EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF LIFE SAFETY AND STABILITY *(EJLSS)*
ISSN2660-9630
https://ejlss.es/ Volume 59, 2026 ||

Drumming and Spiritual Expression in Akwa Ibom State's Indigenous Belief Systems

Ekaette Brian EDEM, Ph.D.
Department of Performing Arts, Akwa Ibom State University
Ime Smart EKPO, Ph.D.
Department of Music, University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria
Joy Micheal EDEM
Department of Performing Arts, Akwa Ibom State University

Abstract: *This paper explores the cultural and spiritual significance of traditional drumming in Akwa Ibom State, highlighting its role as a sacred practice that bridges the physical and spiritual realms. Rooted in ancestral knowledge and spiritual belief, Akwa Ibom State's drumming traditions reflect a deep cultural heritage preserved through skilled artisanship and ceremonial performance. Despite pressures from modernisation and shifting youth engagement, drumming endures as an act of cultural resistance, finding new life in schools, festivals and even religious spaces. The distinct rhythms among the Ibibio, Annang and Oron peoples reflect unique identities while reinforcing shared heritage, affirming drumming role as a dynamic, evolving heartbeat of cultural continuity. The study adopts Cavalli-Sforsa and Feldman Cultural Transmission Theory. It also examines the construction methods of indigenous drums, crafted from sacred woods and animals skins, and their symbolic meaning of components. Sustaining this tradition is essential for preserving the identity and heritage of the Akwa Ibom People. To ensure its sustainability, strategic interventions are recommended; like establishment of cultural training centers and documentation of rhythms and practices through audiovisual archives etc. The study concludes that by combining institutional support, technological outreach and grassroots participation, Akwa Ibom State can preserve its rich drumming heritage as a living evolving tradition, ensuring that the rhythm continues to carry the voice of its people into the future.*

Keywords: *Drumming, Traditional Drums, Spiritual Expression, Indigenous Belief Systems.*

Date of Submission: 25-05-2026 ***Date of Acceptance: 27-06-2026***

INTRODUCTION

Traditional drumming occupies a central place in African societies as both a cultural and communicative art form. In most communities, drums are not merely musical instruments but cultural symbols that embody the history, identity, and spiritual consciousness of a people. As Richard Okafor notes, "music in Africa is not just for entertainment but is integrated into the fabric of daily life, with the drum serving as the heartbeat of communal expression" (22). It ia a way of life, woven into work, worship, healing and celebration. The drum, as the heartbeat, unites people, carries stories and maintains cultural rhythm in everyday life. "Indigenous drumming is an important part of tradition and identity. Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and Ibibio drumming and those of

other ethnic groups in Nigeria have evolved over time, incorporating modern influences while retaining its traditional essence" (Ime Ekpo, Ekaette Edem and Margaret Edet; 191). While evolving with modern influenced, these traditions preserve ancestral rhythms, values and cultural pride.

Joseph Nketia, in his classic study of African music, observes that "drums speak the language of the people, encoding messages that can be understood by those familiar with the rhythmic codes" (45). Nketia highlights that African drums do more than produce sound but they communicate. Through specific rhythms and patterns, drums convey messages, proverbs, or announcements, understood only by those trained in their cultural codes. In Akwa Ibom State, for instance, specific drumbeats are used to announce births, deaths, festivals, coronations, or emergencies. The communicative function of drumming situates it as an indispensable cultural expression, particularly in societies where oral tradition is the primary mode of knowledge transmission.

Traditional drumming is also a pedagogical tool. It encodes moral lessons, communal responsibilities, and social values in the songs and dances it accompanies. Mosunmola Omibiyi notes that "indigenous African music is didactic in nature, teaching the younger generation about their history, morality, and social obligations" (64). While modernisation and globalisation pose threats, traditional drumming remains resilient by being incorporated into festivals, tourism, and even formal education.

This study adopts Cultural Transmission Theory, advanced by Cavalli-Sforsa and Feldman, which explains the processes by which cultural traits, practices, and values are transferred across generations. According to the theory, the transfer of culture occurs through three major channels:

1. Vertical transmission from parents to children.
2. Horisontal transmission among peers and community members.
3. Oblique transmission from elders, leaders, or cultural custodians to the younger generation.

This framework resonates strongly with African societies where oral tradition, apprenticeship, and communal learning are the primary means of preserving indigenous knowledge. As Nketia notes, "African music survives not because it is written down but because it is embedded in the lived experiences of communities" (117).

Historical Development of Drumming Traditions in African Societies

Drumming in African societies has long been central to cultural traditions, spiritual practices, and community life of the people. It plays a vital role in rituals, governance, storytelling, and social cohesion across generations. Drums have historically functioned as the central medium of communication, spiritual invocation, and cultural preservation across the continent. According to Nketia, "the drum in Africa is not only an instrument of rhythm but also a repository of history and social values, encapsulating the worldview of the people" (56). Nketia emphasizes that the African drum is more than a musical instrument—it holds history, values, and cultural wisdom. ts rhythms express the community's worldview, preserving identity and tradition across generations.

In precolonial Africa, drums were used to maintain social order and facilitate governance. They served as "talking drums," transmitting messages across vast distances through tonal and rhythmic variations. According to John Carrington, "the drum was Africa's earliest telecommunication system, used to send coded messages that could travel faster than human messengers" (41). to Carrington, drums served as Africa;s first long distance communication network. The encoded rhythm could relay complex messages like warnings or announcements, faster than messengers on foot. Thus system showcased the drum's intelligence turning rhythm into language across villages and valleys. The spiritual dimension of drumming has also been prominent in African

societies. Through rhythmic patterns, drumming invoked deities, honored ancestors, and reinforced communal ties, thereby securing its role as both a religious and cultural tool (Edem, Ekaette B. and Akpan, Nsisong A. 98). During the colonial period, drumming traditions faced suppression as colonial authorities and missionaries often condemned them as "pagan" or "primitive." Yet, despite these challenges, drumming adapted and survived, often blending with Christian liturgical practices and later influencing modern African popular music. As Kofi Agawu explains, "African drumming traditions are remarkably resilient, continuously reinventing themselves even under pressures of colonialism and globalisation" (28). This resilience highlights drumming dynamic capacity to evolve while maintaining its cultural essence.

