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## RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION: THE PERSISTENCE OF CHRISTIAN ROOTS IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

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### Abstract

This study investigates the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity, focusing on the diverse interpretations and appropriations of these roots by African Indigenous Churches (AICs), charismatic and Pentecostal movements, and mainline denominations. Employing a qualitative research approach and drawing on secondary data sources, the study examines the relationship between Christian religious roots and African indigenous beliefs, assessing the implications of syncretism for the authenticity and continuity of Christian traditions within African cultural contexts. Additionally, it evaluates the relevance of Christian religious roots in addressing contemporary socio-political challenges in Africa, including corruption, inequality, and conflict. The study contributes to the ongoing discourse on African Christianity by offering insights into the resilience, adaptability, and transformative potential of Christian religious roots within the diverse and rapidly changing landscapes of African societies.

**Keywords:** African Christianity, Christian religious roots, African Indigenous Churches (AICs), Charismatic and Pentecostal movements

### Introduction

The landscape of global Christianity has undergone significant transformation in recent decades, with the most remarkable growth and dynamism occurring in the continent of Africa. The vibrancy of African Christianity is a testament to the deep and varied ways in which Christian religious roots have taken hold and flourished in diverse cultural contexts (Adogame, 2013; Kalu, 2020). As the center of gravity for the Christian faith shifts increasingly towards the Global South, understanding the intricate interplay between Christian religious roots and contemporary African Christianity becomes ever more crucial.

Africa's engagement with Christianity spans more than two millennia, dating back to the early centuries of the faith's emergence in the Middle East (Isichei, 1995; Sundkler & Steed, 2000). However, it was in the 15th century, with the advent of European exploration and colonization that Christianity's influence began to expand more extensively across the continent (Hastings, 1996). This historical period, marked by the complexities of the colonial encounter and the transatlantic slave trade, laid the foundation for the indigenization of Christian religious roots in African contexts.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, African Christianity has experienced exponential growth, both numerically and in terms of its influence within global Christianity (Jenkins, 2002; Sanneh, 2008). This growth has been accompanied by a flourishing of diverse forms of Christian expression, as African Christians have engaged in creative and innovative ways with the religious roots of their faith (Adogame, 2013; Phiri, 2021).

One of the central features of contemporary African Christianity is the process of enculturation, which entails the integration of Christian beliefs and practices with local cultural elements (Bediako, 1995; Oduyoye, 1995). This process has given rise to unique forms of Christian spirituality, worship, and theology that reflect the diverse cultural contexts of the continent (Kalu, 2020; Phiri & Werner, 2013). By examining these expressions, we can discern the manifold ways in which Christian religious roots have been reimagined, appropriated, and rearticulated in African Christianity.

In addition to enculturation, African Christianity is characterized by its engagement with social, political, and economic issues, reflecting the transformative potential of Christian religious roots (Freeman, 2012; Gifford, 2015). African Christian communities have played significant roles in addressing challenges such as poverty, education, healthcare, and conflict resolution, often drawing upon Christian principles and values to inform their social engagement (Adogame & Shankar, 2019). Furthermore, the emergence of African Christian leaders and theologians has contributed to a growing body of African Christian thought, offering fresh perspectives on biblical interpretation, theology, and ecclesiology (Maluleke, 2020; Ukah, 2020).

However, African Christianity is not without its challenges and criticisms. The phenomenon of syncretism, which involves the blending of Christian and traditional African beliefs and practices, has raised concerns about the preservation of Christian religious roots (Bediako, 1995). Additionally, the proliferation of mega churches and the rise of the prosperity gospel movement have generated debates about the authentic expression of Christian faith in contemporary Africa (Gifford, 2015; Soothill, 2007). By considering these challenges, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities and nuances of African Christianity.

The relationship between Christian religious roots and contemporary African Christianity is multifaceted, dynamic, and continually evolving. By exploring various dimensions of this relationship, we can deepen our understanding of the unique ways in which African Christians have appropriated and reinterpreted their religious roots, contributing to the ongoing transformation of global Christianity.

### **Background of the Study**

African Christianity has witnessed significant growth and transformation in recent years with the continent emerging as a hub of Christian innovation and vitality. As of 2020, Christians accounted for approximately 49% of Africa's population, making Christianity the largest religion on the continent (Pew Research Center, 2020). This growth has been accompanied by the emergence of diverse theological perspectives and practices, reflecting the complexity and dynamism of African Christianity.

The history of Christianity in Africa is multifaceted, tracing back to the earliest centuries of the Christian era (Isichei, 1995). The establishment of the Coptic Church in Egypt played a significant role in this early expansion (Hastings, 1994; Isichei, 1995). In Sub-Saharan Africa, European missionaries were instrumental in spreading Christianity during the colonial period, laying the foundation for the subsequent development of African Christianity (Hastings, 1994).

In the post-colonial era, African Christianity underwent a process of indigenization, as African Christians sought to reconcile their faith with their cultural identities and socio-political aspirations (Kalu, 2007). This process involved the reevaluation and adaptation of Christian religious roots, leading to the emergence of African Indigenous Churches (AICs), charismatic and Pentecostal movements, and new expressions of mainline Christianity (Hastings, 1994; Kalu, 2007).

The syncretism between Christian religious roots and African indigenous beliefs has been a notable aspect of this indigenization process (Bediako, 1995; Oduyoye, 1995). Syncretism has enabled African Christians to integrate their faith with local cultural practices, fostering a sense of continuity and relevance in rapidly changing contexts (Bediako, 1995). However, it has also sparked debates about the authenticity of Christian religious roots and the implications for Christian identity and unity in Africa (Hastings, 1994).

The role of Christian religious roots in addressing contemporary socio-political challenges has also been a subject of contention. Some argue that Christian values and principles can provide a moral compass for navigating issues such as corruption, inequality, and conflict (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2013), while others question the relevance of Christian roots in addressing these challenges, which are often deeply embedded in Africa's unique historical and cultural experiences (Isichei, 1995).

Recent studies emphasize the importance of ongoing research and dialogue to explore the diverse expressions of Christian religious roots in contemporary African contexts (Adogame, 2021; Obeng, 2022). As African Christianity continues to evolve and engage with local and global trends, understanding the resilience and adaptability of Christian religious roots remains crucial for appreciating the complexities of African Christianity and its potential for shaping the lives and aspirations of African Christians.

### **Statement of Problem**

The evolution and transformation of African Christianity in recent years raises important questions about the role of Christian religious roots in shaping the faith and practices of African Christians. As the continent experiences rapid socio-cultural changes and growing global influences, understanding the extent to which Christian roots have been appropriated and reinterpreted in response to local contexts and needs is crucial for appreciating the complexity and resilience of African Christianity.

One significant challenge lies in the diverse and often competing interpretations of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity. The proliferation of African Indigenous Churches (AICs), charismatic and Pentecostal movements, and mainline denominations has resulted in a wide range of theological perspectives and practices, each claiming legitimacy within the broader Christian tradition (Kalu, 2007). This diversity raises questions about the continuity and discontinuity of Christian roots in African contexts, as well as the implications for unity and cooperation among various Christian communities.

Furthermore, the indigenization of Christianity in Africa has led to a reevaluation of the relationship between Christian religious roots and African indigenous beliefs. Syncretism has emerged as a key strategy for reconciling Christian traditions with local cultural practices, yet this process has been subject to debate and controversy (Bediako, 1995). Critics argue that syncretism undermines the authenticity of Christian religious roots, while proponents maintain that it enables the creative adaptation and transformation of Christianity within African cultural contexts (Oduyoye, 1995).

Another area of contention involves the role of Christian religious roots in addressing contemporary socio-political issues in Africa. While some argue that Christian values and principles can provide a moral compass for navigating complex challenges such as corruption, inequality, and conflict (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2013), others question the relevance of Christian roots in addressing contemporary issues rooted in Africa's unique historical and cultural experiences.

In light of these challenges, it is imperative to critically examine the ways in which Christian religious roots have been appropriated and reinterpreted within contemporary African Christianity. By examining the diverse theological perspectives, cultural adaptations, and socio-political implications of this process, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the resilience and transformative potential of African Christianity in the face of local and global challenges.

## **Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze the diverse interpretations and appropriations of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity, focusing on African Indigenous Churches (AICs), charismatic and Pentecostal movements, and mainline denominations.
2. To examine the role of syncretism in reconciling Christian religious roots with African indigenous beliefs, assessing its implications for the authenticity and continuity of Christian traditions within African cultural contexts.
3. To evaluate the relevance of Christian religious roots in addressing contemporary socio-political challenges in Africa, with a specific focus on corruption, inequality, and conflict.
4. To contribute to the ongoing scholarly discourse on African Christianity by offering insights into the resilience, adaptability, and transformative potential of Christian religious roots within the diverse and rapidly changing landscapes of African societies.

## **Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research approach, drawing on secondary data sources to explore the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity. Qualitative research is particularly suited to this study, as it allows for an in-depth examination of the complex and nuanced ways in which African Christians interpret and appropriate their religious roots in response to local contexts and challenges.

## **Data Collection**

Secondary data will be collected from a variety of academic sources, including scholarly articles, books, and reports focusing on African Christianity, Christian religious roots, syncretism, and socio-political issues in Africa. The sources will be carefully selected to ensure relevance, credibility, and timeliness. Key databases and platforms, such as JSTOR, EBSCOhost, and Google Scholar, will be utilized to access the most recent and pertinent research on the topic.

## **Data Analysis**

The collected secondary data will be thematically analyzed using a grounded theory approach. This method involves identifying and coding key themes, patterns, and concepts emerging from the data, allowing for a comprehensive and systematic exploration of the research questions. The following steps will be taken in the data analysis process:

1. Reviewing and organizing the collected data
2. Identifying relevant themes, patterns, and concepts related to the appropriation and interpretation of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity
3. Coding and categorizing the data according to the identified themes
4. Interpreting and synthesizing the findings in relation to the research objectives

## **Ethical Considerations**

Although this study relies on secondary data and does not involve direct contact with human participants, ethical considerations are still important. The study will adhere to the following ethical principles:

1. Ensuring proper citation and acknowledgment of the sources used in the study
2. Respecting intellectual property rights by using data only for the intended research purposes



### 3. Maintaining transparency and rigor in data collection, analysis, and interpretation processes

By employing a qualitative research approach and utilizing secondary data, this study aims to generate rich and context-specific insights into the resilience, adaptability, and transformative potential of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study draws on several key concepts and theories from the fields of religious studies, anthropology, and sociology. These theories provide a lens through which to analyze and interpret the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity.

The concept of Indigenous Religious Traditions emphasizes the significance of local belief systems and practices in shaping the religious landscape of Africa (Mbiti, 1991). Understanding indigenous religious traditions is crucial for examining the ways in which African Christians interpret and appropriate Christian religious roots in relation to their cultural contexts.

Syncretism, a theory developed by scholars such as George G. M. James and Andrew Walls, highlights the dynamic process of blending and merging different religious beliefs and practices (Walls, 1990; James, 2014). This framework helps to explain how African Christians reconcile Christian religious roots with African indigenous beliefs, leading to the emergence of diverse and localized expressions of Christianity.

The perspective of Religious Adaptation and Resilience, building on the work of scholars like Meredith B. McGuire and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, emphasizes the capacity of religions to adapt to changing social, cultural, and political contexts (McGuire, 2008; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2013). This framework is useful for understanding the resilience and adaptability of Christian religious roots within African societies, particularly in response to contemporary socio-political challenges.

The theory of Religious Identity and Conflict, drawing on the work of scholars such as R. Scott Appleby and John Wolffe, explores the role of religion in shaping identities and fueling conflicts (Appleby, 2000; Wolffe, 2009). By applying this framework, the study examines the potential of Christian religious roots to provide a moral compass for navigating socio-political challenges in Africa, such as corruption, inequality, and conflict.

Overall, these theoretical frameworks provide a solid foundation for analyzing the complexities of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity, offering valuable insights into the dynamic interplay between religious traditions, cultural contexts, and socio-political transformations.

#### **Empirical Review**

Over the years, various empirical studies have explored the role of Christian religious roots within African Christianity, shedding light on the diverse interpretations, appropriations, and implications of these roots in different contexts.

A number of studies have examined the dynamics of indigenization and syncretism within African Christianity, highlighting the creative ways in which African Christians integrate Christian religious roots with African indigenous beliefs and practices (Bediako, 1995; Oduyoye, 1995). For instance, Bediako (1995) argued that the indigenization of Christianity in Africa has led to the emergence of distinct forms of Christianity that challenge Western theological paradigms and norms. Similarly, Oduyoye (1995) emphasized the importance of incorporating African women's perspectives in understanding the intersection of Christian religious roots and indigenous beliefs.

The growth of African Indigenous Churches (AICs) and Pentecostal movements has also been a focus of empirical research. AICs have been described as agents of religious and cultural renewal, contributing to the indigenization of Christian religious roots in Africa (Hastings, 1994; Kalu, 2007). In his study, Hastings



(1994) explored the historical development of AICs and their impact on African Christianity, while Kalu (2007) emphasized the transformative potential of AICs in addressing contemporary socio-political challenges.

Empirical studies have also examined the role of Christian religious roots in addressing socio-political issues in Africa. Asamoah-Gyadu (2013) argued that Pentecostal and charismatic movements have emerged as significant actors in promoting public morality, civic engagement, and socio-economic development in Africa. Adogame (2021) further explored the transnational dimensions of African Pentecostalism, emphasizing its contributions to globalization and development discourse.

However, some scholars have questioned the extent to which Christian religious roots can provide a coherent framework for addressing complex socio-political challenges in Africa. Isichei (1995) cautioned against oversimplifying the relationship between Christianity and African cultures, stressing the need to appreciate the diversity and complexity of African Christian experiences. Obeng (2022) similarly emphasized the tensions and contradictions that arise from the intersection of Christian religious roots and contemporary African realities.

In light of these debates, recent studies have emphasized the importance of ongoing research and dialogue in understanding the resilience and adaptability of Christian religious roots in contemporary African contexts (Adogame, 2021; Obeng, 2022). These studies underscore the need for more nuanced approaches that take into account the diverse experiences and perspectives of African Christians, as well as the broader socio-cultural and political contexts in which they live and practice their faith.

Empirical research on the role of Christian religious roots within African Christianity has yielded important insights into the diverse ways in which African Christians interpret, appropriate, and engage with their religious heritage in response to local contexts and challenges. As African Christianity continues to evolve and engage with local and global trends, the study of Christian religious roots remains crucial for appreciating the complexities of African Christianity and its potential for shaping the lives and aspirations of African Christians.

## **Review of related literatures**

### **Historical Overview of Christianity in Africa**

The history of Christianity in Africa is a rich and complex narrative, spanning over two thousand years and encompassing a diverse range of cultural, political, and social contexts (Hastings, 1996; Isichei, 1995). Christianity's initial introduction to the continent occurred during the early centuries of the Common Era, when the faith spread to Egypt and North Africa. This early expansion was largely a result of the missionary efforts of the Apostles and their successors, as well as the broader diffusion of Christianity within the Roman Empire (Sundkler & Steed, 2000).

In the centuries that followed, Christianity in North Africa flourished, producing influential theologians such as Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine of Hippo (Frend, 2018). However, the spread of Islam in the 7th century led to a gradual decline of Christianity in the region, as many Christians converted to Islam or migrated to other areas. Consequently, Christianity's influence in North Africa waned, and its presence became increasingly marginal (Hastings, 1996).

The 15th century marked a new phase in the history of African Christianity, as European exploration and colonization brought Christianity to other parts of the continent, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. This encounter, however, was deeply intertwined with the exploitative and oppressive dynamics of the colonial era, which has left a lasting legacy on the relationship between Christianity and African cultures (Sanneh, 2008).

During the colonial period, various European Christian denominations, including Catholicism, Protestantism, and Anglicanism, sought to evangelize African populations (Kalu, 2020). These efforts were

met with mixed responses, as some Africans embraced the new faith, while others resisted or syncretized it with indigenous beliefs and practices (Isichei, 1995). Over time, Christianity became an integral part of the social and political fabric of many African societies, shaping education, healthcare, and other aspects of public life.

The 20th century witnessed the rapid expansion of Christianity in Africa, driven in part by the growth of African-initiated churches and the emergence of Pentecostal and charismatic movements (Anderson, 2013; Freeman, 2012). This growth has continued into the 21st century, with Africa now home to a significant proportion of the global Christian population.

The historical overview of Christianity in Africa reveals a complex and multifaceted narrative, marked by periods of growth and decline, as well as diverse encounters between European and African cultures. Understanding this history is crucial for appreciating the unique character of contemporary African Christianity and the ways in which Christian religious roots continue to shape the faith's expression on the continent.

### **Cultural Integration and Inculturation**

The process of inculturation has been central to the development and expression of Christianity in Africa, as the faith has interacted with diverse cultural contexts across the continent (Bediako, 1995; Sanneh, 2008). Inculturation refers to the dynamic encounter between the Christian message and a particular culture, resulting in the creative integration of Christian beliefs and practices with local cultural elements (Shorter, 1988). This process has played a crucial role in shaping the unique character of African Christianity and has allowed Christian religious roots to take root in various African societies.

In the African context, inculturation has been evident in various aspects of Christian life and practice, including worship, spirituality, and theology (Oduyoye, 1995). One of the most visible expressions of inculturation has been the use of local languages, music, and art forms in Christian worship. For example, many African Christian communities have adopted indigenous musical styles, dance, and artistic expressions in their liturgies and devotional practices, creating a distinctively African Christian aesthetic (Adogame, 2013).

The process of inculturation has also influenced African Christian spirituality, which often emphasizes themes such as healing, deliverance, and the power of the Holy Spirit (Kalu, 2020). These spiritual emphases resonate with aspects of traditional African religious beliefs and practices, highlighting the syncretic nature of African Christianity and the ways in which Christian religious roots have been adapted to local contexts (Pobee, 1979).

In addition to worship and spirituality, inculturation has played a role in the development of African Christian theology. African theologians have sought to articulate Christian beliefs and doctrines in ways that engage with African cultural and philosophical perspectives, resulting in the emergence of distinctively African theological contributions (Bediako, 1995; Maluleke, 2020). This theological inculturation has allowed Christian religious roots to be reinterpreted and reimagined in light of African experiences and insights.

Despite the significance of inculturation in African Christianity, the process has not been without its challenges and criticisms. Some observers have expressed concerns about the potential for syncretism, where Christian beliefs and practices become overly intertwined with indigenous religious elements, leading to a loss of Christian identity and orthodoxy (Walls, 1996). Others have highlighted the need for inculturation to be a truly reciprocal process, where both the Christian message and the local culture are mutually enriched and transformed (Shorter, 1988).

Cultural integration and inculturation have been essential aspects of the growth and development of Christianity in Africa. The creative encounter between Christian religious roots and African cultures has

resulted in unique forms of Christian expression, reflecting the diversity and dynamism of contemporary African Christianity. As the process of inculturation continues to unfold, African Christians will likely continue to engage with their religious roots in innovative and transformative ways.

### **Spirituality and Worship**

African Christian spirituality and worship practices are characterized by a deep sense of vibrancy, communal participation, and an emphasis on the experience of the divine (Adogame, 2013; Kalu, 2020). These expressions of faith are deeply rooted in the cultural contexts of the continent, reflecting the creative integration of Christian religious roots with African traditions and sensibilities. This process of inculturation has resulted in distinctive forms of African Christian spirituality and worship that embody the diverse realities of the continent's believers.

At the heart of African Christian spirituality lies a profound awareness of the presence and power of God in everyday life (Oduyoye, 1995). This spirituality is characterized by a sense of divine immanence, where God is understood to be intimately involved in the affairs of the world and actively engaged with the lives of believers. African Christians often express a deep sense of God's providence and guidance, viewing their faith as a source of strength and resilience in the face of life's challenges (Bediako, 1995).

Prayer serves as a cornerstone of African Christian spirituality, with believers engaging in various forms of individual and communal prayer practices (Pobee, 1979). Prayer is often marked by a sense of intimacy and fervor, as African Christians petition God for guidance, protection, and blessing. In many cases, prayer is also understood as a means of spiritual warfare, with believers invoking divine power to combat malevolent forces and overcome adversity (Kalu, 2020).

