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INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM: A SURVEY OF TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IN PRE-COLONIAL YORUBALAND

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Abstract

The same principles apparently underline science and technology, be it modern c indigenous. What perhaps differs is the nature, forms and stage of development. In spi of the increasing advancements in science and technology today, there is still much to b found and cherished within the Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS). This study validate the fact that science and technology are inherently enmeshed in the existence of ever society. Nigerians in general and the Yoruba in particular have a long history of scienc and technology which dates back to a very early period. Much of African cultur tradition, science, religion and other forms were plagiarized, stolen and adopted witho due credit to the African inventors and originators. Hence, this paper surveys th traditional communication system and its functions in pre-colonial Yorubaland in orde to retrieve waning and irresistible valuables and deeply reflect on the implication Findings reveal that trends in modern science and technology owes its origin to the IK due to the fact that the full knowledge of man in the present can only be approache through a scrutiny of the records of his past achievements and failures. The pap concludes/suggests a continuous and productive synergy between the IKS and mode innovations as the past is accordingly, the father of the present; and the past and prese together provide the only basis for a prognosis of the future. The paper adopts a historic and phenomenological approach with a combination of primary and secondary sourc of data gathering.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge System, Communication System, Pre-colonia Yorubaland.

Introduction

The task in this paper is to demonstrate how the acquisition of indigenous skills and the practical demonstration can translate to, or at least enhance national development. Th becomes necessary because, harnessing and repositioning Nigeria's numero Indigenous Knowledge Systems in line with our realistic contemporary needs, w

ultimately contribute immensely to the national development drive. As a corollary, it is also emphasized that in order for any imported technology to truly respond to the practical needs of the Nigerian society, it must have some elements of local initiatives. Really, the past cannot be completely recovered, but the present is also not yet completely enacted and fully open to our view. This becomes necessary because no nation can grow beyond its science and technology. It is well established that science and technology started in Africa. However, European and American historians deprived 'blacks' of the knowledge of their early contributions to science by ignoring and misrepresenting the African identity of the ancient Egyptians. Some of the grossly misleading impressions about African science and technology include that African society was condemned to stagnation, marking time without any remarkable scientific and technological discoveries. Several European authors concluded that African societies had inferior faculty for science and technology.[1] Of a truth, sophisticated knowledge of the natural world is not confined to science since all human societies across the globe have developed rich sets of experiences and explanations relating to the environment they live in. As Uzoigwe observed:

> There have been discontinuities and continuities in African institutions under both the colonial and post-colonial epochs of African history; it follows too, that studies of the African military in the twentieth century ought to benefit significantly from its pre-European antecedents.[1]

These other knowledge systems which encompass the sophisticated arrays of information, understanding, and interpretations that guide human societies around the globe in their innumerable interactions with the natural milieu are referred to as traditional ecological knowledge (or indigenous/local/'folk'/'peoples' knowledge or 'traditional' wisdom or science).[2] The term 'indigenous knowledge' is thus used to describe the knowledge systems developed by a community as opposed to the scientific knowledge that is generally referred to as 'modern' knowledge.[3] Indigenous knowledge is the basis for local-level decision-making in many rural communities. In achieving the objective of this study, the discussion is shall be made under the following themes: a brief description of Yorubaland; communication and communication processes; purpose and means of traditional communication in Yorubaland; Leap Frogging Development- How Many Miles Away? and the conclusion.

Brief Description of Yorubaland

The Yoruba, one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria are predominantly located in the South-west of Nigeria-Ogun, Ekiti, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun and Lagos States. Atanda, however notes that pockets of the Yoruba are found in some other parts of Nigeria, such as in Kwara, Kogi and Edo States; likewise, in some West African countries such as Togo, Ghana, Republic of Benin and Sierra Leone as well as in the West Indies and South America, such as in Brazil and Cuba.[4] The word, Yoruba refers to both the people and

the language they speak. Within and outside Africa, the Yoruba trace common descent to the renowned Oduduwa and their origin is popularly traced to Ifẹ where they believe the act of the creation began. Hence, the saying *"Ifẹ Oodaiye, Ilẹ Owurọ, ibi ti ojumọ ti i mọ wa* (meaning Ifẹ, the land of the most ancient days, where the dawn of the day was first experienced).[5]

