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Globalization, Culture mutation and new identity: Implications for the Igbo cultural heritage

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The paper engages in globalization debate to explore culture mutation and resurgent new identity in the periphery societies of Africa. It focuses on the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria. The study of Igbo culture mutation is particularly interesting because 'traditional' scholarship presents the people as 'acephalous', 'egalitarian' and "republican". It locates culture mutation within a social organization of culture contact and domination resulting in dislodgement, alien practices and lifestyles which gradually calcifies-hence a new identity. To explore the political economy of this new identity, a conceptualization of culture mutation is attempted. Globalization is thus treated as a source of disarticulation of Igbo culture. The paper advances to explore specific culture mutation instances using both primary and secondary data sources. The primary sources are interviews from two purposively selected communities drawn from each of the five states of Eastern Nigeria namely; Anambra, Imo, Enugu, Abia, Ebonyi and parts of Delta State while the secondary source is existing literature and reports. Findings suggest that globalization dislodges Igbo culture which results in mutation. The article calls for culture redress and policy discourse for culture reinstitution and sustainability.

Key words: Identity, culture mutation, culture sustainability, globalization, development.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and its unfolding dynamics are taking various forms in recent decades including resurgent novel modes of behavior and new identity. However, one central problem of this unfolding dynamic namely; culture mutation, remains understudied among the periphery societies.

Few studies raise such heated debates as the issues surrounding globalization and culture mutation. This paper explores fundamental implications of these changes which have not been given adequate scholarly

attention in Igbo cultural studies.

Colonialism resulted in disarticulation, dislodgement and destruction of pristine African culture and the natural economy through co-option, force and imposition of alien "ways" of life. Through colonial policies Africans became alienated from their land- their primary source of subsistence (Coleman, 1959).

Ake (1996) argues that colonialism in Africa was markedly different from the colonial experiences of the Americas, Europe, and Asia. To begin with, it was

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unusually statist. The colonial state redistributed land and determined who should produce what and how.

This was followed by neo colonial and neo imperial influences as African elite could not dissociate from the colonial legacies (Amadi and Ekekwe, 2014).

In the 1960s and 1970s, several African countries gained political independence. A series of highly visible colonial legacies created a groundswell culture distortion including “Westernization” of Africans through acculturation of Western values such as urbanization, bureaucracies, change in dress codes, attitudes etc. These reflected some form of proclivity to European lifestyles.

Eke (1975) identifies emergent “two publics” as a colonial legacy- one within the public realm, the other in the private. He argues that many of Africa's political problems are due to the dialectical relationships between the two publics.

The colonial state and its administrative structure resulted in the imposition of warrant Chiefs in Eastern Nigeria which was alien to the Igbo people ‘who know no kings’ (Afigbo, 1965).

The missionaries equally furthered the incipient destruction of Igbo values (Ilogu, 1974). Western names such as John, Henry, Mark either reflect the names of former imperial rulers of England or Christians in the holy Bible, given to people through “baptism” to “transform” them from “heathens” to “Christians”. Kalu (1996) underscores the decimation of Igbo gods at the advent of Christianity.

In the 1960s, well known literary works began to examine colonialism and the gradual “overthrow” of Igbo culture; Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, John Mfonye’s, *The Only Son*.

From a feminist perspective, Flora Nwapa’s *Efuru* and Buchi Emecheta’s *Second Class Citizen* both provide the relevance of cultural renaissance. Other feminists such as historian, Catherine Acholonu reinforces congenial perception of Igbo artefacts.¹ The post -civil war culture change, economic hardship and reintegration of the Igbo in Nigeria have been portrayed in Phanael Egejuru’s *The Seed Yam Has Been Eaten*.

Korieh (2010) reveals the effects of agrarian change on Eastern Nigeria at post- civil war and peasant production especially within gender contexts.

From linguistic perspective and preservation of Igbo language, Chidozie Ogbalu and the formation of *Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture SPILC in 1948* gave greater impetus to Igbo language consciousness. Although Rev. Thomas Denis had developed the Union Ibo Bible in 1904, perhaps the greatest innovation in modern Igbo language development, several Igbo scholars such as Achebe found that to be a “mutant variant” of Igbo language devoid of pristine Igbo semantics.²

On the contrary, Nwadike (2008) debunks the anti -

Union Ibo Bible debate and argues from a rather progressive perspective stating that Rev. Thomas contributed meaningfully to the development of Igbo language.

Early studies on Igbo culture shows rich cultural heritage. Chidozie Ogbalu’s *Omenala Igbo* comes the closest which provides a panorama of Igbo culture. Ilogu (1964) identifies *Ofor* as Igbo religious symbol. Other cultural norms such as Igbo gerontocracy, oath taking, punishment for breaking of bonds of competent relationship have also been studied (Uchendu, 1974; Irogbu, 2009; Amadi and Akena, 2014).

Within the oral literature of Igbo cultural studies are two veritable culture renaissance programmes namely; *Ahiajoku* lecture series established in 1979 and recently *Odenigbo* in 2009. Eminent Igbo scholars such as Echeruo, (1979), Okigbo (1980), Afigbo (1981), Nwoga (1984), Nwabueze (1985), etc. Also the late professor Chinua Achebe among others have lectured in the series.

The years after the Cold War witnessed the beginnings of dramatic changes in peoples’ identities and the symbols of those identities. Ukaegbu (1991) examines Igbo identity and personality in relation to Igbo cultural symbols.

Igbo culture at once reappears in globalization discourse which in this paper is the “disappearance of boundaries and integration of the world into a global village”. In this dynamic, culture 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 emerges, new modes of behavior and lifestyle emerge which results in new identity.

At the turn of the millennium, globalization becomes a paradigm for explaining these new modes of behaviour, lifestyles and changing identity.

In this paper, we argue beyond the debate about the existence of globalization and posit that globalization is designed to advance the culture of stronger nations at the expense of weaker ones. One of the major effects of this in recent times is culture mutation. We argue that cultural globalization involves the constellation and inter-connectedness of different values, norms and knowledge of different peoples. In this interaction, dominant culture dislodges recessive culture.

The central theme of our argument is the dislodgement of Igbo culture by the dominant Western culture in the cause of this interaction and its implication for Igbo cultural heritage. We demonstrate this 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 Premiere League (EPL) fanatic, New Lifestyles, Online dating and internet virtual sexual intercourse, New Media, New Mobile Apps, New

Consumption Patterns, Novel Western centric names of people and things, Western E-learning and educational inequality, etc.

