

## **THE PLACE OF ORAL LITERATURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITTEN LITERATURE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the claim that the written literary form has its roots in the oral literature. It also seeks to determine how the emergence of written literature helped to stabilize the Igbo oral literature. Oral Literature conveys the norms values, cultures and traditions of a people from generation to generation. It transmits culture by word of mouth. This study adopts the survey research method. There is a review of related literature through which works of earlier researchers and authors were visited. This work x-rays the different forms of oral literature and establishes that written literature is seriously influenced by the oral literary form. It is hoped that this work would inspire as well as encourage writers of the modern times to reflect on the culture and traditions of the Igbo race when creating their literary work. It is also expected to encourage all and sundry to promote and sustain those positive aspects of Igbo culture in order to prevent the Igbo Language from going into extinction. This study finds out that oral literature is a sine qua non for the development of written literature.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Literature portrays the culture of a people and it is language that is used to transmit the culture of such a people. Literature is the mirror of any society or culture. The way of life of a people is seen through their literature. Oral literature then is a verbal form of conveying the norms, values, culture and traditions of a people from one generation to another. It is the transmission of culture by word of mouth through songs, legends, myths, proverbs, festivals and rituals.

Oral creative expressions in Africa are rooted in African oral tradition which Igbo Oral tradition is a part of. They came into existence long before the emergence of written literary form. Before the arrival of substantial written literature, the oral genre comprising story-telling, funerals, incantations, proverbs, weddings which have to do with poetry and dramatic performances were in existence and in use. Describing oral literature, Okoh, (2008:64), states:

Oral Literature is only one type of literature, a type characterized by particular features to do with performance, transmission and social context, with the various implications these have for its study...It has greater appropriateness especially as it fully rightly underscores the literary nature of materials with which this discipline deals...

When tales were told by words of mouth, a father or any adult told his story with his audience made up of both young and old, men and women, boys and girls and in fact all the members of his household seated and listening to him. As the tales were told, there was the tendency that there was a lot of dropping and adding of pieces of information so that by the time the story went through the fourth and fifth hands, there would have been a lot of changes thereby

bringing about distortions. In order to store this knowledge, the earlier writers of Igbo prose fiction started putting down what they remembered of the tales. As time went on, modern creative writers started to emerge.

Experience, knowledge or information passed on from one person to another is the source from which all story-tellers have drawn. Among those who have written down the tales, it is the great ones that have their written versions differ at least from the speech of many nameless story-tellers. Some of the known prose, drama and poetry have their focal point based on oral literature. For example, *Elelia*, *Ojaadili*, *Omenuko*, *Nza na Obu*, *Oka Mgba*, *Mbediogu*, and so on, have their roots deep inside the oral traditions.

There are still others, but the fact is that since they now have authorship, they will be identified as the creative works of the particular individuals who authored them. In as much as the oral tradition is fast fizzling out into the thin air, there is a need to appreciate the oral form as it affords the written form the opportunity to use words beautifully. Truly, the written literary form is a derivative of the oral literary form.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Works of earlier scholars, authors, and researchers were visited in order to support or disagree with their opinions, views, assertions, observations, suggestions, and inferences and so on. In the light of this, this study made efforts to verify the claim that written literary form is a derivative of the oral literary form, meaning that written literature has its roots in oral literature.

### Theoretical Framework

For anyone to appreciate the works of literature, one must bear in mind that the work could either be a fiction or non-fiction. For this reason a willing suspension of disbelief is required by the audience. To this end, Walton (1978:5) affirms:

Willing Suspension of Disbelief is an aesthetic theory intended to characterize people's relationships to art. It was coined by the poet and aesthetic philosopher, Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1917. It refers to the willingness of a person to accept as true the premises of a work of a fiction, even if they are fantastic and impossible. It also refers to the willingness of the audience to overlook the limitations of a medium, so that these do not interfere with the acceptance of these premises.

Willing suspension of disbelief creates in one's mind the ability to believe without any doubt that what one hears is true. The appreciator accepts the story as being the truth and willingly or tacitly agrees to suspend judgment. The audience willingly reflects the reality of the story. Willing suspension of disbelief gives the story-teller or the artist the opportunity to hold the interest of the audience for as long as he wishes.

