Faith, Religion And Communication:
The Communication Pattern In Traditional African Religion

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Abstract:
Communication is an exchange or the sharing of information or message, it requires certain basic components - the source from whom the message originates; the medium through which the message is conveyed; the audience who receives the message; and the feedback which is the reaction of the receiver to the message. Traditional African Religion (TAR) or African Traditional Religion (ATR) on the other hand is a system of information, a procedure of imparting or transmitting values of the indigenous community to members or intending members. Thus, this paper examines three major aspects: religion, faith and communication in African tradition religion. In trying to establish the nexus between communication and African traditional religion, the study adopts the qualitative research method in examining the various concepts. The paper argues that if the four basic elements – sender, message, channel and the receiver are present is the communication process in traditional African Religion, we can then say authoritatively that there is a link. We can therefore conclude that there is a communication pattern in traditional religion based on the sharing of language and meaning among members. The paper recommends that in every communication, the effort should be intensified to achieve a common meaning understood as such by all parties involved. It also recommends that the contents religious message must not be provocative and not convey the superiority of one religion over the other.

1.Introduction

In every communication process there must be a sender who originates the message, the receiver of the message and the channel through which the message gets to its destination. The presence of both the receiver and the sender of the message in the communication activity literarily mean that both players have some to share. Hybels and Weaver II (2001:6) describe communication as, "any process in which people share information, idea and feelings. It involves not only the spoken word, but also body language, personal mannerisms and styles, [that is] anything that adds meaning to a message."

In his understanding of communication, Jemiriye (2006) stated that communication connotes many ideas. The ideas according to Jemiriye include "the act or action of making known, of informing a person, of conveying knowledge or information, of imparting and of transmitting." Okuna (1999) as cited Ogweezy (2008:19) described the process of communication as:

> *…a complex process because the communication process is an exchange or sharing of information or message, it requires certain basic components…. These include the source from whom the message originates; the medium through which the message is conveyed; and the audience who receives the message; and the feedback which is the reaction of the receiver to the message.*

The process Okuna described above is present in every religion, particularly the traditional African religion (TAR) or African traditional religion (ATR) in which believers seek the intervention of a higher being. But solution seeking is not what traditional religion is all about. Every activity in ATR is about communication. According to Jemiriye:

> *Traditional Religion is basically a proved system of conveying indigenous knowledge of a community about their belief to new members of the community and to strangers.*

On that premise therefore, this paper attempts to put traditional religion in a better perspective by examining, the structure of traditional religion with Ifa as the basis for discussion and faith of traditional religion worshippers. The paper will also attempt to see the nexus between communication and traditional religion.

2.Conceptual Clarification

2.1.Faith And Religion

Religion is a set of beliefs and cultural system through which people of different cultural background seek meaning to life uncertainties. Moss (1980), as cited by Daramola (2005:120) sees religion as a product of the earliest attempt of the human mind to achieve a sense of security in the world. According to Connelly (1996), "religion originates in an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual."

Religion exists to help people try to give meaning to the world they live. It is therefore, avenue through which individual, community or group communes with his creator. This is why Nwabuaeze (2009: 247) says religion is a "faith-based belief in the existence of a higher being which is supernatural, including the activities that give identification to how various groups or sects express that belief system."

- **William James** concisely defines faith as "belief in something concerning which doubt is theoretically possible" (http://hopefaithprayer.com/faith/faith-quotes/)." If religion is a faith-base belief in the Supreme God, faith in itself can then be said to mean confidence, hope or trust**.** Thus, faith is the hope or confidence a person or group of persons have in a person, thing or deity. According to Wikipedia free encyclopedia (2013), faith in religion often involves accepting claims about the character of a deity, nature, or the universe. In other words, when a person has faith in something or deity he has not seen but believes in its existence, his faith has gone beyond reason or logic because, faith in something does involve the evidence or the existence of that thing or deity he believes in.

