

ANALYTICAL STUDY OF TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE SONGS TEXTS OF EZINIFITE
AGUATA WOMEN, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Music forms part of virtually all activities in the traditional Igbo society of Nigeria, including births, occupations, worship, ceremonies, festivals, children upbringing, social control, rites of passage, politics and so forth. Every community in Igbo land manipulate music to lend voice and sound to their ideology, actions and even spirituality. Women play very active roles in some of these musical activities. This paper, therefore, studies the songs performed by women of Ezinifite in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria during traditional marriage ceremonies in order to enhance the events. The focus of this study is on the songs' texts. However, mere translation of the texts of these songs which are in Igbo language to English or any other language does not suffice for the true meaning, hence the textual analysis. Also, there is a noticeable gradual decline in number of women participation during the performance of these marriage songs. And this, consequently, poses a great threat on these songs which may gradually lead to their extinction. Data for this research was collected through oral interview and fieldwork. This paper finds out the reasons for this loss of interest among the village women, provides notational document of the songs as well as their textual analysis. It therefore concludes that beyond mere textual translation of a song, there is need to know the culture of the people for vivid understanding the meaning.

Introduction

Festivity is an intrinsic part of the life of the Igbo people of South-Eastern Nigeria, in that most events and activities are turned into celebration and feasting. Such events include child birth, puberty, death, commemoration of past events, ritual sacrifice, festivals, marriages and so forth. According to Okafor (2005), "the Igbo appear to be a people perpetually celebrating. Every month, some community somewhere is celebrating. The Igbo year, *arọ*, is a round of festivals and ceremonies, which vibrate with life, sounds and meaning" (pp. 75 & 76).

Accordingly, music and dance accompany virtually all the events and activities in Igbo culture. The music that associate various festivals and ceremonies are not merely for entertainment but are functional, that is; they are contextual with the particular event(s) they are meant for. That is why there are songs peculiarly meant for birth, works, funerals, marriages, worships, periodic and non-periodic festivals and so forth. The texts, sounds and rhythms combine to depict the mood of the event. According to Nzewi in Ibekwe (2019), "the themes of songs tend to centre on events and matters of common interest and concern to the members of a community or social groups within it, they may deal with everyday life or with the traditions, beliefs and customs of the society" (p. 1). Echezona in Okafor (2019) also notes that life, to every Igbo has a melodic and rhythmic orientation, and again, no event happens that is not associated with music.

However, women participate actively in various musical activities in Igbo society. Although they are regarded as being inferior to men, their musical roles cannot be overemphasized. Omibiyi-Obidike

(2013), notes that previous suggestion which held that Nigerian women by virtue of gender are excluded from specialized musical events has been debunked by more recent studies. She also asserts that among most linguistic groups in Africa, specifically Nigeria, women occupy special positions in musical performances during traditional events. Okafor (2005) highlights various musical roles women play in Igbo culture which include serving as first teachers of music for young children, who are encouraged by the women to join in *iro/ifo/iwho* (dialectical variations), that is stories in song. The children begin with singing the refrains, and in the end, learn how to sing the song. Women chant salutations to announce the birth of a child, sing lullabies and some other songs as they go about their domestic chores, such as cleaning the house and cooking. The women's musical role also extends to ceremonies and festivals, such as marriages, cocoyam festival, fattening room, title taking, chasing of year and so forth; social control; religious activities, as well as minstrelsy.

The focus of this paper, therefore, is on the songs performed by the women of Ezinifite in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria, during traditional marriage ceremonies in order to enhance the event. Obviously, there is a noticeable decline in the number of women participation in the performances. The causes of the decline, as found out by the researcher will be discussed later in this work.

Women in Igbo Society

The traditional Igbo society is known to be patriarchal, that is, women are given less prominence than men. This is evident in the deprivation of certain rights and privileges from women such as involvement in the community politics, inheritance of immovable property in their natal homes because they would get married to another man, being present where land disputes are settled or their witnesses allowed. Also, another unpleasant experience that women have in their husbands' homes come as a result of infecundity and male-childlessness. This as a result, poses great threat to the marriage security of such women. Male children are preferred because they are believed to be bearers of identity as well as sustainers of lineage. Isiugo-Abanihe in Nwokocha (2007) further explains that:

A man who died without a son lived a worthless life; he is inherited by his brothers, and is soon forgotten since his branch of the family tree has ended... For a woman, the birth of a male child is of paramount importance as well, because it establishes her firmly in the family. She is said to have 'taken root' or 'established a solid foundation' when the first son arrives. (pp. 219 & 220)

Nevertheless, the role women play in ensuring continuity of Igbo culture cannot be overemphasized. Ibekwe (2012) points out the indispensability of African women with reference to their contributions in the existential functioning of man and humanities at large. Ibekwe insists that their job exceed child bearing and extends to sustenance of African cultural practices such as language, communality, body adornment, dedication to gods and goddesses, child rearing practices, artistry and so forth.

