

**CHANGES IN MARRIAGE CEREMONIES IN WEST AFRICA: A STUDY OF THE
YORUBAS OF NIGERIA AND THE ANLO-EWES OF GHANA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that, except for reference to other people's work, which have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is the result of my own research work. And this work has not been presented in whole or part to this university or anywhere else for any degree.

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DEDICATION

To the author and finisher of my faith, the excellent story changer, thank you for your infinite mercies and for keeping your promises.

To Dr. Oluwakemi Okuwa, for always believing in me, for always praying, for always nudging, we have only just begun.



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ABSTRACT

This study systematically looks into the changes that have occurred in the ways marriages are celebrated among the Yorubas and Anlo-Ewes, with a focus on the forms of marriage ceremonies observed, similarities and differences between the marriage practices of these two cultures, changes and emergent patterns in their marriage practices.

Its theoretical framework is hinged upon, Peter Ekeh's colonialism and the two publics. It adopts a strictly qualitative methodology. Observation and key informant interviews were used to gather information on the marriage ceremonies. Five (5) key informant interviews were conducted, respondents include, 2 registry officials, 1 catholic priest, 1 church administrator, 1 anthropologist.

The study finds that in both cultures, there is an hybridization of the forms of marriages, solidifying the dilemma of the African Child being a citizen of two worlds in addition to the fact that there is an increasing preference for the religious marriages, over traditional marriages. Traditional marriages in both cultures are also being severely influenced by religious practices, with several changes seen to have occurred. One element however that has endured, is the *eruyawo* (Yoruba) and *sronu* (Anlo-Ewe), which refers to gifts brought by the groom's family for the bride. The contemporary weddings among the Yoruba of southwest Nigeria and the Anlo-Ewes of South-East Ghana reflects a long history of modifications and change resulting from cultural and social intercourses with other cultures and also innovative dimensions aimed at "ceremonising" and celebrating marital unions in more sophisticated ways.

Key Words : Yoruba , Anlo-Ewe, Marriage Ceremonies, hybridization.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background to the Study

Marriage is a universal institution, however what constitutes a marriage or in other words what is acceptable as a marriage, varies from society to society. A Neur woman for instance,(Neurs hail from Sudan), can marry a woman, if her father has no sons, the “wife” in this relationship goes on to have relations with a man or men, to father a child for her “husband”. This would be totally unacceptable and in reality punishable in other societies, the definition of what marriage is, is in truth society specific. . Cutting across every society, culture and civilization are semblances of ceremonies. There are however differences in relation to the types of things or events that are celebrated, the way they are celebrated, and most importantly, the moral and cultural premises, coupled with the logical basis of ceremonies.

Every society accords weddings a great deal of importance, because they signify a movement or change from infancy to maturity. Every society has patterns of celebrating marriages that are unique to it and these patterns have been handed down continuously from one generation to the next. Marriage is a very significant way of showcasing the cultural heritage of any particular society. Customary guiding principles are very important when persons take decisions regarding significant happenings in their life, such as marriage and childbearing. (Billari, Prskawetz and Fürnkranz, 2002). These normative guidelines shape and imbue these life decisions with meanings. More so, normative guidelines provide means of justifying and approving life

decisions. The decision to marry is thus guided by normative cultural patterns. No society however is static, culture itself is dynamic, as internal and external forces stimulate changes, or modifications. Central to the marriage ceremony celebration is the principle of gift giving and exchange, which create social bonds that spring reciprocity in obligations.

Generally, views on marriage around the world tend to be similar. All over the world, individuals let go of their parents, guardians and other family members to begin a relationship with people who are in a way unfamiliar to them. This leaves us with a question, why do people get married? The reason is definitely not couched in them needing assistance or merely support, because in reality they can get that from their own families. It would therefore augur well with reason to assume the “main” reason for marriage is to grant access to having sexual relations with an individual an access that would have been deemed improper and frowned upon with regards to family members or relatives.

Defining the term marriage can come across as a daunting task, because indeed there are a lot of variations in marriage systems across the globe as Otite and Oginowo rightly note,

marriage has no universal definition but denotes socially approved and culturally-specific institutionalized relationships between a man and a woman and their kinsmen. , a family may be defined as a system of roles and relationships amongst a man, his wife or wives and their children, alone or as part of a larger kin group; and third, the various types of marriage and family systems in the socio-culturally differentiated ethnic groups (1991:10).

Marriage “refers to a lawfully acknowledged and communally accepted agreement amid two or more persons which entails definite privileges and obligations, and furthermore it often entails sexual interaction” (Kendall 2008). Generally, marriage is reckoned as a collectively recognized coming together of a male and a female, celebrated via some kind of open wedding ceremony (Heider, 2007). According to (Meekers, 1992), the marriage ceremony is a procedure involving

numerous steps from the initial rites to the complete reception of the husband and wife as a unit of the society. The family is founded on marriage, and it is a social institution which serves to regulate sexual activity, produce and raise children with a particular social identity and cultural skills, and constitute a basic economic unit (Heider, 2007). It creates new social ties, or families (spouses and in-laws) that provide a setting for important sexual, economic, and educational activities.

Through Marriage, new rights, roles and new social relationships are formed not only between the spouses but also between the families of the spouses. In most societies, marriage involves a mutual commitment by each partner, and linkages between two individuals and families are publicly displayed (Skolnick 2008). Marriage is a major event, not only for the two individuals who are most directly involved, but for the society itself, as it marks a new alignment of ties and obligations between individuals as well as groups (Heider, 2007). So it is not surprising that weddings reflects and expresses basic cultural principles of marriage in several ways. Through marriage, the family which is a relatively universal institution is formed and the weddings as varied as cultures of the world are central in importance and observed in most societies.

Weddings are rites of passage; they belong to the class of rituals that every-where mark the transition of a person or persons from one social status to another (Edwards, 1987). The ceremony in which a marriage is enacted and announced to the community is called a wedding. Both within and between societies, differences exist in how weddings are celebrated (Kalmijn, 2004). Weddings mark the beginning of marriage (Leeds, 2002). Weddings may be simple or elaborate, but they occur in virtually in all societies. Weddings represent a rite of passage for two individuals who want to make their relationship legally established in the eyes of the law and of everyone around them (Appadurai, 1997). The socio-cultural context also influences the couple to have a wedding (Baron & Byrne, 1987 as cited in Kalmijn, 2004). Wedding, ceremony of

marriage, is often preceded by ritual preparations and celebrated according to customs prescribed by the culture (Skolnick, 2009). In the classic texts, rites of passage are subdivided into rites of separation (examples are funerals), rites of transition (examples are birthdays and graduations), and rites of aggregation (Van Gennep, 1960; Kalmijn, 2004). Kalmijn (2004), states that the wedding is an example of an aggregation ritual, but it may also include the other subtypes (e.g., the father giving away the bride is a separation rite). In addition, the wedding may be combined with other types of rituals. Wedding customs are often passed down from one generation to the next, yet they are prone to the pervasive forces of socio-cultural change (Kalmijn, 2004). Just as weddings practices shape the actions and patterns of behaviour, weddings are also influenced by the surrounding socio-cultural context. In line with this, states that an examination of weddings should thus provide access to the basic values of society (Edwards, 1987).

Marriage rites draw on civil and religious authority to sanctify the union of a man and a woman and establish the parentage of any children born of the marriage. The rites often include formal removal of one party (usually the bride) from the family group, feasts and exchanges of gifts between the families, honeymoon seclusion, and the re-entry of the newlyweds into society (Tuzin, 2008).

In the African front the institution of marriage is likewise an integral one is an important rite of passage in Africa. Kwasi Agyeman sums up the relevance of marriage in the African communal way of life as he emphasized that marriage is the most important socio-cultural foundation of any African society. He opines “I don’t know if there can be any society without family. I don’t know if there can be any family without marriage. So I don’t know if there can be any society without marriage. He believes that the values in African marriage practices are divine, natural,

cultural and social. It is divine, because it is believed to have been instituted by God as a natural response to procreation, manifested in cultural practices that socially bring families together. He goes further to say that “an authentic unadulterated African marriage is truly a social union of not only a man/woman love affair, but more so, it is a social union in a larger sense, involving families of the two lovers.

The wedding ceremony which marks the beginning of the married life,, is often an elaborate one in Africa, answering the question of why this is so, remains very integral to understanding the marriage institution in Africa today. In Africa, ceremonies hold a place of value in social life. Meekers,(1992), asserts that in contrast to the marriage ceremony as a discrete event in Western societies, the African marriage is a complex institution that generally proceeds by stages, most of which are characterized by the performance of prescribed rites . African societies see marriage not only as a relationship between two individuals but also as a structural link between groups (Hendrix, 1998:734; Kyalo, 2012). The ritual exchange of kola nuts or marriage drinks is typical in traditional wedding ceremonies in many West African societies (Meekers, 1992).In Africa, payment of this bride wealth, in part or in full, guarantees the husband rights to the sexual and economic services of his wife. In many cases, it also gives him rights to the children born to his wife (Meekers, 1992).

The patterns of weddings across the world are relative to the socio-cultural landscapes in which they are perpetuated. Hence, each pattern is highly driven by cultural and social undertones which prescribe and proscribe the appropriate ways of wedding. It is however important to know that cultural patterns in different parts of the world are driven by meanings attached to them.

Regardless of how an act or pattern is exhibited, what matters is the meaning. This being said, ceremonies are immensely laden with meanings. Each particular act, word, move and action is influenced by many of pre-existent cultural and socially significant meanings. Regardless, despite the availability of many other lines of action, people still subscribe to certain patterns even if the individuals involved are not at terms with them. impose on individuals getting married, a set of ritual requirements to fulfill in order to socially be sanctioned and in order to avoid the social backlash of an unsanctioned matrimony. As observed in other aspects of social existence, individuals and groups try as much as possible to satisfy social prerequisites, consciously, or unconsciously. Peoples and groups go the extra mile, to the extent of denying gratifications in order to live up to the standards of their society.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Arowolo (2010) notes that colonialism resulted in the subjugation and domination of Africa, the Western culture and European mode of civilisation began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Traditional African cultural practices paved the way for foreign way of doing things as Africans became fully ‘westernised’. Western culture now is regarded as frontline civilisation. African ways of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably unacceptable in public domain. Not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms.

According to Ekeh, (1975), the experiences of colonialism in Africa have led to the emergence of a unique historical configuration in modern post-colonial Africa: the existence of two publics instead of one public as in the West. He argues that the colonizers came with “colonial ideologies of legitimatization”. They gave legitimate reasons why Africans should accept

European rule and invariably European lifestyles, arguing that it was for the benefit of Africans. He talks about how these colonial and African bourgeois ideologies justified colonization and thus created two public realms the primordial public realm and civic public realm. He also says these two public realms have different type of moral linkages to private realm. a) Primordial public realm: primordial groupings, ties, and sentiments influence and determine the individual's public behaviour. It is moral and operates on the same moral imperatives as the private realm.

This seems to be the case with marriage ceremonies in Africa they have become a sort of hybridization a Janus faced issue of a sort, with Western models of meeting spouses, engagements leading the fore, the question some might pose is the fact that culture is dynamic, and subject to change, while that is true the change in African traditional was not inspired by internal factors, . This is because in a way it is very difficult to change the ideological roots of any society, and this change I speak of is not a change facilitated naturally, I speak of a “forced” change that society was not prepared for, a very vivid example of such is colonialism. Foreign wedding practices are being incorporated and are taking centre stage in contemporary weddings. The implication of this for traditional customs and rituals is that they are being replaced or being redefined. In fact, most traditional practices and wedding rituals have lost their value and those that still persist are not accorded full importance. Hence, the modern wedding practices present a picture of dying patterns as well as emergent patterns. This presents a very huge concern for the African Society.

One of the core essences of research is to fill gaps that exist in literature, of a truth there are only extremely few studies that have been conducted on weddings in contemporary times, most of the works done were quiet far back, and most of them were restricted and documented nationally. There are hardly any works which extend the study of weddings, at a continental level. Asides

from the effects of colonialism, there is also an increasing effect of globalization, as cultural overlaps are seen to occur even within Africa.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To describe how marriages are celebrated among the Yorubas and Anlo-Ewes
2. To examine the significant differences and similarities in patterns of marriage celebrations among Yoruba's and Anlo Ewes.
3. To document the continuities and discontinuities in marriage practices among Yoruba's and Anlo-Ewes
4. To examine the emergent patterns in marriage ceremonies among Yorubas and Anlo-Ewes.

1.4 Justification

Sociology is in the true sense the scientific study of society, it involves an empirical analysis of the taken for granted aspects of society. The study explores a basic concern of what the social and cultural justification for the marriage ceremony entails. The exploration of this concern gives an illuminating insight into people's cultural practices and the meanings people have attached to their own practices. By this, the study illuminates meanings rather than impose explanations and this goes a long way in enhancing the already documented meanings and perspectives on weddings in West Africa.

Moving away from the orthodox wisdom of colonialism, effecting changes, which is however still correct we are made aware, that the world is increasingly getting globalised. Countries are

increasingly influencing each other's cultures. Ghana and Nigeria as the closest Anglophone countries to each other, have in recent times experienced a mass inflow of citizens of both countries to the other. This study would likewise give insight to the effect this mass inflow has had on marriage practices. Studying the whole of Ghana and Nigeria would come across as an extremely daunting task, hence the researcher sought to limit this study to the Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe ethnic groups.

Marriage is indeed a universal institution, while there is a level of homogeneousness these groups still have distinct qualities that separate them, despite being subject to the same colonial rule, similar education systems, both write WASSCE, both speak English, an homogeneity is expected to be seen in the changes that have occurred through colonialism, this study would give insight to the extent to which this is true or false.

One of the most important issues that Africa faces is the classification of commonality; it is a costly assumption that bedevils the continent of Africa, the view that all countries in Africa are the same and have similar cultural heritages and practices, this study would serve to prove this wrong.

1.6 Methodology

This section describes the methodology used in this research study and also provides the justification for its use. This study is a social scientific investigative to in-depthly examine marriage ceremonies in Ibadan, Accra and Kumasi. Research design can be regarded as a kind

of framework designed by the researcher to be a guide in the process of selecting subjects for the study and helps to explain the relevance of specific research instrument, and method in the study. Also, it is in the research design that the sampling technique used in the study is stated . According to miller (1991), Methodology is a body of knowledge that describes and analyse methods indicating their limitation and resources, clarifying their pre supposition on consequences and relating their potentialities to research advances. In other words, methodology refers to the techniques and strategies employed within a discipline to manipulate data and acquire knowledge.

1.6.1 Research Design

Basically, it will be hard for the researcher to conduct the necessary methodology if there framework to gather, interpret and analyze data. Research design refers to the paradigm used in order to systematically obtain necessary data, with respect to levels of prior theory, guidelines for realism data analysis (Sobh & Perry, 2006).).

This research is largely qualitative. This research is largely qualitative because of the adoption of observation and key informant interviews to gather data about the subject of study. As a part of the process, the researcher has to examine which is which, in order to ensure that the most appropriate design will feed this study the right set of information. Before going any further, it is imperative that the researcher has been aware of the fact that research design is very important because it is the determinant of the information reliability of the overall study (Churchill & Peter, 1984).

The usual process of the qualitative method involves the interview of individuals or, to be followed by systematic observation from the same population's behaviour. It involves a research that relies on what is seen in the field or naturalistic settings more than on statistical data (Richard .T, Schaefer). However, qualitative method does not end there because, according to Darlington & Scott (2002), the process also involves the qualitative analysis of documented data in the latter part.

Even though the quantitative method was hailed as the most powerful research design, it does not mean that qualitative design no longer has a weight in the field of research methodology because, as described by Babbie (1986), this design still possesses advantageous features, such as flexibility, capability to yield in-depth analysis, and allowing the researcher to observe various aspects of a particular social situation. This has been supported by the findings of Garson (2002), which indicates that this design strives for in-depth understanding of the subject being studied by using appropriate techniques like participant observation, narrative analysis, or even deconstruction.

1.6.2. Study Population

The population for study was drawn from parts of Ibadan, Kumasi and Accra. The population is majorly composed of participants in wedding ceremonies. The observation uses availability to select wedding ceremonies to be observed. The key informant interviews draw population from the participating individuals in wedding ceremonies, trying as much as possible to include participants with social aptitude and affinity for wedding ceremonies.

1.6.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Six weddings were observed across Ibadan, Accra and Kumasi metropolises. 1 court wedding, 2 traditional marriages, 3 church weddings. The observation was largely based on the availability of the wedding and the willingness of the people wedding to allow their weddings to be observed. About 5 key informant interviews were conducted within the Accra metropolis, the respondents consisted of people with vast knowledge of the marriage process

1.6.4. Methods and Instruments of Data Collection

The research acquires primary data through participant observation and in-depth interviews. The researcher engages in participatory observation in order to get first hand information about wedding ceremonies. For the observation, field notes are taken to document observed ceremonial practices.

Pictures are also taken as visual data presents graphic documentation of wedding practices from the observed weddings. The study used the qualitative method of research, because it required a detailed description, and observation of marriage practices, so as to gain an in-depth and all round knowledge of these cultures, as only this type of research instrument would allow for a detailed and extensive understanding of marriages today among both societies, it would also give room to capture the caveats discovered. The researcher decided to add Key informant interviews to the observations, so as to cover up for one of the downfalls of the observation method, which is the fact that it is prone to the researchers bias, thus this allowed for objectivity in the study.

