

The Use of Information and Communication Technology and Cultural Cannibalization of the Igbos: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract:

The research takes a reflective look into cultural cannibalization which describes the influence one culture has over another culture. It seeks to x-ray different aspects of the Igbo culture which have been compromised, influenced, or totally subsumed by another culture which is superior. A descriptive survey was carried out in five different states of the Igbo land. By employing convenience sampling technique, 100 respondents were selected with 20 respondents from each of the five states of the Southeastern part of Nigeria which is the native land of the Igbos. The result was critically analyzed to ascertain how cultural cannibalization and ICT usage are correlated. It was observed that the cultural values of the Igbos such as language, respect for elders, marriage and family, sanctity of life, food, modesty in dressing, religious allegiance to their deities, farming, craft, trade, traditional governance and justice have been cannibalized in one way or the other with worship of deities, educational system and language being the mostly cannibalized culture with a percentage of 92, 90 and 82 respectively. While some of these aspects of culture that have been cannibalized has led to improved style of living, it poses a danger of not sustaining the cultural identity of the Igbos hence the need to come out of this perennial problem and foster cultural sustainability and self confidence in the Igbo Nation.

Key Words: Culture, Cannibalization, Value, ICT.

Introduction:

Culture is very crucial in the life and advancement of any given society. Culture has many definitions as seen in many literatures, but there seem to be no uniformly agreed definition (Antonio, 2013). Nevertheless, the driving force of human behavior and learning attitude is rooted deeply in one's culture (Harris *et al.*, 2004). People can be identified through their culture. Conversely, a particular culture can be identified by a people's behavior that they mutually share with other people in each society thus giving rise to a sense of inclusivity and identity. The elementary components of culture include people's thoughts well as their material products (Bodley, 1999). Every culture is distinct and unique in terms of their value system, and this goes a long way in determining the attitudes and perceptions of individuals in a given society as well as their reactions to varying life circumstances.

Because of culture uniqueness, understanding different cultures and cultural tolerance are becoming more important due to cross-cultural interactions with many individuals from different countries cultures (Lee, 2006). Interestingly, cultures in its different dimension depend on what individuals or humans can learn, imagine, or think. Culture must be learnable, livable and (Keesing, 1974, Kluckhohn, 1951). Lee (2006) also posits that culture is the way members of a society live.

According to Wiktionary (2021), cannibalization is a noun in which one thing consumes or takes another of the same kind. Figuratively, it refers to adaptation, borrowing or stealing plots, characters, themes, or ideas from one medium to another. Moreso, cannibalization in marketing or business is the introduction of a new product that harms the sale of an older product by the producer. With the above definition, cultural cannibalization or cultural cannibalism is an act in which one culture consumes or takes over another culture. It can also be said to be the act of adapting or borrowing an idea from a particular culture.

Cultural cannibalization is primarily a consequence of post colonialism on cultures and societies which has given rise to broad studies in recent times. A growing awareness of cultural overlap and hybridity according to Michell, (2020) is one of the three broad stages in which post colonialism studies has evolved both as a theory and as a study cultural and political change. He also opined that cultural cannibalization involves a form of post-colonial education where the power that colonizes a particular society envelops either a larger population or native elites' way of thinking and world view. The agents of cannibalization therefore include among other things; perceived inferiority of the cannibalized culture, altering one's culture while in another country of different culture, exoticism where the cannibalizer's native life and ways are seen as the best and normal way of living.

Cross-cultural exchange due to social, political, and religious activities also leads to cultural cannibalization. Other determining factors of cultural cannibalization include hegemony, that is the influence and might of the cannibalizer to make other classes to believe that their interests are for everyone, learning or adopting a new language and racism where one race is superior to other people of different race (Michell, 2020).

