OVIA OSESE FESTIVAL AS A TOOL FOR ENHANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN OGORILAND

BY

ADEBIJA, IYOBORO BOSEDE

P16ARTP8087

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND PREFORMING ARTS,

FACULTY OF ARTS,

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,

ZARIA

FEBRUARY, 2020

OVIA OSESE FESTIVAL AS A TOOL FOR ENHANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN OGORILAND

BY

ADEBIJA, IYOBORO BOSEDE

P16ARTP8087

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS [M.A] DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND PREFORMING ARTS,

FACULTY OF ARTS,

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,

ZARIA

FEBRUARY, 2020

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation entitled "**Ovia Osese festival as a tool for enhancing community development in Ogoriland**" has been carried out by me in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another Degree or Diploma at this or any other institution.

---------- ----------

Adebija, Iyoboro Bosede Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled "**Ovia Osese festival as a tool for enhancing community development in Ogoriland**" written by Adebija Iyoboro B.C (P16ARTP8087) meets the regulations governing the award of Master of Arts **Degree in Development Communication** from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation

---------- ----------

Dr. Emmanuel Jegede Date

Chairman, supervisory Committee

---------- ----------

Dr. Mrs Rasheeda Liman Date

Member, Supervisory Committee

---------- ----------

Dr. Mrs Rasheeda Liman Date

Head of Department

---------- ----------

Prof. S. Z Abubakar Date

Dean, School of post-graduate studies

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents Engineer and Mrs P.A Adebija for all their priceless efforts and support for me. I am forever grateful to you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My profound gratitude goes to God Almighty for granting me good health, blessing me with knowledge and wisdom, grace, courage and zeal to pursue and conclude this research. I am also grateful to Dr Emmanuel Jegede, for his timeless efforts despite his tight schedule. Thank you Sir for your encouragement, guidance and tolerance in making this project a reality. I am as well indebted to Dr Mrs Rasheeda Liman, for finding time to correct, critique and suggest way out for this work.

I want to say a big thank you to the entire academic staff of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Your contributions and encouragements through the course of this work are highly appreciated. My appreciation equally goes to all my classmates, in particular Donli Onyeka, Patience Akuso, Rosemary Matthew, David Medugu and Olugbenga Adebisi. I am grateful for your meaningful observations, encouragement and contributions which have helped to make this work better. I also want to acknowledge the encouragement given to me by my family, my parents Engineer and Mrs Adebija, my siblings, Mr Clement Adebija, Stella Shallangwa, Osebi, Sunday, Oseka, Osisi, Osiaye and Ronmibe Adebija, Joan Amodu. Thank you for your supports, may the Lord bless and keep you all. Not forgetting Dr. Jonah Amodu, Elder and Mrs Idachaba I am sincerely grateful for making this work a reality.

To my darling husband, Mr John Idachaba and God sent son, Penuel Idachaba, I sincerely appreciate you for the moral support and encouragement you gave me. God bless you preserve your lives.

ABSTRACT

Ovia Osese is a festival organized for the initiation of young girls or maidens into womanhood which symbolizes chastity, virginity and purity in conformity with the laws and social norms of Ogori. This study aimed at promoting the relevance of Ovia Osese festival as a tool for community development. The study emphasized the need for people's participation in communal activities. Theory of social mobilization which emphasized on the commitment of people to certain collective goals and objectives, values and behavior was used. Qualitative approach using the key informant interview, focus group discussion and participant observation was deployed to investigate the role which Ovia Osese festival plays in promoting community development. Findings of the study revealed that the festival serves as leverage for promoting culture, peace and unity of Ogori land. It also serves as a forum for discussing issues of socio-cultural, economic and political significance to the Ogori community. It was noted that funds generated from the festival as a result of donations are not properly accounted for leaving the people with doubt about the significance of Ovia Osese festival. Youth's participation in the festival is low and not strategic. Youths are not actively involved in decision making concerning the activities of the festival due to communication disconnect. Decisions are made by the dignitaries (Ogori Descendants Union and Chiefs) who believe to know what the people want without consulting with the local people on the decision on how to go about Ovia Osese festival and development projects of the community. In the case of Ovia Osese, the Ogori people use the platform on yearly basis to evaluate how far they have been able as a community to resolve varying challenges impinging on the development of the Ogoriland. This festival has created an atmosphere of serenity for the people to discuss issues of development such as electricity, education, moral values, health, family unity, societal vices such as corruption, prostitution, etc. and other critical issues such as politics and identity problem (sustaining the local language of Ogori people). The festival, Ovia Osese is therefore a critical tool which the Ogori people have used over the years and till now as a channel to achieve this. There is need therefore to make the festival more participatory and inclusive to accommodate the youth who at present have little or no contribution to decisions concerning the promotion of the festival. Thus the quest to create enabling environment that will attract active participation of youth in all facets of the event and promotion of bottom-up approach communication process is now emerging to ensure development of Ogori community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS **PAGE**

Title…….....…… i

Declaration…….....…… iii

Certification…….....…… iv

Dedication…….....…… v

Acknowledgements…….....…… vi

Abstract…….....…… vii

Table of Contents…….....…… viii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study…….…… 1

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem…….....…. 6

1.2 Aim of the Study…….....….. 7

1.3 Objectives of the Study…….....……... 7

1.4 Research Questions…….…… 7

1.5 Significance of the Study…….…….....….....….. 8

1.6 Scope of the Study…….. 8

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction…… 10

2.1 Understanding Festivals..... 10

2.1.2 The Osun-Osogbo Festival…… 14

2.1.3 Argungun Fishing Festival…… 17

2.1.4 Emume *Iri Ji Ohuru* (The Ritual Ceremony)…….. 17

2.2 Festival as a Platform for Communication……. 20

2.3 Brief History of Ogoriland……... 24

2.4 The Performance of Ovia Osese Festival…… 25

2.4.1 Movement One: Iviasi…… 26

2.4.2 Movement Two: Opa-Obubwe……. 27

2.4.3 Movement Three: Oke……... 28

2.4.4 Dance Performance Design…… 29

2.4.5 Costume, Accessories and Make-up…… 30

2.4.6 Music and Songs…… 31

2.5 Concept of Community……. 36

2.6 Community Development…….. 39

2.7 Benefits of Festivals to Community Development…….. 42

2.8 Review of Studies on Festivals…… 45

2.9 Theoretical Framework……..... 50

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction..... 55

3.1 Research Design..... 55

3.2 Study Population..... 56

3.3 Sample Size/Technique..... 56

3.4Research Instrument 57

3.5 Methods of Data Analysis..... 59

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction..... 61

4.1 Ovia Osese Festival's Signficance and Contribution to the Community 61

4.1.2 Ovia Osese Festival and Community Development…… 71

4.2 Social and Moral Development of Ovia Osese Festival to Maidens or the Girl Child..74

4.3 Challenges Associated with Ovia Osese Festival and the Way Forward…… 77

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction……..... 82

5.1 Key Research Findings……. ……. .83

5.2 Recommendation……. 83

5.3 Conclusion……. 84

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge…… 85

References..... 86

Appendices..... 92

Pictures of the Ovia Osese Festival…… 101

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Festivals are viewed differently by people all over the world. Some believed that festivals are restricted to entertainment, merry making and celebration. This view is succinctly presented by Ekpeyong (1981: 31) as follows:

> Festivals are special occasions or seasons which are marked by merry making, set aside by a community, tribe, clan for the observation of sacred celebration, religion, solemnities or musical and traditional performance of social significance.

This is a true picture of how festival used to be in the olden days whereby people from all **walks** of life gather together to celebrate the traditions of community. With the growing age of civilization, there has been a decline in the observance of festivals.

Festivals are celebrations of important events in every human society which bring together people from all walks of life. Traditional festivals are observed by the adherents of the traditional religion to mark important social and cultural events in the lives of the people and these are culminated in series of performances, entertainments, rites and rituals. Through these festivals, the values and beliefs of the people are demonstrated; they give meaning to the social, political and religious life of the people celebrating them. They are vital mainsprings in the traditional education and the remit of the people's culture (Akintan, 2013). These attributes of festivals are fast declining especially in the area of rituals.

Ovia Osese is one of such festivals that has transformed over the years from just a female oriented festival in Ogoriland to encompass development agenda of all facets of life in the community. Ovia Osese is celebrated by the Ogori people in Ogori Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. Ovia Osese is a cultural festival that is annually

celebrated for the promotion of virginity and womanhood attainment. It preserves and protects its cultural heritage by instilling moral self-discipline and responsibility among the female population. Ovia Osese festival is a unifying factor and a living reminder of the culture of the people because Ogori people in Diaspora always gather every year to participate in the festival. Consequently indigenes interaction and relationship are strengthened since the festival is a cultural cord of unity that binds the people together. Although this festival is celebrated with all pomp and pageantry, the advent of Christianity and Islam in Ogoriland, has made some people who are adherents of these religions not to participate actively in the celebration.

In the past, Ovia Osese festival is usually a day celebration but has been transformed to a week celebration with inclusion of other activities such as games, beauty pageant, symposium, carnival parade, debate, cooking competition etc. These were incorporated by a group of individuals (Ogori Descendant Union members) as a way to achieve certain goals of the community. **The festival** is normally celebrated two weeks after Easter yearly. The various events are geared towards getting resources to finance the community projects or needs and also to attract tourism. In spite of all these programmes infused into the festival, the community is still faced with developmental issues such as illiteracy, juvenile delinquencies, drug addiction, prostitution and alcoholism.

Festival is closely connected with the development of human culture, which dates back to the historical roots of mankind (Klein and Blake 2002). Over the centuries, history has shown that certain days or periods in the life of man have been set aside either to commemorate, celebrate ritually or re-enact certain events of seasons believed to be significant to man and his community. Such periods generally have religious or ritualistic

significance. These celebrations include sacred communal meals and it is from such meals that the idea of fest or festival developed. Therefore, this study **looks** beyond the primary role of festivals in respect of performances, cultural observance, and entertainment but pursuing the possibility of the role they can play to foster community development especially meeting people's needs and improving their lives.

In the past years, people celebrated festivals to promote their cultural heritage so as to pass it from generation to generation. These festivals are now celebrated not only to express cultural identity of the people but also the significance and meaning best known to the people of the community that celebrate them. Earls (1993) submits that festivals are communal gatherings that objectify people's collective wishes and dreams and provide an important occasion for a unique experience in their social lives. He further implies that this festival has a cultural meaning to the host community. In Nigeria there are different festivals that portray **the** cultural heritage of the people to the outside world. For instance, Eyo festival in Lagos, Calabar festival, Osun Osogbo festival in Osun state, Sango festival in Oyo state, Argungu festival in Kebbi State, Durbar in Maiduguri and Kano State have enjoyed international patronage. These festivals including the Ovia Osese have different significance to the **diverse** communities.

Pardy (1991) believes that contemporary festivals are not only vehicles for celebrating, enhancing or preserving local cultures and history, but arguably to facilitate social change. Festivals can serve as a folk medium or means of communicating messages to the people of a community not only on the happenings around but also issues that concern the community, their culture, norms, beliefs, tradition. In order words, it can be said that festival plays a vital role in fostering social cohesion and change in the

community. Thus a positive development in respect of the standards, attitudes, tradition of a society can be reflected in a festive celebration.

Based on evidence from past researches, festivals have been used to promote community image and culture and to create ecotourism and other developmental opportunities. It is thus realistic that festivals can be used as a medium for communicating development to the community. Therefore, the need arises to interrogate how developmental issues have been discussed during the Ovia Osese festival. It is believed that festivals can serve as a platform for disseminating development messages as aptly captured by Mbiti, (1969:137-140) below:

> Through festival, the life of the community is renewed. People are entertained and their tensions find an outlet. Festivals also bring together the people as a group, thus strengthening their unity and cohesion. Religious and social values are repeated and renewed through communal festivals. Artistic talents are utilised to the full, in form of art, music, drama and oral communication. People seize such occasions to solicit blessings from God or the departed, and there is a general feeling that the visible and the invisible worlds co-exist for the benefit of man who are at their center… festivals are religious ways of implementing the values and beliefs of society. Without them African life would be dull…Human life needs some relevant rituals and festival to give it both solemnity and laughter.

It is obvious that festivals have a significant role to play in developing a community by passing vital information on how to bring about social change in the society rather than only entertaining or promoting cultural performances. Thus, festival possesses attributes, values and dynamics that can plead the cause of development and stimulate positive change in the community.

Traditionally Ogori Ovia Osese is a festival organized for the initiation of young girls or maidens known as Ivia into womanhood. The festival symbolizes chastity, virginity purity in conformity with the laws and social norms of the Ogori people. Ovia Osese is a unifying factor and a living reminder of the culture of the people. This is because Ogori

people at home and outside converge at Ogori to witness Ovia Osese every year. Consequently Ogori indigenes' interaction and relationships are strengthened since the festival is a cultural cord of unity that binds the people. Nowadays, Ogori indigenes all over the world eagerly look forward to Ovia Osese festival.

The festival helps to preserve and protect the people's language, particularly Ogori poetry through Ovia Osese songs that are performed and chanted annually. The high moral standard anchored on indigenous cultural values among spinsters in particular, and the Ogori community in general, is maintained by the institution of Ovia Osese. This brings into focus the female in particular and their place in the society, by celebrating purity, chastity and womanhood. Above all, Ovia Osese is a manifestation of the meeting point of culture, religion, custom and tradition. In recent times, it epitomizes religious tolerance through the mobilization and coming together of Islam and Christianity in Ovia Osese activities.

Festivals have been observed as a veritable means of enhancing development especially in African communities. This is largely because certain African cultural festivals possess attributes, values and dynamics that can facilitate development. Festivals are seen to build social capital particularly as the festival facilities increase social cohesiveness through celebration. The question here is how can this festival facilitate development? What are the processes that can enable community development? How can development messages be conveyed to bring about social change in the community? These are some of the questions the study on Ovia Osese festival as a tool for development seeks to answer.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

In spite of the popularity of the Ovia Osese festival in Ogori, there are few empirical studies, interpretations and documentations of the Ovia Osese festival with particular reference to Ogoriland in Kogi State. In the same view, Ovia Osese festival has sustained its core elements and survived through decades of influence of Western civilization and religion, however little is known of how the festival have managed to navigate these challenges. Despite its popularity within Kogi State, its effect on the socio-cultural development of the Ogoriland is yet to be measured and documented in scholarly works.

Nigeria is going through a myriad of conflict ranging from sectarian, youth restiveness; ethnic variance, moral decadence etc. These conflicts most often are violent and destructive to human and public structures; thus, a unifying activity in the form of festivals is needed. The observance of festivals brings about social and moral control as well as entertainment. It attracts visitors to a place and also affects the economy, conserve culture and rejuvenate traditions. Festivals provide a potent platform to guarantee peace if properly organized and can contribute in creating an enabling peaceful atmosphere for all to dwell in. This is because peace which is the absence of violence is important to development.

Festivals whether religious or secular bring people together irrespective of their social standing as it provides an avenue for all and sundry to build social cohesion and reinforce ties within themselves. Although there have been advocacy by government and different interest group on approaches to achieve peace; festivals have not been adequately

identified as a bridge for peaceful co-existence. This study thus focused on how Ovia Osese festival can engender community development and enhance the growth of the girl child.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to establish the relevance of Ovia Osese festival as a tool for community development.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives are to:

i. Evaluate the significance of Ovia Osese festival to the development of Ogori community.
ii. Interrogate the extent to which the festival under study has contributed to the moral growth of the girl child in Ogori community
iii. Identify challenges militating against the effectiveness of Ovia Osese festival as a tool for development.
iv. Enumerate factors that can aid Ovia Osese festival to serve as a tool for achieving community development.

1.4 Research Questions

I. In what what way is Ovia Osese festival significant to development of Ogori community?
II. To what extent has Ovia Osese contributed to the moral growth of the girl child within the community under study?
III. What are the challenges facing the effectiveness of Ovia Osese festival as a tool for development.

IV. How can Ovia Osese festival be restructured to serve as an effective tool for achieving community development?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Some view festival as entertainment, advertising of cultural heritage, and gathering of people to promote peace and unity, but festival goes beyond this; it can be used to promote community development. Since festival brings people from all walks of life together, it can be seen as an avenue for communal discussion, communication, and dialoguing of important issues concerning the community that can easily pave way for future development. Furthermore because festivals are periodic, issues as to how the community can move forward could be revisited. This study will add to the existing knowledge of the people of Ogori, festival organizers, community development, students, researchers to know the various benefits that can be derived from Ovia Osese festival and further studies can proceed from there. The study will further enlighten people on the various benefits associated with Ovia Osese festival and it will prompt people to further investigate on other aspect of benefits that accompanies festival that can aid development. With this study, cultural scholars will be able to comprehend the strategies festivals can use in enhancing development in a community which brings about social change.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on Ovia Osese cultural festival in Ogori area of Kogi State between 2014 and 2016. In order to foreground this study properly, the researcher looked at the cultural components of the festival, the hierarchic concept of the festival, the organization and the activities of the festival, and also the gender discourse of the festival. Furthermore, the process of communication during and after the festival was analysed. The study also

investigated the barriers and challenges of the festivals, concept of participation and perception of the festival, and the specific role of Ovia Osese in stimulating development issues of Ogoriland.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews various literatures and topics on the study which includes, concept of understanding festival, festival as a platform for communication, brief history of Ogoriland, the performance of Ovie osese festivals, concept of community, community development and benefits of festivals to community development. Also, various research works relating to festivals were reviewed to give more credence and understanding to this work. A theoretical framework, Social Mobilisation Theory used to foreground the tenets of this work is also discussed in relation to Ovia Osese festival as a tool for community development in this chapter extensively.

