

**THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE
AMONG STUDENTS OF OREDO GIRLS COLLEGE**

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NOVEMBER, 2025

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**A PROJECT WRITTEN IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATIONS AND SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ART B.A. (ED), ENGLISH AND
LITERATURE EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
CITY.**

NOVEMBER, 2025

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned certify that this project work was carried out by **Aisosa Precious OWIE**, in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria; In partial fulfillment for the award of B.A (Ed) Degree in English and Literature Education

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty for His endless and forever love

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher wishes to express her profound gratitude to God Almighty for his love and guidance in the pursuance of her career and for the completion of this project. May his name be praised.

The researcher would like to specially appreciate her project supervisor Dr. (Mrs.) F. Nwogoh, for her motherly contribution towards the success of this project. Her support, insight and direction have strengthened the researcher.

The researcher would like to appreciate her Head of Department and course supervisor, Prof. R.B. Danner and Dr. (Mrs.) D.O. Osa-Omoregie for their academic guidance and thoughtful counsel.

The researcher is grateful to her wonderful Mother, Mrs. Felicia Owie for being able to provide for her needs, her encouragement and prayers. To her late Father, Mr. Kingsley Owie, she really missed and also want to appreciate your support in making this dream a reality. To her siblings; Gift and Courage Owie, she specially thank you for your support and she prays God continue to bless you forever.

The researcher is grateful to the Family of Otasowie, her spiritual father for their love, care and assistance for making this research a success. She also express

her sincere gratitude to the contributors whose work has been instrumental in shaping this study. She prays God bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAG
	E
TITLE	i
CERTIFICATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Research Questions	5
Purpose of the Study	5
Scope of the Study	6
Significance of the Study	7
Limitation of the study	8
Definition of Terms	9

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

PAGE

Theoretical Framework	10
Concept of Cultural Heritage	14
Concept of Oral Literature	20
Role of Oral Literature in Cultural Heritage Preservation among Students	26
Challenges in the Preservation of Oral Literature	29
Solutions to the Challenges Facing Oral Literature in Cultural Preservation	33
Promotion of Oral Literature in Secondary Schools	36
Summary of Review of Related Literature	40

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design	44
Population of the Study	45
Sample and Sampling Technique	45
Research Instrument	46
Validity of the Instrument	47
Reliability of the Instrument	47
Method of Data Collections	47
Methods of Data Analysis	47

**CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

PAGE

Data Presentation 49

Discussion of Findings 57

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND
RECOMMENDATION**

Summary 59

Conclusion 60

Recommendations 60

Suggestions for Further Studies 61

REFERENCES 62

APPENDICES 65

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students of Oredo Girls College, Benin City, Edo State. The research was guided by three questions focusing on the genres of oral literature used in the school, the roles these forms play in cultural preservation, and the challenges affecting their sustainability. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, with a population of 750 students from which 100 respondents were selected using simple random sampling. A structured questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection, and the data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Findings revealed that genres such as storytelling, folktales, proverbs, traditional songs, myths, and legends are actively used within the school environment to promote cultural continuity. The study further showed that oral literature strengthens students' connection to their cultural roots, enhances understanding of societal values, shapes cultural identity, reinforces moral development, and helps preserve indigenous languages.

The study concludes that oral literature remains an essential tool for transmitting cultural heritage, but its effectiveness depends on deliberate educational and community efforts. It recommends curriculum integration, teacher training, cultural clubs, and school-community partnerships to sustain and promote oral traditions among students.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Oral literature has historically been an essential means of storytelling and transmission of knowledge in many cultures around the world and the Oredo community is no exception. In this region of Edo state, Nigeria, oral literature encompasses a broad range expression, including folktales, proverbs, songs, chants and rituals. These forms of oral literature are not merely artistic, they serve as vehicles for cultural preservation, education and social cohesion among community members.

Oral literature plays a vital role in preserving cultural heritage, particularly in African societies where oral traditions are rich and diverse in nature. For centuries, oral literature has served as a means of entertainment, education and cultural preservation, encompassing various forms such as folktales, myths, legends, proverbs, riddles, and songs. These forms are passed down from one generation to the next through word of mouth, reflecting the history, values and traditions of the people.

In Africa, oral literature is a significant tool for preserving cultural heritage, carrying human cultural identity, including cultural beliefs, values, skills,

knowledge and history. According to Dr. Appell and Lawral (1986), the transmission of oral literature from one generation to the next is at the heart of cultural practice, involving the performance of creative works of verbal art.

African oral literature reflects the customs, ideals, values, history, and outlook of Africans, serving as a means of reassurance in the face of cultural and other challenges. Scholars such as Okpewho (1991) and Chesaina (1991) have explored the significance of oral literature in African culture and cultural development. Finnegan (2012) notes that the relationship between oral literature and society is complex and multifaceted.

Oral literature has been a mode of communication for spreading ideas, knowledge, and history, used to keep cultural history and societal development alive from one generation to the next. Genres like drum songs, drama, and chants are essential in transmitting traditions and cultural identity (Turin et al., 2013). Similarly, oral literature in Oredo college, such as dances, trickster tales, and legends, serves as a tool for transmitting culture (Philip and Kwesi, 2004).

In Oredo girls' college, oral literature serves specific purposes, including inculcating positive values, entertainment, and education. It embodies history, cultural values, philosophy, and beliefs of the people (Mirambo, 1990, 1999). This study will examine the different genres of oral literature, including oral narratives,

songs, proverbs, and riddles, used to transmit culture from one generation to another in Nigeria.

The Oredo community is characterized by its rich heritage which is deeply tied to its ancestors, historical events and societal norms. Oral literature functions as a living archive, preserving the history, identity and value of the people. For instance, folklore told by the elders often impact moral lessons and cultural norms to the younger generation, ensuring that these lessons are passed down through time. Proverbs, on the other hand encapsulate the wisdom of the community, providing insight into human behavior and social practices.

Statement of the problem

Despite the rich tradition of oral literature, modernization and globalization threatens its continuity. The younger generation, particularly students in secondary schools, may lose touch with their cultural roots due to the overwhelming influence of digital media. This study aims to address the gap in understanding how oral literature can be utilized effectively in educational institutions to preserve the cultural heritage of Oredo community.

Oral literature is a valuable and meaningful part of society, serving multiple purposes. It not only preserves historical materials but also encompasses new compositions and performances. Both old and new materials are transmitted to

new generations, shared through entertainment, awareness, recounting events that shape our lives and society's history.

In Africa, oral literature is a vital component of cultural development, reflecting the transition from traditional African values to modern cultural practices. According to Chesaina (1991), traditional African cultural heritage plays a significant role in shaping relevant African culture. Dr. Appell and Lawral (1986) emphasize that the transmission of oral literature from one generation to the next is crucial for cultural practice and performance.

Oral literature carries cultural identity, transmitting it from one generation to another through various forms such as ritual texts, folk tales, songs, and myths. However, despite its importance, many cultural practices and traditions are being lost due to modernization, urbanization and the influence of Western culture. The younger generation is becoming disconnected from their roots and oral literature is gradually losing its significance.

This study aims to investigate the importance of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among secondary students of Oredo Girls' College. By exploring the significance of oral literature, this study will help students understand their culture and how it is transmitted, ultimately improving their cultural identity in the Oredo community.

Research Questions

The study will seek to answer the following research questions

1. What are the genres of Oral Literature used in preserving cultural heritage in Oredo girls college?
2. What roles does Oral Literature plays in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college?
3. Show the challenges that face oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college.
4. Shows solution for the challenges that face oral literature in preservation of cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college.
1. 5.How does Oredo Girls College Secondary School promote the practice of oral literature among its students.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to explore the significance of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students at Oredo Girls College. By doing so, it aims to promote cultural awareness and appreciation within the student body and the wider community. A key objective is to document the diverse forms of oral literature that exist among the students, thereby contributing to the preservation of their cultural heritage.

