

ỤMỤADA-ỤMỤAKATA, TRADITIONAL COSTUMES IN ICHIDA ANAOCHA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, (A VISUAL REPRESENTATION IN TEXTILE)

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Abstract

This research seeks to investigate the various costumes used by Ụmụada Ụmụakata in Ichida kingdom, by exploring creative textile techniques in various media as a viable means of visual illustrations and documentations.

Introduction

African culture, as the culture of many nations worldwide, is mostly male-dominated. However, the paternalistic propensity (a tendency to a particular kind of behaviour) of African culture, especially the Igbo culture, does not indicate subjugation of women. On the contrary, women play dominant roles in the family, the family in turn, affects the status of the women. If the family accords the power, respect and dignity to women, society will do the same and women will be empowered to contribute their utmost best to the development of the society at various levels of cultural heritage.

The study area is Ichida in Anaocha Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. However, Ụmụakata as kindred in Ụmụezesue village of Ichida town seems to do their things

differently independent of the entire Ichida community hence, this research tittle. In spite of the years of contact with education and Christianity, traditional rites and practices still persist in the area yet, no one has written on them especially, as it concerns the *umuada* *Umukata*'s creative textile techniques.

According to Ogbukagu (1997, p.61) "Women have many fora designed to present and protect their interest and one of these fora is *umuada*, which literally means the daughters of lineage. The pilot survey carried out by the researcher revealed that *umuada* means the same thing as *Nwaada* when it is one daughter. Although, *Nwaada* (singular) seems to be more commonly used at Ichida, but *umuada* (*plural*) enjoys more attention of researchers. Consequently, *umuada* shall continually be used in this research.

The costumes of the *umuada* are enriched with symbols and character of their women in the patrilineal community of *Umuezesue*. The costumes are used for body adornment by the *umuada*, which in turn elevates the levels of art in the women. The same costumes shall be adapted into motifs as textile designs.

Background of the Study

This study is about the *Umuada* traditional costumes in *Umuezesue* village with particular reference to their traditional rites and practices. By virtue of the *Umuada* position as daughters of lineage, they wield enormous power, recognition and respect from all members of the kindred; especially in the matters affecting burial and marriage.

According to Nett (1981: p 20), "...there emerges a system of vital mutual, socially constructed shared among members of

the extended family group.” Among the Ụmụezesue people, ties and kinship are strongly sustained as a dominant concern of everyday life in the extended family structure (EFS) and each member is his kin’s keeper.

Consequently, in the culture of the Ichida people, the Ụmụada wear special beautiful Ankara fabrics as wrappers and pretty cottons or silk-laced blouses during traditional marriages and burial ceremonies. The costumes used, are the hand fan (*akupe*), traditional coral beads (*aka*), the horse tail (*Nza*), the woven cotton fabric (*ankara*) and lace fabric (*akwa-lace*). Along sides are the traditional musical instruments, which are used when the need arises. These are metal gone (*ogene*), and native tambourine (*okpokoro*). The costumes used, are in turn adapted into textile design for contemporary use.

Statement of the Problems

Among the Igbo, every town and village seem to be homogeneous in everything, dressing, menu, religion, social affairs, etc. They even fight their enemies together for togetherness the Igbo say, is power (*igwe bu ike*). Unfortunately, Ụmụakata as kindred in Ụmụezesue village of Ichida town seems to do their things differently independent of the entire Ichida community hence, this research title. In spite of the years of contact with education and Christianity, traditional rites and practices still persist in the area yet, no one has written on them especially, as it concerns the ụmụada Ụmụakata’s creative textile techniques.

Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to investigate the various costumes used by Ụmụada Ụmụakata kingdom, by exploring creative textile techniques in various media as a viable means of visual illustrations and documentations.

1.It attempts to identify and examine the various costumes used by the *umuada Umwakata kingdom* in traditional marriages and burial ceremonies

2.It seeks to know how the costumes are used to develop contemporary design in construction and pictorial presentations.

