

GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURAL EXTINCTION AMONG THE NATIVE PEOPLE OF THE EJAGHAM TRANS-BORDER AREA OF AGBOKIM-NSANARAGATI CULTURAL REALM

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Abstract

This study directs attention to an evaluation of how western culture, in the era of globalization has abraded the indigenous culture of the Ejagham people of Nigeria and Cameroon in the proximate localities of Agbokim (Nigeria) and Nsanarangati (Cameroon). The paper makes pain to explain the extent of homogeneity of heterogeneity in cultural traits among the people in all its ramifications. The specific objective is to examine the overall extent of erosion of the native cultural values by the western exogenous culture, understanding the disparity in response to exogenous culture on the basis of sex and age, and finally to appreciate how appropriately or otherwise some or all patterns of behavioural changes are in conformity with the alien culture. The problem statement is the direction of the objectives based on the need to evaluate the full view essence of the cultural anomie. Several justifications for the study were equally well brought out. The methodology encapsulates the description of the study area, the universe or population of the study, sampling procedure, method or procedure for data collection and data analysis technique. The results of the statistical analysis in the direction of the hypothesis showed that the null hypothesis was rejected while alternative hypothesis was accepted indicating that there is significant impact of colonization on the native culture of the Ejagham cultural realm in the trans-border area of Agbokim-Nsanganarati zone Nigeria Cameroun boundary.

Keyword: Western culture, indigenous culture, Trans-border

1.1 Introduction

Globalization is the sweeping wind of change that characterize socio cultural mellieus of today's world. A common feature of this is the borderless image of the entire world perspectives in all the ramifications of human society. It is manifest in the free flow of people, materials, ideas information and technology. Today the world has become a global village due to the fact of improved communication and technology.

Currently the world is in a state of computer revolution. The current revolution is the most far reaching and in impact. Several revolutions have been witnessed such as agricultural revolution, scientific revolution and industrial revolution. But this last phase is the most over bearing.

Improved transport and communication, improved scientific knowledge and all other attendant feats of achievement which characterized the industrial revolution have jointly led to the transformation of the world into a global village due to the achievement of time-distance economy.

The development led Castel (1999) to state categorically that we have arrived at the transition from post industrialism to informationalism.

Today, information rules or governs the world. The world information space has been significantly expanded (Gould and White, 1974). The expanded information surface has led to shrinkage of ignorance surface. Increased information has caused diffusion of ideas and the process of intercultural learning and the production of a universal global culture (Ritzer, 1996). This trend Ritzer calls Mcdonalization of society or cultural universalization. This trend is witnessed by the way the society is disoriented from traditional life forms to western life rather also described as Westernization of society. Preferences for western lifestyles is the fashion in vogue or the order of the day. Individual life modes are witnessed by their styles of language, dress codes, nutrition, music preferences, housing, ceremonies and what have you. The world is experiencing the modal level of cultural borrowing and selling.

To further bolster the frenzy pace of change, international migration is witnessing unprecedented pace leading to changing neighbourhoods and the demand for global competency, (Aglazor, 2011).

Intercultural learning is the panacea to the issue of changing neighbourhoods. On the whole, the world is at the brink of cultural homogeneity where minority culture will be swamped by larger global western lifestyle. The entire fabric of people's native ideas is constantly being eroded by the ensuing homogenous culture, Boyds (2009). Features of the indigenous culture that are witnessing annihilation are enormous such as diminution of communal life modes. The aboriginal Ejagham indigene is altruistic. That is the preference for or subjugation of individual right to the right of the general, feeling for the needs of others or what may be called selflessness. The feature is justice, equity and fair play. This ideal is the key point of Ejagham ethos of cosmology (World view).

Today it has been trampled underfoot and has gone down the drain. Both the old and the young are culpable of this antic that is neither Western nor African. Injustice, inequity and unfair play are more rampant than necessary. Today individuality is at its peak.

This engenders the current state of youths, objectification, family/communal rivalries, disruption of kingship, spirit, breakdown of traditional mores and lots more.