2.2.Traditional African Religion

Tradition is usually described as a belief or behavior which a people hold dear and passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning. The Webster dictionary online (2013) defines tradition as a way of thinking, behaving, or doing something that has been used by the people in a particular group, family, society for a long time. Tradition can further be described as part of culture that is passed from person to person or generation to generation, possibly differing in detail from family to family, such as the way holidays are celebrated (https://www.boundless.com/sociology/definition/tradition/). Ogweezy (2008) described tradition as the norms and values of each individual group under a particular ethnic group or tribe.

Culture on the other can also be described as the belief, custom and art of a particular group of people. According to Zimmermann (2012), Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. Taylor**,** whose definition of culture has been widely accepted as an all-encompassing defined culture as, "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morale, laws, custom and any other capabilities and habits as acquired by man as a member of society" (http://www.preservearticles.com). However, to have a layman's understanding of what culture means, Davey provides the following definition:

- Culture is a framework of behavioral patterns, values, assumptions and experiences shared by a social group;
- Culture is a mostly automatically or unconsciously applied orientation system of collective values, which makes its group members' behavior comprehensible and to a certain degree predictable for each other:
- Culture is communication, it impacts how we send and interpret messages,
- Culture shapes human conduct within a cultural group,
- Culture is something we learn,
- Culture is like mental software and has accordingly been defined as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others"

The various definitions above established six major elements of culture. These include:

- culture is learned and shared;
- Culture is trans-generational: Culture is passed from one generation to another.
- It is adaptive without losing the original roots;
- Culture is cumulative; and
- It is transmitted either orally or through writing.

Having looked at the two concepts there is a need to differentiate one from the other. According to differencebetween.info:

> *The most important thing to differentiate between them is to consider that, if beliefs and behaviors have been forwarded from the previous generation to the next generation, then it is considered a tradition otherwise not, whereas culture reflects the beliefs, governments, and ways of life that makes a community distinct from the other. It is important to note that the word 'traditional culture' is used to describe the culture that has retained the traditional values.*

Traditions and culture forms the identification of a particular society. Traditional activities always reconnect us with the past, whereas the culture defines the attributes of a particular society at a particular time and place.

Also, in her attempt to differentiate the two Ogweezy described culture as 'dynamic' that changes with time, while tradition according to her, 'is a bit stagnant'. However, Ogweezy was quick to say the two concepts are interwoven. The thin line that separates the two often time make people use the two interchangeably - often we hear "the tradition of my people" when what they are actually talking about is "the culture of my people".

Regardless of how the concepts are used, tradition we know from the definition above is the beliefs, the custom and the behavior which a group of persons or society passes from generation to generation through oral communication, culture on the other hand, is the totality of a people's way of life. What then is traditional African religion?

Traditional African religion is based on oral tradition; this means that the basic values and way of life are passed or communicated from elders to younger generation. These traditions are not religious principles, but a cultural identity that is passed on through stories, myths and tales (http://www.sahistory.org.za/african-traditional-religion).

African traditional religion is part of the religious heritage of humankind. Born out of the experience and deep reflection of our African forebears, it provides answers to the stirring of the human spirit and elaborates on the profundity of the experience of the divine-human encounter based on the resources of Africa's own cultural heritage and insight (http://www.hts.org.za/index.php.hts.article/view).

When we speak of tradition in African society, we mean something that belongs to the people which has been passed from generation to generation. In this respect, such tradition can be said to be indigenous to the people. This is what they believe in, practice and preach. Awolalu (1975) confirms the above assertion when he said it is the religion which "resulted from sustaining faith held by the forbearers of the present Africans, and which is being practiced today in various forms and shades and intensities by a very large numbers of Africans, including individuals who claim to be Muslims and Christians."

Omotoye (2011), citing Awolalu and Dopamu gave a clear picture of what an Africa traditional religion is:

> *It is the religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forebears of the present generation of Africans. It is not a fossil religion (a thing of the past) but a religion that Africans today have made theirs by living it and practicing it. This is a religion that has no written literature yet it is "written" everywhere for those who care to see and read. It is largely written in the people's myths and folktales, in their songs and dances, in their liturgies and shrines and in their proverbs and pithy sayings. It is a religion whose historical founder is neither known nor worshipped. It is a religion that has no zeal for membership drive, yet it offers persistent fascination for Africans, young or old.*

Today, the coming of Islam and Christianity has introduced a new dimension to the traditional African religion. Both religions now call believers in the religion pagans or idol worshippers, the truth is traditional religion worshippers believe in the Supreme Being and communicate with him through their orisha.

