

**CHALLENGES TO IGBO TRADITIONAL RELIGIO-CULTURAL RENAISSANCE IN  
THE MIDST OF GLOBALIZATION**

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**JUNE, 2019**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND HUMAN RELATIONS  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) DEGREE IN RELIGION AND HUMAN  
RELATIONS (AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION)**

**FACULTY OF ARTS  
NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA, NIGERIA**

**JUNE, 2019**

**CERTIFICATION**

I, Eze, Okorie Igodo with the Reg.No: 2011097009P, hereby certify that this dissertation is original and has been written by me. It is a record of my research and has not been submitted before in part or in full for any other degree of this university or any other institution.

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**APPROVAL**

We ratify that this dissertation carried out under our supervision has been examined and found to have met the regulations of NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka. We therefore approve the work for the award of Ph.D. Degree in Religion and Human Relations

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late father, Pa Joseph EzeIgado, who laid the foundation for the education of the family.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to God Almighty for his gift of life and good health, for the strength, knowledge and resources with which I carried out this work. I wish to thank my sponsor, TETFUND, for granting me the opportunity to further my studies. May I express my profound gratitude to my indefatigable supervisor Prof. J. E Madu whose fatherly advice, guidance and meticulous supervision of my work led to its successful completion. He was indeed very patient and understanding. May God grant him many more fruitful years on earth. With deep and sincere gratitude, I acknowledge my former Head of Department, Very Rev. Prof. P. E. Nmah for his encouragement and motivation. He was instrumental to my study of religion at the postgraduate level. I am greatly indebted to the new Head of Department, Prof. O. O. C. Uche whose constructive critique contributed to the success of my dissertation. Dr. Thecla Udemmadu, Head, Department of Igbo, African and Asian Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, deserves all the accolades for making time out of her very tight schedule to examine my work.

I wish to extend my unreserved thanks to the following lecturers in the Department of Religion and Human Relations: Rev. Fr. Prof. A. B. C. Chiegboka, Rev. Fr. Prof. B. A. C. Obiefuna, Very Rev. Monsignor. Prof. J. P. C. Nzomiwu, Prof. L. E. Ugwueye, Prof. (Mrs.) E. O. Ezenweke, Rev. Fr. Dr. C. J. B. G. Okpalike, Dr. K. LNwadiolor, Dr. I. L. Umeanolue, Dr. S. C. Mgbemena, Rev. Fr. Dr. D. Obielosi, Dr. (Mrs.) A. M. Chukwuma-Offor and a host of others whose valuable advice contributed in one way or the other to the success of this work. I am also indebted to the entire staff of the Department of Religion and Human Relations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, for all their assistance, motivation and inspiration. I have not forgotten Dr. V. S. O. Ibe of the University of Agriculture, Umudike, Dr. P. I. Eburu of Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo, Mrs. M. Nweke of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Mr. O. I. Osaji, Mr. O. Ude of Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki and all my friends, well-wishers and colleagues for their invaluable contributions. Finally, I am very grateful to my dear mother Mrs. Maria Eze Igodo, my wife and children, Chidinma, Joshua, Nneoma, Chimamanda, Chisom my brother Igodo Ogonnaya and Sister Mercy Eze for their useful contributions and encouragement.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ANC	-	African National Congress
BBC	-	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	-	Cable News Network
GSM	-	Global System Mobile
HIPC	-	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/AIDS	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
IVACAC	-	Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for African Development
PDP	-	Peoples Democratic Party
RFI	-	Radio France International
VOA	-	Voice of America
WTO	-	World Trade Order

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## ABSTRACT

The issue of revival of Igbo culture has become a major concern to Igbo scholars and cultural revivalists. The Igbo cultural values are collapsing and new trends emerging as a result of the pernicious influence of globalization. Apart from deviating from societal norms, crime, insincerity, insecurity, disregard for human life, lack of respect for elders, indecent dressing and so forth have also been on the increase as a result of de-emphasis on tradition. The disappearance of moral checks and balances that were typical of the pure Igbo society is a growing source of worry as the Igbo now act like a people without conscience and morality. There is also the problem of lesbianism, homosexuality and the culture of pornography pervading the Igbo society. All these among others have posed a formidable challenge to Igbo traditional religious-cultural renaissance. The purpose of this work is to critically examine the difficulties that challenge the revival of Igbo cultural values. This work is grounded on two theories namely, theory of Africanity and Self-Acceptance theory for its framework. Historical method, oral interview or personal communications and participant observation were employed for data collection. In the course of this work, new trends in the society such as patterns of dressing, change in cultural values, family values, hospitality and community caring, ethics of hard work, discipline, honesty, justice and other practices that have affected the patterns of behaviour of the people generally because of globalization were investigated. Phenomenological approach was employed for interpretation of data since it suits the study of Igbo religion and culture more than any other method. However, it was found that dearth of originality, disappearing community consciousness, disappearing indigenous names, corruption, acts of savagery and revolt of women against cultural practices etcetera are some of the challenges that make it increasingly difficult for the revival of Igbo traditional religious values. In spite of these formidable challenges, the Igbo still found a way of sustaining their culture through Igbo day celebrations, Ahajioku lectures and other festivals such as new yam and masquerade festivals. The study concluded by saying that the Igbo must return to their past, if their culture must be revived. The work, therefore, recommends, that the state governments in the South East and, indeed all over Nigeria, should assist in safeguarding traditional religious sites and museums because they do not only serve as research centres for the education of the people on their history and culture but also as tourist centres which could yield a lot of revenue for the government.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The issue of Igbo traditional religious renaissance in the midst of globalization has become a major cause for concern among Igbo scholars and cultural revivalists. With the incidence of globalization, Igbo tradition and culture have suffered a serious setback. Igbo culture has been invaded, if not perverted by a wave of new, strange cultures. Igbo culture and its values have suffered severe corruption; from their food to their arts; from their language to their interaction; from their technology to their architecture, even in their relationship with their environment and every other thing in between.

The Igbo had developed their own forms of government, discipline, matters of morality, positive self-concept, importance of dignity and integrity before the dawn of colonialism and westernization. Hayford (cited by Rodney, 1972) added that before even the British came into relations with African people, they were already a developed people having their own institutions and their own ideas of government. It was even said that civilization started in Africa, precisely in Egypt from where it spread to the West. The Igbo had a very rich cultural heritage depicted in the Igbo cultural values such as proverbs, taboos, folktales, arts, artifacts, festivals, ceremonies, moonlight plays, decent dressing, meaningful and melodious music, moral checks and balances, respect for elders, social justice and sacrosanctity of human life, community consciousness and solidarity. All these values assisted in maintaining unity and brotherhood, community spirit and cooperation among the Igbo. Although the Igbo had these values, they grappled with the issue of Osu system, a system that has shackled and dehumanized its victims. There were also inter-ethnic wars, kidnapping for slavery and other social vices but these things were not much in Igbo traditional society. Crime was reduced to its barest minimum because the traditional system of checking crime was functional. The traditional oath sworn on a juju or other abnormal fixation

was respected because the society believed it to be sanctioned by the supernatural forces with power to harm by causing sickness or death. That for this reason struck almost mortal fear into anyone swearing by it falsely. Some of these deities are known to hold sway in many communities. They have remained the objects used for oath-taking not only in traditional affairs and relationships but sometimes even in political relationships of the modern communities.

In the rural areas or villages where the vast majority of the population in Igboland still lives, the stage has continued to be held rather tenaciously by custom and tradition and by the kinship, chieftainship and kingship structures. There is a rhythm in life, a sequence of one event after the other in an ordered succession, all symbolizing harmony, consistency and dynamism. A disruption of this order and harmony would be tantamount to a disruption of life. There is a serious ethical implication in maintaining this harmony and avoiding the attendant dangers that follow this disruption. This therefore brings religion to the core of a world view. Man on earth maintains the harmony by serious observance of his religious duties. He thus uses religion to explain when and how things happen, to predict what next would follow an action and also to control events in time and space. However, the acceptability of traditional religion has been whittled down by western interference through concomitant negative actions on culture and language.

In the Igbo society, the white man, perhaps in his bid to continue with his colonial policy, introduced to the people his own value scales and attitudinal orientations which he adjudged to be all current with modern standards. Thus, the Igbo witnessed rapid social changes with their attendant era of modernism and globalization. Modernism is fashioned towards making Igbo abandon their values and adopt the white man's culture while globalization is meant to collapse cultures and mould the world into a global village. These factors are now subtle ways of destroying Igbo personality and identity. Globalization which also has the potential of eroding national cultures and values, replacing them with the cultural values of more technologically and

economically advanced countries paved the way for the current trend that is disseminating western values, cultures and lifestyles around the world as models. It has removed the igbo almost completely from his background, culture and even religion and made him a zombie who cannot think for himself, who does not see anything good again in his own culture and who allows the Europeans to think for him. This must have made Asumah (2010) to conclude that “Africans must continue to re-examine the global forces today in addition to returning to the African essence of community sustenance, reliability and African cosmology” (p.13).

In the same light, Uba (2014) has seen westernization as the social process of becoming familiar with or converting to the customs and practices of western civilization. In other words, westernization is a process whereby societies adopt the western culture in different matters such as industry, technology, law, politics, economics, lifestyle, diet, language, philosophy and values. Westernization has been a pervasive and accelerating influence across the world in the last few decades. He further stated that westernization is not something favourable as it means forgetting African culture, African religion and African norms to adopt western culture completely forgetting who they are and what their roots are. In Nigeria, the Igbo appear to be the most affected in the globalization process. So, a return to Igbo culture and values could assist tremendously in ridding Igbo society of corruption and crime.

So, it is natural that with self-consciousness, the Igbo should seek to define an Igbo identity. On this basis, Igbo traditional religious renaissance becomes imperative for the regeneration or rebirth of the Igbo society in such a way as to engender the revival of the political, socio-economic and religio-cultural values of Igbo communities

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Globalization has impacted negatively on Igbo cultural values as much as it has altered the complexities in crime, security and governance. However, globalization and Igbo cultural values also present opportunities that could be drawn upon to strengthen security and good governance.

The challenge lies in finding the right balance between the threatened cultural practices and postmodernism towards addressing the challenges of Igbo traditional religious renaissance. The core values of Igbo culture such as community consciousness, respect for elders, conscience and morality and so forth are being phased out by forces of globalization hence, the choice of this topic. Although western culture, intellectualism and economics have contributed immensely to Igbo civilization, their shortcomings have had a far-reaching impact on Igbo traditional life and values. In the traditional past, the Igbo had very good cultural values and practices which have been invaded or perverted and dislocated by forces of globalization. This has thus resulted in the development of new trends that are antithetical to Igbo culture. The cultural foundation and politico-religious structure of the indigenous Igbo societies were not the only things up-turned or undermined by European colonialism. The very personality and mentality of the Igbo were also affected. They lost their self-confidence, self-reliance and the capacity for independent thought and action.

Apart from deviating from societal norms, crimes, insecurity and insincerity have also been on the increase as a result of de-emphasis on tradition. The disappearance of moral checks and balances that were typical of Igbo traditional society is a growing source of worry to the Igbo. There is also the problem of same sex marriage, lesbianism and homosexuality and the culture of pornography, which were not known to the Igbo pervading Igbo society. So, the question remains why, despite the efforts made so far by Igbo scholars and traditionalists through conferences, seminars, cultural festivals, ceremonies and publications on Igbo cultural renaissance, it is increasingly becoming difficult to revive Igbo traditional values? Should the Igbo abandon their cultural values to the vagaries of globalization? What fate would then befall Igbo society if this happens? What should the Igbo do to remedy the situation? These are the issues that truly agitate the mind of the researcher and to which this work seeks to find solution or answers.



### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This work on the challenges to Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance in the midst of globalization seeks to

1. Examine efforts made so far by African scholars and traditionalists for the revival of Igbo religion and culture.
2. Critically examine the difficulties that challenge scholars and cultural revivalists in their quest for the revival of Igbo traditional religious values.
3. Investigate the extent to which globalization has influenced or impacted on Igbo culture.
4. Investigate the extent to which the Igbo are passing through another phase of colonization.
5. Examine the extent to which globalization has brought about the dearth of originality in Igbo society.
6. Explore the negative and positive contributions of globalization to Igbo civilization.
7. Suggest steps for the revival of Igbo religion and culture

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this study will benefit the Igbo by creating a sense of conviction, determination and commitment to the Igbo cause in the quest for Igbo renaissance. It is an effort to tackle the challenges of Igbo traditional religious renaissance.

This work will reinforce the need for Igbo traditionalists to continue to protect, promote and project Igbo culture to the global community through their traditional ceremonies and celebrations.

It will help to educate students in the universities, colleges and allied institutions on Igbo traditions and values which will go a long way in addressing the issue of Igbo identity and personality. It will enable Igbo leaders to forge enduring partnership with the Igbo in diaspora for stronger economic and political ties to improve the continent's dark image.

It serves as a reference material for scholars of Igbo culture who will use it for further research on Igbo cultural renaissance and related topics. Igbo scholars, youth, women, local and national decision makers and the civil society will recognize the significant contributions made by people of Igbo descent so as to combat all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related problems.

The youth will tap from the intellectual efforts so far made in order to establish cultural associations, research and reflect on the Igbo condition so as to rescue the Igbo from the abyss of cultural extinction.

The Igbo will also be encouraged through this work to transcend the divisions of ethnicity, nationality, religion, ideology and class. They will have a dream of Igboland and design what they see it to be like and make commitment to dedicate their lives to the Igbo cause and fight for its place and voice in world governance.

This study also exposes the fact that the Igbo, on the one hand, need modernization in some aspects as a means of moving along with the world and being able to compete with them so that they do not lag behind and the world does not go ahead of them on the other hand.

However, they need to de-emphasize westernization because it is a means of forgetting Igbo culture, religion and values and, in fact, forgetting who they are and their roots in order to adopt western culture.

The Igbo do not want westernization to steal away their culture or water it down. Therefore, this work will enable the government to see the need to market, exhibit, show case and promote the enormous cultural heritage of the Igbo for people around the world to appreciate.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The concern of this study is with the Igbo of Nigeria, focusing on the challenges to Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance in the midst of globalization and the need for the revival of

Igbo cultural values. However, because of the wide area that constitutes Igbo land, the focus of the study is delimited to Igbo south area which includes Ebonyi, Imo and Abia States. These areas were chosen because they all represent the characteristics of the entire Igboland.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

This work adopted historical method. This approach enables the researcher to learn about events that happened in the recent past or long ago in Igbo land. This method also examines materials from the past that contain information of sociological interest. Since these materials consist of written documents which are mainly from secondary sources, this work reviewed magazines, newspapers, textbooks, government records, laws, journals, published and unpublished materials to capture various shades of opinion on the subject matter. The Primary sources of data collection were employed to collect data for this work. The primary sources include oral interviews or personal communication and participant observations which were used to gather useful information from people on the subject matter. Phenomenological method was used to interpret or analyse the data.

## **1.7 Definition of Terms**

**1.7.1 Challenge:** According to Merriam-Webster (1999), the word “challenge” comes from the old French word “*Chalonge*” which means difficult task or problem. It is something that by its nature or character serves as a serious test. It is a general term referring to things that are imbued with a sense of difficulty and victory. It also has to do with something that needs great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully or the situation of facing this kind of effort. A challenge is something that is hard to do, a threat, a new or difficult task that tests somebody’s ability or skills. It is the act or process of provoking or testing physiological activity by exposure to a specific substance. In other words, it is a test of immunity by exposure to an antigen. In this context, it means those factors that militate against or that tend to prevent the renaissance or

revival of Igbo traditional culture and religion. In other words, these are the difficulties encountered in the efforts being made to revive Igbo culture so as to safeguard Igbo cultural values and make them less vulnerable to the forces of globalization. These are also the difficulties that scholars and cultural revivalists contend with while trying to retrieve the lost glory of Igbo cultural heritage.

**1.7.2 Renaissance:** According to Merriam-Webster (1999), the word “renaissance” comes from an old French word “*renaistre*” which means to be born again. It also has a Latin origin “*renascere*” which means to be born. It means a revival of or a renewed interest in something probably the bringing again into activity and prominence a culture and learning that has been in abeyance.

According to Linda (1974), it is a term that historians use in describing a special period in Europe that falls roughly between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries and right after the middle Ages. In the view of Okumu (2002), the renaissance was a period of great developments, of a new style of art and architecture that represented a new birth or renewal of nations and their people. Every secluded corner or recess of society was revolutionized. Whatever was old or archaic was renovated and revised. Everything was nascent, springing up a new or being reborn.

At the beginning of the renaissance, there was political disorder, the economy was in a state of stagnation and the bubonic plague wiped off a large population of Europe. Out of these came out a renaissance movement that left a legacy of change and an emergence of a new culture. It provided the frame work for the emergence of a modern world of science and technology, human freedom, a monument of artistic beauty unparalleled in the history of humanity. As a matter of fact, Igbo renaissance is connected with the regeneration, resurgence, restoration, renewal or rebirth of the African continent in such a way as to engender the revival of Igbo traditional religion and culture.

The Igbo believe they are entering a new era that is being referred to as the Igbo Renaissance. This era, if properly articulated could impact on the value system of all Igbo who are searching for their lost cultural heritage. This loss of cultural heritage may be reflected in Christian schools and churches that emulate western-based curricula and western forms of expression for instance language, music, administration, forms of praise and worship etc. Igbo land is a community of interrelationships in which all aspects of life are interrelated. Therefore, Igbo Renaissance cannot be understood through a fragmentation of its various social components such as religion, culture, economy, identity, education and so on. To separate education from culture, economy, identity and religion is to do injustice to Igbo people. It is known that Igbo people are very religious, so it follows that religion is an integral part of life in Igbo land.

However, the rebirth, revival and renewal of the Igbo are encapsulated in the vision of African renaissance. The African renaissance vision is an all-embracing concept that draws its inspiration from the rich and diverse history and cultures of Africa. It acknowledges Africa as the cradle of humanity whilst providing the framework for modern Africa to re-emerge as a significant partner in the new world order.

**1.7.3 Globalization:** Etymologically, the word globalization was coined and popularized by Theodore Levitt in an article published in 1983 in the Harvard Business Review entitled *The Globalization of Markets*. Mbila (2003) also gave an etymological meaning of this term as the act of making worldwide or global. However, it is still not known who invented the word “Globalization”. It is a word that constructs itself naturally in the English language by combining the word “*global*” with the standard suffix “*ization*” which means “to become global”, “to make global” or universal or something along these lines. The word was widely used by economists and social scientists in the 1960s. Globalization quite often applies to the economy when different national economies become integrated through the flow of goods and services, capital and labour otherwise known as “global market” But the word globalization can also apply to global culture,

global society, global community, global ideas, and global beliefs and so on. Lekan (2005) in his account of the origin of globalization said that the word globalization is a recent entry into most English dictionaries probably not used by any one before the 1990's. He further explained that the lexical items "*globalize and globalization*" did not appear as dictionary entries in many dictionaries until 2001.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The issue of Igbo traditional religious renaissance in the midst of globalization has been raging on for some years now. Several Igbo leaders, writers, traditionalists and cultural revivalists have at various times staged a “fight back against” the global cultural challenges facing Igbo traditions. The motive for this renaissance in Igboland and by extension Africa, according to Mavimbela (1998), is the need to empower African people to free themselves from the legacy of colonialism and neo-colonialism and to place themselves on the global stage as equal and respected contributors as well as beneficiaries of all the achievements of human civilization. However, for more clarification and a better understanding, the discussion in this chapter has been done under three main subheadings, namely, conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical studies and summary of literature review. This chapter tries to capture other authors’ views on the global effect of certain cultural and religious practices emanating from the West to which Igbo tradition; culture and religion have fallen prey.

#### **2.1 Conceptual Framework**

##### **2.1.1 The Concept of Globalization**

The concept “globalization” has generated a lot of upheaval due to the rise of a global culture in which western lifestyle is being adopted as the normal way of life. However, many scholars, opinion leaders and cultural analysts and so on have expressed divergent and dissenting opinions on the impact of globalization on individuals, nations and the world at large. While they unanimously agree that globalization has a political, economic, cultural and even religious impact on individuals, nations and the world, they also differ on the nature and extent of this influence. Some argue that it is all positive while some say it has nothing but negative effects, yet, others say that it is both positive and negative (Kwame, 2007).

However, the focus of this work is on the challenges to Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance as a result of the impact of globalization. To further clarify this concept, Ekei (2010) refers to globalization as the mutual influence nations have on one another in adopting or modifying systems of governance.

For instance, the current presidential system of government practiced in Nigeria today is the brain child of the United States of America which Nigeria adopted as a model and is considered suitable for the administration of a large political unit like Nigeria than the parliamentary system fashioned after the British model. It is pertinent to note that the systems of government practiced in most African countries today were either acquired via colonial influence or as a result of political association with such dominant systems as that of the United States of America, Britain, France, Greece and so on.

Perhaps, this prompted the conceptualization of globalization by Chuka (2007) as a worldwide spread of the ideological doctrine of liberal groups and the universalization of certain practices, identities and structures that are likened to those of the advanced world. From the social point of view, Larsson (2001) conceived globalization as the process of world shrinkage, of distance getting shorter, and things moving closer. It pertains to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact to the mutual benefit with somebody on the other side of the world.

From a similar perception, Giddens (1991) saw globalization as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. This point was further buttressed by Albrow and King (1990) who viewed globalization as all those processes by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single society. Along this line, Nnedum and Ezeokana (2008) conceived globalization as coalescence of varied transnational process and domestic structures, allowing the economy, politics, culture and ideology of one country to penetrate another which



represents the imperialistic internationalization of capitalism. Perhaps, this gave rise to the globalization of political violence, economic meltdown, cultural erosion and terrorism as these anomalies were not known to Africa.

On the other hand, McGrew et al (2001) unanimously described globalization as the interconnectedness of regions of the world from the cultural to the criminal, the environmental to financial and the way and manner regional to financial and regional and local dynamics change, increase or decrease over time. However, Nsibambi (2001) described globalization as a process of advancement and increase in interaction among the world's countries and people facilitated by progressive technological changes in locomotion, communication, political and military power, knowledge and skills, as well as interfacing of cultural values, systems and practices. He noted that globalization is not a value-free, innocent, self-determining process. Rather, it is an international, socio-politico-economic and cultural permeation process facilitated by policies of government, private corporations, international agencies and civil society organizations.

Kwame (2007) defined globalization as a process of linking regions and nations of the world which is facilitated by information flow inducing changes in the pre-existing socio-cultural, political, economic structures and systems of nations and peoples. Alubo (1999) conceptualised globalization as a comprehensive process which includes production, consumption and the organization of material and non-material life according to the ethos of capitalism in univocal world.

These concepts underpin the fact that globalization has only one objective that is to achieve uniformity through a unification or interconnection or internationalization of culture, economics, politics, religion and so on, so that long distances and independence on the part of the nations of the world would disappear as they collapse into a single society or global village. It also means that the aim of globalization is to compress the world into a global village where there will be sameness in everything.

Having looked at these concepts, this work has come up with its own definition of globalization as the making of something to go round the world such that what happens in one country or region especially the developed nations, is seen and used as a model in other countries or regions especially in the less developed nations. It is a phenomenon which is based on the cardinal principle of bringing together in a web-like manner all cultures, ideals, values, practices and belief systems across the world. It is more or less the increasing interconnectivity of global markets, politics and cultures; a world which is increasingly being compressed in both time and space such that there is mutual interdependence between its different parts. It is for this reason that the world is seen as a global village.

Some scholars also approached the concept of globalization from a positive point of view, the shortcomings notwithstanding. Thus, Friedman (2001) characterized globalization as

A dynamic ongoing process which involves the inexorable integration of markets, nation states to a degree never witnessed before, in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before and in a way that is also producing a powerful backlash from those brutalized or left behind by this new system (p.302).

Knor (2008) added that despite the distance between the continents, globalization sought to eliminate it and indeed has done so through the medium of the advanced information and communication technology. This means that events in one part of the world are seen and felt with the same concern and interest in another part of the globe.

Prior to the emergence of science and technology and other globalizing agents, the interactions amongst states, according to Martell (2010), were not on a global level or scale and most often were confined to Asia, North Africa, the Middle East and other parts of Europe. It was actually difficult for states to interact with others that were not within close proximity. But with

advances in technology, states came to learn about others' existence and globalization began to take place.

As Thomson (1969) put it, the technological revolution and the means of communication as well as the experience and lessons of the first and second world wars have irreversibly launched humanity on a firm stage of inevitable interdependence. Advanced modern technology has summarily nullified the obstacles formally posed by geographical distance and time. Human communication has become efficient, rapid, most effective and unrestricted. The world is now one market within which movement of news, goods, money and ideas become fast and cheap, men increasingly found themselves affected by what was happening in other continents and in turn affecting by their actions the fortunes of men in distant lands. On this point, Mboya (1970) remarked that it is difficult to break away entirely. The ease of communication is drawing the people of the world closer together. While we have every right to safeguard our identity, it would be foolish and indeed against our own interest to keep ourselves apart just to be different.

In the same light, Chuka (2006) observed that globalization is both a cause and a result of modern information revolution. It is driven by dramatic improvements in the telecommunication, incredible increases in computer power and development of information networks such as the internet. These technologies are helping to overcome the barriers of physical distance. Since this has to do with linkage between the town and the villages, distance which was one of the problems of extended family mechanism will no longer be a problem with these tools of communication. It is going to connect or make stronger this network of relationships. So, when we have twitters, mobile phones, face books, and so forth, they are going to enhance the communication between several layers or strata of the society and there would also be a change in governance because there is dialogue between different segments of the society.

In his submission, Lekan (2005) saw globalization as cultural changes of the western nations which took place between late 1980s and early 1990s, which were crystallized by the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and heralded the supremacy of capitalism. To him:

It came decisively to affect the material and semiotic basis of world culture, bringing new markets, new and cheap resources for production as well as a new moral basis for interpersonal relations, a new world trade order (WTO) was born whose underlying principle is to spread free trade at a high speed. (pp. 3-4).

In the telecommunication sector, the Global System for Mobile communications (G S M) which has changed the face of the telecommunications landscape in Africa has made Nigeria the haven for telecommunications investors. In his assessment of the situation, Osuagwu (2015) said that with the country's paltry 450,000 connected lines in 2001 to over 135 million active subscribers as at the end of 2014, there is a tremendous growth with multiplier effects in all other sectors of the economy including the banking, education, e-commerce / retailing, agriculture, medicine, media, oil and gas among other sectors. He submitted that just because foreign investors have found Nigeria a lucrative market for telecommunications, direct foreign investment inflow in the sector is on the rise. He further stated that over 32 billion dollars investment has been recorded in the sector as at June 2014 from 50 million dollars in 2001. The investment stood at 18 billion dollars in 2010 and 25 billion dollars in 2012.

Globalization also has its shortcomings which prompted some scholars to have a negative perception of the concept. This probably prompted Mbat (2005) to affirm that "the total domination of Africa through slavery is the origin of moral laxity in Africa as Africans exchanged their brothers and sisters for useless material things like mirrors, cigarettes"(pp.71-72) and so on. This happened because Africans had the problem of greed, misplacement of value and lack of will-power to resist the white man's enticements. Also, it is an aberration for Africans to accommodate and continue to tolerate moral laxity having realized through constant education

even before the post-colonial era that it is an inoculum from the white man. Moreover, it is antithetical to African culture and as rational beings who are naturally and intellectually aware of the consequences of moral laxity, Africans will only have themselves to blame for indulging in it on the grounds that it is a lead way to slave trade and colonialism.

Economically, globalization is a phenomenon, known according to Shorter (2001), by various names such as “*Economism*”, “*Euro-American world technocracy*”, “*Modernization*” “*Neo-Liberalism*”, “*Reductionist Materialism*” and so on. It refers to the one-sided unification of the rest of the world by the so called “*First World*”, deploying a rapidly developing science which is translated into effective technology. It is a domination of the rest of the world by the First World through concentration of financial, industrial and military power. It is a “pseudo-culture” because it displaces genuine culture with a phenomenon that is not a coherent human cultural system. It undermines and homogenizes local or traditional cultures. It robs people of religious and moral values. In other words, it is secularizing. It disables local socio-economic systems. Local cultures are powerless in front of western economic forces. According to him, as a form of economism, globalization is the ethos of the First World and it is spread through technology, the mass media and urbanization. Conversely, economism as a form of globalization is Western domination through colonialism, through post-colonial transnational corporations and through the development “Myth” that poor countries can only enrich themselves if they develop along western lines.

As a strategy to enrich poor countries, development aid has failed. It has resulted in the debt crises and the imposition of structural adjustment programmes in an obsessive drive for economic growth at the expense of social values, social services and micro economic factors. Electronic mass media are dominated by the First World. Television, for example, is basically about money and control. Commercial sponsorship ensures that television obeys the principle of economic rationalism and promotes consumer materialism. Television culture and private video

culture promote violence, pornography and drug abuse. Television is a victim of the violence which it mirrors. It inculcates irresponsibility and secularizes culture through its liberal preferences and anti-religious bias (Shorter, 2001).

However, according to Nnedum and Ezeokana (2008), globalization is a worldwide drive towards globalized economic system dominated by supranational corporate trade and banking institutions that are not accountable to democratic process or national government. (p.129.). This shows that whatever form globalization takes or has taken, it is only aimed at maximizing profits for the globalizers. Perhaps, religious institutions were also set up to put money in the coffers of their parent organizations abroad.

Chuka (2007) simply added that as an economic phenomenon, globalization is a shift from distinct national economics to a global economy. He saw globalization as an urge which will worsen the already bad living condition of Africans because it is an uneven process with unequal distribution of benefits and loses. To him, globalization has a prolonged mass misery and social conflict. It is a bourgeoisie theory which has done little to remedy the big discrepancies in wealth and has done things to make it worse. Against this background, Marfleet (cited by Chuka, 2007) wrote that globalization is not a description of a much changed world. Rather, it is the imposition of neo-liberal economic principles upon the reality of an unequal and disordered system. (p.125). In so many ways, there have been significant changes in world communication culture, economics, politics and religion as a result of sustained global trends.

However, Ekei (2010) refers to globalization as the expansionist actions of multinational corporations. Under this circumstance, the multinational companies like Coca-Cola, Nike, Shell, Shoprite, McDonalds and others moved from their countries of origin to establish factories and conquer markets in other countries in order to maximize profits. This has been the case in Nigeria since the discovery of crude oil. The multinational corporations like Shell BP, Mobil, Exxon, Elf, African Petroleum, Texaco and others have been engaged in the exploration and refining of crude

oil which has cost Nigeria billions of naira in foreign exchange. The same thing goes for road construction and mining sector where multinational corporations like Julius Berger, Strasburg, Monier Construction Company and others have reaped Nigeria of billions of naira.

Asumah (2010) asserted that the world's hegemonic nations' actions in globalization are tantamount to quasi-colonialism and cultural imperialism that are compelling African nation states to relinquish their sovereign authority and cultural values to transnational corporations and the west in order to be accepted in the global village. To this, Chuka (2007) added from the pessimist's point of view that globalization is a stage of imperialism and, to that extent, an attempt at United States cultural as well as economic and political hegemony. As a result, they conceptualized globalization in a new form of colonialism with the United States as the new metro pole power and with most of the rest of the world as its colonies. It is against this background that Mahathir (1996) envisioned globalization as the "re-colonization of the same people" (p. 30). From this concept, it is seen that most of the problems today bedeviling the less developed countries originated from the advanced countries as most of these nations are under their control and globalization is only aimed at maintaining this stranglehold.

According to Ugwueye (2007), the integrationists see globalization as a cross national phenomenon which forms and forces every part of the world into an identical outlook and culture. (p.102). This observation appears to be in order because it takes into account the principle of exclusion. This means that the independence, freedom and right to self-determination of nations and individuals are tampered with. Any nation or individual that does not conform or refuses to embrace the global trends is left out of the comity of nations or worse still faces ostracism.

To this, Uche (2007) added that "globalization is a new order of marginalization and re-colonization in a neo-colonial fashion of the African continent" (p.95). Much as it is a fact that Africa and some other parts of the world are facing recolonization and marginalization through globalization, it does appear that Africa is not yet prepared and may never be prepared to chart its

own course. Africa is still tied to the apron strings of their masters, that is, the colonialists. This is merely so as education which should have assisted Africa to fight off the menace of globalization is also fashioned after the western model. So, it becomes difficult for Africa to be politically, economically and intellectually independent. Knor (2008) in his contribution submitted that:

Globalization remains highly susceptible to negative appropriation directed at the continuation of racism and cultural alienation, injustice and inequalities in global distribution of social goods, it is prone to the institutionalization of exploitation, dehumanization and hegemonies between the presumably superior and inferior races. Thus, globalization established its character as an instrument of dichotomization and imperialism which promotes the cultural values, science, art and ideologies of dominant culture or nations (p. 81).

This has been the case in Africa where the American and European colonialists have held forth channeling African economic and intellectual resources to their own development at the expense of Africa and instituted in its place systemic exploitation and subjugation.

However, Jibril (2005) sees globalization as “the domination of the world system by the west, led by America in a unipolar world where there is no other rival power to challenge its hegemony” (pp. 27-28). The patronage of Africa to the dominant nations of the west leaves Africa no room to extricate herself from western domination not to talk of challenging their hegemony. Knor (2008) tends to agree with this view when he said that globalization, as far as Africa and other developing countries are concerned, is aimed at perpetuating and propagating dependency of these nations and their people on the west and America. According to him, it reinforces economic, political and cultural imperialism or hegemony by the world power. For the same reason, Schottle (cited by Knor, 2008) stated that globalization impresses on countries to part with a significant part of their sovereignty to regional and worldwide supra state agencies.



In line with this view, Dukor (2008) wrote that “globalization amounts to individual countries surrendering their sovereignty or becoming incapacitated in the deluge of non-governmental organizations taking over the role to guide and give directions in matters of development and freedom” (p.29). Globalization is a trend towards homogeneity that will eventually make human experience essentially the same everywhere. Although homogenizing influences exist, they are far from creating anything akin to a single culture. However, the entire globalization process is viewed from the concept of the global village. Asumah (2010) said that:

African way of life is under lethal attack by the forces of globalization. There is an internecine cultural warfare in the global village and most of the casualties are African cultures. The force of modernization, globalization and development contributes to the bastardization and gradual extinction of African traditional and contemporary cultures and unless Africans are able to navigate the dynamics of cultural imperialism from the United States and Europe to become true development partners of the west and not just exotic cultural objects for the global village, African traditional and contemporary cultures will be extinct and African development problems will continue. (pp. 6-9).

Nwosu and Ndu (1999) went further to explain that globalization has brought in its wake a stream of problems that affect local communities, directly or indirectly ranging from the collapse of producers prices to increase in unemployment and poverty, the restructuring of households and gender relations, a rise in crime and social deviance, structural and social dislocations, extensive internal and international migrations. They added that national, sub-national and local economics in Africa are now more than ever before linked to complex networks which are geographically extensive.