Today pecuniary or monetary interest is at its peak. The old tradition of value of care and brotherly love have been brushed aside. The society has gone haywire. This situation agrees with Chinua Achebe's message and title of his book, "Things fall Apart", "The centre cannot hold". Insecurity, insincerity, fraud, assaults (banditry, assassination marauding) and all manner of anarchy or disharmony are effigies of the current social globalization. In this state of affairs, several questions demand answers to the true harbingers of the current social trend prevalent in our communities. All attempts in answering these questions provide the problem statement of this research study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Acculturation or cultural extinction is a common feature of today's world. International migration and colonial occupation of territories by European pacification of territories in Africa, America, Asia and Oceania have led to the phenomenon of global amalgamation which is rider to this trend. Social anthropologists have worked assiduously on this trend and advanced plausible explanations for the process and reasons for cultural decay of indigenous culture by exogenous ones. In this respect and in some areas, the pace and nature of the decay may be shortlived while in others it may be prolonged.

Even in the same cultural realm of Agbokim-Nsanarangati area, the rate of extinction varies between individuals according to age, sex, education and economic status. Considering Nigeria as a whole, some cultures are resilient to change and sometimes further strengthened by the emergence of exogenous cultures. The major ethnic groups – Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo are cases in point. These divergences in the rate and

acceptance of alien cultures have explanations that form the sole basis of this differences. There is also the dire necessity of appreciating or unravelling the direction of the new behavioural changes such as violence, anarchy, antagonism which are not key features of Western life styles today. These and several other questions inform the problem identification of this study.

1.3 Justification of the Study

This study finds relevance in today's world of cultural attrition whereby migration and trans-border transactions are quite high. The findings may provide insights on how cultural identities can be sustained amidst cultural minglings.

Sustainable cultural life styles maybe proffered through the suggestions and recommendations of the findings. It will also be substantiated on the perspective of current behavioural change based on the question of conformity to the western pattern of culture.

The study also serves as the basis of expansion of the frontier of knowledge.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study is backed up by the following specific objectives;

- To investigate how colonization has influenced the overall cultural orientation of the people in the area of study.
- To assess how colonization impact is related to sex or gender characteristics of individual in the area.
- To examine the impact of socio-cultural factors on cultural loss of the people in the area.

1.5 Research hypothesis

The hypothesis is stated as follows

Ho: Globalization has not significantly dislocated the native culture of Ejagham in the trans-boarder area in Etung L.G.A Cross River State, Nigeria and these in Eyumojok sub-division in the republic of Cameroon

2.1 Literature Review

The loss of culture of indigenous groups is being central to cultural anthropologists because it represents the irreversible loss of human heritage and diversity. (Stocking, 1982). The absence of a secular loss in the overall index of cultural values might be related to the fact that modernization can produce countervailing effects on cultural orientation, eroding orientation to some aspects of the local culture and strengthening orientation in other aspects of the local culture (Kuper,1999). Since the 19th century, cultural anthropologists have debated the definition and meaning of culture (Bowen,1995). Newman and Price (2005) defined culture as a communication system of acquired beliefs, memories, perception, traditions and attitudes that serve to shape behaviour. They further stressed that culture is dynamic, diverse and changing process. Accordingly, Wall and Mathieson (2006) defined culture as behaviours as observed through social relation and material artifact and in deeper anthropological sense, including patterns, norms, rules and standards which find expression in behaviour social relations and artifacts. Kroeber (1992) in his research about California's culture has noted that cultural elements as arts of life, society and religion and knowledge.

2.2 Cultural Diffusion and Cultural Loss

Following Sakarya (2005) Alfred Kroely was the first to conceptualise the cultural diffusion theory in his article, stimulus diffusion occurs on his picks and the diffused piece is always subject to change in parallel with the culture it was diffused into. That while the diffusion is welcomed by the home communities all the time, there is no resistance to the stimulus diffusion. Also that the diffusion process occurs as a result of the utilization of a cultural element in a country from one country to another and that the element diffuse to other country with some modification in its nature, Ferrante (2012) in his most recent study defined diffusion as the process by which an idea, an invention or any other cultural item is borrowed from a foreign source. For Refinger (2009), cultural diffusion is the spread of cultural element such as ideas, styles, foods, religions,

technology etc. between individuals and groups with single culture or from one culture to another. In all cases, cultural diffusion may be negative as the case may be.

Globalization is glaringly the process of cultural diffusion and has both positive and negative influences on cultural diversity.

2.3 Negative Influence

Due to the unprecedented access to cultures, much wider audience than ever before has gateway to see, hear and experience phenomena that were never accessible previously (Smith, 2000). This leads to misrepresentation, stereotyping and the risk of loss of cultural identity and intercultural property rights as a result of unmonitored access. Globalization has negative impact on culture in such areas as loss of cultural diversity, the influence of multinational cooperations in promoting consumer cultures, exploitation of workers and markets and influencing societal values (Smith, 2000).