2.3. Traditional African Religion Vs Traditional African Religions

There are divergent views on what to call African religion. The disagreement among scholars over name to call this type religion gave rise to two schools of thoughts – monistic or monotheism and polytheism or pluralistic approach.

The first school of thought prefers a polytheism or pluralistic approach. Scholars like Nawigbo (2010), Magesa (2002) and Mbiti (1961) take a look at the nature and the differences in the type and method of worship, and conclude that it is traditional African religions. Mbiti's position, as cited by Awolalu rest on the multiplicity of African peoples and each with its own religious systems. Nwaigbo (2010) explains his pluralist position:

> *My own position is pluralistic, and I admit this sensibility openly in this discussion. African Traditional Religions are the religious systems that developed among the people of Africa in the course of the thousands of years that had rolled through the ages of history. Every folk in Africa has its own particular religion and religious system guiding their life and their human activities in the world from day to day. They are divergent sensibilities among these religions, which originate from ethnicity, class and gender, and which are still present in our contemporary Africa. The pluralistic category is very helpful and can even explain the origin of African religions (www.ajol.info/index.php/og/article/download/57922/46289).*

On the other hand, the second school of thought argued from a monistic point of view. Scholars like Awolalu (1975) speak of traditional African Religion as one irrespective of type and method of worship. Awolalu writes on his position:

We speak of religion in the singular. This is deliberate. We are not unconscious of the fact that Africa is a large continent with multitudes of nations who have complex cultures, innumerable languages and myriads of dialects. But in spite of all these differences, there are many basic similarities in the religious systems – everywhere there is the concept of God (called by different names). There is also the concept of divinities and /or spirits as well as beliefs in the ancestral cults. Every locality may and does have its own local deities, its own festivals, its own name or names for the Supreme Being, but in essence the pattern is the same. There is that noticeable "Africanness" in the whole pattern.

Awolalu's argument may be taken to be valid in the face the over 22,000 different sects within Christianity (Messina, 2013) and the different sects that are emerging in Islam. Again, the fact that there different types and method of worship in Christianity is not enough to call it "Christian religions" or for Islam "Islam religions".

Thus, even though there are different traditional religions, the similarity in them has made some scholars to see it as one. The similarities according Turaki (1999:69) include the following main characteristics:
- belief in a Supreme Being;
- belief in spirits and divinities
- the cult of ancestors; and
- the use of magic, charms and spiritual forces

On the other hand Krüger, Lubbe and Steyn (2009:35–39) examined the similarities and came up with the following three common characteristics:
- Belief in a Supreme Being
- The realm of spirits
- A unified community.

3.Methodology
To be able to establish the nexus between communication and traditional African religion, the study adopted the qualitative research method. This method entails the collection of data via interviews, oral history, and records/reports of scholars and traditional religion worshippers. The data collect were carefully studied, interpreted and presented as discussion.

4.Discussion

4.1.The IFA Oracle
Ifa is a system of divination that is practice among some societies West Africa. Among those that practise Ifa is the Yoruba ethnic group in the South-West country of Nigeria, it is also practiced among believers in Lucumi, Candomblé, and while in Togo, Ifa is known as Afa. The Yoruba see Olodumare, which literally means Rainbow, has the creator of heaven and earth and even amongst the traditional worshippers. Ifa according to Apena Fagbemijo Amosun Fakayode is a science of divination:

> *…a means of communication and interaction with the unseen, spiritual world. Through the practice of IFA we can see what cannot be seen – in the past, present, and future – and thus diagnose problems that are beyond our scope. Therefore when we place our trust in the word of IFA, we are always ensured hope, no matter how dire the situation may seem to us (http://oyekuofun.com/what-is-ifa/).*

But there no where Ifa is mentioned that Orumila is not mentioned also. Orunmila is seen has the arrow head of Ifa, who they believe was present at the creation of mankind. According to legend Orunmila was a human being, who lived a vibrant and successful life throughout his sojourn in life.