### **2.1.2 Igbo Traditional Religio-Cultural Renaissance**

According to Wang and Jando (2008), it is difficult to trace a history of globalization in terms of how it all began and who started the idea of turning the whole world into one global

village. However, as an economic, political, social and cultural reality, the project of globalization could be traced to the month of May in the year 34 B.C.E. when a Macedonian warlord, Alexander the Great (334-323B.C) with his great array of soldiers and military generals initiated a grand programme of unification of the Macedonians and Persians into one kingdom to make them one people and the dissemination of Greek language, culture and way of life among all the people of the earth. After Alexander, the desire to globalize the world took different forms and changes according to the globalizers and the globalized. From the 1880s C.E, the focus of globalization which took the form of colonialism in Africa had the intention predominantly of economic exploitation and extermination of African identity. During this period of scramble for Africa, the black continent with an area of over 28 million square kilometers was partitioned, conquered and occupied effectively by the industrialized nations of Europe. Globalization in Africa and by extension Igboland was initiated by slave trade and given impetus by colonialism and Christian missionaries. This position was supported by Nwankwere (2010) when he said that early trade between the Igbo and the white man was by barter because the white man rejected the cowries the Igbo used as money. This to him amounted to imperial superiority.

However, Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance is here conceptualized as a process meant to regenerate, reclaim, reawaken and revive Igbo traditional religious heritage, values and practices which are being phased out by globalization. This concept is in alignment with African Renaissance which Uhuru (2014) describes as a vision and mission for change and development that is premised on the understanding that the future of Africa and Africans in Africa and the diaspora lies in the fundamental process of renewal, re-invention and rebirth. These required changes, according to him, need to occur in peoples' mindset and world outlook which in turn requires changes in material conditions as well as in the institutions and processes of intellectual, political, economic and religio-cultural governance. Africa and her people have been subjected to a process of disorganization, fragmentation and disintegration of their historical, cultural and

technological development for the past three thousand years. Here are the views of other African scholars and cultural revivalists' on African renaissance.

Othman (2014) noted that cognizance must be taken of the visionary efforts of pan-African advocates of the 20<sup>th</sup> century like Kwame Nkrumah, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, among others, who offered Africans the right to self-determination. These pan-Africanists in their quest to emancipate the continent from oppression, mobilized Africans from the Diaspora and within the continent into pressure groups and with steadfastness, they slowly but steadily liberated Africans from the many injustices they were subjected to by the imperialists. African states gradually gained their independence and an organization of African Unity now African Union was formed as a recognized global outfit defending the interest of the continent and her people. The union, however, has not really addressed the challenges of African renaissance in order to break free from colonialism. The struggle according to Uhuru (2014) took on a global approach with the aim of rehabilitating the image of the black man wherever he is as an expression of black personality. Thus, the essence of the call for an African renaissance is a call for a continued African resistance to western domination and exploitation of Africans, the process of Africa restating her original message and her own way that was at the same time global. Nevertheless, he said nothing about Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance.

In the words of Njoroge (2004), the concept of African Renaissance, is in vogue in political and academic circles, encapsulating a vision of rebirth of Africa as the African people come to terms with the challenges of the 21st century. It is a vision that eschews the rule of dictatorship, economic mismanagement, suppression of the civic society and ascendancy of an oppressive state monopoly of power, that have hitherto characterized the operations of post-independent African governments. Njoroge, however, seems to have viewed African Renaissance from the political and academic perspective. He did not take into consideration the need for Igbo

traditional religious and cultural renaissance as a major factor that will facilitate African Renaissance.

According to Banda (2010), African Renaissance sees beyond the pessimistic idea that the continent has nothing to offer and looks introspectively at its inherent virtues built in its culture and its people and hope to utilize these resources to make a future for itself. The term according to him is popularly connected with Thabo Mbeki, the former South African President who made a speech to the Constituent Assembly on the 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1996 titled “I am an African”. He added that a look back at history reveals that there had been earlier calls for African Renaissance before this time. Such calls have been credited to Cheick Anta Diop of Senegal and much later Nelson Mandela. He maintained, however, that Mbeki’s speech was what ultimately institutionalized the concept of African Renaissance. The speech led to intellectual consultations and strategizing on how to mobilize Africa and her resources towards the realization of African Renaissance. This eventually led to the establishment of the African Renaissance Institute in Gaborone, Botswana. However, it seems that mobilizing Africa and her resources towards the realization of this renaissance as Banda suggested may not yield any meaningful result unless the challenges posed to African traditional religious and cultural renaissance by the ravages of globalization are addressed.

Dlanga (2013) referred to African renaissance as a glorious hope for the future. He alluded to the famous speech of Thabo Mbeki as an expression of hope for and in Africa thus: I am born of the people of the continent of Africa. The pain of the violent conflict that the peoples of Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi and Algeria are pains I also bear. The dismal shame of poverty, suffering and human degradation of my continent is a blight that we share. The blight on our happiness that derives from this and from our drift to the periphery of the ordering of human affairs leaves us in a persistent shadow of despair. This is a savage road to which nobody should be condemned. This thing that we have done today, in this small corner of a great continent that has contributed so

decisively to the evolution of humanity says that Africa reaffirms that she is continuing her rise from the ashes. Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace. However improbable, it may sound to the skeptics, Africa will prosper. Whoever we may be, whatever our immediate interest, however much we carry baggage from our past, however much we have been caught by the fashion of cynicism and loss of faith in the capacity of the people, let us err today and say, nothing can stop us now. But to achieve all these, Africans need to first of all address the challenges facing African traditional religious renaissance as a result of globalization, otherwise, African renaissance will remain a mere expression of hope.

In a speech in Japan in 1997, Mbeki (cited by Boloka, 1999) noted that the reason for an African renaissance is the need to empower African peoples to deliver themselves from the legacy of colonialism and neo-colonialism and to situate themselves on the global stage as equal and respected contributors to as well as beneficiaries of all achievements of human civilization. Just as the continent was once the cradle of civilization, this renaissance should empower it to help the world rediscover the oneness of the human race. In another speech to a group of business leaders in Virginia, USA in April, 1997, Mbeki unveiled what Maloka (2002) calls the key pillars of his conception of the African renaissance. These were socio-cultural, political, economic regeneration and the improvement of Africa's geo-political standing in world affairs.

So, if the expression, African traditional religio-cultural renaissance has to mean anything to the African, it has to be able to mobilize African people psychologically, spiritually and politically in order for the African continent to engage in a process of recovery, reawakening or rebirth that can break Africa out of the Eurocentric intellectual jails in which Africans find themselves caught and imprisoned. However, Mbeki left out religion from his key pillars of African renaissance.

To Nabudere (2001), the proclamation of African renaissance by Mbeki was an attempt to create a synthesis out of the combination of non-racialism and Africanism as ideological

constructs to cover the post-apartheid situation with which the ANC was confronted. Although the political identity and corporate elements of the concept are interlinked in this ambivalence, nevertheless, the two elements can also be separated because the operationalization of the mainstream attempts to place the African economies within the global economy has the implication of marginalizing the African masses which its own turn inevitably collides with the general purposes and objectives of a post traditional African renaissance.

From his own point of view, Cabral (1973) called African renaissance a “*return to the source*” which for him meant the critical appropriation of the vigour, vitality and the ebullience of African existence by the assimilated African elites who had been alienated from their source by Portuguese culture and history. It is this memory which was reawakened and reignited by the anti-colonial struggle. By returning to the source, Cabral meant that Africans must go back to the sources of their values, not to confine themselves to them but rather to draw up a critical inventory in order to get rid of archaic and stultifying elements, the fallacious and alienating foreign elements brought in by colonialism and to retain only those elements which are still valid, bringing them up to date and enriching them with the benefits of the scientific, technical and social revolution so as to bring them in line with what is modern and universal. So, the idea of the return to the source is in Cabral’s political thought not to be confused with the imagined return to a period and culture of pristine purity that was never a reality in Africa. An emphasis on the past as portrayed by a “*return to the source*” does not necessarily mean an attempt to resurrect the past in opposition to contemporary forces of progress. Nor does modernity involve a rejection of the past, since tradition served as a powerful tool in the effort to realize modernity. Alridge (2003) supported Cabral’s position in his analysis of the *Sankofa*, the Akan concept of returning to the past, adding that Africans must go back to their roots in order to move forward, that is, Africans should reach back and gather the best of what their past has to teach them, so that they can achieve their full potentials as they move forward. Tedla (1995) maintained a similar position, that, for

Africans to initiate a progressive civil social existence, one that preserves their humanity, they would have to reach back into the past for the wisdom of their ancestors, the best of their traditions and renew and refine these traditions for new meanings that are relevant for the present. However, they did not say anything on the challenges facing Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance.

For Kigongo (2007), African renaissance could also mean African communalism. He defined African communalism as a concept that presumes pluralism in that it is essentially a voluntary pooling together of independent and differing efforts and capabilities that makes African communal life what it is. Thus, in this system, the young are not ontologically less human than the elders. Kaphagawani (cited by Kigongo, 2007) refers to this concept as social cohesion which is a state of affairs whereby individuals in the society consistently pursue certain fundamental virtues on the basis of enhancing a common or social good. In the traditional African sense, it is called African communalism. He called it the social structure which pervades traditional Africa in which every member voluntarily cooperates. Nze (1989) compares African communalism to fraternalism. It is fraternal not in the sense that it designates some multiple associations which combine some social character with financial cooperation but in the sense that it symbolizes a form of life of a people whose different members are held together by some parental link. It is more so fraternal because, the link existing between members of the community is blood relationship and kinship as all descended from a common ancestor. In this sense, group membership is very real to the African. This means that nobody can detach from his community for the community is the vehicle through which religion, the lifewire of the people is practised.

Nyerere (1975) also linked African socialism or what he called “*Ujamaa* Socialism” to African renaissance. In his view, this concept is more than a political system. It is a philosophy, a worldview as well as a gate way to African selfhood. Nyerere asserts that African socialism is essentially an attitude of the mind which involves a change in personal attitude and a

reconciliation of individuals but goes beyond these to effect structural change consistent with the socialist outlook, creating a pattern of justice in which creativity and justice, equality and freedom of all will be assured. Agbaje (1991) clearly defined African socialism as an attempt to recapture and modernize the communal way of life practiced by the traditional African before exposure to the world and values of the Whiteman. It can also be said to be a search for an altogether different type of a social system with its root in African soil. Also, Senghor (cited by Mbefo, 1988) in his African Socialism suggested that the African can borrow and use Western technology while conserving and preserving his cultural roots. In the same vein, Mboya (1963) conceives of African socialism as a political philosophy which stands to restore national values, communal social practices and above all to restore the traditional values in the African socialist mentality and outlook and to create more values in the changing world of money economy, to build an economy which reflects the thinking of the great majority of the people. Mboya's list of basic values and social practices of traditional Africa consists of the communal spirit, hospitality, hardwork, generosity, acceptance and practice of egalitarianism, communal ownership of land, equality of opportunities for all, tribal loyalty and so forth. However, they did not say anything on the renaissance of Igbo culture and tradition.

The concept of African renaissance is also likened to the Ubuntu of South Africa as well as Mbiti's (1970) dictum "I am because we are and because we are therefore I am" (p.141). It is a term common to two indigenous South African languages namely Zulu and Xhosa. This concept of individual significance being achieved through the community is the basic understanding that has been repeated by many black South Africans. Mbigi and Maree (1995) defined *Ubuntu* as a metaphor that describes the significance of group solidarity on survival issues, which is so central to the survival of African communities, which, as a result of poverty and deprivation, have to survive through brotherly group care and not on individual self-reliance. Tutu (cited by Burger, 1996) highlighted the sharing and caring for each other in adversity as well as in good times as



central characteristic of *Ubuntu*. In practice, *Ubuntu* is commonly expressed through humaneness that results in the entire communities sharing an individual's joy and pain as seen in marriages and funerals that the whole communities attend. Therefore, the concept of *Ubuntu*, African renaissance and decolonization are intertwined from an African perspective but an understanding of *Ubuntu* is necessary to appreciate the potential value of the African renaissance and the impact of decolonization. African approach to cultural phenomena is still contaminated and is well informed by the past that they desperately want to avoid. Indeed, one realizes that like all academic terms, African renaissance can be taken literally and exploited to serve individuals' (and sometimes nefarious) ends (Boloka, 1999). However, they did not say anything on issues challenging the renaissance of Igbo cultural values.

On African renaissance, Awoniyi (2010) advised that "Africa has a lot to look back to. She has a rich cultural and ethical heritage of respect for elders, family values, hospitality, community caring and sharing, ethics of hard work, discipline, honesty and justice" (pp. 102-106). Sadly enough, however, these values have been abandoned as elders who should enforce them are the ones championing the Eurocentric religious, cultural, political and economic assault on Africa. This is the reason the youth syndrome has become a factor in African communities. Kunhiyop (2008) added that African antiquities are also great treasures that Africa has to look back to. Coupled with these is the sense of religiosity that Africa is known to possess. Africans are believed to be incurably religious and religion permeates all aspects of their life. Okumu (2002) acceded to this when he said that "these all together are what Africa ought to celebrate as regards to its identity and cultural glory" (p. 7). However, these scholars did not say anything on the revival of Igbo cultural values.

Wa Thiong'O (2005) viewed it from the angle of education and primarily with language. He wanted the intellectuals to examine the European memory covering the African landscape and suggests a renaming process, in order to reintroduce precolonial memories which could create new

positive identities. His thesis is that only native African languages can create authentic African cultures while colonial languages create alienation. According to him, knowledge should not be created for European consumption but for the African. This is the only way Africa can become visible to the African. Intellectuals should not be outsiders in their own lands. At this point, Wa Thiong’O wrote that, Africa does not need linguistic unity anymore than Europe does. In fact, mono-lingualism is dangerous to the pan-African project. On his part, Zeleza (2005) chose to focus on the new African academic diaspora of neo-colonialism associated with brain drain. He wanted to teach this diaspora to identify with pan-Africanist terms instead of pan-national and pan-ethnic terms when relating to Africa and turn “brain drain to brain gain; to revitalize the black Atlantic; to rebuild the pan-African triangle by infusing a pan-African spirit into the academic diaspora; the intellectuals to become progressive exiles using their space to promote African knowledge and participating in pan-African battles.

On the other hand, Mazrui (1996) argued that no country has ascended to a first rank technological and economic power by excessive dependence on foreign languages. Japan rose to dazzling industrial heights through Japanese language by making it the medium of its own industrialization. Korea has approximately scientified the Korean language and made it the medium of its own technological take-off. Can Africa ever take-off technologically, if it retains so overwhelmingly European languages for discourse on advanced learning? He further stated that in secondary schools in Africa, the literature taught to many African children is sometimes still European literature. However, what is more to the point according to him is that, the African literature taught to African children is almost never in indigenous languages, saying that, the European “Other” haunts the African Self from a young age in a post-colonial school. He therefore asked these pertinent questions, have Africans been witnessing a clash of civilization in African schools? Or does literature provide a cover for dependency?

This is not to be as changes brought by colonialism have radically altered the status quo in traditional Africa. However, much as these writers have expressed concern over the need to look back at those cultural and traditional values, they did not say the language to be adopted that would address this issue.

Cesaire (1947) responded to the call for African renaissance by projecting a concept which he called *negritude*. He defined *negritude* as a call to the centuries-old alienation of blacks to reject assimilation and reclaim their own racial heritage and qualities. He saw this concept as in fact, a revolt and the acceptance of responsibility for the destiny of his race. He advocates the emergence of “cultural workers” who will reveal black specificity to the world by articulating their experiences, their fortunes and misfortunes. This consciousness of blacks being in the world will write them into history and validate their achievements. It will restore the lost humanity, dignity, integrity and subjectivity of black identity, necessary to confront colonialism, racism and western imperialism.

Senghor (1948) also expressed concern for African renaissance with his concept of *negritude* which he defined as neither racialism nor self-negation. It is not just affirmation; it is rooting oneself in oneself and self-confirmation; confirmation of one’s being. It is nothing more or less than what some English speaking Africans have called the African personality. *Negritude* must take its place in contemporary humanism in order to enable black Africa make its contribution to the “universal civilization” which is so necessary in the divided but interdependent world.

On his part, Nkrumah (1963) linked African renaissance to his concept of African unity. He posited that the salvation of Africa lies in unity. Thus, he put forward this dictum “Divided We Fall, United We Stand”. He believed that African unity will define a common set of directives relating to economic planning which was aimed at the complete decolonization of set ups inherited from the colonial system and organizing the development of the wealth of African

countries in the interest of the people. Also in African unity, there will be the organization of a system of joint defense which will make it possible to mobilize all the means of defense at their disposal in favour of any state of the union which becomes a victim of aggression. African unity will provide Africans equal opportunities, collective mobilization of African resources and a high military command for Africa. This adage which indicates that there is power in unity also applies with equal force to the present situation of Africans on the African continent and those in Diaspora. This division and lack of unity in Africa itself as well as in the diaspora is the very basis on which Africans are being marginalized, discriminated against and exploited in the globalization process. In this condition, Africans remain an enslaved people under modern conditions and they have seen the reason for this as lying in the very character of post-colonial state which could have not given full meaning to these aspirations since the attempt to create an African nation was doomed to failure by the fact that the colonial state which was inherited could not by its nature countenance pan-African unity. However, it appears difficult for Africa to unite because they lack the basic ingredients for unity such as common race, culture and language.

Nevertheless, a true understanding of the origin of African reawakening and rebirth leading to freedom and liberation must be traced to its source in the enslavement of the African people who were taken to the New World. They are now Africans in Diaspora. Also, this reawakening has to be traced to the colonization of the African people on the continent itself as well as their resistance to those two moments. These two struggles are what produced the concept of pan-Africanism which enabled mobilization of the people on the continent in the liberation of South Africa and the rest of the continent.

According to Davidson (1994), the term pan-Africanism began to take on political connotation after 1900 when the notion of Africanism reappeared as pan-Africanism. This was derived from the need for a substantive pan-Africanism which was adjectively being applied to the idea and programmes for an envisioned continental unity. So, the usage of the word became

frequent after the 1920s, especially in the call for the study of Africa by Africanists. As Davidson (1994) put it, in the 1950s, Lord Hailey, a British administrator and writer advised that the term Africanism be used for nationalism in African context. He added that the term Africanist rather than Africanism emerged in black politics in South Africa to describe someone who rejected political co-operation with the whites in the black struggle against racism. In advising the use of the word Africanism for African nationalism by Lord Hailey, Davidson noted that this change was necessary since nationalism had proved inseparable from the whole range of ideas and inspirations joined in the drive to transform African colonies into nation-states and hence bring about a new evaluation of their cultures and societies.

Prah (1998) says these objectives must be to define pan-Africanism and to the same extent African renaissance grounded in historical and cultural terms which are emancipatory for mass society and which in the object does not contradict or deny the rights of other people. He believed that the primary object of pan-Africanism is emancipation by means of African unity. For Prah, the most important pan-African struggle that needs unity is the fight against neo-colonialism, that is western economic hegemony and cultural effacement, as well as the African elites, which according to him has turned its back on Africa's people. This battle includes fighting the neo-colonial nation states. Like Wa Thiong'O, Prah's weapon is African languages in order to create positive local cultures. He wanted to focus on the language clusters on the continent in order to create a certain standardization and larger linguistic communities, where cooperation between African states can be made easier, ethnic conflicts be minimized, knowledge transferred and a cultural institutional base will finally be built.

Esedebe (1994) further defined Pan-Africanism as a political and cultural phenomenon that regards Africa, Africans and African descendants abroad as a unit. It seeks to regenerate and unify Africa and promote a feeling of oneness among the people of the African world. It glorifies the African past and inculcates pride in African values. However, the major concern of the early pan-

Africanists, according to Davidson (1994), was to claim for the blacks of Africa as well as of the Americas the same real equality of human values with other people which were precisely what the black culture of enslavement and imperialism had denied all black peoples. So, there is a link in the idea of Africanism with the struggle for cultural survival and human equality, that is, a struggle against enslavement, racism and colonialism for common humanity. It is only in this sense that pan-Africanism has real meaning in the sense of unity by all black people of Africa and Africans in Diaspora against oppression to which they were subjected. Shepperson (1960) argued that the birth of pan-Africanism in the Diaspora was a gift of the New World of America to the Old World of Africa.

Makonnen (1973), one of the originators of Pan-Africanism, also said that Pan-Africanism has to do with the mobilization of Africans and people of African descent towards the complete liberation of the African continent. However, both Pan-Africanism and African renaissance need to be redefined for the practical development challenges facing Africa today. This concept needs an African who fundamentally understands the history of Africa, an African who is fully aware of factors that have shaped the history and developments of African continent, an African who is conscious that the historical experience of colonialism and other forms of enslavement inform his or her point of departure, an African who can shape the destiny of the continent and contribute however little to the attainment of that destiny. Therefore, he must be a proactive agent of change.

African musicians were not left out in this struggle for emancipation of Africa. Bob Marley (1945-1981) was a Pan-Africanist who believed in the unity of African people worldwide. His beliefs were rooted in his Rastafari religious beliefs. He was substantially inspired by Marcus Garvey and had anti-imperialist and pan-Africanist themes in many of his songs such as “Zimbabwe”, “Exodus”, “Survival”, “Blackman Redemption” and “Redemption Song”. Redemption song drew influence from a speech given by Marcus Garvey in Nova Scotia in 1937. Marley held that the independence of African countries from European domination was a victory

for all those in the African diaspora. In the song “Africa unite”, he sang of a desire for all peoples of the African diaspora to come together and fight against “Babylon”. Babylon in this sense means oppression. Similarly, in the song Zimbabwe, he marked the liberation of the whole continent of Africa and evokes calls for unity between all Africans both within and outside Africa. Also, Lucky Dube (1964-2007) from South Africa in his song “Slave” described how the blacks have been alienated and enslaved. They have taken to drinking and this equally breeds conflict in the home with the wife and family. In the song, he said that ministers of religion have approached him, asking him to drop his agitation for rights. The ministers of religion in this case are the instruments of the white oppressors, to try and convince the blacks to abandon their struggle for emancipation. As a result of exploitation, the working class has lost their dignity. All slaves have turned to pleasing their masters for survival. For the oppressors to maintain power, other institutions like the legal system as well as political power were established to contain the dissenting views and voices of the oppressed were established. From the song, there is a conscious and concerted effort to discriminate and enslave some members of the society. Others like Fela Anikulapo Kuti from Nigeria, who promoted Pan-Africanism through his music, Alpha Blondy from Cote D’Ivoire, Sunny Okosun from Nigeria, Salif Keita, Youssour N’Dour from Senegal and Hugh Masekela from South Africa and others were all pro pan-africanist musicians who sensitized many people about Africa, its people, its history and common culture.

On the other hand, Diop (1996) said that while African renaissance can be talked about in relation to music, sculpture and architecture, language remains key to achieving this grand objective for the continent. Relating language to African renaissance explicitly, Diop noted that development of the indigenous languages is the prerequisite for a real African renaissance. To justify this claim, he was quick to remind Africans of the detrimental effects of using foreign languages as media of instruction in African schools. He stated that the African is forced to make double efforts, to assimilate the meaning of words and then, through a second intellectual effort, to

capture the reality expressed by the words. In order to develop African languages, Diop charged African writers with the task of writing for an audience in African languages. This mission will in turn promote people's political education. He specifically makes useful recommendations for language policy and planning research that aims at establishing relations between African languages, identifying their specific geniuses and studying some aspects of grammar that have thus far been ignored by specialists. Diop drives the point home on the language question for African states by asking African linguists and policy makers to avoid easy solutions and upgrade certain national languages to suit modern exigencies.

African renaissance can also be linked to Edward Blyden's *Return of the Exiles*. In a lecture titled "*Return of the Exiles and the West African Church*" delivered in December, 1890, Blyden proclaimed that as long as the evangelization of Africa was left in foreign hands, firm Christianity cannot be established in Africa. He therefore called on Africans to come together and shun denominationalism. As a result of this, a suggestion was made to establish a non-denominational West African church. The plan, however, failed mainly because of financial constraints and the fear of the organizers that they could be excommunicated by the missionaries.

The present day global village as Nester (2001) put it is a continuation of a process that started five centuries ago. According to him, today's globalization is actually part of the fourth phase of western imperialism and penetration into Africa by superordinate forces that used Africa as a platform for exploitation. Chuka (2007) saw the present day globalization as a continuation of a long tradition over five hundred years, the tradition by imperialism. To him, globalization is only the latest phase and expression of this uninterrupted history of domination and subjugation of peoples, nations, and cultures through the conquistadores and colonizers. It is a tradition of political, economic and cultural domination of some nations over others (p. 126). This is what could be referred to as old wine in a new wine skin. By this, globalization is meant to continue the domination and subjugation of less advanced peoples, nations and cultures through another phase



of colonization by technologically advanced nations. However, no people, nation or culture should be treated as inferior to others. This is part of what Igbo renaissance is kicking against.

The conception of the world as a global village has to do with the post-modern condition characterized by a time-space compression that arises from inexpensive air travel and ever present use of Global System Mobile (GSM) and other social media networks such as internet, computers, email, fax and so forth. In the 1960s and 1970s, immigrant workers in America and Europe relied on postal systems and personally delivered letters to send news back to their home villages in India, China, Africa, Middle East, Far East and elsewhere. Then it could take six months to receive a reply. By late 1990s, the grand children of the first generation migrants were carrying cellular phones that linked them to relations in cities such as New York, London, Calcutta, Singapore, Shanghai, Lagos, Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cairo and so on. Now, awareness of time zones which have to do with the time people will be awake and what time offices open is second nature to people whose work or family ties connect them to far-reaching parts of the world. So, the world has become a global village with communication being an indispensable tool in the entire globalization process. The global village presupposes the world wide spread of television which brings distant events into the homes of viewers everywhere. This kind of communication, no doubt, produces an implosion of personal experience, that is, distant events are brought to the immediate attention of people around the world. A case in point is the spectacular growth of the Cable News Network (CNN). The Cable News Network became an icon of globalization by broadcasting its U.S style news programming around the world 24 hours a day. Live coverage of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Gulf war in 1991 and extended coverage of events, surrounding the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington D.C, on September 11, 2001, illustrated television's powerful global reach. There are other cable network stations such as Aljazeera, BBC and others. Some governments have responded to such advances by attempting to restrict international broadcasting but Satellite communication makes these restrictions

increasingly unenforceable. In addition, satellite system has made it possible for people all over the world to receive international radio messages from international radio stations such as the Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Radio France International (RFI) and others. All these have global effects on people and nations around the world. Consequently, this study is necessitated by the challenge of globalization (that is the resultant global influences that are obstructing or making it difficult) for the realization of Igbo renaissance.

Having clarified the concept of African renaissance held by the various scholars, it is obvious that they did not examine critically the challenges mounted against African renaissance or the revival of African cultural values by globalization. However, having considered all these concepts put forward by various scholars to explain African renaissance, it is clear that Mbeki's concept of African renaissance is more comprehensive because it captures elements of all other concepts, hence this work has adopted his concept.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This subsection seeks to introduce and describe relevant theories to support this research study. On this basis, two theories namely, the theory of Africanity and self acceptance theory have been formulated to explain, predict and understand this research study.

### **2.2.1 Theory of Africanity**

This theory otherwise known as the system of Africanity was propounded by Chuba Okadigbo (1976) as an analytical framework for the understanding of the nature and values of the traditional African society or the pure African society in its reference to the quest of persons residing in the African continent for a new soul, a new motive, a new worldview and a new humanism reborn from the system of Africanity. This theory states that the events of large significance taking place within the setting of culture, art, religion, ethics, politics and philosophy of the African people can be tied together in such a way as to enhance a contemporary African worldview, that is, a *weltanschauung*, which derives from the past, addresses the African present

and looks objectively at the African future. It hinges on the sum total of the resemblances, similarities, identity of principles and identity of values which tie the various pure African societies together. In this work, since culture can be used as a reliable instrument to fight off external domination, this theory becomes imperative to foster a cultural unity of black Africa, which is the unique cultural face that Africa presents to the world.

This unity, according to Marquet (1972), is based not upon race but rather upon cultural foundations. Therefore, this theory explains that the freedom of black people lies in reclaiming the philosophical systems from traditional African beliefs and cultural practices and applying them to contemporary African conditions of life in this era of globalization. However, based on the above submissions, this work has adopted this theory as its working tool.

Recognizing that Western powers' success in effecting world domination was predicated on its use of culture as an ideology, Biko (2004) advised that culture should be used by Africans as an ideological tool for mobilization, conscientization and resistance. In view of this fact, Biko (2004) posited that, although African culture may have sustained severe blows and may have been battered nearly out of shape by the belligerent cultures it came into contact with, in essence, even today, one can easily find the fundamental aspects of the pure African culture in the present day African. However, it is the remnants of African culture that he believed should be defined in concrete terms that would relate the past to the present so as to realize Africans' quest for a true humanity.

As globalization poses a great challenge to African traditional religious renaissance, Biko (2004) believes in the potency of African culture to usher in a humane world although he is painfully aware that African culture has been disfigured by European colonialists. He observed that in an effort to destroy completely the structures that had been built up in the African society and to impose their imperialism with an unnerving totality, the colonialists were not satisfied merely with holding a people in their grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content.

The colonialists, he added, turned to the past of the oppressed and distorted, disfigured and destroyed it. He further noted that in their renaming and misnaming game, Africa became “the dark continent”, African culture became “barbarism” and African religious practices and customs became “superstition”

This misnaming and renaming project is what Mphahlele (2002) refers to as disinherited imagination. This refers to the perception of standards as good because they were established by the white man. This has been made worse by globalization because, as Mphahlele further explained, disinherited imagination is the stripping of the indigenous world of its own myths, poetry, dreams and reveries. As a consequence of disinherited imagination, Africans to a great extent lost touch with a culture that celebrated respect for all that exists. As he further noted, a number of black Africans themselves have to tap the collective memory for all things they need to know about the essence of being African. Africans, he said, have assimilated half-baked, Western thought and beliefs which have uprooted them, left them directionless and chasing rainbow. This theory endorses cultural reclamation as one of the most effective means of Igbo renaissance.

As Ntuli (1999) pointed out, Africa’s cultural reclamation project emerged out of the recognition that African culture was the first target of the colonial power. That being the case, he recalled that for Biko and his Black Consciousness Movement, culture necessarily became the first instrument used to resist colonialism. He noted that this is a strategic retreat to pre-colonial Africa to extricate some of the knowledge systems relevant to the needs of Africans in the next millennium.

This strategic retreat to pre-colonial Africa as Prah (2006) explained, means that Africans need to be selective about what they keep and what they reject in their historical and cultural heritage. They must readily and quickly abandon what clearly goes against the gains of emancipation and salvation. If African traditional religious renaissance must occur amidst globalization, the system of Africanity must be instituted for Africa’s cultural reclamation which,

according to Modupe (2003), is the resurrection, reconstruction and revitalization of African culture. Calls for the reclamation of African culture have been dismissed as backward or alarming, yet, as Diop (1974) further observed, when intellectuals who are not of African origin explain their own historical past or study their language, such is considered normal. While Africans' efforts to rediscover and reclaim their cultural past are treated with derision; there is no shortage of white scholars who research almost every area of African life and write about it.

Maathai (2009) added that, it is an act of re-engagement with one's roots with the aim of attempting to embrace all of its richness, contradictions and challenges in fitting into the modern world. As globalization pounds and pulverizes the world, Africans need to embrace Africinity because, as Maathai observed, when Africans were told that their culture was demonic and primitive, they lost their sense of collective power and responsibility and succumbed, not to the God of love and compassion they knew, but to the gods of commercialism, materialism and individualism.

According to Raubenheimer (1991), during the period Ntuli referred to, black journalists imbued with Black Consciousness declared that they were blacks first and journalists second. This meant that they saw themselves primarily as articulators of the black struggle. They rejected the traditional concept of liberal objectivity of white English language newspapers and saw nothing wrong in being revolutionary propagandists. For the journalists, this did not mean twisting of facts and distorting reality. This theory portrays African culture as an ideological tool seen not just as a temporary weapon against oppression but a mechanism to secure for future beyond oppression. Changes that have occurred in African culture have to a great extent been externally-driven and coercive as a result of globalization. He was supported by many scholars of African culture such as Modupe (2003) and Maphahlele (2002) who argued that not only has African culture survived brutal slaughter on home soil, but that it proceeded under duress among African descendants who were scattered as slaves throughout the Eastern and Western worlds. Despite all that have befallen

African culture, it has not been diminished by globalization. Schiele (2003) noted that the insistence on the survival of African culture implies that slavery and colonization of Africa by Europeans and the Arabs did not destroy the vestiges of Africa and colonialism and apartheid failed to do the same.

Cabral (1970) also explains that within the context of Africa's renaissance, national liberation struggles are themselves acts of political, economic and cultural renewal. They are a reaffirmation of the spirit of pan-Africanism that was the continental ideology that galvanized liberation movements in the days of black people's struggle against different forms of colonialism in Africa. Thus, to reissue Cabral's works in the context of continental rebirth is in itself an act of political intervention in the debate surrounding the sources, content, values, vision and discourses of Africa's renaissance. The importance of this theory cannot be overemphasized, because according to him, there cannot be any meaningful African rebirth without a return to a consideration of the importance of political economy or the material interests of the ordinary people. He was also aware that a people's culture encompasses their struggles and that any struggle can be successful when the people involved have conviction and self-confidence.

He said that the value of culture as an element of resistance to foreign domination lies in the fact that culture is the vigorous manifestation of the ideological or idealist plane of the physical and historical reality of the society that is dominated or to be dominated. Culture is perhaps the product of this history just as the flower is the product of a plant. Like history or because it is history, culture has as its material base the level of the productive forces and the mode of production. Culture plunges its roots into the physical reality of the environmental humus in which it develops and it reflects the organic nature of the society, which may be more or less influenced by external factors. History allows us to know the nature and extent of the imbalances and conflicts which characterize the evolution of the society; culture allows us to know the

dynamic synthesis which have been developed and established by social conscience to resolve these conflicts at each stage of its evolution, in the search for survival and progress.

Cultural renaissance for Cabral (1970), is first and foremost, a people's renewal. He believes that unless culture sinks its roots into the creative humus of people's experience, the discourses of Africa's renaissance that are written by African elites will surely wilt. Cabral's works force certain questions related to arrested decolonization to resurface, begging for further interrogation in ways that bring new discourses on freedom into crisis. Certain political issues related to identity and dignity of Africans is also refracted through new and dynamic perspectives. In this work, this concept portrays culture as a potent weapon for the rebirth or revival of Igbo religious traditions and values.

Eze (2014) stated that what colonialism had accomplished mainly physically was fully sealed psychologically and spiritually through missionary activities. Through missionary activities, every constitutive element of African cultural identity was attacked and almost destroyed. Such elements included the African worldview, politics, social arrangements, religions, economies, educational system, arts, music, literature and languages of different African communities. This had affected the African individual who was attacked, oppressed, exploited, robbed of his self-worth and reduced to nobody and hence deformed by inferiority complex. Africa must come to terms with her own subjectivity by modifying traditional and foreign cultural values in conformity with the realities and exigencies of the day. The modification of these values will yield a system of cultural values that are peculiar to her, but open to all societies. Accordingly, the Igbo must discard or kick against traditional norms or practices that could render him increasingly weak or could imprison him in the past. He should however be able to draw strength from the tradition of his ancestors provided he does so within the ambit of a new dynamism.