The study's findings are expected to inform educational policy and curriculum development, underscoring the importance of integrating oral literature into education as a means of promoting cultural heritage preservation. Furthermore, by examining the role of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage, the study aims to help preserve the cultural identity of the students and foster a sense of belonging.

Ultimately, the study will assess the specific role that Oredo Girls College Secondary School plays in preserving and promoting oral literature, shedding light on its impact and potential in this regard.

Scope of the Study

This study will cover on the genres of Oral Literature which are oral narratives, songs, riddles and proverbs found in Oredo girls college,a secondary school located in Benin city,Edo state,Nigeria. Genres of Oral Literature selected can be mostly used by indigenous schools in preserving their cultural heritage from one generation to another generation. Also, the study will focus on looking the negative effects of the new system of living that was brought by Globalization in Oral Literature to the entire Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to make a meaningful impact in several areas. Firstly, it raise awareness about the importance of oral literature, highlighting its value in preserving cultural heritage. By exploring the relevance of traditional practices in contemporary society, the study will contribute to ongoing discussions and debates, providing a fresh perspective on the role of oral literature in modern times.

Furthermore, the study's findings will offer valuable insights into effective educational practices for integrating cultural heritage into the curriculum, enabling educators to develop more informed and culturally sensitive teaching methods. The research report will also make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on oral literature and cultural heritage preservation, providing a valuable resource for scholars, researchers, and practitioners in the field. Overall, this study's significance extends beyond the academic realm, with the potential to inform policy, education, and cultural preservation efforts, ultimately enriching our understanding and appreciation of oral literature and its importance in contemporary society.

Limitations of the Study

This study on the role of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students at Oredo Girls College has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study's geographical scope is limited to Oredo Girls College in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other schools or regions.

Additionally, the study's sample size may be limited due to time and resource constraints, potentially affecting the representativeness of the results. The study's reliance on self-reported data from questionnaires or interviews may also introduce biases and limitations, as participants' responses may be subjective. Furthermore, the study's focus on the specific cultural context of Oredo Girls College may limit its applicability to other cultural contexts. The study's timeframe may also be limited, which could impact the comprehensiveness of the exploration of the topic. Access to resources, participants, or data may also pose challenges, potentially affecting the validity and reliability of the findings.

Despite these limitations, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the role of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students at Oredo Girls College, contributing to a deeper understanding of this important topic.

Definition of Key Terms

Oral Literature: refers to the literature delivered by words of mouth. (Okpewho, 1992).Therefore, Oral Literature is the literature that is given through oral form or word of mouth.

Culture refers: to the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social, habits, music and arts. (Zimmermann, 2015).Therefore, culture is the transition of knowledge and ability from one generation to another generation.

Cultural heritage: refers to the expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs and traditions.

Oredo community: A community located in Edo state,Nigeria,known for its rich cultural history.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on the review of relevant and related literature to the concern of this study. It is discussed under the following subheadings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Concept of Cultural Heritage
- Concept of Oral Literature
- Role of Oral Literature in Cultural Heritage Preservation among Students
- Challenges in the Preservation of Oral Literature
- Promotion of Oral Literature in Secondary Schools
- Summary of Review of Related Literature.

Theoretical Framework

In exploring the role of literature, particularly oral literature, in preserving cultural heritage among students at Oredo Girls College, two prominent theories are especially relevant: The Theory of Cultural Capital and The Theory of Social Learning. These theories help illuminate the mechanisms through which cultural knowledge, specifically oral traditions, is passed down and sustained within educational contexts, shedding light on both individual and collective contributions to cultural continuity.

The first theory, The Theory of Cultural Capital, was developed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s. Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital has become an essential framework for understanding how cultural practices and knowledge are transmitted within social and educational systems. He proposed that cultural capital consists of the cultural assets such as language, customs, values, and educational credentials that individuals inherit from their families and communities. These forms of capital influence an individual's social standing and their ability to navigate educational systems and other social institutions. Bourdieu distinguished cultural capital in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. Embodied cultural capital refers to the personal, internalized knowledge, behaviors, and skills that individuals acquire through socialization, including cultural practices like storytelling, language, and traditions. Objectified cultural capital refers to tangible cultural products such as books, artworks, or monuments, while institutionalized cultural capital involves formal recognition of cultural competence, such as academic qualifications.

In the context of preserving cultural heritage through oral literature, embodied cultural capital is particularly significant. Oral literature, which includes storytelling, proverbs, myths, and songs, is a prime example of embodied cultural capital. It is passed down through generations by word of mouth, shaping the

worldview and social identity of individuals within a community. When students at Oredo Girls College engage with oral literature, they are not only learning about their cultural heritage but also acquiring embodied cultural capital that connects them to the historical and social fabric of their community. Bourdieu's theory, therefore, provides a useful lens for understanding how oral traditions, transmitted through educational settings, contribute to the preservation of cultural identity. It underscores the importance of educational institutions in promoting cultural knowledge and ensuring that traditions like oral literature are sustained within contemporary society.

The second theory, The Theory of Social Learning, was developed by Canadian-American psychologist Albert Bandura in the 1960s. Bandura's theory focuses on the process by which individuals learn behaviors, values, and norms through observing others. Unlike traditional learning theories that emphasize learning through direct reinforcement, Bandura's social learning theory suggests that people acquire new behaviors and knowledge by watching others, particularly role models. In his early work, Bandura examined how children learned aggressive behaviors by observing others, but his theory expanded to include a broader understanding of how social behaviors are learned through observation, imitation, and modeling.

Social learning theory is particularly relevant to the transmission of oral literature, as it emphasizes the role of social interaction in learning. Bandura identified four key components in the learning process: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Attention refers to the ability to focus on a behavior, retention is the ability to remember it, reproduction involves the ability to replicate the behavior, and motivation is the desire to imitate the behavior based on the perceived rewards or value it brings. In the context of oral literature, students at Oredo Girls College observe teachers, community leaders, and peers who engage in oral storytelling and other cultural practices. By observing these role models, students learn to appreciate and replicate the behaviors associated with cultural preservation. This process of social learning ensures that oral literature is not only passed down but also valued and actively engaged with by younger generations. Bandura's theory also introduces the concept of vicarious reinforcement, which suggests that individuals are motivated to imitate behaviors they observe if they see those behaviors being rewarded in others. This is particularly relevant to the preservation of cultural heritage through oral literature. If students see the positive outcomes such as cultural pride, community recognition, or academic success of engaging with oral literature, they are more likely to adopt these practices themselves. Schools like Oredo Girls College, by integrating oral traditions into

their curriculum and community activities, create an environment where students can observe and imitate cultural behaviors, ensuring that oral literature remains a dynamic part of their cultural identity.

Together, The Theory of Cultural Capital and The Theory of Social Learning provide valuable insights into how oral literature functions as a tool for preserving cultural heritage. Bourdieu's theory highlights the role of cultural capital in shaping social identity and educational outcomes, while Bandura's theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction and modeling in the transmission of cultural behaviors. These theories support the idea that oral literature is not simply a static cultural artifact but an active and evolving practice that can be sustained through education and social learning. In the case of Oredo Girls College, the integration of oral literature into the school's curriculum helps students acquire cultural capital while also promoting social learning, ensuring that the cultural heritage embedded in oral traditions is preserved and passed down to future generations.