Though women seem to be subjugated in Igbo culture, yet, they devised means through which they exercise their power and control of their own affairs. This they achieved by formation of two strong institutions: *Umuada/Umuokpu*- Consanguine Sisters and *Ndinwuyedi/Inyomdi/Alutaradi*- Co-wives Association (women married in a village community). The formation of these women institutions according to Okafor (2005) was as a result of Igbo rule of exogamy. Ezeigbo (1990) disagrees with some early scholars, especially those from Europe and America that made some statements of generalizations about utter powerlessness of women in African societies which she regarded as publications of half-truth. One of the misleading information according to her is found in Basden's submission about Igbo women:

Women have but few rights in any circumstances, and can only hold such property as their lords permit. There is no grumbling against their lot; they accept the situation as their grandmothers did before them and, taking affairs philosophically, they manage to live fairly contentedly. (p. 149)

Ezeigbo maintains that the above statement by Basden is as a result of "his lack of knowledge of the socio-political system of power distribution and the concept of role differentiation in terms of gender and sex among the Igbo in the society of that time" (p. 149).

The power which Igbo women possessed emanated from the two strong women's organisations in every Igbo community: the *Umụada* (Organisation of Patrilineage Daughters) and *Alutaradi* (Organisation of Patrilineage Wives)... The *Umụada* wielded great influence in their natal homes and their advice and sometimes their decisions were accepted with little opposition from the male members of the patrilineage. Thus, even though women had little power in marital homes, they were always respected and listened to in their natal homes, where they had the right to 'come and go' as they wished. The *Umụada* had the power to discipline erring wives in the patrilineage and impose punishment on such offenders. The *Alutaradi* constituted the weaker of the two organisations, but the strength of its members lay in their unique ability to cooperate fully amongst themselves to make their grievances and wishes heard and implemented by their men. (Ezeigbo, 1990, p. 152)

According to Amudume in Ezeigbo (1990), "if lineage men proved stubborn, wives went on strike, in which case they would refuse to cook for or have sexual intercourse with their husbands. In this culture, men did not cook: control of food was therefore a political asset for the women" (p. 152). Other means through which women overcome dilemma of childlessness or not being able to give birth to a male child in traditional Igbo society include the practice of woman husband, whereby a childless woman would marry another woman in order to produce children on her behalf; male daughter, whereby a daughter from a lineage without a male child is allowed to remain at home in order to produce male child/children who would be heir of her father's property and by this, the daughter exercises control over her father's property until the son grows. These practices are for genealogical sustenance.

Additionally, women contribute to community development. Okafor (2005) informs thus:

There is an interesting development in the musical culture of Igbo women which was not needed in the past. Then, people contributed directly the materials and labour required for communal projects. Today, a generation of people have been extracted from their village environment and gone to live in urban centres, where they form dance groups. These provide a big attraction in the cosmopolitan centres, and generate funds. The proceeds are sent to the home villages, particularly for the things that concern women, such as maternity clinics, schools and halls which may be hired to the people. (p. 84)

Therefore, it could be deduced from the above discussion that women in Igbo society are not powerless but are strong and creative beings. Their roles in ensuring cultural continuity as well as community development cannot be underestimated.

Igbo Traditional Marriage

The Western concept of marriage is totally different from that of the Igbo traditional marriage. For the Westerners, marriage is between husband and wife whereas marriage in Igbo culture involves two extended families. Some people believe that the two most important ceremonies in Igbo culture

are marriage and funeral ceremonies because of all the ceremonies observed in Igbo society, only these two ceremonies involve the role and responsibility of the extended families. Okafor (2005) corroborates thus, "in Igbo society, two persons do not marry; two families do. By their very nature, Igbo marriages are a community affair" (p. 76).

