

THE ROLE OF YORUBA CULTURAL VALUES IN COMBATING MORAL DECADENCE IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract

Yoruba culture, as one of the major cultural frameworks in Nigeria, holds deeply ingrained values that emphasize morality, social cohesion, and communal responsibility. These values, transmitted through indigenous practices, rituals, and social norms, have historically served as a form of resistance against moral degradation within society. However, in contemporary Nigeria, the erosion of these cultural pillars, due to increased exposure to external influences and modernization, has contributed to moral decline, evidenced by the rise in issues such as indecent dressing, sexual promiscuity, and insensitivity to traditional values. This paper critically examines the role of Yoruba cultural traditions as a bulwark against the growing moral decadence in present-day Nigeria. It explores how key elements of Yoruba culture – such as naming, respect for elders, dressing, language and its usage – function as moral guides within the society. Drawing on historical and phenomenological methods, along with both primary and secondary data sources, the study demonstrates the capacity of Yoruba cultural ethics to offer solutions to contemporary moral challenges. It also presents Yoruba culture not only as a form of resistance but also as a positive force for societal betterment. Findings indicate that Yoruba cultural practices still play a significant role in shaping ethical behavior, and their revitalization could serve as a counterforce to the moral decay impacting Nigeria. The study concludes that for a more morally stable and

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ethically sound society, there is a pressing need to integrate these cultural values into modern life, rather than marginalizing them in favor of Western ideologies. It calls for a strategic re-engagement with Yoruba culture in policymaking, education, and social reforms, thereby fostering moral regeneration within the broader Nigerian society.

Keywords: Yoruba, culture, resistance, moral decadence, Nigerian Society

Introduction

Previous works on culture have revealed the importance of cultural heritage in any given society. From the viewpoint of Paddington as cited by Oni (2001, p.4), it is the sum total of the material and intellectual equipment whereby people satisfy their biological and social needs and adapt themselves to their environment. In the same vein, Taiwo Fawehinmi & Modupe Fabiyi (2009, p.226) in their *Semantics in the use of African and foreign Proverbs*, were of the opinion that language used in any linguistic society relies on specific cultural heritage. Also, in the word of Anu (1986, p.1), culture constitutes those conventional understanding and practices which establishes a people as unique and distinct from others. These are the values that people cherished in their inherited culture. However, a quick reflection on the cultural meltdown in Nigerian society shows a situation whereby cultural values have been suppressed and foreign cultures are being embraced by all and sundry. Culture, in whatever form, is always ethnocentric and value-loaded. However, having been caught up in the web of modernity; Yoruba self-determination, self-realization and their unique contribution in the global village arrangement has been undermined and pushed to the background. This has adversely affected Africans (Yoruba) in many ways such as: losing some of history, values, norms and even their personalities. With this situation, the word of Idowu (1982) comes to pass when he says:

It is certain that a people whose culture has come into contact with another culture from outside can never really be the same again. The culture either enriched in accordance with its power

to withstand the assault of other cultures while assimilating something of their best qualities or impoverished because of its weakness in consequence of which it succumbs to them by losing its own genius (p.13).

This quotation from Idowu clearly shows the true picture of what is currently happening in the present day Nigeria. The rate at which people, especially youth, are rushing towards foreign culture at the expense of African culture is alarming.

Today, it is a well-known fact that each culture is as good as another since every culture must contain within itself those features which guarantee the survival of its people. The different parts of each culture must fit together if it is to function efficiently, and of course every culture is an efficiently functioning system (Etuk 2000, p.19). Anybody who witnessed the "Festival of Arts and Culture" held in Lagos in 1977 will agree that Nigeria is certainly a richer and happier place for multiplicity and variety of culture. The fiesta really convinced the sceptics that Nigeria has her culture before the advent of colonial masters. This in effect points to the fact that even though there may be other identifying symbol for society, the cultural aspect provides greater distinctiveness to it. Hence, we can talk about Igbo culture, Yoruba culture, Hausa culture etc (Dimo 2001: 157). Besides the above-mentioned fundamental qualities of cultures, there are basic functions which culture stands to perform in society; among which culture acts as the agent of resistance to moral decadence. In the word of Musen (1963), he said inter-alia:

All culture must cope with certain universal problems and events. Every culture makes for perpetuating the group and maintaining its solidarity, for establishing an orderly way of life, and for satisfying the biological needs of its members. In all culture, children must fed, toilet-trained, protected from illness, taught to control sexual and aggressive impulses and liberated from dependence on their parents (p.15).