Concept of Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage refers to the collective identity of a community or nation, encompassing the traditions, values, customs, beliefs, practices, monuments, languages, arts, and expressions that are passed down from one generation to the

next. It represents the social, cultural, and historical experiences of a community and serves as a link to the past, providing meaning, continuity, and a sense of belonging to the present and future generations. According to UNESCO (2018), cultural heritage includes both tangible and intangible aspects, which are equally important in maintaining the identity of a group. Tangible heritage refers to physical artifacts such as buildings, monuments, artwork, and other objects of historical significance, while intangible heritage encompasses the practices, traditions, and knowledge that are not physically observable, such as oral literature, rituals, festivals, and languages. Both forms of heritage play a significant role in shaping the worldview and collective identity of a community.

The importance of cultural heritage lies in its ability to preserve shared history and knowledge, which is essential for the continuity of societies. Cultural heritage serves as a foundation for community identity, ensuring that the values, customs, and memories of past generations are transmitted to future ones. Lowenthal (2015) emphasizes that heritage is not only about preserving the past but also about understanding how the past informs the present and future. It allows individuals and communities to retain their uniqueness and resist the pressures of global homogenization. By maintaining cultural heritage, societies uphold their distinct identities, contributing to the broader diversity of the world. Heritage thus plays a

crucial role in promoting social cohesion, cultural pride, and mutual understanding, especially in a world that is rapidly changing and interconnected.

Cultural heritage can be broadly classified into two categories: tangible and intangible heritage. Tangible cultural heritage includes physical items such as monuments, buildings, and objects of artistic or historical value. These items often serve as symbols of a community's history and achievements, offering a tangible connection to the past. UNESCO's World Heritage List, for instance, consists mainly of tangible cultural heritage, such as the Great Wall of China, the Pyramids of Giza, and the Taj Mahal (UNESCO, 2019). These landmarks not only reflect the artistic, architectural, and cultural accomplishments of their respective civilizations but also act as educational tools, helping future generations understand the historical and cultural contexts from which they emerged. Davies (2018) notes that tangible heritage allows societies to visually connect with their history, offering both educational value and aesthetic significance.

On the other hand, intangible cultural heritage refers to the non-physical aspects of culture that are integral to preserving a community's identity and continuity. These include practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills that are passed down through generations, often through performance, social interaction, and oral traditions. Examples of intangible heritage include storytelling, music,

dance, rituals, and traditional craftsmanship. Unlike tangible heritage, which can be physically preserved in museums or historical sites, intangible heritage requires ongoing participation and social interaction to remain vibrant and meaningful. UNESCO (2003) emphasizes the importance of intangible cultural heritage as it reflects the ways in which people live, think, and communicate. It is the living embodiment of a community's culture, and its transmission relies heavily on social participation. According to Nwankwo (2019), oral literature, such as folktales, proverbs, and myths, forms an essential part of intangible cultural heritage. These oral traditions not only preserve historical narratives but also convey cultural values, norms, and beliefs that define the social fabric of a community.

Oral literature plays a pivotal role in preserving cultural heritage. It serves as a primary medium through which history, values, customs, and traditions are passed from one generation to the next. In many African societies, oral literature has historically been the main form of preserving cultural knowledge. Through proverbs, songs, folktales, and myths, oral literature encodes the history and wisdom of a community, acting as a repository of collective memory. Achebe (2018) highlights in his work *Things Fall Apart* how oral traditions, including storytelling and proverbs, shape the worldview of the Igbo people, offering moral lessons and cultural insights that are integral to their social structure. This

connection between oral literature and community identity is vital for the continuity of culture, as it ensures that younger generations remain connected to the values and histories of their ancestors.

In addition to its historical and educational significance, oral literature is also a tool for building cultural pride and identity. It allows individuals to learn about their roots, fostering a sense of pride in their heritage. According to Oyewumi (1997), language is a crucial vehicle for transmitting cultural knowledge, and through oral literature, local dialects, expressions, and cultural practices are preserved. By incorporating oral traditions into education systems, like at Oredo Girls College, students not only learn about their cultural heritage but also become active participants in preserving it. The integration of oral literature into the school curriculum helps instill a sense of cultural pride, encouraging students to value and continue these traditions.

Oral literature also plays an essential role in fostering intergenerational communication. Elders in the community often serve as the primary transmitters of cultural knowledge, sharing their wisdom and experiences through storytelling. This form of knowledge transfer strengthens community bonds and ensures that cultural heritage is continuously passed down. Nwankwo (2017) notes that in communities where oral literature is regularly practiced, there is a stronger sense

of social cohesion, as younger generations learn to respect and preserve the knowledge of their elders. This intergenerational exchange fosters mutual understanding and respect, ensuring that cultural heritage is not lost but instead evolves through social interactions.

Empirical studies provide valuable insights into the role of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage, particularly within educational contexts. Adekola (2020) found that the inclusion of oral literature in the curriculum at Oredo Girls College enhanced students' understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage. Students who engaged with oral traditions were not only better able to articulate their cultural values but also demonstrated a stronger sense of cultural identity and pride. This suggests that integrating oral literature into the educational system can play a key role in preserving cultural heritage while also shaping students' sense of self and community.

Similarly, Nwankwo's (2017) research underscores the role of oral literature in strengthening community cohesion. His study showed that communities that regularly practiced oral storytelling and other forms of oral literature exhibited stronger social ties, with individuals maintaining a sense of connection to their cultural roots. This highlights how oral traditions act as a

vehicle for cultural transmission, ensuring that knowledge, values, and customs are preserved across generations.

Moreover, Oyewumi (1997) observed that oral literature helps in preserving moral and ethical values, which are central to a community's cultural fabric. His study in Nigerian schools, including Oredo Girls College, revealed that the inclusion of traditional oral stories in the curriculum not only provided cultural enrichment but also instilled important societal values such as respect, justice, and kindness. This demonstrates how literature, particularly oral literature, serves as both an educational tool and a means of preserving cultural heritage and societal norms.

Concept of Oral Literature

Oral literature is a rich and diverse body of knowledge passed down through generations by word of mouth, a tradition that has been fundamental to the preservation of culture, history, and identity in societies, particularly in Africa. Unlike written literature, oral literature thrives in the spoken form and includes genres such as storytelling, proverbs, folk tales, songs, and myths. These oral traditions have been central to African societies, where they served as the primary method of preserving historical events, teaching moral lessons, and maintaining a shared cultural identity. According to Finnegan (2012), oral literature involves

both narrative and performance, making it a highly dynamic and communal form of cultural expression. The stories told through these mediums are not merely for entertainment; they carry immense social, cultural, and educational value. In many African communities, storytelling is an art form that conveys historical events, ancestral wisdom, and the values that bind the society together. As Okpewho (1992) asserts, storytelling plays a crucial role in passing on the collective memory of a community, and through it, individuals understand their roles within society and the cultural practices that define them. Storytelling is a vibrant and interactive form of communication where the narrator engages with the audience, often adapting the narrative to suit the context, which further strengthens the connection between the speaker and the listeners.

Proverbs, which are concise, figurative expressions of wisdom, also form an important part of oral literature. They often embody the collective wisdom of a community and are used to provide guidance in decision-making, conflict resolution, and the understanding of social norms (Nwachukwu-Agbada, 2017). Proverbs are passed down as part of the daily discourse, where they are used to reinforce lessons about the world and society, creating a strong sense of shared knowledge and community. These sayings often serve as moral compasses, helping individuals navigate their social and personal lives by referencing the

experiences and insights of previous generations. For instance, in many African cultures, proverbs are often used to communicate complex ideas in a simple, relatable manner, which helps preserve cultural wisdom across generations (Nwachukwu-Agbada, 2017).