Music and dance are integral to African Christian worship, serving as powerful vehicles for spiritual expression and encounter (Nketia, 1971). African Christians have drawn on a rich array of indigenous musical styles, instruments, and rhythms to create vibrant and engaging liturgies that reflect their cultural identities. Music is often used to convey theological themes, narrate the Christian story, and facilitate communal participation in worship. Dance, too, plays a significant role in African Christian worship, serving as a means of expressing joy, celebration, and spiritual liberation (Adogame, 2013).

The centrality of the Bible in African Christian spirituality and worship cannot be overstated (Sanneh, 2008). African Christians often exhibit a deep reverence for the Scriptures, viewing them as a source of divine guidance and wisdom. The Bible is frequently employed in worship services, with passages read aloud, memorized, and integrated into sermons and prayers. Additionally, African Christians have demonstrated a keen interest in biblical interpretation, with many scholars and theologians offering culturally sensitive readings of Scripture that resonate with the African context (Ukah, 2020).

Healing practices constitute another vital aspect of African Christian spirituality and worship (Gifford, 2015). Many African Christians believe in the power of divine healing, and prayer for the sick is a common feature of worship services and religious gatherings. In some cases, African Christians have integrated traditional healing practices with Christian rituals, creating hybrid forms of spiritual healing that address both physical and spiritual ailments (Pobee, 1979).

African Christian worship is also marked by a strong sense of communal solidarity and participation (Bediako, 1995). Worship services are often lively and interactive, with congregants engaging in call-and-response patterns, spontaneous prayers, and other forms of active involvement. This communal dimension of African Christian worship reflects the African ethos of interconnectedness and the belief that faith is a shared journey undertaken by the community of believers (Adogame, 2013).

African Christian spirituality and worship are characterized by a dynamic interplay between Christian religious roots and African cultural contexts. This synthesis has given rise to vibrant expressions of faith that resonate with the lived experiences of African Christians, fostering a deep sense of spiritual connection

and empowerment. As African Christianity continues to evolve, its unique spiritual and worship practices will likely remain a defining feature of the continent's religious landscape.

### **Social Impact and Community Involvement**

African Christianity has had a profound impact on various aspects of society, shaping the social, political, and economic landscape of the continent (Freeman, 2012; Gifford, 2015). As a central pillar of many African communities, Christianity has influenced public discourse, contributed to social development, and inspired community involvement in addressing various societal challenges. This section explores the diverse ways in which African Christian religious roots have informed social impact and community involvement across the continent.

One of the most significant social impacts of African Christianity has been its influence on education (Adogame & Shankar, 2019). Christian missionaries played a crucial role in introducing Western-style education to Africa during the colonial period, establishing mission schools that provided both religious and secular education (Hastings, 1996). These schools have contributed to the development of African societies by increasing literacy rates, fostering social mobility, and producing a cadre of educated leaders (Sanneh, 2008).

In the healthcare sector, African Christianity has also made substantial contributions, with Christian organizations and institutions playing a vital role in providing healthcare services, particularly in rural and underserved areas (Bate, 2011). Many African Christians have been inspired by their faith to engage in health-related initiatives, including the establishment of hospitals, clinics, and community health programs (Kalu, 2020). In addition to addressing physical health concerns, Christian religious roots have also influenced approaches to mental health and spiritual well-being, with some African Christian communities integrating traditional healing practices with modern medicine (Pobee, 1979).

African Christianity has been deeply involved in addressing issues of poverty and economic development, with Christian organizations and individuals playing active roles in promoting social justice and empowerment (Freeman, 2012). This involvement often draws upon Christian principles such as compassion, stewardship, and the preferential option for the poor, inspiring initiatives that seek to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development (Adogame & Shankar, 2019). These efforts include microfinance projects, vocational training programs, and agricultural initiatives, which collectively contribute to the economic upliftment of African communities.

In the political sphere, African Christianity has influenced public discourse and shaped attitudes towards governance, human rights, and social justice (Gifford, 2015). Christian religious roots have informed the development of African political theology, with church leaders and theologians engaging in debates about democracy, good governance, and the role of the church in politics (Maluleke, 2020). Moreover, Christian churches and organizations have often been at the forefront of advocacy efforts aimed at promoting political accountability, combatting corruption, and advancing the common good (Ukah, 2020).

At the grassroots level, African Christianity has inspired community involvement in various forms, including participation in self-help groups, community development projects, and local peace building initiatives (Bediako, 1995). These community-driven efforts reflect the African Christian commitment to holistic transformation, as believers seek to embody their faith by contributing to the well-being of their communities (Adogame, 2013).

The social impact of African Christianity is far-reaching, with Christian religious roots shaping the continent's educational, healthcare, economic, and political landscapes. Through diverse expressions of community involvement, African Christians have sought to translate their faith into action, addressing societal challenges and promoting the common good. As African Christianity continues to evolve, its commitment to social impact and community involvement will likely remain a defining feature of the faith's presence on the continent.

## **African Theology and Biblical Interpretation**

African theology represents a contextual and interdisciplinary approach to Christian theological reflection that engages with the unique experiences, perspectives, and challenges of African societies (Maluleke, 2020). Emerging as a distinct field of theological inquiry in the mid-20th century, African theology has sought to articulate Christian beliefs and doctrines in ways that resonate with the African context, drawing on the rich cultural, historical, and religious resources of the continent (Bediako, 1995). Central to this endeavor has been the task of biblical interpretation, with African theologians and scholars offering innovative readings of Scripture that reflect their specific contexts and concerns (Ukah, 2020).

One of the defining features of African theology has been its emphasis on inculturation, which involves the creative integration of Christian religious roots with African cultural elements (Shorter, 1988). This process has led to the development of distinctive African theological perspectives that prioritize themes such as community, liberation, and the relevance of faith to everyday life (Oduyoye, 1995). African theology has also sought to challenge and critique Western theological frameworks that have been imposed on the continent, asserting the importance of African voices and insights in shaping Christian thought (Maluleke, 2020).

Biblical interpretation has been a crucial aspect of African theological reflection, with African scholars engaging in various hermeneutical approaches that reflect their diverse cultural and contextual backgrounds (West, 2019). For instance, some African interpreters have adopted a liberationist approach, emphasizing the Bible's message of justice, equality, and emancipation as particularly relevant to the African experience (Mosala, 1989). Others have focused on the importance of African cultural values and practices in shaping biblical interpretation, exploring the ways in which indigenous wisdom and knowledge can inform readings of Scripture (Mbuvi, 2018).

African women theologians have made significant contributions to biblical interpretation, offering feminist and womanist perspectives that foreground the experiences and concerns of African women (Phiri & Nadar, 2006). These scholars have challenged patriarchal interpretations of the Bible, reclaiming the voices and stories of women in Scripture and affirming their significance for contemporary African contexts (Dube, 2001). African feminist biblical interpretation has also emphasized the importance of intersectionality, attending to the ways in which factors such as race, class, and gender intersect to shape women's experiences and perspectives (Kanyoro, 2002).

In addition to these approaches, African biblical interpretation has been shaped by various contextual factors, including the realities of poverty, conflict, and ecological challenges (Getui, 2018). African scholars have sought to address these issues by engaging with biblical texts that speak to themes of justice, reconciliation, and creation care, demonstrating the continued relevance of Scripture to contemporary African realities (Ukah, 2020).

African theology and biblical interpretation represent dynamic and diverse fields of Christian thought that reflect the rich tapestry of African cultures, experiences, and perspectives. As African Christianity continues to evolve, African theologians and biblical scholars will likely continue to offer innovative and contextually grounded insights that enrich the global Christian theological discourse.

## **Challenges and Criticisms**

As African Christianity has evolved and expanded, it has faced a range of challenges and criticisms that reflect the complex and diverse realities of the continent (Gifford, 2015). These challenges encompass a variety of theological, social, and political issues, prompting critical reflection and debate within African Christian communities and beyond. The following section outlines some of the key challenges and criticisms associated with African Christianity, acknowledging the complexity of these issues and the ongoing efforts to address them.



One significant challenge for African Christianity has been the tension between enculturation and the preservation of Christian religious roots (Shorter, 1988). While enculturation has been a defining feature of African theology and worship, the process has sometimes been marked by controversy and conflict. Critics argue that efforts to integrate African cultural elements into Christian practice risk distorting or compromising core Christian beliefs and values (Bediako, 1995). Others contend that enculturation has, at times, been pursued in a superficial or uncritical manner, leading to the appropriation of African cultural symbols without a genuine engagement with their meanings and contexts (Maluleke, 2020).

Another challenge facing African Christianity is the proliferation of controversial and, in some cases, abusive practices within certain Christian communities (Pobee, 1979). These practices include the promotion of "prosperity gospel" teachings, which emphasize material wealth and success as divine blessings, as well as the use of violent and coercive methods in "deliverance" ministries that seek to combat perceived demonic influences (Freeman, 2012). Critics argue that such practices distort the Christian message, exploit vulnerable individuals, and foster social and economic inequalities (Kalu, 2020).

The role of African Christianity in public life and politics has also been a subject of criticism and debate (Gifford, 2015). While Christian leaders and organizations have been actively involved in advocating for social justice, democracy, and human rights, they have also faced criticism for promoting conservative social agendas, aligning with corrupt political regimes, or contributing to social polarization (Ukah, 2020). These critiques highlight the need for greater accountability and transparency within African Christian communities and a more nuanced engagement with the complex realities of African politics.

In addition to these challenges, African Christianity has faced criticism for its handling of gender-related issues (Phiri & Nadar, 2006). While African women have played a vital role in the growth and development of African Christianity, they have often faced marginalization and discrimination within church structures and theological discourse (Dube, 2001). Feminist and womanist theologians have challenged patriarchal attitudes and practices within African Christian communities, calling for greater gender equality and the affirmation of women's leadership and contributions (Kanyoro, 2002).

Finally, African Christianity has been critiqued for its response to environmental challenges and ecological concerns (Getui, 2018). While some African Christian communities have embraced a "green" theology that emphasizes stewardship and creation care, others have been slow to address these issues or have adopted anthropocentric perspectives that prioritize human interests over ecological sustainability (Adogame & Shankar, 2019).

African Christianity's growth and evolution have been marked by a range of challenges and criticisms that reflect the complexity of the continent's social, political, and theological landscapes. These critiques highlight the need for ongoing dialogue, self-reflection, and reform within African Christian communities, as they navigate the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

## Findings

Based on the analysis of secondary data sources, several key findings emerged concerning the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity:

1. **Diverse Interpretations and Appropriations:** African Christians demonstrate a wide range of interpretations and appropriations of Christian religious roots in response to their local contexts and challenges. AICs, Pentecostal movements, and mainline denominations each contribute unique perspectives and practices, reflecting the diversity and dynamism of African Christianity.
2. **Syncretism as a Strategy:** Syncretism emerges as a significant strategy for reconciling Christian religious roots with African indigenous beliefs and practices. This process of blending and merging religious elements has led to the emergence of distinct forms of African Christianity, challenging traditional Western theological paradigms and norms.

3. Resilience and Adaptability: African Christianity exhibits remarkable resilience and adaptability in engaging with local socio-cultural changes and global influences. Christian religious roots serve as a resource for navigating complex challenges, enabling African Christians to develop innovative theological perspectives and practices.
4. Socio-political Engagement: Christian religious roots play a crucial role in shaping African Christians' engagement with contemporary socio-political issues, including corruption, inequality, and conflict. While Pentecostal and charismatic movements have emerged as significant actors in promoting public morality and socio-economic development, there is an ongoing debate about the relevance and coherence of Christian religious roots in addressing Africa's unique socio-political challenges.

In light of these findings, it is evident that the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity is multifaceted, dynamic, and subject to diverse interpretations and appropriations. The resilience and adaptability of African Christianity in engaging with local contexts and global trends underscore the transformative potential of Christian religious roots within the diverse and rapidly changing landscapes of African societies.

### Conclusion

This paper has provided an in-depth exploration of African Christianity, tracing its historical development, examining its diverse expressions and practices, and discussing its social impact, theological contributions, and the challenges it has faced. As a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon, African Christianity has played a significant role in shaping the continent's religious, social, and political landscapes, offering valuable insights and perspectives that enrich the global Christian tradition.

The article has highlighted the central role of African agency and innovation in the growth and development of African Christianity, as believers have appropriated and transformed the Christian message in light of their unique cultural, historical, and contextual realities. This process has given rise to a rich tapestry of African Christian expressions, characterized by diverse liturgical practices, theological perspectives, and modes of social engagement.

In examining the social impact of African Christianity, the article has emphasized the faith's contributions to education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and political discourse. At the same time, it has acknowledged the challenges and controversies that have accompanied African Christian engagement in these spheres, including concerns about inculturation, prosperity gospel teachings, and gender-related issues.

The article has also explored the contributions of African theology and biblical interpretation, demonstrating how African scholars and theologians have enriched the global theological discourse by offering innovative perspectives that draw on their unique contexts and experiences. The emergence of African feminist and womanist theologies has been particularly noteworthy, challenging patriarchal norms and advocating for greater gender equality within African Christian communities.

In light of these insights, it is clear that African Christianity is not a monolithic or static phenomenon but rather a complex and evolving tradition that reflects the rich diversity of the African continent. As African Christianity continues to grow and adapt in response to changing social, political, and cultural contexts, it will undoubtedly continue to offer valuable insights and perspectives that inform and enrich the global Christian faith.

This article has sought to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of African Christianity, highlighting its historical development, diverse expressions, social impact, and theological contributions. By appreciating the complexity and dynamism of African Christianity, we can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which this vibrant faith tradition has shaped and continues to shape the lives of millions of people across the African continent.

## Recommendations

In light of the findings, the following recommendations can be made for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers interested in understanding and promoting the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity:

1. **Encourage Contextual Theological Reflection:** Scholars and practitioners should foster theological reflection and dialogue that takes seriously the diverse contexts, experiences, and challenges of African Christians. This may involve promoting indigenization and contextualization efforts that allow for creative interpretations and appropriations of Christian religious roots in response to local needs and aspirations.
2. **Promote Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** The complex relationship between Christian religious roots and African socio-political realities warrants interdisciplinary research that integrates perspectives from religious studies, anthropology, sociology, political science, and other relevant fields. Such collaboration can lead to more nuanced understandings of the role of Christianity in addressing contemporary African challenges.
3. **Invest in Education and Capacity Building:** Christian churches and organizations in Africa should invest in theological education, leadership development, and capacity-building initiatives that equip their members with the skills and knowledge to navigate socio-political issues and contribute positively to their communities.
4. **Encourage Dialogue and Exchange:** To promote mutual understanding and cooperation, there is a need for platforms that facilitate dialogue and exchange among diverse Christian denominations and movements in Africa, as well as between African Christians and their counterparts in other parts of the world.
5. **Engage with Policy and Practice:** Policymakers and practitioners should recognize the potential of African Christianity as a resource for socio-political transformation, while also remaining sensitive to the tensions and limitations associated with religious engagement in public life. This may involve developing partnerships with faith-based organizations and supporting initiatives that promote peace building, reconciliation, and good governance in African societies.

By implementing these recommendations, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers can contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of Christian religious roots within contemporary African Christianity, while also supporting its resilience, adaptability, and transformative potential in addressing local and global challenges.

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## CHRISTIANITY AND IGBO VALUE SYSTEM: A CASE FOR REVIVAL

By

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### ABSTRACT

Igbo values can be defined as those principles of life that guide the Igbo in their everyday life. Igbo values are imbedded in Igbo culture, therefore Igbo culture and Igbo values can be used synonymously. The main aim of this paper is to evaluate the worth of Igbo cultural values, and Christian influence on them. This paper selected certain sections of Igbo culture areas to highlight these Christian influences. When the missionaries established in Igbo land in 1857 and onward, they met a pattern of life not all of which ran counter to Christian principles. But the assumptions that local culture and Christian values are polarized and conflicting and that Christian values should dislodge the culture of their host communities necessitated an attack on the totality of the culture of the Igbo people and attempts were made to supplant them with the Euro-Christian culture. However, the researcher believes that the attack on Igbo values was unjustified and misguided as not all aspects of Igbo values are condemnable. It is on this premise that a revival of Igbo value system is advocated for in this paper. The aim of this rebirth is to form a synthesis between Igbo values and Christian values with the view to evolving what may be called an authentic Igbo Christianity.

### INTRODUCTION

Value means worth of some sort that is worth something. This worth in common usage is in terms of economic but for philosophers, it covers a multitude of uses and applications. William (1967) distinguishes two main uses of value namely:

- What is valued, judged to have value, thought to be good or desired.
- What has value or is valuable or good as opposed to what is regarded as good or valuable. (p. 230)

Values therefore mean things that have value, things that are good and things that are right beautiful or true. Value can be seen as a preference. It can be seen as that which promotes a goal and can be that which has worth in itself without reference, to any end.

In this work, the term value is used to cover only what Igbo ought to like, or value. The Igbo in this work is the black situated in the Eastern part of Nigeria. The dominant values of these Igbo are their traditional culture prior to his contact with Christianity and still significant to him. Traditional Igbo is religious to the core of his being. Okolo (1978) collaborates that:

Religion is the main principle that dominates his (Igbo) life and sets a definite tone in his relationship with nature and his fellow man. . . The triangle of God, nature, and man is inseparable because these supreme beings form the same one reality. Religion is not therefore something extraneous to the Igbo, a beyond in his experience. (p. 2)

One can therefore say that Igbo traditional religion is a natural one, rooted in the ethics and belief system of a people.

Igbo values have been graphically eroded by the influence of Christianity and westernization and as such, the Igbo is seen as storing between two cultural values without any strong foundation on one. The Igbo now struggles to be a Christian and as such the Igbo values that he grows up in appear to be discarded.

This paper is therefore conceived in the conviction that the ambivalent life of this Igbo is unnecessary if there could be a proper understanding of the Igbo values as foundation for the Christian forum. Hence, the paper advocates a synthesis between Igbo culture and the Christian religion.

## **BRIEF HISTORY OF IGBO PEOPLE**

Igbo tribe is located in the Southeastern Nigeria. Igbo-land which is inhabited by Igbo people was divided by River Niger into two unequal parts namely: Eastern Region and Midwestern Region. Tribes that surrounded Igbo land are: Ibibio, Yako, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Ijaw, Ogoni, Igala, and Tiv. Isichei, E. A. (1976), in her book 'A history of the Igbo People' declares that, there have been inhabitants of Igbo-land for at least five thousand years since the creation of the world. The first human inhabitants of Igbo must have come from the Niger confluence. The earliest cradles of human occupancy in the Igbo area were the Cross River and the Anambra Valley-Nsukka escapement, where later Stone Age sites have been excavated (Isichei, 1976). Igbo is one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa. Igbo has numerous dialects. Igbo people are mostly craftsmen, farmers, and traders, with some affluent government workers. 'Igbo', according Nwala in Udeani (2007), means the community of people. Igbo people are hardworking people. They work to achieve individual and Community goals. When the slave trade was abolished, Slattery, N. D. in Isichei (2007) asserts that in the mid-fifteenth century, the Igbo people had first contact with Europeans. Starting with the Portuguese, the Niger coast served as a meeting point for slave trade among African and European traders, Dutch, and English, from 1434-1807. When the slave trade was abolished in 1807, the trade was shifted to industrial products like timber, elephant tusks, spices, and palm products. The British at that moment began to mingle trading hostile imperialism.

Between 1900 and 1914, Northern and Southern Nigeria were amalgamated. Igbo men were made to pay tax in 1928. The rumours that the Igbo women were asked to pay tax, gave rise to the Aba women Riots of 1929. Igbo include people from other migrants. Some scholars believed that the present Awka division, which includes Nri clan, and the Orlu division, and another extensively travelled group of people of Nkwere and Amigbo (the main home of king Jaja of Opopo, is the Centre of Igbo settlement. Thus, there came a spreading to the southern and the eastern part of Igbo tribe. The current archeological discoveries at Igboukwu which Professor Shaw tentatively ascribes to the court of the Priest Kings of Nri offer more credence to this theory (Edmund, 1974). Ilogu E. (1985) stated that the different migrants came separately and settled in the closest geographical units which include Abakaliki, Onitsha, Enugu, Owerri and Umuahia regions in the Eastern Central State, and fractions of Benin, Warri, and other Delta regions in Midwestern Nigeria. The present Igbo population is above nine million.

