The Socio Religious Significance of Edi Festival Song in Controlling Marital Infidelity in Traditional Marriage Institution in Orígbó Meje, QSun State Nigeria

By Olusegun Peter Oke

University of Ibadan

Abstract- From the time immemorial, marital infidelity has seriously impacted on the sustainability of family structure and peaceful co-existence among families in Yoruba land in particular and Nigeria in general. Since family is considered as the basic unit of the society and whatever happens at the family level has a favourable or an adverse effect on the society. Therefore, a morally strong family setting is a morally strong society. Existing studies on marital infidelity, its attendant consequences and control have to a large extent been restricted to legal, dramatic, literary and modern conflict resolution methods with little reference to the use of Edi festival song as an important method of controlling this deviant behaviour in traditional marriage institution in the entire discourse. Some of the methods of controlling deviant behaviour mentioned above are geared towards using various contemporary approaches to address issue of marital infidelity associated with traditional marriage institution in the society. The methods employed in carrying out this research are the interview and the Focus Group Discussion.

Keywords: religious significance, edi festival song, marital infidelity, traditional marriage institution, orígbó meje.

GJHSS-A Classification: FOR Code: 220499

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

© 2018. Olusegun Peter Oke. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.
The Socio Religious Significance of Edi Festival Song in Controlling Marital Infidelity in Traditional Marriage Institution in Ořígbó Meje, Ọṣun State Nigeria

Olusegun Peter Oke

Abstract- From the time immemorial, marital infidelity has seriously impacted on the sustainability of family structure and peaceful co-existence among families in Yoruba land in particular and Nigeria in general. Since family is considered as the basic unit of the society and whatever happens at the family level has a favourable or an adverse effect on the society. Therefore, a morally strong family setting is a morally strong society. Existing studies on marital infidelity, its attendant consequences and control have to a large extent been restricted to legal, dramatic, literary and modern conflict resolution methods with little reference to the use of Edi festival song as an important method of controlling this deviant behaviour in traditional marriage institution in the entire discourse. Some of the methods of controlling deviant behaviour mentioned above are geared towards using various contemporary approaches to address issue of marital infidelity associated with traditional marriage institution in the society. The methods employed in carrying out this research are the interview and the Focus Group Discussion. Our findings revealed how those with deviant behaviour of marital infidelity were exposed and dealt with in songs laced with satire. While some fled the communities out of shame, others were made to pay fines and promised not to commit such anti-social act again. Recommendations will be offered on the need for stakeholders in traditional marriage institution to be alert to their responsibilities and how such festival songs can be incorporated into the modern methods of controlling marital infidelity in order to enhance a morally stable family structure which will translate to a peaceful and a crime free society.

Keywords: religious significance, Edi festival song, marital infidelity, traditional marriage institution, Ořígbó Meje.

I. Introduction

In Yoruba societies, marriage constitutes an essential step towards family formation. Under normal circumstances, persons cannot have kinsmen unless in the context of family membership or descent from a common ancestor or ancestress as the case may be or unless such a relationship is socially approved and recognised. Among the Yoruba people, celibacy was not allowed because such act is conceived as a way of bringing to an end, the clan or lineage of the affected person. It is the belief of the Yoruba people that there can never be a successful and productive life until an individual marries and have children. Therefore, all over Yoruba land, Ořígbó Meje inclusive, the issue of marriage is very important regardless of varying socio-cultural practices associated with it in various places. This is encapsulated in Ifá literature Qṣẹtura (Qṣẹ plus Otua) as quoted by Olusola Ajibade that:

Aǐnláyówọ kọ sè dákè, bì’a bá dákè lásán ènu ní ìyọ̩n Níní èjọ̀, aìnì èràn, ẹñiyan tì o bá ọdúnfin
Ọ tó kàwọ̀ lórí kò sunkún gboja ọ̀jọ̀, kíí se èràn àṣẹju Ọràn àṣẹdá sí kọ
A man cannot just keep quiet without a wife, keeping quiet about it only results to troubles, having a wife is as knotty as having none, A man that has no wife, is worth weeping and crying in the market square. It is neither an extreme action, nor an excessive reaction."