Another theory is Verisimilitude: This is explained as having the quality to seem to be true or real or authentic. Sterling (1967:613) states:

Verisimilitude has its root both in Platonic and Aristotelian dramatic theory of mimesis, the imitation or representation of nature. In order

for a piece of art to hold significance or persuasion for an audience, according to Plato and Aristotle, it must have grounding in reality.

This quality of seeming to be true or real is one of the characteristics of oral literature. However fantastic, unimaginable, or fictitious has oral literature a way of making a story to sound or look real to the audience.

### **Empirical Review**

Oral literature has to do with oral transmission from generation to generation. It features performance and exhibits all forms of literary devices which make it unique. Generally or basically, it has the same objectives with the written form as well as being conceived. Various scholars have used different terms and expressions to describe oral literature. According to Okoh (2008:72):

Oral literature is spoken, sung, intoned, recited, or chanted, depending on the context ...The first quality of this kind of literature is that it is oral ... Oral literature is to be aurally appreciated. In other words, it is communicated or received through the sound waves of human speech. Written literature is enacted or realized through both visual and aural means. Oral literature is same when actualized; the difference is just that oral literature lacks a tangible existence.

Oral literature is linked with oral transmission. It is intangible. It is preserved in the memory of the performer or storyteller. Elsewhere on, Okoh says that, 'Oral literature was customarily conceived of as a phenomenon transmitted from generation to generation... envisioned as constituting by itself, a distinct, rounded phenomenon...' Oral tradition or form influences the development of the written literature in many ways.

Supporting the existence of African oral literature which gave rise to the development of written literature, Adali-Morthy in Okoh (2008:168) writes:

There are many precious pieces of folktales... Songs sung by children at play in the moonlight village squares...songs of battle ... words of libation, religious prayers and songs. It is out of these materials that modern creative writing can be built, if it is to be distinctly original and West African. This is to say that the written literature has its roots in the oral literature. Oral literature does not give room for a repeat performance. The storyteller or the performer rarely repeats himself either in the tales or the performance.

Meludu (2009) states that 'In the oral form, there is a general participation with the storyteller. There is what is called universality that is, situation whereby the audience is a part of the presentation because a lot of people who already know the story and the response needed will join once the narrator raises the responsorial which is already owned by all. But in the case of the written literature, it has a lot of restrictions.'

Even if what the writer publishes has the same storyline as in the oral, he now owns it. It has become tangible while oral literature is preserved in the memory and can be forgotten. No performer reproduces two performances in exactly the same manner. In as much as the

storyteller cannot lay claim on ownership or authorship of a story once it is let out of his mouth, it is pertinent to note that the written form belongs to the composer. Be it known also that before the transition to the written form, the oral tradition was in existence. Every culture had the oral tradition before the emergence of the written form which gives room for an exact repetition of performance and authorship or ownership. Every people's oral traditions were simply handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth by unknown identities.

Okpewho (2003) while systematically exploring the many ways in which writers have engaged in the transfer of styles from the oral tradition to the written text, observes:

The literary or artistic quality of oral literature was underplayed and undermined by foreign scholars who had little or no feeling for the languages and the attitude in which the literature was expressed. It was only inevitable that, when these African nations won their independence from foreign domination, they undertook to re-examine and overhaul not only the institutions by which they had been governed, but also the image of their culture that had long been advertised by outsiders. The aim was to demonstrate that Africa has had, since time immemorial, traditions that should be respected and a culture to be proud of.

It is a well known fact that oral literature is transmitted by word of mouth from generation to generation. This being the case, it means that Africa's norms, values and traditions are transmitted orally from one generation to another. Ogude (1984:1) acknowledges that, "African literature is the expression of the people's consciousness in a social situation. The literature existed in the oral literature of the people." Driving this assertion home, Igbo people, among the ethnic groups in Africa have their literature existed in oral form before the emergence of the written literature. Supporting this claim Emenyonu (1987:1) affirms:

Literature had existed in Africa before the coming of Europeans to African continent. This literature was basically oral. Known as oral tradition, it consisted of materials transmitted by tradition either by word of mouth or custom and practice. Oral tradition had a definite purpose to instruct the young in the principles of right and wrong and all who mould opinion and character.