We would demonstrate how these globalization induced processes have led to Igbo culture mutation and new identity and argue that urgent policy response is needed for culture reinstitution and sustainability.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article deploys a historical dialectical method which explores the Igbo culture and customs dislodged by the anti-thesis of colonialism and post-colonial history and synthesized into the present state through globalization. The arguments rely heavily on primary and secondary data, generalized theories, proceed to an equally generalized discussion of a specific case analysis—Igbo cultures—and synthesize findings on Igbo cultural mutation.

Our primary method of data deploys interview from two communities both from each of the five purposively selected States in Eastern Nigeria. The communities are; Afikpo and Ohaozara in Ebonyi, Onitsha and Awka in Anambra, Owerri and Orlu in Imo, Arochukwu and Ngwa in Abia, Nsukka and Nkanu in Enugu, Asaba and Ibusa in Delta State. While these do not presuppose the entire Igbo community of Eastern Nigeria, they form the bulk of the population and most suitable audience for the research theme. Secondary data include existing relevant literature, reports etc.

To recapture the pristine state of Igbo culture and general evidence of culture decline and mutation, the history of the study area provides evidence of rich Igbo cultural heritage and incidence of distorted specific cultures, to determine what went wrong and the causes of this particular distortion. The specific globalization induced culture mutation that we seek to investigate includes; excision of core cultural identity and practices such as traditional wrestling contests, initiation into masquerades, mutation of Igbo cultural festivals, Igbo language, dearth of libation to Igbo gods and ancestors, mutation of traditional institutions, novel modes of “blessing” of Kolanut devoid of Igbo spirituality, monetization of Igbo traditional titles, Igbo culture de-alignment, land alienation, attitudinal change, dearth of Igbo recipe and delicacies, ethical bankruptcy, moral decadence etc. We shall substantially elucidate dimensions of these specific mutated cultures.

History of the study area

The history of the origins of the Igbo people has been a subject of intense scholarly debate (Nzimiro, 1972; Onwuejeogwu, 1975; Afigbo, 1974; Isichei, 1969).

Onwuejeogwu (1979) observes that autochthony, which is the claim of origin from the spot of present habitation by maximal lineage generally *Umudiani* (“Children of the earth”), is found in many ancient Igbo towns such as the *Umudiani* in *Nri* town who claim they were there when *Nri* migrated to the present town called *Nri*. The *Umudiani* also claim “amnesia,” which means they recall nothing of their origin. In the Igbo culture area, only new towns like Aro confederacy, Onitsha, Ogidi, Ibusa, Asaba, Ogwashi-Ukwu, etc. claim origin of “certainty”. However, such claims are contestable in recent times³

The Igbos share boundary on the north with the Igala, Idoma and Ogoja peoples, on the east with the Ibibio, on the south with the Ijaw of the Delta region, and on the west with the Edo-speaking peoples of Edo State of Nigeria.

Before the civil war (1967-1970), Igbo land was roughly made up of present Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, parts of Delta and

Rivers states, small parts of Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, Edo, and Kogi States (Uchem, 2001).

More than 30 million people inhabit Igbo land and with a population density ranging from 1000 people per sq. mile in high density areas and 350 per sq. mile in low density areas (Ezeokana, 1999). It could be the densest area in Africa after the Nile Valley.⁴ Altogether Igbo land has an area of some 15,800 to 16,000 square miles.⁵

Igbo land is not a homogeneous entity but characterized by different sub-cultures with significant differences among them. While Forde and Jones (1950) distinguished five Cultural sub-groups of the Igbo culture area, Onwuejeogwu (1981) identified six. According to Forde and Jones (1950), the division is as follows;

- (1) Northern or Onitsha Igbo which includes towns like Awka, Udi, Enugu, Enugu Ukwu, Nsukka, Aro Ndizeogu, Onitsha, Agukwu Nri, Igboukwu, Nanka, and Ihiala.
- (2) Southern or Owerri Igbo, which includes towns like Aba, Umuahia, Owerri, Ahoada, Okigwe, and Orlu;
- (3) Western Igbo, which is the part of Igboland in Delta State and includes towns like Asaba, Agbor, Kwalle, Ilah, and Aboh;
- (4) Eastern or Cross River Igbo, which includes towns like Abam, Ohafia, Afikpo, Arochukwu, and Aribra.
- (5) North-Eastern Igbo, which includes towns like Ezza, Uburu, Okposi, and Abakkaliki.

The Igbo people are among Nigeria's three major ethnic groups, with highly specialized and distinct cultural values. Igbo culture is inherently dynamic and flexible, rather than static.

The moral standard of *omenala* (culture/custom) is very high. Their spirituality is triadic and anchored on the Chief Priest of *Ala/Ani* (earth goddess) who interfaces between the living, the dead (ancestors) and the gods.

Iroegbu (2009) observes that the Igbo cosmology or worldview consists of a world of (i) above, (ii) a terrestrial one or man's world, and (iii) a world below (Iroegbu, 2009 cited in Amadi and Agena, 2014). The world-above is known as *eligwe*; that is “sky or heaven”, where the supreme God (*Obasi, Chukwu, or Chineke*) dwells. The terrestrial world is *elu uwa, ala*, conceived as the earth, “the world of man” (*uwa madu*), the life scene on man in the midst of other beings like animals and trees. The “world-below” (*okpuru uwa*) is known as *ala mmuo*, which is the domain of the spirit forces (*agbara na mmuo*). It is mainly the world of the spirit ancestors, good or evil, inhabiting “the underworld” (*ime ala*), “the world of the dead” (*ndi nwuru anwu*). Life therefore revolves around the interaction of the forces coming from each of the major beings and spaces, represented in the cosmology of life and space (Iroegbu, 2009 cited in Agena and Amadi, 2014).

Igbo traditional religion involves several sacrifices, rituals and initiation such as initiation into the masquerade cult, the Ozo institution, *Nze* title, the *Ichie/Oha* (elders council) (Tolbot, 1967; Isichei, 2004). There are relationships between the gods, oracles, and divination (Ogbaa, 1992; Iroegbu, 2009) such as *Amadioha* (the god of thunder), *Ogwugwu, Ogbanje, Ibinu Ukpabi, Agwu, Onuochasi, Agbara mmiri*, (water spirit), *Ohammiri/Ogbuide* (water goddess among Oguta Igbo), *Mbari* art (among Owerri Igbo), *Ahijoku/Ifejioku* (yam goddess), *Chiokike, (God the Creator)* etc. Various significant streams and rivers are interconnected to Igbo spirituality.

The advent of Christianity has brought most of these gods and

their worship to an end (Ilogu,1996).