3.The study also intends to find out those activities associated with each costume used by the *umuada* and their relevance to present day Umwakata Kingdom.

4.The paper will get to spell out the specific ways by which the *umuada Umwakata* exercise their age-long power in sociocultural issues and activities as it concerns traditional marriages and funeral rites.

5.It seeks to trace and document the origin of Umwakata kingdom.

6.It will try to apply the *umuada Umwakata* traditional costumes as a motif in textile designs.

7.The study will search to know and find out the roles of the *umuada Umwakata* in a traditional marriages and funeral rites.

8.At the end, this paper will analyze, synthesize and interpret the relevant data gathered in sub-problems 1-7 and to report the findings, both in a narrative and visual forms.

Delimitation of the Study

This research shall be focused on *umuada* Traditional costumes of the Umwakata people. The study area shall be the patrilineal aspect. The population will be made up of marriage

women who are active members of the *umuada* institution while the traditional costumes shall be adapted as motifs for textile, contemporary designs in construction and pictorial presentations, thereby showing their details in style as end use.

Significance of the Study

It is believed that the outcome of this study will lead to directing attention to *umuada* traditional costumes in Umuakata.

Findings in this study are pertinent in allowing the youths to gain better understanding of effective use of the *umuada* traditional costumes. Findings may also extend to a major revolution in the development of contemporary costumes in Nigeria Fashion and textile Industries.

The result of this study is believed to generate efforts in mass production of the fabric at the Textile Mills and to see that the designs created from *umuada* costumes will be used for the creativity of various styles used for various occasions.

It is hoped that the finding from the study will guide fashion and Textile Industries in Planning in the area of financing and the training of individuals and those in the area of art, in the tertiary Institutions. The Anambra State Government will equally benefit a lot from this study, as an organ charged with the responsibility of encouraging and urging individuals to work. It is also hoped that the study will serve as a reference source of data for further research.

The traditional costumes identified will be adapted into textile designs and used on different techniques like Batik, Marbling, Screen printing, Tie & Dye and Weaving. The above-mentioned techniques shall be used to develop contemporary

designs in various constructions and pictorial presentations, thereby showing their details in style as end use.

It will also help the culture, to serve as educational sources of reference and to bring the youths closer to culture of the Ùmụzesue.

Definitions of Terms

1. **Ùmụada:** (Daughters of a particular lineage). ùmụada is a compound, collective noun formed from “Umu” and “Ada”. Ada means daughter. Umu is generic plural prefix that confers the service of many. ùmụada also means native daughters, daughters of lineage. ùmụada is collection of daughters of particular family, clan, village, town, or state whether old or young, single, marriage, separated or divorced.
2. **Isi Ada:** Eldest woman of ùmụada.
3. **Akaa:** It means traditional coral beads.
4. **Costumes:** The term costume, can be referred to wardrobe and dress in general, or to the distinctive style of dress of a particular group of people, class or period.
5. **Ọdụ ìnyinya (Nza):** It means horse tail
6. **Akwa-okwukwe:** Woven coloured cotton fabric
7. **Akwa lace:** lace fabric
8. **Okenye-ùmụnna:** old kindred men
9. **Okenye nwaanyi:** Daughters of lineage

10. **Inyom di:** Co-wives
11. **Akaa ochie:** It means traditional coral beads
12. **Ijucha-ahụ:** Purification of the body
13. **Nwaada:** Kindred child
14. **Ndị Dibia:** Native doctors
15. **Ndị ụka:** Church members
16. **Okachaluto na nwaanyị:** Oldest native woman
17. **Otu:** An organization
18. **Osọ Ochụ:** Homicide
19. **Traditional Marriage:** Is a lawful living together of a man and a woman of difference families for the purpose of begetting children after some rites have been performed
20. **Ụmụ Ada:** Children of citizen.