As a result of this, Yoruba people set out some norms guiding the activities of all the stakeholders in traditional marriage institution. The setting up of these norms is expedient because anti-social behaviours have a universal human experience. Its origin and nature are best explained within the framework of human nature and the environment in which they live. The essence of norms in traditional marriage institutions therefore is to adjust claims, right the wrongs and prevent good relationships from being broken. Some of those norms that we can identify in traditional marriage institution in Ořígbó Méje as we have them in other communities in Yoruba land include fidelity in marriage, conjugal rights, role responsibility, tolerance among co-wives and so on. In other words, the norms are set out to enhance a peaceful co-existence among stakeholders in traditional marriage institutions.

As good as these norms are, some of them have suffered serious setbacks because of deviant behavior of marital infidelity that characterized the institution. The setbacks faced by these norms could be blamed on the incursion of western civilisation into Nigeria. Hence, efforts are being made in different quarters to address the issue. Such efforts in the
traditional society were the use of songs to inculcate morality and to control deviant behaviours in the society. One of such methods is the use of Edi festival song. Edi song as means of deviant control worked in the past effectively, particularly in Òrìgbò Mèje, where those involved in vices were exposed through songs and given necessary punishments they deserved.

In spite of various initiatives and programmers of government at various levels, (local, state and federal), little has been achieved in the area of controlling deviant behaviors associated with traditional marriage institutions. The reasons for the inability of these agencies to stem the tide of deviant behaviour of marital infidelity are not far-fetched. The methods, processes and strategies employed are garbed in modern ways, which are at variance with the culture and norm of the people of Òrìgbò Mèje. This work therefore, examines the use of Edi festival song in controlling deviant behaviour marital infidelity in traditional marriage institution in Òrìgbò Mèje.

Edi festival song as a form of literary art, is one of the most powerful tools used to sanction non-conformists in traditional marriage institution in Òrìgbò communities. Those who violate marital norms are punished accordingly to serve as deterrent to others and to enhance peaceful co-existence in the society. What has been observed in the contemporary Nigerian society is a serious upheaval in terms of anti-social practices manifesting in sexual immorality, infidelity and so on, which seem to have become the norm. The incorporation of Edi festival song to the modern methods will go a long way in the control of marital infidelity in traditional marriage institution in Òrìgbò Mèje in particular and other communities in general.

a) Brief Information about Òrìgbò Mèje

There are seven towns that make up Òrìgbò-Mèje. The towns came into existence simultaneously. Ìpetumodù, which is regarded as the biggest and also the headquarters of the Local Government, is reliably gathered to have been as old as Ife which is regarded as the cradle of the Yorùbá. The town was founded by Akalákọ, co-warrior of Òrunmílà and Odudùwa. He settled at the present site of Ìpetumodù having conquered the former occupants of the land. Akaláko settled on the land for the purpose of hunting and farming. The name of Ìpetumodù was coined from Àpà-Etu-Bo-Ódù (He that kills Antelope for sacrifice) . Èdún Àbòn was founded in the 15th Century A.D. by Akinjọle who came from ̀lè- ̀Ifẹ. He settled in their present land in the year when palm trees bore fruits but remained green or never ripe for any consumption. Thus, we hear” “Èdùn Àbòn” (The year when palm trees suffered from unripe fruits). Mòrò was founded long ago by Láábù who came from ìfọ̀n- ̀Q̣sùn in the present Orólù Local Government. He pitched his tent beside one Oro tree (African wild Mango) near the present site of Q̣bạfèmì Awòlòwọ University (OAU). Later, he was met by an Ife prince. He humbly invited the prince to head his settlement, but the prince regarded such an offer as degrading and voluntarily gave the Obaship to Láábù. Later, the frequent troubles of Ugbo Raiders made them to quit that site for the present site. Today, the descendents of Láábù rule Mòrò town.

Historically, the city of Yákojó was founded by Òrúnlámòkún in 1700A.D. At first, he named his town IWARA but later the well-fed, well-helped and humanely treated passers-by changed the name to YA-KI-O-WAYO (You passers-by, call and eat your fill). Laamokun had a wife called Tadeyo who had only a male child called AJIBEWE. Ajibewe had seven children who populated the town and now rule in turn. Asipa, another town in Òrìgbò was founded long ago by Fasina who came from Asipa’s compound in Oyo town. He initially settled at Fasina near Ile-Ifa before moving to his present site. Asipa in Oyo town still comes next to Aláafín of Òryọ. Àkinlálú was jointly founded by Ìpetumodù and Modakeke. Àkinlálú came from Eleye’s compound in Ìpetumodù from Sangotayo’s side. Àkinlálú was an ancestor of Sangotayo. Ìdowu Labala came from Modakeke due to family conflict and he was looking for a virgin land to practice agriculture as well as hunting. He was a follower of Ògùnìmòlù and fought alongside him in many battles.

