

Westernization and Indigenous Modes of Communication in Traditional African Setting: Assessment of the Igbo Cultural Heritage

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Abstract: We live in a rapidly changing world ... a world in which there seems to be a conspiracy by the proponents of globalization to use digital devices for the westernization of all other cultures. This is indeed a worrisome development! But more worrisome is the fact that in contemporary African society, our communication systems (music, dance, drama, story-telling, masking etc.) are being gradually superimposed with movie-watching, computer-gaming, celebrity-following and other digitally-induced forms of communication that are counter-productive to Africans. Obviously, such digitally-induced forms of communication not only shape the understanding and dreams of the ordinary citizen wherever he/she may be; but also create mass market of Western culture at the expense of indigenous African culture. In the light of the above observation, this paper shall with particular prejudice to the non-verbal forms of communication in traditional African setting, examine the roles of the indigenous modes of communication vis-à-vis their Western counterparts in the message transfer process. The study shall adopt the textual analysis method of research to investigate the survivability of the indigenous modes of communication among the Igbo's in South/East Nigeria in the face of palpable threat from the digital divide.

Keywords: *African Culture, Communication, Cultural Heritage, Indigenous media, Westernization*

I. Introduction

Before the advent of modern mass media in Nigeria, our fore-fathers had traditional channels/modes of communication, through which they maintained a stable polity. Even though the forms, contents and patterns of usage of such traditional modes of communication vary from place to place and from culture to culture; the essence remained generally the same. This is because they are all intended to share feelings and ideas (verbally or non-verbally) with as many people as possible and for many reasons. For example, in traditional Igbo setting, if any incident occurs by 6.00.a.m. today, before 6.00 p.m. same day, a sizable percentage of the people of that community and beyond would have heard the news without radio/television announcement nor newspaper/magazine publication. In time of festivities and emergencies, traditional channels of communication are also deployed to notify/summon residents. But the proliferation of media, occasioned by digital innovations and the quest for profit maximization by global media conglomerates, have actually altered the communication landscape, so much so that the young and old alike now enjoy a wide-range of media offerings. And this appears to jeopardize the purpose and virtues of traditional modes of communication in traditional Igbo setting.

II. Communication: An Overview

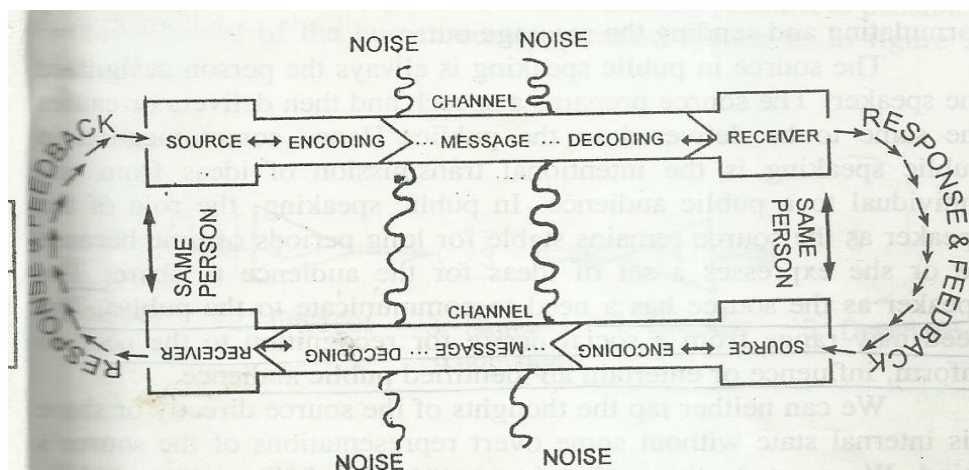
Perhaps, a highlight on the concept of communication at this point may be necessary not only for a richer understanding of the meaning and elements in a typical communication to process, but to also sharpen our perception of the indigenous modes of communication.