Oral tradition basically is transmitted orally and is used to mould the characters of the young ones. Contributing, Ogbalu (2009:21) states that, "Oral literature existed in the following forms: folktales, myths, legends, proverb, jokes, idioms, riddles, tongue-twisters and other forms of verbal arts. Folktales, myths and legends are the most developed forms and existed in form of stories. Generally, oral literature is used to instruct the young in the principles of right and wrong of the society" In response to this, Fryre (1957:47) asserts:

In literature, the question of fact or truth is subordinated in the primary literary aim of producing a structure of words for its own sake and the sign value of the symbols are subordinated in their importance as a structure of inter-connected motives.

Fryne explains here that truth, fact or reality of any story is secondary in any literary work. Due to the oral transmission, oral literature lacked authenticity and accuracy since certain

vital pieces of information may have been lost. There is then the need for oral literature to be preserved through record-keeping. This then brought about the emergence of written literature.

### THE PLACE OF ORAL TRADITION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITTEN FORM

Oral literature has the same objectives with the written form as well as being conceived. Oral tradition or form influences the development of the written literature in many ways. It is important to note that no people's proverbs or legends have ever been said to have descended from heaven. The fact remains that they originated from somewhere although it is difficult to determine with accuracy and exactness the identity of the originators. They are simply handed down from generation to generation by words of mouth by unknown identities.

Going further to explain oral literature, Obi in Eyisi, Odimegwu and Ezenwa-Ohaeto, (2009:63) states:

Literature, be it oral or written, plays very important roles in society. It mirrors society, checks the excesses of people. The life of a people is embedded in the literature as it teaches the cultural values of the society... Oral literature is the unwritten literature of any group of people handed down from generation to generation through the spoken word. It includes the major genres of prose, verse and drama, and sub-literary genres of tongue-twisters, riddles, nursery rhymes etc. On the other hand, written literature is modern literature authored by individual creative literary artist through the medium of writing.

This implies that both oral and written forms perform the duty of mirroring the society. But while the oral form has to do with transmission of the cultural values handed down from one generation to another by word of mouth, the written form is an individual's creativity written down for posterity.

There is no doubt that Ogbalu's *Mbem na Egwu Igbo* is a compilation of poems and songs for different occasions. These were adapted from the oral traditions whereby there are songs meant for war, marriage, incantation, lullabies and so on. For instance, on page 120 number 37, he has this war song:

<i>Nzogbu Nzogbu</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Trample Trample	The great nation
<i>Nzogbu</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Trample	-do-
<i>Zogbue Nwoke</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Trample on the man	-do-
<i>Zogbue Nwaanyi</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Trample on the woman	-do-
<i>Onye o bula puta</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Everyone come out	-do-
<i>Ka anyi gaa agha</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Let us go to war	-do-
<i>Nzogbu</i>	<i>Enyi mba enyi</i>	Trample	-do-

On page 116 member 28 he has this:

<i>O buru n'ukwu</i>	If it is in greatness
<i>O buru na mma</i>	If it is with matchet
<i>Oburu n'egbe</i>	If it is with gun
<i>Anyi ga-meri ndi ahu</i>	We shall defeat those people

<i>Ha buru mma</i>	If they carry matchet
<i>Ha buru egbe</i>	If they carry gun
<i>Ha buru mma</i>	If they carry matchet
<i>Anyi ga-emeri ha dum</i>	We shall defeat them all
<i>Ha gaa n'elu</i>	If they go up
<i>Ha gaa n'uzo(DC)</i>	If they walk on the road (DC)
<i>Anyi no na nche</i>	We are on our guard
<i>Ha bia ma mmiri na-ezo</i>	If they come under the rain
<i>Ha bia ma anwu na-eti</i>	If they come under the sun (DC)
<i>Anyi nwere ogwu ha,</i>	We have an antidote for them
<i>Ha buru dinikpa</i>	If they are strong
<i>Ha buru ogbu agu</i>	If they are killers of tiger (DC)
<i>Anyi nwere ndi ka ha</i>	We have stronger people
<i>Ha si n'uzo</i>	If they come through the road
<i>O buru n'ohia</i>	Or through bush
<i>Anyi ga-egbucha ha.</i>	We shall eliminate them all.

