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TAXONOMY OF IGBO MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:
AN ORGANOLOGICAL CASE STUDY OF HITTE-UBOMA INSTRUMENTAL
RESOURCES

A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Award of the Degree of MASTERS OF ARTS
(M.A.)

IN

AFRICAN MUSICOLOGY
(With a Stress in Organology)

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUCCA

BY

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DEDICATION

To my late dear father, Nze Okuakaji Innocent Chukwu (I.O.C.)

And

My beloved mother, Mrs. Grace Onyeberechi Chukwu

And

My Family
"QUOTES"
By listening to the speech, cries and laughter of others, we learn what they think and how they feel.
(Roger Kamien)

Traditional musical instruments are information sources that help to express feelings of a people and the needed explanations on how these inform, can be effectively disseminated by the culture-owner.
(Sam Chukwu)
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ABSTRACT

The naming and classification of African musical instruments by ethnomusicologists have been an issue of concern to Africans in academia. In Nigeria, for example, efforts have been made by some renowned musicologists, ethnomusicologists and music educators, who have come up with diverse systems of classification. The available classificatory systems seem to be unsatisfactory, when applied to how the people of Ihitte-Uboma classify instrument resources. I have, therefore, embarked on some detailed descriptions and classifications from the folk classificatory perspectives.

Chapter One discusses the geographical, historical and the socio-cultural background of the people of Ihitte-Uboma, in line with the relationships and the musical activities that are prevalent in this area.

Chapter two discusses some available literature on classification of musical instruments, specifically the systems developed by Curt Sachs and Eric Hornbostel, J.H.K. Nketia, Lo Baminjoko, Rich Okafor, Meki Nzewi, Omibiyi and C.T. Nwachukwu.

Chapters Three and Four, concentrate on the cognitive principles in the formulation of folk terminology, explaining the language structure, semantics/sound phenomena in the naming of these musical instruments, and elicit the basic principles in the taxonomy of musical instrumental resources guiding the model.

Chapter five summarizes the findings and proffers some recommendations for studies. The thesis ends with a conclusion and bibliography.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with great respect and happiness that I express my sincere and humble gratitude to all those who have contributed immensely to the success of this thesis.

A number of persons have really helped in directing my thinking on this project. My thanks, therefore, go to my Project Supervisors, Dr. Meki Nziewi and Dr. Dan. C. C. Agu, my Acting Head of Department. I do, really, appreciate your guidance all through this work. My special thanks, also, go to my masters, Prof. Rich Okafor, Director, General Studies Unit, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT); Dr. Joshua Uzoigwe, Associate Professor of Music and the Head, Department of Music, University of Uyo. Sir Lawrence Emeka retired Director of ECBS, Enugu, who is now a lecturer in the General Studies Unit, ESUT. Indeed, his professional advice all through my postgraduate studies was quite amicable and shall remain indelible.

I am particularly grateful to my wife, Love, and to my children, for their concern over my academic pursuit. To crown it all, I am grateful to all those who in one way or the other contributed to the successful completion of this thesis, especially Messrs. Iwuanyanwu Longinus, Dee Karoaha, Dee Nwachukwu, Mazi Lazarus and Korieocha and a few others whose information on the musical instruments of Ihitte-Uboma, helped in buttressing my research findings.

This passage on appreciation will not be complete without my mentioning Messrs. Eugene Nwachukwu, Linus Ezeagwula and Samuel Ejimike, who have successfully manifested the fact that a work of this nature desires teamwork. They were, (as I must put it), persons who made up “my team of researchers”. Your efforts towards data
collection, visitations and the interview there in, shall ever remain indelible to me. May you be rewarded a hundred fold.

My special thanks also go to my parents - Late Mr. Innocent Oku Chukwu and Mrs. Onyeberechi Grace Chukwu, who saw me through my academic pursuit especially my mother, Grace, who helped to explain clearly to me some words and terminology from my locality.

Lastly, I wish to express my profound gratitude to Almighty God, for caring and protecting my life throughout this onerous task and, also, for guiding my Stenographer, Mr. Chris Ugwu - a patient, hard working friend, who saw through the typing of this work. I also wish to thank Mr V. Chukuwaemeke Ughuoatu, especially, for his careful and meticulous contributions towards the successful production of this work.
Music making is man's activities to express his inner feelings either for sad moment or for joyous moments.

Man employs two basic media in the production of musical expressions. Firstly, through his body (either with mouth, hands or feet) and secondly, through materials - instruments which are specially designed and constructed by man himself, to enable him produce musical sounds and feelings.

Culture is the normative practice of a defined human group in the conduct of its day to day activities. Every human culture has developed its own norms and value systems to soothe its people. Each culture, therefore, possesses its social activities to occupy its people. One activity that is most common to human groups is the MUSICAL ACTIVITY. Each human group develops its musical styles. Through production and presentation, these styles are appreciated and perpetuated to soothe the socio-cultural activities of the people. By contact, the people may imbibe the musical styles of another culture to enrich theirs.

A community normally views its culture positively. The 1993 edition of the "World of Music" specifies that an "outsider" perceives the culture of a people initially, from an observer's perspective. Any account he or she gives would reflect such outsider's experience. The outsider's account, therefore, could be biased. An "insider" is more likely to have a realistic perspective as a culture-participant. Sometimes though, the outsider's views could help the insider to shape or sharpen his perspectives. In terms of realism, it is not possible for someone who does not know about, or belong to a spirit manifest group, to give exact details about its
true nature and practice. Moreover, some outsiders encounter some constraints regarding language and the proper pronunciations and meanings of what they hear and transcribe. Though, some of their accounts could be reliable. The 1993 edition of the “World of Music”, discussed elaborately, the EMICS and ETICS in ethnomusicology. The Emic perspective views ethnomusicological studies from the INSIDER’S perceptions, while the Etic perspective refers to observations and accounts of the outsider. This research work is aimed at giving an INSIDER’S (EMIC) account on the naming and classification of Igbo musical instruments, using the case study of the instrumental resources of the people of Ihitte-Uboma, in Imo State. I am an indigene of Ihitte-Uboma. The interest of this study is to elicit the philosophy and principles, which the people of Ihitte-Uboma have relied upon, in identifying and naming their musical instruments. This will establish the authentic traditional classificatory system in terms of musical instruments, and the production of musical sounds. This in turn will go a long way to establish the folk classificatory system of Igbo musical instruments, using the modern trend in the study of musical instruments, from an ethnic point of view. I do believe that traditional musical instruments are information sources that express the inate feelings of a people, and the needed explanations on how these instruments inform, can be effectively accounted for and disseminated by the culture-owners.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The naming and classification of musical instruments in Africa is an issue of concern in this thesis. Cultures differ from one African group to the other. There is therefore, the tendency for the musical activities to also differ. Musical instruments are known to be objects that make
sound. Languages are also represented through sound. Therefore, from the phonic representation of a language, the names of its musical instruments must agree with the sound (phonic) representation, as accepted by the culture. Culture owners, however, are most reliable sources in the proper naming and classification of their musical instruments. Most systems of classification designed by some African scholars, as well as the conventional systems as perpetuated by Curt Sachs and Hornbostels, seem not to have totally solved the problems of classification of the traditional musical instruments in the African continent. These classifications seem to derive from purely scientific reasoning, in terms of the acoustic nature of instruments. There is, therefore, a great need to consider the folk terminology and views in the classification of instruments, otherwise 500 communities would mean 500 systems of classification. This could eventually enable a generally acceptable classificatory system for Africa. Hence, the need for a holistic African classificatory system.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

As an historic and academic exercise, it is necessary to document properly, the descriptions, naming, classification and if possible, analyze the traditional musical instruments of Africa, especially from the Nigerian perspective, considering vividly, the insider’s (Emic) point of view. The taxonomy of Igbo musical instruments, from the Ihitte-Uboma instrumental resources, is geared towards contributing to the issue in the proper naming/classification of Igbo musical instruments from the culture-owners practices and thoughts. In view of the fact that the researcher has endeavoured to study the behaviour, musical activities, norms and values of his people, it is envisaged that this research work shall be of great significance to
ethnomusicologists, organologists as well as anthropologists in their quest for establishing the practitioner's point of reasoning.

From the result of this study, the conventional system of classification in use would be looked into more critically. This study shall therefore, try to encourage African researchers to go into a more in-depth study on the issue of classification and finally arrive at a culturally acceptable system of classification, as designed by Africans themselves.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Ihitte-Uboma, as a people, is rich in culture, as in other parts of Igbo land. From the numerous socio-cultural activities which are usually celebrated with an array of music groups, it can be observed that the culture is endowed with a remarkable number of musical talents involving composers, singers, dancers, and instrumentalists as well as individuals who are talented in designs and paintings.

From my research findings, an estimated numbers of about 20 (twenty)-music groups have been observed performing from the 12 autonomous communities in Ihitte-Uboma.

Some of these groups though, are a duplication, which means that groups like "Ese" musical group of "Umuezegwu", can also be formed in "Umuihi" which is a neighbouring community. Such type can also be found in "Odenkwume" - a community from Obowu Local Government, that shares a common boundary with Umuezegwu. These various groups could expose a great number of traditional musical instruments. Some of these musical instruments are designed and constructed by the instrument makers from the various communities in Ihitte-Uboma; while
some may be brought in from other Igbo-speaking areas like Mbano, Mbaise, Owerri, Umuahia, Ngwa, Arochukwu, Onitsha, as a result of human contact. In view of the large or rather remarkable number of locally made musical instruments in the various communities, Ihitte-Uboma, therefore, is a reliable case study in researching on the instrumental resources of the Igbo race.

METHODOLOGY

The method employed in this study is purely participant-observation. By this method, several individual and group interviews were held and recorded alongside. I was able to attend the two important festivals, which are common to all the 12 autonomous communities in Ihitte-Uboma. These festivals include "IWA AKWA" (wearing cloth or coming of age festival) and "MBOM UZO" (clearing of roads) ceremony. During these celebrations, a large number of musical groups perform their best with all kinds of available musical instruments, from the communities. Some elderly individuals (instrumentalists and instrument makers) belong to some groups, either as age-grade members or organized ensemble groups. Some group leaders were also consulted and interviewed.

Since my research interest has the bias of music instrument technology and construction, instrument makers were consulted in their individual homes and workshops. They were interviewed, and discussions were carefully recorded on tapes. Their knowledge is reliable sources for the subject matter of this research. Photographs, diagrams and tape recordings shall be of importance in this research, for visual representations.
MAP ONE: Map of Imo State
Map Three: Map of Ibbie – Uboma Local Government Area
CHAPTER ONE

GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The Igbo people occupy a land, which is roughly between 5° and 7° north, 6° and 9° East (See Map One). The geographical location of the Igbo extends Westwards crossing the meeting point of Rivers Benue and Niger, into Edo and Urhobo ethnic groups in the Edo State of Nigeria. To the North, the Igbo share ethnic boundary with the Igala and Idoma ethnic groups of Kogi State. To the East, the Igbo also share a common boundary with Eko, and southwards, they share a common boundary with the Ijaw and Efik-Ibibio ethnic groups. Etiti Local Government Area, as it was known before the creation of new states and local government areas, was a large Igbo group which occupies almost the centre of Imo State. Etiti Local Government Area is located Southeast of Mbano and to the South by Okigwe northwest of Umahia (capital of Abia State) and to the north by Mbaise. Dee Karaoha (1994) explained that in a bid to put light to why the local government is called 'Etiti' (meaning centre) states:

Ihe-anyi ji aza etiti wu maka, ile anya na ala ndi Igbo nine, anyi kwufuru iche. N'imo State, ile anya, anyi n'etiti. Ishite n'ulo anyi ngaa ga wa Umahia, ma owu Owerre, m' owu Aba, gaa hu na ihe owere ji ga Aba, ma ishi Aba branch, o wu otu ise abaka nga ewe gi ga kwa Umahia, ma owu Owerri.

Translation

The reason why we answer Etiti is because, if you look around the Igboland, we are quite outstanding. In Imo State, If you observe carefully from our house (village) going to Umahia or Owerri, or Aba (if you take through
Aha Ivancli) it is the same thing (time) it will take you to go to Umunia or Owerri.

This explanation buttresses the fact that Fiti is the centre of Imo State. That it takes the same distance with regards time, to walk down to Owerri, Umunia or Aha - which are the big cities close to Fiti Local Government Area.

With the creation of more local government areas in Imo State in 1999, by the Federal Government, Fiti was split into two autonomous areas, namely OROWU and HITTE-UBOMA local government areas. From this geographical restructuring, Hitte-Uboma now shares common boundaries with Umunia, southwards; Mbaise, Southwest wards and with Mbano, Westwards; then with Oboma, Southeast wards. Before this restructuring, Hitte-Uboma, especially Hitte (where the researcher belongs) was the head of all the communities in the defunct Fiti. Even now that Hitte and Uboma are together, Hitte still remains the head of all the communities in Hitte-Uboma Local Government Area.

Hitte-Uboma is made up of 12 autonomous communities. They include Dimeze, Erimba, Okata, Abaaleke, Amuchimo, Ikpejere, Atunreim, Umudoma, Amakoha, Umudi, Amaiinyi and Umemezue.

ORIGIN OF THE IGBO IN HITTE-UBOMA

The origin of the Igbo in Hitte-Uboma can be understood clearer by having an insight into the origin of Igbo in general. As a race, the Ibos generally speak a common language but with dialectical differences. Inspite of the dialectical differences certain words or names of objects sound the same as you cut across all Igbo speaking areas. There are some Igbo speaking areas
though, that speak some mixed dialects because of their contact with other languages like Igala, Efik, Kalabari - etc.

The knowledge of the earliest Igbos comes from oral traditions, which were preserved in Igbo communities by some elders who had wisdom. The dating of the origin of the Igbo is usually said to be in the eyes of our forefathers and great grand fathers. Nwachukwu (1981:12) opines that:

The place of origin of the Igbo is obscure, although claims have been made that the Nri near Awka was the Primordial site.

With the above account being considered, one may still wish to ask where then came the Igbo in Nri? Isichei (1977) gives another account of the origin of Igbo that “such traditions of origin are of two strands; the first, are of village groups which trace their descent to an ancestor, living in the era of the fore-fathers, claiming that the origin might be traced from either the ground or from the sky”.

A school of thought, as claimed by Nwabufo (1991:167) argued that the origin of Igbo might be traced back from the account of the second strand:

That the history of Iguedo clan, for example, delineates the fact that as a child of an Igbo son called Eri, she was born east of the Niger, in the Omambala area. Iguedo’s children included Ogbunike, Awkuzu, Umu-Leri, Nando - (as males) and Odoje in Onitsha, as the only female. In the same vein, the origin of Onitsha is traced back to Benin, while Nri children spread to Oraeri and Eri towns and to various towns of Igboland where they adopted other names of distinction by which they know themselves and observe certain rites and traditions.
In spite of the seemingly mythological account of the origin of Igbo, the inclination of Nri to the origin of Igbo, still surfaces at any account. There are, though, other schools of thought with some other views. In his own account, Okafor (1994:218) holds the view that:

The origin of Igbo is clouded with Myths and enveloped in debates. Some Igbo communities ascribe the origin to a historical or mythical migration or event recorded in their clan myths and chronicles. Some people claim that the Igbos are autochthons, natives, Indigenes - earliest or original inhabitants - a very old people who simply sprang from that land itself. Others fervently teach that the Igbos were Hebrew people who migrated Southwards either before or during the Jewish exodus from Egypt.

There are many theories about the origin of the Igbo. The most acceptable theory as it may, could be traced back to the historical account of the ‘Nri’ race. To buttress this fact, some Israelite delegates came into Nigeria in late 1998, with the information that they were searching for their “lost” community. The place they finally arrived at was “Nri” in Anambra State. The claim was that “Nri people are descendants of the people of Israel. This research is still going on. History, therefore, shall vindicate itself as time goes on. The account does not seem to be conclusive. But the question still remains: Are the Igbo descendants of Israel? This is the obscurity behind the origin of the Igbo.