The Igbo traditional marriage is not a one-day event but requires about two or three visits by the groom and his kindred, led by the groom's father to the bride's family before a date will be fixed for the *Igba nkwu/Akwa nkwu/Igba mmanya*-wine carrying, that is traditional marriage ceremony. Where the groom's father is late or ridden with sickness, the oldest man in the groom's patrilineage represents the groom's father in the marriage. It is important to note that it is a father that marries for his son according to the Igbo tradition. However, each day of visit has its own list of requirements to be presented by the groom to his in-laws to be and every marriage activity takes place at the bride's father's house. Conversely, the list of requirements for marriage varies among various communities in Igbo society. In some communities, the requirements are so costly that some suitors find it difficult to afford. The belief of such communities is that since they have spent so much to raise their daughter from infancy to adulthood, another man must have to pay hugely to take her as wife. On the contrary, some other communities make the burden light for those who would wish to marry their daughters, believing that nothing brought by any suitor can equate what they spent in training their daughters. Their major concern is that their daughters be taken good care of by their husbands.

The first visit is usually an introduction, known as *!ku aka*- knocking at the door. For this first visit, the groom alone and his father embark on it or they may be accompanied by one or two of the groom's lineal brothers. The groom's father introduces himself and his son to the bride's father and makes known the intention of their visit. "Culturally, this is only a visit and does not warrant any gift of item. However, as goodwill, the groom and his family are free to go with kegs of palm wine, a bottle of hot drink and kola nuts" (Nwabude, 2022, p. 226). After the introduction/contact establishment, both families can go on to make enquiries about each other's background and history.

Subsequently, the groom's family visits again and seeks consent from the bride's family as to whether their proposal is accepted. If there is no objection to the groom's proposal after all investigations must have been carried out, another meeting is scheduled for payment of dowry/bride price which authenticates marriage. Eniola and Aremo (2020) corroborates that the bride-price therefore, is a blood cleanser that removes shame and insults from the woman; evidence that she is legally married to her husband in accordance to the tradition and culture, which again gives her honour and a sense of community value amongst her peers in her husband's home and his family.

Afterwards, a day is fixed for the traditional marriage ceremony proper which is the only event that takes place outdoor and open for the collateral relatives, friends and well-wishers to attend. Before the ceremony commences, there will be an inspection of the items brought by the groom as contained in the list of requirements for marriage. If the items are complete, then, the marriage ceremony will now proceed but if the items are not complete, the suitors may be required to bring money equivalence of the missing item. Having stated earlier that marriage in Igbo culture is a community affair; the list of items for marriage is a combined list for the bride's parents and kindred, the patrilineage daughters, patrilineage wives and the spinsters. It is important to note that the marriage process

could be abridged in terms of the number of visits, but all the requirements meant for all the visits must be provided completely by the suitor.

In Ezinifite, Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria, it is during the ceremony that the women perform their songs. Every group that has a share in the marriage list will have to present their welcoming gifts, usually garden eggs and kola nuts to their in-law. It is during and after the presentation of kola nuts, first by the patrilineage daughters and then, the patrilineage wives, that the women are given opportunity to perform their songs.

Ethnography of Ezinifite, Aguata

In Anambra State, South-Eastern Nigeria, there are two towns/communities that bear the name, Ezinifite: one in Aguata L. G. A. and the other in Nnewi-South L. G. A. Whether or not there is any migration history about the two communities, the researcher was not able to find out.

Ezinifite Aguata is one of the fourteen towns/communities that make up Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State. The communities in Aguata L. G. A. include Ekwulobia, Akpo, Achina, Uga, Igboukwu-Ukwu, Isuofia, Umuchu, Aguluezechukwu, Ezinifite, Ikenga, Amesi, Oraeri, Umuona and Nkpologwu. It is made up of three villages, Amaekwulu, Aku and Ifite. It lies between longitude 7 ° and 7.02 °E and Latitude 6.5 °and 6.52 °N. Thus, Ezinifite town lies completely within the tropics. It is situated at the extreme South-Western end of Aguata LGA and has common boundary with seven communities, namely: Ekwulobia in the North, Nkpologwu in the North-East, Uga in the East, Unubi in the South-East, Ekwulu-Mili in the South-West, Igbo-Ukwu in the West and Ikenga in the North-West. Ekwulu-Mili and Unubi are in Nnewi-South L. G. A.