From the above quotation, one can see that culture is the architect and moulder of social personality. Thus, each person's

social personality is the product of his culture. From our exploration of culture, it suffices to say that culture is essentially inseparable from the society. Society is therefore what culture makes it and a culture is what society makes it.

The Yoruba in Nigeria

The Yoruba people, who constitute one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria, are mostly found in the South-western Nigeria. They cover the whole of Ogun, Oyo, Ekiti, Osun, Lagos, and substantial parts of Kwara and Kogi States (Owoeye 2005, p.36). A fair percentage of the Yoruba populace inhabit the South-Eastern part of the Republic of Benin (Dahomey) and Togo. Furthermore Yoruba communities can be found globally. For instance, there is a group of Yoruba known as *Aku* in Sierra Leone, another group of Yoruba is found in Cuba by the name *Lucumi* while some can still be found in distant Brazil as *Nago* (Falokun 1992, p.194). All these areas referred to formed what was known as the Yoruba nation before the European partition of Africa (Olatunde1996, p.4). With regard to geographical location, the Yoruba country lays roughly between latitude 6° & 9°N and longitude 2°30' & 6°30' east. Its area is about 181,300 square kilometres (Olatunde1996, p.4). Numerous Yoruba live beyond those areas however, the geographical location of the Yoruba defined above is regarded as the people's traditional homeland.

Yoruba Cultural Heritage in Nigeria

Among the prominent features of Yoruba is the appreciation of values that they cherished in the culture of their forefathers. Groups, societies, or cultures have values that are largely shared by their members. It is these values that tell people what is good, beneficial, important, desirable, and constructive. Values therefore help people to solve common problems of survival. Over time, they become the roots of traditions that groups of people find important in their day-to-day lives. Generally, Yoruba people are very rich in culture and this is shown in many ways. This study sets to examine the values inherent in

Yoruba culture with reference to name /naming, dressing, language and how they can serve as agents of resistance to moral decadence in the contemporary Yoruba society.

First and foremost among these cultural heritages is name/naming system. Giving names to a child is one of the most enduring socio-religious ceremonies among the Yoruba. Names are not given to children anyhow but based on the condition and circumstances that led to the birth of such a child. Besides, names are conferred on a child according to likeness to ancestors, elders or by choice of divinity through oracle or divination (Magesa 1998, p.88). That is why it is a common saying among the Yoruba people that; *Ile laawo ka to so omo l'oruko*, meaning; we consider the circumstance before giving name to a child. The importance attached to name among the Yoruba people cannot be over-emphasised. This is because; it is the name that identifies, unique and personal. In fact, in some cases, the solution to one's problem in life lies in one's name.

Apart from been social ceremony, naming a child is a religious exercise. It is one of the rituals during rites of passage among the Yoruba. It is the next stage after 6,7 or 8 days of birth. It is interesting to note that, naming a child is not the sole responsibility of the parents concerned. During naming ceremony, naming ingredients such as: dry fish, dry rat, water, honey, salt etc, with their symbolic meanings are often use to pray for the child. In addition to names given by the parents to a child, there are names that Yoruba people believe were brought by the child from the heaven. These are known as *oruko amutorunwa*. Examples of such names are: Ojo, Aina, Taye, Kehinde, Idowu, Ajayi, Oke, etc. (Awolalu & Dopamu 1979, p.174). As unique and personal a name is, it serves as a bridle to one's action and reaction. In fact, names moderate and regulate one's behaviour among the Yoruba people. This, no doubt, inform the popular saying among the Yoruba that *Oruko eni ni ijanu eni*. Meaning, ones name is a bridle to ones action. Apart from this, it is the responsibility of Yoruba, both old and young to guard and guide their character so as not to tarnish their names and that of their ancestors. The importance attached

to 'name' makes naming ceremony a popular culture among the Yoruba. The meaning of names given to a child has a lot to do with his/her destiny. This is why Yoruba people guard jealousy their names against been used by the enemies or evil doers.

