The Derailment of Core Cultural Values of the Igbo Youths in Traditional Society: An Appraisal of Some Selected Chieftaincy Title Names

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Abstract. Names are not just given for the sake of giving names in traditional Igbo communities respectively. Names are given according to the circumstances that surrounded the birth of a child and this actually makes such names to be symbolic and impregnated with meanings. In traditional Igbo communities, certain names are believed to be part or associated with molding of a person's character. However, Igbo names play some vital roles or significance shaping the lives of the people in Igbo societies. In the past, Igbo ancestors valued hard work, dedication to duty, honesty and sincerity of purpose, genuine and decent pursuit of wealth, community service, a sense of brotherhood and community ethos. With the high rate of ritual killings, kidnapping for a ransom, the celebration of wealth gotten through the syndrome of "*Igbu-Ozu*" or "*Obutelu-Ike*" whatever that means, it is very doubtful if Igbo known traditional and cultural values are still there, or are they regrettably in decline, as the nouveau riche afflicted by a new national malaise called affluenza, have conspired to attack societal cultural values through the nonesensesical names conferred on people during chieftaincy title festivals with different symbolic meanings that portrays money as the ultimate. This paper examines why such names are given in Igbo communities and aims to bring out their interpretive paradigm and to show how these names have conspired to derail and erode the minds of the youths in knowing the real ethics and cultural norms of the tradition of the Igbo people.
Key Words: Conflict, Symbolic, Money

Introduction
Before having a brain-storming acid test on this topic, the first question that comes to mind is: What is a name? It was William Shakespeare that asked this vital question and went further to explain that it is a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Basically, unwittingly, what is practically the behavioral and cultural attitude of people of the western societies to names and giving of names? Since time immemorial, the totality of the culture contact or assimilation has been a source of frustration and perhaps of wonderment to the people of Africa when they see or hear such strange names which the foreigner's living in their territorial boundaries bear and are still bearing up till today.

However, do to their own lukewarm attitude towards their own names – that is behavioral attitudes simply anchored upon their own culture, Africans invariably find it very difficult to understand and digest the reason why a white man should bear such names as green, stone, young and so on. For the sake of cross-fertilization of ideas as far as socio-cultural import is concerned, therefore, it is a *sine-qua non* and imperative to note that to the non-western man of African continent, or of Nigeria, and in the example or analogy chosen here the Igbo race in particular, names have their cultural, religious, political, economic, and sociological significance and symbolism.

No wonder why Ezeanya wrote that for the Igbo people, as for the Hebrews, a name is not just a personal label for the sake of identity. It means much more (Ezeanya, 1994). On this, Nabofa asserted that names of individuals, places, objects and events have meanings, they are not mere labels. Rather each name mirrors the mind of the originator at the time it was given

(Ezeanya, 1994). Also, we should note the fact that not only do names have their meanings and symbols among the Igbo Ethnic group in Nigeria, but this meaningfulness equally makes possible the use of names sociological tendency or phenomena such as the person – to-person, group-to-group, community-to-community relations and interactions in the African view, the total expression of the aesthetic, social control and maintenance of order and so on. At birth, a name is given to a child; there is a belief in the African culture that there is a notion of permanence about the name given. More so, one of the most important customs of the Igbo people eastern Nigeria in line or connection with birth of a child is, the naming ceremony. Again, Ezeanya asserted that:

> The naming ceremony is as important to the Igbo people as it was to the Hebrews of the old. One has only to read the old Testament to see the similarities between the Hebrew custom and that of the Igbos in this as many other aspects of life (Ezeanya, 1994).

Gender, Culture and Tradition

Insofar as culture represents routine behaviour that carries norms and values of a society, they are often not easily changed (Steady, 2005). Phil Okeke (2000) consistently argues that the tendency to regard gender discrimination inherent in cultural practices as being acceptable because it is the tradition. She goes on to illustrate how patriarchal continuities, even when they contain contradictions between statutory and customary law and the weaknesses in statutory law can lead to the strengthening of traditional justifications that still privilege men in relation to property rights, inheritance laws. This can result in relations of power which keep in place an inequitable social structure that privileges the dominant gender (Okeke, 2000). Saba Mahmood (2005) argues that it is under the pretence of tradition that women are enchained. Al-Bukhari (1928) cited in Fatima Mernissi (1991) asserts that "those who entrust their affairs to women will never know prosperity'' especially women that indulge themselves in sex as a currency. Richard Leppert (1987) argues that "this attitude reached its climax in the early nineteenth century in the establishment of rigid distinctions between both peoples at all levels of interaction''. It is on this notion that Fleischacker (1994) thinks that tradition refers to "the practices and standards of conduct that we accept unquestioningly when presented to us by our society''. He argues that "traditions are first and foremost the sum total of what is not argued in the transmission of knowledge and practice from parents to their children'' (Fleischacker, 1994).

