seen

as handing over, oral transmission from one generation to another". It should be noted that legal system is traditional due to it was handed over from generation to generation. According to Metuh (1985: vii), tradition is an embodiment of those things that are handed over by tradition. Tradition is transmitted by words of mouth. It occurs more in the primitive society.

It should be stated that the word tradition is opposed to things that are foreign. The traditional legal system was not imported in Nigeria. It means those things that constitute the legal system such as laws, customs and beliefs that are traceable to local development. Arinze (2001:2) asserts that tradition is a heritage that evolved from centuries as people responded to situations of their life. Tradition originated from the forebears and continued to the present generation.

Tradition covers every aspect of man. It depicts those practices that were not brought into Igbo land as a result of Igbo's contact with foreigners. There is no aspect of Igbo life that is exempted from traditional influence. Parrinder (1969: 8) opines that tradition consists of beliefs, customs and laws that have no written texts and scriptures. In this situation, the Igbo have no option other than to rely on memories, myths and stories. Tradition cuts across beliefs, customs and laws to culture. It is indispensable in the realization and sustenance of Igbo culture. It must be stated that without tradition, the Igbo culture could have been eroded and scraped from the face of the earth by Christianity and western culture.

### **Conceptualization of Justice**

People perceive justice from their vantage points. Ukoma and Nnachi (2012:45) intone that justice takes place when punishment and reward are meted according to the person's inaction or good deed respectively. Bad acts attract punishments given their ability to inflict harm on people while good deeds are rewarded owing to a common belief that good deeds enhance the welfare of people. In a nut shell, Iwe (2003:26) quipps that justice simply put entails giving everybody his due. It occurs when judges are being fair in the discharge of their duties by deciding cases without fear or favour. Okolie (2007:54) maintains that justice occurs when people are treated equally. On the other hand, injustice takes place when people receive favour at the expense of others.

Among the kinds of justice, retributive justice features prominently in the settlement of disputes. Okon (2011:140) avers that "the theory of retributive goes with the notion that the punishment to be meted out should be commensurate with the gravity of the offence". For the Igbo, it is a mark of injustice for an offender to be punished beyond the offence committed. In fact, justice is akin to the biblical justice of tit for tat. Akam (1995:45-46) observed that "retributive justice is intended for rewarding or punishing suitably all human actions". Retributive justice sees that the offender does not go unpunished.

### **Conceptualization of Legal system**

Laws among the Igbo are embedded in nature. The gods enshrined these natural laws in nature during creation. Among the Igbo, there is a common belief that laws are not man made. As Nwadike (1997:34), puts it that laws emanated from divine wisdom which are discovered through human reason. Although, some people hold that laws were revealed to humans through natural revelation.

From the earliest man to the present generation, man has belonged to one group or the other. There is no doubt that human beings are social animals who live in group. This accounts for the necessity of legal system designed to check human excesses. Legal system is indispensable in every society. The legal system was born out of the necessity to respond to human nature that is rebellious in the absence of laws. Idowu (1973:44) argues that there was no way human beings could be allowed to live their lives without rules that will checkmate their choices not to pose threat to the existence and survival of the society. It is on this note that the society responded to the societal need by making provision for the laws that prevail in the society. Therefore, the benefits of legal codes cannot be over emphasized.

The benefits derivable from law contribute in no small measure toward national growth and development. Iwe (2003:26) enumerated the benefits of law for any country when he observes that law helps in eradicating "disease, illiteracy and miserable and offensive poverty, mediocrity, arrogance and purposelessness in power and governance, senseless, political myopia, selfishness and greed; the malicious



manipulation and selfish exploitation of the weak and poor; ... violation of social justice, the culture of mediocrity and other forms of social corruption". Legal system is not beneficial on its own until there is a functional judiciary that is committed in protecting and enforcing the stipulations of the law.

### **Traditional legal System.**

Igbo people constituted a traditional legal system that judges cases and resolves both major and minor misunderstandings among kinsmen. The family heads and village Assemblies known as *Amala* play a pivotal role in dispensing justice. Nwadike (1997:34) asserts that it is an ideal for the family heads and village assemblies to handle judicial and social misunderstandings. This is aimed at ensuring peace and order in the families, villages and communities. Odoh (nd:79-80) insists that the family heads and the council of elders are responsible for legislative and judicial functions. The people respect and repose confidence on the elders and family heads on the grounds that they serve as link between the people and the ancestral spirits (Ndichie). Therefore, manipulation of judgments may attract instant punishment from the ancestors who are revered as moral watchdogs of their families and villages.

The Igbo had a way of appealing to a higher 'court' if a party felt that they were denied justice. Usually, if a member of the family who had misunderstanding with somebody and the case was tried by the family head, at the end if he was not satisfied with the decision of the family head, he had the right to appeal to the Village Assembly to revisit the trial of the case by the family head. Again, if the parties were not satisfied with the decision of the village assembly, they could take their case to *chukwu* in *Arochukwu*. Tasie (2001:58) quips that in the pre-colonial Igbo, the Igbo were known for consulting *Chukwu* at *Arochukwu* which was regarded as the highest court of appeal in *Igboland*. It was the last resort, especially when all the efforts geared to settle the disputes failed. Tasie maintains that the cases of which *chukwu* was consulted at *Arochukwu* include, land disputes, property and inheritance disagreements, resolution of warfare, accusations of witchcraft, sorcery, murder, stealing and so on. All these form sources of conflicts, disputes, quarrels and misunderstanding in *Igboland*.

It is not a surprise that Igbo people consulted *Chukwu* as the final arbiter of cases given the common belief that Igbo people are notoriously religious (Mbiti 1969:1). In collaboration with this view Awolalu and Dopamu (1979:51) aver that the Igbo people call god a judge (*Chukwunweike*). The judgement of god is final and cannot be revoked due to the Igbo people's belief that god is an impartial judge who does not allow evil doers to go unpunished. He dispenses justice by making sure that evil doers are punished and good people rewarded. God does not punish evil doers due to wickedness; rather He punishes them given the fact that it is natural for Him to do so. Awolalu and Dopamu (1979:52) assert that "He punishes and rewards. He is the last court of appeal to whom all human supplications go. The concept of God as an impartial judge implies His Holiness". God is too holy to pervert justice and cannot withhold justice no matter whose Ox is gored.

The Igbo people do not tolerate evil. They believe that evil must be condemned by all. This attitude to evil among the Igbo results from the belief in corporate punishment by the earth goddess against the inhabitants of the community, especially if the culprit is not known. Ogbajie (1995: 21) points out that if the act is done secretly, it cannot be hidden from the earth goddess (*Ala*) who sees and knows every secret and if the offender is not disclosed and appropriate sacrifice made, the earth goddess will punish the entire community with pestilence, small pox, influenza, premature death and famine. This accounts for the important position divination occupies in the dispensation of justice as well as in the revelation of the offender.

The Igbo appreciate the indispensability of divination which is one of the means of ascertaining the truth. Anyacho (2005:255) avers that "divination can simply be described as a means of foretelling the future, reveal the unknown or find out the wish of a divinity or a spirit." It enables the Igbo to unravel the mystery behind every event. The outcome of divination is accepted as true since the gods and the divinities are above falsehood and deception.

Arinze (2001: 74) asserts that the diviners are responsible for rendering the services of divination. They employ pebbles, numbers, water, animal entrails, reading the palms, throwing dice in disclosing the truth. The objects of divination are held sacred due to they are consecrated elements dedicated for divination. Iheanacho (2003:52) opines that objects for divination are thought of possessing spirits and mystical powers that can assist the diviner to unravel the hidden truth. There are rules and regulations

that must be obeyed by both the client and the diviner for the divination to be effective, particularly; the client is expected to remove his foot wear in honour of the sacred place of divination.

The functions of divination in Igbo traditional legal system cannot be over emphasized. Arinze (2001:75) further avers that diviners "... play the role of counselors, Judges, "comforter", suppliers of assurance and confidence during people's crises, advisers, pastors and priests, seers, fortune tellers, and solvers of problems, and revealers of secrets such as thefts, imminent danger or coming events."

It is the responsibility of the diviner to decide who the owner of the property in dispute is. He also reveals the identity of the person who commits the crime through divination. As stated earlier, the family heads and village Assemblies play the role of modern Judges. Although, they differ from modern Judges by applying Ofo in their judicial practice. Odoh (nd: 79) describes Ofo as the symbol of Justice. It sanctions the decisions of the family heads on cases. Ejizu (1986:64) quipps that the use of Ofo in the Judgment of village Assemblies on various disputes is occasioned by the belief that Ofo does not spare any person or witness who tells lies in the presence of Ofo. It is a common belief among the Igbo that the consequences of telling lies in the presence of Ofo are grave. Gbenda (2006:115) opines that "false oath by the Ofo has disastrous consequences. A victim of a false oath by the Ofo could die anywhere and anytime". Among the Igbo, Ofo is also used to swear an oath, especially when it is difficult to ascertain the truth.

To the Igbo, oath taking determines the veracity or falsity of the claims of both parties. Tasie (2001:59) argues that human by nature finds it difficult to speak the truth, without oath-taking, there will be falsehood and perjury and it will also be difficult to detect the offender. Ejizu (1986:64) made it clear that in some parts of Igboland, especially towns in North-Western and Southern Igbo areas, the people take oath with Ofo. In 'Ikpo ofo' or 'ine ofo' which is the highest oath taking, all the ofo holders come to the village square with their ofo. All the ofo is heaped together for the person who wants to take the oath to carry. Ejizu asserts that before the person carries the ofo, there must be rituals and incantations of which if the person survives the oath after one year, he is declared Innocent.

There is another means of ascertaining the truth during settlement of land dispute. This strategy is known as pouring of wine, *itu uza nmanyi*. In this method, an overnight ash is put inside the cup filled with an overnight wine. A kola is broken and its tendril is put inside the cup of wine. The Igbo kola is broken into four pieces, two pieces are thrown to the ancestors who own the land and the remaining two pieces are thrown to the deities of the land. Both the ancestors and deities are invoked to be present on the day of pouring the wine. The overnight ash represents mortality, humility and nothingness in the presence of the gods and deity, while wine showcases Holy Communion between humans and the spiritual world. Onunwa (2012:104) quipps that "because of the strength and blessings which the Igbo bestow on the kola nut, they take it as the source of human life, human destiny, and human relationships with deity and humans". This accounts for the indispensability of kola nut during the pouring of wine. Usually, it is the person who claims the ownership of the land pours the wine with the following words.

1. Ala a ka o nawughi ala Nnam - This land if does not belong to my father.
2. Ka o sikwe n'aka onye ozo fere nna mu - If it was forcefully taken from another person by my father.
3. Ka ndi nwe ala a gbuem - may the owners of this Land kill me.

After that, he pours the wine on the land, if it did not kill him after one year; he is declared the owner of the land. Of course, one of the consequences of pouring wine falsely is disaster on the victim. Besides, the Igbo use other means of swearing oath such as swearing with the emblems of divinity, sacred bushes and shrines that are believed to be portent forces that kill any person who swears falsely.

It should be noted that the people of Yoruba have laid down traditional methods of resolving conflicts and settling disputes among them. They cherish divination which serves as one of the methods of ascertaining the truth. Divination aids in revealing the mystery that surrounds every dispute brought for resolution. Among the Yoruba, divination helps to detect unknown culprits to crime. Infact, divination reveals a bonafide owner of the property in dispute. To show the high confidence and patronage of divination among the

Yoruba Arinze (2001:75) quoted Parrinder as saying “ Yoruba divination...is said to be the most highly developed in west Africa, known as the Ifa system”. It must be stated that Ifa has gained popularity in Africa and beyond which gave rise to its spread across the country and beyond. There is no doubt that people from far and wide resort to Ifa as a reliable means of settling disputes. This accounts for its wide spread. Awolalu and Dopamu (1979:147) collaborated with this view when they quipped;

... the most developed divinatory system in west Africa is that of Ifa associated with the cult of Orunmila among the Yoruba. This system has spread to other neighbouring peoples, and it is practiced among the Fon, the Ewe and the Edo.

The significance of Ifa among the Yoruba cannot be over emphasized. This accounts for the resilience of it despite western culture that threatens to abolish the system. Apart from the confidence reposed on Ifa by the Yoruba, other factors that sustain it are technicality and expertise that are associated with it. In collaboration with this view, Arinze ( 2001:74) opined “ the Ifa divination system, which involves a highly complicated arrangement of numbers and their interpretation”. In this system, it takes time before truth is ascertained due to the Ifa is subjected under processes. It is clear to the clients of Ifa that truth does not come easily. Arinze (2001:75) further asserted

The Ifa system is a series of 256 figures each with its own name, and these are worked out either by using sixteen palm nuts or by casting a string or chain of eight half nuts or shells using a piece of board.

The Ifa system is very difficult to ‘fake’ since the diviners are trained on the job. There is no room for adulteration. It gives a sense of pride and belonging to the diviners who monopolize esoteric knowledge of the Ifa among the Yoruba.

The divinity that is in-charge of God’s wrath is Jakuta which literally means on who “ hurls or fights with stones”. Jakuta is a god of thunder who is widely known as a minister of justice among the Yoruba pantheon. Recently, Shango has taken the place of Jakuta in the scheme of things. In Ile-Ife, Oramfe who is the sun-divinity manifests the wrath of God against evil doers while in Nupe, sokogba ( God’s axe) is revered for throwing axe of God on evil men and women (Quarcoopome, 1987:71). These divinities are invoked during settlement of cases which enables the ‘Judges’ to settle cases without fear or favour. It is worthy to note that the presence of these divinities makes it extremely difficult for the culprits to go scot free.

Quarcoopome (1987:72) maintained that Ogun is the divinity of iron and war. Among the Yoruba, Ogun is the patron of hunters, blacksmiths, barbers, butchers, mechanics, lorry and taxi drivers and all who work with iron and steel. It is said that people swear with Iron that is the emblem of Ogun during settlement of cases. Gbenda (2006:115) observed that the Yoruba use Soponna, the god of thunder to swear oath and if the person refuses to speak the truth before taking the oath, the divinity will strike him dead. Similarly, among Tiv of central Nigeria, Swem is a sacred pot that is used to swear oath. The Swem is prepared with secrete materials and the suspects take the oath to prove their innocence. But if the suspects swear falsely, the Swem will kill them by swelling of legs and stomachs.

### **Native courts and colonialism**

The establishment of native courts was not in response to the Igbo yearning for a place to settle disputes. Afigbo (1981:297) avers that the British established the native courts to settle inter-town disputes. The British was yet to know that what they thought was inter-town disputes were attacks on those who were loyal to British directives. Afigbo (1981:298) opines that the native courts were supervised by the political officers of colonial rule.

Initially, the native courts posed all sorts of problems to the Igbo people. Burns (1929:272-273) asserts that an African judge would accommodate circumlocution and verbiage of an African witness as normal, but for a European judge it was regarded as madness. The Igbo lost confidence in the native courts owing to a common belief that they lost the cases due to the ignorance of British official who was not conversant with the customary laws of the people on land, marriage and so on. In some occasions, the litigants attributed their inability to win cases decided by the African judge to the machinations of evil spirit or bribery given to the African judge. The situation did not improve when the native courts were handled by the warrant chiefs. Isichei (1973:161-162) claims that “it was perhaps inevitable that the warrant chiefs tended to use their positions for personal aggrandizement ....

it was reported that 'the native courts are not in a satisfactory condition. The money is unaccounted for and I have strong reasons to suspect that justice is sold to the highest bidder'. It should be stated that the native courts were replete of bribery and corruption.

### **Legal System in Nigeria**

Roman law was the earliest legal system. It is on record that legal profession developed in Rome. The Roman law developed between 451 to 449 BC, by a council of ten men who drafted the law of twelve tables that later constituted the Roman law. Rome had a judicial system that consisted of praetors. The praetors were judges who administered the law of twelve tables (The world Book Encyclopedia, 1966:310). Roman law preceded the mosaic code of Israelites that dated 1200 B.C. The Mosaic Law comprised the Decalogue (Ten Commandments) that is still in force among Christians. It must be stated that the code of Hammurabi followed in about 1750 B.C. Hammurabi was the king of Babylonians. The Babylonians as at that time lived at the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys. Interestingly, code of Hammurabi was a complete system of laws that prescribed punishment that would be meted to offenders (the world Book Encyclopedia, 1966:310). The essence of the code of Hammurabi was for the maintenance of law and order in the society.

According to Dambazau (2011:53), the English common law forms the major source of the present day legal system and it originated in England. The name common law was derived from the idea that the law was 'common' in England. British who colonized Nigeria introduced English common law. Agha (2003:84) asserts that common law is made up of unwritten precedents and decision of the courts which have been handed over to the present generation. Although, Nigeria adopted the English common law; it has also added written laws to suit Nigeria situation. Nwadike (1997:33) observes that some of the legacies the colonial government left in legal system in Nigeria include courts, lawyers, Judges, police and prisons. The modern legal system and the judiciary do not owe their origin in Nigeria.

Legal system in Nigeria has ushered in some lawyers who do not practice legal profession according to the ethics of the profession. Nwaike (1996:131) asserts that "the development of legal ethics was occasioned by the alarming increase in legal shysters which was attracting not only public criticism of the legal profession, but also public indignation". Many lawyers no longer practice legal profession according to the rule. They resort to enrich themselves at the expense of justice. Nwadike (1996:134) further posits that "today, there are far too many lawyers whose stock in trade is to use the legal profession for money – making and for political advancement". There are many lawyers who have abandoned legal profession for lucrative jobs such as politics, business, movie, teaching and so on.