ORIGIN OF IHITTE-UBOMAIhitte-Uboma, as a people, is said to have migrated from the Igbo nuclear centre Nri, and that some are from the Southern part. From my experience, it has not been clear, where the people of Ihitte-Uboma hail from. An elder, Mazi Karaoha (about 72 years old) claims that “my dead great father Karaoha, did not say we came from anywhere. So, I conclude that we just found ourselves here in Umuizegwu. That is all I know”. It is therefore clear that the people of Ihitte-Uboma are possibly from the nuclear centre of the Igbo where they
adopted other names of distinctions by which they know themselves and who must have migrated and settled in Ihitte-Uboma

SOCIO-CULTURAL RELATIONS IN IHITTE-UBOMA

As it is in other Igbo speaking areas, it is noted that the people of Ihitte-Uboma transmit various aspects of what happens within its culture, through oral tradition. If you ask an elderly man or woman in the community about an issue that concerns the culture, he or she (but most particularly the males) will first say to you "what my father told me..." This proves that whatever it was that his father told him before the father's death, was just what he believes in. If he intends to go further, he might refer you to what "nwata ibe m" (my age mate) had once said. The Igbos of Ihitte-Uboma therefore, attach great importance to what 'Okubiri Nwoko' (an elderly man) says or what the age mates (Ndi Ebiri) say. It is what the fathers or the ancestors have passed down to them that the present day elders, as well as the youths, believe in. What the elders believe in, is what they believe in, too.

Every community in Ihitte-Uboma has regards for elders and age mates (age grade) system. Even the Elders, no matter the age, still have or organize their age grade meetings. Every village comprises of a group of nucleus families with an extension of kinship known as "UMENNA". Each "Umenna" has a head ("nde" or "na anyi") that represents his kindred at any social, economic, or political affairs that concern the community. It is the belief that the eldest man in the village, is a symbol of truth, justice and longevity of life, and this invariably allows him to take custody of the Òrò, which binds together the indigenes in the village.
Ofó, (Detarium microcarpum) is a local tree, which is believed in every Igbo community, as being sacred. It is a symbol of truth and justice; a consecrated thing which is highly regarded as a peace making object in every Igbo community. This is why when an individual is aggrieved of some issue, the expression “Eji m ofo” (I have my ofo - or (literally) I am speaking the truth) comes in, so as to express his sincerity of purpose.

AGE GRADE SYSTEM

This system is the commonest and highly regarded system in Ihitte-Uboma. It is a traditional socio-political status, which plays a great role towards establishing social, political and economic roles in every community in Ihitte-Uboma.

The age grade system “Ndi ebiri” is a traditional system, which brings together, youths (both female and male) or elders - who belong to a particular age grade. Usually the range of those who belong to a particular age grade is 3 years. For example, those who were born in 1920 and those of 1922 belong to one age grade. Though, by special traditional arrangement or agreement, those born in 1923 could still join this age grade by organizing some traditional rites called “ihe ebiri” - which permits them to authentically belong to such group. As soon as this age group (from 1920 to 1922) welcomes the individual into it’s midst, he is given every rights and privileges like others and can then be called “Ebirim” (my age mate). Each age grade usually bears a local name by which they are known and called whenever they are being referred to in the community. The researcher's age grade is called “EHROMA-OMA NYI1UWA” age grade of Umuezegwu.
Criteria for the Formation of Age Grade

In all the 12 autonomous communities in Ihitte-IUboma, age grade system is highly regarded and respected as a legitimate organ for effective checks and balances. Ihitte-IUboma, as a people, are usually proud to talk about the age grade system because it is a system that helps to sanitize behaviours of both young and old, female or male. Before any case of indiscipline, theft or misappropriations of any sort, is brought to the "Ogboto" (village square) for elders to look into, it must have been critically looked into or exhausted, (in terms of settlements) by the age grade into which the victim or victims belong. Right from the age of 6, parents, especially mothers, encourage their children (male or female) to join his or her age mate in forming a meeting group. As the child goes to meetings, mothers give them some coins either 10 kobo or 5 kobo, to go with, as to answer present. This is called "Izara aha", (to answer your name). At the formation of such young groups, the children decide for themselves who to consult to be their "Nna" (father) or "Nne" (mother). They refer to such individuals as "PATRONS". The duty of these patrons is to make sure, amongst other responsibilities that the children behave well and give account of whatever monies they have in their coffers.

During the festive periods like Christmas, New year day, Easter, Mbom-Uzo or Iwa-akwa ceremonies, these children organize dance or masquerading groups, that dance and merry about from compound to compound collecting gifts of cash or food. Cash gifts are usually shared amongst themselves. The sharing may generate disagreements and fighting. This is where the patrons (Nna-otu or Nne-otu) come in. He or she makes sure
the monies are shared appropriately and some cash may be left in the hands of "Nne-otu" (mother of the group) for keeps for future use. This goes to prove the efficacy of age grade system, which are practised from the youth to old age. It is a continuous traditional practice in Ihitte-Uboma.

From the ripe age of 20, the entire community attaches some recognition to the youths of that age - especially from 20 to 22 years of age. This is the age group that is referred to as "Okoro mma akpara" (young matchets-men). It is from this age that a child prepares himself or herself for the next four to five years, to attain the ripest age of recognition, which is the age from 24 to 26 years. This is the age range, which the communities recognise as the "age of reasoning". It is the age range, which the communities celebrate extensively and expensively during "Iwa-akwa" festival.

The socio-cultural implications of the age grade system in Ihitte-Uboma are enormous, but on the whole, it is a system, which has been proven to enhance development in a community. There are some age grades that may want to prove that they are more progressive, and organise a lofty project in the community. Some age grades have helped in the building of hospitals, post offices, and even rural electrification/water projects. The community in response, gives such age grades some recognition and talk proud of them, at all times. In all ramifications, the age grade system in Ihitte-Uboma, like in most Igbo speaking areas, are responsible to a greater extent, in the social, political and economic development of the communities.
"IWA-AKWA" FESTIVAL (wearing cloth or coming of age)

"Iwa-akwa" is a traditional festival when youths in Ihitte-Uboma, are said to have come of age. It is a rite-of-passage, celebrated by youths that have attained the ages from 24 to 26 years. It is celebrated once in every three years in all the autonomous communities in Ihitte-Uboma.

"Iwa-akwa" festivity takes place from the month of December (Owa iri n‘abuo) and runs through into the month of January (Owa mbu), of the next other year. It is a celebration that lasts for 4 (four) market days and each community chooses its days after Umuezegwu - (which is the head (eldest) of the 12 autonomous communities) has chosen her days. About 6 (six) days before the appropriate 4 days, preparations take place accordingly. Umuezegwu community shall be used here as my model.

The age grade system takes the responsibility of celebrating the "Iwa-akwa" festivity. During this period, there are three main age grades that play vital roles. They include:

(a) "Okoro Mma akpuru" (Young matchetsmen)
The ripe age of this group ranges from 20 to 21 years - which include boys and girls. The boys are more active, as they are the ones who play about with matches. This group is responsible for clearing of track roads or pathways through which "ndi na awa akwa" will pass.

(b) "Okoro Egbe" (Young gunmen).
The age range is from the ages of 22 to 23 years. They are called "young gun men" because they are traditionally permitted to handle and operate den-guns, as they go round villages. They also act as protectors of the group that has come-of-age.
On the special market days, they are allowed to shoot guns and make as much noise as they wish, warning visitors and observers to be careful not to try any funny behaviours in the market square or they face the repercussion. They are like traditional or community warriors, always agile and ready for action.

(C) "Ndí n'awa akwa" (Those who will wear cloth- to be initiated into manhood). The age range, as earlier mentioned, is from 24 to 26 years, the ripe age of maturity. This is the age grade that celebrates the "Iwa-akwa" ceremony. The age that can be traditionally taxable. They can, as long as they have been initiated, be allowed to speak out, whenever there is a community gathering of elders. If there are things to be shared, as custom demands, they will be given their shares. From this age range, one can be traditionally ripe to get married; because it is believed that the young man or women can comfortably handle and cater for family, build a house and even vie for a political position in the community.

Preparation/Celebration of "Iwa-akwa" Festival

"Iwa-akwa" festival takes a period of two native weeks. It is usually celebrated in the months of December, January and sometimes goes into February of any year of announcement; and takes almost ten days to celebrate. Each community-group has a central market place where the celebration takes place. On that market day, visitors, friends and well-wishers converge in the evening at about 4 p.m. to witness the ceremony, spray money on the celebrants, congratulating them for having attained such respectable status.
Before the main market day, the celebrants buy themselves very high quality and expensive judge wrappers, bags of rice and tubers of yam; kegs of palm wine and possibly cartons of beer and crates of mineral, to be consumed by the family and visitors. From the date of announcement, which is seven days before the "D" day, celebrants go to organize/hire Brass-Bands or Disk Jockeys and/or traditional music groups that vibrate and make jubilatory "noise" in the compound of celebrants. If the celebrant or his/her parents have enough funds to engage such entertainment groups for a week or more, they are free to do so. From the date of announcement the celebrants keep holding meetings everyday in preparation. Just one day, before the "D" day, the judges (wrappers) are spread full length in front of the celebrants compound, indicating that some one in that compound has come-of-age. Though the traditional implication of the spreading of judge wrappers is for the immediate seniors, who are supposed to lead the celebrants to the market-square the next day, to identify such a compound easily. At the eve of the "D" day, these adults, (who are the immediate seniors of these celebrants) will visit the celebrants one after the other, asking for their compulsory gift items like bottles of beers, a bottle or two of dry gin, some cups of rice, etc. These items must be provided to this group. As they collect these items, they sing and dance round the compound, releasing shots of den-gun, indicating the authenticity of the celebration.

Finally, they will give the celebrant and the family, their blessings. They will ask the individuals to be ready at such a time, the next day, when they will come to tie the wrapper around their waists as it is traditionally done, and lead the celebrants out to the market square to meet with other members.
On the “D” day, in the early hours of the morning, the “Okoro-Egbe” group will visit celebrants in their various homes demanding a few things also. This group is traditionally responsible for peace and tranquility, all through the Market Square. They are the group that follows the celebrants; that means, the group that will be ripe for initiation into manhood, in the next three years. They also sing songs and jubilate as they move from compound to compound. All these must be rounded up before 2:00 p.m. same day. At 3:00 p.m. celebrants will start filing out from their homes to the market square.

Each celebrant has two persons behind him who straighten and smoothen the wrapper as it is spread on the ground, when dancing. The celebrant in happiness blows his “wisulu” (opi-igwe), dancing along, while the brass band or any hired group plays behind or beside him. On getting close to the Market Square, where the bamboo fence is built to protect the celebrants, no other person will be allowed to enter, except the celebrants and their helpers, who straighten and smoothen the wrapper when it gets ruffled. The music or entertainment groups, well wishers, and friends, who may wish to join the celebrant as he moves, do that outside the fence.

The celebration is usually rowdy and very noisy. As every celebrant, with his group of musicians/friends move, there is that noisy atmosphere of blowing of whistles, and shouts of happiness; shooting of guns-double barrels and den-guns, as well as knockouts. People squeezing each other as they walk past, because of the crowd. Some spectators stand out at some distance viewing all that happen, as well as congratulating any celebrant that dances past. The spectators might move forward, spraying some money on the forehead of the celebrant, congratulating him or her, and go back to their viewing posts.
Some mothers, whose sons or daughters could not make it, for one reason or the other, use an enlarged picture (portrait) of such celebrants, with their sons' or daughters' judge wrappers, tied round the mother's neck and head. They, in addition, take the position of such children and join in the parade. Infant, it is a period of happiness all round the community. It is better to witness this celebration, for someone to ascertain the degree of importance attached to it.

![Plate 1: Picture showing Iwa-akwa cerebra tion mood.](image)

"Mhombuzo", or "Mmom ama" or "Ibo-Uro", is one of the main festivals celebrated in Ihitte-Uboma Local Government Area.

"Mmom-Uzo" which means "clearing of roads" is an activity which occurs once in every year. Just like the "Iwaakwa" ceremony, Mhombuzo festival is celebrated once every
year by different communities and at different fixed times, usually commencing from September up to December. Umuezegwu community, which I belong, celebrates this festival at the end or middle of every September (Owa ito lu) the ninth month of the year.

From the month of September, all roads are kept clean in Umuezegwu. Women and youths, in preparation for the celebration, collectively clear pathways of grasses. Any visitor coming into this community at this period usually observes that everywhere is neat and tidy. One would not fail to comment on the environment, because of its conspicuous neatness throughout the villages in the community "Mbomuzo" period is the period of "Mass return" of indigenes from these localities, so to say. From my research, it has been found that, during Mbomuzo festivals, people return home en-mass. Indigenes who may not have been at home for quite a long time, prefer coming home during this period, so that they will have the opportunity of meeting nearly everyone in the community, especially from their age grades-. It is usually a joyous moment, highly celebrated by every mature male in a compound, whether poor or rich. It is a period of exchange of gifts from in-laws, friends and well wishers who visit, to express their happiness and survival over the years. Children or youths are seen roving about, from one compound to the other singing and dancing, and receiving cash gifts and/or eating rice (Osi kapa). There is this common food, which is generally prepared in every compound you step into. It is called "Ugba na Mpuru~u". "Ugba" is a sliced oil bean fruit salad; while "Mkpurusu" is the pounded or grinded Mellon (egusi). Both preparations are spiced with salt and enough pepper, and wrapped with fresh banana leaves; then kept by the side of a fireplace - "Ekwu", to make them dry so that they do not get rotten before it is offered to visitors. Any visitor at all, is presented with a bowl or plate of "Ugba" plus "Mpurusu".
or ("Usu") - usually for elders; while the children are given rice or "Akpu" (pounded foofoo) to eat. At the departure of a visitor, elders especially, some wraps of "Usu" are tied together and given to the visitor to take back home for his family, as a token of appreciation.

The visitor, could either be an in-law or a friend who may have come with either a keg of palm wine or cash, to register his or her presence. Like I earlier mentioned, it is a period of exchange of gifts and pleasantries.

Preparations/Celebration of Mbomuzo Festival

The observation of the moon in September ushers in the celebration of Mbomuzo festival. It is called "Owa ito lu" (the ninth moon). The appearance of the moonlight is the sign of another English month. As soon as the Eze witnesses the sight of the new moon, he sends his errand man to the Chief priest (Onyishi Amadioha) who walks quickly to the "Ikoro" house and plays, to inform the community that the time for "Mbomuzo" has come. That evening or night, there is jubilation in all compounds as the women jubilate and make ululatory noises (signals) towards the long expected information. The point is that, as soon as we step into the month of September, the whole community is all-ears waiting for the "Ikoro" to sound. The sound of the "Ikoro" authenticates the announcement of the festival. From the beginning of the month of September, in every year, every compound or clan tries to clear the roads that lead to their individual compounds. From each compound to the clans' "ama" (place of gathering - a clan square), all track roads, main entrance roads and nearby bushes are made clean and passable. It is interesting to note here, that any compound whose track
road or nearby environment is found untidy, is seriously penalized by the elders of that clan. The whole community might fine or penalize the clan for untidiness because of the default by one compound. It is a serious offence.

Furthermore, in preparation, mothers invade markets in a bid to buy food items, clothes and shoes for their children. Fathers are conscious of the period, as they make sure their wives get enough money to buy things. For the men, the highest they do is to ensure that there must be either a goat or chickens to slaughter, or cow meat and of course, enough palm-wine to be consumed during the festival.

Periodical meetings are held by various age-grades both young and old. They all meet to discuss ways they may wish to celebrate the festival. At the eve of the "Eke-Umuezegwu" day, which is "Nkwo" market day, all men who have attained the age of manhood; that is, those who have worn the cloth (come-of-age) must converge at their various clan squares "Ama" with hoes, shovels and matchets, as well as lanterns at a time agreed upon. This happens in the night, though. Each clan clears its main route that lead to another clan, all through the night till it is midnight. Then, they retire to their various homes ready for the morning session.

On the "Eke-Umuezegwu" day, that early morning, these males gather again at the Market Square to clear the main entrance that leads to other communities. This activity continues until almost mid-day, when every route must have been cleared. They will finally retire to their homes to meet their wives and children preparing food for the day. The man gets home, takes his bath and eats, and finally prepares in the costumes (as agreed by their age grade) to jubilate back to the Eke-Umuezegwu square at about 3.30
p.m. for the festival. This is the period when personalities and age grade groups exhibit their costumes and expensive wears.

Communities celebrate the first day of the festival on the market day that is associated with such communities. In my community, Umuezegwu, the “Eke” market day - “Eke-Umuezegwu” - is the first day when all and sundry (whether it is raining or shining) converge at the “Eke-Umuezegwu” accompanied by instrumental/vocal musical groups. This is usually the greatest day of our traditional celebrations - where many joyous activities take place. Visitors, in-laws, friends and well wishes visit compounds of their choice to celebrate with them. These in-laws or visitors (women) might even cook at their homes and present to a celebrant. Some male in-laws or visitors and friends bring along with them, kegs of palmwine or bottles of hot drink, as gifts to parents or celebrants. This goes on for the four market days as the festival runs.

