

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF IGBO RIDDLES

BY

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CERTIFICATION

I, **NWANKWO IFEOMA MARTHA**, with Matriculation Number **ART1701325** certifies that this work was carried out by me and all requirements for course work and research for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in the University of Benin. The course work embodied in this project is original and has not been submitted in part or whole for any degree or diploma in the University of Benin or any other University or Institution.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Father, God Almighty, who is and has been my constant help and support all through this study and to my dear ones; my parents, my sister, Chioma Nwankwo and my friend Isaac Nev who helped me in different ways in accomplishing this study and to all who contributed in one way or the other to make this work a success.

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ABSTRACT

Igbo riddles form part of the Igbo Oral Tradition. In the traditional Igbo community, riddles are part of the moonlight games children gather to play after the day's activities. Riddles are fun and interesting to take part in because of the puzzling form in which they appear and the various personifications used to present the riddles. It is worthy of note that riddles are not just for fun alone, they possess and convey deep cultural elements in them in which the child comes to be aware of when he/she participate in the riddling and which are passed from generation to generation. The Igbo riddles are a powerful tool through which the Igbo culture, traditions and values are passed to younger generations. But now in our modern world and 'modern Igbo towns', the value for, interest in and usage of these riddles are slowly deteriorating due to the impact of formal education and technology and the cultural embodiments of these riddles are not exploited, appreciated or even passed down to generations. This study set to examine the Igbo riddles using an ethnographic approach. It presents the importance of Igbo riddles to the Igbo culture and determine how the riddles affect the culture of the Igbo people. It discusses and stresses on how riddles also affect the child's cultural and social cognition and thickly explains the Igbo riddle from a cultural perspective and context. Data for analysis will be attained through non-participants observation of a riddling event and oral/virtual interview and the bulk of data collected will be collated and written for proper analysis. This study essentially dwells on the ethnographic study of Igbo riddles and concludes with appropriate recommendations in sustaining and preserving these riddles and also encouraging their usage in the society.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

This research on Igbo riddles is ethnographic. To communicate their opinions and for efficient communication, people frequently employ various terms that are unique to their communities. These expressions can be both vocal and nonverbal, involving, among other things, signs and symbols. The verbal forms consist of things like songs, riddles, poems, and proverbs. Whatever the means of expression, they all attempt to express values, ideas, feelings, and desires that are utilized to instruct, warn, and enlighten a given society. The Igbo people utilize riddles known as "agwugwa" during different periods of society members' lives, same like the majority of African societies.

The term "Igbo" refers to the language used by the people referred to as "Ndi Igbo" collectively in the Ala Igbo or Ani Igbo (Igbo country) region of Nigeria; their community is known as "Olu no Igbo" ("those in the lowlands and uplands"). Although unifying processes such as expansion, ritual subordination, intermarriage, trade, cultural exchange, migration, war, and conquest were present before European colonialism, the Igbo-speaking peoples, who shared similarities in culture, lived in localized communities and were not united under a single cultural identity or political framework. It was common practice to refer to villages and village groups by the distinctive names of their ancestors or by specific names like Umuleri, Nri, Ogidi, Nnobi, Orlu, Ngwa, Ezza, and

Ohaffia. People who speak Igbo today can be found all over Nigeria and in many other nations. However, as a group, the Igbo inhabit most of southeast Nigeria and are found on both banks of the River Niger. Onitsha, Owerri, East Rivers, Southeast Benin, West Ogoja, and Northeast Warri are among the historic provinces that make up the region, which spans over 41,000 square kilometers. The Igbo have referred to all of these regions as the "Niger Districts" throughout modern Nigerian history. Wider unification and absorption into larger political and administrative organizations subsequently started. The Igbo population increased from roughly 8.5 million in 1963 to more than 15 million in 1993(some even claim 30 million, although there has been no widely accepted census since 1963). Their population density, which ranges from 120 to more than 400 people per square kilometer, is among the highest in West Africa.

Igbo is a member of the West African Niger-Congo language family and belongs to the Kwa Subgroup. Igbo oral literature can be found in Riddle. One method used by the Igbo people to pass on their culture and traditions from one generation to the next is riddling. Children and young adults utilize riddles more frequently than older people do. Adults utilize riddles in rituals, whereas children use them in games. Adults frequently utilize riddles in stories that depict problematic situations, such marriage, the choice of a husband by a woman, the choice of a minister by a king, and the choice of an heir to the throne. Riddles are used in the utterances of knowledgeable people, attractive women to young men, and deities or their priests.

A riddle is an open-ended puzzle with a single right answer. A riddle is a form of verbal

play that consists of a question or observation that has been purposefully worded in a perplexing manner and is then presented as a challenge. A statement, question, or phrase with a hidden or double meaning that is presented as a puzzle to be solved is called a riddle. Riddles typically have a hidden meaning and may employ metaphors, euphemisms, or even some form of pun to conceal the correct solution. There are many riddles in the Igbo language that children learn and apply as they develop, and this has had many positive effects on their understanding of Igbo tradition and culture as well as their immediate surroundings. To get the right answer, a person trying to solve a riddle typically needs to apply some logic or recognize certain false cues.

For children, the riddle (*agwugwa*) is a highly well-liked kind of entertainment. Riddles are statements or questions that present a puzzle that must be answered. They frequently require the reader to use critical thinking to determine the solution, which makes for engaging entertainment. The only person who can provide the correct response is one who already knows the answer due to past knowledge alone. It cannot, by definition, be solved by reasoning skills like logical analysis or methodical information gathering.

Riddles may not have drawn the attention of many folklorists to the same degree as other forms of oral literature, but they nonetheless have value in and of themselves. In contrast to proverbs and folktales, some experts are skeptical regarding riddles as serious writings, particularly given that they are frequently thought to be primarily of interest to youngsters. Nowadays, riddling games are only played in a few rural villages. Due in part to modernity, young migration to urban areas, and separation of adolescents from older

people who would have been spending time with them, riddles are no longer performed in the communities that were once known to conduct this game. Reading, watching videos, and watching football games have replaced riddling in most towns with electricity, which was once utilized as both a form of amusement and an educational tool for young people.

Rural villages used to riddle during the evening or night, but today people use that time for other things like watching videos. The gradual disappearance of riddles, a part of our cultural heritage, as a result of these activities makes it necessary to preserve them for current and future generations. This in-depth ethnographic study will examine Igbo riddles in greater detail, analyze a large number of them, and present specific findings.

An ethnographic study examines the social interactions, attitudes, and activities that take place inside communities, teams, organizations, and groups. (Qualitative refers to the study of ideas, emotions, and observations as opposed to hard facts and figures.) It involves the examination of individuals in their natural environments using techniques like participant observation and in-person interviews. According to anthropologist H. Sidky, ethnography uses empirical fieldwork to record cultural similarities and differences and can aid in the development of generalisations about human behavior and the functioning of social and cultural systems (2004:9). Both traditional and modern ethnographic accounts are descriptive and interpretive in nature. Descriptive because detail is so important, interpretive because the ethnographer must assess the significance of what they see without gathering extensive statistical data. In order to gain a thorough

understanding of the cultural context of the people and the relevance of riddling in Igbo culture, an ethnographic approach is applied in the study of Igbo riddles. This methodology is used to provide a thorough account of the effects of riddles on the Igbo community or society and to gain a thorough grasp of the riddling context and the Igbo culture.

The traditions, habits, and practices of the Igbo people of South Eastern Nigeria are referred to as Igbo culture (*Omenala ndi Igbo*). It includes both outdated customs and fresh ideas that have been incorporated into Igbo culture either through cultural development or external influence. In addition to their dress, cuisine, and linguistic dialects, the Igbo people are known for their visual art, music, and dancing styles, as well as their oral tradition, riddles, and proverbs. The oral act form of riddles is the subject of this investigation. Cultural heritage, beliefs, and values can be passed down from one generation to the next, just like oral traditions.

According to Okediji (2017), oral traditions are cultural legacies that are passed down through speeches, songs, and other means. The transfer of the totality of human experiences, such as beliefs, history, customs, artifacts, etc., from one generation to the next orally is known as an oral tradition. Oral traditions predate all of recorded human history. When memory is expressed in words and deeds, culture is once again created. Oral traditions, which served as the main foundation for the reconstruction of history, were how preliterate African cultures in the distant past communicated their culture, traditions, beliefs, and values. For pre-modern and pre-historic Africans, oral tradition is

still a crucial cultural heritage management approach that has relevance in contemporary society. Due to the fact that both riddles and oral traditions are forms of oral literature, there is a causal relationship between them.

Similar to oral traditions, riddles have been defined in a variety of ways. According to Stanley Madonsela (2016), riddles are traditional verbal expressions that contain one or more descriptive elements and whose meaning must be inferred from the parts.

Riddles are typically told to or used with children or young people to help them develop wisdom, particularly through the observation of natural events.

According to Nwadike (2003), the Igbo utilize questions, stories, and riddles in the form of deep phrases or challenging words to teach their children to be wise and in tune with their natural surroundings or habitat. According to Okafo and Eweluka (2008), riddles fascinate the Igbo, especially on moonlit nights, and are very important for learning since they help children develop their critical thinking skills. Since riddles are an ancient verbal poetic form of retelling previous major events in a poetic rhyme, they can be described as succinct yet funny expressions and a crucial tool to learn about the forebearers' activities.

Riddles show the dexterity of the Igbo language and the wisdom of our ancestors, both of which all Igbo must learn to use. Riddles have changed in modern Nigeria due to a variety of factors. Literacy and urbanization have an impact on rural-urban migration and, as a result, push urban residents to renounce some components of their cultural traditions. Other forms of communication, such as writing, print, radio, and so forth, have been

established in addition to verbal communication. The viability, continuity, and preservation of the Igbo riddles are threatened by these and other contemporary pressures on our way of life.

1.2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In time past, children and adults entertain and educate themselves with riddles, an oral art form, but now in recent times, it is disheartening that this rich traditional sub-genre is fast eroding from Igbo social discourses and traditional functions because the ‘modern’ Igbo people, that is, the majority of those who have acquired Western Education comprising of adults and youths alike scarcely make use of them. To this effect, the knowledge of the interpretation of Igbo riddles and its effect in the cultural heritage of the Igbo people is largely unexploited. It is therefore against this backdrop that this research focuses on the Ethnographic Study of Igbo Riddles.

1.3. METHODOLOGY/ THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.3.1. METHODOLOGY

The approach used to conduct the study is described in this section. This study was entirely descriptive and used a qualitative methodology. The goal of the study was to describe Igbo riddles in relation to Igbo culture, social interaction, perceptions, and behaviors.

In this study, the population consisted of all 400 level constituency Igbo students of the Department of Linguistics, University of Benin and members of the National Union of

Anambra State Students.

The study employed deliberate sampling to select participants. The sample was drawn from a population of Igbo students and graduates of male and female ages between 22 and 35, who accepted and also volunteered to participate in the riddle performance. A total of 20 riddlers both male and female were used for the study. Data were collected through participant observation and oral interview. The researcher used participant observation because of its ability to provide an in-depth description of the riddles and to help understand the behaviour of the Igbos. The researcher observed the riddling and did not take part in the riddling game. The method of data analysis was purely descriptive and focus was on the description of the Igbo riddles in relation to the cultural heritage of the Igbo people through an ethnographic approach.