It is on this position that Okafor & Emeka (1998) asserts that "culture and conventions are generally localized within culture groups but certain traits could be universal to the main groups. Because of this, even small communities have firm control of these customs and conventions and can therefore exercise social control of its members. The individual is subject to the community – bows to its laws and conventions and yields to all manners of sanctions''. On the contrary, John Brenkman (1987) argues that "it expresses a restless consciousness, one that senses in every work of culture the fact and the effects of social domination''. He stresses that "this restlessness, this critical attitude toward what is sometimes experienced as the realm of freedom and the very place of human meanings and values, also includes the hope of liberating the human capacity for thought and expression—a capacity that is promised or realized in still distorted and threatened ways in those forms of activity we call culture, art, and literature, philosophy and science'' (Brenkman, 1987).

Again, insofar as gender is analogous to difference but contains within it notions of inequality and is often viewed as a metaphor representing relations of power, nonetheless, analysis of power is often restricted to male/female power relations only, ignoring power relations based on race, class, ethnicity, age, nationality and so forth (Steady, 2005). According to Ruth Bloch, "the view that gender relations are cultural has been a standard cliché of the

anti-biological argument. The very term gender as distinguished from sex-has derived its widespread appeal from its supposedly cultural definition. As a cultural rather than purely physical fact, gender is meant to refer not merely to the male and the female but to the contingent and variable symbols that define masculinity and femininity within a particular social group'' (Bloch, 1996). Sadiq (1996) view this concept of gender as a form of socio-cultural distinction in the individual's physical outlook. Marin Whyte (1978) affirms that "these features give men more outlets and resources to use in dominating women, and more ideological support for the controls they place on their wives and daughters".

According to Brenkman (1987) "a major premise drawn from post historic hermeneutics is needed to keep the interpretation of ideology and utopia from slipping back into the original dichotomy. A text's meaning is not fixed once and for all, because it is determined by the situation of the time and changes with each distinct configuration of production and reception contexts''. Brenkman (1987) again argues that "historicism maintains that its object domain is unaffected by the interests of modern interpreters themselves; that the techniques of the historical-philological method are capable of dissolving such modern prejudices and recovering the real, original meaning of ancient texts; and that the concept of the classical can be employed as a value-neutral category of periodization and stylistic description''.

It is on this position that Dollimore (1995) argues that "there are two analytic perspectives which address first, this paradoxical centrality of homosextuality in our culture, second the phenomenon of homophobia, and third the construction of masculinity [the three things being closely related]. The one is a radical psychoanalysis, the other a materialist account of deviance''. However, Tapper (1991) asserts that inequality of status does not preclude able women from wielding considerable power within the household. Koskoff (1989) also observes that across culture women sometimes "connive" with this notion of male superiority. This concept of gender has been a serious discourse for sometime which made Aluede (2005) to assert that such roles structure our choices and guide our behaviour in an acceptable manner within the community we operate. However, gender issue is a condition of being either male or female and in this wise, Nfah-Abbenyi (2005) argues that men and patriarchal ideologies control women's reproductive and sexual capacities, and that as a result, women are trapped by their reproductive anatomy and by a dogma of compulsory heterosexuality.

In fact, in Nigeria, a typical Igbo man, in an Igbo society attaches much significance to this concept of gender inequality and this apparently is very noticeable in situations where a woman does not have a male child for the husband, she of course knows that her position is being threatened (Nwokocha, 2007). Ikenga-Metuh (1987) asserts that "a woman who cannot or has not given birth is a social misfit and if she has never conceived she is openly ridiculed and told that she is not a woman''. Augustine Nwoye (2007) argues that "an African marriage experiences a sense of disorder and distress where the above process of positive evolution in a marriage fails to place''. Strictly speaking, this social structure of the Igbo tradition, culture and hegemony as regards women is apparently "chauvinistic'' (Balogun, 2010) while it is also "a symbol of women's oppression" (Mahmood, 2005). This notion portrays "women as timeless victims of a ferocious patriarchal order'' (Zeleza, 2005).