These war songs go a long way to motivate and inspire the warriors, it spurs them into action. There are poems meant for different occasion in that poetry book. There is yet another poetry book by Ogbalu which has a compilation of many poems meant for children. It is titled "Ayoro". This compilation was embarked upon in order to prove that there are Igbo poems for children. Based on this Ogbalu (1982) states:

The selection has been carefully done in order to demonstrate that the assertion that there are no Igbo poems for children is quite wrong. Such public pronouncements by well placed men and women ... are misguided and mischievous. Such belong to the class who would, if they could, prevent their children from speaking, writing and reading their mother tongue.

While Ogbalu observes here that Igbo men and women fail to promote their language by not encouraging their children, the poetry book "Ayoro" contains a lot of poems that interest children: some are lullabies, some used during their plays, some are didactic, some are sung in honour of their mothers while some others have animals as the main subjects in them

On page 2 of Ayoro there is lullaby titled, '*Onye Muru Nwa?*'

*Onye muru nwa na-ebe akwa o?*  
*Egbe muru nwa na-ebe akwa !*  
*Weta uziza weta ose*  
*Weta agbam ngororo ofe*  
*Ka umu nnunu rachaa aka*  
*Ka okpo otutu kpogbue ya*  
*Onye onye egwu ozo*

Who delivered the crying child?  
Bring uziza spice bring pepper  
Bring other soup ingredients  
Let the young birds lick their hands  
Let hiccups kill it



Who has another song?

*Mbediogu* is a literature book written by Ogbalu. Going through all the stories, one would find that they all belong to the oral traditional folktales group. The reason for this work is that Ogbalu was trying to prevent the folktales from going into extinction.

*Ala Bingo* is another literature book that was developed from the background of oral literature. It was seriously influenced by the oral traditions or folk tales. The author told his story portraying that a king could live both on the earth and in heaven; had powers to do anything or change situations. On page 3 of *Ala Biugo*, D.N Achara, at the beginning of the story gave a brief on this king in question. Achara (1963:3), therefore states:

*“N’ala Bingo otu onye di O bu onye nwere ike n’ebe ihe niile di. Otutu mgbe o na-agba mmadu nile gharii otu anyi si enwe ihe a na-akpo okachi na udu mmiri. O bu onye eze a na-eme ihe nile ndi a. Ebe o wuru otu ulo ya n’elu igwe: ebe o wuru nke ozo bu na Bingo. Aha ya ozo bu Ogara olu n’afọ lota n’afọ. Ihe mere e jiri nye ya aha di otu a bu nke a: o buru na o hapu ulo ya nke di na Bingo jee n’ulo ya nke di n’elu igwe, o gaghi alaghachi ruo ihe di ka onwa iri na abuo. Mgbe o bula anyi nwere udu mmiri n’elu uwa mgbe ahu bu mgbe ya onwe ya no n’elu igwe ma mgbe anyi nwere okochi mgbe ahu ka o no na Bingo”.*

### **The English Translation**

In the land of Bingo there lived a man who had powers over everything. Most times, it surprises people how we have dry and rainy seasons. The king is responsible for these changes. He built one house in heaven and built the other in Bingo. His other name is the Seasonal King. The reason for the name is this: If he leaves his home in Bingo and travels to heaven, he remains there for the next twelve months. Whenever we have rainy season on earth, that is when he is in heaven but when we experience dry season, he is in Bingo.

Folktales are normally filled with fairytales and unbelievable stories. The above is an example of such. The entire novel told the story of this king who had the powers to do a lot of exploits because of his dual residency and ability to get what he wants with little or no efforts. The story talked about the most beautiful lady the king ever saw and swore to marry her. With his untiring efforts, he succeeded. Within the same story, he brought to light the history of what led to the first born son inheriting the father’s position at his father’s death.