After the Eke market day, the next two days which is also celebrated, is the “Afor day” when the same groups go to “Afor-Ukwu” which is another market day of the next immediate community, to celebrate. Age grade groups run around, jubilating. Masquerade displays, musical groups, shooting of guns and knockouts are all the activities one observes, that take place these days. By the next two days, the festival is over and people who have come home will be getting ready to go back to where they came from. School boys and girls, students in colleges and universities, civil servants and business men and women will thereafter, return to their various places. That brings the festival to an end, until the next celebration, which is the next September of another year.
The people of Ihitte-Uboma, like in other Igbo speaking areas, believe in the Supreme God, whom they call “Chineke” (God the creator) or “Chukwu” (Chi-Ukwu), the Great God or the Mighty God.

Yet, there is this belief that there are other gods who they interact with, through which they tend to commune with and make their requests and supplications, to the Greater God. These other gods are called “Umu mmuo” (spirits). There was and still is, this strong belief that these smaller gods “Umu mmuo” are equally powerful and could listen to and solve the problems of people, when requested to do so. According to Dee Chukwuokoko (1997) in his response about the belief in the smaller gods, said that:

Mgbe nna m di ndu, o nweghi ututu owula, o na
gaghi iwa n’ihu agbara ya. Onweghi ihe gi ime
ya, ya waha oji. Kii ya mmii, ya nuo. Ebe ulo anyi
chaa, anyi anaghi eji agbara egwu egwu. I ga ni-isì
onye ishi amadioha, bo wala oji ututu? Agbara
abagbulo niya. I’e le! I’e le!

(At this point observers around us burst into laughter, as he was demonstrating and gesticulating).

He continued:

Ele ihe umu chigha? Ihitte nine anaghi eji agbara egwu
egwu, maskana o naghị acho onye naghị ugha,
m’owukwuzu onye n’eru ozi. Ohe ochoro u oziokwu. A
si na nna gi di ndu, ga aju na ya iheak ongahara gi, m’owu
ugha. Owuru oge mahu, owuege ugbua ndi choochi mehi
segher’anyi ihe. O wuru oge mahu, oweghi ezi owula
ihara n’Ihitte anyi, n’agbara egwu. Dimka owula
no na ezi owula, ga afuta n’ututu owula, kpokue agbara
ya, si ho’ekwee, chi b’ohola. Taaz! Ya gazi kwe’oh. Ile
kwa nanya, the otiri aka ehia, adighi nke n’agbari nga
zi’ziriri...
(At this point, observers around us, burst into laughter, as he was demonstrating and gesturing).

Translation:

When my father was alive, there was no morning, he would not break kola-nut in front of his shrine. Nothing would stop him from breaking kola-nut and pour out libation with palm-wine for the gods to drink. At our place (village) there, we do not joke with our gods (agbara). Would you now ask the chief priest of amadioha not to break morning kola at his shrine? The gods will maim him. Look at! Look at that.

(At this point, observers around us, burst into laughter as he demonstrates and gesticulates.)

He continued:

What are you laughing at? The whole of Ihitte people don't joke with our “agbara” because it does not like a liar or a thief. What it likes is truth and justice. If your father were to be alive, you would have asked him whether what I am telling you are lies. If it were in the olden days, not now that the church is spoiling things for us. If it were in those days, there is no compound you enter in Ihitte that you would not find a shrine. Any elderly man in any compound, must come out every early morning, call on the gods, ask them to see that the morning has come (it is dawn). To day, let it be through-oh! And if you watch, anything he sets his hands on, on that day, none of them will go through smoothly.

The above discussions with Dee Chukwuokoko go to prove that the people of Ihitte-Uboma recognize the gods (the smaller gods), who, they believe are instrumental to aiding them speak out their minds to the Great God (Chi-Ukwu).
These deities were worshipped as mediators. It is believed that "Amadioha" will punish anybody who does any wrong in the land. Hence, the cause “Amadioha magbukwa gi” - meaning “The god of thunder punish you”. Amadioha is accepted in the land as a good spirit (Mmuo Oma) which does not welcome evil. The bad spirits (Mmuo ojoo - or ajo mmuo) are taken as evil. Hence “Mmu oma” are inconographed, while the “ajo-mmuo” are not symbolized at all.

Nwachukwu (1991:34) asserts that:

Every Igbo man believes in his Possession of a personal god known as Chi. Chi is a very compromising god. There is a popular saying in Igbo which says, Onye kwe, chi ya ekwe, when an Individual submits, his “Chi” also submits. The Igbo man believes his achievements in life depend on the work of his hands. Everyone’s destiny is in his akala aka, the lines of his palms.

The people of Ihitte-Uboma believe strongly on Chi - the personal god. That is why, at any issue that warrants swearing of an oath, the suspect or the victim will swear thus: “Chi m le kwee - O wuu si o wun mere ihea, amadioha magbukwe m”. (My god please see- If it is true that I did this thing, let amadioha Kill me.)

“Amadioha" is believed to be the messenger of the Great God, and identified with the earth goddess. That, as soon as God (Chineke) gets annoyed with any one, He (God) sends amadioha to do its job on that “evil” person.

In the present day dispensation, the church has tried to subtle these beliefs. As soon as the church gained its ground in Ihitte-Uboma, many indigenes became converted to Christianity. Churches especially the Roman Catholic Church became spread all of the
land. People no longer build shrines in front of their homes. Though, there are some homes that are yet to be converted. People now go to church every Sunday, go to confessions and receive Holy Communions. As a result, less of little gods like “ala” (earth goddess), “amadioha” (god of thunder), are spoken about. But some traditional festivals still remain firm. Instead, some of those “fetish” activities that go with these festivals no longer exist. Most festivals like the “Mbom uzo” and “Iwa-akwa” festivals have become periods of mass return of indigenes. “Okonko” festival, which is a highly traditional festival of exhibition of powers and wits, and of course, beheading of visitors (unfortunate ones, mostly), is no longer as “dirty” as it used to be. Instead, spirit-manifest bodies that are camouflaged as lions, now use canes to flog and scare both visitors and indigenes away.

“Ancestor worship or veneration is common practice among the traditional Igbo. The role of ancestors as forces deeply interested in the affairs of the living does no longer need any elaboration, since it is a well known fact” (Opata, 1998:25). In Ihitte-Uboma, these ancestors, because of the interest they have in the living, try to come again to stay with their families. This is called “Iyo Uwa” (Reincarnation).

“Iyo-Uwa”: “Iyo-Uwa” meaning, “to come back to the world”, is a religious belief on reincarnation. The people of Ihitte-Uboma believe that man exists continuously, as he dies and comes again, that death is one phase of man’s existence and he reappears as soon as he is born again. There are indeed, many other aspects, which are worthy of discussion with regard to the religious views of the people of Ihitte-Uboma. For some reasons, I have limited my observations and discussions on this, in view of my area of research.
MUSIC ACTIVITIES IN IHITTE-UBOMA

From birth to grave, Igbos are known for celebrating most, if not all activities, with the accomplishment of music, (singing) and dancing. Ihitte-Uboma is not an exception. In all activities, even when they gather around for meetings, especially at age grade meetings, there is a period usually during entertainment, when one person may be excited and leads others into singing a song, which is usually chorused to in response. I may not want to give a detailed information on all the activities, but I may outline them for purposes of mentioning because, at these periods, most of the musical instruments are exposed at these periods during performances. These include:

1. "Omuru nwa" (Child birth)

During this time, women who hear of the successful news of a neighbour who has given birth, happily gather at the compound of that woman jubilating, giving thanks and praises to Almighty God for her successful delivery. This time, no musical instruments are brought, but hand clapping, singing, stamping of feet and ululations are ways of making merry. In return, the mother of the child gives some white powder to the women or even men too, to rub around their necks, indicating appreciation for coming. The powder signifies that someone has given birth to a baby, and if asked, who and where? The person automatically tells where the good news came from.

2. "Ikufuta Nwa" (Presentation of a child)

This is the period after about four native weeks when the parents, especially the mother of the child, will expose/present the child to the market place, letting the people know and acknowledge the handiwork of God, the safe delivery, in other words. This time, immediate neighbours, or the
woman's meeting group - especially wives of her husband’s age grade, will escort her to the market place with a few musical instruments like “Ekwe” (slit wood), “Udu” (musical pot) - beating these instruments as they sing along, thanking and singing praises to God. In return, people donate cash and gift items to the mother of the baby as they walk past.

3. “Igha Nkwa” (Traditional Wedding)

This is a social event, between a man and a woman. Literally speaking, “Igba nkwu” means “wine carrying”. It is a traditional wedding common in the African continent especially amongst the Igbo race. A period when the man (bridegroom) goes to his would-be wife’s parents to authenticate his intention of taking the young girl as his life partner - his wife. It is an occasion, which calls for a gathering of parents, relatives and friends of the man as well as the parents, relatives and friends of the bride (the girl) to be witnesses of the traditional marriage of the couple. This ceremony, at all times, calls for merry-making. Musicians/music groups, mostly traditional groups are contracted to enliven the environment; and there will be lavish entertainment with regards to food and drinks - and spraying of money to the couple and to the musicians/music groups as well, by visitors, friends and indigenes. Musical instruments are exposed during this period.

4. “Igha akwukwo” (Church Wedding)

As it is in every Christian family, couples present themselves in the church to do the Christian rites, to authenticate their marital life. Amongst the Igbo, especially in Ughite-Uboma, this occasion is usually regarded so as to give the bride her place in the midst of other women in the community. During this ceremony, church bands especially, and
choirs, are at their best. They are being contracted by the bridegroom to provide musical entertainment during the church service and at the compound of the bridegroom, where visitors finally converge to eat and drink, and provide gift items to the celebrants.

5. "Ikwa Ozu" (Funeral Occasion)

Death, which is a necessary end to any individual, affects the emotional, psychological and economic life of any people. In Ihitte-Uboma, funerai ceremonies are highly and lavishly celebrated, especially the death of an elderly man or woman. A man or a woman who dies at an old age is honored accordingly. If her or she is titled, there are some vital traditional rites that are accorded to “Onye chiri echichi” - a titled person. “Echichi” (title taking) which is not so common in the ancient days in Ihitte-Uboma, has become recognized to day.

In the olden days, a man or woman must have done or acquired an extra-ordinary recognition to qualify for title taking either by being a great farmer, a hunter, a warrior or a very rich person. In this present dispensation, title taking has become common because of the acquisition of wealth. I shall not delve deep into this because of the nature of this work. It is important to note that during burial or funeral ceremonies of persons - either titled or non-titled, a number of music and dance groups perform in the premises of the bereaved. Groups ranging from age grade of the deceased, to other entertainment groups in the community come on their own, while some may be hired, to entertain. Songs relating to the mood will be sung. Sometimes special compositions on demand are arranged in honour of the dead person and performed at the graveside, and/or after burial.
6. “Mbom-Uzo” (Clearing of Roads)

Some communities in Igbo land call this festival - “Mbom-ama”. This festival has earlier been discussed on pages 15 – 17.

7. “Iwa-akwa” (Wearing Cloth or Coming of Age)

This festival has been extensively discussed on pages 10 – 13.

8. “Ichi-echichi” (Title-taking)

This is an expensive ceremonial event in all the Igbo speaking areas, especially amongst the northern Igbos, namely: Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Delta Igbos. Down South, amongst the Igbo speaking areas of Imo and Abia States, titular ranks like “Eze” (leaders of political territories), “Nze” (holders of ritual-political territories) or “Ozo” (a prestige title), are not so common in comparison to the Northern Igbos. Ihitte-Uboma indigenes take the “Eze” and “Nze n’ozo” titles, and during these ceremonies, special music and dance activities are performed.

9. “Igbu-Ichi” (Serrating of the forehead)

This is a special title taking which has to do with some ritual obligations. It is a ceremony which allows a select few - (men) in the community to acclaim distinction as “powerful men” (Nwoke chizuru echizu).
“Ichi” - is designed on the forehead of a man, who has attained the status. It is shaped like half-moon, carved into the skin. It is a society for members of a particular traditional cult. All activities are performed in the night. This practice is not as common as it used to be. By the second half of the 20th century, it has become an activity of the past, because the younger generation has refused to belong to this cult. As soon as one gets initiated, the title “Nze” is ascribed to one.

Nze L. Ezegwu (1998) a member of “Ichi” group, who is an “Nze na Ozo” confirms saying:

“Igbu-Ichi” is especially for those male children, who at their birth have been found qualified by the elders that he should belong. The Ozo titleholders are those that can be initiated, and given the title “Nze na Ozo”. And as soon as one is initiated, it is believed that that person cannot tell lies and will not commit any atrocities in the community. The society regards them very highly and are taken as people of proved integrity.

Confirming further, Mr. Nwachukwu E. assets that:

The Diokpa (Elders) are responsible for Igbu-ichi. It is the Diokpa who makes the marks on the forehead of the individual (initiate). Furthermore, it is believed that such a person’s (the initiate’s) blood (which came out, as a result of the marks made on the forehead) is poured on the ground near a shrine close to an Iroko (Orji) tree, for his ancestors. The Iroko, being the king of all trees, is assumed that the initiate has become great amongst his people in the community.

After this ritual ceremony, traditional musicians (members of same cult) and dancers, perform in jubilation for the initiate, usually at late evenings when the ceremony is taking place. They stop after a while and disperse at the end of the occasion.
10. "Itu'anya" (Sharpening of Eyes)

This is a ritual activity (or exhibition of power) made on every male child born in the community - no matter the age. In the olden days, parents initiated their male children into this cult. The implication was that, the child should possess a third eye, as a male child, in order to see spirits. It was assumed that the child had become a man, and would always speak nothing but the truth in every situation. The ground was usually dug according to the initiate's length or height. The individual was put inside the dug hole in such a way that only the head would surface and be seen. The initiate's eyes were forced open and some peppery-liquid was poured into the eyes. The initiate would not cry nor had any opportunity of wiping away the liquid, but endured the pains for almost one hour or more. Thereafter, he would be freed by being dug out, and congratulated with musical performances/dances, indicating survival and toughness.

11. "Okonko" (Achievement Title)

The Okonko society is a social institution for those men who have achieved remarkably, in any field of life. Meki (1991:20) affirms that:

the okonko society, for example, is a title institution the philosophy, of, and admission into which is achievement-based. Membership is open to businessmen, dhia (sacred doctors, civil servants, educators, farmers and any person of any trade or professional specialization in the traditional as well as modern sense in the community, who satisfies the criteria for wealth-based achievement prescribed for membership.

In Ibiite-Uboma, during the ceremonial period of the "Okonko" title taking, the performance of Okonko music is very conspicuously enjoyed - especially during the funeral ceremony of the death of such an achiever. There is no special time in the year
that this is celebrated. It is usually dependent on the preparedness of the benefactor of the title, who informs the members on the day he has fixed for such celebration.

In Ihitte-Uhoma, according to E. Nwachukwu (1998):

"Okonko" is a masquerade celebration, which originated from our forefathers though not celebrated in Umuozegwu. There is, however, one community in Ihitte-Uhoma, called Amakahia that celebrates "Okonko". The community is known with the Okonko festival from the ancient times. The festival usually takes two market days: Afor and Nkwo. It takes off on Afor day at the community shrine and rounds off on the Nkwo day. The masquerade dance (Ogba n'okpotoro) is performed, as one of the activities. "Ogba n'okpotoro" is a spirit-manifest dance, which thrills and entertains observers at its appearance. A kind of display where objects are placed on a vertically moving bamboo (okpotoro) as musical instruments accompany these movements and direct the movements of the masquerade, as well. It can be called bamboo masquerade.

"Okonko", per se, is not just a mere masquerading activity as such. Men, however, who have attained some acclaimed status in that community, dance along side the masquerades, indicating that they are tough.

12."Ifu Agu Okonko" (Lion masking/Masquerading) is the ceremony where "Ogba n'okpotoro" performs. During this Okonko celebration, observers who are curious try to throw their caps to the tip of the moving bamboo (okpotoro), and the cap sticks on the bamboo top, and becomes part of the costume of the masquerade, as it dances along. Nwachukwu's account in this interview really expressed elaborately, the essence of Okonko. Generally speaking, the essence of "Ifu agu okonko" is that it shows that it is the period of the "Iri ji" (New Yam Festival). This festival therefore, is aimed at
celebrating the new yam festival in Ihitte-Uboma. In this festival, there are special drums and slit-wood instruments used in accompanying the dances.

