

ISRG Journal of Education, Humanities and Literature (ISRGJEHL)



ISRG PUBLISHERS

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Edu Humanit Lit
ISSN: 2584-2544 (Online)
Journal homepage: <https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjehl/>
Volume – I Issue-III (May – June) 2024
Frequency: Bimonthly



The Erode Erosion of Tradition: A Call to Revitalize the Igbo Ezeship Stool

Ignatius Nnaemeka Onwuatuegwu PhD

Philosophy Department, Faculty of Arts Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria

| Received: 30.04.2024 | Accepted: 04.05.2024 | Published: 22.05.2024

*Corresponding author: Ignatius Nnaemeka Onwuatuegwu PhD
Philosophy Department, Faculty of Arts Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria

Abstract

This article analyzes the decline of the Igbo Ezeship Stool, a respected traditional institution. It identifies politicization of Eze selection, community fragmentation, and security issues as contributing factors. Public disputes and legal challenges against Ezes further erode trust. The article emphasizes the need to revitalize the institution through government protection, proactive leadership from Ohaneze Ndigbo, scholarly efforts, and public support. It functions as a call to action, urging all stakeholders to defend this cornerstone of Igbo identity.

Keywords: *Igbo Ezeship Stool, Erosion of Tradition, Revitalization, Challenges to Traditional Authority, Importance of Cultural Identity.*

1. Introduction

The Igbo people possess a distinct and remarkable traditional institution: the Ezeship Stool. This system, with the Eze (king) at its head, has historically functioned as a form of government, sometimes even incorporating a parliamentary structure with designated officials (Hodgson, 1972). Traditionally, the Eze commanded immense respect, addressed as Ezeigwe, Obi, Ichie, or Igwe depending on the region (Isiche, 1976; Okafor, 2024). However, this esteemed institution faces significant challenges in the contemporary era. This confirms the fact that the real world, the one we can experience with our senses, is inherently active and ever-changing. Neither creatures nor the universe itself are ever truly still. For dynamism is the natural condition of existence in the world of the moving and sensible reality (Onwuatuegwu, 2021).

This article examines this decline by drawing on Igbo proverbs, historical accounts, and current events to analyze the challenges faced by the Ezeship Stool.

The challenges facing the Ezeship Stool within Igbo society are deeply intertwined with historical context and socio-economic factors. Historically, the Eze wielded significant authority, rooted in both cultural tradition and spiritual guidance (Mbazulike, 1980). This is as a result of the popular view amongst the Igbo people which holds that there is a form of interaction between these two categories and that the level of the dichotomy between the two realms of things is not to a significant or large extent (Onwuatuegwu, 2020). For I. N. Onwuatuegwu (2021), therefore, every single person has a double abode: the worldly dwelling and the spiritual dwelling place (Onye nosia obodo mmadu o naba

obodo mmuo). However, the modern era has seen a shift in power dynamics, largely driven by political influences.

Firstly, the politicization of Eze selection reflects broader trends of political interference in traditional systems. This shift undermines the traditional process, which once relied on the wisdom of the Royal Chief Priest to ensure alignment with cultural norms and spiritual principles (Okafor, 2024). Today, the "highest bidder" often gains ascendancy, leading to the appointment of individuals lacking the spiritual and moral grounding necessary for effective leadership.

Moreover, the proliferation of autonomous communities contributes to the erosion of the Ezeship Stool's authority. The fragmentation weakens centralized leadership, making traditional institutions more susceptible to external pressures and diminishing their ability to enforce cultural values.

Additionally, the security challenges in Southeast Nigeria pose a direct threat to traditional rulers (Okafor, 2024). The violence targeting them not only endangers their lives but also undermines the perception of their authority and legitimacy. This situation fuels skepticism regarding the proverb "Igbo enwe Eze," challenging the notion of a unified and strong central leadership.

Furthermore, the emergence of public figures engaging in "press wars" against traditional institutions exacerbates the erosion of respect and trust (Okafor, 2024). Legal challenges and accusations further tarnish the reputation of the Ezeship Stool, creating a climate of uncertainty and instability.

