



Panoply Of Asante And Ijaw Cultural Practices: Comparative And Descriptive Account

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Abstract:

Ghana and Nigeria have diverse cultures, which embody some unique practices of Nigerians and Ghanaians. These practices are vital to foster unity as well as create a healthy cultural relationship for socio-cultural development of the two West African nations. This paper is a descriptive and comparative account of Asante and Ijaw of Ghana and Nigeria respectively, to establish their unique similarities and differences for socio-cultural cohesion. In-depth interviews and direct observations were the major research techniques employed to collect the data. The synthesis of the findings highlights that cultural equilibrium exists between the two nations in terms of the economic, religious, political and social aspects of the cultural life of the Asante and Ijaw.

Key words: *Asante, cultural policy, cultural practices, Ijaw, socio-cultural*

Introduction

Ghana and Nigeria have had relations over the years and this relationship has remained in spite of the changes in governance, economic and societal demands. The Asante, whose major language is Twi, are a part of a people known as Akans living in the central part of Ghana. The Asante have lived through several years of ethnic rivalry, conflicts and clashes and have discovered over the years that there is strength in unity (Kwadwo, 2004; Kyerematen, n.d). The Ijaw ethnic group, on the other hand, is the largest minority group in Nigeria who are predominantly fishermen and they speak Ijaw as their main language. They are located at the south-eastern coast of the country and some parts of the south-west coast, including the Bayelsa, Delta, Rivers, Ondo and Lagos States (Derefaka, 2003; Afolabi, 1998; Nyananyo et al., 2002). Long before Ghana attained political independence, the people of Nigeria had started making Ghana the preferred destination for a myriad of reasons, many of which bordered on socio-economic connections and ancestral linkages (Linck, 2007:3). Besides, the cultural policies of both countries provide for the preservation of the arts and culture of the people which is foundational of their history and of utmost relevance for growth and development (Towse, 1999; Barinaga, 2007).

For developing societies, the crucial question has been how to preserve and extend indigenous traditions, which root them strongly in the past and provide their deepest sources of energy and inspiration; and at the same time, to take what is more appropriate from the industrialized world without being inundated by it. Most developing societies have been struggling to overcome a long history of cultural colonization.

Cultural Policies And The Preservation Of Culture

The objective of cultural preservation is to ensure harmony with contemporary realities and the demands of change and development and to prevent a mindless sweeping away of the cultural heritage (Singh, 2010; Effa-Ababio, 2005). If this situation is allowed to happen, it results in disorderly change, societal instability and a people completely cut off from their cultural roots. The preservation of culture as provided for in the cultural policies of Ghana and Nigeria relates to the promotion of cultural property whether of concrete or non-concrete nature, past or present, written or oral in so far as it relates to the values and facts of history (Singh, 2010; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; Miller & Yudice, 2001).

The important roles which certain individuals such as chiefs, traditional leaders, women leaders and youth leaders play in the society promote the unearthing and preservation of cultural assets. These assets include traditional sacred groves, monuments, mausoleums, artistic treasures belonging to the state and individuals, private homes and several other cultural objects of high artistic value.

This paper draws out the similarities and differences in the two cultures to further strengthen bilateral relationship between Ghana and Nigeria by studying the Asante and Ijaw ethnic groups. Making public knowledge the similarities in the cultural patterns of Ghanaians and Nigerians enhances mutual cooperation between the two nations on cultural matters while knowledge of the differences in the cultural practices would let them appreciate each other's unique cultural heritage as well as providing for the adaptation of new cultural trends.

Methodology

The research was conducted in Ghana and Nigeria to specifically study the cultures of the Asante and Ijaw ethnic groups respectively. In order to collect detailed information about the cultures of the Asante in Ghana and the Ijaw in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, the Manhyia palace (the palace for the King of the Asante, Asantehene), the Center for Cultural Studies in Kumasi and homes of some traditionalists in Ghana; the Bayelsa State Council for Arts and Culture, the Rivers State Council for Arts and Culture and the palace of the Amananaowei of Bomo clan (the palace for the Chief of the Bomo People) all in Nigeria were visited.