1.6.5. Data Analysis

In order to give life and meaning to data, to make it a potent tool of understanding a phenomenon, data acquired for the study was analysed. Pictures and field notes were acquired from the participant observation. The pictures were put through pictorial analysis in order to illicit meanings from the captured realities. Field notes were used sparsely in the description of observed wedding procedures.

1.6.6. Ethical Consideration

Ethics are self-regulatory guidelines for making decisions and defining professions. It is the moral conduct of a system of establishing what is right and wrong. Ethical behaviour helps protect individuals, communities and environments, and offers the potential to increase the sum good in the world (Haralambos & Holborn, 2009; Isreal & Hay, 2006). Isreal and Hay also identify some principles which most ethical codes have in common: Informed consent; the consent of participants in research must be acquired. Informed consent involves participants voluntarily agreeing to participate in research and substantially understanding what the research involves. Confidentiality; and anonymity; this involves the protection of the identities of the participants in research. More so, information derived from research must not be directly traceable to the participants. This study took cognizance of research ethics and thus made it a point of necessity to contact individuals whose wedding are to be observed beforehand, explaining to them, and the objectives of the research seeking their full approval for their ceremony to be observed. In the pictures taken, individuals were duly informed to respect and maintain their anonymity. More so, participants were given the option of not participating if they are not okay with any of the research objectives. This fully satisfies the ethics of not forcing participants in any study.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

One of the most crucial limitation of this study is that it was carried out under a very short period of time, had more time been accrued to it, the researcher would have been able to look extensively into these two cultures.

The Anlo-Ewe weddings that were observed were also observed in Urban areas, a better proposition would have been to go to the Volta region to observe these weddings, the researcher could not achieve this owing to a number of reasons among which include time constraint, and availability of weddings to be observed, the only Anlo-Ewe wedding which the researcher was allowed to observe within the period of time allocated to this study were in areas which are in essence not where the Anlo-Ewes originate from.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The study is divided into 5 different chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study, which contains the background to the study, problem statement , research objectives , methodology, justification of the study , limitation of the study and the organisation of the study.

Chapter 2 which begins the literature review, starts with an introduction, it contains the concept of social change, factors of social change, and the effects of social change on different African social institutions and the theoretical framework.

Chapter 3 which continues the literature review has an introduction it also contains discussions on Yoruba traditional marriage, Anlo-Ewe traditional marriage, Similarities and differences between these 2, continuities and discontinuities in marriage practices among Yorubas and Anlos and finally the emergent patterns in marriage ceremonies among these two cultures.

Chapter 4 which contains the findings of the study contains an introduction , contemporary court marriage, contemporary marriage patterns of Yorubas, contemporary marriage patterns of Anlos, differences and similarities in marriage ceremony patterns among the Yorubas and Anlos, continuities and discontinuities in marriage ceremonies among Yoruba's and Anlos, and finally emergent patterns in marriage patterns among Yorubas and Anlos. Chapter 5 houses the summary and conclusion of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks extensively into the concept of social change, the factors heralding it and their implications for African social institutions. Culture is indeed not static but dynamic and various factors are responsible for bringing about this change.

2.2 The Concept of Social Change

Social change according to Al-Naser (1996) refers to variations in the ecological ordering of population and communities; in patterns of roles and social interactions; in the structures and functioning of institutions; and in the culture of the societies. Social change as a term signifies modifications which occur as humans interact and relate with one another. Society indeed is a mesh of social relations, thus against this background a social change can typify an alteration in the structure of social associations. Furthermore, the social procedure, in which attitudes, values, social institutions of any given society become changed or altered is referred to as social change.. It refers to a shift in the norms of a society, showing that a society in its entirety has embraced and enacted a pristine deportment or method of thought. According to Wiley (2000), “Norms are the agreed-upon expectations and rules by which a culture guides the behaviour of its members in any given situation. Therefore social change is a significant alteration over time in behaviour patterns and cultural values and norms”. According to Murdock (1961 in Shackman and Wang, 2002) “culture is a system of collective habits. The collective habits may be habits of actions, i.e., customs, or habits of thoughts, i.e., collective ideas. These habits are learned collectively.” A handful of these habits for instance norms guiding marriage, may have a

widespread acceptance throughout society while others may. The collective habits may be habits of actions, i.e., customs, or habits of thoughts, i.e., collective ideas. These habits are learned collectively. Some of the habits, may be shared throughout the society, while others may be limited to certain classes or groups. If the situation of the society changes, old behaviour patterns may be discouraged and new patterns are encouraged.

Mugabane (1971) notes that A total historical analysis of social change in Africa would, as a matter of course, take into account the following stages in "acculturation": 1. An initial period of contact between the invading whites and Africans: African resistance to white rule of formerly independent chiefdoms, and white use of physical force to overcome African resistance. 2. A period of "acquiescence": some Africans, alienated from their traditional society, are impelled to acquire the techniques and social forms of the dominant group, as shown by adopting its religion, going to school, and assimilating value patterns and cultural traits functional in the new order. 3. A period of resistance in a new way: Africans develop a "national" consciousness that transcends "tribal" divisions and confront the colonial power with the demands of national liberation.

3.3 Factors of Social Change

Arowolo (2010), notes points out very succinctly, that missionaries, trading of slaves and colonialism are the mainstay of African people being dominated by Westerners in every aspect of their cultural, political ,economic , religious facets. This assertion is true to the extent that colonialism fuels the budding of social change and cultural imperialism in Africa. This is correct to the extent that colonialism serves as a vehicle of implantation of cultural imperialism and social change in Africa. Colonialism, bearing the fore-mentioned in mind refers to “an

imposition of foreign rule over indigenous traditional political setting and foreign dominance and subjugation” (Arowolo, 2010 pp 3).

The culture and civilization started to find its way into the socio-cultural environment of Africans, beginning through Europeans having a contact with Africans, as a result of the conference held in Berlin, which basically propagated a search for stealing Africa’s resources, this would later be solidified or cemented, by a wave of globalisation, which was almost totally unavoidable. It is imperative to note that colonialism served as a distortion and retardation to speed and pulse of the growth of culture in Africa and its civilization pattern as well. Standing out among the effects of colonialism is what Arowolo (2010 pp 3) refers to as “the political and economic rape of the colonies has also led to what sometimes seem to be an unbridgeable cultural gap between the nations that were the beneficiaries of colonization and those that were the victims of the colonial assault. The era of colonial pillage and plunder led to the relative stagnation and often precipitous decline of traditional cultural pursuits in the colonies”.

African cultural traditions began to decline and were quickly overtaken by Western and European culture and civilization. Western culture and European mode of civilisation began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Indigenous practices peculiar to the African culture, began to give way to the foreign mode of doing things as in truth Africans became Westernised or better still “Europeanised”. Today, while speaking of front-line or civilization, it has to be with regards to Western civilization, as African culture and practices became tagged as “primitive”, “fetish” and “archaic” and totally unacceptable in the public realm.. Arowolo (2010, pp 4) rightly notes “not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it

became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms”.

The consequences of European and western culture and civilization for Africa, are indeed reflected in a lot of stages. It is however imperative to discuss the sources of change for the African socio-cultural milieu and its effects on the various African social Institutions.

In talking about the origins of social change in African societies Arowolo (2010 pp 7), states that:

the significant fact about African cultural history is the convergence upon the indigenous tradition of the two external influences—the Arab-Islamic and the European-Christian and also colonialism which the continent has been exposed for well over a millennium. The values and lifestyles associated with these traditions have been assimilated and to a large extent indigenized on the continent

Christianity and Islam have functioned as a means of solidifying external and foreign cultural practices on African societies. Pre-colonial Africa had as many as 10,000 different states and polities with sundry political systems and groupings (Meredith, 2006).

These comprised small family groups of hunter-gatherers such as the San people of southern Africa; a more structured unit of social groups such as the family clan groupings of the Bantu-speaking people of central and southern Africa, heavily structured clan groups in the horn of Africa, the large Sahelian Kingdoms, and autonomous city-states and kingdoms such as those of the Yoruba and Igbo People in West Africa, and the Swahili coastal trading towns of East Africa (Mokhtar, 1990).

By the 9th century AD, a string of dynastic states, including the earliest Hausa states, stretched across the sub-Saharan savannah from the western regions to central Sudan. The most powerful of these states were Ghana, Gao, and the Kanem-Bornu Empire. Ghana fell in the 11th century but was succeeded by the Mali Empire which consolidated much of western Sudan in the 13th

century. Kanem accepted Islam in the 11th century (O'Brien, 2005). It is imperative to have this sort of historical description of Africa, so as to get illumination on the nature of Pre-Colonial African societies, the fact that they had established systems of governance, they had achieved a sort of tempo to their civilization and cultural improvement, they had developed indigenous systems of politics and ways of enforcing and enacting rules, that ensured and maintained peace in their societies, and on the continent at large. The crux of the matter remains the Africa as a continent is vibrant, and indeed has put in very strong willed efforts at becoming democratic and developed. Africa is indeed not a colossal concept, there is a significant distinction in Africa which can be measured in terms of a lot of factors, like governance and in true sense identity as well.

Western civilization which brought about social change was accomplished through a number of processes Arowolo (2010), notes that the effects of western civilization and culture on Africa are in several phases however the most important three of these phases, are political effect, economic effect and social effect. I attempt to examine some of the effects of social change on African social institutions.

Political Effect

Colonialism was very integral to the comprehension of the Westernization process in Africa was essential to the understanding of the process of Westernization in Africa. Arowolo (2010), notes that “the holistic distortions of the hitherto well organized African societies in every sphere of life pointed to the depth and effectiveness of colonization in the process of westernizing African societies and their cultures”. On the side of politics some of its effects are:

- Natural boundaries that were previously set up to distinguish society from society, were collapsed and distorted, with no alternatives to ancestral culture and social institutions.
 - The civilization that was occasioned by the Westerners, subjugated and decoupled home-grown institutions and as a replacement a foreign rule was enacted.
- . Originally customary institutions were seen and recognized as not just political powers but likewise as guardians of culture and tradition.

- Introduction of Westminster liberal democracy:

Africa indeed had its own pattern of governance, prior westernization as Arowolo (2010, pp 7) notes “This does not just work in Africa. It is not that Africa did not have its own pattern of democracy before imposition of liberal democracy but the typical democracy in Africa and its processes were submerged by westernization”.

- Liberal Democracy: We are posed with the question of the effect of embracing the Western model of democracy for African societies, people and quiet a handful of them might argue that it was the right way to go as it provides a better atmosphere for maintaining human rights and also fosters development

This is indeed not always true as in reality the classification of commonality which is one of the most bedeviling effects of Social change is seen to have grave consequences for African societies. Western civilization insists that African countries must be democratic to achieve development, the truth is that this is not always the case, as different governance systems have achieved development, a governance system must be context specific to suit each country's needs, however one of the effects of social change is that most countries are forced to go into democracy a process they know little or nothing about what we then begin to see is a springing up of false democracies.

Economic Effect:

- One of the most important consequences of European Colonialism was the continuous incorporation of Africa into the “world capitalist system” In this system, Africa’s major role was that of producing raw materials for European industries, this has led to its deepened marginalization and exploitation, through unequal terms of trade, as Africa majorly exports raw materials
- Payment of taxes became compulsory and this compelled Africans into labour with wages. Under colonialism, agricultural production in Africa’s focus shifted to the production of cash crops and raw materials for industries, such as cocoa, oil palm, sisal. As Arowolo (2010, pp 8) notes:

“There was sudden shift in production mode from production of food crops to cash crops, a situation that caused hunger and starvation in Africa. Africa began to produce more of what she needs less and produce less of what she needs most.”

The terms of trade between Africa and European countries, were unequal, as since Africa was producing majorly raw materials which have a shorter shelf life, therefore European countries determined the prices at which they buy raw materials from Africa and also determine the prices at which they sell finished products to African countries.

- Arowolo (2010, pp 9) notes that “the plunder age method and systematically kleptocratic enterprises established in the colonies to expropriate natural resources of Africa to Europe has, in the perspective of Rodney, facilitated “underdevelopment of Africa while engendered the development of Europe”

- It has also led to Neo-liberalism in African countries, this is an economic process that derives its roots from the Liberal political economic perspective, it basically advocates minimum state involvement in the day to day running of the economy, its core ideas can be summarized as “free markets, free trade”, which basically implies that market forces i.e. the forces of demand and supply should be allowed to operate freely with little or no state incursion. It is believed that only through this would a country experience rapid and effective economic growth. Africa’s economy thus experienced a shift from its original communism to capitalism and now more recently Neo-liberalism.

Social Effect

In Africa today the extended family which was originally pre-dominant are caving in to nuclear families, and apparent and obvious shift from communalism to individualism, this which used to be one of the core features of the average African family. The extended which served very beautifully as a form of social vitality and indeed social safety has now been replaced with the Western nuclear family model.

- It also led to very rapid urbanization, as most people wanted to leave rural settlements, to urban ones to find white collar jobs.

Western civilization has also gravely affected the average African’s perception of sexuality, there is a burning desire to become like Westerners and as a result become in The conception of sexuality has changed completely; the desire to be like Westerners, and exploring sexual practices were hitherto unimaginable. However as (Arowolo, 2010 pp 8) notes:

This does not, however, in any way support cultural isolationism. Cultural isolationism is not possible in the context of globalisation. Cultural ideas and

values grow and flow across borders unimpeded, but that should not make us lose sight of the fact that the weaker you are; the more likelihood of cultural dominance. Africa has been very weak and vulnerable since the last century. Africa now suffer from level of mental enslavement; cultural imperialism; the need for decolonisation of the mind. The trend of Western civilisation in Africa is pathetic, the strength of wave of Western civilization is such that Africa is hardly capable of resisting it. The wave is so strong that it has become irresistible.

- Expertise in our indigenous languages is largely on a decline, as Africans are forced not just to accept the Western civilization and culture but also the Western language. This has grave consequences for the African society, as it is important to note that language fuels culture, and culture bears seeds for development, thus if we are made to abandon our indigenous languages and begin to make sense of our social world through a foreign mirror developing as a continent would increasingly be difficult.

Health Care effects

Traditional medical practitioners gain herbal knowledge either through inheritance or apprenticeship as a call by one or the other. In pre-colonial Africa however traditional health care providers were seen as the sole custodians of cures to ailments and were highly referenced and their prescriptions were generally acceptable. This prescriptions did work in curing these ailments presented to them, the percentage of success is however problematic to pin-point. Evidences also show that traditional herbal medicine in pre-colonial Africa was also well organized. and in fact as opposed to common belief that one doctor was to provide the cure for all kinds of ailments there was specialization among its practitioners.

Europeans felt that it was obvious they had something to offer Africans, and thus they also had to remove some of Africans' "backward traditions and replace them with modern ones, leaving them "civilized". Colonial Africa thus experienced much more drastic interventions of European medicines and modernity in general, than other parts of the world in the nineteenth century. The introduction of Western medicine and culture gave rise to 'cultural-ideological clash' which had hitherto created an unequal power-relation that practically undermined and stigmatized the traditional health care system in Africa because of the over-riding power of the Western medicine. The westerners came with an ideology that Africans were backward and thus needed civilization, therefore they were supposed to change their ways and become civilized. Their health practices as well needed to change to modern ones, traditional medicine was termed fetish and thus stigmatized. This became the new order of things, thus anyone who wasn't willing to drop this old ways was stigmatized as well as termed "archaic".

Christianity: The impact of Christianity has to be considered, for this has been the most important single factor in the process of Westernization in Africa. Western education, involving literacy and the mastery of a European language, became the condition for entry into the modern sector. For most of the colonial period, education was in the hands of the Christian missions, who sought not only to convert Africans but also to inculcate Western values. Christianity challenged traditional belief systems and promoted the diffusion of new ideas and modes of life; in particular, it sought to impose monogamy and the nuclear family as the norm.

Effects on Marriage and Family

Western civilization has also had tremendous effects on marriage systems, in Africa. To an increasing extent most young people who have acquired an education prefer to be married in accordance to Western ideals rather than indigenous ones. There is evidence to back this claim studies of secondary school boys and girls in countries like Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria prove this right. Omari, for instance conducted a study on about 293 students in a sample of eight Secondary and Teacher Training Institutions throughout Ghana. He finds that “about three-quarters of these subjects said they would like to be married either in church or before a magistrate (Omari 1960, pp. 197-210). This kind of legal and constitutional marriage, unlike customary ones they opine recognises bigamy as an offence, it is therefore safe to assume that most of these young people want and a monogamous marriage. In Nigeria also, a group of girls in secondary school asserted that the ideal and appropriate marriage type is monogamy, they also made it very clear that their husbands would not be chosen for them, that they would do the choosing themselves.

These kind of perceptions are indeed a resultant effect of the Christian evangelisation, that Colonialism spoke strongly for. No doubt these attitudes are in part the product of Christian evangelization which was augured by colonialism. Most Christian missionaries while trying to spread or grow the Christian marriage prototype insist not just on a one man one woman relationship, but that spouses also have responsibilities to each The contractual nature of the union has been made clear but according to the authoritative Survey of African Marriage and Family Life (Phillips, 1953) much of the teaching on the Christian marriage ideal has been negative. It has concentrated on prohibitions resulting in the common belief that sin is ' the wrong use of sex '. ' By an unconscious transition, the sex impulse and the sex act came to be associated with and to become sin' (Harries, 1953, pp. 379-80). In contrast, the young people

cited above attached positive value to the emotional side of the conjugal relationship. It is possible, therefore, that they have gained their idea of love through a different medium from the missionary;³ through, for instance, the Hollywood type of film, by travel abroad, etc. Young people in traditional society frequently form romantic attachments.