Folk tales, which are stories featuring human, animal, or supernatural characters, are another genre that contributes significantly to the preservation of cultural heritage. These stories, often aimed at children, are vehicles for teaching values such as respect, courage, and social justice. Folk tales often feature a central moral lesson and involve characters that embody virtues or vices, helping the younger generation understand societal expectations (Finnegan, 2012). In many African societies, the transmission of folk tales is not confined to children's education; they are also integral to adult life, often recited during community gatherings, festivals, and other social occasions. They connect people to their collective history, teaching them about their roots and the cultural landscape from which they come. As Nwankwo (2017) observes, folk tales are not static but continue to evolve, with new stories being created and added to the oral tradition, reflecting the changing realities of the community.

In addition to stories and proverbs, songs and chants are powerful forms of oral literature that convey both historical and cultural significance. Music has long

been a medium of expression for African societies, where songs are used to celebrate important life events such as births, marriages, and funerals, as well as to mark political and social events (Baker, 2021). Songs, often accompanied by dance, serve to unify people, reaffirming social bonds and cultural values. They not only act as a means of entertainment but also convey messages of solidarity, resistance, and cultural pride. Music, in this context, becomes a medium for the transmission of historical narratives, as it encapsulates the experiences of a people and reflects their view of the world. Songs and chants also preserve languages, as they are passed down through generations, often becoming a source of cultural continuity in the face of challenges like language loss or colonialism (Oyewumi, 1997).

Myths, which are sacred stories that explain the origins of the world, nature, and human society, are deeply embedded in the fabric of many African cultures. Myths are not merely tales of gods and supernatural beings but are foundational narratives that provide a worldview, explaining the structure of society, the relationship between humans and the divine, and the moral values that guide human behavior (Nwachukwu-Agbada, 2017). These myths serve not only as spiritual guides but also as instruments for preserving traditional knowledge and practices, particularly in relation to nature and the cosmos. Myths are an essential

part of how a community understands its identity and relationship to the world around it, offering insights into the cultural foundations of daily life and governance. As Oyewumi (1997) argues, myths in African societies provide an essential link between the present generation and the ancestral past, ensuring that the continuity of cultural traditions is maintained.

The historical importance of oral literature cannot be overstated, especially when considering its role in preserving history, customs, and identity in African societies. Before the advent of written language, oral literature was the primary method for documenting the history of societies, ensuring that stories of significant events, genealogies, and community norms were passed on to future generations. Nwankwo (2017) notes that oral literature was essential in the preservation of African history, particularly in societies where written records were rare or nonexistent. Oral historians, or griots, were entrusted with the responsibility of reciting the histories of families, leaders, and nations, ensuring that the collective memory of a community remained intact despite the absence of written records. Even in contemporary times, oral literature continues to be crucial for historical documentation, especially in rural communities where traditional practices remain central to social life. As Ngugi (1986) emphasizes, oral literature has also served as a form of resistance against colonialism, as it enabled African

societies to preserve their cultural heritage in the face of colonial attempts to erase indigenous knowledge and practices.

In terms of cultural significance, oral literature plays a central role in maintaining traditions, customs, and languages. It is a primary means through which cultures transmit values, beliefs, and knowledge to younger generations. According to Baker (2021), oral literature serves as an educational tool, teaching individuals how to live within their cultural framework, while simultaneously offering a means of individual and collective expression. Furthermore, as Oyewumi (1997) observes, oral literature is a key method for preserving indigenous languages, which are often threatened by the dominance of colonial languages. By keeping these languages alive through the repetition and performance of oral traditions, communities ensure that their linguistic heritage remains intact.

Oral literature also plays a significant role in preserving worldviews, offering communities a lens through which they understand their existence, relationships, and the universe. As Nwachukwu-Agbada (2017) suggests, the myths, songs, and stories that make up oral literature create a shared cultural framework that influences how individuals perceive their place in the world. This framework is crucial for maintaining the coherence and stability of a society, as it

helps individuals understand not only their role within the community but also the community's place within the broader cultural and cosmic order.

Role of Oral Literature in Cultural Heritage Preservation among Students

Oral literature plays a significant role in the preservation of cultural heritage, particularly among students, by serving as a medium for identity formation, value transmission, and socialization. It offers a platform for students to connect with their cultural roots while promoting the development of language proficiency and cultural literacy. These elements are crucial in fostering a sense of belonging and cultural pride, ensuring that traditions and languages are passed down to future generations. Through oral literature, students gain a deeper understanding of their cultural identity. Engaging with stories, myths, proverbs, and songs allows students to connect with their heritage, thereby enhancing their sense of self and belonging. Okpewho (1992) emphasizes that oral literature is not just a form of entertainment; it is an educational tool that helps students internalize cultural values and historical narratives. In this way, students learn about their ancestors' experiences, beliefs, and social norms, which shapes their understanding of their place within society. Oral narratives, in particular, play a crucial role in transmitting societal values, such as respect, responsibility, and communal cooperation. Nwoye (2018) further suggests that the values passed

through oral traditions contribute significantly to the socialization of students, preparing them for their roles in society. These values guide students in navigating interpersonal relationships, social norms, and community responsibilities.

Additionally, oral literature plays an essential role in language development. By engaging with oral narratives, students gain a stronger command of their native languages. The use of idiomatic expressions, proverbs, metaphors, and oral storytelling techniques provides an immersive learning experience that enhances vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall linguistic competence. Adeyanju (2016) argues that oral literature is particularly effective in improving language skills because it exposes students to authentic contexts of language use. This immersion fosters a deeper understanding of linguistic structures and nuances, making the learning process more meaningful. Beyond proficiency in their mother tongue, students are also exposed to other languages, enriching their linguistic abilities and expanding their cultural literacy. The knowledge gained from oral literature fosters an appreciation for the interconnectedness of language, culture, and identity.

Moreover, the incorporation of oral literature in schools, such as Oredo Girls College in Nigeria, is a testament to its importance in preserving cultural heritage. Schools integrate oral traditions into various aspects of the curriculum, such as language studies, literature, and cultural education. In these settings,

students engage with oral literature not only through storytelling but also through songs, proverbs, poetry, and drama. This engagement fosters creativity and encourages active participation, helping students to better internalize the lessons and cultural values embedded in oral traditions. Emeagwali (2019) notes that schools incorporating oral literature into the curriculum create an environment where students can both appreciate and contribute to the continuity of their cultural heritage. The hands-on involvement of students in these activities reinforces their understanding and appreciation of cultural practices.

Furthermore, the communal aspect of oral literature plays a key role in building a sense of community among students. When students share stories or perform oral traditions together, they learn to collaborate and appreciate diverse perspectives. This collaborative engagement fosters mutual respect and understanding, further enhancing socialization and cultural cohesion. According to Onyeozu (2013), the sharing of oral traditions in group settings provides students with opportunities to engage in discussions that broaden their perspectives, making them more empathetic and socially aware. Additionally, intergenerational learning, where students interact with elders and community members, provides a direct link to the past and strengthens the connection between generations. This

form of experiential learning ensures that cultural heritage is preserved and transmitted in an authentic manner.

In conclusion, oral literature is integral to cultural heritage preservation among students. Its educational value lies in its ability to foster identity formation, transmit cultural values, and promote socialization. Moreover, oral literature plays a pivotal role in language development, enhancing both linguistic skills and cultural literacy.