## **BRIEF REVIEW ON CULTURAL VALUES**

Looking at cultural traditional values from human perspectives, Quy H. S. (2018) gives the concise definition of culture saying that "Culture is the general harmony of human values."

Hac P. M. in the research named "Doing research on people and human resources on the way of industrialization and modernization" claims that: "Culture is a system of physical and spiritual values, made by people, community and country" P. 28-29.

When discussing "cultural values", Thinh N. D. (2019) states that: "Cultural values are created by society in a particular historical period; however, once the cultural value system is formed, it has the guiding function for the aim, manner and behaviors of humans in that society."

When having a discussion about traditional cultural values, Giau T. V. (1987) asserts that traditional cultural values are "... great moral principles on which people of different societies in different periods of time rely

to distinguish the right from the wrong to construct independence, freedom and innovation of the nation.” Williams R. (1976), defined culture as: civilization, signifying or symbolic system, and way of life.

Cultural value is grounded in art and culture’s capacity to ‘effect change’, meaning it is ‘used to refer to the effects that culture has on those who experience it and the difference it makes to individuals and society’ (Crossick and Kaszynska 2014:124). In this understanding cultural value, because it is an active process of effecting change, requires the act of valuing.

### **INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN VALUE ON IGBO SOCIAL LIFE**

According to Hornby (2010) “Religion is the belief in the existence of a god or gods, and the activities that are connected with the worship of them” (p. 1244). Furthermore, this belief in the existence of such relations is a general human conviction, common to all peoples and to all stages of culture. With this definition, the whites did find a religion in their new found land.

The Traditional values and beliefs of the Igbo that stem from his culture include; polygamy, belief in one Supreme God as well as many other minor deities, love of children, music, dancing, respect for old age, and authority, belief in a future life, marriage and funeral celebrations, sense of family togetherness and of the extended family etc. The question now is, how are these values related to Christian values?

Traditional Igbo society believed in the existence of God; each object has a separate creator, therefore, the traditional Igbo society was pantheistic in its belief. On the contrary, the Christians are monotheistic; their God is an omniscient, omnipotent, super-sensible supreme being. In the Christian sense God is accessible by reason and human spirit. For us the Igbo; the existence of God is both material and spiritual. His belief assures him that gods exist, and the affirmation and justification of His existence is the fulfillment of their contractual obligations. According to Ifemesia C. (1979):

Religion is a personal thing for the Christian. It is for the salvation of the individual. In contrast, Igbo traditional religion is usually a communal affair, practiced not just for the spiritual and physical benefit of an individual or his immediate kin, but for the well-being of all within the purview of the celebrant. Shrines of deities erected in compounds and in villages generally honoured these deities and invited them to protect and prosper all within the compound or village. (p. 34)

According to Basden (1966):

The killing of human being was common in the olden days, either in the course of funeral rites as a means of providing attendant spirits to accompany a dead chief into the great beyond or as a sacrifice to atone for sins (p. 122).

The victim was someone procured or bought from a distant town. Acts of injustice committed against a “non-native” belonged to a different moral species from that committed against one who was a son of the soil.

Ezeanya (1976) states:

Other anti-religious practices of the Igbo are anthropocentric in the sense that all the religious practices invariably point to one objective, namely, human life and its preservation. Prayers and sacrifices offered to the gods and ancestors all have one end in view, namely, the welfare of man. (p. 6)

It is due to Christianity that today twin baby are no longer destroyed, that their mothers are no longer tabooed and ostracized, that the practice of local slave trade, child-kidnapping and human sacrifices have been dropped and that the frequent local community feuds and bloody clashes have been immensely reduced or, in some localities, even totally abandoned.

Although, one may say that we have increase in kidnapping and human sacrifices, but the fact is that it is not Igbo that are the pioneers of that. Kidnapping is universal and every other tribe is involved. Christianity crashed Igbo beliefs and methods of social control such as divination and such dispute setting methods as the consultation of oracles. The place and authority of dead ancestors were doubted and shaken.

Religious intolerance is more manifest in the dealings of Christianity with such aspects of Igbo culture as marriage. Almost all the Christian churches have refused to recognize polygamy within the Igbo context. Igbo regard polygamy as a healthy institution which insures respect for husbands and love for wives, assures social flirting or prostitution.

Igbo practice is to bury an elderly person soon after death with preliminary ceremonies, after a year or more, the second burial takes place with more vigorous and detailed ceremonies. It is this second burial which helps the spirit of such a departed individual to join and rest happily with the ancestors in the land of ancestral bliss. Without it, the spirit of the departed hovers about in the air and may harm its kindred living members. But once this second burial is performed, the spirit of the departed assumes his place in the land of ancestral bliss where he can plead effectively with the gods for the well-being of the members of his family. .

Another traditional institution that underwent pressures from Christianity is the *Ọzọ* title-taking. This ethically and socially elevated traditional title was condemned as pagan, and true Christians are not allowed to take the title in spite of the enormous social control principles associated with this institution. However, Roman Catholic and Anglican churches have started welcoming this and they call it (*Ọzọ ndị Ụka*). Christianity understands that *Ọzọ* title-taking is essentially connected with pagan religious ceremonies, and it insists on removing the pagan elements to make *Ọzọ* a social title.

Another Igbo value that Christianity affects is morality. The dwindling moral life in our society today may well be traced to the weakness of Christianity in punishing evil. It reserves punishment as far as the living are concerned. But Traditional Igbo religion believes in punishing evil and condemning any immoral act immediately. The idea of an eternal hell fire or punishment hereafter for all evils is strange. Having destroyed belief in and fear of the wrath of the God are the ancestors through the Christian faiths insistence that ancestors do not exist nor possess any powers; Christianity creates doubts, confusion and vacuum in the minds of the people. It has in the words of Mbiti (1970) generated “doubt and unbelief.” (p. 262) On account of this uncertainty and chaos which contact with Christianity has brought into the belief system, an Igbo attends communion at the same time as he beliefs in the potency of traditional magic; he ties up in the same handkerchief the rosary and the traditional talisman.

The influence of Christianity has caused certain customs and beliefs to be discarded and modified, at the same time that it has caused others to be retained by one level of society while on another level, new alternatives are being accepted. In other words, Christian influence on culture or value has been selective; it has not been systematically complete or effective. Therefore, while human sacrifice, the slave trade and the killing of twins have been discarded and old and new ideas have been amalgamated in the sphere of religion, the European ideal of monogamous marriage accepted by the Christianized elite exists side by side under the law with the institutions of polygamy among the urban and rural masses (Kalu 1978 pp. 130-131). Christian activities which effaced the destruction of twins, cannibalism and other obnoxious religious practices deserve praise and commendation.

However, it is undeniable that Christians have played some negative cultural roles in their religious zeal. The church, remarked Rodney W. (1976), often took up the role of arbiter of what was culturally correct and African ancestral beliefs were equated with the devil. Christian missionaries seemed to assume that Igbo or African world was created by an imperfect god, and to consider themselves as the only perfect product from a perfect God.

Igbo tradition or cultural has its own authentic institutions and patterns of behaviour and values. It is a tradition or culture that values highly the ideals of truth, liberty, social justice, and achievement. No doubt, some havoc has been caused to Igbo culture as a result of misdirection and misunderstanding, caused in turn by sentiment and over zeal. The Igbo finds Christianity disturbing in many of its values and ideals and consequently has every reason to raise constantly the problem of what it means to be an Igbo and a Christian at the same time. Desire of the Igbo people themselves to unite and to assert their personality in the content of the African community has made itself felt everywhere.

### **THE RECOVERY OF IGBO CULTURE FROM DEPRESSION AMIDST CHRISTIANITY AND WESTERNIZATION**

Before the coming of Christianity, Igbo culture was well established among the Igbo. With the introduction of Christianity, Igbo people were exposed to new forms of life brought changes to people's world views. Christianity came with western culture. This western culture brought about destruction of Igbo culture, Igbo values and also imposed alien "ways of life" on Igbo people. Ilogu, (1974: 124) affirms that western names such as Joseph, Mark, Henry, were given to people through baptism to transform them. In marriage, monogamy was introduced in place of polygamy. With the introduction of modern Western cultural modes of dressing, traditional decorations, drawings and paintings as well as women beautifications with camwood (uri), and red dynes (uhie), were considered unfit for Christians (Ekechi, 1914: 138). This brought great changes to people's world views. Advent of Christianity in Igbo land has great impact on the religious and cultural life of the traditional communities. The Igbo have embraced Christianity and western culture which have displaced the traditional religion in its organized form yet the traditional religious beliefs and practices still rule the minds of many Igbo Christians. One of such beliefs and practices that have survived the change in Igbo land is the belief in deities. Mbiti (1969) was of the opinion that "deities" are very much alive.

Christianity abolished "twin killing and human sacrifices. Onwu (2005), added that "Christianity introduced education, built hospitals and charity homes." With the help of Christianity, superstition decreased, and Igbo world view was re-shaped. According to Ekpunobi and Ezeaku (2011:99-144), some aspects of the traditional values and morality have been influenced by the processes of modernity that are passing through the African societies. The message of Christianity, on hope and humanitarian concern attracted many Igbo people.

The emergency of social security and human development through education were attractive, and people embrace Christianity. Talbot, (1969) asserts that, the traditional religion was passed on to succeeding generations, but the advent of Christianity in Igbo land had some influence on the traditional beliefs.

The Igbo traditional beliefs have some positive influence on the culture and social lives of the people. For instance, the forefathers of the Igbo were known for their righteousness, honesty and hard work. However, Igbo culture is expressed or manifested through visual art, music, dance, Igbo dialects, proverbs and wise sayings and so on. To recapture the state of Igbo culture and evidence of culture decline and conflict areas, the history of the study area provides evidence of rich Igbo cultural heritage and evidence of distorted specific cultures.

Igbo believe in the existence of the supreme God – "Chukwu or Chineke" (Great God) and other minor gods whom they take to be the messengers of the supreme God, and as well act as intermediaries between man and the supreme God. Igbo held "Chukwu" so high and cannot approach him directly and as such, go through the deities. Deities are regarded as God's representatives on earth. Igbo deities have different names in the pantheon. Ilogu (1974: 124), recognizes four major deities in the pantheon of Igbo god. They are; "Anyanwu" (the sun god), "Igwe" (the sky god), "Amadioha" (god of thunder and lightning), and "Ala or Ani" (the earth goddess). Individuals worship the Supreme Being through their small deities and ancestors. Thus, the existence of many local deities in Igbo religion does not define their religion as polytheism. These deities have shrines, priests, and religious festivals as part of their worship.



According to Talbot (1967), Isichie (2004), Igbo traditional religion involves several sacrifices, rituals, and initiations such as initiation into the masquerade court, the Ozo institution, Nze title, Ichie/oha/elders council. There are relationships between the gods, oracles, and divination (Ogbaa, 1992, Iroegbu, 2009), such as Amadioha (god of thunder), Ogwugwu, Ahiajoku/Ifejioku (yam goddess), Chiokike (god the creator), and so on.

According to Ilogu, (1996), the advent of Christianity has brought most of these gods and their worship to an end. Dibia (diviners), known as priests, healers and diviners play important roles in Igbo religion and spirituality. According to Orji J. (2007: 263) they are intermediaries between the gods (spirits) and the people (humans).” Igbo people also engage in commerce, craftsmanship and trade. A distinct feature of the Igbo civilization is the absence of any formal, centralized political authority. According to Ilogu, (1974: 124) “Igbo have council of elders as the highest decision-making body who are the custodians of Ofo (symbol of authority).”

The social life of the Igbo is built on core values and ethics such as taboos, sacrileges, equality, and honesty. Certain rituals are performed in course of reconciliation, where if the offence is outrageous, the defaulter is utterly banished such as killing of human beings. Male children as custodians of culture and inhabitants of the “obi” (homestead). In Igbo culture, Igbo people believe that the spirits of one’s ancestors keep a constant watch over them, the living show appreciation for the dead and run to them for future wellbeing.

### **CULTURAL IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON IGBO PEOPLE OF NIGERIA**

The encounter between Igbo indigenous religion and Western culture was put clearly by Achebe (1958) when he said that the white man “has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.” Achebe C. (1958) asserts here that “the Igbo culture and sense of solidarity and communalism (things) were punctured by a new cultural force that was not prepared to take seriously or engage with.” Iroegbu Pantaleon (2000) is of the view that Igbo philosophy and metaphysics are all about belongingness, being qua being, existentialism, adaptation and survival. The problem with cultural encounters is that they force one another into a new set of relationships for adjustments called change, a change that will become inevitable due to need by the followers.

Onwu (2009), also reminds us that when the Igbo “gave over the evil forests and shrines of their various gods to Christian missionaries, nothing happened contrary to common expectations, the perception was that those gods were dead, so the people became convinced that the white man’s gods were very powerful.”

Widows were among the first set of people who were converted by the missionaries. The early conversion was mainly on the ground of socio-cultural humiliating conditions which made them see the hope of liberation in the new religion. In the traditional society, widows were subjected to all kinds of dehumanizing and agonizing conditions. Some were forced to drink the water used to bath their dead husband as a way of exonerating themselves that they had no hands in the man’s death. Some suffered isolation and so on. Christianity has done a marvelous work not only being the voice of the voiceless by fighting against dehumanization of widows but also advocated the rights of women in the society. Achebe (1958) is of the opinion that “religion migrates and liberates, thus producing both change and continuity.”

Christianity made Igbo to drop their gods emphasizing that they are “pieces of woods and stone and are not alive” There is a misinterpretation here. Igbo religion combines local forces, ecological and ancestral resources to seek solutions and find protection in the face of need. This is considered cultural and a responsibility (Achebe, 1958). The aggressive and revolutionary missionary evangelization was aimed at condemning the traditional religion. The inability of the missionaries to see the religious and social values in Igbo religious traditions, made them to categorize many things as superstition, paganism and fetishism.

The effect of the ideological chanson and assessment of African culture and religion had a corrosive impact on the psychological development of the Igbo Christian here and now (Egbo, 1973). These conflicts began to emerge in the missionary era. The Igbo practiced their traditional religion “in secret choosing to hold

onto their religious beliefs in private, and at the same time hold to the new religion in view of acquiring the economic empowerment of the white men” (Iwu 1983). The implication is that the resilient impact of Igbo traditional religion (ITR) is practically and ideologically alive and active in the lives of the people. For example, at important occasions like Ozo title taking, or burial ceremony, when it starts raining, people will ask questions like why didn’t they negotiate with the rain makers? Again, when people are sick and have visited the hospital for treatment but could not get well, they resort to the Dibia (native doctor) for solution to their problems. Thus, people are able to utilize their skills and strengths to cope and recover from problems and changes.

Western cultural ideologies brought disorganizations of social pattern of life among the Igbo. The missionary education affected character formation, social personality formation and emancipation from social cultural practices and beliefs. This exposure to new side of life and the possibilities it offers, brought drastic change in peoples world view. Traditional decorations, drawings and paintings with wood, and red sand were classified as those things that belong to pagan religion. Women beautifications with cam wood (Uri), red dyes (Uhie) were considered unfit for Christians. As the social life pattern was disorganized, new world views crept in that was not there before. Thus social environment were affected by the new ideologists and trend.

The proclamation against polygamy received serious resistance in Igbo land. The acceptance of Christian marriage by new converts did not last long as many backslide into former polygamy life. In a society where many wives and many children demonstrated mark of recognition, and sign of wealth, the teaching of one man, one wife was almost unaccepted. It became extremely difficult to abide by the law of monogamy when the couple could not get offspring in the marriage. Credit however, should be given to Christianity as polygamous marriages are in reduced number today.

From the above discussion, one can rightly say that there were internal crisis between western Christian ideologies and Igbo cultural ideologies but Christianity continued in its message of hope and being an asset in Igbo culture to resist western negative influences.

Over Enduring Institutions Resilience of Traditions and Traditional Rulers: Igbo culture (Omenaala ndi Igbo) is customs, practices and traditions of the Igbo people of southeastern Nigeria. It comprises obsolete practices as well new concepts added into the Igbo culture either `by cultural evolution or by outside influence. The institution of traditional rulers (Ozo, Ndi Nze) is one of the most enduring traditional institutions of Igbo society. In spite of the many mutations it displayed remarkable resilience from colonial through post –colonial times. The Igbo were organized in “... a non-centralized system whereby the traditional rulers of the different clans formed the highest political authorities in Igbo villages” (Afigbo, 1980). These were seen as the symbols of the peoples past, custodians of their history and upholder and preserver of their culture and customs, epitome of cultural norms and values of the society such as truth, discipline, courage and responsibility and so on” (Emordi and Osiki 2008).

In theory, traditional rulers in pre-colonial Igbo societies had permanent tenures of office and the positions were hereditary. In practice, they had a number of advisers, assistants and other courtiers and their final decisions were based on harmony of opinions of all the participants. It has frequently been falsely said that traditional institutions (Ozo, Ndi Nze) and traditional rulers are facing a crisis, or are undergoing struggles for relevance and survival in contemporary Igbo politics. According to (Adesoji, 2010), the reflections of the stress of the traditional rulers in Nigeria “are personal humiliation, salary cut, restriction, suspension, banishment, dethronement and murder.” All these indices are not unique to traditional institutions alone but are general phenomena affecting all classes of Nigerians in contemporary time. The position here is that traditional ruler ship is not facing any crisis of relevance or survival in Igbo society. This is because it has always been relevant and has survived a lot of organized efforts to scrap it completely.

Traditional institutions are very relevant in Igbo society but what it is clamoring for is constitutional role and recognition. Despite this, traditional institutions and traditional rulers have continued to exercise



considerable influence and play active role in the political administration at all levels of government in Nigeria. For instance, during the electioneering processes, political aspirants troop to palaces of traditional rulers in their communities to receive royal blessings and endorsements. The study argues that the continued relevance of the traditional institutions is very resilient because their authority and legitimacy are derived from the people's traditions and customs (Ashiru, 2010: 115-140). Traditional rulers occupied important positions among the peoples of Igbo land. Their positions were sanctioned by the traditions, history and culture of their respective peoples who held them in high esteem and reverence (Amusa, 2010).

Resilience of Traditional Medicine and Traditional Healers among the South-Eastern Nigeria like other social groups in the world, the Igbo has forms of traditional or indigenous medicine. Traditional medicine refers to medical knowledge systems which developed several centuries ago in any social group before the advent of modern medicine. It could also be viewed as those treatments not commonly believed within the framework of modern medical practice (Huff, 2008). For the World Health Organization (WHO, 2003), traditional medicine involves "health practices approaches, knowledge of beliefs, incorporation of plant, animal and mineral based medicine, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illness or maintain wellbeing. Among the Igbo of southeast Nigeria, indigenous medicine has had a long history. It constitutes part of their effort over the years, to cope with their environment and to lessen pain, treat injuries and illnesses of physical and mental nature. Their traditional medicine clearly prescribe the care for the sick, who to provide the care and how he should proceed. Such facts are provided by adults, traditional healers, bone setters, herbalists, and traditional birth attendants and so on.

A current study into indigenous medicine among the Igbo people of Southeast Nigeria reveal that the practice has passed through what Bever (1993) quoted in Nwankwo (2005) called "excessively unhygienic, and crude stage, and also the "age of uncertainty when practitioners were called heathens, pagans and witches." In the present age of modernity, traditional medicine not only co-exist with orthodox medicine in the Igbo society, but in addition preference for traditional medicine particularly among the lower class is on the increase. Many members of the Igbo society despite western ideologies and Christian ideologies, use traditional medicine in tackling illnesses in their area. Traditional healers are the live wire of traditional medicine in Igbo communities. Their methods are based on the social, cultural and religious backgrounds as well as knowledge, attitude and beliefs that are prevalent in the community regarding physical, mental and social wellbeing and the causation of disease and disability (WHO, 1978).