2.1 Understanding Festivals

Festival is defined and explained by different scholars in different ways and perspectives. Festival is an occasion for feasting or celebration especially a day, week or time of any significance that recurs at regular intervals or an often regularly recurring programme of cultural performance, exhibition or competitions (the America Heritage Dictionary 2009). Ekpeyong (1981:31) confirms that “festival is a special occasion or season which is marked by merry-making, set aside by a community, tribe, clan for the observation of sacred celebration, religious solemnities or musical and traditional performance of social significance”. It is an occasion of public manifestation of joy, it brings about social and moral control, entertains, attracts visitors to a place, it affects the economy, conserves culture and revives the spirit of tradition.

Festival contributes significantly to the cultural and economic development of Nigeria. Idegu (1988:4) notes that, "festivals ensure adequate and constant cultural revival and allow the people to evaluate the trends of its cultural development and general growth". This can be seen in the area of development of cultural tourism to the host communities where tourism stands as important source of income for many individuals. Other studies describe festival as a display of culture and identity particularly in the way it is performed for tourists, it enables the community to sell its culture to tourist among others coming from within and outside the country. Getz (1997) agrees to the fact that "events have the potential to generate a vast amount of tourism" because it provides a platform to reclaim heritage, increase economic independence preserve culture.

Festival generates economic gain to the host community in that people bring their wares or goods for visitors to buy. It becomes a beneficial factor to the people. The events in turn are seen as important tools for attracting visitors and building image within different communities. Community festival is typically organised by the host community using local volunteers and organizing committees Getz (1991) stresses the linkages that these festivals have to their host community. Festivals can also contribute to an increased sense of community identity and belonging, and can help to enhance social cohesion and community wellbeing (Mayfield & Crompton *et al.*, 1995).

Community festival can be considered as a part of the new wave of alternative or special interest tourism as identified by Poon (1993). This means that they contain certain unique elements which are not replicated or mass produced. Festivals have been seen as a prime manifestation of the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999) as they entertain, educate, hold aesthetic value and provide the platform for escapism. Falassi (1987:2)

considers festival as a ‘sacred or profane time of celebration marked by special observances’ maintaining that the social functions of a festival are closely related to community values. Farber (1983) investigated festival and public celebration and concluded that much could be learned about a community’s symbolic, economic, political and social life. Falassi (1987) then added that Farber’s notions of symbolism by commenting that both the social and symbolic meanings were closely linked to a series of overt values that the local community sees as essential to its ideology, world view, social identity history and its physical survival all of which the festival celebrates.

Mainstream definitions of festivals all tend to agree that the local community is vital to the success of any festival. Goldblatt (1997) for example, suggests that a festival’s key characteristic is the sense of community created. Festival and community can assume many roles, for example, Dunstan (1994) observes that festivals and cultural events provide a forum for cultural values and traditions, a shared purpose, one view echoed by Getz (1997) is that festival provides a unique opportunity for community cultural development. Other studies (Dunstan 1994, Frisby et al 1989, Getz 1991, 1997) also suggest that festival can be used as building blocks for communities and promote ethnic understanding within society and in doing so preserve and celebrate local traditions, history and culture, or be used as a strategy to extend a destination lifecycle (Chacko and Schaffer 1993). Dugas and Schweitzer (1997) maintain that to develop a sense of community is hard work, long term, especially to build levels of connectedness, belonging and support.

Community festivals represent an opportunity for individual members of a community to come together to celebrate, socialise and be entertained. This occurs when individuals and groups participate in the festival and with each other through volunteering,

leisure activities and opportunities for social transactions. Through their involvement, local residents are able to benefit from the development of new skills and interests, and an increased sense of community spirit and pride.

Participating in traditional music, masquerades, dance and drama like traditional theater, masks and puppets performances, tales, proverbs, riddles and songs, should be seen as a cultural and endogenous response to different community needs for information, education, social protest and entertainment. These systems are often used to solve the contradiction between the need for change (development) of a rural community and the need to preserve its cultural values. As Modum (1978:56) reveals:

> Participation in regular festive activities serves as a means of relaxation of the mind. The physical activities involved in the long run are maintaining sound health and achieving a peace of mind, Modum further insinuated that in a society that had none of the modern recreational facilities such as television, cinema and tennis, festivals were bound to be an important element of diversion and relaxation as well as a means of social interaction. Regular participation in festive activities results in the enhancement of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Besides this festival is a way of socialization as it creates opportunity of meeting with loved ones and enjoys reunion. Festival gives people opportunity to meet new people, develop new friendship and strengthen family relationship.

By participating in festivals, families can interact with other families in a mutually enjoyable environment, allowing them to develop strong relationship with one another especially families that go back home occasionally and also allow the people to develop the community in their own way.

Burkey (1998:56) asserts that:

> Participation is an essential part of human growth, which is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, cooperation and also the process where people learn to take charge of their own problems, is the essence of development This is because the people know themselves best and what changes they will need within their own context.

Burkey (1998:57) further stresses that: “Genuine participation is a process when people become more aware of their own situation, of the social-economic reality around them, of their real problems, the causes of these problems, and what measure they themselves can take to begin to change their situation”. This process of awakening, raising of levels of consciousness, constitutes a process of self-transformation through which people grow and mature and begin to take responsibilities of their own problems. In this sense, participation is a basic human need,' In contrast, (Cashman 1991), believes that by participating in dramatization, villagers themselves show their own perspectives of their problems. Through participation in the festival processes the unknown is known, people begin to see their situational problems, solutions begin to arise if possible at that moment.

2.1.2 The Osun-Osogbo Festival

Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Festival is an annual affair which revolves round the king, *Ataoja*, and the Osogbo people. It is the renewal of the mystic bonds between Osun and the other deities of the grove and the people. The 12th day festival starts and ends in the town palace of the *Ataoja*, beginning with (*Iwopopo*) the physical and ritual *cleaning* of the pilgrimage route from the palace in the centre of the town (*Gbaemu*) to the grove by the royal priestess (*Iya Osun*) and the priest (*Aworo*) accompanying the household of the king with traditional chiefs, High Chiefs and other notables with dancing and singing.

The second to the fifth day of the festival witnesses the appearance of masquerades dedicated to ancestors as well as *Sango*, the Yoruba god of thunder. The night of the 6th day of the festival is dedicated to *Osanyin*, a Yoruba deity responsible for healing through the knowledge of the use of herbs. On this occasion a sixteen-point lamp is lit using palm oil soaked in cotton wicks (from 7pm to 7am). The *Ataoja,* his wives, *Ifa* priests and

traditional priests would dance round the sixteen-point lamp, three times to the admiration of a cross section of the Osogbo people present at the palace grounds.

The 7th day is dedicated to the *Ifa* (divination) priests who also dance round Osogbo town. While the 8th day includes acrobatic performances by personified goddesses like *Oya*, one of the wives of *Sango* with whom Osun was in good terms (*Oya* has a sacred area within the main grove).

It is also to be noted that in the same way, and as a preliminary to the festival. A cleansing ceremony is dedicated to *Oro*, the god of wind, who also has a sacred area within the main grove.

On the 9th day the *Ataoja* and his high chiefs pay compliments to his in-laws in a procession that leads from one house to the other. In a build up towards the grand finale, the tenth day witnesses the laying out of the crowns of the past and present kings for a rededication to Osun. On this occasion, chiefs, priests and priestesses will prostrate before the crowns as a salute to the royal ancestors. The occasion is to invoke the spirit of the ancestors of the king (*Ataoja)* for a bestowal of blessings on Osogbo people. This is followed by eating and drinking at the Courtyard.

The 11th day is devoted to the final preparation for the grand finale that occurs on the 12th day. The whole population of Osogbo undertakes a procession into the sacred grove. The procession begins at about 9 a.m. It is led by the votary maid, (*Arugba*), the king, and devotees supported by high chiefs to the Osun goddess to the Osun Courtyard, around the location of the first palace within the grove, where is *Ojubo,* the point of offering on the bank of the river. The procession is accompanied with drumming, singing and dancing. One of the star attractions is the flogging ceremony by youths of Osogbo.

Flexible twigs of plants are used to whip each other to the admiration of the king and all spectators. The flogging stops when the king gives out money to the youths. The festival also witnesses the display of various *Egungun* – (ancestral) masquerade.

The votary maid (*Arugba)* who carries the ritual calabash of medicine follows the ritual route to the Osun temple where she put down the calabash in front of the Osun Priests who accompany her to the shrine. When the *Arugba* arrives, there are loud ovations with beating of drums and dancing. The *Ataoja* is then called into the temple where he sits on the stone throne to offer prayers to the Osun goddess with a calabash of sacrifice prepared by the Priestess, the priest and other relevant Osun devotees. The *Ataoja* offers prayers, after which the Priestess and Priest pray fervently for the *Ataoja*, Osogbo community, other citizens, and participants. The sacrifice is then carried to the river for offering. This discharge of offering is hailed by all and sundry and every one present begins to pray earnestly to the Osun goddess for individual and collective needs at the river side. Vows, which must be honored are made. The votary maid meanwhile retires into the inner part of the temple and stays there till the end of the festival.

Therefore, the king who leads the pilgrimage along the public route to the *Ojubo* shrine addresses the audience and prays that the Osun goddess will make it possible for them to come same time next year and then everyone disperses. The Osun Osogbo festival officially ends when the votary maid successfully returns to the Osun shrine in the palace. For the people of Osogbo the role of the votary maid **(***Arugba*) goes beyond that of a precarious being. She is the soul and represents the life giving force of their spiritual being. She is the soul of the celebration; two bitter cola nuts are placed in her mouth so that she cannot speak out the wondrous things that fill her mind on visiting Osun. She must not

stumble lest her fate and subsequently that of Osogbo (i.e. all human kind) will be exposed to the hazards of stumbling throughout the following year. This is evidence of the inseparable links of the *Orisa* and its followers (National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 2004).

2.1.3 Argungun Fishing Festival

This is another festival that has gained prominence in recent times; this can be attested to by the turnout of participants both from within and outside Nigeria. Historically, the festival started as an irregular get-together of the local fishermen residing within the immediate vicinity of the fishing site of Argungun settlement in the present Kebbi State of Nigeria. The main period of fishing is the dry season stretching from the month of December to May. This is the period of less agricultural activity and also the time when the floods would have subsided, people go into fishing because it is a time when farming is drastically reduced. The method of catching fish is the use of a pair of seine net known as homa which are held in each hand of the fishermen. Some other cultural events that make the festival thick include kabauchi displays, agricultural fare, traditional dances, drama, boxing, wrestling, camel, donkey and horse races as well as motor rally, bicycle rally and archery as other complements. The climax of the festival is when the signal is given for fishing to start and the fishermen charge into the river amidst music and song. Once the fishing is over, fishermen are forbidden from fishing on the spot again until the next fishing festival. The person with the biggest catch carries the day (NDTC, 2004:1).

2.1.4 Emume *Iri Ji Ohuru* (The Ritual Ceremony)

Iri Ji Ohuru is a thanksgiving festival otherwise known by different names among various sub-ethnic groups in Igboland. The ceremony is variously known as *Emume-*

Ifejioku, Iwa-ji, Ime-Ahiaolu, Emume-Ahianjoku, Iro Ofo or Ofala. According to Uchendu, "each community holds the rite on its market day".The rite is celebrated in many Igbo villages in the form that follows: the *Okpala*; that is, the eldest *Oji Ofo* (a person who is held as the most upright and just; the one who commands moral authority in an Igbo community) is the recognized ritual head. The rite is usually performed under an *Ukwu-Egbu* tree, an *Ukwu Abosi*, or an *Ogirisi* tree. On that day, the most fattened yam tubers donated by an accomplished *Di Ji (expert yam-cultivator in the community)* are displayed. A huge cock, several kola-nuts, kegs of dry gin and jars of palm-wine, alligator peppers and other small ritual items such as *nzu,* (white chalk) *nchara,* (yellow chalk) *edo* (red chalk) are gathered. The ritual master cuts one new yam tuber into four pieces, at the same time prayed.

Incantations may be sung, chanted or simply be said aloud during the ceremony. In other variants of the ceremony as practised in other Igbo communities, the master blesses and thanks *Chukwu* (the Igbo High God) who has given yam to the Igbo people. In some other villages, the ritualist may evoke the spirits of *Ndi Ichie* (ancestors) and pray them to continue to intercede with the homesteads in their quest for *Vital life* to promote longevity and prosperity in the community. He acknowledges *Ala* the *Mother* of peace (udo), of fertility (omumu) and as the custodian of morality in the land (Onye nchekota omume oma) "and the controller of fortune and economic life". He prays to the yam deity, Ahianjoku to continue to prosper the growth and cultivation of yam in Igboland. With other prayers for good health, protection against diseases and infertility of land, people and domestic animals, he terminates his rogatory imprecations with the pouring of a libation, at which moment he faces his cup homewards, a ritual act that indicates that the wish of the

blessings prayed for should directly come homewards to meet all and sundry in the larger community at the point of their needs. All the people show their approval with an extended chorus: Haa! (Amin).

At this point, the elders and shrine attendants retire with the immolated cock and the remaining portions of the sliced yam. Some slices are roasted and eaten hot with red palm oil. The rest are boiled with the chicken for the elders to consume as New Yam Pepper Soup (Ira Miri Ji Awayi – drinking the pepper soup of sliced yams) as a commensal food. This is the end of the communal ritual part of the festival. It is known as Iwa-Ji or Ira Ibe among some Igbo subgroups. From the structure of this ceremony (emume) one can see that it is an adult male ritual that takes place in an open space under the shade of a sacred tree often located at the exit of or the entrance to the Ogbe, the kindred houseclusters or village. The festival marks the beginning of the first harvest and the eating of new and fresh yams in most Igbo homesteads. It is an appeasement ritual with thankful prayers in a rite marked by the slaughtering of live animals, the pouring of libations and the invocation of the ancestral spirits and the local divinities.

The presence of women at the shrine ground is forbidden. The explanation of the physical absence of women at the ritual ground can be deduced from the mythical narration of the origin of yam in the Igbo socio-religious world view, which tells that God only gave a man the "gift" of yams. In addition, Igbo society has been highly patriarchal and yam was regarded, as my sources above have indicated, as a man's chief crop. The climax of the thanksgiving ceremony is the cooking and commensal consumption of boiled yams with chicken-pepper soup. Women cook the food and prepare Ugba (Oil beans), while the men bring palm-wine. The youths clear the village pathways. There is much drinking and eating

in groups. Privately, every adult male in the community performs his own ritual to the extent that he can afford in his own home. Family-groups are involved in the prayers, singing, eating and drinking. Goats and rams are killed on the day. Umuada or Umumgboto (that is, daughters of the community married in other villages) also attend.

Umuada group is "a very powerful and strong force to reckon with" in Igbo society. They grace the occasion with their husbands and children. Many of them bring food and wine to their immediate relatives. Guests come from neighboring villages as the ceremony is not performed on the same day throughout Igboland. The day is greeted with jubilant celebrations. Communal and musical entertainment groups and masquerade troupes display their dances and acrobatic skills. It is really a thanksgiving celebration in which the whole community participates. This happens because "the traditional Igbo culture is community oriented". As Umunna, a people who "trace their unity to a single ancestor", they re-validate their unity by worshipping and sharing food together (Manus, 2007).

2.2 Festival as a Platform for Communication

Festivals are classified as part of Extra-mundane communication. This is the mode of communication between the living and the dead, the supernatural or supreme being. This is usually done through incantation, spiritual chants, ritual, prayers, sacrifice, invocation, seance, trance, hysterics or liberation. This is a multi-dimensional communication transaction which has become more pervasive in all societies most especially in Africa. Cultural ritual performance evokes intensity of emotion which may lead to a temporary spiritual transmigration of the participants as in religious or spiritual ceremonies. Such a performance conveys the elements of a cultural celebration, dedication and consecration as is often witnessed in marriage and funeral rites. Modem forms of extramundane

communication are found in obituary and in memorial notices published in newspapers, magazines or on radio and television (Des Wilson, 1987).

Festivals are good examples of bottom-up communication and remain a very veritable celebration in many parts of Africa. They are not mere entertainment, but also serve as means of communication. There are mainly two types of festival –cultural and religious. They are tied to the culture of a people and predominant among the rural and peripheral population and many of the celebrations are connected to farming and rural development. Although, it is a traditional channel of communication, the scale of usage is absolutely important; users must be part of the culture; must understand and empathise with the people to be able to use it most effectively. So, usage should emphasise the traditional networks of relationships.

Festivals are used to communicate various meanings especially in agricultural practices. For example, they signal times of planting and harvesting crops. They may also give hints on crops tending. They provide occasion for disseminating information. For instance, modern techniques for yam propagation and storage to minimise post-harvest losses. So, modern development issues can be incorporated into traditional festivals and ceremonies particularly for as long as the ideas to be injected will not depart basically from the inherent ideas of such festivals.