Research Questions

1. How can the costumes used by the *ụmụada* be identified?
2. How can the costumes be used to develop into contemporary designs, construction and pictorial presentation?
3. How can the activities associated with the *ụmụada* costumes be examined or known and be relevant to present day Ichida kingdom?

4. In what ways do the *umuada* still exercise their age-long powers in selected sociocultural issues/activities?
5. What are the innovative ways through which *umuada* could extend their age-long powers in economic sphere for the promotion of grass root development?
6. What are the problems that could hinder the *umuada* exercising their age long powers?
7. How can the traditional costumes be applied as motif in textile design?
8. How can we know or find out the role of *umuada* on marriages and burial ceremonies?

Literature Review

The review of literature related to this study, shall be grouped under the following headings:

1. Costume
2. *umuada*
3. Origin of Ichida Kingdom
4. Traditional, Marriage
5. Traditional Burial

Costumes

According to Eve de Negri (1976; p86), "... the costumes for most women in the west, are much the same as other

traditional women costumes of the south.” Their wrapper and blouse or second cloth drape breast being usual, pretty cotton or silk blouses were those chosen by most of the Eastern States, in place of the buba, as worn by the Yoruba.

According to A.S. Hornby (1982, P. 193), “... costumes is a style of dress, it has to do with clothes in the styles of a period in the past.” Consequently, costumes are used to inform fashion accessories. Costumes may also refer to the artistic arrangement of accessories in a pictorial presentation. Status, poem or play, appropriate to the time place or other circumstances presented or described, or to a particular style of clothing worn to portray the wearer as character or type of character other than their regular person at a social even as traditional marriage and burial ceremonies. According to Eve de Negri (1964:p26), “... during the 16th and 17th centuries, with the advent of the Portuguese explores in the Delta region, coral beads were introduced.” Its comparable scarcity made it an object of great importance used by those with wealth and power. Coral beads remained popular for centuries and still considered a vital part of the costumes for the rulers of Anambra areas and other places in Nigeria.

Traditional beads have always been prominent in the costumes of the *umụada* and this custom of wearing massive Akaa in traditional marriage and burial ceremonies still persist. Many of the beads are barrel shaped, suggestive of old red-stone, ones made from lantana and agate. Akaa are still the hall-mark of the *umụada*’s dignity.

According to Hornby, (1974, p. 184), “... contemporary costume is defined as the captivating time or period to which by people from a particular place or during a particular period (oxford Advance learners Dictionary). The costume is the

therefore, to sustain and improve the major identity of the *umuada* Umukata.

In the Anambra regions, the manufacture of cloth was influenced by the contact of the Portuguese traders as cited above. These traders brought real Indian Madras cotton cloth and other fine clothes from India to exchange African commodities they needed. The India Madras was an inspiration to the women, who learn the method of weaving such a cloth, using silk and cotton threads in varied patterns and colors.

Akwa omuma and Akwa lace fabrics are the cloth from ancient days which have always been most favoured by the Umuesue Nation, particularly the Ichida people. The fabrics have recently enjoyed a great revival. Akwa okwukwe comes in many colours, that which is most admired has white ground, with dull red and geometrical designs worked into it by the jacquard method of floating the threads, that the designs appear on side of the cloth only. Akwa okwukwe is a wide cloth, woven on a continuous warp loom. The threads are left uncut to make fringes. Akwa lace is a velvet fabric that comes in different colours too. The most preferred colour that gain popularity is the red, black, green, yellow, blue and wine colour. The brown or black colour are also used but on rare occasion by the Isi Ada.

Umuada

According to (Dow and Werner 1983), the extended family system (EFS) exercise some controlling authority over its members, commands their loyalty and demands strict adherence to the norms and practices of mutual aid. Every member of the EFS has a status, rights and obligation, and enjoys the sense of security. Masha and Hunge (1988 p.9)

referred to the age and welfare of members of the extended family.