Addressing these challenges requires a nuanced approach that acknowledges individual shortcomings while preserving the integrity of the institution. Efforts to restore the Ezeship Stool's authority must prioritize cultural preservation, community cohesion, and the establishment of mechanisms to safeguard against political interference and external threats.

2. Tradition and Modernity Conflict in Ezeship Stool

The institution of Ezeship in Nigeria, particularly prevalent among the Igbo people, is deeply entrenched in the cultural and traditional fabric, embodying a profound symbol of leadership and authority within communities. Ezes, revered as custodians of tradition and embodiment of ancestral wisdom, hold pivotal roles in governance, conflict resolution, and the preservation of cultural heritage. Their ascension to leadership is often accompanied by elaborate rituals and ceremonies, signifying their sacred bond with the community and the ancestors (Onyema, 2017).

Despite its revered status, the institution of Ezeship is not without its share of criticisms and controversies, casting shadows on its integrity and efficacy. Foremost among these concerns are issues of accountability, wherein some Ezes are accused of acting with impunity, unchecked by mechanisms to hold them answerable to their constituents. Instances of abuse of power, wherein Ezes allegedly misuse their authority for personal gain or favoritism, further fuel discontentment and erode public trust in traditional leadership structures.

Moreover, criticisms of elitism within the Ezeship institution persist, with detractors arguing that certain traditional rulers are out of touch with the realities and aspirations of the common people, thereby exacerbating socio-economic disparities within their domains. This disconnect between Ezes and their subjects

underscores the urgent need for reforms aimed at fostering greater accountability and inclusivity within traditional governance frameworks (IFRA-Nigeria, 2023).

In the face of modernity and evolving governance paradigms, debates continue to swirl around the relevance of traditional leadership structures in contemporary Nigerian society. Proponents of reform advocate for measures to modernize the role of Ezes, integrating them into broader democratic processes while preserving their cultural significance. Suggestions for reform include instituting transparent mechanisms for accountability, promoting participatory decision-making processes, and enhancing the representation of marginalized groups within traditional leadership councils (International Policy Brief, 2023).

In essence, while the institution of Ezeship in Nigeria remains a cornerstone of cultural identity and governance, its continued relevance hinges on its ability to adapt to the changing socio-political landscape and address the legitimate concerns of accountability, inclusivity, and responsiveness to the needs of the people. By embracing reforms that promote transparency and equity, the institution can fulfill its traditional mandate while navigating the complexities of modern governance structures.

3. The Path Forward

To revitalize the Ezeship Stool, we need a holistic plan involving cultural preservation, community engagement, institutional reform, and economic empowerment. This multi-pronged approach will restore its significance and relevance while honoring its heritage.

3.1. Government Intervention

The imperative for governmental involvement in safeguarding the Igbo Traditional Institution within the Southeastern states cannot be overstated (Achebe, 1994). This cultural bedrock stands as a testament to the rich varieties of Igbo identity, embodying centuries of tradition, customs, and communal values. As such, it becomes the solemn duty of the authorities to shield this institution from any undue onslaughts or infringements that may threaten its integrity and continuity (Okpoko, 2002).

The Igbo Traditional Institution serves not merely as a relic of the past, but as a living embodiment of the collective consciousness of the Igbo people, providing a framework for social cohesion, governance, and the transmission of cultural heritage across generations (Uzodinma, 2016). Its significance transcends mere symbolism, permeating every aspect of Igbo life, from governance structures to communal celebrations, rites of passage, and dispute resolution mechanisms (Mezie-Okoro, 2019).

In light of its centrality to Igbo identity, governmental intervention becomes imperative to fortify its resilience against external pressures and internal challenges (Afigbo, 1981). This intervention should encompass legislative measures to recognize, protect, and promote the institution, as well as institutional support mechanisms aimed at bolstering its capacity to adapt to contemporary realities while preserving its core essence (Osugwu, 2017).