Irrespective of the condition they find themselves either in time past or present, they have never had a doubt about the usefulness of their historical traditions and the necessity for individuals to know something on community/sub-group/tribe customs and origins. Among the Yoruba therefore, such who show 'gross ignorance of community traditions or customs is described as a bastard (a son who did not get to know his father). Humanity has recorded its history and transmitted its culture from one generation to another through communication, be it verbal or non-verbal communication systems. The Yoruba have of course, expressed their feelings and beliefs concerning the relevance of a consciousness of the past in the present in their verbal and non-verbal means of communication. It is therefore, necessary to x-ray some of these indigenous knowledge systems, re-establish them and stamp our authority on what is our own in order to avoid cultural alienation.

Communication and the Communication Processes

Like the popular Yoruba aphorism, *ọrọ nii yọ obi l'ápò, ọrọ naa si loun yọ ida l'ápó* (words softly spoken make peace, that aggressively expressed lead to violence); communication is indispensable and its sensitive role in national development or national disaster cannot be underestimated. Olatunji attests that

> Communication lies at the heart of all social existence and can be regarded as an essential feature of community life. Its impact on the mind has become so great in modern societies that, whether or not the fact is acknowledged, it tends to influence the attitudes adopted and even the actions taken by the peoples and governments all over the world...Since, where communication is lacking, ignorance of others takes root-a source of mistrust and ultimately of tension and conflict. And solving this problem could make all mankind more aware of its solidarity, and so spare it the tensions that have so often, in the course of history, sparked off serious conflicts and destruction on a vast scale.[6]

Therefore, communication is a vital aspect of all human interactions and organizations through language. It is a combination of human and material resources as well. The administration of any society, organization and either large or small scale companies depends largely on effective and efficient communication. If communication is "the

transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with information being understood by the receiver",[7] communication is therefore, a process between the informant (sender) and the recipient, be it an individual or group of peoples.

From age long, speech has been the most convenient vehicle for the expression of thought. Human thought usually precedes speech and in concentrating one's thought on a particular person or thing, one's will can be projected mentally and consequently transformed into action. To understand how the process works, we begin with by describing its elements: participants (who), messages (what), context (when), channels (how), presence or absence of noise (distractions) and feedback (reaction).[8] It can be deduced that it is only when these elements of communication are taken into cognizance and synchronized by the messenger/actor via a synergy of verbal delivery and elements of non-verbal communication that we can talk of effective communication between the encoder and the decoder.

As indicated in the adapted diagram (Figure 1), traditional or modern, five main processes of communication model abound as follows:

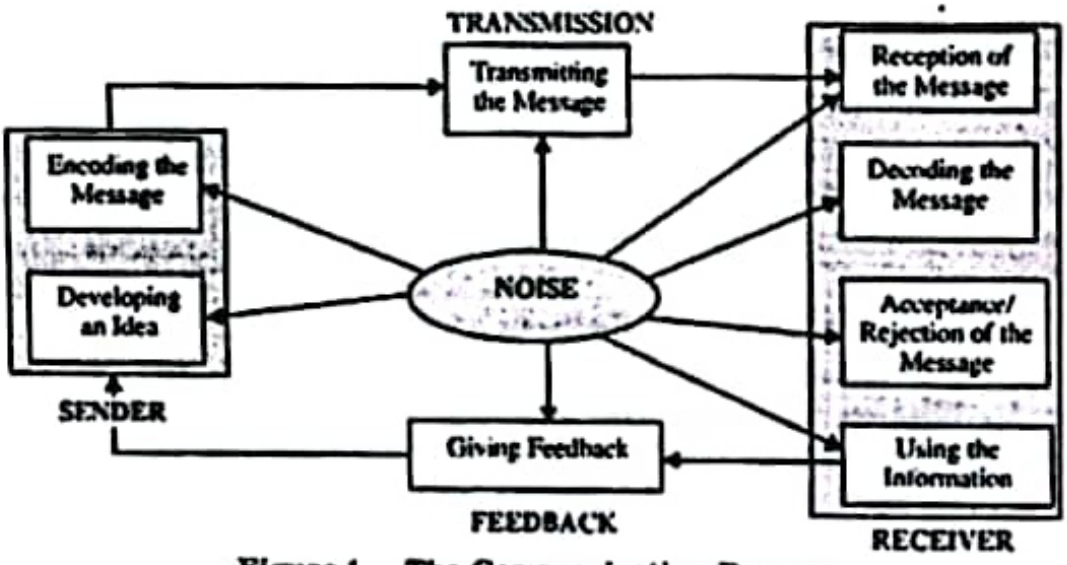


Figure 1 The Communication Process [9]