As an ethnographic research, the following research questions were of relevance to the researchers: a) What are the differences and similarities in the cultures of Asante and Ijaw? b) How can the cultural practices of the two ethnic groups be preserved and projected for international cohesion and development? The qualitative method was more appropriate to answering the above questions because it afforded the researchers time to observe and record cultural practices of the two ethnic groups. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Baszanger, I. & Dodier, 1997). Using the "big net approach" (Fetterman, 1989), the researchers intermingled with a lot of people to get the overall sense of the cultural context as well as to identify key informants such as chiefs, traditionalists, village elders and opinion leaders who provided information and deeper insights relevant to the research questions. Also, participant observation became necessary to allow the

researchers to get fully immersed in the culture of the people. This was done to critically appreciate the cultures of the Asante and Ijaw.

Unstructured interviews were conducted at the work places and homes of the respondents. A mobile phone, tape recorder and camera were used to save information and capture pictures. The interviews were conducted in English, Ijaw and Twi where applicable with the aid of an interpreter for the Twi and Ijaw languages. Most of the respondents were well versed in the cultures of the Asante and Ijaw. There were face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews. The unstructured nature of the conversations helped the researchers to lead the respondents to provide information relevant to answer the research questions as well as to allow more freedom and time for the respondents to provide detailed information.

Results And Discussion

Culture as an embodiment of some aspects of the life of a people has been holistically described. This is to project the cultures of the Asante people of Ghana and the Ijaw of the Niger Delta in Nigeria by discussing the economic, political, religious, and social aspects of the way of life of these peoples.

Economic Ramifications Of The Asante And Ijaw Cultures

The Asante are primarily into in mixed farming of crops such as yam, corn, cassava, plantain, etc. Other farmers engage in fish farming, snail farming and poultry farming. Besides the major occupation of farming, the Asante people are craftsmen as well such as goldsmiths, silver smiths, wood carvers, basket weavers and weavers of cloth. The carvers carve symbolic items, staffs and drums having symbolic meanings in the Asante culture. The drums which are of utmost use at social gatherings convey messages that bind the spiritual and the physical world (Effa-Ababio, 2005; Sarpong, 1974). Royals and other individuals make use of gold and silver ornaments for decoration and body beautification which provide wealth for the gold smiths and silver smiths (McLeod, 1984). This enhances the economic life of the people in sustaining their livelihood.

The Ijaw on the other hand are fisher folks by virtue of their geographical location. The Aquatic ecosystems in Ijawland throughout the Niger Delta support a rich diversity of fish and shell fish resources. At least, one hundred and fifty species of fish inhabit the waters in the Niger Delta which is the largest in Africa and one of the largest in the world (Afolobai, 1998; Nyananyo et al., 2009). Artisanal (Small scale) and industrial

(large scale) fishermen play important roles in fish production, which are labour intensive, in the region. The field observation indicates that the Ijaw use mainly simple indigenous fishing gear and dug-out canoes built by them using mainly paddles as an aspect of their tradition. Due to acculturation and technology, few of the canoes are now motorized, probably to make fishing more effective and efficient. Traditionally, fences and stakes are used as barriers to control the movement of fish and facilitate their capture aside from traps made from wood, twines and raffia. The women, basically, are in control of processing, preserving and marketing of the harvested fish whilst the men dominate the capturing since, traditionally, women are prevented from engaging in strenuous and risky ventures. Furthermore, the Ijaw also engage in peasant farming and distilling local gin (zini) from palm wine. Additionally, the Ijaw people are very skilled in carving for they are known to be the best canoe carvers in Nigeria (Afolobai, 1998).

In farming and carving, these two ethnic groups share similar economic activities. They are very independent and hardworking people making them always finding opportunities to invest and express their hardworking abilities and strengths. These attributes reflect in their success in various economic ventures they engage themselves in their respective countries.

Political Aspects Of The Culture Of The Asante And Ijaw

Leadership And Hierarchy

A major difference in the political cultures of the Asante and the Ijaw is that while all the Asante states come under the authority and leadership of the Asantehene, the Ijaw states are autonomous, but the various chiefs put their heads together concerning issues benefitting the whole Ijaw nation. The Asante states have their own chiefs also, but they are subject to the King of the Asante states who is the occupant of the golden stool (Kwadwo, 2004; Kyerematen, n.d)). The Ijaw chiefs, on the other hand, have sub chiefs under them. These are chiefs of sections in the villages known as the Birinanaowei, chiefs of the compounds in the village, Polonanaowei and the family heads/chiefs Waridauwei all of whom are under the Amananaowei or Amanyanabo, the chief of the town or state (Nyananyo et al., 2009). Besides, chiefs of the various Asante states, the Asantehene has chiefs under him solely responsible for him and his successful administration. With no overall king of the Ijaw states, there are no offices for chiefs solely responsible for the king. The chiefs of the Ijaw state, however, have servants and

stewards at their service. In both cultures, the two kings sit on state stools with their sub-chiefs and subjects sitting around them to showcase their grandiose (Figures 1 & 2).