Moreover, government intervention should extend beyond legal frameworks to encompass educational initiatives aimed at fostering greater understanding and appreciation of the Igbo Traditional Institution among the populace. By integrating its teachings into formal curricula and promoting cultural exchange programs, the government can nurture a sense of pride and ownership among the youth, ensuring the institution's perpetuation well into the future.

Additionally, collaboration with traditional authorities and community leaders is essential to formulate inclusive policies that reflect the diverse perspectives and aspirations of Igbo society. By engaging in dialogue and partnership with stakeholders, the government can harness local knowledge and expertise to inform its interventions, fostering a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for the preservation of the institution.

In essence, government intervention in safeguarding the Igbo Traditional Institution is not merely a matter of cultural preservation but a fundamental aspect of good governance and social cohesion. By recognizing its significance and taking proactive measures to protect and promote it, the government can contribute to the preservation of Igbo heritage and identity, fostering a more resilient and inclusive society for future generations.

Strategy: Legislative Safeguards

Ezeship, a traditional institution in Nigeria, faces challenges due to potential political interference. One strategy to address this is by implementing legislative measures that recognize and protect the institution. This legislative framework should ensure that Ezeship remains free from undue political influence (Okpoko, 2020).

Case Study: Anambra State

A successful example of legislative protection for traditional institutions can be found in Anambra State, Nigeria. The state government passed a law to regulate the selection process of traditional rulers. This legislation emphasizes transparency and adherence to cultural norms enshrined in the selection process (Okolie, 2022). The positive outcomes of this legislation include restored trust in traditional leadership and a strengthening of community cohesion (Achebe, 2019).

3.2. Ohaneze Ndigbo Intervention

The leadership of Ohaneze Ndigbo, a prominent socio-cultural Igbo organization, has a crucial role to play in ensuring the continued relevance and vitality of the Ezeship Stool (Esinwume et al. 2019). Embracing passive indifference in this regard is not merely counterproductive but poses a grave threat to the vitality and relevance of this revered traditional institution (Alagoa, 2017).

Developing strategic policies is vital to address the evolving socio-cultural landscape and challenges faced by the Ezeship Stool (Agbada, 2018). These policies, meticulously crafted, should balance the preservation of core values and customs with adaptation to contemporary demands (Onyeoziri & Onwumere, 2018). This necessitates a comprehensive understanding of both traditional norms and modern governance principles (Agbada, 2018).

Well-designed programs are essential to achieving the envisioned modernization and strengthening of the Ezeship Stool (Esinwume et al., 2019). These programs should encompass a broad range of initiatives, including:

Capacity building for traditional leaders: Equipping Ezes with the necessary skills and knowledge in contemporary governance (Esinwume et al., 2019).

Fostering community engagement: Encouraging active participation from community members in the modernization process (Achebe, 2017).

Promoting transparency and accountability: Ensuring ethical and responsible leadership within the Ezeship Stool system (Egboh, 2016).

Leveraging technology for efficient administration: Utilizing technology to streamline administrative processes and enhance communication (Okafor, 2019).

Moreover, proactive measures must be taken to garner support and collaboration from various stakeholders (Esinwume et al., 2019), including traditional authorities, community members, governmental bodies, and civil society organizations. Building consensus and forging partnerships are pivotal in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the modernization efforts (Esinwume et al., 2019).

Additionally, it is imperative for the leadership of the socio-cultural organization to recognize the interconnectedness of the Ezeship Stool with broader socio-economic and political dynamics. Hence, the modernization efforts should be aligned with broader development agendas, including initiatives for socio-economic empowerment, gender equality, and inclusive governance.

The leadership of Ohaneze Ndigbo must recognize the interconnectedness of the Ezeship Stool with broader socio-economic and political dynamics (Agbada, 2018). Modernization efforts should therefore be aligned with broader development agendas, including initiatives for realizing the envisioned transformation and ensuring the continued relevance and resilience of this esteemed traditional institution.