Ifa plays a significant role in the lives of Orisa priests and devotees and every one who comes to Olodumare through Ifa to inquire on any matter. - Ifa is believed to be the means of knowing the will and advice of our creator and as such exist to perform certain roles in the lives of believers. The essence of Ifa is captured in the following eight essence of Ifa as highlighted by professor Odeyemi:
- **The Spiritual Essence of Ifa** relates to the place of man (as a spirit) in the cosmos, the powers of matter and all aspects of ontological evolution and development.
- **The Religious Essence:** This relates to faith, catechism and Preaching.
- **The Divine Essence:** This relates to the methods of Divination, the mechanics of Divination and the system of Divine Message collection, processing and interpretation.
- **The Worship and Sacrificial Essence**: This relates to the basis and meaning of worship and sacrifice.
- **The Medicinal Essence:** This deals with both magical and materialist medicine.
- **The Historical Essence:** This deals with the history of all creation, including the creation of materialist, non-materialist and spirit worlds.

- **The Scientific Essence:** This deals with the power of observation, axiomatic, astronomy, cosmology, cognitive and pre-cognitive experience, astral science, physical and biological sciences, logic, philosophy mathematics, statistics and computer science.
- **The Cultural Essence:** This relates to rites, rituals, politics, socio-economics, language dress and normative value systems.

The eight essences are summarized into the following three basic roles Ifa performs in the life of worshippers:

- Ifa exists as a system of holistic medicine, whereas, persons afflicted with various physical, psychological, social, and spiritual illnesses seek help from Ifa priests who use Ifa divination and Ifa medicine's complex pharmacology of herbs, roots, and barks to diagnose, treat, and cure disease.
- Ifa is a system of preventive medicine employing medicinal, dietary, and magical means to strengthen, cleanse, and rejuvenate bodily systems.
- Ifa is a social system of ethics, moral teachings, psychology, metaphysics, prophetic revelations, and personalized spiritual training (http://ileifa.org/how-important-is-ifa-divination-in-the-practice-of-yoruba-traditional-religion/)

4.2.The Concept Of Trinity In IFA Oracle

Orunmila is also known as Elerii-Ipin (the Witness of the destiny) as revealed from holy Odu-Ifa Ogbe-Yonu. It was Orunmila who brought the system of Ifa divination into the world. ORUNMILA literarily translate 'only sky knows who will be saved'. According to a site Orunmila:

> *…is the first prophet of the Yoruba religion, sent by Olodumare to control the births, the deceases and the development of the human beings and other species. Fortune teller and owner of the Oracle and interpret of Ifá. He was in the Earth like prophet with the 16 celestial ancestors (the Meyi of Ifa), between 2000 and the 4000 year a.c.*

Olodumare was believed to have been given the mysteries of the world to Orunmila, who legends say was at the creation of man. "Orunmila himself was a human being, who lived a vibrant and successful life throughout his sojourn in life. Orunmila is known as Elerii-Ipin (the Witness of the destiny) as it is revealed from holy Odu-Ifa Ogbe-Yonu, this Odu teaches us that human beings were made of clay or mud by Obatala, in which Olodumare gives the breath, and then proceed to Ajala Alamo (Ajala the great molder), to pick the head where Orunmila witnesses the destiny picks by each creature coming to this world (http://oyekuofun.com/what-is-ifa/)." This recount of creation may suggest the trinity at creation.

4.3.Structure Of Traditional Religion - The IFA Oracle

Basically, there are components that most be present in the Ifa process of worship or consultation. These components represent how Ifa religion is structured and these are the divination, the Babalawo and the client and ceremony or festival.