**2.2.2 Self-acceptance Theory:** This theory is based on Albert Ellis' Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy which deals primarily with helping people to overcome their disturbances and to help them self-actualize, become fully functioning and happy. Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy evolved from the work of psychiatrist Albert Ellis in the mid-1950s as the original form of cognitive-behavioural therapy. Ellis (2002) believed that, most people are not aware that many of their thoughts about themselves are irrational and negatively affect the way they behave in important relationships and situations. According to Ellis, it is these thoughts that lead people to suffer negative emotions and engage in self-destructive behaviour. At the same time, humans are capable of challenging and changing their irrational beliefs, if they are willing to do the work. While specific events may contribute to mental health issues, REBT therapists believe that it is an individual's own faulty and irrational belief system that causes the most problems. By letting go of negative thoughts and replacing them with positive beliefs, one is better able to accept one's self and others and in turn, live a happier life. The strength of this theory lies in the ability of the African to define himself as a worthwhile person because he exists, because he is alive and because of his individual character, strength and abilities that make up his uniqueness. This theory was adopted for this work because it will go a long way in bringing back African identity and personality since the true African life is encapsulated in unity, communalism and shared purpose. Africans will begin to reject some of the obnoxious western values and practices that are inimical to their development.

The mentality of the African is the engine room of his person. Whatever affects his mentality affects his person. The African has colour, culture and belief. These are the basis of his identity. He is unique, rational and has self-worth. This self-worth, which is, the basis of his personality, was tampered with as the Europeans foisted their superiority complex on the him through colonialism. Consequently, the African has a low perception of his person as well as his culture. The solution to this problem, according to Ellis (1977), is unconditional self-acceptance



meaning that the individual fully and unconditionally accepts himself whether or not he behaves intelligently, correctly or competently and whether or not other people approve, respect or love him. Therefore, the African must be able to accept himself as distinct and good enough to excel and reach the same height as the metropolitan states regardless of how the western world perceives and treats him. The western world must cease to be the yardstick or standard for African development. With enormous resources available, Africa can do better than the metropolitan states if they can harness and develop their latent abilities through self-acceptance.

To Shepard (1979), self-acceptance is an individual's satisfaction or happiness with himself and is thought to be necessary for good mental health. Self-acceptance involves self-understanding, a realistic albeit subjective awareness of one's strength and weaknesses. It results in an individual's feeling about himself that he is of unique worth. Ellis (2005) adds that people's estimation of their own value or worth is exceptionally important. If they seriously denigrate themselves or have a poor self-image, they will impair their normal functioning and make themselves miserable in many significant ways. When people do not value themselves very highly, innumerable problems arise. The individual's judgement of his own value or worth has such an impact on his thought, emotions and actions. It is expected that once the African begins to understand himself and refuse to accept that the western culture is better, he ceases to feel ashamed for eating, feeling, dancing, worshipping, speaking and dressing like an African.

This theory is useful to Africans within the context of African renaissance in a world dominated by the metropolitan states. It will assist them to recognize that they are of unique worth. This model rejects the inferiority complex which the western world foisted on Africa. It advocates for a psychological force that opposes and transcends superiority complex and dependency paradigm. It encourages Africa and Africans to recognize their own value or worth because the way they perceive themselves has an impact on their thought, emotions and actions and these in turn affect their value system.

This model is also in tandem with the injunction of Socrates (cited by Sofola, 1978) which says “Man Know Thyself.” The African should know himself culturally, to understand and appreciate himself and express himself culturally. The African should be inspired to greater heights by his self-knowledge. It is in the African peoples Africanness that they can win respect and make important contribution to the world now plagued by greed, aggression, man’s inhumanity to man and cultural intolerance. It is in their African philosophies of wholesome human relations and worldview and such-like moralizing and essentially humanistic cultural characteristics which are ideational rather than technological that they would fulfill the hopes of mankind which is now helplessly groping for peace, togetherness and tolerance in God’s glory on this planet.

There is, therefore according to Sofola (1978), a need to appeal to Africans in general to look inward into their society and rediscover those values which are their African cultural heritage. These values should form the solid basis for the progress; penetrate its planning and implementation in Africa. Some may need modifications here and there but definitely not uprooting as is presently done everywhere. These essentially moralistic, humane and humanistic values should influence the definition of development or progress; penetrate its planning and implementation in Africa.

Sofola (1978) concluded that the modern African’s root is deep down in Africa. The often neglected or overlooked aspects of non-material culture such as ideas, the beliefs and world-view of African people are the cultural characteristics which are moralistic and essentially humane and are the ingredients, contents or building-blocks of which the solid African personality is made. The African therefore, should not behave like a rootless being even in the face of impinging, aggressive cultures of the outside world like the western culture. For while in the expression of his foolishness (culture) at times, the African appears to be culturally self-depreciating, the outside world looks at his African cultural heritage with admiration, respect and appreciation. Besides, to

be seen and looked at from one's own image is better and more enhancing than to live in the shadow of another man. Africans will begin to realize that the Europeans and Americans are not better than them in terms of values and self-worth when they accept themselves.

Africans could use the indigenous knowledge system to read and forecast weather. They had their own ways of dealing with crimes, deviance and conflicts. The self-acceptance approach to African renaissance underscores the importance of using the Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy to engage Africans to face issues of justice, inequality and sustainability from a collective or communal approach. Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy according to Dryden (2005) is a short-term form of psychotherapy that helps you identify self-defeating thoughts and feelings, challenge the rationality of those feelings and replace them with healthier, more productive beliefs. REBT focuses on the present time to help you understand how unhealthy thoughts and beliefs create emotional distress which, in turn, leads to unhealthy actions and behaviours that interfere with your current life goals. Once identified and understood, negative thoughts and actions can be changed and replaced with more positive and productive behaviour, allowing you to develop more successful personal and professional relationships. However, this has to start individually by getting Africans to realize that in order to attain self-reliance and self-assertion, there is the need for self-acceptance. This is necessary for reclaiming African identity and values. Upon achieving this goal, the continent will be able to go back to the drawing board and redesign a new course to prosperity. The self-acceptance theory through Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy therefore advocates for local solutions, community-based solutions and reliance on local resources.

### **2.3 Empirical Studies**

At this juncture, it is necessary to extend this discussion to other scholars whose works are also relevant to the struggle for African renaissance. Asiegbu (2010) in his work *African Renaissance, Globalization and Philosophy*, argued that since African states are socio-politically

and economically weak, they seem disadvantaged in a globalized world. As a result, the prevailing view is that, globalization works against the interest of Africans, thus, ignoring its positive impact on Africa. He added that corruption, killings, either religious or tribal, dictatorship and fraudulent elections are the things pulling down the gains of globalization. Yet, Africans do not see these as caused by themselves; rather they blame the West for everything. Having said these, he did not state the positive impact of globalization to the civilization of Africa viewed from the lens of the Igbo.

According to Asiegbu (2010), African renaissance is meant to fight off the inferiority complex or inferior status of the African. It aims at reclaiming the pride of the African. It does not mean a return to the glorious and primordial African past. It is rather an attempt to restore the cultural heritage of the African, setting him on a par with the Western and Asian cultures in a world of globalization. However, he did not say anything on how globalization has challenged the revival of Igbo religion and culture.

Asiegbu (2010) related Pala's report about a peasant woman in rural Kenya whose interlocutors asked what the villagers understood by development. The woman answered that during the anti-colonial struggles, their leaders spurred them on with the view that independence stood for development and that it would usher in better quality of life, better living standard, security and so forth. Decades after independence, all they had seen was nothing other than people coming to write about them. Africa's record of poverty alleviation and human development is attributable to her poor economic development. Of the 48 heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) in the world, at least 33 are African states. He pointed out that the effect of a poverty-stricken population is enormous as it suffers high rate of child/maternal mortality, widespread HIV/AIDS disease, limited life expectancy, overpopulation, disaster and so on. Africans are among the 300 million heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) population that thrive on less than a dollar (\$0.65)

a day. He did not, however, say anything on the impact of globalization on Igbo religion and culture.

However, Asiegbu (2010) distinguished between the Africa we know and the other Africa. The other Africa relates to the forgotten African that is a symbol of success in failure, one that represents all the good efforts human beings make to address their condition while the Africa we know is the paradoxical Africa which reflects human inability to successfully face down the African condition. In short, he explained that the Africa we know is the contemporary Africa, the Africa that lags behind all other continents in nearly all the facets of life, especially in socio-economic and political aspects of development. The Africa we know is the present Africa, the hopeless continent. However, Asiegbu (2010) disagrees with Asouzu saying that this picture of Africa does not fully well represent Africa as it is in what he called Afro-realism. He argued that whereas this idea dwells solely on the negative, non-progressive dimension of Africa, it remains completely mute about Africa's brighter, sunny aspect. For example, if one refers to a massive African population as famished and hunger-stricken, AIDS disease infested, there is an equally sizeable, promising and prosperous number that have kept Africa going. He added that the Diaspora population contributes to the growing economies of many developed nations and that the Afro-pessimist image misrepresents Africa as it really is. He contends that, as far as Asouzu's Africa typifies the failures of Africa, he is largely mistaken since the present Africa as it is known to Africans and others are not all negative. Asiegbu (2010) argues that, although African states may not have performed expectedly better when compared to other nations, may as well be industrially and technologically underdeveloped, yet, all there is to Africa is not only failed states, retrogression, tyranny, looting of the treasuries by politicians, natural disasters, overpopulation, refugee problems, wars, poor leadership and all sorts of imaginable and unimaginable negative connotation.

He observed that authoritarian government, poor economic and unequal employment opportunities, neglect of public facilities, deprivation of access to social amenities, ostracism, party repressive activities, emasculation of opposition, religious and ethnic bigotry, hoarding of information etc. are all obstacles to people's expansion of their freedom. They hinder a people's development. However, he did not say anything on the challenges of African cultural renaissance which is seen here as a hindrance to Igbo cultural renaissance.

The works of some scholars focused on the efforts of the pioneer African leaders who, after the attainment of independence in 1960 by most African countries, sought to re-establish the post-colonial Africa on its pristine trendy march towards development through what is called African socialism. Generally, they show that this African socialism was aimed at a certain political regeneration of Africa as originally, African attempts to undo the colonial efforts to hold down Africa. Asiegbu (2010) cited Azikiwe who saw an Africa of elites different from Africa of the traditional rulers. To him, nascent Africa had no other reference than the newly emancipated African elites. However, he did not say anything towards the efforts made by African scholars and traditionalists for the revival of Igbo cultural values.

According to Asiegbu (2010), Seme was among the early thinkers who employed the concept of "African Renaissance" to typify a rebirth of Africa. African renaissance refers to economic empowerment, Pan-African vision for South Africa and mutual help among African states. Furthermore, he asserted that, Africa has the right to establish her own credentials and must be judged in her own right. There is tension between Africa asserting the right to be herself from the standpoint of the African experience and the temptation to abandon this in favour of understanding Africa according to the standard imposed by Europe. A common fundamental sentiment that Africans possess is humanism that will be the hallmark of the new civilization. The regeneration of Africa is the age of light overcoming darkness. It is crucial to understand that the

term Africa excludes the non-African that is the European. However, he said nothing about the revival of Igbo religion and culture in the midst of globalization.

Asiegbu (2010) also referred to Ramose saying that, liberation is a necessity and Africans must be the authors of their own liberation. An essential corollary to this is that Africans must have confidence in themselves, be self-reliant and act in unity and solidarity. They must establish a colour-blind, rights-based democracy regardless of creed. Strictly speaking, Asiegbu (2010) says that globalization stands for the compression of space and time so that people from distant areas are able and in fact obliged to interact with one another intensively and in a wide range of areas. In terms of space, the world has become so small that it is significantly termed a global village, as important as the economy or the flow of financial resources, goods and services are, they do not solely constitute globalization. Other dimensions of globalization such as advances in science and technology, information and communication technology, accessibility of labour, transportation, diffusion of religions, cultural, political ideologies and development paradigms. However, he did not say anything about the negative impact of globalization on the renaissance of Igbo religion and culture.

Asikaogu (2018) in his work, *Igbo Cultural Values and the Effect of Globalization: A Critical Analysis* stated that, the profound impact of globalization on the culture of the Igbo people has placed the Igbo mind in a cultural dilemma. This global influence has alienated the Igbo from their ancestral cultural practices, yet, they are not deeply rooted in the new culture they have embraced. The economic and political structure evolved by the Igbo to attend to their basic needs, under this circumstance was greatly affected and seriously weakened especially at the *umunna* (kinsmen) level. With the weakening of the *umunna* political system, enforcement of religious and cultural values was highly eroded. The Igbo traditional way of doing things and their cultural practices capitulated to the foreign way of doing things. Western culture now became the frontline civilization. The Igbo way of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably

unacceptable in public domain. He also noted that, the individualism that developed as a result of the globalization process, which affected the Igbo communal spirit and oneness will continue to have negative impact on the future generation since the 'We' spirit is gradually being replaced by the 'I' spirit. However, he failed to realize that individualism is not the only factor that challenges the revival of Igbo culture in the globalization process.

Agena and Amadi (2015) in their work, *Globalization, Culture mutation and new identity: Implications for the Igbo Cultural Heritage*, submitted that, clash is inevitable as the dominant culture strives to dislodge the recessive culture. This clash provides a new look at globalization debate from the lens of culture mutation conceived as total or partial excision of ways of life of a people. As mutation emerged, new mode of behaviour and lifestyle developed which resulted in new identity. This work argues beyond the debate about the existence of globalization and posits that globalization is designed to advance the culture of stronger nations at the expense of the weaker ones. The central theme of their argument is the dislodgement of Igbo culture by the dominant western culture in the cause of this interaction and its implications for Igbo cultural heritage. This, they demonstrated with substantial evidences which include the new internet identity, online alliances and networking, the global system of mobile communication(GSM) revolution, global satellite system, European premier league fanatic, new lifestyles, online dating, new media, new mobile apps, new consumption patterns, novel western centred names of people and things, western e learning, educational inequality and so on.

On his part, Obioha (2010) in his work *Globalization and the Future of African Culture* said that, today, it has been observed that the rapid and aggressive spread of market economies and communication technologies under the influence of western multinational brings new impediments to local cultures and values, particularly in Africa and non-western societies at large. Nigerians in particular are now cultivating the materialistic and individualistic habits and values previously associated with western culture. The culture of individualism is fast eroding the values



and ideals of the extended family system which Nigerians are known for. Excessive materialism, for instance, has changed the religious character of the traditional Igbo. The traditional Igbo were a truly and deeply religious people of whom it can be said, ate religiously and drank religiously.

However, today, the reverse is the case; the texture of the modern Igbo cultural life is excessively materialistic. The glory of a religious cultural aura and vision of life, which characterized the traditional life, has disappeared from the characterological features of modern Igbo life. The change as observed from a cultural anthropological point of view has been a radical switch over from one extreme of a deeply religious social character to another of excessive materialism. For the present day Igbo, what gives meaning to the worth of any human person is not what he is by virtue of his education but what he possesses. Generally, globalization has brought about the decline of the traditional world, the undoing of the old cultural set up and the rapid erosion of old values. African culture, therefore, is fast running into extinction and something must be done to stop it. However, he did not point out efforts being made to address the revival of Igbo religion and culture in the midst of globalization.

Aharanwa, Ubaku and Ugwuja (2014) in their *Appraising the Encrustations of Globalization on Igbo Culture* concluded that, it should not be misconstrued that globalization has nothing positive to offer as its positive effects are evident in its contributions to the discontinuation of abominable practices such as killing of twins, levirate and sororate marriage, female genital mutilation and so on in most parts of Igboland. On the contrary, globalization has not only come to stay but has developed such a staying power that it cannot be conjured away. The anxieties and worries stem from the fact that the Igbo are not adjusting well as a people with collective identity and destiny in a globalized world. Therefore, to get them to readjust should naturally start with a diagnosis of the problems that globalization has caused them.

However, having pointed out some of the positive as well as the negative effects of globalization, they did not mention the factors that make it difficult for them to readjust. They did

not also emphasize on return to Igbo traditional values which could be instrumental to the readjustment.

Having said all these, they did not consider the renaissance of Igbo religion as an important factor for African renaissance. Indeed, for Igbo renaissance to succeed, the Igbo must return to the past. Returning to the past means revisiting the customs and traditions of Igbo communities which are the harbingers of African religion to pick the positives for Igbo development which has been stunted by globalization. Although certain aspects of Igbo culture refuse to cave in to the forces of globalization, the Igbo has been brainwashed to accept whatever is thrown at him as espoused by the effects of globalization on the Igbo. Since the Igbo is an African, whatever he passes through as a result of globalization represents African experience. These are the gaps which this work seeks to fill.

#### **2.4 Summary of Literature Review**

Having reviewed various literatures on different concepts, all of them talk about African renaissance. Mbeki's call for African renaissance is essentially not new, historically; the desire to shrug off colonialism has been characterized as Pan Africanism, negritude, liberation, emancipation, freedom fight and so on. Some scholars were of the view that Africa can reconnect with their past through African communalism or achieve their struggle for a rebirth; renewal or reawakening of Africa through African unity or African socialism while others believe that the battle can be won through a return to source. Confronted with such a necessity, the liberation struggle is above all, a struggle both for the revival and preservation of the cultural values of the people and for the harmonization and development of these values within the African framework. However, none of them has been able to talk about the challenges facing the revival of Igbo culture in this era of globalization. This then becomes the gap in existing literature that this study has filled.

## CHAPTER THREE

### GLOBALIZATION AND THE IGBO EXPERIENCE

#### 3.1 The Igbo before Globalization

This section looks at the Igbo traditional culture in its organic and untempered state.

Taking it from this point of view, the Igbo in their traditional society differed from the white man in their family system, dressing, eating habits, building patterns, marriage, music, dance, relaxation/games and religion and so on.

##### 3.1.1 Family System

Igbo people according to Ekenachi (2001) lived in nuclear and extended families, hamlets, villages and towns otherwise called communities. This is very different from what obtains in the Western world where the concept of family focuses only on the nuclear, with less emphasis on the extended family connections or identifications. However, as Akalonu (1987) rightly explained:

The concept of the family is quite different from the European or Western concept. While the Western concept is narrow and restrictive, the Igbo concept is broad and elastic. While the Western family is made up of the parents and their children only, the Igbo family is made up of a number of nuclear families which include grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins etc. the members of the extended family usually have the same surname. (p. 12).

C.Njoku (personal communication, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2018) added that, these living patterns definitely influenced and controlled their worldviews and perception of life, as it cemented their community consciousness and solidarity. Traditionally, parents ate together with their children with their hands and often from the same plate. This helped in bonding the family together. This was also meant to teach them (children) eating manners, discipline, tolerance and accommodation of one another. In families with many children, those who usually ate faster than others were made to slow down or would be denied the meal as an immediate measure of correction and teaching good behaviour and

to avoid a repeat of such behaviour. This was the way things used to be in Igbo families in the olden days while the people of the western world ate with spoons and forks with each person minding his own plate. This encouraged individualism.

### **3.1.2 Building Pattern**

In the western world, houses were built with modern roofs and facilities such as toilet, bathroom, kitchen, store, dining and sitting rooms, while the Igbo built round and thatched houses with mud blocks. Some of these mud houses or huts also had stores and kitchens but the sitting room was usually located in the *obi* which is the place for family gatherings. The head of the house had his hut. Each wife also had her own which she shared with her children until the sons grew up, to build themselves bachelor's quarters. Adjoining the chief's private apartment was the recess where the household gods were paraded, with the family *Ikenga* occupying the position of honour.

In front of the main building are one or more sacred *ebwo* trees which serve as a sacrificial grove. Various patterns of beds are in use, movable and fixed or immovable. The movable type consists of a simple frame on four legs over which a layer of palm-stems is fixed crosswise. The immovable beds are supported by the rear legs sunk into the floor and the two horizontal end pieces buried into the side-wall of the hut, these are also covered with palm stems. The furniture and adornments of the hut are curious. The underside of the roof is permeated with lamp-black, very dirty but nevertheless, a great preservative to the thatch and a deterrent to mosquitoes and other undesirable insects. Suspended from the rafters are dozens of skulls of goats, cows, pigs, monkeys and may be human skulls also. These gruesome objects, filthy with smoke and dirt are records of feasts and sacrifices or even victories in war. They are kept as a display of affluence rather than as fetishes, a custom comparable with the practice of mounting antlers and other trophies in English houses.

### 3.1.3 Traditional Clothing

Traditionally, the attire of the Igbo generally consisted of little clothing as the purpose of clothing then was to conceal private parts although elders were fully clothed. Children were usually nude from birth till adolescence, that is, the time they were considered to have something to hide but sometimes ornaments such as beads were worn around the waist for medical reasons. *Uli*, that is body art, was also used to decorate both men and women in the form of line-forming patterns and shapes on the body. Maidens usually wore a short wrapper with beads around their waist with other ornaments such as necklaces and beads. Both men and women wore wrappers. Men would wear loin clothes wrapped around their waist and between their legs to be fastened at their back, the type of clothing appropriate for the intense heat as well as jobs such as farming. Men could also tie wrapper over their loin clothes. However, modern Igbo traditional attire is generally made up (for men) of the *isiagu* top which resembles the African *dashiki*. *Isiagu* or *ishiagu* is usually patterned with lion's heads embroidered over the clothing. It can also be plain, usually black. It is worn with trousers and can be worn with either a traditional titleholder's hat called *okpuagu* or with the traditional Igbo striped men's hat which resembles the bobble hat.

**Plate 1:** Showing modern Igbo traditional attire at a burial ceremony in Edda



**Source:** Fieldwork 25/11/2017

For women, an embroidered puffed sleeve blouse influenced by European attire along with two wrappers usually modern *hollandis* materials and a head scarf are worn. According to A. Okereke (personal communication, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2018), the red cap worn by men is a symbol of authority, culture and tradition of the Igbo people. It represents the institution of chieftaincy, power and leadership. It is used as a logo in anything that portrays the Igbo man. It is given to those recognized chiefs who have met certain required standard in their communities. It is not just any man that deserves to wear a red cap. Some wear the red cap out of ignorance, deceptively parading themselves as titleholders. However, some men like the *Chiefs, Nzes, Ozos, Ichies, Ogbuefis* and so on who are titleholders deserve the red cap. At traditional weddings, the bride would wear a wrapper over her head, a blouse and jewelry known as *jigida* (waist beads), *ihe olu* (necklace) or choral beads and lots of other jewelries. The groom would wear a pull over shirt, this is called *isiagu* and plain coloured trouser. Sometimes the groom may wear a hat. For Igbo wedding ceremonies, the fabric of the clothing generally goes with everything else. The bride is decorated with *nzu* (white clay), the waist and the upper part of the body are covered with a type of cloth known as *akwette* and it is usually an African print.

Women wore headdresses, necklaces made from beads, a lot of make-up, body arts and bangles to preserve their heritage and to show that they were proud of it. For the New Yam Festival, women wore *ekwerike* that is thick fabrics around their waist or they dressed in *jigida* (beads) in place of fabric and painted *uli* or *uri* (black dye) and *ufie* (dark red, slight shade of purple) on their bodies. Some of the materials used for body decoration by the women are *nzu* (white chalk), *uli* or *uri* (black dye), *edo* or *odo* (yellow dye), *ufie* (dark red, slight shade of purple). Women also used *tangele* (black eye powder). They never exposed their breasts or wore tights, miniskirts, trousers or spaghetti hands. Men on their part wore clothes mainly for wrestling or hunting to cover their private parts. The clothes went under their private parts and then tied with a rope around their waist. That way, it will not fall off. Women carried their babies on their

backs with a strip of clothing binding the two with a knot at her chest. This baby carrying technique was and is still practiced by many people and groups across Africa along with the Igbo who still carry their babies this way. This method has been modernized in the form of the child carrier.

With colonialism and westernization of Igbo culture, western styled clothes such as shirts and trousers took over traditional clothing. Women began to dress like men and some men also began to dress like women. Women began to wear clothes that exposed their breasts and other private parts of their body. Many young women now put on miniskirts, tights, trousers and other obscene wears. According to Ajalla (2010), Igbo indigenous dressing was highly discouraged during the colonial rule. The imitation of the European mode of dressing has been the outfit of the Igbo especially on festive occasions. Ignorance or negligence of culture among Igbo educated elite made them to believe that to dress indigenously is to be primitive and archaic and a betrayal of investment made in long years of education. Igbo indigenous mode of dressing was frowned at in offices. Female teachers were discouraged from going to school in wrappers and bubas. Shirts, gowns, jumpers, shorts or trousers are never the dress code among the Igbo.

Among the Igbo, Ajalla (2010) continued, one sees a multiplicity of costumes ranging from European shirts, ties and suits through French suits, safari suits to Chinese suits which were introduced and popularized by Igbo civil servants and rich business men. The Igbo have chieftaincy attire that is still in vogue to this day. To an educated and senior public servant of Igbo origin, to be well dressed is to be in western attire. There are certain positions that you cannot occupy as an Igbo man without wearing suit. To carry out executive functions, one must be in suit. To be a lawyer or a bank official, suit is the approved dress code. Men must also wed in suit. Even in the universities, western styled academic gown, cap and hood are worn for matriculation and convocation ceremonies. A typical Igbo man these days is addicted to western style of dressing

because as Ejiofor (2002) put it, one can get anywhere, see anybody and possibly commit any offence and get away with it if one dresses in suit.

### **3.1.4 Igbo Traditional Food**

Igbo indigenous food has not fared better. Igbo traditional diets have been neglected with the introduction of canned foods, noodles, spaghetti and other imported foods. According to Kwame (2010), nutritionists these days have come to realize that indigenous foods have more nutritional values than the exotic ones. In view of this, they have called on people to eat more of their traditional diets instead of expensive, genetically modified food that are imported. Many of the Igbo foods are medicinal, nutritious and accessible since the food resources are found within the community.

### **3.1.5 Igbo Marriage System**

Marriage is yet another aspect of the Igbo culture which was based on the customs and tradition of the people. In the days past, the parents of the two parties played significant roles in the marriage of their sons and daughters. They were the ones who normally chose a wife for their son or a husband for their daughter. The two families normally carried out necessary investigations to ensure that their son or daughter married from a good family. This equally served as a substitute to courtship which was not allowed in order to prevent immorality. This way, they prevented their son or daughter from marrying an *osu* or from a family with criminal records or genetic diseases. However, there have been some changes in the nature and degree of discrimination against the *osu* in the traditional Igbo society, because, there is nothing absolutely wrong with the *osu*. The *osu* now get married and mix freely with the freeborn in some communities in Igbo society.

Commenting on courtship and marriage in Igboland, O.Nwadike (personal communication, 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2017) said that love then usually had no part to play in native courtship. A girl was sent to the parents of the affianced husband, after she had been introduced to



all his relatives. This was somewhat of an ordeal as some of the man's kinsfolk do not hesitate to comment freely on the debutante, that is, the girl making her first appearance into the family. Her general demeanour was subject to close observation and her domestic qualities criticized. If the girl was quite young when she was betrothed, she would continue to make annual visits to her prospective parents-in-law, staying with them for about one month at a time. In good homes, she would be carefully guarded but in great many cases, the girl to all intents and purposes becomes actually the wife of the man to whom she was betrothed during the period she was residing with his parents. Amongst young people, morals were not very rigid, the only real stipulation being that a girl must have no intimate relationship with any other man prior to the first visit of her intended husband.

There was neither church nor Christian marriage. There were rites guarding or governing the marriage institution or system in Igboland which must be performed by the two families contracting the marriage. The rites in most cases required certain customary gifts to the *umunna* (kinsmen), *umuada* (kinwomen) and the mother-in-law. The bride wealth was paid to the father of the bride after a price had been reached during a bargain which ensues to determine the bride price. A day is normally fixed for the celebration of the marriage. It is usually on that day that the bride is traditionally handed over in marriage to the bridegroom in the full glare of the two families and members of the public who will be there to witness the ceremony. However, the intrusion of globalization has dismembered marriage institution in Igboland. Parents rarely play that role of choosing a wife or husband for their son or daughter because they are told that to do so is anti-civilization. Most of them no longer carry out proper investigations to determine the status of who their son or daughter is to marry as they (intending couples) are now allowed to choose for themselves. This has created a lot of problems in most marriages in Igbo society. Problems like divorce, abortion and infidelity in marriages arose because families no longer care who their daughter or son marries and the tradition that undergirds the marriage institution in Igbo society

has been abandoned as a result of globalization. As it is in the Western world, there is courtship which gives room for immorality. Many young women now get pregnant for their would-be husbands before they wed. Church or Christian marriage is fast taking over from traditional marriage. Couples are issued with marriage certificates after wedding. Monogamy is fast substituting polygamy and virtually all the aspects of Igbo traditional marriage is caving in to the western system of marriage.

**Plate 2.** Showing traditional marriage ceremony (*igba nkwu*) in Afikpo



**Source:** Fieldwork 27/01/2016

These days in some communities in Igboland, church wedding precedes traditional marriage. That means the celebration of traditional marriage now takes place after the church wedding has been concluded and not the other way round. For instance, in Isu community in Onicha Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, most traditional marriage ceremonies now take place after church wedding. Moreso, the traditional Marriage institution is abused because many young men and women now cohabit and even produce children without recourse to proper traditional marriage. These trends seem to have been accepted in Igboland and it is fast gaining ground because of globalization.

### 3.1.6 Igbo Traditional Music

Traditional music in Igboland served various purposes ranging from social criticism, entertainment, education, military, exercise and ceremonial purposes. They have meaning in the way they are expressed in songs and dances. Dance was used during important ceremonies and rituals as well as for recreation. Each clan in Igboland developed their own special style of traditional music and dance. Music was often provided through drums, flutes, gongs and singers. Different rhythms in the music signal different movements to the dancers. There are specific dances for men and women for special occasions such as wars or weddings. According to Mokwunye (1979), African children became aware of, understood, appreciated and promoted their cultural heritage through songs and dances. In the villages, cultural songs and dances were taught to children with the aid of musical instruments. Most of these instruments were made by the village people, using very simple, inexpensive materials. They used local or traditional musical instruments made from local materials while the western world used modern musical instruments such as guitar, piano, clarinet, flute, trumpet, bassoon, saxophone, harp, brass, violin and xylophone and so on. They used microphone to sing and amplify the sound.

Some of the materials used in making music in Igboland are *awja* (flute), *ubow* (local guitar), *opu* or *opi* (whistle), *ogene* (metal gong), *nkwa* (drum), *ekwe* (tom tom), *igba* or *ikpa* (talking drum) and so on. Igbo traditional music often has an upbeat rhythm which is accompanied with lyrics of a moral or story. They create this by using an array of different drums and percussion instruments. The audience is often involved by singing and dancing to the song. Lively music is often played at traditional weddings to celebrate the courtship. Even though the British colonized Nigeria and developed their own church, many western churches introduced African music and tradition to their worship. The Igbo believe that during funeral ceremonies, the more music is played along with dancing, the better the chances of the deceased to have a successful afterlife. Basden (1982) noted that:

The more one listens to the native music, the more one is conscious of its vital power. It touches the chords of man's innermost being and stirs his primal instincts. It demands the performer's whole attention and so sways the individual as almost to divide asunder, for the time being mind and body. It is intensely passionate and no great effort of the imagination is required to realize that such music could only have originated with the son of Cain. Under its influence and that of the accompanying dance, one has seen men and women pass into a completely dazed condition, oblivious and apparently unconscious of the world around them. (p. 192).

Furthermore, they used music to enhance celebrations, bringing out the spiritual aspect during religious ceremonies and pleasure. Highlife music which was popular in the early 80s was heavily influenced by western culture. Dance is one of the best art forms for expression. People gyrate in order to celebrate, commemorate or even to prepare for some rituals. Historic and traditional dance goes back to hundreds and even thousands of years ago. There is a treasure of a variety of folk and tribal dances in communities across Igbo land. A lecture delivered by Mazi Mbonu Ojike at the Glover Memorial Hall in Lagos on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of March, 1948, the topic "Let us Revive African Music" gives insight into the general attitude of this great Igbo man to things African. He asserted that "the human motive for music is one throughout the world. But just as no two human personalities are identical in all respects, so music of nations must be dissimilar one to another" (p.2). He further recounted his experience saying:

Twenty active years at home, plus eight inquisitive years abroad have collectively convinced me that our music is a legacy to love, a tradition to uphold, a heritage to preserve, it needs no reform, it calls for no apology, it wants no distortion. What our music culture wants is a new zest, a new devotion, a new patronage. It must be

strengthened in order to be consolidated and promoted in order to be patronized. (p. 2).

Ojike (cited by Sofola, 1978) concluded in a language so challenging as it is repudiating that:

He had never in his entire safari seen a country like his where people despise their songs, their dance; a nation that patronizes foreign dances to the utter neglect of its own. It is a nation of people who think of progress and civilization in terms of imbibing whatever is foreign. It is a people that have rejected its fashion, its food, its drinks, its ideals of marriage and its music. (p. 28).

The eastern region of Nigeria which consists mainly of the Igbo tribe has a list of traditional dances performed as a form of emotional expression, social interaction or exercise in a spiritual or performance setting and these dances are sometimes used to express ideas or to tell a story. Basden (1982) once again reminds us of the value attached to native music by the Igbo when he stated that:

What the bagpipes are to the typical Highlander and the drums to an Ulster Orange man, that and more is native music to the Igbo. In each case, the emotions are aroused and the pulses quickened but the native yields himself to its influence with absolute abandon. (p. 193).

To buttress this point, Achebe (1958) described *Unoka* saying that he was very good at his flute and his happiest moments were the two moons after harvest when the village musicians brought down their instruments hung above the fireplace. *Unoka* would play with them, his face beaming with blessedness and peace. Sometimes another village would ask *Unoka's* band and their dancing *egwugwu* to come and stay with them and teach them their tunes. They would go to such hosts for as long as three or four markets, making music and feasting. Some of the dancing groups in Igbo society play various roles.

For instance, *Abigbo* and *Ekere-Avu* dances which stand for social critics are from Mbaise community in Igboland and were used for social criticisms against governments and powerful people in the community, which a single person could not do without being victimized. The *Mmanwu* which stands for masquerade dance groups were widely used to protect deities and to deliver judgements or administer punishments on otherwise powerful people because masquerades were untouchable and feared to be spirits. Young men were enlisted into the group to effectively act or serve as local police.

**Plate 3:** Showing *mmanwu* masquerade in Uburu



**Source :** Fieldwork 20/08/2017

*Omuru-onwa* and *Agbacha-Ekurunwa* were both dance groups for married ladies and could be compared to today's exercise clubs in the western world. Married women and new mothers used such entertaining avenues to exercise, lose weight, shed body fats and stay healthy through weekly rehearsals. The *Atilogwu* (Acrobatic dance) was an acrobatic dance that served both as entertainment but also equivalent to today's cheer leaders in the west. The acrobatic flips, high jumps, etc. kept young men in shape and out of crime. *Nkwa umuagbogho* (the maiden dance) was mainly a dance group for young ladies. It is a kind of breathe-taking chest and waist dance, where maidens who have come of age to marry flaunt their bodies in seductive manner to attract suitors.