In contemporary Africa, traditional drumming remains a symbol of heritage, identity, and artistic creativity. It has found new spaces in cultural festivals, theatre, academic curricula, and the creative industries, ensuring its continued relevance. Ivor Miller asserts that "African drumming traditions are not relics of the past but living, evolving practices that engage both local and global audiences" (17). This historical trajectory demonstrates how drumming has moved from ancient communication and ritual contexts to modern cultural and artistic platforms, retaining its centrality in African cultural expression. Thus, the historical development of drumming in African societies reflects a continuum from precolonial times, through colonial challenges, to contemporary reinvention showing its enduring role as a vital instrument for communication, spirituality, governance, and cultural preservation.

Drumming as a Tool for Cultural Preservation and Identity

"Drumming is the art of creating music by beating, striking or hitting a drum or other percussion instruments with hands, sticks or other objects. It involves producing various sounds, rhythms, and patterns to convey emotions, tell stories or accompany music, dance and theatre performances. Drumming is a universal language, found in various cultures worldwide, including

Nigerian traditions like Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio and others" (Ime Ekpo, Ekaette Edem and Margaret Edet; 193). Drumming has historically been a key instrument in preserving cultural heritage and reinforcing identity in African societies. Unlike many Western traditions where music is often separated from social life, African drumming is embedded in the daily and spiritual activities of communities, making it a living archive of tradition. Joseph Nketia is of the opinion that "the drum is a cultural document, embodying and transmitting the traditions of the people who create and use it" (82). This means that drumming is not merely an art form but a repository of cultural memory, safeguarding practices, values, and histories that are central to a community's continuity. Nketia sees the drum as a living archive—its rhythms preserve customs, beliefs, and histories across generations. It's not just an instrument, but a voice of culture and collective memory.

One of the most important ways drumming contributes to cultural preservation is through its role as an oral and performative medium of transmission. In largely non-literate societies, cultural continuity depends on oral performance, including storytelling, songs, and drumming. According to Okafor; "traditional music, especially drumming, is a living textbook through which communities teach their children about history, morality, and identity" (68). In Akwa Ibom State, the rhythmic patterns of *ekpo* or *ekpe* drumming serve as mnemonic devices, reminding participants of ancestral myths, social obligations, and collective struggles. In this sense, drumming functions like a library where knowledge is stored, performed, and passed on to younger generations.

Drumming also plays a central role in shaping and maintaining communal identity. It is both a unifying and distinguishing cultural marker. Chernoff asserts that "to participate in drumming is to affirm one's membership in the community and to acknowledge the continuity of its traditions" (54). This means that drumming is not only performed for aesthetic enjoyment but also as a

declaration of belonging. In Akwa Ibom, different ethnic groups Ibibio, Annang, and Oron use distinctive drum patterns to assert their unique cultural identities. For example, the *obodom* drum ensemble used by the Ibibio differs from the *Odok Uta* rhythms of the Annang, yet both serve as cultural identifiers for their respective groups. These differences, while highlighting diversity, also strengthen a broader sense of cultural unity within the state.

Drumming has also historically served as a tool of cultural resistance and survival. During colonial times, drumming was often suppressed by missionaries and colonial administrators who regarded it as "pagan" or "primitive." Yet, despite these restrictions, drumming survived, adapted, and continued to carry cultural meaning. As Miller observes, "African drumming traditions are not relics of the past but living, evolving practices that engage both local and global audiences" (17). By preserving its presence through resilience, drumming not only safeguarded culture but also asserted identity against cultural domination.

Drumming is a multifaceted tool for cultural preservation and identity. It acts as a cultural archive, a teacher of traditions, a marker of belonging, and an adaptable practice that survives even in modern and global contexts. For Akwa Ibom State, drumming ensures that the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron peoples continue to affirm their cultural identity while transmitting their heritage to younger generations. In this way, drumming is not simply a musical act but a profound expression of cultural resilience, continuity, and pride. Traditional drumming relies on core rhythmic patterns and techniques, played with hands or sticks that have been preserved and passed down through generations. Ime Ekpo and Ekaette Edem confirms that; "Drum Patterns and Techniques – Core drumming patterns, hand and stick techniques passed down through generations are still used" (196). these patterns are more than just beats; they carry cultural meaning, often ties to specific ceremonies, dances or community festivals. The hand techniques produce subtle tonal variations, while stick techniques create sharper and more resonant sounds, each serving a purpose in the performance. This living tradition keeps cultural identity alive, connecting present day practitioners to their ancestors through the powerful language of rhythm.

Traditional Drumming in Akwa Ibom State

In Akwa Ibom State, traditional drumming is more than music. It is a sacred language connecting the physical and spiritual worlds. Used in rites, ancestral ceremonies, and traditional worship, drum rhythms invoke deities, honor spirits, and mark sacred moments in community life.

In the Ekpe society, the drummer is the key figure during the festival. He is responsible for maintaining the groove and setting the rhythm for the performers. They are considered to be powerful spiritual intermediary, channeling the energy of the ancestors and the supernatural forces into the rhythm of the music. The drums and the chants are considered as a spiritual language that conveys meaning and emotion beyond words (Ekaette Edem: 100). These rhythms are believed to carry spiritual power, guiding rituals and maintaining harmony between people and the unseen. In Akwa Ibom State, it is a vital cultural practice among the people, that contributes significantly to the preservation and transmission of culture. The drumming are characterised by unique rhythms and instruments such as *Ikoon* (Xylophone), *Oduk Uta* (Flute or Cow Horn), *Obodom* (Wooden Drum), *Ibid* (Wooden Drums), *Nsak* (Rattle) and more. The traditional drums are used in dances, storytelling, and traditional ceremonies.

Traditional drums are used to send messages across the village, and every traditional drum has specific parts, just like the human body. This includes;

A. The Drum-Head (*Iwood Ibid*): In this context, the Antelope Skin, Goat, Sheep, Cow or Snake Skin (*Ikpa Unam*) are used to cover the drums. These natural materials are carefully selected and stretched over the drum to produce its distinctive sound. The choice of the skin

significantly impacts the drum's tone and resonance, making it an integral part of the instrument's construction and cultural significance in traditional drumming.

B. The drum's body frame (*ekpad ibid or esang*), is skilfully carved from the sturdy tree trunks, typically sourced from durable species like *Ukpa* or *Ekpad Isip Mbakara* (Coconut Tree), *Eto Eben* (Avocado Tree), Mahogany or Ogbono tree. These wooden materials forms the structural foundation of the drum by providing the necessary shape and durability to house the drum-head and amplify its sound. The selection of tree species also contribute to the drum's unique acoustic properties and enduring craftsmanship.

