# REVIVING CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH INDIGENOUS GAME SONGS IN ENUGU SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF ENUGU STATE

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### Introduction

Music embraces nearly all aspect of African life. It is one of the vital ingredients to various activities in African culture. It can be used in worship, politics, for history, entertainment like childbirth, initiation, marriage and education. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (1995) defined music as "the art of making pleasing combination of sounds and composition so made, written or printed signs representing these sounds" (p. 67). Music is man's creation and has been generally accepted world-wide as a universal phenomenon since its meaning and effects are largely the same. Indigenous game songs are performed orally, so it can easily be forgotten since they are not written down. The world is changing and foreign songs are now preferred to detriment of indigenous songs. Parents at home do not have the time to teach their children the local language and their indigenous songs.

The people of Enugu South Local Government Area (LGA)of Enugu State tend to forget that they used these songs in training their children in the past. They tend to forget that a child can be taught to respect the elders through these songs. The use of Igbo indigenous game songs in primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State is gradually going into extinction and being replaced by foreign songs such as the American and British songs, containing English rhymes, prose and poems. Now the question is, 1. Do primary school teachers use music use Igbo indigenous song during indoor and outdoor activities? 2. What is the role of these songs in reviving our cultural heritage which

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is gradually going into extinction? 3. What are the benefits of including these songs in the primary school system? The purpose of this study is to look at the role of Igbo indigenous game songs in reviving the Igbo cultural heritage among the primary school pupils in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State.

This study is guided by the following aim/objectives to:

- 1. Find out why the Igbo indigenous game songs are no longer used during games in the primary schools in Enugu South.
- 2. Determine the possible ways to revive the use of Igbo indigenous game songs in schools in a bid to preserve our cultural heritage.
- 3. Establish the educational implications of Igbo indigenous game songs in primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State.
- 4. Ascertain the role of indigenous game songs in teaching morals in primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State.
- 5. Recommend the prospects of reviving our cultural heritage among primary school pupils in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State through the use of Igbo indigenous game songs.

The study would bring to the limelight the need for the revitalization and the preservation of the Igbo indigenous game songs through the use among the primary school children. The use of the Igbo indigenous game songs in the primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State would foster the learning and speaking of Igbo language fluently. Moreover, the inclusion of the Igbo indigenous game songs in primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State, would create the right and long lasting atmosphere for socialization, eliminating strife among pupils even as they grow, thereby promoting the spirit of sportsmanship in the children. The use of Igbo indigenous game songs in primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State would fascinate the pupils' interest as well as facilitate the pupils' active participation in teaching and learning process. It is hoped that the findings of this study would sensitize the primary school heads, parents, Federal, and Local primary education authorities as well as the musicologists on the urgent need for inclusion of Igbo indigenous game songs in primary school activities. This study will also add to the growing scholarly body of literature on the African indigenous music.

### **Concept of Cultural Globalization**

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010), globalization is the fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and similar to each other because of large multinational companies and of improved communication. This means the process by which businesses or other organizations develop international influence or start operating on an international scale. It describes how people migrates or do things the way other distant people do them. Cultural globalization on the other hand is the transmission of ideas and values around the world in a way to extend social relation that is when people from all over the world try to behave in similar way. According to Guttal (2007), globalization has grown due to advances in transportation and communication technology. It is primarily interaction and integration that's associated with social and traditional aspects.

Cultural globalization is the transmission of ideas, meaning and values around the world in such a way as to extend and intensify social relation. It is marked by common consumption of cultures that has been diffused by the internet, popular culture and international travels. This cultural globalization favours rapid Anglocultural dominance over a more gradual evolution towards an inclusive world civilization. Some Cultural practices including traditional music has been lost or turned into a fused tradition. This has triggered a state of emergency for the preservation of our musical heritage. Globalization with all the good it brought us can harm diversity of culture.