In the past, corruption was unheard of in the legal system in Nigeria, but today corruption is rampant. Malachy Okwueze a legal practitioner avers that the report of the committee set up in September, 2002 by the National judicial council to investigate corrupt cases in the Judiciary in Nigeria revealed that the chief Judge of the Abuja High court, chief Judges of some state High courts and many Judges and magistrates involved in corruption( Okwueze, 2002:233). Before the demise of Kayode Eso (former Justice of Supreme court) in 2012, he disclosed that many Judges had enriched themselves by collecting bribes when they presided over state Election petitions Tribunals in 2007. It should be recalled that election petitions were common in 2007 given the high rate of electoral malpractices. The claim is evident when the Department of State Services (DSS) arrested seven Judges over fraud. During the arrest, the Department of State Services claimed that they found N363 million from the houses of the three Judges. Recently, the National Judicial Council (NJC) that is responsible for ensuring discipline in the Judiciary recommended for the compulsory retirement of three Judges found guilty of bribery and corruption. Subsequently, the National Judicial Council sanctioned 13 corrupt Judges by giving them compulsory retirement.

There was a corrupt case against a Judge who presided over court of Appeal panel at Owerre, Imo State, in 2015 for demanding N200 million from the litigant or the person will lose the case (Punch Tuesday, October 11, 2016). According to Aribisala (2016 : 2), perhaps he was the Judge who was directed by the National Judicial Council to pay the money back in instalments. Okwueze (2003:89) opines that the implication of this anomaly in the judicial system in Nigeria is that most of the cases that are decided in the law courts are influenced by monetary gains and selfish interests. It is the poor who suffer most in law courts where judges and magistrates are bought with money to pervert justice.

The judiciary in Nigeria experiences hiccups in the discharge of its duty. Unfortunately, the judiciary finds it difficult to administer justice as stipulated in the law without fear or favour. It is not that the judiciary is prone to neglect this vital role but due to the judiciary is strongly dependent on the

executive financially (Iwe 2003:33). In some states the judiciaries have gone on strike to drive their complaints of nonpayment of salaries home to the Governors. The poor remuneration of officials of judiciary disposes them to corruption. Perhaps, one of the aftermaths of the challenges that confront the judiciary is incessant adjournments of cases and prolonged sufferings of those who are awaiting trial.

It is no longer news in Nigeria that a lot of people who are awaiting trials have stayed more than they could stay if their cases were given prompt attention. Unfortunately, the number of people awaiting trials has outnumbered the number of convicted prisoners. The issue of suspects who are awaiting trials in the Prisons across the country is a disturbing phenomenon that has defied human rights activists in Nigeria. The worse of it all is the inhuman condition of the inmates of Nigeria prisons which has attracted criticisms from well meaning citizens of Nigeria. Obinna (1999:109) quips that:

Those prisoners who are convicts; that is those who have been taken to court and sentenced to prison, live in marginally better conditions than those awaiting trial. But even their own conditions too are little befitting human beings. They do not, for instance, receive adequate medical care when they are sick. Again, many of them die as a result.

It has been discovered that the claim by the federal government that prisons were established as reformatory centres that are aimed to reform the character of the inmates is a matter of principle not in practice in Nigeria. The pathetic condition of inmates and the way they are maltreated in the prisons can attest to this fact. There are cases where the inmates of Nigeria prisons embark on jail breaks to protest against the ill treatments that are meted to them almost on daily basis.

### **Traditional and Modern legal systems in comparative Analysis.**

Urbanization has drastically affected traditional legal system. Some people no longer find traditional legal system appealing due to it is cumbersome carrying instruments of oath-taking to their respective destinations in various cities and overseas where they reside. Even if it is done, it becomes extremely difficult to observe the ritual danger of eating with a person who is being subjected to oath. The violation of rules of oath-taking, especially eating together with the person who has taken an oath is facilitated by ceremonies, restaurants and hotels that are rampant in the cities. There are also no sacred four corners, grooves, sacred shrines that used to be the easiest spots for oath-taking. In most cases, some people take disputes to prophets who seem to have replaced the diviners or to Pastors for settlement. Others invite town Unions, friends and Associates to resolve the disputes, although without pouring wine. The elites prefer to settle disputes in the law courts to traditional legal system. For them the resolution of cases is documented in the law courts, unlike the traditional legal system that is transmitted through oral tradition. But, it is discovered that those who employ other methods other than traditional method get disappointed at the end of the day which underscores incessant appeal of cases in the courts.

In many cities, there are cases of unlawful possession of property, such as houses, land, cars, and so on as a result of sharp practices that are going on in the courts. There are incessant missing vehicles, people and other precious property which is occasioned by western culture in which people no longer perceive the cosmos as sacred that used to necessitate them to be under the watchful eyes of the gods. Consequently, it is impossible to deter criminals as well as to detect the culprits. Even in the law courts, some people swear falsely with the bible. Perhaps, when they want to go scot free. The church is partly held responsible for the bastardization of modern legal system by refusing to swear with objects of divinity for oath-taking. Njoku (2008:27) recalled how the church raised a controversy over swearing oath in the sacred shrines and grooves that hitherto were used to settle disputes like land, domestic animals and household items. The controversy between Anglican Communion and Traditionalists at Ozala led government to intervene which resulted to the adoption of bible by the church as an instrument of oath-taking. The after effects of the use of bible are grave considering the way people swear falsely to give false witness, forge certificates and affidavits and so on.

There is no doubt that some people still lack confidence in traditional legal system. This is caused by one's orientation and background. The retired Bishop of Aba diocese, Iwuagwu (1998 : 144) once asserted that "Experience has, however, revealed that sometimes the traditional diviners may predict accurately, but in most cases they have deceived people and led them to their untimely death". Perhaps he sees divination that is employed in traditional legal system in ascertaining the truth as mere prediction and guess work. To ensure the authenticity of divination in traditional legal system, a would be diviner who is called by *Agwu* the spirit of divination is enlisted to be an acolyte under the tutelage of a diviner ( Ikenga Metu, 1985 :162). It gives the potential diviner an opportunity to acquire requisite expertise on divination and gives no room for quacks as found in the modern legal

system. There is no doubt that some Lawyers and Judges are not called into the profession. No wonder some of them pervert justice in order to enrich themselves.

In the traditional judicial system, almost everybody has access to justice owing to its quick dispensation of justice. It is not expensive due to the *Amala*, (council of elders) *dibia afa*, (diviner), *Ndichie*, (noble men) *Nze na Ozo*, (titled men) *umuada* (patrilineage sisters), Age grades, secret societies (*okonko*, *Ekpe*, *Nmawu*) and family heads are not interested in monetary gains rather they are interested in judging cases without fear or favour. Their decisions are authentic based on the fact that they are grounded on the tradition and customs of the people acquired through socialization, history, taboos, folk tales, myths and traditional laws that regulate people's conduct from cradle to the grave. It is not so with the legal profession where lawyers do not care to know the customs and tradition of the people. It is discovered that western Education has brainwashed them to accept that African tradition and customs are crude and fetish. They prefer English common law to customs and tradition in resolving traditional cases. The modern legal system should emulate traditional legal system where the officials do not take up legal profession as full time job. It is common to see people who settle cases in traditional legal system but they have other means of livelihood, yet there is quick dispensation of justice. It is not so with the legal system where lawyers and Judges rely on legal profession as a means of livelihood yet there is a delay of justice. This act breeds corruption in the judiciary.

The traditional legal system has prospects despite the onslaught of western culture, Christianity, urbanization and western Education. There are cases of those in Enugu, Imo, Anambra, Ebonyi and Abia States who swore falsely and confessed before their demise that it was the oaths they took that was responsible for their deaths. Not only that majority of people who believe in traditional legal system are rural dwellers, but also some people who reside in towns come back home to settle serious disputes among them.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Citizens of Nigeria should be law abiding
2. The law enforcement agents should arrest corrupt Judges and magistrates and prosecute them.
3. Federal government should strive to reform the Judiciary by making it independent of Executive.
4. The officials of Judiciary should be mandated to embark on retraining of their staff so that they can be conversant with the modern techniques of Judicial system.
5. Judicial system in Nigeria should rise up to the challenge of quick dispensation of Justice.
6. Prisons in Nigeria should be centres for reformation and not places where the inmates are maltreated.
7. The government should encourage traditional legal system in Nigeria.
8. Federal legislature should make laws that will prohibit the law enforcement agencies from arresting and detaining traditionalists who settle cases with traditional method.

#### **Conclusion:**

From the foregoing, it seems that the Igbo feel at home judging their cases in the traditional setting rather than in the law courts. The Igbo people repose confidence in traditional way of settling disputes based on it's involvement of the divinities and gods in the settlement of disputes. It is based on that, that it is rare for people to tell lies or escape punishment by manipulating the 'Judges', deities and ancestors. The sustenance and encouragement of traditional legal system will not only make the Igbo feel satisfied with the decisions of cases, it will also engender quick dispensation of Justice in Nigeria.

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## **Transplantation Literature and Identity Problem in African American Literature: an Analysis of Fredrick Douglass the *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass***

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### **Abstract**

The slavery period and transatlantic trade era exposed Africans to other parts of the world from which the black race gained new experiences to write literature in foreign lands. Africans were practically uprooted from their land and transplanted in foreign places, an act which is studied today as transplantation literature. Added to these were colonial experiences which encouraged slavery and racial discrimination, which further created deep wounds and alien culture that left long lasting scars, especially on slaves in America. From the original slaves emerged new breed of slaves who have lost their historical/ancestral origin – a state which is very frustrating and psychologically traumatic. This state in which the blacks wondered who they are and where they come from cum their position in the foreign world is known as identity problem. African American literature emerged as the writings of blacks in America which addressed the experiences of blacks over the years. Fredrick Douglass is one of those freed slaves who wrote at a time referred to as Early African American literature. His text, *Narrative of the life of Fredrick Douglass – an American slave*, falls into the group of literature referred to as slave narratives, especially tales to inspire the abolitionist struggle. Others categorized under this slave narrative are tales of religious-redemption and tales of progress. Apart from narrating slave stories, Douglass's text gave an account of cruelties of life under slavery and the sense of human person that reflects the dignity of blacks.

### **Introduction**

Transplantation Literature is the literature that portrays and narrates the experiences of the blacks in America and other parts of Europe as slaves. Other terms often associated with this literature is the nostalgic or literature of pain and melancholy. This depicts the pain and suffering of the blacks in the foreign lands during the slavery/colonial era.

Major themes observed in transplantation literature include culture, racism, discrimination, slavery and equality, freedom, identity and revolt, ideologies, rejection and denial. Black experience of slavery in America has largely informed Black writing. The major style and form of much of the earliest black writing was the slave narrative with its overtones of active protest against an inhuman and tortuous system. The African American literary scholars therefore view literature as a means to fill the void that grew out of the ache and pain of their alienation from home, flogging (i.e. whip's lash), the chain's scar and the endless hunger for freedom, instead of seeing art as practical for art's sake and beauty's reward. They see themselves as "trees" forcefully uprooted from their original soil and taken to foreign and strange lands for plantation.

Identity on the other hand, in its literal sense, means "who or what somebody or something is" (Hornby: 739). This definition extends to the characteristics, feelings or beliefs that distinguish people from others: a sense of national/cultural/personal/group identity, as well as the state or feeling of being very similar and able to understand somebody or something. The issue of identity has developed a popular interest over the years and modern scholars have developed interest in approaching this matter from its different aspects like ethnicity, race, gender, subculture and diaspora. This has become very relevant to African American literature especially as slavery and immigration have been rampant in this part of the world.

The sense of loss of identity is one major problem that confronts the African American writers. This problem also affects the exiles and immigrants. Other issues that bother on identity are racial segregation, alienation, displacement, identity crisis and nostalgic feelings. This makes it difficult for Africans to easily integrate properly in host countries as they are usually exploited and oppressed.

## **Background to the Study**

Some of the major problems confronting the study of African American Literature are slavery, racism, alienation, oppression and freedom. This literature largely depicts the pain, deprivation, subjugation and dehumanization of the human persons of the blacks living in America during the era of slave trade and the period considered as the Harlem Renaissance. Some writers of this literature are Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright, Phyllis Wheatley, Toni Morrison, W.E.B. Dubois, Fredrick Douglass, and Claude McKay.

They wrote according to their personal perception of their society and the environment in which they grew up. These early writers are regarded more as those who wrote biographies and slave narratives, so these features of slavery and racism featured mostly in their writing. This paper focuses on Douglass's *The Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass*.

## **Biography of Frederick Douglass**

Frederick Douglass was born in slavery as Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey, near Easton in Talbot County, Maryland. He was not sure of the exact year of his birth, but he knew that it was in 1817 or 1818. As a young boy he was sent to Baltimore as a house servant, where he learned to read and write with the assistance of his master's wife. In 1838 he escaped from slavery and went to New York City, where he married Anna Murray, a free colored woman whom he had met in Baltimore. Soon thereafter he changed his name to Frederick Douglass. In 1841 he addressed a convention of the Nantucket and so greatly impressed the group that they immediately employed him as an agent. He was such an impressive orator that numerous persons doubted if he had ever been a slave, so he wrote *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. His other autobiographical works are *My Bondage and My Freedom* and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, published in 1855 and 1881 respectively. He died in 1895.

## **The Slave Narrative as an Active Protest against an Inhuman and Tortuous System in the Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass**

Fredrick Douglass was one of those people that started a new breed of slavery in America, a breed that seemed to fulfill the oil prophecy of the downfall of slavery by the inevitable laws of population. Speaking about this breed, Douglass defines them as

A very different-looking class of people ... springing up at the south and... now held in slavery, from those originally brought to this country from Africa; and if their increase do no other good, it will do away the force of the argument, that God cursed Ham, and therefore American slavery is right... for thousands are ushered into the world, annually, who like myself, owe their existence to white fathers, and those fathers most frequently their own masters. (16)

The unfortunate reliance on the Bible by some Eurocentric Scholars that Ham was the father of all blacks because of his bad behavior which earned him a curse to be the slave of all others is adapted and used by the colonizers to oppress and suppress the blacks. Ironically what they held as the sacred truth was abused by the slave owners who were guilty of the adulterous intercourse with the black women that gave birth to such writers as Douglass and Langston Hughes. These breed are commonly referred to as 'mullatoes' (usually light coloured mixed breed characters that possess in most cases a white father and a coloured mother). They suffered more than the offspring of the black slaves because of the difficulties confronting their life and destiny. Usually the legitimate wife of the slave owner suspected her husband on the arrival of the children and so exercised more aggression and punishment on them. Such children, apart from being denied their biological motherly care, were soon sold to other slave owners to avoid gaining access to their suspected biological father. According to Douglass,

My mother and I were separated when I was but an infant, before I knew her as my mother. It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age. Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off, and the child is placed under the care of an old woman, too old for field labour. (14-15)

Douglass wonders why this action of separating children from their mothers is taken, expressing the feeling that it is to deter any “pair bond” or emotional attachment of these children to their mothers and possibly sometimes because of the advantage this gives to some slave owners to have free sex with the slave women and so increase their population. This action worsens the identity problem of this breed of human beings as they find it difficult to trace their ancestry to either the black race or the whites.

One common feature of slavery in America is transplantation: the slaves are never allowed to stay long in one place to avoid any sense of nostalgia and identity. Transplantation of slaves therefore assumes both local and foreign type. The African American slaves are highly commended for enduring the long chain of deprivation of their human rights, accommodating sufferings and horrors of slavery. The white masters know this but allowed their sadistic and inhuman inclinations to exhibit criminal acts of oppression and intimidation against the blacks. In a preface to *The Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*, WM, Lloyd Garrison Boston states that slaves of African descent were more degraded than other portion of the population of the earth. According to Boston,

Nothing has been left undone to cripple their intellects, darken their minds, debase their moral nature, obliterate all traces of their relationship to mankind; and yet how wonderfully they have sustained the mighty load of a most frightful bondage, under which they have been groaning for centuries! (*The Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass* 7)

An American sailor, who found himself under slavery for three years on the shore of Africa, is reported to have been “imbruted and stultified” at the expiration of that period. David O’ Connell reports that the American sailor

had lost all reasoning power; and having forgotten his native language, could only utter some savage gibberish between Arabic and English which nobody could understand, and which even he himself found difficulty in pronouncing... (A speech delivered in the Conciliation Hall, Dublin, before the Loyal National Repeal Association, March 31, 1845, quoted in Douglass: 7)

Having experienced slavery and being a peculiar breed of ‘mulattoe’, Douglass uses his narrative as an active protest against inhuman treatment and torture of slaves. His narrative leads the reader to the reality of man’s inhumanity to man, a system that values horses more than men, a system where a slave owner can knock life out of someone because the slave is hungry, and plucks a fruit (say an apple) from the garden.

### **The Agonies of Oppression and Horror of Torture and Death experienced by African Slaves**

Oppression is a state in which somebody is unjustly made uncomfortable, denied assets, rest, home, justice, and feeling and is defenseless to all forms of abuse and unjust treatment. Stacie Herbert while quoting Robert L. Barker defines oppression as “the social act of placing several restrictions on an individual, group or institution.” (Web) She further states that “a government or political organization that is in power places these restrictions formally on oppressed groups so that they may be exploited... The oppressed individual or group is devalued, exploited and deprived of privileges by the individual or group which has more power. (Web) According to Johnson, “the concept of oppression points to social forces that tend to press upon people and hold them down, to block their pursuit of a good life. Just as privilege tends to open doors of opportunity, oppression tends to slam them shut.” (39)

The African American slaves experienced scourging, mutilations and branding, torture to the point of bloodshed, banishment of all light and knowledge. They were easily misunderstood, unjustly accused and punished in any manner pleasing to their masters, and unjustly hated. The slave was reduced to the level of a thing, denied food and clothing, hanged on chains with handcuffs, thumb-screws, etc. Dogs, servants, drivers and other massagers were used to hold the slaves down when the slave masters are whipping them and on the other hand, these animal and human instruments are used to protect the slave masters.