Most cultures have at least some ways of remembering the dead, whether through the spirits of relatives or the deaths of gods. Remembering the dead is done almost worldwide. According to a Latvian artist, Skujina (2006), drawing from Mexico to, Egypt (*emphasis mine*) and ancient Rome, states that it is “not just a formal occasion - it's a chance to visit, if only for a few days, our own concept of mortality.” Buttressing his

assertion that the festival is worldwide, Skujina (2006) account of some festivals for the dead and their significance are presented below: Festival of Isis and Osiris – Throughout ancient Egypt (and later the Greek and Roman Empires) the end of October and first of November were dedicated to the mysteries of Osiris and Isis.

Through festivals like Eyo Masqurade in Lagos, Yam Festival in all Eastern states of Nigeria, The Argungu Fishing Festival of Kebbi State, Ekuechi Festival in Kogi State, Ogun Festival in Ondo State, Agemo Festival in Ogun State, etc. the people of Africa foster a sense of unity among themselves and also the ability to express themselves culturally. One thing peculiar with these festivals is the strong belief the people have in the indispensable roles played by the gods of their land. Some of these festivals have lasted for generations which shows that Africans, through their own means of communication have the ability to not only develop a tradition, but also to perpetuate the tradition from generation to generation.

In the word of Bonye (2011:32) as expressed below:

> However far we go back in history and in whatever locality we find ourselves, there have always been a cultural identity that portrays our religion and practices, moral values, the chieftaincy institution, drumming and dancing, drama and art, and craft as a way of marking our traditional years. Traditional institutions (festivals) are often the embodiment of knowledge through which these cultures are expressed.

Contemporarily, the celebration of festivals goes beyond the preservation and maintenance of tradition to create a platform or an opportunity where communities invite and engage dialogue with duty bearers through advocacy for development projects. Besides, traditional authorities also use these forums to account to their people and also evaluate service providers on what they have been doing and what have been done so far in their communities. The outputs of these festivals eventually culminate into action plans

with assigned roles and responsibilities to various stakeholders in the community (Bonye, 2011).

The role of traditional festivals in community development cannot be **overemphasized**. Drumming, dancing, art, songs, belief systems, values, norms and practices are vital components of culture that need to be preserved and maintain for posterity. Festivals were therefore traditionally celebrated to preserve and maintain these cultures. Hence, community elders and leaders use these **festivals** to enhance the perpetuation of values and belief systems and also pass on folklores to the younger generations.

In recent times, festivals have gone beyond their traditional roles. They are consciously planned towards **their** celebration with concrete action plans at the end of the celebrations. In addition to preservation and maintenance of culture, festivals create a platform for dialogue with duty bearers. Traditional authorities and service providers use these fora to give account of their actions in relation to development activities and also make a passionate appeal for and on behalf of the community to governments, nongovernmental organizations and politicians on development policies that borders them. The general outcomes for both traditional and contemporary roles are to enhance and initiate community development programme.

The traditional role of festivals **is** to preserve and maintain culture, remember, honour and give thanks to God, the gods and the ancestors for their help and protection is increasingly been influenced by government policies and programmes that call for community self-development initiatives. Therefore, communities have resort to the use of various strategies for self-development initiatives in their traditional areas. Prominently,

traditional festivals are being used all over Nigeria as platforms to plan and advocate for development projects and programmes. These festivals bring together decentralize departments of the local authorities, NGOs, politicians and relevant organizations where communities' views on relevant development issues are made bare for consideration. The efforts to use traditional festivals as platforms for development still leave much to desire, traditional festivals are still breeding grounds for chieftaincy disputes and political talks. Thus the need to consider using traditional festivals in participatory forms of engaging with all stakeholders devoid of political ambitions and chieftaincy disputes.

2.3 Brief History of Ogoriland

The people of Ogori have their ancestral home in Ogori city which is in Ogori/magongo local government area of Kogi State, Nigeria. Ogori has six wards that form the total population which are Udo, Utubulu, Okibo, Oshobane, Eni, Adubane. Ogori and Magongo are the only two communities that speak and understand their language called 'Oko' and each of these wards is made up of clans. Other wards were created in 1940's as an outcome of population growth and development. These are Udoba, Ileteju, Aiyetoro, Ekema (Aiyeromi), Akpafa quarters. Osiako emphasized that the people of Ogori practised solely the traditional religion prior to the existence of external religion such as Islam and Christianity (Osiako, 2003).

Apart from specific sacrificial items required in the ritual worship of these gods, certain taboos are observed and a violation of any of these carries grave consequences such as death. Osiako's position enables us to reconcile that the Ogori people have a vibrant tradition, dynamic to changes, yet retaining uniqueness, one of such is the Ovia Osese. It is a cultural festival that is celebrated annually for the promotion of virginity and

womanhood. For the parents of any female child that attains chastity, it is always a thing of joy and a perfect example of good upbringing.

The Ovia Osese, though specifically a celebration of womanhood, stands as a communal celebration and strength to recollection of people's identity. It can be emphasized that Ogori provides a sacred space for the performance of the Ovia Osese festival. The performance not only aggregates as embracing of the performative dance, music, drama, narrative, mime but it is also a reinforcement of traditional ethos. Allen (2002) reveals that recent times, festivals and events have been viewed by various scholars as having a range of impacts on their host community, and they in most cases are divided into economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political impacts.

2.4 The Performance of Ovia Osese Festival

The Ovia Osese is celebrated yearly for a period of one week. This celebration is observed as shown below

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Health service	Health service	Marathon/ Mountaineering	Senior Citizen Jogging	Carnival Performance	Grand Finale	Thanksgiving at various places of worship
Ivia Rehearsal	Local Games	OKO language	Quiz and Debate			
Prayer	Camp Fire	Food Cooking	Talent Hunt	Mr & Miss		

The performance of Ovia Osese festival can be structured into three movements:

2.4.1 *Movement One: Iviasi*

The main performance characters involved in this movement are Iyodina (Chief and Head of Female gender in Ogori), her council of female chiefs and opinion leaders, and Asigiri (Ivia-Isiya/oracle). Iyodina by her position is the head of a formal school (usually situated in her house) for training young maidens. Parents on behalf of their children apply to this school for admission to undergo Ovia Osese ritual process. Iyodina and her council of chiefs consider each application before applicants are either offered or denied admission. Every applicant must be an indigene of Ogori either through paternal or maternal parentage. A key factor in the screening process for eligibility for admission into the Maiden School is the consultation with Ivia-Isiya. The services of Asigiri, the diviner, is engaged to consult oracle (Ivia-Isiya) to determine the following on each candidate:

- Peep into the destiny of each candidate and reveal what the future holds for her. This process offers opportunity for corrective alteration where critical obstacles are identified standing between a candidate and blissful existence.
- To affirm the sexual virtue of each candidate. Anyone not found intact as a virgin is not only disqualified but also punished either by death or banishment from the land. The effect of this negative discovery is not only a reflection of the immoral configuration of the candidate but also a heap of social stigma on her family. Other candidates that passed the Ivia-Isiya test are consequently admitted into the Maiden School, and their parents are expectedly extremely happy, especially their mothers.

It is only after this Ivia-Isiya Virgo Intacta test that Iyaodina enrols the successful candidates into the school.

However, the possibility that some maidens failed the tests in the past and faced either death or banishment is very remote as most of the accounts on Ovia are silent on this. It could be inferred therefore that generally, almost everyone that applies passed the test with very slim exceptions, which further suggests high student enrolment every year being a communal performance experience.

2.4.2 *Movement Two: Opa-Obubwe*

This is the camping and training period for the enrolled maidens in the school located in *Iyaodina's* compound. The training period spans three *Ukpe* festivals which Akerejola (1973:31) says is "the beginning of Ogori calendar year"; that is three years, as earlier mentioned. The *Iyaodina*, her chiefs and any other appointed persons commence the training of the maidens into well-groomed educated women/adults. The training syllabus covers philosophy, vocational knowledge, special career interests like medicine, creative arts, etc. matrimony and love ethics, home economics and management, child care and motherhood.

The grooming period is completed with the making and application of indigenous cosmetics for beautification. These generally include *Iburu* (camwood) and *Ikokori* (ink for body tattooing: the face, shoulders, stomach and back of an Ovia). Other beautification processes and items include the reshaping of the maiden's teeth, the use of the nickel bangles made of ivory and beads (Odolo, Ebele and Isu beads). The *Odolo* beads are arranged in wide layers around the loins of the maiden as cover (pants), this appears to be the only form of costume accessories worn at the time; the *Ebele* and *Isu* are used to

decorate the Ovia's hair styled into *Ogogorogo* type. Actually, the last three months of the training period were devoted to grooming the maiden for her role in life as a woman, a wife and a mother (Sofola, 1987:29). It must be added that the training and ritual process of Ovia Osese does not include circumcision or incision. There is no form of virginal mutilation involved.

2.4.3 Movement Three: *Oke*

Activities that would culminate in the passing out of the graduates are mostly concentrated upon at this stage. These include the teaching of music (lyrics, songs and instrumentation) in which the history, philosophy and worldview of Ogori people are encoded. Also emphasised are dance steps and their meanings, chants and poetry of the community that elevate womanhood. It is from this repertoire that songs, chants and dances are selected for the grand finale (Oke). This stage also witnesses series of assignments and tests to evaluate how much the maidens have learnt from the Ovia training programme; *Iyaodina* also dishes out last minute instructions regarding the entire programme and post-Ovia moral bearing of the candidates; then a technical and dress rehearsal takes place a night to the festival proper. This takes place at *Oyara* (arena), the venue designated for the festival. It is here that all the maidens arrive and engage in ritual dance of transition from adolescence to womanhood in innocence and purity on the d-day. Sofola (1987:30) captures this ritual highpoint this way:

> The maidens, in those days, processed semi-nude to display health, beauty of pure womanhood, their adornment in beads, delicate body tattooing, and enhanced skin tone with camwood. Their coiffeur was said to be exquisite. Proud parents and relatives would flutter in utter delight and joy as festivities mounted from the eve of the graduation day to the day after passing-out ceremonies.

On a general note, the following conceptual changes have occurred in Ovia Osese in order to adapt to modernism. Age qualification for participation originally put at

between 14 and 17 scarcely has any limitation anymore as girls of nine and ladies of 21 are now admitted to participate; the role of *Asigiri* and *Ivia-Isiya* has been eroded and replaced with fasting and prayers (the Virgo Intacta of participants is now questionable).

The compulsion of personal participatory presence has been relaxed to accommodate participation by proxy (only names and personal data are required for this purpose); training period gradually reduced from three years to three months and now three days with concentration on songs and dance steps mainly for the Oke at Oyara (no more dress and technical rehearsals), *Oyara* (arena) is also now restricted to the Town Hall instead of an open arena, thereby constricting the flamboyance and free expressiveness of African performance idiom; the singing and dancing procession of old women from one Ovia's house to the other is now organized according to age groups of mothers (only members of such groups are visited); celebration once handled by local musicians with indigenous instrument is now thrown wide open to incorporate foreign musicians with hi-tech equipment.

Locally brewed drinks are now overshadowed by modern drinks thanksgiving services on Sunday and on Friday for the Christian and Muslim Ovias respectively are now organized after the festival (this has also been turned into avenue of generating money for the places of worship); what was essentially a communal affair now attracts gate takings from audience participants and spectators alike; certificates of participation are also now issued in place of self-moral identity.

2.4.4 Dance Performance Design

The major point of structural and aesthetic reconstruction to note here is the introduction of Ivia Egben (maidens' children). These are little girls of about seven to ten

years old. They usually perform first the ritual dance of chastity at the centre of the arena before the real maidens. This is probably reconstructed to capture the core essence of the event (chastity) which many of the maidens may have lost. After the Ivia Egben cleansing rite, the maidens now file out to perform the same ritual dance with more vigour and colour. It is a circular dance that emphasizes feminity, grace and elegance. The dance entertainment performance of the Kogi State Council for Arts and Culture is also a modern inclusion to serve as a teaser to the main performance. It has no bearing with Ovia Osese, but essentially introduced to charge the festive environment.

2.4.5 Costume, Accessories and Make-up

These are areas Ovia Osese has witnessed dynamic transformations and aesthetic reconstruction. Before now, beads as costume accessories are used to cover the genital parts while the maidens' trunks are left bare. Now they make use of exotic fabrics as costume. Costuming has moved from semi-nudity to vital concealment. Ogori traditional attires like *Esa owuwo* (hand-woven special type of *Aso oke*) are now donned full length from the bust line down beyond the knees, with modern shoes, bags and jewelries to match. Significant emphasis is still placed on coral beads. Apart from the initial *Odolo, Isu* and *Ebele* beads, new forms have been introduced to complement the limited presence of these old types. Some of the new types include *Egueyin Egbolo, Asasa and Ofun*. It is possible to conceive the present concealment of female physiognomy as an acceptance of pre-modern deficiencies in culture, but the change is more of cultural reaction to other cultures and widely accepted norms of feminine decency rather than primitiveness.

Make-up has also assumed new dimension. Weaving of the traditional *Ogogorogo* hairstyle has largely been replaced with palming, jerry curls, fixing of weave on, etc. Body

toning with camwood and other traditional make-up for body adornment and decoration have been somewhat abandoned for modern cosmetics to enhance their beauty and physical attributes. Only the *Ivia Egben* (maidens' children) that now richly adorn *Iburu* (camwood), *Opereto* and the three original beads. Clothing in the festival has also assumed competitive dimension as parents see this as an opportunity for wealth display.

2.4.6 Music and Songs

Music and songs sustain the general performance design of this festival. The ritual import of these is located in the key and sole musical instrument called *Okitoroko*. Played only by women on this occasion, it accompanies the entrance song of the maidens into the performance arena and ceases to accompany other maiden (Ovia) songs to be rendered here. No other instrument is also played. It seems to be a metaphorical statement on having the event with just God's given natural attributes – the human body in its pure state. *Oke eguru* (Oke songs) are the Ovia Osese songs that actually symbolise the successful completion of the initiation rites into womanhood. According to Akerejola (1973:33),"the songs are all pregnant with meaning which are very historical, depicting various stages of development". One of such songs recorded by Sofola (1987:33) reads:

(ii) We have come of age,
We have come of age,
Let all, let all our age-mates,
Get their maiden bodies dressed,
We have come of age.

Put on the black 'IKOKORI' stripes
Put on the red 'IBURU' powder,
Put on, round the waist,
Your "EBELE' of pride because,
We have come of age.

Can't you hear the 'EWERE RO'
Chanting the praises of our ancestors?

Can't you see mother and father,
Leading the 'IVIA EGBEN' and others,
All hurrying towards 'OYARA' with gladdened
hearts?

Can't you see and feel the rising breeze,
Of the great 'OMONEYEN' and the 'AGADA' hills,
Give their utmost and everlasting support?
Our for-fathers are all awake to the 'OKE'
For we have come of age.

This song essentially manifests the essence of the festival while stating the ritual accessories involved in the performance. Some of the obvious characteristics of Ovia-Osese songs are that the songs most times end with "e" ("aye", "eeee", "eh") sound and also often patterned into overlapping call-and-response style, with very short lines. This format makes audience participation in the performance very effective as the songs come in very short sequences. The following songs are offered as examples:

(iii) Call: Ibuse po pa
Response: eh eh eh

Call: Etaga welo
Response: eh eh eh

Call: Ibuse ma ka na no
Response: eh eh eh

Call: Eh eh eh eh eh.

Translation

Call: Wayward girls are forbidden to come along
Response: Eh eh eh

Call: Forget your cosmetics
Response: Eh eh eh

Call: Wayward girls are forbidden to come with us
Response: Eh eh eh

Call: Eh eh eh eh eh.

(iv) Lead: Ayi busu kase asase ro
Ayegbaminaye aye ye ro
E rimomi ki busu ko Ogido we owe
E rimomi keta ko Ogido we owe
Obisina obiso kpin kpin ro
Obisina obiso te erege eminosema

Chorus: Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee 2x

Lead: Aye damina damina damina yamina yamina
Aye damina damina damina gboina gboina
Ireku oyanu bale mowe
Ekumo ya mue, ekumo yanue ekumodede

Chorus: Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee 2x

Lead: Oposuda se mosogbaee

Chorus: Osemoso gbaee

Lead: Oposuda se mosogba fa

Chorus: Osemoso gbafa

Lead: Awigi loye roye

Chorus: Awa mo note lofele

Lead: Awa mo note lote

Chorus: Awigi loye roye ro

Lead: Ona mopa mide

Chorus: Ona me lomide

Lead: Asukuru re mi re

Chorus: Aso gbodo re mi remi

Lead: Egberuwa me joke

Chorus: Ogberuwa me joke

Lead: Osibu soke se ma

Chorus: Osibu so gbafa

Lead: Ewuru udi ewure

Chorus: Ewuru asa ewure

Translation

Lead: Mother went in search of ornament
In order to rescue us
Got stuck at Ogido river
She could not cross Ogido river
Kindly release her, goddess of the river
Show kindness so that we can celebrate.

Chorus: Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee 2x

Lead: She wandered and wandered
She wandered and wandered
Her mission was to trade and not to steal
This is the earnest plea of a motherless child

Chorus: Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee 2x

Lead: Elders intervene to rescue me

Chorus: Come to my rescue

Lead: Wise ones, please help me

Chorus: Please help me

Lead: Offer me a tuber of yam each

Chorus: Donate a pot each

Lead: Offer me a pot each

Chorus: Give me a tuber of yam each

Lead: Include food stuff

Chorus: Include ingredients

Lead: May the royal staff of the chiefs

Chorus: And the heads of elders accompany me

Lead: I am glad I can celebrate

Chorus: I am excited that I can at last celebrate

Lead: God be with all maidens

Chorus: God bless us all

Lead: May it be well with us all

Chorus: May it be better for us all.