Dibia (diviners) play important roles in Igbo religion and spirituality. Orji (2007) explores the *Dibia* in historical contexts as priests, healers and diviners. They together with the Chief Priests (*Onye isi Ala/Eze Mmmuo*) are intermediaries between the gods (spirits) and the people (humans). There are female *Dibia* or diviners but there are no female Chief Priests. The gods select such positions through a long and tortuous consultation. *Onye Isi Ala* is hereditary among specific families known as *ndi nwe isis ala*, (custodians of the sacred land goddess). Soothsaying and potency to concoct charms, spells, poison and to dispel same are common among Igbo culture. Others are herbalists who could cure all sorts of ailments with various roots, leaves and herbs.

Pre-colonial Igbo civilization is democratic. They have a complex and sophisticated form of political life (Nzimiro, 1972). Although they are patrilineal, they believe in *Oke na Nnne* (Male and Female). Hence there are role specifications between various distinct sub groups including women. They are much more diffused than in many places of Africa which makes the study of Igbo culture mutation both important and useful.

A distinct feature of the Igbo civilization is the absence of any formal, centralized political authority. They have egalitarian and republican structure with sub groups which observe specialized form of gerontocracy and recognize the council of elders (*Oha* or *Ndichie*) as the highest decision making body who are the custodians of *Ofor* (symbol of authority).

The largest family unit is the *Umunna* (Kinsmen) made up of male heads of extended families or clans. The patrilineal structure is both distinct and congenial to peaceful co-existence (Amadi and Agena, 2014). Other sub groups are the *Umuada* (daughters of the land); they engage in conflict resolution; the *Umuama* (youths and children) periodically clear the communal roads, the age grades maintain law, peace, order and security and engage in community development projects.

At the extended family level, there are several associations such as hunters, palm wine tapers, herbalists, cultural dance groups, women cooperatives etc. Such are the life wire of the people and the nucleus of their socio-economic and cultural being (Amadi and Agena, 2014). The systemic role specifications among these sub groups are reintegrated into a common societal good.

Important ceremonies and festivals such as child naming ceremonies, traditional tittles, festivals exist. They are enterprising and undertake self- help projects. Where necessary, they levy themselves or through their communal palm cutting- *Iwu Nkwu*, raise funds.

Land is the source of economic existence of the Igbo who are largely agrarian. There are communal and individual ownership of land. It is shared along patrilineal lines. Women do not own lands according to custom. Igbo people engage in commerce, craftsmanship and trade. The Aro area in present Abia State was a slave port in the 18th century.

The social life of the Igbo is built on core values and ethics such as taboos, sacrileges, equality, honesty. *Ezi Okwu bu ndu*-(truth is life) are Igbo philosophical norms .

The Igbo cultural system is a system of equality. The pattern of adjudication is systemic and well developed among the *Umunna*. Consensus is built after the consent of everybody is sought and heard. Everybody has equal right in key decisions and could insist to be heard. Decisions on issues are taken with collective consensus binding on the people called *Izu Ummunna*(Amadi and Agenna, 2014). Several such decisions must be in line with the will of the gods and custom of the land. Issues of conflict include communal or family disputes, border disputes, breaking of oath of competent relationship, infidelity, deceit, stealing, etc. Such conflicts are judiciously adjudicated. After fulfilling cultural obligations such as fines, defaulters are reintegrated. Dissident parties could be

ostracized or banished where they do not conform to collective decisions on amenable ways of resolving such conflicts such as purification rituals or cleansing of the land to appease the gods (Amadi and Agena, 2014).

Certain rituals are performed in cause of reconciliation, reinforced with *ofor* often struck aggressively against the earth by the eldest (*Opara/Okpara*) of the clan on each count of consensus followed by collective shout in affirmation by the *Umunna* –ise (Amadi and Agena, 2014). However, where the offence is outrageous, the defaulter is utterly banished such as killing of human beings. They also engage in communal wars. The Abam people are warriors involved in conquests long before colonial contacts.

Food is both a way of life and culture component of the Igbo people. Various Igbo communities are associated with various kinds of food including food crops. There are *Ji Onitsha* (yam specie that originated from Onitsha), *Akpu Ohaji* (Cassava from Ohaji), *Oka Awaka* (Specie of corn that thrives in Awaka), *Ugba Owerri* (oil bean) etc. Traditionally yam is their staple food and the king of crops; other important food crops are cocoyam, vegetables, maize, palm tree, raffia palm etc.

There are rain makers, hunters, craftsmen and women who design core Igbo arts and artifacts including the highly revered *Mbari* art, *Akwaete* cloth weavers in Ndoki near Aba present Abia State; there are local blacksmiths in Awka axis in Anambra, ceramic and local pottery makers (*Udu*) native water keg, basket weavers, mats, local foot mat etc.

Igbo culture venerates nature which is believed to be interconnected with *Chiokike* (God the Creator). Issues of purity such as virginity, first child (especially male) or first fruits are traditionally celebrated. They place high premium on male children as custodians of culture and inhabitants of the *Obi* (homestead).

The Igbo philosophy is rooted on the perceptions they have over the nature of the Igbo universe. Odita (1995) observes that the two primary factors that underline their belief system and existence are “life-on-earth” and “life-after-death”. These two factors, according to him, help to clarify certain fundamentals and cultural expressions. These are some of the issues surrounding Igbo identity which explains who the people are, how their society functions, and their belief system etc.

Colonial plunder, conquest and slave trade unleashed terror on Igbo cultural values. Igbo identity and culture also vitiated during the decades after the Biafra War (1967-1970). As they lost the war, several groups either wholly or partially dissociated from Igbo identity and connection.

In what follows, we would demonstrate how globalization in the 21st century has changed this pristine Igbo world view as it suffices in this debate.

Conceptual and theoretical issues

The study tracks the dynamics of the culture mutation today in an attempt to identify the cultural practices that have ebbed the ones that have endured overtime and the ones overtaken by globalization. These dynamics make the study of Igbo cultural heritage important.

Debates and conceptualization of culture mutation, identity and globalization is broad and not their entire treatise is relevant in this context. Quite apart from generalizing theories and conceptualizations, we have historical and ethnographic studies of identity which provide the rich Igbo cultural values (Afigbo,1965; Uchendu, 1965; Isichei,1967; Tolbot,1967; Okparaocha,1976; Oriji,1994).

In the social sciences identity has been variously used to explore dynamics of social interactions and attitudes distinct to a particular group of people. For instance in Nigeria both Nnoli,(1978) and Obi (2001) have used concepts such as “ethnic identity” or “ethnic

minority politics" to explain modes of ethnic behaviour.