Names and Naming in the Changing Yoruba Society

Naming, as one of the African popular cultures in a changing society, is also dynamic. Giving names to a child these days is seen as a normal social activity. Thus, the religious and cultural aspects are on the decrease. Names are given spontaneously without a deep thought. Foreign names that have no meaning or bearing with the birth of a child are now given to children at will. Since there is nothing to protect in a name that has no meaning, people therefore care less about their names. People involve in various nefarious activities without putting their names into consideration. The importance attached to name is no longer there. Some Yoruba people, who were trained in western education, do not see anything good in their indigenous names; they therefore changed their names to foreign names which they themselves do not know the meaning. Examples of such names include: Jones, Charls, Stone, Wood, Jack etc. This is a major shift from what we used to have in the Yoruba antiquity. This presentation is calling on the contemporary Yoruba people, especially youths, to have a better understanding of the importance attached to their names as this will enhance their moral rebirth and ethical regeneration.

Dressing

Dressing is another distinguished part of a people's culture that defines tribal or ethnic identity. It is an 'adornment or appearance modification made to the human form to express individual life style, fashion, proportion and taste' (Awosika & Falana 2009, p.152). Dress is ornamental and also serves aesthetic purpose. Just like any other tribe, Yoruba put on dress to cover and preserve their bodies from climatic and environmental condition. Besides, they put it on to adorn themselves. Because of these, Yoruba people attached much importance to proper and decent dressing. That is why they

always lay emphasis on the saying: *irinisi ni isenilojo*, meaning the way you appear (dress) is the way people will address you. Yoruba have various type of dressing for various occasions. Generally, typical Yoruba men cloth themselves in loose flowing robes called *Agbada*, *buba* and *sokoto*. To complete the dressing, men will put on cap known as *fila*, of which there are two kinds. The first type is of about 10 inches tall, with close fitting, and it bent upon itself from top (Omotoye 2001, p.110). The other kind called *Abeti* (ear covering cap) is generally used by older people. It is shaped like the sector of a circle, the pointed ends being used, as its name denotes, fair covering the ears in cold weather.

The females on the other hand dressed themselves with *buba* and *iro* (top wear and wrapper). Apart from this, they adorned themselves with ornaments such as beads, necklace and bangles. Their head tie is called *gele* and it is tied according to their choice of style. To complete their dressing, they will put *iborun* (shawl) on their left shoulders. However, as important as dressing is, it has suffered a major setback, especially from the Nigerian youths. Today, decency in dressing has been thrown overboard as a result of modernity and changes that the society is passing through. Indecent dressing now becomes the order of the day among the old and the younger people. The spirit of fundamental human right has contributed in no small measure to the loose behavioural pattern that runs contrary to the cultural heritage of Africa, where decency and moderation has been jettisoned (Igboin and Awoniyi 2006, p.14).

Since cloth gives the first impression about somebody, it then follows that a person would be addressed by the clothes he or she puts on. So, every dress that deviates from the one acceptable to the set moral standard of the community is termed indecent dressing. Jacob Omede (2011, p.228) observes that, the way our youths dress these days has nothing to write home about. What the girls call skirts that they wear is just 'one inch' longer than their pants. They often find it difficult to climb *Okada* (motor cycle), cross gutter as well as picking something from the ground. Apart from this, their dresses, in some cases are transparent, revealing every sensitive part of their body. The

spaghetti they put on is a singlet-like top that exposes their cleavage (Awosiyon 2005, p.46). As for boys, with their unkempt hair, they often put on crazy jeans with holes deliberately created around the knees. These jeans could not reach their waists as it will reveal their pants. They called this sagging. When they are walking, they drag their legs and their left hand is used to cup their male organs as if they will fall to the ground. This is what we are experiencing today as a result of the dynamic nature of our society.

The challenge on ground now is how to revamp our cultural heritage that is entering into oblivion. It is the opinion of this paper that we need some level of decency in our society; especially among our youth. As various tertiary institutions in Nigeria are campaigning against indecent dressing, our youths should come to a better understanding that; decent dressing promotes self-respect, maintains classroom discipline and discourage peer pressure to buy extravagant clothing (Deji-Folutile, 2005, p.46). Also, if our fashion designers, public figures and parents/guardians, who are role models, take interest in their ward dressing pattern then, decency and sanity will be restore in the dressing mode of people generally (Babalola, 1995, p.13).

Language

Language is an integral part of human life. In fact, according to Elliot, as cited by Fawehimi (2009, p.236) it is intimately connected with activities, desires, emotions, thoughts and business of life. It is therefore another important cultural heritage of Yoruba people. Human beings generally find themselves within a language that allows them to communicate with each other and to express their inner feelings and thoughts. (Olson 2011, p.121). Language occupies a unique position in a people's culture. It serves as the means of interpersonal communication among a group of people and binds the people together more than any other aspect of human culture. It is not prone to changes as the case with other aspects of culture. According to Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963, p.336), language was invented by man and it was the first step toward culture. Consequently,

after Taylor's definition of culture in 1871, importance was increasingly given to man's ability to form cultural traditions in which knowledge and experience were transmitted and accumulated through the use of language.