The slave was not allowed to marry nor have children he could call offspring. Douglass account of oppression in America is the incident he witnessed from an overseer whose name is Master

He was a cruel man, hardened by a long life of slaveholding. He would at times seem to take great pleasure in whipping a slave. I have often been awakened at the dawn of day by the most heart-rending strikes of an aunt of mine, whom he used to tie up to a joist, and whip upon her naked back till she was literally covered with blood. No words, no tears, no prayers, from his gory victim, seemed to move his iron heart from its bloody purpose. The louder she screamed, the harder he whipped; and where the blood ran fastest, there he whipped longest. He would whip her to make her scream, and whip her to make her hush; and not until overcome by fatigue, would he cease to swing the blood-clotted cowskin. (16)

Outside this brute nature of the slave owner, they lack sense of feeling for even blood relations. Douglass reports an ugly scene where the master of a slave house is compelled to sell his own children born by black woman:

The master is frequently compelled to sell this class of his slaves, out of deference to the feelings of his white wife; and, cruel as the deed may strike any one to be, for a man to sell his own children to human flesh-mongers, it is often the dictate of humanity for him to do so; for, unless he does this, he must not only whip them himself, but must stand by and see one white son tie up his brother, of but shades darker complexion than himself, and ply the gory lash to his naked back; and if he lisp on word of disapproval, it is set down to his parental partiality, and only makes a bad matter worse, both for himself and the slave whom he would protect and defend. (Douglass: 16)

While narrating his story, Douglass gave two accounts in which murderous cruelty was exhibited. One is where a planter deliberately shot a slave belonging to a neighbor in the next plantation because the slave was searching for fish (oyster) in his area. The other case is where an overseer blows out the brains of a slave who ran away from him into a stream of water to avoid serious flogging. These cases did not receive any justice both from the police or law officers. To Young, “there are five faces of oppression namely – exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and then violence.” (77)

### **Identity Problem**

As is common with other African American literature, Douglass was separated from his family at a very young and tender age so that he did not know his mother or father. Even though he suspects that his owner is the father, he states that “the whisper that my master was my father, may or may not be true.” (Douglass 15) He condemned the custom of Maryland, from where he ran away as slave,

Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken away from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off, and the child is placed under the care of an old woman, too old for field labor...

I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life; and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve miles from my home. (15)

The consequence of the severance of black children from their parents early in life was to transplant and further sever them from any sense of identity with their ancestry, race and origin. This was aimed at aiding the whites to perpetually establish a long chain/genealogy of slaves, i.e. people who don't have any background or sense of belonging. Black women were used as mere sex objects to procreate children that lacked parentage and by implication identity. They were raped and also made to watch their children sold or separated from them. Most times, it was the white men who impregnated the women and allowed them to bear half caste children who were neither black nor white. The cruel nature of the whites led them to oppressive tendencies of not only enslaving the blacks, but completely annihilating the race. In Toni Morrison's *Beloved* for instance, the major character, Sethe Suggs, having experienced the horrors of slavery, escaped from the plantation where she worked as a slave and when she was recaptured by the slave-owner, she decided to kill her children rather than allow them

experience the dehumanizing experiences of slavery. Although she failed in killing four of them, she slits the throat of one of her children and later the ghost of the child hunts their new home at 124. Sethe, who was later raped by the Schoolteacher's nephews under the watch of Schoolteacher, felt deeply assaulted. As if that was not enough, the Schoolteacher ordered his nephew to hold her down and steals her breast milk by sucking it, thereby stealing the life sustainer of her unborn children and figuratively killing the future of Africa. Sethe narrating this to another character in the novel named Paul D states that

After I left you, these boys came in there and took my milk. That's what they came in there for. Held me down and took it. I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn't speak but her eyes rolled out tears. Them boys found out I told o em. Schoolteacher made me open up my back, and when it was closed it made a tree. It grows there still. (Morrison 16)

One of the methods of slave masters was restricting the women from having male visitors in their homes or going out at nights so as to discourage them from having any marital relationships. Douglass narrates an incident he witnessed in which a black slave by name Aunt Hester went out one night to an unknown destination and for an unexplained reason, along the line the master desired her presence. This woman, being of noble form and graceful proportions, is guarded jealously by her master but having disobeyed the orders of her master and being found in the company of another man, Lloyd's Nest, she incurred the wrath of this slave overseer known as Master (real name is Mr. Plumer). According to Douglass,

Before he commenced whipping Aunt Hester, he took her into the kitchen, and stripped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulders, and back, entirely naked. He then told her to cross her hands, calling her at the same time a d – d b – h. After crossing her hands, he tied them with a strong rope, and led her to a stool under a large hook in the joist, put in for the purpose. He made her get upon the stool, and tied her hands to the hook. She now stood fair for his infernal purpose. Her arms were stretched up at their full length, so that she stood upon the ends of her toes. He then said to her, "Now, you d-- -- d b -- - h, I'll learn you how to disobey my orders! and after rolling up his sleeves, he commenced to lay on the heavy cowskin, and soon the warm, red blood (amid heart-rending shrieks from her, and horrid oaths from him) came dripping to the floor. (17)

The incident above further buttresses the fact that a slave has no identity. A free born could never have such treatment as Aunt Hester because her boyfriend would have seriously restricted or revenged this with his last blood, but the case of blacks is quite pathetic as they are helpless over the challenges that faced them. They were in the midst of a people of different culture, lifestyle and blood. A people with better organized military might, science and technology; tried, tasted and proven over many years of civilization. These aided the obliteration of their identity. Another aspect of identity problem is on the aspect of making the blacks lose confidence in their skin colour and racial background. This is noticed in the way Douglass presents the black woman and her offspring. They are not accommodated in the main scheme of the society. Their children are not free as well as their mother. They are rated at the same level with the animals owned by the slave owner. According to Douglass, "We were all ranked together at the valuation, men and women, old and young, married and single, were ranked with horses, sheep, and swine. There were horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children, all holding the same rank in the scale of being, and were all subjected to the same narrow examination. (40) This attitude makes the blacks uncertain of not only their identity, but of life itself. All these factors result in alienation and frustration.

## **Conclusion**

Slavery has played its role in a form and manner in which human beings were practically used to satisfy the needs and desires of others who were more exposed and civilized at a given time in history. Its nature brought about removal/uprooting of some weaker human beings from their original place of abode to new places where they were planted and made to serve others. Different strategies were used to dehumanize and depersonalize the victims of slavery: they were made to lose their identity and eventually to be phased out from the face of the earth. This situation has created a class of human beings in the society who are known as African Americans, a people who cannot trace their origin but

are bound with one thing – their birth and skin colour, sometimes custom and accents. These people are frustrated due to the problem of transplantation and identity crisis, yet they have to cope with the challenges and realities facing them. As literature reflects true life experiences, transplantation literature and identity problem have always worked hand in hand and have helped to address the major problems that faced Africans at a time in history. Douglass could be said to be quite successful for having given the world a biographical text which exposed the negative sides of slavery.

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## **Cultural Practices In Igbo of Nigeria And Changing Time: The Musical Dimension**

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### **Abstract**

Cultural practices extend to such areas as type of dressing, cuisine, languages, music making, norms and values, beliefs, worships and so on. Most of these aspects of culture have been seriously impacted judging from the recent trend of development that is raging or seems to have gained ground contrary to societal expectations. Obviously, traditional music performance is highly affected in this massive global change. In Igbo traditional society just as in every other African society, music is functionally and contextually ritualized. The fact that music is event oriented accounts for the reason why each performance identifies and gives meaning to the occasion under which it is performed. Unfortunately, the trend is no more exactly the same again, for instance, most traditional music performances in Igbo society have lost their natural taste. Most of them have moved from natural serene environment or arena to stage and electronic thereby shading the traditional flavour that gives them cultural identity. This paper examines different cultural practices and their musical involvements to determine which areas of these musical practices that have been affected by this raging change. Information for this work anchored on materials gathered from personal experiences, observation, oral interviews and review of literatures. It was discovered that technological development and quest for modernity have taken a great toll on Igbo traditional practices and their accompanying music performances. The paper suggests that healthy traditional practices and their music performances be encouraged, most especially as they are pointers to every culture's existence so as to avoid the menace of cultural abrasion and consequent identity devastation.

### **Introduction**

The fact that the Igbo societies share a unique cultural identification which stands them out from other ethnic groups does not imply that there are no recognizable similarities found among other ethnic groups within the Country. These related or varying attitudes are accommodated to foster a tolerable relationship, a situation which Emeka and Oehrle (2003) refer to as 'unity in diversity'. Take for instance; the three major ethnic groups that make up the Country delineate three distinct culture areas, among which exist differences and or similarities in some cultural etiquettes and expressions. These can be found in their manner of greetings such as bowing, prostrating and shaking of hands, respect to elders, music making and appreciation, and respect to constituted authorities. In this paper, the Igbo are exemplified to provide an in-depth account of issues of changes emerging in their cultural music terrain which either improve or endanger their traditional musical practices. In this discussion, one would not expect an elaborate account of the Igbo as many writers have done much on that, just a brief summary to drive home or make an inroad into the discussion will suffice. In Akaolisa (2003) the Igbo

Inhabit the Eastern part of Nigeria and are surrounded by the Igala in the North, the Delta city states in the South, and the Efik in the South East. At present, they occupy the seven states of Anambra, Imo, Enugu, Abia, Ebonyi, Delta, Rivers and parts of Akwa-Ibom and Benue. Within these areas, where Igbo language is spoken, one may also notice a kind of disparity in dialects and cultures. Definitely, every culture has a spatial and definite geographical distribution of traits, complexes and patterns. (2)

Nevertheless, the Igbo are conurbation of communities with related cultural practices in function and usages such as title taking, marriage rites, puberty rites, birth and naming ceremony, burial and funeral rites, cult and ritual practices, festivals, recreational activities, initiation and other activities that constitute music making event. Generally, music making in Nigeria and Igbo in particular is ritualized in every mile stone of human activity from birth to death. Based on this, the discussion on emerging issues or changes in cultural practices in Igbo of Nigeria with music in focus becomes imperative.

### **Method of data collection**

Apart from literature sources cited in the work, information was also gathered through personal observation, experiences and interviews. The writer is of Igbo origin and having been attending ceremonies and festivals where musical activities are featured, such as, naming ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, burial and funeral ceremonies and chieftaincy activities and so on, has observed that a lot of changes have taken place in the way and manner of performances in most of these traditional

activities in this recent time. Even in the choice of music and their styles of performances have all been affected. In one of the writer's encounter during a funeral occasion, a song was rendered which centred on the context of the death, but a good number of the participants refuted it, reason being that the song has gone obsolete and unchristian too. This and other related attitudes have been a hard experience and a big challenge to the survival of traditional music. The rejection of traditional musical texts in favour of foreign texts has become the order of the day. Apart from personal observations, oral interviews were employed to elicit information in other activities that are gender exclusive. For instance, in matters concerning kingship, exercise of powers and type of music, questions were asked on the centrality of leadership and absolute powers of kings in Igbo society as well as what accounts for disparities in royalty music, or the types of music that accompany royal activities in different communities of the Igbo. Other information relating to the work was gathered and supported by related literatures

### **Cultural practices and changing time- the musical implications**

#### **Title taking: (such as *Ozo* title)**

*Ozo*- title is believed to be the highest honour to any traditional Igbo man. Anadu, (1989) asserts, "*ozo*-title is the status symbol of distinction which is usually conferred on qualified citizens in most parts of Ibo land. "It bestows on the eligible possessor a form of honour or social prestige" (54). He further says that, "*ozo*-title had always been and still is one of the most significant titles that had stood the test of time" (55). The possessor of *ozo*-title in Igbo land is automatically a member of *Nze na Ozo* initiates and every male has the right to become an initiate provided such person has the prescribed qualities such as good character, financial and material buoyancy, must not be a convict and above all a free-born. Because of the prestigious nature of the title, the type of music that follows it is highly exclusive for the initiates such as *Ufie* royal music. In Igbo culture, according to my informant, the issue of kingship was the after math of colonialism in a bid to actualize their political ambitions. That being the case, the accompanying music often becomes politicized and that gave birth to a number of title music thus the emergence of *Igba eze* royal music. To some communities *Igbaeze* music is exclusive, while in some it is open.

It is a very common practice in the Northern and some parts of the Western Nigeria, to see raconteurs, griots, praise singers in the courts of the Emirs and the Obas, whose jobs are to herald the dignitaries' in flowing robes, chanting their chronicles and genealogical traditions. But the story is different for the Igbo, although there is royal music that accompany the Kings during royal activities, there are issues of non uniformity. In some cases, the performance is not indispensable neither is it obligatory for the performers. The performance is based purely on the relationship between the king and his subjects. This action solidifies the maxim – *Igbo enwe eze*. According to Anedo, (2016, oral interview) "The Igbo are more of a republican than monarchial in nature" therefore the issue of a central leadership and absolute power of a king is somehow not totally binding. In other words, there is no central organization among the whole of the Igbo and the presence of these much fragmented kingdoms account for lack of central command.

Ordinarily, it is the nature of every average Igbo man to resist any attempt or trait to be subjected to central leadership, dictatorship or despotism and that might be the reason why the colonialists could not succeed in their mission to amalgamate and rule Igbo kingdom when they penetrated the country. In that dimension, Okodo, (2016, oral interview), asserts that "Kingship is not universal, some communities of the Igbo do not have kings, even those that have, at times their authorities are being questioned and challenged as some of them are not duly recognized or installed". In fact it has to be noted that kingship position has now assumed full political structure in Igbo society especially at this period the government has started acknowledging kings and community leaders. The tussle for kingship has soared so unreasonably that kings are now installed or even foisted on people without due process. It has become a lucrative business and a case of survival of the fittest. The number of communities prescribes the number of kings, no central power is recognized.

All these affect the quality and type of royal music performed among different communities of the Igbo as most of them lack traditional values and originality. Take for instance, in some parts of Igbo society, *Igbaeze* royal music is held sacred as music exclusive for *Igwe* and his cabinets, while in some other parts *Igbaeze* is just as open as any other music for entertainment purposes. As a result of these disparities, varied accounts and versions of royal music abound in Igbo society which may be right or wrong depending on the views of the writers or the communities involve in the study. The point being



that what is exclusive in one area may be open in another. According to Nze Okwuegbunem Udogu (2006) in an oral interview, he informs that *nkwa* music is exclusive for *Igwe* in Isi Achina community and not *igbaeze*, reason being that the music was instituted by tradition and not borrowed or influenced by modernity, and that *igbaeze* has been watered down and adulterated in most communities.

### Marriage rites

Marriage is such an institution that involves very stringent traditional rites in Igbo society, where the two parties involved have important roles to play in the contract. It is not a clandestine affair rather; it is all inclusive to both *umunna*, that is the kindred of the suitor and that of the intending in-laws. Okafor, (2005) observes that,

In Igbo society, two persons do not marry; two families do. By their very nature, Igbo marriages are a community affair. Women provide virtually all the musical accompaniment to marriage ceremonies. On the appointed day for the young woman to go to her marital home, *umuada* or *umunwunyedi*, relations from her paternal and maternal lines and friends escort her with music and dance. They virtually sing her away to her husband's place, where her co-wives take over and install her in her new home. In course of time, they tell her about their dance organizations meetings, etc (76).

From the above submission, it is evident that the occasion calls for much merriments and music making. So during marriage celebrations, women feature prominently and colourful too, as they showcase different musical renditions as the event permits. Their music performance does two things-entertainment and culture propagation. This relates to Onyeji, and Onyeji's (2011) views, that "African music is concerned with socio-spiritual issues while employing entertainment as a vehicle for the delivery of its specific concern" (29). In some communities it is the duty of the co-wives (*inyomdi*) and married co-sisters (*umuada*) to perform these important functions. In the process of entertaining the audience, wise instructions are given to the intending couple on how to embark on this journey of marital relationship. In some other communities, it is the maidens or the younger co-sisters who perform the ritual. For instance in Achina community of the Igbo, one of the maiden's songs contain such instructions as

*...ngwa jide nti gi aka k'inulū ọdụ anyi na-adu gi*  
*Jide nti gi aka k'inulū ihe anyi na-agwa gi*  
*Esicha asaghi ite anyi na- asọ ya inuna ?*  
*Ericha asaghi oku anyi na- asọ ya inuna?*  
*Asiri puru ilo anyi na- asọ ya inuna?*  
*Ti-nti lolọ ọdụ anyi na- asọ ya inuna?...*

### Translation

...now hold your ears and listen to our advice  
 hold your ears and listen to what we are telling you  
 leaving the pot unwashed after cooking we abhor it, have you heard it ?  
 leaving the plate unwashed after eating we abhor it, have you heard it ?  
 public gossip we abhor it, have you heard it ?  
 fighting your husband with pestle we abhor it, have you heard it ?

With this song the maidens are reminding their colleague who is getting married the societal detestable behaviours which she should avoid. All these instructions are meant to guide her in her new home. The maidens are doing this to protect their own image as well because they believe that if their sister misbehaves or does not represent them well, it will give a bad impression about the rest of the girls who are yet to marry. There is a common saying that *ofu aka luta mmanu o zue aka nine*- 'if one finger is soiled with oil, it affects other fingers'. The parlance is very much active in Igbo tradition that is why child's upbringing in Igbo culture is a collective duty. Everybody's hand is always on deck to see that good character is enforced. Still in some other communities, none of the groups are in attendance, due to changes connected with modernization. This group according to Nzewi, (1997) "has recklessly abandoned its human essence and cultural values while gobbling up the modern-publicity-hoisted glamorous allures of Western thoughts and life styles" (12). Unfortunately, they may be located within the confines of those he describes as "modern Africa and the individual modern Africans (who) are suffering from unrelieved mental disequilibrium as well as identity submersion syndrome- a pathological case of modern self – mental- enslavement" (12).