Cultural influences also play a major role in social change (Giddens and Duneier, 2000). Civilizations and education, brought by the British colonialist ushered in a drastic change in Yoruba marriage norms. Children, who are matured enough to marry, no longer allow their parents to choose a befitting partner for them. They make relationship with whoever they felt is the best that suit them and who they agreed to live with, for the rest of their life. As soon as the parties concerned meet themselves, agreed and ready to marry each other, the next thing is for the parents of the young man to meet the parents of the lady to introduce themselves very well (Akinbolaji, 2009).

In the traditional Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe society, most marriages were arranged by the parents on both sides. The importance of the family in the selection of marriage partners in the traditional (Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi 2003; Nukunya, 1969). These societies are reflected in the statement by Bolaji (1984) that “marriage partners were in those days of yore, chosen by the families of the young ones concerned”. Alaba 2004 and Nukunya point out that pointed no sooner had modernity (literacy, colonialism, capitalism, individualism, etc) crept into the hitherto preliterate, subsistence agrarian, communal Yoruba and Anlo society than this great importance attached to virginity waned and almost disappeared. Pre-marital sex became acceptable. Happy is a fiancée who got impregnated by her fiancé during courtship Alaba 2004. In Alaba’s (2004) opinion, the symbolic emphasis placed on virginity has waned. Thus, virginity of the bride is no longer accorded value as it was in earlier times.

Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi (2003) state that on the basis of existing evidence, it is possible to discern that there is a general increase in freedom from control by family authority. This indicates that a rural community is no longer an isolated, almost self-contained world, within which each member is dependent on the goodwill of the rest and must secure it by conformity with accepted rules. A major consequence of this situation is that marriage in Africa has become increasingly a matter of personal choice rather than an arrangement between groups in which the elders have a dominant say. It is now rather clear that the authority of parents and guardians is decreasing and often amounts to nothing more than a formal consent (Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi 2003). Modernization theory predicts that traditional family types will gradually give way to the conjugal family as a result of industrialization and increasing levels of education (Meekers, 1992). Rather than a complete abandonment of traditional family norms and a convergence toward the Western conjugal family, there is evidence of an integration of traditional and Western family modes, with contemporary African family life.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

In Peter Ekeh's 1975 article titled *Colonialism and the Two Publics: A theoretical statement*, he says that there is an "existence of two public realms in African societies contrary to Western Societies" Ekeh (1975). According to Ekeh (1975), the experiences of colonialism in Africa have led to the emergence of a unique historical configuration in modern post-colonial Africa: the existence of two publics instead of one public as in the West. He argues that the colonizers came with "colonial ideologies of legitimatization". They gave legitimate reasons why Africans should accept European rule and invariably European lifestyles, arguing that it was for the benefit of Africans. He talks about how these colonial and African bourgeois ideologies justified

colonization and thus created two public realms the primordial public realm and civic public realm. He also says these two public realms have different type of moral linkages to private realm. a) Primordial public realm: primordial groupings, ties, and sentiments influence and determine the individual's public behaviour. It is moral and operates on the same moral imperatives as the private realm.

b) Civic public realm: this is historically associated with the colonial administration and has become identified with popular politics in post-colonial Africa. it is based on civil structures: the military, the civil service, police, etc. Its main characteristic is that it has no moral linkages with the private realm. Civic public realm in Africa is amoral and lacks the generalized moral imperatives operative in the private realm and in the primordial public (Ekeh 1975). This following paragraph summarizes the main theme of the article:

Most educated Africans are citizens of two publics in the same society. On one hand, they belong to a civic public from which they gain materially but to which they give only grudgingly. On the other hand they belong to a primordial public from which they derive little or no material benefits but to which they are expected to give generously and do give materially. Their relationship to the primordial public is moral, while that to the civic public is amoral" (Ekeh 1975).

Our post-colonial present has been fashioned by our colonial past. It is that colonial past that has defined for us the spheres of morality that have come to dominate our politics and permit me to say all spheres of society, health institutions inclusive, (Ekeh 1975).

Weddings in Africa today, depict a contention of culture, a struggle for identity of a sort. The question of why as Africans, we do both “traditional” and “religious” weddings at the same time. The truth in essence is this, for us the religious does not capture our cultural enough. Underlining our thinking is the view that the religious is a prototype of another cultural identity. This captures the liminality of the African personhood, the very idea that the African child is a child of two worlds is still being played out even in our wedding ceremonies



CHAPTER THREE

THE YORUBA AND ANLO-EWE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE PRACTICES

3.1 THE YORUBA TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

The Yorubas are a people with a rich cultural heritage (Atolagbe, 2012). Among the Yoruba, a people with distinguished culture and language, marriage and weddings are uniquely practiced in line of customs and traditions. The rites and the symbolic interpretations of these rights are highly bound to the cultural orientation of the Yorubas. A Yoruba marriage is made final not only by the wedding rites and the move of the bride to her husband's house but also by the payment by the husband of a bride wealth (Llyod, 2004). To the Yoruba, the primary purpose of marriage is sustaining the Yoruba race through legitimate and responsible procreation (Alaba 2004).

The Yoruba traditional marriage ceremony is characterized by outlandish attires hewn from *aso-ebi* (identical fabric chosen for a particular function), *Fila* (caps for males) and *gele* (head-gears for females) of the same color, and pattern, most of the time the bride's family and the groom's are differentiated by different fabric and color), meals of varied sorts from local meals (local meals including amala, yam flour and iyan, (pounded yam), gbegiri (beans soup) and ewedu and efo (stews made from vegetables), stand out as special attractions of the typical Yoruba traditional weddings, drinks of various brands, relatively intimidating number of people and a very cheerful and most times musical atmosphere. This is most likely a wedding reception among the contemporary Yoruba of western Nigeria.

Johnson (1960), notes that in ancient times where all things are equal and normal, there are three stages to be observed in celebrating marriages in the Yoruba culture outlined as;

- i. An early intimation.
- ii. A Formal Betrothal.
- iii. The Marriage.

An early intimation: Generally, it was the duty of the female members of the family to look out for a wife for their male relative; girls are generally marked out from childhood as intended for a particular young man, with or without her knowledge, this is the first stage in the process. Mutual relations at this time are of an informal nature, much depends upon subsequent events, especially on the girl's liking for the man when she is of age, and the consent of the parents. This period is also used to make a close acquaintance with each other's family, for before a formal betrothal is made the relatives on both sides will first satisfy themselves that the family of the other side is free from the taint of any hereditary disease such as insanity, epilepsy, leprosy, etc. and also whether they be insolvent debtors. As mutual understanding becomes established, presents are usually given at the New Year, and at other annual festivals, with both families exchanging gifts with each other, which further deepens or strengthens this relationship. This period usually lasts till the girl is of marriageable age (Johnson,1960).

The Betrothal /the "*Isihun*" / informed consent

No girl will ideally marry without the consent of her parents, and it is rare for a girl to refuse the choice of her parents, at least it was in ancient Yoruba. The family oracles are consulted before the final decision is arrived at, (whether to go ahead with the marriage plans or not) this is

usually done in a bid to foretell the future, of whether their union would be fruitful, or their coming together would increase good luck.

The betrothal ceremony is one that is of very high significance, it is usually done in the night, when all the most important members of the family on both sides (bride and groom) will be at leisure to be present, as well as their intimate friends. The young man is to present 40 large kola nuts, some money, and several pots of beer for the entertainment of those present. The kola-nuts have to be divided, and all present as well as important absentees must have a share of them, indicating thus that they are witnesses of the betrothal. After this day, the girl is not to meet her fiancé or any member of his family without veiling or hiding her face. Following this is what is known as the '*ana*' or 'dowry'. The bridegroom-elect has to present to the parents of the intended bride, choice kola-nuts, alligator pepper, and bitter kolas. Also, he presents a fine wrapper of good quality, a large covering cloth, a head tie and some money according to his ability. Well-to-do families rarely require more than 10 heads of cowries in these days, in earlier times one head was considered ample only as a token. Whatever variations may be in these presents, the kola-nuts of both kinds and the alligator pepper are invariable and essential. If the girl happens to be performing a debtors' service at the time of the marriage, the groom-to-be will have to pay the debt and release her, before the marriage can take place, (Johnson, 1960). This event (the betrothal) is also an occasion of rejoicing, feasting, and offering of sacrifices. The parties themselves are to carry special propitiatory sacrifices offered to the evil one.

Marriage (Igbeyawo)

Marriages could take place at any time of the year, except during the feasts, but the most usual time is after the season of harvest, and following the Egungun (Masquerade) festival. The bride is escorted to her new home at all times in the night, clad in her best with a thin white cloth for a veil, and attended by her companions all well dressed, with drums, and singing and dancing. The bridal party is met at the entrance gate of the bridegroom's compound by a female band of the house specially selected for the purpose, and by them the ceremony of washing the bride's feet is performed, and then the bride is literally carried and borne into the house. We therefore see the origins of the term for marriage in Yoruba 'being *Gbe lyawo*' which literally means lifting or carrying the bride. She is then taken into the bathroom where she is washed, rubbed down, perfumed, and dressed up afresh, and then conducted into the apartment of the head lady of the house. She thus becomes a resident of that house for life.

The bride is usually brought with her idols, and furnished from her home from her parents, their friends and also well wishers with everything that pertains to the so called female department of house-keeping, including cooking utensils, brooms, and other articles for house use. If she gives satisfaction to her husband, and friends, present are sent on the next day to her parents, she herself is covered with trinkets (consisting chiefly of corals and other costly beads, gold necklaces where they are obtainable, etc.) and the festivities continue for at least three days. A bride who is found not a virgin is rather hardly used and sometimes severely punished to the extent of having her tied and severely flogged, thus compelling her to name her violator so as to have him severely fined. No ornaments are allowed her and she may be ordered to perform errands out of doors unveiled, the next day, or may be sent out with, or may be sent out with a

pitcher for water. Otherwise, a bride is never seen out of doors for 12 months at least after her marriage, except closely veiled, and with attendants.

One of the most important characteristics of culture, and dare I say society itself, is that it is dynamic, constantly being changed, modified and these changes come as a result of the interactions between internal and external factors, as Kalmijn,(2004),notes wedding customs are often passed down from one generation to the next, yet they are prone to the pervasive forces of socio-cultural change , this is also true of the Yoruba traditional marriage system. This changes are closely linked to gradual emphasis of society today on individualism what Durkheim calls the shift from Mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity and Fredinand Tonnies describe as the movement from Gemmelschaft to Gesselschaft. In choosing a bride for example, what originally obtained was a bride being chosen for the groom, nowadays, he is left to make his own choice, based on his personal wishes, the issue of it being the community's business whether you are a virgin or not, is also faded out, the veiling of faces for 12 months, and the refusal of the bride to see her fiancé unless accompanied, has also been changed, interesting to note however is that one element of the traditional marriage, that has endured is the aspect of gift giving and its reciprocation between both families, between friends and well wishers during wedding ceremonies. This is due to what is acquired by learning, mostly through an inform al process which Albert Bandura, describes beautifully in his social learning theory, the cultural nature of the Yoruba wedding, necessitates first, the familial exchange of persons and gifts; and then a communal exchange of gifts among kinsmen bound by affinal and consanguinal networks, through a process of learning therefore, through socialization, people are made aware of to give, and not to give , the cultural interpretation of certain gifts and so on.

Modern Yoruba traditional weddings are divided into two basic stages; the introduction and the wedding proper as Atolagbe (2012), notes.

The Introduction / mo mi n mo o (know me I know you)

The families of the bride and groom meet long before any engagement i.e. the traditional marriage ceremony takes place. The groom visits the family of the bride in company of his father and some family members. The occasion is an informal introduction without fanfare but a cordial atmosphere to know each other. The informal introduction does not require much except some tubers of yam and a few bottles of wine; the family of the bride hosts the visitors with a simple meal of their choice. Apart from all round introductions, they might discuss when the event would take place, this is not a hard and fast rule and such discussions might take place later (African Weddings, 2014).

Igbeyawo (carrying or lifting the bride)/ Traditional Marriage/ Engagement

In most societies, marriage involves a mutual commitment by each partner, and linkages between two individuals and families are publicly displayed (Skolnick 2008). The Yorubas believe that it is the entire extended family, and not just the nuclear family that gives out a ‘son’ or a ‘daughter’ in marriage and both families of the bride and groom become one after such a marriage. Also, they believe that both families should be fully represented at the marriage ceremonies, the ‘Introduction’ where family members from both sides are introduced one to the other, and the ‘Engagement’ which is the proper wedding (Atolagbe, 2012).

The wedding starts off with the bride’s family all seated at the venue, excluding the bride and her close friends. Next comes the arrival of the groom’s family, which is heralded by singing,

dancing up to the door steps of the groom's house or the venue. They are led by 'Alaga Iduro' – spokeswoman for the grooms family and then the entourage is stopped and challenged by 'Alaga Ijoko'- spokeswoman for the bride's family and her team who want to know from the visitors their 'joyful mission'. Before this is concluded, some statutory amount must be paid by the groom's family through their spokeswoman, after which the groom's family is welcomed and ushered in. Notably, the groom must be conspicuously absent until he is sent for by the Alaga Ijoko or else such an act could be seen as an affront on the bride's family, which would deserve a fine. Plenty of music, dancing and greetings goes on. Traditional drummers with talking drums and local instruments, singing and chanting at every prompt of either of the 'Alagas' – Ijoko or Iduro.

After the formal introduction of the groom accompanied by his age mates and friends which also involves prostrating to the family of the bride to formally request their daughter's hand in marriage the Alaga iduro which means the standing master of ceremony, also follows the groom and family to ask for the hand of their daughter, a letter of proposal is read, stating the groom and his family's intention, and the bride's family reciprocates with a letter of acceptance. A bride price has to be paid which is subject to negotiation, there are other fees to be paid by the groom/his family (which are also negotiable); Owo Isigba - N500. This is used to open the packaged gift items brought by the bridegroom, Owo Ikanlekun (entrance fee) - N500, Owo Ijoko Iyawo - N1,000. This is the money given to elders in the groom's family, Owo Isiju Iyawo (fees paid to unveil the bride) - N500, Owo Baba Gbo - N500. This amount is paid to ask for the bride's father consent, Owo Iya Gbo - N1,000. This is the amount of money paid to ask for the bride's mother consent, Owo Omo Ile Okunrin - N500. This is the money given to all male children in the bride's family, Owo Omo Ile Obinrin - N500. This is the money given to all

female children in the bride's family, Owo Iyawo Ile - N500. This is the money given to all wives in the bride's family, Owo Ijoko Agba - N1,000. This is the amount of money reserved for elders of the bride's family. The grooms family are also expected to bring certain gifts, Some of the items demanded by the bride's family are; bag of sugar, bag of rice, alligator pepper, large number of bitter kola, bag of salt, kola nuts, wine (some Christians refuse to bring this).If they are Christians, a bible, and Muslims the Holy Quran, keg of honey and about forty large tubers of yam are included in the items. Non edible items could include expensive materials like lace, several pairs of shoes, wristwatch, a gold engagement ring and head tie (Akintoye,2010). The honey signifies a happy 'sweet' fulfilled life, as well as the sugar. The kolanuts and the bitter kola signify longevity and the fulfillment of purposeful tradition and culture in the life of the couple. The alligator pepper signifies inaccessibility to witches and wizards. The salt also signifies a purposeful, useful and fulfilled life. The fruit signifies fruitfulness in the marriage (children, prosperity, etc). Water signifies the source and fountain of life to which the couple are being committed as they are joined together, while the wine, which is used in prayers, signifies the approval of the 'gods' and their protection over the couple. The Holy Bible or Holy Koran which the bride must always pick out of all the gifts when asked to pick what she likes best out of the gifts, signifies a promise to obey God's instructions, this indeed represents a hybridization of weddings today. Lastly, the wedding rings seal the vows of the marriage between the couple while the gifts and cash make up the dowry. A few families refuse to collect the cash, maintaining that their daughter 'is not for sale' and should not be treated as such. Most of these items are touched and used in praying for the couple.

The bride's family are also supposed to reciprocate with return gifts. At the Yoruba traditional wedding, the first use of music- an expression of joy, rejoicing, happiness and fulfilment is the

main purpose. There is a lot of singing on both sides, accompanied by dancing. The ‘wives of the family’ (that is any female married into the bride’s family or the groom’s family-‘Iyawo Ile’) - run all the necessary errands: errands of carrying the gifts in or out, collecting offerings periodically from guests, serving all the participants and even chorusing the songs or chants by their spokeswomen. All these activities make the wedding very lively and interesting from the beginning to the end. The native drummers also add pep to the celebration by beating the talking drum to traditional or Christian songs that are very popular and simple to follow, at every opportunity or prompting of the Alagas. However, most Yoruba Muslims opt for a ‘Nikkai’ (Muslim wedding), but where they do not, indigenous Muslim songs and prayers are offered in place of Christian or traditional songs. (Atolagbe 2012).

The bride is ushered into the venue of the ceremony followed by her friends, all dressed in traditional attires like buba and iro, wrapper and blouse, and gele headgear as they join her in a boisterous dance down the hall. The bride also goes through a few protocols but money is only given to her and not taken from her as in the case of the groom. She is introduced to the groom's family before she takes her place beside the groom. At this stage, they may consider themselves married. The wife displays some wifely traits by feeding the groom some cake and wine, even a kiss to the amusement of the guests.