C. The drum's thread (*Iwad*), is an intricately woven component that securely fastens the animal skin to the drum's body. This meticulous craftsmanship allows for precise tension control, resulting in a wide range of tonal variations and resonant sounds when played. The *Iwad's* design plays a crucial role in the drum's overall acoustic quality and musical expressiveness. The threads are carefully selected and woven to ensure durability and optimal sound production. Skilled drum makers spend considerable time perfecting the *Iwad's* pattern and tension, as it directly impacts the drum's pitch, timbre, and responsiveness. This attention to detail reflects the cultural significance and artistry involved in traditional drum crafting.

Research reveals that diverse ethnic communities in Akwa Ibom State boast unique drumming traditions, characterized by distinct drum designs, crafting methods, and performance practices. These drums vary in size, tone, and symbolic significance. In Akwa Ibom State, drums are often crafted from locally sourced materials such as wood from the *Eto Ukpa* or *Ekpad Isip Mbakara* (Coconut Tree), *Eto Eben* (Avocado Tree), covered with most famous *Ikpa Aso*/*Okoyo/Ukang* (Antelope Skins), and others like *Ikpa Ekpe* (Leopard Skin), *Ikpa Ebot* (Goat Skin). *Ikpa Edon* (Sheep Skin), *Ikpa Enang* (Cow Skin), *Ikpa Udoikot* (Python Skin), tied to the wood using *Ndam* (*Raffia Fibers)*. The process of drum-making itself is considered sacred, and only skilled artisans or initiated members are permitted to carve and tune the instruments.The types of drums include:

Wooden Drum (*Obodom*): this is a sacred and powerful drum among many communities, it is a revered wooden drum that holds immense significance in various communities as a symbol of urgency and conflict. It's a big, heavy frame wood that generates a deep, thunderous sound, which echoes over long distances. It produces a loud booming sound heard from far distance. To maximise its impact, the *Obodom* is struck with deliberate, powerful blows, ensuring its resonant sound conveys critical message during times of crisis or warfare. See Plate 1 below.



Plate 1: Wooden Drum (*Obodom*)

The *Obodom's* size and sound makes it an effective communication tool in times of emergency, by alerting people to potential threats or mobilising them for action. As a scared instrument, *Obodom* is handled with care and typically reserved for important occasions, underscoring its role as a vital part of the community's cultural and social fabric.

In addition to its role in times of crisis, the *Obodom* is also utalised to herald the presence of a traditional rulers. As its rhythmic beats are believed to carry divine messages, signifying the ruler's connection to the spiritual realm. This ceremonial use of the *Obodom* reinforces the ruler's authority and sacred status within the community. It's functions includes:

A. the announcements of war in the ancient period.
B. to call an attention during emergency meetings.
C. playing at the funeral of an important Chief.

The Wood Gown or Wood Block (*Ntakorok*): The *Ntakrok*, characterised by its smaller size and rapid beats, adds vibrancy to youthful gatherings. Its lively rhythms fuel energetic dance performances and friendly competitions, fostering a spirit of celebration and communal storytelling. From Akwaowo William as quoted by Ime Ekpo and Ekaette Edem; "the Wood Block (Ntakorok), a rhythmic instrument that beats the time and keeps the tempo of the music"(139). The *Ntakorok's* dynamic sound invites active participation, making it a popular choice for lively social events and cultural expression. *Ntakorok* provides sharp, percussive sound, complementing drums and other instruments. With its crisp, percussive tones, the *Ntakorok* enriches musical ensembles by enhancing the overall harmony and interplay between instruments. Dancers, too, leverage the *Ntakorok's* rhythmic versatility to create captivating, high-energy performances. Its distinctive sound not only

elevates the aesthetic appeal of traditional music but also contributes to the dynamic layering that defines Akwa Ibom's rich cultural soundscapes.

Beyond its role in music, theatre and dance, the *Ntakorok* serves as an effective means of long-distance communication, relaying vital information across communities. Its versatility extends to significant life events, such as weddings and funerals, where it contributes to the emotional atmosphere. Furthermore, the *Ntakorok* is an integral part of festivals, amplifying the joy and communal spirit that defines these celebrations.



Plate 2: Wooden Gowng (*Ntakorok*)

Metal Gowng (Ekere/Akangkang):

Gongs in traditional settings vary in size, each producing a distinct pitch and resonance. Larger gongs typically generate deeper, fuller tones, while smaller ones yield higher, sharper sounds. This size diversity allows for a broader range of musical expressions and combinations, enriching the overall sonic experience in cultural events and ceremonies. The Metal Gong, (*Ekere/Nkwong/Akangkang*), holds a revered position in cultural ceremonies, reserved exclusively for high-ranking community leaders and select masquerades. Its metallic resonance amplifies the drum's voice, lending an air of solemnity and importance to gatherings where it's played. The Metal Gong symbolizes authority and tradition, underscoring its significance in communal events. The use of metal in the Gong's construction distinguishes it from other drums, contributing to its distinct sonic qualities. Played with precision and reverence, the Metal Gong serves not only as a musical instrument but also as a symbol of heritage and leadership, connecting participants to their ancestral roots during ceremonies and celebrations. The *Ekere* is notable for its high-pitched, melodic tones that include rapid, twittering beats. This unique sound profile makes the *Ekere* stand out among other traditional drums, adding a lively, dynamic layer to musical and dance performances. Its light, agile sound often complements faster rhythms and energetic movements.

Ette Idung Obong Effiong Asuquo Ekanem is the village head of Ekpene Ukim in Uruan Local Government Area, where he is the custodian of the *Ekere.* The *Ekere* as he rightly mentioned is used send information during masquerading occasions, gathering of the clan head and chief's and also during moonlight festivals. See Plate 3 and Plate 4 below.



Plate 3: Metal Gowng (*Ekere*) Displayed by Ette Idung Effiong Asuquo Ekanem



Plate 4: Metal Gowng (*Nkwong*)

Talking Drum (*Iboro/Uboro Ekomo*):

The talking drum **(*Iboro/Uboro Ekomo/Asiku*)**, with its ability to mimic vocal tones, serves as a versatile communication tool in traditional contexts. Beyond call-and-response interactions, it conveys specific messages and plays a ceremonial role, such as announcing the arrival of royalty. Its expressive qualities earn it the name ""talking drum,"" highlighting its unique capacity to articulate and connect with both performers and audiences. According to Patient Asuquo, a Cultural Officer at the Akwa Ibom State Council for Arts and Culture, “skilled drummers manipulate the talking drum's pitch and tone by pressing the drum-head with their arm, effectively changing the drum’s sound to resemble spoken words or phrases”. This technique enables the drum to transmit complex

information, making it an integral part of storytelling, greetings, and other cultural practices. The talking drum's expressive nature has made it a cherished instrument in African traditions.