It also helped the younger girls keep mind and body busy to abstain from sexual activities before marriage.

**Plate 4:** Showing *Nkwaumuagbogho* in Afikpo



**Source:** Fieldwork 1/10/2016

*Ikipirikpi ugu* (war dance) was a dance of warriors usually used to welcome soldiers back from tribal wars. Today, it is purely symbolical to show the prowess and valour of a community and its triumph over collective challenges.

**Plate 5:** Showing Ohafia war dance (*ikipirikpi ugu*) at a burial ceremony in Edda



**Source:** Fieldwork 25/11/2017

*Igba ndieze* (a dance for the kings) was used to usher in kings, titled men and women either into an arena or into an occasion. *Ekpe* masquerade dance was usually more confined in the vicinity

where young men could boast of their valour and strength in turns. *Egwu mgba* (wrestling dance) was used to cheer wrestlers as young men and women competed in local championships.

In describing some of the wrestling encounters between Okonkwo's village and their neighbours and activities marking the New Year in Umuofia, Achebe (1958) captured the beating of drums which came from the direction of *Ilo* ( the village playground). He said that every village had its own *ilo* (playground) which was as old as the village itself and where all the ceremonies and dances took place. According to him, the drums beat the unmistakable wrestling dance-quick, light and gay and it came floating on the wind. Okonkwo cleared his throat and moved his feet to the beat of the drums. It filled him with fire as it had always done from his youth. He trembled with the desire to conquer and subdue. It was like the desire for a woman. The drums were still beating persistently and unchanging. Their sound was no longer a separate thing from the living village. It was like the pulsation of its heart. It throbbed in the air, in the sunshine and even in the trees and filled the village with excitement. All these dance groups apart from dancing produced meaningful music which taught the people valuable lessons about life. They also elicited the people's utmost values and the prevailing philosophy of life. However, as a result of globalization, foreign music is now the order of the day. The youth have imbibed the foreign music culture so much so that the costume they put on is foreign, the dance is foreign and the songs are foreign and meaningless.

However, C. Omabe (personal communication, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2018) pointed out that, names such as *Banky W*, *P Square*, *Jesse Jags*, *D'banj*, *9ice*, *Tuface*, *Davido*, *Timaya*, *Flavour*, *Wizkid*, *Tekno* and so on, are names of Nigerian musicians some of who are of Igbo extraction who have chosen these foreign names in place of their Igbo names which shows the extent to which globalization has influenced the youths in Igboland. Instead of educating the youths on issues bothering on morals through their music, they release erotic musical films and videos which promote nudity and corrupt their sensibilities. All these traditional music and dance are also being



phased out by the new trend of hip-hop, rap and all manners of western music which promote immoral dressing, erotic dance and obscene language.

### **3.1.7 Relaxation/Games**

The Igbo have their way of relaxing and pleasure can be derived from old traditional games. These games have evolved overtime from being a mere feature in festivals, marriages and communal events to becoming competitive sports where participants are awarded and rewarded. For instance, many Igbo men in the past were awarded titles and in addition given women in marriage because of their wrestling prowess. These games are also an opportunity to attract visitors and promote sports tourism across the globe. Prior to westernization, some of these games such as *okwe ugbo* (board game), *mgba* (traditional wrestling), *iku okpo* (traditional boxing), *egwu onwa* (moonlight play) and so on were very popular in Igboland.

*Okwe ugbo* was the most popular traditional board game in Igboland. It is played by two dexterous individuals who attempt to get more seeds to emerge the winner. The game is made up of twelve (12) holes with six (6) on each side of the board and every hole contains four (4) seeds making it a total of forty eight (48) seeds. The board is between 0.8m and 1.2m. A player is declared the winner if he is able to garner more seeds than his opponent. The game is played in an anti-clockwise format while each player is allowed to play for thirty (30) seconds.

*Mgba* (traditional wrestling) was probably the biggest and most popular game in Igboland. It is a highly physical and combative sport involving two men in different weight categories. In the past, when there was a dispute over who should marry a lady, a wrestling contest was organized to settle the matter. The one who won married the lady. In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe (1958) alluded to wrestling as one of the main features of activities marking the New Year in Umuofia. He captured some wrestling scenes in Umuofia to underline the importance of wrestling as a sport in Igbo land. In his description, the whole village turned out on the *ilo* (playground) men, women and children. They stood round in a huge circle leaving the centre of the playground

free. The elders and grandees of the village sat on their own stools brought there by their young sons or slaves. All others stood except those who came early enough to secure places on the few stands which had been built by placing smooth logs on forked pillars. The drummers held the field while the wrestlers got ready. They (drummers) too sat just in front of the huge circle of spectators facing the elders.

**Plate 7:** Source: A traditional wrestling match in Onicha



**Source:** Fieldwork 7/7/2016

The young men who kept order on these occasions dashed about, consulting among themselves and with the leaders of the two wrestling teams, who were still outside the circle, behind the crowd. At last, two teams danced into the circle and the crowd roared and clapped. The contest began with boys of fifteen or sixteen. There were only three of such boys in each team. They were not the real wrestlers. They merely set the stage or scene. The two teams were arranged in a juxtaposition, which is, facing each other across the clear space. A young man from one team danced across the centre to the other side and pointed at whoever he wanted to fight. They danced back to the centre together and then closed in. The challenge went from one side to the other. Two judges walked around the wrestlers and when they thought they were equally matched stopped them.

*Egwu onwa* (moonlight play) was yet another popular if not the most popular sport in the past in Igbo land. U.Igboke (personal communication, 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2017) observed that, many decades ago, cinema, gramophone, radio, telephone, television, computer and internet services and so on were nonexistent in Igboland and there were no schools for formal learning where children could run around, strengthen their veins and arteries as well as build their muscles. The Igbo of those days therefore instituted the culture of playing under the moonlight in place of the aforementioned sources of entertainment and recreation. O.Igwe (personal communication, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2017) noted that, *egwu onwa* culture served as a means of bringing joy to adult members of the community after the day's work and also as an opportunity for children to play around and strengthen their bones and muscles as they grew and developed. *Egwu onwa* appealed to everyone across the length and breadth of Igboland from the youth who was full of exuberance to the aged whose hair has all turned grey. Each evening that the moon made an appearance across the sky, a call to action was made to every member of the village or community using songs and instruments comprising gongs, drums, flutes etc. which invariably serves as open invitation and announcement that the night would be full of fun.

Every member of the community then began to observe the moon element until it appeared to shine in full blast. As soon as the moon began to shine forth in full blast, the exact moment for playing under the moonlight dawned. At such moments, everyone who had had his or her dinner ecstatically trooped out of his or her home to the village square, while those who were yet to complete their domestic chores of the evening sped up activities and increased the tempo of their work in order to finish in time so as to join others in the community or village square. Typically, before 8pm, most families in Igboland would have enjoyed dinner and were ready to join other friends and families for a communal playing under the moonlight. Young maidens took special delight in hanging out in groups as they interact among themselves, share some juicy gossip, admire handsome young males of their community and even attempt to catch the attention of some

good looking males. While the young men took joy in challenging each other either individually or in groups to wrestling bouts, acrobatic displays, special stunts, dancing and musical performance particularly to impress the young maidens who constituted their major spectators. According to O. Ogbu (personal communication, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017), during moonlight play (*egwu onwa*), the elderly members of the community sat in groups around campfires sipping and sharing local drinks while reminiscing and talking about the events of the past. Sometimes, they took delight in teasing each other about misdemeanours of the past, that is, joke about the past (*ima njakiri*). Some of the elderly ones socialize the children into the cultures of the community by gathering them in groups and telling them traditional or mythical stories and folktales about the community under the moonlight and sometimes they deepen the wisdom and intelligence of the young adults by playing games of riddles and proverbs with them throughout the night. As for the sick, they also sat around special bonfires, as they observed the colourful life and activities taking place around them.

The *egwu onwa* experience is known to have had therapeutic effects on the sick that seem to respond better to medication after sharing a night with the healthy under the moonlight. There was no specific time for conclusion of a night out under the moonlight. It went on until one was tired and ready to go to bed. Today, as O. Okoronkwo (personal communication, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2017) put it, this beautiful culture of playing under the moonlight has almost disappeared in Igboland owing to technological inventions and global civilization that have rocked the Igbo cultural milieu. Western games like draft, chess, scrabble; football, lawn and table tennis, modern wrestling and boxing have diminished these traditional games. The colonialists used schools and churches as effective platform for socially controlling and influencing the minds of the Igbo people thereby making them to abandon their own form of recreational activities. Following that negative success engineered by the missionaries against the cultural psyche of the people, the God-willed beauty of the Igbo nation became a mighty pipedream. As long as the leaders of the

people keep forcing upon them foreign cultures including foreign clothing and foreign architectural designs in the illusion that these will make for the progress of the Igbo people, their cultural and spiritual beauty and dignity will remain lost. Imitation is not uplifting.

### **3.2 The Effects of Globalization on Igbo culture and Society**

This section looks at the effects of globalization on the Igbo traditional cultural system.

From the South East of Nigeria, the Igbo experience represents a very good example of the impact of globalization on African tradition, religion and culture. Their way of life was unique and incongruous with that of the Europeans, yet they had all the elements of the western way of life embedded in their culture. As it is with other tribes in Africa, the life of the Igbo in the words of Basden (1982) is not controlled by logic, he is the victim of circumstance and his policy is very largely one of drift. The will of the tribe or family, expressed or implied, permeates his whole being and is the deciding factor in every detail of his life. It is a sort of freemasonry; the essence of the primary instincts of the people. Men constantly act contrary to their better judgement and at times even wrongly because they firmly believe they have no alternative, they dare not oppose the wishes of their people. Consequently, though, there may be independent thought, there is seldom independent action probably not where other members of the tribe or family are involved. He was of the view that ideas of the native are indefinite. He has no fixed thoughts. He is under the influence of an atmosphere which emanates from the whole tribe. This subliminal consciousness, by which all his movements are controlled, becomes practically what they call "sense number six". It is inexpressible in words but nevertheless extremely powerful in action.

Furthermore, Basden (1982) observed that, life in Igbo village was at once simple and picturesque. The houses, the general environment, the dependence on local natural resources and the contentment with the barest modicum of those articles which are usually regarded as indispensable in a household, all these, together with the easy-going spirit amongst the village folk, foster and maintain a life of extreme simplicity. He noted that discontent with primitive

conditions came only with the introduction of novelties from the outside world and then like a child, the Igbo covet what he sees. Left to him, he neither needs nor desires foreign luxuries but once the possibility of securing them presents itself, no matter how incongruous, he will not relax his efforts until they become his cherished possession. The Igbo that the white man encountered at the period of direct colonialism was much more confident than to think of himself as inferior to other human beings. Kembal (cited by Isichei, 1973) wrote that Igboland was the most troublesome part of Nigeria. In acknowledgement of this, Meek (1937) congratulated the colonial government on its effort in bringing peace to Igboland because for him, they were the most lawless part of Nigeria. This attitude of the Igbo can very easily be seen to be an outcrop of their native egalitarianism and republicanism. The Igbo practised a democratic system that was so complete that it is hardly replicable in any other place.

Horton (cited by Hodgkin, 1975) sums it up this way, “the Egboes (Igbo) cannot be driven to an act, they are most stubborn and bullheaded but with kindness, they could be made to do anything even to deny themselves of their comfort” (p.352). This attitude is very much backed by their democratic ethos which another colonial anthropologist, Leith-Ross (1939) described thus, “so natural did it seem to find autocracy in some form or the other wherever one went in Africa that it was impossible even to imagine a democracy so absolute as that of the Igbo”(p.67). In the *stolen legacy* of George James (1954), young blacks were to be convinced that their ancestors left a respectable philosophical reflections appropriated by ancient Greece so as to enable them develop self confidence in the actual world. This *Stolen Legacy* is squarely in the service of African identity which is the guiding principle of philosophic reflections in contemporary Africa. To underline his pride for African culture, Sofola (1978) wrote that Mazi Mbonu Ojike was motivated to write a book entitled *My Africa*. In this book, he chose to make some statements in his own mother tongue, the Igbo language in order to demonstrate to his readers that there were

such things as African languages which the Americans would find equally difficult to learn as he had had to make painstaking efforts to learn the correct English.

However, according to Molloy (2010), Christian missionaries began to work among the Igbo in the mid nineteenth century. Throughout the British colonization of Nigeria in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Church of England also known as the Anglican Church sent many missionaries to Igboland. Catholic missionaries who arrived after 1880 were also successful with conversions. As a result, Christian beliefs and practices have strongly influenced Igbo religion. Christianity has almost displaced traditional beliefs and practices. It has made the Igbo to almost abandon their culture, religion and values to embrace western lifestyle, diet, language, philosophy and values.

Igbo identity has to do with those things for which the Igbo are known and which distinguish them from other people of the world. On the other hand, as Sofola (1978) put it, African personality is reflected in those cultural characteristics which are distinctively African, the African common denominator of culture, so to speak, be it the implicit idea which can be likened to an innate spirit or the practical manifestations of these ideas as can be seen in the African social institutions of family, systems of economy and government, the African arts, the music, the works of art, the philosophy, mode of dressing and so on. These views also agree with the Igbo personality. These things have their peculiar character or distinctiveness as distinguished from those of other nations like Europe, America or India. From this view, the Igbo personality can be seen as the personality we see functioning today and at all times, that predisposition or organized, personal, psychological tendencies to act, react and respond in a certain peculiar way, the Igbo way, to peoples and events. The post-colonial societal crisis in Igboland is significantly a crisis of identity.

The Igbo people are afflicted with this crisis. Identity-confusion, according to Osuagwu (2013), is a horrible disease. Barrack Obama's greatest political strength was his very early

decision to be African-American and nothing else. He knew where his father came from and where his mother came from. Those who pretend in America that they are socially half-white and half-black for example end up as friends of psychiatrists. He acknowledged that the invasion of Africa in the last more than one thousand years, first by the Arabs, then the Europeans has meant the gradual reduction of the Africans to corpses or living dead. The identity-stripped and personality-warped is a living dead. Unless one understands this, one would not understand what is wrong with the Igbo or African. If we now have bad governance in Africa and by extension Igboland, not based on the principle, *Oma n'achi* (the knowledgeable leads), it is because *Ozu* (corpses) are ruling Africa. However, he admitted that the major problem of Igbo in the post-invasion era (after slavery and colonialism) is the crisis of identity.

Enekwe (cited by Yusuf, 2013) described Achebe as a writer who captured and interpreted the momentous clash between traditional African and modern European cultures, so that his people can make meaning out of the configuration of socio-political and historical forces which resulted in Africa's loss of identity and lack of sense of worth and self-confidence. In a paper titled "The Novelist as a Teacher" delivered at the Leeds Conference on Commonwealth Literature in 1964, Achebe (cited by Omotunde, 2013), told his audience among other things that his writing was an adequate revolution for him to articulate his people's (Igbo) culture and help the African society regain its belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-denigration. He said he would be quite satisfied if his novels did no more than teach his readers that their past with all its imperfections was not one long night of savagery which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered to them. This is his contribution to the task of giving back to Africa the pride and self-respect it lost during the years of colonialism. He restated the need to repair the disaster brought upon the African psyche in the period of subjection to alien races. Adesokan (2013) adds that:



Colonialism has left its indelible scars on the lives of the people it dominated, what Achebe called “a wound in the soul” and it has been the definitive experience for most modern African intellectuals. But there were colonialisms on the continent before the European one and there remain varieties of that phenomenon in other guises. (p. 21).

The campaign for the revival of national identity in Nigeria was carried out by certain nationalists whose activities served as a blue-print for the revival of African culture. These dynamic nationalists whose training in foreign cultures equipped them for a better appreciation of the values of their fatherland returned home to mobilize the energies of the populace in this quest for self-awareness and emancipation. In this class are late Dr *Nnamdi Azikiwe*, late *Mazi Mbonu Ojike*, late Chief *Obafemi Awolowo* and other nationalists. According to Sofola (1978),

Mbonu Ojike’s revulsion to the threat presented by the western culture and his pride in his native African culture of Nigeria was so deep that to the uninformed and the cultural annihilist, he might appear to have been driven to an extreme of action and nationalistic expression. With his philosophy of boycott-the-boycottable, Ojike would not wear any western made dress, drink from western made cups nor utilize western cutleries. (p. 27).

For Kochalumchuvattil (2010), the search for identity has always been a key issue facing mankind in its striving after significance and meaning. To him, just like the Igbo, the African understanding of self is in crisis having been assailed from a number of directions. In fact, as he put it, any close examination of African culture and tradition will reveal the simple fact that all too often; scant attention is paid to self-individuation. The self is defined in relation to a larger social or ethnic group which encompasses not only the living but also the dead, spirits and the unborn. Even in contemporary African cities including Igboland, the individual is not liberated from the bonds of the ethnic group for one’s primary responsibility is to the clan or ethnic group, a situation inimical

to self-individuation. According to Onwubiko (1991), the Igbo community consciousness does not mean that an individual does not have any right in traditional Igbo society; rather it means that Igbo individualism is rooted in community solidarity.

This lack of subjective becoming may be seen as a primary cause of many of the persistent and current problems besetting Africa. Kochalumchuvattil (2010) continued, maintaining that the status of the self in African socio-ethical thought is reflected in the communitarian features of social structures. This stems from the very essence of the African's cosmic vision which is not one where the universe is understood as something discrete and individuated but rather, it is conceived of as a series of interactions and interconnections. This general cosmic vision is particularly applicable in coming to an understanding of the relationship between self and community. For further clarity, this African cosmic vision which is similar to the Igbo cosmic vision, postulates that, there are both visible and the invisible constituent parts of the universe. Life in its totality is conceived of as "one great chain of being" with things ontologically related to one another. The interactions and intercommunication between the visible created order and the invisible world of God, spirits and the ancestors are only possible when human beings become the ontological means between the entities acting above and below them.

Tempels (1959) captures the essence of such thinking when he pointed out that Bantu psychology cannot conceive of man as an individual, as a force existing by itself and apart from its ontological relationship with other living beings. Insisting on the sociality of the self, he states that the Bantu cannot be a "lone" being. Furthermore, he observes that for the Bantu, every individual forms a link in a chain of vital forces, a living link, active and passive, joined from above to the ascending line of his ancestry and sustaining below the line of his descendants. The outcome, according to Senghor (1964) is that Negro-African society puts more stress on the group than on the individual, more on solidarity than on activity and the needs of the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy (p.93). More than any other thing, the

philosophy of *Ubuntu* expresses African identity which invariably is the same with the Igbo identity. It postulates that there exists a common bond between all human beings and it is through this bond and through our interaction with our fellow human beings that we discover our own human qualities. Tutu (1999) says:

It is the essence of being human. It is part of the gift that Africans will give to the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, willing to go the extra mile for the sake of others. We believe a person is a person through another person, that my humanity is caught up and bound up inextricably in yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself. The solitary individual is a contradiction in terms and therefore, you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own community, in belonging. (p.22).

However, Forster (2007) one of the critics of this philosophy regrets that:

Scholars will point to the erosion of this world view in African society. He questioned the universality of this philosophy in Africa noting that there can be no doubt that it would be naïve to assume that all Africans view the world in such an integrated manner. The effects of individualism, westernization and stigmatization of African concepts of being have had a marked effect on the prominence of the African world view. From modernizing influences in schools and from ignorant religious movements in Christianity and Islam, there has been a significant effect in the breakdown of traditional African patterns of thought and the resulting behaviour. (p.261).

Western individualism makes extended family relationship and the positive cultural value of being your brother's keeper ineffective in the contemporary Igbo society. According to Nzomiwu (1999), the western sense of community suffers from a total or almost total impoverishment of the

effective bond which is a characteristic of Igbo sense of community. What is left of European sense of community is just economic, social and political interdependence” (p.7).

According to Okere (1996), African culture since colonial invasion has experienced rapid change. The contemporary Igbo culture is merely a mixture of traditional elements and alien features. As a matter of fact, the Igbo today is a living confluence of cultural rivers, the major rivers being on one hand, the traditional culture with its tributaries of religion, social structure, language, values and world view and on the other hand, the Christian-western culture and other alien cultures including Islam with its own tributaries. Western education, philosophy, science and technology which have increased Igbo knowledge of nature and its laws; western religion with its ideological campaign against African traditional religion and culture are the historical forces which are responsible for the fate of Igbo religion and culture. The modern industrialization and commercialization of life in Igboland has also affected Igbo religion. For instance, the sacred long juju of Arochukwu in northern part of Igboland which was very famous and dreaded by foreigners had been converted to a business outfit, an instrument for garnering or extorting money from people even before colonialism. This is the case with almost every shrine in Igboland as the priests of certain shrines demand for money and other material things before performing their sacred functions. The defeat of the Igbo by the British colonial forces may be seen as the victory of one religion over another, that is, the defeat of African traditional god by the white man’s god.

Culturally, it is as if the traditional Igbo script of submit to family and community authority and immerse yourself and partake of all group values and norms was rewritten during the colonial period. Through force, western education and missionary proselytization, the colonialists subordinated traditional Igbo authority and the values and norms of African communalism in the minds of Africans.

However, Nyasani (1997) noted that, what has happened to African traditional religion can best be understood from the perspective of man’s world getting transformed as his productive

forces improve. As Africans probe and understand the laws of nature, they have less need for superstitions and mysticism. As they improve on their instrument of production and can explore and turn inside out the caves, the burial grounds and evil forests and in their place build their cathedrals and mansions; as they cross the mountains, rivers and seas with their technologies, build their tunnels, their bridges and flyovers, as they fly high into the skies, they push the gods farther into the horizons, away from familiar terrain.

The same thing applies to the Igbo. But wherever the gods may be, the important thing is that they can deal with their environment without offending them or violating taboos. However, E. Njoku (personal communication, 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2017) says that, the once powerful and dreaded deities and gods such as *Amadioha*, *Igweka-ala*, *Ibina Ukpabi*, *Osimiri*, *Agbala*, and others have lost their powers and sacredness. They have lost their divinity because they now see Igbo religion as mere superstition and mysticism. On his part, Harvey (1989) asserted that, in the realm of commodity production, the primary effect has been to emphasize the values and virtues of instantaneity, that is, instant fast foods, meals and other satisfactions and of disposability of things like cups, plates, cutlery, packaging, napkin, clothing and so forth. He noted that the dynamics of a throwaway society have become quite obvious. To him, it means more than just throwing away produced goods, creating a monumental waste-disposal problem, being able to throw away values, lifestyles, stable relationships and attachments to things, buildings, places, people and received ways of doing and being. In Igboland, this throw away culture has made the people to throw away their traditional values, lifestyles and attachment to things, buildings, places, people and ways of doing and being.

In his own submission, Onunwa (1990) maintained that the influence of the new factors of change is reflected on the several carved objects seen at the Mbari Art Centre around the colonial Owerri Division in the south Igbo culture area. For instance, the helmet, uniform and different types of guns in the hands of the bodyguards of the effigy of the Earth Goddess at the Mbari Art

Centre reflect a period after contact with colonial administrators when soldiers had been made. The bodyguards look like soldiers who had just finished a battle, possibly a reminiscence of the military exploits at the shrine of the *Arochukwu* oracle, *Ibin Ukpabi* in 1901/02.

The picture of the Earth Goddess was that of a woman wearing a long hair, pointed nose and a cross on her chest; a reflection of the contact the Igbo artist made with the Europeans. The use of an umbrella was a late introduction after European contact and one sees the picture of the Earth Goddess holding an umbrella as a covering for rains. Unfortunately, the sculpture representing the earth goddess was among the sculptures destroyed at Mbari Art Centre.

**Plate 9:** Showing the researcher at Mbari Centre with the relics of the Earth Goddess



**Source:** Fieldwork 9/12/2017

The vessel in which one of the servants at the shrine of the Earth Goddess presented kolanut looks like China ware, a saucer made by the Europeans unlike the Igbo carved wooden saucer for serving kolanut to guests. Thus, the traditional religion accepted some aspects of western art.

In the course of this work, it was discovered that one of the greatest harms done to Igbo traditional religion by globalization is the recent demolition of the age long Mbari Art Centre in Owerri by the Imo State government under Owelle Rochas Okorochoa.

According to A.Iheanacho (personal communication, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2017), the Art Centre was a very important museum for Igbo culture. Mbari was central to the understanding of the Igbo identity, industry, religion, education and creativity. The centre which was originally constructed with mud had sculptural representation of different animals and gods of the Igbo pantheon. Among these sculptures were the *Nguma* which the Igbo traditional religion sees as the Chief Security Officer of the god, *Amadioha*. Tigers, snakes, water mermaids, gongs and other sculptures and murals deemed significant to the worship of the earth goddess, *Ala* were well represented. The centre is in ruins and all the totems and murals completely distorted. Most of the sculptures and artifacts have been lost. This is a formidable challenge to Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance.

**Plate 10:** Showing Mbari Centre in Owerri, Imo State after demolition



**Source:** Fieldwork 9/12/2017

Many traditional festivals in Igboland such as *Aju* festival, *Okpa* festival, *Nkwo* festival and others held in Old Ohaozara in Ebonyi State which are the life-wire of the customs and tradition of the

people were also discovered to have been phased out due to the scathing effects of globalization with the exception of New Yam Festival and a few other festivals which have persisted. As a result of globalization, the unacceptable and dehumanizing practice of nudity is almost everywhere even in Igboland. However, in the course of this work, it was discovered that a man who is a member of Jehovah's Witness in Isiama Onicha, Ebonyi State had to relocate from his family compound because he could not put up with the tradition of ancestral veneration by members of his family. He had to build another house away from the family compound in order to stay away from such traditional religious practice which does not agree with his faith.

According to F.Nweze (personal communication, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2018), majority of the shrines such as *Mkpuma-ata*, *Okwe* and *Mkpuma-ukwu* and others in the same village which are the vestiges of Igbo traditional religion have been abandoned and the deities have gone on retreat as a result of lack of patronage. Even the traditional priest of *Egwu* shrine in the same village is now a member of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, a Christian outfit. Basden (1966) was of the view that the religion, language and custom of the Igbo have been tinged with outside influence superimposed with ancient Igbo beliefs and practices. Those outside influences have in some subtle ways been accepted by later generations as part of the traditional system and have in some ways replaced the original pattern of life.

The Igbo now import cultural products from abroad rather than invest in their own cultural industries. This leads to homogenization in which people in countries throughout Africa will begin to develop similar values, world views and tastes given the influence of these cultural products. This also tends to wipe out local cultural industries and products. In his view, Anyacho (2005) stated that

Capitalism which was given much impetus by globalization is making the modern world more materialistic than ever before. It is posing serious challenges to



communist and socialist ideologies as well as breaking the social bonds that held the traditional societies together. Thus, the quest for materialism has reduced the “We Feeling” in the traditional society. Many people are self-centered. Many are more concerned with their personal interests than the group interests that characterized African Society. (p. 80).

Capitalism has given rise to materialism which in turn has destroyed the community spirit or consciousness that has been the bedrock of Igbo society. Thus, Iwe (1991) stated the spirit of materialism is fast invading and overshadowing Igbo traditional values. Traditionally, Igbo society laid more emphasis on the spiritual and social dimensions of human nature and values. Traditional culture set very high values on religiosity, the sanctity and dignity of human life and labour, social justice, honesty, truthfulness and simplicity of life and respect for social norms and sanctions. Also, the Igbo cosmology undergirded the religion of the people. This is summed up in the remarks of Leonard (1966) about the Igbo that:

They are in the strict and natural sense of the word a truly and deeply religious people of whom it can be said that, they eat religiously, drink religiously, bathe religiously, dress religiously and sin religiously. In a few words, the religion of these people is their existence and their existence is their religion. (p. 429).

Mbiti (1969) echoed this observation when he said that “this all-embracing religion has its cardinal principle as “live and let live” thus allowing coexistence of people and culture”. (p. 1). This is the way it was in every African community until colonialism, science and technology and globalization brought western culture which now maintains a stranglehold on Igboland. To this, Ajayi and Ayandele (1974) added that:

It may be a repetition of the obvious, if we state that except ethnic loyalty, nothing has divided African countries more than the presence of the “religions of book”. But the Igbo who were said to be fragmentary were not only united in their

common reverence and dread of the oracles and deities of the people of different subculture areas but also some other ethnic groups like the Ijaw were united with them in the acceptance of the appellate role of the priest as the custodians of the Oracles. (p. 36).

In support of this, Onunwa (1990) asserted that it is only the traditional religion that understands and practices the principle of individual rights and freedom of worship. A divinity like *Amadioha* known as the god of thunder whose shrine was at Ozuzu in the present Rivers State of Nigeria had clients from different parts of Igboland who came to enlist his help. Some of them eventually established its shrine in their own communities. Those clients who met at the shrine on several occasions established bond of friendship which went beyond religious cooperation and included political, social and economic relationships. These kinds of friendship and relationships have never been encouraged by Islam and Christianity as they have consistently failed to promote peace and unity even as they try to win adherents even from other religious groups either by force or persuasion. Iwe (1985) added that

The Christianity that came to Africa was in general fully steeped in Western personnel, Western culture, Western philosophy, Western theology, Western psychology and cultural values such as monogamy, institutional celibacy, flowing garment reminiscent of the Roman toga of Medieval Europe, Western patterns of prayer and incantations, rituals and ceremonials and western names and concept of authority. All these have been swallowed and still being swallowed uncritically by the Africans in the name of Christianity at the detriment or neglect of their culture. (p. 79).

According to him, the missionaries were convinced of the immense superiority of the western culture which Africa, as a cultural “tabula rasa” must wholly absorb if it is to be rescued from the

claws of paganism, savagery, barbarism and superstition. Such was the mentality of the early missionaries in Africa who did not penetrate the mind and culture of the Africans.

In Igboland, the Christian churches have opposed even in recent times such cultural and religious institutions and practices which Iwe (1985) described as the highly spiritual belief in reincarnation, symbolic reflection of respect and spiritual communion with ancestors; a belief and practice which satisfy the psycho-spiritual needs of preserving socially and visibly the memory of the dead dear ones; the deep religious rites of traditional funerals and second burial ceremonies; the ethically and socially elevated *Nze* and *Ozo* traditional titles; the traditional kinship hierarchies such as *ofo*, *ogu* and so forth and their relevance in judicial procedures and chieftaincy disputes; vocational polygamy the churches have bluntly and perhaps arrogantly refused to consider the status, role and significance of polygamy, a time-honoured and honestly practiced institution among many Africans within the context of African socio-economic order, extended family patterns and practice, African traditional social security system and hierarchy of domestic and matrimonial values.

Lamenting over this uncritical and irrational assimilation of European culture, Iwe (1985) further stated that despite stiff opposition, the relatively few converts supported by colonial power imposed upon the Igbo society many customs, some of which were erroneously thought to be Christian. At school and at the church, it became more heathen or pagan than fashionable to be called *Nkemdirim*. Many Olivers, Franklins and Dicksons as well as Juliets, Roses and Celestinas emerged in the Igbo society more often than not without knowing the meaning of the foreign names pasted on them. To make matters worse, beautiful and meaningful names such as *Chimamanda* and *Chimereze* with direct bearing on the Almighty God were rejected in preference to foreign ones which either had no meaning at all or paid no tribute whatsoever to God. For example, Green, Brown, Yellow, even in living memory, some had in their innocent folly imposed on themselves such names as Dog, Bloody fool, Hub, Spoke and Freewheel. The feeling then was

that one had to identify with European culture and names in order to be modern and accorded social rank. For this reason, therefore, some Igbo have come to believe that colonial education corrupted the thinking and sensibilities of the Igbo and filled him with complexes.

However, Christianity, as an agent of globalization has molded the Igbo into a stooge and took away from him that which makes him Igbo. So, by this, the Igbo have been made to believe that their culture is inferior to the western culture. Therefore, they have chosen to imitate the superior nations. This imitation according to Mbefo (1988) involves tutelage in the ancient and classical civilization. A young African should not descend to the barbarism of his native tongue until he has already successfully developed his intellectual capacity by mastering the principles underlying a sound European civilized education not only of English but of classical Latin and Greek.

With this state of affairs and having abandoned their tradition, the Igbo began to conform to the western ways of life. Regrettably, Mbefo (1988) said that this group of Africans and those after them responded to the goal of imperialism namely the substitution of western culture with its civilization for “Africanism” or the African traditional way of life. They were used by the colonialists to bring about the type of conditions they would like to see in Africa. Having been trained in western ways, they became “new men” prepared and willing to become agents of change. The Igbo who returned from overseas studies generally tried to impress on their people that they had been to the white man’s country. Their people generally expected them to live up to the fact that they have been “overseas”. Some prestiges were attached to having been overseas. These conformists went to absurd lengths; speech mannerisms, clothing and eating habits to impress on their people their “been-to-ness”. They were the privileged minority who pressed on to imitate European ways without changes, living like the Europeans and physically separated from their countrymen in government reserved areas. Such men came to be snubbed as charlatans by the Europeans. Some of them on account of this snobbery turned round to fan the embers of

nationalism that eventually dethroned the Europeans. After the exit of the white men, these men took their positions and tried to further European colonialism without the Europeans.

So, the Igbo lost his identity via Christianity, a vestige of European culture. Thus, the Igbo was subdued and having been molded into a stooge, he was physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, economically and even politically captured and made to do the biddings of the white man. In order to continue his domination and colonial drive even after leaving Africa, the white man has put in place a neo-colonial enterprise called globalization to enable him gain effective control in global affairs via interconnectivity. This, in turn, has continued to dismember African Traditions which is the body and soul of African identity. In Igbo land, apart from colonialism, globalization has led to the problem of colonial mentality, a situation which according to Iwe (1985) is

Characterized by lack of confidence in Africa, the African and his way of life; the belief that the white man or the west knows best and what is best for us in every instance and situation; unreflecting tenacity in the maintenance of colonial structures even if these have become outdated, outmoded, dysfunctional and irrelevant to the present needs of Africa; the perpetuation of and addiction to those futile, unfair and unprogressive colonial methods, procedures, techniques, strategies and formalities which had served only to uphold the arrogance and hold down the Africans in perpetual tutelage and thralldom. (p. 199).

The effect of globalization and invariably westernization was shown in the visit of the President of the Central African Republic, Mr. Bozzie to the Oba of Benin in Nigeria. Osahon (2009) recalled that during this visit, the President had an emissary carrying a large Christian cross behind him; one would think he was visiting as a Pope rather than as head of state of an African country. Osahon submitted that the symbolism was a shameful display of the brainwashed president's self-hate and low regards for his own African nobility and traditions. This picture of the visit also

gives an insight of Igbo loss of self-respect and tells volumes of the extent of the colossal damage done to the psyche of the Igbo by the white world.

### **3.3 Agents of Globalization**

This section looks at the various agents or factors that enhance the globalization event.

**3.3.1 Culture Contact:** This is aptly described as the contact between people from different cultures which usually leads to a change in both the host culture and the foreign culture. It is also known as acculturation, a term defined by Akarowhe (2018) as a process of social, psychological and cultural change that stems from the balancing of two cultures while adapting to the prevailing culture of the society. Acculturation is a process in which an individual adopts, acquires and adjusts to a new cultural environment. Acculturation is the exchange of cultural features as a result of a continuous firsthand contact between different cultural groups. He described the term acculturation as the process of acquiring aspects of a foreign culture by an individual, or a group of people, who were born in a different cultural sphere.