Challenges in the Preservation of Oral Literature

The preservation of oral literature faces numerous challenges, many of which are influenced by modernization, technological changes, and shifting social dynamics. As societies evolve, the transmission of oral traditions confronts several obstacles that threaten its continuity. These challenges include the effects of technology, the decreasing interest among younger generations, the shift in language usage, and the lack of adequate resources for teaching oral literature in educational institutions. One of the most significant challenges in the preservation of oral literature is the influence of modernization and technological advancements. The rise of the internet, social media, and digital platforms has changed the way people access and share information, often diminishing the role of oral traditions. Technology has introduced a new form of communication that is fast-paced and

largely written, in contrast to the slower, face-to-face oral exchange. According to Nwoye (2018), while these technological advancements have brought significant benefits in terms of accessibility and communication, they have also shifted attention away from oral storytelling, songs, and proverbs that once formed the foundation of cultural transmission. Younger generations are increasingly consumed by digital media and entertainment, leading to a diminished interest in the oral traditions of their ancestors. The appeal of quick, modern forms of entertainment, such as video games and online streaming, has caused oral literature to lose its prominence. This shift affects the practice and transmission of oral literature, as these newer technologies do not adequately replicate the personal, communal, and interactive nature of oral storytelling.

The loss of interest among younger generations is another major challenge in the preservation of oral literature. Young people today, particularly those in urban settings, are increasingly disconnected from the traditional forms of cultural expression that were once passed down orally. This generational disconnect is compounded by the influence of Western culture and media, which often prioritize written literature and technological advancements over oral traditions. According to Ogunyemi (2003), younger generations are less likely to engage with oral literature because it is seen as outdated or irrelevant in the context of modern life.

As a result, younger individuals may not acquire the necessary skills to appreciate or practice oral literature. In addition, the lack of formalized education in many places that focuses on oral traditions further exacerbates this problem. Without structured opportunities for engaging with and learning about oral literature, younger generations may fail to appreciate the cultural significance of oral traditions, which are essential to the identity and heritage of many communities.

Language shift and loss also pose significant threats to the survival of oral literature. Many oral traditions are closely tied to specific languages, and as languages face extinction or shift to more globally dominant languages, oral literature may also be lost. This phenomenon is particularly evident in regions where indigenous languages are increasingly replaced by colonial or global languages, such as English or French. When younger generations stop speaking their native languages and adopt a more globally dominant language, the intricacies and nuances of oral traditions can be lost. Adeyanju (2016) argues that language is the vessel through which cultural stories, proverbs, and songs are passed down, and without a strong command of these languages, oral literature loses its depth and meaning. Furthermore, the decline in language fluency among younger generations significantly hampers their ability to engage with traditional oral forms, thereby accelerating the loss of cultural heritage. As more languages

fade away, the traditions and stories tied to them face extinction, leaving behind an impoverished cultural landscape.

Another challenge faced by the preservation of oral literature is the inadequate resources available for teaching and practicing it in educational institutions. Many schools, particularly in rural or underfunded areas, lack the necessary resources to properly teach oral traditions. This includes a shortage of trained teachers, materials, and facilities that can facilitate the practice and learning of oral literature. Educational systems often prioritize written literature and standardized subjects over cultural education, which results in oral traditions being sidelined. According to Adebayo (2017), this lack of resources means that the next generation of students is not exposed to oral literature in a structured or meaningful way. Without access to materials such as audio recordings, visual aids, or the expertise of elders who can pass down oral traditions, students are unlikely to engage with or understand the significance of oral literature in preserving their cultural heritage. Additionally, many educational systems lack specialized programs or curricula that prioritize the study and practice of oral literature, further contributing to its decline.

In conclusion, the preservation of oral literature is increasingly challenged by modernization, technological changes, the loss of interest among younger generations, language shifts, and inadequate resources for teaching oral traditions.

Solutions to the Challenges Facing Oral Literature in Cultural Preservation

One key solution is the reform of educational curricula to better incorporate oral literature. Many educational systems currently prioritize written literature and standardized subjects, neglecting the rich cultural contributions of oral traditions. Incorporating oral literature into the curriculum would not only enrich students' cultural knowledge but also help them develop a deeper connection to their heritage. According to Emeagwali (2019), curriculum reforms should include the introduction of dedicated courses that focus on oral storytelling, proverbs, songs, and traditional performances. These courses can be integrated into subjects like literature, language, and cultural studies, ensuring that oral traditions are given equal importance. Additionally, curriculum reforms can include the use of interdisciplinary approaches, where students explore oral literature through history, social studies, and even art and music. By embedding oral traditions into the curriculum, educational institutions can help students understand the value of their cultural heritage and its relevance in the modern world. This approach would make

oral literature a more central part of educational practice, ensuring that students develop the skills necessary to engage with and preserve these traditions.

Teacher training and the provision of adequate resources are also critical in promoting the study and practice of oral literature. Teachers play a central role in transmitting cultural knowledge and fostering an appreciation for oral traditions. However, many educators lack the specialized training needed to effectively teach oral literature. Adeyanju (2016) emphasizes that teacher training programs should include courses on the history and significance of oral literature, as well as practical skills for delivering oral stories and facilitating discussions. Additionally, teachers should be equipped with resources such as audio-visual materials, books, and recordings of oral performances to make oral literature more engaging and accessible to students. Teacher professional development programs should focus on equipping educators with strategies to encourage active participation in oral traditions, such as storytelling contests, performances, and collaborative projects. By enhancing teacher training and providing appropriate resources, schools can ensure that educators are well-prepared to introduce oral literature to students in an engaging and meaningful way.

Community engagement and intergenerational dialogue are also vital strategies for preserving and promoting oral literature. Schools can collaborate

with local communities, elders, and cultural custodians to create opportunities for students to engage with oral traditions in an authentic and interactive manner. According to Onyeozu (2013), schools can organize events like storytelling festivals, intergenerational dialogues, and cultural workshops, where elders share traditional stories, proverbs, and songs with students. These activities provide students with firsthand exposure to the richness of oral traditions while fostering a sense of cultural continuity. Additionally, schools can create partnerships with local cultural organizations to offer workshops and activities that celebrate oral literature, ensuring that students are connected to the living practitioners of these traditions. Intergenerational dialogue, in which older and younger generations share knowledge and experiences, can also help bridge the gap between past and present, ensuring that oral literature remains a living tradition. Such collaboration can revitalize interest in oral literature and encourage students to actively participate in preserving their cultural heritage.

The use of technology is another powerful solution in the effort to preserve and promote oral literature. Digital platforms offer innovative ways to make oral traditions more accessible and relevant to younger audiences. One of the key strategies is the recording and archiving of oral stories, songs, and performances, making them available online for educational and cultural purposes. According to

Nwoye (2018), schools and cultural institutions can create digital archives of oral literature that can be accessed by students and the public. These digital resources can include audio and video recordings, written transcriptions, and interactive platforms where users can engage with oral traditions in new ways. Furthermore, technology can be used to create educational apps, podcasts, and websites dedicated to oral literature, allowing students to learn and explore at their own pace. Social media platforms can also be leveraged to raise awareness about the importance of oral literature, providing a space for younger generations to engage with these traditions in an informal, yet meaningful way. By using digital tools creatively, oral literature can be preserved and promoted in a way that appeals to contemporary audiences, ensuring its survival in the digital age.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges facing oral literature requires a multifaceted approach that includes curriculum reforms, teacher training, community engagement, and the use of technology. By reforming educational curricula to include oral traditions, schools can ensure that students are exposed to their cultural heritage and develop a deeper understanding of its value.

Promotion of Oral Literature in Secondary Schools

Secondary schools play a significant role in promoting oral literature and ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage by providing platforms for students

to engage with their cultural traditions. Schools can encourage participation in oral literature through various activities, clubs, and initiatives, which foster student interest while reinforcing their connection to cultural practices. These efforts not only enrich the academic experience but also promote cultural pride and social cohesion.