Castells (1997) argues that identity is "a people's source of meaning and experience. Cultural identity encompasses a broad variety of values, attitudes, socialization and norms which are distinct about a particular people (Grauman, 1999; Hall et al., 1992). Social norms and attitudes identify cultural relics, such as belief system and values. Equally, historiographic parameters and anecdotal evidence has largely been useful identity variables. A major theoretical constellation stems from the symbolic watermark of commonly shared traits such as attitudes, values norms and other innate features. Cultural identity encompasses a broad variety of values, attitudes, socialization and norms which are distinct about a particular people. A major theoretical constellation stems from the symbolic watermark of commonly shared traits such as attitudes, values norms and other innate features. (Pedersen, 2008).

The debate on "culture mutation" is a corollary of revisionism which argues that globalization should be revisited as it is at odds with cultural sustainability (Blaukopf, 1985; Miede, 2011; Moahi, 2007).

In recent times, culture mutation is discernible in virtually every aspect of the Igbo life; first, was the colonial legacy including the destruction of the natural economy and emergent culture dislodgement with imposition of Western values and Christianity. The gradual extinction of the gods and powerful Igbo deities and their associated practices have been given attention (Kalu, 1996; Ogbu, 1996; Isichei, 1977; Amadi, 1981; Arinze, 1970).

Amadi (1981) explores the effects of Western tradition on African culture with what he termed, "colonial brainwashing". Culture mutation in this paper refers to excision of prevailing totality of ways of life and attitudes of people overtime through subtle or obvious rejection or imbibing of alternative ways of life which alters existing attitudes or values.

The discourse regarding the effects of globalization on cultural diversity is a challenging debate. The advancement of technology dissolves international boundaries and opens cultures to a whole new arena,⁶ enabling globalization to occur. Globalization can be an empowering entity. It can interconnect the world, support economic development, provide information and create a global village.⁷ However, "There is a paradoxical dichotomy, a tangible undercurrent, when it comes to globalization and cultural diversity".

On one hand, globalization has the potential to mobilize and empower people, provide a means for self-representation, support a collective identity through socialization and provide employment opportunities. On the other hand, it has the ability to disempower people by misrepresentation, provide a process for further colonization, and propel the loss of individualism and self and group identity".⁸

Giddens writes "Globalization is political, technological and cultural, as well as economic."⁹ The second groups are skeptics who believe that we live in an international world in which national forces remain highly significant. Ruigrok and van Tulder observe that "Globalization seems to be as much an overstatement as it is an ideology and an analytical concept."¹⁰

Appadurai observes that globalization activities occur in five dimensions: *ethnoscapes* (people who move internationally), *technoscapes* (technology often linked to international corporations), *financescapes* (global capital, currency markets, stock exchanges), *mediascapes* (electronic and new media) and *ideoscapes* (official state ideologies and counter ideologies).¹¹

It signifies perceptions of common origins, historical memories, identity and common ties between people. It has its foundations in memories of past experiences and common aspirations, values, norms and expectations.¹²

"Political theorist Fredric Jameson presents this as two competing future visions: one of a corporate-dominated monoculture

where nations and cultural groups alike are deprived of autonomy and identity; and another of a vibrant celebration of pluralism, in which various cultural groups are in direct and harmonious contact with one another, free from limiting political forces such as national governments".¹³

"However, the most dreaded dimension of globalization that has adversely affected Africa is the cultural aspect. This has the overall aim of making Africans; lose their history, values, social norms and consequently their personality as it attempts to universalize the world culture into western categories. Since culture in whatever form is always ethno-centric and value loaded, the universalization or rather westernization of culture undermines Africans self - definition, self- realization and unique contributions in the global village arrangement" (Okoro, 2009). The Igbo is not left out in this problem (Ojukwu, 2009; Obioha, 2010). Walden argues on de-globalization (Bello, 2004).

A key question is whether a sense of culture reinstitution and sustainability remains meaningful to the present day Igbo child in re-moralizing the socio- cultural realm to confront globalization.

Dimensions of Igbo culture mutation and resurgent new identity

According to Samuel Huntington the years after the Cold War witnessed the beginnings of dramatic changes in peoples' identities and the symbols of those identities. Global politics began to be reconfigured along cultural lines (Huntington, 1997).

Giddens (1992) argues that; "In traditional societies, the past is honored and symbols are valued because they contain and perpetuate the experience of generations. Tradition is a means of handling time and space, which inserts any particular activity or experience within the continuity of past, present and future, these in turn being structured by recurrent social practices" (Giddens, 1990; cited in Hall et al., 1992).

Let us get closer to the fundamental concern here namely; that globalization induced culture mutation puts at risk the legitimacy of culture sustainability as follows.

Mutation of Igbo cultural festivals

"Although not all cultural festivals have disappeared, "Omenala" (Igbo culture/ custom) is in dilemma and crisis. After colonialism, I envisaged we could have re-invented Igbo culture but it has been futile"¹⁴ "The core festivals that ought to have served as unifying factor and vehicle for transmission of knowledge like the days of our fathers such as wrestling matches, folklores are dead. In its place is European Premier League (EPL). An average Igbo boy, even girls are fans of one or more European club sides. Such addiction has grown deeper". "Few Igbo festivals are strong and alive such as new yam festival- *iri ji Mbaise* (Mbaise Yam festival)" ;¹⁵ "While *Ofala* remains strong in Anambra state as it involves the *Igwe* (Traditional ruler). Presently what exists predominantly in most Igbo communities are "events" not cultural festivals". "The relegation of great festivals such as *Aju* festival in *Obibiezena* near Owerri, Imo State, *Odo* in parts of Ehemufu Enugu, State, *Nkwa Umuagbohoo* (maidens dance) in *Afikpo*, Ebonyi State, *Nwa-okorobo* dance in Ikeduru in Imo State, *Nwa-alija*, *Ojionu*, *Ekpe*, *Okonko Atilogwu*, *Agaba*, *Odogwu*, *Adamma* masquerades etc are evidences of culture loss".¹⁶

"I met my husband in the 1980s after a traditional dance called *Odima* in my secondary school days. Today, *Odima* dance among the Owerri Igbo is no more". The conventional moonlight play and folk tales (*Igba Oro* or *Egwu Onwa*) by children across Igbo clans etc, have all gone".¹⁷

In one of the well-known traditional wrestling communities known as *Ezeogbamgba* (Ezeogba) (king of wrestlers) in Emekuku Owerri, Imo State, Elder P C Amadi recounts that; "the last my village experienced traditional wrestling contest was in the late 1940s, when my late brother Simeon Njoku threw a great wrestler from a neighbouring village. It was historic and memorable"¹⁸

In Nnobi in Idemili South Local Government Area, Anambra State, a culture disconnect with their revered sacred Python is ongoing. Same is applicable to *Eke Emii* (Emii Python) in Emii community Owerri North, Imo state".¹⁹ Other rituals such as *Igbandu* (oath of mutual trust), *idu isi* (Swearing with the deity) are now uncommon²⁰