This is why Ali Rattansi (1997) argues that "the feminization of the colonized male also of course occurred in the context of the masculinism of imperialism and the dominance of the male in the metropolitan order of things. It is therefore appropriate to turn to another recent contribution to post-colonialism literature in which many of these issues are particularly well highlighted''. It is on this position however that Van Allen (1972) asserts that "women, therefore, came second to men in power and influence''. Brenkman (1987) argues that this notion of dominance is a "socially organized forms of exploitation, coercion, and non reciprocity which structure the uses that one individual or group makes of another for the satisfaction of its own need''.

Conceptual Issues

Culture

Frankly speaking, culture is an embodiment of the people's way of interaction and behaviour. Dzurgba (1996) asserts that "culture provides a holistic picture of the way things should either be done or not be done. For this reason, culture is an essential element of society''. No wonder Clifford Geertz opined that culture is "designed to render one or another aspect of the broad process of collective self-redefinition explicit, to cast essentialist pride or epochalist hope into specific symbolic forms than dimly felt, (sic) can be described, developed, celebrated, and used'' (Geertz, 1973).

The Core Values of Igbo People

Value refers to clear desirable condition of a state of affairs. It is a belief system that something is worth striving for, good, desirable, indeed values mirror what an individual cherishes. It does appear that in Igbo land today, an extreme love for money, if not its silly glorification is a predominant and lucid societal value, oblivious of the copious rebuke in the Holy Book of the Christians and in the unwritten ritual code of conduct of the adherents of African Traditional Religion where it is stated that "love for money is the root of all evil". It will be an understatement to say that money is not good but the new wave of idiosyncrasy and ideology today that "money is the new God that some Igbo worship". Justifying this position, it has been postulated that because of what the Igbo people experienced during and after the civil war between 1967/1970 that made them to be enterprising and business oriented. No wonder Ikeanyibe (2001) describes the Igbo as the "resilient Nigerian Hebrews", who were "prevented from living legally, and prevented from surviving illegally'' (Ojukwu, 1998). Buttressing this further, Enobabor Idahosa, a Bini, attests that "the Igbo man has come to earn my respect because of his tenacity to survive. He seems to convert each of his set back into strength immediately. Thus, Igbo are like mysterious animals who feed as they are being shot: *Anu ana agba egbe ona ata nni*" (Ikeanyibe, 2001).

This love and quest for materialism has found symbolic expression in virtually all Igbo communities by the character of those that are invested with chieftaincy titles. Some of them are involved in money rituals, kidnappings, drug peddleling and yahoo yahoo. After involving themselves in all these illegalities, each and every one of their communities would recognize them. The next thing they would do is to seek for traditional titles then they go for confirmation of chieftaincy titles in their various communities, they are installed with different nomenclature of nonesensesical names that portrays money as the ultimate. Even the universities, otherwise citadels of learning, are not spared, where all manner of conceited persons are awarded honorary doctorate degrees. In some religious denomination, those with deep pockets are given special recognitions. In fact, with the gospel of prosperity being preached by later day Pentecostal pastors, our cultural Igbo cultural values seem to have been completely eroded and our youths are being held hostage by the belief in vulgar materialism.

Norms

Frankly speaking, norms are social, religious, economic, and political rules of behaviour that embody the core values in a giving society. In terms of morality in traditional Igbo society, religion is used to give scared backing or support to the customs, norms and values of an established society. In fact, where it has to do with the coronation of Kings in Igbo land to assert the man Eri as the authentic father of the Igbo, Falola (2003) posits that through this kind of commemoration of ancestor like Eri "the ruling dynasties in the various states forged relationships with one another by promoting brotherhood relations and the cordial relations among them were sometimes explained in affinal relationships". This is to counter the claims

that "the gospel in Igbo land achieved an amazing success where the walls of pagandom collapse Jericho-wise" (Ayandele, 1973). Also, in order to counter the belief that the retreat of the African gods is rather obvious do to the waves of nationalist resurgence at various points in time that made them to accept the verdict, arguably through the ritual ceremony of the *Olili-Obibia* Eri -- commemoration of Eri in Aguleri, it has been observed that this ritual somehow and "romantically sought to re-plant the gods back firmly in African's firmament" (Ogbu, 2002). Although, Idigo (2001) regrettably comments that in those days, other Igbo communities come to Aguleri to offer sacrifices in the sacred temples to request for one favor or the other and that helped to maintain the link with their root but since their massive conversion into Christianity, these activities became extinct, only Nri keeps to this norm. Idigo (2001) further argues that "the Eri and Aguleri connection is avoided in order to give them the opportunity of projecting Nri as the head of the Igbos. But the truth is that Eri is the founder of Igbo race".