Source: Surbhi, Rawat. "5 Main Processes of Communication (With Diagram)".*SurbhiRawat*.28 August 2021. Web: https://www.businessmanagementideas.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/clip_image004_thumb9.jpg

i. The Sender: Communication starts with the sender, who initiates the message and encodes it in a way (verbal and/or non-verbal) that can be comprehended by the receiver..
ii. Transmission: The sender's message is transmitted via a channel (an emissary, letter, telephone, television or computer) to the receiver. A channel connects the sender to the receiver.

iii. Noise: Noise is anything that has a disturbing influence on the message (i.e. ambiguous symbols that lead to faulty encoding or decoding, an inattentive receiver, gestures and postures that may distort the message, a poor network connection, and prejudices obstructing the poor understanding of a message). Noise hinders communication, and it may occur at the sender's end, during transmission, or at the receiver's end.

iv. The Receiver: The receiver is the person to whom the message is transmitted. Decoding is the process of translation of symbols encoded by the sender into ideas that can be understood for necessary action or reaction. Communication is considered effective only when both the sender and the receiver attach similar meanings to the symbols that compose the message.

v. Feedback: This is the message generated by the receiver in response to the sender's original message. This ensures that the message has been effectively encoded, transmitted and decoded.

Purpose and Means of Traditional Communication in Yorubaland

Like earlier mentioned, the same principles apparently underline science and technology, be it modern or indigenous. The knowledge of the fundamentals of communication is germane. Although the indigenous communication systems may be considered old (traditional), they remain what essentially sustain the information needs of the rural population till present. The aim of traditional communication system (informal or formal) is to primarily serve as a source of information, education and entertainment to the people at the grassroots. In other words, communication from time immemorial has been a veritable tool for exchange of ideas, information, experience, thoughts or opinions, from one person or group to another. Prior the colonial era that ushered in modern trends in the communication system; certain Yoruba concepts (via concept's label-term) abound in the mode and processes of indigenous communication system which need be clarified. Before what became known as *Ìwé Ìròyìn* (written/published news) were *Ìròyìn* (verbal communication/news) which could be either via human dialogue (*ìbá ra □ni sòrò*) or non-verbal/symbolic communication (*ìbá ra □ni sòròlái lo ohùn □nu*). The premium placed on authenticity/reliability of any news/information (*òkodoro ìròyìn/ojúlówó ìròyìn*) is in the preference for an eye witness account which is captured in the Yoruba saying, *Ìròyìn kò tó àmójúbá, □ni tó bá dé bè ló lè sọ* (seeing is believing). Oral news (though with every tendency to overtime fade away, get distorted or lose its originality) can be kept forever as history via oral tradition passed from one generation to the other. Hence, the concept of "*Bí ọmọdé kò bá bá ìtàn, ó máa bá àróbá*" (meaning oral tradition brings the past within the reach of the youth). Some other relevant terms that need be mentioned to describe the nature and types of news include: *ìròyìn kàyéfì* (amazing news), *ìròyìn tó ka ni láiyà/ is□l□ ni yàjóyajó* (breaking news), *ọrọ tó ún lọ* (current affairs), *ìkéde* (announcements), *àbọ* (feedbacks/reports), ìfọrọwérọ (dialogue), etc. Information (decisions, dissemination of news) therefore, became vital in the day-to-day, periodic and

iii. Noise: Noise is anything that has a disturbing influence on the message (i.e. ambiguous symbols that lead to faulty encoding or decoding, an inattentive receiver, gestures and postures that may distort the message, a poor network connection, and prejudices obstructing the poor understanding of a message). Noise hinders communication, and it may occur at the sender's end, during transmission, or at the receiver's end.

