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Citation: Okechukwu, I.P., Okechukwu, C.P. & Okechukwu, I.E; *Folk Music Impact on Cultural Practices in Idemili North, Anambra State.*

FOLK MUSIC IMPACT ON CULTURAL PRACTICES IN IDEMILI NORTH, ANAMBRA STATE

Abstract

This paper focuses on the impact of folk music on the cultural practices of the Idemili North people of Igboland in Anambra state. Folk music as a carrier, educator, and disseminator of the people's customs and traditions is passed down from one generation to another through songs and other practical performance communications with overt significant effects on people's daily lives and activities. Overtime, folk music's recognition and performance practice within the wider society has dwindled. Moreover, in Idemili North folk music has not been digitally documented. The study's methodology is descriptive, based on data from the library, related literature, participant observation, interviews, and the internet. Observation and findings from the study reveal that folk music and cultural practices are interdependent and mutually reinforcing better relationship among individuals and groups in the community. It requires proper application of digitalization, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Artificial Intelligence (AI). The study recommends that folk music and cultural practices be well appropriated and acknowledged because of its impact on people's lives. Sponsorship from individuals, groups, agencies and government should be solicited. Digitalized applications can be used in the documentation, presentation and transmission of folk music to the entire globe and future generations.

Key Words: Folk Music, Impact, Cultural practices, Idemili North.

Introduction

Folk music is an embodiment of cultural practices, while cultural practices use folk music to portray the people's way of life. It is an efficient and effective tool in transmitting the activities of the community for identification. Ekong (2008) asserts that "Music is what gives a society life and cultural identity. Just as culture defies a specific definition, so is music" (p.17). Idemili North people value their cultural integrity and heritage through music as a communication medium and process suitable for them.

Ekong (2008) affirms that, "each group tries to maintain its musical identity/culture through any medium deemed fit. It is obvious that every society has its musical culture" (p.17). Similarly, Agu (2017) submits that, "A people's music portrays who they are, where they come from and their values" (p.6). Given the foregoing, the Idemili North community of Igboland also attach great importance to their culture. However, with digital explosion, there is a need for Idemili North folk music to keep pace with such a present trend to avoid its decline or going into total extinction. Acknowledging and portraying the impact of such music on cultural practices reinforces the community and attract the masses for human resources and national development, thus underscores the need for this study. Omibiyi–Obidike in Ezeugwu (2015) postulates that, "Music is a language, a social communicator, a messenger in peace and war, an educator, a phenomenon that is integral in all aspects of our culture and therefore, must be produced through a practical process" (p.110). In Idemili North Community, there are cultural practices that go along with the people's folk music, such as New Yam Festivals, Traditional Marriage Ceremonies, Octogenarians (Ito Ogbo) Celebrations, Burial Ceremonies etc.

Statement of the Problem

In contemporary times, folk music in Idemili North is losing visibility and value due to acculturation and digital influence. The cultures of the Western world, along with digitalization like Artificial Intelligence and others, are threats to Idemili North folk music. Musical activities in the rural areas face the challenge of extinction, as a result of mass exodus of youths who are supposed to learn and patronize their folk music to the urban centres in search of greener pasture. Technological advancement and a 'fast' money making syndrome pose a serious threat to folk as lucrative popular music is in vogue. In addition, the total neglect of information and

communication technology in the documentation and safeguarding folk music in Idemili North due to cost implications. Although, other forms of rural entertaining activities exist in the villages which may cost less, or at no expenses, compared to the folk music. Overtime, new innovations might affect the existence and transfer of these folk songs.

Objectives

The study's objectives are to:

- a. examine the role of folk music on cultural practices in Idemili North.
- b. explore and identify some cultural practices in Idemili North and how they are shaped by folk music.
- c. examine how folk music functions as a medium of socialization in Idemili North.
- d. identify how folk music impacts cultural practices in Idemili North can be preserved for up-coming generations

Research Questions

Research questions guiding the study are:

1. what specific cultural practices are shaped by folk music in Idemili North?
2. how does folk music function as a medium of socialization in Idemili North?
3. how to save the Idemili North folk music from decline in the present time and for the future generations?