African Concept of Names in Relation to Morality

In Africa naming is unique and meaningful, even among people of different subcultures within a speech community. Name for the Igbo is not just a tag, it have social, linguistic, historical, religious and philosophic interpretations. Because of the close tie between morality and belief, it is deductible name can be a guide to morality. The Igbo, therefore, through names live. Morality, of course, is the proper articulation of relationship between human beings. Alongside the fact of the place of name for the Igbo, is the power of word itself. The deep reflective character of the Igbo is reflected in their names vividly shown especially in their naming ceremony. Name in traditional Igbo culture itself is an art that carries with it a lot of information. Most names simply recount history of particular events such as war or any serious event that has to do with life. A look at the concept of name in Igbo culture may help reveal more about the Igbo morality and how this affects the formation of conscience.

African names are not mere labels, they are pregnant with meanings. They manifest a person inner reality and express African cosmology, the social, economic political and religious values of the society, the tensions and struggles of man in society. Thus Igbo names bear great moral import in the formation of conscience. Igbo name shapes their bearers. However, this has greatly changed with the modern time. Now people takes names without so much reflecting on what the meaning they may have. Naming and being named is very important for the Igbo, this may account for the unparallel desire of most Igbo people to belong to one form or the other. Name is important for identification and is in most cases the simplest form of identification. That's why the Igbo *bear Ahamefula (my name will not lost).* For the Igbo's, children are given theophoric names by their parents like, Ifeanyichukwu (nothing is more than God). With this, the child is made to believe and trust only in God (*Chineke*).

The study assumes a position that the Igbo do not give names to their children anyhow, it argues that names of children of the Igbo born are a projection of not only the whims of the parents but also a window through which we mirror their lives and concatenations. At times, such names constitute an aphorism unto themselves as well as an exemplum of their worldview, what we may in Igbo refer to as *Uwa Ndi Igbo*. Naming reveals the people's sociological and ideological culture, vis-a-vis, their folkways, fears and aspirations, joys and hates, ideals and values as well as their cultural and spiritual values in which they hold so dear. This paper observes that every generation sets its own value. That is why the philosophic meanings of naming of the previous generation of our forebears sharply contrast with those of the succeeding generations. It could be said, therefore, that one lives according to ones name. The naming of a child both humanizes and socializes him. It makes him a member of family society. Names are believed to carry with them their morality also. More implicitly than explicitly, these forms of formation of conscience show the wisdom of the ancients.

Igbo Worldview

A worldview has been referred to as how people perceive and explain their world, or the ways things are or change in their environment. According to Ogbu (1992) and Kraft (1979) a worldview can be understood in terms of a unified picture of the cosmos explained by a system of concepts, which order the natural and social rhythms, and the place of individuals and communities in them. In other words, a world-view reflects people's basic assumptions about, and perceptions of the universe, which give orientation and value to their lives. A people's worldview stands for their source of explanations for the ways things are in the world, including their theories of illness, death, and misfortunes, and how human afflictions and problems can be resolved. No wonder Animalu (1990) asserts that "a worldview or cosmological framework refers to a people's way of organizing their activities which explain the how and why of daily existence" (p. 43.). Worldviews are products of experiences so pregnant with drama that such experiences give rise to symbols or totems of some sort. The symbols give rise to thought or creative intelligence *(ako-na-uche)* and creative intelligence gives rise, in turn, to the customs and codes of the society, which are so internalized, from childhood onwards, that they go unquestioned as a way of life.

A cultural group such as the Igbo is able from their worldview, to explain reality, life and the human environment, and predict space-time events, and finally exert control over them. According to Ejizu (1986) the force of Igbo Religion as of any other religion or ideological system rests with the cosmology, which undergirds it. In the case of the traditional Igbo, all forms of individual and group religious practices occur within the broad outline of their worldview (Ejizu, 1986). Particular belief systems, such as the basis for the ritual naming of a child, the *Okuku Onye-Uwa* ceremony, and death and burial rites and other traditional values and practices emanate from and are validated by it. Animalu (1990) argues that it is not only religion, but also most other aspects of Igbo traditional socio-cultural life that come under the influence of Igbo worldview.

Igbo Social-Cultural and Moral Values

A major social practice among the Igbo is the ritual naming of the newborn. For an Igbo child, the ceremony of being named is the beginning point of being socialized into the membership of the community. Some of the names given to the child during such a ritual, as *Onwubiko* (death, I implore you) bear testimony to the suffering and desperation experienced by the parents preceding the child's birth. Such names often help to make the child to resolve, to acquire good decorum, to avoid adding, to the pain of existence already suffered by the parents before he or she was born.