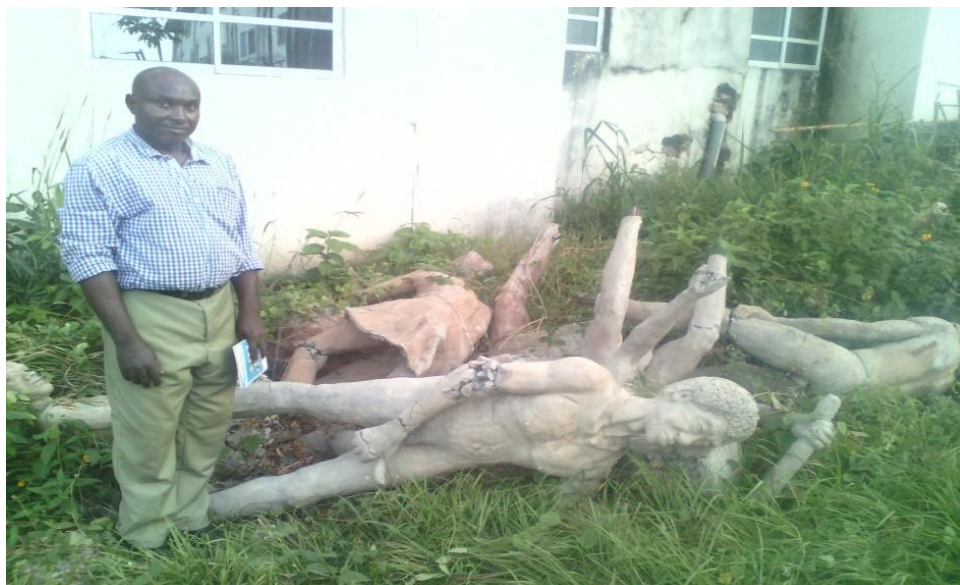
The culture of a people defines the people; anybody without a culture does not have a value. If you do not have a value and you do not know what you stand for, you definitely would not know where you are going. The Igbo as a people appear to have no direction when the culture that is supposed to define them is being eroded by western practices. The Igbo are bringing up children today as Americans and English people. They no longer speak Igbo to them; they no longer teach them their cultural values like, Igbo proverbs and wise sayings that will give them good direction in life. In Igboland, children these days feel safer wearing English dresses, they speak in English and they do not understand Igbo language anymore. In fact, the nursery schools do not encourage learning in Igbo, whereas one thinks better in one's mother-tongue and speaks better in one's mother-tongue. In many secondary schools, the senior students even place embargo on speaking in vernacular. All these values have been lost to this new generation, who consume everything external as if their lives depend on it. As a people, the Igbo have to be distinct, they

have to take pride in their culture and they have to understand what it means to be a people with culture. They now abdicate their responsibility because they have thrown away these values. That is why there is lack of respect, that is, why there is corruption in Igbo society because those basic traditional values that should have been there are no longer there. As a result of culture contact, societal practices that were once regarded as sacrosanct are now being swept aside, giving way to new ways of doing things.

### **3.3.2 Western Religion**

Western Religion remains one of the most potent agents of globalization which has brought a lot of changes in Igbo land. Every religion is a way by which people try to reach God or the gods. Millions of people on earth today believe that the existence of God is a reality. Igbo land is filled with intensely religious people who believe that a transcendent being is overlooking and overseeing human activities on earth. Before the advent of Christianity, the Igbo had their own concept of God which is the same with the concept of God anywhere in the world. The Igbo were known all over the world as a people who are ardent in matters of traditional religion and worship. They were united by their customs and tradition which constituted their religion. They believe in a benevolent creator known as *Chukwu*, the Supreme Deity who created the visible world or universe (*uwa*). The Igbo believe in the concept of *ofo* and *ogu* which is the governing law of retribution or retributive justice. In Igboland, it is believed that *ofo* and *ogu* vindicates anyone that is wrongly accused of a crime as long as his hands are clean. It is only the righteous or one on the side of *ofo* and *ogu* that can call its name in prayer, otherwise such a person faces the wrath of *Amadioha* (the god of thunder) the chief messenger of the Supreme Deity.

**Plate 8:** The researcher with the relics of Amadioha at Mbari Centre, Owerri



**Source:** Fieldwork 9/12/2017

The belief of the Igbo on how they should relate with their ancestors (*ndichie*) is reflected in many ways. For instance, with kolanut in hand, they call on the ancestors (*ndichie*) whenever they want to say their prayers. They also pour libation to them whenever they want to drink especially in formal traditional events and ceremonies in Igbo land. The Igbo believe that the ancestors fight spiritually on their behalf to protect them from harm and negative attacks. They help to facilitate childbearing and survival of any particular lineage, they provide spiritual guidance to those still on earth and act as intermediaries between them and *chukwu*.

The Igbo communicate with the ancestors through dreams, through apparatus and through the eyes of the holy spiritual seers. Apart from the natural realm of the universe, they also believe that another realm exists which is inhabited by the spiritual forces called *arisi* or *alusi* which are minor deities and who have the capacity to perform good or evil depending on the circumstances. They punish social offences and those who unwittingly infringe upon the privileges of the gods. In order to commune with the spiritual level of the universe, diviners exist to interpret the wishes of



*arisi*. Arisi can also be reached through the priesthood, which placates them with sacrifices. Either a priest is chosen through hereditary lineage or is chosen by a particular god for his service, usually after passing through a number of mystical experiences. Arisis' according to Arinze (1978) are elemental beings. The four basic elements of land, water, fire and wind have elemental gods and goddesses who are in charge of everything that concerns them, that is, the formation, development and transformation of land, water, fire and wind anywhere on earth which makes earthly existence possible. In Igbo traditional religion and worship, these gods and goddesses are lower than *ndichie* but are very powerful and unswerving in their activities such that any man who misapplies their effects will die within a short time. Some of these *arisis*' have shrines where they are approached. They also possess material things like servants, trees, animals, piece of land etc. mainly because they are more closely connected to the earth than the other two subjects of worship in Igbo traditional religious system.

However, since the inception of Christianity, the gods have gone on retreat due to missionary activities in Igbo land. The customs and traditions of the people which are their true identity have been bastardized by foreign religious practices. It is against this backdrop that Christianity is seen as a religion which is greatly rooted in if not interwoven with globalization. Most traditionalists and traditional rulers who are the custodians of the customs and tradition of the people have been converted to Christianity and have been made to loathe their religion. This has also brought a significant change in the worldview of the Igbo people who now think and act according to western prescription. Indeed, according to Ibezim (2016), Igbo traditional religion helps to promote community living through religious belief in the ancestors, initiation practices and sacred institutions such as public shrines and masquerades. But its strength in ensuring community living has virtually disappeared due to the onslaught of Christianity.

Consequently, most adherents of Christian religion in rural and urban areas now boycott Igbo communal life system by dissociating themselves from their community meetings and

festivals such as New Yam festivals because they see it as devilish and a primitive way of life. Many Igbo Christians in Nigeria today see community consciousness as a means of contracting evil spirits or entering into soul-ties that would put them in everlasting bondage or prevent them from moving forward in life. The quest to own good things of life like sophisticated houses, cars, airplanes, mobile phones, computers and so on brought in by globalization through science and technology has made many religious leaders including igbo traditional religious leaders to abandon their cardinal responsibility of remolding the people into good characters to pursue wealth. Some pastors now hoodwink naïve people in order to fleece them of their wealth. The current security challenges and economic backwardness experienced in Igboland are partly caused by the failure of the religious leaders to lead by example and effect moral regeneration among adherents. Many people are now becoming pastors, reverends, elders and evangelists not because they want to do the work of God but because it gives them the leverage to control church funds and proceeds. No religion preaches hatred and bloodletting. But adherents of foreign religions like Christianity feel that their religion is superior to others. This often makes them to embark on winning converts to their religion sometimes through coercive ways. As a result, religious bigotry and intolerance now cause upheavals between Christians and traditionalists in Igbo land. Some Pentecostal pastors in Igbo land with pervert minds have twisted the teachings of Jesus Christ to their selfish ends. Some churches have commercialized and monetized Christianity. They reduce the entire teachings of Jesus Christ to one thing, a means of making money. So, some Christians that have indoctrinated their members with prosperity messages and teachings about miracles believe that pastors are vessels through which God can visit them.

### **3.3.3 Science and Technology**

Humans from time immemorial have been endowed with survival techniques which enable them to produce things for survival. These techniques gradually became the offshoot of the profound indigenous technology which emanates from the application of knowledge accumulated and

experienced overtime in achieving the desired result. In other words, technology arose as a result of the application of indigenous knowledge in tools, techniques, processes and methods that help in solving problems.

Fundamentally, technology is a vital driving force in human history accountable for change in all civilizations. Indigenous technology having been identified with a group of people readily answers to their needs at all levels. Thus, a technology with such an impact ensures technical development. Olson (2010) acknowledged technology as a system based on the application of knowledge, manifested in physical objects and organizational forms for the attainment of specific goals. The growth of any economy foremost lies in what it has and can adequately make out of its resources without external aid. In the light the above, ancient Igbo communities extensively exploited their environment which gave rise to their mastery of iron making, arts, textile weaving and dyeing, herbal drugs, agriculture and so on. The decline of this prestigious technology especially blacksmith industry according to Mawere (2014), is the outcome of lasting impacts of colonialism as well as the tide of globalization.

In Igboland, Neaher (1976) identified three centres of metal working namely *Abiriba*, *Nkwerre* and *Awka* with *Nsukka* area as a possible fourth centre. Thus, owing to the ritualistic nature of iron working, availability of resources coupled with abundance of iron working residue, it is arguable that an act well engrafted into the norms of a community must have evolved out of interaction between the community and its environment. Eze-Uzoamaka (2011) added that the proliferation of furnaces, slags and iron objects in Igbo land attests to local production of iron and the dates they were recovered from iron smelting sites point to the early smelting of iron in Igbo land. The iron tools and weapons provided by the iron smith are essential for agricultural production, for warfare and in some societies for hunting.

In the western world, they had laboratories where diagnosis or tests are carried out, pharmacists, nurses, medical doctors and so on, who prescribe, dispense and administer drugs

while the Igbo had diviners, medicine men and herbalists who performed the same function. They had hospitals which served as healthcare providers. Corpses were embalmed and kept in the mortuary in hospitals in the West while the Igbo without mortuaries and hospitals had their traditional method of embalmment and preservation of corpses though it lasted for a short period of three to five days. Today, however, the Igbo have keyed into the modern method of embalmment and preservation of corpses. They buried their dead in cemeteries while the Igbo buried their dead inside the house, the bush or within the compound depending on the status of the dead. In keeping with this modern practice, the Igbo now bury their dead in cemeteries. The western musical instruments which are now in use almost everywhere in the world have replaced Igbo traditional musical instruments.

In the area of agriculture, the western world did mechanized farming using machines or modern farm implements while the Igbo did subsistence farming using traditional farm implements. Agricultural products in the western world were processed in industries or factories and preserved in storage facilities while in Igboland; they were processed locally and stored in bans, earthen pots and baskets and so on. In his study of the Igbo people, Basden (1982) noted that:

Every village had its own market place, fetish-houses and public meeting ground. The markets were designated by the names of the day on which they were held viz *Ekke (Eke)*, *Afaw (Afor)*, *Oye (Orie)* and *Nkwaw (Nkwo)*, these corresponding to the four days of the Igbo week. The life of the womenfolk largely consists in a continual round of marketing and the preparation of food, varied by farm work in the season. (p. 48).

They sold raw goods and transactions were done by bargaining or trade by barter as the case may be. In contrast, in the western world, they had supermarkets, shops, groceries, malls and business centres and so on. The goods had price-tags and transactions were done with vending machines,

calculators and computers and so on. The western world used vehicles like cars, motorcycles, bicycles on tarred roads, they had very good network of roads. They equally used aeroplanes for air transport and ships, boats and ferries for water transport while the Igbo trekked over long distances on track and untarred roads and used wooden canoes for water transport. The Western people constructed concrete bridges using modern construction equipment while the Igbo used bamboos and logs of wood to construct narrow bridges which brought their engineering and technological ingenuity to the fore. Today, there are beautiful houses littered everywhere even in the villages in Igboland. They now construct concrete and wider bridges and the roads are now tarred and wide enough for vehicles to ply. There are also air and sea ports where airplanes land and take off and ships berth. Supermarkets, shops, groceries, malls and business centres and so on are now a common sight in Igboland. All these coupled with the use of machines, computers and so on have made communication with the outside world very easy which made globalization in Igbo society inevitable.

Traditionally, indigenous technology graduated lots of artisans in the present Igboland. It is one of the institutions of higher learning in Igbo land where the future livelihood of the apprentice is guaranteed. Hence, it can be said that the primary objective of this industry is to equip people with basic knowledge necessary for survival. This medium in turn instilled self-confidence and a sense of belonging in the apprentice who is quite useful to the community. However, with colonization came the massive importation of cheap European goods to substitute Igbo made goods. Having been deprived of their cultural root, it was easy for the early Igbo to embrace these foreign goods as being superior looking at their fanciful finishing. As a result, the Igbo indigenous technology with its crude but high quality products ceased production. Therefore, it was not strange for an industry to collapse for lack of patronage. Today, the Igbo indigenous technology is beset with challenges, including the dearth of apprentices to carry on with the tradition, its competition with foreign goods and its crude processes.

### 3.3.4 Western Media

In Igbo land, various media communications existed before the advent of western media. The media referred to here is the traditional channels of communication which enabled their forefathers, traditional rulers and members of the communities to share and exchange ideas and information.

Traditional communication is akin to village or rural communication where the town crier played a prominent role. Hence, traditional communication or oral media is employed in most rural areas like villages, clans, towns and wards; it is essentially an oral process which depends on the effective use of human auditory system. Similarly, westernization brought modern communication which places emphasis on the use of machines or oral equipment. They used electronic and print media such as telephones, television, cable television, radio, GSM, internet, computer, social media, newspapers and magazines to facilitate information dissemination while the Igbo employed the services of town criers and emissaries to deliver information or message to the people. This method of information dissemination as it is presently in Igboland has been modified with the use of public address system. Apart from information dissemination, they also provided education and entertainment. The elements of the size and heterogeneity of audience, ability of the message, the nature of the communication, the efficacy of media and speed of transmission of message makes modern communication quite different from traditional communication.

Much as modern communication is faster, more efficient and effective, it has delivered a knockout blow on the value system of the Igbo society. Gangsterism, armed robbery, assassination, kidnapping, violence and other related criminal behaviours were introduced to Igbo society via western media. Pornographic films and materials have reduced the people to the level of lower animals. Married and unmarried people now hide under the cloak of civilization to indulge in sexual immorality without regard for the customs and tradition of the people and so

many of them have even joined the pornographic film industry in the West. Many young women have destroyed their lives and career because of this ugly trend. Igbo society whose values about sex hitherto were shaped by traditional religious beliefs and doctrines enshrined in taboos and sanctions now have access to the other side of the coin. Ayantayo and Akintunde (2008) also revealed that the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century which ushered in globalization has produced certain factors that have affected the religious thinking of Africans about sex. To the westerners, the word 'sex' is like every other word but for the Igbo, it is a taboo. Beyond the use of foul language, violent films, pornographic pictures and videos are freely uploaded in the various sites of the social media for the consumption of both adults and the underage who practice what they watch afterwards. It is the reason family values are trampled upon.

In his views, Obiakor (2016) observed that social media have created an Igbo society that is swayed by reducing cultural barriers and convergence. It has altered the normality of the traditional Igbo family whereby friendship between opposite sex and having dealings with strangers are seen as an aberration. Social network opened the door for silent immoral acts thereby robbing the parents of the opportunity to reprimand and scold their children. Parents are totally locked out of the social media activities. Parental control as enshrined in Igbo value has vanished as the young ones through social media copy from strangers that which is alien. It has taken away the hours of life reforms in exchange for deviance to parental guidance. It has completely changed the dress code of the Igbo from decent African style of dressing to western style. Among the Igbo, there is clear distinction between female and male outfit. But western culture and their mode of dressing have taken over the sensibility of the Igbo, most especially the youth. Men compete with the womenfolk over the wearing of earrings and the same is applicable to women who derive pleasure in putting on male outfit. More disturbing is the male attitude of pulling down their trousers thereby exposing their inner wear, it is called "sagging", young women also dress this

way. All these are products of social media where they visit, interact and copy western style which is alien to the Igbo.

Such transparent dresses like tights, leggings, body hug, skimpy skirts, and indecent trousers which expose the private parts of the body are now rampant among married and unmarried women in Igbo society. Moreover, according to Ohaekwusi (2010), being technologically sophisticated has amounted to being technologically dubious as fraudulent syndicates continue to expand their branches worldwide through global network. This advancement in global technology has equally sophisticated the practice of terrorism. It has also increased the level of insincerity and mutual mistrust among people, since one can assume to be in a position, place or situation which he is not while communicating with other people through this sophisticated medium. Although the information systems that permeate the modern world allow for a greater dissemination of information, there remains the danger of dehumanization of that information and the social context that makes the information relevant. This implies that the human aspect of social interaction is often downplayed by the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The more social communication becomes an electronic affair, the more the value of the human agents is eroded.

The difference between physical or live communication and cyber communication or between the physical neighbour and a cyber-neighbour is that a cyber-neighbour is not as reliable as the physical neighbour. Also, the technologies of modern life are ultimately destructive when applied to certain kinds of messages such as religion. For example, one cannot claim to have actively participated in any religious activity like holy mass, through this media because such participation is apparent and superficial. Moreover, it is pertinent to say that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) while playing its connecting role in communication equally creates a big communication gap between individuals. We seem to be unconcerned and indifferent



about the human agents while communicating with this sophisticated medium that seem to unite but tear us apart. It simply means that we are connected but cannot relate.

### **3.3.5 Western Education**

Education cannot be separated from the regular routines of societal life. It is a life experience which takes place from the cradle to the grave. According to Ekenachi (2001), every culture, people and profession in the world has a stake in education whether informal, non-formal or formal. Education is synonymous with learning. Traditionalists believe that traditional education in Igbo society is not only acquired but also lived. They also suggest that following the child's acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitude appropriate to life in his or her community, the stage is set for the growth and development of the whole person including the education of the soul. In his bid to throw more light on traditional education, Uchendu (1993) explained that:

African traditional or indigenous educational system refers to the system of education that was prevalent in Africa before the advent of colonialism, Islam and Christianity. These two important religions influenced African indigenous education very greatly. In traditional African society, the purpose of education was clear and the main guiding principle was functionalism. For them, education was a means leading to an end. Traditional African education emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, spiritual and moral values. The children normally learn by doing and so were the adolescents. (p. 1-2).

According to Taiwo (1981),

The yardstick of an educated man in such a system was his morals, manners, obedience to authority and respect for the customs, conventions, superstitions and laws of the group, together with unquestioning acceptance of the group beliefs, values and religious practices. Employment was taken for granted because everyone had one occupation or the other. (p. 179).

On his part, Agada (1991) asserted that community served as an agent of education by utilizing every incident and ceremony to train children and young adults. (p.18). This implies that Igbo community living helps in communal training of children since all members of the community are useful in imparting knowledge. Agbo (1993) vividly explains that:

Training of children is a community affair and Igbo people spare neither the rod nor the mouth in order not to spoil the child. They correct children through physical punishment, facial expression, scolding, denying them of piece of meat or with holding other little comforts. (p. 49).

But the western culture sees this form of correction as child abuse and would not hesitate to punish parents who correct their children or wards in this manner. The Igbo are well known for maintaining their culture and traditions as well as practicing them anywhere they are, in or outside Nigeria. They regard these cultural practices as part of their traditional beliefs, customary norms, love of family and community as well as love for religion and learning. The love for religion and learning which is now embedded in their pursuit of western education has created a paradigm shift from the old or traditional ideas to the modern day Igbo ideology and philosophy of life. Following this development, Uchendu (1965) observed thus:

Today, there is an important shift in what is necessary to make a town “get up”. There is consensus among the Igbo that education is the key to progress as it is now reinterpreted. The educational progress of Igbo land owes much to the missionaries, for there are few Igbo leaders today who did not attend mission schools. On the other hand, the success of the missionaries was in no small part due to the cooperation and the community spirit of the people among whom they worked. (p. 36).

The missionaries and the host community played cooperative roles to make the educational progress a priority for making Igbo to get up. That is helping the Igbo to acquire western

education that prepared them for future roles in national development and professional work. Hence, the paradigm shift from the Igbo idea of transmitting traditional values and the emphasis attached to the acquisition of wealth, farmlands and yam, marrying of many wives and traditional title taking has influenced most Igbo people because those parents who have been affected by western education are today the champions of this change in their thought and value system. This falls in line with other progressive societies across the globe. Therefore, there is no doubt that traditional education for the Igbo is an indispensable process in the upbringing of the child even before he or she begins to attend a formal school. In the colonial era, they competed about who had the biggest yam barns and farmlands, greatest number of wives, most popular husbands, wealth and domestic animals in the compounds as well as the highest number of traditional titles one had received from his community.

Today, the same motivation and competitive spirit have given dynamism in exploring education. Although they still cherish these traditional aspects of human accomplishments, Igbo parents also bother about how many of their children have gone to secondary school as well as how many have received college and university education. Also, for the Igbo man and woman of today, to have educated children in the family is the greatest asset and legacy to leave with one's children rather than having a bunch of illiterates in a family, filled with arrogance and often quarrelling and fighting over some pieces of the so called inherited material wealth.

However, according to Okeke and Njoku (1989), western education in Nigeria served not only the religious interest of the missionaries but also political and commercial interests of Western Europe. Literate Nigerians served as clerks, interpreters and messengers etc. Western education was conceived of and utilized as a potent instrument for converting people to Christian religion. Reading and understanding the Bible so as to appreciate the revealed truths about God was the major concern. Therefore, the schools were to produce teachers, catechists and interpreters for evangelization. Also, the idea and practice of sharing food separately at meals among Igbo

children was a later development that came with western individualism that was brought about by formal education and lifestyle. Children now often eat from their separate plates and use their own specific cups for drinks. Although the table rules of not talking during meals and of sharing still apply today in Igbo families, things are no longer what they used to be for the changes have been very drastic.

Another notable change is the breaking of kolanut. Kolanut (*oji*) is a very important edible seed among the Igbo. It is seen as a seed that binds the Igbo together. It signifies Igbo hospitality to visitors either at home or at community gatherings and celebrations. In the past, before a traditional Igbo man broke the kolanut, he would first invoke the presence of the spirits of his ancestors (*ndichie*) to come and participate in it, as well as asking for guidance and protection in his endeavour and for all those who would partake in it. This very practice is today carried out in a modernized form where most of the people have been Christianized. Instead of calling on the spirits of their ancestors to come and participate in the ritual breaking of the kolanut, people now invoke the name of Almighty God to come and bless the occasion and the kolanut so that those who would eat it will be blessed too as well as protected from the evils of the world.

Western education has also influenced the cost of marriage. In most parts of Igbo land today, they now put high price tags on young women who have received tertiary education thereby scaring their suitors away. This is clearly a deviation from the norms, customs and tradition of the people. The Igbo society has fully embraced these modernizations as part of the outcome of formal education which they had freely bargained for with their acceptance of the early Christian missionaries. The goal of globalization is not that the entire world would become westernized and capitalist. Rather the implication is that western culture has become the standard by which all other cultures must be measured.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON IGBO LAND

#### 4.1 The Positive Contributions of Globalization to Igbo People

Despite the negative impact of globalization, there are still areas which could be exploited to the advantage of Igbo tradition and culture which have affected Igbo traditional society positively.

##### 4.1.1 Reduction in Irrational Discrimination against Women, the *Osu* and Children

According to Iwe (1985), Africans owe it to their contact with the west that today the frequency of local community feuds and bloody clashes has been drastically reduced. Twin babies are now acceptable and no longer exposed to slaughter and destruction. The mother of twins is no longer a suspect, a taboo and ostracized. Women are no longer sub citizens to be seen and not heard, to be given away in marriage and deployed against their will and choice and to be relegated to the background and stably harnessed to the burdens of domestic chores and routines. The rigorous and irrational discrimination practiced against the victims of the *Osu* system is fast losing ground in Igboland.

##### 4.1.2 Improvement in the Health System of the People

E. Okereke (personal communication, 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2019) as a consequence of the accessibility of the scientific and technological contributions of the west to Africa, various diseases and ailments have been brought under medical and rational control, the health of Igbo people has improved, infant mortality rate has decreased, many childbearing women have continued to receive adequate clinical care and in general, the mortality rate of the people has ceased to be alarming.

##### 4.1.3 Industrialization of Igboland

He submitted that incipient industrialization has become a feature of African culture. Though on a very modest scale, small scale and large scale industries such as garri, palm oil, cocoa, rubber,

textile, steel, glass, cement and ceramics, breweries and so on, now abound in most villages and towns in Igboland.

#### **4.1.4 Improvement in Transport and Communication System**

Igbo culture has joined the mainstream of world civilization in terms of free flow of men, money, materials, ideas and goods rendered easily and fairly cheap by modern changes in transport and communication. Igbo culture can no longer be insular and isolated. According to C. Nwafor (personal communication, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2018), they now have good network of modern roads, assorted vehicles, airports and riverports, which facilitate transportation and communication in various parts of Igboland. The development of Information and Communication Technology through science and technology has flooded villages and towns in Igboland with information and communication gadgets such as television, radio, internet, computer, Global Mobile System, Satellite system and so on. With these tools of communication, the distance between towns and villages has been eliminated as it has enhanced communication between the various layers of the Igbo society.

#### **4.1.5 Awareness that Igbo Religion is not Idol Worship**

The non-adherents of African traditional religion are now armed with adequate information about the features of African traditional religion as recorded in Idowu (1991) such as belief in God, belief in divinities, belief in spirits, belief in ancestors and the practice of magic and medicine. They have come to understand that Igbo traditionalists are not pagans as falsely and perniciously insinuated by the non-adherents of the religion. With the awareness of this information about the features of African traditional religion, they are now able to see the mutual relationship between African traditional religion and other world religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. African traditional religion has been alive from time immemorial, yet people continue to describe it erroneously as animism. African religions have continued to face prejudice from other religions especially from adherents of Islam and Christianity who still call

African traditional religion pagan. This probably informed the argument of Hackett (1996) that, African religions are being revitalized through universalization, modernization, politicization, commercialization and individualization of religious ideas and practices. Igbo traditional religion articulates world view that continues to provide a basis for morality. Just as Judaism, Christianity and Islam believe in God so also African traditional religion believes in God. Prophet Mohammed and Jesus Christ in Islam and Christianity respectively serve as intermediaries between man and God. Spirits exist in other religions like Christianity, Islam and Judaism, the same way they exist in African traditional religion. Ancestors in African traditional religion can be likened to those who have lived extraordinary life like the saints in Christianity and Judaism. The practice of magic and medicine is akin to the performance of miracles and wonders in Judaism, Islam and Christianity. The great world religions are scriptural unlike African traditional religion that is unscriptural.

#### **4.1.6 Enhanced Evangelism courtesy of Science and Technology**

Today, with the help of science and technology, the Igbo now have electronic Bible, electronic Quran on mobile phones, laptops, iPads and Mp4. Preaching, sermons and religious messages are recorded and transmitted through radio stations and television stations. If adherents of Igbo traditional religion are not able to face the people or are not given listening ears to evangelize their religion in order to win converts, they can employ any of the means science and technology has provided like recording religious messages on Tapes, Mp3, CD, radio stations, television stations, cable network television and posting the same messages on the internet. Through all these means, the basic facts about African traditional religion would be known by even non-Africans and Africans who have been blindfolded by western religion and have not taken time to study or look into the religion of their forefathers because their negative impression about the religion is the result of ignorance.

#### **4.1.7 Improvement in the Educational System of the People**

With the progress made so far by western education, civilization and science and technology, adherents and non-adherents of Igbo traditional religion are now better informed about their religion. Their lack of knowledge of the truth about African traditional religion made them to be easily swayed off by western religion which gave them wrong teachings, information, facts and evidences about their own religion. However, with western education, civilization and science and technology now available to Igbo traditionalists, African traditional religion has a great opportunity of achieving the level of popularity those great world religions have achieved. So, globalization has contributed a lot in the civilization and survival of African traditional religion through the education of Africans to embrace their own religion. Africans have made their own religion a field of study for anybody who wishes to specialize in African traditional religion from any part of the world. This was made possible by western education.

#### **4.2 The Negative Effects of Globalization on Igbo People**

We are witnessing a major global cultural revolution that is having an incredible impact on Igbo society. Because of this, the pure Igbo society is collapsing and new cultural trends emerging. The forces responsible for the apparent demise or progressive disappearance of Igbo traditional gods, deities and venerable ancestors followed in the wake of Africa's colonial conquest by the Europeans. Apart from this, there are five principal threats to their existence; erosion of Igbo personality, the spread of popular global culture, loss of natural environments, loss of traditional languages and conversion to other religions. These are the threats that the Igbo grapple with even as they make concerted efforts at retracing their root.



#### 4.2.1 Erosion of Igbo Personality

Mbiti (1986) noted that “contact with colonizers from Europe and America with their allies brought about a change and one which affects all spheres of life” (p.218). The burden of globalization has wreaked havoc on Igbo personality. It has constituted the Igbo into a bundle of contradiction. In terms of identity, a person tries to maintain that which he is because he cannot be what he is not. For instance, he cannot be an Igbo and a European or an American at the same time. If this happens, the law of identity is breached. One may bring in the issue of dual citizenship but the fact remains that nature confers on a person the citizenship of a place based on his paternity or parental descent from a father. This is a well-known case in Igboland. The duality as the case may be is only acquired based on birth, marriage, registration or naturalization of a person in another place.

Again, the law or principle of excluded middle must also apply. If this is strictly followed or adhered to, then he cannot be half African and half European or American. So, there is no middle way to it. He is either an African or not an African. However, the Igbo have also breached the law of contradiction by conferring on himself the burden of dual personality. He now tries to copy the Europeans and Americans in his bid to be like them thereby abandoning and deviating from that which makes him distinct from these people. So, the identity crises in which the Igbo has found himself today is as a result of the breach of the laws of thought. And the breach of these laws of thought is the outcome of the influence of globalization on Igbo personality.

Globalization through colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism has brought the Igbo a confused sense of identity. The Igbo now has a split personality. This probably prompted an observation by July (1970) that the modern African is a product of uneasy union of two alien civilizations. He tries to make himself look like “Whiteman in black skin” (p.405). C. Okorie (personal communication, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2017) adds that, perhaps, this is the reason many Igbo men and women wear-off their natural skin colour by bleaching. They perm their hair and perform plastic

surgery in order to look like the Whiteman. In the end, they do not look exactly like the Whiteman rather the figure they cut out is that of someone who has lost his background. At the base of the Igbo being are systems of beliefs, rituals and thinking which are expressive of the sum total of the being, existence and identity of an Igbo.

So, the problem is that Igbo systems of beliefs, rituals and thought have negatively and profusely been globalized. This is probably why Agassiz (cited by Lugira, 2002) said that the “brain of the Negro is that of the imperfect brain of a seven month infant in the womb of the White” (p. 1). It is the inability of the Igbo to hold onto his own identity by taking in everything thrown at him by the Whiteman that has made him to be viewed in this light. Hence, Ezekwugo (1992) captures the Igbo of Nigeria as a typical African personality who ends up being neither here nor there. He is schizophrenic suffering a sort of neurosis. He is like a man at crossroads whose world is in disarray. (p.249). The Igbo seem to be complacent and careless about the way their children embrace other people’s cultures without having a grasp of their own. This, according to N. Chukwuma (personal communication, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2016) may spell doom for the children and spark-off revolt by the time they fail to culturally identify themselves which may subject them to be ridiculed and embarrassed as children of no culture, no tradition, no value and no identity. The Igbo has also failed abysmally to pose to himself these questions: who am I? What kind of being am I? To who exactly does the term I refer? What constitutes my person?

#### **4. 2.2 The Spread of Popular Global Culture.**

According to McGaha (2015), popular culture is generally recognized by members of a society as a set of the practices, beliefs and objects that are dominant or ubiquitous in a society at a given point in time. Popular culture also encompasses the activities and feelings produced as a result of interaction with these dominant objects. The most common examples of popular culture are entertainment such as movies, music, television, video games, sports, politics, news, fashion, technology and so forth. Molloy (2010) added that, television, radio, films, airplanes, internet and

satellite system and others are carrying modern urban cultures to all corners of the earth including Igboland. In his reaction to this spread of popular culture, O. Mbazu (personal communication, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2016) says, virtually every home in Igboland is now equipped with some of these electronic gadgets. These gadgets are now aiding and abetting the spread of popular global cultures such as western style of cooking, building, eating, speaking, marrying, dressing, dancing, naming, and burying and so on which have taken over the pure Igbo society. For the past fifty years, these gadgets have enveloped the globe and transformed every aspect of Igbo culture, behaviour and brains. There is also this culture of viewing centres, where people now watch popular world sports like English Premier League, American Wrestling and so on. This has made the Igbo to abandon their own local sports in preference to those popular global sports. According to him, change is also evident in the realm of clothing. In Igboland, traditional clothing began to disappear a century ago as western styles became the standard. Western business wears are now worn in all the world's cities including Igboland. Informal clothing like baseball caps and T-shirts are seen everywhere even in Igboland. Despite all these, some cultures are trying to hold on to their traditional clothing especially for formal occasions. This is common in Korea, China, the Philippines and Japan. In the same vain, the Igbo try to encourage their civil servants to dress in native clothes or traditional attire on certain days of the week to underscore their quest for the revival of Igbo culture.

Architecture too is becoming standardized as the international style with its plate glass; aluminium and concrete is taking the place of traditional styles. As modern urban culture spreads across the earth, it tends to dominate everyone's worldview. In Igbo land, it used to be round thatched houses, but now, it is this standardized international style. It would be difficult to convince today's young people to undergo the deprivation of a vision quest when all they need to visit other worlds is a television, computer or an airplane ticket. But everywhere we go, we find

hamburgers, pizza, rap, rock and jeans. Some even believe that popular culture is becoming a religion of its own displacing others.

I. Ibe (personal communication, 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2017) in his opinion says, in Igboland, we now have Mr Biggs, Shoprites, Crunchies, Plazas and so forth which promote foreign foods and wears; viewing centres which encourage and promote foreign football culture everywhere in Igbo society; birthday parties, child dedication, marriage and burial ceremonies have now taken on the garb of foreign culture so much so that the Igbo are now seen as a people without culture. It has affected the way they think and their general perception or worldview about their culture because they now see their culture as not only inferior but something that should be subsumed in foreign culture.