b) Edi Festival song in Ife and Òrìgbò Mèje

Among the many festive occasions that characterise Òrìgbò Mèje’s rich calendar of events, Edi festival, is one of the most important and popular. Almost every festival is based on a particular occasion or circumstance. Historically, the celebration of Edi festival originated in an event dating from what is commonly acknowledged to be an early phase of Yorùbá history, a period in which a group of newcomers led by Odudua settled in Ile Ife. It recalls the difficulties the new settlers had with the previous inhabitants of the area, the Ugbo, who despite being forced into the nearby forest tried to regain control. In order to do so, the Ugbo raided Ife with calculated persistence. They disturbed the town, disguised in raffia costumes and wearing face-masks. Mọrọ, who, in order to put an end to this climate of oppression, was ready to risk her life, and ultimately, sacrificed her only son, known by different names, such as Èlà/Ìlùòrògbọ. Because of her courage and heroism, the warfare between the two factions ceased and possibly resulted in reconciliation, thus establishing Òránmọ́yànyà as the “father” of all Oyo’s or Yorùbá proper, and the universal conqueror of the land.

Accordingly, she volunteered to discover the secret behind the terrifying beings, whose unearthly sight rendered the Ife people incapable of offering any resistance. To ensure her plan’s success, she made a vow to the deity of Esinmirin River, promising that she
would sacrifice anything she could afford if the deity would assist her in carrying out her plans. And so it happened. Because of her beauty, she was enslaved and given to the king. Soon, however, she won his trust and confidence, and became his wife. Once there, she revealed the secret and taught her people how to defend themselves, and eventually freeing her country.

The victory was marked by the due public recognition of Mọrẹmí’s heroic deed. After that, she went to the stream to fulfill her vow, but her reported offerings did not satisfy the divinity, who, instead, required the sacrifice of Mọrẹmí’s only son. Grief-stricken, she finally complied with the request, and Olúorogbo was offered as sacrifice, ascending by rope to the other world. In recognition of Mọrẹmí’s loss and sacrifice, the Ifé people promised to be her sons and daughters. It is in commemoration of Mọrẹmí, heroic exploits, that the people of Ifé celebrate the Edi festival.

Edi festival got to Òrífọbọ-Mẹjẹ generally through 1petumodu. Òrífọbọ-Mẹjẹ as jointly called comprises seven communities. These communities are Akínlálú, Àshìpa, 1petumodu, Iṣọpe, Yákoyó, Móro and Ẹdún Aboún. Edi festival in 1petumodu came through a barren woman who eventually became a mother after she had consulted an Ifa oracle who then directed her to go and offer sacrifice to Mọrẹmí in Ilé- Ịle if she wanted to have a child. She did it with a vow and she eventually got a child and she, as a result of this, became a worshipper of Mọrẹmí Ajásořó. The woman then decided to make it one of the festivals in 1petumodu and it later spread to other communities in Òrífọbọ-Mẹjẹ.

The period of Edi festival is also viewed as a period of cleansing the society of deviant or anti-social behaviours. For example, there is the custom of “blocking” the door steps of thieves, adulterers, wife beaters, house-wives rivals and the habit of ridiculing those that exhibit deviant behaviours. These customs help the town to deal decisively with such negative habits during the festive period. Those who represent a norm, are the major groups that exposed the misdeeds of others. However, other groups did not initiate the singing, but reported any individual who committed any deviant behaviour to the Edi’ group. Sanctions are made visible and the festival helps in this way to build a deterrent to deviant behaviour, implicitly enhancing the values of those good behaviours already considered as norms in the society.

II. Concept of Deviant Behaviours in Traditional Marriage Institution

Deviant behaviours are recognised as violation of cultural norms. Norms guide virtually all human activities, so the concept of deviance is quite broad. Norms are rules and expectations by which members of the society are conventionally guided. Deviance is an absence of conformity to these norms. Social norms differ from culture to culture. For example, a deviant act can be committed in one society that breaks a social norm there, but may be normal for another society.