Figure 1: The current Asantehene (Osei Tutu II)



Figure 2: The Amanyanabo of Bomo clan

Responses from the field indicate that both the Asante and Ijaw practice matrilineal and patrilineal inheritance respectively. Kings are not made outside the royal family and even though there are differences in their practice of inheritance, either through maternal or paternal links, kingship remains in the royal family.

The Place Of Queenmothers

In as much as the role of a queenmother is recognised among the Asante (Figure 3), the Ijaw do not have an overall queenmother but each of the Ijaw states has a female chief, called the Erenanaowei (Figure 4) who is in charge of feminine matters. However, in both cultures, they settle domestic disputes ensuring that there is always peace among the people.



Figure 3: The current Asante Queenmother



Figure 4: The Erenanowei oOporoma

The Use Of Royal Regalia

Rulers and their servants adorn various objects primarily to impress (McLeod, 1984). However, the once-functional objects that serve as regalia identify the rank and purpose of the bearer and also express ideas about political relationships (Barinaga, 2007). The Asante king's regalia comprise a lot of gold jewellery for his arms, neck, fingers, ankles and head. He is always dressed in special *Kente* cloths and slippers for different ceremonies such as festivals, funerals, durbars. The regalia of an Ijaw chief are not quite as opulent as that of the Asante king. The Ijaw chief wears traditional coral beads (*Ibolo*) in place of gold jewellery. Additionally, he is dressed in an *etibo*, *owoko* or jumper shirt on trousers with cloth (wrapper), which is accompanied with shoes and hats as headdress. He sits in state on a chair known as the *Amananaowei ikasi*. The special seats distinguish the chiefs from other nobles and elders seated around them. While sitting in state, the Asante king sits under a state umbrella with various totems and symbols used according to the occasion. The Ijaw chiefs do not have state umbrellas as part of their regalia; instead, they are seated under shades made from palm fronds and thatch if they would be seated in public.

Nomination, Installation And Enstoolment/Coronation Of Kings And Chiefs

Both the Asante and Ijaw have king makers (known as *Gyasefoo*, among the Asante) who nominate candidates for the position of the departed king or chief. However, for the Asante, the queenmother performs chieftaincy roles in the absence of the king and it is she who is responsible to nominate a candidate. She does this by consulting members of the royal lineage, principal chiefs of the royal household, prominent and influential persons in the state. Together, they come up with a nominee who if not accepted, she is allowed two more nominations and if they also are not accepted, then the king makers can make their nomination. An Asante or Ijaw nominee must possess both physical and excellent moral attributes. He must not be physically handicapped and must not be a sufferer of tabooed illness (leprosy, blindness, etc). He must possess virtues such as humility, honesty and respect for all. He must not be a drunkard, an adulterer or fornicator. All these excellent qualities are essential so that chosen would not exhibit bad moral character in public to the disgrace of the state.

The Asante and Ijaw traditions demand that a candidate must be nominated within forty days from the demise of the previous king, so that the nominated candidate can preside over the activities, following the laying of the departed king to rest. The nominee is put through proper investigation to determine his abilities should he emerge king/chief. However, nowadays, people lobby for traditional leadership positions and even go to war, take lives and destroy property just to have power and the wealth as well as the recognition that comes with it. The Ijaw have no stool that serves as an embodiment of their unity, so their king is coroneted and not enstooled.

Social Aspects Of The Culture Of Asante And Ijaw*Dress Culture*

Both the Asante and Ijaw have cloth (wrapper) as their traditional attire. The *Kente* cloth and the *Adinkra* cloth are the most important cloth used by the Asante people. The Ijaw on the other hand, use the “*Abada*” George cloth. An indigenous Asante man, after wearing the knickers “*Danta*”, puts on cloth over his shoulder or his waist without a shirt underneath (Figure 7). The Ijaw man dresses in a trouser and shirt with a cloth on top and a hat (Figure 6a). The Ijaw have their shirts in three major styles, the *etibo*, *owoko* and jumper. The Asante woman uses two pieces of cloth. She may have one tied from her bust downward and the other one wrapped around her shoulder or the cloth could be tied on her waist, she would wear a blouse and still wrap the cloth around her shoulders

(Figure 8). The Ijaw woman wears a blouse with two wrappers on her waist and a headgear (Figure 6b).