1.3.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, often known as the Whorfian hypothesis (1919) or Linguistic Relativity, is the foundation of the study. According to this theory, a language's structure affects how its speakers perceive the outside world. According to a theory, a language's structure influences a speaker's worldview or cognitive processes, and as a result, people's perceptions are correlated with their spoken languages. This hypothesis demonstrates the connection between language and culture and maintains that they are mutually dependent, making it impossible to comprehend or value one without understanding the other. "Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor do they live alone in the world of social activity as it is generally understood, but are very

much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society," Sapir writes in his book "Language" (1929b, p. 207). It is quite a delusion to believe that language is only an incidental technique of addressing particular communication or reflective difficulties and that one essentially adjusts to reality without the use of language. The "real world" is actually highly dependent on the group's unconsciously acquired linguistic patterns. Because of the community's language habits, which promote specific options of interpretation, we see, hear, and otherwise experience the world mainly as we do.

According to Whorf, different speakers will have different perspectives on the world insofar as the structural differences between the languages they speak, and not even the most accomplished linguist who is aware of all the subtleties of structural differences between languages can escape to see the world for what it truly is instead of how this or that language presents it to us.

Fishman has written about Whorfian theory and the kinds of statements it makes on a number of occasions, most notably in 1960 and 1972c. One argument is that if speakers of the first language have terms to describe things in their native tongue and speakers of the second language do not, then the first language speakers will find it simpler to discuss those topics. The boldest assertion of all is that a language's grammatical categories not only support and assist its speakers in having a specific worldview, but also simultaneously constrain that worldview. They serve as blinders, limiting your perception to the ideas and things that are compatible with your language. Your language determines

your "world-view," hence people who speak different languages will have distinct world-views. According to this perspective, language acts as a screen or filter for reality, influencing how speakers organize and comprehend the social and natural worlds.

Given the emphasis on language and worldview and how these reflect a given group's culture, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is pertinent to the objectives of this study. In this case, the Igbo society and language, riddles in a language influence and to some extent shape the culture, social behavior, and worldview of a specific social group.

Ethnography of Speaking by Dell Hymes, published in 1964, serves as another foundation for the subject. In order to comprehend many cultural and contextual aspects of communication, the Ethnography of Communication (EC) is a multidisciplinary research approach that uses ethnographic research reports of actual communication events and occasions. Hymes contends that language cannot be examined in a vacuum. It must be explored in a larger framework that takes into account cultural and social factors. He created the SPEAKING model, which examines speech in the context of culture.

According t

Riddles are distinct type of literary expression in most African cultures and are viewed as peculiar domain relating to the instruction of children.

1.4. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The general objective is to provide an in-depth examination and description of Igbo riddles using an Ethnographic approach.

The specific objective and purposes of the study are;

1.4.1. To examine the importance of riddles to the Igbo culture.

1.4.2. To determine how riddles affect the Igbo culture.

1.4.3. To examine the functions of riddles in the Igbo society.

1.4.4. To determine the significance of riddles to children in the Igbo society.

1.4.5. To examine how riddles affect a child's cultural and social cognition.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1. What are the importance of riddles to the Igbo culture?

1.5.2. How do riddles affect the Igbo culture?

1.5.3. What are the functions of riddles in the Igbo society?

1.5.4. What are the significance of riddles to children in the Igbo society?

1.5.5. How do riddles affect a child's cultural and social cognition?

1.6. SCOPE OF STUDY

This study is restricted to an ethnographic study of Igbo riddles. The study aims to give an in-depth description of Igbo riddles and how riddles affect and influence the Igbo

culture. It aims to examine the place of riddles in the cultural and social build up of a child and to give the significant functions of riddles in the Igbo society. The study aims to cover the importance of Igbo riddles and the significance of riddles to children and adults in the Igbo society. This study covers the hallmarks of Igbo riddles in the Igbo community.

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study would greatly benefit children and adults in various societies as it would reveal the place of riddles in the Igbo culture and the effects and importance of these riddles to members of the society. The study would be of immense importance to children , students, adults, researchers and scholars who are interested in developing further studies on Igbo riddles.

1.8. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study justified as Igbo riddle is not a fantasy topic but is actually evident and used in the world across various communities, localities and cultural backgrounds and the effect it has on members of a community cannot be overemphasised.

1.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.9.1. Time Constraint- Ethnographic studies are time consuming to complete as it involves participant observation in the collection of necessary data for the study and

requires an in-depth description of the concept and culture under study.

1.9.2. Place- This is also a limitation to the study as it is not an easy task getting the cooperation of the people for the successful study of the phenomena or concept.

1.9.3. The Collection of Data- this also posed as a limitation as not everyone was willing to take part in the riddling game because it involves critical thinking in asking good riddles and getting their answers. Most persons lacked interest and gave no response when reached out to.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Some researchers have already undertaken earlier studies on the subject. This chapter includes evaluations of the literature that include a number of the theories that this study will employ to inform its methodology. Along with previous researchers' empirical studies, the conceptual framework of the study is further addressed in this instance. To further knowledge, other aspects of Igbo riddles are also looked at.

Riddles are questions or statements that are purposefully framed incomprehensibly or deceptively. They are perplexing explanations disguised as statements intended to pique a person's imagination. In other words, they include metaphors or descriptive aspects for which the listener must figure out the meaning. Riddling is a popular form of family amusement in the Igbo community. Under the moonlight, children would gather around the family's elders to play riddle games. This type of family riddle game is so much fun and makes everyone giggle.

According to Kyoore (2010), puzzles bring generations together to experience the magic of archetype and, as a result, to see how the world works. The answer to an Igbo riddle, for instance, is death: Enwere otunna, mgbe obula okporogi, Igaghi aju (I have a particular father, when he calls you, you cannot reject) (onwu). No one is exempt from death. This riddle implies that death has no regard for age, gender, or status and that

everyone must face it on an equal footing.

According to Kyoore (2010), almost all cultures around the world include riddles in their historical literature. According to Kyoore, it is extremely likely that riddles were passed down orally as a form of storytelling and education around the campfire.

Riddles are perplexing descriptive statements or direct queries that demand an association or connotation be given. Instead of being asked to guess directly, the answerers are presented with an allusive sentence that alludes to another object, which they must then attempt to identify.

In most riddles, what is necessary is that the answerer should identify the thing mentioned in these allusive general statements. The structure of the riddle, either grammatically or in terms of thematic components, and the cognitive aspect of the riddle, that is, to functions psychologically, sociologically, and intellectually as performed in context, have been the primary sources for definitions of the riddle in oral tradition (Green and Pepicello 1979). These academics defined riddle analysis in terms of the structural and cognitive investigations that supplied the context for the definition of the riddle. There are two categories of riddles that one can develop: Conundrum, a riddle that relies on the use of puns to achieve its desired effects, and "enigmas," which are issues typically described in metaphorical or allegorical language that demand ingenuity and careful thought for the solution. Conundrums are queries that rely on puns in either the query or the answer to have an impact. Although adults are known to participate as well, the Igbo people view riddling as a game for children. Adults occasionally perform riddles

for kids at riddling sessions when they share their own riddles.

Oral literature is a dynamic, thriving kind of art that has been passed down through the years. For instance, oral literature is performed frequently in social, political, religious, and casual gatherings in traditional Igbo society. Youths had very active roles in the performance and dissemination of oral literature in the past. According to Akporobaro (2001:37), one of the alternative definitions of oral literature is "the sum of verbal expressive formats and beliefs created in tribal societies for social enjoyment and for the organization of society and transmitted orally from one generation to the next." In addition to serving as entertainment, oral literature also plays a significant role in the "ordering of society," as mentioned in this definition. When it comes to expressing, codifying, and advancing cultural ideals or beliefs, oral literature can be an instrument of social control. The diverse human societal roles that oral literature fills demonstrate its pertinence or relevance.

Nnabuihe (2001:479) defines folklore, which includes oral literature, as "a catalyst our ancestors utilized to inculcate excellent sense of values into the children to have them psychologically equipped and to build their own moral ideals needed to govern their future living." In almost every civilization, folktales, riddles, proverbs, folk ballads, and other types of folklore are reflections of the people's culture, including their beliefs, institutions, ideals, and philosophical outlook (Ikwubuzo, 1990:76). The Igbo society, where these various genres of oral literature combine the people's cultural qualities and worldview, is not dissimilar to this.

In addition to being utilized for entertainment, Igbo riddles (Agwugwa or Gwam gwam gwam) were also employed as a tool for education and character development. The substance of Igbo riddles tightly encloses a variety of cultural issues. Through playing a riddle game, a youngster can absorb some cultural norms and values that are communicated in the riddles. A young person could also learn about his moral responsibility through Igbo riddles. The customs of welcome and marriage (an instance, for it to be an abomination for a man to marry his sister hence, committing incest and other cultural heritage of the Igbos are embedded in the riddles). It is impossible to overstate the relevance and significance of Igbo riddles as a teaching and socializing tool. For this reason, according to Ugonna (1989), cited by Ikwubuzo (2001:9), children are introduced to a variety of cultural aspects of their community through Igbo riddles, which also instill in them Igbo cultural ideals. It gives children access to the wealth of information and collected wisdom of their ancestors, and they acquire this access through entertainment rather than the grind and tedium of official schooling.

A riddle is a statement or question that demands creative thought in order to be answered. As a literary form, riddles use figurative language to conjure up images. In order to achieve a special meaning or effect, figurative language must diverge from standard language, according to Abrams (1993). According to Abrams, metaphorical language deviates from everyday language by altering the sequence and importance of words. Similar to this, Motebele (1997) claims that using imagery is one of the most popular ways to create figurative language. She continues by stating that imaging requires

abandoning one thing or idea in favor of another by highlighting their similarities and distinctions. Knowing how to organize the universe in your mind's eye means you can recognize the images in a riddle. Additionally, according to Motebele (1997), organizational principles are found in riddle competitions by causing a collision of meanings between literal and metaphorical meanings formed by the montage of linked pictures. Although adults are known to participate as well, the Igbo people view riddling as a game for children. Sometimes, adults perform riddles with children in riddling session when they share their riddles with them.

The art may also be practiced by adults. Additionally, children execute and exchange riddles on their own. The practice of riddling is seen by the Igbo as a way of passing on knowledge. The Igbo people view riddles as a dialogic competition, and a riddler, a riddlee, and an audience are necessary for a performance. The riddlee must respond to the riddle that is thrown their way by the riddler. In Igbo riddling sessions, there is a system of taking turns where one riddler gives a riddle to a riddlee and vice versa. The game's rules prohibit lying, withholding information, or altering the contest's terms in order to increase one's chances of winning. Igbo riddles have an opening procedure to prod an individual into riddling session and it is stereotyped. For instance the riddler says; gwam,gwam,gwam,(tell me,tell me,tell me) the riddlee say;“ko azia nna ntighere oghe” meaning say it, we are listening or waiting. The function of the opening formula is to establish the contextual situation of riddle exchange. The performance of riddle among the Igbo is guided by understood rule. For instance, riddles are mostly performed at night

as a form of social control so that time is not wasted. This therefore, is meant to train the child to follow time-lines and activities, so that they do not forget other given chores. Riddles can also be performed during the daytime in schools.