Worse still, it is worrisome to note that presently the situation is that, even those communities where the practice previously existed are seriously facing threats of discontinuity and extinction. What is trendy now in those communities are electronically based entertainment with amplified gadgets - synthesizers and sound systems, even where live performances are involved; it is either gospel band or hip pop-highlife music. Obviously, traditional music with its ethical values is fading in most communities of the Igbo if not all the communities. A situation which in Nzewi's language, "is the tragedy of superficial modernism of adopting borrowed mental idioms and material indices of mal-understood modernism" (12) at the expense of Igbo traditional value system.

### Puberty rites

During puberty rituals, the induction is entirely the responsibility of the adult women. They use the forum to initiate the young women into the next level of womanhood. The puberty rite is celebrated with songs and dances which are learnt during the period of confinement. Through this ritual the duties and expectations of motherhood are made bare to the initiates. Outside Igbo, many societies in Africa celebrate this rite in various ways. In Adangme of Ghana it is the duty of the older women to supervise the *dipo* puberty institution, its ceremonies and music. The girls, who are kept for several weeks of instructions in mother craft, learn special music and dance to celebrate the rite. On their graduation day, they move in musical processions to ritual places, make feast in their homes and perform publicly to mark the end of their training. Ibekwe, (2012 a) avers,

In Aguata of Igbo, puberty activities such as *Ahia ezi*, *Ahia mbibi*, *okuka nwoji* are organized for young maidens. During the period the eligible ladies are put on a fattening diet, the elder women are duty bound in educating them on the ethos of motherhood. In such confinement the ladies are to occupy themselves with the making of decorative accessories which they will use in beautifying themselves on the premier day. Such things included *uli*- (a type of liquid substance got from *uli* pod and is used for body designing), *ufie*- (red substance got from camwood for body designing), different types of beaded necklaces, etc. mothers see it as their social duties to transfer what they know to their daughters, so that they (daughter) will fit in properly in society (109).

However, it should be noted that almost every culture of the world ritualizes these important rite of passage from childhood to adulthood. For instance, Hispanic cultures have *quinceaneras* or fifteenth birthday for their daughters; Jews hold *Bar mitzvahs* and *Bat mitzvahs* for their children. And America celebrates Sweet Sixteen parties for their young girls. In South Africa, Blacking (1976) gave similar example of Venda girls who perform *domba*, the premarital initiation dance which is a very important rite in Venda culture. According to Okoye, (2008) similar dances are also performed by Swazi girls during the time the kingdom of Swaziland used to announce that their girls are ripe or ready for marriage. At this period during the month of August to September, every eligible maiden from the kingdom attend what is called the *Reed* dance, locally known as the *umhlanga*. Also in Okafor (2005) such ceremonies apply to the maidens of Efik, Ibibio and Ijaw of Nigeria, where a period of seclusion during which prior to marriage, a girl is taught body culture, house craft, music and the role of women in society. In some parts of Igbo land young boys perform what is known as *Iwa akwa* rites literally meaning tying of cloth. This is done to signify coming of age for young boys normally between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years depending on the readiness of the intending celebrant.

All these initiations with their associated music practices are fast disappearing. Young girls no more undergo confinement because at that age the female child is preoccupied in her academics and has no time for such rite and its music. Rather what are now taking place are exotic relationships –courtship, *asoebi* and honeymoon. All those societal ethics which every society should hold tenaciously, as they prepare the initiates adequately for the task of adulthood are lost. The fact that most of them are phasing out implies that their musical involvements are also phasing out especially where other means of entertainments are available.

### Moonlight sessions

This period in Igbo society provides a forum for interactions to both old and young. Nzewi (2003) avers that, "moonlight play is a seasonal, societal institution that enables intensive recreational socialization of young, non-married members of a community of either gender" (23). Children tap or learn from adults as they use the medium to unravel the wits and wisdom of age. Folktales and folksongs are employed as the most valuable and effective means of recreation and relaxation that

impact on children's life. According to Basden in Okafor (2005) "the Ibos (sic)... have a great fondness for fairy tales" the Igbo is a good storyteller with a faculty of putting reality into fables. He uses as illustrations animal and birds in such a way that they seem to be endowed with human powers"(61). Onuora-Oguno, and Chuma-Ude, (2011) further stress that such "traditional education helps the child to understand as well as appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community" (99). It is true that during folktale- folksong hour, figurative representations are made instead of direct remarks, yet those representations always convey the expected messages. Ibekwe, (2012 b) maintains that,

... although in African tradition, animals such as tortoise, ant, grasshopper, lion and many others are usually personified as human beings during storytelling and folktale sessions the images they create do not in any way reduce or affect the messages they are meant to give, rather they intensify the streaks of reality the story intends to unfold(346).

In that direction, Ogbalu in Ibekwe, (2012) gives the following illustrations to replicate the symbolic representations of various animals in folktales/ folksong performance. Thus

... tortoise is a symbol of injustice, greed and wickedness in most cases, tortoise is used to illustrate the Igbo man's belief in retributive justice... lion has the image of force, the spider symbolizes avarice, bees and ants portray hard work and industry, child is a symbol of innocence and credulity, rhino for monstrosity, elephant for unruffled strength, hugeness and the ultimate in any series, hawk is the indicative of agility and ruthlessness, eagle represents the beauty and excellence while ram is the stock figure for strength and extreme endurance and so on. (346).

Regrettably, all these message- driven instructions and musical accompaniments have given way to modernization. It is true that time are now allotted in the radio and television programs to cater for this important activity yet the result is so insignificant as the production lasts for a short period and the perception very far from reality or what should constitute a natural milieu for such traditional performances. New forms of relaxation and entertainment have edged out these aspects of traditional heritage in the name of globalization. In talking about this global impact, Nzewi in Ojakovo, (2013) decries that,

Globalization is divesting contemporary practice of musical arts in Africa of such spiritual, healing and humanizing roles. What gets re-fashioned and exhibited internationally as African musical arts are anemic abstractions of the substantial virtues and values of heritage-bastardization of traditional genius that intended to reflect the flippant European-American imaginations as well as proscription of African creative integrity. (251)

Obviously, this paper does not propose a total annihilation of the entire globalization process, but rather to suggest a form of syncretism where cultural practices are given equal packaging in the global terrain.

### **Burial and funeral activities**

Ordinarily death is a very awful and terrible event that would not require any celebration at all. It is always bitter no matter the age of departure of the deceased. But the fact that it is an inevitable situation made people always resolved or resigned to its occurrence. In Igbo tradition, age is a very differential factor that determines how a deceased person is accorded burial and funeral respect. Children are not celebrated or given elaborate burial and funeral recognition. In the past, any adult who is not married or died as a youth is said to have died a bad death, but old people are celebrated according to the person's wealth when they die. Nzewi, (2007) asserts that "there are categories of death in most societies". According to him,

The category of death prescribes the scope of mandatory cultural programmes and the extent of community's involvement it will generate... some deaths are treated as of agonizing nuisance value, and are quickly disposed of. Such is the death of rather young persons as well as adults who are not yet fulfilled, according to a society's conventions of reckoning achievement. Other deaths are of weighty communal concern, implicating critical political,

religious and social businesses and affirmations thereby generating a wide range of socio-cultural observances and performances that could be of festival proportions. (120)

Musical performances accorded to the deceased are not left out in this submission. The performances are done to reflect indigenous rationalization and philosophical concept of people about death. Invariably, the deaths are honoured with musical renditions such as dirges and other songs that have some significance to the occasion. It is dialectically called *egwu ọnwụ* (death music) which according to Nzewi, (1991), "... is any music which is played specifically in a death situation and the sound of which evokes death sentiments and therefore, evokes the transcendental emotions about death in the hearer" (48). In event of death one hears such songs as

*Dibe nwanne m ebezina*  
*Dibe nwanne m ebezina*  
*Igwe nine jekọ n'ụzụ*  
*Madu nine jekọ be Chukwu o*  
*Dibe nwanne m ebezina*

### **Translation**

Endure my brother/sister, stop crying  
Endure my brother/sister, stop crying  
Every metal must pass through the furnace/fire –(everybody must die or is destined to die)  
Every human is answerable to God or the Creator  
Endure my brother/sister stop crying

This is a suiting song to the bereaved as well as a reminder to everybody present that death is inevitable. As we mourn the dead, we should also not lose sight of our own turn. This is a message-driven song for all mortals. Regrettably, most of these songs are said to be ungodly. The climax is the emergence or the activities of the so called UNDERTAKERS (eg the APAMS) who have given another dimension to the event of death. These are people who are contracted to carry the corpse from the mortuary to the burial ground. They dance with the corpse on their shoulders, throwing it up and down in different directions and doing all sorts of dramatic displays with the corpse. The sentiment and solemnity that usually go with such occasion and which are generated by the type of music accompanying the event are no more felt. Instead of mourning the dead, we now celebrate it no matter the age. Ordinarily, even death at old age is still painful and should be treated with respect rather than turning it into sport activities. All these exercises are alien to the traditional practices of the Igbo, including musical expressions that accompany them.

### **Child weaning practices**

Igbo people have a good number of cultural practices, which stretches from cradle to death. One of these practices is child weaning activities. This is a special period when mothers give ample opportunity to the weaning and nurturing of their children. Mothers use this period to introduce to their children the way and manner of speaking. Igbo people speak the Igbo language and that is the reason why they are called Igbo. The same thing applies to other ethnic groups such as Hausa, Yoruba, Ewe; Venda, Bemba, Swahili and so on. Each of these ethnic groups is identified by her language.

Invariably, this identity extension practice is made possible and enhanced through mother-child relationship at early stage. Young children learn this language early in life from their mothers who first introduces it through singing of lullabies. Before ever they know how to speak or pronounce words correctly, these lullabies have almost dominated their speech abilities. As the child grows, the mother's functions and training continues to widen. Mothers use storytelling and folk tale songs, which are rendered in local languages to train their children morally and intellectually. All these help in consolidating and inculcating native language from one generation to another.

But now the trend has drastically changed, the quest for greener pasture and the issue of white collar jobs have given a new dimension to mother-child relationships. Children now spend most of their time with care – takers and school auntie right from as early as three months to as old as two years and onwards that is before they reach school age. This is the period they supposed to be under the care and tutelage of their mothers. Throughout these preliminary stages, the medium of communication with

these paid surrogate mothers and aunties is the English language, by implication the child's first language or mother tongue precisely becomes the English language

. Odinye, and Odinye, (2010) observe that, "Igbo people abandon the use of Igbo language from primary school to higher institution because the language of instruction is English language, by so doing, their love for Igbo language dies gradually" (88). Even the types of songs children are exposed to are void of cultural lessons. Songs like 'twinkle, twinkle little star', 'baa baa black sheep', 'London bridge is falling down', and so on and so forth are what kids are taught at this early age. Funny enough, these mothers who have failed in their primary duties as a result of circumstances beyond their control derogatorily regard the Igbo Language and cultural musical practices involved as inferior and take pride in their deficiency. Eme in Eme (2015) advocates that,

the Igbo should love, cherish and use their language in all spheres of their endeavour; they must also transmit it to their young ones to avert its going into extinction, since the death of a language signifies the death of everything about its native speakers- their worldview, technologies, belief system, norms and values, traditions, customs, legends, artifacts history, games, literature, and in fact, all about them and their way of life. (34)

Children learn more through practical experiences and that is why introducing them to cultural practices early in life can never be overemphasized. Okafor (2005) avers that,

what the child sees or hears at this time forms the foundation of his /her education later in life. The child's first lessons in music are thus given by its mother before the father, siblings, peers and other people in the environment. Through the mother, the child also learns to develop its sense of pitch. The cradle songs (which) are the medium of instruction (55) invariably expose the child to its first language.

Unfortunately, the use of lullabies to introduce local language to our children at the early stage of their upbringing has become too obsolete to many of our young parents. This trend is so devastating that a good number of our young people cannot express themselves in their mother tongue due to poor foundation or total lack of it, hence Odinye, and Odinye, (2010) affirm, "... it is the speaker of Igbo language ...that can determine how important Igbo language becomes, if they have a positive attitude toward Igbo language, Igbo will be important and vice versa" (87). Agreeably, there is need for orientation and re-orientation for young mothers and youths to really understand the danger of losing one's identity most especially when it is as result of negligence.

### **Child birth and naming ceremony**

This is another aspect of Igbo traditional practice that has been impacted by issues of change. In the past, according to Okafor, (2005)

Birth announcement is sometimes encoded in the number of long hoots or calls made by the paternal grandmother or aunt. The sex of the baby is often not announced as a direct statement but encoded in reference to tools or trade depending on the prevalent occupation in the locality. For example, the palm-wine tapper's climbing -rope (*agbu nkwu*) or machete (*mma olu*) would refer to a male child while broom (*azuza ezu/aziza*) or trading basket (*alia -ashua/afia*) would refer to a female child (49-50).

This birth announcement calls for joy, merriment and songs of jubilation among women folk in appreciation that their fellow woman has successfully completed her nine agonizing months of pregnancy. Then naming ceremony which normally comes on the twenty- eight day of birth also ushers in jubilation, singing and dancing by women. All these activities are done to consolidate some important events in Igbo calendar. For instance, on the eight day of birth, circumcision takes place and on the twenty-eight day of birth, naming ceremony is observed. All these call for celebration especially on the part of women who, ostentatiously parade themselves in such a manner that portrays and establishes their exclusive role of motherhood. The event enjoys such renditions as

*i. mụrụ nwa neta nwa anya, nwa bu ụwa ọma ee*

*Ọ mụrụ nwa nete nwa anya*

whoever begets a child should take care of it

<i>Nwa bụ ụwa oma ee</i>	child is a good fortune
<i>Onye mụrụ nwa nete nwa anya</i>	whoever that begets a child should take care of it
<i>nwa bụ ụwa oma</i>	child is a good fortune
<i>Nwa kariri ego igwe</i>	child is more valuable than money

ii. *kwenu oke nwa*

Call	response
<i>kwenu oke nwa</i>	<i>oke nwa akọna anyi n'aka</i>
<i>Kwenu oke nwa</i>	<i>oke nwa akọna anyi n'aka</i>
<i>Ebe m'ebe o jene</i>	<i>gbaghalu ya n'omuru nwa ohuru</i>
<i>Ihe m'ihe omene</i>	<i>gbaghalu ya n'omuru nwa ohuru</i>
<i>Ojebe nku m' onuoghini ngwa</i>	<i>gbaghalu ya n'omuru nwa ohuru</i>
<i>chube iyi m' onuoghini ngwa</i>	<i>gbaghalu ya n'omuru nwa ohuru</i>

Translation

Sing child's share	let child's share never elude us
Sing child's share	let child's share never elude us
Wherever she goes	forgive her for she is just delivered of a baby
Whatever she does	forgive her for she is just delivered of a baby
If she goes to fetch firewood,	
And returns late	forgive her for she is just delivered of a baby
If she goes to fetch water	
And returns late	forgive her for she is just delivered of a baby

The second song here highlights some of the benefits women enjoy at childbirth. And that is why every mother's desire is to have her own child so as to enjoy those benefits. During the periods of nursing and weaning, a woman's offences are not strictly counted or dealt with; she is treated with utmost lenience no matter the gravity of her offence(s). If her offence is a grievous one that she could not be forgiven, she would be allowed some periods of grace, to enable her complete the ritual of childbirth, nursing and weaning before she is punished. The song is an open intercessory prayer to God to bless every woman with a child or children.

The issue now is that most of these valuable practices have experienced drastic shading and re-shaping as a result of Christianity. Okoye, (2008) observes that,

most of these child-centred musical activities ...are no more as they were before. Some changes have set in. Instead of the formal presentation of the child in the village arena for naming and outing ceremonies (in company of wife mates, who grace the occasion with music making), the child is now taken to the church for such ceremonies' (93).

In most cases when the child is taken to church for christening and outing ceremonies or churching as it is commonly called, the type of songs and dances that accompany the celebration are mostly religiously based. In such a situation, the content of the songs may be lyrically inspiring as a thanksgiving song to God for a gift of a new baby, but invariably lack cultural flavor or context, sentiment and appreciation. When a presentation does not portray, explain or capture the situation of performance, it is not culturally applauded. For instance, songs such as

*Kenelem Chi mo*  
*Nwannem kenelem Chi mo*  
*Na Chi m emeela*

**Translation**

Thank my God for me  
 My sister/brother, thank my God for me

For He has done marvelous thing

or

*Omekwana ya ọzọ*

*Ome ihe ukwu*

*Chi m emekwana ya ọzọ*

*Ọ bụ ome ihe ukwu*

### **Translation**

He has done it again

A doer of great things

My God has done it again

His is the doer of great things

Obviously, the above songs are examples of wonderful worship and thanksgiving songs which people render to God when they receive favours from Him. The songs are universally applied in every joyful situation and not restricted to any specific intention. Some Christian devout even sing such songs in event of sorrow to demonstrate their level of understanding of the gospel which says, 'in every situation give thanks to God'. Traditionally, any performance in Igbo and Africa in general must be self explicit in content, context and presentation. The song texts must intelligibly interpret or point to cultural phenomena as well as re-sounding the central theme of the event. Anything short of this is not African. In other words, birth song is expected to capture or carry information about child birth and activities surrounding it. Therefore singing of general praise songs in occasion like this does not picture the event.