Figure 6a : Traditionally dressed Ijaw Men



Figure 6b: Traditionally dressed Ijaw Women



Figure 7: Traditionally dressed Asante men

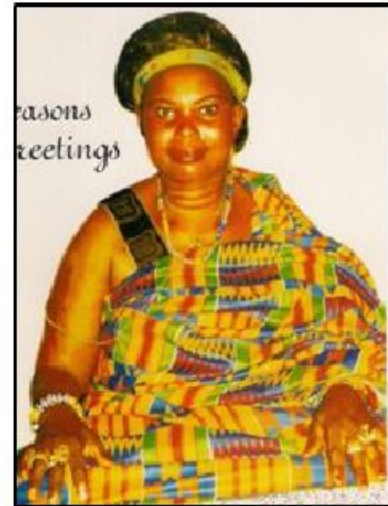


Figure 8: Traditionally dressed Asante woman

The respondents indicate that the significance of their dress culture is to showcase their wealth, social status and enhance their beauty. More significantly, religion, education and acculturation have introduced different forms of dressing among the Asante and Ijaw showcasing the dynamism in cultures. However, the kings, chiefs and queenmothers

(female chiefs) are somewhat bound by tradition and heritage culture to always conform to the status quo in their respective societies.

Food

Both the Asante and Ijaw are predominantly farmers, producing foodstuffs which are used to prepare a variety of dishes for their people. The Asante call it fufu, the Ijaw call it Onumu or mbedakaagun, which is usually eaten with a variety of soups. The two ethnic groups have similar soups ranging from palm nut soup (Abenkwan – Asante), Banga – Ijaws), the light soup or pepper soup (Nkraka – Ashanti), (Iginafluo – Ijaw), through groundnut soup (Nkatenkwan – Asante), (Apapa fluo – Ijaw) to okra soup, green leaves (vegetable) soup. Other staple foods for the Asante include Ampesie (cooked yam, plantain, cassava or cocoyam), Dokono (Kenkey), Akapinyi (toasted and mashed plantain, with groundnut paste), Mpampa (porridge), Mmotuo (Rice pounded and formed into balls). The Ijaw people have the special delicacy kekfie (unripe plantain porridge). These varieties of food provide the requisite protein, carbohydrate and vitamins to promote the health of the people.

Music And Dance

Music and dance are activities that characterize an African musical expression, and they play important roles in the lives of the people (Senogan-Zake, 1986). The Asante and the Ijaw have music and dance as an integral part of their lives, which the people use to express themselves on joyous as well as sorrowful occasions such as naming ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, festivals, puberty rites, wars, religious worship and funerals among others. The people use their music and dance to encourage and establish unity among them as well as with the spiritual world.

Greetings

Greetings are important among the Asante and the Ijaw at social functions, daily activities and at all times, morning, noon, evening or night. The various forms of greetings among these people portray their reverence for one another and most especially the elderly as well as people of high status. The Ijaw people greet Noa and do at every time of the day. This form of greeting is also used to say welcome, thank you or well done. Significantly, young people go on their knees to greet older people saying “koide” or “okoido” meaning “I am on my knees in respect for you”. The Asante greet anti-

clockwise when greeting a group of people by shaking hands from the right to the left. If a chief is in a gathering, among both ethnic groups, he would be greeted first. Chiefs are accorded a higher reverence when they are being greeted. This gesture is always characterized by lowering one's traditional cloth, mostly kente or adinkra cloth, to the waist or bust level when one is a male. Sometimes, the people would remove their footwear and bow to greet the king signifying their deep sense of respect to their chiefs.

Rites Of Passage Among The Asante And Ijaw

Birth And Naming Of A Child

Traditionally, the Asante name a child one week after birth and the Ijaw name a child at the time the first teeth appear. In both cultures, it is a belief that if a child is able to survive till the day set aside for its naming, it shows that it has come to stay and therefore deserves a name.

