

# **An Analytical Consideration of Obosima's Cultural Identity Dynamism in the 20th Century**

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## **Abstract**

The unique cultural identity of Obosima which include traditional festivals, marriage customs, age-grade systems, and oral traditions as well as her cultural heritage have been evolving over the years, influenced by various factors such as Christianity, modernization, urbanisation, formal education, and migration. The paper examines the dynamic interactions between culture, tradition, continuity and change in Obosima as well as the factors driving these transformations. It begins by defining key concepts and then investigates how the cultural identity of Obosima transformed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The paper, using the historical methodological approach which employs the use of oral data gathered through semi-structured and unstructured interviews with ozo title holders, age-grade elders and documentary data consisting of books and journal articles, argues that the cultural identity of the Obosima people is not static but rather transforming to absorb and adapt to modern taste. The paper advocates for cultural policy development at local and national levels, promoting initiatives that support the sustainability of traditional practices amidst contemporary societal changes. It concludes by underscoring the need for inclusive policies and the promotion of reciprocity in build cohesive societies.

**Keywords:** Culture, Cultural Identity, Dynamism, Change, Evolution

## **Introduction**

Obosima, a town located in the Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria, is a community rich in cultural heritage. At the heart of Obosima's history is the six foundational lineages, represented by the six sons of the progenitor. Okem, Ngwu, Agor, Oronma, Onyere, and Ohabele. These sons laid the foundation of the six major villages of Obosima: Umuokem, Umungwu, Umuagor, Umuoronma, Umuonyere, and Ohabele. Oral traditions therefore function as both historical records and cultural frameworks, explaining the genealogical and spatial organization of the town. The settlement of these six families gradually gave rise to Obosima's village structure, with each lineage establishing its own compound and expanding into larger villages. These lineages served as the fundamental political and social units of governance, with each village exercising relative autonomy while maintaining allegiance to the collective identity of Obosima. The personality traits of the six sons ranging from Okem's peacefulness to Ngwu's stubbornness and Ohabele's arrogance were mirrored in the values and dispositions of their descendants, shaping inter-village relations and the political temperament of the town as a whole

(Uchendu, 1965). This pattern of growth is consistent with Igbo social organization, where towns are typically composed of extended families branching into distinct lineages and villages. Predominantly inhabited by the Igbo people, Obosima has maintained a strong adherence to traditional practices, including age-grade systems, festivals, and communal rituals. These cultural elements have historically played a significant role in the social organisation and identity of the community. The age-grade system, a cornerstone of Igbo social structure, has been instrumental in community development and social cohesion in Obosima. This system organizes individuals into groups based on age, assigning them specific roles and responsibilities within the community. Through these age grades, members contribute to communal projects, enforce societal norms, and participate in decision-making processes.

## **Studies on Culture and Cultural Identity**

Culture is complex and to a large extent has no rigid definition. When people identify with a culture, they tend to embrace traditions that have been passed down over time. When the cultural identities of people with a culture erode, the people can lose their sense of self, place and belonging.

Culture refers to shared values and norms; it is about identity which is both complex and dynamic. Identity is formed through present or historical experiences (social forces); put differently, how we see ourselves and how others see us (Srivastava, 2003). Tylor (1871) posits that culture is a complex whole which consists of knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and habits acquired by man as a member of society. DiBianca (2021) argues that culture focuses on historically-based beliefs, values and practices that are actively constructed and shared by people within communities.

Cultural identity largely centres on cultural values and practices and how individuals perceive their role in a particular cultural group (Schwartz et al., 2008). Cultural identity is variedly layered, intersectional, and ever-changing in all social contexts-religion, family history, community, occupation, politics and language (Holliday, 2010). Cultural identity comprises a people's beliefs, values, inclinations, tastes, language and practices (Joseph, 2012). Cultural identity an individual or a community is forged, created, transmitted, and reproduced from generation to generation. Cultural identity encompasses the beliefs, norms and practices that connect individuals to their heritage and to each other, often expressed through traditions, clothing and behaviours (Baskin, 2024). In other words, it is a sense of belonging to a particular group shaped by factors such as ancestry, ethnicity, religion and social class.