### **Festivals**

Festivals are integral to the life of Igbo people. According to Okafor, (2005) "any Igbo festival or ceremony is essentially a continuity of culture, usually hallowed by tradition and traceable for its origin down to the community's twilight of fable" (127). Festivals may be socially or religiously centred. When socially concerned, it ensures a kind of harmonious co-existence. According to Nzewi (2003) "the process of creating and performing music together bonds participants...gives members an exclusive, shared social identity, binding them in musical action" (16). In such case, participation is always open, that is to say, the musical involvement is not restricted. But when religiously instituted, the performance is ritualized in reverence to some prescribed gods and deities. Musical performances here are selective to some groups. These festivals are arranged to follow a societal calendar of events. Myths have it that failure to observe some of these festivals may result to an unhealthy situation in such a community that violates its calendar. Some examples of festivals in Igbo culture include; *udala/udara* festival, (a fertility ritual performed by young girls around *udala* tree. A tree which is believed to be 'a tree of life' or a tree that can give children) *ogugochi* festival (a ritual in reverence to personal gods but more symbolically attuned to women folk) *ofala* festival (mostly in commemoration of kingship title) new yam festival (to usher in new yam for the year) *mmṛnwu* festival (spirit manifest celebration) *okuka nwaji* festival (organized for young ladies after their fattening room exercises or seclusion) fishing festival and so on and so forth. In all these festivals music is the pivot on which they rotate. In most cases it serves as a medium of social control where people's misconducts and social vices are brought to public ridicule through songs and dances. Okafor, (2005) stresses that, "the Igbo have an elaborate social control system- to protect their institutions, punish unaccepted conduct, and prevent trespass" (129).

All these festivals with their valuable musical imports are no more in practice except in some few places where they thrive with so much moderations and reshaping. This is as a result of misconception which holds that those traditional practices are pagan orientated. These opinions in no small measure have jeopardized the place of indigenous activities, musical practices inclusive.

### **Conclusion**

Different cultures of the world have different traditional practices and their musical accompaniments. The Igbo have a good number of such practices both those that are human friendly and those that have some shades of inhuman act which are not discussed in this paper. In this discourse one thing is outstanding, and that is change. Culture is so dynamic that at every point in time one observes some

features of cultural dynamism. As a society continues to experience and undergo such rapid changes in their social, economic, political, infrastructural and environmental set up, so are their traditional practices as well as their accompanying music. The problem with the Igbo and their disappearing culture is their inability to withstand the undue pressure and forces of modernization. No culture is a perfect or an entirely finished product. But the type of image the foreigners painted of Africans in general submerged them into inferiority complex syndrome, and that according to Asiegbu (2009) “the values of the west become assumed as African values, while the core African values become rejected in preference to the west” (6). The paper argues that the Igbo on their own part and Africa in general should rise up to the challenges, protect and defend their cultural values before they finally disappear from history. The paper also propagates that no culture should denigrate the other or claim superiority over the other in the name of modernization; rather people should imbibe cultural tolerance and co-existence so as to maintain cultural balance.

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# **THE IMPERATIVE OF MORAL EDUCATION IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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## **Abstract**

National issues of moral decay in the private and public spheres of life in Nigeria have reached deplorable conditions despite increased religiosity and the fattest rate of phenomenal growth in religious participation in Nigeria. Similarly, the deplorable state of decay explains monumental corruption, avarice, kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, child trafficking and abuse, and other forms of unpatriotic acts. Issues of national concern have either not been seen as issues of morality and ethics or have not been sustained due to political instability. Consequently, there is a fall in moral standards and the observed change in value system has negative effects on people, institutions and relationship in Nigeria. The focus of this paper is to examine the imperative of moral education for sustainable development in Nigeria. Primary and secondary data were employed and interpreted through analytical, descriptive and phenomenological methods. The findings show that there is a serious decline in morals which explains the uncomplimentary attitude of Nigerians to issues bordering on sustainable development. The need for revived and sustained moral education is a collective responsibility which entails all hands on deck in this moral rebirth through character education in Nigeria.

Key Words: Imperatives, moral, education, moral education, sustainable, development, sustainable development

## **Introduction**

The deplorable state of decay in Nigeria goes on unabated. One or two examples will give weight to the above view point. Avarice has given rise to high level of corruption, terrorism, armed robbery, kidnapping, and lack of patriotic feeling. It is observed that there is a fall in moral standards and value orientation. This fall has negative effects on increased religious involvement and ascendancy in moral acquisition. This explains also why Nigeria is ranked as one of the countries that are witnessing the fattest rate of growth in religiosity. Religious education which seems to centre on dogma does not address holistically character education aimed at promoting respect, honesty, justice, hard work, loyalty, patience and patriotism.

It is against the above sorry state of affairs that this paper explores the imperative of moral education for sustainable development in Nigeria. A sound and integrative moral value is essential for peace, patriotic feelings, and moral rebirth indices for measuring sustainable development in Nigeria.

Data for this study were based on primary and secondary sources. They are analyzed through analytical, descriptive, discursive and phenomenological methods. The results show that a number of efforts have been made in the past but they have not yielded encouraging results. Development does not mean or refer to advancement in science and technology but moral rebirth, moral values, patriotic feeling and filial bond.

## **Definition of Terms**

The terms used in this article needed to be clarified for better and improved insight into the imperative of moral education for sustainable development in Nigeria. The terms to be defined include moral education, imperative and sustainable development.

## **Moral**

A split of moral education into moral and education will make for a better understanding of moral education. Moral is concerned with holding or manifesting high principles for proper conduct. Similarly, it is concerned with the degree to which an action, attitude, behavior and habit is indeed right or wrong. The principles of right and wrong are not left out in confirming to an approved standard of what is right and good. Moral implies conformity to well established sanctioned codes. Moral refers to codes, accepted notions of right and wrong in human act which cover the goodness or otherwise of a human act.

**Education** is a process involving learning, training and acquisition of new experiences. It is the development of the mind and character, a system of training and instruction especially, the children. It entails nourishing, drawing out potentials, gifts for others and any process by which one grows irrespective of age in knowledge, awareness and transformative life skills. In a general sense, education is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, habits of a group of people according to [http/ / en.wikipedia.org/wiki/education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/education), are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training or research.

**Moral Education** refers to character education based on approved social and religious norms and values of acceptable behavior. Similarly, it refers to all the processes of inculcating good values on citizens. It is the training given to an individual for him to know the rights and wrong behaviours and for him to accept the right behavior as a way of life. It is a process of learning which helps people to acquire virtues or moral habits that help them live good and responsible lives as well as become productive and contributing positively to the general well being of their society. Moral education is also an act of relating to issues of right and wrong and how people should rightly act, behave and respond to issues in life. It is a process that influences lives positively, imparts good values to the recipients and inculcates right optimum performance into people.

**Imperative:** Imperative according to Hornby (2000) refers to very important need, immediate attention or action, expressing authority and an order. Mairi (1998) describes imperative as “absolutely essential, urgent, having or showing authority, command or order.

**Sustainable:** Sustainable explains involving the use of something that can or be continued for a long time. It is the quality to provide enough of what one needs in order to live or exist; provide evidence to support an opinion. Mairi (1998) says that sustainable refers to as capable of being sustained, renewed at a set level.

## **Meaning of moral education continues**

According to Nwodo (2015) “moral education is a process by which principles of right and wrong are being instilled in the individual” (p.2) Uche and Nwodo (2015) that say moral Education is explained as character education based on African cultural values such as respect for elders, honesty, justice, hard work, loyalty, patience etc (p.1 23).

Odoemelum (2014) associates moral education with moral character which has to do with building of man’s potentials for moral goodness achievable through the education of conscience, the training of the will by the practice of such virtues as courage, temperance, prudence, justice, self-control and regulation of the irregular passions, zeal and emotions of Nigerians.

Omeregbe (2010) succinctly defines moral as good or praiseworthy (p.6). Anyacho (2005) cites Edwards and Edward as explaining morality as a standard for determining what is right or wrong appropriate or inappropriate, just or unjust in social relationship (P.104). It is define by *The Complete Christian Dictionary* (1992) as “behaving exactly according to what is considered by society to be god or acceptable (p.441).

**Development:** Development according to Gboyega (2003) is the idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. Naomi (1995) holds that it involves not only economic growth, but also some notions of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other essential services all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life. Development is seen by world commission on environment and development

(WCED) (1987) as “what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode “(p.xi). The above views indicate a process of societal advancement which Chrisman (1984) sees as an improvement in the well being of people and are generated through strong partnership between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. It could be observed that development implies improvement in every sphere of life of man.

**Sustainable development:** According to World Commission on Environment and development (WCED) (1987) sustainable development refers to the “ability to make development sustainable to ensue that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (p8). It is a major focus on intergenerational equity.

#### Theoretical Framework

A number of theoretical approaches-functionalism and anomie have been applied to moral education in Nigeria. They have shade on teaching, learning, training, monitoring, planning and caring of children in particular and Nigeria in general.

Functionalism is adopted as very relevant based on the impact moral education plays in sustainable development in Nigeria. Nigeria has component parts which must work together for a positive contribution. The imperative of moral education anchors on the collective resolve to highlight what makes it the solid bedrock for sustainable development in Nigeria. This theory identifies social and religious institutions such as the family, the school, the church and politics. Their positive and negative contributions, according to Henslin (2010) are inter-related parts that work together” (p.25), for the sustainable development of society.

Anomie according to Merton is the state of normlessness. It is adopted in this study because the moral decay, poor moral standards and other forms of indiscipline are the results of not conforming to right norms, values, actions, behaviours, attitudes and actions that will be of benefits to greater number of people in Nigeria. Uche (2015) sees it as “a situation where anything goes” (p.9). It is a situation where moral norms are no longer seen as directing the right behaviour, rather deviance is grossly encouraged. Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2008) opine that “anomie can result from changes in society which disrupts existing relationships and brings existing values into question” (p.667).

Functionalism and anomie are relevant in promoting moral education and controlling the tide of normlessness, indiscipline and poor moral standards which are the bane of lack or loss of purposeful moral direction in Nigeria.

#### History of Moral Education in Nigeria

Moral education in Nigeria has a long history, which if is well articulated would help understand the imperative of moral education as bedrock for sustainable development in Nigeria. The consensus among scholars such as Stark (1990), Target (1995), Nwodo (2004), as well as Akintola (2005) Odumuyiwa (2005), Osoba (2005) Oshitelu (2005) and Uche and Nwodo (2015) is that the history of moral education started with the child development, the family input to the child religious education, the Christian church and the school system.

At birth, the child is endowed with body, soul and spirit which are nurtured by his or her parents in the family. However, it is observed by Akintola (2005) that:

The principle of positive child development is not limited to breast feeding, prevention of child killing, provision of maintenance for children, creating an emotionally balanced child through the manifestation of love and concern for the moral uprightness, self-discipline and God consciousness (p.27).

The above charge has insightfully challenged parents to understand what child development means especially in relation to the history of moral education in Nigeria. Odumuyiwa (2005) states that child development is “an all-round growth and nurture of a baby within the age of one to twelve years. This childhood age is so important in any baby’s life for a solid foundation in life to be laid” (p.3) . The relevance of this definition is that child development is anchored on moral education which starts with

his or her parents. It is observed that if it is well articulated, the child will continue to build his or her life in the future.

In this early child development, parents and other members of the child's family are involved in moral instructions in the family, moral which religious education anchors. Osoba (2005) is of the view that Christian religious education offers the child the fundamentals of Christian moral norms and values that would be difficult to break away from in adulthood. The child's family remains a fertile virgin land growing and nurturing the child's positive values in life. Stark (1990) maintains that whatsoever is impressed on the children in the family becomes their socialization and integrated in the child's personality. On the contrary, Fonagy and Target (1995) frown that parents who could not think about their children's mental experience have deprived them of the basis for a viable sense himself.

Oshitelu (2005) seems to distance himself from the above position. He is of the view that "the choice of a religious outlook and faith rests on superficial and chance factors rather than upon sound guidance and preparation for the fundamental problems of finding a life purpose and a road to meaningful living" (p.34). In a pluralistic society, the child meets people of various religious and social world views. The child is also influenced by news, television, social functions, peer groups and social networks. The influence of pluralism on child's development calls for the teaching of the tenets of their religion to their children and wards from the earliest possible age. The foregoing probably explains why religious education was made an integral part of life of the family at the earliest age in life.

### **The Moral Situation in Contemporary Nigeria**

The moral situation in Nigeria calls for a sober reflection. It is our observed view that the discussion is better made by classifying the moral situation under the family, the church, the school and the government. Periodization will be helpful in situating each structure and institution in Nigeria.

The family system was more stable during the pre-independence, pre-Christian and shortly after independence and Christianity in Nigeria. Western civilization, Christianity, and Islam had their toll on Nigerian family system. In the words of Achebe (1963) things fell apart and the centre could not hold. The traditional family norms and values were eroded during and shortly after Nigeria civil war. The effects of the civil war on the family system were enomous. Other factors that influenced the family negatively included western civilization, Christianity and industry. The oil boom, the Udoorji award and the crave for materialism made parents to go all out in order to make money.

The above was at the detriment of the family system that was left in the hands of those whose interest were far from the ideals and principles for which the family was established in Nigeria.

The technological advancement did not help the situation especially as it relates to cyber crimes, pornography, internet fraud, and yahoo swindlers. Less attention was given to formal education as a means of developing and sustaining one's potentials in Nigeria.

There is rural-urban migration which did not help the family system in Nigeria. The search for greener pasture left farming in the hands of old men and women. The search for white collar jobs did not make Nigerian youths keep faith with destiny and traditional family norms, and values. Hardwork, respect for elders, patience, loyalty, patriotism, love and filial piety were far from the Nigeria youths.

Mothers were not left out of the challenge to the family system. They became materialistic and compete with their male counterparts for business activities. Some leave in the morning and other come back late in the night. This has negative effects on their families especially their children and husbands. The parental influence was weakened. There is no control in their attitude to issues of spiritual, moral and social development, rather, internet, satellite or cable television and social media seem to becloud their sense of humanity. To whom much is given, much is expected from parents especially in children moral formation and development. Mothers need to be complimented by fathers in this match towards moral education of their children in Nigeria.

The post war years saw the proliferation of arms and ammunities in Nigeria. The embattled Nigerian youths and their leaders were not sincere in managing the nation's reserves. The attitude of get rich quick syndrome and the oil boom that did not get to every Nigerian, made most Nigerians to pursue with utmost zeal such vices as avarice, kidnapping, drug peddling, terrorism, child trafficking and other

forms of corrupt practices in Nigeria. Similarly, Nigeria in her 55 years of a sovereign nation had not less than seven coup d'état. Each of them would hold on to corruption as their reason for taking over power. Yet the level of moral decadence has risen unabated.

The fall in moral standard is further complicated by unemployment, poverty, disease, lack of patriotism and other crimes against God and humanity. The situation became more unbearable with the Christian church being preoccupied with prosperity preaching and other forms of commercialization of the Christian church. Indoctrination, schism and unhealthy rivalry were not left out of the moral situation in Nigeria.

Politically, ethnicity, nepotism, favoritism and thugery, false declaration of election results, violence, conflict, arson, murder and terrorism seem to have beclouded Nigeria's sense of political experiment. The political leadership has not shown enough evidence of patriotic feeling and exemplary character in stirring the political boat of filial piety.

The economic situation did not help matters as monumental fraud characterized the nation. Contracts were awarded and the last kobo paid with no tipper of sand tipped on the sight. The oil sector witnessed individual ownership of oil fields. Pipe line vandalism, crude oil theft and bunkering seem to defy solution.

Worse still, major cities became the heaven of beggars. Many of these beggars pretend to be physically challenged. Some hung around places of worship, bus-stops, festivals and special celebrations by the rich. The high poverty rate explains parents giving their children to slavery and the attendant large scale exploitation of the poor. In the light of the above hard and perilous times are here. Folaranmi (2012) articulated these sentiments as follows:

Mention anything negative, corruption, violation of human rights, fallen standard of education, electoral malpractices, epileptic power outage, incessant strikes, lack of security of lives and properties, unemployment, fraud, greed and the rest, Nigeria is in the forefront. (p.vii).

There is a strong implication that corrupt practices breed abject poverty, violence terrorism and insecurity. Nigeria is really blessed with abundant human, natural and material resources but they are mismanaged. The description of Nigeria as the world most corrupt nation by an international year book calls for serious concern. The reverse seems the case as the principal actors in Nigeria's political leadership are characterized by fraudulent mind, exploitation, degradation, avarice, selfishness which have brought bad image on Nigeria.

The deplorable moral predicament in Nigeria has raised issues as to what role religion has played to address the hopeless situation. For the above moral evil to persist, every God fearing person has upheld cold complexity, and mute indifference. The Christian church is criticized of compromising as the salt of the world. Materialism seems to have affected the required radical transformation of thought, attitude, outlook and direction. The religious inability to holistically address societal injustices in Nigeria informed the editorial of Nigerian Tribune of Wednesday 1985 to point out that: "Nigerians are used in these violent reactions because they had suffered from progressive deprivation and lacked the language to articulate their differences and also were denied the opportunity to disagree with other privileged members of the society" (p.2).

The manifestation of these violent reactions is evident according to Uche (2008) in the "blood bath in Kano, Kaduna, Kastina, Gombe, Zaria etc." Christian association of Nigeria (1987) gave sordid story of the burning of one hundred and thirteen (113) churches by Muslim rioters within 20 hours of March 1987. Similarly, a breakdown of figures or a rundown in lives and property destroyed during the violent conflict point to moral decay. Ilori (1987) opines that the first and largest religious riot in Nigeria claimed four thousand, one hundred and seventy seven (4,177) lives in Kano state in 1987. The sum of eight (8) million naira was paid as compensation. In "The Trial of Blood", the breakdown of figures shows that in Bulumkutu near Maidugiri 400 people were killed in April, 1985. Six thousand arrest of fanatics were made. Akinrinade (1991) gives insight into the death figures. Seven hundred and sixty-four (764) deaths were not part of the police and mortuary figures of 350 and 500 respectively. It is significant to note that the above tale of woe which the recent Boko Haram terrorist activities made unending has moral undertone. These rising wave of deaths, destruction of private and public property,

arrests, molestations and prolonged detention of Chibok school girls have adverse moral effects in the socio-religious development of Nigeria.