Song (iii) is a satirical piece directed at the girls who were not found worthy to participate in the Ovia Osese on account of moral and social recklessness. It therefore raises general consciousness on the need for moral decency in order to avoid such public ridicule. We apprehend a narrative song in the story, which emphasizes the bond between mother and daughter; the sacrifices parents make to define a worthy path of livelihood for their children; and of course the plight of an orphan. The performance of the song itself is emotion-driven and *Oyara* often goes quite as those who understand the language are compelled to reflect on its strong message.

Music being an embodiment of universal language, even non indegens of Ogori are equally gripped by its moving solemn tide. The maidens usually join hands in a wide circular formation to sing this song, which also symbolically suggests that both the poor and the rich need one another to pull through the challenges of existence. It should be stated also that new songs are composed annually and added to the collection of Ovia Osese songs. Expectedly, most of these new songs yield to the influence of church or

Islamic melodies while also embodying religious constructs as if seeking performance validation from these religious bodies. Consider these two examples below:

(v) Oboro itie, oboro itie
Ogbona ami ma m'esu deji
Oboro itie.

Translation
Goodness is my portion
Since I don't transact business with Satan
Goodness is my portion.

(vi) Ekena Iduma sie nemo
Ena maka gan ye baa?
Ekwintee
Eeee.

Translation
What the Lord has done
With what shall I thank Him?
Except to kneel.

Some of the other musical instruments used during Ovia Osese performance include *Osa* (rattle gourd often played with both hands), *Opagigigi* (gourds filled with little pebbles), *Ogenge* (metal gong). They are played during the festivities and not for the core Ovia Osese performance. They are used for instance to accompany the opening glee of Ogori Women Association, the hunters dance and sometimes the *Ivia Egben*'s dance before the core ritual dance. Only *Okitoroko* has ritual significance in the ritual dance.

2.5 Concept of Community

The concept of community is central to a discussion of community festivals and their social impact. Given the several decades over which the term 'community' has been subject to research, definition and debate, it is not surprising that there is no one single definition of it. Crow & Allan *et al*., (1994) however, identify as:

1) Geographic location

2) Social interaction

3) Common ties

Geographic location represents the first characteristic of community, referring to a "cluster of people living within a specific geographic area" (Poplin, 1979: 9). Members of a community can be viewed as a group of people with something in common, with that commonality being explained in geographic terms (Willmott, 1986). A second defining characteristic of community is that it consists of a number of people interacting with one another (Poplin, 1979). Such interaction is typically structured around a set of common interests held by members of the community (Willmott, 1986; Taylor, 2003). Common interests can include religion or cultural heritage, occupation, leisure pursuits or any common experiences or interests that draw members of a community together, thus forming the basis for social relationships and interactions between members of a community. Further, beyond the geographic location and social interactions, a third defining characteristic is that a community represents a set of common ties or bonds between people (Poplin, 1979).

Common ties are those aspects of a community, such as shared goals, values or norms, through which people can identify with each other and their community (Willmott, 1986; Taylor, 2003). In identifying with their community through these common ties or bonds, community members can gain a sense of identity and a feeling of security and belonging.

Butcher (1993) also outlines three meanings of the concept of community which although distinct, are each interrelated. He defines these as the 'descriptive', 'value', and 'active' meanings of community. The first context of community proposed by Butcher

(1993) is the descriptive community, which depicts community as a group of people who have something in common. This commonality between people can be either geographic or interest-related. Butcher's descriptive meaning of community is similar to the elements of geographic location and social interaction outlined above as two characteristics featuring in a majority of community definitions. Thus Butcher's (1993) descriptive meaning of community highlights a community as a place in which people come together because they have a geographic proximity and/or share common interests which encourage social interaction.

Secondly, Butcher (1993) proposes a meaning of community as 'value', recognizing that solidarity, participation and coherence are three intrinsic values of communities. Solidarity refers to the emotional relationships that exist between community members. Participation refers to shared activities of community members that help realize common goals and aspirations. Coherence refers to the adoption of a set of meanings and values by individual members of the community that contribute some overall sense of their world. This 'value' sense of community builds on the social interaction and common ties aspects of community, as discussed previously. This conceptualization of community as 'value' suggests what it is that community represents to its members, that is, a place where people share similar values.

The third meaning of community outlined by Butcher (1993) is the idea of 'active community'. An active community is represented by collective action undertaken by groups of people with either a geographic or interest-related commonality, which embraces one or more of the community values of solidarity, participation or coherence. Collective action is typically undertaken by community groups, networks or organizations, working

together towards a defined goal or purpose. This meaning of an 'active' community emphasizes how people behave and act in relation to their common interests and shared values.

Concept of community is relevant to community festivals for a number of reasons. First, a community festival is bound by the geographic location in which it takes place, i.e. within a specific community. Second, not only does the community host the festival in a geographic sense, but its members, the host population, "organise the event, support it through volunteer labour, and attend it as a community celebration" (Getz, 1995, p. 129). This represents an 'active community' that comes together around shared interests and values to realise a common goal of organizing and staging a festival in their community. Third, by hosting the festival in their community, members of the local population must cope with the potential impacts of the festival, both positive and negative. When a community comes together to undertake collective action, such as for the purpose of staging a community festival, positive outcomes for the community can be realized.

Community festivals, through their provision of entertainment and socialization opportunities, enable individuals and groups to participate in the community and with each other through volunteering, taking part in leisure activities and strengthening social networks, which help in achieving wellbeing outcomes for the community. Additionally, community festivals have the potential to encourage the development of social capital within a community.

2.6 Community Development

For community development to occur, people in a community must believe working together can make a difference and organise to address their shared needs collectively

(Flora, Flora, Spears, and Swanson 1992). Community development is a group of people in a community reaching a decision to initiate a social action process to change their economic, social, cultural and environmental situation (Christenson and Robinson, 1989). Community development is a process that increases choices. It creates an environment where people can exercise their full potential to lead productive, creative lives. Community development is a process where people are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities and communities are integrated into the life of the nation enabling them to contribute fully to national progress (United Nations, from Biggs,1999).

Sanders (1958) saw community development as a process moving from stage to stage; a method of working towards a goal; a program of procedures and as a movement sweeping people up in emotion and belief. Regardless of the definition, community development is not just "growth". Growth means more jobs and more investment but implies "more of the same". It does not necessarily increase choices, networks or ability to manage change. Development can also sometimes mean "less", fewer people in a community, or the loss of a manufacturing plant for example could improve the circumstances of what people value in the community. Development can occur without growth and growth can occur without development.

Community development often is associated with terms such as community capacity building, community vitality, empowerment, rural development or self-reliance. The basic elements of collective action, ownership and improved circumstances are common to all these ideas. There may be slight differences in emphasis. For example, while community capacity building focuses on enhancing the assets and abilities of the

community, the term is essentially synonymous with community development. The debate increases over the distinction between community development and economic development.

Economic development is part of community development. Local industry development involves facilitation of relatively small groups of industry people addressing specific issues, such as discussion groups or market alliances. This is part of economic development. Economic development involves many of the elements of community development, such as participation, rethinking, action learning etc. However, it specifically aims to improve the relative economic position of the community. Flora *et al*., (1992) argues that it does not necessarily lead to improved quality of life nor involve "collective agency". Economic development largely aims to improve employment, income and the economic base of the community.

Community development fundamentally relies on creating new options by reconsidering issues and problems with new assumptions. For example, if you think of "export" from the community as the physical transfer of cattle, wheat or other products in return for money, only a few options for building exports appear, such as improved commodity prices. However, if you think of "export" as activities that *bring money into a community* a new range of alternatives become available such as tourism, education, government, and transport stops as export activities. Development plans can be put in place to bolster these export activities. For example, a well inclusive packaged activity for Ovia Osese festivals can draw visitors. Community festivals, government employees, and educational institutions are all export "industries" because they bring money into communities.

Community development is a process that leads to not only more jobs, income and infrastructure, but also communities that are better able to manage change. Community members can better mobilise existing skills, reframe problems, work cooperatively and use community assets in new ways. Principles of self-help and participation guide a flexible process. While there is no recipe, major steps are identifying existing concerns, engagement, self-examination, exploration, prioritisation, planning and action.

2.7 Benefits of Festivals to Community Development

In order to comprehend the essence of development from the standpoint of festival, it is important to highlight few areas that festival has facilitated development in the community. Generally, festivals are organized in order to answer the specific needs of a community and at the same time to offer entertainment. This presents the different dimensions of festival, which are the economic, social and environmental and political aspect.

Fredline (2000) notes that, festival stimulates the local economy showcases the region to the world, promoting potential future tourism and business activity. There is other important positive impact often associated with the staging of events, many of which may directly benefit the local population. Getz et al (1997), agree that, these include the development of facilities and infrastructure, entertainment and social opportunities, and a sense of pride and identity brought about by playing host to a major event. The benefits attached to festival have created a platform for event organizers and destination marketers who now use historical and cultural themes to develop annual calendars of events to attract visitors and create cultural images in the host destinations by holding festival in community settings.

Events provide an opportunity for local communities to develop and share their culture. This creates a sense of value and a belief (by individuals) in the community; it also provides opportunities to exchange experiences and information. It enables visitors to interact with the host community and help people to enjoy and meet their leisure needs. However, festival constitutes one of the most exciting and fastest growing forms of business. Hall (1992:10) suggests that, the ability of festival is perceived to attract economic benefits often provide the official justification for hosting events. Economic analysis of festival provides reasons as to why events are held and the effects that they have on a region.

The hosting of a festival creates the potential for a number of social impact on a host community. Social impact on a host community are those that affect day – to - day quality of life and bring changes to lifestyle, values, social interactions and identity (Glasson, Godfrey, & Goodey, 1995; Hall, 2003). Opportunities for interactions with others, entertainment and leisure activities, and an increased sense of identity and pride are all potential outcomes of a festival that may be perceived positively by locals. Festival organisers aim to foster these expectations by advertising the potential benefits that a festival can bring.

Shone and Parry (2005) argue that festivals have the social implications of improving social ties and providing an opportunity for the community to demonstrate that it can pull together (people) for a greater good. The role of festival in encouraging social interaction and celebrating happy occasions is probably more important in the society which, as a result feels a greater need to maintain social contact. Events provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy and experience local illumination and culture. Events

also provide support to those who pursue economic opportunities related to sharing community culture with the broader world.

Getz (1991) sees events tourism as a segment of tourism that conceives festivals and events as tools for destination development and image building, and as an attraction for tourists. Indeed, many small communities seeking to gain benefits from tourism are choosing to do so through the hosting of a community festival (Delamere & Hinch, 1994; Higham & Ritchie, 2001). This suggests a view of events from a tourism perspective in which events represent one type of tourist attraction within a destination that can attract increased visitation (Getz, 1989, 1997; Goldblatt, 2000). When purposefully staged at an otherwise quiet time of year, an event can help to extend a destination's tourist season (Goldblatt, 2000; Allen, O'Toole, McDonnell, & Harris, 2005). Media attention on the event can further assist in promoting the destination and encouraging future visitation (Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules, & Ali, 2003; Allen et al., 2005). However, community festivals can provide more than these tourism benefits. They can also strengthen the social fabric of the communities in which they take place.

The political implication of festival is another area that has contributed immensely to events impact on the host community (Shone and Parry, 2005). The effects of festival could be important to political elites and event organizers. Politicians tend to attract major event to their city or region so as to boost their political status and gain the benefits of being associated with useful civic activities and positive special events.

There is copious evidence in literature on the benefits of cultural tourism festivals to destinations. It is reported that festivals contribute to the local regeneration and prosperity of the destination. This is because it generates new employment opportunities (Prentice and

Andersen, 2003; Smith, 2004). It encourages the development of a kind of infrastructure which is visitor friendly and sustainable. Bachleitner and Zins (1992) assert that festival tourism enhances residents learning, awareness appreciation of community pride, ethnic identity, tolerance of others and brings about the opening of small and medium sized family enterprises. It is also believed that cultural events foster cross-cultural communication that can promote understanding between the host and the guest (Sdrali and Chazapi, 2007). A region can make a name for itself and establish its competitive position among country or nations through tourism (Smith, 2004).

2.8 Review of Studies on Festivals

Festivals are celebrations of important events in every human society which bring together people from all walks of life. Akintan (2013) in his paper entitled "Traditional Religious Festivals and Modernity: A Case Study of Female-Oriented Cults Annual Festivals in Ijebuland of South Western Nigeria" argues that despite the incursion of foreign religions, science and technology, there are still some adherents who through persistence and resilience have to continue till today the celebration of traditional festivals.

In Ijebuland, traditional festivals are observed by the adherents of the traditional religion to mark important social and cultural events in the lives of the people and these are culminated in series of performances, entertainments, rites and rituals. Through these festivals, the values and beliefs of the people are demonstrated; they give meaning to the social, political and religious life of the people celebrating them. They are vital mainsprings in the traditional education and the remit of the people's culture.

However, generally speaking, some festivals are no longer celebrated to bring out the values in them. It is obvious that the practice of traditional religion is declining rapidly

particularly in the area of worship and cultic activities. There is a preponderance of female oriented cults in Ijebuland in which women occupy important and significant positions. During various cultic activities and celebration, women participate fully, and at times, they are the sole officiates. Although some of these festivals are no longer celebrated with all pomp and pageantry in Ijebuland, like in other places; there is still persistence in the observances of some certain festivals in spite of social change brought about by the foreign religions and modernity.

Various types of festivals and events have long existed as a significant part of human society and were devised as forms of public display, civic ritual and collective celebration. In fact, people in all cultures have recognized the need to set aside certain amount of time and space for communal creativity and celebration (Quinn, 2009). Sonja Oklobdžija (2015) in his paper entitled 'The Role and Importance of Social Media in Promoting Music Festivals' argued that traditional media is losing the battle for the leading marketing platform, while the Internet marketing communication is becoming more advanced each and every day. He noted that music festivals are the global phenomenon which is gaining considerable importance through the event tourism industry and thus the need to promote it through social media.

The possibilities of online marketing are countless, from creating a website as the virtual office of every product that needs to be advertised, through search engine optimization in order to attract as many visitors as possible to the website, to all the different social networks available. Still, the most important fact is that it can be even completely free – the only investments required are marketer's time and creativity.

In a study conducted to investigate the relationship between tourists' overall satisfaction and cultural festival attributes by Bassey Benjamin Esu and Vivian Mbaze-Ebock Arrey (2009), the Calabar carnival festival was used as a case study. A Sample of 500 spectators was used for the study. Nine festivals attributes (organisation, promotion, facilities, shopping, facilitates, refreshment, food, infrastructure, environmental ambience and safety and security) were investigated out of which four showed significant relationship with overall satisfaction. Demographic variables revealed little or no dependence difference on overall satisfaction. No significance difference was found on the perception of cluster membership based on demographic variables. Only few behavioral variables show significant differences in perception of cluster member's. In this study, four festival attributes were found to be explanatory of the level of satisfaction (event organisation, promotion, facilities, and friendly locals). When these variables are factored into the development and marketing of festivals, it would go a long way in improving the tourists' satisfaction of event attendees.

Solmaz Filiz Karabağ, Mehmet Cihan Yavuz and Christian Berggren worked on 'the impact of festivals on city promotion: a comparative study of Turkish and Swedish festivals'. The paper examines how festivals, in particular, affect the promotion and communication of a city in different market levels. A survey instrument was used to gather data from festival managers in İzmir, Turkey, in April 2009; and Göteborg, Sweden, in April 2009. The main findings indicate that managers perceive their festivals as creating community cohesiveness and strong communication among the current residents. However, they view the impact of the festivals on the promotion of the city within its country or in the international tourism market as limited. This study ultimately suggests that the festivals

of İzmir are less efficient in promoting the city and that Göteborg festivals work to promote the city in Sweden and in the larger regions of Scandinavia.

Abioye (2017) reviewed a paper entitled 'Issues and Themes in Traditional Festivals as Agents of Social Mobilization: A Look at Egungun and Oro Festivals. The paper adopts Social Mobilization theory as theoretical framework to illustrate the importance of value change, which can lead to the development of the community. It identified the challenges facing traditional festivals in realizing its roles of social mobilization. It was noted that Egungun festival in South West Nigeria is prone to hijack by the political elites who use them to cause havoc in the society. Some masquerades have turned themselves into political thugs carrying dangerous weapons to victimize members of the society. He concludes that, traditional festival if properly harnessed would remain an important agent of social mobilization. In spite of the challenges, the 'Egungun' festival and 'Oro' traditional festivals are important social mobilization platforms in South West Nigeria. He recommends total overhauling of the festivals to meet the desired goal it intends to achieve where miscreants and hoodlums will not play prominent roles during the festival and involvement of corporate organizations in financing traditional festivals could bring some sanity and attraction into it, thereby turning it into cultural and tourist attraction.