## **Traditional Governance and Leadership**

Traditional governance and leadership in Obosima town before the late twentieth century was deeply rooted in indigenous systems of authority that combined kinship, age-grade institutions, and community-based councils. At the center of this governance was the council of elders, composed of respected lineage heads who represented various kindreds within the town. These elders were entrusted with decision-making on matters ranging from land disputes, communal labor, inter-family conflicts, and religious practices. Power was largely decentralized, with no single ruler exercising absolute control, but rather a consultative system that emphasized consensus and the preservation of harmony (Nzimiro, 1972). This system was effective in maintaining unity and preventing excessive concentration of power, especially in a society where kinship and collective responsibility were highly valued; the elders' council was the real government because no major decision could be taken without their agreement. The governance of Obosima town reflected the

wider Igbo pattern of republicanism and participatory democracy before the advent of modern state structures. Another major pillar of governance in Obosima was the age-grade system (otu ogbo), which played both administrative and executive roles in local leadership. Age-grades, consisting of men and women within the same age cohort, were responsible for executing communal labor such as road clearing, market sanitation, and security patrols. These institutions were highly respected and functioned as the link between the elders, who deliberated, and the youth, who implemented community decisions (Afigbo, 1972). The age-grade system not only helped in organizing labour but also instilled discipline in young people through communal obligations and sanctions (Duru, 2025). This reveals the participatory dimension of traditional governance in Obosima, where every social group contributed to leadership, ensuring inclusiveness and accountability. Such systems were resistant to authoritarianism and instead encouraged collective responsibility, thereby maintaining the stability of Obosima society for generations. The role of traditional religious authorities was also central to leadership in Obosima as the town's spiritual leaders, such as priests of local deities and custodians of sacred groves, were integral to governance because political decisions were often intertwined with religious sanction. For example, the selection of lineage heads or the timing of agricultural activities required ritual consultation with oracles and priests, who were considered mediators between the physical and spiritual realms (Isichei, 1976). No one dared to go against the priest's pronouncement, because it was believed to carry the authority of the gods (Onyemauche, 2024). Thus, spiritual leaders were not merely religious functionaries but vital participants in governance, ensuring that communal order was maintained through a balance of political authority and spiritual legitimacy. This relationship between governance and religion shows that leadership in Obosima was holistic, encompassing both material and metaphysical dimensions. The advent of colonial rule and the introduction of the warrant chief system disrupted the indigenous governance structures in Obosima. The colonial administration sought to centralize power by imposing warrant chiefs, who were sometimes chosen without community consensus, thereby undermining the consultative elders' council (Afigbo, 1972).

Archival records reveal petitions from community members protesting the appointment of warrant chiefs who were accused of corruption and favoritism (NAE, 1916). Many people resented these imposed leaders, leading to periodic tensions between colonial authorities and the indigenous governance system. Despite this imposition, Obosima people maintained their traditional councils and age-grade structures informally, ensuring that their indigenous institutions continued to function alongside, and sometimes in opposition to, colonial administration. This dual system of governance persisted until the post-colonial period, when local government reforms gradually integrated traditional rulers into Nigeria's modern political framework. By the early 1980s, traditional governance in Obosima had begun to evolve into a hybrid system that combined indigenous authority with state recognition. The institution of the Eze of Obosima emerged as a formalized traditional rulership, recognized by both the community and the state government. This role was not entirely alien, as it drew legitimacy from the elders and lineage heads who endorsed the ruler, but it also represented a departure from the older republican model. Afigbo (1981) argues, the introduction of centralized kingship in formerly republican Igbo societies reflected both colonial influence and post-independence state policies. The acceptance of the Eze institution in Obosima was gradual, as many community members initially feared the concentration of power in one individual but the people eventually embraced the Eze because it gave the town a recognised

identity in dealings with neighboring towns and state authorities (Ugoji, 2025). Thus, the traditional governance and leadership system of Obosima reflected a dynamic process of continuity and change, where indigenous participatory structures adapted to external influences while maintaining their core values of consensus and collective responsibility.