### **Concept of Civilization**

Civilization according to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010) is a state of human society that is very developed and organized. It is the stage of human social and cultural development and organization that is considered most advanced; a process by which a society reaches an advanced stage of social and cultural development. According to Cambridge Dictionary (2019), civilization is a process of educating a society so that its culture becomes more developed. The establishment of the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus (UNEC) in this LGA, brought about rapid civilization to Enugu South. This made most of the indigene to strive to speak what is called central Igbo and English language to be able to communicate with the students that come from all over the country and the world to study in the university. This made the indigenes civilized

G. N. Nnam & F. N. Nmadu: *Cultural Heritage Revival in Primary Schools through*.... as most of them are now educated, though civilization is also suppressing their cultural heritage and their indigenous way of life.

### **Indigenous Game Songs**

Traditional/ indigenous game songs, also known as folksongs, according to Scholes (1970) are music which originated from an individual composer and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten, living tradition of a community. As a culture indicator folk music provides an avenue for clear expression to the level of cultural complexity, and a set of norms differentiating and sharply characterizing cultures. Kennedy (1980) defined folksongs as songs of unknown authorship passed orally from one generation to another, sung without accompaniment and often found in variants (of words and tunes) in different parts of a country.

Folksongs used to be predominantly found among peasants or country dwellers, but it need to spread to towns and urban cities where it will chronicle the people's lives in terms of design, melody and rhythm; and hence become traditional among them. But still it cannot be considered that folk songs have taken its rightful place in our society. Scholars of African music have variously discussed the place of these indigenous songs in the socio-cultural life of an African child and an Igbo child in particular. All such studies have been unanimous in agreeing that indigenous songs are significant part of the social, cultural, and religious aspects of our lives as Africans, being effectively employed as an agency for moral, social, religious and general culture education as well as for the negotiation of societal well-being.

In a study of folk music, Nzewi (1999) describes folk song as a communion of both the living and the dead. His study points to folk music as the significant element for societal cohesion as well as social and cultural mobilization in Nigeria. His study also brings to the fore the high value placed on folk music by the traditional societies in Nigeria.

### **Issue of Cultural Heritage**

Culture signifies the sum total of human creations. It is the general idea of knowledge, belief, customs, tradition, and skills that are available to the members

G. N. Nnam & F. N. Nmadu: *Cultural Heritage Revival in Primary Schools through....* of a particular society. They are not God given but man-made. They are language, mode of dressing, art, tradition, dance and songs designed for a particular people. They are prescriptions and responses which are designed to guide all aspects of people's life.

Music is one of the oldest valuable artistic forms in the tradition of Igbo societies. In the home, it is often believed that culture transmission begins immediately after birth. As the child grows, he learns to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Onyiuke (2005) stated that "Music is also an aspect of the life of the child, which he grows up with" (p. 23). There is hardly any activity within the society without one form of accompanying music or the other. Music is not seen in Igbo traditional society as a luxury but as a part of process of living itself because it touches on all aspects of their living. According to Okafor (1998) "the Igbo dance for joy, for love and for grief; dancing is therefore a communal expression, a socialization process and an expression of group's solidarity" (p. 45).

But unfortunately today, according to Okpara (2015) one can hardly hear an Igbo child sing our indigenous songs or recite our traditional poems. She went further to say that; there is an urgent need to reintroduce these Igbo didactic songs in the nursery and primary school music pedagogy in Igbo land for cultural revival. In recent time, in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State, foreign education form the most part of the primary school indoor and outdoor activities. This study seeks to find out why Igbo indigenous game songs are no longer used during games in the primary schools.

### **Traditional Method of Teaching Igbo Game Songs in Primary Schools**

When we talk about traditional way of educating children, we are referring to the educational practices and systems which various traditional communities use in bringing up their young ones in their way of life. This education does not involve the art of reading and writing but is mainly informal and practical in nature. It is informal in the sense that no conscious effort is made to organize the education in any classroom neither is it even consciously known that something called education is taking place.