## **IMPERATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

The foregoing expository review of the moral situation in the contemporary Nigerian society shows evidences of sporadic moral upheaval in different sectors in Nigeria. These upheavals have given rise to rough edges in Nigeria's moral fibre. The life of contradiction in Nigeria has not only exposed the futility of the life of immoral disposition based on disobedience, crave for earthly wealth and massive exploitation but has given credence to the imperative of moral education as the bedrock for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Sustainable development implies that the developmental strides need to be sustained. The low moral standards that gave rise to moral decay and gross indiscipline call for moral education as a bedrock for the envisaged sustainable development in Nigeria. Nigerians need character education in order to stem the tide of moral indiscipline. There is need to bear good fruits worthy of regeneration. Character education teaches people the right conduct, behaviour, attitude, action, norms and values that are good, commendable, acceptable, rewardable and appreciable.

Character education brings out the good behaviour in Nigerians. As socio-religious members of the society, moral education paints vividly the moral values such as honesty, truthfulness, diligence, patience and hard work which if sustained will help Nigeria acquire enviable qualities of good citizenship.

Moral education makes Nigerians agents of transformation. Moral education is held in high esteem because it has the capabilities of changing children in particular and Nigerians in general from immoral to moral dispositions. Child from immoral background such as deviants, almajeri and some orphans are properly groomed by their guardians through moral education. Moral education helps children interact and socialize with their peers from good moral background and their lives are modified for better.

Moral education is imperative for sustainable development in Nigeria because it promotes peace and friendly attitudes among Nigerians. It helps Nigerian children as leaders of tomorrow to see others as co-inhabitants of the nation. This filial love promotes peace and friendliness among the people. The Igbo of Nigeria believe in '**onye aghala nwanne ya**' meaning do not forsake or abandon your brother. Since moral education serves as a bedrock for better orientation, moral education is evidenced in the value it places on better and improved moral orientation and transformation of people, institutions and relationship in Nigeria.

Hard work is essential for sustainable development in Nigeria. Similarly, moral education helps by inculcating the principles, virtues, norms and values of hard work. It discourages laziness, idleness and other societal evils militating against sustainable development in Nigeria. It serves also as a catalyst to whatever goal and achievement Nigerians want to attain.

Moral education promotes national values which are those principles, ideas and beliefs Nigerians hold and fondly cherish as bedrock for sustainable development. They include respect for elders, hard work, patriotism, integrity, contentment, discipline, courage and peace. These national values are promoted by moral education in giving direction, influence and control of Nigerian conduct or pattern of behaviour. Character training is imperative in determining good choices Nigerians make, and right decisions that would benefit more people.

Values as cherished social issues for the daily activities of Nigerians also include co-operation, honesty, and self-reliance. Moral education promotes good values. Nigerians need to have integrity as a virtue of being honest and consistently firm in their moral principle. Nigerians need the transparent sense of moral standards on human relationships. Integrity does not compromise corruption; rather, it promotes probity, honesty, contentment, truthfulness, justice and fair play. Nigerians need these virtues in order to sustain the tide of development in Nigeria.

Moral education promotes straight forward and honest people. They are needed in the business circles and political leadership because they are trustworthy and disciplined. Public funds entrusted in their hands cannot be lost. Moral education remains the solid rock upon which religious education is built.

Osoba (2005) sees religious education as offering the fundamentals of Christian moral norms and values in the early stage of life. Religious education starts in the church, schools and religious settings. The emphasis in these settings is on religious doctrines, belief systems and indoctrination. The point in this clarification is that moral education goes beyond a response to concerns of the nation's youths, their socialization and direction through faith. Moral education offers home training which inculcates and promotes in people such moral and social norms and values as respect, fear of God, interpersonal relationship and filial piety. Moral education also tries to fix the national ills and compliments the place of traditional moral ethics in formal education.

The identified moral predicament of Nigeria gave rise to the pervasive and widespread lack of accountability. These unethical behaviours have persisted due to the lack of political will to see the imperative of moral education as the solid bedrock for sustainable development in Nigeria. Lip-service to basic issues of concern in moral education are not left out.

A little insight into these unethical behaviour will give deeper insight into their failure and the need to learn from past mistakes. Uche and Nwodo (2015) gave a recap of past efforts to combat moral decadence in Nigeria. Former president Shehu Shagari introduced ethical revolution in 1979, in 1983, General Buhari came up with social and moral War Against Indiscipline, (WAI) former president Babangida introduced Mass Mobilization for Social-Justice, Self Reliance and Economic Reconstruction (MAMSER). These milestones to expurgate "ignorance and the liberation of the Nigerian citizenry from the chains of incapacitation" (p.263), according to Igbum and Apenda (2002) failed. Similarly, the war against corruption found unfulfilled expectation as the worst perpetrators of indiscipline and corruption in Nigeria are the political leaders and their collaborators. The Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) set up by former president Obasanjo did not change Nigeria as one of the most corrupt nations of the world.

Moral education is imperative for correcting these national woes because it is a yardstick for shunning societal evils. It is pertinent to note that it helps to shun indiscipline and enables Nigerians to embrace societal virtues, condemns such ills as abortion, kidnapping, armed robbery, violence and unpatriotic acts in Nigeria. It gives hand in the prevention and escalation of crimes in Nigeria. Similarly, moral education teaches the strong need for co-operation, filial bond and tolerance among Nigerians. These are moral principles upon which the society is peaceful for conducive atmosphere for business activities in Nigeria. Economic activities do not thrive under insecurity, violent terrorism and other forms of insecurity which moral education fights through conscientizing Nigerians to be alive to their moral and educational responsibilities.

Moral education is dynamic in promoting sound mind, attitude, behavior and actions moral development in Nigerians irrespective of age, status, political and world-views depend on strong moral fibre. None of the aspects of life of Nigerians has exerted a comparable influence to moral educational development as religion. Moral education according to Chijindu (2005) is now both more urgent and more perplexing than ever before in our society. Vast cultural changes have forced revisions in many customs and have brought about a re-examination of moral standards. The National policy on education of 2004 edition, section 4, No. d emphasizes on molding the character and developing of sound attitude and moral in the child.

Moral education is the bedrock of socio-economic growth of Nigeria. It equips and forms the child holistically. It is the pivot of every stratum of human life, especially the character molding needs to be instilled in Nigerian children right from the cradle for better Nigeria society. Moral Education is imperative in creating a nation where human dignity and equality is restored and justice promoted, the rights and responsibilities of persons are respected, sufferings of humans are alleviated and the causes addressed for the common good of all Nigerians.

Moral education helps to inculcate in Nigerians improved value judgment. It prevents further degradation on Nigeria. It promotes care and responsible citizens that could genuinely contribute to a just and peaceful Nigeria. Character is something one cannot do without. This is due to the fact that morality directs Nigerians on good conduct, authentic human values and guarantees discipline to meet the societal needs and satisfy their aspirations.

Moral Education shares some core values in people, Institutions and relationships in Nigeria. Moral Education in this auspicious time in Nigeria's history is imperative especially when Nigerians,



according to Obioma (2016) are overburdened by the endemic culture of over bearing impunity have overwhelming desired a change in leadership generally as an embodiment and encapsulation of national integrity and deep ethical values. Moral Education will deepen the drive and search for Nigeria's collective return to the culture of ethical values, transparent integrity as reflective of communal and national way of life. Moral education strives to maintain high ethical standards of conducting public and private driven business and high compliance of socially accepted culture.

## CONCLUSION

Moral education has shaped the lives of the average Nigerian for good. It has also served as a catalyst for societal developments. More importantly, moral education has helped in producing and shaping notable personalities who have been celebrated as national heroes, role models and champions of social and moral discipline in Nigeria. Moral education as a process, act and a long standing system has a strong moral fibre and muscle to fight the deplorable state of decay, fall in moral standard and other hallmarks indiscipline such as the excruciating financial looting, terrorism, kidnapping and lack of moral probity, accountability and unpatriotic feelings which have been the bane of Nigeria's moral decay. This moral decay has negative effects on sound moral living in Nigeria. It has weakened also the high spirit of greed, avarice and selfish ambition. Moral education which remains the bedrock for sustainable development in Nigeria calls for collaborative efforts in deepening the national drives and search for the collective return to the culture of ethical values, transparency and integrity as reflective of national way of living. Ethical standards promote positive change, instill high moral standard in learners, teacher, parents and leaders who must be trained and retrained for an improved and efficient moral education as the bedrock for sustainable development in Nigeria. All hands must be on deck to achieve this dream. The question for peace in Nigeria has always been a core issue especial in the biblical scholarship. Quest for peaceful co-existence in Nigeria, therefore, has given rise to the national peace policy developed by the institute for peace and conflict resolution. The institute has developed a very good document which could be considered a read map or blue print towards evolving a peaceful society in Nigeria.

Development can only thrive in a peaceful environment. For peace to reign, any individual, group or society such as Nigeria, peace must divert self and project the common or general interest of all Nigerians. Series of works have been carried out in order to proffer solutions and recommendations to the seeming perennial absence of peace in Nigeria. Peace shares some core values in Nigeria.

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# **Vision for Sustained Prosperity in Nigeria: Implication of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's speech on the perception of women in leadership**

by

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## **Abstract**

*This paper looks at the speech of one of the notable women in Nigerian, Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, who has played a key role in handling Nigeria's financial matters as a minister of finance in one of the efforts to solve the country's key financial challenges. It aims to appraise her political/economic effort in speech delivery, as a determinant of how well women can perform in key affairs that affect the country. Specifically, the paper appraises whether the speech meets the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner, which are the qualities of a good speech as stipulated by Grice. The paper observes that the speaker, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala succeeded in presenting a speech in the international setting which fulfilled the requirements of a good speech, fulfilling the maxims of quantity, relevance and manner; thus, producing a speech capable of making the right impact on the gathered audience. Obviously, the speaker did not fulfil the maxim of quality to the zenith. This is understandable, given that she has to defend and speak in favour of her government which she represents. In general, the speaker met the requirements for a good speech. The paper recommends that further roles be given to the women-folk in leadership, with regards to the growth, development and enhancement of proper perception of Nigeria by the outside world, as the potential of the country will not be hindered as widely feared; rather, will equally receive proper boost as expected by the general public.*

## **Introduction**

### **Background of the study**

The world is fraught with lots of problems or challenges affecting human beings and the growth and development of their societies. These problems range from environmental, social, political, religious, cultural problems, etc. As human existence on earth stretches further, more problems are encountered which human beings have to find solutions to. The efforts to solve these problems or challenges in order to ensure and enhance comfort, therefore, lie in the hands of every human being capable of, or empowered to bring about the positive changes or adjustments required.

Over the preceding centuries of human history, solving these problems have largely been placed on the shoulders of the male members of the various societies all over the world. This does not imply that the female members of the society do not contribute to making life more comfortable for human societies; their roles, rather, were limited to solving or handling seemingly important but less insignificant problems or needs such as taking care of the homes, the husbands and the children. However, in recent times, solving several of these world problems have been taken upon by the female folks of various societies; Nigeria of course, a case in point.

There has been observed increase in the number of females in the politics or leadership of Nigeria. These females serve in various capacities as commissioners, permanent secretaries, heads of companies, departments and several other parastatals, deputy governors and ministers. Upon holding these positions, several of these women have played crucial roles in handling, solving and attempting to solve several problems affecting the country's law-enactment, crude-oil exploration and utilization, security of lives and property, state governance and financial activities.

In this paper, we will look at the speech of one of such women in Nigerian context who has played a key role in handling Nigeria's financial matters as a Minister of Finance with the attempt to solve the

country's key financial challenges. By studying this speech, we will find out how reliable her ideas are and how effective her role as the then Nigeria's Minister of Finance influenced the country at the time.

### **Statement of the problem**

Over the years, since the inception of the country- Nigeria, the role of women in Nigerian politics and leadership has rarely been given a chance to thrive, and in the same vein, has rarely been given proper recognition. Their ideas and the impact of the policies engineered by women, which are evidenced through their speeches and reports are, equally, rarely placed in the limelight where they can receive reviews from those of the male counterparts.

This paper, therefore, takes a look at the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, one of the most influential Nigerian women on an international stage in order to appraise the quality of the speech, in respect to creating the right impact on the audience for the benefit of the country- Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

Its aims to find out how reliable her ideas are, through her speech and how effective her role as the then Nigeria's minister of finance influenced the country at the time, and by extension, to appraise her political/economic effort as a determinant of how well women can perform in key affairs that affect the country. Based on this, the paper adopts the outlined objectives:

- i. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meets the maxim of quality, which is one of the qualities of a good speech as stipulated by Grice.
- ii. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meets the maxim of quantity
- iii. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is in line with the maxim of relevance
- iv. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala agrees with the maxim manner.

### **Research Questions**

This paper adopts the following research questions:

- i. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meet the maxim of quality, which is one of the qualities of a good speech as stipulated by Grice?
- ii. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meet the maxim of quantity?
- iii. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala stipulate the maxim of relevance?
- iv. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala agree the maxim of manner?

### **Scope of the study**

The scope of study for this paper is pragmatics. Thus, the paper focuses on the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala to analyse and determine the effectiveness of her leadership, exemplified through the speech, to determine the effectiveness of women, generally, in the developmental aspiration of Nigeria.

### **Significance of the study**

The significance of this study is drawn from the fact that there has been a lot of debate regarding the suitability and effectiveness of the womenfolk in the leadership of the country, Nigeria, as it strives for growth and development. It is, equally, a proven fact that one of the key attributes of a good leader is the ability to deliver proper speeches which convince, motivate or inspire the audience who constitute the members of a group.

By studying the speech of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, which she delivered upon her invitation to speak about the country by the 'The Atlantic Council' on the 8th of October, 2014, as the then Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of the country, using the framework set by Grice for assessing a good speech, the paper will be able to appraise her impact as a woman-leader, and this can be a basis for determining the effectiveness of women-leadership in the country.

## **Literature review**

### **Theoretical studies**

Several writers and researchers have expressed various views about the perception of women in leadership and their use of language. In this section of the research, we will look at some of these views as they relate to the study.

According to Lakoff (1973:45),

Our use of language embodies attitudes as well as referential meanings. 'Women's language' has as foundation the attitude that women are marginal to the serious concerns of life, which are pre-empted by men. The marginality and powerlessness of women are reflected in both the ways women are expected to speak, and the ways in which women are spoken of. In appropriate women's speech, strong expression of feeling is avoided, expression of uncertainty is favoured, and means of expression in regard to subject-matter deemed 'trivial' to the 'real' world are elaborated.

These words by Lakoff provides a generally perceived natural view about women as it concerns their use of language. Women are perceived to be more reserved and unimpulsive when it comes to expressing reactions to issues, especially more sensitive ones. This is because, in expressing themselves, they are very mindful of how the male folks, especially, will perceive them. Thus, there is a general stigma to the appropriateness and inappropriateness of behaviour attached to the female-folks by the male-folks and this determines the acceptability or unacceptability of women as worthy of gaining the interests of the male-folks for association/marriage.

Furthermore, Lakoff (1975) unequivocally states that a "women's register," serves to maintain women's (inferior) role in society. She further argues that women tend to use linguistic forms that reflect and reinforce a subordinate role. She outlines these linguistic forms to include tag questions, question intonation, and "weak" directives, among others.

According to *Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2006)*, descriptions of women's speech as deficient can be dated as far back as Otto Jespersen's "The Woman," which is a chapter in his 1922 book entitled *Language: Its Nature and Development*. They note that Jespersen's idea that women's speech is deficient relative to a male norm went largely unchallenged until Lakoff's work appeared fifty years later. These ideas, though being challenged politically as incorrect from a modern perspective, Jespersen's contributions remain relevant. It's relevance manifest through the information on the prospect of language change based on social and gendered opportunity, lexical and phonological differences, and the idea of genderlects and the influence of gender roles on language.

### **Discourse analysis**

In his series of papers published in 1952, Zellig Harris traces the development of discourse analysis to the emergence of semiotics and the French structuralist approach to the study of narrative. McCarthy (2011) notes that in the 1960s, Hymes drew a sociological perspective with the study of speech in its social setting (e.g. Hymes 1964) and thus, defines discourse analysis as a study which is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between language and the contexts of its use.

Discourse analysis also examines how language is used to sustain social institutions and manipulate opinion; how it is used in the expression of ideology and the exercise of power. Discourse analysis can also be used to develop awareness of linguistic features in the interpretation of literary texts.

The above named writer summarises by stating that discourse analysis examines spoken communication (talk/speech/spoken texts/spoken messages) between speaker(s) and listener(s) and written communication (texts/messages) between reader(s) and writer(s). He stresses the need to see language as a dynamic, social interactive phenomenon. He further states that meaning is conveyed not by single sentences but by more complex exchanges, in which the participants' beliefs and expectations, the knowledge they share about each other and about the world, and the situation in which they interact, play a crucial part.

## Critical discourse analysis

CDA was first developed by the Lancaster school of linguists of which [Norman Fairclough](#) was the most prominent figure. [Ruth Wodak](#) has also made a remarkable contribution to this field of study. The approach draws from several disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, such as critical linguistics.

Fairclough developed a three-dimensional framework for studying discourse, where the aim is to map three separate forms of analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271-80) summarize the main tenets of CDA thus:

- CDA addresses social problems
- Power relations are discursive
- Discourse constitutes society and culture
- Discourse does ideological work
- Discourse is historical
- The link between text and society is mediated
- Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
- Discourse is a form of social action.

In terms of its methodology, it is generally agreed upon that any explicit method in discourse studies, the humanities and social sciences may be used in CDA research, as long as it is able to adequately and relevantly produce insights into the way discourse reproduces (or resists) social and political inequality, power abuse or domination. Consequently, the strength of CDA lies in the fact that it does not limit its analysis to specific structures of text or talk, but systematically relates these to structures of the [sociopolitical](#) context based on its ability to adopt any method it deems relevant for a given study.