The main language of the Yoruba people belongs to the Sudanic family language, the vocabulary of which is built by largely of monosyllabic elements. This makes it a tonal language. That is, the relative pitch of word has significant bearing on the correct pronunciation. Some words with three and four syllables have a song quality with a specific 'tune' that defines the meaning of the word. A similar set of syllables with different melody would have a different meaning. The tonal inflection on individual letters is marked with a slanting accent. If the pitch drops from one syllable to the next, the accent slants down from the left to right (\). If the pitch rises from one syllable to the next, the accent slants up from left to right (/) (Falokun 1992, p.196).

However, Yoruba language has been super-imposed by the foreign influence and language (English language). Even the Yoruba people that were trained under western influence do not see anything good in their indigenous language. The modesty and respect (*Eyin, awon*, etc) embedded in Yoruba language are gradually getting lost. The words of respect accorded to elders while addressing them are almost gone. They considered it barbaric to be speaking and discussing in their local language. Students in both public and private schools are regularly punished for speaking in 'vernacular'. Thus, it is now a punishable offence to speak in one's mother's tongue. It is important to note at this juncture that communication and transmission of culture from one generation to another cannot be possible without language. Thus, the Nigerian (Yoruba) languages must be jealously guarded against foreign influence. Once again, this presentation is calling on the Yoruba people not to be ashamed of their language. There are many Yoruba words that cannot be adequately said in English language, otherwise the real meaning of such words will be lost. Yoruba people should therefore develop interest in their indigenous language so that the language will not enter into oblivion.

Factors Responsible for Declining Status of Cultural Heritage in Nigeria

Various factors are responsible for the luke-warm attitude of Nigerians towards their cultural heritage. First and foremost is 'culture contact.' It is a clear fact that exposure of Africans in general and Nigerians in particular to the foreign culture have really improved their lives. The benefits derived through this cultural contact include: Western education, orthodox health care delivery system and social mobility. Also, through this cultural interaction we can use modern resources to build roads and bridges, to travel faster, to communicate with the entire world, to use the internet, etc. (Dopamu 2000, p.196). These are indeed beneficial to mankind. However, the negative effects of these modern discoveries on African cultural heritage in Nigeria are bitter pills that Nigerians, who still cherish cultural heritage, find very difficult to swallow. The immediate result was cultural conflict and this had led many Nigerians into dilemma as to which of the cultures should be embraced. With this situation, the word of Idowu (1982) comes to pass when he says:

It is certain that a people whose culture has come into contact with another culture from outside can never really be the same again. The culture either enriched in accordance with its power to withstand the assault of other cultures while assimilating something of their best qualities or impoverished because of its weakness in consequence of which it succumbs to them by losing its own genius (p.13).

This quotation from Idowu clearly shows the true picture of what is currently happening in modern Nigeria. The rate at which people, especially youth, are rushing towards foreign culture at the expense of African culture is alarming.

Second is the loss of interest in both cultural and moral values. In the good olden days, Nigerians are morally conscious and this had made them to be always maintaining moral balance in all their undertakings. However, with their exposure to foreign culture some degree of unbridled liberty, looseness and

moral carelessness in human behaviour had set in. Commenting on this situation, Asaju (1979, p.96) lamented that people have watched their long cherished ethical code, virtues and tradition to be eroded by the new ways of life characterized by sexual laxity, indiscipline, moral ineptitude, disrespect, divorce and violence. It must be noted that Western civilization, urbanization and industrialization have drastically influenced the life and thought of the average Nigerians in consequence of their exposure to foreign culture, which are in some respects claimed to be higher and more sophisticated. Appreciation of values is no longer there, people bear foreign names, the meaning of which they do not know and see their indigenous names as barbaric.