The fear of cultural cannibalization and loss of identity is at the back of the mind of every Nigerian patriot and cultural activists (Wilson, 1981). The lurks of identity crisis and fear of identity loss through foreign cultures cannibalizing indigenous culture can be alleviated when the indigenous cultures are presented at a level that could make it compete with some other cultures, either dominantly or peripherally. Cultural cannibalization in Nigeria is rapidly eroding our indigenous culture through the imposition of English language as official language which has made some people to forgo or forget their indigenous language. Therefore, cultural cannibalization leads to loss of identity because it involves the eating up of a particular culture by a foreign culture (Mowlana, 1996).

Research Questions:

The study seeks to provide answers to the following research questions;

1. What are the causes of cultural cannibalization?
2. How does ICT contribute to cultural cannibalization?
3. What areas of the Igbo culture and to what extent has the Igbo culture been culturally cannibalized?

Review of Related Literature:

Paul and Wales (2010) see culture as common beliefs or collaboration among members of an organization. The development of the principles and initial values that tailor the fabrics of a group or society are significantly influenced by the founders and proponents of culture in a particular place at a particular time. Although sometimes taken for granted by members of a society, culture defines the identity and distinguishes a society and recognizes the fabrics that connect a particular society to other societies in more subtle ways.

In managerial terms, Schein (1990) sees culture as 'how people feel about an organization, the system of authority as well as the level of involvement and commitment of the employees. In addition, culture was viewed as a widely held and shared set of values, beliefs and ideas. In the most basic terms, culture was defined as shared symbols, norms and values in a social organization (Walsham, 2002).

Don (1996) explained that one of the explanations for cultural cannibalization in Igbo land is that the Igbos were swift to perceive the superiority of Western education in the new colonial structure and that the Igbos were and are still very eager to accept change at the expense of their indigenous culture, hence the idea of

cannibalization. Before the advent of colonialization, civilization and ICT, the Igbo nation, cultural parches of the Igbos were well evolved but now cultural cannibalization has seemingly uprooted the people from the comfort of their culture and has placed the Igbos in a state of identity crisis and cultural dilemma.

It seems that cultural influence has eliminated the Igbos from their ancestral cultural practices, yet they are not deeply rooted in the new culture they have embraced (Joannes, 2018). This, as observed by Gladys (2017) is due to the contact the Igbos had with the Europeans and this has seriously influenced and affected by the culture of the white men in such a way that the indigenous culture has been considered inferior and at best relegated to the background.

This gives rise to societal influence where individuals reverse their beliefs, adapt their opinion or at other times, change their behavior because of social interactions with other people. Aguba (2005) noted that Igbos and Africa would like to do some of the things their hands find to do like a white man as they have probably learnt from their screens, for saking their own normal way of life hence giving rise to cultural cannibalization.

Based on the established concepts, this research seeks to trace the root of the Igbos and their cultural heritage with a view of considering the various aspects of the Igbo culture that has been eroded or cannibalized using ICT and globalization.

The Igbos, Origin and Cultural Values:

Due to paucity of evidence, helpful records or archeological findings useful in determining the date and time of settlement or place of origin., the origin of the Igbos according to Ilogu, (1974) will always remain a matter of conjecture Nevertheless, from the analysis of some sources like the fragmentary oral and local tradition of the Igbos and its correlation with some archeological

discoveries provide three schools of thought on the origin of the Igbos (Sabinus, 2018).

Foremost, the autochthony school of thought suggests aboriginality which suggests that the Igbo people have been where they are located from antiquity, arguing that they did not migrate to settle in their present habitation because they have remained and occupied their territorial position which correlates to the archeological evidence revealing that the Igbos were in occupation of parts of south-eastern Nigeria by 2000 – 3000 BC (Hartle, 1967). The antiquity of the Igbo probably goes back to five to six thousand years (Afigbo, 1981). This buttresses also the claims of an early man whom Sabinus quoted in an interview; “We do not come from anywhere and anyone who says we come from anywhere is a liar, write it down.’ (Sabinus, 2018).