Various forces and norms combined in the engineering and sustainability of the EFS today are the kindred men (*umunna*) and women (daughter of the lineage). These people whose genealogical relationship can be traced to a common ancestry.

Umụada means native daughters of common male ancestors or “daughter of the soil”. It is the inalienable right of every daughter of a particular place without exception whatsoever, to belong to *otu umụada*, (the society of native daughter). According to M.O. ENE (egbedaa@901.con) *Otu-umụada* is a powerful sociopolitical setup of a functional forum for females.

The membership of this forum is the absolute right of all women born of the same male lineage. Even if and when a woman marries outside the village or town’s setting, she remains an *Ada* of her father’s community. In order words, membership of the group is conferred patrilineal; i.e from the father’s side of the family. So strictly speaking, any woman who does not belong to the group is either an outside or she have been ostracized by her community for some abominable acts.

These same women therefore, from a major group as wives in the husband’s village known as the *Inyom di*. Conversely, women stemming from the same village from a group known as the *umụada*.

The *Otu umụada* is a group based on place of birth. This group is very powerful, and they are feared and respected in the communities. They control several activities affecting their natal home and ensure the well-being of other daughters

of their village. Still today, the women in these associations function as political pressure groups in natal village to reach their objectives. They normally intervene at any point when the constitution of their natal village is violated and they give sanction to the offenders. The formal head of this women's organization is the eldest women in the village, which automatically becomes the senior. (Isi *Ada or Ada*), various other officials are appointed among the women and rules are drawn up to go govern the conduct of the members at meeting. Members are fined if they are late to a meeting.

Role

The *umuada* are empowered to execute and perpetuate the traditional practices and norms, which are sometimes harmful. Hindering rather than embracing development at the grassroots level, the exercise of their power is often manifested in the role or activities during funeral, widowhood rites, traditional marriage ceremonies, conflict resolutions, and other kindred activities. in the process of wielding their age-long power, the *umuada* often harass, intimidate, punish and sanction people, including imposition of levies and making of threatening demands on member of the kindred. Their activities border mostly on traditional EFS practices, some of which are harmful, hindering, rather than promoting development at grass root level. Notable among their activities are the agonizing widowhood rites by which widows are often subjected to various obnoxious treatments (Okoye 1995; Azikiwe 1994; Negi *et al* 1990).

The problem however, is that the grass root level at which the *umuada* have wielded and are still wielding their age-long power, through rural, is fast changing and is being threatened by various challenges including poverty, HIV/AIDS, economic and political crises, globalization, etc (Ebisike

2004). As society becomes more complex and new problems arise, the *umuada* as a powerful institution at the grass root level must necessarily become involved in problem solving at this level. They need to extend their age long powers beyond the traditional practices into the economic, health and political spheres for the purpose of promoting development. They need to modify their strategies, so that they could remain relevant in grass root communities, which are presently being challenged in various ways.

According to (Okoye 1995 and Ahonsi 1997), various studies on *umuada* have focused on their traditional roles, notable on the widowhood rites wherein they are the sole perpetrators, no studies have however focused on ways of extending the frontiers of the age-long power of *umuada* into economic, health and political spheres for grass roots development.

The *umuada* meet from time to time to discuss issues concerning their natal village. They pay membership dues, which are used for various unanticipated events that arise in the village.

The *umuada* also play significant religious roles in the community. They take part in the funeral rites in their natal lineage. During the mourning period for a deceased person, they stay with family of the deceased day and night. They wash the body laying it in state. They decide how a widow should mourn her husband in the village. They also deal with women who had committed offence against their husbands before his death.

Apart from this, the *umuada* settle interlinear disputes between their “brothers” as disputes between their natal and marital lineages. According to Elizabeth Isichei (1976), they are the watch dogs of the community and they, rather than

men, spy on the activities of people, especially their fellow women. They do not tolerate a bad wife in the village and they deal severely with quarrelsome wives of their brothers.