Sociologists describe deviant behaviours as violations of social norms. That is, any thought, feeling, or action that members of a social group judge to be a violation of their values or rules ‘or group’ conduct, that violates definitions of appropriate and inappropriate conduct shared by the members of a social group or the violation of certain types of group norms, where behaviours is in a disapproval direction and of sufficient degree to exceed the tolerance limit of the community. Moreover, deviant behaviours are actions which do not adhere to widely accepted social or cultural norms. Deviance can be viewed from psychological, biological and sociological perspectives.

Human beings are social in nature. They hardly live in isolation but prefer to live and interact with one another. The urge to interact creates some challenges, which need to be addressed. Therefore, in order to achieve development, norms are developed to guide human interactions. One of such norms, which promotes and discourages deviant behaviours, is positive interpersonal relationship. However, Interpersonal relationship in traditional marriage institution in Òrífọbọ Méjẹ is being threatened by deviant behaviour of marital infidelity which has become a source of worry and concern to everybody.

In this work, therefore, effort is made to consider the deviant behaviour of marital infidelity that is threatening the survival of family stability in traditional marriage institution in Òrífọbọ Méjẹ.

a) Marital Infidelity

Marital infidelity is unfaithfulness on the part of a man or a woman having sexual affair with another man or woman other than his/her own man/woman. This is very common in Òrífọbọ Méjẹ and anybody who gets involves in this is referred to as alágbèrè (an adulterer). Àlé ṣiyàni or Òrè ṣiyàni as it is called in these communities usually involved two consenting married adults who have already married but still engage in romantic relationships, or friendships, or passionate attachment with other partners other than their marriage partners. The norm which this deviant behavior violates is the norm of fidelity in marriage for partners in marriage. It is expected that when husband and wife/wives are together in marriage, they should remain faithful and should not engage in any sexual activity outside marriage. This is because in extra marital affair, two parties are involved, the man and the woman. When a man engages in sexual relationship with a woman outside marriage, he is mocked and ridiculed by the people in the communities. Such a person is seen as a...
worthless person (Eni yeyẹ, Eni abụkụ). Marital infidelity passes for deviant behaviour since it goes against what is expected of married people. In Ořígbo Méje communities, there is great respect for married people as long as they remain faithful to their partners. But any action of marital infidelity is greatly frowned at as such is considered an anti-social.

As discussed above, in Yorùbá traditional society, a man is allowed by custom to marry more than one wife and any sexual affair among the wives is accepted so far they are his wives. But, any sexual activities outside the married wives are considered as (Alé yýán) extramarital affair. This is not peculiar to only men in the traditional Yorùbá society, women also engage in sexual relationship outside marriage. The phenomenon of levirate marriage is not considered as an extra marital affair. This is because the death of a man does not release his widow from her marriage obligation, but renders her liable to be inherited (through the system of levirate) by any member of his extended family and sometimes even by the son of his sister. This is done in order not to put an end to the lineage of the family and sometimes even by the son of his sister. This does not amount to concubination or adultery. Societal values permit sexual activities only between man and woman in a marriage relationship thus the Yoruba adage, ‘A kiri mopọ ẹni kí à tun mopọ alé ẹni’ meaning, “When one accepts the husband of a child, it is a taboo to also accept the concubine”. Therefore, engaging in extra marital affairs certainly goes against these marital norms. The reason for engaging in this deviant behaviour however varies from one society to another. The members of various genders seem to have various issues that encourage them to try out extra marital affairs despite maintaining marriages. Many in Ořígbo communities engage in extra marital affairs because such affairs are a source of reassurance of their desirability. Some want better sex while others feel that it is worthwhile having a change of routine or having a variety of sex. The reasons many of those engaging in extra marital affairs give for participating in extra marital sex is for emotional satisfaction. But, whatever the reason adduced by anybody as far as it goes against the norm of the society, it is a deviant behaviour.

In Ořígbo Méje, like in other cities and towns, people frown at infidelity. They express this by saying, Ojú kan ni adá rí, adá tó bá lójú méjí ti d’óbe. A cutlass has only one edge, any cutlass with two edges has turned to a knife. Wives are to be loyal and faithful to their husbands. Anything short of this is interpreted as violation of marriage morality. A woman who violates this ethics is not only condemned privately, but the Edi singers sing about his/ her misdeed publicly to teach others a lesson.