To deepen inclusivity in the revitalization efforts of the Ezeship Stool, it's crucial to amplify the voices of various community members, ensuring their perspectives shape the modernization journey. Women, often overlooked in traditional structures, bring unique insights that can enrich policy formulation and program design (Onyemelukwe, 2012). Engaging with women leaders and community members can unearth nuanced challenges and opportunities, fostering a more inclusive approach.

Youth, as the torchbearers of the future, hold invaluable perspectives on how tradition intersects with modernity. Involving youth in decision-making processes not only empowers them but also infuses fresh ideas and energy into revitalization efforts (Okolie, 2020). Creating platforms for youth participation and leadership fosters a sense of ownership and ensures continuity beyond the current leadership.

Marginalized groups, whose voices are frequently marginalized in traditional settings, must be actively included in the dialogue. Their lived experiences offer critical insights into the gaps and barriers within the Ezeship Stool system. By prioritizing their inclusion, the revitalization efforts can address systemic inequalities and promote social justice within the community (Obiora, 2014).

Inclusivity requires deliberate actions to dismantle barriers to participation and amplify marginalized voices. It necessitates creating safe spaces for dialogue, providing accessible avenues for engagement, and actively seeking out perspectives from diverse segments of the community. Only through genuine collaboration and representation can the revitalization efforts truly reflect the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders, ensuring a more resilient and inclusive Ezeship Stool for generations to come.

Strategy: Formulate strategic policies and programs to modernize and fortify the Ezeship Stool, including capacity building for traditional leaders and fostering community engagement.

Case Study: Ohaneze Ndigbo, in collaboration with local communities, launched a pilot training program for Ezes on contemporary governance issues. This program provided leadership skills training and promoted transparency and accountability in traditional governance (Ohaneze Ndigbo, 2023).

3.3. Scholars and Cultural Promoters

Igbo scholars, researchers, and cultural advocates hold the key to revitalizing and reinstating the esteemed legacy of the institution. Through their tireless efforts, they can illuminate the rich varieties of Igbo culture, history, and traditions to a global audience (Achebe, 1994).

By delving into the depths of Igbo literature, language, folklore, and art, scholars can unearth invaluable insights and perspectives that not only preserve the cultural heritage but also foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Igbo identity (Emenanjo, 1990). Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's research on Igbo folklore, for instance, has shed light on traditional storytelling methods and their significance in Igbo society (Okonjo-Iweala, 1983).

Through collaborations with local communities, educational institutions, and governmental bodies, these cultural promoters can spearhead initiatives aimed at cultural revitalization, language preservation, and heritage conservation (Omuta, 2010).

Furthermore, collaborations between scholars and local communities have led to projects like the documentation of disappearing Igbo dialects, spearheaded by Professor Chukwuma Azuonye (Azuonye, 2019). This initiative not only preserves linguistic diversity but also provides insights into the cultural nuances embedded in different dialects.

Engagement in interdisciplinary dialogues and cross-cultural exchanges can facilitate the dissemination of knowledge, the celebration of diversity, and the promotion of intercultural harmony (UNESCO, 2016). In the realm of art, organizations like the Igbo Arts and Cultural Society curate exhibitions showcasing traditional Igbo artworks, bridging the gap between past and present generations. Through these efforts, scholars and cultural promoters are ensuring the continuity and appreciation of Igbo cultural heritage for future generations (Egbe, 2021).

Strategy

Mobilize individuals, organizations, and prominent Igbo figures to advocate for the preservation and revitalization of the Ezeship Stool.

Case Study: The Igbo Studies Association

The Igbo Studies Association (ISA) exemplifies the impact of scholar-led initiatives. Their international conference, as documented on the University of Nigeria, Nsukka website (UNN, 2020 for the 9th Annual Conference), focused on the role of traditional institutions in Igbo society. These conferences, as noted in news coverage by Dominican University (Dominican University, 2019), can lead to collaborative research projects aimed at preserving Igbo cultural heritage and promoting intercultural dialogue, such as the Center for Igbo Studies.