The second school of thought explicates a process of internal migration of the Igbos moving from the Benue or from the Enugu Area located at the Southeastern part of Nigeria. The Niger-Benue confluence is regarded by scholars of this school of thought as the initial homeland of the Igbo people from which the Igbo hunters and gatherers migrated towards the South to the Nsukka-Okigwe cuesta (Sabinus, 2018).

The third school of thought argues about external migration theory where they assert that the Igbos descendants of the Jews and as such migrated from the Far East (Sabinus, 2018). The Nubian wars of Amenemhet and the conquest of Egypt by Hyas were believed to have made some of the Egyptians to settle in the Yoruba country of Oyo and in certain Igbo tribal areas, (Talbot, 1926). According to Nwabara (1977) when he quoted Niven, a colonial officer who wrote about the people:

“There are living today along the two great rivers of Nigeria many tribes using languages... who... for the most part have no traditions except almost universal one... have come from the East,

from Mecca, from Egypt and elsewhere but always from the East(p7).”

He noted also that some cultural characteristics of the Igbos are similar with that of the Jewish culture. To back this up, Basden (1966) also wrote.

“There are certain customs which rather point to Levitic influence at a remote period. This is suggested in the underlying idea concerning sacrifice and the practice of circumcision. The language also bears several interesting parallels with the Hebrew Idiom (p31).”

Having considered these three schools of thought on the origin of the Igbos, one underlying fact is that the Igbos do exist, and they have lived in their ancestral homes for thousands of years now. People are mostly assessed by the way they behave and as such are identified with their behavior as their way of life. The lifestyle of the ancient Igbos was like other people who lived in the difficult era of the pre-modern world. Before the British colonialism, their major preoccupation was to; live peacefully and harmoniously with themselves and higher forces that are not seen, have numerous children and grandchildren and to cultivate and produce sufficient food (Don, 1996). The Igbo people called ‘Ndi Igbo’ in their native term are one of the three largest ethnic group in Nigeria. Their occupations are mainly farming, trading and crafts. Agriculture is the dominant activity. Their native location is in the present-day Imo, Anambra, Enugu, Abia and Ebonyi states as well as parts of rivers and Delta states (Joannes, 2018)

Acquired cultural values are transmitted from generation to generation and not freely chosen (Joannes, 2018). Cultural values are inscribed deeply in the history and spirit of the people though individuals or groups of individuals may choose what they call their values. The Igbo nation’s cultural values are but not limited to; family and its name, sanctity of marriage, sacredness of human

life, respect for elders and parents, chastity, hospitality, communal living, family solidarity and support for relatives, collective child upbringing, reverence to supreme God and other divinities, fluent speaking of the Igbo language, good character, modest dressing and behavior, production of arts and crafts, judicious preservation of traditions, cooking good food, and celebration of feasts, symbols and festivals (Gladys, 2017).

Culture is full of values. The cultural values of people give rise to guidelines and rules that specify the behavior of members of society otherwise known as norms. These norms bound the members of society to the confines of their culture thus giving restrictions on what to do and what not to do. Deviation from the set norms in a society is considered a taboo. What is seen as a taboo in one culture may not be seen as such in other cultures or in European countries.

I.C.T and Other Agents of Cultural Cannibalization:

As ICT deals with mainly electronic gadgets that aid the transmission of information, the information can be passed through a video, texts or sound related to all angles of human life both in fashion, food, morals and so on.

The Igbos partially or adroitly have abandoned the cultural heritage of their land which made their lifestyle to be common among them. Presently, their cultural pattern had been gradually jettisoned such that one can barely identify an Igbo man with his living pattern (Gladys, 2017). According to Aguba (2005), Igbos and Africans at large would like to eat like the whites, speak, dress and drink like them. People are usually influenced by what they see or hear around them. This agrees to the statement of a Confucius scholar Xunzi who said: “What I see, I remember...” (Xunzi, 340 BC).