Before men could take a traditional title in *Umuakata Kingdom*, *umuada* do perform purification rites in order to ward off evil spirits. The women assist the oldest man in the kindred in keeping sanity in the village. They also feature during social events such as marriages and burial ceremonies.

The *umuada* and the *Inyom di* usually cooperate with the kindred men at the village level to ensure peace and progress in the community.

In the organization of the *umuada*, it is the duty of their leader (Isi Ada) to convene the meeting of the *umuada* in the village, and to look into any crucial matters. The senior daughter at the village level also interacts with the senior Co-wife, who is the head of the *Inyom di*, in the village in terms of marriage. The two of them meet from time to time to discuss issues concerning the marriage of women in the village.

In the case of any important message from the members of the *umuada* to the *Inyom di*, the head of the *Inyom di* will convey it to her members. When a member of the *Inyom di* is misbehaving in the village, their head reports this to the *Isi Ada*.

The *umuada* also play a complementary role, that they support the *umunna* at the town level and serve as helping hands to the *otochalu* (oldest) at the village level. They observe and investigate matters arising from the conduct of *Inyom di*. The leader of the *umuada*, (senior daughter) will represents the women of her natal village at the *Igwe* (king) palace.

The Igwe (king) invites the *umụada* to represent the women in the village on any important occasion in the community. King (Igwe) also discusses affairs concerning the women in the town. In addition to their social activities, the *umụada* also try case concerning their members. If the case is a serious one, they transfer it to the Igwe. The Igwe also acts as an intermediary between the *umụada* and the *umunna* in the community. In case of any serious problem between a wife and her husband's family, the women might return from home to seek emotional support from her natal home, or express her problem to her fellow *umụada*. If it is a case that they cannot settle as usual, refers such a person to the Ndi-ichie for help.

Umụada are strict but fair in their interventions and enforcement. For example, if a brother maltreats his wife and no one would stop him, *umụada* will step in and straighten the matter. On the other hand, if a woman married into the clan becomes unruly, *umụada* will intervene and resolve the matter, even if it entails forcing the bad wife back to her own clan for peace to reign, make amends, and possible return to turn a new life. In extreme cases, they can ostracize and even place a curse on an intractable member of the clan.

Umụada is a group, that are decent and dynamic in their decisions and actions. They are great arbiters probably because they are not part of the problem, and they do not have to stay back in the community to face anyone on a regular basis.

In all social functions, from marital rites to title taking, *umụada* play important roles. They are pampered and treated right. In many marital rites, the intending husband gives them special treats to win their approval because a no-vote could cause a rejection of the proposal by the *otọchalụ* (oldest). In many cases, *umụada* as middle person, steering assumed good

guys from her husband's community to potentially good girls in their native specially, even though they belong to a different clan or town. If the children of *umuada* encounter difficulties, they and their families are welcomed to come back to the community as "*Umu nwa di ani*" (children of Citizen). They can stay as long as they wish, but they are encouraged and supported to return to their father's community as soon as conditions permit.

In Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart Okonkwo packed up his wives and ran away from *Umuofia* to his mother's *Mbanta* community to serve the seven-year sentence from the manslaughter of *Ezeudu's* 16-year-old-son during his friend's funeral. As *umu nwadiani* (a child of their daughter), the people of *Mbanta* had no choice but to accommodate Okonkwo and his entire household for seven years of course, *Mbanta* happily helped the *Okonkwo* to *Umuofia* after the expiration of the mandatory (*oso ochu*) (Homicide exile), probable for his reason, all children of *umuada* remain connected with their mother's community.