#### **4.2.3 Loss of Traditional Lands and Natural Environments.**

As Molloy (2010) discovered, because so much personal and group meaning comes from the natural environment, its degradation or loss can be devastating to a native people's identity. The Igbo people's religious institutions and practices are threatened as sacred groves, creeks, rivers and shrines that adorn various places in Igbo land are devastated via Logging and deforestation. The loss of this sacred heritage has also led to the people's loss of identity and traditional perception, definition of life and worldview and ipso facto loss of religious and cultural identity and legacies. The implication is that globalization is a negation of the principles of sustainable development which emphasis is on ensuring that the cravings and the exploitation of today in the process of development does not jeopardize the chances of generations yet unborn. That is the integration of the needs of the weak, the unborn and environmental friendliness in all human development and adaptation activities. Fights are intense over conservation, land ownership and government protection.

It is well known according to Ajayi (2012), that before the advent of colonialism, Africa had a system of justice and adjudication hinged on fear of deities which attracted instant sanctions

and punishments, hence, making the people conform to the ethos of the community. But, the coming of the Europeans has altered or changed the peoples' cognitive mapping of what constitutes social order and control through the introduction of new methods leading to the abandonment of the traditional social control patterns, systems and mechanisms in favour of modern social mechanisms has done more harm than good to Igbo land. For instance, Ajayi (2012) recalls that Transparency International ranked Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The traditional lands and environment today have taken a new shape in terms of modern road construction, new building projects, mining and logging activities.

#### **4.2.4 Loss of Native Languages**

Loss of native languages is one of the biggest threats to the existence of Igbo indigenous religions. Clearly, the loss of a native language endangers the continued transmission of a religion that expresses itself in that language. How many young ones can talk in Igbo language? The corrosion of Igbo language has turned the youths into cultural mulattoes or what Albert (cited by Malogo, 2011) calls the "tragedy of in-betweenity" that is, they can neither speak the new, foreign language masterfully nor their supposed first language fluently. Language is not merely a set of grammatical rules or a vocabulary; it is the vehicle by which the soul of each particular culture comes into the material world. However, the cold fact remains that, for every elder that dies, he carries with him or her into the grave the last syllables of an ancient tongue, that is, that which identifies a people in the *mélange* of global identities. When the phrase *the good old days* is used, it expresses a romantic hankering after the values and aesthetics of the past, that is, the culture that gave the Igbo identity. Many Igbo scholars of culture and language have bemoaned the systematic erosion of the Igbo way of life through the gradual disappearance of Igbo language. It has long been observed that in Igbo society, Igbo language is now at risk since it is not being systematically transmitted to the younger generations. According to N. Anoke (personal communication, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2016), despite the campaign for the use of mother tongues as possible languages of

instruction in schools, the Igbo seem to have ignored this call to the detriment of Igbo language. Most of the stories that were told to children as folktales are becoming extinct. Nobody is repeating these stories to the present generation.

#### **4.2.5 Conversion to Other Religions**

In Igboland, the traditional religion is bound with culture. This means that in the pure Igbo society, cultural life is intricately bound with their religion. For one to interpret one's cultural life, one's religion must be properly addressed. So, the missionaries handed on the baton of hatred for African traditional society, religion and culture to Igbo Christians. And as it stands now, Igbo Christians hate any association with Igbo traditional religious culture because they sincerely believe it to be satanic. Ironically, Igbo traditional religion is patronized by these same Christians who accuse it of being satanic. Similarly, Trimingham (1956) said that the massive drift from traditional religions to Islam and Christianity in the past one hundred years or so is due to the collapse of the structures of Traditional African societies and African world views. To him, the sudden impact of Western civilization in the form of colonial subjugation, technological superiority and education upset the social structures of African societies based on tribal structures and rural subsistence economies, so African traditional religions are bound up with the social structure that the collapse of the latter also precipitated the collapse of religious life. C. Orji (personal communication, 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2016) adds that globalization in form of Christianity has made the Igbo to demonize their culture. They demonize their culture on the grounds that they are fetish but even the Pope has entered shrines, not of Christians and acknowledged the sense of faith in God by adherents of the deities worshipped in such shrines.

Some of the core cultural values of various ethnic groups being so demeaned in Igbo land are being celebrated with growing global recognition in other climes. J .Nwachukwu (personal communication, 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017) recalls that, in most Igbo communities, ancestral worship or veneration has also been condemned as demonic and fetish whereas in a place like Japan, the

second largest economy in the world, ancestral veneration remains a valued culture. The Japanese including the most highly placed go to venerate the graves of their dead parents decorating them with flowers. The situation is such that a deliberate cultural imperialism is being launched in a systematic destructive process by the western world in the name of vogue and modernism and the Igbo will soon wake up one day to find out that its culture and values have been obliterated from the socio-cultural map of the world. All these make it difficult for the renaissance of Igbo traditional religion.

In the words of Opoku (1978), Quite apart from the internal dynamics of African society which effect changes from within, the introduction of Islam and Christianity as well as the impingement of the modern world has all brought their influences to bear on traditional religion and culture in Africa. In the case of Christianity, the early missionaries demanded a complete break with tradition as evidence of one's conversion. Conversion therefore led to the abandonment of many of the rituals practiced in traditional religion and further led to the complete disregard for most of the gods, their priests and other functionaries who played such an important role in the religion. With the abandonment of the gods went the taboos and other restrictions which their worship placed on the life of many of the people. The Christian missionary endeavour was considerably aided by the introduction of modern education which ushered in a new order and new values were acquired by the products of the schools that did not seem to fit into the traditional society. Many forms of traditional education such as initiation and puberty rites were dealt a heavy blow, for many products of the schools refused to undergo those rites. With the new education, came other influences from the west which began to alter the former predominantly religious orientation of life in Africa. All these are true of Igbo society.

The disruption in the rhythm of Igbo traditional society was not totally the fault of Islam and Christianity as Metuh (1987) pointed out when he said that "the greatest threat to the survival of African Religion is posed by modernization which has brought about the collapse of the

structure of traditional society which had sustained traditional religion". Furthermore, he unequivocally added that the collapse of traditional societies also led to the collapse of organized form of traditional religion. Conversion to Christianity, emigration to town, the need to send the young ones to school have made it impossible in some places to organize the traditional initiation rites, annual festivals to the deities, ancestral rites, and communal rites.

These traditionalists who remain in the villages and many more who have immigrated to towns where they cannot practice traditional religion effectively practice no religion even where they have retained most of their traditional cosmological ideas. African traditional religion is also an embodiment of spiritual values like art, education and love which the modern African societies seem to ignore in place of Christianity and Islam. These foreign religions seem to have lost their spiritual essence as they are now manipulated by their operators for economic gains on one hand and for killing and maiming as Boko Haram is doing in Nigeria, ISIS in Syria, ISL in Iraq, Al Shabab in Kenya and AI Qaeda all over the world. On the other hand, Ekwunife (2012) said that assimilation policy projects the culture and civilization of the colonizers as the ideal. This meant that the culture of the colonized had no value. Hence, it is immediately suppressed as the colonized are absorbed into the supposed ideal culture. Similarly, in indirect rule policy, the colonizers project their culture and civilization as ideals to be imitated while allowing some modicum of the culture of the colonized citizens to be retained as long as these retained elements do not encroach on the colonizer's economic, political and miscellaneous interests.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### IGBO TRADITIONAL RELIGIO-CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

Material values are not the only values necessary for development in any society, religious and cultural values are also essential. Esedebe (1990) expatiated on this view thus, to see development solely in terms of factories, railways, airports, computer and national products is to miss the point. The point is that though important, material values are neither the only values nor even the most important. There are values of subtler and higher nature which stand in greater need of nourishment. These are religious or spiritual values. They have no absolute connection with technological sophistication. Thus, a community that is technologically backward may possess a richer inner life than a highly industrialized society. He merely stated the need for Igbo traditional religious renaissance because development is not only measured by the amount of technological sophistication but by religious or spiritual values which need nourishment. However, this laudable idea may prove unrealistic, unless the factors challenging the revival of Igbo traditional and cultural values as a result of globalization are adequately tackled.

#### **5.1 Challenges Facing Igbo Traditional Religio-Cultural Renaissance**

The challenges militating against Igbo traditional religious renaissance are enormous. These challenges which manifest in acts of savagery, bribery and corruption, indiscipline, same sex marriage, baby factory, disappearing indigenous names, disappearing tradition of community consciousness, child adoption, the revolt of women against cultural practices and dearth of originality etc are the albatross of the revival of Igbo culture vis-à-vis Igbo religion. All these have come upon the Igbo as a result of globalization. In this chapter, we shall discuss these challenges as they affect the renaissance of Igbo culture.

**5.1.1 Acts of Savagery:** Most a times, people indulge in acts of savagery as a result of their religious inclination or belief. Acts like human sacrifice, rituals involving human parts, initiation into secret societies etc. which most often are used to victimize non-initiates are believed to be

essential aspects of Igbo traditional religion which scare many people in Igbo land. As a result of this, people get converted to Christianity and other religions thereby abandoning their traditional religion which they now see as crude, barbaric, satanic and evil.

African communities including the Igbo incorporated elements of later iron culture, yet retained Stone Age aspects such as tribal scarifications, voodoo, witchcraft, animism and sorcery. People have had to use these means to kill or harm other people in the society for one reason or the other. These acts portray Igbo traditional religion in bad light and actually dissuade people from taking part in the religion. These acts are further encouraged by globalization as developments in science and technology have made people who want to own cars, phones, televisions, sophisticated houses, airplanes, ships etc. to resort to the use of their relations for money rituals in order to own all these things. They visit the shrines where charms or juju are prepared for them to use for their dastard acts. This makes people to view shrines which are places of worship for traditionalists or traditional worshippers as places where evil is promoted. Pastors seeking for spiritual powers in order to perform miracles, signs and wonders and control the affairs of their churches also visit the shrines where such powers are given to them. A case in point is the incident that took place on January 25, 2016 at Ugwuaji, along Enugu-Port Harcourt Express road where three dead bodies were buried in the foundation of a church building under construction.

**Plate 16:** Showing the three corpses buried in the foundation at Ugwuaji being exhumed



**Source:**Fieldwork 25/01/2016

It is believed that the culprit must have acted according to the prescriptions of a traditional priest. Politicians also visit shrines to prepare charms with which to win elections, for social recognition and other diabolical purposes. On occasions like marriage or burial ceremonies, some unscrupulous elements attend with the intention of poisoning or harming other people through this unconventional means. These acts demonize Igbo traditional religion and make it difficult for the Igbo to return to their native religion because they now see it as satanic, barbaric and evil. All these resulted from exposure to the West, the problems of urbanization, modernization and individualism which are agents of globalization.

**5.1.2 Corruption:** This is by far the biggest challenge against Igbo traditional religious renaissance. Corruption was not the Igbo way of life. It was the Igbo tradition for people to always stand for justice no matter the circumstance. The negligence of Igbo traditional religion has made the Igbo to derail and embrace crime and corruption. Traditional religion instills sound morals. Sanctions were immediate and did not have to go through cumbersome processes before the

culprit was punished. There were days when Igbo business men were known for frugality rather than exhibitionism. Then, they lived as tenants in one or two rooms until they owned 4 or 5 houses, not because they lacked refinement but because conservation was given priority and flaunting of wealth was still obscene. In those days, the worth of a man was measured by his nobility and his success by how many lives he had touched positively.

Philanthropy was a moral duty rather than a vehicle for personal aggrandizement and positioning for public office. Businessmen grew organically and the source of their wealth could be explained. Igbo politicians did not need billions of naira or rigging or stuffing of ballot box to win elections. Even the moneybags among them deferred to some tradition and delegates were not available to be traded like "*kulikuli*". It is a fact that corruption has always been rife in our politics but politics then was not the commercial enterprise we now have. Now that corruption has set in and upset the order of things, serious crimes, lost moral pungency etc no longer attract opprobrium. Well known advance fee fraudsters and drug dealers now revel in fame and become the envy of Igbo youths. They and their philanthropy undercut the industry and took away whatever virtue that was left in patience and hardwork. Conmen assumed newly minted traditional stools in Igbo land where honesty and hardwork had always ruled. The commercial instinct of the Igbo youths was perverted and male school enrolments dropped drastically. School and education became redundant nonsense as get-rich-quick moved from being a mantra to being a religion.

The decadence was general but it would appear that the Igbo with their innate cleverness were the masters of both the good and the ugly. While other regions began to revive their political cultures and structures, money took hold of Igbo politics. The Igbo played peripheral shortsighted politics and were very easily and cheaply bought. Semi-literate business men became political godfathers. Elections were all about rigging and sane people abandoned the show for thugs. Fraudsters became governors and legislators and made a mockery of democracy. They fended for

their personal ambitions and their pockets while the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches quibbled and continued with their primitive political rivalry which would amuse Irish and English clergies. Nominal affiliation with a denomination by reprobates mattered more to the priests whose endorsements many unfortunately relied on. When a people lose the courage to condemn evil, let alone check it, they regress. However, I. Eze (personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2018) Igbo communities did not just stand aloof; they also valorized ill-gotten wealth and sanctified criminal careers in the worship of money. Criminals were celebrated and atrocities became banal. Traditional rulers who are supposed to be the custodians of culture and invariably the deities of their domains are now kidnapped. This is because such traditional rulers fail to commune with the gods through rituals or they got enmeshed in corruption. Many traditional rulers now assume office through corrupt means and this automatically brings misfortune to their communities. For the same reason, most traditional rulers nowadays no longer respect the traditional institution either because they bribed their way to the throne or they belong to the Christian faith. This shows the extent to which the processes leading to the selection of traditional rulers have been watered down.

Survival of the fittest has always underlined the healthy competition and rivalry prevalent amongst the Igbo of old. But, that sort of competition had the virtue of the recognition of abomination and sensitivity to sacrilege. It was once condemnable to abandon a brother in need. It was once obscene to brag about wealth not to talk of exaggeration of one's achievements. It was once a sacrilege in Igbo land to steal because future generations would be tagged and smeared as the Igbo believe that, like madness, stealing was transmitted along bloodlines. This is the reason kidnapping came and found a foothold. All the bulwarks against the sort of moral degeneration that would permit the thriving of such evils have long been dismantled. Priests by their conspicuous unrighteousness trivialize priesthood and kidnappers show no reverence. Churches have replaced shrines but they did not replace the deterrent dread of "*Ala*" and "*Amadioha*" and the

immediacy of their retribution with anything comparatively exacting and decisive. The priests are not wholly to blame for this, the secular police; the missionaries relied on to maintain law and order have been made unreliable by corruption. Taboos have been demystified, the society is now naked

According to N. Utobo (personal communication, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2017), these days, people struggle to live a better life. As a result, they acquire wealth through dishonest means. The traditional system which is the way of life of the people no longer frowns at this. The Igbo no longer bother about what the community holds sacred. Therefore, it becomes difficult for Igbo traditional religion to be maintained because the customs and tradition of the people no longer appeal to them due to the cankerworm in the traditional system called corruption. The traditional rulers who are supposed to be the custodians of culture and tradition are now being manipulated and most of the time used against their own people, just because they have sold themselves to corruption. The youths who have been overwhelmed by modernity and global influences have been completely uprooted from Igbo tradition. They also get involved in crime and corruption because it is said that, a snake does not give birth to anything other than a snake.

Speaking further on the challenge of corruption to the renaissance of Igbo tradition, M. Onu (personal communication, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2017) observed that in the past, it was a taboo for the Igbo to engage in money rituals as the culprit faced ostracism and rejection in the society. The traditional priests even carried out rituals and sacrifices to appease the gods so that the community does not get punished for such a crime. But these days, a lot of youths ignore Igbo traditional religious values which include respect for human life and dignity of man to indulge in money rituals in order to satisfy their materialistic tendencies while the elders look the other way. And the society seems to have accepted this because these values have been corrupted by money and materialism. He added that in those days, masquerades were used to fight some of these anomalies but today, masquerades are seen as evil which should not be identified with. Globalization has

also intensified corruption because even the traditionalists are moving away from the traditional values to modern and global values which do not augur well for Igbo traditional religion. Corruption has also made the elders to abandon their sacred responsibility of settlement of matters pertaining to land ownership to the youths who even bribe them not to interfere with land ownership matters. Therefore, they take bribe to decide land cases in favour of the highest bidder. So, with all these happening to the custodians of Igbo culture, the revival of Igbo traditional religion is a far cry.

However, the traditional Igbo society with its traditional laws and religious systems was more secure in all aspects than the modern Igbo societies. All these seem to have delivered a knockout punch on Igbo traditional religion which is based on the unified view of reality, community consciousness and the highest value placed on human life, its enhancement and continuity. Because of endemic corruption, the security system is compromised. Iwe (1991) noted that:

Many of our citizens are prepared to divert the course of justice for money; they are most willing to sacrifice morality and professional ethics on the altar of mammon; they are ready to betray, maim and murder for monetary rewards. They are even disposed to pollute the politics and jeopardize the future of Nigeria, if only financial or other material gratifications could be forthcoming. (p. 24).

Because of corruption, the traditional means of detecting crime such as oath-taking has been abandoned. The sacred system has also been compromised because the sacred specialists such as the priests, diviners, medicine men etc. who are the harbingers of Igbo traditional religion now take bribe. The elders and traditional rulers who are next in rank to the ancestors and who are by this, the custodians of the tradition and culture of the people have compromised their sacred functions because they now take bribe and subvert justice. Metuh (cited by Madu, 2004) explained that:

The goal of interaction of beings in African world view is the maintenance of the integration and balance of beings in it. A pernicious influence from one being weakens the other beings and threatens the integration of the whole. Man therefore strives to be in harmony with God, the deities and his fellow men both the living and the dead and even the yet unborn. To avert a breakdown in this network of relationship, man needs to constantly consult oracles and diviners to assure him that he is in the right relationship with all the forces in his world. He needs to constantly commune with these forces by engaging in rituals so as to re-establish any broken relationship that may occur. (p. 22).

With the constant threat of globalization, this is no longer the case because the world view of most contemporary Igbo has been replaced by the European world view. There is chaos in Igbo communities because the Igbo seem to have lost touch with their religion. They no longer consult nor commune with their Gods and even when they do, they seek to bribe them in order to achieve their selfish end. There is a total breakdown of conscience and morality which are the most essential values of Igbo religion. This is the reason, the oath-of-office taken by Igbo political leaders are not kept. It is the reason politicians now patronize secret societies for the purpose of consolidating and perpetuating themselves in power. It is the reason people no longer have respect for the sacrosanctity of life. It is the reason there is oppression, exploitation and subjugation by cruel Igbo rulers. It is the reason traditional rulers' doublespeak. These things pound and pulverize Igbo traditional religion and render it difficult to revive.

I.Nweze (personal communication, November 9, 2017) further lamented that Igbo traditional religious values that were cherished by the people have been jettisoned in the twenty first century. Most traditionalists no longer allow traditional values to guide their actions and decisions in their homes and places of work. This is because they are seen as analog or uncivilized each time they insist on tradition. As people have lost interest in traditional values due to



globalization, it becomes difficult for them to want to embrace traditional religion for fear of being embarrassed. The Christians have often been accused of changing traditional moral values that held the Igbo society together without providing suitable replacement. As a result of this, Idowu (1962) asserted that the church contributed to the detrimental changes in moral values. At the inception of Christianity, the early Christian converts were taught that African gods had no power and should not be feared. The new Christian orientation against the African gods resulted to lack of fear of the gods by Africans. People can now steal those goods displayed for sale by the roadside that used to be safe without feeling any moral compunction. The church has not relented in condemning traditional oath-taking used by Africans to detect culprits of one offence or the other as well as an instrument of ascertaining the truth as fetish.

The challenge here Onyeidu (2004) added is that Christians are not serious with the bible as an instrument of detection. Many Christians swear falsely with the bible and the resultant effects are perjury in age declaration, affidavit for lost credentials, death certificates and change of ownership of property. The Igbo people are at cross roads in terms of making moral decisions because corruption has destroyed the moral apron string that held the people together for generations and moral decadence has become the order of the day. Even after death, the Igbo individual cannot be free from his social obligations. This explains why corruption is endemic in Igbo land. It is for the same reason that the youth syndrome has taken the place of the elders in contemporary Igbo communities. Obviously, it is the reason man has lost his dignity in Igbo land.

**5.1.3 Indiscipline:** Discipline which used to be the hallmark of child upbringing in Igbo society has disappeared. This has come upon the Igbo society as a result of their inordinate desire for wealth occasioned by lack of discipline and negligence of parental responsibility on the part of the government, parents and the society. In the past, the Igbo had *nso ani* (taboo) but today, with the invasion of modern religion and globalization, people now defy tradition and commit sacrilegious acts like incest and adultery.

Titled men now bear false witness at a price. These are the reasons for most problems we have in Igbo land. As it is in the western world, parents in Igbo land are told that using a cane on the child amounts to child abuse. But the irony is that the same white man who brought the bible is the one telling Africans that using a cane on the child is child abuse. What a terrible contradiction? Yet, the bible says spare the rod, spoil the child. At school, teachers can no longer discipline erring students because the culture of discipline has been tampered with. It used to be the responsibility of everyone to train a child to follow the right path but these days, there seems to be some sort of reservation towards communal training of children because some parents frown at whoever reprimands their children without their consent.

According to O. Eze (personal communication, December 20, 2017), in the past, a child used to be seen as the property of the community. Everybody then took part in the training of the child. As the child grew older, he learnt from the elders and age mates the taboos and sacred laws of the community. This enabled him to operate within the ambits of such taboos and sacred laws in his community thus ensuring a disciplined society. But today, this beautiful tradition is gone as a result of individualism brought into the contemporary Igbo society by globalization. Now, everybody is on his own. Children no longer want to learn from elders because they see their ideas as archaic and outdated. They equally see Igbo tradition as something that belongs to the past which should not be identified with. An elder cannot even correct an erring child for fear of being embarrassed. The society also seems to have accepted the irresponsible attitude of the government and the parents towards enforcement of discipline. This is why the elders and well-meaning individuals keep quiet when teenage girls put on transparent trousers or leggings and walk about the streets naked. This negates the Igbo value of proper dressing. Even married women have abandoned their traditional role and responsibility as mothers who should live by example to join this sacrilegious trend.

Elderly men who should champion the fight for proper dressing are the ones now encouraging married and unmarried women in this act by buying skimpy and transparent dresses for them. This is why a child would get angry that his teacher corrected him. This is why some children would mobilize and beat up their teachers for trying to instill discipline in them. This is also why the youth who get involved in clandestine and nefarious activities cannot be called to order. Apart from the docile attitude of parents, the government and the society, globalization is increasingly making it impossible through social media for discipline to be instilled in children in Igbo society. What children watch on phones, television and internet affect them morally. As a result of this, the age long tradition of respect for elders, decent dressing, communal training and traditional religious practices such as age grade system and masquerading which encouraged discipline among children have disappeared though not completely. The youth are now a menace to the society as they are put into bad use by politicians who use them for their selfish end. All these make it increasingly difficult for the renaissance of Igbo culture.

**5.1.4 Baby Factory:** This phenomenon is one of the weird cultures brought into the contemporary Igbo society by globalization. It is a situation where young women are lured to a camp to make babies for their keepers. The new babies produced are sold for monetary gains or used for money rituals. The sale of babies in the traditional Igbo society was a taboo because children were seen as special gifts from God or the gods.

According to C. Ajuruchi (personal communication, November 2, 2017), the emergence of baby factories in the contemporary Igbo society has turned this value for children upside down. This is quite antithetical to the tenets of Igbo culture. Instead of consulting traditional priests and medicine men for solution to their problem of conception, childless couples now exhibit their lack of faith in Igbo traditional religion by going to baby factories to buy children. At the baby factories, they just bargain and the deal is done. But the rigorous processes involved in the traditional religion such as rituals and sacrifices tend to discourage them. So, they see the

traditional process as cumbersome, fetish and unreliable. This shows that baby factories encourage lack of faith in Igbo traditional religion.

In his own view, A. Iheanacho (personal communication, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2017) observed that babies adopted from baby factories usually do not possess the character traits of the adopting family because of lack of gene transfer. And most of them when adopted are not even trained within the community so as to learn and observe the taboos of that community. This makes such children to grow wild and not to imbibe the traditional value attached to certain sacred prohibitions such as incest. A male and even a female child bought from baby factory may decide to cause moral problems in the family by having sexual relations with the female or male members of the family since they are no blood relations. This act, according to Iheanacho (personal communication, 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2017), is abominable in Igbo tradition. But since they are not blood relations, *Umune* the god of justice does not work here. *Umune* is a strong deity in Igbo land that punishes incestuous crime committed by blood brothers and sisters but in this kind of incest, *Umune* will not punish them because there is no blood relationship or gene transfer. At times, a child adopted from baby factory grows up to cause disharmony in the traditional institution especially when it comes to the selection of a traditional ruler in a community. In Igbo land, traditional rulers are selected based on their genealogy.

A person is not eligible to be selected as a traditional ruler if he is discovered not to be a free born. But a child bought from baby factory may grow up to become interested in becoming the traditional ruler of his community irrespective of his alien background. When this happens, some people will support him while others will insist on tradition taking its course thereby creating disharmony. Eventually, when he foists himself on the community as the traditional ruler, other persons with similar background begins to emulate him and the trend continues, this makes it difficult for Igbo tradition to be revived. Also, a female child bought from baby factory may grow up to become a menace to the sacred traditions of the community since she has no genetic

relationship with her adopted family. She becomes difficult to control by the adoptee family because of the genetic factors acquired from the biological mother. She will begin to violate the norms and values of the family which the community holds sacred. She begins to dress indecently and indulge in sexual promiscuity. Other girls may see her way of life as fashionable and begin to emulate her, thereby deviating from the norms of decency and chastity which characterize Igbo traditional religion. These acts violate family values in Igbo tradition and render them vulnerable to globalization. This makes it difficult for Igbo traditional religion to be revived.

According to Ojedokun and Atoi (2016), the existence of baby factories where infants are bought and sold represents an erosion of values attached to the birth of a child within the context of the traditional family institution in Nigeria. In Igbo land, childbirth is normatively expected of every family and a child is considered a treasure that is passionately desired. Children according to I. Eburu (personal communication, 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2017) are seen as the gift of God; they are well admired, adored, revered and regarded as the most precious possession, not only as humans in the physical but also in their spiritual being. N. Nwammuo (personal communication, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2017) added that it is considered very important for a man and woman to have children because they represent the symbol of wealth and ensure the continuity of family descent. Hence, the celebration and expensive ceremonies that accompany the birth of a child is an indication that the Igbo have so much admiration for and ascribe a lot of value or premium to children. Therefore, when a child is born, certain religious or traditional rites such as *ite nzu* (robbing of powder), naming ceremony etc. are carried out to admit the child into the community. This is why the celebration of the birth of a child is not just a family affair but something that involves the entire community. This is not so with children born in baby factories. Such children face rejection and are denied the traditional rites that guarantee their full admission into the community because of the questionable circumstance under which they were born. But these days, the reverse is the case because the traditional values guarding the birth of a child in Igbo society are gone, as children

with questionable parentage are now admitted into the community. As a result of this, what we now have are children who have no regard for the customs and tradition of the people and children who have no respect for elders and the traditional institution. This has remained a constant threat to the renaissance of Igbo traditional religion.

**Plate.18:** Showing baby factory discovered at Isiala-Ngwa



**Source:** Fieldwork 23/05/2016

On the other hand, O. Okorie (personal communication, 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2017) condemned the running of baby factories as evil and unnatural adding that trading in children, kidnapping, lying to birth parents about the fate of their children or the production of spurious background reports on adopters all add up to a catalogue of ignoble and unprincipled practices. Apart from the fact that the buying and selling of infants constitute a crime with very dire consequences on the physical and mental health of the victims, it equally dehumanizes them. Babies are being commoditized, trafficked and subjected to the forces of demand and supply. All these show that there is a total breakdown of conscience and morality which are the hallmark of Igbo traditional religion. E. Abaa (personal communication, 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2017) sums it up thus; nobody bothers anymore about nemesis or the law of retribution which is a serious sign that the fabrics of Igbo traditional religion are being destroyed. There is no fear of the gods anymore because the forces of globalization have swept the youths completely away from Igbo tradition. This also jeopardizes the renaissance of Igbo religion.

However, Ojedokun and Atoi (2016) put the records straight affirming that baby factory syndicates are organized groups of people that specialize in sourcing for pregnant teenagers or needy mothers for the purpose of buying their babies and thereafter, sell same to clients who wish to have their own biological children at all cost.

A common practice among these syndicates in Nigeria is that they usually set up orphanage homes, hospitals, child care centres and social welfare homes under the guise of offering humanitarian services to the needy members of the society. They further stated that baby factory syndicates often gained access to babies which they usually subject to the market forces of demand and supply through various means. Some of their methods include sheltering young girls who get pregnant out of wedlock for the purpose of collecting their babies at birth, luring deviant teenagers of both sexes to sleep with one another for the purpose of conception in exchange for money, abducting or kidnapping babies from their parents and sourcing for married couples who are willing to sell their babies. All these are moral crimes brought by the emergence of baby factory which seriously hamper the renaissance of Igbo traditional religion. A typical baby factory syndicate comprises of a well-established network of people including corrupt medical doctors, nurses, matrons, middlemen, clients and victims, which is pregnant teenagers. The syndicates usually comprise of a network of middlemen charged with the responsibility of facilitating initial contacts between prospective buyers and baby factory owners across the country. More so, this phenomenon of baby factory according to Ojedokun and Atoi (2016) is a clear case of systemic corruption that has over time characterized the Igbo society. Criminally minded people are capitalizing on the haphazard status of the Nigerian child adoption process to make illicit profit by exploiting the most vulnerable and helpless members of the society. The emphasis on biological children in Igbo culture is seriously being eroded by the emergence of baby factory. In Igbo land, one of the most agonizing experiences that married couples typically have is infertility or childlessness.

Childless couples, most especially, the wives are routinely ridiculed and stigmatized by their husband's extended families and members of their immediate communities. Childless couples no longer worry so much about biological children since the Igbo now admit non-biological children into the society. This has made it increasingly difficult for the Igbo to continue to hold on to the cultural practice of biological children as the only way of having children in Igbo society.

#### **5.1.5 The Disappearing Tradition of Community Consciousness:**

The most formidable challenge facing African traditional religious renaissance is the disappearing tradition of community solidarity. Sacrificing one's individual interest for the sake of the community is typically African. To this, Madu (1997) adds that man is the centre of everything. But he is not alone. He exists for the community and the community exists for him. He relies on the patronage of the gods and his neighbours. Thus, he has to be his brother's keeper. This underscores why neighbours help one another to build a house, to cultivate the yams and to harvest crops. This also underscores the same consciousness among the Igbo. This is no longer the same because political and intellectual neo-colonialism have disrupted organization and unity in African communities including Igboland and has fostered myopic and irresponsible individualism amongst Africans. On this, Akinpelu (cited by Iwe, 1991) observed that over concern with one's self-importance and preoccupation with self-aggrandizement naturally lead to total indiscipline starting from the self to the society. Preoccupation with the accumulation of wealth, the get-rich-quick syndrome, bribery and corruption to maintain and increase the level of one's affluence, conspicuous consumption and profligate living, unconscionable display of wealth to the annoyance and deliberate spite of the labouring masses are vices which are traceable to the breakdown in social conscience and the age-long principle that the good of the individual is a function of the good of his community.



In the course of this work, it was gathered that a man from Isiama Onicha in Ebonyi State perceived that the misfortune his family encountered was as a result of the presence of a sacred stone in their compound. This sacred stone usually located at the centre of every compound in the community is the family shrine where the ancestors are venerated. He invited a pastor to help him remove the stone and cleanse their compound. On the day they were to do the ritual cleansing being 12th June, 2010 at Isiama, a prayer session was held into the midnight. When it was 2.00am, they began to dig up the stone. Some members of the community who were alerted to the incident and who knew the implication, tried to prevent them from digging out the stone to no avail. They alerted the neighbours but nobody was willing to assist. This was a true test of the community spirit but that community solidarity was gone. They dug out the stone and carried it away unchallenged.

Thus, this way, many arts and artifacts which are true identities of most Igbo communities have been lost. This is a bad signal that the renaissance of African traditional religion is in jeopardy. The sweeping forces of globalization have placed a yoke on Igbo culture. According to E.Akpaka (personal communication, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2017), the Igbo is being deprived of his cultural potentials. The Igbo was culturally rich in arts and artifacts and even in certain behavioural patterns. But as soon as Christianity and modernity came, these arts and artifacts were either stolen or destroyed. Traditionally, the Igbo focus on the key moments of life and celebrate only the core occasions of a person's life such as birth, name giving, initiation, marriage and making transition to the ancestral world. Through this dynamic approach to time, a social contract is made between the living and the dead and those yet-unborn with an organic division of roles. The living is supposed to remember and make offerings and sacrifices in honour of the living dead. The living dead are supposed to protect the living and provide them with good health and well-being while those yet-unborn are to replace, revitalize and sustain human life on earth. The Igbo were also free from the shackles of holy books or scriptures to kill and die for. But this status

quo was tampered with by the coming of Christianity, Islam and such globalizing agents as science and technology.

What the Igbo view and read on internet about other people's culture tend to affect them seriously as they have abandoned their own culture to embrace these alien cultures. Today, the Igbo kill and die for holy books or scriptures. They have abandoned their obligations to the living dead and vice versa. Because of globalization, it may not be possible to identify a culture that is totally pure and which has not received cultural traits from other societies.

### **5.1.6 Disappearing Indigenous Names**

As there are diverse cultures in the world, so also are names both in meaning and expression. There is hardly a person in the world without a name. A name can also be said to be a kind of face whereby one is known. Apart from identifying the individual, names also have significant traditional and historical meanings. There is often a link between a name and an identity in every day speech, particularly in the words we use in making introductions and identifying ourselves, for instance, I am *Okorie*. By intuition, we associate our identity and the identity of the person we are introducing with a name. It is always an issue when someone mispronounces our names. People take offence when not properly introduced especially in public. The reason for this concern is that people generally resent the mispronunciation of their names which amounts to a distortion of their identity. In the words of Merleau-Ponty (1973), the child uses its name as a self-reference much later than it uses the names of others. The child's own name becomes above all, a movement that signifies an attempt to mark the child's place besides others. (p.38). Today, we have Tansi International College, Tansi Major Seminary and Tansian University, all named after blessed Iwene Tansi. He would have lost his peculiar identity if he had answered Paul or Peter because no one would have known which is being referred to. Anybody can be a saint. In Igboland, child naming is regarded as a very important event and it is always marked by a naming ceremony. The significance of names is emphasized by elaborate rituals that almost always have deep religious

meaning that accompany it. The name given is not randomly selected or done based on some guesswork or some research work carried out on names. It is based on experiences or circumstances surrounding the birth of a child.

For the Igbo, a name is more than a tag. According to an Igbo proverb, when a person is given a name his god accepts it, meaning that a name can have a determining effect on the person's life. Traditional Igbo names may communicate concern for a child's future like "*Dumaka*" which means help me with hands or *Obiageli* meaning one who has come to eat or mundane circumstances related to the birth like *Udeafo* meaning "noise of the market". Traditional Igbo names often have unique stories behind them. From the day or time a child is born to the circumstances surrounding his birth, several factors influence the names parents choose for their children. Also, the names parents choose for their children reflect the relationship between name and identity. The sense of personal identity and uniqueness that a name gives us is at the heart of why names interest us and why they are important to us as individuals and to our society as a whole. In spite of their importance, most people know very little about names and about the effects they have on us and on our children in everyday life. In a very real sense, we are consumers of names and we have a need and right to know about the psychological, magical, legal, religious and ethnic aspects of our names.