On the other hand, it is practical because everything about it is reduced to the level of participation. Parents and the siblings of a child serve as teachers under the type of education. A child learns by observing the adults and in the absence of the adult, the tendency is for the child to try to imitate what the adult did and finally he starts to participate effectively in such an activity. This is how music is taught in this form of education. The child is exposed to work songs, game/moonlight play songs and folksongs. Children are taught how to dance, beat drums and sing without even knowing it. They watch the elders perform regularly during recreational activities or preparation for performances during occasions and festivals: music education and character training are required for corrections by the elders. These are learnt through imitation and this is an important form of the unwritten curriculum. In this way, the culture of the people is transmitted from one generation to the other. In line with this statement, Agu (1999) opined that "there exists a strong belief that the musical training of the average African... passes through infancy to adolescence and on to the initiation school" (p. 34). When a child learns a song he/she hardly forgets the song whether it is game songs or religious songs.

#### Western Music Education

Western music education is aimed at training man to become literate in the field of music, to understand the art of music as well as the history of music, Ekong (2009). The introduction of the western system of education in Nigeria in the nineteenth century brought new dimensions to the Nigerian traditional music education. According to Olabode (2001) of particular significance was the change from the informal nature of the pre-colonial system to a formalized system, typical of the western system of tradition. He added that a feature which accompanied this development was the predominant use of western musical instruments as resource materials in teaching school students.

Lending credence to these assertions Omotoje (1990) noted that the predominant emphasis on western music characterized the programmes of the early western type of school in the nineteenth century, in Nigeria. Ahanotu (2009) observed that the predominant emphasis on western rather than African system of music education in Nigeria secondary school has continued till now.

### Methodology

Data was collected through in-depth interview sessions with school management and class teachers of six (6) primary schools in Enugu south local government area of Enugu state. Two state government primary school, two mission primary school and two private. In addition, the participant observation method was used

### **List of Primary Schools under Study**

The primary schools used in this study include; Maryland Primary School Maryland Enugu, Igbariam I Primary School Achara Layout Enugu, Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School Maryland Enugu, St Matthias Model Primary School Maryland Enugu, May Blossom Primary School Achara Layout Enugu, Kayla international Montessori School Corridor Enugu.

## Reasons for Negligence of Igbo Indigenous Game Songs in Contemporary Primary Education System

According to school owners and management interviewed, there are reasons for this lack of appreciation of the folk culture of our own people.

- One is the way folk songs are taught orally. To them and millions of people, folk song, poetry, music and the study of history are just for peasants or rural dwellers.
- ii. The indigenous game songs were intentionally removed by the private schools owners in their bid to fit into the group of "circular or international school".
- iii. The private school owners assumed that it is meant for the pupil in schools that are government owned which accommodate low class citizens because in circular and international school, the use of indigenous language and song is not allowed as it is outdated.
- iv. The focus these days is in the use of American and British curriculum.
- v. The government school management that is the Head Teacher said that a child cannot come out from the village and you will expect that child to be learning Igbo song, they have to learn how to speak English which is the essence of going to school.
- vi. Nonchalant attitude of most Igbo parents towards Igbo indigenous game songs our cultural heritage also has caused the gradual disappearance of indigenous game songs of the Igbo people due to lack of practice and documentation.

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  - vii. Oral tradition is the basis for the composition, documentation, dissemination, and retrieval of music of Igbo people. As such, many Igbo folk songs have been lost as a result of a breakdown in oral tradition and the inability of an unreceptive new generation to follow these traditions.

From their responses, no one cares about the preservation of our cultural heritage which is gradually going into extinction. Some of the pupils in the private school could not even speak Igbo language fluently and this still boils down to the fact that no one wants his/her child to identify with the local language but they want these children to speak English even from the womb. According to the teachers interviewed, you will even find some primary school teachers trying to interpret these Igbo songs to English before we can even teach the pupil. We teach the English version before teaching the main Igbo game songs

Our system of education is, at present, too cosmopolitan, it is calculated to produce citizens of the world rather than an African/Igbo Child. The wake of modernity, urbanization and technological advancements brought about reduction in the preservation of the Igbo indigenous game songs (cultural heritage) hence borrowing, as well as abandonment have affected all aspects of Nigeria's culture and life. Unlike other cultural practices of Nigeria, indigenous game songs appear to be endangered in the contemporary scheme of child education.