## Marriage and Family Systems

Marriage and family systems in Obosima town were deeply rooted in traditional Igbo cultural values that emphasised kinship, lineage preservation, and communal obligations. In traditional Igbo societies, marriage was not just a union between two individuals but rather an alliance between families, serving both social and economic purposes (Achebe 1987). Families regarded marriage as a strategic means of consolidating alliances, expanding kinship networks, and ensuring the continuation of ancestral lineages. Opara (2025) notes that in earlier times, a man's worth was partly measured by the number of wives and children he had, as this was seen as a symbol of wealth, labor force, and prestige. This resonates with Elizabeth Isichei's (1976) observation that polygyny was common across Igboland, driven by agrarian needs and social expectations. Marriage was never solely an individual decision but rather a collective family and communal responsibility, grounded in cultural and economic imperatives. The process of marriage reflected broader Igbo traditions but also had peculiarities shaped by local customs. cursory observations suggest that courtship often began informally, sometimes through communal events such as market gatherings or festivals, before progressing to formal family negotiations. Bridewealth (ihu uka) played a significant role in cementing the marriage agreement. Without the exchange of bridewealth, the marriage was not recognized, no matter the level of affection between the man and woman (Onwuchekwa, 2025). This aligns with Ifi Amadiume's (1987) Anthropological study, which emphasizes that in Igbo societies, bridewealth was not merely a material transaction but rather a symbolic exchange that legitimized marriage and established the rights of the husband over the wife's reproductive capacity. The payment of bridewealth also had spiritual significance, as it was believed to appease the ancestors and prevent calamities that might arise from unrecognized unions. Such practices reinforced communal control over marriage, ensuring that it was not left to the whims of individuals but governed by social norms and ancestral obligations. Family systems were predominantly patrilineal, with strong emphasis on the extended family structure. The nuclear family was subsumed under the wider umunna (kindred), which acted as both a political and social unit. Children were considered the collective responsibility of the lineage, and communal child-rearing was the norm. This sense of collective responsibility is corroborated by Kalu (2003), who stresses that Igbo family systems functioned as miniature communities, with each member playing a role in sustaining the household economy and moral values. Family authority rested with the male household head, but women equally exercised influence, especially in domestic management and in organizing female solidarity groups such as the umuada. These kinship networks reinforced communal unity and ensured that both men and women contributed meaningfully to family and societal stability. Marriage in Obosima also reflected gender roles and expectations within the family. While men were primarily regarded as providers, women played crucial roles in agriculture, trade, and child rearing. Igbo women historically derived power not from political offices but from their indispensability in the domestic and economic spheres (Van Allen, 1976). Polygynous households further highlighted women's agency, as wives often managed different household farms, and co-wives navigated both competition and cooperation. These dynamics underscored the

complementarity of gender roles in sustaining family systems. However, as Christianity and modernisation began to penetrate local life, missionary influence discouraged polygyny and promoted monogamy, creating conflicts between Christian converts and traditionalists. For example, Pa. Augustine Eke (2025) explains that the Church often refused to bless marriages involving multiple wives, thereby pushing many families into redefining marital arrangements. In other words, Christianity in Igboland reconfigured gender relations and marriage systems by undermining polygynous practices and introducing Western ideals of family life. Despite these pressures, many Obosima families continued to practice traditional marriage systems well towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reflecting a gradual negotiation between continuity and change.