3.2 ANLO-EWE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

The Ewe people reside in south-eastern Ghana. There, they form the Volta Region of the Republic of Togoland (Nukunya, 1969). This area stretches from the Volta River to the borders of Togo and Ghana. The Anlo Ewe in particular are an ethno-linguistic group among the Ewe who reside on the Ghanaian coast and who utilize their own particular dialect of the Ewe language (Geurts, 2003). “Anlo,” is a particular dialect of the Ewe language (Geurts, 2008). A

kinship is upheld by the Anlo Ewe, and their king, termed the *Awoamefia*, lives in seclusion as he is seen to possess many aspects of a divinity. This kingship is comprised of fifteen clans, two of which, the Adzovia and the Bate, are considered to be royal clans. These clans alternate in providing the *Awoamefia* for the Anlo Ewe people (Nukunya, 1969).

An important group of concepts to understand when dealing with kinship among the Anlo Ewe people is their dealings regarding their marriage practices. Anlo lineages are exogamous while clans are endogamous. To clarify, this means that the Anlo Ewe people are encouraged to marry outside of their lineages, but they are told it is better not to marry outside of their clans. As marriage between members of the same lineage is strictly prohibited, it does not happen very often. This prohibition exists in order to keep and establish ties between unrelated lineages.

The Anlo people also do not allow marriage between, “uterine kin,” (Nukunya, 1969). This refers to siblings, cousins, and basically any two people who are known to be relatives to some degree. This rule is not strictly observed in the least, however. Due to the residence pattern of the Anlo Ewe kin are relatively dispersed, and ties that are further removed are easily forgotten (Nukunya, 1969). Thus, marriages between uterine kin occur commonly without any repercussions.

An Anlo man is also not allowed to marry his sister’s husband’s sister (Nukunya, 1969). This to the Anlo Ewe is essentially an exchange of spouses between two lineages that taints relationships between members of kinship groups by turning them into affinal, or marriage, relations. This rule is strongly enforced and hardly ever violated.

While marriages are still occasionally arranged, knowledge and encouragement is developing amongst the Anlo Ewe people regarding the individual and personal aspects of marriage. When a boy fancies a young woman, there are certain courting procedures to take place that the boy must see to. In the past, it was tradition that all Anlo girls were given ceremonies when they reached puberty and were paraded through the area in lavish clothing (Nukunya, 1969). This symbolized that the young girl was old enough to be married.



In modern times, however, boys simply may be able to court girls whenever those young women are old enough, and no ceremony is given for them. When a young man sets his eyes on a girl, he customarily tells a friend, and they both go to the girl's house later in the evening. This time of day is preferred because by then, all of the household duties have been completed. The boys are welcomed into the home of the girl and are seated. Then, the boy's friend tells the former's potential suitor why they have come. The possible couple converses, while the young man tries his best to act appropriately and win the girl's approval. Wooing can be an, "arduous business," among the Anlo Ewe (Nukunya, 1969). Girls typically do not say, "yes," easily, and several courting visits must usually be made by a young man before he wins over his girl of choice.

Every now and then, brave girls go against the grain and propose their love to whichever boy they fancy. A girl will find an opportunity to corner the boy and bluntly state, "Young man! I love you," (Nukunya, 1969). When the boy accepts the proposal he commonly exclaims, "I loved you first," in return. Polygyny, or marriage of a man to more than one woman, sometimes occurs within the Anlo Ewe culture. Very few men actually take up more than one wife, however.

The actual marriage between an Anlo Ewe man and woman requires a series of fairly elaborate and intricate ceremonies. When a young man is serious about his intent to marry, a ceremony called, "vofofo," or simply, "knocking," takes place. During this ritual, the young man's father's sister and mother's sister go to the house of the bride's parents and formally ask for the girl's hand in marriage and his behalf. The bride's parents usually take at least a week to deliberate on the matter, since it is customary for Anlo people to not reply immediately to questions of great importance (Nukunya, 1969).

If and when the bride's parents agree to the proposal, the bridegroom immediately starts putting the marriage payments together. These payments, or the bride wealth, must be paid from the bridegroom's family to the family of the bride, in return for the young woman's productive and reproductive abilities. The payments usually consist of a wooden box filled with various types of valuable cloth and drinks. This must be given to the bride's family before the actual marriage ceremonies can ensue. The bride's family may give back any payments they see to be insufficient, and they commonly do. Thus, it usually takes several attempts of presenting the bride wealth before it is actually accepted and the marriage process can begin.

When the marriage payments are finally accepted, the actual marriage ceremonies quickly ensue. First, the bride is formally handed over to the bridegroom's parents (Nukunya, 1969). This ceremony is relatively short and takes place in the household of the bride's father. Both sets of parents give advice to the couple, and the bride and groom state explicitly that they wish to be wed. This "handing over," is meant to symbolize the transferring of the woman's sexual rights to her groom (Nukunya, 1969). After this a date is set for the next ceremony.

This next day is deemed, "the powdering of the bride," (Nukunya, 1969). The woman is bathed in sweet oils and dressed in lavish clothing. She is brought to the groom's household by her father's sister and her mother's sister. While they walk over, the groom and his family are waiting for waiting for them, and the consummation bed within the bedroom is already ready and covered

with white sheets. When they come to the house, the bride's father's sister hands her over to the groom's father. After this occurs, the consummation ceremony takes way. Typically, the groom's father's sister performs this ceremony being that she has had a successful and productive marriage herself. The hope and belief is that the bride will follow in this woman's footsteps (Nukunya, 1969). The older woman leads the bride to the doorway of the bedroom. The bride is told to look into the room three times, and then walk in and out of the doorway six times. Next, she then is brought into the room. As this occurs, if the bride steps on the crack of the doorway it is believed that she will not be a good wife (Nukunya, 1969). When in the bedroom, she is stripped naked and wrapped in cloth. The bride is then powdered and brought to the bed where she is met by her groom. The older woman states to them, "You are now man and wife, breed as much as you can," (Nukunya, 1969). This woman leaves and they newly married couple are expected to embrace each other for the first time. While the newlywed's are consummating their marriage, both families wait outside of the bedroom. After a considerable amount of time, the woman who performed the marriage knocks on the bedroom door, goes inside, and examines the white bed sheets. If the sheets are stained with blood, everyone rejoices, for it means that the bride was a virgin. The consummation ceremony, overall, is a public declaration of the bride's former virginity. If and when the sheets are not blood stained, the girl is shamed and she must name who she has slept with before. These men are then charged and fined for fornication, and the rest of the bride's ceremony is not as showy as it would have been (Nukunya, 1969).

Following the consummation ceremony, the bride is to remain in seclusion in the groom's new home that he would have recently acquired for himself. She typically remains there for anywhere between four and eight months. During this time, the groom is supposed to take care of and lavish his bride. When the bride comes out of seclusion, she is expected to be pregnant. This gives people hope that their marriage will be a successful one. The main point of the wife's seclusion is for the husband to express his sexual monopoly over her (Nukunya, 1969). After seclusion is complete, a ceremony of thanksgiving to the dead is held (Nukunya, 1969). The wife is then dressed up again, and goes out to see her relatives who provide her with many gifts. With this, the marriage ceremonies are officially complete.

3.3 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WEDDING PRACTICES AMONG THE YORUBAS AND ANLOS

The aso-ebi (identical cloth sewed for various occasions) is a very integral part of the Yoruba traditional marriage ceremony, it serves as a source of distinguishing the bride's family from the grooms, it also serves as a form of signifying one's association to either of the family's as a friend or well-wisher or direct relative. Orimolade, (2014), notes that these fabrics are often times very expensive with the seller often times gaining a lot from its sale and cannot be reused for other occasions, however buying it means that when an individual has a function of his or her own, those whom you bought from would be obligated to buy also, thus generating your lost money back and making the event a more colorful one, attendance is also hinged on reciprocity, as people are more likely to attend your events if you have theirs. This is one significant difference .

Only very few studies have been done concerning this, in relation to this study this objective is one that is largely exploratory.



However from the descriptions above there are converging points for both of the marriage prototypes from both cultures.

3.4 THE CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES IN MARRIAGE

PRACTICES

Increased exposure to Western norms is a potential source of social change (Meekers, 1992).

Social change according to Al-Naser (1996) refers to variations in the ecological ordering of population and communities; in patterns of roles and social interactions; in the structures and functioning of institutions; and in the culture of the societies. The term social change is used to indicate the changes that take place in human interactions and interrelations. Society is a web of social relationships and hence social change means change in the system of social relationships.

Also, social change is a social process whereby the values, attitudes, or institutions of society become modified. It is a shifting of societal norms, which indicates that an entire society has adopted and applied a new behaviour or way of thinking (Fitzpatrick, nd). Norms are the agreed-upon expectations and rules by which a culture guides the behaviour of its members in any given situation. Therefore social change is a significant alteration over time in behaviour patterns and cultural values and norms (Wiley, 2000). According to Murdock (1961 in Shackman and Wang,

2002) culture is a system of In the traditional African society, most marriages were arranged by the parents on both sides. The importance of the family in the selection of marriage partners in the traditional. (Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi 2003) Yoruba society is reflected in the statement by Bolaji (1984) that “marriage partners were in those days of yore, chosen by the families of the young ones concerned”. Specifically, two forms of arranged marriage were common among the Yorubas. One was the betrothal of a girl before she was born. Orubuloye (1987) observed that betrothal of an unborn baby, with the hope that the outcome of the pregnancy would be a girl

was a common practice among the Yorubas. Immediately the child is born and turns out to be a girl, the family that was considered to be respectable and worthy in character will be betrothed. Such arrangement was usually made on behalf of a single man. Gifts were brought to the parents of the girl, until she was old enough to be taken away in marriage. Secondly, several years before reaching puberty, a girl could be given in marriage to a man older than her; sometimes old enough to be her father. Quite often, the girl might not be aware of this arrangement for a long time. The third category of mate selection now prevalent among the Yorubas is the one in which individual concerned personally chose their own mate. This may not be unconnected with the increased pace of modernization whereby emphasis are shifting from extended family ties, which formally existed in most of the rural areas, to nucleation. Therefore, the family involvement in mate selection may be diminishing.

Alaba 2004 pointed out that no sooner had modernity (literacy, colonialism, capitalism, individualism, etc) crept into the hitherto preliterate, subsistence agrarian, communal Yoruba society than this great importance attached to virginity waned and almost disappeared. Pre-marital sex became acceptable. Happy is a fiancée who got impregnated by her fiancé during courtship Alaba 2004. In Alaba's (2004) opinion, the symbolic emphasis placed on virginity has waned. Thus, virginity of the bride is no longer accorded value as it was in earlier times.

To an increasing extent educated young people apparently want a companionate marriage on Western lines (Marris, 1961). Evidence comes from interviewing and from studies made of the attitudes of students and of secondary school boys and girls in a number of countries, including Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. Omari, for example, collected data from 293 students in a

sample of eight Secondary and Teacher Training Institutions throughout Ghana. About three-quarters of these subjects said they would like to be married either in church or before a magistrate unlike what was seen before where parents choose their children's spouses. No doubt these attitudes are in part the product of Christian evangelization. "Traditionally the young Ghanaian boy did not choose his own wife. A 'father' or genitor sought a wife for his dutiful son. When a father found a suitable girl, he approached the girl's father and ascertained from him what he thought about a marriage between their respective children. If the girl's father agreed (and this was rarely after consulting his daughter), he accepted kola nuts or money, and two bottles of rum or a pot of palm wine. These were used 'to knock on the girl's parents' door'. The girl's father then stated what else needed to be done to complete the marriage. As a symbol of his intentions, the man also sent gifts at frequent intervals to his fiancée and he sometimes performed other services for her or her parents"(Omari, 1960 pp 2). When a woman married she did not forfeit her status as a daughter of her natal lineage or lose her personal ties with her relatives throughout her married life. Conceived of from the standpoint of the individual this was because she would need relatives to fall back upon in case of the failure of the marriage or because of some personal disaster. She would also need the support of her relatives in the event of a dispute with her husband's relatives. (Omari, 1960).

What is different about the contemporary situation is the extent to which romantic values are socially emphasized. According to Omari, (1962, pp. 14, 43). Ghanaians nowadays want 'to fall in love ' with a girl before they marry her. This implies that, in contrast to most traditional patterns, 'love ' is becoming nowadays an initial requirement for mate selection Omari says: While in grandfather's time he was lucky if he was permitted to edge in a word as to whom he would rather marry; today a young man wants to do everything for himself. Grandmother had

even less to do or say about these things: she only found herself with a husband. She did not know anything about 'love' and never expected her husband 'to say sweet things ' to her. She knew she had to get along with the man-for her own happiness, and for the happiness of her family which had taken' head money for her. The educated Ghanaian has increasingly come to have a preference for marriage under the Ordinance, i.e. the Western form. This is even more true of educated girls than of boys, for, by popular consent and usage, only women married under the Ordinance are addressed by the title, 'Mrs.' This title has come to command respect in social circles, so it is no wonder that popular sentiment is currently being aroused by the women of Ghana to have 'marriages under native law' legalized. Wives of marriages under the Ordinance are not only 'Mrs.', but the offspring are also protected.

Children, who are matured enough to marry, no longer allow their parents to choose a befitting partner for them. They make relationship with whoever they felt is the best that suit them and who they agreed to live with, for the rest of their life. As soon as the parties concerned meet themselves, agreed and ready to marry each other, the next thing is for the parents of the young man to meet the parents of the lady to introduce themselves very well (Akinbolaji, 2009).

Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi 2003 state that on the basis of existing evidence, it is possible to discern that there is a general increase in freedom from control by family authority. This indicates that a rural community is no longer an isolated, almost self-contained world, within which each member is dependent on the goodwill of the rest and must secure it by conformity with accepted rules. A major consequence of this situation is that marriage has become increasingly a matter of personal choice rather than an arrangement between groups in which the

elders have a dominant say. It is now rather clear that the authority of parents and guardians is decreasing and often amounts to nothing more than a formal consent. (Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi 2003) This is true for both the Ghanaian and Nigerian situation.

3.4.1 THE EMERGENT PATTERNS IN MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

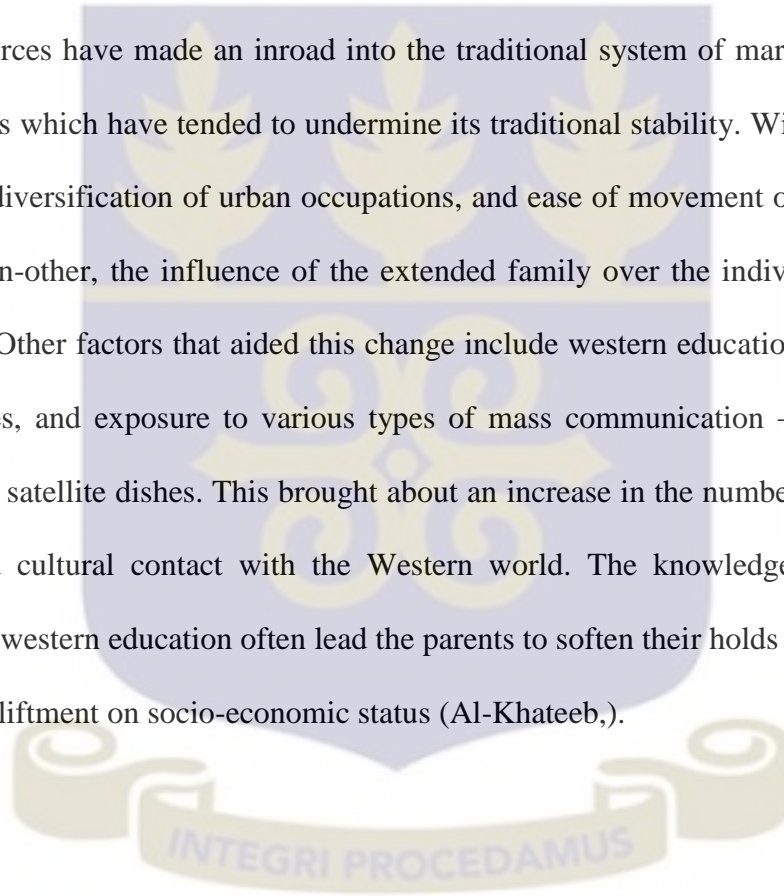
During the colonial era, Africans were subjected to forced acculturation. This was done through western education. Being educated and civilized meant the adoption of western ideas and values of love, marriage, family and life in general today, foreign values and life-styles are being introduced into Nigeria with greater vigour. The cable networks, internet, cellular phone, international media with their local collaborators are bringing new ideas about all of life into the bedrooms (Fasonranti and Owogbemi 2010)

The marriage laws and customs have undergone changes brought about by intercourse with other peoples, but the chief features in them are still preserved (Johnson, 1960). Even the wedding has become an individual achievement. In the distant past, a wedding was an event at which two kinship groups formed an alliance. More recently, it has been an event organized and paid for by parents, at which they display their approval and support for their child's marriage (Cherlin 2004). Cherlin's position posits that the communal nature of weddings is fast eroding. Cherlin 2004 studied the deinstitutionalization of marriage Cherlin 2004 studied the deinstitutionalization of marriage in America. From his study, he posited that marriage, it is now becoming an event centered on and often controlled by the couple themselves, having less to do with family approval or having children than in the past. One might assume, then, that weddings would become smaller and that many couples would forgo a public wedding altogether Cherlin (2004).

Cherlin (2004) discovered that contemporary couples wanted to make statements through their weddings, a statement both to themselves and to their friends and family that they had passed a milestone in the development of their self-identities. Through wedding ceremonies, the purchase of a home, and the acquisition of other accoutrements of married life, individuals hoped to display their attainment of a prestigious, comfortable, stable style of life. They also expected marriage to provide some enforceable trust. Cherlin 2004 further argued that the enforcement value of marriage is less than it used to be. People marry now less for the social benefits that marriage provides than for the personal achievement it represents.