Another story book that falls within the written literature group is *Elelia na ihe O mere*. It is equally based on oral literature. Folktales normally end up teaching morals. They are didactic. This is exactly what is found in “*Elelia*”, another great work of D.N Achara Achara, (1964:10) writes:

*Unu ga-echeta na Elelia bu onye mmadu nile na anumanu nile huru n’anya n’ihi obi ebere ya. Chetakwanu abu onye isi, “Onye mere ihe oma mere onwe ya; onye mere ihe ojoo mere onwe ya”. Ugbu a ka ihe oma Elelia mere gaje ibara ya uru. Mgbe amaghi ihe-oma tubara kalari ahu na mmiri, otu nnunu ukwu nke bi n’ime mmiri ahu were kpuru ya zoo n’akwu ya. N’ubochi ahu eze na-acho ka Elelia wetere ya*

*kalari ahu, nnunu ahu kpuuru kalari ahu bia idowe ya n'akuku mmiri ebe Elelia ga-ahu ya. Kalari ahu dapunahu ya. Otu azu a na-akpo atuma loo ya. Nnunu ahu tugbuo ya buru ozu ya jee busa n'akuku mmiri.*

### **The English Translation**

You will remember that Elelia is loved by both humans and animals because of his kindheartedness. Also remember the blind man's song: "One's good deeds will return to one; one's bad actions will fish one out." Now Elelia's good deeds will be beneficial to him. When the king threw that coral bead into the river, one very large aquatic bird living in that river picked it and hid it in its nest. On the day the king intended that Elelia should produce that coral bead, that bird came to the bank of the river to drop the coral bead where Elelia would see it. The coral bead slipped from the bird. A very big fish called the shark swallowed it. Then that bird used its stabbing beak to stab and kill the fish, then carried the fish to the bank of the river.

One could notice a lot of impossibilities in the above passage. It is only in folktales that such stories are told. The two stories so far have shown that the theories of willing suspension of disbelief and verisimilitude are in action here. The reader or the appreciator definitely understands that there are certain attributes portrayed in these stories that are not real and are unbelievable but the author succeeded in presenting the work in such a way that it will remain captivating and creating the effect of Do-not-drop-till-the-end in the reader. Here the reader or appreciator willingly suspends his disbelief, seeing the work as having the quality of seeming to be real or true. If it were in the oral form, the two stories will have the same effect on the audience. The way the story teller or performer presents his work, using some literary devices and introducing some styles will make the audience to overlook the realistic aspect of the story.

On page 18 also there is yet another part of the story where it was told of how birds spoke and Elelia was able to hear and understand them and from what they said, Elelia planned to go in search of the said most beautiful girl ever seen on earth. The different kinds of people described who had the ability and capability to aid Elelia were just part of the tables.

*Oka Mgba* is another Igbo novel that got its roots from Igbo oral literature. It is a compilation of folktales that had to do with human beings relationship with the spirits; and man with animals. There were stories on the relationship among animals, with the tortoise at the forefront. Just like Ogbalu wrote *Mbediogu* in order to preserve the oral literature, Iroaganachi did his work for the same purpose. In addition to this, that one may know how the Igbo lived their lives in the past, Iroaganachi, (1973:v) states :

*E deputara Akuko ife ndi a ka ha diri n'usoro n'usoro. E siri otu a dee akuko ndi a ka o wee ndi na-agu ha anya. O bukwa ka mmadu mara na n'akuko ife ndi Igbo, e nwere ndi gbasara umu mmadu na umu mmuo, umu mmadu na umu anumanu na ibe ha... O buru na o di onye nwere ndidi muo ihe gbasara akuko ife ndi Igbo, nyobamaa anya n'ime ya, o ga-amata ghotakwa otu ndi Igbo siri din du na mgbe gara aga.*



## The English Translation

These folktales are written in sequence. They are written in this form so as to be clear to the readers. It is also to ensure that people know that the Igbo folktales contain the interpersonal relationships between the human beings and the spirits, human beings and animals, and among the animals themselves. If anybody has the patience and determination to x-ray and learn about things pertaining to Igbo folktales, he or she will learn as well as understand more about the origins, culture and way of life of the Igbo in the past.

Furthermore, Iroaganachi wrote *Oka Mgba* in chapters as would be found in the modern fiction. They all portrayed the relationship between the oral and written literature. There were interpersonal relationships existing either between man and animal or man and spirit or among animals especially singling out the tortoise as the protagonist. All these are based on the folktales normally told in the moonlight at the village squares.