This is why Adewale states that in Yorùbá societies, the kinship structure of the society makes extra marital affairs a crime not only against the husband as an individual but also against those corporate bodies with whom the husband is related. Such an adulterous man or woman usually brings shame and dishonour to the entire family (Aláí ri tíjú ágbálagbá, O kó tíjú atí abụkụ bá ẹbí). Another Yorùbá saying is to the effect that of alé (alá) yóò pa ara rẹ. Meaning that an adulterous woman will either kill herself or her husband.

In Yoruba land and Ořígbo Méje in particular, extra marital affair breaches societal norms as it breeds an unhealthy and unwholesome relationship in society. People look down on such an individual as reckless and indecent (A ba ni lójú jẹ, aláí lójú ti, aki ndanidári ágbálagbá). This is because the entire family share in the shame and the ridicule (Aki pé’rí ajá, kí á mā pé’rí ikokó ti a fi sèd). Also, the whole communities see an adulterer (of alé) and his family members as not receiving the necessary training which will make him or her to conform to the norms of the society.

It is also a known fact that in Ořígbo communities, sexual relation is expected to be decently conducted with the rightful person (husband and wife/wives) and at the rightful place. What we can see here is that sex should be an affair of married people (Ojú kan l’adá rí, adá tó bá lójú méjí ti d’óbe). In other words, it is their exclusive prerogative. Anything contrary to this is considered anti-social. Sanctions are awarded to anybody that deviates from this marriage norm in the society.

Between husband and wife, faithfulness in marital relationship is a cherished virtue. In other words, extra marital sexual affair is detested. Mbiti made this assertion when he says:

When adultery is discovered it is severely dealt with: in some societies the guilty person (particularly a man) would be whipped, stoned to death, made to pay compensation or have his head or part of his body mutilated.

How Edi ‘Festival Song Controlled Deviant Behaviour of Marital infidelity

Edi festival song has been used extensively to order the behavior of people. As we have Edi song in Ořígbo Meje, so also we have it in many other towns and communities in Nigeria and other countries in Africa with different nomenclatures. For instance, in many African countries, it is a medium through which the individual or society expresses its most heart-felt feelings. A number of these songs make use of satire where satirists express their complaints or grievances against certain actions committed by individuals in the community. Edi song in particular stirs up emotions against abnormal behaviours or attitudes and arouses mass reaction against non-conformists practice. Generally, in the ancient times, there were neither written laws, nor prisons for the punishment of law breakers.
People were expected to respect the rights of other individuals in the society. They were expected to conduct themselves in a way that would promote peace and brotherhood. Those who did not and those who committed major crimes faced automatic physical torture, ranging from ostracism to ritual execution. Minor offences – adultery, liars, domineering housewives and lazy husbands - were all singled out for attack in songs. In primitive society, therefore, songs laced with satire were a manner of ridiculing, decrying and denouncing the unwanted behaviour of people in a bid to improve and amend their lives in the community. In the contemporary times, Edi festival song is still being used as a weapon to influence people’s conduct in the society. The Edi singers, professional groups and individuals compose songs alluding to complaints about neighbours, relatives, husbands, corrupt men and rulers in the society.

Whenever any case of anyone committing extra marital affairs is brought to the notice of the Edi choral group, they make efforts to carry out an independent investigation on the matter. They did not only rely on the information brought to them by their Okunrin ilé, Obinrin ilé or Òmọ ilé, but also do a thorough finding to establish the veracity of the allegation. When it is established that the man or the woman in question committed the said offence, they wait until Edi festival to ridicule the person or persons in song. On the Edi festival day, the Edi choral group joined by other Okunrin ilé, Obinrin ilé, Òmọ ilé and the general public begin the ridicule of their victim by singing songs to create awareness that certain information has been received by their group on a deviant act of an individual in the community. This is called Ikó Edi.

They sing songs to create awareness round the town. This is done to inform the members of the public to hear what certain individual has done. Most of the times, they may not mention the name of the individual, but songs are used to describe the person. This is because they would give a vivid description of their victims’ identity, where he lives, what really happened, where it happened and how the action was committed. Often times, the victim must have taken to his/her heel before the Edi festival group reached the victim’s house. Usually, the victim begged for forgiveness and promised never to engage in such bad conduct again.