Western civilisation and culture began to creep into African socio-cultural milieu, first, with the contact of Europeans with Africa, a consequence of Berlin conference in the quest for imperial pilfering of African resources and, later, consolidated by the unstoppable wave of globalization (Arowolo 2010). From Arowolo's stand point it is evident that two major factors of influence are colonialism and globalization. Western culture and European mode of civilisation began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Traditional African cultural practices paved the way for foreign way of doing things as Africans became fully 'westernised'. Western culture now is regarded as frontline civilisation. African ways of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably unacceptable in public domain. Not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms. The effect of western civilization on Wedding ceremonies is indeed a very profound one.

In underpinning the sources of change in African cultures, Arowolo (2010) states that the significant fact about African cultural history is the convergence upon the indigenous tradition of the two external influences—the Arab-Islamic and the European-Christian—to which the continent has been exposed for well over a millennium. The values and lifestyles associated with these traditions have been assimilated and to a large extent indigenized on the continent Arowolo (2010). In a rather religious fashion, Arowolo (2010), reflects that Christianity and Islam as religions have served as harbingers of foreign cultural influence on African cultures. Over the years, external forces have made an inroad into the traditional system of marriage and wrought important changes which have tended to undermine its traditional stability. With increasing pace of urbanization, diversification of urban occupations, and ease of movement of people from one Yoruba area to an-other, the influence of the extended family over the individual member has been attenuated. Other factors that aided this change include western education, going to abroad for further studies, and exposure to various types of mass communication – television, video programmes, and satellite dishes. This brought about an increase in the number of educated men and women, and cultural contact with the Western world. The knowledge and information acquired through western education often lead the parents to soften their holds over their children because of the upliftment on socio-economic status (Al-Khateeb,).



CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEMPORARY MARRIAGE PATTERNS OF THE YORUBA AND ANLO-EWE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with data analysis, interpretation as well as discussions on findings according to the objectives of the study which were acquired through qualitative method from the field.

This presentation is based on six case studies and 5 key informant interviews.

4.2 TO DOCUMENT THE FORMS OF WEDDINGS IN IBADAN AND TO DESCRIBE HOW WEDDINGS ARE CELEBRATED IN GHANA AND NIGERIA AMONG THE YORUBA WITH REFERENCE TO IBADAN AND THE EWE MARRIAGES

Observation in research implies a method of obtaining first hand data about a particular object or phenomenon through personal experience and notes about the nature of the phenomenon, event or occurrence. Data acquired from the indepth interviews regarding the meaning of weddings is presented here and an overall summary of way wedding rituals are carried out under different jurisdictions is presented here. Pictures are also analysed. The study observed 6 wedding ceremonies. 1 court wedding, 2 traditional wedding ceremonies and 3 church weddings.

The study discovers that among the Yoruba and Anlo Ewe, religious, civil (ordinance) and traditional marriages exist alongside each other and are done one after the other. It also however found out that there was no cemented order on what forms of marriage, should precede the other,

especially regarding the civil/ ordinance marriages . The Religious marriage ceremonies however most often require the couple to have completed all traditional rites before being performed.

4.3 COURT / ORDINANCE MARRIAGE

The civil or ordinance marriage is done in marriage registries, it has foundational basis in the western culture the transcended and was established during colonialism. After colonialism, it has been enmeshed into the overall process of wedding.

The court wedding is usually done in a marriage registry. The couple stand next to each other on the right whilst the registry official standing before them conducts the ceremony. The court wedding is basically a ceremony of the law. The main essence for this is for the couple to register and be recognized as married before the law. With this, the couple have civil rights and legal rights over each other and in fact some sense of security in the marriage. Hence, in the conduct of the court wedding, the couple go through a series a declarations, oaths, vows and actions to mark the beginning of their legal union. The court wedding is guided by routine. The official tells the couple what to do and say and there is prepared documents from which the couple would read. The couple read an affidavit on their left hand, and hold a bible on their right in turns .On the table lies the form which they filled and signed.

The audience comprises of family members and well wishers of both the bride and groom. The front rows of the audience space are occupied by parents or guardians of the bride and the groom as they have a prime role as witnesses and also to grant their consent and approval of the wedding. The parents of the bride and groom can either be in identical attires. In other cases, the groom's parent and bride's parents dress in different attires. It is not unusual to find empty seats

in the registry during a wedding, this is due to the fact that most people see going to court with the couple as a duty of the family and close relatives of the couple. Therefore most people do not attend with couple . The court wedding is usually brief and relatively formal unlike the traditional wedding which spans for longer. The court wedding usually involves a number of well laid out procedure which must be adhered to strictly.

As a respondent noted,

The intending couple has to come to give a notice of marriage, then they are given a form to fill, which would include their names, passport photographs, occupation and parents name. The form would be displayed for 21 days, if there is no caveat or objection then the couple can go ahead to fix a wedding date. Probe further what type of objections? For example if you have an issue with someone, the person can come to place a caveat on it , we have had a case of someone coming to report that a man who was intending to get married had previously been married to her sister, after our own investigation we found out that it was true and the wedding did not hold. Probe is it compulsory to do the court wedding ? I would say yes and No, If your Pastor or Church has been gazetted you don't need to, but if not then you need to in order to be recognized by law.. The pastor is gazette through the regional coordinating council, who would publish your name throughout the nation through Ghana publishing in the Gazette magazine, then you can hold marriages recognized by law, but this certificate can be revoked if it is misused. Some Churches don't know this thus when they take their certificate to the embassy it is rejected, that's why some people prefer to come here first and then go back to church for blessing .

(KII/MALE/MARRIAGE REGISTRY OFFICIAL/MARRIED/ MADINA / 2016).

According to another respondent,

After a man has performed all customary rights over a lady and the families have given their consent, they can then go on with the court marriage. What happens is that they go to the AMA, Accra Municipal assembly to register their marriage, they are given a three weeks window if no one comes to object the published marriage, then they can proceed the assembly however gives them a space of 3 months, it is within this 3 months that they can conduct or hold their weddings. Probe is it compulsory, No it is not if a church has been gazetted there is no need for the court marriage.

(KII/ CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR /MARRIED/LEGON/ 2016)

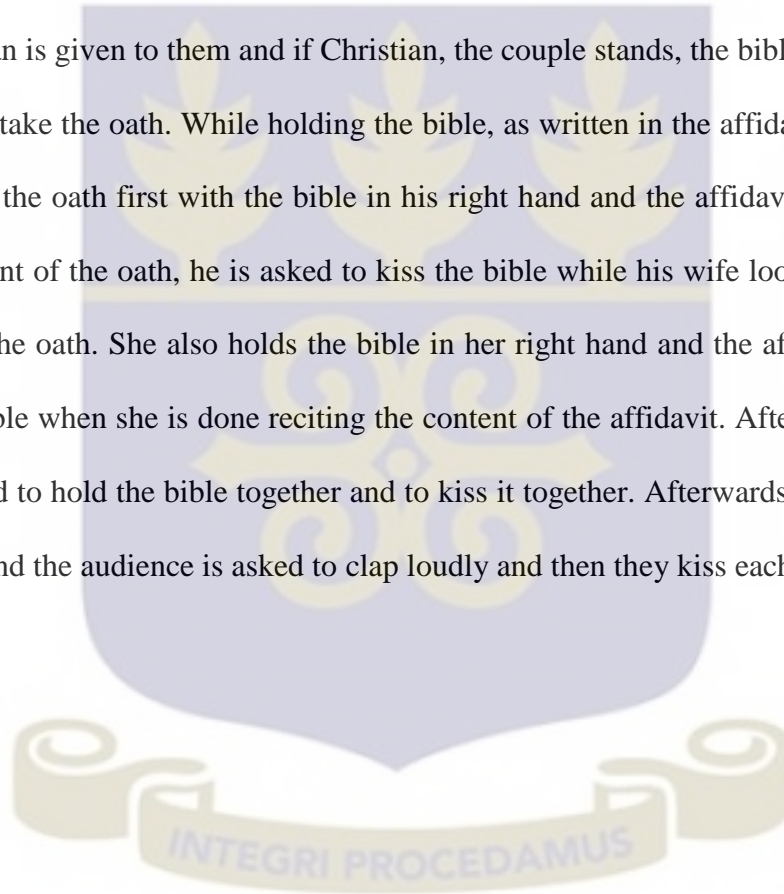
The study also observed that all the Anlo-Ewe marriages attended did not have a court marriage, this was attributed to the fact that most of the Churches used for their weddings, were already gazzetted hence there was no need to go to the court for a wedding as the church was lincensed to give them a certificate.

4.3.1 COURT MARRIAGE CASE STUDY

The ordinance marriage is also called the court marriage, it is sometimes referred to as the white wedding. All local governments have a marriage registry that serves people residing in the local government. The marriage in the registry is conducted by officials and the major purpose is to give legal sanction to the marriage according to the law of the federal republic of Nigeria. The registry has a small hall used to conduct weddings. This particular registry conducts weddings on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturdays alone. On the day of this case study, the couple observed were the fourth couple to have their wedding. They had previously come to register their intentions and their name had been published for 3 weeks. The couple although had already been assigned their wedding day, had to come early to pick a number this would determine the number of weddings that would precede them. The process in the registry is a very strict and routinely guided one in which the officials are in charge of its running.

The couple dressed in English attires. The bride in white top on a skirt, she is followed by the chief brides maid / best lady. The groom is dressed in a two piece suit while his best man who is behind him wears a shirt on trousers and their family members and friends behind them this is how the procession runs.. The couple enter the registry marriage hall, here they meet traditional drummers who beat their traditional *gangan* (talking) drums with vigor and skill. The couple

dance their way to the seats in front of the hall where the officials are waiting. The couple takes their seats, and the best man and best lady are seated behind the husband and wife respectively while family members, friends and well wishers sit in space reserved for the audience. The officials then proceed to ask the couple their language of preference and what language they want their marriage conducted in. The options available for this case study are English and Yoruba. The couple are first given an avadavat each which contains the wording and details of the oath of marriage they are about to take. The couple is then asked their religious affiliation, If Muslim, the Quran is given to them and if Christian, the couple stands, the bible is given to them. Afterwards, they take the oath. While holding the bible, as written in the affidavit given to them. The groom takes the oath first with the bible in his right hand and the affidavit in his left. After reciting the content of the oath, he is asked to kiss the bible while his wife looks on. The wife is the next to take the oath. She also holds the bible in her right hand and the affidavit on the left. She kisses the bible when she is done reciting the content of the affidavit. After taking the oaths, the both are asked to hold the bible together and to kiss it together. Afterwards, they are asked to interlock hands and the audience is asked to clap loudly and then they kiss each other.



PICTORAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ORDINANCE/COURT MARRIAGE.

Image 1.1 (Groom signing a copy of the affidavit)source(field work)



Image 1.2(

The couple dancing into the marriage hall) source (field work)



Image 1.4 (Registry officials conducting the marriage ceremony) source (field work)

Image 1.5 (bride signing the affidavit) source (fieldwork)



Image 1.6 (Couple reading out the content of the marriage oath) source (field work)

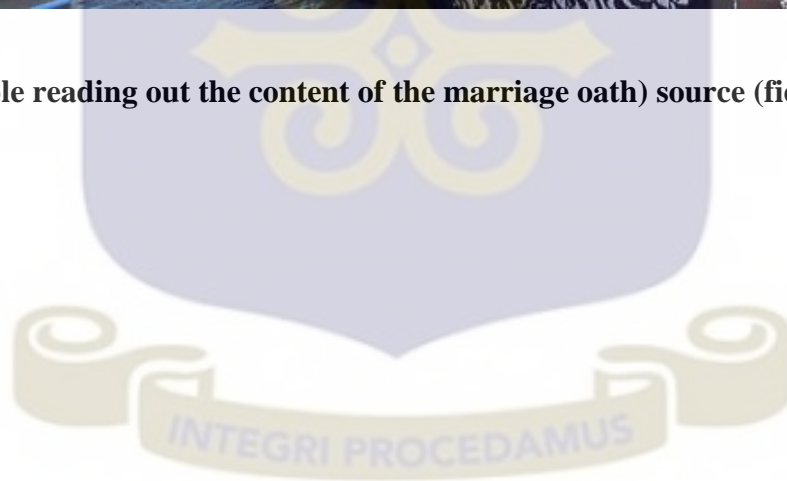


Image 1.7(Couple holding the bible in Unison)





Image 1.9 (marriage certificate presented)



Image 1.8 (Couple holding hands) source (field work)



Image 1.10

(Couple signing the marriage certificate).



Image (Representatives of grooms parents signing the marriage register)source (field work)





Image 1.12 (Couple exit the marriage hall with dancing).

PICTORAL ANALYSIS OF THE ORDINANCE/COURT MARRIAGE

Image 1.1 shows the couple entering the marriage hall with dancing with music provided by traditional drummers, they are flanked by the chief brides maid and best man who stand behind the bride and groom respectively, they are immediately followed by the parents or representatives of the parents of the bride and groom, and other well wishers and friends, the atmosphere in the hall is a joyous one. Image 1.2 shows the groom signing a copy of the affidavit, Image 1.3 shows the bride doing likewise, the affidavit contains the wordings and details of the marriage oath they are about to take, appending their signature means they agree to this oath. Image 1.4 shows the registry officials conducting the marriage ceremony and

explaining in detail the laws binding the marriage, especially that if anyone of them decides to take another spouse without a proper divorce before a court is tantamount to bigamy and is punishable by law. Image 1.5 shows the couple, ready to read the marriage ordinance and affidavit. Image 1.5, the bride and groom hold the bible in their right hand and a copy of the affidavit on his left. This rite leverages on the fact that the use of a religious symbol helps to further cement and entrench the proclamations in the affidavit in the minds of the couple. The couple are to read out the content of the affidavit loudly to the hearing of the public, this process is also known as the oath taking, afterwards the groom kisses the bible after reading the affidavit. The bride also kisses the bible after reading affidavit. This rite marks the acceptance to marry by both parties according to the ordinance of marriage.

Image 1.7 and 1.8 shows the couple holding the bible and holding hands in unison, this is indeed the closest contact they have with each other since the marriage process began, unlike 1.6 where they hold the bible separately, these images show that they are now officially joined together and therefore have to do things in unison. This functions as a pointer to the fact that immediately they are wedded, they would start to do things in togetherness and unison, not separately like they originally used to do. The ingraining of collective action in wedding at the registry shows or points out a change in their status and the need for them to begin to act in unison and togetherness. The couple was then asked to kiss each other after this, the researcher noticed something very important at this stage, the couple vehemently declined and stated that they did not want to kiss until their “church” wedding had been conducted, that only then were they married under God. The registry officials then got upset and told them, that it was standard procedure and if they were not ready to do it, they should excuse them, it took a pastor in the audience to explain to the couple, that God also recognizes the ‘court’ wedding. He said and I

quote “I permit you, you can kiss her it is not a sin”, after this statement the couple then proceeded to kiss each other and it was followed by large cheering and echoing of the audience.

Image 1.9 show the couple signing the marriage certificate which is a proof of their marriage, after the bride and groom sign respectively, the best man and chief brides maid also signs and the Couples parents as shown in Image 1.10 as well . Before the certificate is presented to the couple however and in fact before the participants previously mentioned are allowed to sign they have to drop an amount of money which goes into the pocket of the registry officials, the Chief Brides maid and best man were asked to bring #500 each , while the parents of the bride and groom were asked to bring #1000 each, if they fail to do so they would not be allowed to sign and hence the marriage certificate not presented. Image 1.11 shows the presentation of the marriage certificate amidst smiling by a registry official as a final “seal” to their wedding. Image 1.12 show the couple dancing out holding hands as husband and wife, with drumming from the talking drummers who are also expected to be tipped for providing a joyous atmosphere.

Respondents also gave various opinions on the importance of the court wedding, and why it was introduced.

A respondent says that ,

The main reason is because of this inheritance issue, for the wife to inherit from the Husband, the court wedding gives her a right to, as it is the registered one, the one the government recognizes. The government also recognizes catholic weddings, they however want all 3 types to be synchronized, you therefore need to put the number from the registry on the certificate of the Catholic church.

(KII/CATHOLIC PRIEST/SINGLE/LEGON/2016).

According to another respondent,

The importance of the Court wedding is that many at times people who do only customary marriages end up molesting their wives and cheating on them, the ordinance marriage protects against polygamy which the customary marriage supports. If you cheat and molest, you can end up in court, it is a form of security.

(KII/MARRIAGE REGISTRY OFFICIAL/MARRIED/MADINA/2016).