Cultural tourism have been identified as one area that Africa and Nigeria in particular can take advantage of her rich and diverse culture, one aspect of the Nigerian culture that have survived and could serve the purpose of cultural tourism are various unique festivals. There are various rich, colorful and exciting festivals across the regions in Nigeria but the Ogun festival in Ondo, South Western region of Nigeria is one festival that

has survived through the years and is still celebrated annually almost in its original state. Therefore, Opare (2014) made an attempt in his thesis to carry out structural and functional analysis of Ogun Festival in Ondo. The scope of the study covers the description of the cosmology and religious beliefs of the Ondo people. A sociological analysis of manifest and latent functions of the festival both as a trado-religious festival and a cultural tourism product was also examined. The study covers the preparation for the festival; the different stages of the ceremony as it is practised in Ondo and the findings showed that people believed in the existence of this traditional god, and that the festival is growing into a vital force and rallying point for the Ondo people.

Festivals have always had social and cultural significance and their origins can be traced back to ancient rituals celebrating spiritual or communal identity, often combined with excess and with subversion of accepted norms (Gold 2005; Friedrich 2000; Segal 2009). The key forces for change have been 'festivalisation' and new thinking on the part of policy-makers in relation to the instrumental role festivals can play in delivering economic and social policy agendas. Attala, Jennifer (2012:35) in her PhD thesis entitled 'Performing the Festival - a study of the Edinburgh International Festival in the twenty-first century' made this assertion which the Researcher also subscribe to as follows:

> The role of festivals has become recast with greater emphasis on more professionalised delivery and adherence to public policy agendas, the findings of this research suggest that many of the changes recently adopted can be viewed as positive and advantageous for festival organisations and audiences.

Festivals have always had social and cultural significance and their origins can be traced back to ancient rituals celebrating spiritual or communal identity, often combined with excess and with subversion of accepted norms (Gold 2005; Friedrich 2000; Segal 2009). In the long history of festivals, the roles they have played have evolved from antique

celebrations into major events to which a variety of economic and political expectations are attached (Austissier 2009).

Grace Lawrence-Hart (2014), in her paper review 'Festivals: Catalyst for Peace in Nigeria' noted myriad of conflict ranging from sectarian, youth restiveness; ethnic variance etc threatening Nigeria existence as a nation. She noted that festivals could serve as a unifying activity to curtail these challenges based on the fact that festivals observance brings about social and moral control as well as entertainment. It also attracts visitors to a place and also affects the economy, conserve culture and rejuvenate traditions. The work x-ray the ethnological and phenomenological review of selected festivals in Nigeria and its gain in fostering unity and peaceful co-existence among the people, with the aid of available documents on Nigerian festivals. She thus submitted that if festive activities are organized regularly, it will go a long way in creating a platform for peaceful co-existence in the nation. Reason being that Nigeria as a nation is multi-cultural with different tribes and tongues and multi-religious, hence, needs a platform for effective and meaningful intercultural communication and understanding.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Asmah (2009) accepts the submission that theories, are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical assumptions. By this submission, theoretical framework constitutes a structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. For this study, social mobilization theory is used.

2.9.1 Social Mobilization Theory

Social mobilization theory is an interdisciplinary study within the social sciences that generally seeks to explain why social mobilization occurs, the forms under which it manifests, as well as potential social, cultural, and political consequences. It was propounded by K.W. Deutsch in 1953. Deutsch (1953) contends that communication plays a major role in molding divergent peoples into a modern nation-state; conversely, groups disunite because of a communicative rupture. Communication reinforces other factors which also create national consciousness (such as race, culture, geography, fear of common enemies). Deutsch comments that communication only influences a particular segment of the population: the mobilized citizenry.

According to Deutsch, social mobilization is the name given to an overall process of change which happens to substantial parts of the population in countries which are moving from tradition. The workings of this process are described by Deutsch (1961) as "major clusters old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded and broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior. Citizens engaged in this process are the mobilized population and become the nucleus for a modern nation-state. It is something that happens to large numbers of people in areas which undergo modernization, i.e., where advanced, non-traditional practices in culture, technology and economic life are introduced and accepted on a considerable scale.

This study examines how Ovia Osese festivals can be used as agents of social mobilization in a positive way to achieve sustainable development. This festival can be used to disseminate information to the people while entertaining them at once. It is necessary to note that the modernization of the society is not an excuse for traditional

activities and ways of life to go into extinction. Those in charge of age long traditional African festivals can restructure them and other tradition related activities in a way that it will achieve the needed purpose without affecting the peaceful fabric of the average Nigerian society to modern ways of life.

Social mobilization has been described as the pooling together of potential resources for the purpose of development (Moemeka, 2012). Socialization leads to development. Some of the indices for development include the following: - Education (schools – nursery, primary, secondary, tertiary, professional) - Training (becoming tradesmen and women) - Health (excellent hospitals, health centers, dispensaries, etc.) - Employment opportunities (including manufacturing) - Respect for law and order. Courts that are independent and can deliver fair/true judgments. - Responsible government that is close to and cares for the people - Modern infrastructure – light, water, good roads and so on. - Agriculture – modern agricultural practices leading to abundant and inexpensive food. - Protection of territorial integrity so that citizens can live in peace in their country.

Oso (2004) noted that social mobilization entails: "The commitment of people to certain collective goals and objectives, and to value and behavior patterns conducive to the timely attainment of those goals and objectives. As a corollary, it entails also minimizing the commitment of people of such goals, objectives, values and adopted by society" This assertion sees social mobilization as an act of getting people to participate, support and or partake in a particular course of action. Thus mobilization efforts is successful when majority of the people for whom action is intended participate in the action after due mobilization. Babalola (2004) posits that the essence of mobilization is to put together the talents in a particular community for developmental programme. It is the human resource

of a nation not its material resources that determine the nature, direction and speed of its socio-economic development.

At the centre of social mobilization is the development of man, as man is the agent, the target and the beneficiary of social mobilization. Development comes in through the creative energy of man. Therefore, mobilization should be concerned with the provision of those conditions which will facilitate the realization of man's creative potentials. Development however does not start with provision of infrastructure nor goods and services but start with people through conscientization, orientation, organization and appreciation of cultural values, norms and acceptable ways of living. Development that focuses on things at the expense of human resources is no development because a society can be poor amidst opulent material resources. Proper orientation, organization, mobilization of human resources engenders sustainable development.

Gregory (2008) remarked that festivals have many uses and values beyond their public enjoyment that are orchestrated in societal celebrations. He notes that in the pre-historic societies, festivals are known to have provided an opportunity for the elders to pass on folk knowledge and the meaning of tribal love to younger generations. The festivals of many ethnic groups are credited with the presentation of unique customs, folktales, costumes and culinary skills. This is also noticeable inferences of Ovia Osese festival. Thus, the Ogori people see Ovia Osese festival as an agent of social mobilization. That explains why Oloyede (2004) remarks that mobilization is the act of organizing somebody ready for service or action and that mobilization denotes that act of getting people ready to participate that is, to support and or partake in a particular course of action. Mobilizing

people at the community or grassroots level is always a very difficult task particularly when one proposes to use strategies or tactics used in the city where the elites reside.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This research is a qualitative one; this research solely relies on qualitative tools that were deployed by the researcher in the collation of data. The tools include observation, focus group discussion, key informant interviews, books and journals in the sole aim of information gathering.

3.1 Research Design

Daramola (1992) defines research as "any organized inquiry carried out to provide information for the solution of a problem". Osuala (2005:1) sees research as "a process of arriving at a dependable solution to problems through the planning and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data". The researcher used qualitative research instruments for this work. Qualitative research is characterized by its aspirations, which relates to understanding some aspect of the social life of the case of study; and its process which generates words rather than figures.

Qualitative methodologies helped this study understand community members experience and knowledge about Ovia Osese festival in achieving sustainable development. Using qualitative research has aided the study, for instance, to gain detailed knowledge about societal inconsistency responsible for some challenges affecting participation of community members in Ovia Osese festival.

3.2 Study Population

Okoro and Hassan (2009), define population "as the target group, which the researcher is interested in studying and which he intends to obtain information and draw conclusions". The population of Ogori community is large therefore the researcher had to focus on the targeted individuals and groups who are in the category to help the researcher provide raw data for the research. They are men, women and youth. The population was deduced from indigenes of Ogori community who owns the festival, traditional rulers, planning committee members. Also, the researcher had a focus group discussion with the indigenes of that community who were shared into groups according to age grade and genders, held interviews with the chiefs, director of local government Ogori Magongo, head of arts and culture at the local government council, as well as men and women who are sons and daughters of the land to collect data and information that would assist the research.

3.3 Sample Size/ Technique

Bello and Ajayi (2000) defined sampling as a "systematic process used to select a required portion of a target population" and this is to further aid the researcher to remain focused. It is a way of selecting a small part of a given population in order to determine the popular views of the people targeted for the research. A simple random sampling was used because it ensures that every unit in the study population area has a known and equal chance of being included in the sample while collecting data (Eboh 2009:67). In order to access the population of interest and study the festival, the purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study. The method helped the researcher to select the population whose opinions are important for the research based on their age, gender, knowledge and social status and it met the requirements of the research by answering the research questions. The

researcher worked with mainly the youth in the community because they constitute the majority of the participants as well as some elderly people in the community.

3.4 Research Instruments

The researcher used qualitative approach of research writing under which the following instruments were deployed to gather information for analysis. The instruments are;

3.4.1 Key Informant Interview (KII)

This is a qualitative in-depth interview with people who know what is going on in the community. The purpose of key informant interviews is to collect information from a wide range of people including community leaders and residents who have firsthand knowledge and information about the community under study. The researcher conducted KII with Prof. Olugbemiro Jegede (secretary to the Government of Kogi State, Ogurefa of Ogori land), Mrs Eunice Fadebimpe Obajulu, Royal highness S.K Obajulu (chief) Mr. Sunday Ajeh (Director of Local Government), Mrs Janet Soje (Chief Administrator of Ovia Osese), Mrs Oye (Mother, Indigene), Mr Gabriel (indigene) and Mr Matthew Akinye (Father, indigene) in Ogori community so as to achieve this purpose for the research.

The above listed personnel are the custodian of Ovia Osese festival in Ogori community and granting them interview provides firsthand information that were quite relevant to the set out objectives of the study. This KII also included personnel of Government whose actions have policy development which on the long run will benefit overhauling and sustenance of this festival.

3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

This is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions and ideas about a concept. Focus group discussion involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their thoughts and ideas about a given subject. The researcher had discussions with respondents categorized in different groups consisting of a medium size of 12 men, 12 women and 12youth each. This is to listen to the different opinions about Ovia Osese and development of Ogoriland.

The aim of FGD as used in this research was to build an interactive avenue within the community along social status and groups that were selected for this study. The participant groups, through the FGD were able to unravel the challenges, benefits and prospects of Ovia Osese festival in meeting the demands of present dispensation as it concerns development of Ogori community. The FGD focused on the process, importance, events, planning and execution of the festival to achieve the goal of unity and development the focus group discussion also helped to identify the roles played by each discussant in the festival and as well establish the concerns of each participant on how to embellish its progress.

3.4.3 Participant Observation

Participant observation is the process enabling researchers to learn about the activities of the people under study through observing and participating in those activities. Through participant observation, the researcher can uncover factors important for a thorough understanding of the research problem. The researcher attended the festival, observed, recorded the events, took pictures as well as interacted with participants and

community members. Documentary observation materials; this simply means any material on which information is recorded and it includes written or printed materials, photographs, audio and video tapes. These were used by the researcher in the cause of gathering information to back up the facts.

The observations provide important information for posing central questions that could be useful to understand Ovia Osese festival as a tool for enhancing community development (Mikkelsen, 2005). They were also relevant as they provided information about how Ogori people live and interact with one another, which in turn relates to the bases of social power assets with regard to defensible life space. Observing the festival provided additional information about the importance of Ovia Osese festival as a connecting factor in gender relationship, empowerment and dispute settlement among Ogori people.

3.4.4 Secondary Sources of Data

This study made use of information collected from relevant publications such as books, newspapers, magazines, journals and internet sources. The data collected from secondary sources were used to establish the background to the study, situate the research problem statement, justify the significance of the study, and explain the theoretical framework that reinforces the study. Likewise, the information gathered from the secondary sources was also used to review related literatures in the study with authors cited duly acknowledged in the reference page.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The method of analysis is analytical and descriptive. By analytical, it means use of content analysis. Content analysis according to Julien (2008) is the intellectual process of

categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities or conceptual categories to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes. It is commonly used for analyzing a wide range of textual data including interviews, transcript of focused group discussion, informal and formal interviews, observations, responses to research questions. Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and recorded observation were analyzed based on their response to the demands of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the observation and findings generated from the field. Its interpretation and analysis are based on the objectives of the study. This study was carried out in Ogori Magongo Local Government Area where Ogori community is based which celebrates Ovia Osese festival annually. The presentation includes Ovia Osese Festival's Significance and Contribution to the Community, its activities and overview,, To address the research objectives, the researcher used the qualitative research approach under which the following instruments were deployed; Key Informant Interview (KII), Observation, Focus Group Discussion, and also journals and books were sourced.

4.1 Ovia Osese Festival's Significance and Contribution to the Community

Over the years, Ovia Osese festival is seen as the main culture and tradition of Ogoriland; this is because the people of Ogori community take the festival very serious although there are other festivals in Ogori like yam festival etc. Ovia Osese is unique in its kind because it gathers variety of people, young and old, rich and poor, politicians and business men alike. In fact, Ogori people in diaspora come together to celebrate this festival hence fostering unity in the community. Also, the festival promotes and preserves the cultural heritage of Ogori community because it brought check and balances on the girls in the community thereby promoting moral values in the society.

Ovia Osese is embraced by the people of Ogori because it instills moral self-discipline and responsibility to preserve and protect chastity and purity among the female population. The act of being nurtured in home management and health

care has made parents more responsible by consciously bringing up maidens to meet societal expectations (pogoson 2012:8).

In order to comprehend the type of development the festival has brought to Ogori community, the researcher engaged in field interrogation at Ogori community of Kogi State, through Focus Group Discussions with men, women and the youth of Ogori village. Interviews were conducted with stakeholders that include Chiefs, Director of Local Government Area in Ogoriland and mothers within the location.

As posited in the brochure of Ovia Osese festival (2011):

> Festivals are expressive ways to celebrate glorious heritage, culture and traditions. These festivals play important role to add structure to our social lives and connect us with our families and background, and the events started passing the legends knowledge, history, traditions to the next generation.

In an interview with Mrs Anuwe, a mother and also an indigene, it was revealed that:

> Ovia Osese festival is an annual festival that celebrates girls that have attained the age of womanhood. The festival is observed by the people of Ogori in appreciation to God for the stage of motherhood, the process of girls changing into mothers or womanhood (*interview with Mrs Anuwe, 8/4/2016*).

To support the above statement, Ovia Osese brochure (2011) further put emphasis on womanhood such that:

> Women are seen as homemakers therefore the need to curtail the chastity of the woman is very important in the society; the woman should be guided by the laws of tradition because she is responsible for building up a child to be a well behaved and respected identity of his culture and society. The woman has a fundamental task of humanity, if the mother does not play her role well; there will be no next generation or a generation that is worse than none at all. Therefore, the mother is responsible for protecting the child's health, education, intellect, personality, character and emotional stability, the woman is now an important instrument of social change.

The festival is usually celebrated two weeks after Easter. In the olden days, Ovia Osese festival was celebrated in a day but the influence of western civilization has transformed the festival into a seven days event including different activities to showcase the rich culture, tradition, youth potential and hospitalities of the community. It starts on

Monday and ends on Sunday when everyone is expected to go to his/her various places of worship to give thanks to God for the success of the festival. During the festival week, series of events/activities such as dance, carnival-like performances, games, beauty pageants, music, and symposium are included to make the event colorful.

The Ogori people see Ovia Osese festival as a unique culture that helps to instill moral discipline in the society. It is also seen to promote unity and peace, serves as medium for communication and a forum to discuss issues of concern that affect the wellbeing of the society. Speaking on the significance of the festival to the Ogori people, Prof Olugbemiro Jegede has this to say;

> History started about the 18th century when there was community need of celebrating womanhood, congratulating mothers for training their children, for maintaining chastity until they were married, it is actually a thing of joy and it calls for celebration, this is what led to Ovia Osese named by the community. Today there is slight modification whereas lots of activities have been inculcated into the programme to make it a one week event in order to beautify the festival. The Ivias (ladies to be initiated),undertake trainings on how to cook food, take care of the home, leadership qualities, how to play the local instrument called "Okitoroko". The idea is that as groups come and go for the training, it is passed on from generation to generation (*interview with Prof Olugbemiro Jegede, the SSG to the state government on 8/4/2016*).

The researcher was informed that in time past, if a girl is not initiated into womanhood, she cannot be given into marriage and if she becomes pregnant before the festival, she brings shame to the family because the act of getting pregnant before the initiation is a taboo in Ogori culture.

Today, some of the above issues have been removed as a result of modernization. Consequently, some of the rules are either removed or relaxed, for example maidens no longer consult the oracles to prove their chastity before taking part in Ovia Osese, they no longer dance semi-nude with only beads covering their essential parts rather maidens tie *Aso-Oke* (traditional attire) to cover their essential parts and bodies. To corroborate this

departure from the old tenets is the comment of Eunice Fadebimpe Obajulu as stated herewith:

> I was among the last set of Ovia Osese that dressed naked because that was strictly the tradition and culture in that century, we were naked, dressed with beads to cover our loin, cow-powder (iburu) put on our bodies, ikokori (tattoo) used to decorate our bodies. Today the naked dressing has stopped due to civilization and also for the sake of Ovia Osese cultural festival to continue (interview with Eunice Fadebimpe Obajulu, mother and an indigene 8/4/2016).