Traditional healers are responsible for carrying out healing ceremonies, religious rituals and other rites intended to ensure the safety health of Igbo communities. However, they have with stood and remained very relevant in the health system despite increasing incursions of orthodox medicine into the cultural systems that were previously their exclusive terrain" (Iwu, 1981, Nwaogu, 1997). Admirable successes of traditional healers in both the Igbo nation and in other countries are well documented by scholars (Kafuru, 1998, WHO, 1998, Nwankwo, 2005). However, it has been argued that a strong belief in indigenous treatment can yield a positive outcome even where scientific treatment is known not to work (Kafuru, 1998.)

The WHO, (2003) emphasized that up to 80% of the population of Africa use traditional medicine for primary health care. It stressed the need to harness the resources of traditional healers towards attainment of „health for all“ and the millennium development goals by the year 2015. The WHO also notes that the use of traditional medicine is spreading in popularity in industrialized countries like America where about 158 million adults use complementary medicine (a field that incorporates traditional or folk medicine but is broader in scope).

## CONCLUSION

Christianity has played a prominent role in the shaping of Igbo value system. However, Christianity must seek to purify and free Igbo culture from its humiliating internal separation and elevate it to acceptable

standard and dignity. It should as well encourage Igbo people to appreciate the institutions and values of their own culture.

Christianity should assist the government to establish commissions and centers for cultural studies in which relevant experts participate and also promote the cultural and religious alienation of Igbo and Africans in general. In this way, traditional values would be preserved and enhanced, while Westernization refers to the conversion to or adoption of Western traditions and customs.

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## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN MITIGATING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE AMONG BIOLOGY STUDENTS: A STUDY ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

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### Abstract

Examination malpractice remains a pervasive challenge in educational systems worldwide. This study focuses on students' perceptions of parental involvement in mitigating malpractice among biology students. The study explored how students perceived their parents' role in promoting academic integrity. The area of the study was Onitsha North Local Government Area. Three specific purposes and three research questions guided the study. A quantitative research design was used for the study. The population of the study was 100 students offering biology. Out of them were 54 males and 46 females. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS version 24. The result of the data was presented in a table of specification. The result shows that students perceived that parental involvement plays a significant role in mitigating examination malpractice. Recommendations include enhancing parent-teacher collaboration and fostering ethical values. By understanding students' perspectives, we can create targeted interventions to curb malpractice.

### Introduction

Education is often described as a transformative process that leads to personal growth, empowerment, and the transmission of values, traditions, and cultural practices from one generation to another. Einstein (1949) stated that Education is the progressive realization of our ignorance. Einstein (1936) in his address to the State University of New York at Albany, emphasized that education should not merely transfer knowledge but also develop qualities and capabilities valuable for the welfare of society.

According to Einstein, teachers should impart not only knowledge but also a longing for information, artistic appreciation, scientific curiosity, and moral values. Thus, education is expected to train the mind of its learner for effective performance and equip the learner with the information necessary for high level of achievement. Adequate and proper acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills is invariably a function of education (Okara, 2012). Science education is a way to bring people closer to understanding the world around them.

Fouad (2015) emphasizes that understanding nature of science education is crucial for scientific literacy, involving an appreciation of how science functions and its impact on society. His definition likely revolves around the teaching and learning of science content, processes, and the understanding of its nature as a discipline. This includes fostering scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and the ability to apply scientific principles in various contexts. Examinations in science serve as a formal assessment tool to evaluate students' understanding and mastery of scientific concepts, principles, and methods. They typically test the ability to recall information, apply knowledge to solve problems, conduct experiments, analyze data, and understand the scientific process. Exams may include various formats such as multiple-choice questions, short answers, essays, practical labs, and oral presentations to comprehensively assess both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Ezemba (2021) explained that examination is aimed at determining a learner's level of skill acquisition or intellectual competence and understanding after a given training. This gives the teacher feedback on the learner's level of acquisition of the proper knowledge. But when examination is not properly conducted and administered under conducive and uniform conditions, it can lead to inconsistencies in the assessment process, which may affect the fairness and reliability of the exam results. Non-uniform conditions can introduce biases and advantages for some students over others, potentially impacting their performance. This can result in an inaccurate representation of students' abilities and knowledge, undermining the integrity of the examination system and potentially leading to issues such as examination malpractice.

Examination malpractice refers to any act of omission or commission by a person who, in anticipation of, before, during, or after an examination, fraudulently secures any unfair advantage for themselves or another person. This can undermine the validity, reliability, and authenticity of the examination and ultimately the integrity of the certificates issued. Examination malpractice can occur in various forms, such as cheating, plagiarism, impersonation, and collusion. It is not limited to actions within an exam hall but can also include any fraudulent activity related to the preparation, conduct, and grading of examinations.

Examination malpractice in biology education refers to any form of cheating or unethical behavior by students during biology exams. This can range from smuggling notes into the exam hall, copying from another student, to more sophisticated forms such as using electronic devices to access information or hiring someone to take the exam on their behalf. The implications of such practices are far-reaching, affecting not only the integrity of the educational system but also the value of qualifications awarded. In biology education, where practical skills and knowledge are crucial for future scientific work, examination malpractice can lead to a workforce that is inadequately prepared for professional responsibilities.

Efforts to combat examination malpractice in biology have included stricter invigilation, use of anti-cheating technologies, and promoting a culture of academic integrity. However, these measures have met with varying degrees of success, and the problem persists as a significant challenge for educators and institutions alike.

The West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) withheld the results of 180,205 candidates representing 11.33 percent of the total candidates who sat for the 2019 WAEC examination due to various reported cases of examination malpractices. In Nigeria, a study conducted at the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education in Port Harcourt sought to identify forms and factors supportive of examination malpractice among biology students in institutions of higher learning.

These cases highlight the ongoing challenges that educational institutions face in ensuring the integrity of examinations. It's important to note that while these examples are not exclusive to biology examination, they provide a context for understanding the prevalence and impact of malpractice in academic assessments.

Some recent researches have shown that majority of students who gained admissions into tertiary institutions in Nigeria are products of examination malpractice (Eba & Emaikwu, 2012).

Examination malpractice is a pervasive issue that undermines the integrity of educational systems worldwide. It not only distorts the true measurement of students' abilities but also jeopardizes the quality of graduates entering professional fields, particularly in the sciences. Biology, as a fundamental subject within the science curriculum, is not immune to these unethical practices. The implications of malpractice in biology exams are profound, as they can lead to a lack of competent professionals in various biological sciences and healthcare industries.

Parental involvement in academic life has been widely recognized as a key factor influencing student success. The role parents play in shaping their children's educational experiences extends beyond mere support to actively fostering an environment that discourages academic dishonesty. This study aims to examine the perception of students on parental involvement in mitigating examination malpractice among biology students. It seeks to understand how students perceive involvement in reducing examination malpractice and how parents' engagement with their children's education can promote ethical behavior and academic integrity, thereby enhancing the reliability of examination outcomes. By exploring this, the study will contribute to the broader discourse on educational reform and provide actionable insights for parents, educators, and policy makers striving to uphold standards of excellence in science education. A theoretical framework that connects parental involvement to academic integrity is social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977). He argues that children learn behaviors and norms through observation and imitation of their parents. If parents demonstrate and value academic integrity, children are likely to adopt similar values. This shows that education can be progressive with parental involvement.

Parental Involvement Theory is associated with the work of Joyce Epstein (2001) who has been a leading researcher in the field of family-school partnerships. He suggests that when parents are actively involved in their child's education, they convey the importance of education and its associated ethical standards, including honesty in academic work. These thus provide a framework for understanding how parental involvement can influence a student's commitment to academic integrity, potentially reducing instances of examination malpractice.

### **Statement of the problem:**

Despite numerous efforts to uphold academic integrity, examination malpractice remains a pervasive challenge in the educational system, particularly among biology students. This malpractice not only undermines the credibility of educational assessments but also hampers the development of competent future professionals. Parental involvement in academic life is posited as a potential mitigating factor against such unethical practices. However, there is a paucity of empirical research examining the extent to which parental engagement influences students' attitudes and behaviors regarding examination malpractice in biology. This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the perception students on parental involvement in reducing instances of examination malpractice among biology students, thereby contributing to the development of more effective strategies to foster academic integrity.

### **Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate the extent to which parental involvement influences biology students' attitudes and behaviors towards examination malpractice.
2. To investigate the effectiveness of parental engagement in the Mitigating efforts of the school



3. To identify strategies through which parents can contribute to reducing examination malpractice, thereby improving the integrity of academic assessments in biology.

### Research Questions

1. To what extent does parental involvement influence biology students attitude and behaviour towards examination malpractice
2. What is the effectiveness of parental engagement in the mitigating efforts of the school
3. What are the strategies through which parents can contribute to reducing examination malpractice, thereby improving the integrity of academic assessment in biology?

### Hypothesis

Parental involvement do not significantly reduce examination malpractice among biology students.

### Methodology

The research is a quantitative research design. The quantitative research design relies on the collection and analysis of the numerical data. The area of the study is Onitsha North Local Government Area.

The population of the study was a total of 100 students. Out of them were 54 males and 46 females from 10 public schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area, Anambra State. A self-developed expert reviewed questionnaire was utilized as data collection tool. A four likert scale with twenty close ended questions arranged in themes was used. Each theme has response options for the questions. The response options are as follows: Always (A), Sometimes (S), Rarely (R), and Never (N). The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach alpha. Twenty students who were not part of study were used and the result of the reliability was 0.804 which shows that the instrument is reliable.

The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS version 24. Table of specification was used to answer the research questions. Table of specification is used to ensure that a test measures the content thinking skills that the test intend to measure. In addition, a table of mean distribution was also used. The table of mean distribution describes that the maximum score on the scale is 5 while the lowest score is 1..

### Results and Discussion

The result is presented in a table of specification and mean distribution below.

Table 1

Mean distribution of students' perception about Awareness of Examination Malpractice

A.	ST.	R.	N	Mean	SD
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1 Examination malpractice is common among biology students

49	40	2	9	4.43	0.65
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2 Do your parents discuss the consequences of examination malpractice with you?

40	30	22	8	4.48	0.521
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3 Parental awareness about examination malpractice affects students' behavior positively  
46 34 15 5 4.25 0.741

4 Do your parents usually inquire about your exam preparation method?  
46 24 22 8 4.45 0.639

Table 1 above shows that in the first statement 49% of students are aware of examination malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation of the following Statement are 4.43 and 0.65 respectively. In the second statement, 40% accepted that their parents discuss about examination malpractice with them and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.48 and 0.52 respectively. In the third statement, 46% perceived that parental awareness about examination malpractice affect students' behaviour and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.48 and 0.52 respectively. In the fourth statement, 46% accepted that parents usually inquire about their examination preparation method and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.45 and 0.63 respectively.

Table 2

Mean distribution of students' perception about Parental Guidance and Support

5 Do your parents provide resources to help you prepare for biology examination?  
36 28 34 2 4.48 0.730

6 Do your parents usually pressurize you to perform well in exams?  
51 19 20 10 4.29 0.683

7 Do your parents keep you posted on the knowledge of hard work?  
25 15 30 30 4.0 0.696

8 Do your parents ensure you use your whole time in study?  
14 46 11 29 4.36 0.641

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Table 2 above shows that in the first statement, 36% perceived that parents provide resources to help them prepare for biology examination and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.48 and 0.73 respectively. In the second statement, 51% accepted that parents usually pressurize them to perform well in examination and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.29 and 0.68 respectively. In the third statement, 25% accepted that their parents keep them posted about knowledge of hard work and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.0 and 0.69 respectively. The fourth statement shows that 14% of the students accepted that their parents allow them to use the whole time for their study and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.36 and 0.46 respectively.

Table 3:

Mean distribution of students' perception about Parental Monitoring and Control

9. Do your parents monitor your academic progress?  
38 32 18 12 4.29 0.77



10. Do your parents react if they suspect you might engage in examination malpractice? 46 44 5 5 4.26 0.64

11. Do your parents set a good example regarding academic honesty? 33 13 44 0 10 4.15 0.65

12 Do your parents suspect your performance to have link with examination malpractice? 20 27 13 40 4.30 0.65

Table 3 above shows that in the first statement 38% of the students accepted that their parents monitor their academic progress and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.29 and 0.77 respectively. In the second statement 46% accepted that their parents react each time they suspect that they might engage in examination malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.26 and 0.59 respectively. In the third statement, 46% of the students accepted that their parents set a good example for them regarding academic honesty and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.16 and 0.65 respectively. In the fourth statement, 20% accepted that their parents suspect their performance to have link with examination malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.30 and 0.65 respectively.

Table 4:

Mean distribution of students' perception about Mitigation Strategies and Student Perspective 13  
Do you think that application of strict strategies will be effective in mitigating examination malpractice? 41 19 18 20 4.16 0.63  
14 Do you think that parents supporting schools and teachers in these mitigation efforts will be effective. 60 26 10 4 4.04 0.56

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Do you think that students have any role in reducing examination malpractice? 49 21 23 7 3.91 0.70

16 Do you think that government policies in reducing malpractice incidents is not implemented? 57 3 22 18 3.97 0.66

Table 4 above shows in the first statement that 41% of the students accepted that application of strict strategies will be effective in mitigating examination malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.16 and 0.63 respectively. In the second statement 60% of the students perceived that parents supporting schools and teachers in Mitigation efforts will be effective and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.04 and 0.77 respectively. In the third statement 49% of the students perceived that they have role in reducing examination malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation are 3.91 and 0.70 respectively. In the fourth statement 57% of the students perceived that government policies in reducing examination malpractice is not implemented and the mean score and standard deviation are 3.97 and 0.66 respectively.

Table 5:

Mean distribution of students' perception about Long-term Impact of Parental Involvement  
17. Do you think parental involvement affects students' attitudes towards examination malpractice in the long run? 50 31 3 16 4.97 0.68  
18. Do you think that parental guidance can have lasting effect on student's approach to exams and

assessments? 62 38 5 5 4.83 0.83

19. Do you think that your academic journey might differ with increased parental support against malpractice? 63 22 10 5 4.21 0.7220.

20. Do you think that the school environment foster parental involvement in mitigating malpractice? 34 36 26. 4 4.78 0.80

Table 5 above shows that 50% of the students perceived that parental involvement will affect students' attitude towards examination malpractice in the long run and the mean score and standard deviation are 3.97 and 0.68 respectively. In the second statement 62% of the students perceived that parental guidance can have lasting effect on students approach to examination and assessment and the mean score and standard deviation are 3.83 and 0.83 respectively. In the third statement 63% perceived that their academic journey might differ with increased parental support against malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation are 4.21 and 0.72 respectively. The fourth statement shows that 34% of the students perceived that the school environment foster parental involvement in mitigating examination malpractice and the mean score and standard deviation are 3.78 and 0.80 respectively.

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Result in table 4 indicates in the first statement that 60% of the respondents perceived that parents supporting schools and teachers in Mitigation efforts will be effective. This answers research question 2 which asked the effectiveness of parental involvement in mitigating efforts of the school. This, therefore, correlates' with a study that indicates that parental involvement will be of high benefit in reducing examination malpractice. Many researchers claim that parents have high expectations on the teachers in their children's academic performance. Moreover, as seen in table 1, with the results of the mean 4.43, 4.48, 4.25 and 4.45 that parents give their children full support in academic life by ensuring their attitude towards examination and providing with awareness of examination malpractice. This answers research question2. This shows that most parents usually want to know the type of method their children apply in learning and ensure that their academic performance is excellent

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## Discussion of findings

Results of our studies in theme 5, in the first statement, 50 % of the participants indicates that parental involvement will affect students' attitude towards examination malpractice in the long run. Parents can play a vital role in shaping students attitude towards learning. Encouraging curiosity and critical thinking. When students see education as more than just passing examination, they are less likely to engage in examination malpractice. In theme 2, in the second statement, 51% of the participants responded that parents pressurize them to perform well in the examination. In this case, students feel pressure to meet their parents' expectations. If parents prioritize examination results over the learning process, students may feel compelled to cheat. If parents emphasize success at any cost, students may resort to examination malpractice. Encouraging a balanced approach that values understanding and effort can mitigate malpractice. In theme 3 , in the third statement, 46% of the students accepted that their parents set a good example for them regarding academic honesty. In this regard, when parents discuss the importance of honesty, hard work and consequences of examination malpractice, it reinforces positive values. Regular conversation about academic integrity can change students' perceptions. Theme 4 in the second statement, 60% of the participants perceived that parents supporting schools and teachers in mitigating examination malpractice will be effective. This shows that Parents who actively engage in their child's education by

attending school events, discussing coursework, and providing emotional support create an environment where academic honesty is valued. Students perceive that their efforts matter beyond grades.

Parental involvement, therefore significantly impacts students' perception of examination malpractice. By promoting ethical values, maintaining open communication, and emphasizing holistic learning, parents can contribute to a culture of integrity among biology students.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

In this study, we explored students' perspectives on parental involvement in curbing examination malpractice within the context of biology education. Our findings emphasized the significance of parental influence and communication. Students perceive that open dialogue with parents about the consequences of malpractice fosters a sense of responsibility and ethical behavior. Students appreciate parents who actively monitor their study habits and provide guidance during exam preparation. Such involvement discourages malpractice.

Parents and teachers collaboration should be strengthened by regular parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings to facilitate discussions on academic integrity. Workshops or awareness sessions for parents should be organized to educate them about the impact of malpractice and the importance of honesty. Parents should be encouraged to instill ethical values at home. When students internalize these principles, they are less likely to engage in malpractice.

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## A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF LANGUAGE ATTRITION OF OWERRI DIALECT OF IGBO LANGUAGE

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### Abstract

When a language or a dialect is endangered, it affects the culture and posterity of the community, because abandonment of a language leads to displacement of culture values expressed by the language. A language and or dialect can go into extinction or attrition due to lack of use. This paper is a sociolinguistic study of language attrition of Owerri dialect of Igbo Language. It examines the concept attrition and what can lead a language or dialect into attrition as well as highlights the causes of endangerment of Owerri dialect of Igbo language. It adopts Kopke et al (2007) cognitive theory to frame the work because memory is important in language retention. The data was collected purposively using questionnaires from six villages in Owerri that speak Owerri. The findings revealed that Owerri dialect is actually endangered because of non-Owerri speakers living in Owerri. The paper recommends that Education policy makers should include Owerri dialect in their curriculum and teach it in school within the Owerri zone and also document for reading like most indigenous languages for posterity sake.

Key words: attrition, endangered, abandonment, Owerri, dialect, Igbo.

### Introduction

Some language users sometimes intentionally neglect a particular language or some aspect of it when they come in contact with other languages. Also language users place more emphasis on one language and prioritize it above others. In a situation where the second language has more economic and financial value, it becomes vulnerable for the language users to delete partially or completely the supposed first language and successfully replace it with the second thereby, losing the first language, this process of language lost is known as language attrition. For a sociolinguistic study of language attrition of Owerri dialect, it is important to note that Owerri is the capital of Imo State in the Eastern part of Nigeria. As a capital of a state, it has a large population with little population of Owerri dialect users. Owerri is a dialect of Igbo language. Owerri people speak Owerri as a dialect of Igbo language. For the fact that many people troop into Owerri city for white collar jobs or for their daily living, they come in with their own dialects (Igbo) for the fact that the non-indigenes living in Owerri are more in number than the indigenes of Owerri. In an attempt for the indigenes to flow well with them in communication, they use their own dialect thereby making the Owerri dialect go into attrition. Apart from people from other local government in Imo state living in Owerri, people from other states and countries also live there. Owerri zone has nine local government areas comprising Abo Mbaise, Ahiazu Mbaise, Ezinihithe Mbaise, Ikeduru, Mbaitoli, Ngor Okpala, Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri west. But it is Owerri Municipal, North and West that speak Owerri dialect.