Brief background of Idemili North's Folk Music

Music at large and folk music in particular is a serious integral part of the Idemili North community because it is duly involved in their daily activities from cradle to grave. As Africans, the Idemili North people cherish their folk music and culture. This is portrayed at every occasion of their ceremonial event and music performance. Vidal (2012) posits that:

For one thing, our culture seems to emphasize the practices of performance, creativity and traditions as opposed to those systematic studies, research and theoretical obstructions. The average Nigerian would rather drum, sing, dance and dramatize than study what he does or theorizes why he does it. Our

culture seems to be on a value functional system and performing arts are no exceptions (p.149).

Notably, the ethnic/folk music of Idemili North community has its historical account on the people based on the root and origin of the deity (water goddess-Idemili and traditional ceremonies like Ime Agwu (Shrine Ceremony), Nwafor-Ogidi (Ogidi Masquerade Festival) among others. The word Idemili is derived from an ethnic nomenclature, particularly the settlement whose geographical location is surrounded by a water goddess (deity) known as Idemili in Anambra State, Nigeria. Idemili is divided into two areas namely Northern and Southern ethnological parts of this area. Hence, the names Idemili North and South Local Government Area of Anambra State, South – Eastern Zone of Nigeria. According to Chief Alex Obi (Di Okpa Ire) (personal interview 2024) “Idemili North is a Local Government Area in Anambra State. It is found in the South-Central part of the state in Nigeria (Personal communication, 20th June, 2024), the resource person went further said that Idemili North is one of the twenty-one (21) Local Governments in the state situated in the South-Eastern part of the country, Nigeria.

Idemili North is bordered by other local government areas, including Idemili South, Anambra East and Anambra West. Idemili North Local Government Headquarters is in Ogidi town along the major old road to Iyi Enu University Teaching Hospital, Ogidi. Idemili North is known for its rich cultural heritage, agricultural productivity, and economic activities that, engage folk music in their celebrations. The area is predominantly inhabited by the Igbo people-one of the three (3) main ethnic groups in Nigeria. Idemili North Local Government Area has a population of approximately 398,801 people according to the 2006 census. The area is served by several roads, including the Onistsha-Enugu Expressway, which passes through the L.G.A. Agbodike, Madu, Orjirikor, Igwe, and Obiakor (2015:25) assert that, towns that make up the local Government Area are ten (10) in number namely; Abacha, Abatete, Eziowelle, Ideani, Nkpor, Obosi, Ogidi, Oraukwu, Uke and Umuoji

Conceptual Clarifications

Folk Music

Folk music is the music of a particular community, ethnicity or entity, which transmit the customs traditions, values and general culture of its people orally and practically from one generation to another. It is the embodiment of the real cultural practices of its people. Folk music also refers to a genre of music that is not infiltrated and unadulterated, which may be in the form of song, dance, storytelling, folklore, instrumental, or combined for performance, to reflect on the people's daily activities to portray their culture and general behaviour (cultural practices). Ibekwe (2019) affirms that, "Folksongs are the traditional music of a people which are taught and learnt orally by the members of a given society and which are believed to contain the cultural values of that society" (p.3). Folk music is communally owned and practically performed by the people, and there is no individual authorship and/or ownership attached to it specifically. Nwobu and Okeke (2022) ascertain that,

Folk music is the original and traditional music of a people, whose composers are one characteristically unknown, and which is passed orally from one generation to another. According to Nmadu and Nnam, folk music is transmitted orally from one generation to another and currently thrives in the rural areas, where the custodians of the people reside (p.260).

In light of the above definition, folk music and culture are in alignment with each other, especially in a performance situation. The two are inter-webbed and move along with each other. Okpokwasili (2023) infers that, folk songs are songs verbally passed down from generation to generation. These songs usually carry the cultures and customs of the place they originate from, and authorship is not tied to a particular individual most often but rather belongs to the community, by implication, the cultural values of a society can be transmitted, sustained and consolidated through folk song which are taught to children starting at a very early stage of their development, and as they grow up, they live by it (P.232).