"The annual *Uguzor* festival in Emekuku in Owerri one of the most developed and well attended festivals in Eastern Nigeria, experienced its worse turn out last November. The moderator Chief Jude Ajaero states; "I am amazed at the rate our people are withdrawing from such great festivals"²¹

The *Mbari* art is one of the distinctive cultural artefacts of the Igbo; it represents historic Igbo symbols and designs representing the gods, monumental events and relics of the past. After such designs which are usually sculpted, its unveiling attracts great ceremony (Okparaocha, 1976). "In my village, I was only a child when the great *Mbari* art was performed. Children were never allowed to participate as it looked like shrines with symbols of great Igbo histories. I am not aware of any village since the 1960s that has *Mbari*"²²

Igor Orji (blessing of kolanut) has witnessed changes in recent Igbo history. "We have left the natural and transcended mode of blessing of kolanut in Igbo land. In the days of our fathers, kolanut observe some rituals and blessed with special prayers; "I salute *Nkwo, Eke, Ori, Afor*, (names of market days), the gods of the land, kola has come, our ancestors, kola has come. He who brings kola, brings life. Our ancestors ate this and lived long, may we eat it and have long life and prosperity, unity and brotherhood. This pattern of prayer is replaced with a novel mode of prayer this way; "We bless this kolanut in Jesus name, Amen. This does not reflect Igbo spirituality".²³

The excision of libation is another mutant variant. The Igbo has systemic spirituality. Pouring of libation to their gods and ancestors is one of the mediums for expressing this. It is poured in three successions signifying the triadic Igbo spirituality. However, Westernization and Christianity have resulted in a gradual end to libation. "In my opinion there is a disconnect among the present Igbo generation with the ancestors. Libations to the ancestors and the gods are no longer offered."²⁴

Language mutation

The Igbo language belongs to the 'kwa' language group of the Niger-Congo language family (Forde and Jones, 1950). A recent study demonstrates the effects of globalization on Igbo language (Ahamefula and Okoye, 2012). It is argued by Western globalization pundits that; "Globalization has also contributed to an increasing interest in English-language education worldwide. In response to the emergence of English as a world-linking, global language, an increasing number of schools have stepped up English-language requirements, even at undergraduate levels. The argument is that a universal teaching language is necessary as a natural consequence of globalization" (UNESCO Report, 2006). Ironically this has side stepped other languages and cultures and fosters inequality and promotion of Western culture and ideology. In relation to language planning in particular, Rasool (1998) cited in Tikly, (2001) has described the issues surrounding linguistic human rights in the context of mass migration of peoples and the 'hybridization' of indigenous cultures. On the one hand, she describes the tremendous possibilities opened up for language

choice for migrant and formerly colonized groups of people in relation to ever-changing geographical demographies. On the other hand, she points to the difficulties of language planning in relation to these groups. Tuhus-Dubrow (2002) observes that a language is considered endangered when it is no longer spoken by children, moribund by only handful of elderly speaker and left to extinct when it is no longer spoken. The number of language endangered varies but the average estimates from studies, according to Whalen (2002) are alarming with half of the world language struggling to survive. It has been observed that many of Nigerian languages are endangered (Ajayi, 2001 cited in Abdurraheem, 2004). Igbo people have names for the days of the week; such names in present times are less relevant (Nkwo, Eke, Ori, Afor). 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* (child born on oye day), *Ofofodile* (ofor is potent), *Nwa-eke* (child born on eke day) are rarely given to children of contemporary generation.²⁵

Mutation of Igbo traditional institutions

Globalization has not only weakened traditional institutions but has decimated same. Eke (1975) observes that one of the most successful ideologies used to explain the necessity of colonial rule was the heavy emphasis placed on what was described as a backward historical past.

He argues that Africans, according to this view, should be ashamed of their past; the only important thing is in the present. Missionaries openly told Africans that ancestor-worship was bad and they should cut themselves loose from their 'evil' past and embrace the present in the new symbolisms of Christianity and Western culture. Indeed, Africans were virtually told that the colonizers and missionaries came to save them, sometimes in spite of themselves, from their past (Eke, 1975). "Igbo institutions are withering away in era of globalization. The sanctity of *Ofor* (symbol of authority) has vitiated. Chief Agwuka Okorie, an elder and *ofor* holder from Arochukwu in Abia state recounts; "My son, *ofor* is no longer what it used to be. Sincerely most communities no longer have *ofor* and the younger generations do not know its potency even some of the custodians have soiled "their hands" so much that they are afraid to associate with *ofor*".²⁶ "Ofor has several roles in our lives, it is revered, and reinforces our commitment and union with our fore fathers, hence it is in the custody of the eldest."²⁷ "Ask all the Igbo communities today how many have *ofor*. Am not speaking for others though I am a custodian of *ofor* by virtue of my status, it exists in proxy today"²⁸. Elder Nwamkpa from Ohaozara near Afikpo Ebonyi state recounts, "Yes *ofor* is very rare in recent times, but I have ours intact, its loss implies that we have lost this kingdom."²⁹

In a sample of 30 respondents from the six states of Eastern Nigeria within the ages of 15 to 25 none accepted to have seen or known what an *ofor* is. In rural Amasiri close to Afikpo in Ebonyi state. Mr Omaka Oko says; " I am not aware if the *ofor* of my clan still exists"³⁰

Mutation and rural /urban migration

With rapid urbanization, rural life and culture suffers as majority of the population migrates to the urban centres and adapt to urban lifestyles. "Modernization" and similar infrastructures have created culture divide between the urban and rural areas. "In my area (Onitsha) there are several high rising buildings in the urban centres most of the owners rarely visit the villages as they are permanent urban dwellers."³¹ The reduced number of people

residing continuously in the village undermines village institutions and makes the enforcement of cultural norms and values ineffective.

The new identity

With the mutation of Igbo culture the following globalization induced new identity emerges.

The new internet identity

Castells (2001) identifies "internet galaxy" to explore the new internet identity. The internet is now a way of life. There are internet addicts in recent history. Conversely, the poor and illiterate are left behind which creates inequality beyond culture mutation. The Internet (248 million users currently, in 2000; 700 million projected by the end of 2001; 2 billion by 2007) will link individuals and groups among themselves and to the shared multimedia hypertext. This hypertext constitutes the backbone of a new culture, the culture of real virtuality, in which virtuality becomes a fundamental component of our symbolic environment, and thus of our experience as communicating beings (Castells, 1996).