Riddles are used for a number of objectives, such as moral instruction, Intellectual testing, and acculturation of young people into society's poetics. Because riddles reflect the environment and people's intellectual prowess, scholars examine riddles as literary expressions by members of society. Riddles might be crucial for young people's overall development. Riddles serve a variety of social, educational, cultural, and other purposes in society in addition to their social and educational ones. The people get a strong feeling of cultural values like harmony, respect, honesty, and others from traditional Igbo riddles. Values play a crucial role in the correct growth and education of young people. Some Igbo riddles have a structure, may include names or make allusions to historical occasions. Riddles undoubtedly foster in people a sense of awareness and ingenuity. Igbo riddles are a useful tool for evaluating and enhancing the listener's capacity for quick, precise thought. This viewpoint is supported by Ajayi's (1990) observation that riddles are an outstanding moral and intellectual exercise that help people build their capacity for independent reasoning, which is essential for having morally sound judgments like uprightness and kindness. Riddles encourage social interaction, friendly competition, and friendship between participants. Riddling fosters a spirit of competition among the participants as well as a sense of community among those who are placed in the same group. Folk culture, especially language use, includes riddles. It involves the questioner

confusing the respondent by using ambiguous language. A particular environment's phenomena are used to frame riddles. They are employed for a variety of reasons, including amusement, lesson teaching, and intellect demonstration. Riddles are examples of folk literature and they symbolize a particular cultural feature.

The Igbo had a variety of informal methods of educating their children before official schooling arrived in Nigeria, and they continue do now. In the traditional Igbo community, parents consider it their obligation to introduce and initiate their kids into a variety of specialized organizations, such as age grades and secret clubs. Parents encourage their children to join play groups so they can relate to their peers. Through these institutions, the children are not only exposed to the outside world but also emotionally matured, which deters their complete reliance on and lifelong attachment to their parents. Play groups take part in activities that raise a child's awareness of his surroundings, the way his society works, and his responsibilities as an individual member of that society. Simply put, they serve as the child's training grounds. One of the activities that are included in play groups is the riddle game. For instance, in the moonlight play, riddling is one of the activities that the participants enjoy. Due to their rich content, riddles serve as an equally excellent teaching tool for Igbo children as folktales do. Studies of oral literature have traditionally included the art form of riddles (Ikwubuzo, 1992:52). A riddle, according to Hugh Jansen (1968:231), is a traditional inquiry that challenges the listener to recognize and identify the precision, the unity, and the truth in a statement that typically sounds improbable or self-contradictory but is, in its own

particular light, always accurate. In addition to stating that a riddle is a traditional art form, this definition lists some strategies it employs to perplex the listener. For example, it frequently asks "indirect" or "incomplete" questions that may seem "implausible" or "self contradictory."

According to Ugonna (1988-89:90), the riddle is a satisfying literary work that assumes the form of a competition, either between two people or between one person and many others.

The sociological and educational values of the riddles, particularly as they relate to children's upbringing, were briefly discussed by Ugonna (1980). Education as a concept goes beyond the methodical and intentional training received in high school and college. Among other things, it involves the indirect impact made on morality and mental faculties. Apart from formal education, it is believed that there are other informal ways to educate oneself. Before official education was introduced in Nigeria, one of the informal methods of educating Igbo children in traditional Igbo society was through Igbo riddles (Agwugwa or Gwám gwam gwam). However, it should be mentioned that the 'modern' Igbo's lack of interest in the Igbo language is a result of the development of technology, such as television and mobile phones, which have caused the Igbo to stop enjoying their traditional moonlit entertainment of plays, games, and other plays. The Igbo people stopped attending their customary moonlight gatherings, during which they engage in a variety of cultural entertainment, share folktales, and occupy the children and young people with riddles and other activities. Accordingly, it is believed that this kind of

entertainment among the Igbo people is quickly approaching total extinction and that it must be purposefully brought into the light of things for continued usage in Igbo social life in the present.

Riddles and clever sayings are among the children's specialties in Igbo communities. Children used to spend their evenings amusing themselves with riddles, folktales, and child games. However, there was not a session that was dedicated specifically to telling riddles or riddling, and at the same sitting, children played other games, told folktales, and engaged in riddling. They could begin with riddles, move on to other activities, and possibly finish with storytelling. When compared to the telling of folktales, the time set aside for riddles is frequently short; it is assumed that folktales are typically more intriguing and entertaining. As a result, kids do not always feel that they require adult assistance to start or continue a riddle session. The smaller kids pick up more riddles as they play with their older siblings. This is not to say that adults never participate in riddle games; on occasion, they will, at the request of kids. In a regular riddling session, two people are needed. A minimum of two people are needed, but generally speaking, a larger group makes for a more engaging session. A group of people play the game of riddle by exchanging riddles, either competitively or not. One group asks a riddle question, while another group responds with the solution. Each group poses a precedent and responds to a riddle question in turn.

The Igbo riddles can be expressed in simple language or poetic language and are presented as brief utterances. It demands a response, which could be as simple as one

word or as complex as the riddle. The answer could be a single word, a lengthier phrase, or a whole sentence that matches the grammatical structure of the riddle question. It might offer a supplementary explanation for the response's compatibility. The answer is intended to be found by considering the hints given, but more often than not, the interlocutor is expected to recall the accepted or typical response or else to submit to ignorance and wait to be informed of the correct response. Since the level of figurative communication varies from one riddle to another, some are simpler to understand than others. An evaluation that reveals the riddle's literal meaning is necessary if we want to try to solve its figurative content. Riddles can be considered to have non-obvious functions that an explanation may not immediately disclose if entertaining is their primary goal. These functions are applicable to everyone, including adults and children, possibly even more so for adults who observe kids playing riddles. Igbo riddles, which are 96% real and factual, reveal a lot about the culture, setting, and manner of life of the people.

2.1 TYPES OF RIDDLES

A riddle is a sort of performance where everyone involved wants to have fun. Since riddles are meant to deceive the listener, the situation entails both fun and humiliation at the same time. Here, logically sound solutions are frequently incorrect.

We'll look at each form of riddle in turn because there are many different kinds;

i. Enigma: The Greek word *enigma*, which means "to speak in riddles," is the source of

the word enigma. It applies to both individuals and things that confound one's logic. Riddles that use allegorical or metaphorical methods are known as enigmas. The solver uses critical thinking and cunningness to arrive at a solution.

ii. Conundrum: A conundrum is a riddle that relies on puns to achieve the desired outcome.

iii. Descriptive Riddles: In this type of riddle, the important characteristics and traits of the thing, phenomenon, or living thing in question are listed. By providing shorter or more thorough descriptions, descriptive riddles can be made simpler or more difficult. It is usually advisable to question a more difficult (shorter) version of the descriptive riddle first, and of course, give the child time to consider, because it is always preferable to keep ahead of the child's present level of development (what he already knows and can do at the moment). However, if it becomes clear that the child is still having difficulty, one may consider a simpler (expanded) solution.

iv. Rhymed Riddles: In some riddle poems, it is suggested that the answer be the last word in the line. When making a guess, another clue is the word's coincidence with the rhyme in the previous line. The poem will reveal the solution and give the youngster confidence in himself and a sense of accomplishment. The smallest people can participate in such activities, and children love solving such riddles. Rhymed ones may only be two lines long or longer.

v. Trick Riddles: These riddles likewise provide a rhyme word as the solution, but this word is actually a clue that leads to uncertainty. Such riddles need the child to be alert and focused; the youngster must not fall victim to deception or allow himself to be persuaded into providing the correct answer, which is not consistent with the poem. It is also a lot of fun, especially if you play with a bunch of children and provide sets of pictures with appropriate and incorrect images for them to choose from while selecting the correct response.

vi. Riddle-poems: There are various degrees of difficulty for these poetic riddles. In shorter riddles, the meaning is very obvious and is based on the child's understanding of his immediate environment and his practical experience as presented in simple terms that preschoolers may comprehend.

vii. Figurative Riddles: The meaning is veiled and presented figuratively in more intricate poetic riddles. You need to have a broad vocabulary, advanced reasoning skills, and inventiveness to solve these riddles. It has been found that children prefer to guess these riddles only if they are already familiar to them and struggle to guess new riddles. As a result, the majority of kids who participate in riddle sessions avoid figurative riddles because they can be tedious and slow-moving and require a lot of critical thinking.

Riddling is a verbal engagement in which the "correct" response may occasionally be utterly unexpected, deceiving others on purpose. Riddling, however, is not a general knowledge test because the "right" answer could also be "wrong," or randomly chosen. The social activity of riddling rewards amusement, wit, getting the question right,

humiliation, and its tolerance. As Akíntúnde Akínyemí points out, while speaking of riddles, “the performer and audience often derive equal pleasure and entertainment from participating” (Akínyemí 2015: 84). Never is the audience unresponsive. If all of the riddles were simple to figure out, both the riddler and the audience would find the game uninteresting. A riddle is thought of as a query that needs to have a solution. The agrarian domain and its homogenous culture served as the inspiration for the imagery of classic riddles. It could be presumed that the riddlers would all be familiar with the real world that the tradition derived its pictures from because people all had similar lifestyles. People found it amusing and humorous when someone was unable to respond to a query that contained well-known components. But regardless of how well-known the imagery was, a remarkable aspect like in a riddle could be a surprise. Depending on the type and regulations of the riddle, a failing riddler may face punishment in particular societies and ethnic groups. In Igbo communities, the number of riddles that can be answered wrong before a riddler is penalised is decided upon by the players prior to the start of the game. The usual quantity was three.

People had to learn to tolerate being deceived to or bluffed without becoming outraged through the use of riddles. While riddling offers enjoyment, the communication also promotes a feeling of similarity among participants, introduces cultural metaphors and language, and conveys communal values and standards. Riddles elicited a variety of laughter, from jeering to rejoicing, from pleasure to relief. Not only might humor cause people to laugh, but also the gathering and pleasant company that it produced. It has

always been crucial to take turns in riddles in order to keep the game going. While everyone had a different sense of humor, riddles set collective boundaries and clarified what was and wasn't acceptable. Riddles provide a glimpse into the complexity of language and culture. The humor in riddles is a unique blend of imaginative or novel word play, disguising the familiar as foreign, pulling the rug out from under the riddler by defying convention, exercising authority, and even finding hilarious components in areas where no one thought to seek for them.

2.2. FUNCTIONS OF RIDDLES

Riddles frequently have the objective of entertaining the audience by providing difficult problems to solve, but they also have additional functions. For instance, they might permit more in-depth consideration of a subject or the emergence of fresh inquiries. Riddles are used in these instances to force the reader to consider a variety of options critically rather than just skimming the text.

•**Riddles educate kids about their local surroundings:** The majority of riddling games employ items that can be obtained locally. The child learns more about his surroundings and the proper roles of these entities in the community by using them in riddles.

•As participants in the programs solve riddles, their cognitive abilities improve since solving riddles often requires technical and logical reasoning as well as creative thinking. Riddles are ambiguous, perplexing questions with answers that are frequently symbolic or figurative rather than the literal meaning intended by the question.

•**Riddle and Memory:** In addition to providing entertainment, riddles help children strengthen their memories because they are expected to repeatedly give the correct answers to the riddles. Despite Harries' (1971) comment that the purpose of a riddle is not didactic, this is the case. The memory of responses and entities can be the focus of this feature. In the case of some riddles, it is plausible to hypothesize that the abundance of answers stems from the provision for further ones. As the child's memory retention improves, recall, a prominent feature of riddles, goes beyond simply remembering the right or accepted answers and responses to questions. Instead, recall makes a significant contribution to a child's education.

•**Riddle as a Didactic Tool:** It is clear that among the Igbo, as it would be in many African societies, riddling is an overt and covert adjunct to learning for youth. The knowledge that can be learned directly or indirectly from the riddle itself is another part of moral riddle observation. Riddles are constructed via critical analysis of the context in which the civilization is situated. This encompasses the natural environment, human society, its structure, and how it functions, as well as the behavior of animals and other living things, the divine and human relationship, and more. This kind of information can be learned from other riddles that came before or after this one. For instance, the answer to the riddle "I see beautiful leaves but I cannot use them to adorn myself" is "No matter how beautiful your sister is, you cannot marry her." Whatever the child's sex, the answer to the riddle serves as a reminder of the rigidity of some natural laws. People must also abide by human rules like exogamy, incest, and other such regulations as well as cultural

and social conventions. The metaphorical "sister" in the riddle above stands for all women who are related to a man by blood. No matter how attractive a woman may be sexually, one cannot marry her solely because she is one of his "sisters"—who may be nothing more than a distant classificatory sister. Even though this riddle appears to be directed at men, there is a clear lesson for everyone. In the same way, a girl cannot accommodate a brother-type boy sexually. Children are introduced to a range of vocabulary terms through riddles, among other things, such as the names of animals, trees, artifacts, etc.