In relation to the above statement, folk music is portrayed as a security guard of cultural practices and the traditional or indigenous music of a community or a particular folk. It carries and preserves the cultural practices of its people to empower the community in the areas of social, cultural, economic, religious, therapeutic, historical, entertainment, intellectual, and commercial attributes. This is to help individuals adapt without struggle in society. Folk music

can also be called indigenous music, traditional music, ethnic music, native music, local music and/or community music handed down orally from one generation to another.

Cultural Practices

Cultural practices refer to customs, traditions, values, ethos, pathos, and beliefs that are specific to a particular community. These practices are often passed down to their upcoming generations for sustainability and continuity. Agbidi (2011) postulates that public performance, therefore take place on social occasions – that is, on occasions when members of a group or community come together for the enjoyment of leisure, for recreational activities, or for the performance of a rite, ceremony, festival or any kind of collective activity, such as building bridges, clearing paths, going on a search party or putting out fire (p.130). The practices are shaped by the community's history, values and beliefs. Some of the cultural practices are;

- Rituals and ceremonies
- Traditional clothing and Adornment
- Music and Dance
- Food and Drink
- Language and Communication
- Social Etiquette
- Spiritual and Religious Practices
- Arts and Crafts with Exhibition
- Festivals and Celebrations
- Traditional Medicine and Healing Practices.

Cultural practices play vital roles in shaping the identity and sense of the community of a particular culture or group. Consequently, folk music and cultural practices are interdependent. Nwobu and Ikedi (2023) ascertain that, “Nigerian culture does not exist outside of music. There is music making for every gathering. There is music for every activity” (p.261). Therefore, folk music has a vital impact on the cultural practices in the lives of the Idemili North people.

Impact

Impact means a significant influence or effect on something, often resulting in a noticeable change. It can be positive, negative, or neutral. Moreover, impact explores how one thing affects another, just like folk music positively affects the cultural practices of any community, like the Idemili North people. Impact also refers to the vital roles of something over or on another. Nonetheless, it means the favourable attributes of a person or thing with a good and changeable effect on the other thing, which can be tangible or intangible. In the study, impact refers to the positive and favourable effects, roles and attributes of folk music on cultural practices.

Oral Tradition

Oral tradition means the values a community cherishes as its way of life, which is handed down from one generation to another and usually performed orally and/or demonstratively. Oral traditions are practically passed down through the words of mouth that give a community identity, such as their music, costumes, food, religion, instruments etc. It is a sort of custom observed and practiced by the owners and users of such a tradition. It is also a way of life transmitted to others for both formal and informal acknowledgement, to achieve a better society. Oral tradition carries the worth, dos and don'ts and code of conduct of a people for their socio-cultural and cordial relationship. Oral tradition is a process of passing vital information from the performer to the audience orally. It is also a communicative tool and an educative method by the African to keep their ethos and pathos going.

Custodianship

Custodianship is the keeper or security agent of any valuable item which may be tangible or intangible. Custodianship may be a person, group or organization that holds the authority of a community. By implication, a personality or guard can be the custodianship where the society's life-wire is stored. It is the store-keeper of important objects, documents, materials, cultural practices and other important written or unwritten valuables of a community for safety purposes. The custodianship can be a body/person who preserves, guards and retrieves information when there is need.

In reference to the study, folk music and cultural practices are involved in the custodianship of the community's customs and traditions through performance. Custodianship is the record-

keeping agent of a body, society or community. It is a way of achieving or keeping/safe guarding important documents for a vital purpose.

Features of Folk Music

Special attributes are seen, observed and derived from folk music as cultural practices. This makes it unique and outstanding from other music genres in Africa and the world of music. Such characteristics are seen in the works of Agu and Ibekwe (2024:103), who identify that folk music is preserved by tradition. It generate social experiences that go deep and serve as a link that binds each ethnic group together, giving every individual in the community a sense of belonging. It serves as a medium through which notable ideas and vices are acknowledged or condemned, encouraged or discouraged. It serves as the custodian of people's cultural, religious and traditional lifestyles. In addition, it serves as relaxation and entertainment.