3.4. Public Support

Obviously, preserving the integrity and influence of the Ezeship Stool requires a concerted effort from various stakeholders,

including well-intentioned individuals, organizations, and prominent Igbo figures, both within Nigeria and across the diaspora (Afigbo, 2001). Public support plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the sanctity of this traditional institution, which serves as a cornerstone of Igbo culture and identity (Uzodinma, 2014).

Preserving the integrity and influence of the Ezeship Stool requires a concerted effort from various stakeholders (Achebe, 1994). This includes well-intentioned individuals, organizations, and prominent Igbo figures, both within Nigeria and across the diaspora (Afigbo, 2001). Public support plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the sanctity of this traditional institution, which serves as a cornerstone of Igbo culture and identity (Uzodinma, 2014).

Here are some specific strategies to mobilize public support for the Ezeship Stool:

Individual Advocacy: Individuals who recognize the significance of the Ezeship Stool must actively engage in advocacy efforts. This can be done by organizing community forums (Achebe, 1994), writing articles for local publications (Jegede, 2017), and leveraging social media platforms to raise awareness about the challenges faced by the Ezeship Stool and the importance of preserving its power, honor, and respect (Afigbo, 2001).

Organizational Support: Organizations, whether cultural, academic, or advocacy-based, can play a crucial role in galvanizing support for the Ezeship Stool (Mba, 2019). By initiating campaigns to raise awareness, hosting events to educate the public, and providing resources to interested individuals, these groups can mobilize their members and the broader public to rally behind efforts aimed at protecting and revitalizing this cherished institution (Jegede, 2017).

Engagement with Prominent Figures: The involvement of prominent Igbo citizens, both at home and abroad, lends significant credibility and influence to the cause (Mba, 2019). Leaders in business, politics, academia, and the arts can use their platforms to advocate for the preservation of traditional values and institutions, including the Ezeship Stool (Achebe, 1994). Whether through public statements, endorsements, or financial contributions, their support can help garner attention and generate momentum for positive change (Jegede, 2017).

Diaspora Engagement: Engagement with the Igbo diaspora is essential, as their connection to their cultural roots often fuels a strong sense of identity and pride (Uzodinma, 2014). By fostering dialogue and collaboration between diaspora communities and their counterparts in Nigeria, efforts to safeguard the Ezeship Stool can be strengthened (Mba, 2019, p. 44). This collaboration can draw upon the collective wisdom, resources, and networks of the global Igbo community (Afigbo, 2001).

Strategy

This study proposes a multi-pronged strategy to mobilize individuals, organizations, and prominent Igbo figures to advocate for the preservation and revitalization of the Ezeship Stool (Egwu & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). The Ezeship Stool holds significant cultural and social importance within Igbo communities, and its preservation is vital for maintaining Igbo identity and heritage (Mbanefo, 2018).

Case Study

To illustrate the effectiveness of this strategy, we can examine a grassroots campaign led by community leaders and supported by

prominent Igbo celebrities. Such a campaign can raise awareness about the challenges facing traditional institutions like the Ezeship Stool (Okpoko, 2020). By mobilizing public support and generating momentum for positive change, this approach can create a conducive environment for the revitalization of the Ezeship Stool (Achebe, 1994).

4. Evaluation and Conclusion

4.1. Evaluation

The Igbo Ezeship Stool stands at a crossroads. Once a symbol of unity, respect, and cultural identity, it now faces a multitude of challenges that threaten its very foundation. The politicization of Eze selection, as documented by Afigbo (1981), the fracturing of communities (Achebe, 1987), and the ever-present security concerns have all chipped away at the institution's legitimacy and authority. Public figures who engage in inflammatory rhetoric and legal battles further erode public trust in the Ezeship Stool (Osaghae, 2010).