Today many changes are taking place in methods of education. The use of the blackboard, the straight lecture and teaching by rote are becoming relics of the pre-technological era. More use of audio-visual aids is advocated. Television is being increasingly used. This is all good, also visits to historical sites, art galleries and museums, to factories and farms show that much is being done to bring to life the facts and figures of the text books. But there still remains the vital need to interrelate subjects and people, to show that all aspects of life are interdependent; and to provide for the 'culture of feelings' that is relating with others which is the real Igbo culture. Onuora-Oguno (2011) observed that:

Indigenous Nigerian music springs from the womb of the people's culture. It does not have to conform to the music of other people, though it could share in some common factors and elements. It is often a people's (sic) closed expression but is part of the universal language of the people which is called music (p. 205).

These indigenous songs are most times unique to a particular people.

# **Educational Implications of Including Game Songs in Primary School Activities**

Cecil Sharp as quoted by Johnson (2007), concluded thus; 'We look, therefore, to the introduction of folk- songs in the elementary schools to effect an improvement in the musical taste of the people, and to refine and strengthen the national character.

The following are educational implication of this study

- 1. The indigenous contexts of the songs could serve as a rich source of reference for musical arts education in formal music settings.
- 2. Teachers could develop repertoires from these songs into a variety of materials in the teaching and learning of indigenous culture and music in the classroom.
- To use the music elements of each applicable song to suit learning objectives of the day's lessons. For example, Students/pupils on their own part could diagram the contour of the melodies and come up with their own symbols to write down the songs (Dzansi, 2002).
- 4. They could choreograph new dances to accompany entertainment songs or compare the melodic patterns of different folksongs.
- 5. Students could also be assisted to develop good sense of rhythm as the teacher engages them in intelligent musical drill. Listening of the regular pulsation coming from the mortar and pestle when the people engage in pounding of yam (music appreciation).
- Students could be encouraged to compose responses to calls songs apart from displaying some of the strongest characteristic features typical of lgbo folksongs.

# Inclusion of Igbo Indigenous Game Songs in Primary Schools' Outdoor Activities: Roles and Benefits

Igbo indigenous game song is one of the most important elements in the transfer of Igbo cultural heritage. Traditional forms of music are considered to be the chief carriers of cultural heritage because folk music, which comes to mind at the mention of traditional music, is a sub-division of culture as a genetic cultural

- G. N. Nnam & F. N. Nmadu: *Cultural Heritage Revival in Primary Schools through....* nucleus and at the same time involves many other sub-divisions and features of culture
  - Folk music, beyond its pure entertainment value, uses "lyrics and performance dynamics as means to maintain the moral norms of the community and to discourage crime and social deviance. The fact that gospel tunes and other popular songs are replacing most of the folk songs we used to hear brings concern for the gradual but continuous disappearance of the folk music of Nigeria.
  - There can never be a universal appreciation of the values of the community unless school environment which impacts and sustains the process of keeping the national culture alive, transferring, and developing it, is characterized by national qualities. It is known that bearing a national character, these indigenous songs will not only make a remarkably distinctive cultural makeup to be adopted, spread, and disseminated throughout the country but it will also help this distinctive national character contribute greatly to the Igbo culture.
  - These indigenous songs create in pupils the right and lifelong atmosphere for socialization, eliminating strife and building unity and oneness as they grow.
  - The use of these songs motivates the primary school pupils to learn their indigenous language with ease.

For the Igbo, there are songs which are used for leisure; that is at free time or period such as during moon light play. These songs are songs for both personal and group entertainment and are so interesting and fascinating that the songs induce people to perform excellently well without fear or shame, making these young ones emotionally stable. It is through these recreational songs that children share their sense of belonging, social integration and friendliness. When these songs are introduced to primary school pupils, they will learn and grow with it knowing the moral lessons and the cultural heritage transferred to them through the songs. The use of these indigenous game songs during the outdoor activities which includes games and sports among other things will motivate them exercise more thereby making the children physically fit.

