

**AFIWE AWON OWE TI O JE MO IGBEYAWO  
LAARIN YORUBA ATI IGBO  
(A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF YORUBA AND IGBO  
PROVERBS ON MARRIAGE)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study carried out a comparative study of Yoruba and Igbo proverbs on marriage. It also highlighted the similarities and differences in issues relating to marriage among the Igbo and the Yoruba as reflected in their proverbs. This was done in order to examine the form and content of proverbs in the two societies and compare them on the basis of the context of their use, their cultural values and aesthetics.

Ninety-one Yoruba and sixty Igbo proverbs were purposively collected. Oral interviews were conducted with the native speakers of Yoruba and Igbo languages. The collected primary data were complemented with secondary materials from textbooks, libraries and the internet. The hermeneutics method was used in the analysis of the data.

The analysis of the proverbs revealed that there were differences in the number of visitations made by the groom's family, in the requirements of engagement materials and in the format of the wedding ceremony. It also revealed that parents had the exclusive right to determine the choice of partners for their daughter as well as the time of marriage after consultation with Ifa oracle and members of the two families. Other similarities included formal introduction, engagement and a befitting marriage ceremony for the children. The Igbo attached much importance to the wealth and financial status of the groom as evidenced in the large amount of gifts presented by his family during various visitations to the bride's family. The Yoruba however, attached much importance to the moral standard of the groom's family. Unlike the Yoruba who frowned upon intertribal marriage, the

Igbo allowed their daughters to marry from other ethnic groups, once other conditions were met by the groom's family.

The study concluded that love, peace, progress and harmony were promoted in the house and in the society through the stages involved in marriage in the two societies as depicted by the proverbs. It also added that the two societies held female pre-marital virginity in high esteem and abhorred pre-marital sex.