This is how the Edi choral group creates awareness

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Won ní ò mọ wi hùn hùn hùn} & \quad \text{They forbid us say it} \\
\text{Awa ò wi hùn hùn hùn} & \quad \text{We shall say it} \\
\text{Oba ò wì hùn hùn hùn} & \quad \text{The king wants I said} \\
\text{Awa ò wì hùn hùn hùn} & \quad \text{We shall say it} \\
\text{Another song goes like this:} & \\
\text{Okè yì ìnì òfàlè} & \quad \text{That is where the adulterer lives} \\
\text{Okè yì ìnì òsèwò} & \quad \text{That is where the adulterer lives} \\
\text{Okè yì ìnì òyà ńlè} &
\end{align*}
\]

After this awareness has been created by the Edi choral group and enough members of the public had followed them, they go straight to the house of their victim. They go with different types of things anybody could lay his/her hands on, ranging from stones, stick, grasses, leaves, cans and so on. Edi festival song is an age long custom employed to sing abusive songs in front of the house of anybody known to have stolen, committed adultery, engaged in house wives rivalry or who has not been responsible during the year. The action is taken by a great multitude of crowd running up and down in the streets, singing and shouting vociferously the names of the offender and his parents (Bí a bá phọ̀ Ajá, a ó pe ofí ọkókó tì a fi sè è. Ṇìí bí ọmọ óràn ní ọpọ̀ ọpọ̀). This further implies that anyone who has given birth to a deviant child will also share in the consequences of his/her behaviour.

The running crowd would then converge in hundreds or two sets and deposit grass and rubbish of all kinds at the front door of the house of the culprit. In the olden days, when houses were built of thatch, the crowd would pull out low portions of the roof and carry them away in running procession, saying loudly that they demolished the house of so and so (Ati bìlè ìsìwò lùìlù ìnàgù òkọ̀). Thus, it served as deterrent to others. In any of these activities, they sing songs of different types. Examples of such songs that were used to ridicule those that engaged in extra marital affairs are:

\[
\text{Bí ènìyàn ó mu Qójún à mu} \quad \text{If man does not catch;} \\
\text{God is there to catch him} \\
\text{Obinrin tọ tì ilé ńlè dè tọ ni gbọ́jọ́ ńlù́jú} \quad \text{A woman who came from her concubine’s house and engaged in exchange of blow against her husband.} \\
\text{Another one says:} \\
\text{27 Interview with Chief Adebisi Adegoke of Oke Ola Street Akinlalu, Aged 82 years. 13 February, 2013.} \\
\text{Ojú kal l'ádá á ní Cutlass has only one sharp edge} \\
\text{Eyi jẹ kọjọkọjọ ẹ́ má a gbọ́} \quad \text{Listen you adulteress.} \\
\text{Why adultery?} \\
\text{Agbééré sise ti jẹ́ It is not a good act, please desist from it.} \\
\text{This is yet another song:} \\
\text{Wọ́n ní ò mọ wì hùn hùn hùn They forbid us to say it} \\
\text{Awa ò wì hùn hùn hùn We shall say it} \\
\text{Oba ò wì hùn hùn hùn The king wants I said} \\
\text{Awa ò wì hùn hùn hùn We shall say it} \\
\text{Another song goes like this:} \\
\text{Okè yì ìnì òfàlè} \quad \text{That is where the adulterer lives} \\
\text{Okè yì ìnì òsèwò} \quad \text{That is where the adulterer lives} \\
\text{Okè yì ìnì òyà ńlè} \\
\]

Abikélọ́là yàn alé ó d'ogùn x2 Labake daughter engaged in extra marital affair and became a problem
Abikélọ́là éléšé 1ṣẹ́bále Abikelola with legs like broom sticks
Onlpékeré Ebi dì lè pa’ya tò n d'òkọ An adulterous woman selling plantain chips cannot be hungry O f’ọtún gbèwọ, O fowọ dšì f’akọ mọra She collected money with her right hand and Used the left to draw man’s manhood to herself Onlpékeré Ebi dì lè pa’ya tò n d’òkọ An adulterous woman selling plantain chips cannot be hungry ìyà a f’ìdì gba légèdè The woman that uses her body to collect vegetable Pàdè mi làkùrọ o Meet me at the riverside ìyà a f’ìdì gba légèdè The woman that uses her body to collect vegetable Pàdè mi làkùrọ o Meet me at the riverside

This first song here, according to the focused group discussion we had with Baa, Okùnrí Ilè and Obniní Ilè, revealed the incident of marital infidelity involving a woman and a man which resulted in an illegitimate male child. The husband did not know until three days after the naming ceremony when the Edi group sang against her action. The shame on the part of the husband led him to divorce the woman. The woman did not know until three days after the naming ceremony when the Edi group sang against her action. The husband did not know until three days after the naming ceremony when the Edi group sang against her action. The shame on the part of the husband led him to divorce the woman. The woman fled the town because of the shame. But the concubine was encouraged by his friends to beg the group. The pleading could not stop them from composing the song above.