The New Media and Mobile Apps

"A major part of these revolutions can be attributed to social networking and information exchanges made possible by networking platforms like Facebook and Twitter. These avenues provide information sharing on a whole new level"³²

Several mobile applications are currently changing the world. Phones, Apple Ipad, Androids, Blackberry provide new modes of interaction and identity. There are pinging, WhatsApp, YouTube, Skype, LinkedIn etc, providing certain modes of behavior that are alien to the Igbo culture. A number of similar applications are on the way. Mobile Apps, promote Western culture and lifestyles in a variety of ways; some are good others are bad. The bad ones include obscene materials such as pornography, Lesbians, Gay, etc which are "abomination" according to Igbo custom. While the good ones are access to information etc

There is widespread consensus that information and communication technologies (ICTs) present one solution to Africa's (Igbo inclusive) development problem, with resurgence in mobile phones, social networking sites etc. Currently, services such as G-cash in the Philippines and M-Pesa in Kenya are providing mobile-based financial solutions for persons who may not otherwise have access to a bank.³³ Although many useful mobile applications have not been implemented on a large scale in Africa and if it is, Africa would remain passive recipients.

Online alliances, networking and new lifestyles

Globalization is brain washing (Amadi, 2012). New relationships, modes of social interactions are emerging through "social network sites" and online alliances; friendship requests from Facebook, Badoo etc. Different levels of interaction result in different levels of understanding. Some amoral relationships contrary to Igbo value system and belief emanate such as online virtual sexual intercourse and similar online alliances are in practice. There is e-commerce, e-transact which has taken transactions to a different level. Castells (1996) observes that this is the enclosing of dominant cultural manifestations in an interactive, electronic hypertext, which becomes the common frame of reference for symbolic processing from all sources and all messages. He argues that it will link

individuals and groups among themselves and to the shared multimedia hypertext. This hypertext constitutes the backbone of a new culture, the culture of real virtuality, in which virtuality becomes a fundamental component of our symbolic environment, and thus of our experience as communicating beings (Castells, 1996).

The GSM revolution

In 2003, GSM became a dominant mode of telephony in Nigeria. This led to a change of attitude and dearth of conventional traditional mode of communication and information transmission. Undoubtedly it has eased the challenge of communication, at the same time, it has been exploitative (Amadi,2012). The Igbo local "town crier" is gradually phasing out with Short Message Service (SMS) which excludes the majority who are illiterates.

Global Satellite System

The global satellite system tele guides the world interactions. This has resulted in disappearance of boundaries as the world is integrated into a global village. The more powerful and technologically advanced societies teleguide the activities of the poor and weak societies.

New Consumption Patterns

Schor (2005) argues that; "As is widely recognized, US private consumption currently entails a globally disproportionate use of resources, as measured by ecological footprint, measures of material weight, and numerous other indices and estimates (Wackernagel, 1999; Wernick, 1997,cited in Schor,2005). The 1990s and early 2000s have been a period of rapid consumption growth for the average household, as consumption outpaced income growth, and savings rates declined (Schor, 2005). Challenges of sustainable consumption are on the increase among the high income countries which deleterious effects have been manifold on the human environment. In the globalizing world, African lifestyles and attitudes have drastically changed. The consumption patterns, dress code, moral decadence, lack of respect and veneration of traditional African institutions etc are evident. In the context of consumption, Western foods such as the MacDonald's, UAC's Mr Biggs, Coca-Cola,Starbucks etc have affected consumption patterns. Traditional African meals such as dried bush meat, pounded yam, *Ofe Nsala* (Nsala Soup) are fast replaced with micro waved frozen chicken. These have carcinogenic effects resulting increase in incidence of cancer.

"The core Igbo delicacies of *Ogiri*, *Uziza*, (Igbo Indigenous spices), *Utazi* (medicinal leave) *Onugwu/Olugwu* (Bitter leaves), *Uda* (Herb) *Nchanwu* (Saint leave), *Oha/Ora*, *Achi*,etc are hardly found in most homes or popular local restaurants. Pounded yam is replaced with semovita or semolina, *Abacha* (Native Salad) and *Ugba* (Oil bean Salad) are gradually replaced with Western delicacies such as Western salad now popularly served in public Igbo functions. Bargar, Spagheti and more recently, Indian noodle-indomie are now household names for Igbo children". "*Mkpu* (edible termite), *Nsiko*(native crab), *Ololo* (edible larva), *Ukpara/Ukpana*, (Edible grasshopper), *Eruru* (edible laver from raffia palm/palm trees), *Odo* (traditional yellow chalk), *Uhe* (native die for beautification of maidens),*Uli/Uri* (native powder), *Nzu* (edible white chalk which symbolizes peace and used during child birth as quasi kolanut), *Akidi* (Igbo native beans), *Mbuzu* (crickets), *Ero* (mushrooms). Species of peculiar mushrooms found around Ngwa and Owerri axis and snails are gradually disappearing due to the

use of Western organic fertilizers³⁴.”

“Other cultural values and practices in decline include Igbo traditional patterns of greetings and dearth of Igbo gerontocracy (respect for elders). Rituals such as libation are no longer observed; the gods and ancestors are dissociated.”³⁵

Monetization of Igbo Traditional Titles: Traditionally, Igbo has a reward system; the society is based on an ethical system that promotes hard work, honesty, trust, and cooperation. People who serve their communities and maintain the moral and ethical ideals of the community either through philanthropy or patriotism are rewarded by the community with traditional titles. Title taking has been a source of upward social mobility.

Conversely with globalization and modernization of the Igbo society, the institution of

‘Chieftaincy’ has lost its original moral and ethical meaning. “Due to the deteriorating economic conditions in some communities and dearth of societal values, chieftaincy titles are now awarded to the highest bidder regardless of the source of the money. As a result, well-known criminals now receive chieftaincy titles from their villages – a practice that has compromised the high moral and ethical values of the Igbo. This has result local conflicts.”³⁶ It has also affected the adjudicatory institutions as “the money bags” pervert justice which results the loss of integrity and value system.”³⁷

Igbo Culture De-alignment: This is a systemic excision from conventional to extraneous mode of behaviour or orientation. In present times the Igbo is arguably de-aligned or disconnected from their pristine values yet unaligned or unconnected to the Western values. This explains the dilemma of present Igbo cultural. The philosophy of *Engligbo* underscores “identity cross roads” of neither English (White) nor black (Igbo).