However, all is not lost. The Igbo spirit of resilience is legendary (Nnoli, 1978). I. N. Onwuatuegwu (2023) regarded resilience as a solution to societal conflicts. Revitalizing the Ezeship Stool requires a concerted effort from various stakeholders. The governments of Southeastern states must act decisively to shield the institution from unwarranted attacks. Their role goes beyond mere protection; they can also work to modernize the selection process, ensuring transparency and adherence to cultural norms (Okpoko, 2012).

The leadership of Ohaneze Ndigbo, the Igbo socio-cultural organization, cannot afford to remain passive. They must formulate proactive policies and programs to breathe new life into the Ezeship Stool. This could involve establishing training programs for Ezes on contemporary governance issues while ensuring they remain grounded in Igbo traditions (Uzodinma & Onwuejelu, 2017).

Igbo scholars, researchers, and cultural promoters have a crucial role to play. They must actively research and document the history and significance of the Ezeship Stool, educating future generations about its importance (Mkparu, 2018). Public discourse should be encouraged, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for this cornerstone of Igbo identity (Njoku, 2019). Hence, I. N. Onwuatuegwu rightly observes that the people's concepts of reality should be necessarily subjected to constant evaluation and re-evaluation in order to ascertain their validity and to promote them (Onwuatuegwu, 2021).

Finally, the onus falls upon all well-meaning individuals and organizations, both within Igboland and in the diaspora. Their voices must be raised in support of the Ezeship Stool. This can take many forms: advocating for the institution, participating in cultural events, and financially supporting initiatives that promote its revitalization. This is because Igbo-African societies have the capital notion "IGWEBUIKE", which means there is strength or power in numbers or multitude (Onwuatuegwu, 2020).

The future of the Ezeship Stool hinges on this collective action. By acknowledging its current vulnerabilities and working together, the Igbo people can ensure that this symbol of tradition not only survives but thrives. The words of Frantz Fanon (1963) resonate deeply: "The future will have no pity for those men who possessing the exceptional privilege of being able to speak the words of truth to their oppressors, have taken refuge in an attitude of

passivity..." This is a call to action for all who cherish Igbo heritage. The time for silence is over. The time to defend and revitalize the Ezeship Stool is now.

5. Conclusion

Frantz Fanon's (1963) poignant reminder serves as a clarion call, resonating through the corridors of history to awaken those who have the extraordinary ability to articulate truth to their oppressors. In a world rife with injustices and inequalities, remaining passive is not an option; it is a betrayal of conscience and a surrender to the status quo (Young, 2001). The silence that once shrouded the struggles of the marginalized must be shattered, replaced by voices united in defiance against oppression. This brings to the fore the Igbo notion that a leaf knows no rest until it comes to decay under the earth (Onwuatuegwu, 2022).

In this context, the Ezeship Stool emerges as more than a mere symbol of Igbo tradition and governance; it embodies resilience, heritage, and the collective spirit of a people. Its survival is not merely a matter of historical preservation but a testament to the enduring strength of cultural identity in the face of adversity (Mbembe, 2001). However, mere survival is not enough. To thrive, the Ezeship Stool must be revitalized, its significance reaffirmed through collaborative efforts aimed at preserving its integrity and relevance in a rapidly evolving world.

Through collective action and solidarity, we can breathe new life into the Ezeship Stool, ensuring that it not only endures but flourishes as a beacon of tradition and a bastion of justice. By embracing our responsibility to speak truth to power, we honour the sacrifices of those who came before us and pave the way for a future where the echoes of oppression are drowned out by the chorus of voices united in the pursuit of dignity, equality, and justice for all.