Furthermore, influenced by Igbo worldview, Igbo birth rites initiate sex-role orientation at an early age. The child is expected to model after the reincarnated ancestor or deity represented by the godfather or godmother (the *Onye-Uwa).* People point to gestures, character traits, looks, and other signs to confirm that the child really is a reincarnation of a loved one or a deity. Thus, a middle-aged man may call a baby, grandfather because he perceives the baby as a reincarnated grandfather. From birth, rites of passage are designed to celebrate and initiate the child into the family and community. In the past, wealth and children were considered as, in one way, related. Children were more valued than money. This is expressed in the Igbo name *Nwakaego,* meaning, "Child is more precious than money".

Customary life among the Igbo is based on *Omenanil Omenala,* the ancestral rules of the land grounded on the laws of the earth goddess, *Ani/Ala.* Animalu (1990) listed the Igbo market week to consist of four days: *Eke, Orie, Afar* and *Nkwo.* Different towns or villages hold their markets on different market days. All local deities have special market days that are sacred to them. For the fact the Igbo perceived motion as cyclic changes of space and time, they used

the same names, as above, *Eke, Oye, Afar, Nkwo,* to designate both locations in space, and locations in the time of the four-day Igbo market week *(izu).*

Hence, among the Igbo, the assertion, "*Afamefula*" (may my name never be lost), becomes a matter of identity and a guiding principle in the lives of individuals, and communities.

Names and Morality

In Igbo cosmology, the Igbo are religious ones. This is because, it is a society based on the religious cosmology, a cosmology which looks at the world as a unified whole. It is society where life, its enhancement and preservations are cherished as a value. It is a society in which the inhabitants of all cosmic forces are expected to work in harmonious relationship in order to maintain an organic cosmic harmony. The traditional Igbo orientation to the ultimate is their great respect for morality and so they dread the consequences in-built in committing any offense against the Supreme Being, the ancestors, local divinities and deities. The ultimate, which a traditional Igbo person cherishes, is to live a good and worthy life here on earth, die and receive full and proper burial rites and finally rejoin his ancestors who lived well and died a good death. This could only be achieved within a decent moral order.

Some Nonesensesical Chief Titles Names that Derail the Cure Igbo Values

Before now, the Igbo are known for taken such tiles like '*Ogbuefi, Ogbuanyiya, Nze, Duru, Eze*' and so but do to the syndrome of what I can describe as '*Igbo Enwe Eze*'—Igbo does not have a King or leader which Okafor (1998) argues that "the saying is a political philosophy derived from the proto-type political ideology characterized by egalitarian and republican features and its political system is complex and dynamic which is based on the segmentary lineage system where every man is a god in his house; every village an autonomous community''. Harneit-Sievers (1998) argues that this "theory is welcome in current popular and political debates about chieftaincy, as it seems to be able to prove the character of contemporary Igbo traditional rulers titles''. Isichei (2004) asserts that "historians and ethnographers have always applied the word king to a wide range of dignitaries located at different points along a range from priestlike ritual figures to powerful rulers''. According to Isichei (2004) again "there is a proverb to that effect that the Igbo have no kings [*Eze*]. In some polities, including Asaba in the late nineteenth century, *eze* was a title multiplied deliberately, and held by many men as a safeguard against oppressive rule but it is now dying because of its ritual restrictions''. Buttressing this assertion, the symbolic interpretation of this proverb is that no one person rules any Igbo community and this made Francis Arinze to affirms that:

> The Ibos are unique among the other peoples of Nigeria in the decentralization of political authority in Iboland in the past. While the Yorubas had their mighty Obas and Fulanis their powerful Emirs, the Ibos' greatest political organization was often the town, village-group, or commune. Only Onitsha and some Western Igbo towns had the Obi or Kings, but the influence of these rulers was limited practically to their own towns (1970).

In other not to waste our precious time counting and recounting, an endless names in among Igbo speaking people of Hebrew origin, we have decided to select some the names given voluntarily by the Igbo parents. These classifications of names, bears most of the sociological implications as we have maintained all along in this paper. Although, the following Igbo names, drawn from the Nigerian and South African situation, equally depicts how the people use personal names to transmit their religious beliefs especially about God. A lot of information could be gathered from an Igbo name, as each one carries some significance and meaning. From an Igbo name, one could gather information such as the market day someone was born (*Okafor* means a male born on *Afor* day), their clan (*Nwaneri* means a descendant of

Eri), the profession of their father (*Ezeana* means the descendant of a priest of *Ani*), as well as the circumstances around their birth (*Ijeagha* refers to a child born during war).