The term communication has its roots in a Latin word called '*Communicare*' which means to share or establish commonness. It could be said to be the exchange of meaningful messages between and among persons or groups. Fiske (1990, p.2) sees communication as "*a social interaction through messages*", while Emery cited in Ebeze (2002, p.27) posits that "*communication is the act of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one person to another*". As for Nwosu (2000, p.2), communication simple "*refers to the sharing of meanings, ideas, thought, experiences, information or opinions from person to person, from person to group or even from group to group*". From the foregoing definitions, it is obvious that communication is a two-way process that must of necessity include "*who says that, to whom, through what channel and with what effect*". Merrill et al cited in Izuogu (2010, p.56).

It is worthy of note here that as a process, communication takes place in a frame work that consists of *source, encoding, medium, receiver, decoding, response, feedback and noise*. The implication is that it is a dynamic, or on-going, progressive and ever-changing activity. It is something that is never static because its elements interact with one another, and such interactions result in some progressive changes in the course of time. It is an indication that communication is not a fixed sequence of events but an on-going event that reflects dynamic interrelationship among many simultaneously occurring variables. Communication could be intrapersonal, interpersonal, interpersonal machine-assisted, group, mass or cybernetic. Through communication, the society is informed, educated, entertained, socialized, mobilized and motivated. In fact, it is an inevitable aspect of human existence as aptly captured this by Cicero:

If a wise man were granted life of abundance of everything material, so that he had the leisure to contemplate everything worth knowing, still, if he could not communicate to another human being, he would abandon life.

Graphic Representation of the Elements in a Typical Communication Process



Culled from Ezeukwu & Nwanze 2000, p. 22

On the other hand, indigenous modes of communication are the traditional media/ channels of communication developed and used by the local people to meet their needs for information, education and entertainment (Aneto & Aneto cited to Eze 2016). The above cited scholars went further to state that indigenous modes of communication are the vehicles the common people employ for the delivery of their messages through the use of oral languages and cultural contexts which the community members can easily understand and identify. To Nwabueze (2010), indigenous modes of communication are customized traditional channels which people in specific societies adapt in sharing ideas, meanings, values and information dissemination. Ugboaja (1979) sees it as:

The product of inter-play between traditional community's customs and conflicts, harmony and strives, cultural convergences and divergences, cultural specific, tangibles and intangibles; interpersonal relations, symbols and codes and oral traditions which include: mytheology, oral literature poetry,

music, dance, drama, costumes and similar abstractions and artifacts which encompass peoples factual, symbolic cosmological existence from birth to death and even beyond death (p. 43).

Indigenous modes of communication according to Boafa (2006), provides horizontal communication approaches to stimulate discussion and analysis of issues, as well as sensitizing and mobilizing communities for development. In the words of Ansu-Kyeremah cited in (Eze 2016), it is:

any form of indigenous communication system, which by virtue of its origin, forms an integration into specific culture, serves as channel for messages in a way that require the utilization of values, symbols, institutions and ethos of the host culture through its unique qualities and attributes (p.8).

According to William & Udo (2010), indigenous modes of communication are an “admixture of social conventions and practices which have become sharpened and blended into veritable communication modes and system that have almost become standard practice for society”.

From the foregoing definitions and explanations, it is deducible that indigenous modes of communication are a complex system with a network of media systems, which pervade all aspects of life in a traditional African setting. They are all those activities (news, advertisements, entertainment etc); those instruments (ideophones, membranophones etc) and institutions or media (leaders of thought, community heads, town criers etc) that facilitate the actualization of the communication needs of a given society.

III. Statement of the Problem

Every society defines what it wants, describes how to achieve what it wants, designs appropriate instruments and devices strategies for the actualization of her set goals. Like every other society, the Igbos have their traditional media of communication which also serve as major instruments for achieving unity, peace and development among the people. But the emergence and eventual proliferation of modern media of communication, with their wide-range of offerings, appear to be hampering the growth and development of traditional media of communication among the Igbo-speaking people of South/East Nigeria.