•**Riddles also succeed in imparting knowledge of human anatomy.** Numerous riddles depict the body's constituent parts as well as its overall operations. In the riddle "Two noticed a mango fruit, Twenty climbed the tree to fetch it, and Thirty-two ate it," the relationship between the body's parts is depicted. The answer is "It is the pair of eyes that observes a fruit, and It is the help of the Ten fingers and the Ten toes that a person is able to climb a tree to pluck its fruit; However, it is the Thirty-two teeth that do the chewing and eating. Another riddle states that the eyes are like two black hens brooding side by side but not seeing one another. Riddles provide a wealth of information on the different components of the human body and effectively enlighten the reader about their distinct roles.

•**Riddles and Creative Thinking:** In societies like the Igbo society, riddling is based mostly on creative thinking. Some academics argue that riddling prioritizes or emphasizes memory at the expense of critical thinking, and this basic purpose of riddling

runs counter to those researchers' arguments. The Igbo riddler looks for the right response according to tradition, not simply any response. However, it would seem that the riddle culture is not as rigid as it might seem and that there is some wiggle room in the compatibility of answers. Interlocutors are capable of making a strong case for an explanation that may not have been the initial, conventionally accepted response to the riddle precedent; such a solution might possibly be accepted as an alternative and eventually make its way into riddle tradition. Some riddles have come to be acceptable over time in the riddling game along these same lines.

At the cognitive level, riddles can be considered to offer opportunities for critical observation and examination of beliefs, norms, and conceptions as well as behaviors, as Kallen and Eastman (1979) have noted on the cognitive aspect of riddles. When solving riddles, one's creative thinking is put to use, which helps to develop one's mental faculties. This increases one's cognitive capacity, whether one is solving riddles as an adult or child.

•**Child Inculturation:** Through riddles, children can learn about certain cultural topics that are related to and depend on the beliefs, practices, norms, and values of their culture. Proverbs, folktales, stories, and myths are examples of Igbo riddles that represent the cultural characteristics and worldview of the Igbo people. The riddle game serves as a non-formal educational tool and, like other moonlight play activities, "introduces the children to the diverse cultural values of the Igbo," according to Ugonna (1989:16). It gives children access to the wealth of information and collected wisdom of their ancestors, and they receive this access through entertainment rather than the grind and

boredom of official schooling. Themes like marriage, morals, etiquette, religion, and other topics can all be used to provide the youngster a cultural orientation through the usage of the Igbo riddles.

•Igbo riddles as a Tool for Children's Intellectual Growth: Igbo riddles can be used as a tool for children's intellectual development. According to Jansen (1968:232), "Man has always proudly considered the power to reason a very precious talent, if not a distinction and justification for a sense of its own superiority," and is fundamentally a rational being. A high level of reasoning is needed to solve an Igbo riddle because many of them are only onomatopoeic sounds or disguised language. By linking signs with ideas, thoughts with ideas, and signs with signs, the riddle competition, in the words of Makouta-Mbouko (1973:19), "develops the (child's) memory, imagination, mental process, and judgement." Since a question with an expected proper response is purposefully omitted to perplex the respondent, the riddle is a test of a person's creativity or intelligence. For this reason, according to Abraham and Dundes(1972:30), a riddle is a question that is structured to confuse or test the cunning of both those who do not know the solution and those who do, as well as the cognitive abilities of those who do. Because, as was already mentioned, man views the ability to reason as a "distinction and justification for a sense of his own superiority," the youngster sees the riddle game as an opportunity to showcase his intellectual or mental competence and superiority over others. The child's ability to recognize, identify, or untangle the truth that is shrouded in ambiguity, competition, or

contest is how they demonstrate their intellectual prowess and dominance over others. It should be noted, nevertheless, that the game not only gives one a chance to practice their thinking, but also gives them a platform to see how others exercise their reasoning. Igbo riddles have a competitive element that requires the observation of a time lag for each riddle question. While the riddlee is not given a set amount of time to respond, he is expected to do so as soon as possible because, in the words of Chukwuma (1974:27), "the repetition in the term 'Gwam gwam gwam' suggests some urgency "inform me- tell me- swiftly." Igbo riddles greatly aid in teaching and developing the child's rapid thinking because they force one to engage in some critical and in-depth reasoning in order to come up with the solution within the smallest time that may be permitted for the question. When Finnegan (1970:442) writes that riddles have an educational purpose by "developing children in fast thinking, in intellectual skill, and in classification," she is expressing a reality. Riddles help children communicate more effectively while also enhancing their mental agility.

•Riddles as a tool for training the child in cognition: The riddling game is a form or mode of communication. A teller and a response are used in the game, which functions as a kind of two-way conversation. When one participates in the session as they depict nature as a whole, one can learn a lot from riddles. Through the riddle game, a person, and particularly a child, learns more about himself as a being. This is because some riddles make reference to people. The child can learn a variety of facts about his environment and culture through riddles, such as the names and characteristics of these

objects. When some riddles contain people or objects, the child can also learn about those subjects' occupations and tools.

•Riddles as a Socialization Tool: In addition to their instructional function, Igbo riddles also have sociological values and purposes. Riddle games are typically performed in the evening when people meet to unwind in Igbo nation. A riddle competition can be held as an appropriate part of the moonlight play. It acts as a socializer by enticing neighborhood kids to congregate in a public space. The children usually split up into two groups and start a riddle competition, with each side trying to win. The majority of the time, the competition may be between two people, with the other spectators watching, cheering, and clapping for the contestant who outperforms his opponent mentally. When children from different families get together for a moonlight riddle session, they occasionally decide to turn it into an inter-family competition by dividing up into groups according to the families they belong to. Each side tries to outsmart the other and establish its own credibility by how many of its replies are correct. A friendly environment is created by people laughing at one other's solutions and the competitiveness to solve the riddle itself (Olatunji 1984:182). An umpire who may have been chosen to oversee the tournament may announce the total of the right responses provided by each side at the conclusion of the competition. The winning side declares its superior knowledge and congratulates itself for the honor the family has received as a whole. The losing team typically concedes defeat with good sportsmanship, but not without boastfully pledging to exact revenge should they cross paths again. The competitors then break up and head home

amid cheers, applause, and the singing of some victory songs.

Riddle games are occasionally played by youngsters during the day as a form of entertainment. They exchange riddles for solutions whether they are at school or traveling to the stream. When they exchange riddles on their trip to and from the stream, they might not notice the monotony that the distance might impose on them. To put it simply, both children and adults can enjoy the riddle game. According to Finnegan (1970:441), "typically, riddle-telling is a social game for pure and simple entertainment." People talk to one another and laugh together, especially when a candidate is totally confused by a challenging question that he is unable to correctly solve. The predominant environment at all of the riddle events mentioned above might give one the chance to fulfill their desire for social fulfillment, and it is in this way that the riddle game has a socializing effect on Igbo society.

2.3. EMPIRICAL STUDIES

The phrase "the riddle, both itself and its contextual embeddedness, is rich in existential context" from Galit Hassan and David Shulman (1996) is accurate. This indicates that a riddle may be read independently as a text and, with the benefit of the situational language and cultural context that shapes it, a riddle has a wealth of meaning. Additionally, the audiences' interpretations of the riddle precedents that had been set before them were among the items that needed to be translated.

An analysis of Abagusii riddles was conducted by Gachanja and Kebaya in 2013 as part

of their study on the pedagogical use of riddles. Primary data for the analysis came from a field study among adults and children who had been purposefully selected from the Abagusii community. In order to gather data, the researchers used participatory and observational methods. The study of the numerous educational abilities and values found in riddles demonstrated how both the riddle and the riddling include educational qualities. In this sense, the author emphasized the value of using riddles as a teaching and instructive tool.

Riddles are similar to proverbs in their complicated shape and structure, according to Summer(1995) analysis. The proverb is mostly connotative, but this is frequently very metaphorical. Riddles display a broader and deeper range of meaning, operation, and interpretation in this way.

Magachi (2015) carried out research on the Ekegusii riddle's pragmatic analysis. A pragmatic analysis of Ekegusii riddles served as the study's foundation. According to him, riddles are crucial for educating both adults and youngsters. Riddles were divided into literal and metaphorical riddles in the study. The relevance theory is the foundation of the study. The study's conclusions showed that Ekegusii riddles may be divided into literal riddles that are deciphered and understood using context and cultural background. Additionally, it was revealed that both adults and children engage in the riddling process and that cultural background and context are crucial for correctly reading and comprehending Ekegusii riddles.

A research on riddles among the Dagora in Ghana and Burkina Faso was conducted by

Kyoore (2010). The study focused on the value of the genre as a cultural tradition by thoroughly examining Dagara riddles from West Africa. The riddles analyzed were gathered at a folktale storytelling session in Ghana's upper west, in the Nandom area. The paper makes the case for the inclusion of folklore study in the elementary school curriculum and asserts that riddles used as metaphors are a logical association of things or human behavior.

As they are frequently framed in a way that pertains to real-life circumstances, riddles, which are questions or statements that are purposely phrased to demand creativity to determine their answer or meaning, can aid students in understanding complex topics. Additionally, students must use and hone their critical thinking abilities in order to solve riddles. Many have demonstrated how well puzzles and riddles can engage any learner in a subject; working with riddles can enhance the effectiveness of the overall learning environment because these kinds of problems call for a variety of skills and give new meaning to abstract concepts. Not only does this force a student to be a "active" rather than "passive" listener. It is important to engage in riddles in order to improve the community and the world at large today, tomorrow, and forever. Riddles play a significant role in our communities and have a positive impact on people's overall development and nature.

According to the literature review so far, nothing has been done using an ethnographic method to examine the cultural implications and social influences of Igbo riddles. The goal of the current study is to close this research gap in order to spur more investigation

on the Igbo riddling game.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 DATA PRESENTATION

DATA I

Q: Gwàm ìhe na aga n ìhu be eze, ma ọ kelegħì eze.

A: Idémmìrì zọrọ ezo

Q: Tell me what passes through the king's house, but it doesn't greet the king.

A: Flood

DATA II

Q: Gwam Àzu bi n etìtì mmiri na achọ mmiri ọ ga anụ

A: Nwoke nwèrè otùtù umunne nwaanyi ma puọ ìchọ onye ọ ga alu

Q: Tell me, a fish that lives in water but searches for drinking water.

A: A man who has many sisters but goes out in search of a wife to marry.

DATA III

Q: Kwuoro m̀ onye uwa dum na atụ ẹgwu; onye amaa nné mo nná; onye amaa nkpona mọ mgbei; onye amaa odibo mọ eze; na emete gi mgbe ụra kagba uto?

A: ọnwù

Q: Tell me who the whole world fears; who can't tell mother from father; who can't tell rich from poor; who can't tell servant from king; who wakes you up when your sleep is sweetest?

A: Death

DATA IV

Q: Gwam anụ akpụ n onụ ma erighi erị

A: ire

Q: Tell me the meat put in the mouth but not eaten

A: Tongue

DATA V

Q: Gwam gwam gwam, Gwam ejewe ejewe ọ bụte uzọ, alawa alawa ọ kpata azụ?