Besides these things, a lot of Igbo philosophy is apparent in many names. Take for example, the meanings of some of these nonesensesical chieftaincy names:

Aka-ego: *Hand of Money*
Agba-Ego or Agba-Ego Nkiti: When money is Ignored, it will mess you up.
Akuamia: My Wealth or Money has germinated.
Aku-Ilili:
Aka-Ji-Aku: The Hand that has money.
Amulu-Onye-Na-Ego: No one was born with money.
Eze-Ego: The King of Money.
Okwuoto-Ekene-Eze: One who stands up to greet the king.
Odaliwu-Egenga: One that breaks the law without going to jail.
Osuofia: Clearer of bush or way.
Omeluora: One that does good for the people.
Isi-Mmili: The Head of the river.
Aka-Egbuchi-Onwa: Hand does not cover the moon.
Onwa: Moon.
Nwata-ji-Mma-Gbwue-Agu: The baby that killed a lion with matchet.
Nwanaya-Eze: The Child people are begging to become the people's King.
Ozo-Igbo-Ndu: The healer of the Igbo people's life.
Obata-Obie: When one comes every problem is solved.
Okwute-Ndi-Igbo: The Stone of the Igbo People.
Okwu-Ego: Money Matter.
Ego-Na-Ekwu: Money Talks.
Ukwu-Gbolu-Ego: The Leg that steps / stumbles on money.
Akpokuodike: When a man is called suddenly he answers.
Uche-Ego: Mind of Money.
E-Money: (The meaning of this slogan is not yet known).
Akpa-Ego: Money Bag.
Ite-Ego: Pot of Money.
Ogbuaku: The Killer of money or Money Killer.
Negative Consequences of These Nonesensesical Names among the Igbo Youths: A Proverbial Interpretation

Among Igbomina people in Osun State Nigeria, Igbo song which is used to praise and condemn good and bad behaviours among the people as the case may be is no longer rendered (Agboola, 1987). Ayantayo asserts that: It is also a pity that as a result of modernity African youth does not only find it difficult to speak in proverbs but cannot even understand it because they are less concerned about it. Sad enough, when a proverb is said, the youth have their own artificial and superficial meanings and interpretations to it. This development is doing havoc to African culture (Ayantayo, 2001). Basically, in Igbo traditional society, proverbs add good taste and flavour to speech as sugar does to tea and they lubricate, embellish and objectify societal ethical values and religious truths and render them suitable or palatable to the ears of the people who care to listen (Nabofa, 1994). Metuh comments that:

> Proverbs spring spontaneously from the people. They are *"vox populi"* … in profound sense and consequently, should be accepted as a true index of what a people regard as true, and are interpretative of the principles of life and conduct. Proverbs are therefore trustworthy witnesses of the social, political, ethical and

religious ideas of the people among whom they originated and circulate. … The use of proverbs is cultivated as an art and cherished as an index of good oratory and acquaintance with traditional knowledge and ancestral wisdom. The Zulu say that 'without proverbs, the language would be but a skeleton without flesh, a body without soul'. The Ovambo have it that 'a speech garnished with proverbs, parables and wisdom saying is pleasant to hear'. Proverbs, the Yoruba would say are 'horses for chasing missing words'. The Igbo people say 'proverbs are vegetable for eating words'. Another Igbo proverb claims that 'a child, who knows how to use proverbs, has justified the dowry paid on his mother's head (1987).

In this situation, when proverbs of this nature are given the African youth of nowadays would simply misinterpret it and not only that would equally treat such with contempt (Ayantayo, 2001). It is a pity that today most of the African cultural heritage, are allowed to be influenced and overshadowed by the Western culture and things are designed to suit European taste in Africa (Sofola, 1973). Now as it has to do with the negative influences these nonensesical names are having on the Igbo youths nowadays, Noun (2009) proverbially affirms that such names "tells of heroism, valiancy and intrepidity. Only those who could brave the night could foot-touch the drum or ascend it. No coward, however rich, can dare it. ….. is only for the brave''. No wonder Guenther (1975) asserts that such men "are widely idolized – especially by boys and youths adults – their song, their idiosyncrasies of dancing and their exploits are talked about widely", and in that form they are "searching for spiritual ideal" (Warren, 2006), and "personal identity" (Alford, 1988). Guenther (1975) argues that "to a large extent the wealth, prestige and glamour of the dancers stem directly from the dance and its inherent affective, integrative and moral power''.