Attitudinal Change: As a result of globalization, there is discernible change of attitude. The younger generation now feels they know more than the elders. “Our people have moved away (retreated) from our culture, our ways of life. Taboos and sacrileges are no longer observed as they were in recent past”³⁸ “I hold the title of “*Onyeishi*” (Clan Head), our value system-our identity. Our dress codes are in question. Symbolic body art used to decorate both men and women is no longer in use. Maidens traditionally wear short wrapper with beads around their waist. These relics are now a thing of the past”³⁹.“ The traditional Igbo coral beads (*Mgbaji*), *Uli mma* (traditional make up powder) is no more or rare. In its place, Igbo women and maidens prefer the Western make up kits”. “There is emerging and discernible “attitudinal change and value re-orientation”. For instance, millennium child-rearing and upbringing has taken a different dimension; no Igbo child of contemporary upbringing calls his father *Nna m* (My Father) or mother (Nne m); even children born in remote rural villages call their father “Daddy” and mother “Mummy” as though the Igbo cherished conventional use of *Nnem* (my mother) or *Nnam* (my father) is abhorrent. You are aware that we mothers have returned to exclusive breast feeding because this whole “Oyibo” (Whiteman) thing is not working”⁴⁰ “Worse still, none in the urban areas speaks Igbo perfectly without mincing English words/*pidgin* nor rightly pronounces the Igbo words, wise cracks, folklores, idioms and meanings”⁴¹

Land Alienation: A primary culture mutant was the repressive land policies adopted by the colonial state. Coleman (1959) identifies such policies as the Minerals Act ,the land use act etc (Coleman, 1959) which was later inherited by indigenous African government to foster the interest of emergent African elite. “Similarly the people of Ubowalla in Owerri North Local Government Area, Imo State lost their unique “Achara Ubo festival” (grass land) celebrated annually on the last *Afor* market day of the year to the State government in the 1980s as a result of land grab .Till date they have no cultural festival.”⁴²

Emergence of New Names: The names of people, places and

things are fast changing in the periphery societies in line with Western names. Although the history of name mutation is traced to the early colonial contacts with mutilation of name of towns such as Onicha-Onitsha, Omekeukwu-Emekuku, Owere-Owerri, Orka-Awka, Enugwu-Enugu etc. “According to Ebeogu, within the Igbo cultural context, names are not abstractions but hinge on the socio-cultural consciousness of the people (Cited in Ukpokolo, 2009). In the same vein, Madu posits that Igbo names are not mere appellations but have very deep expressions of attitudes, sentiments, aspirations, sorrows, historical facts, and the underlying philosophy of the Igbo people (Cited in Ukpokolo, 2009).

He further notes 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 (Ukpokolo, 2009). “In *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, Chinua 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 is the name his children bear” (Ukpokolo, 2009).

Globalization and Western values have played on the psyche of most Igbo people so terribly that “mutation” of names has become the order of the day. *Chukuemeka* (*God is so merciful*) is mutated to Chucks (meaningless); *Obinna* (Fathers’ heart or wish) to Obison (meaningless) etc. More than these are the novel names parents give their children, such as Chelsea (Name of European Football Club) etc; non reflects Igbo history or identity.

E-learning and Educational Inequality: New identity accompanies Western education as a result of globalization. E-learning is internet based learning. Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared that ‘everyone has the right to education’. In the year 2000, the organization adopted the eight Millennium Development Goals, which included the goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015. The six ‘Education for All’ goals were also adopted by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). These goals also included providing free and compulsory primary education for all. Conversely, the e-learning and e-library which of course are “new forms” of globalization induced learning are missing in Sub Saharan Africa. In line with ongoing mutation, there are elements of inequality which keeps the Igbo child at cross roads.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

New lifestyles and identity are fast appearing. Survey data on the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria show that most of the consequences of these changes could be grave in the near future.

From the six states, the study demonstrates systemic culture dislodgement and proclivity to Western values from the addiction to European Premier League (EPL) infused from globalization networks, satellite system and live telecast, mobile applications etc. Igbo traditional system is eroded and gradually extinct. The data from the survey and the interviews demonstrate how Igbo cultural practices are mutated by globalization. This includes the internet, social media, online relationship and networking, mobile applications, weakening of Igbo cultural institutions -such as *ofor*, masquerades, chieftaincy titles, Igbo spirituality, connection with the gods and ancestry, reward system, monetized chieftaincy titles etc.

The republican structure of the Igbo system allows for

the increasing globalization culture contact. As advanced in this study, the resulting variants of culture mutation have placed upon the recessive culture (Igbo) some growing dilemmas and social disorientation.

The major burden of generating culture resilience in a weak economy has been enforcements- hence vulnerability and dislodgement of Igbo cultures. In most rural communities Christianity had earlier fostered culture dislodgement.

Globalization as observed appears to produce a psychological reaction in the sense of people trying to re-create meaning in their lives. We have identified new lifestyles such as online virtual sexuality which are issues of globalization discourse. These are counter to Igbo culture and values "the internet identity" are integral component of the Western globalization.

Western consumption pattern now dominates following the proliferation of eateries and Western outdoor catering, burger, salad, spaghetti, noodles etc.

Cultural identity is one such source of meaning. Indeed, there is growing pessimism on what becomes the fate of cultural identity in the context of dramatic globalization induced changes in the near future.

One of the most distressing concomitants is the loss of the sense of self. It can be argued that what makes a person the same person through life is the accumulated set of identity he carries with him. Certainly, it would seem that identity is an important concept from the perspective of cultural development and heritage. Identity is arguably an important source of meaning. As modern technology erodes on culture identity – one of the few truly sources of identity – Igbo culture is likely to experience a clash, shock or dislodgement. Identity is related to every aspect of the Igbo cultural heritage.

Conclusion

Neo- liberal ideologies have served only the interest of the West at the expense of the poor societies. Our larger point, which is well documented in the political economy of identity debate, is that the neo-liberal policies, existing global economic institutions and structures, and the exercise of its considerable power reproduce the global regime of asymmetrical global system. This asymmetry is multidimensional including economic and socio-cultural (Amadi, 2012).

We have demonstrated that culture mutation results identity loss and culturally disoriented personality arising from novel attitudes alien to the norms and values of a people. We acknowledge that change is inevitable in human existence but not when it is fostered with exploitation and economic interest insulated from the wellbeing of the people. Culture change should evolve from the people based on their commonly shared attributes and mores which could be transformed over

time and not from external ploy.

The contention can be made on the basis of the evidence from both the primary and secondary data collected for this study that Igbo culture is mutated. Globalization is deculturation. From our case analysis, the study suggests that Igbo culture is witnessing changes as globalization spreads. Evidence has been substantially demonstrated both institutionally and individually.

Culture mutation is the research agenda that has been explored in this literature as it attempts to establish its implications for the Igbo cultural heritage and to establish how such culture dislodgement could be remedied through culture sustainability drivers .

Since 1987 sustainable development launched the vast research trajectory, defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation from meeting their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). Culture sustainability has been a missing research agenda among the poor societies. A culture sustainability program could salvage the increasing dislodgement of the periphery cultures through culture reinstitution movements, symposium and conferences. A policy discourse in this regard is important aimed at culture reinstitution.