## **Festivals and Rituals**

Festivals in Obosima in the 20<sup>th</sup> century remained central to the community's cultural identity, functioning as markers of time, expressions of gratitude, and platforms for reinforcing social cohesion. The Agba Festival, celebrated every November, stood out as the most prominent event in the ritual calendar. Oral testimonies recall that the festival was a four-day event marked by distinctive ritual stages, each bearing spiritual and communal significance (Osuji, 2023). The first day was devoted to cleansing rites, during which elders performed libations and purification ceremonies at village shrines, believed to cleanse the land of misfortunes. The second day involved communal feasting, where households contributed yam, palm wine, and goat meat for collective meals. On the third day, masquerades emerged, dramatizing myths of the ancestors and reinforcing the sacred presence of the dead among the living. Finally, the fourth day was devoted to thanksgiving prayers, where elders invoked blessings for agricultural prosperity in the next season. These ritual performances demonstrated the deep interconnection between religion, ecology, and social order in Obosima. The New Yam Festival (Emumehe Iri Ji) also remained a prominent ritual, especially for farming households who viewed it as the symbolic renewal of the agricultural cycle. Interviews with community farmers suggest that no family consumed new yam before the collective ritual sacrifice led by village elders, emphasizing the communal nature of agricultural blessings (Osuji, 2023). Beyond its agricultural relevance, the festival was also a moment of moral instruction: younger generations learned discipline, communal service, and respect for elders through participation in preparatory tasks such as clearing village squares and providing food. The New Yam Festival was not just about eating yam; it was about teaching the people that life is renewed only through collective labor and respect for tradition. In this way, festivals were pedagogical spaces where cultural values were transmitted, ensuring that younger members of the community remained grounded in their heritage.

Despite the vibrancy of these festivals, particularly the Agba Festival and the Emumehe Iri Ji (New Yam Festival), which embody communal identity, they have undergone significant transformations. generational shifts and urban migration introduced new layers of meaning and practice. Younger members of the community, influenced by exposure to Christianity, formal education, and urban lifestyles, sought to modernize the presentation of the festival. The advent of Christianity generated tensions in their observance. Some Christian denominations, especially Pentecostal churches, discouraged members from participating in masquerade displays or ancestral rituals, labeling them as idol worship. Yet, the lived realities of Obosima people often demonstrated negotiation rather than outright rejection. Many Christian families reconciled faith and tradition by first attending thanksgiving services in church before joining the communal celebration of festivals (Njemanze,

2025). Others participated in the non-ritual aspects, such as feasting and dances, while avoiding libations or masquerade rituals. This selective adaptation illustrated how Obosima navigated the coexistence of Christianity and indigenous practices. Far from eroding tradition, the interplay between Christianity and traditional festivals produced a hybridized form of cultural expression, where both belief systems coexisted in dialogue rather than in absolute opposition. Festivals served as avenues for unity and peacebuilding, especially in times of tension. The Agba Festival, for instance, brought together dispersed kin and migrants who returned home for the occasion, reinforcing bonds of solidarity. Disputes were often suspended during the festival to allow the community to focus on celebration and thanksgiving. Masquerade performances were not merely entertainment but also instruments of social control, as satirical masquerades mocked immoral behavior and indirectly cautioned community members. Thus, festivals were not static rituals but dynamic cultural practices that responded to social realities, preserved communal morality, and offered frameworks for conflict resolution. Between the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Obosima's festivals and rituals reflected both continuity in cultural identity and flexibility in adapting to changing religious and social landscapes.