This is evident in the fact that Igbo cultural values are now given serious and negative expression by the material condition of the present society, the prevalent mode of production, the method and manner societal wealth is produced, accumulated and distributed. These kinds of nonensesical chieftaincy names have reconfigured and rekindled a passion for money as the next "God" in the psyches of many Igbo youths where cultural values and identity had been derailed and eroded under the class segregation and understanding that money is the ultimate through the Syndrome or philosophy of '*Igbu-Ozu* or *Obutelu-Ike'* that is now in vogue in Igbo land. Today, majority of the Igbo youths leave a life of debauchery believing that they will get rich quicker without hard work which contradicts the philosophy of their great ancestors that hard work pays.

Scholarly Argument against the Backdrop of These Names

These nonsensical chieftaincy names actually shows that Igbo people don't know their God(s) and they don't have respect for their culture as acclaimed by some scholars. But even from my personal and careful observation about the Igbo culture in relation to African ideologies and ways of life, there seems to be a divided approach and loyalty among the Igbo Christians, a clear case is that, as Africans, the Africanness bestowed in us by God will spur us to act as Africans by omission or commission. It is a truism that even with more 80 percent of the Igbo population claiming to be professing Christianity, yet, many of them are still rooted in their old beliefs, and the culture of the South-East is neither Christian, nor Traditional. This is a source of worry and confusion in many communities in Igbo land today, and is seriously affecting the pace, and true character of community development. No wonder Leith-Ross (1965) made an observation that:

An Igbo attends communion at the same time as he believes in the potency of traditional magic; he ties up in the same handkerchief the Rosary and the traditional talisman and plants side by side in the garden around his new cement and pan-roofed house the hibiscus of civilization and the *ogirisi* tree of pagan family rites.

Like the proverbial Igbo maxim about a bird called bat, South-Easterners are neither modern nor traditionalist. In fact, it shows a cultural catastrophe and confusion galore. No wonder Fanon (1967) asserts that as pesticides kill germs so, does Christianity destroy the traditions of the colonized peoples. From my own thinking, it is interesting to note that Frank Fanon might not have had any animosity with Christianity as a religion except with the method European missionaries and imperialists used it to enslave, colonize and ended up reconfiguring the brains of the African people especially the Igbo people of South-Eastern Nigeria. Pobee (1979) asserts that their negative views sometimes due to straight arrogance, often taking the form that anything non-European could not be good. Sofola (1973) argues that through "their self-declared superiority of their culture, a declaration which was strongly backed by ethnocentricism and racial arrogance and the points of bayonet and machine guns, they went all over the non-western world and Africa to impose their culture''. He insists that "the result is the cataclysm and the warped mentality in which the world suffers now'' (Sofola, 1973). It is on this position that Onunwa (2002) asserts that the early Christian missionaries behaved like social revolutionaries, but whole trying to achieve the goal of their mission – the conversion of Africans to Christianity. Nabofa (1994) affirms that is the reason why the early Christian missionaries that had contact with Africa, instead of developing, civilizing and educating Africans, they succeeded in under developing, deschooling, and eventually producing half-baked Christian converts. Achebe (2012) argues that when the Europeans came to Africa, they knew very little of the history and complexity of the people and the continent which made them to believe that Africa had no culture, no religion, and no history. They equally castrated and brain washed Africans by carrying the propaganda that Africans were savages, and their culture was primitive and barbaric, and cannot cope with the requirements of modern society (Metuh, 2002). Horton (1968) argues that this "is an even poorer index which to judge traditional religions in pre-literate culture''. Johann Reinhold Forster (1778) cited in Chidester (1996) affirms that Africans were so "degenerated, debased, and wretched'' that they had forgotten their "ancient systems''. Pointing to this assertion, Eric Severied laments that "not that Britain really educated these people. Britain gave just enough of them the chance to educate themselves, and what they learned was why they must rid themselves of Britain and how to do it fast (Ndabanigi, 1959). Pobee (1979) asserts that outsiders misunderstood many of the African ways of doing things, while ignorance of the organizing principles of African sacred music prevented serious and more accurate study of the musical instruments (Fleurant, 2000). Insufficient research and lack of adequate knowledge of the language coupled in some cases with racial bias, resulted in a number of wild speculations and misrepresentations by certain missionary writers and ethnographers of the Igbo traditional belief and practice relating to such sacred drums contributed also to this negative attitude (Ejizu, 2002). Sofola (1973) argues that some were either ignorant of the rich values of their African past or were made in their education to look down upon them or shun the values entirely. Ohadike (2007) affirms that "one of the aims of assimilation is to achieve political and cultural control by mounting a vicious attack on the victim's consciousness and self-esteem. When put in motion, the victim begins to hate the customs of his people, their language, music and religion''.