A: ụnyogo

Q: Tell me when going he is in front, when coming back, he is at the back?

A: shadow

DATA VI

Q: Gwam Gwam Gwam! Gwam ihe gba áká banye ohie chiri ụmụ pụta?

A: Ede

Q: Tell me what entered the bush empty handed but came out with children?

A: Cocoyam

DATA VII

Q: Abụọ hụrụ mango, iri abụọ rịgoro n'osisi ka ọ doputa ya, iri atọ na abụọ rie ya, gini ka m bụ?

A: Anya, mkpisi aka iri na ukwu iri, eze iri atọ na abụọ

Q: Two noticed a mango fruit, twenty climbed the tree to fetch it and thirty-two ate it,

what am I?

A: It is the pair of eyes that observes a fruit and it is with the help of the ten fingers and the ten toes that a person is able to climb a tree to pluck its fruit; however, it is the thirty-two teeth that do the chewing and eating

DATA VIII

Q: Gwam ñwata gba oto je ụbi we mara àkwá lọta?

A: ọka

Q: Tell me the child that went to the farm naked and came back with clothes?

A: Corn

DATA IX

Q: Gwam ọ bọawa ọ maa mma, ma ọ lawa ọjọọ njọ

A: mmadu

Q: Tell me who comes to the world beautiful and goes back ugly?

A: Human being

DATA X

Q: Gwam onye íetì nwata ìhe níhù nne ya?

A: Agụụ

Q: Tell me who beats a child before his/her mother's eyes?

A: Hunger

DATA XI

Q: Gwam ọ maara ka ọ joro were ọchichiri nāaga

A: ụsụ

Q: Tell me who knew how ugly he was and started walking at night?

A: Bat

DATA XII

Q: Gwam onye jiri ikpere gazuo ubi nna gi

A: Ọgụ

Q: Tell me who went round your father's farm with his knees

A: Hoe

DATA XIII

Q: Gwam ozụ lirị onwe ya

A: ụkwàrà

Q: Tell me the corpse that buried itself

A: Cough

DATA XIV

Q: Gwam ọgba áká arị enụ

A: Agwọ

Q: Tell me what climbs up without hand

A: Snake

DATA XV

Q: Gwám ìhe kuru áká kpam gbabaa ohia?

A: ukpaka

Q: Tell me what clapped his hand "kpam" and ran into the bush?

A: oil bean seed

DATA XVI

Q: Gwam ìhe enweghi isi ma nāawa oke ala?

A: Ide

Q: Tell me what has no head but paths the ground

A: flood

DATA XVII

Q: Kpòròkpòtòò n'òbi ògàrànyà?

A: ogbiri ehī

Q: What doesn't lack in a rich man's house?

A: Cow's rope

DATA XVIII

Q: ìhe mere ka eze raa ntụ?

A: ụbe

Q: What made the king lick dust?

A: pear

DATA XIX

Q: Gwam otị nwata n'ìhụ nne ya?

A: Agụụ

Q: What beats a child in the mum's presence?

A: hunger

DATA XX

Q: Gwam ìte okụ ụwa jì ahụ uzọ?

A: ọnwá

Q: Tell me the fire pot the whole world sees with?

A: moon

DATA XXI

Q: ọ gba aka baa ọhịa, chírì ụmụ lọta?

A: ede

Q: What went into the forest empty handed and came out with children?

A: coco yam

DATA XXII

Q: Gwam ìhè a ñuru ka ē gbụrụ ma a nughị ka ọ dara?

A: ahịhịa nkwụ

Q: Tell me what they heard when it was cut, but didn't hear when it fell?

A: Palm frond

DATA XXIII

Q: Mmadu abuo nāaga ije, mmiri nāama otu, ma o naghị ama nke ozo?

A: nwaanyi di ime

Q: Tell me two people walking while it was raining, but the rain was beating one and wasn't beating the other?

A: A pregnant woman and the baby in her womb

DATA XXIV

Q: Gwam Agboghọ pa ite mmiri nọọ n'èlù?

A: akibekee

Q: Tell me a young girl that carried a pot of water up?

A: coconut

DATA XXV

Q: o dara olulu ereghị ure?

A: Nkume/okwute

Q: What enters the ground without decaying?

A: stone

DATA XXVI

Q: Gwam otu ibe ji zuru oha onu?

A: onwa

Q: Tell me one piece of yam that is enough for the whole world?

A: moon

DATA XXVII

Q: Gwam Okorobia chi uta agba uzọ uzọ?

A: akpi

Q: Tell me a young man with arrows and shoots out?

A: scorpion

DATA XXVIII

Q: Gwam ihe a nuru ka o dara ma a nughị ka e gburu?

A: ukwa

Q: Tell me what they heard when it fell, but didn't hear when it was cut?

A: breadfruit

DATA XXIX

Q: Gwam oḡba áká ari oji?

A: ahụhụ

Q: Tell me who climbs kola nut tree empty-handed

A: Suffering

DATA XXX

Q: Osi si oma m huru n'uzo o dighi mma m huru m ji egbu ya?

A: nwaanyi m huru n'uzo o dighi ego m huru m ji alu ya

DATA XXXI

Q: Gwam Anụ a kpụ n'ọnụ nāekweghị otita?

A: ịre

Q: Tell me a meat in the mouth that cannot be chewed

A: tongue

DATA XXXII

Q: Gwam Agboghọ ntị ike?

A: akpụ

Q: Tell me a stubborn young girl or tell me a young girl with difficulty in hearing

A: Fufu/cassava

DATA XXXIII

Q: Gwam Okorobia jị ọsọ arị ụgwụ?

A: ọkụ

Q: Tell me a young boy that runs up the mountain

A: fire

DATA XXXIV

Q: Gwam Agboghọ toro n'afọ laa n'afọ?

A: ókà

Q: Tell me a young girl that grew in a year and ended up in the stomach

A: maize

DATA XXXV

Q: Gwam Nwókè òcha a nāakurū aka n'ahja?

A: akpu

Q: Tell me a fair man that is being applauded at the market

A: Fufu/ cassava

DATA XXXVI

Q: Nwóké jì mma kwurū n'ubì?

A: ókà

Q: A man that stands in the farm with a machete

A: maize

DATA XXXVII

Q: Gwam ìhe yi ụwe baa na mmiri gbara oto puta?

A: akpụ

Q: Tell me what entered the water clothed and came out naked?

A: cassava

DATA XXXVIII

Q: Gwam ụmuụnne atọ, otu nwụrụ anwụ, otu nāebe ákwá, otu nāegwụ ala.

A: nsị ahụrụ na mamịrị

Q: Tell me; three siblings, one is dead, one is crying and the other is digging the ground.

A: faeces, fart and urine

DATA XXXIX

Q: ìhe dara ọlulu sujje ọlụ?

A: òsì

Q: What fell into a hole and broke it's neck?

A: faeces

DATA XXXX

Q: ìhe nwere nkụ ma ọ dighi efé efé

A: ùlò

Q: What has wings but doesn't fly

A: house

DATA XXXXI

Q: Gwam ọgaranya dara ngwuro

A: awọ

Q: Tell me a wealthy man that is crippled

A: frog

DATA XXXXII

Q: Gwam Agboghọ tere nzụ baa ọhia

A: isi ugu

Q: Tell me a young girl that applied ash and went into the bush

A: pumpkin head

DATA XXXXIII

Q: Ihe wuru ulo n'elu ma biri n'ala?

A: ji

Q: What built a house on top of the ground but lives inside the ground?

A: Yam

DATA XXXXIV

Q: Ihe nāenwe obi uto na mmanu

A: uchicha

Q: What has happiness in oil?

A: Cockroach

DATA XXXXV

Q: Gwam Ama Chụkwụ zara adighi eru ahilia

A: élu igwe

Q: Tell me a place God swept that doesn't grow grasses.

A: Heaven

DATA XXXXVI

Q: Gwam ihe nwere ukwụ anọ n'ụtụtụ ukwụ abụọ n'ehihie, ukwu atọ n'abalị?

A: nwata nāegbe igbe nwere ukwụ anọ okorobia nwere ukwu abuo okenye nwere ukwu atọ maka mkpo o ji aga ije.

Q: Tell me what has four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon and three legs in the night?

A: A crawling baby has four legs, a youngster has two legs and an elderly person with walking stick has three legs.

DATA XXXXVII

Q: Gwam ihe yi àkwá na nwata gbara oto na nka

A: Achara

Q: Tell me what puts on a cloth at infancy but goes naked at adulthood?

A: Bamboo

DATA XXXXVIII

Q: Gwam ìhe gị na ya nọ, egwụ anāatụ gi ma ọ naghị atu ya

A: egbe

Q: Tell me what you are together with and you are afraid but it is not afraid?

A: Gun

DATA XXXXIX

Q: Gwam ụmụ abụọ elụ igwe mụtara?

A: mmiri na anwụ

Q: Tell me the two children God gave birth to?

A: Rain and Sun

DATA XXXXX

Q: Gwam Anụ ego ise juru ite?

A: eke

Q: Tell me a meat of N10 that fills the pot?

A: Python

DATA XXXXXI

Q: Gwam ite dochiri uzọ onye puta o bunye aso?

A: nsi

Q: Tell me the pot that blocks the way and anyone who comes spit into it?

A: Faeces

DATA XXXXXII

Q: Gwam ihe putara uwa kworo nwanne ya n'azu?

A: amu

Q: Tell me what comes into the world and carries its siblings on its back?

A: Penis

DATA XXXXXIII

Q: Gwam ìhe nọ n'ihụ eze ago ọfọ?

A: ngwere

Q: Tell me what is saying prayers in front of the king?

A: Lizard

DATA XXXXXIV

Q: Gwam Onye ọma danyere na nsi?

A: udara

Q: Tell me a good person that fell into faeces?

A:African. Cherry

DATA XXXXXV

Q: Gwam Osisi kpọrọ nkụ nāatu onye nwe ya egwụ

A: egbe

Q: Tell me a dried stick that frightens the owner?

A: Gun

DATA XXXXXVI

Q: Gwam Mmadu abuo bi n'otu ulo ma ha anaghi ahụ onwe ha?

A: anya

Q: Tell me two persons living in the same house but they don't see themselves?

A: Eyes

DATA XXXXXVII

Q: Gwam Mmadu abuo naeme njem a hu otu ma a hughị otu?

A: nwaanyi di ime

Q: Tell me two persons on a journey, one is seen, one is not seen?

A: A pregnant woman

DATA XXXXXVIII

Q: Gwam ihe bu nwanyi noduru okwu

A: obere oche nwanyị

Q: Tell me what makes a woman stay long in a discussion?

A: The woman's small stool

DATA XXXXXIX

Q: Gwam ịhe bụ gi uzọ gaa mba

A: ụche

Q: Tell me what entered the nation before you

A: Knowledge

DATA XXXXXX

Q: Gwam ụwe ịgwe ekweghị myiputa

A: mvo

Q: Tell me an iron clothing that can't be removed

A: fingernail

DATA XXXXXXI

Q: Gwam ìhe nāebụ gị ụzọ enedo nnụ n'ofe?

A: eku

Q: Tell me what checks salt in the soup before you?

A: stirs spoon

DATA XXXXXXII

Q: Gwam ìte e sịnyere n'uzọ onye puta ọ bupu asọ?

A: òsì

Q: Tell me a pot cooking on the road if one passes they throw spittle?