4.4 CONTEMPORARY ANLO-EWE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

4.4.1 THE ANLO-EWE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

The Anlo people are perhaps the most widely known of the Ewe tribe that occupies the area roughly equivalent to the south-eastern quarter of Ghana and the southern half of the Republic of Togo. The Ewe people have a tradition of migration from the east, and more precisely from Ketu, a town lying to the west of the River Niger in modern Dahomey (Amenumey, 1968). The traditional marriage of the Anlo-Ewe tribe is indeed the only type of marriage that leverages strongly on the tradition and customs of the Anlo-Ewe marriage. This study observed very detailedly one Anlo-Ewe traditional marriage. A summary of the notes taken from field work is presented, followed by pictures which are visual evidences to the practices observed. The atmosphere in traditional wedding ceremonies and engagement is usually very cultural, colorful and bold, tinted with melodious music and merriment. The usually celebratory mood is indeed evident till the end of the ceremony. The ceremony took place at the Brides fathers house. A respondent noted :

Among the Anlos, when you want to marry, there is what we call knocking, you have to go and inform the family of the lady, that our son, cousin, brother or grandchild, has seen someone, daughter, granddaughter to marry, so they are coming to obtain permission. If they would allow, they are supposed to carry along traditionally one bottle of gin or hot drink, this is attributed to the fact that the knocking which is supposed to be done at dawn, that at this time you are disturbing some people, causing them to swallow saliva which may cause stomach upset for them, the strong drink would however neutralize this, after this your proposal may be accepted or rejected, if accepted you come for the traditional

marriage., it is usually a real marriage, they even give rings, in some communities, the ring may not be given until after the woman is pregnant this is called pregnancy ring or” “fusige” in Ewe, to show that shes married and she is pregnant, showing the importance attached to getting married, and getting pregnant, it is not worn in every family, because it is made of gold and not everyone can acquire it

KII/MALE/LECTURER/ACCRA

4.4.2 CASE STUDY ANLO-EWE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

The marriage ceremony held in the house of the bride’s father, the house was well decorated with the colors of the day evident i.e. blue and gold. The living room was divided into 2 sections, to the left were seated the family of the bride, while the grooms family sat on the right. In the middle of these two divides were 2 elevated chairs for the bride and groom to sit and a walkway for them to pass through. On the ground were displayed the traditional marriage list items, which were beautifully wrapped in the color of the day blue, some of the gifts are put in cane baskets before wrapping them, the gifts are tagged differently, on one of the baskets was written customary drinks, another mother-in-law, another father-in-law, on another brides shoes, there was another which had bible and ring written on it, and there was a box, supposed to contain clothes, and household utensils for the bride.

The master of Ceremony is a representative of the Bride’s family who is a woman, while the groom’s family also has a spokesperson who is male. The ceremony starts with an opening prayer, given by one of the pastors present, immediately after this the master of ceremony asks the groom’s family for some envelopes, the first she says is “entry” money and the next the “bride price”. The money is then put on a tray, she brings out a list and begins an inspection of the engagement items. She then requests for the money meant for the brides brother, it’s given to her a representative of the bride’s brothers comes to accept the money, before she gives it to

him, he's made to dance and mimic the song "a lion, a lion, he has a big head and a very long tail", the crowd cheers and claps, afterwards he is given the money. She asks the man to identify what is in each wrapped gift, she stops him at intervals to make jokes and comments about each gift to the amusement of the whole audience, and he identifies each gift and she makes comments on each of them. He says there are and the master of ceremony instructs that they should carry the gifts, the groom's family then stands up to carry the gift, saying since she was not specific, this causes laughter to erupt among the audience, she then specifies that the bride's family sends 2 representatives, to check if the gifts are in correct order while brides family members carry the gifts in to be inspected. The 2 representatives come back with two bottles of schnapps, as a proof that all the things they brought are in the right order and are good, the two women hand these drinks to the male head of the family who shows it to the members of the bride's family amid applause. The Master of ceremony then raises a song "Halleluyah Hosiana" and the audience joins in to sing.

The groom is then sent for after this, while the DJ plays music he is clad in a gold flowing "agbada". He comes in accompanied by his friends, the master of ceremony introduces as coming from the University of Ghana, he comes in to shake hands with his family members as a sign of greeting and he does likewise for the family of the bride, and waves his hands at those he cannot shake. He is then asked to take his seat on the elevated platform. The groom's family then begins to agitate that the gifts have been taken, but they have not seen the bride, the master of ceremony then says she needs money to pick the bride in a fancy car, they give her some money, she insists it is not enough, the grooms family adds some more money to the one previously taken, and the MC who makes sounds of driving a car goes to bring in the bride, she instructs the DJ to play some music. The master of ceremony gives a warning that there have been cases

where people wipe away the bride's destiny with handkerchiefs so no one should wipe the bride's face. This is a custom that hitherto used to be. The bride comes in clad in a skirt and blouse of matching attire with the groom, with a green head tie she is asked to wave at the guests seated outside the living room, after which she dances in flanked by her friends, she is asked to greet members of her husband's family, she does this by shaking hands with them, her friends also shake hands with the groom's family. She also goes to greet members of her family by shaking hands with them and waves and smiles to the others she cannot reach.

The master of ceremony then brings out a chair and asks the bride to stand in front of it, and requests that the bride's family speak good things over her and pray for her, she asks them to drop money on the chair as a sign that they are sending her forth with prosperity, members of the bride's family then troop out, to drop different dominations of cash on the chair for her. The bride is then asked to stoop before her father who still holds the bottle of schnapps previously mentioned in his hands. The father then asks her "some people were here they brought this schnapps asking for your hand in marriage, do you know them, she answers in the affirmative, he hands over the schnapps to her and she is supposed to hand it back to him, as a sign that she's in agreement with the decision, she does this, and the father raises the schnapps up for everyone in the family to see amid applause from the bride's family. The bride is ushered to her seat, after which her father rises up to hold her hand as she seats and then puts her hand in her husband's hands as a sign of handing her over to him , this generates loud applause and cheering. The couple is asked to rise, while an invited pastor prays over the ring, singing "Maugbagbe apena o* 2" which translates we thank you liing God as he prays over the ring after which the pastor instructs the groom to give his bride the ring, insisting that as the groom puts the ring on her finger she says nice words, the groom begins to speak, he insists it is not loud enough therefore

he has to raise his voice, he says things like I love you, you are beautiful etc. The crowd erupts in loud cheering and laughter during this process, after this process the pastors wife comes to hand them the bible, and instructs that they collectively hold it as they are now one. She advises that the bible should be their succour when they have troubles or issues, that the bible should have the final say, not any family member or friends. The ceremony comes to an end with a woman giving a traditional Ewe rendition, after which people come out to dance the traditional style of dancing. Guests are ushered outside to a well decorated compound for entertainment, the bride and groom's family go for their food on a queue first, followed by friends and well-wishers, who choose from the choice of foods presented, they include Banku (corn dough) and tilapia with pepper/ okra, Jollof rice, Wakye, Fried rice, Salad, with local drinks like sobolo and millet drinks adding color to the day.



PICTORAL ANALYSIS ANLO-EWE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

Image 2.1 (Master of ceremony asking groom's family representative about the engagement list) source (field work).



Image 2.2(Well-decorated Engagement gift items) source (field work).



Image 2.3 (Engagement gift items) source (field work).



Image 2.4 (Bride's brother about to collect money meant for bride's brothers) source (field work).



Image 2.5 (Groom's entrance and greeting members of his family with handshakes) source (field work).



Image 2.6 (Groom flanked by his friends greeting members of the bride's family, with handshakes) source (field work).

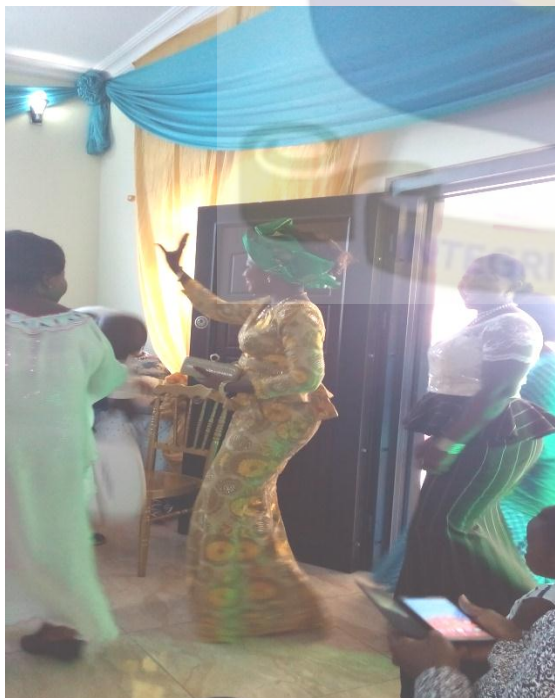


Image 2.7 (Bride's entrance waving flanked by friends) source (field work).



Image 2.8 (Bride being instructed by the MC to shake hands and greet members of the grooms family) source (field work).



Image 2.9 (Bride greeting members of her family) source (field work).



Image 2.10 (Bride being blessed with money as a sign of sending her forth with prosperity) source (field work).



Image 2.11 (Bride's father questioning her about knowing the groom's family who brought schnapps) source (field work)

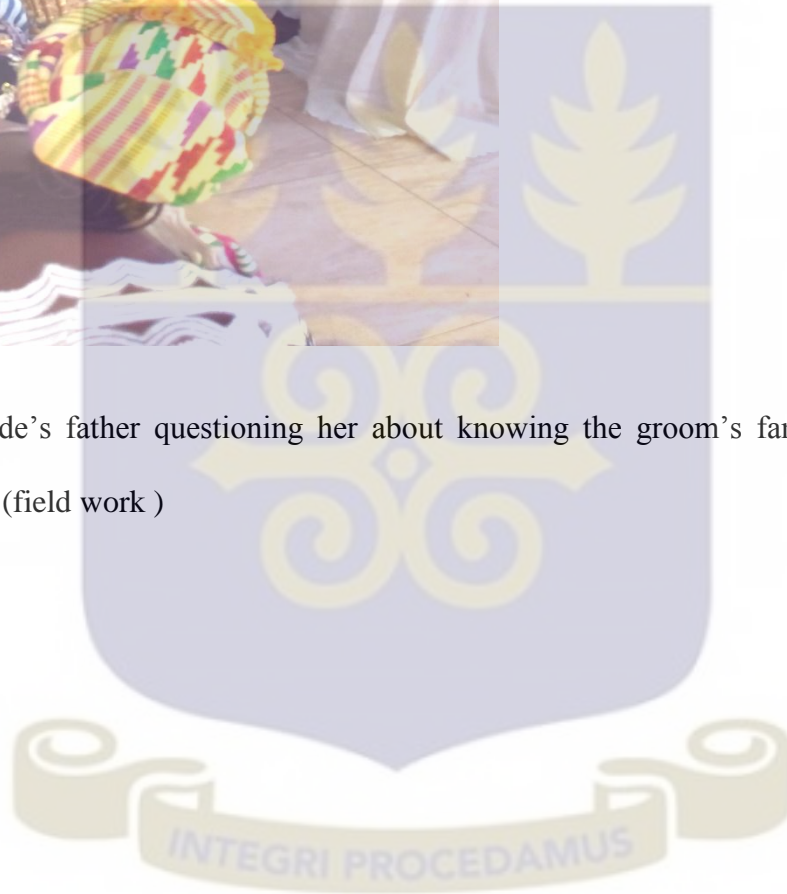




Image 2.12 (Bride greeting her mum) source (field work).



Image 2.13 (Bride's mother sitting her down on a chair, a sign that she is in support of the wedding).



Image 2.14 (Cross section of bride's family at the engagement) source (field work)



Image 2.14 (Bride's father handing her over to the groom) source (field work).



Image 2.15 (Groom placing the ring in Bride's hands) source (field work).



Image 2.16 (Couple receiving the bible in unison from their pastor's wife).



Image (Bride and groom) source (field work).



4. 5 CONTEMPORARY YORUBA MARRIAGE

The traditional marriage or engagement as it commonly labeled , is the culturally sanctioned wedding ceremony that draws inspiration from core Yoruba cultural and family values. The most salient evidence to this is the attire worn by the bride, groom and even members of the audience during the traditional wedding; traditional Yoruba clothes made from fabrics of Yoruba origin. This study observed one Yoruba traditional marriage very keenly.

4.5.1 CASE STUDY YORUBA TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

This traditional marriage held at an events centre, the hall was well decorated, with the 2 colors of the day, red and grey, reflecting very evidently, there was an elevated platform with a leather sofa for the bride and groom to sit on. The hall was divided into two sections with a rug and a walkway dividing it. The bride's family are expected to sit on the left while the groom's family are expected to be seated on the right. The ceremony is co-ordinated by the alaga ijoko (sitting chairman) who is the representative of the bride's family and the alaga iduro (standing chairman) who is the representative of the grooms family. There are also pastors present, who give opening prayers and even an exhortation. The bride's family are seated at the hall at the start of the ceremony, however the bride and her close friends are not at the venue. The groom is likewise evidently absent. The ceremony starts with the groom's family arrived, amid joyous singing, drumming and dancing, they are led by their representative i.e the alaga iduro , they dance to the entrance of the hall, where they are halted by the representative of the bride's family, the alaga ijoko, who asks them who they are and what they want . She says "Tani yen" "Ta le bere" which translates "who is that" who are you looking for" The groom's family representative replies "Lati idile Mr and Chief (Mrs) Gabriel Adeloju ni Ikare-Akoko , Ondo State". This translates "we are from the family of Mr and Chief (Mrs) Gabriel Adeloju, from Ikare Akoko in Ondo , we

are here to give a message to the family of Alhaji J. Ola and Alhaja B.O Ogun, we have seen a beautiful flower in your house and want to ask permission to pluck it”. They expected to pay an amount of money which is called “owo ikanlekun” meaning literally (knocking/entrance money), after which they are allowed to enter. They then proceed to greet members of the bride’s family, the women kneel while the men prostrate, after which they are requested to take their seats. The alaga ijoko, then asks “where is this your son”, after this the groom is asked to come in, if he comes in before this, it is seen as a crime and has to pay a fine.

The groom is ushered into the hall, accompanied by some of his friends and some family members. His attire is unique and different from others. He is dressed in *aso oke* (local fabric worn on special occasions) while the other family members are dressed in the *aso-ebi* (family cloth) chosen by the groom’s family. From outside the venue, there is singing by the members of the groom’s family as they walk in to the venue, dancing gently with the groom in front of them: the major songs that dominated were :

Inumidun tori morojo oni,
inu mi dun tori eni soju mi,
congratulations ore mu owore wa.

Translation: I am glad because I can see today

I am happy today is happening before my eyes

Congratulation, my friend, bring your hand.....

Another was :

Ese Baba

Baba Ema se Jesu eseun,

Olorun mi Eseun Baba.

Translation: Thank you father

Father we really thank you, Jesus we thank you

My Lord, thank you father.

Another was :

A Sanmi Bobo

Skin dudu, Ilesanmi o ti fine ju

O ti fine ju.

Translation:

Sanmi Boy

With the Dark shining skin

You are too fine.

On the entry of the groom, members of the audience stand up and sing along with them. While the musical band in the hall play melodious tunes to the songs. They are again halted by the alaga ijoko, who asks him to go and greet his family members; he does this by lying prostrate on the ground after which they pray for him. He then proceeds to the members of the Bride's family, with his friends and lies prostrate to greet them and request for their daughter's hand in marriage, they proceed to pray for him and accept him. He is made to sit between the bride's parents, and puts his hands on their shoulders as a sign of acceptance, only after this is done is the bride allowed to come in.

The bride comes in to the hall veiled, accompanied by her friends and a few family members, clad in their aso -ebi, she comes in with a lot of singing and dancing and drumming . She goes to meet and kneel in front of members of her family first, as a sign of homage and greeting they in turn pray for her and her mum unveils her, as her mother in particular is expected to speak

words of advice into her ears and likewise pray for her . She proceeds to the members of her husband's family, while still veiled, where she likewise kneels to greet and pay homage, she is also prayed for and unveiled finally, by the grooms mother. She is made to sit in between the grooms parents as a sign of acceptance, with various prayers being rendered. The bride is then asked to proceed to meet her husband , as she dances towards him with smiling, he is expected to bring out money from his pocket to bless his wife, as a sign that he would always give her money for upkeep. She is the expected to kneel in front of her husband as a sign of submission and greeting, after which he is expected to pray for her fruitfulness and all round success with him. A member of the family is seen to be called to do an introduction of all members of their respective families. The order of call is usually from the elderly to the young. Before introductions however the person introducing sings and show evident joy. Letters of introductions are exchanged between both families. A young adolescent female from the family was observed to be the one that read the marriage proposal. Hence, the alaga iduro take charge and start conversations, singing and negotiating payments of different sorts in the process. The items of the eru iyawo are listed out by the alaga iduro and checked by the alaga ijoko.

Fruits, dry fish, cans of malt, tubers of yam, jewellery, bible, plantain, oranges, pineapples, palm oil, bags of rice, box of clothing were very integral part of the eru iyawo (bridal load). Prayers are offered for the couples and the eru iyawo is sanctified and blessed by a pastor. The bride dances towards the eru iyawo and is asked to pick out the item, which she loves the most of all the items, she picks a bible which usually has a ring attached is usually the norm, the audience then cheers after which she is expected to give the bible to her husband who pulls out the ring which is known as (edidi iyawo) evidence of marriage, the pastor in turn blesses the ring, and the groom proceeds to insert the ring into the bride's hand, she is then asked to show off her ring,

with the alaga ijoko (sitting chairman), singing. The groom is then asked to carry his bride, in fulfillment of the marriage description among the Yoruba's Igbeyawo which translates literally, carrying the bride.

The guests at the marriage ceremonies, are treated to various varieties of meals, ranging from amala (yam flour) and ewedu (vegetable), fried rice, jollof rice, ikokore (water yam pottage) and a variety of drinks. The ceremony is brought to a close by a closing prayer given by one of the officiating ministers.

PICTORAL ANALYSIS YORUBA TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE.

Image 3.1 Marriage proposal banner

Image 3.2 Eru Iyawo (bridal gifts)



Image 3.3 Items of Eru iyawo

Image 3.4 Return gifts from brides family including the

Letter of acceptance of marriage.