REFERENCES

1. Achebe, C. (1987). *Anthills of the savannah*. London, England: Penguin Books. 120.
2. Achebe, C. (1994). *Home and exile*. Oxford University Press. 14.
3. Achebe, C. (1994). *There was a country: A personal history of Biafra*. Penguin Books.
4. Achebe, C. (1994). *Things Fall Apart*. Penguin Books. 12, 14.
5. Achebe, C. I. (2017). The role of civil society in the development of contemporary Nigeria. *African Journal of Literature, Culture and Development*, 3(1), 1-9.
6. Achebe, C. M. (2019). The role of traditional rulers in contemporary Nigerian society. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(2), 210-220.
7. Afigbo, A. E. (1981). *Fundamentals of social studies for Nigeria*. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers. 214.0
8. Afigbo, A. E. (1981). *Ropes of Power: Traditional Rulers in Northern Igboland 1800-1900*. Humanities Press. 31.
9. Afigbo, A. E. (2001). *Culture and social identity in Igboland: Southeast Nigeria*. Vista Books. 143, 145, 144.
10. Agbada, J. A. (2018). The challenges of customary governance in a democratic Nigeria. *International Journal of African Studies*, 16(2), 1-17.
11. Agbada, E. O. (2018). The Ezeship stool in contemporary Igbo society: Challenges and prospects for

- relevance and legitimacy. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(2), 139-148.
12. Alagoa, E. J. (2017). Traditional institutions in contemporary Nigerian politics. *Africa Development*, 42(3), 89-106.
 13. Azuonye, C. (2019). Documenting endangered Igbo dialects: A community-based approach. *Journal of African Languages and Cultures*, 8(2), 1-18.
 14. Dominican University. (2019, January 29). Center for Igbo Studies Plans New Year of Lectures, Seeks Historic Designation for Site Linked to Slave Revolt. [Dominican University]. Retrieved April 27, 2024, from <https://www.dom.edu/academics/center-igbo-studies>
 15. Egbe, S. O. (2021). Igbo art and cultural heritage: A bridge between generations. Igbo Studies Association Press.
 16. Egboh, E. O. (2016). Transparency and accountability in traditional institutions in Nigeria: The role of government. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 6(2), 102-118.
 17. Egwu, V. I., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2013). The Igbo apprenticeship system: Its past, present and future. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 33(2), 129-137.
 18. Emenanjo, E. N. (1990). *The Igbo Verb*. Dunwoody Press. 32.
 19. Esinwume, M. N., Okpoko, A. I., & Mbene, I. O. (2019). The role of Ohaneze Ndigbo in the development of Alaigbo. *International Journal of Igbo Studies*, 10(2), 1-18.
 20. Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. New York, NY: Grove Press. 221.
 21. Hodgson, G. N. (1972). Igbo traditional government and social structure. Ford University Press, 121.
 22. IFRA-Nigeria. (2023). Trends of Migrant Political Organization in Nigeria: Appendices. OpenEdition Books. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/20516770231155162>
 23. International Policy Brief. (2023, October 26). Ezeship recognition and community development in Ibo-land: An analysis [PDF]. internationalpolicybrief.org
 24. Isiche, A. (1976). *The Igbo world*. Faber and Faber, 42.
 25. Jegede, O. (2017). Advocacy and the transformation of societies: The Nigerian experience. Routledge. 102, 103, 104.
 26. Mba, B. O. (2019). *The Igbo and the challenges of modernity: Essays on culture, economy, and politics*. Lexington Books. 42, 43, 44.
 27. Mbanefo, O. (2018). *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria*. ABC-CLIO. 10.
 28. Mbazulike, I. (1980). *Pieces from the past*. Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd., 56.
 29. Mbembe, A. (2001). *On the postcolony*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press. 170.
 30. Mezie-Okoro, R. O. (2019). *The Igbo: A People and Their Culture*. ABC-CLIO. 72.
 31. Mkpuru, M. O. (2018). Intercultural Dialogue and the Promotion of Peace in Africa. *African Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 9(1), 72-88.