13. "Igba Mgba" (Traditional Wrestling Contest)

This is more of a sporting event, where adults from the ages of 25 to 35 years of age, challenge themselves, to exhibit or expose the strongest individual in the community. It was a common activity in Igboland, which presently, seem to be dying away because of civilization, in the sense that most young boys in the community have resorted to "white-collar" jobs in urban areas, thereby, forgetting and looking down in most traditional activities.

In Ihitte-Uboma, "Mgba" activities usually take place during the Christmas period - December, when many youths are around at their various villages, for the celebration of Christmas. It is usually a theatrical activity that entertains the indigenes, even though, it has other societal implications in terms of "show of strength and energy".

14. "Emume" (Celebration Period)

This period generally signifies celebration of any sort. One may be celebrating "Imeghe ulo" (opening of a new house), "Oriri maka ihe ona" (eating and drinking for something good); "Ori na-nchu" (celebration while alive) - usually organized by age grade members -as designed by themselves for their members in a rotational sequence, moving from one individual compound to the other, especially during monthly or yearly (annual) meetings. During this period the individual, the age grade, or the group, organize musical entertainment at the celebrant's compound and all through that day the mood shall be celebration galore- in a grand style.
Some Christian title-takings like Knighthood, women guilds, priestly ordination etc. also celebrate with musical performances—featuring choirs, traditional dance groups, as well as mini-spirit manifest groups by the youths, example "Atilogwu" or "Oji-onu" music groups. In all, from the above mentioned music activities in Ihitte-Uboma, it can be observed that various musical instruments are employed to accompany either vocal, instrumental and dance presentations, in their natural states. These instruments, which have aided me in my findings of a greater number of instrument types, is the concern of this thesis, as they aid this research in ascertaining the instrumental resources of the people of Ihitte-Uboma.

**Samples, Types and Categories of Musical Group**

Generally speaking, the verbalization and categorization of Igbo musical groups depend solely on the classificatory terminology as derived from the locality in question. As Nzewi (1991:24) rightly states, "There are two key terms which are focal to Igbo musical verbalization and categorization. One is artistic "egwu", the other is organizational, "otu".

In Ihitte-Uboma per se, some music groups are designed as either "ndi egwu" or "ndiotu egwu", and all tend to display impressive plastic arts. There are some groups organized especially by either age grades or by members of a particular interest. In all, the basic or rather primary aim of these musical groups is for socialization, during some public functions or for educating the masses at very important festivals. The table on the following page tries to enumerate some traditional vocal and instrumental music groups in Ihitte-Uboma, as categorized in the following manner:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of group</th>
<th>Type of group</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Performance Occasion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abijo cultural dance</td>
<td>Vocal/instrumental</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Festival and Special occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agbata Eburnus group</td>
<td>Vocal</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Child birth or Special occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atilinga cultural group</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Artistic/Organizational</td>
<td>Males (Youth)</td>
<td>Festive periods or Masquerading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewun Nwatari</td>
<td>Vocal/instrumental</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>On demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewun Orino</td>
<td>Vocal</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Female (mothers)</td>
<td>During child birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebiro traditional group</td>
<td>Instrumental/vocal</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Burial/funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Egba” cultural group</td>
<td>Vocal/instrumental</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Celebration period and special occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nwo nokoko</td>
<td>Vocal/instrumental</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Celebration period and special occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igba ndi ere</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>At the Eze's palace or Outing of Eze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikot Babu village</td>
<td>Instrumental/vocal</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Male/Female</td>
<td>Social occasions on Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ochimodi dance group</td>
<td>Instrumental/vocal</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Male/Female</td>
<td>Social occasions on Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igbeone okpoje group</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Youths (Male)</td>
<td>Festive/special Occasions on demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ochokon cultural group</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Festive/special Occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ochokon cultural group</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Burial ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oji nu yaere</td>
<td>Vocal/instrumental</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Child birth or Special occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oji nu masquerade group</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Youths (male)</td>
<td>Festive periods or special occasions on demand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Samples, types, and categories of musical groups.**

By the above categorization, it can be observed that there are basically two categories of music groups - Artistic and organizational groups.
Artistic groups refer to music groups associated with songs and dances designed for impressive displays and are traditionally recognized by the people, as occasional performance groups.

Organizational groups refer to that music and dance category, which are formed by age grade, associations or clubs, as recognized by the locality. This group or category has a common binding objective and thereby, uses music to enhance its associations' activities.

Nzewi stresses further that:

"Music making provides the members of an otu the best atmosphere for in-group socialization, and enhances its club activities, and social identity during public occasions. The type of music-making identifying the club would then be synonymous with the name of the club or, at other times the name of the music type is adopted as the name of the club irrespective of other roles or activities for which the club is known (1991:24)."
This chapter deals with the views of some ethnomusicologists who have tried to classify the African/Nigerian traditional musical instruments as they have observed them. These writers include Curt Sachs and Eric Von Hornbostel (1963), W.W. Echezona (1964), Hood (1971) J.H. Nketia (1974), Lo-Bamijoko (1983), C.T. Nwachukwu (1981), Meki Nzewi (1991), and Rich Okafor (1994). The idea is to survey what they had written in comparison to what obtains in the instrumental resources of the people Ihitte-Uhoma.

In Africa, the study of musical instruments has been a crucial issue for some time now, beginning from the early quarter of the 20th century. Numerous studies on the systems of classifying them have so far been made but each system has its advantages and imperfections. There are some cultures like China, India and Western Europe that have developed a standardized system of classification. The Chinese classification has based its system on EIGHT materials, namely: stone, metal, earth, silk, skin, gourd, bamboo and wood. The Indians based their classificatory system on FOUR groups, namely; cymbals, bells - as one group; the drums - as the second group; the strings and the wind instruments - as the third and fourth groups respectively.

CURT SACHS AND ERICH VON HORNBOSTEL'S CLASSIFICATION:

As far back as in 1880, "Victor Mahillon, curator of the instrumental collection of the Brussels conservatory, developed a system of classification, which was revised and expanded in 1914 by Curt Sachs and Erich Von Hornbostel", (Hood 1971: 124), for Europe. The European system of
classification seems to have achieved a wider acceptance—which they resolved finally as idiophones, Membranophones, Chorodophones and Aerophones.

**Jaap Kunst's Classification**

This classification, though, seems to have been developed in line with the systems established in the Indian classification, yet there are some weaknesses which have been validly criticised by some authors, even though the classification has been widely acclaimed. In Sachs-Hornbostels' classification, Kunst has drawn attention from four main groups:

- **Idiophones**: Classed and arranged according to the playing method, and according to shape.
- **Chordophones**: First split into two groups i.e that of simple and that of the composite instruments. They are further classified according to shape.
- **Aerophones**: First divided into free aerophones and wind instruments proper. The latter group is again subdivided according to the manner in which they are blown.

Kunst's views are quite understandable, because Sachs and Hornbostels' classification (1963) seems to have rather looked into African musical instruments with emphasis on the nature of sound generation. To me, this system of classification is based purely on scientific reasoning in terms of the acoustic nature of African musical instruments. This, therefore, proves that Sachs-Hornbostels' classificatory system is one-dimensional.
Echezona's Classification:

Echezona (1963) tries to classify Igbo musical instruments in his work "Ibo Musical Instruments in Ibo Culture", in line with the four categories determined by Sachs and Hornhostel. As a director of the 1977 FESTAC exhibition of musical instruments, Echezona had the opportunity to observe the "variety and the musical quality of the instruments that were submitted" (Echezona, 1981:viii), and thereby categorizing these Nigerian musical instruments into five, with various subdivisions, thus:

1. Instruments of inherently resonant materials like:
   
   (a) the clapser series
   
   (b). Bell series (with sub-divisions)
       Simple xylophone; compound xylophones; hollow xylophones;
       metalophones; pellet bells; clapper bells.
   
   (c). Jingle series;
   
   (d). Sistrum series;
   
   (e). Hollow rattles;
   
   (f). Musical rasps and friction instruments.

2. Membranophones (with sub-divisions)
   
   Single membrane drums; Double membrane drums.
3. **Prongaphones** - as instruments consisting of a number of flexible tongues of bamboo, wood or metal, whose bases are attached to a board of a box-like resonating body.

4. **Aerophones** - (Wind instruments) with sub-divisions:
   (a) Flute series (with its sub-divisions)
   - Pan-pipe group; dust-flute group; transverse wind group; notched flute group; talking tube
   (b) Trumpet series
   (c) Reed Instruments
   (d) Spinning series.

5. **Stringed instruments** (with sub-divisions):
   - Extemporized monochords; Musical bows; Split stringed instruments; Harps; Plucked stringed instruments; Bowed stringed instruments.

Echezona's work which includes the prongaphone instruments as one of the categories, is an extension of the four groups established by Sachs and Honnholdel. My observation is that this work is more of a catalogue of Nigerian musical instruments than an organological study.

**Kwabena Nketia's Classification:**

Kwabena Nketia's assertion on the instrumental resources of Africa, rightly points out that:
The instrumental resources at the disposal of performers naturally tend to be limited to those in which their respective communities specialize. They may be instruments believed to be of local origin or instruments which have become integrated into the musical life of their communities from other areas. They may show local peculiarities in design and construction as well as in tuning, for every society maintains its own norms or accepts creative innovations in its musical practice or instrumental types, without reference to other societies with whom they have minimal cause for musical context (1974.67).

The statements above express the fact that musical instruments are studied in context with the locality in which the performers belong, and can be studied from different angles. Furthermore, some studies and classifications could be viewed from the historical perspective, from the social uses, functions and beliefs or from the material objects in terms of the technology.

In the light of the observations made by Nketia, it would be expected, therefore, that a more "folk" oriented approach would be applied in the classifications made. Instead, Nketia follows the established system by Sachs and Hornbostel, but in furtherance, he sub-divides those four categories as "inventory of Africa musical instruments", limiting his observations primarily to the uses to which instruments are put, and to the basis of their selection. This, can be observed as enumerated below:

**IDIOPHONES** - with sub-divisions as:

(a) Shaken idiophones eg.: rattles

(b) Primary rattles, and Secondary rattles.

(c) Struck and Concussion idiophones eg.
resonant slab of stone or wood strung by a metal;

stone clappers or rock gongs;

Iron or wooden bells with clappers. Wooden slit drum; Gourd percussion. Iron cymbals or gourds tied together to function as concussion rattles.

(d) Scrapped and friction idiophones, eg.

- piece of notched bamboo or palm stem scraped with another stick; Scraping a bottle with the lid of a tin; by rubbing a calabash or gourd against a board, etc.

(e) Stamped idiophones, Two (2) main types.

- stamping sticks - used for hitting the gourd; stamping tubes - closed end is hit at an inclined position against hard ground or preferably against a slab of stone.

(f) Tuned idiophones are of two types:

1. Hand piano (eg. Mbira or Sansal)

2. Xylophone
   - (a) Pit xylophones
   - (b) Babana step type
   - (c) Wooden frame
MEMBRANOPHONES: Drums with patchment heads. These include:-

Simple make-shift drums played by women; strips of wood bound together by iron hoops; Earthenware vessels used as drum shells; Large gourd or calabash.

Shapes: - conical, cylindrical or semi-cylindrical:

sling drums; drums held under the armpit at play, etc.; Heavy drums of various types - normally placed on the ground when played; Single headed, open at one end and closed at the other end by means of a board or nonsonorous skins; Double-headed drums; Hourglass; Sets of tuned drums.

AEROPHONES:

These fall into three broad groups:
The flute - designed for playing in vertical or transverse position; Reed pipes, Horn and trumpets made of gourd, wood or bamboo.

CHORDOPHONES:

(a) Musical bow,

Earth bow, mouth bow; mouth bow with resonators

(b) Zithers - idiochord zither:

Raft zither, Tube zither, Flat bar zither; and Bow zither.

(c) Lutes: Strings running parallel to its neck; Spike fiddle with a resonator One string fiddle with resonator, Tube fiddle, Bowed lutes; Harp lutes etc.
In as much as Nketia's "inventory of African musical instruments" is detailed, according to Sachs-Hornbostel's classification, it also seem not to have recognized the folk view on the classification of musical instruments. From my analysis (according to what obtains in my locality) all the groupings made by Nketia fall into three categories, namely:- Manner of play, Materials and Onomatopoeic derivations. The musical instruments outlined as idophones can be grouped as those identified as "manner of play"; those grouped as Membranophones and Chordophones, fall into the category of "Materials from which they are made"; while those grouped as Aerophones can be classified as those that fall into instruments "identified by their characteristic onomatopoeic derivations. All these therefore, prove that the totality of the instruments outlined above can be grouped into three basic groups which I am trying to establish in this thesis, namely:

(a) African musical instruments identified according to the manner of play;
(b) Instruments identified according to materials from which they are made; and
(c) Musical instruments identified according to the characteristic onomatopoeic derivations.

These categories are discussed extensively in chapter four of this thesis, according to the instrumental resources of Ihitte-Uboma.
Lo-Bamijokio (1983) attempts to classify Igbo musical instruments from another perspective. In her work, she opines that the classification of musical instruments takes two factors into consideration.

The first focuses on the instrument per se. The second on the society in which the instrument is used. The first factor, in other words, deals with the classification of the instruments based upon how they are played, and the second with the various functions of the instruments in the indigenous context (pg. 38).

In classifying Igbo musical instruments, Lo-Bamijokio groups them into five categories, as thus:

1. "Iyo" - to shake, rattle or clap together.
2. "Iku" - to strike a hard surface with a beater.
3. "Iti" - to strike a membrane with hand or beater.
4. "Ikpo" - to pluck or bow.
5. "Ifu" - to blow.

From my observation, this system of classification seems to have been based on the author's first category, which deals with the classification based "upon how the instruments are played". The five key terms (Iyo, Iku, Iti, Ikpo and Ifu) are adjectival...
(d) Rattles of various kinds - (with various names according to dialects).

(e) Thumb piano - (with various dialectic names).

(f) Percussion pots or clay pot drums or water pot drums - (with dialectic differences).

2. Membranophones: Instruments that depend on membranes of animals, fixed on wooden frames, for their source of sound. They include the single and double headed drums. Some of them are talking drums, and some are melody-borne. He gives examples from Igbo, Ibibio, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri and Ghana.

3. Aerophones: These include instruments of the flute family, made from materials with a natural bore, such as bamboo or the tip of a horn or gourd. They depend on the column of air for them to sound.

(a) Flute (made of wood) - with examples

(b) Horns (made of animal horns and elephants tusks) with examples.

(c) Reed pipe - (with example)

(d) Trompet - (with example)

(e) Gourds - (with examples from some localities)

(f) Clarinet - (with examples).

4. Chordophones (String Instruments) - Those instruments which depend on the agitation of strings for musical sounds to be produced. These include the
It is also important to note that Okafor's classification of Nigerian instruments is yet another dimensional classificatory system based entirely on Sachs-Hornbostel's system of classification. Again, this classification is based on the technique of sound generation, thereby identifying the system from one view point.

NIGERIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:

Nigerian musical instruments, especially in the Igbo speaking group, are numerous but can be identified as well, by their generic names. They can be grouped according to class. Within this class, Nzewi (1991) stresses that 'there are varieties which are distinguished according to morphology, structural variation, performance techniques, ensemble role and in some instances, societal role' (pg. 57). Nzewi's classificatory system of musical instruments are categorized primarily according to the "sounding material or the technique of production thus providing two conjunct folk systems" (page 57). As observed, there is one important consideration made by Nzewi. That is, he had recognized the 'folk systems' in his classification from an Emic (culture-owners) point of view. He, therefore, goes further to classify Igbo musical instruments into four groups, namely:
(a) Melodrhythm Instruments - as the wooden, metal and membrane instruments - which, without producing definite pitches, are capable of a wide range of phonic manipulation.

(b) Blown Instruments - as second in importance and are melody or phonic-effects producing instruments.

(c) Shaken and pot instruments - which play percussive roles in ensembles.

(d) Plucked (soft-toned) melody instruments - which are primarily as solo instruments.