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miscellaneous activities in the process or after every meeting (*ìpádé)*, events (*ay□y□)*, anniversary/ceremonies (*àjòdún/ọdún*), special programmes (*àkànse èto*), hearings/judgement (ìgbéjó), etc.[10] Lucky and Frank attest that "in Nigerian traditional society, the means of disseminating information varied from one ethnic group to another. In whatever form, the traditional system is used to achieve its aim, it is undoubtedly a success factor in a developing society."[11] In the traditional Yoruba society, information was disseminated at different centresor venues via recognized officials, recognizable sounds, signs and symbols.

In order to appreciate the level of initiatives of the ancient Yoruba societies; measure the level of modernity over the years and showcase the resilience of the indigenous knowledge; it is necessary to x-ray some of these indigenous communication systems so that the present and future generations would not get disconnected from genuine traditional knowledge. The concern of the study is more on the formal (organized) communication than the informal transference media (oral communication).[12] Many of them of course find placement in Wilson's broad categorization of traditional forms of communication in different parts of Nigeria as follows: Idiophones; Membranophones; Aaerophone; Symbolography; Signals; Signs; Objectifics; Colour schemes; Music; Extra-mundane communication and Symbolic display.[13]

Town Criers: In the traditional Yoruba society, the town crier was regarded as the traditional information minister (news agent, correspondent, news reporter), regarded as the only credible source of information (still found in most rural societies today). The town crier (s) under the directive of the *Ọba* (king) and Council was officially deployed to disseminate information to all dwellers from street to street. At the beat/sound of his recognizable gong and audible projection of voice, villagers would gather to hear him or pay rapt attention from indoor to the message. Usually, he would go slowly and stop at intervals to clearly relay the information from the beginning of the town to the end of it. A repeat of same message was done at both the to and fro movements before he finally retired to the palace. The resonant bronze plate (gong) commonly called the *agogo* was struck with a mallet at specific counts first to catch the attention of the listeners that gathered or at indoor before the message was finally disseminated. The timing in most cases was usually at dawn before villagers set out for their routine works or in the evening time when majority would have returned. Relayed information could be categorized under directives, news/information, advertisement, public relations, entertainment and education.

Body Language (Gesticulations) and Signals: As actions speak louder than voice, a popular and effective means of traditional communication was via body language or symbolic displays associated with attributes such as smiling, winking of the eyes, sticking out the tongues, conspicuous silence, assembly boycotts, etc towards the expressions of anger, disgust, fear, disappointment or happiness. Also evident and very effective were physical embodiments of the message in the form of fire (used by rescuing team usually

> Hence, the king and any of his councilors could not decode the contrasting message until later events unraveled. [14]

The latter, Ogunlola ended up becoming the Soun of Ogbomoso after he helped Oyo to defeat the invisible and dreaded Elemosho.

Drums/Language of the Drum: One characteristic of traditional music is the use of musical instruments to reproduce human speech and convey signals. Jolayemi notes that "the various social events with which music is most usually associated include religious worship, war, therapy magic, work, children's games, sports, installation of chiefs and kings, festivals and ceremonies pertaining to the life cycle (such as birth rites, infant rites, puberty rites, marriage and funeral rites)."[15] Drums were used not only for entertainments but also as a means of communication among the people. It could be used to convey messages such as the death of a dignitary, arrival of a visiting or passing king/chiefs or used in times of wars. For instance, Ologundudu attests that

> The talking drum can steer up an uprising among rival *Egungun* groups...Gbedu drum is a large drum played for the Alaafin of Oyo usually played on very important occasion like the coronation or announcing of the death of an Alaafin. Kósó drum is usually to wake the Alaafin up in the morning or greet him goodnight. Dundun is the talking drum.... Agogo Ifa is the bell played by the Babalawo when reciting Iyẹrẹ for Orunmila....Bata drums are special drums played for Sango.[16]