Ichida Kingdom

Ichida kingdom is in Okotu, it is situated at the Anaocha Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. The Okotu Nation is made up of seven clans or kingdoms. These are Amichi, Osumenyi, Ogbozi, Akwaeze, Adazienu, Adazi ani, Adazi Nnukwu, Obeledu and Ichida

Of the kingdoms or clans presented Nine (9) claims to outright Anaocha origin. They are: Agulu, Obeledu, Adazienu, Adaziani, Adazinnukwu, Nneni, Ichida, Akwaeze and Aguluzigbo. Indeed, it is obvious that the overwhelming influence of Ichida in Anaocha language cannot be explained strictly on the basis of this founding role. As a matter of fact,

the Anaocha language has become so present in Ichida language. Ichida as a rural community in the heart of Anaocha, because of lack of written history of these settlements, the factors which made it possible for these people from diverse cultural religious political and traditional background to fuse and live in such harmony and unity as one political and administrative unit, are lost to oral history.

Names of Villages in Ichida

There are nine villages in Ichida Town namely:

Um̄ezesue, Mgbudu, Ajani, Ezebazu, Amureri, Umuebo, Mgbuwa, Ubulu, Nnulu-ukwu

Social

1. Age groups of various stratification male and female. In some cases, these are on village levels and in others they cut across the clan.
2. Thrift and loan union.
3. Unity association made up of both genders of certain ages living outside clan.
4. Ladies league.
5. Umuike social club

Religious Groups

1. Okenye nwaanyi - Oldest native woman
2. Um̄yada – Daughters of the kindred

3. Onye isi ụka - Head of the church
4. Ndị ụka - Church members
5. Ndị Dibia-Native doctors
6. Inyom di - Co-wives

Occupation

1. Business is the major occupation of Ichida people.
2. Producing of Foreign goods like Wine, Cosmetics etc.

Government/Influence/Presence

These are the following:

1. Ten Primary/Nursery schools.
2. Three Secondary schools.
3. One Commercial Secondary School
4. Electricity.
5. Maternity/Health
6. Water system, Borehole in addition to state water borehole in addition to state water board, which presently is non-functional.
7. Christian center like the catholic and Anglican Church.

Ichida Clan Deities/Festival

A. Deities: – Oto-Ogwe, Ogwugwu Okponku, Ogwugwu, Ajana, Amanjom, Udo Amureri etc.

B. Festivals: Ahia-olu: This was once a festival of Ụmụezesue village but gradually became a clan festival.

C. Iri ji ofuu: Mainly celebrated by Ụmụezesue and Ụmụakata villages.

D. Ikuputa nwa ofuu: celebrated exclusively by Ụmụezesue village.

E. Igua-alo and Iwa-ji (New Yam Festival) are celebrated by all the villages of the Ichida clan.

Conclusion

Ụmụakata as kingdom has continued to maintain peace co-existence, mutual understanding/respect and good neighborliness without compromising her social political, traditional and economic rights and privileges. Most of their cultural practices considered to be dehumanizing are prevalent in the area.

Traditional Marriage

According to Nzoiwu, Azuka. A. (2007) "Traditional marriage is lawful giving together of man and woman of different families for the purpose of begetting children after some rites have been performed. It is regarded as mile-stone in the life of a man and woman enabling them to immortalize their remembrance through their children".

Marriage in Ichida land is an arrangement, which enables individual (man/woman) to live together and cooperate in an orderly organization is the extended family, where “one is his brother’s keeper”. This consist of the nuclear family (man, wife, and children), plus couples parent, brothers and sisters; their grandparents and great grandparents. The extended family takes the form of three or four generations of nuclear families of linear descendants.

The marriage is patrilineal. One has to take a wife outside his kinship community. These are much emphasis placed on compatibility of the couples and social standing within the kinship community. In Ichida marriage, more emphasis is placed on arrangement than on love in the marriage. There is much screening for hereditary illness, for insanity, and sanctions are placed on incest rules.

Bride price is a token of appreciation for the loss of a daughter. This token gift is given to the bride’s fathers of relatives before the elders of both the bride and bridegroom’s communities. It is not a purchasing of a wife, but a part of a contract between two couples.