The talking drum's role extends beyond music; it's a means of conveying emotions, telling stories, and even sharing news. In some cultures, it's used to declare important events, like births or weddings, and to honor ancestors. Its adaptability and expressiveness have solidified the talking drum's place in the rich cultural heritage of many African communities. It is mostly used for *Itembe* dance performance. See Plate 5 below.



Plate 5: Talking Drum (*Iboro/Uboro Ekomo*)

Short Drum (*Nyin Ekomo or Ekpri Ibid*):

This is a drum that is mostly used for Ekombi dance performance. Known for its deep, resonant tones, this drum drives the rhythm of Ekombi dance and is celebrated as the "Talking Bass" for its melodic, speech-like expressions. See the plate 6 below.



Plate 6: Short Drum (*Nyin Ekomo or Ekpri Ibid*)

Long Drum (*Anyan Itak Ekomo*):

This is a slim and long drum, accompanied with **(*Iboro/Uboro Ekomo*).** The Long Drum (*Anyan Itak Ekomo*) is a slender, elongated drum traditionally played alongside the *Iboro/Uboro Ekomo.* This drum pair is central to ritual and dance contexts, with the Long Drum providing deep, resonant tones while Iboro/Uboro Ekomo adds sharp, rhythmic accents. Together, they create a powerful sonic dialogue in traditional storytelling. According to Akwaowo William as quoted by Ime Ekpo and Ekaette Edem; " the Membrane Drums (Ibid Ikpa) which play the melo-rhythm and also used to communicate with the instrumentalists and dancers; provide cues during performances, signaling either a change in song or dance steps. They perform the most important functions in the ensemble" (139).

Long Drum (*Anyan Itak Ekomo*) is crafted from durable *Ukpa* or *Ekpad Isip Mbakara* (Coconut Tree wood) and streched with antelope hide, this drum produces rich, resonate tones essential to *Utah* and *Samba* traditional dance and music. This drum mostly use by the Annang people. The long drum is traditionally used by the Annang people of Akwa Ibom State, playing a vital role in cultural ceremonies, dances and communal storytelling.



Plate 7: Long Drum(*Anyan Ekomo*)

Slide Drum (*Nkrung*):

This drum is used during masquerade festivals, by producing rhythmic patterns that energise performances and connect spiritual and community expressions. The *Nkrung* is deeply spiritual; its rhythms are sacred and only initiated members are permitted to play it. It is also played in ensembles, not by individuals, using well made wooden sticks to strike the drum, creating powerful,

synchonised rhythms central to masquerade rituals. This collaborative playing style strengthens community bonds and ensures rhythmic precision, with each drummer contributing to a unified, spiritually charged performance. The *Nkrung* ensemble features drums of varying sizes and pitches, each contributing unique rhythms that blend into a rich. Dynamic soundscape, elevating the energy of dance. Mr. Aniekan Ibanga Ukasua as the leader of the masquerading team in Ekpene Ukim Local Government Area who is the head of the masqueraders reaffirms that the Slide Drum is used to announce for the gathering different masquerades to display at either the market square or the village hall (*effe idung*). See Plate 8 below.



Plate 8: Joy Edem with Obong Ekpo Uruan displaying the Slide Drum (*Nkrung*).

Xylophone (*Ikon*): The Xylophone (*Ikon*) is a melodic percussion instrument with tuned wooden bars that produce distinct musical notes. It's often played during songs to reinforce the melody and rhythm in traditional performances. Its bright, resonant tones cut through ensemble music, making it ideal for leading melodies or harmonizing with vocals during dances and ceremonies. The *Ikon* adds both rhythm and pitch, bridging the gap between drumming and song, making it a vital instrument in Akwa Ibom's musical storytelling. The Xylophone is played with carved wooden sticks, not hands, allowing for precise strikes and clear, resonant tones that carry through ensemble performances. Using stick enhances control and volume, enabling the player to match the dynamic energy of dance and song in traditional settings. The xylophone (*Ikon*) often signals dancers with melodic cues, guiding their. Its rhythmic patterns and pitch variations act as musical commands, helping dancers stay in sync with the ensemble and respond to changes in tempo or mood.



Plate 9: Xylophone (*Ikon*)

(xi) Rattle (*Nsak*): This is a virtual part of traditional Akwa Ibom State music, which add texture and rhythm to various performances. The *Nsak*, a traditional rattle, plays a vital role in Akwa Ibom music—adding rhythmic texture and pulse to dances and ceremonies. Often shaken in sync with movement, it enriches the sonic experience. It's help in dance accompaniment, healing rituals and in storytelling. The *Nsak* is usually crafted from a gourd or calabash filled with seeds or beads—shaken to produce crisp, rhythmic patterns that enhance traditional performances. Its simple yet effective design allows for versatile rhythms, making it a staple in dances, rituals, and storytelling across Akwa Ibom communities. The *Nsak's* sound punctuates key moments in performances, guiding dancers and singers while preserving cultural rhythm and tradition. It can also be used in spiritual and ritual contexts, believed to have symbolic meanings.



Plate 10: Rattle (*Nsak*)

(x) Bass Drum (*Eka Ibid*): The Bass Drum delivers deep, resonate tones that anchor the rhythm in traditional ensembles, providing a powerful foundation for dance. The *Eka Ibid* is among the largest traditional drums, symbolising strength and unity. Its deep voice leads the ensemble with

commanding presence. By grounding the ensemble, the Bass Drum allows other instruments to layer rhythms and textures, enriching the overall sound. It provides a foundational rhythm, synchronising with other instruments to create a cohesive and dynamic musical ensemble. Its steady pulse supports and enhances the interplay of melodies and rhythms, ensuring harmony and energy across performance and also guiding dancers and musicians alike with its powerful, steady beat.



Plate 11: Bass Drum (*Eka Ibid*)

Here are some common rhythms played on traditional drums in Akwa Ibom State.