## Empirical studies

Several empirical works relating to speech studies have been conducted and these will be respectively reviewed. According to Sunderland (2006), empirical studies on talk between men and women in the 70s and 80s found women producing more well-timed 'minimal responses' such as 'oh' and 'mm' and asking more questions', that is, doing more legwork in conversations. Thorne (1997) in his observation, establishes that men were thought to use slang and swearing more frequently but recent studies suggest that this trend is changing. He also notes that the speech of women is characterised by the frequency of politeness markers like 'please' and 'thanks'. This work relates to the current effort in their respective attempts to study the speech of the womenfolk. However, their differences stem from focus. While Thorne focuses on the morphological and syntactic composition of speeches by womenfolk, the current research focuses on the impact made by speeches from the womenfolk.

Newman, Groom, Handelman and Pennebaker (2008) in their research, examined gender differences in language use by using standardised categories to analyse a database of over 14,000 text files from 70 separate studies. They observed that women used more words related to psychological and social processes while men referred more to object properties and impersonal topics. This is similar to the findings of another research conducted by Mulac, Weimann, Widenmann and Gibson (1988) as they observed that questions are more common in women's contributions to dyadic interactions (e.g., "Does anyone want to get some food?"), whereas directives that tell the audience to do something (e.g., "Let's go get some food") are more likely to be found in men's conversational contributions.

According to Newman et al (2008), a growing body of research suggests that people can learn a great deal about people's underlying thoughts, emotions, and motives by counting and categorising the words they use to communicate (Pennebaker & King, 1999; Pennebaker, Mehl, & Niederhoffer, 2003; cf. Shapiro, 1989). They note that this approach has proved particularly fruitful with respect to "function words," which include pronouns, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs. They equally maintain that these words are distinct from content words (nouns, verbs, and adjectives), and are used to "glue" other words together, asserting that in the English language, there are fewer than 200 commonly used function words, yet they account for over one half of the words people use.

In the example they put forward, they state that using "you and I" instead of "we" reflects a different perspective on the relationship between the speaker and the referent and that using more



pronouns in general (rather than nouns) refers to a shared reality, in that both parties have to understand who “he” is. They point out that, empirically, the use of the first-person singular has been associated with age; depression; illness; and, more broadly, self-focus (Pennebaker et al., 2003) while the first-person plural can variously be a marker of group identity and, on occasion, a sign of emotional distancing (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Pennebaker & Lay, 2002). They also point out that ‘function words’ can also reflect psychological state independent of content, giving an example that people telling the truth use more first-person singular and more qualifying conjunctions (e.g., but) than those instructed to lie—although they are discussing the same topics (Newman, Pennebaker, Berry, & Richards, 2003). This approach to language will be adopted in studying the implications of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala’s speech and how it tells on the perception of women in leadership.

Observation from the works reviewed, so far, shows that the concern of so many researches have always hinged on identifying and pointing out the components of statements and speeches when they are isolated and differentiated along gender lines. Such components are drawn from both morphological and syntactic compositions of the language(s) analysed. Thus, words, sentences and other vocal non-lexical sounds which are peculiar to respective genders. On the other hand, the current research focuses on conducting an enquiry into the level of success which the speech of the womenfolk can record in the effort to project a positive image of the country, exemplified by the speech of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, as the Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of the country.

### **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for this research is the theoretical framework of ‘Conversational Implicature’ by Grice (1975). Grice (1975) has it that the ‘calculation’ of conversational implicatures is grounded on common knowledge of what a given speaker says, the linguistic and extra linguistic context of the utterance, general background information, and the consideration of what he calls the ‘Cooperative principle’. Thus, he emphasises that cooperative principle is implemented in the plans of speakers and understanding of hearers, highlighting the following maxims:

- Quantity: This maxim states that one should speak as informative as required based on the topic at hand and should not be more informative than required.
- Quality: This maxim states that a speaker should try to make sure that his information provided is true and should not say what is believed to be false or what one lacks adequate evidence
- Relation: This maxim states that one should be relevant in one’s speech, and
- Manner: This maxim states that a speaker should express his speech clearly, as well as make it transparent and easy to understand. Thus, this maxim emphasizes that one should avoid obscurity of statement, avoid ambiguity, be brief and be orderly as well.

We will adopt this theoretical framework for analysing our data adequately.

### **Methodology**

The methodology employed in this work is discussed below:

**Research design:** A survey research design is adopted. Thus, a systematic plan was adopted in order to conduct this research as it will help to reflect the most important details required, given the limited time and spatial content for the work. Thus, the paper starts with an introduction of what the work is all about by recognising the problem aimed to be solved, its relevance and limitations too. Relevant works of literature which help to shed more light on the nature of the research work are then discussed. The laid-down systematic plan for the work is presented, followed by the presentation and analysis of data. The work then ends with the summary of the findings or observations made from the study.

**Area of study:** The area of study for this work is sociolinguistics which studies language based on its relationship with the various social factors that influence its usage within a given society. In this study, the socio-political circumstances existing in Nigeria are put into context while studying the use of language in the speech of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

**Method of data collection:** The work takes to the internet to obtain available transcribed copies of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala as the then Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of the country, on the 8th of October, 2014; particularly published in 247Ureports online page.

**Method of data analysis:** The data obtained for this research work will be analysed based on the tenets of theoretical postulations of conversational implicature by Grice (1975), as the various statements contained in the speech made by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala on the efforts of the government of Nigeria, to create a better country for its people, are analysed. The analysis will ensure that her statements which endeavour to paint or create a favourable image of the Nigerian state are critically analysed with respect to the success and failure of such attempt.

### **Data analysis**

On the 8th of October, 2014, the then Coordinating minister for the economy and the minister of finance of the country, Nigeria, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala presented a speech titled "Vision for Sustained Prosperity in Nigeria" upon her invitation to speak about the country by the 'The Atlantic Council'. The speech will be analysed using Grice's conversational implicature in order to find out what impact the speaker, who is regarded as one of the top women in leadership makes through her speech.

### **Maxim of quantity:**

As earlier noted, this conversational maxim looks at the appropriateness of speech of a given speaker with regards to being as informative as required based on the topic at hand and it also states that a given speaker should not be more informative than required. Let us look at the expression below:

- Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I bring you greetings from Nigeria and particularly from our President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, who was quite delighted when I informed him of my invitation by the Atlantic Council to speak on Nigeria.... I've been invited here today to speak on the Vision for Sustained Prosperity in this great country of mine called Nigeria.... In the decades of the 1980s and the 90s, we saw an Africa that was heavily indebted with an average debt-to-GDP ratio of 75 percent.... Fast-forward two decades and the story is remarkably different. We see now, an Africa whose economy is growing faster than most economies in the World with better than 5 percent annual growth in GDP.... Yes, these are certainly challenges.... Now, Nigeria is a classic example of this Africa Rising phenomenon, and perhaps one of its most successful stories.... A number of steps are currently being taken to tackle these challenges....

These excerpts from the speech point to the fact that the speaker fulfilled the maxim of quantity by being as informative as is required. In the speech, the speaker, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala first expressed her appreciation and delight for being invited to speak at the gathering. Then, she talked about the challenges facing African continent as a whole and Nigeria in particular, as well as the efforts made and the ones being made to handle or solve them. All these discussions were aimed at informing the audience, comprising of leaders of various countries across various continents of the world, about the state of Nigeria's affairs; especially about the fact that Nigeria is a country on the rise and a country everyone should learnt to love, appreciated and associate with. Summarily, she tried to change the opinion or views of the members of the various countries of the world about Nigeria into a favourable one. The way she presented her points for this purpose are observed to have produced the needed or necessary information, as well as avoided the production or expression of unnecessary or unrequired information or statements. Once again, therefore, this maxim is fulfilled by the speaker.

### **Maxim of Quality**

This conversational maxim states that a speaker should try to make sure that any information provided is true and should not say what is believed to be false or what one lacks adequate evidence of. With regards to the speech made by the then Minister of Finance of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, it is observed that to a large extent, she failed to fulfil this maxim, even though there are several truthful facts provided in the speech. Let us take a look at the excerpt below:

- Fast-forward two decades and the story is remarkably different. We see now, an Africa whose economy is growing faster than most economies in the World with better than 5 percent annual growth in GDP. We see an Africa with low debt, averaging about 32 percent of GDP (which is certainly much lower than those of developed countries including the US and several countries in Europe), low inflation at single digit on average, and a middle class that has nearly tripled in size – from about 126

million people (or 27 percent of total population) in 1980 to nearly 350 million people (or 34 percent of population) by 2010, according to the African Development Bank.

Africa being a continent whose economy is growing faster than most economies in the World with better than 5 percent annual growth in GDP is very much debatable. The variables necessary for promoting the growth of an economy of any nation which include, human and capital resources are evidently lacking in most countries of Africa. Particularly, security, proper long-lasting policies, electricity, and other basic infrastructure which motivate settlement and investment in a given location are absent. There is a high frequency of the occurrence of terrorism acts and wars in several African countries; and safety is key to habitation and investment. The popular belief is that information is best assessed from the angle of the neutrals. Thus, it is wrong for the then Minister to draw her claims from the statement credited to the African Development Bank about a continent it is established to serve since making biased statements will definitely be inevitable on the part of 'the Bank'.

Further in the speech, one can notice the speaker discussing these recognised challenges facing the country and the fact that these challenges greatly affect the growth and development of the country's economy and the country in general. Thus, one wonders how honest the then Minister has been in her speech prior to this point. Take a look at the excerpt below:

- ... like in most of Africa, Nigeria faces a large infrastructure deficit. The inadequate infrastructure is holding back economic growth by at least 2 percent per annum, according to a recent World Bank study, and we need about US\$ 14.2 billion per year to bridge the infrastructure gap.... Absence of adequate infrastructure in Nigeria, particularly poor electricity supply adds a massive 16 percent to business costs in Nigeria.... For a country of our size, we are underinvested in transportation infrastructure... and we currently face a housing deficit of about 17 million units. Without a doubt, the dearth of infrastructure is further exacerbated by the lack of access to long-term finance, which makes investment in long-term projects almost impossible.... we face the challenge of economic inclusion and high youth unemployment.... Our maternal and infant mortality rates are high, and we have large numbers of children out of school. The absence of social safety nets leaves the unemployed highly vulnerable to poverty. In many countries in Africa, the information required to better target the poor and the unemployed is not available. We lack sound identification data and biometrics that can support safety nets. We lack effective tax systems that can help redistribute income in favour of those at the bottom end.... corruption continues to be a challenge, and happens to be one of the most talked about problems of the country.... We are losing up to 100,000 barrels of oil per day to theft from onshore and swamp operations alone. This amounts to several billions of dollars, if you do the math.... Fifth is the security challenge we presently face, particularly the Boko Haram insurgency, which reached a crescendo when over 200 schools girls of the Government Secondary School in Chibok, were abducted from their dormitories last April. This terrorist sect's key objective is to destroy formal or western education in Nigeria. This year alone, we know that Boko Haram has murdered over 170 teachers in Borno State, and an estimated 300 educational facilities have been destroyed in the three most affected states of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe, including 80 primary schools in Borno State alone.

Again, the statement made by the speaker that Africa is obviously enjoying a peace dividend and better governance with democracy now entrenched in most countries is highly contentious. On the contrary, insecurity and acts of terrorism are frequent trends observable in many African countries as earlier noted; and poor leadership within the democratic setting is equally evident.

Therefore, by these statements, the speaker lacks authenticity as she contradicts herself in her earlier statements and her revelation in her succeeding ones. One can as well, accuse the then Minister of speaking from the two side of her mouth. On this ground, the speaker failed to fulfil the maxim of quality.

### **Maxim of Relevance**

This maxim stipulates that one should be relevant in one's speech. By explanation, this maxim, requires a speaker to make statements which are relevant to the topic at hand or to the context. That is, one's discussion of the topic at hand should address the said topic and not deviate with points which do not, in any way, contribute to the topic of discourse.

Being that it is a speech delivered by the Coordinating Minister for the Economy & Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria at The Atlantic Council on October 8, 2014 upon an

invitation by the Atlantic Council to speak on Nigeria(an occasion which is the first of a series of talks on “New Africa”, in partnership with Thomson-Reuters), the speaker is expected to make statements relevant for the occasion or context in which she finds herself. Based on these, we will look at excerpts from her speech to find out if the speaker fulfilled this maxim.

- I’ve been invited here today to speak on the Vision for Sustained Prosperity in this great country of mine called Nigeria.... In the decades of the 1980s and the 90s, we saw an Africa that was heavily indebted with an average debt-to-GDP ratio of 75 percent; an Africa plagued with slow economic growth...and rampant poverty; an Africa troubled by civil wars and political strife, and an Africa in desperate need of donor aid and assistance. Fast-forward two decades and the story is remarkably different. We see now, an Africa whose economy is growing faster...., an Africa that is obviously enjoying a peace dividend and better governance with democracy now entrenched in most countries.... Yes, these are certainly challenges.... Now, Nigeria is a classic example of this Africa Rising phenomenon, and perhaps one of its most successful stories. Nigeria is underrated with its sore points magnified beyond belief particularly in the Western media. My country receives little or no praise even when things are done right, but is left battling with the prejudice of a country where nothing works. Take as an example the recent fight to contain the deadly Ebola virus. The efforts of Nigerian medical personnel that prevented the early spread of this deadly disease to the United States are rarely acknowledged.... like in most of Africa, Nigeria faces a large infrastructure deficit. The inadequate infrastructure is holding back economic growth.... A number of steps are currently being taken to tackle these challenges in line with President Goodluck Jonathan’s Transformation Agenda.... Thank you Ladies and gentlemen for listening.

From the excerpt above, one can understand that since the purpose of the speech is to tell the gathered audience about the state of Nigeria with regard to the ‘Africa Rising’ theme, the speaker showed relevance in speech by guiding the audience through the state of affairs in the African continent and Nigeria in particular few decades ago, and the state of their affairs contemporarily. In doing this, she highlighted the challenges facing the country, the efforts to tackle them, both those that have been successful and those still in progress, as well as future expectation.

Of course, it is the wish and target of every country to be projected on a bright light and to have the world possess a favourable perception about them. Achieving this attracts positive interests from people and governments of other countries with regards to obtaining aids and attracting investments that will better the lots of the country. Nigeria is no exception. Thus, in presenting her speech, the speaker also made tangible effort to project the positives of the country in a bid to change the world view held by most western countries regarding the Nigeria. Consequently, it is right to unequivocally state that Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, in her speech, fulfilled the maxim of relevance.

#### **Maxim of Manner:**

This maxim stipulates that a speaker should express his speech clearly, make it transparent, and easy to understand. It emphasizes that one should avoid obscurity of statement, avoid ambiguity, be brief and be orderly as well. By this, we will look at the speech delivered by Dr. Okonjo-Iweala in order to assess whether it was clear, transparent, unambiguous, unobscured, brief and orderly.

With regards to being clear and easy to understand, the ex-Minister ensured clarity in the deliverance of her speech. This, she ensured by using simple expressions which are easy to be understood by all gathered. Though the speaker employed some terminologies and statistical data which may elude the full-grasp of a less literate person, the overall idea expressed gives any hearer who understands even the basic English language good understanding or correct interpretation. In terms of being transparent, the speaker endeavoured to be transparent to a large extent. Thus, most of the points made were accompanied by explanations and the challenges facing the country, ranging from corruption, poor infrastructure, poor making and execution of policies, to poor economic, social, environmental and health challenges. All these points lend credence to the transparency of her speech.

The speech is unambiguous. This stems from the observable fact that the speaker’s language is clear and does not contain words, phrases or sentences which give rise to ambiguity. The speaker also avoided obscurity by ensuring that only the topics and points of which address contemporary issues in the given context are discussed. However, the speech is orderly. Observation shows that the speaker, expected to discuss the challenges facing the Nigeria and the efforts already made which have been successful and those being made, which are still in progress, as well as future expectations from the country and the bright future the country envisages was ordered to address its points articulately.

A look at the data shows that sections 3 to 12 of the speech (identifiable in the appendix) highlight some endeavours and achievements of Africa and Nigeria in particular. Sections 14 to 23 discuss the challenges facing the country, while sections 24 to 44 discuss the efforts and policies being put in place in order to tackle the challenges. On this note, one gets an idea that the speaker is presenting to the audience, a picture of a country which has made some achievements and is still making policies and concerted efforts to tackle the recurring and seemingly perennial problems in a genuine and well-planned manner. The organisation of the speech, therefore, shows proper orderliness of in its presentation by the speaker. Finally, being that the speech does not record undue repetition of points, the speaker is adjudged to have been brief in her speech.

### Summary of findings and conclusion

From the study, we have been able to observe that the speaker, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria, succeeded in presenting a speech in the international setting which fulfilled the requirements of a good speech. With regards to the maxims of quantity, relevance and manner, the speaker fulfilled them; thus, producing a speech capable of making the right impact on the gathered audience. Obviously, the speaker did not fulfil the maxim of quality to the zenith. This is understandable, given that she has to defend and speak in favour of the government which she represents. In general, the speaker to a great extent, met 80% of the requirements for a good speech.

These findings reveal that the role of women in leadership, as epitomised by the former Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria- Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, is one that has been beneficial to Nigeria as a country. Thus, with further roles given to the women-folks to play, with regards to the growth, development and enhancement of proper perception of Nigeria by the outside world, the potential of the country will not be hindered as widely feared; rather, will equally receive proper boost as expected by the general public.