Fabunmi also attests that "Pẹrẹ Awo drum is the drum used by Orunmila to announce the date of the festival to his followers... Pere Awo drum is always accompanied with the sound of a bell."[17] In Yorubaland, the talking drum is able to imitate all the tones and gibes in Yoruba speech. Yoruba drums perform both rhythmic and communicative functions. Yoruba drum may signal danger i.e. *kangun, kangun, kangun, ibi kan ni a kangun si* (meaning gradually, gradually, it will end or lead somewhere); mobilize people for manual or communal work (*Bawo loni o ti se? Oni a daa* meaning how will today be? It will be well); to caution or warn children against bad behaviour and imminent wreckage i.e. *kọlọmọ kilọ fọmọ rẹ, oni a ro* (meaning parents warn your children, it will be tough today); express solidarity and announce communal war i.e. *"Bole d'ogun ko d'ogun, bole dija ko dija* (meaning if it can turn to war, let it be, if it can turn to battle, let it be); to abuse, encourage, entertain, etc.[18] This confirms Omu's submission that "it is widely acknowledged that when some of the drums are expertly sounded, they are capable of conveying specific meaning."[19]

The language and beating of talking drum are also going into extinction. Like it is commonly said, *'ẹni to bamu kọngọ dani lo mọ ede ayan* (it is the drummer and those versed in the skill of drumming that can interpret the language of the drummer). Only few people from the *Ayan* family can play and interpret the talking drum today because people are not interested in communicating in Yoruba language again let alone in the local dialect. It suffices to say that whoever does not understand Yoruba language can in any way understand or interpret the language of the drum. Though the importance of the music cannot be denied in Yoruba society, patronage given to the traditional music today is low as foreign music seems trending.

Power of the Spoken Words (Literal Conversation/Speeches): The unique language of man is the language of culture, which is a knowledge system developed within the context of experience thereby showing an experimental system at work. The Yoruba language is the key to the understanding of Yoruba culture. There is no doubt about the power of speech to mobilize strong feelings, prejudices, desires, fears and all the forces of public opinion. The power of the words in the process of communication has a vocative potency which can create or destroy. Many renowned orators, politicians and elder statesmen had used mere power of the spoken word (language) to inform, persuade and control behaviour, create and express social cohesion, transmit information or move the audience. The likes of Cicero, Pericles, Patrick Henry, Martin Luther King Jr, Woodrow Wilson, Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Adlai Stevenson, Adolf Hitler, Nelson Mandela, Barrack Obama, Alaafin Ajagbo of Oyo, Ògèdèngbé Agbógungbọ́rọ̀ of Ijeshaland, Fagbamila Ajagunla of Ila-Orangun, Aare Latoosa of Ibadan, Lagelu of Ibadan, Kurunmi of Ijaiye, Fabunmi of Okemesi, Afonja of Ilorin, Akintoye of Lagos, etc– successfully used propaganda and speeches to inform, persuade, arouse and mobilize at one time or the other.

Magical words: The magical power of the word was utilized by the ancient Greeks, Romans, Indians and other groups of people on the globe. The Indians for example, recited the "Mantras" to control the world around them.[20] In the same vein, aside the literal conversation, words to the Yoruba has a very powerful spiritual significance as it is believed that there is power in the spoken words. Ologundudu attests thus:

> According to Yoruba oral tradition, the ancient people used to be able to talk to the other elements of nature. It has been told in many cultures that ancient people have been able to talk to the river to open for them to pass or provide more water for agriculture for the people. Many of the traditional Yoruba believe that knowledgeable people can use invocation and incantations to change the nature of things like mood, feelings of people and different elements. They believe there are specific energies in most matters that can be invoked. Therefore, they can invoke the river water to

> have the properties of rainwater...turn ordinary water into stomach ache medicine. There are lists of ritual items that may be invoked in Yoruba. However, in order to properly invoke the Irunmalẹs and these elements, one must use the Yoruba language.[21]