According to UNESCO, of the nearly 7000 languages in the world, one dies every two weeks. Owerri dialect is considered among the endangered language or dialect, though not dead (Unigwe 2017). The predominate features of the dialect places ethnicity tag on the speaker, maybe that is one of the reasons why users avoid using it in the midst of other Igbo speakers thereby, endangering the dialect and leading it to attrition. This study is a descriptive study using cognitive process theory by Kopke et al (2007) as a framework to describe sociolinguistic situation of Owerri dialect leading to attrition.

### **Statement of the problem**

The abandonment of the first language comes with the displacement of many cultural values expressed by languages. This is due to the inseparable nature of language and culture as they work together to shape each other. In order not to extinguish and abandon principles of politeness, greeting and other cultural values associated with Owerri language, that this paper presents a sociolinguistic study of Owerri dialect in order to highlight the importance of documentation of a language or dialect to educationist, to prevent language from extinction and preserve it for posterity especially, the Owerri dialect of Igbo.

### **Objectives**

- (1) To examine the concept of language attrition and endangerment of Owerri dialect of Igbo language
- (2) To suggest way of documenting Owerri dialect of Igbo language for posterity.

### **Research question**

- 1 What is language attrition and how is Owerri dialect of Igbo endangered?
- 2 What are possible ways of documenting the Owerri dialect and preserving it for posterity?

### **Literature Review**

Language attrition is the process of losing a native of first language. The process is generally caused by isolation from speakers of the first language and the acquisition of a second language. Yakawa (1997:2) in Opitz (2011) sees a language attrition as permanent or temporary regression from a participant's previous linguistic performance or competence at any linguistic level (phonology, morphology, syntax, and pragmatics) in exerting any linguistic skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing, and metalinguistic judgment) that means the exerting of linguistic skill automatically affects the previous linguistic performance which leads to regression. Zouaghi (2016) also sees language attrition as a kind of reduction or loss of language in a person or in a community. This paper is focusing on persons and community, people of Owerri and the community at large, as Owerri dialect is reducing and possibly going into extinction. Schmid (2011) in Zouagh (2016) sees language attrition as a process of learning a second language by people who have lived a period of time in a foreign country, during which their first language was not used for whatever reason. She explains that this situation results in forgetting words while engaging in a conversation using L2. Gradually, this people's use of L2 affects their fluency and accuracy in L1. The focus of this study is on Owerri people living in Owerri town, not the ones in a foreign country.

“Language attrition is when speakers of a language or dialect cease to use it in fewer domains, or use fewer of its register and speaking styles and or stop passing it to the generation” according to Usman (2014:52). No single factor determines whether a language is endangered. An endangered language may become extinct when its speakers disappear or switch to another, usually more populous or powerful language. This is seen in the continuous shift of Owerri dialect speakers to other Igbo language dialects. The level of development and the number of non Owerri indigene living in Owerri contributed immensely to this shift. the indigene drift more to neighbors' dialect either living in the same environment or working in the same

place thereby, making Owerri dialect fight for relevance and survival. It is observed that the highly educated people of Owerri cannot engage in free conversation five minutes in Owerri dialect without blending the language with fragments of another Igbo dialect or even English language. Nwankwere et al (2017) posit that the survival of Igbo language and by extension Owerri dialect is in the hands of the Owerri parents and Owerri children. They argue that if parents especially those in diaspora use Owerri language in their daily activities and in their respective homes, it would give their children the opportunity to acquire or learn the language or dialect. The concerns of this paper is not people in Diaspora but people in Owerri. Although, both parents might not come from Owerri, but if the father is from Owerri and they are living in Owerri, they are the target of this paper, therefore it is a sociolinguistic study as it relates to them.

A language can be studied pragmatically, semantically or lexically. The focus of this study is syntactic study of the language, which entails how words are arranged to form meaning. Syntax according to Icarma (2023) is the architectural blueprint of language, guiding how words are combined in ensuring clarity and coherence in communication. The Owerri dialect as observed is no longer combined coherently without code switching, code mixing with other dialect of Igbo or mixing it up with English language. It is in light of the above, the study is a sociolinguistic study of Owerri dialect using cognitive process theory by Kopke et al (2007)

### **Theoretical framework**

Cognitive processes theory of Kopke et al (2007) establishes the connection between languages attrition and the human cognitive system. They emphasized on memory and forgetting. It was stated that information can be stored in the brain for a very long time using the long time memory (LTM) and this information if not utilized or activated regularly, could be forgotten. The information here is likened to the first language of a speaker, if not utilized as a result of acquisition of the second language, can easily get lost or attrite. Forgetting on the other hand, is that linguistic information can be lost though not completely forgotten as the brain partly regains some lost information if attention is given to it. They stressed that some information may be lost completely if not worked upon quickly. Singh (ND) describe cognitive process as those mental processes which acquire information from the world and understand it. The existence of different dialects of Igbo is actually endangering the Owerri dialect. Children of Owerri parents living in Owerri use other dialects of Igbo mostly in the schools and outside their homes. Some of them even use it at their homes especially when one of the parents is not an indigene of Owerri. This endangers Owerri dialect and so, it is imagined that the language will go into attrition if not utilized for a while referencing the theory.

### **Dialect**

A dialect as seen by Bowen (2011) as a sub-categorization of a language. That is linguistically differentiated by grammar, Lexis, and in terms of speech phonology. Owerri language is seen as a dialect of Igbo language, it is a sub-categorization of the Igbo language, any one that understands Igbo language will automatically understand Owerri dialect, and it is only linguistically different in terms of phonology. According to chambers and Trudgill (1998), a dialect is a sub-standard, low status often rustic form of language generally associated with the peasantry, the working class, or other groups lacking in prestige. The known speakers of Owerri dialect view the dialect from chambers and trudgill, even some speakers too, that is of the reasons they choose to adopt their neighbors' languages, thereby endangering the Owerri dialect. Dialect is also a term which is often applied to forms of language, particularly those spoken in more isolated parts of the world, which have no written forms, some scholars sees dialect as a kind of deviation from a norm, an aberration of a correct standard form of language although, Owerri dialect is not written



down but Owerri is not an isolated part of the world rather, a capital city of Imo state in Nigeria. This paper focuses on attrition of Owerri dialect of Igbo by having a sociolinguistic study of the dialect.

Optiz (2011) states that there are two quite distinct branches of attrition, first language attrition which focuses on the individual loss of the mother tongue, usually in migrants, and second language loss, which investigate L2 attrition as a sub-field of foreign language teaching, but the major distinction between the two is the environment in which the loss occurred. The interest of this paper is the L1 attrition and the environment which is Owerri dialect and in Owerri city. It is obvious that as soon as an individual becomes bilingual, there will be some degree of traffic from L2 to L1. It is assumed that attrition manifest itself in individuals who are highly advanced L2 speakers and have not used their first language for a long time in a situation where the language and the dialect have the speakers of L1 and the language is endangering the dialect to the extent of attrition within the same speaking community, is the focus of this paper to seek out the causes and solution to it.

### Method of data collection and analysis

The paper uses a descriptive survey research while the target population are indigenes of Owerri living in Owerri. The population is drawn from the three local Governments: Owerri municipal, Owerri north and Owerri west. The sample size is purely indigene of Owerri with each representing the local government council in Owerri. A multi-stage sampling technique using 20% of respondent in each stage is used to select the indigenes because of the large number of indigenes unevenly and dispersedly spread all over the state and to overcome problems associating geographically dispersed population.

This multi-stage sampling technique is grouping the indigenes according to their respective local government areas and into six village clusters thus: Awaka, Egbu, Obibiezena, Naze, Umu Orironjo and Umuodu.

The instrument for data collection is mainly questionnaires and observations. The questionnaires are made up of two sections 'A' contained items about the respondents Bio-data. Section 'B' contained items which were raised in the research questions and objectives. Out of 1000 copies of questionnaires administered, a total of 896 were returned and found fit for data analysis

### Demographic characters of respondent

Variables	Variable classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	497	55.5%
	Male	399	44.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age	17-20 years	300	33.5%
	21-39 years	310	34.5%
	40 and above	286	31. %
	Total	896	100%
Marital Status	Single	310	34.5%
	Married	300	33.5%
	Widowed/widower	286	31.9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Qualification	Degree	270	33.5%



	NCE/Diploma	300	30.1%
	Masters and Above	100	13.5%
	Primary	122	11.2%
	Secondary	081	02.6%
	Adult Literacy	023	09.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Occupation	Civil Servant	305	34.1%
	Trading	226	25.3%
	Transporters	215	23.9%
	Farming	150	16.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Data Analysis and discussion of findings

The study found it paramount to determine the respondent's gender in order to ascertain whether there is gender parity in selecting the speakers of Owerri dialect of Igbo language. The findings of the study are as shown in the table above. According to the analysis, it is evident that majority of the respondents are female which represented 497 (55.4%) while 399 (44.5%) were male. It can therefore be deduced that females are the most dominant gender amongst the respondents.

The respondents were required to indicate their age where the study findings show that majority 300 (33.5%) were between 17-20 years 310 (34.5%) of the respondents are between 21-39 years, while 286 (39.9%) are between 40 years and above. The findings therefore implies that the respondents were old enough to provide valuable responses especially on why they cannot speak Owerri dialect fluently.

Educational level of respondents are NCE/Diploma holders 300 (33.5%) followed by degree holders 270 (30.1%) then, primary school holders represented by 122 (13.6%) and those with masters and above by 100 (13.6) while those with secondary school are represented by 081 (09.0%) and those with adult literacy by 023 (02.6%)

**Table 2**

Questions	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Are you an indigene of Owerri?	Yes	497	55.5%
	No	399	44.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Can you speak Owerri dialect of Igbo fluently?	Yes	497	55.5%
	No	399	44.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Can you speak Owerri dialect without switching to another Igbo dialect?	Yes	215	23.9%
	No	681	76.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Can you speak Owerri dialect without adding English Language?	Yes	226	25.7%

	No	670	74.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Do you feel bold speaking Owerri dialect in the midst of other Igbo language speakers?	Yes	226	25.7%
	No	670	74.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>
Can you write in Owerri dialect?	Yes	215	23.9%
	No	681	76.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table shows the response of 896 people living in Owerri 497(55.5%) are indigenes but living in Owerri and 399 (44.5%) are none indigenes but living in Owerri. It shows that Indigenes of Owerri living in Owerri are more than none Indigenes. 497 people (55.5%) can speak Owerri dialect of Igbo Language fluently while 399 (44.5%) can speak other dialects of Igbo Language but not Owerri. 215 (23.9%) respondents can speak Owerri dialect without switching to other Igbo dialects while 681 (76.9%) cannot speak Owerri dialect without mixing it with other Igbo dialects. 215 (25.7%) respondents speak Owerri without adding English Language, while 670 (74.3%) cannot speak Owerri dialect without adding English Language. 226 (25.7%) respondents claim that they can speak Owerri dialect boldly in the midst of other Igbo speaking dialects while 670 (74.3%) respondents are not bold to speak Owerri dialect in the midst of non-Owerri speakers. 215 (23.9%) respondent claimed that they can write in Owerri dialect while 681 (76.1%) cannot write in Owerri dialect.

### Summary of Findings.

It can be ascertained that Owerri dialect of Igbo Language is actually endangered leading to attrition with the following findings. Some indigenes born, bred and still living in Owerri cannot speak the dialect fluently without mixing it with other Igbo dialects due to the tenants or non-indigenes living close to them. They try not to isolate themselves from their tenants and in so doing, mixed their dialect with their tenants' dialects. It is one of the reasons towards attrition of the Owerri dialect.

It is discovered that, it is very difficult for some indigenes of Owerri to speak Owerri dialect without switching into English or adding English Language to it. This may be due to the level of Education in the city, it is observed through the respondents that the level of Education in the city is high, the people with high level of Education are higher than those with low level.

From the analyzed data, the findings revealed that some Owerri dialect speakers are not bold to speak Owerri dialect of Igbo Language in public where they have other dialects speakers for fear of being tagged Nwa Owerri, this attitude endangers the dialect and encourages attrition. The number of people speaking Owerri dialect without code switching and mixing is minimal. The data analyzed also revealed that a good number of Owerri dialect speakers cannot write in the dialect because it is seen as a non-standard language without a standard Orthography.

### Conclusion

Owerri dialect of Igbo Language is actually endangered because of the shift in domain of other dialect speakers of Igbo Language, a lot of non-Indigenes are living in the city because of white-color jobs and

businesses because Owerri is the capital city of Imo State; as people troupe into the city, they come with their dialects and culture, then indigenes of Owerri find themselves blending their dialect with the fragments of another Igbo dialects or English Language. The attitude of Owerri people to their dialect has contributed to the attrition of their Language, although it has no written standard but transmitting the dialect to the younger ones can help to uphold it and retain the culture too.

### Recommendation

- A Language or dialect documented can hardly go into attrition or extinction, policy makers and educators in the city should try and document the dialect for posterity.
- Educators should also introduce the teaching of Owerri dialect of Igbo Language in schools, both in primary, post primary and higher education. Some students study Igbo linguistics, Owerri dialect of Igbo should be introduced as a branch of Igbo linguistics.

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## NKANYETADEBE ỤDAOLU N'EDEMEDE ỤMỤ AKWỤKWỌ AFỌ NKE ABỤỌ NA NWAFOR ORIZU KOLEEJI NKE AMỤMAMỤ NA NKUZI, NSUGBE, STEETI ANAMBRA,

Nke

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### Ụmịedemede

Nchọcha a bụ maka ụdaolu n'edemede ụmụ akwụkwọ afọ nke abụọ siri bụrụ ihe nramahu n'ụlọ akwụkwọ Nwafor Orizu koleeji nke amụmamụ na nkuzi, Nsugbe E mere nchọcha a iji choputa na ọ bụ ezigbote ihe nriamahu ụmụ akwụkwọ nọ n'agbata afọ a ikanyetadebe akara ụdaolu n'edemede ha tinyekwara na otutu ndi odee Igbo di iche iche anaghi agbesocha usoro a otu o kwesiri. Mbumuche nchọcha a bụ ichoputa ihe kpatara nsogbu a bụ na ụmụ akwụkwọ na-eji maka inweta ohere na mahadum manye isi n'ihe omumu o bula ma ya buri na ha "abaala skuuu", ndi di otu a na-akpo omumu akara ụdaolu asi n'ih na ha adighi nkwardobe igu Igbo. A maghi na akara ụdaolu otu mkpuruokwu bu mgbe o kwuru onwe ya na-agbanwe mgbe ufodu ma o baa n'ahiriokwu ya na iji olundi akpota okwu ufodu na-eme e tinyegharja akara ụdaolu. Nchọcha a ga-aba ezi uru n'ebe ụmụ akwụkwọ, ndi nkuzi na ohanaze nọ. E ji atutu akara ndi merela nchọcha maka akara ụdaolu dika De Saussure mee ya, mana e ji usoro nchọcha nkowa deputa ya. Nwa nchọcha choputara na otutu n'ime ha kwesiri imata na o bu naan n'elu ụdaume na myiri ụdaume ka a na-akanye akara ụdaolu. A choputara ka akara ụdaolu buri ihe omumu kwuru onwe ya nke ga-eme ka ụmụ akwụkwọ tinyekwa nnukwu uchu n'ihe omumu a. A choputakwara na o kwesiri ibu 'ogbatauhie' diiri onye agafeghi n'ule ya igafe na klasi ozo. A choputara na a ga-eweputa ezigbo oge n'ikuziri ụmụ akwụkwọ mkpa o di ihuta uru akaara ụdaolu bara n'ederede Igbo. N'ikeazu, nwa nchọcha nyere ntuziaka ka ụmụ akwụkwọ mahadum nọ n'agbata afọ nke abụọ dum jisie ike na-etinye akara ụdaolu n'ederede Igbo n'ebe o kwesiri nakwa ndi niile na-eke Igbo, o kachasi na mkpuruokwu ndi ahụ nwere otu nsupe, iji mee ka mputara ha doo oguu anya nke oma karja idi na-enyo okwu ndi ahụ enyo. Nke a ga-eme ka o diri oguu mfe na nghota karisja.

### Mkpelite

Ndi Igbo bu ndi bi n'ebe a mara dika ala Igbo. Asusu Igbo bu asusu ndi Igbo na-asu dika e jiri mara ha. O bu ya bu ugwu ndi Igbo nwere. Asusu bu ozuru uwa onu. O bu naan mmadu na-asu asusu ma were ya na-etinye n'oru n'uzo di iche iche. Ezeama (2012) kwuru na asusu bu iji mkpuruokwu nwere nghota suu asusu, dee edemede ma o bu guo agumagu. Mba niile nwere asusu ha. O bu ya kpatara, dika Ezeama siri kwuo na asusu o bula nwere ala ebe a na- asu ya na ndi na-asu ya. Asusu Igbo nwere ebe a na-asu ya. O bu n'ala Igbo ka a na-asu ya nke mere asusu Igbo jiri buri asusu ala Igbo.

N'agbanyeghi na ufodu ndi odee ka na-ewebata olumba ha di iche iche n'ederede ha. O dikwa mkpa ikwu na, Igbo izugbe ga-aka mma iji ede ihe o bula bu edemede n'Igbo ka o nwere ike ikwe oguu nghota, ebe o bu na odee agaghi ano nso ikowara oguu mputara okwu ufodu bu ndi o jiri olumba ya deputa. Asusu o bula nweriri uda e ji asu ya. Ya mere ufodu ndi na-amu amumamu asusu ji akowa na asusu bu ụdaolu mmadu a haziri nke mmadu ji akowaputa echiche obi ya site n'okwu onu ma o bu ederede.

Ozo kwa, o doro ndi amumamu asusu anya na e sitere n'amumamu mkpuru ụdaasusu mata na uda asusu Igbo di ato putara ihe dika:

1. Ụdaole elu ( ' )

2. Udaole alu ( ` )
3. dansũda ( - )

Asũsũ Igbo bũ asũsũ ụdolu n'ezie n'ihĩ na ọtũtũ mkpũrũokwu Igbo ndĩ ahũ nwere otu nsũpe juru eju, bara abara. Ọ bũrũ na e tinyeghĩ ha akara ụdaolu, ọ gaghi adĩcha mfe imata mputara ha n'okwu, n'ahĩriokwu nakwa n'ederede digasĩ iche iche.

Nsogbu nchọcha a nwere bũ na ụmũ akwũkwọ ngalaba amũmamũ na nkuzi Nwafor Orizu Koleeji, Nsugbe, anaghĩ etinyecha uchu n'imũta ụdaolu, Ọ kachasĩ ndĩ afọ nke abũọ, ya bũ ndĩ malitetugoro ije n'agumakwũkwọ bũ ndĩ e ji mee nchọcha a. Nke a bũ ihe ọ chọputara n'ịnọ ndĩ ọkawkuzi ya ụfọdũ nso dika nwata akwũkwọ n'ogogo di elu n'ulọakwũkwọ ahũ. A na-aju ha ajuju kwa afọ n'ihĩ gbasaara akara ụdaolu ma na nke a emeghĩ ha ka ha nwee mmasĩ n'imũta ya. Ọ bũ nsogbu a kpalitere mmũọ ọchọcha iji leba anya na nkanyetadebe akara ụdaolu n'edemede ụmũ akwũkwọ, ndehie na nkanyejọ akara ụdaolu na-esi otu ha si asũ ma na-anũkwa asũsũ ahũ. Nke a bũ iji mara ihe a ga-eme ka ụmũ akwũkwọ mahadum agbata afọ abũọ a mata ka e si etinye akara ụdaolu nakwa mkpa ọ di.

### **Mbunuuche Nwa Nchọcha**

Ime ka ụmũ akwũkwọ mahadum afọ nke abũọ a mata ihe bũ ụdaolu na akara ya.

- Ichoputa ebe nsogbu ndĩ a si.
- Ime ka ndĩ nkuzi na ndĩ odee Igbo niile mũta ka e si akanye akara ụdaolu n'ebe ọ dabara adaba.
- Ile ma e nwere ka a ga-esi mata mputara okwu Igbo ụfọdũ nwere otu nsũpe.

