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Influence of Cultural Practices on Community Development among Ikwerre People in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This paper captured the influence of cultural practices on community development among Ikwerre people in Rivers State. It is obvious, that some of this cultural practices impact the growth and development of community. The paper also exposed some of the ugly cultural practices in Ikwerre land such as, worshipping of the queen of the coast, masquerade display, worshipping of idols, bowing down for ancestral spirits etc. The findings revealed that Ikwerre people values their cultures and tradition. They pay much attention to their culture than Christianity. The paper also revealed that a lot of youths destiny has been oppressed or frustrated since the practices came on board. Finally, cultural practices cannot be ignored because it is one of the important events the community uphold but, it should be practiced in such a way that it will be emulated and respected. Some of the ugly aspects of the cultural should be expunged or avoided.

Keywords: Cultural practices, Community Development, Ikwerre People.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural practices can be defined as customs, ideas and social behaviors of a particularistic set of people in the society (Jaja, 2022). Cultural practices can also be seen as a tradition or norms obtainable in the society. Culture simply means peoples way of life meaning the avenue people do things in the society. Culture can be noticed through traditional dancing, attire and language. It is unavoidable practices that unite or bring communities and individuals in the society together.

The major factors hindering community development is the attitude or character of the people towards involving in efforts to develop their communities. Therefore, the sum total of a peoples, way of life known as culture can adversely affect the needed efforts to bring development to their communities, or impinge them in the move towards their well being. It is obvious that where individual progress development is marred, it will be very difficult for the community to see the light of the day. Community development is based on individual progress in that community (Chile, 2010).

Ada (2015) community development depends entirely on the attitudes and residence of the people or the individuals in that communities. The way of people therefore, matters much the development can come in that community, people in that community need to shape their attitudes and ensure helps among themselves in that society to enable development come in. therefore, certain aspects of culture poses threat and hinders community development of their communities. Some of the aspects of the culture are; self-concepts, ideas, traditions, belief and attitudes (Ibanga 2016).

Culture and values are pertinent in the life of people in the society. It is good for people to uphold values that can transform the society and people, thereby uniting them and make them feel sense of belonging. Therefore, some of the vital values among others that can promote the dignity and intergrity of the community are hard-work, honesty, genuine belief, truth, equity and so on. (Angels, 2025) community members equally wants their representatives to be accountable to them. Community development entails self-reliance and help, community members are expected to work hard and get things alone themselves.

A system of beliefs peculiar to a people in a community could as well influence development, most beliefs among Ikwerre communities or people in Rivers State are cultures that are inimical, supernatural and at times considered superstitious. Some of the beliefs concentrated much on ancestral spirits appeasement, gods, and serving of queen of the coast etc (Kalanja, 2020).

In this Dev, some of the Ikwerre beliefs hinges on gender equality were men inherit parents prosperities while women are banned from getting anything, suffice Ikwerre culture is concern. The discrimination against women in Ikwerre land is very obvious as one aspect of their culture. There is another beliefs that banned female child from inheriting parents land.

Ikwerre cultures values male child in the community and women cannot make decisions in the communities (Nda, 2024)

In the foregoing, woman are also prevented from participating in community meeting in Ikwerre land. Certain traditions or [long practice, established sometimes destroy community growth and development. This ugly practices has subjected a lot of people into darkness and helps in manipulating their destiny or restricting some of the communities from progressing. Another cultural practices that is bewitching some of the communities in Ikwerre are masquerade or Ekpo cultural dance, celebration of dead during burial etc.

Therefore, some of the age long cultural practices among Ikwerre communities are harmful and affect the lives of some people in the community. The influences and adverse effects are alarming and it portends great danger to community growth and Development.

Statement of the Problem

It is pertinent to understand that certain beliefs, customs, attitudes and practices in the community hinders community growth and development. Community can only grow and progress when they keep off from this ugly practices. These cultural practices inculcates so many constraints and adverse effects that destroy the future of the individuals in some of the communities. The influence of cultural practices has shaded a lot of community development and growth and thereby frustrating some of the individuals in this communities.

Therefore, it is obvious that influence of cultural practices really cripples community development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate influence of cultural practices on the community development among Ikwerre communities in Rivers State.

Specifically the study will:

1. Find out if influence of cultural practices can affect community Dev and growth.
2. To identify those cultural practices that hinders community dev among Ikwerre communities in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What are the cultural practices that exist among the Ikwerre people in Rivers State?

2. What are the cultural practices that hinders community development among the Ikwerre people in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between cultural practices and execution of community development among Ikwerre people of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between community education on cultural practices and improvement of community development among Ikwerre people of Rivers State.

METHODS

This study employed a description survey research design. The design is considered appropriate to ascertain the influence of cultural practices on community development among Ikwerre people in Rivers State, because it is concerned with the beliefs, customs, attitude and behaviours of the individual in the community. The population of this study comprised all the people of Ikwerre.

Research Question one: *What are the cultural practices that exist among the Ikwerre people in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Active Population of Ikwerre in the selected local Government Areas.

S/No	LGAs	POPULATION
1.	IKWERRE	99, 042
2.	OBIO/AKPOR	121, 034`
3.	EMOHUA	122, 035
4.	PHALGA	124, 036
	TOTAL	

Table 2: What are the cultural practices that hinders Community Development among Communities in Ikwerre people in Rivers State?

S/NO	LGA	COMMUNITIES	POPULATION	%
1.	Ikwerre	Isiokpo	1, 760	75
		Elele	960	96
2.	Obio/Akpo	Eneka	1, 620	160
		Rumuagholu	999	165
3.	Emohua	Ubimmi	2000	99
		Egbeda	2050	100
4.	Phalga	Rumuchulu	3000	150
		Ogbunobali	3020	99
	Total		11, 834	843

Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study will be a self-developed questionnaire tagged “Questionnaire on influence of cultural practices on community development” (QCPCDP). The instrument will be divided like section “A” and “B” section “A” will deal with the demographic characteristics of the respondents, while section “B” elicited information on influence of cultural practices on community development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Results on hypotheses one showed that there is no significant relationship between cultural practices and execution of community development among Ikwerre people of Rivers State. This findings is in support of the finding of Kanlanja (2021). The researcher investigated the influence of cultural practices on community Development among Ikwerre people in Rivers State. A set of Questionnaires containing influence of cultural practices in community Development among Ikwerre people in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings, the following conclusion was reached. The influence of cultural practices on community development is not significantly related to community development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Tradition is an important one. Therefore, communities in Ikwerre should be organize and promote cultures that will enhance their skill and bring in successor to the community.
2. Ikwerre people should maintain their culture and ensure practices that 'will transform their community positioning.
3. Ikwerre people should do away their cultures that will destroy their future and well-being.

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