Image 3.5 Entrance of the members of Grooms family



Image 3.6 Groom's family greeting members of bride's family



Image 3.7 The alaga iduro and ijoko Masters of ceremony.



Image 3.7 Grooms entrance flanked by friend and family members



Image 3.9 Groom prostrating to Bride's family to ask for her hand in marriage.



Image 3.10 Groom sits between brides parents as a

Sign of their acceptance.



Image 3.11 Vied bride's entrance, flanked by friends

And family.





Image 3.13 Bride kneeling to greet and receive prayers from her parents.



Image 3.14: Bride's mother advising her





Image 3.15 Bride kneeling to greet groom's family, while the groom's mum unveils her.



Bride sitting in between groom's parents as a sign of acceptance.



Image 3.16 Groom praying for Bride .



Image3.17 Bride picks bible from Eru iyawo the bible



Image 3.18 Groom removing the ring from



Image 3.19 Exchange of rings



Image 3.20 Groom carrying his bride.

4.6 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONTEMPORARY YORUBA AND ANLO- EWE MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

Weddings are significant to celebrate the joyous and grateful nature of people to the mercies of God for making the wedding a day that happened. Weddings are significant also in the fact that it shows the importance Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe people attach to legitimate, socially sanctioned sexual relationships. It also serves as an avenue to display these tribes cultural heritage. Culture in a lay man's language has been termed the total way of life of a people. It serves greatly as a means of distinguishing one group from another. There exists however certain characteristics that perhaps almost cuts across African marriage ceremony patterns, Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe inclusive, as noted by Hendrix, he says this about the African marriage systems:

First marriage is a transfer of legal rights to a woman from her kin to her husband. Not only does the husband gain rights to the wife's labor, sexuality and offspring's, but also the rights to receive compensation for the harm done to her by others. In some societies the husband receives rights to offspring if he pays the full bride price but can receive more limited rights if he makes a small payment. Second marriage modifies and to some degree ruptures, the relations between the bride and her immediate kin. In many societies the wife moves out of her parents' home and they lose a family member. Where the husband joins the wife's parent's household there is less disruption. Third marriage is an affiance, an agreement or contract between two families or groups of kin's, because our African societies see marriage not only as a relationship between two individuals people but also as a structural link between groups (Hendrix, 1998:734) as cited in (Kyalo, 2012).

Generally, marriages in Africa, tend not be restricted to the individuals who are getting married alone but reflects also a wielding of their families, in Africa marriage is indeed a "family affair". There are however also sharp contrasts, that serve as a mark of peculiarity to each group and also a distinguishing factor of one group to the other. Examining these similarities and differences would give us great insight to the cultural practices of the Anlo-Ewe and Yoruba people, which of course is very integral to Sociological research. Weddings thus are moral antecedents to approved sexual intercourse among adults. Weddings serve as a means of sending a message to the general public that the wedded individuals are no longer in the singles circle and the Weddings serve as a means of sending a message to the general public that the wedded individuals are no longer in the singles circle and the bride especially is not available for marriage to another person.

Weddings are significantly celebrated in relatively elaborate manners to show the value and importance accorded to marriage and family formation and by consequence, biological and social procreation. Celebrating weddings to a large extent is an extension and expression of the families status in society.

This study found out that, one of the most important elements that cuts across both Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe traditional marriage, is the role of the family. In all the marriage ceremonies observed, the families played active roles, in the joining. The traditional marriage in both cases, the researcher observed, started with both families present, and fulfilling certain rights and cultural expectations, before the couple were allowed to come in. In both situations emphasis was placed on the parents acceptance of their child's marriage, the families had to officially meet and accept each other, before the marriage ceremony was allowed to go on. This indeed solidifies the fact that marriages in Africa, reflect a coming together of families not just individuals. The Yoruba traditional marriage for example, required a proposal and an acceptance letter, for the marriage ceremony to be solidified, the researcher discovered that on the marriage proposal and acceptance letters, the family name of the bride and groom were written, it read “ the family of Mr and Chief (Mrs) Gabriel Adeloju, from Ikare Akoko in Ondo on behalf of our son, Ilesanmi Oladimeji write to the family of Alhaji J. Ola and Alhaja B.O Ogun, 4, Alapo street, Ijebu-Ode in Ogun , to request for your daughter's hand Abimbola Olubukola for him in marriage, in essence the family was the one 'marrying' his bride for him, this is line with what Atolagbe notes that:

The Yorubas and indeed most Africans, believe that it is the entire extended family, and not just the nuclear family that gives out a 'son' or a 'daughter' in marriage and both families of the bride and groom become one after such a marriage. Also, they believe that both families should be fully represented at the marriage ceremonies, the 'Introduction' where family members from both sides are introduced one to the other, and the 'Engagement' which is the proper wedding (Atolagbe, 2012).

The Anlo-Ewe traditional marriage, also reflected this as the bride's mother for example had to sit her down on a chair, as proof of her support of the marriage, without which the marriage could not have been conducted. The religious marriage for both groups also reflected this, as the

bride's father walked the bride in in all church marriages observed, and was also required to give her out to be married, in all cases, the bride's father mentioned his name, adding that it was on behalf of his wife and his entire extended family, both parents i.e the parents of the bride and groom also had to sign the marriage register as a signification of their acceptance and agreement of the entire marriage process, this was also true of the court marriage going further to prove that marriages are a "family affair" in Africa.

A respondent notes:

The parents of the bride and groom must give their consent before we can join them, you know this is Africa, and parent's opinions are highly respected, errhm, infact even family opinions, because if the parents don't support if they have any issue in the marriage, who would they run to?

KII/REGISTRY OFFICIAL/MADINA/ 2016.

Another respondent notes :

In the Anlo-Ewe culture now, when you see a girl you talk to her if she accepts, your parents would go see her parents for what is known as knocking, but you would not be part of the delegation, they do it on their behalf, to tell the other parents that they have spotted a flower in their house and they want to bring that flower down to their house, after this intention is registered the lady's parents start investigating about your family, the background and what you do, and what are the inherited sicknesses you have in your family, maybe some people they have madness in their family, after that then you can go for the engagement proper, but if they are not satisfied the marriage cannot hold, the family still plays an important role in marriage ceremonies today, in our traditional set up you are not married to the person, you are married to the whole family, its not just an individual thing, marriage is a family affair.

KII/ CATHOLIC PRIEST / LEGON/2016

Another very important converging point, is gift giving, in both traditional marriage ceremonies and in the religious marriage ceremonies across both groups. . Most scholars while studying weddings, leave out the place of 'reciprocity' and resulting obligations that come to the fore, throughout the entire, wedding process as well as the significant gain that the main actors (

Bride, Groom and their parents) tend to accrue during this process. Human beings are inherently rational, and would perhaps most of the time, engage in actions that are beneficial to them. The marriage ceremony is one that leverages on exchange relationships, reciprocity and gift giving which yields immense benefits for the main actors and their families. In both traditional marriages, for example the groom's family were expected to bring gifts which the Yorubas for example call eru iyawo, without this gifts which are thoroughly inspected in both cases by the masters of ceremony the marriage process cannot continue, the items in both traditional marriage settings might differ, but the concept of the groom's family giving well wrapped and presented gifts is a very integral factor solidifying the common wisdom or orthodoxy of the African culture, of not going to an "in-laws house empty handed". There were also gifts for the parents, the researcher however discovered that the Yoruba culture had moved faster to accepting most of the gifts meant for the bride's parents or extended family in monetary terms, whereas the Anlo-Ewe culture still retained this aspect as giving of gifts. The researcher also observed that although most gifts were given by the groom's family, in both cases the bride's family also reciprocated with a return gift, which was evidently smaller but still had great significance .



Image 4.2.1 Return gifts from brides family(Yoruba traditional marriage).



Image 4.2.2 Return gifts from bride's family (Anlo-Ewe traditional marriage)

The religious marriage also reflected, as all the weddings observed had a gift stand, and attendees of the ceremony were also supposed to give gifts in return, after coming to feast and merry with the couple as a respondent noted :

Gifts are very important in a marriage, as family and friends of the groom and bride cannot just send the couple off, and as you are seeing, they know the people who give them gifts, and even significant ones, they would call you to thank you, and when you also have a function they would give you, it's a scratch my back I scratch your's kind of thing.

KII/ WEDDING PARTICIPANT/ IBADAN/ 2016.

Furthermore, another crucial connecting point, for these marriage ceremonies is the concept of hybridization of the marriage types, this was observed to be true for both the Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe marriage ceremonies, as all of them had to fulfill religious, customary and legal requirements before being fully accepted as married. The research also discovered that certain

religious organizations had sanctions imposed on those members of society who are likewise members of their religious institution and choose to get married in the customary i.e traditional way, these kind of sanctions which were brought to the fore by Christianity and Colonialism, serve as compelling forces that generate an enchantment towards an hybridization, solidifying the notion that the African child is indeed a citizen of two worlds/realms.

A respondent notes:

Christianity is now influencing our marriages so much, that nowadays if someone is marrying without the wedding there is no marriage , everyone wants to be taken to church and be introduced to the pastor or the priest and the church members, this is what is happening now. In my church it is compulsory to have a church wedding , ever since Christianity came here it has been. Probe for do you sanction couples who have not done the traditional marriage? Yes we do there are sanctions for them, when you are not married in a church, you've married, now let me put it like this, you must have performed customary rights and two families attest to your marriage before you are allowed to marry in a church. If you are not married in a church, you cannot take part in certain important ministries in a church ,you can't be for example a communicant, you cannot take communion, you cannot be part of the Church and parish council. The communion is very important, because it shows that you are in communion with Jesus Christ, and people who are not married in a church, are considered to have an illegal, notorious relationship, because you have not brought it to church, to witness to Jesus Christ and Church members that you are now husband and wife, you therefore come to Jesus Christ but you don't partake in the Eucharist .You know people fear the church wedding because it does not allow polygamy, our traditional marriage permits it .

KII/CATHOLIC PRIEST/ LEGON/ 2016.

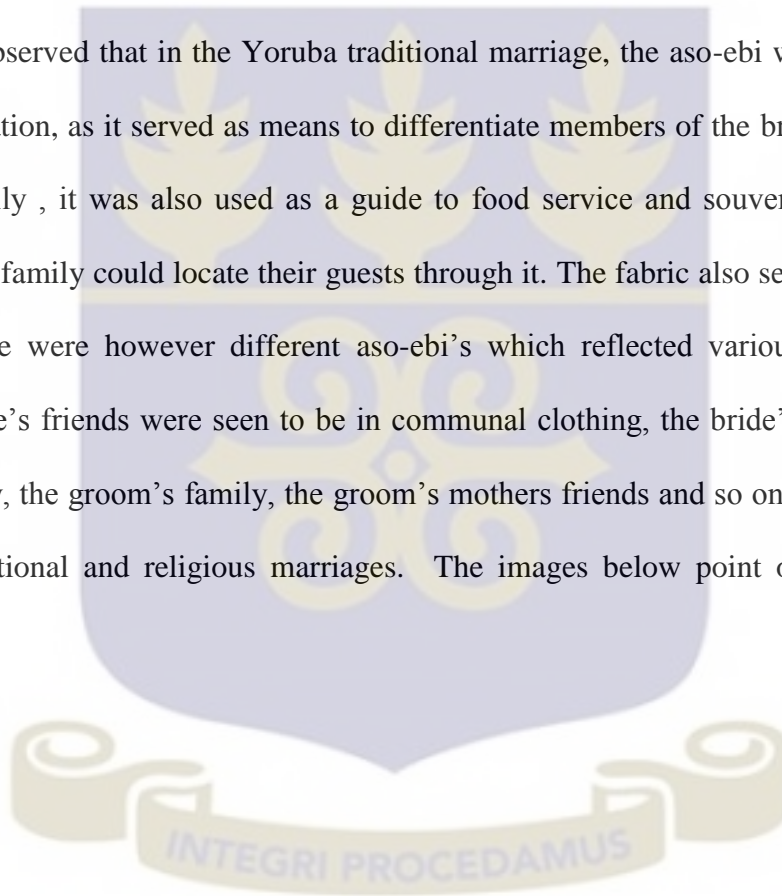
There are however sharp contrasts in these marriage practices, despite the fore-mentioned similarities. A very profound difference, is the concept of the *aso-ebi*, which was very evident in the Yoruba marriage ceremonies and conspicuously absent in the Anlo-Ewe marriages.*Aso ebi* literally speaking means (family cloth) it simply refers to uniform dresses that family members and friends put on in the course of social functions, in Nigeria. There are two schools of thought on the origins of *aso ebi* among the Yoruba. First, is the one that views the dress practice as an

ancient phenomenon and the second that linked its emergence with the unparalleled accumulation that came with the post-war boom of 1918-20.

While Olukoju (cited in Nwafor 2011) believes that *aso ebi* was part of a culture of ‘conspicuous consumption, that was fuelled by the post-World War I boom, which has survived to this day as a national culture’, William Bascom traced the origins of *aso ebi* to Yoruba age grade which used the uniformed dressing or *aso ebi* to mark fraternal bonds. He observed that both men’s and women’s clubs were characterized by uniform clothing by which their members could be recognized during religious or other ceremonies (ibid). *Aso-ebi* started with the family funeral activities or rites. Those required to have *aso-ebi* were children of the deceased or his siblings. For Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, the use of ‘same fabric or colour of clothing, the same style of dress, or at least a similar head tie to demonstrate the size and standing of women in their associations known as *egbe*’ (ibid). John and Margaret Drewal also attributed uniform dressing to the type of comradeship that has its origin in the pairing of Yoruba *Gelede* masquerades. They write: ‘when two partners make a pact and adopt a common secret name, they often choose to dress alike and may be mistaken for twins’. Whichever of these two schools we may wish to adopt, one thing that is worthy of note is that *aso ebi* has continued to attract attention as a major dress culture in Nigeria during social ceremonies such as weddings, naming ceremonies, birthdays, burial ceremonies, political gatherings, house warming parties, among others. There are three major reasons why the *aso ebi* phenomenon has continued to find social acceptance in contemporary Nigerian society. First is the fact most Nigerian communities enjoy a thriving associational culture as social life in many communities revolves around informal and semi-formal organizations. Many people depend on these associations, which often substitute for missing formal or state institutions and safety nets and tend to persist even during periods of

repression, negligence or co-optation. This form of social life provides a good platform for the growth and promotion of this age long dress practice. Secondly, the need to construct their own meaning of self, social identity and social relations has gone a long way in fostering the acceptance and growth of aso ebi over time among the Yoruba and other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. In addition, a thriving urban life provides a fertile ground for the survival of this form of ostentatious consumption.

The researcher observed that in the Yoruba traditional marriage, the aso-ebi was a very integral form of identification, as it served as means to differentiate members of the bride's family, from the groom's family , it was also used as a guide to food service and souvenir distribution, as members of each family could locate their guests through it. The fabric also served to add colour to the day. There were however different aso-ebi's which reflected various allegiances, for example the bride's friends were seen to be in communal clothing, the bride's mothers friends, the bride's family, the groom's family, the groom's mothers friends and so on. This was evident in both the traditional and religious marriages. The images below point out the significant differences.





Cross section of guests at Anlo-Ewe traditional marriages.



Cross section of guests in Aso-Ebi at the Yoruba marriage ceremonies.

Another sharp contrast, which the researcher noticed, was the manner in which the couple greeted the members of their family, in the Anlo-Ewe traditional marriages it was observed that the bride and groom greeted members of both their family and their spouses by shaking hands with them, and this was considered generally acceptable. The researcher observed that this was

not the case for the Yoruba traditional marriages, as the bride and groom both had to kneel and prostrate, respectively as a sign of greeting for both members of their family. The researcher also observed that during the Religious marriage's reception, this orientation was still evident as when the bride in the Anlo-Ewe marriage was asked to feed her husband a piece of cake, she did so standing, whereas the Yoruba bride had to kneel to show respect for her husband, this shows in effect the two different orientations these cultures have towards respect .



Image 4.2.3 Bride kneeling to feed groom Yoruba wedding .



Image 4.2.4 Bride feeding groom Anlo-Ewe wedding .

Another evident difference was the spraying of money which was visibly present, in the Yoruba marriages, and conspicuously absent at the Anlo-Ewe marriages, various family members and friends were seen to come to the dancing floor to spray the couple with money, the money was noticed to be packed into polythene bags by the Chief bridesmaid or a relative of the bride, the money would later be handed over to the couple. This act serves as a display of affluence and class, and also a form of making money to vendors who were present, who changed bigger denominations to smaller ones at an extra cost.



Image 4.2.5 Couple being sprayed money (Yoruba wedding).

4.7 CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES AMONG YORUBA AND ANLO-EWE MARRIAGES

Marriage practices among the Yoruba's and Anlo-Ewe's have passed through certain changes that have been occasioned or heralded by different factors. Though the traditional system of marriage is still practiced by all but a small proportion of educated persons, many of its essential features have been made obsolete (Olusanya (1970)). The findings discussed therein are in consonance with these statements. These changes reflect when weddings of nowadays are compared to weddings in the past. While some practices are still enduring, some others have faded into insignificance. Respondents were asked about their opinions of the continuities and discontinuities. Their responses revealed that so much of culturally oriented practices native to Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe marriages have been changed and faded and are no longer part of the mainstream wedding ceremony. Nonetheless, other practices have been enduring and some others though still existent, have been modified.