#### Conclusion

It is necessary that the indigenous game songs of our people be learnt by the

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G. N. Nnam & F. N. Nmadu: *Cultural Heritage Revival in Primary Schools through....* primary school pupils for posterity. Ojukwu and Onuora-Oguno (2016) also opined that

Since school learning is based on the assumption that what is learnt in school will be transferred to life situations outside the school, teachers should strive to transfer, involving the students in various activities. Active learning approaches help to provide the students with rewarding and joyful learning experiences (p. 36)

Music is a natural way for children to experience learning in a pleasurable way. The use of the lgbo indigenous songs in schools allows the children to easily recall our cultural heritage which they learn through the songs, as the years go by it will be a quide to them. From the discussions on Igbo indigenous songs, the researchers have come to examine the meaning of these Igbo indigenous songs to the Igbo child and why Igbo indigenous songs should be included in the activities of the primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State. They also saw that music cannot be separated from the school system, because music is used during teaching and learning process, children often sing their English alphabet, states and capital, Igbo and French alphabet, multiplication table and other songs which fosters memorization. Even in the schools' social activities, music plays a number of roles. The tradition, culture and songs of the people needs to be fully used and taught in all school programmes, as was used vears back. To achieve the overall educational objectives, there should be equal balance in the use of Igbo indigenous game songs and that of the Western. So as to gain both knowledge and avoid adverse effects of not learning them on the pupils, instead of the total move towards western songs which are in the curriculum. Nigeria and Igbo in particular should be proud of their indigenous game songs.

Some of the songs recommended to be used in schools include but not limited to the following:

- i. Onye e nene anya n'azu
- ii. Okereke okereke
- iii. Nwa ngwere
- iv. Kpa kpa nkolo
- v. Kpu kpu mkp' ogene

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Performance guide

TITLE	PERFORMANCE	THEME
	FORMATION	
Onye enene anya	Circle squatting	Carefulness and
n'azu		alertness
Okereke okereke	Circle squatting with stick	Diligence and oneness
Nwa ngwere	Jogging in group	Physical fitness of lizard
Kpa kpa nkolo	Standing in circle form	Unity
Kpu kpu mkp'	Standing facing each other	Corporation and
ogene	to form a tunnel	accommodation

### Song no. 1



Igbo Text	English Translation
Onye enen' anya n'azu	No one should look behind
Mmonwu anyi n'abia n'azu	Our spirit manifest is coming behind
Onye enen' anya n'azu	No one should look behind
Mmonwu anyi n'abia n'azu	Our spirit manifest is coming behind
Onye nee anya n'azu	If anyone loos behind
Mmonwu anyi g'apia ya utali.	Our spirit manifest will flog the person

The song is done sitting down in circle form while one person run behind with a stick as the song go on, he/she will drop the stick behind someone and run to take position. The person that has the stick behind will pick it and continue to go round singing the song again. No one is to look back as it is assumed that the person behind is a spirit manifest. It teaches alertness and carefulness.

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### Song no. 2

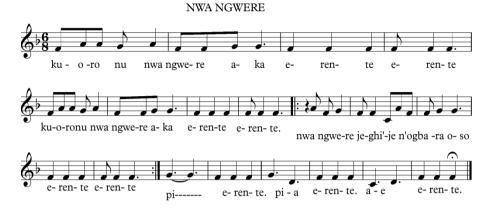


Igbo Text	English Translation
Okereke, okereke	Okereke, okereke
Du du du ya ya	Du du du ya ya
Okorafor, okoroafor	Okorafor, okoroafor
Du du du ya ya	Du du du ya ya
Kwe nu oga n'a ga	Sing, it is going,
O ga n'a ga Ngwo	It is going to Ngwo
O ga n'a ga,	It is going
O ga n'a ga Ngwo.	It is going to Ngwo.

This game song is done in sitting position. Everyone is expected to have a short stick which they pass to another person as the song goes on. The eviction takes place when the song stops and one is found with more than one stick. It teaches diligence and vigilance.