It could be rightly argued that if the South/East must remain relevant in the global society that is tending towards westernizing all other cultures, there is urgent need re-enforce her indigenous modes of communication to compete favourably with their Western counterparts. Consequently, the trust of this paper is to identify the indigenous modes of communication (non-verbal) in traditional Igbo setting and comparing their goals with those of modern media within the framework of information dissemination.

IV. Literature

A couple of studies have actually been done on indigenous modes of communication and their impact on the people. In his study on the impact of traditional media in harnessing youth activities in Delta State”, Oziwele (2014, p.147) undertook a survey of 160 respondents of 18 years and above purposively drawn from Oleh and Ozoro in Isoko South and Isoko North Local Government Areas of Delta State respectively.

The findings of the study showed that:

- (i) majority of the youths still use the traditional media as sources of information
- (ii) traditional media are effective in managing youth activities because they provide reliable information
- (iii) youths have easy access to traditional media of communication
- (iv) and traditional media are quick in identifying the root of any problem.

The study however assessed traditional media as poor because they are not compliant with the digital age. It then recommends that since youths rely on information received from traditional media, that government and all change agents should use them to harness youth activities.

In a similar study, (Eze 2016, p.1) conducted a research on the “Influence of Social Networking Sites on the Traditional Communication System”, she set the objectives of the study to be “to examine the influence of technologically-introduced means of communication on Africa’s indigenous modes of information dissemination”. Using the descriptive survey research design, the researcher focused on literate youths of Elugwu-Ezike in Igboeze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

The study found among other things that the traditional modes of information-dissemination in Igbo land face the danger of extinction, due to the introduction of social network sites. It then recommends that in view of the cost-effective, easy to use and other advantages of the indigenous modes of communication, that they should be revitalized.

V. Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on Participatory Theory of Development Communication. It is a development theory which encourages people to take control of their social environment and work towards solving the problems mitigating human well-being and happiness. Ihejirika (2001, p.55) says participatory development communication involves group action, a putting together of people's resources and capacities towards solving their common problems.

The participatory theory is a fall-out of the dominant paradigm theory which was criticized by Latin American Scholars for its top-down approach, non-inclusion of the people on the issues and matters that concern them and over-dependence on the industrial world. These criticisms sparked-off a plethora of research projects that resulted in a robust literature exploring participatory communication approaches to development. At the end of the day, participatory theory emerged as the right communication strategy. The significance of the participatory theory here lies in the fact that it advocates for the adoption of all media of communication (developed and undeveloped) for people to widely-participate on social issues that involve them and their respective communities.

VI. Methodology

This study adopted the textual analysis method of research. The research design aims at collecting data from textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines seminar papers, theses, dissertations etc. for the purpose of describing the characteristic features of the population in a systematic and comprehensible manner. This method is considered most appropriate for the study because it focuses on the qualitative examination of secondary sources of data. The population of this study comprises non verbal forms of communication among the five Igbo-speaking states of South/East Nigeria viz. Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo.

VII. Indigenous Modes of Communication in Traditional Igbo Setting

Every society has an identifiable system of communication that is peculiar to it, and such system of communication could be organized or unorganized; modern or traditional, verbal or non-verbal. Whatever be the case, such systems of communication must originate from the societies being referred to, or must be the dominant ways of exchange of ideas amongst the people. For the purposes of this exercise, we shall be concerned with non-verbal modes of indigenous communication in traditional Igbo setting. In part of the world (Igbo land) several instruments have been developed and adopted as modes of communication among the people. It is therefore the cordial assignment of this paper to identify/discuss those modes of communication, with particular reference to their cultural implications.

Wilson cited in Nwabueze (2010, pp. 31-33) had earlier classified these modes of non-verbal communication under ten (10) headings viz *Idiophones, Membranophones, Aerophones, Symboligraphics, Signals, Objectifics, Colour Schemes, Music, Extra-Mundane Communication and Symbolic Displays*.

- **Idiophones:** These are traditional media of communication that can be described as self-sounding instruments. They are technical wares which produce sounds by mere hitting them with something and they include gongs of (wooden and metal types), i.e. ekwe, ogene, ikoro etc.