Among the Asante it is the sole responsibility of the father to give a name to a child while among the Ijaw, anyone can suggest a name provided they are members of the family or the community. On the day of naming, an elderly female member of the family of the Asante sweeps the room where the mother and baby sleep, takes the rubbish to a refuse dump saying to the spirits, "This baby has left them completely this day and you should no longer call him/her yours". The baby is washed and taken to every part of the house and be told that every part of the house belongs to him/her after which it is laid in the open. An elderly woman then holds the baby in her arms, mentions the name chosen for it, showers praises on the person the baby is named after and urge the baby to emulate that person. She dips her index finger into water and wine, puts drops on the baby's tongue one after the other and says "woto nsuo a fre no nsuo" and "woto nsa a fre no nsa" meaning that "if you taste water or wine, say that it is water or wine". Figuratively, the child is being advised to be truthful at all times. Significantly, gifts are presented to the child according to the sex type. A female is given a cutlass, hoe and basket for farming while the male is given a gun and cutlass, to work hard in order to defend his family and nation. However, dynamism in culture is introducing various kinds of items.

On the other hand, the Ijaw baby is taken by an elderly female member of the family to one of the elders of the village who then prays for the child that "The tooth that has erupted will not disappear". The baby is then taken back home after which the hair is shaved, the name is mentioned by an elder or family head and the child is prayed for

whilst gifts are presented by all present. After three days the child's hair is shaved again and the scalp is decorated with white paint and cowry shells are placed around his or her waist. With this body adornment the mother then walks the child around the village signifying full membership of the village.

It is significant to indicate that some factors determine the naming of a child if a child in both ethnic groups. For instance, if a child is born on a festive day, the child is named after the festival. If he or she is born on Christmas day, they are named accordingly. If the child is 'gotten' through a deity, it is named after the deity. Twins are named Ataa by the Asante and Mamuzee by the Ijaw. However, persons may change their names as they grow older as a result of education, religious beliefs, achievement or status change/change in status.

Puberty Rites

Puberty rites, known as *bragoro* among the Asante and the *okrika* among the Ijaws, are performed for a young girl the first time she sees her menstruation. The Asante young girl is first taken to the queenmother of the town for inspection and approval before proceeding to the menstrual home, where she eats mashed yam and gulps eggs to signify her attainment of a new status. Invariably, the ceremony is carried out for a group of girls that may have seen their menstruation almost at the same time. For boys, attainment of this stage is signified by being required to participate in communal rituals and to supply manpower at communal works. The Ijaw ethnic group marks this stage in a ceremony where the boy is made to climb a palm tree and successfully cut down his first bunch of palm fruit unaided. This performance is a good indication that he has attained the stage of maturity. Both cultures do not mark the entrance or exit from the stage by rituals but rather it serves as a period of training, learning, apprenticeship and preparation for future roles and responsibilities.

Marriage Ceremony

When two consenting adults of opposite sex agree to get married in the Asante and Ijaw cultures, their families are involved in the customary rites that precede marriage life. An Ashanti man goes to the family of his bride with the *Abusuapanin* (family head) his father, mother, siblings and relatives. The Ijaw also goes to the family of his bride with the *waridauwei* (family head) his parents, siblings and relatives on arrival. The wife's family asks of their mission and a spokesperson from amongst them speaks on their

behalf for the duration of the ceremony. Drinks (Aromatic Schiedam Schnapps) in addition to some amount of money are brought by the man and his people to seek the bride's hand in marriage. A box of clothes may be presented to the wife at an elaborate marriage ceremony largely characterized by feasting and merry-making.

Burial And Funeral Rites

When a person dies in the Asante society, the family head would provide a bottle of schnapps and delegate two or more relatives to go and inform other relatives and family members. The Ijaw people on the other hand, do not announce it immediately a person dies. The family members first of all bath and dress the deceased with items for bathing and clothing which they have provided themselves. The deceased would be laid in state before the information is let out.

Both Asante and Ijaw perform funeral celebrations for the dead. The Asantes perform it forty days after burial while the Ijaw perform it three days after burial for a male and four days after burial for a female. The Asante attach importance to the funeral celebration as they believe that the celebration enables their departed relatives to go to the land of the dead (*Asamando*) and not linger on the way to *Asamando* where the Ijaw perform the wake keeping ceremony before the burial, Asante perform it a night before the funeral celebration. Drumming, singing and dancing would continue till dawn amidst firing of musketry.