1. **Long Drum (*Anyan Itak Ekomo*):**
   - Used for communication and ceremonial purposes
   - Rhythms often feature deep, resonant tones (Dum, Dum, Dah)

Patterns may include:
- Dum-Dum-Dah-Dum (common call pattern)
- Dah-Dum-Dum-Dah (response pattern)

2. **Talking Drum (*Iboro/Uboro Ekomo*):**
   - Used for entertainment and storytelling
   - Rhythms often feature fast, intricate patterns (Tak-Tak-Ding-Tak)

Patterns may include:
- *Tak-Tak-Ding-Tak-Tak* (Common Dance Rhythm)
- *Ding-Ding-Tak-Tak* (Storytelling Pattern)

3. **Short Drum (*Nyin Ekomo or Ekpri Ibid*):**
   - Used for cultural and traditional ceremonies
   - Rhythms often feature driving, energetic patterns (Pah-Pah-Dum-Pah)

Patterns may include:
- *Pah-Pah-Dum-Pah-Pah* (Common Wedding Rhythm)
- *Dum-Pah-Pah-Dum* (Initiation Pattern)

Cultural Significance of Traditional Drumming among the People of Akwa Ibom State

Traditional drumming in Akwa Ibom State holds deep cultural significance. It connects communities to ancestral heritage, marks key life events, and serves as a living medium for

storytelling, spiritual communication, and social cohesion. Traditional drumming reinforces identity, celebrates communal values, and activates cultural rituals from festivals to funerals, by ensuring that traditions remain alive and meaningful across generations. In precolonial and early postcolonial times, drumming functioned as a "talking instrument" a means of conveying messages across distances before the advent of modern communication systems. Each rhythm carries distinct meanings that are understood by community members. It symbolises cultural identity, spiritual connection, and communal unity. It communicates messages, marks rites of passage, and invokes ancestral presence through rhythm. Drums serve as voices of tradition, conveying warnings, celebrations, and sacred narratives. Their rhythms speak when words cannot, bridging the physical and spiritual realms.

For instance, a fast, urgent beat signals danger or a call to gather, while a slow, rhythmic beat may indicate death or mourning. In masquerade performances, certain drum patterns are reserved for ancestral spirits, and breaking these rhythmic codes is considered a violation of cultural order. According to Effiong Uloh a master drummer from Oron Local Government of Akwa Ibom State; "our drums speak the language of the ancestors. Those who understand can interpret every sound. The drum can praise, warn, or summon people without words". This highlights how drumming operates not only as an art but as a repository of cultural memory and spiritual consciousness. The Master drummer in any traditional performance plays a central role by mastering his arts while playing complex melo-rhythmic patterns tied to the meaning of each songs. Ime Ekpo and Ekaette Edem asserts that: "*Ata Abre Nkpo* (Master Instrumentalist) has the responsibility of learning several sequential melo-rhythmic patterns associated with conceptual frameworks of different songs"(140). Their playing does not just provide music, it communicates, directs movements and unifies dancers, singers and other performers.

1. Social and cultural significance of Drumming

Traditional drumming serves multiple social purposes within Akwa Ibom communities. It brings people together during public celebrations, promotes cooperation during collective labour, and strengthens inter-generational bonds through shared participation in festivals. In addition, drumming is an educational tool. Through performance and apprenticeship, younger generations learn discipline, respect for elders, and the moral values encoded in songs and rhythms. During interviews, several elders emphasised that drumming teaches patience and communal responsibility, values essential to cultural preservation. Furthermore, drumming has therapeutic and spiritual functions. It is used in healing rituals, thanksgiving ceremonies, and invocations of ancestral blessings. The rhythmic vibrations are believed to connect the physical and spiritual realms, allowing humans to communicate with the gods and ancestors.

2. Modes of Transmission and Learning

Traditional drumming in Akwa Ibom State is primarily transmitted through oral tradition and apprenticeship. Young learners often begin by observing master drummers during festivals or community ceremonies before being formally introduced to the instruments. The training process involves listening, imitation, repetition, and gradual participation. From Anthony Usoro, drumming skills are often passed down from father to son or within specific families recognised for their musical heritage. However, in recent times, interest from young people outside these traditional lineages has grown, reflecting a gradual shift from hereditary to inclusive learning patterns. Imoh Bassey, a young apprentice from Uyo noted that; "I started learning drumming by watching my uncle. He would ask me to beat softly beside him until I could play the same rhythm. It takes years of practice to become a real drummer". This process emphasises experiential learning and mentorship, ensuring that cultural knowledge is preserved through practice rather than written instruction.

3. Drumming and Modernisation

Findings also reveal that traditional drumming practices in Akwa Ibom are undergoing adaptation due to modernisation, urbanisation, and the influence of contemporary music. Drums once used exclusively for rituals are now integrated into church worship, cultural dance troupes, and entertainment events. While this adaptation has expanded the visibility of drumming, it has also raised concerns about the dilution of its traditional essence. Some elders lamented that young drummers now prioritise entertainment over cultural or spiritual significance. Nevertheless, many cultural custodians view this evolution as a positive step toward sustaining the art in a changing society. One respondent summarised this shift aptly, "Drumming today has found new homes in schools, churches, and even bands. But we must not forget its roots, because without culture, the rhythm loses meaning."

Traditional Drumming in Akwa Ibom State is not merely a musical or entertainment practice; it functions as a powerful vehicle for the transmission of cultural values, communal ethics, and social messages. Data gathered from interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations reveal that drumming embodies a communicative system through which the people of Ibibio, Annang, and Oron express their worldview, moral expectations, and collective identity. Respondents consistently emphasised that every drumbeat conveys meaning. Beyond rhythm and sound, drumming encodes moral lessons, social regulations, historical memories, and spiritual beliefs. This section presents the findings thematically, highlighting the major cultural values and messages transmitted through drumming in Akwa Ibom State.

Across all the ethnic groups in Akwa Ibom State, drumming serves as a non-verbal means of communication. It functions as a "talking instrument" capable of conveying messages over long distances or within ritual contexts. Each rhythm or beat has a coded meaning understood by community members, depending on the occasion. Among the Ibibio, for instance, specific drum patterns signals the beginning of a festival, to summon elders to meetings, or announce the arrival of a titled Chief. In the Annang communities, drumming often serves to relay news of death, war, or victory, while among the Oron, drumbeats are used to call fishermen ashore or to alert the community during emergencies. A respondent, a master drummer from Ikono Local Government Area by name Edet Monday stated that; "Before modern communication, our drums spoke to the people. When the Chief's drum sounded, everyone knew what message it carried without words". This communicative function of drumming reinforces the cultural value of collective awareness and social coordination, ensuring that members of the community remain informed and united.