Ekwe: This is a piece of wood carved hollow which when beaten with a piece of stick or metal produces a dry but penetrating sound *ko-ko-ko-ko*.

Ogene: This is a metal disc with a folded rim which when struck with stick or a piece of metal produces a resonant sound *gbom-gbom-gbom-gbom*. In a typical traditional Igbo setting, these instruments are manipulated to produce sounds that make meaning. Whenever the *Ekwe* or *Ogene* is beaten in any area of the community, the aim is usually to attract and hold people's attention for oral messages like sweeping of market, clearing of bush paths, summon to village squares etc.

Ikoru: This is a big tree trunk hollowed out and slit open in one small area which gives a dum-dum sound when struck with a stick. Till date, *Ikoru* remains the fastest means of transmitting messages of community-wide importance in traditional Igbo setting. It occupies a central position in the governance of the community and it is considered a sacred instrument that must not be owned by an individual. It is used only on such important occasions as summoning people for emergencies, announcing sighting of the moon that precedes commencement of new yam festivals etc. and must not be beaten for frivolous reasons. Anyanwu (2005, p.80) records that the type of message the *Ikoru* sends across is dependent on the rhythm or tone of the instrument, while Ebeze (2002, p.31) submits that the types of message sent by *Ikoru* depends on the "rhythm, intensity and interval of sound". According to Anyanwu, if the *Ikoru* is beaten fast and repeatedly, it signifies emergency consequent upon which every able-bodied young man is supposed to hurry to the village square in response to the *Ikoru*. He argued that such response to the call of *Ikoru* must be quick and swift; otherwise penalties will be imposed on offenders. Thus, in traditional Igbo setting, there is this adage which says "a man responds to the call of the *Ikoru* with whatever is at his disposal at the moment". Generally, women are forbidden from responding to the call of *Ikoru*.