In Ořigbò Méje, according to a staunch member of the Edi choral group named Sarifatu, it was very rare for them to sing against an action not committed by an individual. This is why they did serious investigation and got facts before they came out to sing against such action that was against the norm of the society. The woman caught in the act made matters worse by trying to bribe one of the members who reported her to the group. She thought they would not sing against her action. The ìlògún (Male counterpart singers) compiled the names of those who had committed one form of deviant act or the other by any individual most especially as related to marital infidelity and handed it over to the leader of the Edi I group. Therefore, the ìlògùn served as a watchdog and any attempt made by the Edi group to sweep any matter under the carpet, would be vehemently resisted by the ìlògún. As a result of resilience Edi group, cases of adultery were highly reduced. This was because people were cautious of their actions as Edi choral group were no respecter of anybody. The common slang among the people then was, Mà fidi ẹ bà mí lórùkọ je, jẹ́jẹ́ mi ni mo jódọkọ mi, meaning, Don’t use your buttocks to dent my image. This slang showed how people became wary of their actions. The songs above were used to control deviant behaviours of marital infidelity in Ořigbò Méje. However, numbers of Edi singers has dwindled due to threat to lives, fear of litigation and the influence of Christianity and Islam.

What the researcher observed in the course of this research was that in the contemporary time, it can be said that the high level of moral decadence in Ořigbò Méje has made the Edi song to be seen as primitive culture to the youth of nowadays. They don’t see anything really bad in engaging in sexual activities before marriage or extra marital relationship any longer. The watching of pornographic sites on phones, fraud, yahoo yahoo and listening to contemporary songs make it practically difficult for Edi singers to really make a serious impact on the lives of the youth that constitute the majority of the populace. It is only the elderly ones
that appreciate the Edi song, that are clamoring for its re-introduction because of the impact it has over the years made and its capacity to reduce the high level of moral laxity in our society.

It is equally important to look at the moral dimension of Edi festival song. We believe that the society cannot see itself degenerating into rubbish by allowing people who behave immorally to go unpunished, either physically or psychologically. The society by virtue of its existence, is duty bond to preserve, nurse and nurture its moral standards (through a channel like Edi song) or through other available means. Without this, the society will be a difficult place to live. The researcher therefore infer that in spite of the influence of modernity and missionary religions Edi festival songs are still relevant in enforcing moral consciousness in Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje communities.

III. Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is evidently clear that the various deviant behaviour of marital infidelity that has become an household name in Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje in particular and Nigeria in the recent time all came due to the neglect of Edi festival song. If these songs were revisited with little modifications introduced to it, many cases of deviant behaviours associated with traditional marriage institution in Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje will be highly minimized. This is because people will be conscious of their actions and will refrain from any act that will tarnish their image and that of their family. It is also obvious that Edi festival song phenomenon will remain a relevant agent of social control especially on issues related to marital infidelity in Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje, Osun State, and globalisation of culture notwithstanding. However, here are some recommendations that would further enhance the rejuvenation of Edi festival song in Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje.

The findings from the above show that Edi song, though an ancient socio-cultural practice among the Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje communities in Osun State, its ability to control social misbehavior like marital infidelity among others is commendable. From this, we can infer that this study has widened the horizons of Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje communities and Nigerians in general on the traditional ways of solving problems that are peculiar to traditional marriage institution. The contribution, which this study has made to scholarship, is that the singing of Edi festival songs which was satirical in nature would help in no small measure to prevent deviant behaviour in traditional marriage institution. The study will also go a long way in preventing the high cost of money spent on litigation in the court of law when divorce petitions are filed. Also, on many occasions, cases taken to court do not end in reconciliation but separation. However, in the traditional marriage institution, traditional measures taken concerning Edi festival song was to settle misunderstanding and punish offenders thereby bringing sanity to the society.