The Igbos are blessed with good cultural values which their forefathers used to live with and at such able to achieve good human development before the advent of colonization, post-

colonization, civilization which ushered in cultural cannibalization amongst the Igbos. According to Uwandu and Nwankwor (2006), change in culture must not be mistaken for dynamism in culture which is the susceptibility of culture to receive and add to itself certain other cultural values. People without culture are people without identity (Clifford, 2018).

ICT:

ICT has undoubtedly transformed the way groups, individuals and societies think, interact, feel, behave and communicate. According to Food and Agricultural Organization FAO (2021), ICT refers to all communication technologies, including the mass media applications, cell phones, the internet, computers, middleware, software, video conferencing, social networking, wireless networks and so on which enable users to access, retrieve, store, transmit and manipulate information in a digital form. From the foregoing, ICT can be said to be the general name for all electrical gadgets that enhance the transmission of information from one person to another electronically.

Marriage:

Marriage is the strongest relationship that can control human behavior (Susi *et al.*, 2019). A household established by a couple of different ethnicities most likely has more serious challenges than couples married to someone of identical ethnicity (Susi *et al.*, 2019).

In a marriage where the couple is from different ethnicities, there will be the adaptation of other people's cultural values such that a foreign tradition will be used for the marriage ceremony. The culture of either the man or the woman will prevail or both cultures will be merged in the marriage ceremony in order to have harmony in the household (Hurlock, 1990). This will give rise to cultural influence or cannibalization. In terms of enunciating the respective

roles of the man and woman in the household, culture has a strong influence. When there is more than one culture, there will be adaptation or competition. The wife will introduce her culture directly or subtly to her children just the same way the man will like his identity and culture to prevail in the home thus leaving the children unbalanced. The children will in turn choose from either of the cultures they were trained to adapt to. They will consider the culture that is more pleasurable to them because none can serve two masters at the same time.

According to Miall and Woodhouse (2000), inter-cultural marriages result to four patterns of interaction namely, negotiation, competition, accommodation, and backing down. In a successful and lasting marriage, the relationship between husband and wife is dominated by the attitude of accommodation and negotiation but marriage tends to fail and end in divorce when it is dominated by cultural competition. One culture must cannibalize the other if they desire to have a peaceful home. Therefore, marriage is one of the agents of cultural cannibalization.

Migration/Urbanization:

Individuals who move from one place to another experience diverse challenges and breakthroughs that can impact their mental well-being. Such a situation may include the loss of religious customs, cultural norms, social support system, adjustments to a new culture, identity changes as well as the concept of self (Dinesh and Matthew, 2005). Migration is the process of going from one country, region or place of residence to settle in another location. Migration results to the loss of familiar things one used to do including social structures, language, attitudes, values and support network because the migrant will have to adapt to the new environment (Eisenbruch, 1991). When one leaves his country to reside in another, his original cultural identity will be absorbed by the new culture hence the loss of identity. The migrant may as well practice the foreign culture whenever he returns to his home

considering his new learnt culture as a new way of life in areas like speaking the new language, eating their food, dressing like them, thinking like them and worshipping their gods. In such instances, his cultural values have been cannibalized, therefore, migration is an agent of cultural cannibalization. This is corroborating what Zenner (1996) said; cultural value is a common heritage shared by a particular group which includes history, language, rituals, preference for music and food. These can be lost through migration or urbanization.

Colonization:

This has a large impact on Africa and on the Igbos. Through colonization, Africa was damaged economically, politically and culturally. The traditional lifestyle and culture of the Igbos were destroyed. The colonizers had no respect nor interest in traditional African culture, rather they cannibalized the culture by impressing their own cultural values and way of life on the Igbos and the Africans at large. According to Benson (2011),

“It is doubtless that colonization stimulated positive and negative changes in Africa. More importantly, colonial rule was an imposition that unleashed deadly blow on African culture.”

One effect of colonization on the Igbo culture is the erosion of the cultural values attached to names. Igbos now bear European or Christian names. Extraneous ideology has become the lot the Igbo culture making them to grapple with little or no cultural success.