In light of the above characteristics of folk music. Its impact on cultural practices is felt and exposed through the ceremonial activities of Idemili North indigenes. Onyeji (2012) affirms that, Nigerian indigenous music may thus be described as the specific musical arts creations of indigenous Nigerian societies with which various aspects of their cultural lives are woven, documented and exhibited when needed (p.48).

Folk music has a remarkable impact on the cultural practices of the Idemili North community because the two are interdependent and work together.

Impact of Folk Music on Cultural Practices of Idemili North Indigenes

Generally, music, and folk music in particular, has a serious impact on man because all his cultural activities integrate music. Agbidi (2011) posits that, Music making is not simply an exercise in the organization of sound; it is a symbolic expression of social and cultural organization, which reflects the values and the past. It represents the way of life of the human beings who create it. African music is central to the cultural life in the day-to-day living and cultural practices of the people (p.128).

Therefore, folk music's impact on Idemili North indigene can be summed as follows:

- i. Moral and ethical education

- ii. Social cohesion and community bonding
- iii. Communication and public awareness
- iv. Identity formation and historical preservation
- v. Ritual and religious significance

Moral and Ethical Education

In Idemili North and general African setting, music teaches morals, ethnic, customs, traditions and general values of a particular community. The words and lyrical renditions carry the required behaviour from individuals as regards respect to elders, greetings, obedience, hygiene and general discipline. This is communicated to the individual from child foundation to adulthood. Agbidi (2011) affirms that, music is vital in traditional educational system in teaching values, and norms, in regulating social ills in the society, to teach respect for elders, personal hygiene, discipline and moral attitudes to life. It is used for social control and correction of erring members of the society, just as music is used to criticized these in authority. It communicates the community taboos to members of society as well (p.131).

Folk music, therefore, serves as a deterrent to offenders, then as appraisal to good conducts. In the same way, one of the respondents from the elders of Idemili North community Chief Alex Obi (Di Okpa Ire), narrated that folk music is a great trainer because it is used to deter and correct an offender in the community (January 22, 2025, personal communication). Okafor in Onuora-Oguno (2022) posits that, through song texts, a person learned the moral codes of his land, its chronology and history, the guiding principles and ethics of his land. He also learned about his language, the things his people lived by, and how society worked. All these were learned through music that ranged from simple folk tunes to highly specialized ritual music, including chants, incantations and minstrelsy (p.362).

When linked to the theoretical framework, observations prove that socializing a child/individual requires moral education or inculcating moral and cultural practices through cultural theory of learning. Hence, the communication of values using communication medium model so as to initiate the individual function as a good member of the society.

Social Cohesion and Community Bonding

Through folk music and cultural performances, communication and public awareness of some ceremonies, celebrations, festivals, dangers and good news are made known and acknowledged to the individuals and the entire community. For instance, in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (2008) infer that, "The wrestlers were not there yet, and the drummer held the field' (p.37). Folk music is always set to complete the task of successful communication. It relays to the community those important notifications and happenings of the past, present and foretell the future for them to be on the vigilant. Folk music plays the role of sending signals through its songs, dance and instrumental rendition. Okpokwasili (2023) posits that, "the use of traditional folksongs for creating awareness in African societies and as a means of development is not a phenomenon" (p.237). Referring to the theories that prove that folk music has relevance to socialization, cultural and communication, the three (3) and integrated in the study. In communication, there should be a source where the message or information comes from, carrying the norms, traditions, and values as the message of redress (i.e., the cultural practices) which is socialized or sent to the community through communication of the values. The three theories, therefore, work together to create and initiate communication and public awareness through folk music's impact on cultural practices.