This literature suggests the confrontation of globalization. The internet has taken relationship and social interactions to the next level. We deduce that some of the web based interactions and their contents are not in line with Igbo values. Many crucial development issues such as illiteracy, poverty, and gender inequality have been neglected. These icons of a culture are viewed as a living heritage and are an integral part of identity Using images, reselling them and mis-representing these rights are considered property theft and a heinous crime against communities. It is difficult to monitor or control what is out on the Internet and therefore difficult to prevent and prosecute appropriately (Smith and Ward, 2000).

In Igboland and most African societies there is a strong need for services and software in local languages, dialects and cultures. This has kept Africa at the periphery as mere users of finished Western centric configured applications. None of the globalization machinations understands the Igbo environment; this keeps the Igbo at a superficial level as non- stakeholders in the globalization construct.

We posit that Igbo culture is the last frontier of common identity available to the people; it is their sole unifying factor and should constitute an instrument to confront globalization. Culture reawakening and renaissance is needed.

Socio-cultural movements to improve, restore and reintegrate Igbo culture on a global level is important which could attract value-adding international culture transformation that could contribute to the Igbo cultural

development.

It is apt to argue at this point that globalization and its implications on Igbo culture will be antithetical in the near future as the cultural traits of the Igbo are disappearing. New globalization paraphernalia are soon on the way to further mutate the Igbo culture. Policies to redress these issues are important. A detailed knowledge of Igbo indigenous institutions and their systemic mechanism which are integral components of the socio-cultural and spiritual life of the people, should be considered in policy formulation.

Thus, the implications of the relationships described in this paper are important for public policy makers seeking to develop strategies for promoting culture sustainability by considering the importance of complex institutions and practices that are increasingly fading away as a result of globalization. A more balanced interaction is proposed.

Despite this general sense of “culture disconnect and distortion” the promise of culture renewal via culture reinstitution and sustainability programs through veritable and equal terms on integration of Igbo culture into the wider globalization order are yet to be possible.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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- 13 . See Jameson, F. (1998) Globalization as a philosophical issue In: F. Jameson, M. Miyoshi (Eds.), *The Cultures of Globalization* (pp. 54-77). London: Duke University Press. Several sociologists and anthropologists foreshadow the identity crisis of globalization for instance Both Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson believe in Identity restoration, see Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference Volume 7, Issue 1, pages 6–23, February 1992 DOI: 10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020 American Anthropological Association
14. Personal discussion with Igbo culture custodian Amanze Iwuoha ,13th October ,2014
15. Interview with Chief Levi Chikere, custodian of Igbo culture in Mbaise March 30th 2013. He emphasised the need to bring back the Igbo culture, several interviews conducted in this study point to this direction .
16. Discussion with Chief Dikeora Obieke on issues on culture experiences in Anambra state. March ,12th, 2014
17. Lolo Lucy Ihenacho said that traditional dances endeared several Igbo maiden to men for marriage. That she was among such persons in the 1980s during the Odima traditional dance around Owerri axis which she said was no longer in existence.
18. Interview with Elder P C Amadi Ezeogba Emekuku Owerri North Imo State, 30th October, 2013
19. Personal discussion with Barrister Obiageli Oraka from Nneobi Anambra State. July, 2012
20. Several rituals are no longer observed as Igbo custom demands.
21. Interview with the moderator of the 2012 Uguzor Emeke festival, Chief Jude Ajaero.
22. This narrative was provided by Madam Patricia Ajaero of Mbaoma Owerri. North Mbari art is predominantly found among the Owerri Igbo.
23. *Igor Orji* (blessing of Kolanut) is a ritual of its own. Ironically, today the Igbo merely "bless" the kolanut. They hardly "pray" with the kola as Igbo custom demands, encompassing the triumvirate structure of Igbo spirituality and religiosity involving ; the gods, ancestors and the living. As Igbo custodian Mazi Nwafor Mbonu stated, Aba, Abia State 10th May, 2012
24. Ibid
25. Names are very symbolic and important among Igbo people including names of people and markets days such seem to have waned in recent times.
26. Chief Agwuoka Okorie provided an incisively understanding of the potency of Ofor and failure of the custodians to live up to the task as a result of lack moral rectitude.
27. Pa Nwankpa is an octogenarian and spoke spiritedly about *Ofor*. 1st November, 2014, Ohaozara Ebonyi State Eastern Nigeria.
28. Ibid
29. Discussions with Pa Nwankpa 10th March, 2014, Ohaozara Eboyi State.

Notes

1. Feminist writers of Igbo extraction have made cogent contributions to gender and Igbo culture transformation.
2. During the ..Ahiajoku lecture series Professor Achebe the Guest lecturer described the Ibo Union Bible as a mutation variant of Igbo language and was attacked by Igbo linguist Innocent Nwadike (2008) who upholds the Ibo Union Bible as effort in Igbo language development
3. Several Igbo communities claim authocnomy such as Owerri, Mbaise etc.

30. A sample of 25 children shows that they are not conversant with *Ofor* and what it signifies. Also discussion with Mr Omaka Oko a school teacher from Afikpo shows a vitiated potency of *ofor*, 10th November, 2013
31. Interview with Mr Ifeanyi Okolie, 10th October, 2012
32. Smith, C. & Ward, G. Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World, 2000. Vancouver: UBC
33. According to Igbo traditional custom, when a child gives an elder *Mbuzu* (cricket) the elder gives the child a hen in exchange, the hen reproduces and replicates.
34. Across Africa are globalization induced transactions such as E-transact, E-cash, G-cash in Philippines, M-Pesa in Kenya etc.
35. Similarly Mr Jonh Ekenta observes poor ritualization of Kolanut as Igbo custom demands also *ofor* and similar cultural institutions
36. Ibid
37. Ibid
38. *Onyeishi* (Head) is the eldest in the clan it follows in order of gerontocracy. Around Nsukka Axis in Enugu. Interview with Pa Linus Igwe.
39. Ibid
40. Interview with Mrs Hilda Chukwu a rural women leader from Mebiowa Okposi in Ohazara Local Government Area of Ebonyi state, 12th August, 2013
41. Interview with Mrs Ngozi Ogbuni a primary school Igbo Teacher in State School I Aba Abia State. She stated that pupils in most homes are now trained in English language as none addresses their parents in Igbo parlance. *Igba Oro* or *Egwu Onwa* (moonlight play) was typical of traditional Igbo settings where children listen to didactic folk tales, learn Igbo cultural norms and myths.
42. "Achara Ubo" festival in Ubowalla Emekuku Owerri is a well-known festival mutated by land grab by Imo State government in the early 1980s.