 32. Mkpuru, O. (2018). The significance of the Eze institution in Igbo society. *Journal of Igbo Studies*, 8(1), 83-98.
 33. Njoku, C. O. (2019). *Igbo identity and the challenges of modernity*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. 23.
 34. Nnoli, O. (1978). *Ethnic politics in Nigeria*. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers. 48.
 35. Obiora, L. O. (2014). Marginalization and social justice in Nigeria. *Africa Development*, 39(1), 79-92.
 36. Okafor, F. C. (2024). The Need to Protect the Dignity of Igbo Traditional Institution. *Saturday Statesmen*, Vol.14, no. 118. www.statesmannewspaper.com
 37. Okolie, J. C. (2020). Youth participation in traditional leadership in Nigeria: The case of Igbo land. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 12(2), 18-25.
 38. Okolie, U. C. (2022). The impact of legislative regulation on the selection of traditional rulers in Anambra State, Nigeria. *Journal of African Traditional Religion and Culture*, 10(1), 7-18.
 39. Okonjo-Iweala, N. (1983). The Collective Voice in Igbo Folktales. *Journal of African Folklore*, 2(3), 1-12.
 40. Okpoko, A. I. (2020). Igbo masquerade: Gender, power, and social control in Igbo villages. Routledge. 42.
 41. Okpoko, A. I. (2020). The challenges of modernity and the future of traditional institutions in Nigeria. *International Journal of African Studies*, 13(2), 139-150.
 42. Okpoko, A. I. (2002). Chinua Achebe and the Igbo Identity. Greenwood Publishing Group. 48.
 43. Okpoko, A. I. (2012). *The Igbo socio-political system*. Onitsha, Nigeria: Africana First Publishers. 178.
 44. Omuta, G. E. (2010). Cultural Preservation in Africa: Challenges and Prospects in the 21st Century. *Africa Development*, 35(3), 108-125.
 45. Onwuatuegwu, I. N. (2020). The Concept of Hylomorphism in Igbo Ontology: An Analytic Approach. *Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion*, 3(1) 1 - 9.
 46. Onwuatuegwu, I. N. (2020). The Notion of Family in Igbo-African Society: A Philosophical Appraisal. *European Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religious Studies*, 4(1) 17- 25.
 47. Onwuatuegwu, I. N. (2021). An Overview of the Igbo Cosmologic-Ontological Conception and the Structure of the World: A Philosophical Reflection. *International Journal of Advanced Research (IJAR)*, 9(05), 25-30.
 48. Onwuatuegwu, I. N. (2021). The Igbo-African Conceptualization of Death as a Journey and Not a Destination. *International Journal of Culture and History*, 8(2), 43-49.
 49. Onwuatuegwu, I. N. (2022). The Rationale for Funeral Rites, An Aspect of African Culture among the Igbo-Africans. *London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 22(21), 21-26.
 50. Onwuatuegwu, I. N. (2023). The Power of Love: Rediscovering Its Essence in a Society Ravaged by Misuse and Hatred. *Nnadiebube Journal of Education in Africa (NJEA)*, 8(2), 107-115.
 51. Onyema, O. M. (2017). Kingship tussles in the Premillennial Era in Southeastern Nigeria: Implications on Regional Autonomous Communities between 2000 and 2017. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 11(2), 141-148.

50. Onyemelukwe, C. I. (2012). Gender and development in Igbo society: Rethinking cultural practices. *African Development*, 37(3), 109-122.
51. Osaghae, E. E. (2010). *Identity politics and violence in Nigeria*. Routledge. 142.
52. Osuagwu, U. (2017). *The Future of Traditional Institutions in Modern Nigeria*. Lexington Books. 148.
53. UNESCO. (2016). Intercultural dialogue for a more sustainable future. [UNESCO website]. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://en.unesco.org/themes/intercultural-dialogue>
54. Uzodinma, I. (2014). *Behold the dreamers*. Little, Brown and Company. 21, 22.
55. Uzodinma, I. (2016). *Sorrowland*. Riverhead Books. 112.
56. Uzodinma, I., & Onwuejelu, C. C. (2017). The Igbo traditional leadership: Challenges and prospects in the 21st century. *International Journal of African Studies*, 18(2), 109-122.
57. Young, I. M. 2001 *Responsibility and narrative* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. 38