- **Membranophones:** These refer to traditional modes of communication in which sounds are produced through the vibration of membranes they are made of. They include all forms of skin or leather drums that can be beaten with stick or bare hands to produce the desired sound. The drum is a good example of membranophone. It is made of a hollow cylinder with leather parchment on top. In Igbo land this instrument is known as *Ekpete* and is used for praise-singing or summoning young men for communal labour. It performs similar communication functions to that of *Ikoru*, though not as sacred as the *Ikoru*. In appreciation of the importance of *ekpete (drum)* as a traditional means of communication amongst the people, the foremost communication scholar of our time, Professor Frank Ugboajah (late) avers.
Drums communicate from a verbal basis through signals, speech and dance at ceremonies, in puberty rites, at funerals and by drumming organizations such as: popular bands, hunters and warrior companies. Ugboajah (1977, p.12).
- **Aerophones:** Aerophones produce sounds as a result of the vibrations coming from columns of air. The *opi* (horn) is a good example of aerophone and there are two types of *opi* (horn)
 - (i) Antelope horn-which is the smaller type of *opi* and a replica of modern day trumpet. It is used to summon the youths, ginger them during communal labour and sing praises of brave deeds during ceremonies.
 - (ii) Elephant horn-is a bigger type of *opi* that is usually owned by titled and wealthy men. It is only blown by the owners during festivals as an indication that they belong to a special class in the society.
- **Symboligraphics:** These refer to traditional media of communication in which symbols are used to pass on information which are generally tied to the culture of the people. The *omu* (plume of oil palm tree) falls under this group and is generally recognized as a non-verbal form of communication in traditional Igbo setting. For instance, if someone is carrying a knot of *omu* in his mouth, it symbolizes that such a person should neither talk nor be talked to (Anyawu 1993, p.53). If *omu* is tied round a piece of land, it implies that people are barred from entering that land, (it is under dispute); if tied to a vehicle, it means that the vehicle is carrying a corpse. On the other hand, if it is found among raw food items like cassava, yam, plantain, potatoes etc., it signifies that those food items are for sale.
Other meanings could be derived from the *omu*, depending on circumstance and usage. For example, in a typical Igbo setting any man who does not want to marry girl arranged for him, conveys his feelings by sending the girl to her parents with a keg of palm-wine stuffed with *omu*; whereas the man wants to marry the girl arranged for him would send such a girl home with a keg filled with palm wine and *omu* tied to its mouth. Oreh (1982, p.81) records a slightly different practice amongst the Ikeduru people of Imo State, Nigeria. According to him, if a girl is sent to a man she does not want to marry; she communicates her objection by returning the traditional keg of palm-wine meant for her parents through an intermediary, whereas if she returns the keg herself it means she has accepted the hands of the man in marriage.
- **Signals:** Signals refer to physical embodiments of a message as can be seen in gun and canon types of explosives. Guns and canons are some of the indigenous modes of communications among the Igbos. Prior to this time, tradition made it mandatory for every male adult of Igbo extraction to own a locally-made den gun. But today, such is being gradually replaced with English made single or double barreled and other sophisticated guns. Whenever an Igbo woman puts to bed (boy or girl), the husband or any of his relatives announces that by releasing a gun shot. On the other hand, once a shot is fired by an Igbo man behind his wife, who is being led to her parents, it sends a clear signal that the man has divorced the woman and that such decision is irrevocable.
Canon is a type of explosive buried beneath the surface of the earth and usually detonated with a flame to produce heavy and far-reaching sound. The canon known variously in Igbo land as *otutu*, or *Kurutu* or *mkpo n'ala* as the case maybe is the highest form of explosive used to convey to distant villages and communities messages about arrival, departure and demise of illustrious citizens. For instance, the repeated firing of canons at intervals and for some days in Igbo communities signifies not only the demise of a dignitary, but the earnest commencement of funeral rites. In fact, the 21-gun traditional salute that today heralds the arrivals of great men could be said to have derived its significance from the Igbos.
- **Objectives:** These are culture specific modes of traditional communication that present themselves in concrete forms. They include concrete objects like *kola-nuts*, *native white chalk (Nzu)*, *charcoal*, *eggs*, *feathers*, *cowries*, *white pigeon*, *white fowl* etc.

In all parts of Igboland, offering of Kola-nuts to a visitor signifies that such a visitor is welcome with open mind. To further demonstrate his/her open-mindedness and sincerity, the host usually takes the kola-nut and kisses it with the tip of his tongue before presenting it to the visitor (a sign that the kola-nut is free from poison). Thereafter, the kola-nut is blessed, broken and eaten by both parties. Note that kola-nut is usually presented in

multiples so that the guest or other titled men can take some home as a testimony of the warm reception accorded to them.

The native white chalk represents welcome, unity, joy, mystical power etc. for example, if a messenger sent to another community is clutching the native white chalk (*Nzu*), it means that he is a messenger of peace. In a similar vein, if someone draws a single vertical line with white chalk (*Nzu*) upon receiving a visitor, it signifies peace. As a mark of welcome, Igbo tradition requires that visitors are given *nzu* to rub on their feet; while unity or togetherness is demonstrated by drawing four vertical lines representing the four traditional Igbo market days of (*Eke, Nkwo, Orié and Afo*) and crossing same with the one horizontal line. Family members, well-wishers and friends express their joy on the arrival of new-born babies by rubbing their faces with native white chalk. In most cases, a pot of *nzu* is kept at the entrance to any compound where a baby has been delivered so that visitors could share in the joy by dipping their hands into the pot and rubbing the substance on their faces. Note that apart from rubbing *nzu* on their faces, visitors go the extra mile to rub the substance on their left or right arm depending on the sex of the new born baby boy. Whereas rubbing the *nzu* on the left arm signifies the arrival of a baby girl, rubbing the substance on the right arm signifies the arrival of a baby boy.

Native doctors also make ritualistic use of the native white chalk. For example, when rubbed across the left eye, it sends a clear signal to all and sundry that the witch doctor has entered a spiritual realm and is capable of not only detecting hidden mysteries, but able to remove evil spirits through herbal medication or sacrifices.