Ezinifite and its neighbouring towns share similar traditional practices, including music. Some of the songs performed in Ezinifite are also performed in its neighbouring communities either in the same contexts or similar contexts, although there may be some dialectal variations. Texts of songs sung in a particular community are also modified by another community for a different context.

Traditional Marriage Songs by Ezinifite Women

The themes of the traditional marriage songs by the Ezinifite women are mostly centred on child-bearing/rearing because of the high premium placed on children in Igbo culture. The *Umada* and *Ndi nwunye di* have their respective songs which they render at the appropriate time during the marriage ceremony. These songs express what the various women institutions stand for- their philosophy, ideology and Igbo world-view. A mere English translation of the marriage songs texts cannot grant an in-depth understanding of the songs to a non-indigene of Igbo, except an individual is acquainted with the place of women in Igbo culture. The songs are performed a cappella and are learned through imitation by participation.

However, the number of women participants in the rendition of these marriage songs has continued to decrease. The causes as identified by the researcher include rural-urban migration, religious belief, acrimony that exists among the members of the community. Also, insecurity and time constraint pose great threat on the continuity of these songs.

- i. Rural-urban migration: Many families reside in the cities, very far from their hometown. They visit their community mostly during festive seasons like Christmas, Easter and the women August meeting held annually. They only participate in the marriage ceremonies held within these festive periods.
- ii. Religious belief: Some Christian women no longer participate in performance of the marriage songs because they are not Christian songs. Since 'Jesus' or God is not mentioned in the songs,

they are not part of the rendition because, according to them, those songs do not give God glory.

- iii. Acrimony that accrues among various families in the community, which could be as a result of land dispute, disagreement among individuals in their kindred or in village politics is also a major factor in the reduced involvement of some women. Some women may decide not to attend any event held in any family they are not in good terms with.
- iv. Time Constraint: In many occasions, the traditional marriage ceremony starts late. Also, payment of the bride price may take place the same day and the in-laws may have come from a distant community, of which they will have to leave in good time back to their destination in order to avoid late night travel. These as a result lead to omission or truncation of some activities with performance of women songs inclusive.

For this paper, five of the songs performed by the women during traditional marriage ceremonies in Ezinifite, Aguata are presented: two by the *Umụada* and three by the *Ndi Nwunyedi*. It is pertinent to note that these songs are not exclusively performed in Ezinifite, Aguata. These songs are not exclusively performed. They could be heard in some other communities in Aguata LGA with some dialectal variations, as reflected in the adage - Igbo *na-asụ n'onu n'onu mana akwaa ukwala, oburu ofu*, meaning that the Igbo speak in different tongues but when they cough, it becomes the same. Some of the songs may also be performed either in the same or similar contexts in other communities or the texts changed to suit a different event.

Song No. 1

Ọmụmụ Erichala M Ego
(Childrearing Has Cost Me So Much Money)

Call 

Response 

7 

13 

17 

Text

Translation

Call:	<i>Ọmụmụ erichala m ego,</i>	Childrearing has cost me so much money,
	<i>Ya ribe</i>	let it be,
	<i>Ezigbo Ọmụmụ erichala m ego,</i>	Good childrearing has cost me so
		much money,
	<i>a kwụba m ya mmaji</i>	let it be, shortly, I will be paid
		back immeasurably.
Resp:	<i>Ọmụmụ erichala m ego,</i>	Childrearing has cost me so much money,
	<i>Ya ribe.</i>	let it be.
	<i>Ọmụmụ nke a erichala m ego,</i>	This childbearing has cost me so much
		money,
	<i>Ya ribe, mgbole a kwụba m ya mmaji</i>	let it be, shortly, I will be paid back
		greatly.

This song is in solo and chorused refrain form, based on Agu's (1999) criteria for analysis of African music; that is, the lead singer intones the song while the chorus repeats the song exactly as was

presented by the lead singer, although the lead singer may occasionally improvise. It is performed by the *Umuada*, as they proceed to present their *oji*-welcoming gifts, usually garden eggs and kola nut, to their in-laws. In this song, the *Umuada* states that they have really spent hugely on training their daughter, the bride; hoping that shortly, they would begin to regain bountifully, all that they spent in raising her. Women, as we earlier stated wield great influence in their natal homes and as a result, assume motherhood of their brothers' children. The upbringing of a child in Igbo society is a collective responsibility of the community, although they may have contributed nothing for the training of the bride.