Drumming also transmits moral lessons and social norms. Through rhythm, accompanying songs, and chants, drumming communicates values such as respect for elders, honesty, courage, humility, and communal responsibility. During festivals and storytelling sessions, drummers often collaborate with singers to highlight moral tales or to caution against antisocial behaviors like laziness, greed, or disrespect. The rhythmic patterns and songs accompanying such performances serve as didactic tools, reinforcing ethical conduct among listeners. An elder from Etinan by name Aniefiok Inyang explained that; "the drum does not just entertain; it teaches. When we play during festivals, we remind the youths that respect, obedience, and unity keep the community alive". This finding aligns with the notion that traditional performance arts serve both aesthetic and pedagogical functions, shaping character and reinforcing moral order in society.

Another significant dimension of the messages transmitted through drumming relates to spirituality and ancestral connection. Many respondents asserted that certain drum rhythms are reserved for communicating with the ancestors, deities, or spiritual beings. These rhythms are often played during masquerade festivals, funerals, and ritual ceremonies to invoke blessings, protection, or guidance. Among the Ibibio and Annang, specific drumbeats accompany Ekpo or Idiong rituals,

symbolising the presence of ancestral spirits. Similarly, in Oron, the drum is used to consecrate traditional shrines and to accompany chants that appease marine deities. One elderly custodian remarked, "when the sacred drum sounds, it is not the drummer who speaks it is the ancestors. The sound opens the path between the living and the spirit world." This perspective demonstrates that drumming transcends mere performance; it serves as a sacred language of communication between the physical and spiritual realms, reaffirming the community's faith in the continuity of life and ancestral reverence.

Drumming in Akwa Ibom is also a repository of oral history and cultural memory. Many drum rhythms are associated with particular historical events, heroic figures, or communal achievements. During fieldwork, several respondents recounted that certain drum patterns are used to commemorate wars won, leaders enthroned, or significant cultural transformations. For instance, in the Annang area, the *Nkong and Obodom* instruments is traditionally played to recall past battles or to honour ancestral heroes. This use of drumming as an archive of communal memory ensures that important aspects of history are preserved and transmitted orally from generation to generation.

In addition to its moral and spiritual dimensions, drumming also communicates emotions and moods such as joy, celebration, sorrow, or victory. During weddings, harvest festivals, and communal dances, the rhythmic patterns express happiness and gratitude. In contrast, during funerals, slow and heavy beats convey mourning and reflection. These emotional messages strengthen social bonds and provide an outlet for communal expression. The dynamic interplay between drum rhythm and dance movement reflects the people's philosophy of life one that celebrates togetherness, balance, and harmony.

Drumming in Akwa Ibom State continues to evolve as both a traditional and contemporary art form, sustaining its cultural relevance through adaptive creativity and community participation. Drumming preserves indigenous knowledge by encoding history, proverbs, and moral lessons in rhythm, serving as an oral archive. It transmits cultural values and strengthens identity through communal participation and intergenerational performance. Through specific rhythms and ceremonial contexts, drumming passes down ancestral wisdom, social norms, and spiritual beliefs—keeping indigenous identity It also fosters collective memory, uniting communities during rites of passage and festivals, ensuring that cultural identity is not only preserved but actively lived. vibrant and resilient.

The Role of Drummers in Preserving Cultural Heritage

Drummers occupy a central position in the cultural life of Akwa Ibom State. They are not merely performers but custodians of tradition, interpreters of cultural values, and transmitters of communal memory. Data gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations indicate that drummers play a crucial role in maintaining the vitality of traditional practices among the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron people. Their functions extend beyond music-making to encompass social, educational, and spiritual responsibilities that ensure the preservation and continuity of cultural heritage. Drummers serve as repositories of indigenous knowledge, preserving the history, customs, and worldviews of their communities. Through their mastery of rhythms, songs, and performance contexts, drummers encode the stories, proverbs, and moral lessons that define the collective identity of their people. During interviews, elder drummers emphasised that they are entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining the purity of traditional rhythms by ensuring that performances conform to cultural expectations. Anthony Usoro asserts that; "our drums carry the wisdom of the elders. Every sound we make has meaning it tells where we come from and what we believe."

Drummers also function as teachers and mentors, transmitting cultural knowledge and performance skills to younger generations through apprenticeship systems. Most young drummers learn through

direct observation, imitation, and participation under the guidance of experienced masters. This traditional model of learning ensures the inter-generational transmission of both technical skills and moral discipline. Apprentices are not only taught how to play the drums but also the meanings, taboos, and ethical standards associated with performance. This process of guided learning preserves both the technical and spiritual aspects of drumming, ensuring cultural continuity despite changing times.

Drummers in Akwa Ibom State also play the role of cultural interpreters, translating communal events and emotions into rhythmic expressions. Their performances narrate stories, celebrate achievements, and communicate messages during festivals, rituals, and social gatherings. According to Patient Asuquo; In Ibibio land, during the Ekpe and Ekpo masquerade festivals for instance, the drummer's beats dictate the movements of the masquerade and the mood of the audience. In Annang and Oron communities, drummers are the first to announce the start of communal ceremonies and the last to close them, marking the rhythm of social life itself. And "without the drummer, the festival has no life. The drum tells the people when to dance, when to mourn, and when to rejoice".

This interpretive role situates the drummer at the heart of community expression, making them indispensable in preserving the performative aspects of Akwa Ibom's cultural heritage. In many villages, drummers are called upon to perform during weddings, festivals, coronations, and funerals, events that reinforce communal ties. Their rhythms create a common emotional language that transcends individual differences, thereby promoting cultural solidarity. A community leader observed that; "when the drum sounds, everyone comes together. It reminds us that we are one people. Even strangers feel the rhythm and understand our culture." Through such experiences, drummers act as unifying agents, sustaining the emotional and social fabric of their communities.