4.3.1.The Divination

The Divination is concerned with finding out something or situation and what will happen in future. The method differ form religion to religion but some of the known methods of divination include palmistry, cream interpretation and astrology, necromancy, crystal gazers, dream interpreters and diviners by automatic writing. Writing on the importance of divination in Ifa, Ajayi:

> *Ifa divination is both a body of knowledge and a system of social, emotional, pathological control, employing relevant historical and mythological precedents contained in the special divinatory verses to be recited, chanted or song by the Babalawo. lfa divination is the most complex system of divination both in its repertoire of verses and in its range of applications. To the Yoruba, divination or consultation with the supreme divinity (Orunmila) is of crucial spiritual importance.*

4.3.2.Instruments Used In The Practice Of IFA Divination

Prominent among the Ifa instruments used for divination is

- the Ikin (the sixteen sacred palm nut of divination),
- The Opele (the divining chain) and the various objects which form the ibo (instruments for casting lots).
- The Iyerosun (divination powder),
- Opon Ifa (the divining tray),
- Osun (ornamental Ifa metal staff),
- Iroke (the carved ivory rattle)

4.4.The Babalawo/Iyanifa

The Babalawo is the chief Ifa priest who is trained in the art of divination. The Ifa priests are highly respected among worshippers mainly because they are the spokesperson for Orunmila. Among the Ibos of the eastern part of Nigeria, he is referred to as the dibia. Ifa also have female priestess known as iyanifa.

The Babalawo perform various roles from healer, herbalist and doubles as the one people come to when they want to acquire some knowledge on Ifa corpus. His knowledge of the solution to the problem brought to the Ifa is dependent on the reading or the interpretation of either the patterns of the Opele (the divining chain), or the palm nuts called Ikin. His interpretation of the odu ifa will be supported by ese Ifa (a verse of divine poetry that has been passed down for thousands of years) and if there eewo's or taboos are the do's and don'ts which may come form the interpretation which the client must observe to enjoy life without mishaps. The role of the Babalawo or the Iyanifa therefore according to Ajayi (1996), is that of connecting two worlds: the ephemeral and eternal, the material and the spiritual.

4.5. The Client
The client is the person who consults the Ifa oracle for guidance by means of divination performed by the Babalawo. Generally, a person who is consulting a Babalawo for divination has a shared belief in the divination. When a person who is not a worshipper decides to consult the oracle, his decision stems from the fact that he has faith in the divination. The reason for the shared belief is based on the impact faith has in the positive outcome of the compliance with the divination.
Again, humility and submission are other factors that the client must have. According to Ajayi (1996), the client, regardless of who he is, his social status, religious inclination, age or educational attainment, he has to submit himself to the authority and direction of the Babalawo. This is because the Babalawo is believed to be endowed with the knowledge to solve his problem.

4.6. Ceremonies
Within Ifa, there are numerous ceremonies and rituals used for personal protection, improving one's health, achieving goals, preparing for pregnancy, obtaining wisdom and knowledge, removing negative spirit energy, becoming more productive, becoming married, etc. again, there is Ifa festival which is a day set aside to praise and worship Orumila and also to make supplications. According to Ogwezzy (2009), to observe the day, all Ifa priests will dress in white and danced through the streets reciting incantations amid drumming and dancing in the company of followers of the religion.

4.7. Initiation Into IFA - ITEFA
Initiation into Ifa means conversion into Ifa family. It is a ceremony carried out to welcome new members or initiate Ifa priest or priestess to become the voice of Orunmila. Whether or not the ceremony is to welcome new members or initiation of new priest or priestess, itefa as the initiation is called, is believed to brings members to the knowledge of taboos that if not observe may affect their lives negatively it is also done to tell members what they need to do to be successful and victorious over their enemies. Ceremony is commanded by Orunmila for all members or intending members if the want to be successful in life and is between a day and three days depending on the type of initiation. Itefa has the following benefits according to IyaKemi (2009) an Ifa follower:
- reclaim our lost blessing
- get rid of negativities
- get in tune with the Universal energies
- know who we truly are and know our divine role here on earth
- know what we need to use, do, go away from, and act, so that we can be able to accomplish our divine role