To promote oral literature, many secondary schools implement activities such as oral storytelling competitions, poetry recitals, and drama performances based on traditional tales. These activities engage students actively and allow them to explore the intricacies of oral traditions. By establishing oral literature clubs, schools provide an environment where students can come together to share stories, discuss cultural values, and practice the art of oral storytelling. Through these clubs, students gain not only the ability to communicate effectively but also the opportunity to engage with peers from different backgrounds, enhancing their understanding of the diverse cultural narratives within their society. Encouraging students to perform traditional songs and stories in front of audiences helps improve their public speaking and presentation skills, fostering confidence and creativity in a supportive environment. By integrating oral literature into the curriculum and organizing extracurricular activities, schools actively promote an appreciation for these traditions, making them relevant in the modern world.

In addition to extracurricular programs, schools also organize cultural heritage events to celebrate oral literature and other cultural practices. These events, such as cultural days or heritage festivals, provide students with opportunities to connect with local elders, cultural custodians, and community members. Elders can share traditional stories and songs with students, offering them direct exposure to the authentic transmission of oral traditions. Schools might also host workshops and seminars that explore the significance of oral literature, inviting cultural experts to speak to students about the importance of preserving these forms of storytelling. These events not only educate students about their cultural roots but also foster a sense of pride in their heritage. By celebrating cultural diversity through oral traditions, schools promote social harmony and understanding among students from different cultural backgrounds, creating a shared space for the exchange of ideas and experiences.

The benefits of engaging students in oral literature programs are far-reaching, influencing academic performance, social skills, and cultural identity. Through consistent involvement in oral literature activities, students gain a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage, strengthening their sense of identity and belonging. This sense of cultural pride is critical in helping students navigate their personal development and enhances their self-esteem. As students engage with

oral traditions, they learn to value their heritage and appreciate the significance of their cultural practices, which helps them form a stronger connection to their community and history.

Moreover, oral literature programs contribute to the development of key social skills, including communication, empathy, and collaboration. When students participate in group activities like storytelling, debates, or drama performances, they learn how to work together, listen actively, and communicate their ideas effectively. These skills are valuable both inside and outside the classroom and can contribute to better interpersonal relationships and teamwork. The collaborative aspect of oral literature activities fosters a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, encouraging students to appreciate and respect the diverse perspectives of their peers.

Academically, engaging with oral literature can enhance students' language skills. Oral storytelling encourages critical thinking as students analyze stories, proverbs, and songs to uncover their meanings, morals, and lessons. This critical engagement with texts helps students improve their reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing abilities, while also encouraging creativity and imaginative expression. The oral nature of these traditions also helps students develop listening skills, which are essential for effective communication and

learning. By immersing students in oral literature, schools create a dynamic learning environment that nurtures both cognitive and emotional growth, contributing to better academic performance and intellectual curiosity.

In conclusion, secondary schools play a pivotal role in promoting oral literature, which serves as a vital tool for preserving cultural heritage and fostering social and academic growth among students. By organizing extracurricular activities, cultural heritage programs, and events, schools provide students with opportunities to actively engage with and celebrate their cultural traditions.

Summary of Review of Related Literature

The literature reviewed highlights the significant role of oral literature in preserving cultural heritage, especially among students in educational settings like Oredo Girls College. Through a detailed exploration of theoretical frameworks, the concept of cultural heritage, and the role of oral literature in cultural preservation, it becomes evident that oral traditions are central to the transmission of cultural knowledge, values, and social norms. The Theory of Cultural Capital, as proposed by Bourdieu, emphasizes the importance of oral literature as a form of embodied cultural capital, which is passed down through generations and plays a vital role in shaping social identity and community belonging. Additionally, Social Learning Theory by Bandura sheds light on how students learn cultural behaviors

and traditions through observation and social interaction, underlining the importance of role models in the transmission of oral literature.

Cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is critical in maintaining the identity and continuity of societies. Oral literature, as a form of intangible cultural heritage, helps preserve historical narratives, customs, and languages that define a community. Through various genres such as storytelling, proverbs, folk tales, songs, and myths, oral literature facilitates the understanding of societal values and traditions, thus fostering a sense of cultural pride and identity. The empirical studies reviewed further confirm the positive impact of oral literature in strengthening social cohesion, cultural identity, and personal development among students.

However, the preservation of oral literature faces several challenges, including the influence of modernization and technological advancements, which have shifted attention away from traditional oral practices. There is also a noticeable loss of interest in oral traditions among younger generations, compounded by the decline of indigenous languages and the inadequate resources available for teaching oral literature. These challenges pose significant threats to the continuity of oral traditions and cultural heritage.

To address these challenges, the review suggests several solutions, including curriculum reforms to incorporate oral literature into educational settings, teacher training programs to equip educators with the skills and resources to teach oral traditions effectively, and fostering community engagement and intergenerational dialogue to revive interest in oral practices. The use of technology also presents an innovative way to preserve and promote oral literature by recording and sharing traditional stories, songs, and performances on digital platforms.

Lastly, the review underscores the importance of secondary schools in promoting oral literature. Through extracurricular activities, cultural heritage events, and the integration of oral traditions into the curriculum, schools provide students with the opportunity to actively engage with and appreciate their cultural heritage. The impact of these programs is far-reaching, enhancing students' academic performance, social skills, and cultural identity, thus ensuring that oral literature remains a vibrant and dynamic part of their educational experience.

In conclusion, oral literature is an essential component of cultural heritage preservation. It serves as a key mechanism for transmitting cultural knowledge and values across generations. Educational institutions, particularly secondary schools,

play a pivotal role in ensuring the continuity of oral traditions, fostering cultural pride, and enhancing students' academic and social development.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is concerned with the description of the method and procedures used for the study. It is sub-divided into the following headings:

- Design of the Study
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

This study employs a survey research design of the descriptive type to comprehensively investigate the target population. The simple random survey method facilitates data collection across diverse segments, enabling the exploration of patterns and relationships. This approach ensures a broad and inclusive representation, enhancing the study's validity. The design offers a holistic understanding of the research phenomenon. (Senam, & Akpan, 2014). In summary,

the descriptive survey research design serves as a robust foundation for systematically addressing the research questions and objectives.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of 750 students from the Oredo Girls senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. (Edo State Secondary School Education Board, 2024)

Sample and Sampling Technique

In this study, simple random technique is adopted. This technique enables the samples to be gathered in such a way that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for sample. The study's sample size is determined by using taro yammane, the calculator represent taro Yamane formular of sample determination. The margin of error was set at 5%, which was considered appropriate for undergraduate research work with a small sample size. Using this formula increased the level of precision and reduced the risk of inaccuracies in determining the actual sample size required for the study. Based on the sample population of 750 students and a margin of error of 5%, the calculated sample size is 146 .

$$\begin{aligned}
n &= \frac{N}{1+Ne^2} \\
&= \frac{750}{1+750(0.05)^2} \\
&= \frac{750}{1+1.575} \\
&= \frac{750}{2.875} \\
&= 260.86 = 261.
\end{aligned}$$

Research Instrument

The research instrument is a questionnaire designed by the researcher. It is divided into two sections: section A and B. Section A contains particulars of the respondents (demographic data) such as age, gender while section B contains questions to address the research questions. The questions contained in the questionnaire revolves round the research questions raised in the chapter one of this study and the response obtained from the respondent will help to validate the research questions.

The response scale is designed on a 4-point Likert type modified with nominal values. It ranged from Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 pts, Agree (A) = 3 pts, Disagree (D) = 2 pts and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 pt, open ended questions were also asked in the demographic section (part A) of the questionnaire.