A: faeces

DATA XXXXXXIII

Q: Gwam ọka Chukwu gbara

A: eze

Q: Tell me a corn God planted

A: teeth

DATA XXXXXXIV

Q: Gwam otu nri mmadu ncha na-eri

A: ikuku

Q: Tell me the food everyone eats

A: air

DATA XXXXXXV

Q: Gwam igwe mmadu niile ji egbu osisi

A: eze

Q: Tell me the iron everyone uses to cut tree

A: teeth

DATA XXXXXXVI

Q: Gwam ihe mụtara nwa a na-apiwa ọnụ

A: ụdara

Q: Tell me what gave birth to a child that the mouth is always pressed

A: cherry

DATA XXXXXXVII

Q: Gwam ọgaranya e liri na ntụ

A: ụkwara

Q: Tell me a rich man buried in ashes

A: phlegm

DATA XXXXXXVIII

Q: Gwam ihe kotara okwụ gaa idozie okwụ

A: mmanyà

Q: Tell me something that got itself into trouble and still went to settle it

A: liquor

DATA XXXXXXIX

Q: Gwam ihe nwere ukwu anọ ma o naghị aga ije?

A: tebụl/oche

Q: Tell me something has four leg but does not work

A: Table/chair

DATA XXXXXXXX

Q: Gwam oti nwata n'ihu nne ya

A: agụụ

Q: Tell me what beats a child in the presence of the mother

A: hunger

DATA XXXXXXXXI

Q: Gwam Ihe kpe azu n'ojije kpekwarazụ na nlotazụ

A: ikiri ukwu/ikili ukwu

Q: Tell me What is in the back while going and also at the back when coming back?

A: Heel

DATA XXXXXXXXII

Q: Gwam ìhe so gi baa òhia ma ọ soghi puta?

A: mposì(ńsì)

Q: Tell me What follows u into the bush but doesn't come out with you?

A: Faeces

DATA XXXXXXXXIII

Q: Gwam ìhe e nweghì aka na ọkpa ma nāari elu

A: agwo

Q: Tell me What doesn't have hand and leg but climbs a tree?

A: Snake

DATA XXXXXXXXIV

Q: Gwam ihe ocha no n'uzo kpu okpu?

A: ero

Q: Tell me What is the white thing standing on the road wearing cap?

A: Mushroom

DATA XXXXXXXXV

Q: Gwam ihe na-ebu uzo richaa tupu onu erie?

A: anya?

Q: Tell me What eats before the mouth?

A: Eyes

DATA XXXXXXXXVI

Q: Gwam ihe dara mmiri mma ya ruo?

A: oku

Q: Tell me What does water dent the beauty?

A: Fire

DATA XXXXXXXXVII

Q: Gwam Nwoke ọcha ezoro n'ụzụzụ?

A: ịmị

Q: Tell me What is a white man that is hidden?

A: Nose

DATA XXXXXXXXVIII

Q: Gwam ịhe na-ekpo ọkụkọ ịke?

A: ikuku

Q: Tell me What blows open the buttock of a fowl?

A: Breeze

DATA XXXXXXXXIX

Q: Gwam ịhe nāezi gị ka ị di?

A: ụgegbe

Q: Tell me What shows you as you are?

A: Mirror

DATA XXXXXXXXX

Q: Gwam oke osisi dara na mba ụmuaka ji amụ elụ?

A: nnụkwụ mmadụ nwurụ n'obodo

Q: Tell ma What is a great tree that fell in a village that children use in learning how to climb?

A: A great person died

DATA XXXXXXXXXI

Q: Gwam Ihe di ka anu ufe dikwa ka anu ala?

A: usu

Q: Tell me What looks like a bird of the air and also like a land bird?

A: Bat

DATA XXXXXXXXXII

Q: Gwam Ihe di n'ulo nne gi ma o nweghi isi na odu?

A: akwa okuko

Q: Tell me What is in ur mother's house but doesn't have hand or leg?

A: Egg

DATA XXXXXXXXXXIII

Q: Gwam Akwu chara n'uzo onye puta o kpara?

A: nwanyi akwuna

Q: What is a palm fruit that is ripe by the road side and who pass will pick from?

A: A Prostitute

DATA XXXXXXXXXXIV

Q: Gwam Oba Chukwu kwuchiri ekweghi nkwughe?

A: isi

Q: Tell me What is a band that God tired that cannot be loosed?

A: Head

DATA XXXXXXXXXV

Q: Gwam Ude asuru na mba, nu ya na mba?

A: egbe

Q: Tell me the sigh that was made far away and was heard far away?

A: Gun

DATA XXXXXXXXXVI

Q: Gwam Ogaranya ukwu aja?

A: awo

Q: Tell me a rich man with a sandy feet?

A: Frog

DATA XXXXXXXXXVII

Q: Gwam O buru ibu enweghi okpukpu?

A: ejula

Q: Tell me what is fat without bones?

A: Snail

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXVIII

Q: Dum na yom?

A: Isi akwu na odu igu

Q: Tell me something always together.

A: Head of palm kernel and palm frond

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXIX

Q: Gwam ihe guru ubi nna gi onu?

A: ahuhu

Q: Tell me something that counted your father's farm land.

A: Ant

DATA XXXXXXXXXXX

Q: Ugiri anaghi ada n'ukwu ugiri?

A: nwanne anaghi alu nwanne ya

Q: Tell me the fruit that falls far away from the tree.

A: A sibling who cannot marry his/her sibling

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXXI

Q: Gwam ihe na-echere gi mgba n'uzo nna gi?

A: apiti

Q: Tell me something waiting to fight you on your way to your father's house.

A: Mud

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXXII

Q: Ebughi uzo ekpeghe azu?

A: nkita

Q: Tell me something that does not go in front of you or behind you but walks beside you.

A: Dog

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXIII

Q: Gwam ihe jiri ikpere jezu ubi?

A: ugu

Q: Tell me what walks the farmland on its knees.

A: Hoe

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXIV

Q: Gwam Agbogho ara ano

A: ikwe

Q: Tell me a young girl that has four breasts.

A: Mortar

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXV

Q: Gwam Ejeghi eje alaghi ala

A: ogwumagana

Q: Tell me what doesn't go upward and doesn't go backward

A: Chameleon

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXVI

Q: Gwam Agbogho kpu okpu n'ikpa

A: ero

Q: Tell me a young girl that has a cap in the bush

A: Mushroom

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXVII

Q: Gwam Ihe pūtārā n'ùtùtù wèrè ùkwù ānō̄ gaa ijè, ruo n'ehihiè wèrè ùkwù àbūō̄ gaa ijè,
ruo n'àbalì wèrè ùkwù ātō̄ gaa ijè

A: Mmadụ

Q: Tell me that which comes out in the morning and walks on four legs, comes in the
afternoon and walks on two legs, comes at night and walks on three legs.

A: Human being

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXVIII

Q: Gwam Àgboghō mārā ezigbo mmā mànà ànaghī ebì yā ākā

A: ọkụ

Q: Tell me a damsel who is very beautiful but cannot be touched

A: Fire

DATA XXXXXXXXXXXIX

Q: Gwam ụmunnē àbụọ ihu obodobo ihū obodobo

A: Eluigwe na ala

Q: Tell me two siblings each with a wide face

A: Heaven and Earth

DATA D

Q: Gwam Ihe na-egwu olulu ma o nweghi ukwu na aka

A: nwamiri

Q: Tell me something that digs but doesn't have hands and legs

A: Water

DATA DI

Q: Gwam anụ nō bē Èzè na-èkwere yā n'īsī

A: Ñgwèrè

Q: Tell me an animal in the king's palace and nodding for him

A: Lizard

DATA DII

Q: Gwam Ihe enweghi isi ma na-awa oke ala

A: ide

Q: Tell me something that doesn't have head but digs the ground

A: Earth worm

DATA DIII

Q: Gwam O muru keere ohia

A: ukpaka

Q: Tell me something that birthed and shared it to the bush

A: Pumpkin

DATA DIV

Q: Gwam ihe a gùrù ahà ọ dị kà ahà a gùrù ya

A: ọnwụ

Q: Tell me something that is named and it's like the name given to it

A: Death

DATA DV

Q: Gwam Ihe na-abu o biawa abiawa mpekele mpekele, o lawa alawa mpekele mpekele

A: Onwa

Q: Tell me that which when it is coming comes in fraction by fraction and when it is going goes piece by piece

A: Moon

DATA DVI

Q: Gwam Àgbòghò tōrō n'afò laa n'afò

A: ọkà

Q: Tell me a maiden that matures in a year and goes/disappears in a year

A: Maize

DATA DVII

Q: Gwam Òjì ihu aga mà wèrè āzū na-àlota

A: diòchì

Q: Tell me something that goes with the front but comes back with the back

A: Palm wine tapper

DATA DVIII

Q: Gwam Ihe na-aku kpoo oge dum

A: anya/obi

Q: Tell me something that beats always

A: Eye/Heart

DATA DIX

Q: Gwam ono na mba abara mba ozo mba

A: Egbe

Q: Tell me that which scolds a town from another town

A: Gun

DATA DX

Q: Gwam Nwanyi otu ntu ime

A: unere

Q: Tell me a woman that only got pregnant once

A: Banana

DATA DXI

Q: Gwam Onye ocha no n'omagu

A: mkpu

Q: Tell me the white man in Omagu

A: shout

DATA DXII

Q: Gwam ụmụnnē ānō gārā njēm, àbụọ ālōtā, àbụọ alòtāghì

A: itè, efere, ụtàrà, ofe

Q: Tell me four children of the same mother that went on a journey, two returned, two did not return

A: Pot, plate, fufu and soup

DATA DXIII

Q: Gwam Ngwugwu Chukwu kere

A: afo

Q: Tell me the gift God created

A: Stomach

DATA DXIV

Q: Gwam ihe e gbūrū mmà mànà ò gbaghī òbàrà

A: Osi kpōrō nkū

Q: Tell me that which is struck with a knife but it does not bleed

A: Dry wood

DATA DXV

Q: Gwam ihe mmirī sàrà àhụ mmā yā ārūō

A: Nnu

Q: Tell me that whose beauty gets spoilt after a bath

A: Salt

DATA DXVI

Q: Gwam kpara kpara n'elū anūghī gidàm n'àlà

A: Akwukwo kpōrō nkū

Q: Kpara Kpara on the treetops but noiseless on the ground

A: Dry leaf

DATA DXVII

Q: Gwam osisi toro na mba laa na mba

A: Nwaagbogho

Q: Tell me a tree that grew in one town and went to live in another town

A: Girl

DATA DXVIII

Q: Gwam ihe gaje ubi gbara oto ma lotawa mara akwa

A: Oka

Q: Tell me what goes to the farm naked but returns clad

A: Corn

DATA DXIX

Q: Gwam otu ibe ji zuru uwa onu

A: Onwa

Q: Tell me a slice of yam that feeds the whole world

A: Moon

DATA DXX

Q: Gwam hata hata di ime hata hata ji nwa n'aka

A: Ose

Q: Tell me that which produces buds while pregnant and produces buds while nursing a baby

A: Pepper

DATA DXXI

Q: Patapatapa

A: Rain

Q: Patapatapa

A: Rain

DATA DXXII

Q: Gwam obu ulo ya aga mba

A: Mbe

Q: Tell me what carries its house while travelling

A: Tortoise

DATA DXXIII

Q: Gwam ihe ya na eze na-anuko mmanya

A: Ijiji

Q: Tell me what drinks with the king

A: Housefly

DATA DXXIV

Q: Gwam Nwaanyi ogbe ara ukwu

A: Oji

Q: Tell me a woman with big breasts

A: Kolanut

DATA DXXV

Q: Gwam udo si n'igwe wee ruo ala

A: Mmiri ozuzo

Q: Tell me a rope that stretches from heaven to earth

A: Rain

DATA DXXXVI

Q: Onwa ole nwere ụbọchiri abụọ na asatọ?