Charcoal represents war. In the event that any community wants to declare war on her neighbor, such community sends a messenger to that neighbor with charcoal.

Eggs are used for sacrifices and spiritual enquiries. Whether one is making sacrifices or spiritual enquiries, eggs must be involved. If an egg used in making sacrifices or enquiry is thrown to the ground and it refuses to break, such sacrifice or enquiry is considered not acceptable by the gods.

Feathers and cowries are worn as ornaments by only witch doctors and titled men, especially, during festivities. A feather put at the right side of a cap portrays the wearer of such cap as a titled man, while certified native doctors wear their cowry-bangles on the right hand.

Pigeons and fowls are sacrificial materials. While pigeon represents peace, fowl represents innocence, which is why pigeons are used for peaceful sacrifices while fowls are used for purification rites.

- **Colour Schemes:** This is the use of various colours to convey specific meanings. The basic colour schemes are black, white, red, purple, green, yellow etc. In traditional Igbo setting, if somebody is dressed in black (up and down), it means that the person is mourning someone. White connotes purity/innocence, which is why any person who is wrongfully accused of any evil portrays his/her innocence by parading the length and breadth of his or her community in overall white garment. Red represents danger. Red cloth is used to notify people of danger prone areas such as erosion sites, stationary vehicles, buildings that are about to collapse etc. To Igbo youths, purple colour signifies love. So, youths in the area, register their willingness to get married to the opposite sex by decorating themselves in purple garments and ornaments.

In contemporary society, colour schemes play vital roles. In road traffic, colour lights are used to indicate when motorists should stop, get ready to move and move. For example, red light means 'stop', yellow light means 'ready to move' while green means 'move'.

- **Music:** Music is the combination of local instruments to produce sound that passes across a message. In some cases, such sounds produced by local instruments are complemented with songs to eulogize, criticize and satirize people based on their deeds or misdeeds. For instance, we have moonlight songs and masquerade songs (*egwu onwa and egwu ekpe*) through which negative and positive behaviours are condemned or commanded as the case may be. Music enjoys the dual advantage of entertainment and infotainment in traditional Igbo setting.
- **Extra-mundane communication:** This refers to communication between the living and the dead in a supernatural realm. It could assume a one-way flow whereby the gods or spirit of the dead pass messages across to the people or messages are transmitted from the people to their gods/spirit of dead. Sometimes it could assume a two-way flow, whereby witchdoctors convey the prayers of the people to their gods and receive feedback. Such prayers may be for good planting season, protection in times of war or danger, detection of criminals, punishment of criminals etc. This type of communication is usually achieved through invocation, libations, incantations, sacrifices, spiritual chants, rituals, trance, hysterics etc. For example if an Igbo man dies mysteriously, elders of the deceased family will go to a

native priest and invoke the spirit of the dead in order to know what killed that person. Other practices like divination (*igba aja*), oath-taking (*inu iyi*), cursing (*ibu onu*), witchcraft etc. constitute extra-mundane communication. Modern forms of communication with gods or spirit of the dead are found in obituary and memorial notices published in the print and broadcast media.

- **Symbolic Displays:** This is a kind of communication that involves facial expressions and body-movements like smiling, sighing or hissing, winking, shoulder-shrugging, finger-snapping, scratching of the palm, leering, waving of hand, sticking out of the tongue etc. All these modes of communication are culture-specific to the Igbos and are generally recognized. For example, scratching the palm of the opposite sex in traditional Igbo setting culturally means “I love you”; whereas waving of hand is generally recognised as greeting.

Goals of Indigenous Modes of Communication in Traditional Igbo Setting

There are a variety of traditional modes of communication in Igboland. Even though these modes of information-dissemination differ from medium to medium, the goals remain largely the same. Wilson (1991), Nwodu and Fab-Ukozor (2003) have captured those goals to include: News content, Directives, Advertising content, Public Relations content, Entertainment content and Educational content.