Identity formation and Historical Preservation

Folk song lyrics through their language forms and expose people's identity. Likewise, it carries the historical background and preservation of a particular community's culture. The costumes, as well as the instruments of folk music performance, carry noticeable identity and integrity. It tells where a particular music originates and who they are. Okpokwasili (2023) infers that "folksongs are carriers of cultural identities of different communities. Music, especially folksong, participates in almost all human activities, and in human beings and their cultural life by its special function and power. It preserves history because the songs carry news of the past and present, then gives it to the future generations, ensuring continuity. The three (3) theories play a part in carrying and teaching the ideals and ideas of the community through a proper communication model. In the folk song of *Onye gbulu nwanne, Aburo Odogwu* by the respondents, warns against bloodshed, especially the killing of a brother. This shows that it is an abomination which should not be condoned in Idemili North, Igboland and the world of music at large.

Ritual and Religious Significance

In African Traditional Religion (ATR), folk music carries the incantation, invocation and libation attributes of their spiritual worship to trigger their ancestors during their ritual and religious performances. Songs of invocation also go along with their musical instruments like gong, drums, bells and rattle. In Idemili North, people believe in a supreme being, but worship their main deity, the water goddess, named after the community and even the local government, "Idemili". However, most of the folk songs are a psychical communion between the people and deities. The spirit masquerade also carries those songs and performs them during some specific festivals. Agbidi (2011) postulates that, "the African view of the universe makes the worship of the gods a vital concern. Music plays a sacred role in the religious worship of the traditional African. It is used for the worship of the ancestors and gods" (p.131). Here, the theories of socialization, cultural and communication combine as a strong force through teaching, transfer and the message through folk music, reach the appropriate audience for final application from one generation to another.

Theoretical framework

The study hinges on socialization, cultural and communication theories of learning. Theories well defined, relevancies explained and related to how they frame the findings in the work.

Socialization Theory

Socialization theories are defined as the beliefs, assumptions and arguments that teach individuals the correct values and attitudes of his/her environment or community so that the person will live as an acceptable member of their society. It also means those acceptable attributes that were argued and agreed upon by prominent scholars for psychological and educational support to learning. The scholars and proponents of theory were Charles Horton Cooley, George Herbert Mead, and Sigmund Freud. The theory states that a person or human being acquires the appropriate skills that are necessary for him/her environment. More so, the skills are to enable the follow live within the required principles and demands of their ethnicity or the societal values.

Ahamefula and Ehiogu (2014) infer that socialization is how infants begin to acquire the skills necessary to perform as functioning members of their society, and it is the most influential learning process one can experience. Unlike the other living species, whose behaviour is biologically set, humans need social experiences to learn and survive (p.51).

In light of the above, folk music's impact on cultural practices in Idemili North is transmitted through social relationships among individuals for them to inculcate all about what is needed in their community/society for adaptation purposes. For instance, the interview held with one of the elders of Idemili North, Elder Chukwuma Ekwueme, on 16th June, 2023, states that folk music carries the way of life of a people (personal communication).

Its relevance to this study is that folk music teaches the members of the society (children, youth, adults), the rules and regulations of the community to avoid a person from being a social misfit in their immediate and wider environment. Since it helps a member from deviating according to norms and traditions of the community, the theory specifically is hinged on membership conformity to the requirements of the society through folk songs, dance and instrumental renditions.

Cultural Theory

Cultural theory means the acceptable beliefs of a particular community according to their cultural background, and practices as regards their general way of life. The theory states that a society chooses the positive customs and traditions that are good and favourable for their socio-cultural development with cordial relationships. While they reject the behaviours that do not conform to their ethos and pathos of life. The scholars who initiated the theory were Douglas and Wilderviski. Consequently, folk music, which is the transmission medium of the people's culture, therefore, educates the individual groups and the community on where they should base or focus their interests/events. On the other hand, they should be aware of and discard the negative cultures that pose threats or risks to the harmonious welfare of the community. Hence, the theory from its explanation affirms that folk music is an educator and propagator of cultural elements, and it gives identity through initiation and imitation to the people. Incidentally, cultural theory believes in the inculcation (imitation) of the values and ethics of a people from one generation to another. The relevance of this theory to the study is that folk music has been

proven to be a transmission model of the cultural ethos in Idemili North for continuity. The findings here show that cultural practices are transmitted to future generations through their folk music.