A: Onwa iri na abụọ niile

Q: How many months have 28 days?

A: All 12 months.

DATA DXXXVII

Q: Kedu ihe siri ike nke na isiaha ya na-agbaji ya?

A: gbachi nkịti

Q: What is so delicate that saying its name breaks it?

A: Silence

DATA DXXXVIII

Q: Kedu ihe di ka oku di ka nku, ma obuna onye kasi ike n'awa enweghi ike ijide ya ihe kariji otu nkeji?

A: ume

Q: What is as light as a feather, but even the world's strongest man couldn't hold it for more than a minute?

A: Breath

DATA DXXIX

Q: Kedu ihe inwere ike ijide ma igaghi atufu?

A: oyi

Q: What can you catch but not throw?

A: A Cold

DATA DXXX

Q: Gwam akwu a suru anaghi ako ako?

A: Ire

Q: Tell me the cloth that was washed but does not dry?

A: Tongue

DATA DXXXI

Q: Gwam mmadu abuo na-aga n'uzo, mmiri na ama otu mana o naghi ama onye ozo

A: nwanyi di imm

Q: tell me two people that when walking under the rain, water beats one and doesnt beat the other?

A: pregnant woman

DATA DXXXII

Q: Gwam ihe bu nke gi, ma mmadu niile kara gi nwere ya?

A: aha gi

Q: tell me what belongs to you but others use it more often than you do?

A: Your name

DATA DXXXIII

Q: Gwam onwere uru, enweghi okpukpu

A: ji

Q: What has flesh but no bones

A: yam

DATA DXXXIV

Q: Gwam DUM gwam YOM

A: ogbe akwu na igwu

Q: Tell me what sounds DUM and YOM at the same time

A: palm head and palm fond

DATA DXXXV

Q: Gwam gwam gwam, Gwam agbogho oma ana ama-ura n'ahia

A: Akpu

Q: Tell a beautiful damsel being slapped in the market

A: uncooked fufu

DATA DXXXVI

Q: Gwa m ude asuru na mba anu ya na mba

A: egbe mkpona'ala

Q: A sound you make in a town and hear it in another town

A: canon

DATA DXXXVII

Q: Gwam gwam gwam, Gwam agaba aga okpelu azu, anaba anaba okpelu azu

A: ikiri ukwu

Q: Tell me, what stays back when coming and stays back when going

A: The back of the foot

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

As a component of oral tradition, riddles represent the people's beliefs, thoughts, ethics, doctrines, and methods for addressing their social, economic, and political issues. This chapter set to analyse some selected riddles from the body of data collected to show how the culture, traditions and customs of the Igbos are embedded in the riddles.

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA I	Gwàm ìhe na aga n ìhu be eze, ma ọ kelegħì eze. (Idémmìrì zọrọ ezo)	Tell me what passes through the king's house, but it doesn't greet the king? (Flood)

The Igbo society's cultural values and traditions are ingrained in the riddles.

Greeting" is one of the Igbo people's cultural values, and it is depicted in their riddles.

The Igbo place a high priority on respect.

It improves interpersonal ties and peaceful cohabitation. Teaching a youngster how to welcome and respect people, especially their elders and seniors, is one of the first types of orientation that every parent gives their child. When a youngster first learns to speak, among other things, he is taught how to greet his parents, other family members, and visitors. The preceding riddle illustrates the importance that the Igbo people attach to greetings. One must honor the king when entering his palace, or any other person's home for that matter. The answer to the riddle above reveals that greetings are highly valued among Igbo people. Floodwaters sweep past the front of homes, including the king's palace, every time it rains. It is traditional for everyone to greet the king or anyone in whose house they find themselves, thus only a non-human creature, like a flood, might pass by a king's house without saying hello to him. As he learns and repeats this type of

riddle in subsequent riddle games, the young child indirectly learns that he should not behave or act like the "flood," whose action in this context signifies and spells out scorn and disloyalty for people to whom respect is due. Through this, the child learns the custom of greeting elders. Greetings are the major method of social communication in Igbo language and custom. It serves as the main means of introducing Igbo culture wherever the Igbo congregate. Contrary to popular perception, greetings are much more than just a way for people to say "hello" and share pleasantries for the Igbo people. Giving a welcome is a symbol of dignity and respect. Respect is a core Igbo virtue that means having a high regard and admiration for an elder or other significant individual. "Onye bi n'uzo ji ugwo ekele" refers to the Ibos' obligation to welcome one another (he that resides along the way owes a lot of greetings).

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA II	Gwam Àzu bi n etị̀ mmiri na achọ mmiri ọ ga anụ (Nwoke nwèrè otụtụ umunne nwaanyi ma puọ ịchọ onye ọ ga alu)	Tell me, a fish that lives in water but searches for drinking water. (A man who has many sisters but goes out in search of a wife)

		to marry).
DATA XXXXXXX XX	ugiri ànàghị ada n'ụkwụ ugiri? (nwanne ànàghị alụ nwanne ya).	Tell me the fruit that falls far away from the tree? (A sibling who cannot marry his/her sibling).
DATA DXVII	Gwam osịsị tọrọ na mba laa na mba. (Nwaàgboghò).	Tell me a tree that grew in one town and went to live in another town. (Girl)

As in other African cultures, incest is detested by the Igbo. It is forbidden in the land. A cultural taboo is an unspoken restriction on something (often on a statement or behavior) that is exceedingly repugnant in the eyes of the culture. Because incest is so hated, it is punished when it happens. Offenders are frequently sentenced to humiliation in front of others, public condemnation, and a sacrifice requirement in order to appease the desecrated Ala deity. Blood related marriages between men and women are discouraged. Because of this, a young Igbo man will look for a wife even if his sisters are all still single. The information in the aforementioned riddles relates to Igbo marital traditions. The young man learns about the Igbo moral code regarding marriage and brother-sister relationships with the aid of these kinds of riddles. Given this riddle, a child, young person, or woman is made to understand that it is against Igbo tradition to marry a blood relative.

Marriage is not only forbidden between siblings and other close relatives in some towns in the South Eastern states, but also between any man and woman who are members of the same town or clan. This is the case because people in those towns consider anyone to be a sibling as long as they are from that particular town. In order to avoid committing an abomination by marrying someone from their own town or village, a man or woman must travel to the next village or town. It's remarkable how these traditions are transmitted to younger generations through riddles.

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA XXIX	Gwam ogba áká ari oji?(ahụhụ)	Tell me who climbs kola nut tree empty-handed? (Suffering)

Marriage is of great importance to the Igbo. It is part of their cultural norms and customs which every family is acquainted with. In Igbo traditional weddings, some items are symbolic and of utmost importance for them to be present, because of the deep generational meaning they possess. The kola nut is an indispensable fruit among the Igbo because, the presentation and sharing of kola nut symbolizes unity, love, peace, kindness and gratitude. The breaking and sharing of the kola nut is done by the most elderly person present in the gathering. The palm wine is also very significant in Igbo weddings and without these items, the wedding is not complete.

From the above riddles, the kolanut tree symbolises elders of the community and it is a very vital item present in the Igbo traditional wedding as stated earlier. When a man wants to get married to a lady, he goes to see her father and it is customary for kolanuts to be broken in that gathering. So going to see a girl’s father, an elder, for her hand in marriage, empty handed, spells that the guy is not wealthy, doing well or living a stable life. That already is a red flag for the man who wants to get married. This is why the answer to the riddle says “ahuhu” which is interpreted to mean suffering, showing the man is suffering and the lady cannot be handed over to him for marriage because he will not be able to take care of her.

With this kind of riddle, the riddlers gain the knowledge of not going to a girl’s father’s house empty handed to ask for her hand in marriage. Even though to some persons, it’s just a visit and proposal and not the main wedding, it is the custom of the Igbo people which must be practiced. Igbo riddles are very rich in the culture and traditions of the the people and their role in the society cannot be overemphasised.

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA XXI	<p>ọ gba aka baa ọhịa, chiri ụmu lota? (ede)</p>	<p>Tell me what entered the bush empty handed but came</p>

		out with children? (Cocoyam)
DATA VIII	Gwam ñwata gba oto je ubi we mara àkwá lɔta? (ọka)	Tell me the child that went to the farm naked and came back with clothes? (Corn)
DATA XII	Gwam onye jiri ikpere gazuo ubi nna gi(Ogu)	Tell me who went round your father's farm with his knees? (Hoe)
DATA DXXXIII	Gwam onwere uru, enweghi okpukpu? (Ji)	What has flesh but no bones? (Yam)
DATA XXXIV	Xxxiv. Gwam Agboghò toro n'afò laa n'afò? (ókà)	Tell me a young girl that grew in a year and ended up in the stomach. (Maize)
DATA XXXVI	Nwòké jì mma kwurù n'ubì? (ókà)	A man that stands in the farm with a machete. (Maize)
DATA XXXVII	Gwam ihe yi uwe baa na mmiri gbara oto puta? (akpu)	Tell me what entered the water clothed and came out naked. (Cassava)
DATA	ihe wuru ulo n'elu ma biri	What built a house on top of the ground but lives inside

XXXXIII	n'ala?(Ji)	the ground? (Yam)
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Farming is one of the major occupations engaged in and a main source of livelihood in the Igbo community. Almost every family in the Igbo community owned a piece of land used for farming. It is part of the family's heritage. Most Igbo traditionally, have engaged in subsistence farming with their staple being yams, cassava and taro. Other crops grown include corn(maize), melon, okra, pumpkins and beans. Among those still engaged in agriculture, men are chiefly responsible for yam cultivation, women for other crops. Much value is placed on the yam crop which is why it formed a major festival in Igbo Land, the New Yam Festival.

From the above riddles, we see the expectation of a rich harvest by farmers, a form of seed time and harvest. We see the seed time in the corn going naked to the farm and the coco yam entering the bush empty handed, then we see the harvest in the corn returning with clothes and the cocoyam returning with children. So as farming is one major occupation, the people prays for and expects a rich harvest each season.

The Igbo people upholds that the society must prepare and teach a child to be able to handle and manage effectively individual, family and communal affairs in future. The child is trained to respect and assist the elders and also undertake responsibilities. It is therefore common to find a child assist his/her parents in farm work(cultivating and harvesting cash and food crops).

This knowledge of the importance of the farming system and the expectation of the farm produce is conveyed in the riddle and this knowledge is inculcated in the children and anyone who engages in the riddling.

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA XXIII	Mmadu abuo nāaga ije, mmiri nāama otu, ma o naghi ama nke ozo?(nwaanyi di ime)	Tell me two people walking while it was raining, but the rain was beating one and wasn't beating the other? (A pregnant woman and the baby in her womb)
DATA XXXXVI	Gwam ihe nwere ukwu anọ n'utu ukwu abuo n'ehihie, ukwu ato n'abali? (nwata nāegbe igbe nwere ukwu anọ okorobia nwere ukwu abuo okenye nwere ukwu ato maka mkpo o ji aga ije).	Tell me what has four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon and three legs in the night? (A crawling baby has four legs, a youngster has two legs and an elderly person with walking stick has three legs).