In addition to their social functions, drummers perform critical roles in ritual and spiritual contexts. They accompany sacred ceremonies, initiation rites, and ancestral worship where drumming serves as a bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds. Among the Ibibio and Annang, specific drummers are initiated into secret societies and are responsible for producing rhythms that invoke ancestral spirits or signal ritual transitions. These rhythms are often kept secret and can only be played by those who have undergone the necessary spiritual training. Patient Asuquo mentioned that; "the drum has spirit. If you are not properly initiated, you cannot play it. The spirits will reject you. We protect these traditions so that the sacredness of our culture is not lost". This sacred responsibility positions drummers as spiritual mediators, safeguarding the metaphysical dimensions of cultural heritage and ensuring that traditional rituals maintain their authenticity.

While drummers preserve ancient traditions, they also act as innovators and ambassadors who adapt drumming to contemporary contexts without eroding its cultural essence. Many drummers now perform at cultural festivals, schools, and church events, using traditional rhythms to educate and entertain broader audiences. Some have also incorporated traditional drumming into modern music ensembles, thereby promoting cultural pride and awareness among younger generations. Through such adaptations, drummers extend the relevance of traditional music into new spaces while maintaining its symbolic and aesthetic roots. Thus, drummers serve as cultural ambassadors, bridging the gap between tradition and modernity through creative adaptation and cultural advocacy.

Therefore, the role of drummers in Akwa Ibom State extends far beyond musical performance. They are custodians, educators, interpreters, and innovators whose work embodies the continuity of indigenous knowledge and identity. Through apprenticeship, ritual performance, community participation, and creative adaptation, drummers preserve the cultural fabric of their society. In this

way, drummers remain indispensable agents in the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage within the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron communities.

Audience/Community Perception of Traditional Drumming

The perception of traditional drumming among the people of Akwa Ibom State remains multifaceted, reflecting both continuity and transformation in cultural consciousness. Data gathered from interviews, focus group discussions, and observations indicate that community members hold diverse yet generally positive attitudes toward traditional drumming. While many still regard it as a sacred and vital cultural practice, others, particularly the younger and urban populations perceive it as an art form that must adapt to modern realities.

Across the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron communities, traditional drumming is widely regarded as a symbol of identity and pride. Respondents repeatedly emphasised that the sound of indigenous drums immediately evokes a sense of belonging, reminding them of their origins, customs, and shared values. This perception positions drumming as an audible emblem of cultural continuity. For many rural dwellers, traditional drumming remains an inseparable part of communal celebrations, rituals, and storytelling a rhythmic reminder of ancestral wisdom and unity. A significant proportion of respondents acknowledged that drumming functions as a medium of communication. Elderly participants, in particular, recalled how drums were used to send coded messages across villages before the advent of modern technology. Each rhythm carried distinct meanings understood only by members of the community. During focus group discussions, several participants noted that although modern communication systems have replaced these traditional functions, the symbolic communicative power of drumming remains intact. According to Effiong Uloh; “even though we now use phones, the drum still speaks. When it sounds, everyone listens, we know if it is joy, mourning, or danger”. This perception underscores the enduring respect the community accords to drumming as a traditional language that continues to convey cultural emotion and meaning.

Some Christians view traditional drumming with caution due to its historical association with ancestral rituals and masquerade cults. They often distinguish between “cultural drumming” and “ritual drumming”, accepting the former while rejecting the latter on religious grounds. A youth respondent from Uyo remarked, “I like our traditional drums, but in church we use them for praise, not for the old rituals. We must separate culture from idolatry”. This sentiment reflects a broader trend of religious reinterpretation, an attempt to retain cultural aesthetics while aligning them with contemporary Christian values. Despite this tension, most respondents agreed that drumming itself is not evil but depends on the context of its use. Conversely, modern influences such as Western music, urbanisation, and technology have reshaped how younger people perceive traditional drumming. Some youths see it as an outdated art, while others appreciate it as a heritage worth modernising. This dual perception suggests both challenges and opportunities for cultural preservation.

Some members of the community increasingly appreciate traditional drumming as a form of artistic entertainment. During festivals, weddings, and social events, drummers attract admiration for their skill, creativity, and ability to energise the atmosphere. In urban areas like Uyo Ikot Ekpene, Eket, traditional drumming groups are often invited to perform alongside modern bands, blending indigenous rhythms with contemporary music. This has helped redefine community perception, positioning drumming not only as a ritual practice but also as a legitimate form of cultural performance.

The study found clear generational differences in attitudes toward traditional drumming. Older respondents expressed deep reverence for drumming as a sacred and integral part of communal life, while younger respondents tended to view it more as cultural performance than spiritual practice. However, many youths expressed renewed interest in learning drumming when exposed to it

through school Cultural Clubs, University Theatre Groups, or Community Festivals. This suggests that positive exposure and institutional support can significantly improve youth perception and participation in traditional drumming. A young university student from Uyo observed, "before, I thought traditional drumming was for old people, but now I see it as part of our heritage. It's something to be proud of". Such responses demonstrate a gradual shift from indifference to cultural appreciation, indicating that traditional drumming still holds strong potential for revitalisation among the younger generation.

Although drumming has traditionally been a male-dominated practice, the study found changing perceptions regarding gender roles. Some women, especially in urban communities, are beginning to challenge traditional restrictions and participate in drumming groups. While a few older participants expressed reservations about this development, most agreed that inclusion of women could help sustain the practice. This evolution in gender perception reflects a broader transformation in societal attitudes toward cultural participation and equality.

In summary, the perception of traditional drumming in Akwa Ibom State remains largely positive, though influenced by factors such as religion, modernisation, and generational change. The community continues to value drumming as a symbol of identity, a means of communication, and a vital tool for cultural preservation. While older generations revere it for its spiritual and ritual significance, younger audiences increasingly embrace it as an expressive art form and a marker of cultural pride. This dual perception, balancing reverence for tradition with openness to innovation suggests that traditional drumming remains a living, evolving practice capable of adapting to the cultural realities of modern Akwa Ibom society.

CONCLUSION

Traditional drumming in Akwa Ibom State remains an indispensable component of the people's cultural heritage. It transcends the realm of mere musical performance to function as a medium of communication, education, spirituality, and social cohesion. Through drumming, the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron communities express their collective identity, celebrate their history, and transmit moral and cultural values from one generation to another. The findings affirm that drummers play a crucial role as custodians and transmitters of indigenous knowledge. Their skills, rhythms, and performance contexts embody the wisdom and worldview of their ancestors. The apprenticeship system through which drumming knowledge is passed down ensures that the practice remains alive and relevant within the community. Despite the challenges posed by modernisation, religious influences, and changing youth interests, traditional drumming continues to adapt and evolve. Its incorporation into schools, churches, and cultural festivals has created new spaces for its survival while maintaining its traditional essence. This adaptability reflects the resilience and dynamism of Akwa Ibom culture in the face of societal change.