The dressing mode of the maidens that was modified by the Ogori Women Association encourages the maidens to uphold its moral values that the festival teaches them. As a result of the importance of Ovia Osese festival in the lives of Ogori people, the community had to build a civic center as an open cultural arena for the ceremony. The civic center is used to generate funds for the community development allowing well-wishers to pay gate fees in order to enter to witness the Ovia Osese festival. This apart, people also rent the civic center for occasions.

The festival also gives room for donations, as issues of development concern were brought forward and discussed during the festival, issues such as the need for transformer, provision of health care facilities and providing helps to the aged/ elderly people while appropriate action or profound solutions were suggested. The various activities or events were used as strategy to raise money through the implementation of gate fee in some of the events. In an interview with the Royal Highness S.K. Obajulu, the following information emerged;

> Donations are done in order to tackle issues concerning the community. The monies gotten from the gate fee are also used to develop the community. The youth are in charge of the gate fee monies which go for community development. (*Interview with Royal Highness S.K. Obajulu, a Chief of Ogori Community on 8th April 2015*)

Some of the donations gathered together were used to build the civic center, which is now used for the festival celebration arena; comprehensive school was equally built too.

From the point view of the researcher, Ovia Osese festival has helped the community to promote local trade and commerce, maintain peace, local artifacts, food, language, traditional wears, unity in the state and nation at large in the sense that as people gather every year to join their families to celebrate the festival, they tend to harmonize with their families. Tourists or visitors tend to learn something new from the cultural uniqueness of the festival and also gets attracted to the community's food. This finding also corroborates the statement of Felsenstein and Fleischer (2003:285):

> Local festivals are increasingly being used as instruments for promoting tourism and boosting the regional economy. This is often reflected in the level of public assistance made available to them. However, it is difficult to assess the extent of the contribution of the festival to local economic growth, and most studies do not examine this issue beyond standard multiplier impacts.

Activities of the festival are divided into seven (7) days meaning the activities start from Monday and end on Sunday. The Ogori Descendant Union (O.D.U) is responsible for the planning and organization of the yearly festival. This body (O.D.U) has branches in all states of the federation where Ogori people in Diaspora are found. The financial donations regarding the organization of the festival to make it a success are shared to the body (O.D.U) in different states. Messages regarding how the event would look like are passed to the people of Ogori in diaspora through the O.D.U. body as they create avenues of holding tribal meetings to disseminate information. The town crier passes messages to the people in the village.

The youth also participate in the activities of the festival; they hold their meetings in different states to deliberate on how to make the festival a success. The youths take part in collection of gate fee, sports, games, security aspect, usher, spectator; they make sure

that rules and regulations are obeyed by the people. Also, cultural groups from neighboring villages and states come to perform during the festival.

A day to the grand final (Friday), the maidens are taken to the camp where they are trained on how to take good care of the home, be of good behavior. They are trained by the Iyodina (head of women group), A traditional leader of woman. The men engage in games competition, this is to show that men are not sidelined in the activities of the festival. These games bring old men together and they jubilate and remember their youthfulness. This was confirmed by Mr. Sunday Ajeh in an interview that It is a way of relieving one's spirit and body of the troubles of life and also way of relaxing the body and soul especially when you have challenges.

The participating girls are involved in cooking competition, debate, beauty pageant, language speaking competition. This competition also encourages the girls to participate in the festival so that they will not be left out. The competition is a form of promoting the role of girls in the society and the transition of becoming mothers. The language speaking competition is done for the promotion and inculcation of language and culture so as to pass it from generation to generation. This competition helps to bring out the culture of Ogori, history, tradition, language rather than allowing the culture to die. The competition is done in order to remove the mentality that girls are not involved in the festival and its activities compared to how men in the community are actively involved in the planning and organization of the festival.

In the Focus Group Discussion with the youth of the community, some of the girls pin-pointed reasons behind them not participating in the festival activities, it is because we were not duly informed on the roles we can play during the festival, or maybe the

organizers feel that we should only be featured during the making of the bride alone, the respondents also remarked that with more adequate information about the event, they will show more interest in participating in the festival.

The pageant contest is a strategy initiated to encourage the successful girls to abide and patronize the culture and tradition of Ogori especially in this contemporary society where girls' exposure to modern life is tending towards waywardness and social vices. Mrs. Felicia Osiako comments thus on the usefulness of pageant contest as a means of addressing negative attitudes:

> The fact is that some of the girls in the village decide to live their lives in a wayward manner engaging in unprotected relationship which leads to early pregnancy and childbirth, some girls are dropouts from schools, some girls do not want to learn handwork, but if this immorality can be corrected, they can contribute meaningfully to the families, community and nation (FGD Felicia Osiako 9/4/2016).

The researcher observed that the consistent participation of girls in the community festivals could engender moral values, cultures and traditions in a sustainable way. During the camping of girls as part of the activities, the Ivia (maidens) were taught on how to empower themselves with entrepreneur skills like bead making and making of hair. These can help them gain self-help to boost their local income, so that they will not be a burden to their husbands. Likewise, the men are being empowered with entrepreneurship skills organized by the league of professors in Ogori land. The professors came together to join hands to organize symposia where people are taught how to make local instruments that can enhance trade in the community and nation at large. The researcher is also of opinion that the National Open University of Nigeria, Ogori community center can also help Ogori people by making skill acquisition programme available beyond the academic training that the place is known for.

The boys in the community have less participation because of the feeling that Ovia Osese is meant for girls alone. In order to close this gap, Mr. Culture competition was introduced into the festival, as an event for young men who are knowledgeable in areas of history, culture, tradition and language. The contest takes place on the eve of the festival.

During the festival [Saturday] morning, the maidens were led by the Iyodina, they dance in procession singing songs of victory in their tribal language, which is the special song of the occasion. They are led to the arena in excitement, jubilation by crowd consisting of parents, well-wishers, family members and prospective suitors. This depicts the various stages in their development and stresses the change of life.

Cultural dancers from neighboring villages and states come together to perform during the festival to make it colorful and this shows unity among the villages and states. Many people from far and near, Ogori people in Diaspora, people from all walks of life attend the festival. The traditional chiefs, chairman and other dignitaries are welcomed before the commencement of the event as respect is given to them. Also to the nation and community, the national anthem and Ogori anthem are recited. The Ogori anthem, when sung shows a symbol of unity, togetherness and tradition of that community.

The event starts with arrival and welcoming of the special guest to the venue, many cultural groups from Ogori community and neighboring communities do register their presence in the festival carrying their banners for easy identification, various O.D.U. in different branches of the state also register their presence by dancing round the arena, carrying their banner during a match pass in the venue, this shows the unity that exists in the Ogori community and neighboring communities.

When everyone is well seated including the invited guests, dignitaries, well-wishers, the maidens, chiefs, etc. The chairman of the Ovia Osese festival committee 2016 stands up to give the welcome address, the O.D.U. (Ogori Descendant Union) national president gives a goodwill message on behalf of the community. He stands as the mouth piece of the community. The goodwill message usually covers issues that bother the activities of the association that can change the lives of the people. It is in this area that the key development issues are made known, festival financial supports or donations are made for the purpose of attending to such developmental needs of the people.

However, subsequent donations made during the festival over the years have not yielded good development achievement; however, the people yearn in anger and demand for the account of the monies realized and how it has been used. This poses as one of the challenges which leads to distrust among the members of the community concerning the EXCOS (the past organizers or leaders). An example is the case of the civic center where people gather to celebrate the festival. The building is small to accommodate people so the arena is made use of and there is no shield from the sun, hence when the sun is hot, people begin to look for canopies or shield where they can sit under to receive fresh air. In the light of this, a respondent sheds more light saying “this community suffers from light problem, the only time when there is light is when it is almost Ovia Osese period and it is so painful that this community always realizes millions of naira yearly during the festival and yet they cannot overcome the issue of light by buying a transformer (FGD Mekaoye 12/4/16).

Another respondent complained that the manner in which money realized is being spent is not open to the public so there is a demand for accountability (FGD Gloria Oke

12/4/16). More so, it was observed by the researcher that most people are not allowed to participate during discussion of developmental issues concerning the community during the festival rather the dignitaries take charge of the day by airing their voices and at the end bringing not what the people want but what they feel the people need as development. Therefore it is expected that subgroups should represent the voice of the people during development discussions rather than leaving the people empty and their questions unanswered.

After the festival, people expect that monies gathered during the festival would be used immediately to solve some of the developmental issues, but this has not been so. The monies are left in the hands of the executives for the purpose of carrying out development projects that would benefit Ogori people. However, the execution of these projects to benefit the Ogori people is dependent on the integrity of the executives. There are no checks and balances to confirm appropriateness of expenditure on earmarked projects.

Besides the festival and Sunday worship, people including sons and daughters of Ogori land return to their various states or destination and hold subsequent O.D.U. meetings in their respective branches across the 36 states of the federation. However, lack of follow-up on developmental activities was one of the reasons why most development projects have failed or are not completed. This is further highlighted in a focus group discussion as noted below:

> The post festival activity is supposed to manifest the solutions to issues that were discussed during the festival. In short, how and where the monies gotten from the festival go to, cannot really be explained, I rather suggest that a committee on collection and spending of money on development projects should be formed (FGD with women group in Ogori village 12/4/2016).

It is evident therefore that post activity of the festival needs to involve a responsive communication between the community and the group in charge of organizing the festival who are also custodian of all the returns.

4.1.2 Ovia Osese Festival and Community Development

For a particular development initiative to be identified and sustained by the people who it is meant for, it simply means that their participation should be in the entire process of achieving that goal. The people's participation is very important when their cultural modes of expression, language are incorporated to the process, they have a feeling of togetherness; they feel it is their own development because they are familiar with the principles guiding their culture. In the context of the people of Ogori land, they see their cultural festival Ovia Osese festival as a tool through which development can be achieved. This is because Ovia Osese festival can be used to achieve some solutions concerning some issues of Ogori community development.

For any festival to be effective in bringing about social change in the community, certain dynamic change has to occur in the way the festival is conducted in order to achieve its ambition. For instance, the people must emphasize or make moves in identifying and solving the problems of the community as an important motive of the festival. However, people must be ready to face challenges confronting them. For positive change to occur, challenges or stumbling blocks must accompany such changes. Within this context of community development, the committee of Ovia Osese elect and the Ogori Descendant Union (O.D.U) are the associations that could promote the festival into a tool for community development. Since the festival is now celebrated as a week affair, new innovations have been incorporated into the festival such as games, sport, cooking

competition, beauty pageant and language speaking competition.Findings show that media men, tourists, invited guests and majority of the people see this festival from the point of expression of tradition, a platform for entertainment and socialization with friends and loved ones. A respondent attests that media men especially NTA (Nigeria Television Authority) Kogi, Prime FM 101, as well as individuals cover the events done on the grand finale and even interviewed people partaking in the celebration of the festival. People from neighboring villages stage performances of cultural dance and drama as a way of participating in the celebration of the festival and promoting unity among the villages. The coming together of people, traditional performers, and visitors shows a sign of promoting unity and peace and also how well people are aware of the festival.

The festival stands as a means of promoting and preserving the cultural heritage of Ogori people. For example, the cultural dance group which performed during the events used musical instruments and songs to depict the history and culture of the people. Through this cultural display, the cultural practices of the people would be preserved; hence it would be passed from generations to generations. The beauty pageants consisting of Miss. Ogori, Mr and Miss Culture are staged to inform and acquaint people with the past history so as to keep the heritage from one generation to generation.

The camping of Ovia (maidens) during the festival period helps the maidens to have an understanding of life on how to become mothers of tomorrow. They learn about values and norms, art of storytelling, art of beautification, how to take care of the family and home. The lyodina (women leader) Mrs Janet Soje succinctly put it this way:

> The camp room is a place where the young girls gather to receive traditional education, they are taught how to take care of the family and home, the moral, norms and value of the culture, this is because some of the maidens are not been

> taught or educated on important topics of the afore by their parent or guardians (interview with Mrs Janet Soje the woman that takes care of the maidens 9/4/2016)

Looking at the past records of the festivals, it has served as a forum for political manifestos, where some individuals came to reveal their political ambition to the larger population seeking their votes, prayers and support. The festival serves as a forum where new ideas of talents can be recognized, culture and language of the people can be promoted and preserved. In a discussion, a respondent pointed out this innovation:

> During the festival, songs sung in local dialect compressed in CD form are sold, new ideas on how to carve musical instruments using wood was taught in a workshop, this help to promote the rich culture of Ogori land (*FDG with Ayemibo Kate 9/4/2016)*

Other traditional items like cultural attires, food, necklaces are also displayed or sold, hence promoting the local economy or trade. It is evident that meetings conducted in different states are used to deliberate on development matters/issues that concern the community. The meetings held in different states comprise both the men, women and youth, but they are under one umbrella known as O.D.U (Ogori Descendant Union). This association comprises Ogori people in Diaspora. They hold their meetings once every month. For people within the community, the elderly people in a village do not organize meetings to deliberate on issues that concern them; they depend on information from the chief which is delivered to them by the town crier. Mrs Oye is of the notion that:

> Information regarding development projects should be passed to us or we should be consulted by a representative from each state because we are the ones in the village and we know the issues and pressing needs of the community. This can make their work easier instead of the association bringing up a development initiative that will not solve our problem (*FDG with Mrs Oye* 8/4/2016).

Monies realized from O.D.U. meetings at each state level are gathered and sent to the village for development projects such as sinking of boreholes, building of community

school, the association also helps the less privileged in the community by supplying them with the basic needs to sustain their life.

The researcher was informed that sometimes when O.D.U. calls for meeting in some states, the attendance is always poor. The reasons for this not yet explained. This can be a stumbling block to the promotion of unity and development discussion in such areas. There exists the youth group in different states named Ogori Student Association (O.S.A). This is the smallest unit, they collaborate in relation to youth education, jobs opportunities and issues pertaining scholarship. They share information and ideas that are beneficial or important to them. They have their representatives who stand for them anywhere they are called upon. This makes it possible for them to be aware of the happenings in order to procure solution. Despite the commitment of the youth to community development, they are not given the opportunity to partake in discussions that concern development of the community rather they are only handy or called upon to assist during festival.

4.2 Social and Moral Development of Ovia Osese Festival to Maidens or the Girl Child

During Ovia Osese festival, the training covers philosophy of life, vocational knowledge, and special career interest like medicine (the use of herbs) marital requirement, love ethics, home economies and management, childcare and motherhood. The training period used to be three years, within the last three months devoted to intensive grooming of the maidens for her role in life as a woman, wife and a mother. Later, the training period was reduced to seven days, and recently to three days. The grooming lessons include how to strap a baby to the back correctly, positioning of a baby for breast feeding, sitting position when bathing a baby. The maidens are also taught how to prepare special

delicacies, using local spices that will bring the aroma and improve the taste of the food. They also benefit from vocational training such as knitting, carving of small wooden combs for parting of hair etc.

Speaking on the festival, during the key informant interview with Gbemi Omole, an engineer and the new national president of Ogori Descendants Union said:

> It is one festival that has survived through the ages and has remained in its original form. The message is still as relevant as it was several decades ago. It is one festival that makes us forget our differences if at all there is any (Daily Trust, 2019).

Ovia Osese festival has continued to attract global attention because of its strong message and essence because culture is dynamic. This is so because we do not live in a world that is static. However, even at that, the message and essence of Ovia Osese has been largely preserved. Its message harps on moral chastity and it is something that makes the festival unique. Ovia Osese festival in the face of moral decadence, decline in societal values and sexual perversion amongst young people nowadays, the people of Ogori community in Ogori-Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State have continued to utilise their ageless Ovia Osese annual cultural festival to spur young girls to maintain their virginity and dignity of womanhood.

The new chairman further maintained that:

> We are not averse to civilisation or modernity, if you like, but any civilisation or modernity that will corrupt our culture and influence our young ones, especially our girls negatively, we do not welcome or imbibe such. We have kept our doors firmly closed against any influence that will erode the essence and true meaning of this festival; that is why it has remained in its original form after many decades (Daily Trust, 2019)

He also noted that Ovia Osese is one of the few festivals around the world that has remained in its original form and with its message still relevant to our contemporary world. He expressed gratitude to the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation for

indicating interest to list it as one of the festivals on the National Calendar of Festivals in Nigeria. The chairman however, expressed regret thus:

> It is rather unfortunate that in spite of the high moral lesson of the festival, it has been left solely to the community to shoulder every year. This festival needs all the support it can muster. Permit me to use this opportunity to plead that government at all levels should support us in the annual hosting of this event. "Also, events such as this should not lack corporate sponsorship. It is my hope that by next year we would not be sweating to organise this event. On this note, I urge that you all donate generously towards the promotion of the festival. It has been neck-breaking hosting this festival annually, and, indeed, we have a responsibility to keep it alive if only we want a secured home and future for our young girls.

Generally in Africa, there are so many rules guiding the upbringing and growth of the girl child. The women folk are believed to be responsible for impacting moral value on a growing child. Mothers are expected to teach their daughters how to be good wives and mothers, virtuous, faithful, strong, respectful, skillful, confident, courageous and loving because that is what the society expects from them. Any attitude that is short of the mentioned therefore incurs oppression, rejection, marginalization and humiliation from the society. This is why it becomes beneficial to the society when emphasis on the kind of morals enumerated above dominates a traditional festival as found in Ovia Osese festival.