The last phrase, 'Influencing societal values' appeals directly to the problem statement of this study. It was further echoed that increased availability of commercial media and products can 'elbow out' local cultural influence. That is where we have arrived at in our traditional African society and among the Ejaghams people in particular.

3.0 Methodology of the study

3.1 Study Design

This research design is field exploration study aimed at data collection on the changing attributes of the people in the area. The area is an example of a cultural realm that transcends the colonial political boundary of Nigeria and Cameroon. It has been christened in this write up as the Agbokim-Nsanaragate cultural realm.

3.2 Area of Study

The area is Agbokim-Nsanaragati cultural area. The location is North western and eastern Cross River upstream region. While Agbokim in Nigeria lies in the West bank of the Cross River, Nsanaragati in Cameroun lies in the East bank of the river. Ecologically, the region is of the equatorial forest, with luxuriant growth of vegetation being an ecological hot spot, it registers abundant annual rainfall.

Before the colonial Annexation of Africa, it was a homogenous cultural realm. Evidently there is immense intercourse in marriage, commerce and theocratic conjugation among the people in the area.

Economically, they people engaged mostly in stabilized agriculture involving the cultivation of cocoa and other related cultivars. Forest products extraction is also a significant flank of their economic mainstay.

Colonial pacification of Africa led to the dissection of this cultural realm into South East Nigeria and South West Cameroon. Today monetization /globalization has caused the disruption of the one-time distinct cultural realm.

3.3 Population of the Study

The subject or the universe of this study comprises all the native people of the area from the ages of 12 years and above. The choice of this chronological range stems from the consideration of the psychological essence of human cognitive development as put forward by Jean Piaget, a onetime German psychologist in his cognitive development theory.

3.4 Sampling Technique

Multistage sampling was employed in selecting subjects for the study. Area or cluster sampling will precede stratified sampling. Stratified sampling will involve selection of subjects according to sex. Random sampling will follow through cap and draw procedure.

3.5 Instruments

Instruments to be employed in field data collection included:

- The questionnaire
- Observation schedule

3.6 Method of Data Collection

Data was collected based on the following procedure:

- The questionnaire was administered to elicit responses from the respondents.
- Observation will be based on visual impression of lifestyle, perspectives of the people.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The chi-square (χ^2) distribution was employed to test the degree of homogeneity or disparity in opinion or responses of individuals in the population

Data presentation and analysis

Presentation:

Table 1; Field data presentation on respondents information on impact of globalization on cultural loss in the Agbokim Nsanragati cultural realm (Nigeria) The data were now tested statistically using the χ^2 technique as reflected in the analysis procedure that followed

S/N	PARAMETERS OF CULTURAL LOSS ELICITED	RESPONDENTS				
		A	SA	D	SD	TOTAL
1.	Incidents of loss of family ties	75	88	28	34	225
2.	Occurrence of nuclear families in the area	95	105	22	25	247
3.	Retainance of spirit of communality	30	44	83	90	247
4.	Presence of indigenous knowledge of farming, technology etc.	48	46	75	80	249
5.	Presence of indigenous knowledge	36	32	86	82	236
6.	Youths ability to fluently speak their languages	25	28	87	84	224
7.	Presentation of ancestral worship	10	28	91	95	224
8.	Youths appreciation of native costumes	25	48	79	87	239
9.	Preservation for native food and diets by youths	40	49	75	81	245
10.	Recognition of the importance of social capital (joint affairs)	18	29	99	95	241
	Total	402	497	725	753	2377

From the table above a total of two hundred and fifty respondents were interviewed in the process. Volitionally some respondents declined certain item of responses, resulting in deficit from the total figure mobilized

The value presented on the table were employed in hypothesis testing using the chi-square (χ^2) the distribution technique.

Hypothesis: the hypothesis is tested in alternative form as follows.

Hi. There is a significant impact of globalization on the culture of Agbokim- Nsanragati trans-border cultural realm of the Ejagham people.

Data analysis

Data was analysed in line with the hypothesis stated above using the chi-square statistical technique.