Furthermore, the ethnocentric belief that the colonizer is superior to those of the colonized was achieved programmatically by the establishment of schools whose curricula were tailored to achieve the goals of the colonizers rather than train the colonized to be independent (Ekwenife, 2010). Therefore, it is valid to say that to an extent, colonialism served as a vehicle of implementing cultural

cannibalization in Igbo land and in Africa at large (Dare, 2010., Mimiko, 2010).

Civilization:

The Oxford Advanced Learners' dictionary defines civilization as the stage of human, social and cultural development and organization that is considered the most advanced. Igbo culture and traditional values of Africa has seemingly been precariously contaminated by Western civilization because the Western culture and the style of civilization of the Europeans began to outgrow and thrive above African cultural heritage. Igbo and African cultural practices substantially gave way for foreign way of doing things in the guise of civilization. The Igbos way of life is now considered by many as archaic, primitive and unacceptable in public places while Western culture is now regarded as frontline civilization. It thus becomes almost practically impossible to recover the ability to struggle for cultural progress in the native terms just as certain aspects of the material culture of the colonies were lost. (Dare, 2010).

In his own part, Kasongo (2010) also said that civilization was just another concept of domination, the imposition of incoming new culture over original traditional values of culture. Civilization brought cultural emptiness among the Igbos and Africans at large and it is of great importance to candidly say that urgent and more deliberate steps are needed to be taken in order to change the disturbing situation so as to prevent drought of Igbo cultural values.

Methodology:

The study used both survey methods and descriptive methods. The sample size was chosen through convenience sampling consists of 100 respondents in different locations of Igbo land. 20 questionnaires each was distributed to five different rural communities in Igbo land namely: Owerinta (Abia State), Oba (Anambara State), Uburu ((Ebony State), Nike (Enugu State) and Mbaise (Imo State). The choice of these communities was based on convenience sampling to represent the different states of the Indigenous Igbo people. Nine major aspects of the Igbo culture were investigated to ascertain the level of its compromise or total extinction. These aspects include political systems, economy, social life, language, worship, food, dressing, marriage values, and education.

Interpersonal interviews were also used to compliment the information obtained in the questionnaire where some respondents explained some of the cultural issues experienced due to globalization and the advent of ICT. The data obtained was summarized and analyzed as presented.

Results:

The result obtained (Table 1) shows different aspects in the Igbo cultural trend that have been affected by the use of ICT.

Table 1:

Aspects of Igbo culture affected by ICT

S#	Aspects of Culture	Percentage of Respondents	
		Affected	Not affected
1	Economy and Occupation	61	39
2	Social Life	80	20
3	Political System	65	35
4	Language	82	18
5	Worship of Deities	92	8
6	Food	25	75
7	Dressing and Fashion	77	23
8	Marriage Values	60	40
9	Educational System	90	10

Source: Researchers

Discussion and Findings:

From Table 1 and oral interviews obtained during the field survey, it is observed that almost all the cultural values of the Igbos have in one way, or the other been cannibalized by different agents. Some cultural values, however, have been in existence and at best have undergone one form of change or the other.

As regards the original economy and occupation of the Igbos, 61% of the respondents believe that it has been grossly affected while 39% believe that it is still unaffected. Those who believe that the Igbo economy and occupation have been changed believe so because the major occupation and economic activity of the Igbos are farming and hunting. Men were chiefly in charge of cultivating yam and other crops while the women cultivated cocoyam and other crops too. The trend is no more these days because one can barely see vast lands for farming as they have been used in modern day infrastructure while men and women are in pursuit of white-collar jobs.