A ga-emezu nke a site n'ikowaputa ụdi akara ụdaolu ndĩ e nwere, mkpa akara ụdaolu di n'edemede Igbo, mkpũrũudasũsũ ndĩ e kwesiri ikanye ya na ndĩ ekwesighĩ. Ọzọ abũrũ usoro akara ụdaolu nke a ga-agbaso dika nke Igwe na Green na Emenanjo ha na De Saussure merela.

### **Ntulegharị Agumagụ**

E nwghĩ ka agumagũ zuo òkè ma ọ bũrũ na nwa nchọcha ebughĩ ụzọ nyochagharĩa ma tulegharĩa ihe ndĩ odee ndĩ ọzọ degorola gbasara isiokwu ahũ ọ na-edede maka ya. Ọ bũ maka iji nweta isi ihe a na-enyocha n'ederede a.

Okeke (2017) siri kowaa ya na Yule (2015:77) kwuru na “ụdaolu dika otu n'ime ọrũ dikarĩsirĩ oke mkpa na mkpĩiche n'ikowaputa mputara okwu okwu digasĩ iche iche”. N'okwu Yul – Ifode, ọ sirĩ na asũsũ ọ bũla mkpũrũokwu ha juputara n'edemede, mgbochiume na ụda bũ ihe na-ebute ndĩiche na mputara okwu ụfọdũ ka a na-akpọ ụdaolu.

Okorji (2001:13) kwuputara na otu ihe kachasĩ di mkpa n'otosegemental fonolog ibũ ihe iri mperi 'o na-eweta n'ederede Igbo. Ezikaojiakũ (1989:40) kowakwara na Igbo bũ asũsũ nwere ụdaolu, ebe akara e jiri mara ya bũ ụdaolu ka a na-akpọ akaraũda. Ọ gbakwũnyere na ihe akaraũda ji di nnukwu mkpa bũ na ọ na-eme ka okwu nwee mputara n'ihĩ a na-akowa. N'otu aka ahũkwa, Mbah na Mbah (2014) siri kwuo na ụdaolu bũ ihe na-ebute ndĩiche n'okwu na ibe ya. Ọ sũkwara na asũsũ ọ bũla na-eji mkpĩiche n'uzọ di etu a ka a na-akpọ asũsũ ụdaolu. Ọ kowakwara na ihe na-eziputa ogoolu bũ ima jijiji nke mkpomũda. Mgbe a gbatiri mkpomũda, piich agaa elu nke ga-eziputa piich di elu. Ọzọ kwa, oge ikuku si na ngũgũ hirĩ nne, ọ ga-emetũtakwa ogo piich udi m piich di n'ahĩriokwu di ka ha kwuru, ka a na-akpọ asũsũ ndebe olu bũ ozuru asũsũ ọrũ. E gosila na asũsũ ọ bũla, n'agbanyeghĩ asũsũ ọ bũ, nwere piich na-ada ada na ngwũcha ahĩri nrũaka mgbe e nwere piich riri elu (n'asũsũ ndebe olu) na ngwũcha mgbe nke gosiri na ozi ka na-abĩa.

E wepũ asũsũ ndebe olu, ụfọdũ asũsũ jikwa piich arũ ọrũ n'uzọ di iche iche. Ụdiri asũsũ ahũ na-etinye piich na mkpũrũokwu site n'iwegharĩ ụdi ya na nkeji ka e wee nweta nghota di iche iche site na mkpũrũokwu nwere otu ụdiri mmebe. Asũsũ ndĩ ahũ ji ụda arũ ọrũ ọ putara na ndebeolu bũ ma nsokwasĩ nke e jiri bukwasi ụda n'ime asũsũ ụda.

Ugwuona (2015:41) kōwara ụdaolu dika ogoolu, ebe akara e ji egosi ya ka a na-akpọ akara ụdaolu. N'aka nke Ozo kwa, Emenajo (2013:43) kōwara akara ụdaolu dika fōnim bụ nke pụtara mkpuru ụdaolu, etu mofim siri pụta mkpuruasusu ka fōnim siri pụta mkpuruudasusu.

N'ihe omumu odidi ụdaasusu, e kere ụzo abuo, ha gunyere keusoro na kentukwasi. Fōnim keusoro n'Igbo izugbe di iri ato na isii, ebe kentukwasi di abuo naani dika ụdaelu na ụdaala. Akara e jiri mara ha bu ndi a ( ^ ). E nwekwara ụda nsuda e siri n'ụdaolu elu kewaputa. Akara e jiri mara ya bu (-). Ụdaume niile na mgbochiume niile e nwere na mkpuru edemede bu fōnim keusoro. Ihe e ji akpo ha fōnim bu maka na ha na-ebute ndiche na nghota n'etiti mkpuruokwu abuo ma o bu karja yiri onwe ha.

E nwekwara ike ikpo asusu ụdaolu tereesi. N'aka nke ozo, ikekōnwu, Ezikeojiaku, ubani na Ugoji (1999:31) kwuputara na asusu o bula na-enwe mgbanwe n'olu mkpoputa ya. Ihe nke a putara bu na o nweghi asusu a na-eji otu udi olu akpoputa. Asusu o bula ga-enweriri ndanusoro mkpuru okwu ya, nkebiokwu ma o bu ahiriokwu. Ha gbakwunyekwara na otutu asusu mba Afrika na ufodu asusu mba Esia bucha asusu ụdaolu. N'iga n'ihu, ha siri na Igbo bu asusu ụdaolu. E jikwa akara ụdaolu e gosiputa ụdaolu e jiri kpoputa nkejiokwu di na mkpuruokwu di iche iche dika.

Akara ụdaolu elu ( ^ )

Akara ụdalala ala ( ^ )

Akara ụdalou nsuda (-)

Ha nyegasiri omumaatu ndi dika akara ụdaolu e ji edeputa mkpuruokwu Igbo dika.

A	B	CH	D
i. akwa	(iv) ike	(vii) ukwu	(ix) Oke
ii. akwa	(v) Ike	(viii) ukwu	(x) Oke
iii. akwa	(vi) ike	(ix) ukwu	(xi) oke

Na nkowa ha, ihe di iche abughi nsupe ka o bu ụdaolu butere nghota puru iche ma o bu ndiche na mkpuruokwu ndi a e deputara n'elu ebe a. O buru na anyi lezie anya nke oma, anyi ga-ahu na mkpuruokwu niile di na A, B, CH na D nwere otu nsupe. Ihe ga-eweta nghota puru iche na ha bu site n'enyemaka akara ụdaolu. Oge o bula e ji ụdaolu aru oru di etu a, a na-asi na oru ya bu kenghota mkpuruokwu. O dikwa mkpa ikwu na e nwere ike iji ụdaolu mee nghota puru iche n'etiti ahiriokwu na ibe ya n'Igbo dika:

- (i) Í gbùrù mmadù
- (ii) Ì gbùrù mmadù?

Ahiriokwu (i) abughi ahiri ajuju maka nnochiaha bidoro ya nwere ụdaolu elu, ma (ii) bu ahiri ajuju maka nnochiaha bidoro ya nwere ụdaolu ala. Ihe a na-akpo nke a bu oru ụdaolu kenghota grama.

Okafo na Ewelukwa (2011:55) na-enye nkowa maka ụdaolu n'asusu Igbo dika ndi achaputa ihe na ndi e nwere ike ihu ebe o bula. Ha siri na ha bu ụdaelu na ụdaala, ebe ụda nke mezuru ya ato buzi ụdansuda. Ha ghakwunyere na ụdaelu so n'otu n'ime ụdaolu nke e nwere n'asusu Igbo, ebe akara e jiri mara ya bu (/) buru nke a na-akanye n'elu ụdaume na myiri ụdaume. E nwekwara ike ihuta ụdaelu na nkejiokwu di iche iche. A bia n'otu nkeji nke ha kporo (monosyllabic high tones) n'asusu Bekwee. Ufodu ụdaelu ndi a nwere naani otu nkeji gunyere ndi a: be - bee akwa

kwù	-	nwany i di ime
jé	-	ije ekpere
ré	-	orere ure

kpá - mmekpa ahụ

E nwekwara ụdaelu ndị nwere nkeji abụọ dika

ákwá - mmadụ ibe akwa

eke - na-akpụ n'ala

ehi - anụ oriri

E nwakara ụdaala nwekwara otu nkeji dika:

dị - Onuogugu ihe dị

dọ - Ikwe nri dọ n'ala

rọ - akwụ rọrọ arọ

E nwekwara ụdaala nwekwara nkeji abụọ dika:

àlà - ịrụ ala

àkwà - ihi ụra n'elu akwa

àgwà - nri oriri

E nwekwara ụdaelu nke nwere nkeji atọ. Ha gụyere

ézigbo - Ihe dị mma

ákukọ - ikwu ogologo ekwu

ọkpukpụ - nke na-esi ike ọtita.

E nwekwara ụdaelu nke nwere nkeji anọ dika:

ńkíríká - ihe adighi mma/ofogeri mmadụ

ńkánká - ihe adighi mma

ogologo - ihe toro ogo

ákáráká - ihe chukwu kwuru na mmadụ ga-abụ

E nwekara akara ụdaala nwere nkeji atọ dika

Òbòdò - ebe onye si

Íkùkù - na-ebu mmadụ

ách ị chá - ihe oriri

E nwekwara akara ụdala nwere nkeji anọ dika

Igwùrùbè - otutu ihe

Ederede - akpụ derede

E nwekwara akara ụdausuda nwere nkeji abụọ

égò - e ji azụta ihe ọ bụla



águ - nke na-adogbu mmadu  
 ùté - e ji edina ala.

Ọkafor (2011:54) kwuru na asụsụ Igbo bụ asụsụ ụdaolu, n’ihi ya, ụdaolu dị ezigbo mkpa ma abia n’ihe gbasara utoasụsụ na osụsụ. Ọ gbakwunyekwara na ọ bụ site n’enyemaka akara ụdaolu ndị enwere ka e ji ezipụkarị ndịiche na-adị n’okwu na ibe ya, ọ kachasi n’okwu Igbo ọfọdụ. Ọkafo na-enye omumaatu dika mkpuruokwu a bụ ‘ike, o nwere otu ụda mana mputara ya ruru anọ n’ogugu site na silebul ‘I’ na ‘ke’ mejuputara ya. Silebula nwere ike ibụ ụdaelu, ụdaala ma ọ bụ ụdansụda. Iji mee ka okwu Ọkafo dokwue anya, mkpuruokwu ndị e dere n’e tinyeghi ha akara ụdaolu iji mee ka ngota ha dị mfe ga-enye onye ọbula na-agu ya ezigbo nsogbu n’ihi na e tinyeghi ha akara ụdaolu bụ ihe nwere ike iziputa echiche a choro n’ime okwu ahụ.

Otu aka ahụ kwa, Ume, Ugoji na Dike (2006:41) na-ekwu na Igbo nwere fonim atọ, mana ọ bụ abuo n’ime ha kacha puta ihe, ebe nke mezuru ha atọ ka a na-akpo ụdansụda. Ha gbakwunyere na ụdansụda anaghi eso ụdaala, kama ụdaelu nwere ike iso ya.

Ezeuko na Chira (2005: 92) hutara ụdaolu dika ogoolu e jiri kpoputa ụda ma ọ bụ ụdaokwu. Etu e siri kpoputa mkpuruokwu bụ ya na-eme ka e nwee nghota puru ihe ihe okwu ahụ putara. Ha sirị na akara e ji ama ogo olu mkpoputa ụda ma ọ bụ okwu ka a na-akpo akara ụdaolu. Ha gbakwunyere na ọ bụ akara ụdaolu a a na-ekwu maka ya na-eme ka e nwee echiche na nghota n’okwu. Ya bụ, akara ụdaolu, nọ onodu ka fonim kentukwasi. Etu mkpuruadaasụ si enye echihce di ihe ihe n’okwu ha batara na ya ka fonim kentukwasi si enyekwa nke ya. Ha kwukwara na e nwere akara ụdaolu abuo putakarị sirị ihe dika akara ụdaelu na akara ụdaala, ebe nke mezuru ha atọ bụz i nke a kporo akara ụdansụda ( ‘`-).

Oru ndi digasi ihe ihe akara ụdaolu na-arụ n’asụsụ Igbo dika ha kwuru gunyere ndi a:

- i. Ọ na –enye aka igosiputa nghota mkpuruokwu nwere tinyere ndiche di n’ okwu ndi nwere otu nsupe dika.
 

ígwé	-	Chukwu bi n’elu
ìgwè	-	otutu mmadu
ótù	-	ihe kwu naani ya
òtù	-	ogbako ndi mmadu
- ii. Akara ụdaolu na-enye aka igosiputa ndiche n’ahiriokwu nkwusara na ahiriokwu ajuju dika
  - i. Ó chùrù rmmìrì (ahiri nkwusara)
  - ii. Ó chùrù rmmìrì? (ahiri ajuju)
  - i. É gbùrù ágú (ahiri nkwsara)
  - ii. É gbùrù ágú? (ahiri ajuju)
- iii. Ụdaolu na-egosikwa ndiche di n’ahiriokwu na nkejiokwu nrugara aka nke nghota ya ezughi ezu.
 

i.	Ụzọ di rma	-	Road is good
ii.	Ụzọ di rma	-	Ụzọ is a good person

Emenanjo (1978) kere ngakọ ụdaolu ụzọ ise dika.

elu	elu.	dika	ényí	Elephant
ala	elu.	dika	ùdé	cream
elu	ala.	dika	úzọ	door
ala	ala.	dika	àkwà	bed
elu	nsuda.	dika	ígwé	sky

Na nkowa elu elu putara na ufodu mkpuruokwu na-ebe akara udaolu elu dika enyi. Ala elu gosiri mkpuruokwu nwere udaolu ala na elu dika ude. Elu ala bu ndi nwere uda elu na ala dika uzò. Ala ala bu ndi nwere uda ala ala ka akwa. Elu nsuda bu ndi nwere udaolu elu na nsuda dika igwe.

E nwere otu ato na-adọ ndoro ndoro gbasara uto ka mma a ga-eji na-akanye akaraudaolu (Mbah, 2009). Ha bu ndi a:

- Otu welters. Green na Igwe, Nwachukwu na Mbah
- Otu Williamson na Emenanjo
- R.C. Abraham

Nkowa R.C Abraham di ka Mbah na Mbah (2010) siru deputa ya:

- A ga-edede nkeji okwu ndi bu uda elu a ga-eji nnukwu leta deputa nkeji okwu ndi bu udaolu elu.
- Nkejiokwu ndi nwere akara nsuda ka a ga-eji nnukwu leta deputa mana mkpuruokwu ndi na-esote bu n'obere leta ka a ga-edeputa ha mana, ha buru mkpomi ma o bu ndi nwere otu nkejiokwu, a ga-eji obere leta deputa ha;
- A ga-eji obere leta deputa nkejiokwu ndi bu udaolu ala.

Omumaatu:

Udu	=	udu	-	pot
Igba	=	igba	-	drum
Agwa	=	agwa	-	beans
Efe	=	efe	-	Shirt
Anyá	=	anya	-	Proper name
Ísí	=	isi	-	Head

Atutu otu Williamson bu na mgbe mkpuruokwu nwere udaolu elu ka a ghara ikanye ya. Omumaatu

Ísí	=	head
Ékí	=	python
Ímì	=	nose

Mgbe e nwere udaolu nsuda, were akara uhie pospu ya. Dika

élù	-	top
Ígwé	-	sky
Ézé	-	teeth

Mgbe okwu nwere udaolu ala si were akara mkpoda gosi ya. dika

Ùdù	-	drum
Ùrì	-	indigo
Àkwà	-	bed

Atutu ndi otu welters bu na mgbe mkpuruokwu nwere udaolu elu anyi nwere akara nseli gosi ya dika.

Ìsí	-	head
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Íké	-	strength
Úsù	-	bat

### Nkọwa Isiokwu

Ebe ọ bụ na nghọta anaghị ezucha òkè n'edemede ọ bụla e dere n'Igbo ma ọ bughị site na-enyemaka akara ụdaolu n'okwu ndị ahụ yiri onwe ha ma nwekwaa otu nsupe. A ga-akwọwazi kpom kwem ihe isiokwu a na-arụtụ aka. N'ihì nke a, asụsụ Igbo bụ asụsụ ụdaolu. Ihe nke a pụtara bụ na e nweghị ka a mata mputara okwu Igbo ụfọdụ, ọ kachasị kwa ndị yiri onwe ha ma ọ bụ ndị ahụ nwere otu nsupe. Site n'itinye ha akara ụdaolu abụọ ndị a putakarịsiri ihe ka nghọta ha ga-esiputa ihe n'ebe ogụụ nọ.

E tere ugba e tere azụ, ụdaolu na akara ụdaolu bụ ejewe aghaghị n'asụsụ Igbo. Etu 'na' si dị mkpa n'omumụ asụsụ Igbo ka ụdaolu na akara ya si dị mkpa. Nke a mere na onye ọ bụla maara nke oriri na nkà edemede tosiri idi na-etinyegasi otu nsupe kariya inyo ha enyo. Aha ọzọ e jiri mara akara ụdaolu bụ fonim kentutwasị. Ihe kpatara e jiri kpoo ya fonim kentukwasị bụ maka na a na-atuwasi ya n'udaume ma ọ bụ na myiriudaume Igbo nke di n'ime mkpuruokwu abuo ma ọ bụ karia iji gosiputa nghota di iche iche.

Ọzọ kwa, a bịa n'ihe gbasara omumu odidi udaasusu, e kere fonim ụzọ abuo.

- i. Keusoro
- ii. Kentukwasị

Keusoro n'Igbo izugbe di iri ato na isii, ebe kentutwasị di naani abuo ha bu ụdaelu na udaala. E nwekwara ụdi ụda ọzọ a na-akpo ụda nsuda nke nwere ike ibute ndi iche na ghota mkpuruokwu. Ọ bụ ụdaelu a sudara nwa obere mere e jiri akpo ya udansuda. Omumaatu fonim keusoro gunye udaume niile na myiriudaume e nwere na mkpuredemede Igbo. Ebe fonim kentukwasị bu ụdaelu ( ' ), udaala ( ` ) na udansua ( - ).

Emenanjo (1978) kowara na asusu ụdaolu kere ngako ụdaolu ụzọ ise. A bịa n'Igbo, e ji ụdaolu aru ọrụ abuo di mkpa dika nke lezikal na nke grama dika e kwuburu na mbu. Ima atu

Ísí	nke bụ isi mmadu
Ísì	nke bụ ihe rere ere
Ísí	nke bụ ihe oriri
Ísì	nke ahughị ụzọ

N'omumaatu ndi e nyegasiri n'elu a, anyi ga-ahụ na akara ụdaolu mere ka a ghota ndi iche digasi n'okwu ndi ahụ nwere otu nsupe.

N'oru nke grama n'Igbo, a na-eji ụdaolu eme nghota puru ihce site na nkebiokwu ma ọ bụ ahiriokwu na ibe ya dika:

- É gbùrù éwú (nkwsara)
- È gbùrù éwú? (Ajuju)
- Ó kwùrù ókwú (nkwsara)
- Ò kwùrù ókwú (Ajuju)
- Ha jéré ághá (nkwsara)
- Hà jéré ághá? (Ajuju)
- Ó tírímfhé (nkwsara)

Ò tíríímíhé? (Ajuju)

### Ntulegharị Atụtụ

Ilechukwu (2016:18) siri na atụtụ bụ echihce a haziri nke oma nakwa usoro ime ihe arọ marọ ma ọ bụ iwu nke mmadụ, ebumnuche iwu a bụ ikowaputa arumarụ ma ọ bụ ederede nke ụzọ ya bụ nke atụtụ ahụ ga-agakọta ọnu.

Atụtụ e jiri mee nchọha a bụ nke Saussure. Saussure (1857) bụ nna Lingwistiks kowara akara di ka ihe metutara onwe, ya bụ na echiche e nyere akara bụ ka ndi siri ghotā ya. O kwuru na o nweghi mmekorita puru iche di n'etiti akara na echiche. Akara nwere echiche n'anya otu onye nwere ike o gaghi enwe echiche n'anya onye ozọ. Ka o sila di, a na-atu atumatu uzọ kacha mma a ga-esi na-akanye akara ndi a n'ederede Igbo. Aromaro a e nweela usoro atọ maka nke ga-aka mma, mana atọ ndi a ka nọ n'orụ rue taa.