## **Indigenous Language and Oral Traditions**

The people of Obosima have historically maintained the use of the Igbo language as the primary medium of communication, with distinctive dialectical features that trace their ancestry to Obosi in Anambra State. Oral traditions affirm that their linguistic patterns contain idiomatic expressions and tonal inflections that distinguish them from neighboring communities, underscoring the continuity of cultural identity through language. In Obosima, language was not merely a tool of communication but a vessel of cultural authority, shaping moral codes, spiritual practices, and communal solidarity; the retention of dialectal forms became both a cultural marker and a declaration of ancestral continuity. Stories of the six founding sons- Okem, Ngwu, Agor, Oronma, Onyere, and Ohabele are recounted in moonlight gatherings, initiation rites, and festivals, ensuring that younger generations internalize their migration history from Obosi and the legitimacy of their settlement in Imo State (Nwarie, 2025). Folklore often served as a didactic tool, embedding lessons on bravery, morality, and hard work within narratives. Proverbs such as *onye kwe, chi ya ekwe* (when one agrees, his god agrees) were employed to instill perseverance, while riddles sharpened children's wit and memory. These oral forms transformed entertainment into education, embedding ethical conduct and communal cooperation in the consciousness of the youth. The generational linguistic shift reflects wider post-colonial dynamics, where formal education, urban migration, and globalization have prioritized English as the language of progress. Despite these pressures, however, cultural events continue to create avenues for linguistic resilience. During masquerade festivals, chants and incantations are performed exclusively in Igbo, reinforcing its sacred and communal authority (Ugwu, 2025). Similarly, songs and dirges sung at funerals or during initiation rites remain untranslatable into English, thereby ensuring the indispensability of the Igbo language in ritual and spiritual contexts. The transmission of migration histories, proverbs, folk songs, and riddles continues to bind the community to its origins, but the dominance of English complicates this legacy. As Obosima negotiates its identity in the modern Nigerian state, the endurance of oral traditions underscores the community's determination to maintain its ancestral roots, ensuring that even in a changing linguistic landscape, Igbo remains a living repository of cultural heritage.

## **Traditional Arts, Music, and Dance**

Traditional arts, music, and dance in Obosima have remained integral to the community's cultural identity, serving as both expressive forms and mediums for socialization. Crafts such as basket weaving, pottery, wood carving, and traditional textile production were once central to domestic and economic life. These art forms were not only functional but also aesthetic, reflecting the community's creativity and resourcefulness. Pottery, for instance, was widely used for cooking, water storage, and ritual purposes, while carved stools and masks symbolized authority and spirituality. These crafts were historically taught within families, ensuring their continuity through generations. Even though plastic and industrial goods have increasingly replaced handmade items, some households continue to practice and preserve these crafts as markers of heritage, especially during festivals and rituals when traditional artifacts are still preferred (Afigbo, 1981). Music and dance constituted an equally important aspect of cultural life, with each performance embedded in communal celebrations, rites of passage, and religious festivals. Drumming, especially with the ogene (gong), udu (pot drum), and ekwe (wooden slit drum), provided rhythmic foundations for both worship and social entertainment. Folk songs were used to convey moral lessons, praise ancestors, and narrate historical migrations, while dances brought people together in collective participation. The Nkwa dance was particularly prominent in marriage ceremonies, symbolizing joy, fertility, and continuity of lineage. In contrast, solemn dances accompanied funerals, where drumbeats and chants were used to console the bereaved and guide the departed spirit. Thus, music and dance acted as both celebratory and therapeutic tools in the cultural life of Obosima. Masquerade performances occupied a special place in Obosima's artistic and spiritual tradition, blending visual art, music, and dance. Masks were carved with intricate designs and embodied ancestral spirits during festivals and rituals. These masquerades performed not only as entertainment but also as instruments of social control, invoking fear, respect, and reverence. During the annual festival, masquerades paraded through the village square, reenacting oral traditions and reinforcing communal solidarity. Their costumes, often decorated with raffia, cowries, and dyed fabrics, represented a synthesis of artistry and symbolism (Nwaerie, 2025). While modern Christian influences discouraged masquerade performances, they remain resilient in certain contexts, particularly during cultural festivals and heritage events. This resilience reflects the determination of the people to preserve a balance between tradition and modernity. Despite the influence of Christianity and globalization, Obosima's traditional arts, music, and dance continue to adapt and find relevance. While many youths prefer western forms of entertainment, elders have introduced heritage festivals in schools and churches to reawaken interest in indigenous expressions. Storytelling sessions, accompanied by music and dance, have also been revived as cultural education platforms; these initiatives are deliberate attempts to counter the erosion of cultural identity by re-establishing pride in traditional aesthetics. In this way, the traditional arts of Obosima are not static but dynamic, evolving to survive within a modernizing world while retaining their symbolic importance as carriers of collective memory.