The researcher observes also, that Nzewi's system of classification seem to have considered four techniques of sound production in line with Lo-Bamijoko's representation as "Iku", "Ifu", "Ihi" and "Ikpo" - which can be grouped respectively, as he has grouped the four above. Though, this attempt seem to be one dimensional basing it on the technique of sound production. But Nzewi has created the need for a more detailed emic view on the classification of Igbo musical instruments, which Nwachukwu (1981) had successfully established.

NWACHUKWU’S CLASSIFICATION:

Nwachukwu, already pointed out that the "museum classification of musical instruments by the Hornhostel-Sachs system (1961) remains most useful". This is true based on the fact that presently, it is the Sachs and Hornbostels' classification of 1933 which was expanded (as the case may be) in 1961, that ethnomusicologists and anthropologists are still relying on, in the classification of African musical instruments. Nwachukwu, in her work, is interested in the modern trend in the study of musical instruments, which is
ethnicity bound rather than "in the imposition of an etic system of classification such as that worked out by Hornhostel and Sachs" (1981:3). As a result, Nwachukwu establishes some folk evaluation and system of classification of Igbo musical instruments, using MBaise in IMO STATE, as a case study. Her system of classification agrees with what I call "the culture-owner based classification" - which is the EMIC classification. Nwachukwu, therefore bases this system of classification on the folk taxonomy of musical instruments with five major distinguishing characteristics:

(i) by the material from which they are made, for example Ogbo calabash horn,
(ii) by the utilitarian names for objects from daily use, for example, Okwa (small slit drum) and Okwa (small kitchen mortar),
(iii) by abstract names with no readily discernible meaning,
(iv) by the manner of playing, for example, Uhic name for large wooden slit drum suggests the beating of the instrument across its lips.
(v) by the characteristic sound they make.

In furtherance to the above categories, Nwachukwu elaborates clearly, what instruments belong to which of the groups above, as classified in Mbaise. Nwachukwu's classificatory system is in fact, in consonance with my observations. Musical instruments in any given culture, can be better accounted for by those who own the culture. These people will be able to search out these instruments, where-ever
they are, for what purpose and what-ever group that makes use of them thereby giving the appropriate names of such instruments and times of usage.

**MANTLE HOOD’S CLASSIFICATION:**

Bearing in mind that "musical instruments can provide information vital to the work of the ethno-musicologist", Mantle Hood (1971) expresses further by looking into "musical instruments as a unique source of information" (page 123), wherein there lies the emphasis in the discussion and description of musical instruments. Furthermore, that the study as organology (the science of musical instruments) should not be limited to the description of the physical features, acoustical properties and history of musical instruments alone; but that "equally important but neglected aspects of the science of musical instruments, such as particular techniques of performance, musical function, decoration (as distinct from construction), and a variety of socio-cultural considerations" (Hood, 1971: 124) should be of importance.

Even though Hood stressed holistically on the science of musical instruments from an organological point, no attempt is made to classify any group of instruments from any class of people. Instead, mention is made on the 'Principal systems of classification' emphasizing the musical cultures of China, India, and western Europe that have developed a taxonomy of musical instruments.

Considering all the efforts made by these 'giants' in ethnomusicology, I have been prompted positively to research on the instruments from my locality, as an Igbo speaking group, to enable me make an effective assessment for the future, of other
areas. It is on this premise that the need for the taxonomy of Igbo musical instruments from the folk concept arises, in order to systematize and rationalize, as much as possible, the classification of the instrumental resources of the people of Ihitte-Uboma. Therefore, it is likely that this attempt shall improve the system of classification and devise a better taxonomy which will continue to provide a fascinating challenge for the future, in the classification of Igbo musical instruments.
CHAPTER THREE

COGNITIVE PRINCIPLES IN THE FORMULATION OF FOLK TERMINOLOGY FOR THE NAMING OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE, SEMANTICS AND SOUND PHENOMENA:

In my earlier publication, I had pointed out that from my research findings "about 700 languages are spoken in Africa. Nigeria alone has about 260 in number. These languages are spoken in different culture-areas with different musical practices" (Chukwu 1991: 151). That is to say, each ethnic group has its own musical language, ideas, instruments and styles of performance that are exclusively acceptable by that culture.

Igbo language, as we know, is one of the most highly tonal languages in Africa in the sense that the variations in the voice-pitch stress give rise to different meanings. In English language, for example, several words may have the same meaning depending on the context. Whereas in Igbo, a single homograph may have several meanings depending on the diacritic markings used to show the inflexions in Igbo tones. There are three inflexions in Igbo tones, which are represented as thus:

- high, as /
- low, as \\n- medium, as —
For purposes of clarity, the following examples below can help in explaining these tonal inflexions. The words are written in Igbo, with the tonal inflexions, while the meanings are explained in English, opposite each word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Igbo Word</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>afo</td>
<td>afo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afo</td>
<td>year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afo</td>
<td>stomach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afo</td>
<td>market day (in Igbo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ifo</td>
<td>ifo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ifo</td>
<td>to uproot (grass)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iko</td>
<td>ikò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iko</td>
<td>folk tale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iko</td>
<td>to cultivate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iko</td>
<td>a love mate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akwa</td>
<td>ìkwà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akwa</td>
<td>bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akwa</td>
<td>to cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akwa</td>
<td>cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akwa</td>
<td>egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ike</td>
<td>iké</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ike</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ike</td>
<td>to tie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ike</td>
<td>to divide (to share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ike</td>
<td>buttocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>igwe</td>
<td>ìgwè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>igwe</td>
<td>iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>igwe</td>
<td>sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>igwe</td>
<td>bicycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>igwe</td>
<td>cown (of people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ikwe</td>
<td>ikwè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ikwe</td>
<td>mortar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ikwe (ukwe) ikwé to sing (song)

ite ité to rub

ite ìíë pot

ite (ife) ité to cook (soup)

ishi ishi head

ishi Tshí blindness

ishi (nri) ishi to cook (food)

The above homographs are just a few examples of the tonal inflexions, which are not used in Ihitte-Uboma alone, but are also common in the whole of Igboland.

Sometimes when new objects are brought into the culture and are being accepted and are in use, some mnemonic devices or ellipsis are used and sometimes compounded to differentiate the object from the foreign one.

For example:

"Ite - pot" = which differentiates the native clay pot (ite) from the enamel pot.

"Oku-electriki" = which differentiates the native light or fire (oku) from the electric light.

"Aki oyibo" = which differentiates the native palm kernel (aki) from the European's (Oyibo) nut

"Igwe ogba tum tum" = "Igwe" means machine; while "Ogba tum tum" depicts the sound the engine makes. This therefore, refers to "motor-byke".
To explain this further, Nwachukwu (1981) confirms that:

Some objects made from metallic substances, such as zinc for roofing or plates and basins are called *ghamgham* because of the harsh sound they produce when struck (pg. 55).

In Igbo language some animals found in the forest derive their names either from the sound they make or from their activities. In Ihitte-Uboma for example, the names of forest and some domestic animals derive their names from the *onomatopoeic* sounds thus:

"Asha" (weaverbird) - name derived from the sound the bird makes, like "ashashasha-ra-ra-ra".

"Ikwighi-kwighi" (owl) name derived from the sound it makes like "ikwighi-kwighi-kwighi"

"Okuko" (fowl) - name derived from the sound it makes like, "Kuko-ko-ko-ko-ko" etc. etc.

In the case of musical instruments, it is important to note that, through the means of mnemonics, ellipses and words loaned from other objects or language outside Igbo, some musical instruments also derive their names. In general terms, it is of importance to consider "sound" as what it is in the Igbo language structure, so as to be able to under the semantics and sound phenomena in the language.
"Uda" (Sound)
The generic name for different kinds of sound in Igbo language is called "uda". "Uda" can mean "depth of sound" as well. For example, "O dara uda" (literally - "it sounded sound") which grammatically means, "it sounded deep". This means that "uda" could refer to "sound" as well as the "depth" of sound.

"Ida" means to "fall"; "Ida uda" therefore means "to fall sound". Sound does not actually fall, instead it is made. This means, "Ida uda" refers to making of sound (to make sound).

Nwachukwu (1981:589) stresses elaborately on what sound means to man, by asserting that:

The universe of sound is divided into two, The animate, including human being and animals; and the inanimate. Man is the producer or activator of sound, while inanimate objects, although carriers of sound need generators in order to emit sounds. Man/animal has voice known as Olu, which he can use to produce diverse kinds of sounds.

Accordingly, the Ihitte-Uboma people refer to sounds as "uda" but when it comes to songs, they refer to them as "ukwe". When a great singer performs, certain slogans like "I kwe ghuo la onye gi n'ukwe" meaning "you really do sing too much" or "that the singer is such a wonderful one" are expressions used to praise a good singer. In another dimension, the term "Olu ogele" meaning "Voice of the gong" or that "your voice sounds like that of the gong" is used to express the quality of a good singer. But when a singer's
voice is not in tune with the song being sung, the expression "Olu gi, mgbaba nshi" meaning "Your voice, like the scattered excreta", is used to express dissatisfaction or disappointment.
CHAPTER FOUR

BASIC CLASSIFICATORY PRINCIPLES IN THE FOLK TAXONOMY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTAL RESOURCES IN IHITTE-UBOMA

In chapter three, I tried to investigate and explain the cognitive principles in the formulation of folk terminology for the language structures and the naming of musical instruments in my Local Government Area. This chapter goes further, into attempting to outline the basic classificatory principles that underlie the naming of these musical instruments.

From the analysis of the data on folk taxonomy of the musical instrumental resources of the people of Ihitte-UBOMA, it was discovered that there are five distinguishing classificatory principles in the naming and classification of these musical instruments.

They include:

1. Traditional musical instruments identified according to the materials from which they are made.
2. Musical instruments identified according to their onomatopoeic derivations.
3. Musical instruments identified by their utilitarian associations.
4. Traditional musical instruments known by their abstract appellations, and
5. Traditional musical instruments known by their manner of play.

As a member of this area of research, I have critically and emically looked into various musical instruments found in various communities in Ihitte-UBOMA. I have, as a culture-
owner, gathered my information from elders and instrument makers, as well as performers on these instruments and finally arrived successfully on the groupings of all the musical instruments, according to the five classifications.

4.1: TRADITIONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IDENTIFIED ACCORDING TO THE MATERIALS FROM WHICH THEY ARE MADE:

There are five traditional instruments found in this locality that are identified according to the materials from which they are made. They are:

(i) "Odu" (Ivory horn or animal horn)
(ii) "Ogwe" or "Igba-Akpukpo" (drum or skinned drum)
(iii) "Okpokoro Nnabe" or "Okpokoro mbe" (tortoise shell)
(iv) "Opi achara" (flute bamboo)
(v) "Opi igwe" (metal whistle)

Following Curt Sachs and Eric Homnabostels' (1962) classification, it is observed that the five outlined musical instruments above are grouped or classified into aerophone, membranophone, idiophone, aerophone and aerophone families, respectively. It is important to note that from the instrumental resources of Ihitte-Uboma, these are grouped as one - those instruments "identified according to the materials from which they are made". It is important therefore, to discuss the physical properties and functions of these musical instruments, in order to explain the relevance of the classification.

4.1.1 "Odu" (Ivory or Animal Horn)

"Odu" is the local name or word for either the ivory horn or elephant/cow tusks.

But in a bid to differentiate a type from the other, the name of the animal whose
horn (tusk) is got from, is usually mentioned. For example, "Odu enyi" (Elephant tusk/horn); "Odu" or "Mpi" Nnama (Cow horn/tusk).

The ivory horn type is not commonly found in Ihitte-Uboma. Though recently, because of the vogue in title taking, most of "Ndi Nze n'ozo" now possess "Odu-enyi" as part of their chieftaincy materials (costumes). Today, "Odu-enyi" is now found into and used for some other symbolically prestigious objects/ornaments like bangles, necklaces, anklets, etc., which are worn as ceremonial costumes for the titled men and women (Ndi Nze n'ozo and Lolo respectively). These ornaments are usually very expensive, probably as a result of the cultural values attached to them. Therefore, it is observed that only the previledged ones can afford them. In the traditional Igbo world, traditional rulers and shrine priests attach high values to "Odu".

Musically, "Odu" plays a great role especially in the coronation activities of an "Nze". The "Odu" is blown as soon as the individual is being coronated; who now becomes an "Nze". Thereafter, he is given an "Odu" as his instrument, which should distinguish him from other men in the community.

PLATE 3: Picture of 'Odu'

The "Odu" is blown as soon as the individual is being coronated; who now becomes an "Nze". Thereafter, he is given an "Odu" as his instrument, which should distinguish him from other men in the community.
Furthermore, Court musicians and some titled elders, blow the "Odu" to hail the entrance and the exit of the "Eze" (town leader) from his palace; as well as, when the Eze appears at the village gathering of elders. Chief priests also blow the "Odu" during moments of worship at their shrines.

"Odu" has a curved structure, with a horn-like bell at one end (open) which gets thinned up at the other end (closed). Some "Odu" have smooth exteriors with rough interiors. The inside (interior) is usually smoothed and dried in the sun before usage.

4. Ifi: "Ogwe" or "Igba Akpukpo" (drum or skinned drum)

"Ogwe" is the generic name for all drums in Ihitte-uboma. "Akpukpo" means, "skin", while "Igba" refers to drum, too. "Igba" is another dialectic name for drum.

Some drum types bear names as ellipses, which differentiate them from other types. For example:

"Igba Ogologo" meaning "long drum"
"Oke Igba" meaning "male drum"
"Nne Igba" meaning "mother drum"
"Igba Mmuo" meaning "Spirit drum"
"Igba Ese" meaning "Ese drum"
"Igba Ukom" meaning "Ukom drum".

This distinguishing ellipse is also applicable to the variety of animal skins used in the construction of such drum type. For example:

"Akpukpo Mghafa"- skin of deer skin.
"Akpukpo Ebi" - Cow skin
"Akpukpo Ewu" - Goat skin
"Akpukpo Ele" - Antelope skin

When I consulted an instrument maker, Dee Korieocha (1998), he told me that "not all types of animal skins can give good quality sounds as needed in drum technology". He tried to make me understand that "Akpukpo Mgbada" (Deer skin) and "Akpukpo Ele" (Antelope skin) are the most preferable in drum making because of their sonorous nature. It is important to note therefore, that the skins of the Deer and Antelope produce smooth and sonorous sounds that when played, the sounds are usually audible and pleasing to the drum player. Dialectically speaking, some communities in Ihitte-Uboma say, "Igba" as "Ogwe". In some instrumental ensembles the drums are referred to as either "Igba" or "Ogwe". No matter the name ascribed to whatever specie of drum, one common thing about the drum is that they make use of "Akpukpo" (skin). The wood used in constructing the resonator is either Ugba (oil bean tree), Ube (pear tree), or Aki-bekee (coconut tree).

"Igba" or "Ogwe" is a type of drum, which is commonly used, in most ensembles - male or female membership. It can be played with the bare hands or with sticks, depending on the nature of the ensemble group. Some of this species of drums include:

(a) "Igba Ogologo" (Long drum)

This species of drum has a long wooden trunk that serves as the resonator. It is cylindrical in shape. At the top (wider) end of the trunk, an animal skin (akpukpo) is placed covering the opening,
while at the bottom end, some carvings are made to allow sound exposure, when positioned on the ground as the drummer strikes. Some pegs are used to hold the tie that stretches down the skin placed at the top (wider) end of the trunk. The trunk, of course, is bored hollow all through from top to bottom. These pegs are also tuning pegs whenever the need arises. The length is about 110cm to 120cm.

Plate Four: Igba Ogologo

The circumference of the wider (top) opening is about 28 to 30cm, while the bottom is about 18 to 20cm.

Igba Ogologo is commonly used by the youths as accompaniment instrument in their masquerade dance ensemble called "Atilogwu". As a time-line instrument, it produces deep tones.

(b) "Oke Igba" (Male drum)

An ordinary drum is called "Igba" or "Ogwe" in this locality. But when the drum plays an outstanding role in an ensemble, it bears a
name acceptable by the group. "Igba" (drum) becomes an "Oke" (male) when it plays very significant role in an ensemble. The Master-drummer, in most instrumental ensembles in Ihitte-Uboma, usually handles and/or plays "Oke Igba". In ensembles like "Abigbo" cultural dance group; "Egwu Nwatari" dance group; "Aghacha okuru nwa" dance music group; "Nwaokorobo" traditional group; and a host of others, the master-drummer of these groups play "Oke Igba". A good master-drummer, with the "Oke Igba" can express his expertise and virtuosity as he thrills his group (when practicing) and his audience (when performing) with the high tones emitted by the drum.