In the traditional Yoruba society, most marriages were arranged by the parents on both sides by Bolaji (1984) that “marriage partners were in those days of yore, chosen by the families of the young ones concerned”. The importance of the family in the selection of marriage partners in the traditional. (Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi 2003). In contrast to this finding by Ogunjuyigbe and Adeyemi, this study found out that contemporary weddings and marriages among the Yoruba has reduced the selection power of family members to approval powers. Orubuloye (1987) observed that betrothal of an unborn baby, with the hope that the outcome of the pregnancy would be a girl was a common practice among the Yorubas. Immediately the child is born and turns out to be a girl, the family that was considered to be respectable and worthy in character will be invited and allowed to visit the parents. Such arrangement was usually made on behalf of a single man.

This is likewise true of the Anlo-Ewe society as Nukunya (1969), notes:

Older people say that in the past first marriages were arranged by parents without consultation with the young people, but however at present there appears to be a gradual change from the old position of parental control over the choices of spouses to a new position where those directly concerned give some latitude in making their own selection . Many prospective couples now plan almost everything about their intended union before the youth tells his parents to approach the girl’s parents on his behalf. Nevertheless, the parental veto is far from dead and it is no exaggeration to say that the final words still lies with the parents.

Respondents also solidified this claim, as a respondent noted:

What we know, those days , when you are maturing as a young man, they would build your hut for you, they would give you a parcel of land, the family would go and bring a woman for you to your house but now you cannot marry a woman you do not love, love has to play an important role . Probe for what do you feel brought about these change? I think it is our association with the Western culture, even you know that in our traditional set up when you are married it is for life, nothing like divorce, but today it is on the rise. Christianity is now influencing our marriage so much

KII/CATHOLIC PRIEST/ LEGON /2016.

According to another respondent

There are a lot of changes in marriage practices today, take the choice of a marriage partner for example it was exclusively the parents duty, and the child must accept whoever they choose, but nowadays laughs, it is not possible anymore, children want to fall in love, as the Westerners have projected is the basis for a good marriage. KII/LECTURER/LEGON/2016

We see clearly, that there is an apparent shift towards individualism regarding the choice of marriage partners for both the Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe traditional marriages and the role of parents reduced to approval rather than the selection role they previously played.

Another discontinuity that is common to both, is the emphasis on virginity in both Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe weddings, Alaba's (2004) opined that the symbolic emphasis placed on virginity has waned in African marriages. Thus, virginity of the bride is no longer accorded value as it was in earlier times. Marital sanctity and pre-marital sanctity have much value in the Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe wedding practices of old. This is because it is a thing of honour, glory and pride for the parents of bride as well as the unmarried lady for keeping her virginity until the time of marriage. The bride should be a virgin before the actual wedding, but today things have changed and the tradition of ascertaining the virginity of the bride on the night of the wedding is archaic and no longer practiced. The study found out that the earlier rite of testing for the bride's virginity is no longer in practice and has been exclusively removed from the overall wedding process.

A respondent noted:

An important aspect of the traditional marriage has been abandoned these days, it refers to the test for virginity, for the bride in previous days or years, they would prepare a bed in a room and usher in the man and the woman, to have their first sexual contact, and then people from the two sides go to inspect the bed to see if there is blood, if they see blood of course it is a proof of the virginity being broken at marriage by the man, and it is a very great respect for the woman and her family and gifts are lavished on her as she serves as a role-model in society, parents begin to make it a reference point for their daughters.

KII/LECTURER / LEGON/ 2016.

A major discontinuity discovered among the Yoruba's is the venue used for the wedding ceremony. The engagement ceremony used to take place at the bride father's house or family house but due to factors such as settlement in urban centres, today event centres, halls and fields are used for the engagement ceremony. Most times venue big enough to cater for guests, a hall or an open space which would be lavishly decorated in order to show that the bride's father is affluent. The Anlo-Ewe people have however retained this aspect of their cultural heritage, as traditional marriage ceremonies are still carried out in the bride's father's house. Dowry is another continuity that is common to both groups. The dowry today the researcher observed among the Yorubas is usually returned to the groom's family. The returning of the dowry shows that the bride is priceless and cannot be sold.

A major continuity with both cultures is the eru-iyawo or sronu which refers to a set of items the grooms family bring to the engagement venue as part of requirement to get the bride's hand in marriage. The following items were observed to be included in the eru-iyawo or sronu in the case studies examined. Sugarcane, pieces of yam, engagement ring, wrist watch, pairs of shoes and bags, fruits, aso- oke, bag of salt, unsewn cloth materials, one big suitcase, honey, engagement bible or Quran, crates of can drinks, assorted drinks, cans of beer, dry fish e.t.c. However it was discovered that the Yoruba wedding did not involve the use of traditional items of sugarcane, kolanut and alligator pepper and schnapps in prayers for the couple as it was termed heathen and fetish, this is however noticed to be retained among the Anlo-Ewe as schnapps still played a very significant role in the traditional marriage process.

The bringing out of a different girl before the bride, in order for the husband to choose which was his bride among the Anlos , is also discovered to have waned, as the researcher noticed members of the bride's family saying this was a very key part of the wedding process that has been eroded. The giving of the pregnancy ring called the fushige is also seen to have waned among the Anlos.

A respondent noted:

Before among the Anlos you did not have to buy a box, all you had to buy was a basin with a cover and put the things there, but nowadays, no one would take that from you everyone wants a nice looking box .

KII/ LECTURER/ LEGON/ 2016.

4.8 EMERGENT PATTERNS IN WEDDING PATTERNS AMONG THE YORUBAS AND ANLO EWES.

One emergent pattern, that is seen to be common to both the Anlo and Yoruba marriage ceremonies, is the role of pastors or religious leaders in the traditional marriage ceremony. Originally times the engagement ceremonies were strictly a family affair, but today in both of these cultures, and in the weddings observed, the pastor's were seen to play very key roles, from sitting at very special places, to praying over the ring, and overseeing the ring exchanges, to blessing the marriage. This is an emergent pattern which has great implications for these societies, as dare indeed, pastors are not custodians of tradition. The marriage ceremonies between these two ethnic group, reflects an hybridization already, the traditional marriage is no more viewed as a real marriage, but the legal and religious marriages are now given primacy of place, thus if the traditional marriages which were supposed to be the only "cultural" prototypes

of marriage we have left are being taken over this might pose a huge problem and of course have grave implications for the Yoruba and Anlo cultural heritage.

Respondents also noted that colonization, westernization and globalization are very important factors heralding these emergent patterns.

A respondent notes :

Infact we are battling with that, in our place, among the Anlo-Ewes it looks like a lot of adulteration is coming in ,imported culture, they are all coming in. Having a purely traditional Ewe marriage is no longer feasible. Infact apart from colonialism, we are watching a lot of Nigerian movies this is really affecting us, we are incorporating it into our marriage, you don't know whether it is an Ewe marriage, or a Nigerian marriage rather , formerly we never had a set-up of a lady taking a drink and looking for her husband in the crowd, we did not have that, it is a Nigerian culture Igbo in particular. What we know, those days , when you are maturing as a young man, they would build your hut for you, they would give you a parcel of alnd, the family would go and bring a woman for you to your house but now you cannot marry a woman you do not love. Probe for what do you feel brought about these change? I think it is our association with the Western culture, even you know that in our traditional set up when you are married it is for life, nothing like divorce, but today it is on the rise. Christianity is now influencing our marriage so much

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Over the years, external forces have made an inroad into the traditional system of marriage and wrought important changes which have tended to undermine its traditional stability (arowolo, 2012). Emergent patterns consist of new practices not inherent in wedding practices among the Yoruba and Anlos but are gradually carving a niche of relevance for themselves in wedding practices. The study found out that major emergent trends were found in the aesthetic aspects of wedding ceremonies. The study found out that professional and thematic decoration of the weddings venues is a trend subscribed to and gradually gaining prominence. Rather than just leave the wedding venue to be bare, decorations and props are set up to enhance the beauty of the venue. For the engagement ceremony, most observed weddings are designed with traditional mats and cane chairs, calabashes in attempt to recreate a cultural and traditional atmosphere. The

wedding venues are also embellished with lights. Another emergent pattern discovered is the use of colour schemes in wedding ceremonies. Colour schemes refer to the use of a particular colour as a dominant colour in the wedding ceremony. It was observed that for each wedding a particular colour was dominant. Colour schemes refer to the use of a particular colour as a dominant colour in the wedding ceremony. It was observed that for each wedding a particular colour was dominant and easily identifiable with the wedding. Starting from the decoration of the venue, to the clothes spread on the table, to the cloth of the couple and even to the aso ebi chosen, by the Yorubas it is common to find that weddings are done with one particular colour dominant in the whole venue and atmosphere. The choice of the colour scheme is at the discretion of the couple, their friends and sometimes the events planner.

There are various factors heralding these changes, which this study found out. Civilizations and education, brought by the British colonialist ushered in a drastic change in African marriage norms (akinbolaji 2009). Findings of this study lend support to this claim, majorly the increased level of educated individuals is creating imminent changes in weddings, and higher level of education to a large extent predisposes individuals to celebrate weddings in more unique ways. Nonetheless, education as we have it today is an aftermath of the colonial enterprise in Africa. By implication, colonialism and neo-colonialism have roles to play in perpetuating new ideals in wedding practices

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on presenting a brief summary of the study as well as recommendations and suggestions for further studies. The summary of major findings according to the study objectives of the study is presented.

5.2 Summary of Major findings

The study found out that the three major forms of wedding among the Yoruba's and Anlo-Ewes are the religious, civil and traditional weddings. These forms of weddings coexist and are predicated on different ideals. However, individuals are expected in the real sense to wed under the three different forms. Thus, wedding as the study observed is a fulfilment of religious, legal and cultural requirements for marriage. The observance of the three different weddings is however in tandem with the decision of the family members and the couple. Only the legal marriage acts as evidence and provides the couple legal rights and duties over each other. The traditional marriage is largely a cultural phenomenon guided by cultural norms and values. However it was discovered that there is strong fusion between the church marriage and the court marriage. These fusions are borne out of the similar processes involved. Court marriages do not give room for polygamy and so does church marriage. It was also observed that amongst the forms of weddings, the traditional wedding hold less importance and relevance due to the fact that it has less attendance than church weddings and it was usually done in a rush, a sort of fulfilling all righteousness.

The study found out that the role of primacy the family plays, is a major similarity to both groups, as both groups still accorded very significant respect to families in the entire marriage process, solidifying the fact that marriage in Africa is a family affair. The presentation of gifts by the groom's family to the bride's family is also a very important similarity, and likewise the presentation of return gifts by the bride's family.

The mode of greeting family members by the couple, is a major distinguishing factor between the Yoruba and Anlos, during the marriage ceremony, the bride is expected to kneel to greet her and her husband's family members, whilst the groom is expected to prostrate, whereas among the Anlos the bride and groom are just expected to shake hands with family members.

The aso-ebi phenomenon which refers to uniform worn by family and friends during social functions in Nigeria, is another phenomenon, which was evidently present during the Yoruba marriage ceremonies, and conspicuously absent during the Anlo-Ewe traditional marriage.

The study found out that emphasis on bride's virginity in both groups had waned seriously, and was no longer accorded significance. The choice of marriage partners was discovered to have increasingly become a choice of the couple, it was seen not to be determined by parents anymore in both groups, the parents role was now more of an approval rather their previous selection roles.

The wedding venue among the Yoruba's was also discovered to have changed from the bride's fathers house to event centres, however the Anlo-Ewes still retained this tradition. The eru-iyawo or sronu which refer to bridal gifts brought by the grooms family is a major element common to both groups and has endured over time.

The study found out that professional and thematic decoration of the weddings venues is a trend subscribed to and gradually gaining prominence. Rather than just leave the wedding venue to be bare, decorations and props are set up to enhance the beauty of the venue. Another emergent pattern discovered is the use of colour schemes in wedding ceremonies. It was observed that for each wedding a particular colour was dominant and easily identifiable with the wedding. An emergent pattern was observed in cakes is the styling and aesthetic dynamics that is being applied to the making of cakes. The study also discovered, the increasing involvement of religious leaders in traditional marriages.

The study discovered that the increased exposure of individuals through education and travels to other parts of the worlds has a way of infusing innovative dimensions the ceremonies of their native lands. The study finds out that mechanisms of mass communication through which people of contemporary times get informed also play roles in exposing people to new wedding practices. Social media which is birthed from information and communication technology and a tool of globalization has become a tool of influence the creation, popularization and sustenance of new trends in wedding ceremonies. The study found out that individual, upon getting married share

their wedding pictures on social media sites like facebook, twitter, instagram, pintrest, tumblr and others. From these social media sites, different individuals have access to these pictures and learn new trends even though there were not present at the weddings.

5.3 Conclusion

This study examined wedding ceremonies in Ibadan metropolis, southwest Nigeria and Kumasi and Accra of the greater Accra region of Ghana. The study discovers that multi cultural weddings of different requirements and ideals are perpetuated among the Yoruba and Anlos, to the extent that there is a fusion of various ceremonies and a fulfillment of religious, social and legal approval of a marital union. The study found that there is an increasing disenchantment towards traditional marriage practices, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to draw the line between what is traditional and religious. The fact that marriages in Africa, still remain a family affair, also came to the fore during the course of the study, as although parents roles have been reduced from selection to approval, parental and familial consent to marriage still remains an integral and important factor in marriage ceremonies.

The preference of “foreign” western marriage prototypes to indigenous ones, is of grave detriment to both the Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe cultures. The fact that the culture of any society bears seeds for its development, and it serves as a mirror through which we look inwards to solve our problems as a society cannot be over-emphasized, if we as Africans continue looking at ourselves through a foreign mirror, the tendencies of our development would remain slim, cultural practices and heritages indeed must be preserved. The unique African situation, which Peter Ekeh points out, was very evident throughout the studies of marriage ceremonies, the fact that the forms of Weddings themselves reflect an hybridization, a sort of alliance to 2 realms,

which Peter Ekeh beautifully describes as the Civic and Primordial public, occasioned by colonialism which in effect constitutes the reality of the African Child being a citizen of both worlds is a very important point to note.

5.4 Future Research

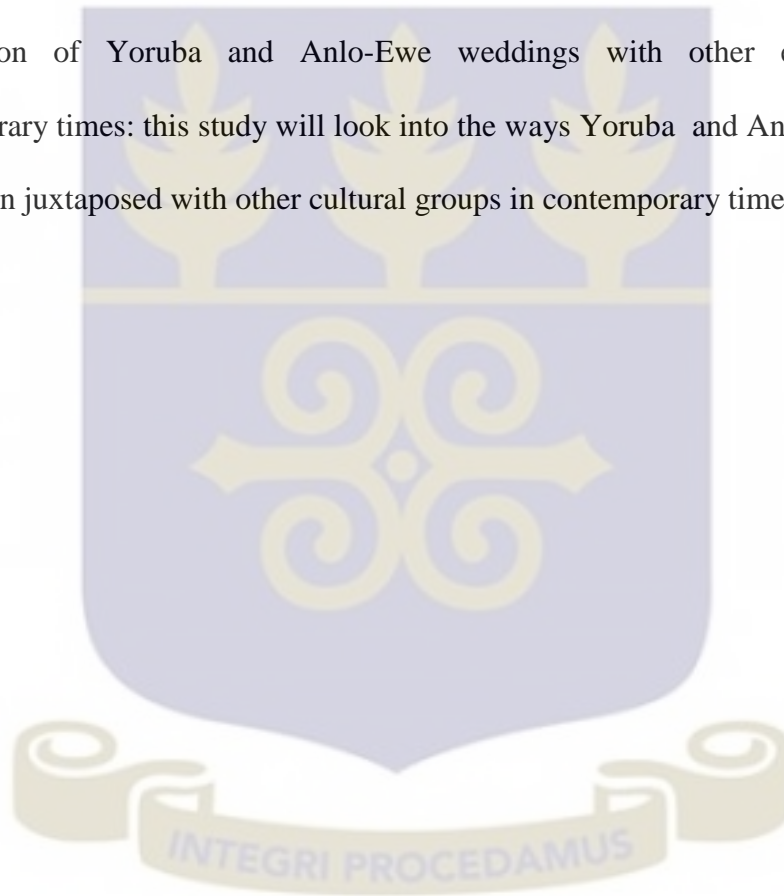
Any society that must develop, must take its cultural heritage seriously, thus a recommendation of the government of both country's to partner with astute anthropologists, to teach coming generations, their cultural heritages, and its importance, as this would indeed shed a positive light and illuminate young people on the beautiful aspects of culture.

Religious officials, should be encouraged, to work within the context of the societies they find themselves in, thus they should be encouraged, to accept traditional marriages as enough a marriage.

The study faced a few challenges, one was the fact that there was a time limit to it, this therefore did not allow the researcher to explore more issues on the topic. The issue of availability of weddings was also a very challenging aspect, as a number of people refused to have their weddings observed.

This research has brought to light some of the realities of weddings among the Yoruba and Anlo people in modern times. However, as indicated above given the limited time, this researcher does not pretend to have done an exhaustive study of the two groups as many issues can be raised about the study: for example the depth of knowledge about the Anlo-Ewe in particular, etc. And also because weddings vary and are dynamic subjects of study, the research recommends that future studies should look into the following areas;

1. A more detailed future research has to be done on the two groups to add up to the insight we have gained here.
2. The role of ICT and Social media in shaping the “ideal” wedding image in couples minds
3. Factors that have helped preserve the enduring customs in traditional weddings: This study will examine how enduring elements of traditional weddings have survived till contemporary times and will also look into the social, economic and cultural factors that have preserved them.
4. Comparison of Yoruba and Anlo-Ewe weddings with other ethnic groups in contemporary times: this study will look into the ways Yoruba and Anlo –Ewe weddings stand when juxtaposed with other cultural groups in contemporary times.



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