Traditionally, both the Asante and Ijaw celebrate funerals for elderly people majorly. It is the belief of both cultures that death of the youth, children or people who die in a forbidden manner such as suicide, sickness caused by deities, death through childbirth or thunder bolt, etc. Such corpses are buried quickly when they occur without any celebration.

Festivals Among The Asante And Ijaw

The Asante and the Ijaw celebrate quite a number of the festivals as part of their rich culture to remember their ancestors and sacrifice to them. Celebration of festivals in both cultures is largely characterized by drumming, singing and dancing. However, there are some basic differences which are based on the geographical location of the two ethnic groups. While the Asante have more land mass, the Ijaw have more water (river and seas) than land mass. Therefore, the former celebrate their festivals on land while the latter celebrate their festivals on water.

Three major festivals of the Asante ethnic group are the Akwasidae, Awukudae and Adaekesee. The Akwasidae is celebrated on Sundays only, every forty days throughout the year. In the Ashanti calendar with nine months making a year, the Akwasidae festival marks the beginning of a new month. Every month has forty days. It is a day for remembrance of the ancestors. In the morning of an Akwasidae, the Asantehene goes to the mausoleums to pour libation and offer prayers to the ancestors. Requests and the needs of the people would be asked of the ancestors and the stool houses of various families may be opened to the family members. They pour libation, offer sacrifices and ask for the help of their ancestors as a family, which crowned by a grand durbar where the Asantehene sits in state surrounded by his retinue of elders (Figure 9).



Figure 9: the Asantehene Osei Tutu II during an Akwasidae

Three major festivals celebrated by the Ijaw are the Segbein, New Yam Festival and Amapumo. With their residence and towns very close to the water, between the months of August and November, there is flood yearly for the Ijaws. After the flood, at the end of November or early in December, they celebrate the Segbein festival. When the water has receded, there are a lot of fish and other seafood trapped behind in the mud, which the people go after. They go fishing in beautifully decorated boats and beautiful attire for themselves (Figures 10 & 11). Both men and women are involved in this exercise. After making big harvest of the sea food, they compete in the boat regatta which is a boat racing exercise. The chiefs, elders and other members of the community, visitors gather

at the riverbank to watch the display. In the evening, the traditional priest offers sacrifices and performs libation to the ancestors, expressing their gratitude for a bumper harvest. The people give parts of their harvest to the traditional priest, his followers, compound heads and to the chief of the town. This attitude of sharing symbolises their strong sense of caring and belongingness.



Figure 10



Figure 11

Ijaw boat regattas during the Segbein festival

The Amapumo, which is a town cleansing festival, takes place also at the end of a flood. At the dawn of the day appointed for Amapumo, the traditional priest, chiefs and some members of the community dress in rags with their faces blackened with kitchen soot. Also, they insert leaves of oil palm branches in their mouth whilst they sweep every compound, pathway and parts of the whole community. This is symbol of “sweeping away” disease, poverty, curses, barrenness, famine and death. This ritual is climaxed at the river bank where they wash their bodies as a sign of cleansing away misfortunes, after which they feast and make merry.

Conclusions

The cultures of the Asante and Ijaw, discussed in all ramification, have laid bare some differences and similarities in these two cultures in Ghana and Nigeria respectively. The study has buttressed the objective of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to promote co-operation and integration in economic, social and cultural activity of member countries leading to raising the living standards of its people as well as maintaining and enhancing cultural stability among them to enhance the progress and development of the African continent (Linck, 2007). The fact that every people’s culture is of utmost importance to them supports the observations of Towse (1999) and Barinaga

(2007) that being knowledgeable of each other's cultures is good way to promote unity, acculturation and enculturation for accelerated socio-cultural growth. The conscious integration of the cultural policies and set of rules restore the cultural heritage and values of societies.

The findings also show that the Asante and Ijaw of Ghana and Nigeria respectively share some essential similarities in their cultural practices in terms of their economic, religious, political and social life. Significantly, these aspects of the people's life portray their strong sense and awareness of the spiritual world, reverence of social status, diligence and self-consciousness.

It therefore affirms that ECOWAS, the National commission on Culture, Ghana and the National Council for Arts and Culture, Nigeria must make known the cultures of the different member states to the people of the member states through festivals, seminars, art exhibitions and workshops to the entire citizenry. Lastly, all stakeholders in culture and tourism affairs have a bigger responsibility to organize cultural activities involving the people of Ghana and Nigeria aiming at establishing cultural equilibrium.

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