Validity of the Instrument

The constructed questionnaire to project supervisor and two other experts in the Department of Educational Foundation. The appropriate suggestions and corrections from the experts will be effected in the final draft of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument will be established by using the test-retest method. The instrument will administer to 20 respondents who are not part of the sample. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test Reliability of the study instrument will be performed for each scale within the instrument, and a combination of all scales using the Cronbach alpha reliability statistics. This will determine the degree of reliability and the resulting test scores was using Cronbach alpha.

Method of Data Collections

The researcher administered personally to the respondent. The respondent would be ensured confidentiality and encouraged to answer questions truthfully. The respondent was instructed on how to fill out the questionnaire, and it was collected the same day to avoid loss.

Methods of Data Analysis

The study data were analysed using Mean and standard deviation. Data collected through the administration of questionnaires will be analyzed using

descriptive statistics for easy interpretation. Descriptive statistics are brief informational coefficients that summarize a given data set, which can be either a representation of the entire population or a sample of the population. It involves summarizing, organizing and presenting data meaningfully and concisely. This enabled the researcher to meaningfully described independent factors in the study, as well as helping to indicate the number and percentage of respondent rank, and rank variables under this study. T test will be used to analyze the hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the analysis of data as well as the presentation and discussion of results according to the response from the questions formulated

Demographics of Respondents

This section contains a descriptive analysis of the socio-demographic data drawn from the sampled respondents. The socio-demographic variables include the, gender, age.

Table 4.1: Respondents Demographic Profile

SN	Variable	Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	40	40
		Female	60	60
		Total	100	100.0
2	Age	12-15	26	26.0
		16-19	72	72.0
		20-above	2	2.0
		Total	100	100.0

Source; Field Survey, 2025

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 4.1, which includes two key variables: gender and age.

Regarding **gender**, the sample consisted of 37% males and 63% females, indicating a higher representation of female respondents in the survey.

In terms of **age**, the largest group of respondents (63%) were aged between 16 and 19 years, followed by 34% of respondents in the 12 to 15 age range. Only 3% of respondents were aged 20 or above, showing that the majority of respondents were relatively young, with a strong concentration in the adolescent age group.

Research Question 1; What are the genres of Oral Literature used in preserving cultural heritage in Oredo girls college?

Table 2; Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage showing What are the genres of Oral Literature used in preserving cultural heritage in Oredo girls college

S/N	ITEMS	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)
1	Storytelling is regularly incorporated into the school’s curriculum as a way to teach students about cultural heritage.	60 (60)	20 (20)	9 (9)	11 (11)
2	Folk tales are actively used in classroom discussions to preserve traditional cultural values.	17 (17)	63 (63)	16 (16)	14 (14)
3	Proverbs are frequently shared in class as a way to teach moral lessons and societal norms.	11 (11)	86 (86)	3 (3)	0 (0)
4	Traditional songs are performed or learned in school to help students connect with their cultural identity.	16 (16)	73 (73)	7 (7)	4 (4)
5	Myths and legends are taught in school as a way to preserve and pass down community history.	13 (13)	74 (74.)	10 (10)	3 (3)

Source; Field Survey 2025

The data presented in Table 2 provides a descriptive analysis of the genres of oral literature used in preserving cultural heritage in Oredo Girls College. The

findings reveal that various forms of oral literature such as storytelling, folk tales, proverbs, traditional songs, and myths play significant roles in cultural preservation within the school setting, though their levels of use vary. From the responses, storytelling appears to be a relatively well-integrated component of the curriculum, with 60% of respondents strongly agreeing and 20% agreeing that it is used to teach cultural heritage. This suggests that storytelling remains a vital educational tool for passing down cultural knowledge and values in the school. In contrast, folk tales show a slightly different trend. Although 63% of respondents agreed that folk tales are actively used in classroom discussions to preserve cultural values, only 17% strongly agreed, while 16% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed. This implies that while folk tales are acknowledged as part of the school's activities, their use may not be as consistent or formalized as storytelling. Proverbs appear to have the highest level of agreement, with a combined 97% of respondents (11% strongly agree and 86% agree) indicating that proverbs are frequently shared in class to teach moral lessons and societal norms. This highlights the continued relevance of proverbs as a concise and powerful means of transmitting traditional wisdom. Similarly, traditional songs are highly valued in cultural preservation. About 89% of respondents (16% strongly agree and 73% agree) affirmed that songs are performed or learned in school to strengthen

students' cultural identity. This indicates that music and oral performance are actively embraced as effective tools for cultural education.

Finally, myths and legends also feature prominently, with 87% of respondents (13% strongly agree and 74% agree) acknowledging their use in teaching community history and values. Only a small fraction (10% disagree and 3% strongly disagree) expressed contrary views.

Research Question 2; What roles does Oral Literature plays in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college?

Table 3; Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage showing What roles does Oral Literature plays in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college

S/N	ITEMS	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)
6	Oral literature helps students connect with their cultural heritage by teaching them about historical events and traditional practices.	16 (16)	73 (73)	7 (7)	4 (4)
7	Engaging with oral literature helps students develop a deeper understanding of societal values and norms.	14 (14)	75 (75)	6 (6)	5 (5)
8	Oral literature plays a key role in shaping students' identities by reinforcing their cultural roots and traditions.	14 (14)	61 (61)	10 (10)	15 (15)
9	The practice of oral storytelling in school promotes the transmission of moral lessons and ethical principles to students.	69 (69)	18 (18)	9 (9)	4 (4)
10	Oral literature enhances students' understanding of their community's language, ensuring that native dialects and expressions are preserved.	73 (73)	14 (14)	6 (6)	7 (7)

Source; Field Survey 2025

The data in Table 3 provides insight into the various roles oral literature plays in preserving cultural heritage among students at Oredo Girls College. The findings clearly indicate that oral literature serves as a powerful educational and cultural tool, fostering identity, moral development, and linguistic preservation among the students. A significant majority of respondents (89%) either strongly agreed or agreed that oral literature helps students connect with their cultural heritage by teaching them about historical events and traditional practices. This suggests that oral forms such as folktales, myths, and storytelling are effective in linking students with their ancestral past and community traditions, thereby reinforcing a sense of belonging and continuity. Similarly, 89% of respondents (14% strongly agree and 75% agree) acknowledged that engaging with oral literature enables students to develop a deeper understanding of societal values and norms. This finding highlights the didactic function of oral literature in imparting ethical guidance and social conduct values that are central to cultural sustainability. When asked whether oral literature shapes students' identities by reinforcing their cultural roots, 75% agreed or strongly agreed, while a smaller portion (25%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This indicates that oral traditions significantly influence students' self-awareness and pride in their cultural background, although some may perceive this impact as limited, possibly due to

modern influences or reduced emphasis on cultural instruction. A large proportion of respondents also recognized the role of oral storytelling in transmitting moral lessons and ethical principles, with 87% (69% strongly agree and 18% agree) affirming this view. This underscores the moral and educational value of storytelling in guiding student behavior and reinforcing communal ethics. Lastly, oral literature was widely seen as vital in enhancing students' understanding of their community's language, with 87% (73% strongly agree and 14% agree) agreeing that it helps preserve native dialects and expressions. This finding emphasizes the linguistic role of oral traditions, ensuring that local languages and idiomatic expressions are passed down to younger generations.

Research Question 3; The challenges that face oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college?