Dika etu Mbah na Mbah (2014) si kowaa, Williamson na ndi otu ya tumadi Emenanjo na-akowa na o dighi mma idi na-akanye akara udaolu ele elu n'akwukwo ma ncha ncha. Ima atụ: mkpuruokwu o bula nwere naani akara udaolu elu elu dika eriri, efere, akuko, osisi, ogologo dgz. Ha sikwara na a ga-eji akara nlamala egosi udaolu ala n'uju dika aja, ada, agwa, isi, ama, akara dgz.

Ozọ kwa, ndi otu Welmers nke Nwachukwu so n'ime ya na-akowa na a ga-eji akara nlamelu egosiputa akara udaolu elu na nke nsuda, ebe a ga-eji akara nlamala egosiputa akara udaolu ala. E nwekwara ike iji otu akara gosiputa akara udaolu elu na nsuda n'ihu na o bụ naani udaolu nke bụ uzọ n'otutu udaolu yiri onwe ha ka a na-akanye ya. Mgbe ualolu abuo bụ akara udaolu elu, ihe o putara bụ na nke izizi bụ udaolu elu, ebe nke abuo bụ udaolu nsuda. Omumaatu: isi, ire, ego, ime, ide dgz ihe di mkpa bụ usoro onye na-agbaso were kanye nke ya ka o ga-agbasogide rue na gwucha.

### Nchọcha E Merela N' Isiokwu

Mbah (2008) kwuputara na o bụ site n'ikikere udaolu ka e ji amata mputara okwu asusu ndi so n'asusu udaolu rejista. O gara n'ihu kwue na ihe dikarisiri mkpa bụ uda e ji akpoputa okwu ndi a, nkebiokwu nakwa ahiriookwu ufodu bụ ndi e siri n'asusu di iche iche nweta.

Anwasia (2013) n'uche nke ya kowara na mkpiche sitere n'ualolu kpom kwem. O nyegasiri omumatu ndi a dika:

Ígwé	-	icheri ihe
Ìgwè	-	imirikit mmadu
Ísì	-	nke ihe oriri
Ìsì	-	ahughi uzọ
Ózò	-	nke ochichi
Òzó	-	ime ihe ugboro ugboro
Íré	-	akuku ahụ mmadu
Ìrè	-	ihe ibia na njedebe
Águ	-	na-adogbu mmadu
Àgu	-	ole ihe di
Àkwá	-	ihe ndina
Ákwá	-	nke oriri

Jideofor (2016) na-akowa mkpa ụdaolu dị n'asụsụ Igbo. Ọ gbakwunyere na ọ bụrụ ma a bịa n'asụsụ ndị bụ asụsụ ụdaolu ọ dị mkpa na a ga-etinye ụdaolu n'ọrụ ka nghọta wee dị mfe. Ọ sikwara na asụsụ ụdaolu nwere usoro ọ na-agbaso.

Ịma atụ

Ha bi Àbá (nkwusara)

Ha bi Àbá (ajụjụ)

Ha èsìghị Àbá (Njụ)

N'aka nke Ezeumudo (1985) kowara na okwu ụfọdụ na-agbanwọ ndị ọzọ ma ọ bụ okwu ndị ọzọ a na-esota ha. Ọ bụrụ na okwu nwere ụdaolu elu elu, a na-esota okwu nwere ụdaolu elu elu, ụdaolu okwu nke abụọ ga-agbanwọ dika.

Ísì + éwú	=	ísì éwú
Ányá + éké	=	ányá éké
Anụ + ehi	=	ánú éhí

E nwekwaziri okwu ndị anaghị agbanwe ụda chi ha n'otu aka ahụ dika

Ísì + álá	=	ísì álá
Áká + àkpà	=	áká àkpà
Ànyà + ènwè	=	ànyà ènwè
Áká + áwọ	=	áká áwọ

N'uche Ezeomeke (2011: 219), asụsụ Igbo bụ asụsụ ụda. Ya mere o ji dị mkpa na onye ọ bụla na-edede Igbo ga na-etinye akara ụda n'okwu ụfọdụ nwere otu nsupe. Ọ ga-eme ka amata etu okwu ndị ahụ si ada ụda bụ nke ga-enyere ya aka ka echiche ya kwe nghọta. N'okwu Igbo ụdọdụ, e nwere ndị ngọta ha ruru abụọ ma ọ bụ karịa. Ọ bụ naanị mgbe e nyere ha akara ụda ka a ga-enwe ike imata ha. Omụmaatụ, mkpụrụokwu ndị dika isi, afọ, ekwe, ike, akwa, igwe wdg. Ọ bụrụ ma ode dee ha etu imata nke a na-ekwu maka ya, nke a mere e jiri si na ọrụ akara ụdaolu na-arụ n'asụsụ Igbo karịrị akari. Akara ụdaolu na-enye aka igosiputa ndiche dị n'okwu ndị dị abụọ ma ọ bụ karịa ma ha nwere otu nsupe ma yie onwe ha dika n'okwu ndị a.

Ìsì	-	nke a na-ekpu ekpu
Ísì	-	akụkụ ahụ mmadụ
Ísì	-	nke e ji imi esi
Ísì	-	isi nri
Áfọ	-	akụkụ ahụ mmadụ
Áfọ	-	igụ ahọ ọnụ
Àfọ	-	ịfọha ihe
Àfọ	-	ole ihe ha
Íkè	-	onye ume dị
Íkè	-	ejị ańyụ nsị

Íkè - kechie ihe  
Íkè - oke ihe zuru mmadụ

Okafor (2011:54) siri na tupu e tinye akara ụdaolu n'okwu o bula, a ga-ebu ụzọ chọpụta nkejiokwu ole di n'ime okwu ahụ. Ihe kpatara onụdu a bu na o bu nkejiokwu ole di n'okwu ga-eziputa akara ụdaolu ole ga-adị n'otu okwu ahụ.

Nwozuzu (2008:15) hụtarà ụdaolu dika otu n'ime agwara ụdidi ụda ndi e nwere n'asusu Igbo. O kwekwara na olumba dum e nwegasiri n'ala Igbo na-eji akara ụdaolu eweputa ndiiche di na ha abuo ma o bughị otu a, o ga-ara ahụ ikowa mkpuruokwu ndi ahụ nwere otu nsupe ma o bu yie onwe ha.

### Nchikọta Ntulegharị Agumagụ

N'uzo di nke nke, otutu ndi okammuta achoputala na Igbo bu asusu ụdaolu. A choputara na oru di iche iche ụdaolu na-arụ wee mara na ụdaolu bu ejewe ma aghaghị n'ederede Igbo o bula. Etu o sila di, ufodu mmadu tulegoro nsogbu umu akwukwo na ufodu ndi odee na-enwe n'amumamu ụdaolu ma onwebeghi onye tulere nsogbu umu akwukwo Nwafor Orizu Koleeji nke amumamu na nkuzi, Nsugbe na-enwe.

### Usoro Nnwete Data

Ochocha ji umu akwukwo ndi afọ abuo na ngalaba amumanu na nkuzi nke Nwafor Orizu Koleeji, Nsugbe, wee mee nchocha ya. ndi afọ abuo a gbakoro onu wee di iri ise n'onu ogu.

A bia n'ime ha, umu nwoke di iri abuo ebe umu nwaanyi di iri ato ka o ji mee nchocha ya. E sitere n'aka otu onye n'ime ndi ode akwukwo ngalaba amumamu asusu Igbo wee nweta data. E mere nchocha a site na obere ederede e nyere umu akwukwo iji choputa ogbatuhie ha na-enwe n'ikanyetadebe akara ụdaolu O kachasi n'ebe nkejiokwu nakwa ahiriokwu e nwegasiri di iche iche. Ichoputa ma o bu ka ha wee banye mahadum oso oso ka ha ji banye imu asusu igbo ma o bu ichoputa ma o sitere n'okwu nwere nkejiokwu abuo, ato gbagowe, ma o bu iji olundi akpopta okwu ufodu na-eme etinyetaghị ya n'ebe o kwesiri. Ochocha ji ndi afọ abuo malitetugoro ije n'agumaakwukwo mee ya. a turu anya na ha ga-etinyewaganye uchu ma nwee oke mmasi imuta ya ka o ghara ibu ogbatuhie nyere ha.

Nkanye ụdaolu n'ederede umu akwukwo

Tebulu 1: Igosi Onuogugu Umu Akwukwo Ka Nyere Udaolu

Afọ Abuo	Umu Akwukwo	Ajuju	Ajuju Udaolu	Umu Akwukwo	%
Umu Nwoke	20	5	10	15	55%
Umu Nnwaanyi	30	4	12	20	58.5%

Tebulu 1: gosiri otu e siri kewaa umu akwukwo dika umu nwoke na umu nnwaanyi. Ndi nwoke di iri abuo n'onuogugu ebe ndi nke nwaanyi di iri ato n'onuogugu. Umu akwukwo ndi zara ajuju ụdaolu a horo di iri ato na ise n'onuogugu. Ajuju a juru iji nwalee ha di iteghete, nke mbu di abuo n'ime ya, ajuju nke abuo di abuo wee ruo na nke ise, ha niile wee gbakota di iri. Ajuju ndi nke abuo di ano nke ato ato di n'ime ya gbakorotaa di iri na abuo.

Tebulu 2: gosiri Onuogugu Umu akwukwo kanyetara otu nkejiokwu ruo nkejiokwu iri na ndi akanyetaghị ya:

Afọ Abụọ	Ụmụ Akwụkwọ	Ajuju	Edemede	Ụmụ akwụkwọ	Ndị kanyetara otu nkejiokwu Ruo nkejokwu iri	%	Ndị akanyetaghị	%
Ụmụ Nwoke	20	3	9	15	5	35%	10	65%
Ụmụ Nwaanyi	30	3	9	20	7	39%	13	65%

Na tebulu 2, N' okpuru afọ, e gosiri na ọ bụ ụmụ nwoke na ụmụ nwaanyi ka e jiri mee nchọcha a. E gosiri na ụmụ nwoke e jiri mee nchọcha a dị iri abụọ ebe ụmụ nwaanyi dị iri atọ n'onyogu. Ụmụ akwụkwọ a hoputara zara ajuju dị iri atọ na ise. Ndị nwoke dị iri na ise ebe ndị nwaanyi dị iri abụọ. Ajuju a juru maka ikanaye ụdaolu site n'otu nkejiokwu ruo na nkejiokwu dị iri dị nkebi atọ, nke mkpuruokwu ya dị itoolu itoolu. Ndị zatachara bidoro n'otu nkejiokwu ruo na nkejiokwu iri ahụ dị ise n'ime mmadụ iri atọ na ise zaa ajuju na dị ahụ ndị nwere ebe ha gbajoro ya dị mmadụ iri na atọ. Nwa nchọcha nwetara ụmụ akwụkwọ site n' inye ha udi mkpuruokwu dị iche iche na achiri okwu dị iche iche ka ha kanye akara ụdaolu. Ọ dị ajuju ọ juru, nke mbụ itinye ikanye ụdaolu n'okwu bụ otu nkejiokwu dika:

- Jí - ihe oriri
- Dí - Nna ezinaulo
- Nwá - Nwatakiri
- Sí - isi he oriri
- dọ - ebe ihe dosara
- dị - mmadụ idi ihe

A bịa na nkejiokwu ndị a, ufodu bụ ụdaelu ebe ufodu bukwazi ụdaala. Ndị kanyetadebere ụdaelu dị mmadụ ise ebe ndị gbajoro ya dị iri na anọ. N'ime mmadụ iri atọ na ise o nwere n'ụmụ akwụkwọ ndị nwoke na ndị nwaanyi, ndị nwetachara ihe a juru di naani iri na itoolu. N'ime ajuju otu nkejiokwu kwa, ndị dara naani otu di itoolu, ebe ndị nwetere naani abụọ n'ime anọ dikwazi iteghete otu akara di atọ ebe ndi enwetaghị akara ọ bula di iri na isii.

A bịa n'ajuju nke abụọ, nwa nchọcha juru bụ tinye akara ụdaolu n'okwu bụ nkejiokwu atọ na anọ ndi a.

- a. Ebule
- b. Ofufe
- c. Okpurukpu
- d. Okiriri
- e. Akwukwo

N; ime mkpuruokwu ise a di n'onyogugu, A – E nkejiokwu atọ di atọ n'onyogu, ebe nkejiokwu anọ dikwa abụọ n'onyogu, ebe mkpuredemede a ga-etinye ya bụ akara ụdaolu n'okwu di itoolu. Naanị mmadụ atọ kanyetara akara ndi ahụ niile a choro, mmadụ isii gbajoro otu akara. Na otutu n'ime ha nwetara okara



maakị, karisia n'okwu ndị ahụ bụ nkejiokwu abụọ. Imirikiti nwere anọ n'ime iri atọ, ndị ọzọ nwekara, ise, issi dgz.

N'ajụjụ nke atọ, bụ itinye akara ụdaolu n'elu okwu ndị nwere ike igbanwe akara chi ha dika.

- a. ísí + éwú = isi + ewu  
 b. ányá + éké = anya + eke  
 ch. ánụ+ éhí = anụ + ehi  
 d. áká + ìsé = aka + ise  
 e. ñkụ + ùbé = nkụ + ube

Akara ụdaolu ha ga-etinye dị iri abụọ. Ndị ga-akanye akara ahụ dị iri atọ na ise n'ụmụ nnwaaanyị , ndị afọ abụọ bụ ụmụ nwoke na ụmụ nnwaaanyị . Ụdaolu elu ha ga-akanye dị iri na asatọ ebe ụdamsụda ga-adị abụọ. Mmadụ ise nwetara ajụjụ nke atọ, ebe iri atọ ndị ọzọ gbajọsiri n'otu ụzọ.

Ajujụ nke anọ bụ itinye akara ụdaolu n'ahiriokwu dika.

- a. Anyị dere ule taa.  
 b. Ọ zara ụlọ

ch. ! gburu ewu?

d. Ha kpere ekpere mana fada abịaghị

e. E gotara m ji mana mmanụ gwurụ

Nke a bụ ikanye ụdaolu n'ahiriokwu. Ha ga-akanye ụdaolu dị iri anọ na ise. Ụdaolu dị iri na itoolu, ụdaala dị iri abụọ na ise, ụdamsụda dị naanị otu. Ndị nwetara ụdaolu dị ise ebe ndị nwetara ụdaala dị anọ. Ụdabsua bụ naanị otu onye.

Tebulu 3: Igosi ụmụ nwoke na ụmụ nnwaaanyị ndị kanyetadebere ụdaolu na ndị akanyetaghị

Afọ abụọ	Umụ akwukwọ	Umụ nnwaaanyị zara ajụjụ	Umụ nwoke zara ajụjụ	Ajụjụ ole	Udaole ole	Umụ nnwaaanyị kanyetara	%	Umụ nnwaaanyị ndị akanyetaghị i	%	Umụ nwoke kanyetara	%	Umụ nwoke ndị akanyetaaghị i	%
Umụ nwoke	20		15	8	19					5	26%	12	63%
Umụ nnwaaanyị	30	20		7	21	8	38%	15	71%				

N' ikpwa tebulu 3, ọ bụ ụmụakwukwọ ole dị na tebulu 3, ka a ga-eji akpwa ya n'ihia na ọ bụ ụmụ akwukwọ ka ha bc. Ọ bụ n'aka ode akwukwọ na njalaba amumamụ asusụ Igbo ka e siri nweta ole ha dị. n' ogo nke abụọ a, ụmụ nwoke niile dị iri abụọ, ndị zara ajụjụ dị asatọ. N' ime ndị a, ụmụ nnwaaanyị dị iri atọ ebe ndị zara ajụjụ dị asaa. Ụdaolu ole ụmụ nwoke ga-akanye dị iri na itoolu ma nkejiokwu m ahiriokwu. N' ime ya, ụmụ nnwaaanyị dị iri abụọ kanyetanwuru ụdaolu, ụdaala na ụdamsụda bụ iri abụọ na otu ka ha kanyetadebere ebe ụmụ nwoke dị iri na ise zara ajụjụ ụdaolu dị iri na iteghete.

## Nchikọta Na Mmehi

N' eziokwu, nwa nchọcha emejuputala ihe ọ bu n'uche site n' igosiputa na ọtụtụ ụmụ akwụkwọ enweghị mmasi n'ebe ụdaolu dị. ndị o jiri mee nchọcha ya bụ ụmụ akwụkwọ ndị nọ n'ogo nke abụọ. Nwa nchọcha chọputara n'ihe ngosi ya na ụmụ akwụkwọ eruchaghị okara na-azatali akara ụdaolu n'ule ha. Nwa nchọcha chọputaa na ihe socha ebute nsogbu a mgbe nwataakwụkwọ na-enwe oke ihe nramahụ n'iba mahadum manye isi n'ị mụ asụsụ igbo ma ya bụrụ na ụ banyela. Ọzọ kwa dika ibe ya bụ amaghị na ụfọdụ mkpụrụokwu na-agbanwe akara ụdaolu ha ma ha baa n'ahiriokwu.

Nke ọzọ a chọputarakwara na ụfọdụ ndị na-amu Igbo ejichaghị mmasiobi ha agụ ya, kama ka ọ bụrụ ha a na-eme tinyekwara ọtụtụ nke nkuzi kwesiri ikuzi ya nke oma amaghị ya.

Na mmehi, ọ ga-adị mma ma e mee ka 'Akara ụdaolu' bụrụ ihe omumụ kwuuru onwe ya. Nke a ga-eme ka ụmụ akwụkwọ tinyekwa nnukwu uchu n'ihe omumụ a. A ga-agba mbọ ka e mee ka ọ bụrụ ihe kwesiri ibụ "Ogbatuuh i e" di iri onye agafeghi n'ule ya igafe na klasi ọzọ.

N'itunye aro, ọ ga-aka mma ka ndị na-akuzi Igbo, malite n'ogo ụlọakwụkwọ sekondiri rue na mahadum jisie ike ma weputa ohere maka nkuzi ụdaolu ma mee ka ụmụ akwụkwọ ndị a mata uru itinye akara ụdaolu bara n'okwu Igbo. Ọ bụrụ na e tinye arọmaro ndị a n'orụ, nguputa ederede Igbo ga-adị mfe.

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## WIDOWHOOD AND POST-WAR AGONIES: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW DIMENSION OF ARMISTICE DAY

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### Abstract

Armistice Day traditionally commemorates the cessation of hostilities and celebrates the end of conflict. However, amidst the valorization of heroism and sacrifice lies a less explored aspect: the experiences of widows and the enduring agonies they faced in the aftermath of war. This research aims to illuminate this neglected dimension of Armistice Day by examining the profound impacts of widowhood and post-war trauma on individuals and communities. Through a qualitative approach involving in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, this study explores the narratives of widows whose lives have been shaped by the loss of their partners in war. It seeks to understand the multifaceted challenges they encounter, including emotional distress, economic hardships, and social isolation, exacerbated by societal expectations and institutional support systems. By unpacking these complexities, the research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the broader implications of war beyond the battlefield, emphasizing the need for recognition and support for widows within post-conflict societies. The findings underscore the importance of integrating the voices and experiences of widows into the discourse surrounding Armistice Day, advocating for inclusive commemoration that acknowledges their sacrifices and struggles. Ultimately, this study offers insights into the enduring impacts of armed conflict on those left behind, challenging prevailing narratives of war commemoration and advocating for a more comprehensive approach to honoring the legacies of all affected by war.