This is to counter what scholars said about the religion of the natives like the Igbo. According to Leonard (1906) "the religion of the natives [Africans] is their existence and their existence is their religion. It supplies the principles on which their law is dispensed and morality adjudicated. The entire organization of their common life is so interwoven with it that they cannot get away from it''. No wonder, Shorter (1978) affirms that "…Africans are notoriously religious'', while Isichei (1976) particularly asserts that "the Igbo are nothing if not profoundly religious, and all accounts of their life reflect the fact''. Ezeanya (1980) posits that in Africa, "life is religion, and religion is life''. Ekeke (2013) argues that "this means that

religion could not be explained away in Africa and whoever tries it will be seen as a stranger to Africa''. Mbiti (1975) asserts that religion is by far the richest part of the African heritage.

Igbo Names and Its Moral Implications

According to Madu (1997) "the term 'morality' derives from the Latin plural "mores", meaning morals or manners. It is used to mean the generally accepted code of conduct in a society or within a sub-group of society. Secondly, it is used to mean the pursuit of the good life" Obiefuna cited in Madu (1997) maintains that "Morality is man's conscience determined by his future, which serves as potentials in moral decision. Obiefuna here considers morality from the eschatological point of view. Metuh cited in Madu (1997) distinguish four elements of morality as:

Ground of morality; or what makes an act good or bad. That is, that from which is an act or prohibition device its binding force. For example by law, custom, religion, society, etc. motive of morality: the reason for which an individual does a certain act. Criterion or morality: Measures by which we know what is right or wrong (i.e. conscience). Sanctions for morality: or reward or punishment which usually goes with morality but not essentially part of it.

Arinze (2001) states that "in Igbo traditional society religion is the basis of morality both through the beliefs of the people as well as through the sanctions imposed by customs and prohibitions".

General Symbolic Functions of Names

There are so many roles name plays in the socio-cultural, socio-religious, socio-political and economy of the traditional Igbo society. From the history of mankind Sofola (1973) argues that the antics and dynamics of social behaviour and interaction in human communities, communities of social animals with absolute powers for proper reasoning and verbalizing, actually calls for the performance of the adaptive functions in which the entire members adapt to one another and to the social environment. In another way, adjustments of desires, rights and temperaments of the whole individuals are encoded such that they do not jeopardize those of others; complete resolution of conflicts and the elimination of disruptive factors are somehow some of the essential nutrients that a society must grapple or contend with. More so, if organization, order and stability are to be maintained in our human society, then these vital problems must be grappled with squarely. These would be seen from the names given in traditional Igbo society and their functions, among these are:

1. Names primarily are for identity.
2. Names acts as an order to maintain and make peace among the community members.
3. Names acts as a warning against and challenge envy which usually leads to conflict in the community.
4. Names challenge the prospective evildoer to enable him refrain from evil.
5. Names seek to maintain wholesome relationships between man and the supernatural.
6. Names seek to insult or appeal to the players of the heavenly spiritual abode and the mundane earth to achieve a welcome goal.
7. Name acts as a communicative medium to affirm people's belief in the sincerity and justice of God, other ethical deities and ancestors to defend the defendless and the innocent.
8. Names signifies or symbolizes seniority

Conclusion

Almost every Igbo personal name, and those of things and places, has deep theological, philosophical, sociological, ethical, economical and political meanings. They express the people's belief in the different characteristics or attributes and capabilities of God, other ethical

deities and the ancestors and other objects of worship the sacred, ritualized and profane. In Igbo tribe respectively, names are called or announced daily, and when they are used the ideas that are surrounded and connoted with them are directly transmitted and received. However, most of the Igbo personal names are prayerful and thanksgiving expressions. Basically, like all other forms of prayers, they communicate religious ideas a great deal in Igbo paradigm. This brief study has attempted to explore the implications of naming and morality among the Igbo. Sources consulted accede the fact that naming has social, linguistic, philosophic colouring. The Igbo names children bear are a reflection of their parents' thoughts and life's travails. Naming among Igbo people showcases their fears and aspirations, joys and hates, ideals and values as well as cultural and spiritual values in child rearing practice in Africa. In effect, we should love our language and live our language by giving our people chieftaincy titles to those illustrious individuals that distinguished themselves through hard work and honest ways good names, for our culture is our essence as a people. All these could be anchored by revitalising those old Igbo culture, norms and values of hard work, honesty, sense of sacrifice and desisting from naked pursuit of wealth at all cost.

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