The length of "Oke Igba" is about 70 to 75cm. It is shorter than "Igba Ogologo." The diameter of the wider top is about 20 to 30cm wide. It is also cylindrical in shape as "Igba Ogologo". The same wood types are used and the same animal skin (Mgbada) types are also used in the construction of "Oke Igba".

Plate Five: Oke Igba
(c) "Nne Igba" (Mother drum)

In an ensemble where a type of drum is assigned the role of a "mother", it means that the drum is playing an accompaniment role in response to what the "Oke Igba" says or plays.

"Nne Igba" is cylindrical in shape. The height is about 70cm to 75cm, almost like "Oke Igba" (male drum); the difference is that it is slimmer than "Oke Igba". It is lighter in weight, and that is why it is common with the women groups. The skin used in the construction is "Akpukpo Mgbada".

The sound of "Nne Igba" is deep toned (ida ala ala).

Plate Six: Nne Igba.

(d) "Igba Mmuo" (Spirit drum)

"Igba Mmuo" is like other types of drums but the uniqueness lies on the style of carvings made on the sides of the resonator. The height is shorter than other types. It is about 30 to 35cm long. The skin used is the same as in others but because of its use by chief priests and diviners in their shrines, it makes the drum sacred and potent.
from others. The nature of storage and preservation of "Igba Mmuo" after use, tend to create some 'powerful' image that makes people (indigenous) refer to it as "Igba Ike" (powerful drum). After use, "Igba Mmuo" is hung at the "Uko" (fireside) to avoid the reach of children or any non-user, since it is prohibited for children and non-users to touch or play on.

Plate Seven: Igba Mmuo

There are some "Igba Mmuo" drums that are longer with deeper tones too. The commonest types found at shrines are the short ones as shown above

1. "Igba Ese" (Ese drum Row) and "Igba Iko" (Iko drum Row)

"Igba Ese" and "Igba Iko" are both kettle drums, with closed ends. Same wood types are used and the same animal skin (mgbada) is also used in the construction.

"Ese" and "Iko" are all burial music for adventurous personalities. "Ese" which is also called "Ese ike" (strong ese) is associated with the funerals of men, who have remarkably exhibited some outstanding heroic contribution in the community while they were
alive. Both instrumental ensembles are, therefore, sacred, in view of their function in burials.

"Ese" comprises of five kettledrums, each with its characteristic name and positioned in a row, hence the name "drum row". It is actually a set of talking drums, which speak and tell stories.

"Iko", which other Ibo cultures also call "Ukom", comprises of nine kettledrums, positioned in a row each with its characteristic names.

From the photograph above, it can be observed that the drums are arranged from left to right. At the extreme left is placed, the smallest (high pitched) of these all, arranged accordingly, to the biggest (deep toned) at the right. All the drums bear different pitches from the highest pitched to the lowest or deepest tone.

The "Ese" and "Iko" instrumental music are symbolically known as prestigious music groups because of the roles they play at very special periods for titled men and women in the communities. In Ihitte-Uboma, Ese instrumental ensemble is more common than the Ukom.
4.1(ii): "Okpokoro Nnabe" or "Okpokoro Mbe" (Tortoise shell)

"Okpokoro Mbe" is one of the sacred musical instruments which form part of the dibia's (Native doctor's) materials in the shrine.

Dibia Okponku (1998) - a traditional medicine man, explains that:

Okpokoro nnabe wu otu n'ime ngwa ndi dibia. I gaa na nke onye dibia shiri ike, ija huriri okpokoro nnabe. Mgbe owula imuru udu ya, gaa mara na onweriri ozhi dibia aha na ezhi. O na ejie ya ekwuru ndi mmuo okwu, O na ejie ya a ju ha ajụju ufodu ga si. Mgbe ufodu, ya were ya guọ egwu, kwe ukwe oji a kpoku ndi mmuo. Ha za Kwa n'iya. (He laughs)

Translation

The tortoise shell is one of the many materials / tools of the native doctors. If you visit a strong native doctor's shrine, you must see the tortoise shell. Whenever you hear the sound, you will notice that there is a message the native doctor is delivering. He uses it to talk (commune) with the spirits; he uses it to ask the spirits some questions. Sometimes, he uses it to accompany himself as he sings or chants, and to sing songs to invite the spirits. They also answer (Laughter).

This information enlightens one on the use of the tortoise shell in my locality.

The tortoise shell (Okpokoro mabe) is basically used as a communication medium, which the diviner/native doctor uses in his incantations and/or forecasts, at early mornings, or late at nights. During periods of incantations, the dibia strikes the shell.
intermittently and also unconsciously making some rhythmic arrangements. He strikes the shell for a while and keeps silent, assumedly expecting a response from the spirits.

Dibia Okponku (1998) confirms that:

"Mgbde dibia kuturu ma mechie onu, o nwereihe o na ecxhe. Mgbde aha, ndi mmuo ga isaya ajuju o na ja ha, ma owukwu na the ockoro ka ha mere ya Okpokoro mbe shiri ike-o"  

Translation:

"When the dibia strikes and keeps silent, he is waiting for something. At that period of silence, the spirits will respond to his question(s), or what he (dibia) wants the gods to do for him. The tortoise shell is a powerful/mysterious thing-o."  

From my findings, however, the tortoise shell is, strictly speaking, not a musical instruments that is commonly used by musical groups in Ihitte-Uboma, but due to its percussive nature and the intermittent rhythmic sounds produced by the dibia, it tends to serve as a traditional music instrument. Though, there are some special moments it is used purely as an accompaniment instrument; that is when the 'dibias' are making their procession in honour of a late colleague in the community. At this time, other dibias will line up in a single file, some with Okpokoro mbe while some will handle the gongs (either the twin or the single "ogene"), singing as they process.

Plate 9: Okpokoro 'mbe (Tortoise shell)
4.1/f. "Opi achara" (flute bamboo)

As the name depicts, "Opi achara" is a traditional flute made of bamboo. It is an instrument made popular by infants in the localities. It is a playtime musical instrument for children, and they tend to use it in creating some "funny" squeaking sounds as they play, mostly during moonshine or as they go to fetch water or firewood with their peers.

Opi achara is not a difficult instrument to make. As these infants go to fetch wood in the forest, they cut off the branch of the "achara" tree and use penknives to sharpen the branch to different sizes. It is usually cut to about 15 to 30cm in length. "Achara" branch itself is naturally segmented. Each segment is about 15cm. One segment gives a particular pitch. The shorter the length, the higher the pitch. Two or three children could cut out three different branches that could give them clear three pitches, as they blow. For an opi achara with two segments, separated by a notch, the notch is being pierced through with a hot (fired) sharp metal, (like the spoke of a bicycle). This heating up of metal and piercing through the notch of the achara, are actions to be done at home in a more relaxed mood. As the segment is open, for air to pass through to the other segment, a deep toned pitch could be achieved.

Children use "opi achara" to call on themselves in the bush, in a bid to identify what corner of the bush his companion is. But during moon light plays, they play with or make some monophonic (one-line melody) sounds.
As a musical instrument, opi achara is not really one, but for the sounds it makes, children construct it into various sizes, that produce different pitches, thereby creating an ensemble of bamboo flutes.

"Achara" (bamboo) itself, is segmented. Each segment is about 15cm long. When two segments are constructed to make a sound, a hole is bored at the centre with a sharp pointed object like the bicycle spoke, for air to pass through to the next closed-end segment. The length may now be 30cm or thereabout as already explained above. The open-ended side of opi achara can be carved to form either a "V" or "U" shape - mouthpiece. (See Plate Ten (a) and (b)).

Plate Ten (a and b) - Opi achara

4.1/c: "Opi-Igwe" (Metal Whistle)

"Opi-igwe" is not basically a musical instrument. Instead, it is used by youths in officiating games, especially football matches. Later, on the youths introduced it into their dance groups, especially the women folk dance groups. They sometimes refer to "Opi-igwe" as "wisulu" (a direct translation from the English
name... whistle). The law enforcement agents, like the police, also use "opi-igwe" to effect other means of suppression and apprehension.

The word "igwe" refers to metal, while, "Opi" refers to horn. A combination of "Opi igwe" therefore refers to a "metal horn".

"Opi igwe" becomes functional in a dance group especially when the dance either changes in terms of steps or to indicate climax as the dance comes to an end. Also during the period of "iwa ahwa" (coming of age), celebrants blow "Opi igwe" as they line up during procession in the market square. It is also effective as the celebrant blows it to attract attention of spectators who are watching closely as he/she jubilates during the procession, as well as using it to effect tempo increase of his instrumentalists who accompany him or her, closely during procession. (See plate eleven).

Plate Eleven: Picture of "Iwa ahwa" celebrant blowing Opi-Igwe.

"Opi igwe" is not constructed in any of the communities, but are either bought from the markets. All other horn instruments are constructed in this locality, but sometimes, some
species are brought from neighbouring areas that bear a variety of designs, in terms of decoration.

4.2 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IDENTIFIED ACCORDING TO THEIR ONOMATOPOEIC DERIVATIONS

In Ihitte-Uboma, there are none (0) species found in the locality that can be identified according to their onomatopoeic derivations. They include:

i. "Ichaka" or "Osha" (Beaded gourd or calabash rattle);

ii. "Ija" (anklet or ankle rattle);

iii. "Kwaka-kwaka" (stringed rattle);

iv. "Ogele" (Conical clapperless bell);

v. "Udu" (Musical pot or pot drum);

vi. "Ngelenge" (Xylophone);

vii. "Okwa" (Small wooden slit drum);

viii. "Ekwe" (Medium wooden slit drum);

ix. "Mghiringba" (Conical bell with hanging metal beater)

4.2.i. "Ichaka" or "Osha" (Beaded gourd or calabash rattle)

"Ichaka" is an instrument referred to as rattle, with its network of stringed beads wound round a gourd or a calabash. The gourd or calabash acts as the resonator. The sound produced is unique and non-metallic in nature.
"Ichaka" or "Ocha" is so named, due to its characteristic "chaka-chaka-chaka" or "cham-cham-cham" sound - as a result of the effect of the beads on the calabash or gourd.

Ichaka" is commonly used by women in dance groups, as a percussion instrument with very rich sound. The people of Ihitte-Uboma must have recognized the "sh" and "ch" digraphs which are important elements that highlight more on the sound produced by the instrument. In the same vein, the morpheme sound "ka" denotes the non-metallic, as well as, the non-resonant nature of the sound of the instrument.

In some Igbo areas, "Ichaka" can be found in two forms; one is that already mentioned, while the second type is made with a woven basket-like form -with the beads or pebbles enclosed in the basket. The basket, though, carries a base, which is made of calabash or gourd. Some Igbo cultures call it "Oyo" or "Iyo", depending on the dialect. But in Ihitte-Uboma, the type found is the outwardly beaded type. (See Plate Twelve)

Plate Twelve: Picture of "Ichaka".
"Ija" is an instrument, which is common with women and maiden dance groups, in Ihitte-Uboma. It is usually worn round the ankles - sometimes on one leg, or on both legs. In some Igbo cultures especially in the northern Igbo, Anambra State, it is called "Ubia". In some dance groups in Ihitte-Uboma, the longer type is worn round the waist.

"Ija" is made of round shaped metal (silver) with heads enclosed inside. For the "Ubia" type, it is made of woven raffia leaves. None of these types of anklet is made in Ihitte-Uboma, but they are bought from the markets. Women traders, who travel out, brought them into the musical culture of the people of Ihitte-Uboma. (See plate Thirteen).

Plate Thirteen (a & b): Pictures of "Ija" and "Ubia"

The metallic and idiophonic sound "jam-jam" of "Ija," distinguishes it from the "cham-cham" non-metallic sound of "Ubia". The digraphic sound "i" combined with the
morphome sound "jam" - is as a result of the heads inside the enclosure - which are usually produced as the dancers stamp their feet on the ground while dancing.

The sound of "Ija" is stronger and metallic than that of "Ubia" which is weaker and non-metallic. The acoustical differences of these two types of anklets (Ija and Ubia) are quite distinct and prominent that an observer can easily notice the sounds of the two types.

4.2/iii “Kwaka-kwaka” (Stringed rattle)

Traditionally, "Kwakakwaka" as a musical instrument was not common with the people of Ihitte-Uhonta. But as time went on, it found its place in, and is now used by children and the women folk in the musical/dance performances.

"Kwakakwaka" is rather an onomatopeic representation of the sound the instrument makes. Its simplistic nature perhaps, explains why it is common with children and women, as the rattle (shell) can be easily attached to or strung to a long rope (twine).

Just like the "Ekpili" (stringed rattle in Anambra State), "kwaka-kwaka" is played by compacting the whole bunch in the palm and shaken. It can be handled by the right hand and struck on the left hand, or shaken without stricking, to produce a closed or open percussive sound respectively, in accompanying an instrumental or vocal musical dance piece. "Ekpili" according to Okafor (1980) "is found in Anambra State, but used extensively by adults."
The name "Ekpili" is derived from the material from which it is constructed. It is interesting to note here that this instrument in one culture can be classified as being "derived from the material from which it is constructed, while in Ibibio-Ibibom, it is classified and identified "according to the onomatopoeic derivation". It is therefore important to note also that musical instruments in these Igbo areas can be classified according to the two categories - "materials from which the instrument is made" and "according to the onomatopoeic derivation of the instrument."

In constructing the "Kwaka kwaka" or "Ekpili" a hole is bored on each shell and a rope is passed through. That is the only way the shells can be tied together to produce the desired sound.

Plate Fourteen: Picture of "Kwaka kwaka" or "Ekpili"

The crucial sound of "Kwakakwaka" is the morpheme sound "kwa" and "ka". It is perhaps the repeatedness of the sound, when the instrument is played or shaken, that
must have given rise to the "Kwakakwaka" nomenclature, as derived from the onomatopoeic sound.

4.2iv: "Ogele" (Conical Clapperless bell)

"Ogele" is also called "Ogene" in some other Igbo cultures. It is an instrument that is as old as the people of Ihitte-Uboma are. Dee Chukwukere (1977) who is a blacksmith, who also constructs "ogele" has this to say:


Translation:

Ogele is not a thing of today. It has been long. I came into this world to to find Ogele. My late father, you know, was a blacksmith. He did his best. My father told me that the people who made us to know about Ogele were hunters. These hunters used it to call on their dogs in the bush. There were some hunters who hung metal bells around the necks of their dogs to identify where their dogs were in the bush. After a while they started using "ogele" to call on their dogs. Ogele is also used to make calls and deliver messages. To day it has become a musical instrument. The sound helps in an ensemble.

From the above statement, it can be observed that Dee Chukwukere has given all the information desired of "Ogele" in any locality. "Ogele" is a clapperless bell which is usually struck on the body with a wooden beater, to make sound. There are two types of
"Ogele." "Ogele otu onu" (one mouthed ogele) and "Ogele mkpi abuo" (two mouthed ogele). The two-mouthed ogele is welded and flanged together. The welded flange serves as a handle to easy handling while playing or striking on it. The "One mouthed ogele" also bears a little handle. (See Plate Fifteen).

Plate Fifteen(a&h): Pictures of "Ogele"

"Ogele mkpi abuo" is constructed in a manner that one is smaller than the other. The smaller one possesses a high pitch, while the bigger one possesses a low pitch (deep tone).

Traditionally, it is said that "Ogele mkpi abuo" characterizes male and female genders. Musically too, it has been observed that in most double or two mouthed ogele, the intervallic distance is not more than a major or minor third apart. Depending on the maker, (who is not usually so strict or exact on pitch differences, except on demand) the pitch intervals arise from the need by an instrumentalist or the group, who may recommend the pitches desired. Most times, the intervals have to synchronize with the existing melody of the group and of course, the culture per se, so that the instrument can be effective in the ensemble.
Acoustically, the conical clapperless bell is metallic. It is therefore, not beaten with a metal beater but with a wooden beater. The sound derived from the effect of the wood is a "jem-jem" sound. This onomatopoeic representation, has therefore, enhanced the naming of the bell as "Ogele".

The making of ogele in Ihitte-Uboma, is not too difficult, since nearly all the blacksmiths in this area are conversant with the construction - as almost all the youths use ogele in their masquerade performances. The maidens as well as the womenfolk, also use "Ogele" quite often, except that they usually pad up the beaters, so as to dampen the sound from being too loud and noisy.