Table 1: Chi square table on impact of globalization on the cultured of Agbokim- Nsanragati trans-border cultural realm of the Ejagham people

O_{ij}	E_{ij}	$(O_{ij} - E_{ij})$	$(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2$	$\frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$
75	38	37	1369	36.03
88	47	41	1681	35.77
28	67	-39	1521	22.70
34	71	-37	1369	19.28
95	42	53	2809	66.88
105	52	53	2809	54.01
22	75	-53	2809	37.45
25	78	-53	2809	36.01
30	42	-12	144	3.43
44	52	-8	64	1.23
83	75	8	64	0.85
90	78	12	144	1.85
48	42	6	36	0.86
46	52	-6	36	0.69
75	76	-1	1	0.01
80	79	1	1	0.01
36	40	4	16	0.40
32	49	-17	289	5.90
86	72	14	196	2.72
82	75	7	49	0.65
25	38	-13	169	4.45
28	47	-19	361	7.68
87	68	19	361	5.31
84	71	13	169	2.38
10	38	-28	784	20.63
28	47	-19	361	7.68
91	68	23	529	7.78
95	71	24	576	8.11
25	40	-15	225	5.63
48	50	-2	4	0.08
79	73	6	36	0.49
87	76	11	121	1.59
40	41	-1	1	0.02
49	51	-2	4	0.08
75	75	0	0	0
81	78	3	9	0.12

18	41	-23	529	12.90
29	50	-21	441	8.82
99	74	25	625	8.45
95	76	19	361	4.75
χ^2				433.68

Decision rule:

The degree of freedom (r-1), (C-1) = (4-1), (10-1) = (3,9) At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance and degree of freedom 3,9. A table value of χ^2 (0.05, 3,9) = 0.352, and 3.33, if the computed χ^2 is $>$ the table χ^2 we reject the null hypothesis or otherwise if $\chi^2 > 0.352$ or $\chi^2 < 3.33$

Results/findings

From the hypothesis testing based on the chi-square (χ^2) distribution the result revealed that the χ^2 calculated is greater than the α ($\chi^2 < \alpha$), which in essence means that the value of calculated χ^2 is higher than the value of α at 0.05 level of significant at (3,9) degree of freedom.

This invariably means that alternative hypothesis accepted while the null hypothesis rejected. This means that there is a significant impact of globalization on the culture of the Ejagham people of Agbokim-Nsanaragi trans-boarder cultural realm.

This result falls in line with Ritzer's (1996) perspective of "cultural universalism" which predicates on the overriding influence of western culture on other less dominant cultures. In another sense Ritzer (1996) described this as Americanization of society or McDonaldization where every facet of the American life styles are adopted hook-line- and sinker. From the field observation and inquiry, traditional life styles have been significantly down played by a good number of local folks in such areas dressing, hair styles by both men and women, diet, music speech mannerism and so on.

Glaring aspects are seen in food preference where such diets like spaghetti, macaroni, "indomie", "foreign rice" are preferred. All these are areas of the cultural diffusion process earlier Sarkgrya (2005) and later popularised by Krody which states that stimulus diffusion occurs in trickles and the diffused piece is always subject to change parallel with the culture it was diffused into' and further that "when the diffusion is welcomed by the home community all the time, there is no resistance to the stimulus diffusion.

Stated in a plainer language the theory border on the gradualism or uniformitarianism of cultural encroachment from one society to the other. It equally inferred in the theory that the process of stimulus diffusion is at the same rate with the culture it was diffused into which in other words explains the process of emplacement- displacement trend and that at all times the diffusion element is always acceptable to the home community.

This explanation tends credence to Ferrante (2012) assertion that diffusion is a process by which an idea, an invention or some other cultural items are borrowed from a foreign source.

The foreign source which is called an exogenous culture may superimpose its influence on the home culture which is called an endogenous culture. Smith (2000) has pointed the dark side of cultural diffusion which is said might "lead to misrepresentation. Stereotyping and the risk of loss of cultural identity and inter-cultural property right due to unmonitored access. This apprehension supports our notion of "cultural extinction" which is the pivot of our enquiry.

The process of field investigation reveals significantly that there predominance of outright tilt towards westernization of the native culture of the people. From the parameters fielded in our field data collection there is a homogenous affirmation by the respondents in the support of the overwhelming influence of the exogenous culture on the culture of the natives. As revealed by table 1 using raw data from the field, item 1 supports the point that there is overwhelming evidence of loss of family ties, Item 2 supports the view of emergence of nuclear of family system, the third parameter concerning the spirit of communality is responded in the negative suggesting that individualism is the current fashion in vogue.

Going through the entire gamut of the responses, there is a clear evidence that traditional life styles are being

abandoned for western life styles some which are positive , while others are negative. The challenge therefore remains that there should be steps taken to call for cultural reorientation and other strategies of creating awareness regarding the dangers of cultural annihilation.

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