Yekini-Ajenifuja (2011) posits that, “music in Africa portrays the totality of its cultural product. It cannot be separated from culture, because in culture there is music, in music there is culture” (p.69). Therefore, both should be acknowledged and encouraged through digital means for global appreciation.

Communication Theory

Communication theory means the theoretical application of some assumptions and arguments that believe that information from the decoder to the encoder is well transmitted through a medium devoid of any distraction/noise. It is called the medium theory because of its interactive value. The theory states that the media are not just channels but are also diverse environments that enable communication to occur, which may influence the meaning of information that is transferred.

The scholars and founders who initiated the theory were Megrowtz, Marshall McLuhan and Harold Innis. Meanwhile, folk music has a serious impact on Idemili North Community and its cultural practices through practical communication and interaction of the musical performances. Nnanyelugo (2016) opines that, “Music is a medium of communication to create awareness and publicity or alert the society of some new developments in the society or in the country” (p.83). As a matter of fact, folk music of Idemili North is to alerting the community of some dangers or goodies on the ground for proper awareness to be welcomed or ignored for instance, the response from owners and performers of Idemili North folk music at the interview excerpts found out that the respondents clarified that their folk music is a good trainer because its lyrical content are used to deterring and/or correcting any offender of their rules and regulations in their community. Moreover, this is achieved through the proper communication channel, the community's folk's music, which in turn portrays the relevance of cultural practices of the people.

Methodology

Data for the work were gathered from different sources. These include interviews from three (3) elders of the community who are male respondents. One respondent was interviewed on the brief historical background of Idemili North community and the towns that make it up, another was on a lyrical example, while the third elder was on the impact. The interview took place in their residences, ceremonial arena and burial places respectively, as shown in the body of the work. There is also participant observation in some Idemili North towns', burials, traditional marriages, and new yam festival and other social functions. Subsequently, after the researchers had been acquainted with the necessary materials and data for the work, they made some visits to the resource persons to negotiate and familiarize themselves with them before proceeding to fix dates for the actual interview. Three (3) sets of interview schedules were constructed for three (3) respondents:

- The brief history of Idemili North
- Cultural practices of Idemili North people
- Impact of folk song (with lyrical example) on Idemili North community.

Other methods of data collection were through the internet, related literature and eye-witness accounts as well as participant observation.

Findings and Discussion

Observations and the findings indicate that folk music and cultural practices in Idemili and the entire Igboland is very vital and inseparable. Esimone, Ojukwu and Ugoo – Okonkwo (2022) assert that, the Igbo-one of the three major ethnic groups and tribes in Nigeria, possess very rich culture made available mainly through music. All activities carried out in Igboland are accompanied by music. Daily activities and living revolve around performance of music from cradle to grave. Music remains their easiest means of training their children in early childhood because it is proven to be the simplest and stress-free informal training (p.56).

Given the above observation, one can rightly address the following questions to buttress the findings – following:

- (i) Why do these impacts of folk music matter for Idemili North?
- (ii) How do they shape individual and communal identity?

In response to the first addressed question, the impacts of folk song on cultural activities matter a lot because if it is lost, cultural identity and community heritage will decline and/or totally go into extinction. Secondly, this music provides the bedrock for the rites of passage from cradle to grave. Ibekwe (2019) postulates that, “folksong in addition to providing entertainment contains meaningful texts that instruct, train, reprimand, caution, advise, socialize, encourage, and direct the behaviour of a growing child” (p.7).

This is so because today’s children’s healthy living helps tomorrow’s wealth of the community and general welfare. Findings identified as follows;