4.2.1. "Udu" (Musical pot or pot drum)

"Udu" is an object that seems to have dual functions in Ihitte-Uboma. It serves as a water pot as well as a musical or percussion pot. But when the pot has been used for fetching or storing water, it no longer serves a musical purpose.

"Udu" is a general word for pots - whether it is used as a musical instrument or for domestic purpose. When it is used for domestic purposes, it is called "Udu mmiri" (water pot) or "ite-mmiri" (water pot). But when it is used for musical purposes, it is called "Udu egwu" (musical pot). "Udu" as a musical instrument, serves as a percussion instrument. It possesses a deep characteristic sound "du-du" or "dum-dum" - which clearly distinguishes the sound as a deep-toned or bass instrument. It is usually struck with a foam-padded beater.
There are two types of "Udu", "Udu onu onu" (one mouthed udu) and "Udu onu abuo" ("two mouthed udu). The one-mouthed pot possesses two distinct deep sounds; when the beater is struck and placed on the rim of the pot and when the beater is struck and lifted up immediately; that means - close and open sounds, respectively. While the two-mouthed musical pot "Udu onu abuo" possesses three distinct pitches.

In the first instance, "Udu onu abuo" is not beaten or struck with any beater but with bare palms. The left-hand palm, takes care of the rim while the right hand palm, takes care of the side opening. In the second instance, the size of "Udu onu abuo" is smaller than the one-mouthed "udu", that is why the two-mouthed pot drum can be placed on the player’s laps while playing. It is therefore, evidently clear that the pitches produced by the two-mouthed musical pot will be higher than the one-mouthed musical pot - which is usually placed on the ground while at play. There are some "one mouthed musical pot" that are supported with "aiu" (round basketry object) attached at the basement (bottom) which stands the pot erect and firm, as the player beats. "Udu" is a time-line instrument.
"Ngelenge" (Xylophone)

"Ngelenge" is a melo-rhythmic instrument, which possesses both melodic and percussive (Rhythmic) features. In this locality, it is sometimes referred to as "ekwurekwu" which means - a talkative, due to the fact that it combines "talking" too much and accompanying itself at the same time. In some other areas in Imo State, "Ngelenge" is also called "Ekwirikwe" - which sounds closely to and gives reason for referring to it as "ekwurekwu". In a nutshell, "Ngelenge" has a strong propensity to talk too much in an ensemble.

In traditional African cultures, there are a great variety of "ngelenge" types. They are basically made of wood slabs. So, there are some types with 8-slabs;
some with 10 slabs and some with up to 20 to 22 slabs. The type found in Birom
tribe of Plateau State of Nigeria has 22-slabs. Traditionally, each culture
constructs its type according to dialectic and tonal ranges of its language. One
instrumentalist plays some alone, while in some cultures, the instrument is
played by two or three persons. The instrument is usually played with wooden
beaters. The slabs are placed on either banana trunks or on foams attached to
well constructed frames. The objects help in the amplification of sounds
produced.

In Ihitte-Uboma, "ngelenge" music is performed usually by males, especially
adults. There are some ensembles though, where youths (boys and girls) form a
group, just for ngelenge music, but the instrumentalists are boys. An example of
this kind of group is the "Ogbongelenge" dance group of Umuezegwu in Ihitte-
Uboma. They make use of the 8-slabs ngelenge, played by two persons, with
about two or three other instrumentalists who play accompaniment roles with
"Ogwe", (drum), "Ekwe" (slit wood) and "Ogele". (gong)

The most crucial word in "ngelenge" is the "ge" (digraph) and the "nge"
(morpheme) sounds. It is the repeatedness and the non-metallic sound "gelen-
gelen-gelen" that must have derived its phonetic sound "ngelenge" which the
instrument bears. This onomatopoeic representation depicts the name of the
instrument. Hence, the name "ngelenge".
Plate Eighteen: Picture of "Ngele" instrument.

"Mgbirimgha" (Conical bell)

"Mgbirimgha" as an instrument, found its way into the musical ensemble of the people of Ihite-Uboma only recently, as a signaling instrument in an ensemble - to indicate presence and change of style - in the absence of "wisulu". Traditionally, it is an instrument used to attract attention and maintenance of peace and order in a meeting group. It was, and still is in use, in churches to create awareness to members of the congregation.

"Mgbirimgha" is a metallic instrument which has a hanging metal beater inside the conical shaped bell. The bell, as well as, the beater, is made of metal, brass or bronze - which is caste for such purposes. The material used in the construction of "mgbirimgha" (which is cast iron) is quite different from the material used in constructing the "ogele" (which is made from two plates of...
wrought iron with welded or flanged sides). The two instruments are metallic in nature, but the sounds produced by both instruments are clearly distinguishable when heard. "Mgbirimgba" has a heavier weight.

"Mgbirimgba" is constructed with an attached handle made of wood, at the top. Inside the conical shaped hells, is a hanging, metal which strikes the sides of the (when rang or shaken) to produce sound. The sounds produced, depending on the size of the hell, is "ghirim'ghirim" or "ghagam-ghagam". The most crucial sound from mgbirimgba is "gb", either "mgbi" or for "mgba". The digraph "gb" represents the acoustic heavy or rich texture of the name "Mgbirimgba", an onomatopoic sound representing, or rather reflecting the maximum hardness of the instrument. Hence, the name "mgbirimgba".

Plate Nineteen: Picture of "Mgbirimgba."

4.2viii: "Ekwe" (Medium size wooden slit drum)

"Ekwe" is the medium sized wooden slit drum. In some Igbo societies, it is referred to as "Ikoro". This is a pure difference from what obtains in my locality. The "Woso" is a bit larger. (This is discussed in 4.4/1.

"Ekwe" like the "Okwa" in Ibite-Uhoma, is carved out from "Ugba" tree - (pentaclethra macrophylla) wood, or from "Ube" tree (Dacryodes edulis) wood. The most preferable wood, which has also proved its suitability, for
this purpose, is the "Ugha" tree/wood. "Ugha" woods have also shown a strong resonant quality.

The size of "Ekwe" is bigger than that of "Okwa" as they are named in Ihitte-Uboma. Due to its size, it tends to play a melo-rhythmic role in any ensemble that it is found in use. In youth groups like the "Okonkwo" or "Oji-onu" (which are masquerade groups), "Ekwe" goes beyond playing the time-line role, especially when the "Okwa" (small slit) is used. Ekwe then plays melo-rhythmic roles. The women or the maiden groups also use "Ekwe" as an accompaniment instrument and in fact, serves the role of the "Okwa" in their groups, as they place it on the ground and play, with the beater (one stick)

Plate Twenty: Picture of "Ekwe"

4.2/ix: "Okwa" (Small wooden slit)

The name "Okwa" is what the people of Ihitte-Uboma call the small slit wood. In some Igbo speaking areas like in Anambra and Enugu States, "Okwa" is called "Okpokolo" and "Kpokopoko" respectively. Some areas in Anambra also refer
to it as "Ekwe", even in Imo State. The same types of wood are also used in its construction as in Ekwe 4.2/viii.

In Ihitte-Uboma, "Okwa" is another most effective time-line instrument like the "Udu" (4.2.v). The only difference is that the "Okwa" player plays more notes than the "Udu" player does. (See the notation below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Okwa</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ekwe</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udu</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As percussion instruments, it can be observed that these three instruments are playing together, but one instrument "Udu" plays the time-line role than others, in the above notation. In some instrumental ensembles like "Egwu Nwatari" or "Ogbongeleke" groups, the instrument "Okwa" heard very prominently, due to the fact that two beaters are used by the players to play the accompaniment role.

Plate Twenty-One: Picture of "Okwa" and a beater — "Nkpisi".

Traditionally, "Okwa" in Ihitte-Uboma also refers to the small wooden bowl used in offering kolanuts to visitors in an elderly man's house, mostly in the homes of "ndi nze n'ozo". It serves as a plate. "Okwa" also refers to the small wooden mortar used by women in their kitchens, to pound pepper, egusi, etc. The name "Okwa" must have been
derived from the wooden texture of the material, which sounds non-metallic. The "kwa" sound, which is onomatopoeic, is derived from the striking of the wooden beater, which is a wood to wood effect. Hence, the name, "Okwa" - where it is used as a musical instrument with two lips, or used as a domestic material with a bowl-like shape with a wider circumference.

4.3 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IDENTIFIED BY THEIR UTILITARIAN ASSOCIATIONS

From my findings, some musical instruments in Ihitte-Uboma have derived their names from household materials or objects, which are domestically utilized. It is also observed that the meaning(s) of the names of these instruments can be readily discernible and have been accepted locally. In this category, there are two musical instruments in the instrumental resources of Ihitte-Uboma that derive their names from this source. They include:

(i) "Nkuku" (Calabash cup/horn)

(ii) "Udu-mmiri" (Water pot)

4.3(i): "Nkuku" (Calabash cup/horn)

In a more comprehensive sense, "Nkuku" means cup, and "nkuku mmiri" or "nkuku mmiri" refers literally to "wine cup" or "water cup" respectively, meant for drinking. "Nkuku" is made from the horn or handle of the gourd/calabash. This is why it can be referred to as the calabash horn. It is quite rare, in most Igbo societies, to find "nkuku" as a musical instrument. The fact is that, most elders in Ihitte-Uboma, especially when they go into palm-wine drinking spree, in the
village markets, turn the "nkuku" (which they use in sharing and drinking the palmwine,) into a musical instrument. As they become high-spirited, as a result of the quantity of palmwine consumed, they use the nkuku as accompaniment instrument, as they drink and sing. The "nkuku" is carved into various sizes. The shorter or smaller ones possess or produce high pitches, while the longer or wide-mouthed ones produce low pitches. Any passer-by might be attracted by the percussive effect of the "nkuku's" and a possible croaky but enjoyable songs emitting from the shade or hut where they are seated, enjoying the communal life of the village setting. Even the women come in to take a cup or two of the palmwine - when invited by any male in the midst.

"Nkuku" is made from calabash - the neck-side or the branch, which holds, firm, the gourd to its tree, when not plucked off. Some necks are straight while some are curved. When plucked, it is allowed to dry for some days or weeks. As soon as the colour changes from green to light brown - indicating dryness, the instrument maker carves out the desired portion for the purpose for which it is plucked. While the neck is now turned into "nkuku", the other part (which is round or oval in shape) is used in storing liquid (either palmwine or water) or used as resonators in the making of Ichaka (rattle) (See plate Twenty - two).

Plate Twenty - Two (a & b): Pictures of "Nkuku"
"Achara" (Bamboo stunts)

"Achara" is an instrument, which is purely feministic, in the sense that, it is the women, mostly the youths that use it during moonlight plays to accompany themselves as they sing and play.

"Achara" has not been made prominent in the musical life of the people of Ihitte-Uhoma. The fact is that, it has been observed to be rare, but sometimes used by young girls, as they play during moonshines. In some cultures like in Abia State, precisely in Afikpo, "achara" is an important musical instrument. In Afikpo, "achara" is an important musical instrument in women ensembles, as they sit on the ground and play them while singing. It creates a beautiful scene when one watches the women sitting in circular form playing with "achara" as they sing along. Just like "Opi achara" (4.1/4v) the achara is cut out from its long branch and shaped into various sizes, so as to produce varied pitches.

"Opi-achara" is much smaller in diameter and also thinner in size than "achara" itself. "Achara" also bears notches, which separates one segment from the other, just like the "Opi-achara" branch. For domestic use, "achara" is used in building mud houses in the village. It is also used in supporting the vine of a growing yam. That means a whole length of "achara", which could be about 40 to 50 metres long, is used for these purposes, cut into short or smaller shapes as instruments.
4.3(iii): "Udu mmiri" (Water pot)

"Udu mmiri" or "Udu mmi" refer to "water pot or "wine pot" respectively. That means, the type of "Udu used in storing water or palmwine.

This species of pot is purely a domestic pot. Like I pointed out in 4.2.v, "Udu" only serves a musical purpose when it is meant specifically for musical accompaniment. But when it is not used for this purpose, it is used for storing water or palmwine.

When young girls go to the streams to fetch water, they tend to sing along, as they go to the stream. Some rhythm-conscious young girls strike (very softly to avoid breakage) the sides of the pots they are carrying on the heads, to accompany the song they sing. This does not particularly turn the "Udu" into a musical pot but a percussion pot, which supports their smooth movement - easing off and not thinking about the long distance they may have to trek to the stream.

The structure of "udu-mmiri" is exactly like that of the "udu" (musical pot) with same rim and same body. They are all made of clay. (See page 81.)

Plate Twenty - Three: Picture of two young girls going to the stream with "Udu mmiri"
4.4 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS KNOWN BY THEIR ABSTRACT APPELATIONS

There are a few musical instruments in Ihitte-Uboma found to be identified by names with no discernible meaning. These designations or names, so to say, have been found to be used also in other Igbo societies to identify the instruments, and have been so accepted by the cultures.

There are two instruments that belong to this category. They are:

1. "Ikoro" or "nkoro" (large wooden slit drum)
2. "Oja" (notched flute).

4.4.1 "Ikoro" or "nkoro" (Large wooden slit drum)

"Ikoro" is sometimes referred to as "nkoro" in some areas in Ihitte-Uboma; while the indigenes of Ihitte refer to it as "Ikoro", the people of Uboma call it "nkoro". So, it is a question of dialectic difference. They all mean the same. "Ikoro" in some Igbo cultures is called "Ufie" - especially in Anambra State. In Imo State, where the word "Ufie" is used, it is the name of the tree from which the "Ikoro" is cut and carved out. The wood "Ufie ukpa" (pterocarpus osun) is a species of wood which has been proved to possess a strong resistance to rodents and ants that eat wood, and is used generally in Igbo societies for the construction of "Ikoro" or "Ufie".

"Ikoro" in Ihitte-Uboma, is specially constructed. It is regarded as a special instrument and it takes months to construct. It is usually a very large object and because of its abnormal size, it is usually constructed where the people (elders) want it to be positioned. It is not easily lifted except with a crane. In the olden days, according to my informant "Dee Chukwukere" (1997), "it is constructed or..."
carved where the tree is felled”. As soon as the construction is made, a big hut is built above it to shelter the instrument from sun and rains. It is regarded sacred. That is why it is not played by everybody, except the person it is assigned to, by the “Eze” of the community. Today, three different sizes of Ikoro are constructed indicating the child, the mother and the father representing ancestral parents of the community, and called “Nkwukwu – ishi”.

In Ihitte-Uboma, especially in the Umuezegwu community, so also in Amakohia, Atonerim and Ahueke communities (to mention but a few) “Ikoro” is housed at the community’s market square where for years now, it has been positioned.

Plate Twenty - Four: Picture of Ikoro (Nkwukwu – Ishi) as housed under a roof.

The authentic player of the "Ikoro" in Umuezegwu is the "Onye Ishi amadioha" (The Chief Priest of the god of thunder). He does so on the orders of the "Eze" for a specified purpose - especially when the "Eze" (Traditional Ruler) of the community intends to call the elders together or members of the community, for a particular information. Sometimes, though, any member of the community might go to "Onye ishi amadioha" to
request him to assemble the elders of the community for a purpose. It might be that, he
is quarrelling with someone who intends to oppress him or deny him of his right over a
piece of land or something else. The "Onye ishi amadioha" must first inquire very
critically the authenticity of sounding the "Ikoro" before he accepts to do so. If he does
accept, the convener shall then pay the stipulated amount in cash, before he proceeds to
the "Fire" to inform him of a complainant's plight and then goes to sound the "Ikoro". As
soon as the community hears the sound of the "Ikoro", the elders will, in the next 30
minutes or so, start converging at the Market Square, to know the reason for the
summons. In the case of the death of an elderly man or a titled person (male or female)
or of a civil case, these are different sounding patterns for each purpose. And the
communities that are already familiar with these patterns, easily decipher what sound is
heard. The sound, which tells of any festivity like "Mhom-uzo" festival, is also different
from all other sounds.

"Ikoro" as the name sounds, does not portray any clear meaning except for the sound it
produces when struck. As large as it is, the tone is usually deep and pierces throughout
the whole community, no matter the position one finds him. Neighbouring towns or
communities even hear the sound of an "Ikoro" from a community and become aware
that something must be happening in such community from where the sound is heard.