4.7.1. Types Of Initiation
- **ESE'NTAYE:** Generally speaking, initiation begins at the birth of a new born babe born into an Ifa family is taken to Ifa for Ese'ntaye (stepping on the earth) seven days after birth. Ese'ntaye acts as a guide for the child early life and which will be a path which he will take to secure his destiny successfully. Ese'ntaye therefore reveals the child's personality, gives direction on what the child will do, and the ewoo (taboo) for the child, as well as the Ifa name the child will be called.
- **Itefa**: itefa is a three-day ritual ceremony where the initiate receives the sacred Ikin Ifa (Palm nuts) of Orunmilla, and are now ready to receive instructions on how to use the tools for one's advancement as priest of the tradition.
- **Elegan**: This is another type of Ifa initiation in which the Odu -sacred calabash is not present and the Ikin are not buried in a special prepared place by the Osun staff. The Elegan initiation only takes two hours. The initiation is done to appease the Ori (head) of the initiated person. During the process Ifa chants are said and Ifa will be cast to know the Odu and sacrifices for the person. The sacrifice may be instant or postponed.
- **Olodun Ifa Initiation:** This is a type of initiation where the sacred odu calabash is present. The initiation process takes almost 15-20 hours. The process is to call on the energies that were present at the time of the initiated person birth, when he chose his ipin (destiny). Again, the universal energy is called upon so that he/she could be able to fulfill his/her destiny.

4.8. Belief Of Worshippers
Traditional African religions recognize a Supreme God – one who creates all, who holds the key of life and death, one who determines the fate of all. Incidentally, though followers or worshipers believe in the Supreme God's existence, they do not worship him directly as they do not feel worthy enough. The Supreme Being is called upon in times of need, like drought or any other thing that may threaten their existences. Beyond seeking help, worshipers also render special thanks for their lives because they believe it is the Supreme Being chose to spear their lives. Nwaigbo (2010) writes on the belief system of the traditional religion in Africa:

There is a presence and strong recognition of a Supreme Being, or still more of a Father. This deep awareness and recognition results in a way of life that is imbued with a deep religious sense, the belief in the existence of God and the experience of a Supreme Being belong to the basic religious experience of persons belonging to African Traditional Religions and cultures. There is in all the traditions of Africa a sense of spiritual realities, and "a very important and common factor of this sense of spiritual realities is the notion of God as the first and ultimate cause of things...In reality, a living sense of God as the Supreme personal and physical Being, pervades the whole of African culture."

4.9.Trends In IFA Worship

- **Congregationalism:** History has no record of a particular place where worshippers meet on a regular basis to celebrate Ifa, the tradition then was for the Clients on the realization of the need to seek guidance from Ifa go to the Babalawo's house for divination. However, there is a day to celebrate Ifa, when worshippers come together in an open space to sing, dance and offer sacrifice.

This mode of worship is to day changing as a result of the influence of Christianity and Islam. The proliferation of churches and mosques has infiltrated the worship that today some Ifa worshippers now has Ijo Orumila Adulawo (the church of Orunmila in Africa). Ogunbanke (2012):

A Sunday service at Ijo Orunmila Adulawo starts with a prayer session at the vestry and choir's dressing room followed by a processional hymn and congregational opening prayer. Then, it progresses with praises, songs, drumming, reading of some traditional canticles, offering and sermon. The sermon is coordinated by any of the leaders known as Eni Owo (Priest.)In the cause of their service instead of reading or quoting from the Bible, the priest makes references to some historical accounts, especially on matters relating to Orunmila and the Ifa oracle. They make use of a compilation of writings on Ifa worship, sacrifices and other forms of reverence known as odu.

The worshippers use Yoruba though out the service and they lay more emphasis on Yoruba culture, norms, traditions and values, especially on issues relating to relationship between Olodumare (God) and Orunmila.