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# CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF LAMBdacISM IN THE SPEECH OF IGBO-ENGLISH BILINGUALS IN ALOR DIALECT

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## Abstract

*This paper examines lambdacism in the speech of Alor Igbo-English bilinguals. It was observed that many students in Alor use /l/ in place of /r/ during interactions in the English language. The paper investigates the possible causes of lambdacism, its effects, and offers suggestions on how to improve the pronunciation of Alor second language learners of the English language. A qualitative approach characterized by participant observation was adopted in this study to ascertain the students' interaction in the classroom. The researcher being a teacher in one of the schools used for this research at the time the information was gathered had time to observe and interact with the students noting their use of language. In addition, the interview method was used to elicit information from eight language teachers in the two government secondary schools in Alor; students were given a reading task during their break periods. The data were analyzed as a double check for the qualitative approach. Findings show that there is no retroflex liquid /r/ in Alor dialect. The main cause of lambdacism is interference coming from the mother tongue, that even when the students have learnt through the efforts of the second language teacher, the difference between /l/ and /r/, the problem of competence and performance persists. The study concludes by positing that students learning a second language should also learn correct pronunciation in the target language. The study recommends the deployment of adequate trained language teachers to the schools in the above mentioned location. These teachers should address the peculiar language problems of the town. Teaching aids/facilities should be provided to make second language learning more interesting. Slow speech rather than rapid speech should be encouraged for beginners that have the problem of interference.*

**Keywords:** lambdacism, bilinguals, competence, performance.

## Introduction

Alor is a town located at the southern part of Idemili in Anambra State, Nigeria. Nwajide (2011), explains further that:

Alor town is located within the triangle formed by the three main towns of Anambra state. Conceptually straightening out the roads connecting the towns, the northern side of the triangle is the Onitsha-Awka road... the eastern side or southeastern edge of them triangle is the connection from Awka through Agulu or Nimo...the third side is Onitsha to Nnewi (p. 1).

Alor people speak Igbo as their mother tongue. Nwaozuzu's (2008) classification of dialects has Alor under the Idemili speech community. A good number of Alor people, especially the younger ones speak English as a second language. It has been observed that what would have been an interesting speech in their second language has often been marred due to inadvertently mixing /l/ and /r/ sounds, hence 'Rabbit' becomes 'Labbit', 'Aeroplane' becomes 'Aeloplane', 'Florence' becomes 'Flolence' and 'Raphael' becomes 'Laphael'. Millar (2007, p78) explains lambdacism as the conversion of another sound into [l]. The excessive use of the sound l...or its substitution for the sound r is referred to as lambdacism (Random House Unabridged Dictionary (2011).

Lambdacism is a source of confusion among users of the English language. It also poses a big concern to some people, especially the elites who did not grow up in the community thereby averting the wrong pronunciation. People from neighbouring communities make fun and mockery of Alor people, calling them 'Aror Rondon'. The name calling is as a result of the interchange of /r/ with /l/. It is worth noting that /r/ is silent in the pronunciation of Alor /alor/ [alɔ].

## Review of Related Literature

Existing literature shows that interference is always present in bilingualism. Malmkjiaie (2002,p.296) observes that the level of competence achieved by a first language speaker is usually not achieved by a second language speaker. This observation holds for Alor Igbo-English bilinguals for even when some of the people from the community have mastered much in their second language (hereafter L2), they still have problems in pronunciation and one of such problems is that they interchange the voiced alveolar retroflex liquid /r/ with the voiced alveolar lateral liquid /l/. Sridar in Croft (1980, p. 93) postulates that a substantial number of persistent mistakes made by L2 students can be traced to the “pull of mother tongue”. Croft in Lee (1968, p.186) states that, “The prime cause or even the sole cause of difficulty and error in foreign language learning is interference coming from the mother tongue and this is due to the differences between the two languages”. Lee’s explanation throws light into the major cause of errors among bilinguals which is interference from mother tongue. Interference comes in as a result of differences between languages.

Observing errors in speech to L2 learners, Corder (1967) in Croft (1980,p.105) equates the errors of an L2 learner to that of a child struggling to acquire his language. He further states that the learner’s ‘errors’ (or hypotheses) are not only inevitable but they constitute necessary part of the language learning process. Lee (1973) assumes that errors of the learner and the response to the errors help him to learn. Lee’s postulation shows that errors are regarded as potentially facilitative rather than inhibitory in the learning process. The learner uses his errors to test hypotheses about the language thereby learning from them. Supporting the importance of errors in the learning process, Etherton (1976) asserts that:

The errors may show a teacher area where his teaching has not been effective. A systematic study of errors may lead to improved teaching methods through a greater awareness of the nature and causes of the mistakes which pupils make (p.69).

Continuing, Etherton asserts that making an analysis of error will have an intellectual reward because anybody who undertakes it finds himself thinking about the nature of errors and reason(s) why they are made. The reasons will lead to making attempts to finding answers to them. Errors equally provide valuable data for the preparation or manufacture of teaching materials, textbooks and examinations. It enables the L2 teacher determine which areas of the language need more attention and the type of attention needed.

Deducing from the postulations of these scholars, mistakes are inevitable in the learning of a second language and these mistakes are useful to the L2 teachers and the learners. Some of these mistakes are as a result of interference from the mother tongue. We shall now examine what interference is.

Berthold, Mangubhai and Batorowicz (1997 p.2) view interference as the transference of elements of one language to another at various levels, including phonological, grammatical, lexical and orthographic. Bose(2005) in Khansir (2012, p.1028) describes interference as the negative and positive transfer between the mother tongue and the target language. Continuing, Bose explains that the negative transfer happens when the forms of the target language and those of the learner’s mother tongue are different from each other whereas, the positive transfer between the mother tongue and the target language is similar. Joze Tajareh (2015) avers that:

Nowadays, the widely-used term interference is being increasingly replaced by the label cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in order to avoid associations with behaviorism. CLI is a cover term used to refer to situations where one language shows the influence of another (p.1108).

This work is on the interchange of /r / with /l/ - lambdacism. It has to do with sounds; it is therefore a phonological type of interference or cross-linguistic influence. Berthold *et al* (1997), define phonological interference as items including foreign accent such as stress, rhyme, intonation and speech sound from the first language influencing the second. Anene (1997, p. 28) opines that the phonological level of interference involves the comparison of the phonetic symbols contained in the speaker’s mother tongue with that of the target language.

The problem of interference is not peculiar to Alor people. It cuts across other speech communities both in Nigeria and other countries of the world. Anene observes that some Yoruba-English bilinguals (Ibadan dialect) have no palato-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ and palato- alveolar affricate /tʃ/. They use the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ in place of /ʃ/ and /tʃ/. Hence, ‘seque’ (ʃek) instead ‘cheque’ [tʃek] and surs [ʃɔ] instead of [tʃɔtʃ] ‘church’. People sing the song in the appendix to tease Ibadan people for the above mispronunciation. Anene continuing notes that some Hausa-English



bilinguals have no bilabial plosive /p/ and therefore use the labio-dental fricative /f/. They say 'farking' in place of 'parking'. Japanese native speakers have difficulty producing the English sounds /l/ and /r/ (Rubrecht, 2007). Most native Chinese speakers of the English language have similar problems. Herlihy (nd) observes that "these sounds are not only unfamiliar; they can easily be confused with each other. 'Rake' becomes 'lake'... 'low' sounds like 'row'. This can make distinguishing meaning between words quite difficult. Umera-Okeke (2011, p. 183) argues that "Bad pronunciation can be a serious problem if it negatively affects understanding". Just as it is with Alor people, the reversing of the two sounds obscures the meaning of the affected words and sentences as a whole. All these show that interference is one of the major challenges to every L2 learner especially when it has to do with negative transfer.

Chun in Croft (1980, p. 182) states that it would be difficult to examine research in L2 acquisition in a vacuum without considering research in the field of first language acquisition. She equally states that first and second language acquisitions are generally believed to be similar. Moreso, both the first and second language learner's systems seem to progress through a series of stages by means of rules that the learners formulate and try out for himself. For this reason, we shall examine the L1 of Alor people and this we shall do by examining the Alor dialect of Igbo with the standard Igbo.

### Methodology

The qualitative information gathering for this work spanned a period of five years, when the researcher was teaching language in Alor town. During the period, the researcher carefully observed the speech of the students. The researcher's knowledge as a native of the town aided the work. The researcher, in order to double-check her observation, selected through the help of the form teachers, ten final year students each from the two government owned secondary schools in Alor town, who are indigenes, and who started their year one with the schools. Ten students were systematically chosen from each school – ten males and ten females. The reason for choosing the final year students is because they have been taught both Igbo and English languages for six years in the secondary school and can communicate fluently in the two languages. Alor indigenes were chosen based on the fact that the work has to do with Alor town. Moreso, these students have not been heavily influenced by cross-linguistic contacts.

The students were given a reading task during their break period. The language teachers in the two schools were equally interviewed orally, to ascertain the effect (s) and possible solutions of lambdacism among Alor Igbo-English bilinguals. The responses were tape recorded. The responses provided materials for analysis of this work.

### Alor Dialect of Igbo and Standard Igbo

It is noticed that the Alor dialect of Igbo (hereafter AD) uses the voiced alveolar lateral /l/ where the standard Igbo (hereafter SI) has the voiced alveolar roll /r/. The oral interview with the selected Alor secondary school students in which they were asked to translate certain English words to Igbo reveals the following deviations between the AD and SI:

	SI	AD	GLOSS
1.	riri	lili	ate
2.	ara	ala	breast
3.	mmiri	mmili	water
4.	huru	hulu	saw
5.	siri	sili	cooked
6.	kariri	kalili	greater than
7.	oriri	olili	feast
8.	asiri	asili	gossip
9.	okirikiri	okilikili	round
10.	anuri	anuli	joy
11.	akara	akala	bean balls
12.	amara	amala	grace
13.	ire	ile	tongue
14.	unere	unele	banana
15.	anara	anala	garden egg
16.	aru	alu	abomination
17.	okara	okala	half
18.	ebere	ebele	mercy
19.	ughere	ughele	yawn
20.	ndi ntori	ndi ntoli	kidnappers

These examples simply show that AD uses /l/ in place of /r/ in spoken Igbo, the environment of occurrence notwithstanding.

The students were further asked to translate the following English words into Igbo, in order to ascertain whether AD uses the voiced alveolar retroflex liquid /r/ where SI has /l/

SI	AD	GLOSS
ilu	inu	proverb
udele	udene	vulture
le	ne	see
ala	ana	land
ekele	ekene	greeting

It is clear from the above words that AD uses the alveolar nasal /n/ where the standard Igbo has /l/. The examples point to the fact that AD has no /r/ in their dialect.

The pronunciation is the same in sentences. For example, the students were asked to repeat sentences 1(a - d).

Sentences (e - h) are the responses.

SI

- 1a. O wufuru mmiri  
He/she poured water.
- b. O riri ji  
He/She ate yam
- c. O kporo oriri  
He/She called a feast
- d. Ha nwere aturu  
They have sheep.

AD

- e. O wufulu mmili
- f. O lili ji
- g. O kpolo olili
- h. Ha nwelu atulu.

It should be noted from the given examples that /l/ is a dialectal variant of /r/. They are used in free variation and it does not hinder communication. Emenanjo (2015, p. 6) avers that "the differences between dialects do not inhibit effective communication...". In spoken Igbo, the switching of /r/ with /l/ poses little or no problem as it is well understood as a dialectal variant.

### Mispronunciation among Alor Igbo-English Bilinguals

Having examined the AD of Igbo and the SI, we shall now look into lambdacism in relation to Alor Igbo-English bilinguals. The students were asked to read the passage on appendix 11.

Sixty-seven percent of the responses show a high level of transfer from mother tongue to the target language- English. This group of students used /l/ to replace /r/ from 50% to 100% of the time, the environment of occurrence notwithstanding. The negative transfer disrupts the meaning of the sentences. Ferdinand de Saussure (1966) in Okafor (2005) argues that:

After much groping and many trials and corrections, the child succeeds in pronouncing what he hears around him; here would be the starting point of all changes; certain uncorrected inaccuracies would win out in the individual and become fixed in the generation that is growing up (p.71).

Considering the group of students that were selected for this study, it is very clear that the interchange of /r/ with /l/ is a complete influence by their immediate environment. They reproduce what they hear around them. The students use the pre-existing phoneme /l/ which is similar to the newly introduced phoneme /r/ to replace it. The words in lines 1, 3, 12, 15 and 17 - 'possibly', 'slaughtered', 'least' 'late', 'lost' respectively, posed no problem to the students as they are used to the sound /l/. Closer looks at the two phonemes shows that they share some features. Both are consonants, voiced, sonorants and liquids. O'Grady, Archibald & Katamba (2011) argue that:

Among the sounds commonly found in the world's languages are *l* and *r* and their numerous variants. They form a special class of consonants known as liquids. Although there is a great deal of variation in the production of *ls* and *rs* in the languages

of the world, they are grouped together in a single category because they often pattern together in phonology (p.31).

The students, it should be noted, are used to the alveolar lateral /l/. They use it freely at home, with no one embarrassing them. They equally communicate freely in Igbo language with their peers in the school, using the same sound /l/ without complaints. It follows that they are used to the sound. In spoken English, they understand one another even when they switch the two sounds. Their conversation flows. For instance, during one of the classes, a student asked her friend to bring her *\*led bic* (*Red Bic*). The instruction was carried out without hesitation. A stranger will be confused at such instruction. These groups of students are not worried on the effect of lambdacism on other users of the English language. To them, what is of utmost importance is that they are understood in their environment.

Thirty-three percent, which represent the rest of the students used for the study pronounced more words correctly and had a mix-up in less than 50% of the affected words. For instance, pronouncing 'reporter' correctly and 'road' wrongly despite the fact that /r/ have the same environment of occurrence in the two words. Responses from this group of students reveal that they have had good opportunities to mix up with other people / students from other towns and are sometimes embarrassed when they are corrected by their peers.

Interviews with the teachers reveal that the two phonemes have been written separately during classes to draw the attention of the students that they are different phonemes. It is here argued that the mispronunciation has to do with competence and performance. Chomsky (1957) cited by Crystal (1987, p.65) defines competence as "the persons knowledge of the rules of a language and performance as the actual use of that language in real situations". Chomsky argues that there is an innate competence in children which accounts for the speed with which a child masters language. He further argues that competence develops out of basic innate deep structures, through a succession of transformation, which starts from deep structure of Kernel sentence and to infantile structures and structure of the mother tongue. On the other hand, Chomsky refers to performance as inferior to language knowledge because it is mediated by memory limitation and distractions and this accounts for the reason why an actual language user is not perfect in speech, although he may have a perfect linguistic competence. Moreover, we think faster than we speak and most of the time, our speech cannot keep pace with our linguistic competence.

It is now clear that Alor people, as a result of exposure to the target language understand that /l/ and /r/ are two different phonemes. The understanding in this context refers to competence. When it comes to putting what was learnt in practice, that is performance; there is a negative transfer which results in mispronunciation. Chomsky continuing postulates that linguistics should be concerned with the study of competence and not be restricted to performance for the description of the rules of governing the structure of competence should be the important goal.

From the foregoing, it is seen that mispronunciation of some words from Alor people comes in as a result of interference from their mother tongue. Moreso, even when the people are exposed to the correct pronunciation they still make some mistakes and the mistakes are due to negative transfers from their mother tongue.

Literacy as well as cross-linguistic contacts is growing in the Alor community. Competence has therefore grown, but performance is not keeping pace. The sense of embarrassment is growing too; practically every extended family has members that have grown up outside Alor who have both competence and performance on the issue under consideration. Mockery for non-performance has therefore become a household thing, and great majority of the mocked wish they have the performance. Lambdacism is therefore slowly becoming a social concern in Alor – a class issue- which needs to be addressed before it becomes a social problem.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This paper has examined lambdacism as it relates to the Alor Igbo-English bilinguals. The major challenge of the speakers is interference from the mother tongue. The pre-existing phoneme /l/ is negatively transferred to replace the phoneme /r/ in the acquired language – English. The official language in Nigeria is English; therefore, there is every need to speak the language properly. To enhance the correct pronunciation of the liquid /r/ in the target language among Alor Igbo/English bilinguals, there is a need to have adequate trained language teachers in schools in the affected community. These teachers should understand and address the peculiar language problems of the town in order to bring out the desired result. They should equally provide teaching aids/facilities to make second language learning more interesting. It is here suggested that the special training starts at the

elementary level. Most indigenes of Alor, who grew up in other communities with a different dialect do not have the same challenge with /l/ and /r/. If teachers start on time to educate the students, they will learn the two sounds and how to use them appropriately.

On the other hand, special classes should be organized for the students that have the problem of interference. Slow speech rather than rapid speech should be encouraged as they begin to make progress. Teachers should equally put more efforts in constructing exercises that will help the students to perfect each sound of the second language. As the students become perfect the two sounds, they should be exposed to exercises like tongue twisters such as the phrase: red lorry, yellow lorry. Such an exercise will help them to be more fluent and keep pace with other users of the language.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Yoruba Gloss

Omo Ibadan kí ni sódò re?(Ibadan indigene, how are you?).

Sódò sure ni.(Show is good).

Kí lo jẹ lánàà?(What did you eat yesterday?)

Eran síkìn ni.(It is sikin (chicken) meat).

Kí ló fi jókódó?(What did you sit on?)

Kuṣin Sîà ni.(Cushion chair).

## APPENDIX 11

No one who got to the scene of the accident could possibly have left the place with dry cheeks. Even as a reporter, unrelated to any of the victims slaughtered in their prime, I could not stop wishing the driver had never been born. For this was one accident which need not ever have happened. The road was smooth, straight and wide. There was no on-coming vehicle and the weather was clear. But the driver had apparently taken some alcohol before the journey. Only that could explain why he ran his car into the deep gorge where four of his passengers died.

The culpability of that driver compares with that of another, a few years earlier. That was on the Mahu-Odahi Road was smooth, and the weather was bright. With all the road signs warning against speeding because of the narrow bridge and the sharp bend, someone with enough sense would, at least, have exercised enough restraint before overtaking another vehicle. So, why the pick-up van driver decided to overtake the trailer just there, where he could not possibly see an oncoming vehicle until too late, beats one's imagination. As a result of his action, the oncoming mini bus ran into his van, while the trailer itself ran over the two vehicles. A total of twenty souls were lost (Amaechi, 2005).