"Ikoro" has two lips, which produces two distinct pitches when sounded. The two lips
sound high and low, with a relatively tuned interval of a 4th or a 5th apart. The
ideography "i" and the morphomes "ko" and "ro" identify the sounds produced from the
instrument - which are crucial sounds that give reason for the name "Ikoro". There are no much designs on "Ikoro" except that in some cultures, some decorations are made on the body of the instrument depicting either some gods of such communities, or the head of a great personality - whose prowess needed some kind of recognition. One end of the "Ikoro" in such communities could bear the image of such heroic personality. In Umuezezu, the image found on the side of the "Ikoro" is an assumed head of the god of thunder (Amadioha) which the community respects. It might be more comfortable to say that "Ikoro" must have derived its name from the characteristic sound it produces, but for purposes of appropriateness and since "Ikoro" sounds abstract with no readily discernible meaning, it is therefore proper to place "Ikoro" into this category.

4.4ii. "Oja" (Notched Flute)

"Oja" is an elliptically shaped traditional flute made of wood, with a narrowly hollowed cavity, which is cylindrically bored from the top to the bottom. The length is usually about 14 to 16cm. The mouthpiece (embouchure) is "V" or "U" shaped. It has two finger holes created at the opposite sides. There is also a hole at the bottom for another finger position. With the three holes, it is expected that there would be three distinct pitches produced from the "Oja", but when an virtuoso player handles the "Oja" in Ihitte-Uhoma, more than three tones can be heard.
"Oja" as the name sounds, does not depict the name of anything, either as material for construction or the sound produced. It is probably the most appropriate musical instrument in the instrumental resources of Ihitte-Uboma that has such abstract name, which cannot be discernible either by the sound or by its material.

Plate Twenty-Five: Pictorial "Oja"- "V" and "U" shaped

Oja music is quite a recent musical creation in Ihitte-Uboma Local Government Area. Oja music found its way from other parts of Igbo land, especially from the Anambra State of Nigeria, where masquerading is so prominently practiced. Masquerading groups in Ihitte-Uboma made "Oja" popular, especially by the youths. A young "Oja" flutist can make discernible statements in his group and every member understands what he blows. It can be used to hail or call out names of members of his group, and even spectators who are present watching the groups' performances. As he does this, some "hailed" personalities get moved and they spray money on the forehead of the acclaimed flutist - "Ogbu oja" (which is the name ascribed to any virtuos "Oja" player).

The groups where "Oja" is prominently used are "Oji-onu" and "Atifrogwu" masquerades.
Table two: Classification of instruments in Ihitte-Uhoma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUMENTS IDENTIFIED BY THE ONOMATOPOEIC DERIVATIONS</th>
<th>INSTRUMENTS IDENTIFIED BY THEIR UTILITARIAN ASSOCIATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. &quot;Odu&quot; (Ivory horn or animal horn)</td>
<td>1. &quot;Ndika&quot; or &quot;Oba&quot; (Headed gourd or calabash rattle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. &quot;Okpokoro nna or 'Okpokoro mbe&quot; (Telescopic shell)</td>
<td>2. &quot;Ija&quot; (Anklet or ankle rattle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. &quot;Ogbe&quot; or &quot;Ogba ikpokpo&quot; (Skin drum)</td>
<td>3. &quot;Kwakawu&quot; (Stringed rattle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. &quot;Opi-achara&quot; (Yole bamboo)</td>
<td>4. &quot;Okelo&quot; (Conical clapperless bell)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. &quot;Opi-igwe&quot; or &quot;Ogbe&quot; (Metal shistle)</td>
<td>5. &quot;Udu&quot; (Musical pot or pot drum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. &quot;Ngwir&quot; (Xylophone)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. &quot;Ogbunweta&quot; (Conical bell with hanging metal beater)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. &quot;Ekwe&quot; (Medium size wooden slit drum)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. &quot;Okwa&quot; (Small wooden slit drum)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instruments known by their abstract apppellations

1. "Oke" or "Nkoro" (Large wooden slit drum)
2. "Oja" (Notched flute)

Instruments known by their manner of play

1. "Ubo-aka" (Thumb piano)
Some instruments in Ihitte-Uboma are known and classified according to the manner of play. Incidentally, this class of instruments is not so common in this locality. From my findings, there is only one in this category. It is called "ubo aka" (Thump piano).

Table 3: Curt Sachs and Eric Hornbostel's classification:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>A (Acrophones)</th>
<th>B (Chordophone)</th>
<th>C (Idiophone)</th>
<th>D (Membranophone)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Opi-achara (bamboo flute)</td>
<td>Ubo-akwara (raffia wine)</td>
<td>Okwa (slit wood and flores/large wooden drum) and Ekwu (medium slit wood)</td>
<td>Ogwe (Membrane Drum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Odo (wooden notched flute)</td>
<td>Ogele (clapperless Bell)</td>
<td>Igba-ogologo (long membrance drum)</td>
<td>Igba-muo (spirit drum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Odu (Elephant cow tusk)</td>
<td>Udu (musical pot)</td>
<td>Igba-ogologo (long membrance drum)</td>
<td>Igba-muo (spirit drum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Opi-achara (flute bamboo)</td>
<td>Okpokoro-Nnabe (toroise shell)</td>
<td>Ese and Ukom (sand and stone kettle drum respectively)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Opi-igwe or &quot;Wirulu&quot; (silver metal whistle)</td>
<td>Osha or Ichaka (rattle)</td>
<td>Sm (anklet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Uba (anklet)</td>
<td>Kwanwaka (stipped rattle)</td>
<td>Ngeleoge or Ekwirike (Xylophone)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ngwirika (bell)</td>
<td>Mbiringba (bell)</td>
<td>Mgbirimgba (bell with hanging met Beater)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nkuku (calabash)</td>
<td>Oke (kalabash)</td>
<td>Nkuku (calabash sound/percussion)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 TRADITIONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS KNOWN BY THEIR MANNER OF PLAY
"Ubo-aka" means "hands sounding" instrument. In the Western classification, it is known as the "thumb piano" because it is played with the left and right hand thumbs. "Aka" refers to "hand" while "Ubo" stems from the word "ibo" meaning to stroke, or to scrap, or to scratch. In this regard therefore, to stroke is closer in meaning. "Ubo-aka" is made of relatively tuned pieces of metal prongs of varied sizes, attached to a sound board (which serves as a surface) and housed by a hemispherically-shaped calabash resonator or wood constructed in a square-like shape which amplifies the sounds emitted as the prongs are stroked with the thumbs. These prongs can either be 8 or 10 in number and are arranged pentatonically.

The construction of any type of "Ubo-aka" in Yoruba-Ihitte depends solely on the ensemble group, whose melodies must synchronize with the prongs as arranged. Sometimes, though, an already arranged and constructed "Ubo-aka" (which is bought from instrument sellers or makers) helps the groups to sing as arranged. The prongs are also adjustable to soothe a particular melody.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Instrument</th>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Vocalization</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Odu&quot;</td>
<td>Ivory or animal horn</td>
<td>&quot;Pupu-pupu&quot;</td>
<td>Material-Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Okpokoro make&quot;</td>
<td>Tortoise shell</td>
<td>&quot;Ko ko - ko ko&quot;</td>
<td>Material-Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ogwe&quot;</td>
<td>Skin drum</td>
<td>&quot;Ke kem-ke kem&quot;</td>
<td>Material-Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Opi achara&quot;</td>
<td>Flute bamboo</td>
<td>&quot;Fi-fi fi-fi&quot;</td>
<td>Material-Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Opi iywe&quot; (Wusulu)</td>
<td>Metal shistle</td>
<td>&quot;Pi-pi pi&quot;</td>
<td>Material-Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ichaka&quot; or &quot;Oha&quot;</td>
<td>Calabash Rattle</td>
<td>&quot;Cham-cham&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ija&quot;</td>
<td>Anklet</td>
<td>&quot;Jam-jam&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Kwaka kwaka&quot;</td>
<td>Stringed</td>
<td>&quot;Kwa-kwa&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ugele&quot;</td>
<td>Conical bell</td>
<td>&quot;Gom-gom&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Udu&quot;</td>
<td>Musicalpot</td>
<td>&quot;Dum-dum&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ngelenge&quot;</td>
<td>Xylophone</td>
<td>&quot;Gelen-gelen&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mgbiringba&quot;</td>
<td>Conical bell with hanging Beater (metal church bell)</td>
<td>&quot;Ghangbangamba&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ekwe&quot;</td>
<td>Medium wooden slit drum</td>
<td>&quot;Ko-toko-to&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Okwa&quot;</td>
<td>Small wooden slit drum</td>
<td>&quot;Ka-ka-ka&quot;</td>
<td>Onomatophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Kuka&quot;</td>
<td>Calabash horn</td>
<td>&quot;Ku-ku-ku&quot;</td>
<td>Utuliphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Achara&quot;</td>
<td>Bamboo</td>
<td>&quot;Kwe-kwe&quot;</td>
<td>Utuliphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Udu-emiri&quot;</td>
<td>Water pot</td>
<td>&quot;Du-du-du&quot;</td>
<td>Utuliphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ikoro&quot;</td>
<td>Large wooden slit drum</td>
<td>&quot;Koro-Koro&quot;</td>
<td>Abstractophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Oja&quot;</td>
<td>Notched flute</td>
<td>&quot;Pirom-pirom&quot;</td>
<td>Abstractophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ubo-aka&quot;</td>
<td>Thumb piano</td>
<td>&quot;Kpi-kpm kpom&quot;</td>
<td>Mannerphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL NAMES</td>
<td>ENGLISH NAMES</td>
<td>MATERIALS USED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Odu&quot;</td>
<td>Horn</td>
<td>Ivory and cow horns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Okpokororo Nnabe&quot;</td>
<td>Tortoiseshell</td>
<td>Tortoise shell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ogwe&quot;</td>
<td>Drum</td>
<td>Deer skin and Coconut trunk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Opiscara&quot;</td>
<td>Bamboo flute</td>
<td>Bamboo (soft)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Opigwe or wisulu&quot;</td>
<td>Metal whistle</td>
<td>Steel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ichaka&quot;</td>
<td>Rattle</td>
<td>Dry calabash and beads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ig&quot;</td>
<td>Anklet</td>
<td>Raffia leaves and beads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Kwaka kwaka&quot;</td>
<td>Rattle</td>
<td>Strings and seed shells</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ogele or Ogene&quot;</td>
<td>Bell or gong</td>
<td>Metal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Udu&quot;</td>
<td>Musical pot</td>
<td>Clay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ngelenge&quot;</td>
<td>Xylophone</td>
<td>Ufie or ube tree slabs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mgbirimba&quot;</td>
<td>Bell (with hanging beater)</td>
<td>Cast iron.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ekwe&quot;</td>
<td>Medium slit drum</td>
<td>Wood (ufie).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Okwa&quot;</td>
<td>Small slit drum</td>
<td>Wood (Ubie or (Ube).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Nkuku&quot;</td>
<td>Horn or &quot;cup&quot;</td>
<td>Calabash neck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Achara&quot;</td>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>Bamboo (hard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Udu mmiri&quot;</td>
<td>Water or musical Pot</td>
<td>Clay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ikorro&quot;</td>
<td>Large wooden drum</td>
<td>Wood (Ubie)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Oja&quot;</td>
<td>Notched flute</td>
<td>Ube (pear) tree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubo-aka</td>
<td>Thumb piano</td>
<td>Calabash, soft wood and metal or zinc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Some types of trees found in Ihitte-Ubauma/Instruments they are constructed with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BOTANICAL NAME</th>
<th>INSTRUMENTS (THE WOOD IS USED FOR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Akibeke</td>
<td>Cocos Nucifera</td>
<td>Drum trunks or resonators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Achi</td>
<td>Brachystegia</td>
<td>Small and medium slit drum and beaters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ugha</td>
<td>Pentaclethra macrophylla</td>
<td>Xylophone slabs and drum sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ube</td>
<td>Dacryodes edulis</td>
<td>Flutes, drum trunks (Resonators) and slit drum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Ube agba</td>
<td>Canarium Schweinfurthi</td>
<td>Slabs, beaters and stand (for drums) and wooden slit drums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Uhie</td>
<td>Pterocarpus osun</td>
<td>Slit wooden drums and xylophone slabs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ngwo</td>
<td>Raffia hookeri</td>
<td>Twines or chords and drum trunks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Nkwo</td>
<td>Elaeis guineensis</td>
<td>Mallets for tuning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Icheku</td>
<td>Dialium guineense</td>
<td>Slit wood, beaters or drum sticks and tuning pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Oji</td>
<td>Chlorophora excelsa</td>
<td>Large wooden slit drum, instrument stands and pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ofo</td>
<td>Detarium microcarpum</td>
<td>Drum trunks (Resonators) and slit beaters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ogbono</td>
<td>Irvingia gabonensis</td>
<td>Beaters and tuning pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Ntunkpa</td>
<td>Pierocarpus santalinoides</td>
<td>Mallets for tuning and beaters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Ubere</td>
<td>Musa Specie</td>
<td>Xylophone resonators (Slabs are placed on top)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Uru</td>
<td>Musanga cecropiodes</td>
<td>Xylophone slabs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY

It is important to note, from this study, that language plays a great role in the naming and classification of musical instruments of a particular culture. Users of musical instruments simulate the kinds of sounds made by their instruments through vocal interpretations. In Table 4, one would easily observe the characteristic sounds of instruments by trying to imitate the sounds produced by any instruments, as represented by particular speech tones. These instruments, as enumerated in Chapter 4, possess sounds and could be related as either metallic or non-metallic. With the explanation of various digraphs, ideographs and morphones, the sounds of the proper names of instruments can be easily pronounced.

The need for explaining clearly the cognitive principles in the formulation of folk terminology for the naming of musical instruments found in the instrumental resources of the people of Ihitte-Uboma, can not be over-emphasized. These principles as enumerated in Chapter 3, are necessary, so as to make the reader understand the tonal reflections of the language of the culture. The mnemonics, ellipses and other words that are loaned from other languages outside Igbo, help in understanding the depth of the meanings of words, as used in this locality.

Chapter four deals particularly with the basic principles in the naming of musical instruments in Ihitte-Uboma. I have tried to ascribe one word, which I have suggested, as a binding word to each of the five basic principles. For example:
1. "Materiaphone" - Which refers to traditional musical instruments identified according to the materials from which they are made.

2. "Onomatophone" - Traditional musical instruments identified according to their names.

3. "Utiliphone" - Musical instruments identified by their utilitarian associations.


5. "Mannerphone" - Traditional musical instruments known by their manner of play.

These five classifications result from my observations and findings in the instrumental resources in my locality, in fact, from a culture-owners assessment - which is a model to any other African culture. This is subject to future research by scholars, ethnomusicologists and organologists.

CONCLUSION

Many ethnomusicologists and organologists world-wide, have always tried to classify African musical instruments in line with Curt Sachs and Eric Von Hornbostel's classificatory system. But they seem to overlook the fact that, in as much as one should commend the good works done by these personalities, it must be noted that, that system may not have solved all the classification problems of traditional musical instruments in the African continent. It is worthy to note that this classification may have arisen from a museum research, which buttressed the reasoning that they have only taken into cognizance the acoustical properties of the instruments they saw. It therefore goes to prove that culture-owners (Emics) are challenged to give a more folk consideration in the classification of the musical instruments found in their various localities, so that we (Africans) may arrive at an agreeable and holistic classificatory system. The taxonomy,
of Igbo musical instruments based on the instrumental resources of Ihitte-Uboma is only but a case study, which should be able to guide future researchers in a more indepth study of traditional musical instruments in the African continent.

In this thesis, I have tried to discuss the taxonomy of the instruments found in Ihitte-Uboma, as well as to classify these instruments according to what obtains. Taxonomically, I have enumerated the instruments in sets as they are found, and classificatorily, I have tried to group these instruments according to the class each instrument belongs. The need to streamline these facts this way arose from the emphasis on the importance of a "fold view" (Merriam 1964) and Nzewi (1991).

It is important to note that the people of Ihitte-Uboma have a classificatory system. They have the conviction that certain instruments belong to certain specific group, as classified in this thesis. It is basically known worldwide today, according to history, that there are three basic systems of "folk classification" of musical instruments studied in organology. These include:

1. The ancient Chinese system,
2. The Indian system, and
3. The European system.

There are, though, other classificatory systems by some other African scholars as mentioned in this thesis, which are used, but are yet to be accepted in its totality. This research work, which is aimed at contributing some knowledge in the classification of African instruments could be looked into, as another folk classificatory system of
African musical instruments. It is hoped that this organological study, therefore, will go a long way, as a model (amongst others) in the taxonomical study of the instrumental resources of other areas in Africa.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