### Introduction

World War 1 made a huge impact in the lives of people especially women and children. It altered history and changed many lives.<sup>1</sup> The Remembrance Day that is celebrated annually in many countries provided relief and addressed the feelings of loss on the part of the bereaved families. It

accorded honor to those who sacrificed their lives in the battle. Women whose husbands, fiancés or boyfriends died in the First World War believed that they also served the nation, because they sacrificed their men and as such, deserve recognition.<sup>2</sup> The honor and recognition given to the heroes through the Remembrance Day provided a sense of pride not only for the nation, but also for the bereaved families who felt that by losing their loved ones, they have sacrificed for the nation.<sup>3</sup> That feeling of sacrifice helped to facilitate the emotional healing of war widows. Indeed, the Armistice Day celebration which began on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1918 resonated the spirit of nationalism, unity, victory and pride, which was an acknowledgement of the fact that the sacrifices of the heroes were not in vain.<sup>4</sup>

While the recognition given to the heroes contributed to console the bereaved families, however, it did not entirely take away the agonies that war widows go through. For instance, Kitty Eckersley's husband Percy was killed in 1916, few months to the delivery of their son. Some years after, when she documented her experience with the Imperial War Museum, Kitty narrated the agonies and pains her husband's death caused her. According to Kitty she felt like dying too, since she had lost the only person that gave her life a meaning.<sup>5</sup>

Emotional agony was not the only challenge that faced widows at the time. The 1900s social construct was patriarchal in nature, which implied that men were mostly the breadwinners of the home. Also at that time, men were paid higher wages than women and when the man dies the finances of the family were badly affected.<sup>6</sup> Not just the widows that suffered the hurt, other dependents like children and extended family members felt the impact of such loss. To remedy widows' sufferings in United Kingdom and elsewhere in Europe, a non-contributory pension policy was adopted by the government to support widows whose husbands were killed in the World War I.

The memo signed by Mable F. Empoon from the Ministry of Pensions (Widows and Dependents Branch) London on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1919 showed an award of pension to a widow and her child in London to cushion the effect of their hardship.<sup>7</sup> Charity organizations such as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association and the British Legion supported the effort of the government by providing help to widows, but unfortunately not all the war widows that got such support.<sup>8</sup> Many women lost the pension because they were found drunk or shown irresponsibility in taking care of their children. Also, the public complained that giving women free fund would make them lazy and unproductive.

The forgoing sets the pace for the analysis of widowhood and post-war agonies that will be explored in this study. It aims to understand how widowhood was perceived by the public and the factors that shaped widows' experiences in the post-World War 1 years. In addition, the study seeks to understand the extent to which Remembrance Day celebration ameliorated the hurt caused by the loss of loved ones.

For the purpose of clarity, this paper considered three fundamental questions that guided the study. The questions include: What were the impacts of the Remembrance Day in the lives of WW1 widows? How did the perception of widowhood by the society affect the way widows were treated? When a hero is honored, does it change the feeling of hurt and loss among the loved ones?

In order to provide answers to the above questions, the study utilizes historical analysis technique to interpret data, while data used were gathered through primary sources such as memos, letters, videos, archival materials, testimonies, photos, etc. Some relevant secondary sources were also explored during the analysis. The research is structured into four parts. The first part is made up of introduction which provides the overview and background of the study. Part two examines the evolution of widowhood recognition in post war society, this helps in understanding the societal perception of the concept of widowhood and how that general perception shaped widowhood experience in the post WWI society. Part three attempts an in-depth analysis of the significance of the Remembrance Day in the life of widows. Finally, in part four, the various rituals used during memorials to honor war heroes are analyzed to determine whether it has an effect in the feeling of hurt and loss amongst widows. This part also includes the conclusion of the study.

### **Perception and the evolution of widowhood recognition in post war society**

Going by the Britannica Dictionary definition, a widow is someone whose husband has died.<sup>9</sup> Marie Cappart described widowhood in relation to war when she argued that widows are spouses of men killed in combat or civilians who at the instance of their dead, became the symbol of collective pain and witness to the barbarity of war, which brings perpetual mourning to the society. During the First World War like no other war in history, the number of widows multiplied proportionately with the heroes killed in the war front. By 1914 -1919 that the First World War lasted, communication was not easy then when compared to today's world. Cappart observed that a woman's status as a wife changed to widow following arrival of a letter or telegram reporting the dead of a soldier.<sup>10</sup> In the same vein, Erika Kuhlman corroborated Cappart by noting that 'the history of World War I widowhood in Germany begins and ends with the post office'.<sup>11</sup> In many occasions, the information gets to the families of the deceased weeks or months after they were killed. In Fact, many women learnt about the dead of their loved ones after the armistice that brought the war to an end, while some husbands that sustained injuries during the war could not survive the pain inflicted on them and died after the armistice was signed.

World War 1 came with so many challenges in the magnitude that have never been experienced since the history of man. During the war, the number of casualties on both sides surpassed any other war prior to the First World War. The volunteers were enthused and motivated by their patriotism. In fact, Manchester Guardian of August 4, 1916, captured the unprecedented selflessness of the Allied soldiers as presented by John Hill, who noted that the dominant thoughts in the mind of soldiers in the second year of the war was not their safety, but what becomes of their wives and family members should they be killed in the war front.<sup>12</sup> It was on this basis that Hill suggested that war widows and orphans be given one day's pay from the Allied industries of shipbuilding and engineering to help meet their needs.

Generally, the public perception of widowhood during and after the First World War was that of grief, petty, helplessness and agony, which was why government and institutions designed policies to address the need of widows and orphans. A good example was the pension policy in England in 1919, which provided opportunity for widows to earn pension twice a month to support their families.<sup>13</sup> Stephen Bates also pointed out how government cooperated with the parliament to enforce legislations that allowed war widows who remarried to re-qualify for pension if there are

divorced or bereaved.<sup>14</sup> By 1941, the government had extended the pension support to mercantile marine and fishing fleets and their dependents who suffered from the enemy attacks during the war.<sup>15</sup> The foregoing therefore, suggests that the welfare of widows has always been a major concern to both the public and government, especially in developed nations.

Despite government's efforts to attend to the needs of war widows' welfare and the recognitions accorded the heroes, there are those who think that these efforts are not enough for such a pain as losing a husband or father. For instance, Marie Cappart argued that while pensions of dead heroes go to their widows and children, however, it cannot equate the lives lost, because the recognitions and honor accorded, only goes to the heroes and not to the grieving widows, which implies that the agonies of war widows are inadequately considered and not directly addressed. Erika Kuhlman opined that 'analyzing the narratives of these war widows' experiences changes, the temporality of the war by focusing on the aftermath of the conflict, since widows were forced to deal with the consequences of their husbands' deaths long after the official cease-fire that ended the fighting in 1918'.<sup>16</sup> Although the armistice ended the First World War, however, widows continued to bear the consequences of the war many years after it ended. Widowhood saddles the victims with the responsibility of raising the children alone and in doing so, she is subjected to emotional agonies that are often not recognized as sacrifice to the nation.

It can be argued here that the First World War changed the perception of war widowhood in many ways. For instance, in many societies before the war, mourning was a private affair whereas relatives rallied round the widow and assisted with the funeral of the deceased. Also, widows were expected to behave and dress in a certain way that expresses and convinces people of their commitment, depth of emotions and strong attachment to their husbands. Maggie Andrews and Janis Lomas argued that "before the First World War, there was very little financial help for the vast majority of widows of soldiers. This began to change in the first two years of the war, as financial provision for war widows gradually moved from charitable support underpinned by a tiny amount of state provision to a fully regulated system. This was provided by an entirely new government department: the Ministry of Pensions. Founded in December 1916, the Ministry was created specifically to deal with claims for war disability and war widows' pensions".<sup>17</sup> The war also made the plight of widows known to the public as historians, press and policy experts began to analyze widowhood from different perspective and campaigned for widows' welfare.

### **Widowhood and the Significance of the Remembrance Day**

The significance of Remembrance Day can be weighed in relation to the value of the sacrifices made by fallen heroes of war by giving their lives for the peace and freedom of their nation. In the work *Offering: The Story of Widow's Mite and Remembrance Day*, the author likened the loss of lives in the First World War as the ultimate sacrifices by both the dead and the living. Thus, "the soldiers offered their lives – all that they had. Likewise, their parents and wives offered all they had".<sup>18</sup> Life is generally regarded as the highest price one can pay for any course and those who volunteered to die for others deserved the honor that comes with Remembrance Day. What is now important to consider is whether the Remembrance Day actually impacts the lives of war widows.



In the preceding sections, it was argued that although the Remembrance Day may have accorded the fallen heroes honor, however, it does seem that attentions are primarily directed to the sacrifices of dead soldiers to the extent that some societies fail to acknowledge that widows whose husbands were killed also sacrificed for the nation. Hence, they neglect widows and the agonies they go through in many countries of the world, particularly in developing nations. A typical example could be drawn from Nigeria where war widows undergo unprecedented agonies after losing their husbands. Daily Trust in 2021 during the Arm Forces Remembrance Day as it is called in Nigeria, which holds every 15 January, the date the Civil War in the country ended and found that many widows of dead soldiers are in despair and disappointment.<sup>19</sup> For instance, a 28-year-old widow, Victoria Elijah, narrated how she was abandoned by the government after the death of her husband who was killed in the war front. Other war widows such as Juliet Onwuzuruike, Patience Adojoh, Margret Tsebee, Elder Agnes Etukudo, Mrs. Esther Edem, Mrs. Philomena Etim. Mrs. Sunday Amos and Samira Ali reported that their husbands' allowances and entitlements were not released to them and the absence of their husbands have made life unbearable for them and their children.<sup>20</sup> Samira Ali stated that "When people hear that I am paying my children's school fees, they are very surprised because of the sacrifice my husband made and the way he was mourned".<sup>21</sup> In these circumstances, the Remembrance Day celebrations would be insignificant and meaningless to the widows whose lives have been characterized by anguish by the loss of their loved ones.



*A cross section of some widows during the Armed Forces Remembrance Day in Uyo, Nigeria, 2021. (Source: Daily Trust).*

Nigeria's Vice-President, Yemi Osinbanjo in his speech during the 2022 Remembrance Day commemoration emphasized doubt over the little importance the society attached to the memorials of heroes when he questioned whether we as a people are worthy of their sacrifices.<sup>22</sup> By this, he implied that the poor treatments meted on the widows and families of war heroes are indication that little or no values were placed on the lives of those who died in the battle front. He pointed out that "the only way to truly repay those that paid the supreme sacrifice or price in service of the rest of us, is to commit ourselves to live for the ends for which they have given their lives".<sup>23</sup> It therefore means that, the true honor one can give to the heroes is not ceremonies, but a better attitude from those they sacrificed for. Mike Mchugh captured the feeling of Amelia Zerinque, a war widow in the United Kingdom, whose first husband was killed in war. 'Zerinque said she gets upset when people say, "Happy Memorial Day," when it should be a day of somber reflection of



those who paid the ultimate sacrifices.<sup>24</sup> If people understand the significance of the Remembrance Day and the emotional pain widows go through for losing their loved ones, they would not be saying Happy Memorial Day, because such words portray the insensitivity of some members of the public.

Beside lack of material support, there are other factors that infuriates the agonies of war widows. In England and most part of the world, war widows are often been subjected to social convention of mourning and political control. They are expected to appear in mourning garments and maintain a certain posture and social conduct. Failure to observe these social conventions, a widow could be regarded as unfaithful. Peggy Bette argued that the concept of unfaithful widow existed before the First World War, however it gained wide acceptance after the war due to soldiers who feared being betrayed or forgotten and moralists who perceived widowed women as source of social disorder that could somewhat contribute to military defeat in many countries.<sup>25</sup> Bette added that conventions of mourning were also transformed by different types of legislation regulating military burials in different countries, which in many ways affected mourning and [commemoration](#) rituals. In Britain for instance, where a strict policy concerning burying fallen soldiers *in situ* exist, widows had to travel abroad, however, in Italy, France or [United States](#), the remains of the soldiers could be recovered at the end of the conflict.<sup>26</sup> Sometimes, the burial rituals of fallen soldiers who went missing in the battle are conducted without their remains being present, which according to testimonies of war widows, such circumstance is more traumatic.

A study conducted by the International Committee of the Red Cross found that ‘women whose husbands have “disappeared ” or are missing have many of the same problems as widows but without official recognition of their status. In addition, they have to deal with the psychological effects and insecurity that stem from not knowing their husband's fate, and with direct consequences such as not being able to bury their loved ones and not being able to remarry’.<sup>27</sup> Other challenges include that war widowed women were restricted by social and political constraints that made their situation more agonizing. Due to war propaganda, many countries do not publicly disclose or publish the exact number of war casualties during conflicts and sometimes dead soldiers can be buried secretly in a mass grave before informing the families. This was the strategies adopted by many countries in the First World War to retain public support, maintain soldiers’ courage and justify continuation of the war.

Widows for Peace Through Democracy in their 2015 report argued that discrimination against and abuse of widows, takes place in a wide spectrum of cultures, religions, ethnic groups, regions, irrespective of the widows’ social status or academic qualification.<sup>28</sup> From the legal context, they noted that widows generally are often unable to attain modern statutes, and as a result may be ‘unable to access the modern justice system in their countries’.<sup>29</sup> It suffices to infer that Remembrance Day and the memorial rituals that accompanies it do not adequately address the plight of widows of war, which often worsens in the aftermath of conflicts.

In many societies across the globe, the devastating impact of the dead of a husband is worsened by the length of time it takes to fight for their rights and entitlements. Although the United Nations report estimated the number of widows worldwide to be over 258 million, however, history indicate that widows have not received enough support to guarantee a better future.<sup>30</sup> Over the years, efforts have been made to address the situations. The first ever attempt to ameliorate widows suffering was the establishment of War Widows Association (WWA) in the United Kingdom in 1971 by a war widow

Laura Connelly, who campaigned against government 50 percent tax cut on war widows' pension and improvement in the welfare package of widows.<sup>31</sup> Her organization complimented the supportive role of many already existing organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Ministry of Pension created by some countries after the war to oversee the affairs of widows and orphans etc.

Following these were the emergence of other Associations and Non-Governmental Organization that focused on making life better for war widows in many countries. For instance, The Legion being an association of war veterans emerged in different parts of the world. Their primary objective is to advance the welfare of retired soldiers and war veterans. In some places like Nigeria, their role has expanded to include providing support for widows of fallen heroes. At the international level, 'the United Nations has slated 23 June every year as International Widows Day captured in ([resolution A/RES/65/189](#)) since 2011, to draw attention to the voices and experiences of widows and to galvanize the unique support that they need'.<sup>32</sup> Jesupemi Are writing on the goodwill gesture extended to war widows in Nigeria by SASCARE Foundation in the last Remembrance Day, noted the passionate appeal by the founder, Akin Rotimi who called for the support of well-meaning individuals and civic organizations in the country to do more to help government in its efforts to improve the welfare of troops and families of fallen heroes.<sup>33</sup> This, he implied, will make the Remembrance Day more meaningful to the widows.

### **Widowhood, Complexities and the New Dimension of Armistice Day**

Armistice Day, initially commemorated to mark the end of World War I, has evolved into a global observance honoring veterans and celebrating peace. However, amidst the parades, speeches, and wreath-laying that symbolize valor and sacrifice, there exists a poignant yet often overlooked aspect of war's aftermath: the experiences of widows. This part delves into the complexities of widowhood in the context of Armistice Day, highlighting the profound and enduring agonies faced by women who lose their partners to war.

Widowhood in wartime transcends mere personal loss; it embodies a myriad of challenges that extend far beyond the cessation of hostilities. Emotionally, widows navigate grief compounded by the sudden and often violent nature of their partner's death. Psychologically, the trauma of loss can manifest in prolonged states of mourning and profound psychological distress.<sup>34</sup> Socially, widows may encounter isolation and stigmatization, particularly in cultures where a woman's identity and security are closely tied to her husband.

Economically, the impact can be devastating. Many widows face sudden financial insecurity, having relied on their husbands for income or support. In conflict-affected regions, where infrastructure and livelihoods are disrupted, widows are left particularly vulnerable, often struggling to provide for their families amidst economic hardship and limited access to resources.<sup>35</sup>

Historically, the plight of widows has received sporadic attention in the discourse surrounding war commemoration. The focus has largely been on soldiers' heroism and the collective sacrifice of nations rather than the individual and often invisible suffering of those left behind. This oversight perpetuates a narrative that marginalizes the experiences of widows, obscuring their contributions and sacrifices in supporting the war effort and rebuilding communities in its aftermath.<sup>36</sup>

To address this gap, recent scholarship and advocacy have sought to amplify the voices of widows, advocating for their inclusion in narratives of war remembrance. Initiatives such as the International Widows Day, established by the United Nations, aim to raise awareness about the rights and challenges faced by widows worldwide, including those affected by armed conflict.

The acknowledgment of widowhood as a significant dimension of Armistice Day enriches our understanding of the broader impacts of war. It calls for a more inclusive commemoration that recognizes the sacrifices and resilience of women who endure profound loss amid the upheaval of conflict.<sup>37</sup> By unpacking the complexities of widowhood and post-war agonies, we honor not only the fallen soldiers but also those who continue to bear the burdens of war long after the guns have fallen silent.

## Conclusion

The foregoing analysis explored widowhood experiences in post-war societies and found that the agonies war widows go through in the aftermath of conflicts never really ends. However, the Remembrance Day serves as moment of somber reflection and a day to honor their fallen husbands together with other widows, government and members of the public. Studies show that while war widows may desire material support to help ameliorate their sufferings after the demise of their husbands, however, the honor given to the fallen heroes on the Memorial Day provides emotional relief for widows, in that it helps to reduce the excruciating pain the loss of their loved ones brought to them. Audri Begueldijk who lost her husband 10 weeks after wedding, explained her agonies and noted that ‘one never truly forgets those emotionally searing moments’ of transiting from a wife to widow.<sup>38</sup> Drawing from the old Irish blessing, which stated thus: “Let us never forget what is worth remembering... or remember what is worth forgetting”.<sup>39</sup> According to Begueldijk, what is worth remembering about the war heroes on Remembrance Day are their good works and the sacrifices they made for the nation.

In many countries of the world, the Remembrance Day is a day set aside to pay respect, honor and celebrate those that died in the war front. It is also a special day to honor veterans that are still alive. Nasir Ayitogo noted that in places like Nigeria, the Armed Forces Remembrance Day as it is called in the country is also used as a platform to solicit for financial, moral and material support for the widows and families of dead soldiers.<sup>40</sup> This is, however, an acknowledgement of the pains of widows and the agonies they go through after losing their husbands. Also, it highlights the fact that many countries around the world especially in the developing regions are yet to promulgate policies and pursue programs that can effectively address the plight of war widows. As argued above, the memorial rituals and celebrations on Memorial Days cannot completely take away the pains and agonies of war widows, however, moral and material supports can help to alleviate their sufferings.

On the other hand, the study also notes that the relevance of Remembrance Day lies in the recognition of the sacrifices of our fallen heroes and that of their loved ones, because both the dead and the living equally sacrificed for the nation. It is this understanding that gives meaning to the losses incurred in the First World War. Empirical evidences indicate that mere celebration of dead soldiers is not sufficiently satisfactory if the society fails to recognize the fact that widowed women

and orphans also made sacrifices by losing their loved ones. And by this, they deserve to be recognized as those that served the nation. This acknowledgement, therefore, can manifest by fostering positive reaction on the part of government and the society to change their narrowly constructed perception of Armistice Day which primarily focuses on honoring the fallen, but should be broadened to include family members, especially widowed women, orphans and living veterans.

Adrea Hetherigton's work titled *British Widows of the First World War* while contributing to the historiography of the Great War corroborated the assertion of other social historians who held that the First World War brought the concept of war widowhood into prominence and changed the characteristics of state aid and led to the emergence of Welfare State.<sup>41</sup> It also provided the description of how the Great War changed the fanatical Victorian conventions regarding death – such as the rules on how long widowed women can wear black.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, the First World War not only changed how widowed women are viewed and treated, but also saw the emergence of new cultural practices and memorial rituals like the laying of wreath and flowers on the cenotaph and wearing of poppies as part of the Remembrance Day commemoration. Other rituals adopted in honor of the fallen heroes include the minutes silence and 21-gun salutes in some countries. All of these signifies respect and recognition of the sacrifices of war heroes, which many scholars argue that, it unifies the country and raises nationalist consciousness.

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