This agrees with what Dare (2010) opined that a major effect of cultural influence was on the economic structure of Igbo land. There was the progressive integration of Africa into the world capitalist system, within which the Igbos and Africans primarily functioned as a source of raw materials used by the Western countries in their industries. The westerners changed the marketing structure of trade by barter to money. There was tax imposition which forced Africans at large into wage labor. Western culture through colonization caused the Igbo's agricultural activity to be diverted towards the production of cash crops like palm oil, cocoa, groundnut, and others. This led to hunger and starvation as there was also a sudden change to the production of cash crops from the food crops produced initially. The Igbos began to produce more of what they needed less and gradually turned to producers of primary raw materials in which there was unequal exchange, and they used the raw materials to develop their own territory leaving that of the Igbos undeveloped.

As regards the social life of the Igbo people, 80% of the respondents believe that it has been affected or cannibalized by ICT while 20% believe that it is still in its original state.

The political system of the Igbos has also suffered some influence as 65% of the respondents believe that it has been affected by ICT and globalization.

A good number of the respondents also believe that the Igbo political system is still in existence in some areas and are still sacrosanctly practiced at the traditional level irrespective of the use of ICT and evolution of governance and democracy.

From the result in Table 1, 82% of the respondents believe that the Igbo language has been affected. This agrees with the findings of Clifford (2018) who said that Igbo language proficiency has declined tremendously because the Igbos are compelled to embrace foreign language. These foreign languages have created a dichotomy between those who can speak foreign languages and those who can't. Some parents even forbid their children from speaking Igbo language and mandate them to speak foreign language like English language. The Igbos therefore is a serious cultural problem because language is a driver of cultural sustainability. Many people desire to speak foreign languages even in their homelands. This leads to alienation for people who can't speak or understand such language. Clifford (2018) succinctly explains this situation; the Igbos who prefer speaking English or foreign language to speaking their ancestral language have caused a communication gap between the young ones who migrated to urban areas and their brothers living in rural areas as well as old men and women who can't understand or speak such foreign languages.

As regards worship of deities, 92% believe that Western cultures changed the Igbo traditional way of worship to Christianity which contradicted the traditional way of worship and belief system thus

promoting the diffusion of new ideas and modes of life, leading to the destruction of the Igbo deities.

According to Alloy (2003), traditional ways of worship have been modernized leading to a drastic change. Particularly, Western religion seeks to impose monogamy and the nuclear family as the norm, changed the normal way of swearing using the 'ofo' to the use of the Holy Bible. The local traditional drums and music that send a significant message are being replaced with band sets and English songs. Shrines were replaced with churches and chief priests were considered evil and were replaced with Pastors. Worship items were either destroyed or changed like the schnapps was replaced with olive oil.

The type of food eaten in Igbo land has not been substantially cannibalized as believed by 75% of the respondents. The staple food of the Igbos like garri, fufu, yam, cocoyam, corn, melon, okra and pumpkins are still enjoyed today delicacies. Although through civilization, some foods like canned foods, noodles and their likes have found their way in the menu. Some of the cutlery and dishes used by the Igbos in eating their food have also been changed thus constituting the 25% ideology of change in food.

The dressing and fashion of the Igbos is believed by 77% of the respondents to have been negatively influenced. Many of the Igbos now resort to wearing English wears and dress in other people's cultural attires to satiate the dressing demands of their employers and fit in to the environment they find themselves. At some other times, they dress in an immoral manner unbecoming of an average Igbo with dignity and virtue. For instance, the men now pierce their ear, plait their hair while the women wear trousers, skimpy skirts and other sensual attires that suggests immorality. This is simply because of what is copied from social media and the use of ICT.

This observation is in line with the findings of Sykinner (2015) who posited that people most especially women now traverse the

roads and even churches half naked due to eroded cultural values. They put on skimpy things they call “sexy”, revealing their cleavages and their body all in the name of fashion. This has negatively led to increased immorality, sexual harassment and rape. These social vices give way to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. The mode of Igbo dressing has been cannibalized in such a way that instead of covering the nakedness, which is the major essence of clothing, they tend to expose their sensitive sensual parts to the public.