Proverbs (Òwe)- Proverb is the hallmark of communication among the Yoruba, as it is among other Africans. Aristotle describes proverbs as a 'remnant from old philosophy preserved amid countless destruction by reason of its brevity and fitness for use".[22] Achebe in his renowned novel, *Things Fall Apart* describes proverbs as "the palm oil with which oil is eaten".[23] Whatever successes the Yoruba record in the moral and religious sense was partly traceable to their emphasis on wisdom of life through the recurrent use of proverbs and philosophical sayings. Often used among the ancient Yoruba was the use of proverbs usually to drive home a point. Wise and knowledgeable people and leaders in Yoruba societies were/are expected to be versed in the use and understanding of proverbs. Proverbs are identified with the sage and so it was customary that any young that would use a proverb in the presence of the elders must first acknowledge symbolically his oral trespass into an area considered the exclusive preserve of the learned elders on seat (*O se bi owe ẹyin agba*). Oladele Taiwo does not only describe proverb as *Owe lesin oro, oro lesin owe, ti oro ba sonu, owe la o fi wa* (meaning proverbs are the horses that we use to find the words when the words get lost);[24]hein his earlier publication attests thus:

> Proverbs are the stock in trade of old people who use them to convey precious moral lessons, warnings, and advice, since they make a great impact on the mind than ordinary words. The judicious use of proverbs is always regarded as a sign of wit.[25]

Examples of proverbs often used to drive home a point include: *Ojo to nrọ lọwọ ti ko da, a o lee sọ iye eniyan ti yio pa* (We cannot say how many people would a rain falling incessantly will beat); *Iwa laa fi nri ọmọ adugbo fẹ* (It is good character that can make us marry); *ti a ba ni bi ejo se gun to ni ao fi dana ti a o fi sun, a o sun ile nina* (If we want to make fire as long as the full length of a snake we have killed, we will burn the whole house); *Eniyan o tan ara ẹ bi iya ọlọmọ kan wọnni ọmọ rẹ nja nita, oni ewo ninu wọn*? (A self- deceiving person like a woman who has child, she was informed her child was fighting outside and she asked which one of them); etc.[26]

Philosophical Words: Slightly different from proverbs, philosophical Yoruba sayings are wise statements used to convey common truism on the matters of life. The basic difference being that, while the presentation of proverb can be indirect and symbolic, the latter is usually a direct affirmation of wise statements, which serve as guiding principles to people. Hence, in the traditional Yoruba society, the maturity of a person was not solely

determined by age but by wisdom acquired and displayed especially through effective and apt use of proverbs. These media of communication (proverbs, philosophical sayings) were useful vehicles for the transmission of ethical teachings against several vices and worldliness. For example, the Yoruba believe that a person's enemies might be found among his family. Hence, the philosophical saying, *ẹhinkule ni ọta wa, ile ni aseni ngbe*(A witch outside one's family cannot successfully operate against a person without the cooperation of the witches in one's family). A typical example of philosophical sayings on the nature of human behaviour (falsehood, dishonesty, fraud, betrayal, distrust) include: *Ẹni ani o kini lẹhin o fẹgun sọwọ, ẹni ani o fẹni loju o fata sẹnu, ẹni a ba fẹhin ti ka mu didun ọsan, kikan ni n funni mu. Ẹni aba finu han, o kuku jalarokiri ẹni* (He whom one asks to help scrub one's back hides a thorn in his hands, he whom one asks to blow out the dirt in one's eyes, puts pepper in his mouth. He whom one depends on for the sweetness of oranges, gives one the sour. He on whom one relies as confidant is indeed one's betrayal.[27] Atypical example to express the undependability of man is the saying, *Ọwọ epo laraye nba nila, wọn kii bani la tẹjẹ* connoting that when a person is poor, most people especially the untrue friends dissociate but when a person is rich, he suddenly becomes attractive for opportunists. Usually, rich persons who suffer unfortunate reversals of their status witness gradual desertion by those who previously hung unto them or rather their wealth. The mark of true friendship in Yorubaland is consistency but on the final analysis, God remains the final succour for man and this is a major lesson for those who are rich not to build castles in the air with their wealth.[28]