- **Media Evangelism:** another trend that is fast gaining ground is the use of the media for propagation of Ifa or Orunmila messages now known as "ifavagelism". The Ijo Orunmila mentioned above has a 30 minutes programme on Lagos Television channel 8 (LTV8) designed like Christian televangelism. Also, the EKO FM starts each broadcast day with prayers from Christian, Moslems and traditional religion which is said by Ifa followers. The station also ends each broadcast day in the same manner.
- **Internet and Social Media:** Internet generally offers information while social media provide an avenue for networking, today internet and social media are providing a link between people and their religion. Stout (2006) adds that these "developments signal an emerging trend of personal autonomy in religious worship. Information that was once obtained directly from clergy in face-to-face meetings can now be accessed from online sources". The internet affords Ifa priest to talk freely about Ifa and indirectly canvass for followers.

4.10.Communication Process In Traditional Religion

Communication is said to be the sine qua non of religion, it is the essence of prayer, sermons, rituals, and worship. Whether it is Christianity, Islam, Hindu or Buddha, communication is at the heart of what they do and how they do it. Jemiriye underscore the essence of communication in traditional religion when he said:

It is a system of information, a procedure of imparting or transmitting values of the indigenous community. Traditional religious communication, as per formative therefore includes speaking, singing, gesticulations, rituals, worship, and virtually all that are done within all traditional communities. Thus, Traditional Religion can aptly be seen as a unique but comprehensive system of communication that covers all within a traditional community.

Every communication situation must have four basic elements – sender, message, channel and the receiver – to be called communication. The situation is not different in traditional religion regardless of the ethnic or tribe involved.

The client in traditional Ifa worship represents the initiator or the origination of the communication. He or she kick start the communication first by the exchange of pleasantries and secondly, by speaking his mind silently either to the opele or by explaining his problem to the Babalawo who then proceed to inquire from Ifa. The channel of communication in the situation discuss above becomes the opele and the Babalawo, while the message is the problem brought before the Babalawo. The reaction to the message is what Orunmila says through the odu ifa which will be interpreted by the Babalawo after reciting some verse from Ifa to support the revelation.

Generally speaking, the communication situation discussed above can be discussed from three perspectives, namely communication setting (interpersonal and group communication), extra-mundane communication and demonstrative communication.

4.11.Communication Setting In Traditional Religion
- **Intrapersonal communication:** intrapersonal communication is a communication within self that involve thoughts and feelings of individual. According to Asemah (2009), intrapersonal communication occurs 'when we ponder on issues within us and weigh them before speaking them to others". In Ifa religion, intrapersonal communication occurs from the moment when the client decides within himself to consult Ifa and even after the consultation, the revelation stays with him.
- **Interpersonal Communication:** This type of communication generally involves two persons. According to Dominick (2002) interpersonal communication is one in which "one person (or group) is interacting with another person (or group) without the aid of a mechanical device. The source and receiver in this form of communication are within each other's physical presence." Adding to Dominick's understanding of interpersonal communication, Weaver (2001: 16) said interpersonal communication occurs is usually in an "informal, unstructured setting.' Asemah (2009) agrees with Dominick but adds that for interpersonal communication to be effective there must be a certain relationship between the sender and the person he is interacting with." A good example of interpersonal communication situation in traditional Ifa religion is the interaction that takes place between the client and the Ifa priest.
- **Group Communication**: group communication occurs when members of a group with identical philosophy meet to solve a problem or as in the case of Ifa festival or ancestral worship.

4.12.Extra-Mundane Communication In Traditional Religion
Broadly classifying the communication that takes place in traditional religion setting as interpersonal or group communication may not give a better understanding of what goes on when during festival, ancestral worship or when a client comes to make an inquiry from Ifa, this is because the communication is mostly between human and supernatural being. Lending his voice to this argument, Akpabio (2003:31) asserts that:

> *When communication goes beyond the realm of intra-personal, interpersonal and mass communication to embrace supernatural beings –ancestors, spirits, gods, the supreme God – or when they involve processes, elements or abilities that are superhuman as in witchcraft, reincarnation etc, it would readily qualify as supernatural communication.*