Other means through which the festival has helped the maidens is the promotion of the playing of the Okitoroko drum. The drum is an instrument that must be played only be women. No maiden is supposed to get married in Ogori unless she has passed through the rites of passage of Ovia Osese. The implication for any girl who accidentally conceives before the purification and initiation ceremony rests on the fact that such a girl brings disgrace to her parents and the child that such a girl brings forth will not be allowed to marry from the community. This is premised on the belief that such a child will bring bareness upon the land. Another calamity that would befall any girl who commits the

abomination is that such a girl stands the risk of death during child birth. Hence, it remains a rule that all Ogori girls must remain virgins until they are legally married, after the celebration of Ovia Osese (Adeyemi, 2012).

Ogori town is after Okene, and is one of the smallest local government areas in Nigeria. Apart from priding itself as the 'home of elites', Ogori is also the home of culture. It is one community whose rich culture is placed on the world map. Annually, the community hosts the Ovia Osese cultural festival, which involves initiation rites that prepare young maidens for the journey into womanhood. This is after they must have been trained on how to take good care of their homes and sustain their husbands' love with wonderful food delicacies. Those to be initiated are adjudged by the community to have preserved the sanctity of virginity prior to the time of the festival. It is a ceremony that openly extols the virtues of womanhood, while celebrating the purity, chastity and untouched physical and emotional conditions of young girls of marriageable age. The concept of Ovia Osese is to engender the value of self-restraint and sexual discipline amongst young girls in the community.

4.3 Challenges Associated with Ovia Osese Festival and the Way Forward

With the study conducted, there are some challenges that affect the optimal performance of the festival thus preventing it from impacting effectively on the community. These challenges are discussed below:

The researcher while on the field, observed that there was no organizational alliances partnership with organizations like MTN, UNICEF, Indomie that can help to promote the festival to create interest of the people. Absence of sponsorship was also seen as a limiting factor for attendance of people, especially from outside in the festival. It is

obvious that through sponsorship, spaces are created for advertisement and information of the festival. This is what Mr Timothy Areh has to say to this effect:

> Organizations can sponsor the festival by branding the festival. For example, bringing celebrities to participate in the festival can draw the attention of people from far and near to attend the festival. MTN can help to use the Ovia osese song as a caller tune and people can subscribe to the caller tune for 50 naira; this may serve as another area of bringing income to the community for development (*FGD with Mr Timothy Areh 11/4/2016).*

To achieve development in Ogori community, there should be a standby committee to search for good sponsors for the festival. This point was buttressed by Mr. Sunday in this manner:

> Asides the committee setup for the Ovia Osese festival, a subcommittee should also be setup to bring in advert sponsors that will aid in generating money for the community (*interview with Mr. Sunday an Indigene of Ogori on 11/4/2016).*

It was observed by the researcher that there is little involvement and participation of the youth. The youth are only seen active in collecting gate fee, playing instruments, featuring in drama and security checks; while in major areas of decision making and the whole process of organizing the festival, the youth are sidelined. The importance of making the youth key players in the festival was emphasized in a statement by Mr. Tony Alabi as follows:

> More attention should be paid to the youth of this community because they are the future leaders of the community. They should be encouraged to participate and give their own ideas because this is their own opportunity to hear their voices (*FGD with Mr. Tony Alabi a youth on 18/4/2016)*

Also the youth should be encouraged to go to school because by being educated and empowered they will transform the community for better. Furthermore, the youth should be empowered to create wealth and employment opportunities. The researcher noticed that some youth are idle, they do not have finances to start up business in the community and this gap could be inimical to their development if not checkmated. From the activities that

the youth were entrusted with, it is evident that the youth have good plans for Ogori community and the well-being of the people in that community as sons and daughters. They have limited finances to contribute to the development of Ogori community but rather they depend on the O.D.U. for finances. Seeking ways of sourcing for finances, empowerment should be considered as a way of acquiring financial strength so as to help the youth contribute their quota maximally to the community. Furthermore, grants and loans could be disbursed to youth in order to start up their businesses. This opinion is shared by Mr Matthew Onoba who revealed the following in the course of interview:

> The youth in Ogori community are hardworking and if only they can be empowered, the community projects would move forward, also loans can be given without sentiments, i am saying this as an eye witness, when i requested for loan but I was denied rather my neighbor who simply got the loan because he had someone in position, misused the money and cannot account for the money (*Interview with Mr Matthew Onoba an Indigene of Ogori on 10/4/16*)

The researcher observed that one critical problem showing down the effectiveness of the festival is a poor communication flow. There is no proper communication channel between the organizers and the people in the sense that the people are not consulted on issues of concern in the community. It is on the festival ground that the people hear the dignitaries mentioning the community's issues and what they will contribute to the community. The people are not given the opportunity to contribute or seek clarifications on some developmental issues, hence developmental issues that are supposed to be solved lie fallow. There is no community without issues of concern that affect its people. Not giving a room for discussions during the event has left a lot of issues unsettled and unsolved till date. When issues are given room for discussions, ideas on how to solve such issues are raised. It is therefore vivid that participation of community members in an event enhances the level of awareness on the agenda the festival set out to achieve. It is the people's

festival so they should not be sidelined as mere spectators or visitors. The local people need to be seen as host of the event and their opinions or contributions to be allowed matter in scheme of things concerning the festival.

Community development through the platform of festival needs identification and participation of the people in developmental activities which can enhance their capacity to perceive their own needs. Putting this into consideration is necessary if any change for better will be realized in future Ovia Osese festival. Through participation, the needs of the people and ways of achieving the success of the community can be identified, the wellbeing of the people, development of the community; infrastructural provisions such as borehole, education, light [transformer], health care centres, basic amenities would be discussed during the festival and prompt follow up on development projects will be executed.

When there is no feedback concerning information about the progress made on the redemption of pledges and promises made, people give up on projects. During festivals, people make pledges and if there is a good follow up, it can bring about better response to achieving better developmental projects. This is further pointed out in a focus discussion as stated here:

> I expect that there should be a follow up as regards to the promises and pledges made by the dignitaries on the festival ground. I hope that there would be a change this time so that the organizers would meet with the dignitaries after the festival so they can redeem their pledges (FGD Idowu Aturu 13/4/2016).

One critical setback to development is the rising dissent voices. There will always be people in the community who naturally will counter the agreed opinion and decision intended to bring unity and peace to the community. It is very important to allow these

dissent voices to air their views but efforts should be made for them to see reason for one voice, when developmental issues are raised, and not to oppose plans designed to move the community forward. The researcher noted that in the past, issues of concern have been dragged during meetings of Ovia Osese festivals without any fruitful conclusion. It is therefore expedient for all the stakeholders of Ogori Community to do away with dissenting and cynical acts by carrying everyone along in all decision making processes.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the summary, research findings, conclusion, recommendations that will contribute to the body of knowledge. Information gathered from the field, discussions and interviews conducted with men, women, youth (sons and daughters of the town) depict that festival is a good avenue or forum used for fostering development initiative and growth and depicting communal development. However, the inability of the organizers to carry people along in the activities of the festival from planning to execution stage is a big challenge that affects development and brings limitation to the accountability of funds realized and utilized during the festival.

Another factor responsible for the inability for planners to execute projects is due to the fact that most projects are not people owned but rather the projects are the 'brain child' of the dignitaries; furthermore, lack of follow up for funds raised during the festival contributes to lack of development. In the course of discussion with the interviewees and the focus group discussion participants, a lot of challenges that hinder Ovia Osese development in the community were discovered, such as poor participation of youths, poor communication, poor perception of the festival especially by religious beliefs of people, integrity and accountability issues surrounding funding, and illiteracy. Also, lack of job opportunities and enabling environments that promote development has created gap which has not allow the people of Ogori to maximize the potentials of Ovia Osese festival. It is thus imperative that the youth of the community should be empowered through behavioural and attitudinal change which this festival if carefully utilised stands for.

5.1 Key Research Findings

1. Ovia Osese festival serves as leverage for promoting culture, peace and unity, tradition, belief of Ogori land. By gathering people in Diaspora and all walks of life, it serves as a forum for discussion of issues of socio-cultural, economic and political significance to the Ogori community.
2. Funds generated from the festival as a result of donations are not properly accounted for leaving the people with doubt about the significance of Ovia Osese festival.
3. Youth's participation in the festival is low and not strategic. Youth are not actively involved in decision making concerning the activities of the festival due to communication disconnection.
4. Decisions are made by the dignitaries who believe to know what the people want without consulting with the local people on the decision on how to go about Ovia Osese festival and development projects of the community.

5.2 Recommendation

In view of the findings from the field, the researcher makes the following recommendations

1. Ovia Osese festival should be sustained by all the stakeholders in the community to serve as a forum for enhancing community development.
2. Framework that will ensure accountability and proper monitoring of fund utilization should be established by the Ogori Descendant Union who are the main player in the festival.
3. Enabling environment that will attract active participation of youth in all facets of the event should be provided by the convener of the festival.

4. There is need to create bottom-up approach in deciding developmental projects to be done. Through this the voice of the local people of Ogori community could be heard and ownership of projects could be achieved.

5.3 Conclusion

It is evident that festival can preserve and maintain culture, because through this avenue, ways of life of a particular indigenous people are translated from one generation to the other. This study has also proved that beyond sustaining the cultural heritage, festival also create an environment for entertainment and to discuss societal issues. In the case of Ovia Osese, the Ogori people uses the platform on yearly basis to evaluate how far they have been able as a community to resolve varying challenges impinging on the development of the Ogoriland. It is succinct to say that Ovia Osese has created an atmosphere of serenity for the people to discuss issues of development such as electricity, education, moral values, health, family unity, societal vices such as corruption, prostitution, etc. and other critical issues such as politics and identity problem (sustaining the local language of Ogori people). The study has highlighted that though these issues are challenging in real sense, but the people are making effort to resolve them and create the ideal environment. The festival, Ovia Osese is therefore a critical tool which the Ogori people have used over the years and till now as a channel to achieve this.

There is need to make the festival more participatory because at present, youths have little say and the administration of the fund is still exclusive and not in the purview of the common Ogori people. A key to this gap in the usage of Ovia Osese is the need for strategic communication approach that will ensure participation of all the stakeholders including and in particular, the youths in decision making and participation in various

processes of the festival. Taking this into cognizance will help Ovia Osese festival to enhance community development, promote cultural heritage and also serve as template to communicate developmental messages that can bring about positive change in the Ogori community and a model to make the larger society a better place to live.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The reason for every research is to add to the existing body of knowledge in order to further improve and develop the society. This research has opened more dimensions for other research work that might be carried out in relevant field. The study has been able to expose hidden challenges that hinder community development. Furthermore, the study reveals the importance of festivals and how it can facilitate community development. Finally, the study has shown that community participation in festival in all stages of preparation can reduce challenges that hinder sustainable community development.

REFERENCES

Abioye, L.A (2017). Issues and Themes in Traditional Festivals as Agents of Social Mobilization: A Look at Egungun and Oro Festivals MCC, l (1): 102-120

Adeyemi, T (2012), Sexuality in Ogori Magongo Ovia Osese Festival. *The Performer* Vol.14:9,226-234

Akerejola, Gab Bawa. (1973). The History of Ogori, Occasional Publication No. 22, Institute of African studies, University of Ibadan.

Akintan O A (2013). Traditional Religious Festivals and Modernity: A Case Study of Female-Oriented Cults Annual Festivals in Ijebuland of South Western Nigeria *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 3(3): May

Allen, J. et al (2002). *Festival and Special Event Management.* Milton: Wiley.

Allen, J; O'Toole, W; Harris, R and McDonnel, I (2005). *Festival and Special Event Management* 3rd Ed. Milton Wiley, Australia pp 518

Attala, Jennifer (2012) *Performing the Festival - a study of the Edinburgh International Festival in the twenty-first century*. Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD in the School of Culture and Creative Arts, University of Glasgow, June 2012.

Autissier, A. M., ed., 2009. The Europe of Festivals: from Zagreb to Edinburgh: intersecting viewpoints. editions de l'attribut.

Bachleitner, R. & Zins, A. (1992). Cultural tourism in rural communities: the resident's perspective. *Journal of Business Research*. 44 (3), 199-209.

Bello, R and Ajayi, O.S (2000). Research methods and statistical Analysis. Ilorin: Haytee press and publishing company ltd.

Biggs, S. 1999 Community Capacity Building in Queensland: The Queensland Government Service Delivery Project. Unpublished paper. Office of Rural Communities, Brisbane, Queensland.

Boeren. A. (1992) Getting Involved: Communication for Participatory Development, *Community Development Journal*, 27 (3):259-271.

Bonye, S. Z (2011). The Role of Traditional Festivals in Action Planning, Advocacy and Accountability. *World J Young Researchers* 2011;1(3):32-35

Burkey, L. D (1985).*People First: A Guide to Self-Reliant, Participatory Rural Development. London*: Zed Books.

Butcher, H (1993). *Community and Public Policy*. Pluto Press. Michigan pp 281

Cashman, K (1991) Systems of Knowledge as Systems of Domination: The Limitations of Established Meaning. *Agriculture and Human Values* 8 (1-2) 49-58

Chacko, H and Schaffer, J (1993). The evolution of a festival: Creole Christian in New Orleans. *Tourism Management* .14(4):475-482.

Christenson, J. A and Robinson, J. W (1989). Community Development in Perspective. Iowa State University Press, Ames Iowa.

Crow, G and Allan, G (1994). *Community Life: An Introduction to Local Social Relations*. Harvester Weathsheaf, pp229

Daily Trust (2019) *Ovia-Osese: A Kogi festival for keeping girls chaste*: A report by Itodo Daniel Sule, Lokoja | Published on May 19, (Accessed on September 13, 2019).

Daramola, S.O (1992). Research and statistical methods in education for students and research in tertiary institutions. Ado-Ekiti: Petoa Educational publishers.

Delamere, T. A and Hinch, T (1994). Community Festivals. Celebration or sell out. *Recreation Canada*, 52 (1), 26-29

Des Wilson (1987). Traditional Systems of Communication in Modern African Development: An Analytical Viewpoint. *Africa Media Review* Vol. 1. No. 2. 87-104

Deutsch, K. W (1961). Social Mobilisation and Political Development. *The American Political Science Review*. Vol 55, No 3: 493-514

Dugas, K and Schweitzer, J (1997) cited in: Derrett, R (2003) making sense of how festivals demonstrate a community's sense of place. *Event Management, 8:49-58.*

Dunstan, G (1994) cited in: Derett, R,(2003) making sense of how festivals demonstrate a community's sense of place. *Event Management*, 8:49-58.

Earls, Z (1993). First Night Celebration: Building Community Reactions: A Cluster Analysis, *Annals of Tourism*, 27 (3), 763-784

Eboh, E. (2009). Social and economic research: principles and method. Enugu: African Institute for applied economies.

Ekpenyong, G. (1981). *Festivals in Nigeria. A biblography of Nigeria Magazine.* Lagos. Emmacon Print ltd.

Falassi, A (1987). *Time Out Of Time*: Essays on the festival. Albuguergue: University Of New Mexico.

Felsenstein, D and Fleischer, A (2003). The Role of Public Assistance and Visitor Expenditure, *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 41, May 2003, 385-392

Felsenstein, D. (2003). Local Festival and Tourism promotion: The Role of Public Assistance and Visitor Expenditure. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(4), 385 -392

Flora, C.B., Flora, J. L. Spears, J. D and L.E. Swanson (1992). *Rural Communities: Legacy and Change*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Fredline, E. (2000). *Host +Community Reactions to Major Sporting Events*: Gold Coast Indy and the Australia Formula One Grand Prix in Melbourne, *Unpublished PhD Thesis*, Gold Coast: Griffith University.

Friedrich, K., 2000. *Festive Culture in Germany and Europe from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century.* Lampeter: Edwin Mellon Press.

Frisby, W and Getz, D (1989). *Festival Management: A case study perspective.* Journal of Travel Research 28(1), (summer): 7-11.

Getz, D. (1991). *Festivals, Special Events and Tourism.* New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Getz, D. (1997). *Event Management & Event Tourism.* New York, Cognizant Communication Corporation.

Glasson, J., Godfrey, K., & Goodey, B (1995). *Towards visitor impact management: Visitor impacts, carrying capacity and management responses in Europe's historic towns and cities.* Aldershot: Avebury

Gold, M (2005). *Cities of Culture: staging international festivals and the urban agenda. 1851-2000.* Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Goldblatt, J (1997) *Special events: Best practices in modern events management.* New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Goldblatt, J (2000). A Future for Event Management: The Analysis of Major Trends Impacting the Emerging Profession.

Grace Lawrence-Hart (2014) Festivals: Catalyst for Peace in Nigeria *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 19, Issue 4, Ver. III (Apr. 2014), PP

Gregory, H (2008). The Quiet Revolution of Poetry Slam: The Sustainability of Cultural Capital in the Light of Changing Artistic Convention. *Ethnography and Education*. Vol 3 Issue 1: 63-80

Hall, C.M. (1992). *Hallmark Tourism Events: Impacts, Management and Planning*. London: Bethaven Press.

Hall, T and Hubbard, P (1996). The Entrepreneurial City: New Urban Politics, New Urban Geographies. *Progress in Human Geography*, 20:153-174.