Plate 1. *Umuada* proceeding to welcome their in-laws

During marriages in Igbo society, it has always been the wish of both families of the bride and the groom for an intimate relationship, hence the statement- *Ije anyi ga-bu ije mmilri, o gaghị abụ ije nku* being translated: our journey shall be one to the stream and not to fetch fire wood from the bush. A journey to fetch water from the stream is a daily routine and it continues each day until enough water for each day is provided for the household, whereas the journey to fetch firewood is not done daily but at times, weekly or even monthly. A man, therefore, is expected to pay a regular visit to his in-laws and the visit is not done empty-handed.

Song No. 2

Amụlụ Ya Amụ Na Nnkwute Obi

(She Was Born in An Affluent Family)



A - mụ-lụ y'a - mụ na n -nu-kwu-t'o - bi o, A -g'a - nụ y'a - nụ n'o - ko - to -k'o - bi o.

Text

Translation

Amụlụ ya amụ na nnkwute obi She was born in an affluent family, A

ga-anu ya anụ n'okotoko obi She will be married into a wealthy family

This song is also in solo and chorused refrain. It is performed by the *Umuada*, after presenting their welcoming gifts, usually garden eggs, to the family of the groom. In the text of this song, the

Association of Sisters tries to project their own fathers' family as a wealthy one and their sister, the bride, as an invaluable gift being given out to the groom. They also express their good wish that the family into which their daughter, the bride, is married would be a good and wealthy family that would be able to take proper care of her.

Song No. 3

Nnwa Akona M
(May I Not Be In Want of A Child)

Call: N-nwa le, n - nwa n'e - n'u - wa le, u-wa m j'a-bia, n-nw'a-kọ-na mụ, eh!

Response: -

5 N-nwa n- k'a -

10 -tọ -gbuo - n'ọ - nwe ya, u-wa m j'a - bia, n - nw'a - kọ - na mụ, n - nw'ọ -

13 ma.

N-nwa le, n - nwa n'e - n'u - wa le, u-wa m j'a-bia, n - nw'a - kọ - na mụ, eh!

Text

Translation

- Call:** *Nnwa le, nnwa n'elu uwa le,* Child, child born on the earth,
Uwa m ja-abia nnwa akona mụ, eh! In my next world, may I not lack a child.
- Resp.:** *Nnwa le, nnwa n'elu uwa le,* Child, child born on the earth,
Uwa m ja-abia nnwa akona mụ, eh! In my next world, may I not lack a child.
- Call:** *Nnwa nkea atogbuona onwe ya,* This child is so sweet, *Uwa m ja-*
abia nnwa akona mụ, eh! In my next world, may I not lack a child.
- Resp.:** *Nnwa le, nnwa n'elu uwa le,* Child, child born on the earth,
Uwa m ja-abia nnwa akona mụ, eh! In my next world, may I not lack a child.

This song is performed by *Ndi Nwunye Di* (co-wives association) as they march to present kola nut to their visitors. The text of the song reflects their joy of fecundity which make them firmly established in their husbands' homes. Their wish is that they will never be without children even in their next world.



Plate 2. *Ndi Nwunye Di* marching to present their gifts of welcome to their in-laws
Song No. 4

Ọmụmụ Amaka
(Child-bearing is Good)

Ọ - mụ - mụ a - ma - ka, ọ - mụ - mụ a - ma - k'ọ - mụ - mụ e - bui - n'a - nyị o -

5
che n - nọ - dụ - m u - kwu e - sie m i - ke, ọ - mụ - mụ e - bui - n'a - nyị o - che.