News Content: One of the primary goals of the indigenous modes of communication like its modern media counterpart is to disseminate basic information on recent events and up-coming ones that are of importance to the citizens. This may range from information on news of births, deaths, visitation of sanitary inspectors, commissioning of electricity, road, health, water and other projects; to coronation of Ezes, award of chieftaincy titles etc.

Directives: This comes in the form of information or announcements on community services that require citizens’ participation, of which defaulters will be penalized. It could be clearing of bush paths, road maintenance, clearing of old/new project sites etc. In this instance, town criers collate and transmit the directives of village/community heads and opinion leaders to the rest of the village/community people for the purpose of notifying citizens on specific community services and their attendant consequences on defaulters.

Advertising: In traditional Igbo setting, advertising is done through the display of products on tables, tree-stumps or flagpole. For instance, the hanging of condemned bicycle frames and condemned bicycle/car tyres on flagpoles are indications of the availability of bicycle repairers/vulcanizers respectively. Hawkers and vendors are known to advertise their wares in a sing-song manner that easily attracts attention of potential buyers. In some other cases, advertising is done in the form announcements at the end of church services.

Public Relations Content: In additional Igbo setting, Public Relations is usually carried out on person-to-person or person-to-organization basis in order to promote the philanthropic gestures of an individual or organization through praise-singing. Here, flutes and talking drums are often used for special performances by dance groups to eulogize a person or organization.

Entertainment Content: From the activities of the early men, there has been this attachment to the entertainment value of communication among the Igbos. Through musical performances, drama, story-telling, praise-singing or folktale, the Igbos have been known to re-enact their experiences in such a way that they serve as avenues for entrainment and relaxation to engender the spirit of oneness among the people.

Educational Content: The goal of indigenous modes of communication in traditional Igbo setting is not only to provide media of expression, but to also express knowledge in a manner that is acceptable and functional. Through story-telling, praise-singing, proverbs etc., wisdom and knowledge necessary for tackling personal and group challenges are inculcated into the people. In the process of such interactions, the younger generation is expected to learn the rewards of personal sacrifice, purposeful leadership and good behaviour.

Findings

Findings from this study indicate that:

1. Indigenous modes of communication in traditional Igbo setting are cost-effective. This is so because even the poorest person in the land can afford to access the culture of his/her people as expressed in songs, poems, plays, proverbs etc.
2. They are platforms for cultural transmission and preservation. In the course of our daily interactions in traditional Igbo setting, we use languages, symbols, signs etc. that are peculiar to our people. In doing that, the Igbo culture are not only transmitted but as well, preserved.

3. Indigenous modes of communication in traditional Igbo setting provide opportunity for immediate feedback. This is because the message-sender and message-receiver are not detached in time and space.
4. Indigenous modes of communication in traditional Igbo setting are interpersonal/interactional and participatory. They assume a two-way flow, with messages going back and forth, such that the people feel involved in decisions arising there from.
5. Traditional media of communication among the Igbos are people-oriented. This is because the form, content, nature, operations etc of the media are known to the people. That was the premise on which Professor Frank Ugboajah called it 'ora' media.
6. Indigenous modes of communication in traditional Igbo setting are conversational in style or language, as they adopt everyday language which the common man understands with ease. In most cases, the language is not only simple and conversational, but condescends to the use of local dialect.

VIII. Conclusion

There is no gain restating the obvious that technological innovations have brought lots of changes in contemporary modes of communication. However, the fact remains that whether one chooses to communicate through the indigenous or modern media of communication; the goals remain largely the same. But on a comparative scale, the indigenous modes of communication have been found to far more effective in both mobilisation and enlightenment, as well as in fostering a sense of identity, oneness, cohesion and order among the Igbos.

On that note, we conclude by agreeing with the submission of Wilson, (2008) that the indigenous modes of communication in Igboland have defied efforts by Western media to cannibalise and supplant them, and that they have equally refused to be seriously dislocated by Western culture or other external influences.

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