Bride price plays a very important role in social, legal and economic customs. The bride price seals the two couples and also regulates the rate of divorce cases, if any. Marriage is solidified with the birth of a child, particularly a male child who wills in the future inherent the land. The Ichida traditional marriage is not a marriage of romantic love through beauty or handsomeness. The couples establishing a family for procreation, important functions are reproduction, childcare, socialization, economic support, collective responsibility and status placement.

The Ichida traditional marriage favours monogamy (one man marries one wife) but, there is no civil ordinance law against anyone who takes more than one wife (polygamy) as long as the person can maintain them. With impact of Christianity on Ichida people, education, bureaucracy and monogamy is gaining momentum.

Traditional Burial

All enduring marriages ultimately end with death of either the husband or the wife or both. The death of a spouse may be the most extreme life crisis because it severs some of the deepest emotional bonds established in a life time.

According to Nzoiwu, Azuka A. (2020), The disorganizing and the traumatic experience, which accompanies death of husbands, tend to be greater on women than that of men when they loses their wives. Whereas, the wife immediately becomes the primary suspect for her husband's death. The man is immediately offered an appropriate substitution to comfort him upon the loss of his wife.

This is because, from time immemorial, societies have always been male – dominated and are still so. Women have always been relegated to the background and traditions and customs clearly rob women of their rights and privileges.

The presentation of African women in historical writing according to I. Imanm (188:p30), has been characterized by four approaches. In the first case, women have simply not been presented at all. In the second, they have been seen as inferior and subordinate to men. The third trend has been a conception of women's roles in equal complementary to those of men and finally, there has been a movement towards seeing women as active agents in the historical processes.

Stemming from this fact, women are treated like chattels (properties) especially widows. The prevalence of witchcraft accusation, widows are subjected to a trial by ordeal (as prime suspect in the demise of their husbands). The severity of these trials, vary in different communities and local government areas, in order to prove their innocence. The widows are subjected to a variety of arduous and degrading rites that violate some of their human right and erode their self-esteem.

Dehumanizing widowhood rites and practices are prevalent gender based violence practices extensively perpetrated against widows in olden days, among Ichida people of Anambra State. Njaka (1975) sees women's organization merely as one of four minor counter balance agents. His attitude towards women can be seen from the following words: "Despite this power, however, *umuada* (patrilineal daughters are said to be like mothers – always lenient and not as fierce as it sounds (Njaka 1975:260). *umuada* have been known however, to be important contributors and catalyst to development and health improvement"

According to (Afr. J. Report (2005, p.65 – 75). 'The women should therefore, be strengthened and encouraged to champion issues that affect their well being. Notable among their activities are the agonizing widowhood rites by which widows are often subjected to various obnoxious treatments (Okoye 1995; Azikiwe 1994; Nzei 1990).

According to Ogbukagu (1997) the *umuada* are empowered to execute and perpetuate the traditional practices and norms which are sometimes harmful, hindering rather than embracing development at the grass root level. The exercise of the *umuada* power is often manifested in their roles or activities during funerals, widowhood rites etc.

The ways *umuada* still exercise power in widow-hood rites are:

1. Restriction on the feeding, bathing, resting and sleeping patterns of the widow.
2. In cases of extreme suspicious that a widow was responsible for the death of her husband, she may be forced to drink the water used for washing the corpse of the death husband as a proof of her innocence.
3. It was and still, is an abomination for a widow to die during the mourning period.
4. The period of restriction for the widow, has reduced in many places from one year to 6 or 3months as a result of pressure from religious groups
5. Or burial might not take place except they are properly represented.
6. During the final rites, priors to closing the casket, the Isi-Ada of the blood sister of the deceased man is expected to make some pronouncements.

Methodology

Area of the Study

The area of study is the patrilineal communities of Umuakata Ichida Kingdom in Anaocha Local Government of Anambra State, Nigeria. There are diversities of family patterns in the area but the basic of Extended Family System (EFS) and *umuada* Institution remain fairly the same. The patrilineal area Umuakata in Umuetzesue is the focus of the study.