## **Food Culture and Culinary Practices**

Food has always been central to the cultural life of Obosima, serving not only as a necessity, but also as a marker of identity, social cohesion, and hospitality. The people of Obosima maintained a food culture deeply rooted in Igbo traditions, with yam occupying the pride of place as the "king of crops." Yam festivals marked by communal feasting reinforced social bonds, while other staples

such as cassava, cocoyam, maize, and plantain reflected both local agricultural practices and adaptations to colonial and post-colonial food systems. In pre-colonial times, yam cultivation was tied to notions of masculinity and status, as a man's ability to harvest large yam barns determined his social standing (Afigbo, 1981). Women, on the other hand, were recognized as custodians of processing and preparation, with skills in making fufu, garri, and abacha (African salad) regarded as an essential measure of industriousness and respectability in marriage. Food preparation and culinary practices in Obosima also embodied rituals and symbolic meanings. Certain foods were considered sacred or reserved for particular occasions. Kolanut, for instance, symbolised hospitality and was always presented to guests as a sign of welcome, while palm wine accompanied rituals, meetings, and festivities, reinforcing solidarity within the community. Meat, particularly goat or chicken, was reserved for celebrations, while bushmeat often featured in feasts associated with hunting traditions. Oral testimonies reveal that in family settings, meals were not only about nutrition but also about hierarchy and respect; elders were served first, and younger members waited until the head of the family began eating (Nwarie, 2025). This ensured the reinforcement of values of respect, discipline, and family order within the context of daily meals. Despite the strong continuity of indigenous culinary traditions, shifts emerged in the post-colonial and modern periods. The spread of Western education, Christianity, and urban migration introduced new tastes and eating habits. Processed foods such as rice, bread, and noodles became increasingly popular, especially among the younger generation, at the expense of traditional staples. Elders often lamented that rice has replaced yam in family gatherings, pointing to a transformation that reflects both globalization and socio-economic changes. Yet, traditional foodways retained symbolic resilience during cultural festivals such as the New Yam Festival, where yam must be eaten ritually before any other food could be shared publicly. These events demonstrated that, while everyday practices shifted, symbolic and ritual uses of food remained central in defining Obosima's communal identity. Moreover, food culture in Obosima continues to serve as an archive of indigenous knowledge, particularly in relation to medicinal and ecological wisdom. The use of vegetables such as bitter leaf and scent leaf not only enriched meals but also conveyed an understanding of their medicinal properties in treating ailments like malaria and stomach upset (Nwarie, 20205). Palm oil, widely used in soups and stews, was regarded as a gift from the ancestors and symbolized continuity with the land, linking culinary practices with agrarian cycles and spirituality. Food sharing was also a mechanism of conflict resolution as disputes between neighbors were sometimes settled through a communal meal, signifying reconciliation and the restoration of peace. Thus, the food culture of Obosima illustrates the ways in which cuisine intersects with ecology, medicine, economy, and social values, embodying both continuity and adaptation in the face of modern influences.

## **Education, Technology, and Cultural Transformation**

The earliest wave of formal schooling, pioneered by Christian missionaries in southeastern Nigeria, was intended not only to spread literacy but also to inculcate Christian values and Western ideals of civilization (Fafunwa, 1974). In Obosima, these missionary schools gradually drew children away from traditional apprenticeship systems, where knowledge of farming, craft-making, or community governance had previously been acquired through direct mentorship from elders. By the 1970s and 1980s, the establishment of government schools expanded access, enabling more families to send their children to acquire Western education. The real turning point came in the 1990s, when

secondary and tertiary education became increasingly attainable, shifting aspirations toward professional occupations and wage labour. Young people began to envision futures beyond subsistence farming or fishing, gravitating instead toward careers in teaching, law, nursing, and business administration. This reorientation of values was also accompanied by the stigmatization of certain indigenous practices, which were increasingly viewed as “primitive” in contrast to the prestige of modern, educated life. Thus, education not only diversified occupational choices but also transformed local perceptions of social status and cultural legitimacy. The growth of formal education also introduced new gender dynamics and reshaped generational relations within Obosima. Whereas traditional Igbo societies often privileged boys in skill acquisition for leadership roles, the introduction of modern education gave both boys and girls access to literacy and broader opportunities (Okeke, 2001).