## Song no. 3

# $G.\ N.\ Nnam\ \&\ F.\ N.\ Nmadu:\ \textit{Cultural Heritage Revival in Primary Schools\ through...}.$



Igbo Text	English Translation
Ku oro nu nwa ngwere aka –	Clap for the baby lizard- Erente
erente erente	
Ku oro nu nwa ngwere aka –	Clap for the baby lizard– Erente
erente erente	
Nwa gwere' –je-ghi' je, n' ogbara	Baby lizard did not walk but is
oso - erente	running- Erente
Pi Erente	Pi Erente
Pi a – erente	Pi a – erente
Ae – erente	Ae – erente

This song is performed as a group faces one direction, the group jog as the song goes on. When the song ends the leader of the group will shout about turn, everyone will do a U turn and face opposite direction and continue jogging. This teaches being physical fit like the lizard.

### Song no. 4

# G. N. Nnam & F. N. Nmadu: Cultural Heritage Revival in Primary Schools through.... KPA KPA NKOLO



Igbo Text	English Translation
Kpa kpa nkolo kpa nkolo	Kpa kpa nkolo kpa nkolo
Kpa kpa nkolo kpa nkolo	Kpa kpa nkolo kpa nkolo
Udum e, ogene	My musical pot, my metal bell
Udum e, ogene	My musical pot, my metal bell
Onye omara,	Who it catches
Du du ya ya, ya	Du du ya ya, ya
Du du ya.	Du du ya.

The song is done in standing position. The participants join their hands and form a circle. They move round as the song goes on. When the song stops everyone squats in unity. Anyone that did not squat is eliminated. It teaches unity and alertness.

### Song no. 5

#### KPU KPU MKP' OGENE





Igbo Text	English Translation
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Kpu- kpu mkp'o gene,	Passing through a tunnel
0 – gene, o gene ge	O tunnel, o tunnel
Kpu- kpu mkp'o gene,	Passing through a tunnel
0 – gene, o gene ge	O tunnel, o tunnel
O nye n'akpo' ogene,	Who is passing through the tunnel?
0 – gene, o gene ge	O tunnel, o tunnel
O bi n'akpo' ogene,	Obi is passing through the tunnel,
0 – gene, o gene ge.	O tunnel, o tunnel

This song is performed by passing through a tunnel. Everyone is paired as they stand facing each other and engage in clapping with each partner. A pair of participant will then pass through the supposed tunnel created by others. When they get to the end they will join and continue the tunnel while another pair finds their way through the tunnel. It teaches corporation and accommodation.

Similarly all the game songs help to build and develop pupils in the present and in the future in areas such as:

- Orderliness
- 2. Spirit of sportsmanship
- 3. Fitness
- 4. Collective and individual coordination.
- 5. Diligence and carefulness
- 6. Perseverance.

### Recommendations

Extinction of indigenous musical heritage is being experienced every day in Africa. This comes from lack of proper documentation of these songs by the owners. Oral tradition is the basis for the composition, documentation, dissemination, and retrieval of these songs in Igbo land. As such, many Igbo folk songs have been lost as a result of a breakdown in oral tradition and the inability of an unreceptive new generation to follow these traditions. Having seen the problems and the negative effect of not teaching traditional songs in primary schools in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State, the following recommendations will help in reviving the use of Igbo indigenous game songs in the primary schools.

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  - Parents should at least teach their children their local language before teaching them English language this will help the teacher to easily relate with the children well while teaching these songs. Parents at home should endeavour to teach their children Igbo indigenous songs and parents also should explain the meaning of these songs to their children.
  - 2. Recreation periods in schools should involve Igbo indigenous songs and dance. Primary school teachers should endeavour to teach the pupils these songs with or without supervision. It is necessary to make the pupils know the meaning and the importance of these traditional songs.
  - 3. The researchers strongly recommend that the use of Igbo indigenous game songs be enforced and monitored in the primary schools in Enugu South Local State ministry of education.
  - 4. The primary school educational authorities should provide incentives (like competitions and cultural carnivals where winners will be rewarded handsomely) to promote the use of Igbo indigenous game songs in schools and encourage pupils to learn them in a bid to salvage and preserve the Igbo indigenous game songs.
  - 5. Documentation and teaching of authentic Igbo indigenous game song in primary schools would be a remarkable contribution to research and scholarship drive centered on Igbo indigenous music. In order to preserve these traditional songs, it is imperative to document them especially for the pupils in primary schools.

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