- i. It serves as a link between music and traditional society that owns, keeps and uses it.
- ii. Folk music gives its people a respectable and reputable identity through their cultural practices.
- iii. It is used for the documentation and preservation of the people’s cultural heritage.
- iv. Folk music is used for bonding the community, love and solidarity.
- v. It acts as an eye-opener to some hidden historical facts that have anthropological attachment for the people’s security purposes.
- vi. It was also found out that folk music serves as a communication agent and mentorship for some critical issues that should be addressed for future use.
- vii. It enhances socio-cultural relationships and its heritage among its people.
- viii. It reinforces religious and therapeutic attributes, thereby healing emotional and psychological challenges of the community/individuals.
- ix. Folk music was found to be a veritable tool for intellectual and entertainment purposes to calm the nerves, mental stress, and anxiety among individuals, groups or the community.
- x. Folk music was found to ensure economic and commercial benefits to performers
- xi. It creates moral awareness, especially during the time of moral decadence, like in these contemporary times.
- xii. It creates peaceful co-existence and tranquility among people, especially during chaos and confusion in society.
- xiii. Folk music was found to be of immense help in inculcating wisdom, knowledge and understanding for solving crucial matters during the community/society’s crisis.

The Challengers or Task Ahead

Presently, in the global village, folk music as a tradition is facing a serious challenge due to the digital explosion in this era. The questions addressed to help in reducing the task/challenge are:

- What tension exists between tradition and modernity (e.g., digitalization, youth migration)?
- How do you engage Artificial Intelligence, which is not yet developed, especially in the remote areas, as regards engaging it in folk music and cultural practices?

Folk music's impact on cultural practices is facing digital challenges with Information and Communication Technology problems. However, the tension exists between traditional method of performance and transmission, which had been on the stage as handed down by our ancestors, and the new sophisticated innovations on digital performance, transmission, archiving and documentation. More so, as a result of this digital explosion, most of the youth are found migrating in great numbers to the urban centres. As a result, the community is facing some risks, such as:

- Losing the youth who are supposed to take over in modern life in the cities.
- Difficulty in transmission and inculcating the folk values using the Information and Communication Technology system in our music.
- Displacement of our oral tradition and loss of the process to Western civilization.

We should therefore, embrace and adapt to the system gradually, with care not to reduce the quality of our folk music and its integrity.

As regards modern AI, the youth should be attracted by giving them scholarship training on the Artificial Intelligence programme. More so, in the process of its preservation through documentation and archiving, carefulness should be taught as well, so that we will not allow our cultural heritage to die in the hands of modern technology. At the same time, the Idemili North people should not be left behind in this digital era, so as to keep up with the modern trend.

Limitation of the Study

It covered a small sample size in the content of the work because of the scope of the study. The geographical location was also limited and directed to cover only the scope of Idemili North. It was mainly reliable just on oral interview account which is not enough. It suggests that the aforementioned limitation be addressed further, with more extensive devoted scholarly work. Further work should delve deeply into AI and digitalization usage in our folk music and its practices, especially in the area of preservation and documentation.

Conclusion

Folk music of any community is vital and plays an important role in the life of individuals and society. Therefore, efforts to guard it through cultural practices should be enforced. More so, modern technological advancements that are in vogue are good to carry our folk music along. As a matter of fact, folk music, the cultural practices and digitalization have the correct transmission materials to hand it over to future generations for continuity. Folk music and cultural practices give individuals/community life meaning, especially to the people of the Idemili North community. It also addresses critical issues in the community. As an agent of cultural transmission of values, it is an important instrument of positive change in society as proved from the impact as well as the findings. There is need to identify the following implications:

- ❖ Need for the policy makers to include cultural policy that will include support for folk music festivals and documentation projects.
- ❖ Engage education curriculum planners to integrate folk music into school curricula, syllables and the scheme of work.
- ❖ Need for a community-based preservation body to make efforts in safeguarding our folk music and its cultural practices
- ❖ Institutions to be equipped technologically to teach and roll out competent hands in the use of AI and other sophisticated machines in documenting our folk music and its practices.
- ❖ Creating more departments like the Folklore Department that is linked to music at large and folk music in particular. This has been included at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

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Personal Communication/Interviews

Chief Alex Obi (Di Okpa Ire). Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025; 10:C Obosi.

Ogbueshi Clement Chukwujekwu Emekwue (Mentus). Thursday, January 23rd, 2025; 2.30pm-3.45pm. Ugamuma Village Obosi.

Mr. Chukwuma Ekwueme (Ogaranya). Thursday, January 23rd,2025, 10:00am-12:00pm. Ikenga village, Ogidi.