***Ọfọ* (Incantations):** The fundamental performative roles of language in *Ọfọ*, the Yoruba incantations cannot be over-emphasized. *Ọfọ* is the generic term for all categories of Yoruba incantations ranging from □*gèdé* or *ògèdè*, *àásán* (both usually for offensive purposes), □*wúre* (that which brings goodluck), *madarikan* (that for self defence), *atúbi* (that which unties evil), *àsàpa* (that which is used to kill), □*sọyè* (that which is used to activate memory), *àyájọ* (narrative incantation often used in the well- being of man).[29] Words in the forms of spells or curses (like Alaafin Aole's curses on the Yoruba nation) are agents of power even though words and rites are usually combined. The traditional Yoruba society attached great importance to *Ọfọ* as a means of solving their social, political and (wealth) economic problems. *Ọfọ*, the verbal aspect of the traditional medicine involves the uttering of words arranged in a set pattern believed to have a magical power to control the world around it. For an*Ọfọ* to be effective, the reciter must utter the right words and sentences, often in a particular sequence. Ajayi submits that

> For an Ọfọ to be effective, the word must be uttered correctly – any minor fault in rendition may make an ọfọ inefficacious. A change in the wording or wrong pronunciation or technique of reciting a particular ọfọ may diminish or nullify its power.[30]

It should be emphasized however, that *ọfọ* may be used for both bad and good wishes across every sphere of human activities. For example, *ọfọ* may be used to combat evil forces, make a person become invisible in the face of imminent danger, cure various diseases, aid women in the labour processes during delivery, gain the favour of people, secure total well-being and so on. Once the user of *ọfọ* knows and calls the personal name(s) of the addressee three times (*Alagbaja* the son of ...), it is believed that such would respond instantly and accordingly to the call except the targeted himself has the knowledge of the secret names of death (*iku*) and/or diseases (*aarun*) to nullify the pronouncements. Fabunmi gives such counter recitals to ward off death and evil as follows:

> A ki mọ orukọ iku ko pani; Aki mọ orukọ arun ko gbeni de; Apenrenpete lorukọ a pe iku, Iku o ni pami ni rewerewe; Ọlarinnako lorukọ a n pe arun. Arun oni sọmi lọjọ (meaning One does not know the name of death for it to kill, one does not know the name of disease for it to hang one up. Aperentete is the name we call diseases, death will not kill me prematurely. Olarinnako is the name we call disease. Disease will not flourish in my life).[31]

Leap Frogging Development- How Many Miles Away?

Beyond Yorubaland, it is good to know whether the African situation is similar to the crocodile theory or not. The theory argues that genetically, a crocodile is a killer, and no matter how much training you give to it, it will kill whenever the opportunity arises. This is opposed to the situation of the elephant, which if well trained, and barring excess palm-wine, will remain submissive. We look at the African problem and ask whether we have a genetic problem or an environmental one? If our problem is genetic, we might as well forget it, but if it is an environmental or historical one, then we can develop new strategies to redefine the future of our people. ...considering the noble works of our ancestors in Egypt, Ghana, Mali and the likes that were for a long time the most prominent and dominant culture in the world, it becomes obvious that our problem is not genetic but a historical transgression. A close look at our history and culture reveals many qualities which we ought to be proud of. For example, our ability through history to maintain our humanism, resilience, spirituality and psychological atonement in the face of all the worst adversities.[32]

In view of the increasing scientific and modern technological advances, the catch up game (by the third world countries) with the developed world seems to be practically unachievable especially in Africa where there is little or no recognition to indigenous initiatives whether then or now. For instance, in India, Gandhi said he was going to apply aspects of so called western science but not its tool and he started what he referred to as numeracy of ancient crafts and tools in India. The Indians used certain aspects of their

'western education" without using its tools. It is quite evident that the Indians, going by their level of development and self-reliance, have benefitted in large measure from this strategy and remain attached to their traditions. It is on this note that Akindiji Akinola, advised, "I am of the view that here in Africa, we have to look inwards to recognize the very positive part of our indigenous knowledge systems and utilize these elements in our development"[33]

Our resilient history has ascertained our capabilities and what is needed is the emancipation of African mind. If the Brazilian government could introduce the compulsory study of African History and Yoruba into the primary and secondary school's curriculum,[34] should Yoruba Language and Culture be disdained by most Yoruba themselves in Yorubaland and elsewhere? "Language constitutes a basis of a people's personality while contributing to their creative genius... A people renouncing the use of its language are doomed to stagnation, and even to retrogression and to disappear completely as a people.[35]