Along the line of drama, one very prominent creative writing based on oral literature or oral tradition or oral form is *Ojaadili* which was put together by Odunke Artists. This drama was first acted on stage by the actors and actresses in Lagos at the National Theatre during the Festival of Arts that took place between December 1976 and January 1977. Though acted, everything about it is based on oral literature. It is easy to write a novel telling the story of what happened among the human beings, animals or spirits, but to act it is something else. It is an uphill task.

In his collection of poems titled *Nka Okwu*, Maduekwe brought in a lot of poems that were based on the oral form. The very first has to do with 'Oji' but he titled it "I biala". With colanut one welcomes a visitor to one's home especially in the morning. He took on the traditional musical instruments and called them, "The Egwu Anyi". He went on and on showcasing the different aspects of Igbo culture in those 53 pieces of poems.

*Mbem Igbo* written by Obienyem may be seen as a completely modern phenomenon. On page 7 No 6 titled "UNU NILE" is a folktale on the tortoise and other animals. Ekwudu brought in "Eri Ukwu" in "A tuoro Omanu O mara" to portray its significance in the taking of Ozo title. This is oral tradition. Nwadike in "Nri Uche" introduced "Oji" and some others including "Chukwu Hapu Uwa" as those based on the oral form.

*Ije Odumodu Jere* by Bellgam is another story book that has a combination of creativity and folktale brought together to come up with a novel. In fact it was a transliteration of "Gulliver's Travel" Man would not have lived in holes as described in the novel. A lot of incredible stories come in from the beginning to the end of the story. Such incredibility portrays the morality of the work. Willing Suspension of Disbelief and Verisimilitude play active role in the sustenance of the interest of the reader.

Almost all authors of the modern Igbo prose fiction have their works based on oral literature therefore proving that written literature is a derivative of oral literature as well as helping to stabilize Igbo oral literature. In the light of this, Okoh (2008:276) states:

The contemporary writer in Africa is primarily concerned with the African present; but in getting to grips with it, he, like every other

social being around him, is heavily dependent on his past ... Indeed it must now be quite boring, in fact a cliché, for anyone with even the slightest acquaintance with modern African literature to observe and be reminded that in their works, most African writers draw substantially upon their oral literary traditions.

He further concludes that there is no way of even beginning to appreciate contemporary African writing without first getting to grips with the workings and resources of oral literature. More importantly, the particular power and profundity of modern African literature derive essentially from the writers fascinating infusion in their works with the rich resources of their oral literature. Other examples in which aspects of modern or written literature successfully derived from oral literature include Ogbalu's *Ilu Igbo*, Nwadike's *Echiche Miri Emi* and so on.

From the foregoing, looking at the stories and drama critically, one would definitely conclude that the ideas projected are impossible but because oral literature has a function of teaching moral lessons, those fictitious and fallacious characters and scenes are introduced to help the artist achieve his or her aim. Therefore, Willing Suspension of Disbelief and Verisimilitude are forces that pull the audience or the reader to sit for hours enjoying the stories. Verisimilitude and Willing Suspension of Disbelief combine together to make an unrealistic, fantastic, fictitious and unimaginable work of arts to appear to be true, real, authentic as well as interesting making one to suspend one's doubt on the probability of the story being true and real.

## **FINDINGS**

Though oral literature is transmitted by word of mouth, it forms the bases on which written literature springs. Both oral and written literature mirror the society. Oral literature (folktales) lack authorship, authenticity and accuracy as there exist addition and subtraction of pieces of information, while written literature is tangible and can boast of authorship with information remaining in tact.

In spite of fantastic, fictitious, unimaginable and incredible nature of folktales and those built into written novel, the forces of willing suspension of disbelief and verisimilitude still increase the sustained interest of the audience or reader especially due to the artist's style.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper has been able to examine with examples, the claim that written literary form is a derivative of the oral literary form. Actually, the written literature is seriously influenced by the oral literature. The researcher therefore recommends that all aspects of Igbo oral literature be preserved through documentation for posterity. This work further recommends that the modern creative writers should include the Igbo norms and values in their creative works. Educational institutions should encourage this growth through competitions both verbal and written and incentives given to winners. Universities especially those in Igbo land, should provide incentives through scholarships to students of Igbo language, culture and literature and lecturers provided with grants to carry out researches on Igbo language and literature.

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