Higham, J and Hinch, T (2003). Tourism, sport and seasons: The challenges and potentials of overcoming seasonality in sport tourism sectors. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 23, pp.175-185.

Idegu, E. U. (1988). *The Socio-Cultural Significance of Ogani Festival among the Igala People.* Unpublished MA Thesis Submitted to the Postgraduate School Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Nigeria.

Janet. I. Soje (Iyodina) chief Administrator 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on the 8th April 2015 at 9am

Klein, R. G and Blake, E (2002). *The Dawn of Human Culture*. New York: John Wiley and Sons pg 288

Manus, U C (2007). The Sacred Festival of Iri Ji Ohuru in Igboland, Nigeria *Nordic Journal of African Studies 16(2): 244–260*

Mattew Onoba, a father 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on the 10th of April 2016 at 4.30pm.

Mayfield, T. L and Crampton, J. L (1995). Development of an Instrument for Identifying Community Reasons for Staging a Festival. *Journal of Travel Research* Vol:33:37

Mbiti, I (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann pp290

Mikkelsen, B (2005). *Methods for Development Work and Research: A New Guide for Practitioners:* Sage Publications, India

Modum E. P(197*8).African Cultural Development*.Nsukka: Fourth Dimension publishing Co. Ltd. University of Nigeria.

National Commission for Museums and Monuments Abuja (January 2004). Nomination to the World Heritage List OSUN-OSOGBO SACRED GROVE Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria

NTDC (2004). An official Report on Argungun Fishing Festival.

Obajulu conducted 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on 8th April 2015 by 10am in town hall Ogori.

Oklobdzija, S (2015). The Role of Events in Tourism Development. *Bizinfo Journal* Vol 6 No 2: 83-97

Okoro, R.U and Hassan, U. (2009). Understanding research methods, measurements and evaluatiom concepts. Sokoto: Mathi production.

Olugbemiro Jegede, State Security to the Government conducted 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on the 8th April 2016 by 5pm

Opare A (2014). *Functional Analysis of the Ogun Festival in Ondo, Nigeria* Thesis Kajaani University of Applied Sciences School of Tourism Degree Programme in Tourism Spring 2014

Osiako, E.S (2003), *Traditional History of Ogori in Socio-Anthropological Setting Abuja*: petra digital print.

Osuala, E. (2006).*Introduction to Research Methodology (3rd Edition)*.Nsukka: Africana First Publishers Ltd. P.225. Picton, John. (1991). "On Artifact and Identity at the Niger-Benue Confluence", African Arts Special Issue: Memorial to Arnold Rubin, Part II, July, Vol. Xxiv, No. 3, pp. 34-49.

Pardy, S. G (1991). *A study of the Role of Community Festivals and Events in Community Development.* Unpublished Master's Thesis, USA: Acadia University

Philip. O (2016) Repositioning Ovia Osese for the Mutual Benefits of Kogi State and Ogori/Magongo. P.22 bronchure.

Pine, B, and Gilmore, J (1999) *The experience economy*: Work is theatre and every business is a stage. Massachusetts, Harvard Business School Press.

Pogoson, O (2002). *Ogori Culture and People: Ovia Osese and Beyond*. A collection of Essays Ed O. I. Pogoson

Poon, A (1993), *Tourism, Technology and Competitive Strategies*, Walling Ford: CABI.

Poplin, D. E (1979). *Communities: A survey of theories and methods of research*. Macmillan pp 334

Prentice, R and Andersen, U (2003). Evoking Ireland: modeling tourist propensity. *Annuals of Tourism Research*, 27(2):490-516.

Quinn, B. (2009). Festivals, events and tourism. In Jamal, T. and Robinson, M. (Eds), The SAGE *Handbook of Tourism Studies*. London: Sage.

S.E Mosugu (Otaro), Senior Advocate of Nigeria 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on 8th April 2015 in the Arena Hall by 10.15 am).

Sanders, I.T. 1958 Theories of Community Development. *Rural Sociology* 23(1): 1-12.

Segal, J and Giorgi, L., eds. (2009). European Arts Festivals from a Historical Perspective. *Arts Festivals and the European Public Culture: Euro festival Project.* WP2. SSH-2007-5.2.2. http://www.euro-festival.org. [accessed 16 July 2018].

Shone, A and Parry, B. (2005). *Successful Event Management: A Practical Handbook*, 2nd ed. London, Thomson Learning.

Skujina, I (2006) "Festivals of the Dead" in "Gates of Light" (http://altreligion.about.com/library/weekly/aa101300a.htm) Downloaded on 26th March, 2003.

Smith, M. (2004). Seeing a new side to seaside's culturally regenerating the English seaside town. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 6 (1):17.28

Sofola, 'Zulu. (1987). "Reflections on Ovia-Osese Festival of Ogori." In Ovia Festival Digest: Proceedings of the First National Seminar on the Ogori Ovia Osese Festival, pp. 24-35.

Sonja Oklobdžija (2015). The Role and Importance of Social Media in Promoting Music Festivals. *International Scientific Conference of IT and Business-Related Research*.

Sunday Ajeh, Director of Local Government Akpafa 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on the 8th of April 2016 by 11am in Ogori.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.4th Edition 2009. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Toyin Adebisi conducted a focus group discussion 'A Study of Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for enhancing Community Development' on the 15th of August 2016 by 10am

Willmott, P (1986). *Social networks, informal care and public policy*. London Policy Studies Institute

Appendices

Appendix I

DEPARTMENT OFTHEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS

FACULTY OF ARTS

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

Dear Respondents,

I am a postgraduate student of Development Communication from the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. I am conducting a research study on the topic: Ovia Osese Festival as a tool for Enhancing Community Development. Kindly respond to the following questions. All information will be treated as confidential for academic purpose only.

Thank you,

Adebija Iyoboro Bosede.

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Mr Sunday Ajeh (Director of Local Government)

What is Ovia Osese festival all about and what is the importance of the festival to Ogori people?

Ovia Osese festival is the making of the bride, whereby when a girl attains a certain age or sees the features of a woman in her, it simply means that she has come of age to be initiated into womanhood, after which she can get married to any suitor of her choice. If she gets pregnant before she does her Ovia Osese, it becomes a taboo to the community and there is a punishment for that immoral act she has per took from.

Ovia Osese is very important to the community just as how food is important to the body. This is because it unifies the community members, it instills moral discipline among the girls, it passes the Ogori tradition from one generation to the other, it gathers people from all walks of life to come together to celebrate the beauty of Ogoriland which in turn serves as an avenue for dispute settlements, issues of community development, social vices and the likes.

Since the conception of Ovia Osese festival, has it brought any development? If yes, what kind of development has it brought?

Yes, Ovia Osese festival has brought a lot of developments, these developments started from the very moment activities were added to beautify the festival making it a week programme instead of two days. Some of the developments are instilling moral discipline in the community, unity, building of comprehensive school, and building of the festival arena. These developments were able to take shape due to some of the monies realized during the festive period and we hope that this festival will continue to bring more monies to the community.

How do you view festival?

Well, from my own view I see this festival as a platform of entertainment, showcasing the tradition and culture of Ogori people, an avenue to mix up and unite with families, friends and a way to interact on how to move the community forward.

Do you have any association? If yes, what have they been able to achieve through the festival?

Actually we have the Ogori Descendant Union(O.D.U) in all states. These set of people run the affairs of moving Ogori to be a better society. They are the middle men between the villagers and the Ogori people in diaspora. The O.D.U gather, send and receive information from the Ogori people in diaspora to the village and in turn receive feedback to the Ogori people in diaspora. Infact, put together these group of people are the channel through which messages are passed to the Ogori people in diaspora.

Are people involved in the planning process of the festival? If no, what are the reasons?

This is one of the challenges faced by the community members. We have situation whereby the youth voices are not heard so decisions are taken on their behalf, but when it comes to handling of other matters like sports, organizing gatekeepers, the youth in the village are important, is that fair?

How do you think Ovia Osese festival can help bring development to Ogori community?

Once we can reorganize ourselves and put the interest of Ogoriland at heart, we can achive a better development. For example, monies realized during the festival, if there is a proper follow up process, the monies should be accountable and heard off by the people.

Chief Dr S.E Mosugu (Senior Advocate of Nigeria)

Interview Transcript

How do you view Ovia Osese festival?

The idea of the festival is just like what the Bible says about holiness to show the purity of our young girls so anyone that is matured of age, the parents and the relations come to celebrate their purity at that age, this simply means that nobody has touched them, it's a sign of dignity to the family, it's a sign of integrity as a way to edify the family for what the female has done to the family for not messing up herself.

Since the conception of Ovia Osese festival, has it brought any development? If yes, what kind of development has it brought?

Development takes two forms. The first, is an occasion for everybody to sanitize his environment, cleanup most especially those who are celebrating Ovia Osese for their girls for the first time.

Secondly, the community seizes the opportunity to launch on many occasions developmental programmes to nations, contributions made during the festival was used to build comprehensive community school where children attend till date. Infact, so many things happen when funds are raised and they are used to develop any aspect or facet of the community for example sinking of borehole or any project the community want to emback on.

Is there any development that Ovia Osese festival has brought?

The festival is spread out in order to get resource to develop the community, through the spread out of activities; it has helped people who travel to have a good site view on the environment before the grand finale. This makes the festive period entertaining and fun. The aspect of life of the festival which is the symposium organized by the league of professeurs in Ogori where a musical instrument was analyzed, the origin, construction, different sounds, the preservation, how to elevate the instrument to the world of music was discussed.

Are there any challenges faced during the festival?

There are a lot of challenges faced during Ovia Osese among these challenges are Accommodation – only people that have money can access accommodation.

Transportation – many people want to witness Ovia Osese but they do no have the means to bring them and money/ finance is also a constrain.

Mr Mattew Onoba (Father)

Interview Transcript

What is Ovia Osese festival?

This is a ceremony of the Ogori people. Ovia Osese is an announcement to the whole community that the young men in the village can come over to ask for his daughter hand in marriage. Ovia Osese has undergone a lot of transformation and it is all about celebrating our daughters that have come of age.

What are the developments that Ovia Osese Festival has acquired since its conception?

Unifying of Ogori community for example community town hall that has turned out to be the arena where everybody irrespective of your tribe, religion and denomination come together to celebrate the vibrant culture in the arena.

The festival has brought professors from different parts of the country to organize seminar which helps to educate the people of the community on different aspect most especially the art and crafts like how to modernize the Okitoroko instrument used during the festival or how to introduce different instruments that can be used to beautify the rhythm of the music.

How effective is the communication system during the festival.

The communication system is very effective because the Ogori Descendant Union at the national level sends information to the Ogori Descendant Union in different states, sometimes information is posted on Facebook, since Ogori culture is dynamic and information can be sent through any of these channels. We also have age group meetings, community meetings where information can be passed to the people.

What do you have to say concerning the development of Ogori

The youth in Ogori community are hardworking and if only they can be empowered, the community projects would move forward, also loans can be given without sentiments, i am saying this as an eye witness, when i requested for loan but I was denied rather my neighbor who simply got the loan because he had someone in position, misused the money and cannot account for the money.

Royal Highness Obajulu S.K (acting chairman of the traditional council of Ogori)

Interview Transcript

What is the purpose of Ovia Osese?

I will not be able to say the exact date that it was established but the purpose is to check our ladies from waywardness. This will allow them to be respectful to their parents, to honour their parents because before you are married, you must undergo this type of something you do not just get married or get pregnant without doing Ovia Osese. From this festival you will be able to know your age group because all this things are all coming in age group by age group. The celebrants of this year will know themselves forever.

What are the implications of Ovia Osese, has it brought development to the community?

Yes, because if you do not attain the age of 18 before you get married in those days because of education that's why we now curtail it. You don't just marry anyhow, it checks our ladies things are changing, it doesn't allow their parents to give them out unlike before they marry once you are a good farmer, they give you out.

The money realized from the gate fee is used to develop the community. Actually, it is the duty of the traditional chiefs to stage Ovia Osese but we cannot be running up and down when we have the youth can do it that is why we delegate the job to the youth. Any money realized from the festival is used to develop the community.

My wife was among the last set that celebrated Ovia Osese nakedly. They donot wear anything because they donot know what is in the world, they only fulfil what their parents say. These days you cannot allow your children to be naked because of a festival.

IYODINA (the chief administrator)

What do you understand by Ovia Osese?

The meaning of Ovia Osese is children that are mature to marry. If you reach the age of 15-18yrs and you do this Ovia Osese for each of our children in the community without this Ovia , you cannot marry and if you try to do this type of things before the Ovia, you cannot have anyrespect and honour in the community because those people we call them *'Ovia ne tibe na'* meaning who agrees to honour this festival is relevant because people who do not do their Ovia, they look down on the person and person cannot have the right to talk in the community.

What do you do during the camp training of the maidens?

The camp room is a place where the young girls gather to receive traditional education, they are taught how to take care of the family and home, the moral, norms and value of the culture, this is because some of the maidens are not been taught or educated on important topics of the afore by their parent or guardians

Teach them character, how to respect the communities, how to respect elders, how to cook. Today being their final day we want to showcase them to the world. From there, they pick who they want to marry; they are free to do whatever they want to do in their life time because they are matured. There is a song that is sang to lead them to how to grand pepper using stone, which is often demonstrated, how to greet elders, how to pound yam.

Are there any major criteria for the ladies about to be inducted into womanhood?

Of course, in the olden days, there was a criteria but because civilization has come and wants to overtake the olden days laws but still we have made a stand on it.

One of the lessons learnt is that the Ivias needs to be a virgin before inducted, civilization has modified that trend but it has not been eradicated totally.

We are still standing on it. If you are not initiated, you cannot marry, you don't have an age group in the community. Three sets of Ivias make an age group.

APPENDIX III

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PICTURES



The researcher in a focus group discussion with the women in Ogori Magongo Local Government office, Akpafa.

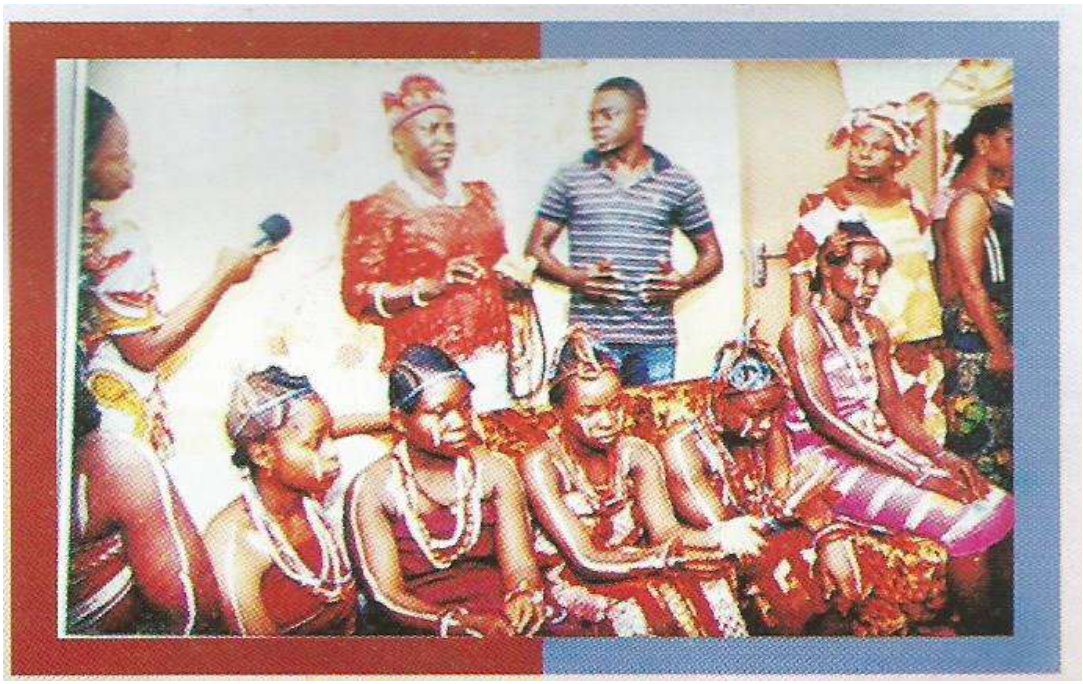


The researcher in a Focus Group Discussion with the youth in Ogori Magongo Hall, Akpafa.

INTERVIEW PICTURES



The researcher in an interview with the Director of Local Government



Side view of the researcher in an interview with the Iyodina in the camp.

PICTURES OF THE OVIA OSESE FESTIVAL



A group picture of the Iyodina surrounded by the Ovias (maiden) and the *Ivia Egben* (Maidens' children) on the day the grand finale of Ovia Osese festival after been camped for two weeks of moral education.



A group picture of the Researcher, Iyodina and the Ivia Egben (maidens' children) as they prepare to go to the arena where the festival takes place.



A cross section of women playing the Okitoroko instrument during the grand finale of Ovia Osese festival



Here are the custodians of the tradition. They are well sitted and waiting for the programme to begin.



This is the Iyodina, the (Chief and Head of Female gender in Ogori)



A cross section of the building that was built as a result of the donations made during Ovia Osese.



The Ivia Egben (Maidens' children) are having a dance that will usher in the Ovias to the arena.



The Ovias are singing their songs of victory.



The photo of the award given to the winner of the beauty pageant 2015