When children are given names from other languages aside their mother tongue, no meaning is attached and no identity is formed. Such names are often given because they sound fine to our ears or someone we admire bears that as a name. When Obama won the presidential election to lead the United States of America, many children that were given birth to then were named after him or after his wife Michelle. These names mean nothing to an Igbo man. These names have not identified with the cultures where the named come from. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962), for the child, the thing is not known until it is named; the name is the essence of the thing and resides in it on the same footing as its colour and form. Children begin to develop a

sense of identity as individuals and as members of groups from their earliest interactions with others. Igbo name is unique and cannot be compared with names of any other culture. It is unique in form. It is something that one needs to be proud of. The white man came to Igbo land and met their ancestors answering *Chukwu, Chukwumerije, Chukwuemeka, Chiebuka, Olisa, Obasi, Chinonso* and so on, while they were answering Green, Wilberforce, Mungo Park, Bill, Bush and so many other funny names, yet they claimed their ancestors did not know God. African cultural practices are steeped in spiritualism where names are sacred to the people and their very being.

Indeed, names and naming among Igbo people bore spiritual, psychological and physical significance. Igbo names are complete expression which are not only meaningful but reflect on certain experiences and circumstances that occurred during childbirth, human sojourn on earth and also on social expectations. This is captured in the meaning of the name. *Ogechukwukamma* (God's time is the best) for instance is a good expression of someone who is patiently expecting something or a child. And when the child is eventually born, the child is given the name to serve as a lasting memory to the family on circumstances surrounding its birth. Igbo names also reflect joy, sorrow, death, prospects and potentials to mention but a few. For instance, *Onwudiwe* (death is wicked), *Ozoemena* (may it not happen again) may have been as result of an unexpected death in the family prior to the birth of a child, *Toochukwu* (praise God) is an expression of joy and so on. So, why would a people who are called by the name of God so prefer meaningless and strange names as against their traditional and meaningful names?

Naming traditions among the Yoruba of South Western Nigeria are similar to that of the Igbo. Circumstance names for example are popular. When twins are born, the first to arrive might be called *Taiwo* meaning "pre-tasted the world" and the second *Kehinde* meaning the "one who lagged behind". A traditional name for children born on a Sunday is Sunday. Naming a child after the day of the week on which he was born is popular across many parts of Nigeria. Igbo people have names for the days of the week, such names as *Nkwo, Eke, Ori* and *Afor* in present times are

less relevant. These names are core Igbo identity which determines the market days and days for great occasions such as burial, marriage and child naming ceremonies. Names such as *Nwoye* (born on Oye day), *Ofo* (Ofo is potent), *Nweke* (child born on Eke day) are rarely given to children of nowadays.

Regardless of tribe, Nigerians are considerably more aware of the underlying meanings of their names than those in the West. One can commonly deduce a number of things about a person by simply hearing his or her name. For instance, he can get a sense of where they come from, which region of the country, which tribal origin, sometimes the exact village they call home and so forth. Often, he can also draw some conclusions about the familial circumstances surrounding the person's birth all just from a name. For example, the Yoruba name *Babatunde* means "my father has returned" which suggests the premature loss of that parent not long before a child was born. The equivalent for a girl is *Yetunde* meaning "my mother has returned". A similar name in Igbo is *Nnamdi* which means "my father still exists". Another interesting name in Yoruba is *Abeni* meaning we asked for a daughter and now we have her suggesting perhaps a difficult conception.

According to Ebeogu (cited by Ukpokolo, 2009), within the Igbo cultural context, names are not abstractions but hinge on the sociocultural consciousness of the people. In the same vein, Madu (cited by Ukpokolo, 2009) submitted that Igbo names are not mere appellations but have deep expressions of attitudes, sentiments, aspirations, sorrows, historical facts and the underlying philosophy of the Igbo people. He further noted that a social scientist can study the social, religious, historical and political issues in the Igbo society through Igbo names which must be understood within the context of Igbo worldview and the symbolic functioning of such names. According to Ukpokolo (2009), in *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, Achebe had earlier on extended this significance to the names a man gives to his children and advised, if you want to know how life has treated an Igbo man, a good place to go to is the name his children bear. Some names give you some information about the rest of the family or the circumstances of the birth as in the quirky

names, *Idowu* born after twins, *Ige* born feet first and *Okoye* in Igbo which means born on *Orie* market day. Many of the names are astonishingly creative.

In Igboland, the name *Kelechi* means “thank God” and *Eke* means “creation”. The usual Igbo name for God, *Chineke*, literally means “God of creation” and the two elements *Chi* and *Eke* can be seen in the two names. On the contrary, majority of English names are taken because they are either the name of a Christian saint or a noble English gentleman which has no real connection to the baby. But quite unlike English names, there is real meaning behind every Igbo name because they capture the circumstances of one’s birth and consequently reflects a person’s true personality. There is always a story behind every Igbo name. However, the high esteem which Igbo names command is fast disappearing. It is indeed shameful that the Igbo no longer find it necessary to answer or be proud of answering Igbo names in schools, business sectors and in public places. The Igbo man now prefers foreign names especially English names for identification and other related purposes.

Of all the factors that influence Igbo names, the most effective were the deadly and damaging combination of religion and education. Through these two factors, the colonizers successfully indoctrinated the Igbo to despise their way of life as primitive and satanic and to covet the colonizer’s way of life as the ultimate form of civilization and godliness. It is difficult to see Igbo children nowadays without foreign or baptismal name which are not pure Igbo names like *Nwankwo*, *Uloka*, *Ojiugo*, *Egozo*, *Anyaedo*, *Oluede*, *Ilodibe*, *Ilodinso*, *Uyanwanne* and so on. These are names that were not influenced by Christianity. In the pre-Christian era, most of these names did not begin nor end with *Chukwu* or *Chi*. Names from that era are almost extinct now. Contemporary Igbo names usually tend to start with K such as *Kamsiyo*, *Kosiso* or *Kanayo*, if you put *Chukwu* or *Chi* at the beginning or the end of these names, you get their meaning. These names are indicative of the sway of Christianity in Igbo land today. It is a well-known fact that religious leaders compelled Igbo parents to choose only English baptismal names for their infants

and enforced such names as their first name, consequently relegating the baby's original and primary Igbo name to middle name as if there is something wrong with Igbo names. The handwork of the colonial masters seem to have manifested in the present generation and unfortunately enough, contemporary Igbo youths seem to prefer the western style of life to what they call "archaic practices of our forefathers". They now regard some of the Igbo names given to them as "*afa mmuo*" (spirit names).

A Pentecostal pastor changed his name from *Nweke* to *Nwachukwu*, citing a reason that *Nweke* (a child born on Eke market day) is of the spirits and that *Nwachukwu* (son of God) reflects his true profession. Some people believe that it is their Christian background that made them to change their names, while some others believe that we are in a civilized world and must definitely follow the train of civilization. One of the major identities of a Christian in Igbo land is his name which must be a Christian name of the western brand. If it is not English, then it is Greek or Latin such as Agatha, Polycarp, Ambrose, Ignatius and Cecilia to mention but a few. It is called baptismal name, that is to say, one's name at the time of one's oath and initiation to defend and uphold the teachings and doctrines of Christianity even if it means selling his birth name or mother name. Christianity does not encourage Igbo names into Christian sainthood. Christian influence from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century altered many of these names and encouraged the proliferation of *Chi* names. *Chi* roughly means a life source but the missionaries took it for the Christian God, a name like *Chioma* which originally meant good *Chi* became God is good.

With the influence of Christianity, more names became centred on God. What are the meanings of the names Peter, Paul, Stephen, Job, Michael, Kelvin, Isaac, Abraham, Mary, Elizabeth, Esther, Judas, Andrew etc. if not for biblical allusions to such names, yet our children bear them. They only get to know what they stand for when they are grown up. How do we explain the names Stone, Cousin, Moon, June, Wood, Pablo, Ford, Tom, Booth, Bone, Sandox,

Fox, Fork etc; some of which are words of the dictionary? The Igbo abandon their culturally rich names for meaningless western names.

**5.1.7 Lesbianism, Homosexuality and the Culture of Pornography:** Marriage is naturally a union between a man and a woman. Any marriage other than this is unnatural and abnormal. There was no traditional marriage of a woman and a woman nor a man and a man. For the traditional Igbo society, marriage is primordially and predominantly for the procreation of children and the continuation of the lineage.

A powerful, strong and wealthy woman if barren or infertile for one reason or the other or even if she has only one child, sometimes and this is not the norm or tradition may decide with the husband's consent to bring another woman (*Ilu bata nwanyi*) to the husband's matrimonial home for the sake of procreation. There are instances where a friend, a relation who may be a man or woman has helped a poor man contract a marriage in Igbo society. The bride does not become the wife of him or she or they who paid her bride wealth, rather she is the wife of the poor man in whose name she was married. A dimension of this is seen too in the examples of marriage by proxy. In like manner, the woman who married her is not her husband even if she cares for the children as a responsible man would do. The off springs of the marriage do not bear the name of either the one who paid their mother's bride wealth or the name of the person who put their mother in the family way but the name of the man in whose name the marriage was contracted. As such, it is in his lineage that they take their legitimacy.

Akalonu (1987) put it this way; some people are forced to engage in it when a marriage fails and to fail means that no procreation is possible with the first wife. This situation is sometimes remedied by a form of marriage called "woman marriage". In this marriage, a barren but wealthy woman performs all the marriage requirements and marries another woman for her own and cares and provides their needs with so much intimacy. When this happens, the woman remains under the control of the man's wife. The children born by the new wife and the husband



of the two women are joyfully brought up, educated and equipped by the man's wife and the family. It is not a marriage between a woman and a woman but "a threesome union". This practice is usually done so that a lineage is not defunct due to non-existence of a male heir. Where a man dies, without leaving a male heir, and his wife having passed child bearing age or is unable to bear children, will arrange with some elders in the village to go and marry a new wife for the family. It is the men on behalf of the woman who go to perform the marriage rites under native law and custom, so that any male offspring from the new woman will be a bonafide heir to her late husband. And so that their home or lineage or habitation will not become desolate or defunct for want of a male heir. In this kind of arrangement, there is no form of sexual relationship between the women involved. It is strictly for the purpose of keeping or continuing the family lineage. The need for a male child especially is the motivation for such unions for the purpose of keeping alive the family name and continuing the family lineage.

Ele (2016) also made it clear that the wife so married maintains the decorum and ethics associated with marital status in Igbo land. She maintains the male sex partner as arranged in order to achieve the purity of family blood in the off springs. He stressed that in the so called same sex or gay marriage, procreation is ruled out and they marry each other exclusively to keep alive a family root from extinction. In Igbo culture, the woman does not marry her fellow woman for herself; it is for a man who is either alive or dead who the husband is. The children born under this arrangement bear the name of the man even when he had died. It is also a culturally permissible way of getting around the fact that the Igbo people have no tradition of adoption.

Woman-to-woman marriage in traditional Igbo society and by extension Africa is an aberration. Igbo society considers it an abomination for a man to be pregnant or for a man to be a woman and for a woman to fight in wars or for a woman to be a man. When a woman marries for her husband, for the sole purpose of begetting children whom she nurtured and educated, this in Igbo land does not constitute a woman marrying a woman or same sex marriage. According to

Achebe (2011), at the risk of falling into the trap of Eurocentric and Western misunderstanding of African social institutions, it should be made clear that the institution in which women were allowed to marry women was not created to facilitate what is now considered as gay marriage. According to Milbank (cited by Ele, 2016), in Igboland, same sex union is a taboo equal in pungency to murder, stealing, adultery, incest etc. On the other hand, homosexuals hold that since heterosexual partners who are barren can adopt children, they too can do the same.

Traditional Igbo society does not celebrate barrenness and neither does she smile at adoption of babies as linked with technologization of child birth found in western schemes. Typical traditional Igbo families do not go into heterosexual marriages in order to rear other people's children but rather to bear and rear their own. In fact, Chukwuemeka (2012) saw this kind of marriage as an improvisation to sustain patriarchy and an instrument for the preservation and extension of patriarchy and its traditions since in Igbo society the male child was of utmost importance and it was in this obsession to have a male child that would continue the lineage that a woman marries a wife for the husband. This practice did not involve any sexual relationship between the two women. It was not lesbianism because none of the women who married other women were romantically or sexually attracted to other women. They were only interested in children. Every woman who married for her husband just wanted a child that was considered legitimate in society's eyes.

In the traditional Igbo society, same sex marriage between a man and a man was unheard of and it is on record that there is no society in Igboland where a man has ever gone to perform the traditional marriage rites of a fellow man. So, man-to-man marriage was a taboo and remains a taboo to this day in Igboland. However, there is the western dimension to it. In contemporary Igbo society, globalization has brought in pornographic materials and video films which encourage lesbianism and homosexuality. These were alien to traditional Igbo society. In fact, homosexuality and lesbianism have nothing to do with any traditional Igbo practice and are a form

of mental disorder caused and sustained by an abjectly dysfunctional social structure. Same sex marriage in the western world is the type that encourages immorality and is strictly for pleasure. In this kind of arrangement, there is sexual relationship among the women or the men involved.

In the Western world, a man and a man can marry just as a woman and a woman can marry not for the purpose of procreation but to satisfy their sexual urge. Onuche (2013) argues that same sex marriage is incompatible with the inherent nature of marriage. Unitive and complimentary components of marriage cannot be satisfied by gay unions. In his words, two constituent parts reside within marriage. The first is unitive, when two become one. Homosexuality cannot by definition satisfy this requirement. Secondly, marriage includes openness towards procreation. Homosexual sex violates the law of complementarity whereby male and female while sexually different are indeed complementary. Homosexual sex has no procreative value and thereby negates marriage's second component. Marriage is based on the fact that we are male and female, two halves, a complete life-giving whole and that this life-giving power is inherent in heterosexual intercourse. He maintained that this ability to transmit life is what invests marriage with its transcendental, moral, cultural and social significance.

The youth, especially young men and women, who do not understand the evils of same sex relationship in Igbo society, now indulge in acts of homosexuality and lesbianism probably because it is the trend in western world and not minding the fact that it violates nature and could bring unpalatable consequences to the actors and actresses. It is unnatural for a man to have a fellow man as a sex partner just as it is for a woman to have a fellow woman as a sex partner. According to Ele (2016), since Adam and Eve, human cultures and civilizations abhor same sex marriages. It is not human culture or natural justice but human laws that approve of same sex marriage. Recently in Nigeria, the Federal Parliament resisted pressures from western countries and passed a law against same sex marriage. They further recalled that the strongest argument against same sex marriage is culture-based.

V. Omeje (personal communication, 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2017) argued that it is alien to our society and culture and it must not be imported. He observed that our religions abhor it and our culture has no place for it. The Federal Government of Nigeria has outlawed same sex marriage and prescribed 14 years imprisonment for offenders. By this, those who witness, assist or support such marriages are criminalized; those who make public displays of identities, choices, orientations of same sex relationships and gay affections are liable to jail terms. According to Ele (2016), same sex marriage is foreign to Igbo culture. It is illegal, immoral and abhorred in Igbo traditional society. It is an abomination (*aru*) in Igbo culture for a man to become pregnant. It is a taboo (*nso ala*) for a man to marry another man as homosexuals and a woman to marry another woman as lesbians.

To this, Ele (2016) submitted that a woman marrying another woman for her husband is not the same as a woman marrying a woman and sleeping with her or a man marrying a man and sleeping with him. That is abomination. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of homosexuality. Ele (2016) added that in Igbo society, a woman who married another woman has a motive behind her action as the very essence and significance of marriage in Igbo land is the family or lineage continuity. This is why we hear of names like *Eziechina*, *Obiechina*, *Obodoechina*, *Amaechina*, *Afamefuna* etc. It is grossly undesirable among the Igbo to have relational poverty (*ogbenye*) that is where a family has few or no persons for generational continuity. It is an honest prayer of the Igbo person that his or her family line does not go into extinction and neither should his or her “compound grows weeds” as it is metaphorically said. She marries the wife for a man who handles the aspect of the male factor in procreation. She does not marry for pleasure.

**5.1.8 Dearth of Originality:** Originality is all about the power of independent thought or constructive imagination. As people become increasingly connected and more mobile, the Igbo are fast losing their natural ability of independent thought or constructive imagination due to

foreign influence. Due to European colonization of the Igbo people, they have lost their freedom and more importantly their dignity in choosing how to grow their own language, fashion, food habits, religion, music and so on which is contributing to their declining culture.

The Igbo have a reputation for exploring faraway lands in search of a better life. Some complain that they are too quick to assimilate and adopt the culture of the host country. Others argue that this traveller spirit is something to be proud of. This has affected the names they bear. But name is not the exclusive identity element of culture; there are also language, fashion, food habits and most importantly an inner sense of cultural pride. In neglecting or not giving good credence and attention to the writing of Igbo language, many Igbo today grew up finding it very difficult to speak their tongues. As this neglect gained time, it affected even the way the Europeans responded to it prompting them to even go as far as altering their common and simplest names to suit their origin and their tongue. This informs the many strange spellings and pronunciations of many Igbo names like *Anambra*, *Enugu*, *Onitsha*, *Owerri*, *Abakaliki*, *Awka* etc. It has become a dent on their originality and an insult to Igbo heritage.

Story-telling and proverbs are very important to the traditional Igbo way of life and have always helped to sustain the language. Away from the elders and away from the village square, the stories are told, the Igbo now lose contact with it. The British were not done with getting their colonized countries to speak the English language and some even made it their lingua franca, no, they went as far as adulterating the originality of Igbo culture and tradition in naming and in several other things to the full view of their great grandfathers.

Another step in the adulteration of Igbo tradition and culture came in the form of chieftaincy titles which adulterated the true *Nze na Ozo* title ship and relegated it to mere positions of wearing attires thus desecrating the core values of Igbo title ship. Okoye (1964) laments that globalization represent a corruption influence on the prior innocence of the Igbo by making rogues of honest men, self-seeker out of unselfish men, liars and perverts and neurotics of men happily

free from these defects (p.15). He submitted that the Igbo has been exposed in no consistent or radical fashion to the milieu of globalization which is different from that which he naturally belongs though the later continues to surround him. He is a truly displaced man. His mastery of the new culture is never complete but is rather self-conscious and generally in conflict with the mores in which he was born. His cultural ambiguity according to Abraham (1962) is characteristically accompanied by misgivings of wide range proportion. (p.35).

Apart from language, the declining culture of originality is manifested in the musical arts of contemporary Igbo society. According to Okafor (2001), the musician has a role as a keeper of public conscience and as a man who has his hands on the social control lever. He guides the society, drawing from the collective wisdom and pool of knowledge and proverbs of his people. He foresees events like any poet for a poet can point the way to come, even though the people following may not see it for the time being. The musician therefore has an acceptable role in many traditional societies. He could rise to any height by excellence, by hard work and by other criteria of merit. So, in the traditional society, the musician is an educator. Many of our social comments, moral codes and guides are couched in music and songs.

But sadly, according to Osundare (cited by Malogo, 2011), we now live in an era of ideological amorphousness. There is a kind of hip-hop hysteria. Everywhere you go; there is a tendency to look down on what is original. Look at the music scene and compare the current music in Nigeria with what we had in the era of *Rex Jim Lawson, Roy Chicago, Victor Olaiya, Victor Uwaifor, I. K Dairo, Osita Osadebe, Eddy Okonta, Dan Maraya Jos, Adeolu Akinsanya* and others. Compare the inventiveness, the meaningfulness, the sheer powerful melodiousness and the meticulous organization that characterized the music of these people with what currently assaults our ears. What passes as contemporary popular music is noisy sound and little sense. The overwhelming negative impact of globalization on Igbo indigenous culture continues to affect mostly the youths who can hardly believe in the values of hardwork, dignity and respect for

elders. The low interest in culture has forced Igbo society to be so materialistic that people tend to measure everything on the values of instant wealth, with the belief that anything contrary to this becomes irrelevant.

Most musicians of yesteryears were quite committed to promotion of culture rather than commercial interest. Agu (2012) further recalled with nostalgia that at certain age among the Igbo of Nigeria, boys between ten and fifteen had perfected the art of constructing certain musical instruments like slit wooden drums, miniature membrane drums, flutes, musical bows and whistles and so on. At this age too, virtually all adult instruments were recognized and known by their names. He observed that the advent of Islamic and Christian religions in Nigeria ushered in a new trend in musical arts education and practice. The establishment of churches and schools in southern Nigeria especially in Igbo land had adverse effect on traditional musical arts education and practice as prescribed by culture and tradition. According to Ochrie and Emeka (2003), “these religions have millions of adherents and their systems of thought and art have been planted in the systems of civilization holding sway in large swathes of the continent” (p.45).

Generally, interest in traditional music and dance waned in preference to foreign music. The principle of slow absorption of musical experience through observation, imitation and active participation was subjugated by the new system which advocates teaching music through technique as against teaching technique through music which the traditional system advocates. The traditional musical system produced such musical stars like late *Oliver de Coque*, *Osita Osadebe*, *Dr Sir Warrior*, *Oriental Brothers*, and *Bright Chimezie* and so on. Their songs which are very meaningful capture the philosophy of life and world view of Igbo people in its original form. However, the acceptance of western system of education culminated in the emergence of white collar jobs, urbanization and migration to cities and rural development which brought a lot of changes. Rural environments and communal affiliations became negatively affected by the new development. Okafor (1993) lamented that the environment and situation have changed today and

we changed with it. The emergence of popular music received the attention of the elite especially those in the academia. Instead of the local highlife music that is fraught with meaning and originality, what we now see is the American rap and hip hop music which are meaningless and promote nudity, bad behaviour and all sorts of immoral acts. Our young men and women now imitate, mime and dance foreign songs especially the American hip hop which is now prevalent in Igbo land. The Igbo highlife music is now seen as outdated, uncivilized and music for old people. The rate at which the young people in Igbo land have assimilated the foreign music culture is quite alarming so much so that the challenge of reviving the local music culture is now a daunting task.

Many villages' squares which in the past served as entertainment and performance centres gave way to town halls and other developmental projects. Some aspects of musical arts education and practice virtually disappeared and with their cultural heritage too. People's attitude towards their tradition, culture and music changed. The well-established system of musical arts education and practice gradually became jettisoned. Young boys and girls who in the past were conversant with indigenous musical practices lost grip of the trend, so much so that they now could hardly sing the traditional songs or play the traditional instruments which were taken for granted in the past.

The church and school did not spare Igbo traditional music. Its performance was prohibited and labeled satanic. To this, Omibiyi (1987) added that the music curriculum in the schools at all levels was western oriented and the entire content of instruction was completely western, too simplistic and circumscribed. Regrettably, this situation has remained on ground to this day.

**5.1.9 Child Adoption:** Children are the greatest asset of every home and as such, they are valued more than riches in Igboland. As a result of this, there is always great expectation from the society of every marriage or home to produce children of their own. A childless home in Igboland is an aberration and therefore unacceptable. For psychological and social reasons, an Igbo man would



prefer to have his own biological children instead of adopted children. Not only that he feels incomplete as a man, the society regards him as an outcast in the comity of men. According to Nwaoga (2013), in Igboland, prior to the colonial era, child adoption has never been a part of Igbo culture. The Igbo appreciate their culture and hold it in high esteem. Nowadays, civilization and its effects on the society have made most modern cultures to find their way into many places including Igbo land. Globalization with the help of social network has done a lot to break cultural boundaries.

Part of the culture that evolved includes adoption. Child adoption has found its way into Igboland although its introduction has not been widely accepted by a lot of people because of the nature of Igbo culture. The culture of the Igbo people is such that before a marriage is contracted, the two families involved will take time to investigate about the background of the would-be husband and wife so as to avoid marrying somebody with genetic diseases or problems. In contemporary Igbo society, people do not compromise when it comes to marriage. Thus, any family that has a history of the above mentioned diseases hardly gets married not to talk of adopting a child from such families. Thus, adopting an unknown child is generally not acceptable in Igbo land. So, the thought of adoption always comes as the last resort when all avenues for having a child are exhausted. Instead of adoption, when a man marries and later discovers that the wife is infertile, he is compelled to take another wife since the essence of marriage is procreation. On the other hand, if the man is impotent and the wife agrees to stay with him, he either permits the wife to bear children for him through another man or they could agree to adopt a child.

This is probably why Anderson (cited by Nwaoga, 2013) chipped in that the increase in the rate of adoption in Nigeria especially Igbo land today can best be explained by the increasing cases of infertility among married couples and the pressure from the society. He further stressed that in the olden days, infertility among married couples was not rampant as it is these days. Amalu (cited by Nwaoga, 2013) agreed with this observation saying that it was very rare for a

married woman to be infertile. He noted that the cause of infertility these days is as a result of the lifestyle of the Igbo people brought in by science and technology which has led to the misplacement of the cultural values of the Igbo people. In those days, young girls went into marriage as virgins but now the reverse is the case. Nwaoga (2013) contends that in Igbo land, the primary function of marriage is procreation, thus, having children is a source of personal satisfaction and social status. So, generally, a woman's status is measured in terms of her ability to procreate. The number of children a woman has in Igbo land determines her stay in her husband's house. Most often, a childless woman is always cajoled and made to suffer tremendously in the society. She hardly gets a share from her husband's property. Children guarantee a woman's respect and enhance her social status in the community. According to Handwerker (1989), child bearing was a singular important mechanism used by women to gain access to the resources on which their material welfare depended.

Childlessness is therefore a matter of deep and ultimate concern to the individual, family, society and ethnic group. Since marriage is for the purpose of procreation, the Igbo hardly marry for pleasure or companionship. This is why a woman can go to any length to get a child. In Igbo land, according to Nwaoga (2013), most women can do anything to get a child because having a child especially male child gives her ninety percent right to stay in her husband's house. No woman anywhere would like to be called a barren woman.

Barrenness is the product of infertility. Infertility has led many married couples into desperation and they try everything humanly possible to get children. These days, a lot of assisted reproductive technologies are available to help childless couples such as invitro fertilization, zygote intra fallopian transfer, gamete intra fallopian transfer, sperm injection or surrogacy and use of gestational carriers. These modern assisted reproductive technologies are expensive and cannot be afforded by many people. The expensive nature of these technologies have made a greater percentage of the women to visit prayer houses, herbalists, shrines, churches in order to

find solution to their problems. Finally, if nothing happens, they look for children to adopt. The availability of these reproductive technologies has also made most people to lose faith in the traditional methods regarding it as fetish and evil. However, in Igbo land, some people adopt to make up for the sex of a child which they lack. Male children are adopted so that the male child could take over from the adoptive parents to continue the family lineage.

Title-taking is a prestige which is accorded mainly to those who are rich and wealthy. Part of the requirement for title-taking is that the person must have children, especially a male child who will take after him. Usually, people go to adopt male children in order to meet up with this requirement. A child adopted into an Igbo family is sometimes treated like an outcast mainly because he is an adopted child. The adopted child finds it difficult to interact freely because of the fear of being intimidated. The social life of a child cannot be overlooked because it helps to integrate the child into the society. It helps to inculcate the core values of one's community into him and makes him aware of them. This might constitute a major problem in the life the adopted child in Igbo community.

From an investigation carried out, Nwaoga (2013) discovered that in Igbo land, over 49 percent of the youths in motor parks became hoodlums as a result of the type of adoptive parents they had. Instead of sending them to school when they were younger, they sent them to go and make money for them, in the process, they joined bad gangs and became touts and their life changed to bad. She further observed that 55 percent of the girls among them tend to lose their virginity at a very tender age. This is so because majority of them are adopted into unfamiliar homes and their adopted parents take advantage of them to do all sorts of things such as assaulting them sexually, using them as house maids, sex workers, sending them to the streets to hawk and sometimes using them for ritual purposes. Worst still, the adopted children suffer neglect and all manners of abuse in the hands of their adoptees simply because the couples might have regained their fertility after adoption and are later blessed with children. Instead of such parents being

grateful to God, they resort to maltreating the adopted children. Nwaoga was also of the opinion that the Igbo value legitimacy as evidence of paternal lineage which is shown from generation to generation.

The typical Igbo family is patrilineal. What this means is that the supreme authority that empowers entitlement to resources flows from the father figure who is hereditary but restricted to only legitimate and truly biological sons of the father of the family. The bottom-line is that in Igbo society, most people do not have regard for any child adopted by any family and such adopted child is often regarded as a “bastard” and as such does not have any right of inheritance. Adopted sons and daughters had no say in the village assembly and this runs counter to the freedom of expression. But these days, the reverse is the case. They are now treated as free born. An adopted child is not allowed to occupy a traditional leadership position in Igbo society. Sometimes, such a child is treated by members of his or her immediate family with hatred and disrespect and often the child is reminded that he or she does not belong to the family; that he or she lacks information about his or her parenthood and by implication lacks the “burden of proof” to justify his or her entitlement to any of his or her parent’s inheritance.

On the other hand, Christianity had from its inception challenged the indigenous perceptions, ideologies, norms and philosophies. The Christian doctrine of no Jew, no Gentile does not agree with the indigenous ideology of “*onyebiaraabia*” that is the stranger or the new comer or the refugee. In contemporary Igbo society, the perceptions of this thought shapes opinions and the ideology of certain anti-human co-existential philosophy of son of the soil syndrome that is the indigene-stranger dichotomy. This perception contradicts the Christian maxim of “all are one in Christ” thereby creating a crisis of ideology in contemporary Igbo societal quest for religious cohesion and brotherhood that transcends the blood of consanguinity. However, these days, child adoption has come to stay and adopted sons and daughters now have a say at village assemblies. They also hold traditional leadership positions among other things in

some communities in Igbo land because of the persistent assault on the customs and tradition of the Igbo people by foreign practices.

**5.1.10 The Revolt of Women Against Cultural Practices:** The Igbo is equally gripped by the force of global opinion of women. In Igbo traditional religion, women are questioning traditional practices which they allege marginalize and dehumanize them. The usual areas of conflict are marriage practices, patriarchal systems of inheritance, widowhood institution and its cohort practices and so on. Agitations arising from such areas pose serious challenge and problem to Igbo traditional society and religion. Hence, many religious practices are flouted by women. As a result, threatening signs of polarizing the Igbo society along male-female divide looms large.

A lot of Igbo women have no more respect for customs and tradition of the people on the grounds that they are out-moded and run contrary to what is widely accepted as civilization. A close examination of the implications of such aberration in the Igbo traditional worldview poses adjustment and remedial problems to the people's ontological balance and harmony. In Igbo land, the rite of shaving the hair by a woman when her husband dies has generated a lot of controversies in many communities. At present, many Christian women, especially the Pentecostals among them resist such practice and in some Igbo areas, it has been a subject of hot argument and disharmony. Contrary to Igbo tradition, most women now refuse to be submissive or live under the control of their husbands just because they acquired western education and this has translated to lack of respect for core family values. They see traditional marriage rites as fetish and something that should be discarded. Most of them refuse to participate in ceremonies and cultural festivals on the grounds that they are fetish and unchristian. This in no small way has also challenged the revival of Igbo culture and tradition. Loss of virginity is now being tolerated in Igbo traditional society. The wave of such practice is gradually increasing in tempo as a major problem to cope with in this age. Women have even gone to the extent of challenging for a share in their father's property which according to tradition was the exclusive right of the male children of the deceased. With

preference to western mode of dressing, most Igbo women now kick against dressing in traditional attire. They have then resorted to immoral dressing which is totally against the Igbo traditional ethics of dressing.

Sex-related matters that were given traditional conception and definition no longer hold. According to Balogun (2015), there was a time in African culture, especially in Nigeria when chastity, purity and virginity were celebrated. Woes betide any lady whose husband failed to meet her at home on her wedding night. The shame of losing one's virginity and purity before marriage back then was borne not just by the lady but by her parents as well. Back then, premarital sex was almost unheard of. Parents were very strict and the social unwritten code guiding pre-marriage relationship then was the "no sex code". Chastity was taken seriously that it was not too common to come across two adolescents holding hands or playing any immoral act in a corner. And from Igbo land to Yoruba land and up North, the culture of purity and virginity was the same and the penalty for engaging in premarital sex ranges from fine, banishment from the community to even death sentence in some cultures. Sadly today, abortion is now a common practice among most Igbo women. Abortion negates Igbo cultural value for children.

The global advance in reproductive medicine now makes birth control measures easily affordable and administered. On the contrary, this negates Igbo traditional religious belief that the number of children a woman bears is divinely determined. There is global organ traffic market, transplant, genetic engineering, semen bank and cloning. The global market on human and obliteration of natural human incarnation channel is inimical to the teachings of Igbo traditional religion. Many hopeless fertility cases that were handled spiritually in Igbo religion are now treated by modern medicine.

#### **5.1.11 Erroneous Belief that Igbo Traditional Religio-Cultural Renaissance is Idol Worship**

There is this erroneous belief by the Igbo that Igbo traditional religious renaissance is an attempt to return to idol worship. The Igbo have been widely and incurably brain washed into

believing that Igbo traditional religion is a religion of idol worshippers. This erroneous belief has made many Igbo, especially the Christians among them, to distance themselves from this call for Igbo renaissance.

## **5.2 Efforts Made at Revival of Igbo Culture**

To ward off the pernicious influence of globalization, the Igbo are beginning to emulate other countries like China, Japan, Korea and India in the revival of their traditional values. To underline the continued value for their original heritage, the Igbo express, expose and export their religion and culture through festivals, ceremonies, movies, conferences and seminars and books.

### **5.2.1 The Establishment of the Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization**

In response to the fear of the eclipse of Igbo language and culture, Ahaneku (cited by Odogwu, 2018) explained that Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka decided to set up the Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization to research on, revive and revitalize Igbo language and culture in the context of contemporary times and to promote and propagate same in tandem with African civilization. The United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization UNESCO in 2012 said that the Igbo language will be extinct by 2050. Therefore, any sustained plan to reinvigorate the Igbo tradition, language and culture is what is needed. This is a mission the Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization (IVACAC), a Directorate in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka established in 2016/2017 academic session has set out to achieve before the deadline of 2050. The Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization has marshalled out plans to ensure that Igbo language, culture and tradition reign supreme first in Nigeria, Africa and the world.

According to Umeogu (cited by Odogwu, 2018), the Directorate was set up to preserve and foster “Igboness” (*Ejirimara Ndigbo*) in relation to the people who regard Igboland as their ancestral homeland and who think in and speak Igbo language and have their life and existence in Igbo tradition and culture. The idea is to expose Igbo civilization to the Igbo, Africa and the world at large. This is why the motto of the Directorate is: Enlightening the world through Igbo-African

heritage. Since this is about “*Igboness*” that is what concerns the Igbo people, the term, “*Igwebuike*” which connotes the spirit of oneness, collectivism and communalism represents the ideology on which Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization can be developed from a university as an ivory tower. Umeogu further stated that the absence of *Obi* in an Igbo community is like the absence of a soul in a body, for *Obi Igbo* is the quintessence of Igbo civilization.