Furthermore, the sanctity of marriage values is believed to have been affected by 60% of the respondents. Clifford (2018) noted that in the pre-colonial days parents of a young man or lady find a suitable partner for them to marry unlike the present-day trend where a young man/woman presents to his parents his desired partner. This has also increased the rate of marital mistakes and divorce as it is believed that a young person may not know as much as their parents in making very meaningful lifetime decisions.

Ubani (2007) noted that while the would-be couple will be preparing for the marriage date, their parents will also do their investigation to know whether the girl’s lineage give birth without difficulties or if there is a trait of rampant adultery (ukwunnu), stealing, premature death and any negativity in either of the families. The would-be couple listen to their parents’ counsel especially when there is a severe danger. The trend has tremendously changed these days due to cultural cannibalization. People now cohabit and sometimes elope without the blessings of their families.

Nevertheless, the sanctity of marriage is still held in high esteem in Igbo land despite the erosion of its values as noticed in 40% of the responses.

The educational system of the Igbos has also been greatly affected as agreed by 90% of the respondents. They acquiesce that westernized system of education and advanced technology stepped

down the rate of growth of Igbos' local technological development and oral development. The trade, craft and apprentice system of education has been replaced by formal education in primary, post primary and tertiary educational institutions. According to Arinze (2006), the Igbos despite the foreign technologies around them which of a truth has helped in diverse ways, should encourage and appreciate the products of their local crafts and art works of painting which were seen on their walls, sculptures and molding just for what they are so as to encourage development amongst them and not to keep basking in the euphoria of the technological advancement of the western world and forget to improve on their local technology which has been apparently abandoned.

Qualitatively, the nature of the socio-cultural activities of the Igbos has also been affected by civilization as evident in some literatures that correspond to the statistical data. Foremost, some still believe that the original economic activities of the Igbos like trading farming, craft and arts are still in existence though at a minimal level when compared to how it was in the years past. Such activities are for the elderly, and those without formal education living in remote and yet to be developed rural areas (Joannes, 2018).

Furthermore, the traditional Igbo culture entails the fostering of extended family relationships and communal living. The extended family served as a wonderful instrument like social security in communities where everyone checks on each other to know their wellbeing, and this is made possible through communal living where many houses are located in a compound. Sadly, the extended family value has rapidly given way to nuclear family cycle where each building is isolated and enclosed in a perimeter fencing thus eliminating the native architecture and peculiarity in the building structures of the Igbo land. Mutual communication is highly reduced as folk tales and moonlight stories which brought children together to be taught and educated by their elders have been substituted with movies and video games which have little or no elements of the Igbo culture (Arinze, 2006).

According to the oral response of a Traditional ruler, His Royal Highness, Eze Ogbonna;

“Respect for elders and values which were held sacrosanct is now grossly eroded as everyone is claiming independence and unconcerned about other persons activities, a lifestyle copied from movies and the Western way of living. Greeting an elder by a younger one is now a matter of choice and no longer a societal obligation as it was in the time past. The western culture submerged and dismantled traditional institutions and replaced the indigenous political cultures with foreign rule. As an instance, the first and eldest male born of every family represents the family in the community’s decision-making body. In some places, the practice is no longer with the advent of democracy as what is obtainable is the election of one person to be a councilor representing them at the local government level.

This has made people with questionable characters manipulate their way to such positions. The traditional institution was considered as not only the political authorities but also the present-day culture custodians, we have the police, the law makers and their likes. There is also an introduction of liberal democracy which suggests that the Igbos, even Africa at large did not have its own defined style of democracy. The respect accorded to traditional rulers has been reduced because the government now interferes with the selection of those coroneted as kings in different communities. Today, the quest for power has made people fight and even make their ways into positions of power, which is evidence of a deviation and abandonment of values.