Parents, increasingly aware of the socioeconomic benefits of education, invested heavily in their children’s schooling, sometimes selling farmland or taking loans to support higher education costs. As a result, the cultural landscape experienced shifts; younger generations often acquired new forms of authority rooted in academic credentials rather than age or experience. This created a generational paradox where older individuals, once regarded as the uncontested custodians of tradition, were increasingly overshadowed by younger, educated elites who possessed the literacy and linguistic skills necessary to engage with bureaucratic systems and modern employment structures. The rise of education contributed to rural urban migration, as educated youths relocated to Owerri, Port Harcourt, or Lagos in search of jobs, thereby weakening the communal fabric of traditional Obosima life (Ugwu, 2025). In these new urban contexts, the connection to indigenous practices further waned, though diaspora associations and cultural unions later emerged to sustain elements of tradition. Technology accelerated these cultural transformations by reshaping the ways the people consumed information, communicated, and imagined the world. The introduction of radio and television in the 1970s and 1980s provided households with access to external cultural influences, including Nigerian pop music, international news, and evangelical religious programmes. This development eroded the centrality of traditional storytelling sessions, which had once been the primary source of moral education and entertainment for children. By the 1990s, Nollywood films became especially popular, offering new models of morality, social aspiration, and cultural identity that often clashed with indigenous values. With the ubiquitous spread of mobile phones and later the internet, the erosion of traditional oral culture deepened. Platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook became the new sites of inter-generational dialogue, where even family meetings were increasingly held virtually. These technologies, while weakening traditional channels of cultural transmission, simultaneously opened new spaces for cultural documentation. Obosima’s diaspora members could now witness and share local festivals through videos uploaded to social media, ensuring a form of cultural continuity despite physical disconnection. However, the effects of technology in Obosima were not uniformly negative. Despite the decline of indigenous oral traditions, modern communication technologies have also been harnessed to preserve and reinvent cultural identity in the globalised age. Facebook groups, YouTube channels, and community WhatsApp platforms have become crucial tools for sustaining diasporic ties and maintaining a sense of belonging among Obosima’s younger generations abroad.

Education has also enhanced this technological adaptation, as educated elites within the community increasingly serve as archivists, using digital tools to record local songs, dances, and oral histories

for posterity. The interplay of education and technology thus demonstrates a complex dynamic; both forces undermine traditional forms of authority while simultaneously enabling their reinvention in modern formats.

## Conclusion

The paper demonstrates that culture in Obosima remains central to its social cohesion, identity, and inter-generational survival, even when expressed in transformed ways. The shift from agrarian livelihoods to professional and urban employment did not erase communal values but redefined their expression in new contexts. Obosima's cultural trajectory reflects both resilience and adaptation. The community preserved certain traditional practices, such as communal festivals, marriage customs, and age grade associations, even as they were redefined under new religious, political, and economic realities. The paper emphasises the importance of land, trade, and kinship as determinants of identity and inter-communal relations. Land disputes and patterns of migration, especially in the late 20th century, reshaped the spatial and cultural organisation of Obosima. Similarly, the adoption of Christianity, formal education, and urban migration restructured traditional authority, diminishing the role of elders and spiritual custodians while elevating new forms of leadership centered on churches, political figures, and educated elites. The cultural trajectory of Obosima is one of resilience, negotiation, and continuity amidst change—a microcosm of the Igbo experience and, by extension, the African Struggle for cultural survival in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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