The study therefore concludes that traditional drumming is both a cultural archive and a living art form, one that connects the past with the present, uniting generations through rhythm and meaning. For the people of Akwa Ibom State, drumming is not only an aesthetic expression but also a symbol of identity, continuity, and communal pride. Preserving and promoting this practice is thus essential to sustaining the cultural heritage and collective memory of the state.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to ensure the preservation, promotion, and continuity of traditional drumming in Akwa Ibom State:

A. Integration of Traditional Drumming into Formal Education

Traditional drumming should be incorporated into the curriculum of schools, colleges, and universities, particularly within cultural and performing arts programs. This will expose younger generations to indigenous music forms and encourage appreciation for cultural heritage. Schools can

establish cultural clubs or music workshops where students learn traditional rhythms and their cultural meanings under the guidance of experienced drummers.

B. Documentation and Archiving of Drumming Traditions

There is an urgent need to document and preserve the various rhythms, drum types, and performance practices unique to the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron people. Cultural agencies, research institutions, and media organisations should collaborate to record and archive these traditions in audio, video, and written formats. This documentation will serve as an important reference for future generations and researchers.

C. Support and Recognition for Traditional Drummers

Government and cultural organisations should recognise and support master drummers as vital custodians of cultural heritage. This can be achieved through grants, awards, and inclusion in state-sponsored cultural festivals. Providing financial and institutional support will motivate drummers to continue practicing and mentoring apprentices.

D. Community-Based Cultural Education

Community leaders and traditional institutions should promote informal learning systems that encourage youths to participate in drumming and related cultural activities. Organising community festivals, workshops, and exhibitions where drumming is performed and taught can foster pride in local culture and sustain intergenerational transmission.

E. Encouragement of Youth Participation

To counteract declining interest among young people, deliberate efforts should be made to make drumming appealing to modern audiences. This could involve fusion performances that blend traditional drumming with contemporary music styles, as well as the use of social media platforms to promote traditional drumming groups and performances.

F. Religious and Cultural Reorientation

Religious leaders and communities should be encouraged to adopt a balanced perspective that distinguishes between traditional culture and negative practices. Educating people on the cultural and artistic value of drumming will help dispel misconceptions that associate it solely with idolatry. This will promote wider acceptance of drumming as a legitimate cultural expression.

G. Establishment of Cultural Training Centres

The Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Culture and Tourism should establish Cultural Heritage and Drumming Centres in key towns such as Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, and Oron. These centres can serve as hubs for research, training, performance, and preservation of traditional music and drumming practices.

H. Collaboration with Media and Technology

Local media houses, film producers, and digital content creators should be encouraged to showcase traditional drumming in documentaries, films, and online platforms. Such visibility will help promote the practice to national and international audiences, enhancing cultural tourism and pride.

Works Cited

1. Agawu, Kofi. *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions.* Routledge, 2003. Asuquo, Patient. Cultural Officer at Akwa Ibom State Council for Arts and Culture. Uyo: Akwa Ibom State. 2025.

2. Bassey, Imo. *Apprentice Drummer. Anua: Uyo Local Government Area. Akwa Ibom State*. 2025. Carrington, John F. *Talking Drums of Africa*. Praeger, 1949.
3. Cavalli-Sforsa, Luigi L., and Marcus W. Feldman. *Cultural Transmission and Evolution: A Quantitative Approach*. Princeton University Press, 1981.
4. Chernoff, John Miller. *African Rhythm and African Sensibility: Aesthetics and Social Action in African Musical Idioms.* University of Chicago Press, 1979.
5. Edem, Ekaette B. "African Theatre and the Performance Space: Iboku Uruan Cultural Festival of Akwa Ibom State in View". In *Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS)*, vol.7, no.2, 2 June, 2024, pp. 91 – 102.
6. Edem, Ekaette B. and Akpan, Nsisong A. "DANCE ACROSS GENERATIONS FROM ELDERS TO CHILDREN: THE UNIQUENESS OF AKWAOBIO THEATRE TROUPE IN AKWA IBOM STATE". AKSU Diakonia: Journal of Religion and Culture (AKSU JRC, vol. 5: issue 1, December 2025. pp 95-116.
7. Ekpo, Ime S., Edem Ekaette B. "Change and Continuity in Asian Ubọikpa Music and Dance of the Ibibio: A Case Study of Asian Ima Eka Cultural Group of Okoro Atai, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria". In *Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity* vol.52, 2025, pp. 135-147.
8. Ekpo, Ime S., Edem Ekaette B. "Ibibio Indigenous Drumming: Evolution and Roles in Traditional Music and Theatre Performances". Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity vol.48, 2025, pp. 190-198.
9. Ekpo, Ime S., Edem Ekaette B., Edet, Margaret A. "Incorporating Indigenous Music into Nigerian Theatre Productions". Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity vol.16, 2023, pp. 30-35.
10. Etteidung Obong Asuquo Ekanem. Village Head of Ekpene Ukim in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. 2025.
11. Inyang, Aniefiok. *An Elder from Etinan Local Government Area. Akwa Ibom State.* 2025.
12. Miller, Ivor L. *Voice of the Leopard: African Secret Societies and Cuba.* University Press of Mississippi, 2009.
13. Monday, Edet. *Master Drummer from Ikono Local Government Area. Akwa Ibom State.* 2025. Nketia, John. H. K. *The Music of Africa*. W. W. Norton, 1974.
14. Nsewi, Meki. *African Music in Education: Contemporary Paradigms for Musical Pedagogy*.
15. CIIMDA, 2003.
16. Okafor, Richard C. *Music in Nigerian Society.* New Generation Books, 2005.
17. Omibiyi, Mosunmola. "African Musical Practices and Cultural Transmission." *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1994, pp. 60–68.
18. Ukusua, Aniekan Ibanga. Head Masqueraded of Ekpene Ukim in Uruan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. 2025.
19. Ulor, Effiong. *Master Drummer from Oron Local Government Area: Akwa Ibom State.* 2025
20. Usoro, Anthony. *Cultural Officer at Akwa Ibom State Council for Arts and Culture*. Uyo: Akwa Ibom State. 2025.