Consequently, in the face of the continuities and effectiveness of the indigenous knowledge system in Yorubaland and elsewhere, it is obvious that the two can go together or as an alternative option. For example, in place of today's ambulance, the fresh unfolding frond of the palm tree usually greenish yellow tied at the front and back of a vehicle indicates that the vehicle is carrying a corpse to his home town for burial. Similarly, as trade through the market system was one of the means that enhanced information dissemination in the traditional Yoruba, their markets still serve not only as centres of trade but also as principal agents of communication, information and recreation. The trading forum provides opportunities to meet friends and kinsmen from far and near distances during which the traders exchange news. While the use of modern communication facilities (radio, television, print media, cell phone, dailies, internet, etc) helps to carry non-indigenes along in rural governance; it does not promote the development of traditional systems of communication. As the indigenous knowledge system had its own challenges ranging from non-uniformity of language across, difficulty in understanding complexities in technical development, little or no technical input of learners outside the traditional environment; so also, the modern communication system has its own peculiar problems such as poor network facilities, distortions, exorbitant costs, etc. Therefore, the use of both media if properly integrated will increase effective communication and close the gap between traditional and modern means of communication.

Conclusion

The term, 'traditional' or 'indigenous' is considered by apologists of modernity as primitive and archaic. This paper examined the resilience of Indigenous Knowledge System: x-raying the traditional communication system in pre-colonial Yorubaland.In doing that, it first discussed communication as a vital aspect of human interactions and

organizations through language (verbal and non-verbal) and then described the common communication processes, be it 'traditional' or modern. With specific references drawn from Yorubaland, the purpose and means of traditional communication were described alongside since communication or information dissemination are twin concepts that can be interchangeably used to describe the method of spreading news within a society or community.The submissions in the paper revealed that the varied means of disseminating information across the Nigerian traditional societies undoubtedly achieved the purposed aim and objectives as they did not only serve as a source of information, but also education and entertainment to the people at the grassroots.

Ultimately speaking, it is the dynamic interplay of environmental factors and human activities that accounts for the terrestrial process known as history. Because of the biological continuity of our species, coupled with mankind's unflagging inventiveness, each generation has been able to build upon the experiences and contributions of its predecessors - so that continuity and change in human affairs proceed together. This is in the case of indigenous knowledge system and modern science and technology not only in Yorubaland, but in general Nigeria. Even though indigenous system of communication is in the face of modernity considered outdated, primitive or mutually antagonistic to what is generally known as modern systems of communication, the fact remains that they remain what essentially sustain the information needs of the rural population. It can be summed up that traditional communication system was naturally believed with no modicum of doubt, the audience was familiar with the sources and the codes employed by the source; it was not expensive since it required little or no cost, it integrated different segments of society through their cultural and social gatherings, and its transactional nature made feedback immediate.

On the one hand, the author expressed optimism on the resilience of indigenous communication system since through globalization; indigenous communication system has crossed Nigeria's border and has been internationalized, thereby promoting Yoruba religion and culture globally. On the other hand, the author expressed pessimism considering the obvious reality that Yoruba heritage is presently a legacy misplaced in motion as it is obvious that the Yoruba nation like any other Nigerian group is mired in a crisis of development vis-à-vis modern science and technology. Lamentably, the country is failing to win the catch up game with the developed world as there seems to be no Nigerian nation that is in command of its destiny because indigenous values-social, economic and technological abilities and breakthroughs and cultures were officially banned and substituted with foreign ones. Consequent on this observations and findings, the study provided the key to our quest to free ourselves in several ways from mental slavery as it is worrisome to note among others that "the standing tragedy of all Blacks and Africans wherever they may be is that their tongues have been pulled out and they must speak in strange tongues."[36] Every form of communication has its language and symbol embedded in a cultural milieu. Traditional medium should, therefore, be used in

conjunction with modern media which people are familiar with in order to make for participatory communication to enhance national development. It is hoped that the present and future generations will live to keep the traditional systems of communication alive as well as improve on it. In an attempt to emphasize or revamp the place of existing knowledge (indigenous knowledge) in sustainable development; government policies, sciences and technologies should be geared towards introducing new ideas through the existing ones.

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