Thirdly, influence of modernity has affected Nigerian dressing habits in a negative way. Since there is no value free action, indecent dresses, whether premeditated or not, produce effects on the society (Igboin & Awoniyi 2006, p.57). Driving or walking through any of our nation's higher institutions of learning and looking at the youngsters, one will probably pause and ask what has happened to simple attires such as gown, skirts and blouses, shirts and trousers when you observe young girls in outrageous mini and wired hair-do and young men in tattered or patched jeans and T-shirts with unbelievably crude inscriptions and crazy hair-do (Babalola 1995, p.3). In recent times, there has been an increase in the number of students who dress provocatively, which by general standard is considered indecent on campus in the guise of living with what is in vogue. Not only do the students expose the sensual parts of their bodies but also flaunt them as if they wish to lure their male counterparts into immoral acts. (The Punch 2005, p.3) One's worry, according to Babalola (1995, p.13) therefore is that, now that decency and moral uprightness are entering into oblivion and near nudity is the order of the day, how will the offspring of the present generation not go a step further and probably legislate in future that 'total nakedness' is not an offence?

Moreover, poor parenting is another contributing factor. The role of parents in preserving cultural heritage cannot be over-

emphasised. This is because parents are the first teachers. They are in better position to put their younger ones on the right footing as far as culture is concerned. However, what we are seeing today is exact opposite of what we are expecting. Parents themselves are no better, they are bad examples as they put on transparent dresses that reveal parts of their bodies that supposed to be 'hidden away from the glare of people' (Omede 2011, p. 228). As a rider to this, some of the present repositories of culture are people who returned home after a long absence from home, during which period they have lost contact with what is in practice (Ajayi 1981, p.119). As a matter of fact, the real repositories of culture are dying out without transmitting their knowledge of the heritage to the younger people. The worst part of the matter is that, most of the educated elites often claim that it is unfashionable these days for anyone except an old person to declare himself an adherent of indigenous tradition in public records like those of the hospitals and application form to institutions of learning where customary matter is indicated.

Again, societal influence has led to the loss of burning zeal that Nigerians initially have for their indigenous culture. Just like any other society, Nigeria is a dynamic society. The processes of change have produced some effects in the modern Nigeria that have serious implications for the maintenance of African culture. Few years ago, the late *Ooni* (king) of Ife, one of the paramount rulers in Nigeria, His Imperial Majesty, Oba Okunade Sijuwade, humbly dropped and renounced his famous traditional title *Oluaye* (The great one of the world). He made this declaration at the "Festival of Nation" organized by Glory Ministry, at Ashi junction, Bodija, Ibadan (*Sunday Tribune* 2001, p.1). Also in Ekiti State, the Christian missions have admonished their converts against customary matters so that they would not backslid (Olomola 2002, p.22). In the places of traditional practices attacked, Western dress, food and social practices such as Western marriage (a system that is completely un-African), were promoted. This situation no doubt, has affected the Nigerian value system as a whole. Lambo (1996), in his lamentation says:

I think many things were wrong with Nigeria in that the value system has collapsed and we've got not other substitute. We've been dangling between the traditional and the so-called sophisticated Western mores and values system and we had not even got to the other end before the traditional one collapsed, so, we are in a total vacuum (p.67).

Even up till today, the educated one prefers suited up, even on the hottest of the season, to traditional outfit. They thereby confused Westernisation with civilization and consequently fail to recognize and promote African traditional value in Nigeria.

Coming next is the influence and abuse of science and technology. It is an open secret today that the advancement in Science and Technology has increased the rate of crime in this country. Crime now appears to be a permanent feature of modern society. Despite the well-meaning effort of social workers, law enforcement personnel and criminal rehabilitation professionals, the world is becoming a more dangerous place to live. Even rural areas that were considered relatively save in the past years are recently witnessing instances of unimaginable act of violence.

With mass communication becoming much more effective in recent years, such appealing crimes are known to millions within hours. A report published by the *World Health Organizations* states that, "violence leaves no continent, no country or community that is untouched (*Awake!* 2003, p.4). The moonlight story from which moral lessons are deduced to shape children's characters and moral behaviour has now faded out. In its place, various forms of modern communications have encouraged aggressive conduct. Regular exposure to violence depicted on television, in movies, video games and on the internet are said to sensitize conscience and inspire violent crimes.

Besides, advocates of this cultural heritage are not practicing what they are advocating for. For instance, one may not be surprise to hear that teachers of Yoruba language find it very difficult to speak the language to their children at home. Also, it is no longer news that some chiefs and custodians of culture

are ignorant of the culture they are guarding. In fact, many officials in the ministries of culture and tourism these days have proved to be misfit in the position they find themselves (Ogunleye 2018, p.31). They failed in their performance because they lacked ideas of the culture they were managing.