Text	Translation		
<i>Ọmụmụ amaka,</i>	<i>Child-bearing</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>good,</i>
<i>Ọmụmụ amaka,</i>	<i>Child-bearing</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>good,</i>
<i>Ọmụmụ ebuina anyị oche,</i>	<i>Child-bearing has given us seat,</i>		<i>Nhọdu m</i>
<i>ukwu esie m ike,</i>	<i>When I sit, my waist balances well,</i>		<i>Ọmụmụ ebuina anyị</i>
<i>oche,</i>	<i>Child-bearing has given us seat,</i>		

Ọmụmụ amaka is performed by the co-wives association. The song is also performed while celebrating child birth. In the traditional Igbo society, what makes a woman firmly established in her husband's house is her ability to produce children. However, any woman who could not bear children most times, suffers humiliation in her community; if it is not from her mother-in-law who might always use harsh words on her, it may be from a co-wife who derides her regularly for not having a child or even from her husband, even though medically the fault might not actually be from her but from her husband. The husband may decide to send her packing and marry another wife or allows her to stay while he marries a second wife who can bear him children. In some cases where the husband is not bothered about his wife's infecundity, his family members might begin to mount pressure on him to marry a second wife in order to have children so that his generation will be sustained.



Plate 3. *Ndi Nwunye Di* dancing in circular to their songs
Song No. 5

Ite Omumu
(Pot of Fertility)

Call 
Bia₁ ma-₁, bia₁ ma-₁a-ka n'i - t'ò -mù-mù ku -lu n-nwa.

Response 
Bia₁ ma-₁, bia₁ ma-₁a-ka n'i-

7 
O- ny'o-bù-na bia ma-₁a-ka n'i - t'ò -mù-mù ku -lu n-nwa.


t'ò -mù-mù ku -lu n-nwa. Bia₁ ma-₁, bia

14 
Ò mù-t'e - ji - m'ì-buò, a -nyì g'e - ku - cha ya,


ma-₁a-ka n'i - t'ò -mù-mù ku -lu n-nwa.

21 
Ò mù-t'e - ji - m'ì- to, a -nyì g'e - ku-


Bia₁ ma-₁, bia₁ ma-₁a-ka n'i - t'ò -mù-mù ku -lu n-nwa.

28 
cha ya, Bia₁ ma-₁, bia₁ ma-₁a-ka n'i-


Bia₁ ma-₁, bia₁ ma-₁a-ka n'i - t'ò -mù-mù ku -lu n-nwa.

35 
t'ò - mù-mù ku - lu n - nwa.


Bia₁ ma-₁, bia₁ ma-₁a - ka n'i - t'ò - mù-mù ku - lu n - nwa.

Text	Translation
Call: <i>Bia maị, bia maị aka n'ite ọmụmụ kulu</i>	Come and dip, dip your hand into the pot <i>nnwa</i> of fertility and carry a baby.
Resp.: <i>Bia maị, bia maị aka n'ite ọmụmụ kulu</i>	Come and dip, dip your hand into the pot <i>nnwa</i> of fertility and carry a baby.
Call: <i>Onye ọbuna bia maị aka n'ite ọmụmụ nnwa,</i>	Everyone should come and dip their hands into the pot of fertility and carry a baby. <i>kulu</i>
Call: <i>Ọ mụta ejima ịbuo, anyị ga-ekucha ya.</i>	If she gives birth to a twin, we will nurse them.
Resp.: <i>Bia maị, bia maị aka n'ite ọmụmụ kulu</i>	Come and dip, dip your hand into the pot <i>nnwa</i> of fertility and carry a baby.
Call: <i>Ọ mụta ejima ito, anyị ga-ekucha ya.</i>	If she gives birth to a triplet, we will nurse them.
Resp.: <i>Bia maị, bia maị aka n'ite ọmụmụ kulu</i>	Come and dip, dip your hand into the pot <i>nnwa</i> of fertility and carry a baby.

Ite Ọmụmụ- Pot of Fertility is in call and response. This song is performed by the co-wives association. While they sing, they dance in a circular formation with a clay pot containing water placed at the centre. The bucket of water symbolizes pot of fertility, into which they call on everyone to come and dip their hands and carry a baby or babies, especially, those that have not given birth to children or those who are yet to marry. Sometimes, those who have children also join in dipping their hands into the bucket on behalf of some other persons who have not given birth to children.

Conclusion

The life of the Igbo people of Nigeria is characterized by festivals and ceremonies, in that most of the events and activities are turned into celebration and feasting. Music is regularly used to spice up such activities. However women play active roles in some of these festivals and ceremonies. One of such activities is traditional marriage ceremony. In the traditional marriage ceremonies in of Ezinifite in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria, the two women institutions in Igbo culture variously contribute musically in songs to enhance the events. The analytical study of the songs' texts reveal that they are not merely for entertainment but are based on what the two women institutions stand for in Igbo culture.

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