Population of the Study

The population is made up of married women who are active members of the women shall be 30 – 60 years.

Sample of Study:

A sample of study was carried out in Women Anglican Association, & Health Center and two other communities in Ichida town.

Data Collection Instrument:

Quantitative and qualitative data were utilized for the study. The data collection instruments shall include structured questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide. These instruments will be based on the purpose of study and research questions of the study. Draft instruments shall be developed, validated and pilot tested before use for data collection. The unstructured interview method of direct questions and in oral narrative will also be adopted in this research.

Central Problems and Frame work

This study has analyzed the specific ways through which umuada still exercises their age long power in traditional marriage, widowhood rites, funerals and conflict resolution, respectively.

Source of Materials

The materials collected were reduced to drawings that have been arranged into patterns and designs for the production of handmade fabrics. Presentation in three dimensions in

clothing construction, fashion illustration and fashion accessories were introduced; using wax resist, tie & dye, batik, printing etc.

The researcher consulted libraries for facts and information on the subject. Books, magazines, photograph as well as internet for current information.

Locally improvised and industrially produced materials such as beads, dyes, printing paste, glue, sewing machines equipment and tools were sourced from shops and local environments.

Participant Observation:

In addition to the personal experience of the researcher who is *Nwa-ada* (a patrilineal daughter) an indigene of her father's community had an experience of participant observation when her father died.

The researcher also observed some ceremonies related to the topic to have first hand information; and identify changes that have taken place.

Method of Production:

Every information were analyzed and utilized for visual presentation in Textile Design of *umuada* traditional costumes in Umuakata Kingdom.

Photographs and sketches are also made for visual illustrations and others below;

1. Sketches of dancers with use of the traditional costumes and fabrics were made out of it. They were scanned, processed on the computer and printed out for clarity.
2. Silk screen printing, tie and dye, batik, using the traditional costumes as motifs.
3. Akwa okwukwe was done by the researcher on a locally constructed loom. Silk yarn were introduced as the weft and cotton yarn as the warp to add luster and richness to the traditional costumes.
4. Shawls, hats and stockings were knitted by the researcher with the use of baby wool and traditional were also constricted with the use of yarns.

Finally, an exhibition of the researcher's work was showcased, with a well written project on the narrative and contemporary of *umuada* traditional costumes of Umuakata Kingdom, Ichida in Anaocha Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Umuada Umuakata CORAL BEADS



Fig.1. Artist: Nzoiwu, Azuka Abigail Artist:
Title: Coral Neck-Lace Medium:
Glass Year 2023



Fig 2. .Nzoiwu Azuka Abigail Title: Coral
Blacelet Medium: Glass Year 2023:



Figure: 3. Artist: Nzoiwu, Azuka Abigail Title: Coral earring Medium: Glass Year: 2023

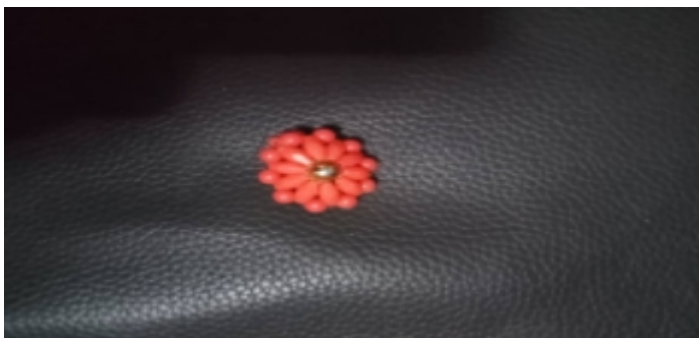


Fig. 4: Artist: Nzoiwu, Azuka Abigail Title: Coral Ring Medium: Glass Year: 2023

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