Last but not the least is the peer influence. People deviate from their cultural orientation because of the influence from their colleagues. Some still cherish their culture but the desire to belong and fear of rejection by colleagues have led many people to act otherwise. People forced their children to speak in English language so as to show that they are not inferior to their neighbours. They give foreign names to their children and dress in foreign ways just to show they are on the same page with Britons and Americans. The question that comes to mind now is, with this present situation, what are the ways out?

Ways out of Foreign Cultural Domination

In attempt to revive African cultural heritage in Nigeria the following suggestions can be of great help. First and foremost, there must be a cultural reawakening and cultural pride. With the present situation there must be a renewed interest in African ways of life. People must take pride in their culture and must be ready at all times to identify themselves with it. Since African culture in all its ramifications caters for the needs and interest of Africans' existentialist problems, it should be given its prime of place. The 7th International Congress of Orisa, Tradition and Culture held in Ile-Ife, Osun State of Nigeria in 2001 was a right step towards cultural revival in Nigeria. According to the president of the Congress, Prof. Wande Abimbola, its purpose is to bring together people who are interested in the promotion and propagation of African religion, culture and tradition (Abiola 2001, p.26).

Secondly, traditional rulers who are the custodians and guardians of traditions and culture must be rallied round and supported in their bid to uplift African culture and traditions in Nigeria. During traditional activities for one reason or the other, traditional rulers who are the chief celebrants needed the concerted effort and support of the community concern.

Furthermore, theatre workers in Nigeria must be encouraged to work more on the promotion of African culture in their various performances and film productions. Actors, such as: Yinka Quadri, Taiwo Hassan (Ogogo), Akin Ogungbe, Lere Paimo, Zack Orji etc. have contributed to the promotion of African culture and traditions through their various film productions. Medicine, divination, worship and other African ways of life found in plays and films are veritable means of reminding Africans in general and Yoruba in particular of their rich cultural heritage. Besides, through stage and film productions, vices that have eaten deep into the fabric of our nation will be openly condemned and virtue praised. This will surely reveal to people the cultural values wrapped in entertainment.

Last but not the least, ministries of culture and tourism in Nigeria must be alive to their responsibilities. Government must see to it that people appointed as minister and commissioners of culture and tourism are not ignorant of their own culture. This is very important because some of the ministers and government officials in charge of culture and tourism in recent years have proved to be misfit in the positions they found themselves. They all, with few exceptions, have failed to perform as expected because they are bereft of cultural ideas (Jawolusi 2003, p.25). If this shortcoming can be removed, then African culture will no longer be relegated and Science and Technology will not be able to have undue advantages over African Cultural heritage in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper had examined the African cultural heritage from the Nigerian perspective. Through the contact of African culture with the foreign ones, human lives have been improved upon as a result of modern discoveries in Science and Technology. However, it was discovered that interactions of Nigerians with foreign culture, in the name of globalisation the so-called global village, has caused a major setback to the growth and development of African cultural heritage in Nigeria. The hitherto cherished cultural values have now been relegated to

the background and described as primitive. Due to cultural differences and relativism, the idea of having a single global homogenous culture may be difficult if not impossible.

For the avoidance of doubt, it must be noted here that we cannot pretend that all aspects of African culture are good and that all aspects of foreign culture are bad. In spite of the agitation for the revival of African Culture there are still some aspects that are culturally disvalues. These are negative sides of the culture that needed refinement before they can be accommodated in the scheme of African modernity. The paper laid emphasis on the revival of African Culture so that all aspects that are culturally disvalued may be amended and refined to meet the trend of modernity in Nigeria. Since culture is dynamic, Nigerians cannot afford to remain static but to embrace and retain those valuable aspects such as naming system, dressing and language. Those that are inimical to modern society in both Western and Africa cultures can then be discarded so as to be in touch with the global trend. Examples of culture that still needs to be revisited include: trial by ordeal, widowhood rite, female circumcision and breast ironing that is rampant among the people of Cameroon (Akeredolu 2016, p.117). The effort of Leina (2014), a Cameroonian lady, who fought against the tradition and disagreed with her grandmother to free herself from being a victim of breast ironing is a welcome development.

Nigerians should not embrace the Western Culture at the expense of their own culture so as to save African culture from total collapse. It is on this note that the paper recommends that revival of African culture must be taking very serious and that both Christians and Muslims in Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular must encourage their members to express their religious values in a fully African way.

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