The prevalent polygamous marriage in Igbo land is considered unfashionable due to Christian proposed monogamy. In recent times, single parenthood, which is a strange culture, is now becoming the order of the day which was a taboo in ancient times. The mind bugling deviation is the idea of sexuality which has changed drastically in not only the Igbo culture but in the entirety

of most African societies. The interest in being like the Westerners has resulted in making some of the Igbos to be defiant who do things that were never imagined many years ago. Western cultures and their values have grown and flown across borders. The Igbos now seemingly suffer from some level of mental enslavement. The trend is quite pathetic and the wave seemingly irresistible.”

The comment of Eze Ogbonna agrees with the observed data where many of the elements of the Igbo culture like marriage, social life, political system, and education have been affected by civilization to a large extent.

There is nonetheless believed that worship of deities has not been affected by civilization. According to Ekwenife (2010), these minority sects are basically traditional worshipers who still adhere to the ancient believe system of worshipping the Igbo deities prevalent in their localities. Generally, while most of the religious changes have positively influenced the lives of their adherents, it buttresses the fact that the religious cultural life of the Igbos has also been greatly cannibalized. This too agrees with acquired data.

Summarily, the proliferation of the agents of cultural cannibalization in the Igbo cultural setting has left the Igbo cultural values greatly eroded. It is appalling to note that so many years of the cannibalization of Igbo cultural values were not only destructive in terms of cultural heritage, but they were also robbed of decades of opportunities of self-development, self-government and self-styled technological advancements (Dare, 2010).

It is important to note that many of these aspects of cultural cannibalization can positively influence the life and the culture of the Igbos in manifold ways, but it is like a two-edged sword which while bringing positive impacts has compromised natural living with virtual and artificial lifestyle (Wright *et al.*, 2018). None is exempted from the effects of ICT from the children, youth, women and men have in one way or the other felt the impact of ICT and its

cultural implications. ICT and its components or tools have played and still playing a vital role in Igbo traditional culture cannibalization ranging from morals, dressing, food, sexuality to mention but a few. Anna *et al.*, (2011) noted that one major concern of ICT usage is its intellectual effect. According to them, spending a substantial amount of time with communications media will compromise intellectual ability including the ability to; make good decisions, concentrate, think deeply and reason logically, focus and be creative.

It is therefore crucial to underscore that urgent and more decisive steps need to be taken to change and reverse this evanescent trend of cultural emptiness among the Igbos lest they may experience cultural extinction and drought of Igbo cultural values.

Conclusion:

The Igbos just like any other tribe in Nigeria and in the world at large are blessed with rich cultural heritage but with the advent of colonialism, migration, civilization, ICT and inter-cultural marriages. On examination of different aspects of the Igbo culture like economy/occupation, social life, political system, language, worship of deities, food, dressing and fashion, marriage values and educational system, it was observed that they have been affected in one form or the other with language, worship of deities and education mostly affected and cannibalized. This work aims to awaken the Igbos on the need to guard their cultural values from external influences while being dynamic in practicing their culture. This will prevent them from entirely losing their identity irrespective of where they find themselves around the globe.

Comparison to other major ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Igbo people seem to be lagging in preserving their precious cultural heritage than other tribes in Nigeria. This cultural infidelity can be linked to colonial and post-colonial cultural cannibalization and there is an urgent need to seek a solution before it is too late. This research therefore provides an avenue to arouse the consciousness

of the Igbos on how they have drifted away from their cultural heritage and identity thus providing a solution to this post-colonial malady.

Recommendations:

1. More studies should be carried out on other aspects of culture that can be affected using ICT.
2. Information and communication technology should be studied to know ways it can promote culture.
3. There should be a rehabilitation program by Igbo elites on Igbo citizens who know little or nothing about their cultural heritage.
4. The mass media operating in the native Igbo land should have more of their transmissions done in Igbo language to promote the culture and traditions of Igbo land.
5. Traditional societies should sit up to their responsibility in ensuring that the Igbo cultural heritage does not go into extinction.
6. Institutions of higher learning in Igbo land should integrate the culture and traditions of the Igbos in their curriculum.

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