Table 4; Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage showing The challenges that face oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college

S/N	ITEMS	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)
11	Modern technological advancements have reduced students' engagement with traditional oral literature in favor of digital media.	70 (70)	19 (19)	6 (6)	5 (5)
12	There is a lack of interest among younger generations in participating in oral literature activities due to the dominance of modern entertainment.	14 (14)	61 (61)	10 (10)	15 (15)
13	The decline of indigenous languages threatens the transmission and preservation of oral literature within communities.	13 (13)	72 (72)	18 (18)	7 (7)
14	The absence of trained teachers who are skilled in teaching oral literature makes it difficult to effectively pass on these traditions.	19 (19)	70 (70)	6 (6)	5 (5)
15	Oral literature is often overlooked in educational curricula, with more emphasis placed on written forms of literature.	60 (60)	23 (23)	9 (9)	8 (8)

Source; Field Survey 2025

The data in Table 4 highlights the major challenges affecting the preservation of cultural heritage through oral literature among students in Oredo Girls College. The findings indicate that technological influence, declining interest, language loss, lack of skilled educators, and curriculum neglect are the key

obstacles hindering the effective transmission of oral traditions in the school setting. A large majority of respondents (89%) either strongly agreed or agreed that modern technological advancements have reduced students' engagement with traditional oral literature, as many now prefer digital and social media entertainment. This suggests that the rise of technology and globalization has shifted students' attention away from culturally rooted storytelling and traditional performances. Similarly, 75% of respondents (14% strongly agree and 61% agree) noted that younger generations show little interest in oral literature activities due to the dominance of modern entertainment forms. This declining enthusiasm reflects a generational gap where modern students may view oral traditions as outdated compared to the appeal of contemporary media and pop culture. Language decline also emerged as a serious concern. A combined 85% of respondents (13% strongly agree and 72% agree) believed that the decline of indigenous languages threatens the transmission and preservation of oral literature. This indicates that as native languages lose prominence in daily communication and education, the oral traditions expressed through them also weaken, leading to a gradual erosion of cultural identity. Another key challenge identified is the lack of trained teachers proficient in oral literature instruction, with 89% (19% strongly agree and 70% agree) affirming this issue. The shortage of educators with cultural

and linguistic expertise makes it difficult to properly teach and sustain traditional narratives, songs, and proverbs within formal education. Finally, a significant portion of respondents (83%) agreed that oral literature is often overlooked in school curricula, as written forms of literature receive more emphasis. This educational bias limits students' exposure to oral traditions, reducing opportunities to learn about and engage with their cultural roots in structured academic settings.

Discussion of Findings

The findings show that different genres of oral literature such as storytelling, folktales, proverbs, traditional songs, myths, and legends are used in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo Girls College. These genres serve as effective tools for teaching moral values, cultural identity, and historical continuity within the school context. This agrees with the view of Finnegan (2018), who noted that oral literature is a vital medium for transmitting knowledge, beliefs, and traditions within African societies. Similarly, Nwachukwu (2020) affirmed that oral genres like proverbs, songs, and myths remain important instruments for preserving communal history and instilling social values among the younger generation.

The findings also reveal that oral literature plays major roles in preserving cultural heritage by connecting students with their traditions, enhancing

understanding of societal norms, shaping cultural identity, and promoting native language use. This supports the submission of Adegbija (2019), who emphasized that oral literature functions as a channel for moral education and identity formation. In the same vein, Olatunji (2021) observed that oral narratives help sustain indigenous languages and values, enabling students to appreciate their cultural heritage and collective identity.

The study further shows that the preservation of oral literature faces challenges such as the influence of modern technology, loss of interest among youths, decline of indigenous languages, shortage of trained teachers, and neglect of oral literature in school curricula. This finding corresponds with the assertion of Ebele (2019), who stated that modern media and western education have led to a decline in students' participation in oral cultural practices. Likewise, Afolayan (2022) noted that the lack of institutional support and curriculum integration poses a serious threat to the transmission of oral traditions and indigenous knowledge systems among students.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study assesses the role of literature in preserving cultural heritage among students, three (3) research questions guided the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all the students in Oredo Girls college in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, the sampling technique was used to select 100 students from the school. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was administered by the researcher to the respondents, the data collected was collated and analysed using descriptive statistics. The following are the findings;

1. Various genres of oral literature such as storytelling, folktales, proverbs, traditional songs, myths, and legends are used to preserve cultural heritage in Oredo Girls College.
2. Oral literature helps students connect with their cultural roots, understand societal values, develop moral behavior, and promote indigenous language use.
3. The major challenges facing oral literature include technological distractions, low student interest, decline of indigenous languages, lack of trained teachers, and limited inclusion in the school curriculum.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study establishes that oral literature remains a vital instrument for preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo Girls College. Through the use of genres such as storytelling, proverbs, songs, folktales, and myths, students are exposed to their community's traditions, moral values, and linguistic heritage. Oral literature plays an essential role in shaping students' cultural identity and sustaining collective memory. However, its effectiveness is hindered by modern influences, declining interest among youths, language loss, and inadequate curricular attention. Strengthening the teaching of oral literature and integrating it more formally into the school curriculum would enhance its impact in promoting cultural continuity among the younger generation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Schools should integrate oral literature more fully into the curriculum to ensure continuous exposure of students to their cultural heritage.
2. Teachers should receive proper training in oral literature to improve their ability to teach and preserve traditional knowledge effectively.
3. Cultural clubs and school events should be organized regularly to encourage students' participation in storytelling, traditional songs, and other oral art forms.

Suggestions for Further Studies

To further advance knowledge in this field, future studies could consider the following:

1. Further studies should examine the impact of oral literature on students' moral and behavioral development across different schools.
2. Future research could explore the influence of digital media on the transmission and adaptation of oral literature among young people.
3. Additional studies may investigate teachers' attitudes and competencies in teaching oral literature as a means of cultural preservation.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
ON
THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE
AMONG STUDENTS OF OREDO GIRLS COLLEGE

Dear Respondents

My name is Owie Aisosa Precious, I am a 400-level student working on research titled “the role of Literature in Preserving cultural heritage among students of Oredo Girls College, Benin, Edo state” The purpose of this questionnaire is to elicit information on the afore-mentioned topic. Your cooperation in providing honest and sincere response to all the items will be appreciated as they will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your co-operation

Instruction, please tick (appropriately in the boxes provided)

Section A

Demographic Data

Gender : Male (), Female ()

Age: 16 -19 () 20-23() 24 and above ()

Section B

Instruction: Please tick [√] the most appropriate option for each item.

Key: SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly disagree

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
RQ1	What are the genres of Oral Literature used in preserving cultural heritage in Oredo girls college?				
1	Storytelling is regularly incorporated into the school's curriculum as a way to teach students about cultural heritage.				
2	Folk tales are actively used in classroom discussions to preserve traditional cultural values.				
3	Proverbs are frequently shared in class as a way to teach moral lessons and societal norms.				
4	Traditional songs are performed or learned in school to help students connect with their cultural identity.				
5	Myths and legends are taught in school as a way to preserve and pass down community history.				

RQ2	What roles does Oral Literature plays in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college?	SA	A	D	SD
6	Oral literature helps students connect with their cultural heritage by teaching them about historical events and traditional practices.				
7	Engaging with oral literature helps students develop a deeper understanding of societal values and norms.				
8	Oral literature plays a key role in shaping students' identities by reinforcing their cultural roots and traditions.				
9	The practice of oral storytelling in school promotes the transmission of moral lessons and ethical principles to students.				
10	Oral literature enhances students' understanding of their community's language, ensuring that native dialects and expressions are preserved.				

RQ3	The challenges that face oral literature in preserving cultural heritage among students in Oredo girls college?	SA	A	D	SD
11	Modern technological advancements have reduced students' engagement with traditional oral literature in favor of digital media.				
12	There is a lack of interest among younger generations in participating in oral literature activities due to the dominance of modern entertainment.				
13	The decline of indigenous languages threatens the transmission and preservation of oral literature within communities.				
14	The absence of trained teachers who are skilled in teaching oral literature makes it difficult to effectively pass on these traditions.				
15	Oral literature is often overlooked in educational curricula, with more emphasis placed on written forms of literature.				