This work has also emphasised the fact that Edi festival song is a powerful tool in controlling deviant behaviours, though it is much more powerful in the traditional Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje communities than in the more developed Òrìgbọ̀ Mèje communities as we have it now.

Reccommendatio.

To ensure the rejuvenation and survival of Edi festival song, the following measures are recommended. The songs, as they were sung in the past, should be recorded and preserved on magnetic tapes. Older and surviving members of the group should be consulted and made to sing the songs. The danger in not preserving the song is that, the young generation, may not know the content and the context of those songs any longer.

In enhancing the rejuvenation of Edi festival song, an annual special award event should be instituted where those with good behaviour are rewarded in cash or by other things that would boost their self-esteem. Families who exhibit good characters towards one another should be rewarded too. This idea of gift to those in the community with good behaviour could be done on the town day of such community. For instance, on Ìpetumudù day, which is a gathering of all and sundry? This will boost their morale and serve as a lesson to others to always be of good conduct wherever they find themselves.

The study also recommends that the traditional rulers in various communities and towns should not allow this cherished culture to go into oblivion. This can be done by inviting the older members as well as surviving members of the Edi group to perform at different occasions in the palace. This will encourage the younger ones who are the tomorrow of today to learn one or two things when the songs are being sung by the members of the group. The young ones may not really have the interest, since they only hear its effects on the people in the past. But, if they see how the group sings, dances and dresses, it will be an impetus to them. This is why the interest of the new Ooni of Ile-Ife, Oba Ogunwusi Enitan is commendable as all the 18 (eighteen) members of Edi choral group interviewed informed us that the Oba has called for the re-grouping of Edi singers in Òrìgbọ̀-Mèje for performance on every forthnight at his palace, which is broadcast live on Orisun F. M. In fact, according to them, they now hold meetings for rehearsal on Wednesday of every week at a designated place at Ìpetumudù. This, according to them, is to revive, rejuvenate, reinvigorate and re-inculcate the importance of the song in the communities.

The communication networks can also help in this direction. They can sponsor and co-sponsor festivals that are related to Edi festival in various
communities. Instead of spending huge amount of money on events that do not have any direct impact on the people, they can take it upon themselves to sponsor those festivals that promote virtues and norms of the society. This will go a long way in revamping the cherished culture of our people which is gradually going into extinction. They can do this by selecting elderly ones in various communities who are versed in Edi song and other songs for a compilation of such songs into tapes, CDs, books etc for the public free of charge.

Edi song can also be fashioned to reflect current issues about deviant behaviours in traditional marriage institution in such a way that it can be a modern instrument for the campaign against marital infidelity, parental irresponsibility, incest, house rivalry and wife/husband battery in Òrìgbò Mèje in particular and other communities at large.

On a final note, we also recommend that Òrìgbò Mèje communities should go back to their tradition so as to protect the moral values. Interestingly enough, all Edi songs are aimed at protecting moral values whether they can stand the test of modern day reality or not. What is more important, and what we have tried to do in this work, is to make sure that moral values that are meant to be protected in the traditional marriage institution are not flouted since marriage is the foundation of the family which automatically is the basic unit of the society. If this happens, that is, when there is peace at the family level, peace will also reign in the society.

It should be noted that because of the positive impact Edi festival song has made in Òrìgbò Mèje communities, it should therefore be incorporated into the modern mechanisms of government to address deviant behaviours in the family setting. Litigation to settle family matters is very expensive today and many cases are not resolved. But, Edi festival song can be a veritable tool to control deviant behaviours associated with traditional marriage institution since it has no cost implication whatsoever.

**EndNote**

7. Interview with Chief Tiamiyu Babarinde, Age 82 years. 12 June, 2014.
8. Interview with Mr. Oyeniyi Olawale, Age 72 years. 22 May, 2014.
10. Interview with His Royal Highness, Oba Adedapo Oyekanmi, Ilufemiloye 1, The Alakinta of Akinlalu, Age 52 years. 15 January, 2014.


30. Interview with Chief Adebisi Adegoke of Oke Ola Street Akinlalu, Aged 82 years. 13 February, 2013.


32. Interview with Mrs. Folayemi Taiwo Olainukan in Ipetumodu, Aged 80 years.
This page is intentionally left blank