The absence of *Obi Igbo* (the heart of Igbo) anywhere in Igbo community is always a tragedy, because it is indicative of the fact that such a community has no origin, no history, no authority, no people and no life. The presence of *Obi* in Igbo community is always a clear indication of the being and existence of Igbo spirit. So, *Obi Igbo* is the place from where the spirit of *igboness* emerges to connect with and possess the Igbo people from authorization and generation of enlightenment and civilization. Consequently, Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization is founded on *Ohazurume Igbo*. Whether in Igbo or Africa or the world, *Oha* is greater than anyone (*Ohaka*) that is, the community as instituted by *Obi Igbo* and personified by the eldest males or the most important individuals is supreme. In *Ohazurume*, *Oha* represents the spirit of *igboness* or Igbo spirit or the spirit of Igbo people (both living and the dead). the objectives of Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization according to Umeogu (cited by Odogwu, 2018) is excavating the contributions of Igbo heroes of the past such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Mike Okpala (Power Mike), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, Chinua Achebe, etc, as the foundation of today’s Igbo civilization. From their works and achievements, a background will be established so as to form a foreground in expanding the frontiers of *igbo* civilization through research, science, medicine and indeed every aspect of human endeavor. It is important to note that ignoring the works and achievements of such elders and heroes of the past has created a huge gap between them and the present generation.

The Directorate also plans to indigenize researches by instituting Igbo studies in areas of Igbo Science, Igbo Medicine, Igbo Architecture and Igbo Engineering, Igbo Physics etc. The idea



is that before the colonial times, the Igbo society was functional in every sense, but with the coming of the colonial masters, all aspects of these functional structures were abandoned. The Centre will explore these areas with a view to remodel it for the civilization of mankind. The Centre hopes to achieve all these by drawing and executing programmes to highlight and showcase the culture and tradition of Igbo extraction to the world; By holding annual Ohazurume Igbo Festival to promote Igbo language and thought through building and remodeling of thought process in a way that will unify the entire Igbo people; promotion of programmes geared towards engraving the Igbo ideology in the mind of the new generation which is fast losing grip of what the Igbo culture and tradition really are; Enlightening the world through Igbo-African heritage, by the use of Radio, Television and Social Media vehicles and programmes among others.

Igbo Village and Centre for African Civilization has come to ensure that all Igbo traits and natural inclinations are in consonance with the Igbo spirit. It has come to connect Igbo civilization to its source so as to give the world worthwhile enlightenment and civilization. It is not only concerned with fostering and preserving Igbo civilization in the world, but also, with using Igbo spirit to organically measure and maintain order and homogeneity of Igbo civilization amidst the changing times in Igbo society.

### **5.2.2 Popularization of Igbo Traditional Festivals**

In his study on Traditional African festivals, Ogunba (1978) noted that festivals are great artistic institutions in traditional African society because their purpose is for renewal and growth of the community. This assumption was also reflected in the thinking of Okpoku (1970) when he asserted that African festivals are occasions for a community or kin to come together to join in song or dance or in ritual, to give expression to the sense of dependence on the ancestors or other supernatural powers. In the words of Nwanya (1997),

Igbo people are rich in culture. Festivals are one of the great artistic institutions inherited from their ancestors. Festivals in Igbo culture originated from time

immemorial and are means by which their ancestors expressed their belief in transcendental beings other than themselves. In Igbo cosmology, festival involves “worship” of some sort and not just mere celebration. This is true of *Iri-Ji* (New Yam) Festival which is a thanksgiving feast in honour of the god “*Ahajioku*” the god of yams. (p. 29).

Festivals are also occasions for strengthening community consciousness or community spirit or sense of community. It is also an occasion when the interaction or link between the three spheres or compartments of beings in heaven, the earth and the underworld is renewed for the preservation of the well-being of the community. Therefore, Nwanya (2010) sees festivity in Igbo as a period that is marked with a great cultural display such as singing and dancing, fashion exhibitions, masquerade displays etc. New Yam Festival according to her begins in most communities in Igbo culture from July and continues till early November. The celebration marks the end of planting season and the beginning of the harvesting season. *Iri-ji* is a festival of harvest and renewal. Its celebration attracts many visitors to Igbo land. Explaining further on the New Yam Festival, Nwanya (2010) observed that in some cultures like Awgbu, a community in Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State, it is mandatory for every son and daughter of the community living abroad to attend the festival. The festival is celebrated in stages depending on the community arrangement. For instance, the Nnewi people begin with “*Afia-oru*”. The period is characterized by rascal display of masquerades by mostly youths who take over all the streets, markets and other available spaces. There is always wide excitement in the air. Sometimes, the male youths engage in inter flogging session with their peer groups. According to her, at the Palace, the *Igwe* of the community performs the religious ritual of cutting the New Yam.

**Plate 11:** Showing a traditional ruler performing traditional rites at a New Yam Festival in Onicha



**Source:** Fieldwork 10/08/2017

Other days that follow may be for cultural displays such as outing of new traditional dance in the village square, wrestling and masquerade. Recently, innovation such as seminars on culture and tradition has been added to usher in the celebration by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Hence, it can be said that *Iri-Ji* festival of the Igbo has a wider appeal among *Ndi-Igbo* and strong tourist potentials that can be tapped if properly packaged and marketed. Writing on *Asala* Festival in Ukpor, the headquarters of Nnewi South Local Government Area, Nwanya (1997) said that

*Asala* Festival began at the period of ancestral worship when our forefathers went to the mythical god “*Chukwu*” to ascertain the cause of premature death in Ukpor. The result of this expedition was the origin of *Asala* Festival. The festival is celebrated every ten years, for minor *Asala* (*obele Asala*) and every twenty years for major *Asala* (*Nnukwu Asala*). (p. 30).

### 5.2.3 Observation and Promotion of Igbo Cultural Day

Also, many communities in Igboland now have days called “Cultural Day” earmarked for the celebration of the culture and tradition of their respective communities. On such occasions,

traditional dances, songs, masquerade display and lectures to remind the people of their history and origin as well as their identity are observed. From time to time, conferences and seminars are held to educate, acquaint or remind the people of their history, culture and tradition e.g. Ahiajoku Lecture which is held every year in commemoration of the New Yam Festival. We cannot talk about yam festivals in Igboland without mentioning the importance of Ahiajoku lectures. According to Balogun, Nnadi and Obioha (2010), Ahiajoku Festival is an intellectual harvest, a kind of stock taking by a farmer after each year's harvest. After planting and harvest, the farmer looks at his crops and seeks how to improve in the following year. So, the festival is actually named after the harvest of yam, the king of crops in Igboland. Ahiajoku Festival is the longest and most enduring legacy of the Igbo people.

According to the Ministry of Information, Culture, Youth and Sports (1979), it was established by late Dr Samuel Onunaka Mbakwe, the first civilian Governor of old Imo State in 1979. The festival was introduced to honour the yam gods. It has provided a forum for the Igbo to reflect on the past and to keep the Igbo spirit alive. During the lecture, about 500 roasted or barbecued large tubers of yam are eaten by all the participants to enhance the importance of yams to Igbo community. The Ahiajoku festivals and lectures or colloquium which is a wonder and the brain child of late Dr Sam O Mbakwe has the following aims and objectives

1. To define aspects of Igbo culture and relate them to the main corpus of Nigerian culture as well as to Africa and world civilization.
2. To create a challenging situation for scholars to undertake relevant research on Igbo culture, especially the more basic and fundamental ones.
3. To relate the research findings to Igbo worldview and total human development and
4. To establish a diachronic relationship in each discipline as regards Igbo human development.

Besides, Ahiajoku is a Pan-Igbo event meaning that other South East and South South states are also involved. The festival is domiciled in Imo State which takes the responsibility of funding it annually.

**Plate 12:** Showing new yam tubers during the New Yam Festival in Afikpo



**Source:** Fieldwork 28/08/2016

Like the Igbo, among the Ejagham people of Ogoja in Cross River State, a folk tradition that continues to blossom in spite of the rapidly changing values such as westernization and Christianization of the local communities is the New Yam Festival. This festival and other ceremonies serve to reaffirm commonalities among the Ejagham people. Yam in Ogoja is also a king of all crops and the festival is second only to Christmas in the modern sense and initiation into various esteemed positions in the Ejagham society prevail to date.

#### **5.2.4 Adoption of Igbo Names**

Many individuals in Igboland now drop foreign names attached to their names in their bid to reclaim their identity and return to Igbo culture. In Igboland, names have meaning and history. Circumstances of a child's birth can determine the name given to a child. Names can be prayers or pronouncements on the child. Names say a lot about where a person comes from. It identifies a culture. Despite taking on baptismal names, the Igbo still adopt Igbo names because that is what

gives them identity. On the importance of Igbo names, C.Chukwu (personal communication, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2018) recalled that, at times, family name in Igboland determines the role of families in traditional issues. For instance, those families that bear the name *Nwarisi* may be in charge of the community oracle or shrine. A family with the name *Nwauzu* connotes a family whose occupation is blacksmithing, while those that bear the name *Ogbanta* may mean a family that engages in hunting. In other words, with these traditional Igbo names, people do know who to call upon to perform certain duties in the community as the need arises. Children are also named according to the kind of traditional festivals taking place at the time of their birth. For instance, if a child is born during the period of new yam festival, he may be named *Okoroji* or *Nwaji*. It can be said that traditional naming among the Igbo is an opportunity to pour blessings upon the new baby and to link the baby to his ancestors, who it is believed have the power to protect the baby. In other words, through traditional names, the Igbo communicate their ambition, good behaviour, hospitality, cosmology, beliefs and other cultural values to their children and to the rest of the world. The culture and beliefs of Igbo people are expressed in their names. Names in a particular language are used as a means of communication. As such, it is in traditional names that the Igbo preserve their past. Therefore, the functionality of Igbo language is sustained by communication through traditional names. The sustenance of Igbo traditional names means the sustenance of Igbo language and the continued survival of Igbo people.

### **5.2.5 Emphasis on the Need to Return to Igbo Language**

In their quest for cultural renaissance, Igbo people have continued to emphasize on the need to return to Igbo language as one effective means of reviving and sustaining Igbo indigenous culture. Other ethnic groups in Nigeria who also understand the importance of language in the transmission of their culture have continued to make use of their languages even in offices, hence, the incorporation of the three major languages spoken in Nigeria, namely, Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa into the national education curriculum.

### 5.2.6 The Influence of Nollywood Movies

To sustain the quest for the renaissance of Igbo traditional values, the culture and tradition of Igbo people are now packaged in movies popularly known as Nollywood for other people to watch and appreciate. According to Obiefuna and Aniago (2010), movies break down cultural boundaries across the world. Images, ideas, values and styles of life are now disseminated more rapidly around the world through movies. African films which most times reflect Igbo worldviews, images, ideas, values and styles are today watched by people of other countries and in one way or the other, they impact on their psyche. They further stated that it has been observed that what people read, hear and watch is what makes up their ideas, feelings, mentality and thought pattern. So, Igbo culture and indigenous religious beliefs and practices that are sometimes depicted in home videos must have impacted people from other countries too and will continue to do so in many years to come.

One of such movies is *Omenala Igbo*. This movie portrays various Igbo cultural values and was done in Igbo language. The movie was put together to avert the negligence of Igbo language by Igbo people which is contrary to the pride other cultural groups hold their language. If we lose our language, we have lost our identity. It is a way of sustaining or resuscitating Igbo language which is on the brink of going into extinction.

Another of such movies is *Battle of the gods*. This movie portrays Igbo value for justice and indicates that the gods often fight to protect the customs and tradition of the people as can be seen in *Battle of the gods*. In this epic movie, after the death of the king of Amachara Community, an ambitious millionaire Chief Muoka sought to take the throne regardless of custom. The traditional prime minister and some of the elders refused to grant his request. Chief Muoka came back with the support of some greedy elders of Amachara with his quest for the throne against the will of the gods. He killed and destroyed anybody who stood in his way to the throne. The intervention of the gods became the only vindication of the righteous. The gods of Amachara went

on rampage, killing and destroying anybody who had a hand in the installation of Chief Muoka as the Igwe of Amachara. The gods fought to ensure that justice prevailed and that the customs and tradition of the community as it has to do with the installation of the Igwe was followed. All these point to the revival of Igbo traditions and culture.

The Igbo cultural and fundamental value for life and ethical justice are also depicted in the movie “Innocent Blood”. It captures the Igbo saying “*ogburu onye na onye ga ala*” (the murderer will perish with the murdered). To the Igbo, justice is the basis of morality, the measure of goodness and the greatest of all virtues. In this movie, the problems and trials facing Ubomiri Community is enormous because of the crime committed by some persons. The problem of lack of water hitches the villagers. The only river suddenly got dried up and all the villagers lived without water and fed on fruits. The problem continued after the death of the strongest rainmaker. The neighbouring villages would not allow Ubomiri people to fetch water from their village. Eruru the god of the river would then speak out and revealed the culprit. What happened to the culprit amidst conspirators, plots and counter plots in the shedding of an innocent blood shows that the evil doer will never go unpunished.

### **5.2.7 Book Projects**

Another means by which the customs and tradition of the Igbo people are staging a comeback is through books written by Igbo indigenous authors. On this, Obiefuna and Aniago (2010) further clarified that books are another powerful trans-cultural information carrier. Igbo authors like *Chinua Achebe*, *Elechi Amadi*, *Buchi Emecheta* and others often write to depict Igbo culture. These writers wrote back to the west and challenged by writing their own stories, the dominant and reductive western images of Igbo people. Their works are really appreciated in foreign countries. These countries must have adopted and transformed some of the things they read from such authors. For instance, while effectively countering the white colonial portrayal of Africa, the book *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe presents itself as a useful source material



for both the Igbo and non-Igbo ethnic groups. For especially minority groups which are ancillary to Igbo, the novel has the potential to propel scholars to embark on similar imaginative and artistic recreations of their societies prior to the interference by white European colonizers in the affairs of sub-Saharan Africa. Chinweizu (1980) argues that “*Things Fall Apart* was a deliberate and successful effort to recreate pre-Westernized African reality; using authentic Igbo characters, situations, values and religious concepts and bending the English language to express Igbo proverbs and idioms” (pp. 288-289).

Another book is Elechi Amadi’s *The Concubine* which paints a picture of an Igbo traditional society yet uncontaminated with the forces of modern change. It is replete with several issues bothering on communal life, love, superstition, death, widowhood and fate which are essential aspects of Igbo traditional religion. The book is generally about African village life, customs, beliefs and religious practices as they were before contact with the western world. It reveals that the gods are inscrutable and have a hand in all affairs of human world. Market days that mark the Igbo calendar, lavish celebration of feasts and feverish wrestling matches, punctured by the talking drums are contrasted with solemn funeral rites and dedicated mourning songs. Traditional practices like using the habits of birds to tell the future, that is, augury and complex divination by crafty medicine men which portray Igbo culture and traditions were depicted. The book also revealed that man’s destiny, affairs or existential struggles is dictated and controlled by the supernatural forces. It was a peaceful society devoid of corruption, erosion of values and neglect of custom and tradition that run contrary to what obtains in the contemporary Igbo society. This is the kind of society this work intends to bring back.

Another book that wrote on the consequences of neglecting the customs and tradition of the people is *The Bride Price* by Buchi Emecheta. According to this book, *Aku-nna*, a young teenager was forced to marry someone of her uncle Okonkwo’s choice. *Aku-nna* fought fate and cultural customs to be with the one she desired. This story shows how the females in a society

must feel as if they are under the men. The readers learn about how in the African society here represented by the Igbo, the males use women to benefit themselves, traditions play a big part in society and how betraying one's society's rituals will result in a cursed death. The book shows how the traditions that are passed down from generation to generation teach that females must have their bride price paid in order to be with someone. If their bride price is not paid, it means they still belong to the family. They are not considered to be married if the bride price is not paid. This expresses the significance of the practice of paying the bride price.

The book is a traditional story told by the people of *Ibuza* to teach young girls not to go against their family's will. *Chike*, the groom and *Aku-nna*, the bride substantiated the traditional superstition they had unknowingly set out to eradicate. Every girl born in *Ibuza* after *Aku-nna*'s death was told her story, to reinforce the old taboos of the land. It is supposed to teach young females living in *Ibuza* how they must listen and obey their parents; if they do not, they will be punished for not following the traditions. The Bride Price demonstrates the idea of men being of a higher status than the females. Customs will continue to be passed on and disagreement on traditions will have an effect on the future whether it is negative or positive. Going against her uncle's will to be married to a man that he disagreed with will result in bad endings. This takes us back to the real world society and how it was supposed to be led by traditions and customs of a certain society. The manner of men being of greater status is hoarded by the males to restrain females from rebelling. This story demonstrates the renaissance of Igbo traditions.

### **5.2.8 Arts and Artefacts**

A lot of sculptures, carved images or molded images which are great religious symbols still adorn museums, shrines, cultural and religious centres in Igboland which preserve the indigenous religion of the people. Unfortunately, these arts and artefacts are being plundered by foreigners. However, those sculptures and art works which the plunderers put in their museums according to Obiefuna and Aniago (2010) must have influenced to a large extent their sense of art and

sculpturing. This means that they must have learnt how to make sculptures and art works from those artworks which they put in their museums, which is a credit to Igbo culture and also shows that Igbo religion is still alive. Also, body painting (*uli*) which is a recognized aspect of Igbo traditional art has been borrowed and modified by the western world which shows their appreciation of the aesthetics in this aspect of Igbo traditional art. Today, women and even men from other countries are seen wearing body painting in form of tattoos. Tattoos could be said to be the transformed pattern of *uli* body painting of Igbo women. To Nwankwo (2004), tattoos are now a huge hit with today's younger generation and are quickly becoming the norm.

### **5.2.9 The Continued Relevance of Deities in Igbo Justice System**

In a bid to revive the traditional justice system, people still consult various deities in their respective communities in Igboland for unraveling of mysteries and settlement of cases ranging from fraud, land snatching, theft, adultery, murder and other criminal incidents. They also seek protection, provision and blessing from such deities. A good example according to Ani (2015) is the *Ube* deity of Uhunowerre community in Igboeze South Local Government Area of Enugu State. This deity according to him is believed to be so potent to the extent that it has become a rallying point when robbery and other criminal incidents occur. People who believe in its power consult it when they feel there is the need to do so. Those who feel aggrieved always take their case to the deity, which they believe would fight and get justice for them. It was gathered that people take their cases to *Ube* mainly when they have strained business deals or when they are attacked by armed robbers and they lose their property as well as when they have land disputes. *Ube* is believed in some quarters to be a deity that delivers justice accordingly. It does not spare anybody who is guilty. However, the innocent need not fear.

**Plate 13:** Showing the researcher with the demolished Sculptures at Mbari Centre, Owerri



**Source:** Fieldwork 9/12/2017

#### **5.2.10 Marriage Rite as a means of reviving Igbo Culture and Tradition**

Despite a change in the method of choosing a spouse, Igbo culture has been sustained where traditional marriage is concerned. The traditional marriage rite is usually very festive. Reflecting on Igbo traditional marriage rite, N. Nwevo (personal communication, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2016) said that, although, the western system of marriage is now the order of the day; it has not diminished Igbo traditional marriage rites, for it is in those traditional marriage rites that marriage is legalized in Igbo society. It is for this reason that intending couples are required to perform all the necessary traditional marriage rites. Even in the church, the officiating minister(s) have to be sure that the proper traditional marriage rites have been performed before blessing the marriage. Again, most married couples now insist on performing traditional wedding ceremony, while white wedding is now optional. Today, there is high percentage of marriage ceremonies being conducted the traditional way, which shows that, traditional marriage rite is a strong factor in the revival of Igbo culture. In Igboland, parents of the couple, their extended families, villagers and town's people

play active role in traditional marriage ceremonies. Friends of the two families are also present, so that at the end of the ceremony, it becomes clear that marriage among the Igbo people is not just between the bride and bridegroom, instead, the entire communities are involved. Nwevo further stated that the intricacies involved make it abundantly clear that marriage is not a brief one day affair, but an enduring ritual which binds people, families and communities, turning strangers into friends, kinsmen and kinswomen. So, the two families enter into an enduring marital bond, which follows strict Igbo traditional conventions.

In spite of the interference of Christianity, traditional marriage and funeral ceremony which are the harbingers of the traditional religion of Igbo people feature prominently in the social life of every community in Igboland. The traditional marital system which allows a man to marry as many wives as he can afford and the funeral rites accorded the dead especially elders are the other aspects of the Igbo cultural heritage. People still marry more than one wife to maintain this age long tradition in Igboland.

### **5.3 Prospects for Igbo Traditional Religio-Cultural Renaissance**

Despite the onslaught of globalization, there is hope that Igbo traditional religious renaissance is achievable. However, for this to happen, Igbo unity, peace and absence of internal wars, restoration of Igbo dignity, Igbo centered education system and so forth will have to be put in place. In view of this, Igbo unity is essential for the revival of Igbo cultural renaissance. The Igbo are no longer united in pursuit of their common goal. The philosophy *Igbo enweeze* (the Igbo have no king) pays tribute not to disunity but to the independent mindedness of the Igbo and their republican spirit. The Igbo rightly believe that when the community rules itself, then arbitrariness and inequality that kings epitomized would not afflict them. The colonialists came and in the name of civilization, adulterated Igbo culture. When they left, the legacy of messengers and headboys gave rise to a multiplicity of pseudo-kings and contrived kingdoms, serviced by the logic of administration convenience. Autonomous communities proliferated supposedly to bring governance to the grassroots but, in reality, it only allowed many maniaics become Eze (kings).

This enthroned disunity among the Igbo. Even *Ezendi* Igbo (king of the Igbo) a potentially useful instrument for community organization or for unifying the people soon became a bogus social contraption for vainglory, often bought, borrowed, usurped, snatched or stolen. That title is now emblematic of a much deeper rot in Igbo culture.

Igbo renaissance is supposed to usher in a sustainable and long lasting peace and total absence of internal wars among the various communities in Igboland. This calls for effective and efficient conflict resolution mechanisms and the engendering of brotherly and fraternal affections among the Igbo. The economic, spiritual, material and even emotional resources that the Igbo expend on internal conflicts and wars, if channeled into peaceful, productive and developmental goals in Igboland will lift her from poverty to abundance. Also, the Igbo self-confidence and enhanced self-sufficiency will begin to gradually but surely jump-start the process of the restoration of the dignity of the Igbo. It is a common and painful knowledge that the average Igbo today is in so much loss of dignity that he tries to pretend to assume the nationality of non-African countries. The efforts that some Igbo women of today make and the money they spend in trying to look like the Europeans or Americans is an eloquent testimony to this assertion. The activities that go on in most hair salons in Igboland and even outside Igboland, where the Igbo are clients are geared towards making their hair look like the European or American. They also indulge in borrowed lifestyles that are increasingly leading to social dislocations and break up of marriages and families.

According to Amadasu (2014), with colonialism came the relegation of African culture to a state of irrelevance. European education and history were forced on the people with the force of coercive laws and the instrument of religion. The more one advanced in European education, the more distant one was far removed from the African way of life. Therefore, in order to free the minds of the Igbo from enslavement by colonial education, there is the need to set up Igbo centred education system which will centre on Igbo identity and project Igbo personality. The system of

education pervading African continent including Igbo land is the colonial education which was imposed on the Igbo by the colonial enterprise. These education systems were put in place to effectively and perpetually condition the Igbo for economic and intellectual exploitation and political emasculation. Colonial education system has inoculated the Igbo with inferiority complex and colonial mentality and made him to believe that everything that comes from the west is the best. The Igbo have lost a lot of personnel to the western world through brain drain. In contemporary times, most societies that are highly successful are those that have adopted the right indigenous educational policies and systems. The Igbo can borrow a leaf from the Asian tigers that have used their local languages to power their indigenous educational system to good effects.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Summary

This work started with the clarification of African traditional religious renaissance as the rebirth, renewal or return to the African past. This became imperative because the contemporary African society is facing a very serious identity crisis and cultural denudation as a result of the influence of globalization. The Igbo experience is here used as a case study for the challenge of African traditional religious renaissance in the midst of globalization. However, the African past here represented by the Igbo experience does not necessarily mean going back to the past but picking out or returning to those traditions in the past that will engineer the revival of Igbo traditional religion. A return to Igbo culture, religion and tradition is the emphasis of this work so that Igbo identity will not be completely swept away by the sweeping forces of globalization.

The Igbo experience shows how the wind of globalization blowing across the globe has become one of the greatest challenges facing the renaissance of Igbo traditions. It has affected their native names, the way they dress, their language and the way they speak, the way they eat, the way they greet, the way they relate, the way they marry, the way they bury, the way they worship, the way they learn and their general outlook on life. The rate of crime and corruption has also increased tremendously as a result of these changes brought by globalization which are antithetical to Igbo tradition.

The work identified some of the challenges facing Igbo traditional religious renaissance as acts of savagery, corruption, indiscipline, same sex marriage, child adoption, disappearing tradition of community consciousness, disappearing indigenous names and the revolt of women against Igbo cultural practices. African traditional religious renaissance in the lens of the Igbo captures the effect of global spread of popular cultures on Igbo tradition, religion and culture and efforts being made by the Igbo to revive their culture. Here, the Igbo recognize the importance of



native language in Igbo cultural renaissance. The Igbo cultural values and traditional beliefs and practices are packaged in home videos and well written books about Igbo by indigenous Igbo writers and disseminated across the world to portray their identity. Festivals and celebrations that portray the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo still hold in most Igbo communities.

However, in most places in Igboland, arts and artifacts that are symbols of Igbo cultural heritage have been lost through obnoxious government policies as happened in Imo State a few months ago when Mbari Cultural Centre in Owerri housing a lot of arts and sculptures that portray Igbo culture was destroyed by the state government. We found out that Igbo native names as well as the tradition of community consciousness are fast disappearing due to neglect of Igbo culture and tradition as a result of the debilitating effect of globalization.

Apart from the negative effects of globalization on Igbo people, this work equally expounded the positive contributions of globalization to the advantage of the igbo. Adherents of Igbo traditional religion could therefore use any of the means provided by science and technology such as recording religious messages on tapes, CD, radio stations, television stations, satellite television network, internet etc.to evangelize their religion in order to win converts. Through all these means, authentic information, correct teachings, facts and evidences about Igbo traditional religion could be made known to the adherents and non-adherents of the religion, so that they will know the truth about their religion and stop being swayed by western religion.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

In recent times, prominent Igbo citizens have expressed deep concern over the neglect of Igbo culture and traditions. Many scholars of Igbo extraction have predicted that if something is not done to arrest this trend, many Igbo sons and daughters may not be able to speak Igbo language, not to talk of knowing the details of Igbo culture and tradition. The rich historical and cultural values of the Igbo have been relegated to the background as a result of global influences and western culture which the Igbo have imbibed as a way of life. This is probably the reason it is said

that the Igbo is going through a second phase of colonization and as such, a second stage of decolonization has to be put in place. The way and manner the Igbo respond to the challenging effects of globalization is aptly reflected in this saying of the Yoruba that “you cannot be so hospitable as to abandon your house for a stranger and go to live on the dunghill”

This means that the Igbo have almost abandoned their house for globalization to occupy at the expense of their culture and tradition. They seem to have imbibed the European colonial enterprise in Igboland which is geared towards the total eradication of the Igbo cultural heritage and its replacement with the Western culture. This development is not the best as the Igbo are now portrayed as distinctive people, a race without identity. It is in a bid to address this phenomenon that this work seeks to recapture the rich historical and cultural values of the Igbo people. This work, therefore, concludes that the Igbo must return to their past, if their culture must be revived. The past in this sense refers to the traditional religious beliefs, values, practices, teachings and modes of thinking of the Igbo which may guide, organize and regulate their ways of living in order to build a corruption free and disciplined society to cope with the prevailing global influences.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Having looked at the challenges facing Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance in the midst of globalization, there are a number of things that should be done if Igbo culture and tradition are to be revived, sustained and preserved.

1. There is the need for government and community participation in the revival and sustenance of African cultural heritage. It is within the communities that shrines, caves, rocks, grooves, forests and so on which are very important cultural heritage sites are found. The communities should be made to realize that cultural heritage sites and other components of culture generally belong to them and therefore should be important stakeholders in the efforts at preserving them. By ensuring

community participation, the government creates a sense of belonging in the communities which will facilitate the preservation of cultural heritage in those communities.

2. There is the need document Igbo technological heritage. Through research, a lot of data could be gathered on traditional technology and technical know-how. Such knowledge could be documented and preserved to form the platform for the development of handicrafts, small and medium scale enterprises.

3. Archaeological sites need to be protected. Government should ensure that before major construction activities are carried out, there should be an archaeological survey to ensure that such construction activities do not pose a threat or danger to archaeological items. It has been found that most archaeological sites are being destroyed due to construction activities.

4. There should also be constant public enlightenment for the renaissance and preservation of Igbo culture. The state of awareness on the need for the preservation of Igbo culture is extremely low. Therefore, it is important for the government to embark on a massive sustainable programme of public enlightenment for the renaissance of Igbo culture. Such a programme must permeate the grassroots and must embrace a wide variety of data on for instance, textile technology, linguistics, photographic images and economy. It must also cover traditional systems of knowledge which are not codified or written down. These forms of knowledge continue to exist as long as they are useful and new methods have not been found to replace them.

5. There is also the need for the revival of Igbo language. The talk about the renaissance of Igbo culture will continue to be a mirage, if Igbo language continues to be neglected. The examples of the South East Asian countries popularly known as the Asian Tigers should serve as a lesson. The progress they have made in science and technology has been closely linked with the assiduous manner with which they guard their cultural heritage especially their language which they use to teach even in schools.

6. There is the need for the establishment of museums at the grassroots. Individuals should be encouraged by the government to establish museums by giving those grants and technical expertise required for such projects. Issues that were left out of museums should be incorporated, for instance, the process of urbanization, agriculture and the environment.
7. Teaching of history at all levels of education should be encouraged by the government since cultural heritage has its roots in the past for an understanding of the present and future. No meaningful revival and sustenance of Igbo culture can take place unless they are aware of their identity.
8. Government should enact laws to prohibit the destruction of arts and artifacts, sculptures, cultural centres, museums etc. that promote Igbo culture in the communities where they are located.
9. There is the need to change people's orientation about Igbo traditional beliefs and practices because they believe that most of Igbo traditional practices are fetish and this is not true. The Igbo needs to neglect western religion and go back to their roots, so that it does not die a natural death.
10. The Igbo have to take it upon themselves to entrench in Igbo polity, the practice of liberal democracy, fundamental human rights, freedom, transparency and accountability. The liberation of the Igbo is a task which every Igbo must undertake in order to foster Igbo unity and cooperation.
11. Finally, the Igbo need to be free from external and internal dependence. They need to be free to decide or determine her own fate in world affairs and the way forward is total rejection of slavish control by Europe and the Western world.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Although this extensive research work has made several significant contributions to knowledge, this is not all there is to this study. So, more studies should be carried out to investigate whether there are other challenges that hamper Igbo traditional religio-cultural renaissance. It is also

expected that researchers will carry out more investigations on this topic in order to create more awareness of the challenges facing Igbo traditional religious renaissance. Apart from these challenges such as acts of savagery, corruption, indiscipline, the dying tradition of community consciousness etc. which make it extremely difficult for the renaissance of Igbo tradition, researchers should be able to find out whether there are other ways in which globalization attacks Igbo culture and tradition.

Researchers also need to investigate further the essence of returning to the past (because Igbo tradition is anchored on the past) in order to explore other areas that will assist in the rebirth of Igbo culture at this time globalization has made the Igbo to abandon their cultural heritage. All there is to globalization is not only negative effects; there are also a lot of positive effects which seem to have overshadowed the negative effects in some aspects of Igbo traditions. Modernity brought by globalization is one of the positives but is now phasing out the core traditions of the people. Researchers also need to investigate the extent to which modernity has improved Igbo society without making Igbo culture and tradition irrelevant.

Efforts being made by people of other nations of the world to shield their cultural heritage from the forces of globalization should be properly investigated and documented. This can serve as a motivation for the Igbo to embark on aggressive revival of their culture through a regeneration of Igbo language in order to preserve their identity. This work has equally opened up new prospects for more research on the challenge of African traditional religious renaissance in the midst of globalization.

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**NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA**

P.M.B. 5025, AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**OFFICE OF THE HEAD**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND HUMAN RELATIONS**



## APPENDIX 1

Department of Religion and Human Relations,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.  
January 17, 2016.

Dear Respondent,

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr. Eze Okorie Igodo from the Department of Religion and Human Relations, Faculty of Arts, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka with registration number 2011097009P is a Ph.D student and on a field research. He is carrying out a research work on the challenges of Igbo traditional religious renaissance in the midst of globalization. The research is purely an academic exercise and your anonymity is guaranteed.

We solicit your cooperation.

Remain blessed

Prof. J.E. Madu

## APPENDIX 11

## LIST OF INFORMANTS

S/N	NAME	AGE	PLACE	STATUS	DATE
1	NWANI ANOKE	57	ONICHA	TRADER	20/1/2016
2	O. MBAZU	55	ISHIAGU	LECTURER	20/6/2016
3	NWUZOR CHUKWUMA	56	ABAKALIKI	BUSINESS MAN	10/6/2016
4	CHUKWUEMEKA ORJI	57	ONICHA	PUBLIC SERVANT	12/12/2016
5	JOHN NWACHUKWU	59	OHAOZARA	LECTURER	15/1/2017
6	CHIJOKE AJURUCHI	48	OWERRI	CIVIL SERVANT	2/11/2017
7	INYA EBURU	60	AFIKPO	LECTURER	6/11/2017
8	ATHANASIOUS IBE	49	OWERRI	LECTURER	8/10/2017
9	NWOBA UTOBO	60	ABAKALIKI	CIVIL SERVANT	8/12/2017
10	CORNELIUS OKORIE	48	MGBOWO	LECTURER	9/7/2017
11	INNOCENT NWEZE	58	OHAOZARA	LECTURER	9/11/2017
12	MICHAEL ONU	56	AFIKPO	CIVIL SERVANT	9/12/2017
13	OGBONNAYA OKORIE	54	OHAOZARA	PUBLIC SERVANT	10/12/2017
14	NWADIKE	49	ONICHA	PHOTOGRAPHER	28/10/2017
15	ASINOBI IHEANACHO	50	UMUAHIA	CIVIL SERVANT	11/11/2017
16	VICTOR OMEJE	56	NSUKKA	PUBLIC SERVANT	13/11/2017
17	EMEKA NJOKU	45	ISIALA NGWA	CIVIL SERVANT	12/8/2017
18	NDU NWAMMUO	51	MBAISE	PUBLIC SERVANT	12/10/2017
19	CHIEF OKEREKE EZE	56	ONICHA	RETIRED PRISONS OFFICER	20/12/2017
20	EMMANUEL ABAA	60	ONICHA	RETIRED CIVIL SERVANT	27/12/2017
21	Umunna Igbokwe	64	ohaozara	Civil servant	8/8/2017
22	Osondu Okonkwo	48	ikwo	Public servant	15/5/2017
23	Okereke igwe				