The supernatural communication is what Wilson (1998) as cited by Akpabio referred to as "extra-mundane" communication. Ibagere (1994) as cited by Ogwezzy called this form of communication esoteric mode mainly because "its understanding depends, to a large extend, on the psychic development of the individual.
Citing Wilson (1994), Akpabio notes that extra-mundane communication involves intra-personal processes, physical revelation, magical other-worldly verbalization, spiritual transmigration and it may convey elements of cultural celebration, dedication and consecration. The type of communication is broadly categorized as bottom-up and top-down communication.
- **Bottom-Up Communication:** this type of communication occurs when human beings seek audience with a supreme being or gods for a pressing needs like type of profession to do, desire for children/wife/husband or promotion at the office. Ogwezzy adds that in this form of communication human beings are actively involved in incantations and supplication to supernatural beings.
The believers in Ifa oracle for instance often, after childbirth, approach Ifa to know the akose jaye (destiny) of the new born babe. The Ifa priest inquires from Orumila what this is and he in turn relay the message as revealed by Ifa. Ogwezzy identify festivals, ceremonies, divination and ancestral worship as part of bottom-up communication.
- Festivals are days through which traditional religion worshipers come together to celebrate, worship and make supplications to a supernatural being for the good of the past years and for favorable years ahead.
- Divination: divination is the consultation with the Supreme Being, and among worshippers this is crucial as the oracle elerinpin (omniscience) knows all and can do all. According to Ajayi (1996) Ifa divination is both a body of knowledge and a system of social, emotional, pathological control, employing relevant historical and mythological precedents contained in the special divinatory verses to be recited, chanted or song by the Babalawo. Ajayi citing Bascom (1969) and Awolalu (1979) avers that of all the methods of divination employed by the Yoruba, Ifa divination is considered the most reliable, and the most popular means of divination.
- Ancestral worship according to Ogwezzy refers to the worship of departed relatives who believed to have become powerful spiritual beings and guides; or less frequently, to have attained the status of gods.
- Ceremonies are channels of communication with the gods either to rededicate worshippers, dedicate new born or the initiation of new members or priests.

4.13.Exra-Mundane Top-Bottom Communication In Traditional Religion
A top-bottom exists when the gods communicates with human beings on issues affecting them. In describing the top-bottom situation, Ogwezzy writes that:

In extra-mundane top-down communication, a supernatural being, through its priests/agent or signs, communicates its pleasures/displeasures, directives, orders, and so on, to its adherents and priests. Akpabio went a step further to clarify top-down communication. According to him, the top-down "is actually the feedback component of the extra-mundane mode of communication." Among top-down channels, as identify by Ogwezzy, include Potent speech i.e. ofo (incantation), dreams, telepathy and natural phenomena.

4.14.Demonstrative Form Of Communication In Traditional Religion
Demonstrative communication in traditional worship entails the art of dancing, singing or any action that shows appreciation, or praises of a supreme being. Akpabio contends that this "engaging component of the demonstration communication mode serves very useful purposes in terms of sensitizing audience and community members to the development messages, passage of respected members of the community, to aid work amongst others."
So when we talk of demonstrative communication, we include music, dance, chants, praise singing and incantation.

5.Conclusion
Communication is the process by which information, ideas, messages and feelings is processed (intrapersonal), and passed between individuals. The effectiveness of the communication depends on the sharing of meaning among players in the communication process. It means that all the parties in the communication activities must share common language, codes, values and symbols. This is why Heinich et al emphasize that communication is an interpretative transaction between and among individuals.
Communication is said to be transactional because of reversal of role that occur in the communication activity. In other words the sender at a point acts in that capacity and at another point as the interpreter/receiver, while the receiver also doubles as the receiver as well as the interpreter/sender at another point. This is the exact communication activity that takes place in traditional African religion. We can conclusively say it is a system of conveying the belief, indigenous knowledge of a society to a younger generation and intending members of that society. This is why Jemiriye concludes that traditional religion is 'a system of information, a procedure of imparting or transmitting values of the indigenous community'. In other words the dancing, the ritual, the divination and every other activity in traditional religious activity established the communication link.

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