XXXXXXVII	Gwam Mmadu abuo naeme njem a hu otu ma a hughi otu? (nwaanyi di ime)	Tell me two persons on a journey, one is seen, one is not seen? (A pregnant woman)
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The human life is sacred and is immensely valued by the Igbo community. The riddle above portrays the sacredness of life as upheld by the Igbos. First it shows the origin of life, how a person came to be in this world, by being given birth to and not dropping from the sky, this enlightens the children who take part in this riddle. Second, as the human life is sacred, it stresses that abortion is wrong and an abomination because it would disregard and insult ‘the intrinsic value, the sacred character of any stage or form in human life’. So a pregnant lady is expected to carry her child for nine months and not to engage in abortion as it’s against the society’s customs and values. The Igbos value and recognise the dignity and worth of the individual by reason of the life of the individual. They also place the dignity and worth of the individual with respect and regard in their cultural values.

The value of human life can also be portrayed in the riddle of Data XXXXVI. This riddle shows the transition from infancy to adulthood and then to old age. It thereby gives the child or riddlee an idea of the various stages and transitions of the human person. As also shown in Data III, death is inevitable. It is no respecter of person and all living thing will one day taste of it. With these riddles, the child learns that death is proper to come at old age when the body is weak and the person has lived a good life on earth, passing through

or transiting the different stages of life; from infancy to adulthood and finally old age as portrayed in Data XXXXVI and he/she also gets to learn that the loss of life at an early age is detested.

With these, the value and sacredness of human life as part of the Igbo cultural values is imbibed in the children as they take part in these riddling.

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA DXXIII	Gwam ihe ya ná eze na-anuko mmanya. (Ijiji)	Tell me what drinks with the king. (Housefly)

Respect is a key cultural value the Igbos do not joke with and this respect is not only from the younger ones to the older ones but also exhibited by the elderly ones to various distinguished persons and predecessors in the community. Every parent take it upon themselves to imbibe this value in their children and the children are cautioned on what to do especially when it involves showing respect to people. Respect for elders and royalty is highly upheld in the traditional Igbo community where the monarch system of Government operates and is still used in ruling the people. Though the Presidential system of Government operates at the Federal, state and local levels of government but in

communities, clans and villages, kings and other chieftancy titles are still very much in operation. The king is referred to as ‘Eze’ and his queen “lolo”. No one except the royal family can or is allowed to eat or drink with the king and it is regarded as a very high privilege to sit with the king, talk more of to eat with the king.

From the riddle above, the riddlees are made to understand that it is a very uncommon privilege to drink or eat with the king which the housefly enjoys when found in the palace. With this, the cultural practices of the community is imparted in the participants and this inputs a sense of respect and honour for the king and traditional rulers in the community. The Igbo people value respect a lot and they show this in various ways of which dining with the king is a part.

DATA	IGBO	ENGLISH
DATA III	Kwuoro m̄ onye uwa d̄um na at̄u ègwu; onye amaa nné mo nná; onye amaa nk̄p̄ona m̄o mgbei; onye amaa odibo m̄o eze; na emete ḡi mgbe ụra kagba ụto?(ònwù)	Tell me who the whole world fears; who can't tell mother from father; who can't tell rich from poor; who can't tell servant from king; who wakes you up when your sleep is sweetest? (Death)

DATA V	Gwam gwam gwam,Gwam ejewe ejewe ọ bụte uzọ, alawa alawa ọ kpata azu?(ụnyogo)	Tell me when going he is in front, when coming back, he is at the back? (Shadow)
DATA IX	Gwam ọ b́awa ọ maa mma, ma ọ lawa ọjọọ njo.(Mmadu)	Tell me who comes to the world beautiful and goes back ugly? (Human being)
DATA XI	Gwam ọ maara ka ọ joro were ọchichiri nāaga.(ụsụ)	Tell me who knew how ugly he was and started walking at night? (Bat)
DATA XIV	Gwam ọgba áká arị enụ.(Agwo)	Tell me what climbs up without hand.(Snake)
DATA XXXXIX	Gwam ụmụ abụọ elu igwe mụtara? (mmiri na anwụ)	Tell me the two children God gave birth to? (Rain and Sun)

The Igbo people has always been known as a people of interest in gaining knowledge; knowledge of things around them, knowledge of their cultural values, practices and beliefs, knowledge of natural phenomena among them. The Igbo riddles teaches a whole lot about the natural phenomena of the Igbo surrounding and educated the indigenes

about their environment. From Data IX, we see the natural phenomenon of death being portrayed through the riddle. The riddle states clearly all persons born into the world, beautiful as a baby, will one day die when they are old and their bodies are weak and ugly. This is a natural phenomenon known as Life(Birth) and Death which all human and living things must experience.

Data V educates on the shadow of a person which all human beings possess and this is by the cast of light rays on an individual or item.

Data XI teaches on the make up of Bats, a kind of bird that flies and sees only at night and it not being a fine bird but a hairy specie of birds is also portrayed.

The movement and mechanism of the snake in Data XIX is also seen. The snake is a reptile that crawls on its belly without hands and legs and its mostly found in bushes and on trees.

Data XXXIX talks about the natural elements created by God to nourish the earth. The Rain and Sun are presented as siblings in the riddle because they go hand in hand and they make up the two seasons in Nigeria; the raining season and the dry season. This riddle gives the participants an idea into the importance of the rain and sun that make up the seasons of the country which are single handedly created by God.

We can go on and on about how the Igbo riddles educate the Igbo child and indigenes on the natural phenomena surrounding their environment and lives. The Igbo riddle is a very

powerful instrument of education and its importance and need in the education of the younger generation cannot be overemphasised.

4.2. ANALYSIS OF THE RIDDLING EVENT

Riddles play a crucial role in keeping the Igbo culture alive. The riddling event was observed and analysed by Dell Hymes Ethnography of Communication model. Ethnography of communication is the study of communication within the background of social and cultural practices and beliefs and one of its main purpose to investigate directly the use of language in contexts of situations so as to discern patterns proper to speech activity.

Dell Hyme's speaking model is used in analysing the riddling event in the Department of Linguistics library, University of Benin.

A non-participant observation was carried out on the Igbo students of the Department of Linguistics and Igbo in the Departmental library of the University of Benin based on the consent of the students. The interactive persons were homogeneous in terms of speech character in that they were all bilinguals as they spoke both Igbo and English Languages. The language of interaction of the riddles was Igbo. The participants were Christians by birth and are students by profession. Altogether, 15 persons took part in the riddling. The riddling lasted for about 30 minutes.

The riddling event is analysed using Hyme's SPEAKING model;

S-Setting: The setting of the riddling event was the Department of Linguistics' Library.

P-Participants: It was a homogeneous group consisting of 15 students present. The riddling process was random as anyone of the students asked a riddle and the other students provided answers to the riddle. It continued in that order.

E-Ends: The purpose of the riddling event was to get raw and robust data from the participants and observe the riddling situation. This was achieved through participant's observation by the researcher who by means of the writing method wrote down the riddles from the riddling event.

A-Acts Sequence: Riddles which fall under questioning in speech acts is used for this speech event. The event started with one of the students asking a riddle and other students responding with answers to the riddle asked. The riddling event started at about 11:00am and ended at about 11:30am.

K-Key: The tone of the speech event was joyful, friendly and playful.

I-Instrumentalities: The medium of communication used was Speech, as the riddles and answers were all done orally. The language used is the Igbo language.

N-Norms: All the norms for the riddling event were maintained carefully by all participants.

G-Genre: The speech event or riddling belongs to the Igbo Oral Tradition and Folklore. All participants understood the riddles and answers were provided appropriately.

4.3. DISCUSSION/FINDINGS

The Igbo riddles may be viewed as just a game of fun which children engage in under the moonlight after all the day's work and nothing else, but they are far from being just a game but a powerful tool for socialisation. From the analysis, we can see how richly the culture and beliefs of the Igbo are contained in their riddles. Diverse cultural themes are enclosed closely in the Igbo riddles and not only for entertainment, and these cultural themes, norms and values of the Igbo society are transmitted orally from generation to generation. When the riddling is on going, the effect these riddles have on the participants may not be explicit but indirectly, the participants and most especially children get to imbibe and know more about their culture, their people, their way of living, their environment and even taboos in the society. We can say from the study that for a fact, riddling is an interesting means by which knowledge is inculcated in young individuals.

From the above analysis, we see the greeting culture of the Igbo people portrayed in the riddles, the marriage of the Igbo, taboos in the community, respect for elders, value for human life and so on. This study sheds light on and opens the eyes of many to see how powerful, useful and enriching the Igbo riddles are. The value and importance of the Igbo riddles as an educative and socialising tool cannot be overemphasised or downplayed.

Igbo riddles play a significant role in the lives of the younger generation and its use at home and even in formal setting like schools should be highly encouraged.

It is not surprising to see some Igbo children who have no knowledge of their culture, norms and values due to modernisation and the impact of Western/formal education on these young ones. Some of them have no interest whatsoever in knowing about their culture and traditions, and the transmission of these cultural practices is fast eroding which is very disheartening. One way it can be curbed is by encouraging them to engage in riddling activities during their spare time from their day to day activities. With this, they start to know and get insight into their cultural practices and traditions. Riddling is an interesting way to learn and most youngsters do not shy away from or frown at it due to the fun and laughter that accompanies it.

This study analysis riddles using an ethnographic approach and the cultural context of the riddles have been unveiled for all to see.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ethnographic study of Igbo riddles as presented by this study has in no small way shed light into the cultural heritage and values of the Igbo community as embedded in their riddles. The Igbo riddles play a very crucial and vital part in keeping the Igbo culture alive and also transmitting the community's values from generation to generation. Riddles are beneficial and can improve children's mental state in more ways than one may expect. It can support children's problem solving, logic and critical thinking skills and it has shown to improve children's comprehension and creativity. Riddles have a lot of beneficial impact in the lives of children and this has in no small way improved the intellectual, social and creative life of children. The practice of moonlight riddling is gradually going into extinction and the repercussion is that the transmission of culture and tradition of the people is suffering major setbacks. There are various factors that threaten the survival of riddles in modern Nigeria and to name a few; urbanisation and rural urban drift where lack of basic amenities in the rural communities has caused the rural youths to migrate to urban centres. Also, the priority government place on science and technology and scarcely regard the arts has a way of affecting the values and appreciation of the arts and this has led to the youth's dereliction of our culture and

folkloric upbringing in pursuit for foreign ways of life. As established in this study, riddles are means of transmitting cultural values and beliefs and their preservation is of great importance. The preservation of the riddles through documentation and oral practice is an important means of sustaining the Igbo culture and its transmission to younger generations. Not only should documentation be done, but performance of these riddles in the classrooms or at home should be encouraged as these are important ways of learning about the Igbo language and the people and this is mostly directed towards the youths and youngsters who are the future of the tribe. The study strongly and exhaustively explains the Igbo riddles in relation to the cultural and social context of the Igbo people.

Premised on the fact that the Igbo riddles embody indigenous and cultural beliefs, ideals, ethics, moral values and method of the Igbo community that can be harnessed and when inculcated, it effects cultural and tribal appreciation, there arise the need to emphasis the Igbo riddles in the upbringing of the child rather than foreign games and tales that have been put in cartoon forms. These foreign games have not added the required value to the life of the Igbo child, rather they seem to have perverted both the nation's culture and children.

As a way of encouraging the preservation and continued use of the Igbo riddles in order to promote cultural knowledge and transmission, the study also recommends;

- The high use of documented riddles in schools and also at home so that they can be made available and accessible to youths and youngsters who have no knowledge of the Igbo riddles or know how to source for them.

- That more riddles be documented for the purpose of cultural engineering and re-engineering.

The Igbo riddles are of great importance to the Igbo society and people in the preservation and transmission of the people's culture and this great and key role it plays in the life of the Igbo child and youth cannot be overemphasised and underestimated.

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