

## **AFRICAN IDEOLOGY: IGBO PAREMIOLOGY IN PROMOTING MORALS, PEACE AND HUMAN SECURITY**

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### **Abstract**

*Every society has its own fundamental philosophy and ideology that can build good moral behaviours, peace and security in the society. Africa, a continent that is replete in tradition and culture, has many tribes and communities with distinct proverbs, norms and values that can transform an individual or the society. Igbo land is a one primary example of an African tribe that has deep belief in their proverbs. The central motive of the study is to assess the values therein in proverbs and other constructive idioms of the people capable of building moral, peace and human security. The study, therefore, examined African/Igbo ideologies, the proverbs and thoughts that can bring and sustain peace and security. The study also observed the various sayings of elders which are today, either due to modernization or civilization, are wearing off from the memories and words of the youth and middle aged people and found more on the lips of the elderly people basically. The paper noticed that many young Igbo people have little care and concentration of the meanings embedded in Igbo proverbs and idioms. The study highlighted the importance of knowing these basic African ideologies replete in the quantum Igbo proverbs and other words of knowledge. The paper concluded by emphasizing that both the adults and the younger ones should retrace their steps and make efforts to know the values in Igbo proverbs which have deep wisdom capable of building individual characters positively as well as bring peace and security to the society.*

**Key Words:** African Ideology, Igbo Paremiology, Morals, Peace, Human Security

### **Introduction**

African societies are not only blessed with substantial amount of mineral and human resources but also with constructive traditional worldviews which comprised of beliefs and ideologies that make the society peaceful to live in. Right from time immemorial, the time preceding colonial era, African continent had had their numerous belief systems (African belief systems are those sets of ideologies and principles that guide the people in their everyday life) that brought order and tranquility in their lives. Most of these beliefs and practices,

despite the challenges of yester years, still exist. One may likely argue that today's complexity, modernization, globalization and increase in migration of Africans to various cities and nations within and outside Africa may have wiped out these fundamental philosophies (philosophy of the African people refers to their fundamental principles, values, beliefs, language, mindset, and the likes, generally agreed upon and practiced by the people) and ideologies (ideology of the people is the set of beliefs, values and ideas which they adopted and practiced) completely from the minds of the people and from their communities. This is not completely true because many African communities still retained most of their belief systems despite these changes.

Africa as a region of the world has no doubt witnessed its own share of social and other forms of trials in recent times. Remonstrating that conflict and backwardness is only prevalent in Africa, the paper tends to emphasize that what is prevalent in Africa in terms of conflict is witnessed elsewhere around the world. Nhema & Zeleza (2008:3) observe that the twentieth century Africa was ravaged by wars of one type or another. In as much as it is known that conflict and unstable society favour some people, it is also known that this act is observed in the minority. It is a fact that some politicians who have much to gain out of conflict and disorganized societies provoke some conflicts in Africa for personal gains at the end. Nevertheless, the majority of African people prefer peace, love, tranquil environment, security of their lives and properties. Conflict and lack of peace destroys harmony and makes people to live life in uncertainty. Since the limitation in core moral values as a result of the reduction in the practice of many traditional ways of doing things and also the increase in the number of people living township life, many things have changed.

Again, since the vital strings that held the people together - traditional statements, listed abominations and taboos that incur wrath of the gods and disaster to the offenders, have been overlooked, crime rate has exacerbated. Many societies are now submerged in war and conflict and societies are no longer as stable and sweet as they used to be. Fear and distrust even amongst relatives and brotherhood has increased. Today's upsurge in crime rate, conflict and insult is because most of the fundamental traditional strings and statements that build human character are downplayed. Many African people have compromised their traditional values and their societies are now facing dangers of various kinds. Nevertheless, it is not too late for Africans, using Igbo people as a case study, to retrace their steps and embrace once again the rudimental

cultures that gave human beings conscience and real sense of existence. There is no gain saying the fact that most African traditional beliefs, ideologies and philosophies have good elements that can upgrade good moral values, build peace and sustain human and societal security at this time. Some of these vital statements are the proverbs and idioms. Ndukaihe (2006:18) note that language and symbolic expressions are purveyors of culture, religion and philosophy of the Igbo.

It is a natural phenomenon that people should always disagree, quarrel, and have conflict once in a while. In other words, there are times for anger and stress, likes and dislikes to manifest, time for peace and times when frictions manifest in a natural human environment. What is indeed worrisome is the upsurge in aggression and reaction to conflicts and fights, killings, insensitivity, grudges, malice across African communities and the world in general. Yet, despite the fact that the period is marked by these flashes of insecurity, attacks, ethnic rancor, cultural frictions, racism or tribalism, terrorism and so on, there are some elements of culture and traditions that are capable of reforming the society as earlier stated. African societies are replete with core moral statements and social guidelines that tame people's excesses. Modernization seems to have relegated most of these vital qualities to the background in recent times. In Africa, each community has its own traditional principles that have sustained it directly or indirectly for ages. This paper tends to look at an important aspect of culture of the Igbo people which can reform human characters for the best, build moral values and provide security of lives and properties in this fast changing world. Most aspects of the Igbo ideologies and philosophies are observed in their statements. Some of these special words and statements include proverbs, idiomatic expressions and parables. Proverbs, particularly, has remarkable characteristics that can influence individuals and their societies positively. Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Varga (2015) were able to conduct extensive research on proverbs where they gave solid details on its collection and categorization.

### **Basic African Ideologies**

Basic Africa ideology is the collective ideas, beliefs and values which guide the people for their own good and for the betterment of their society. Eagleton & Eagleton (1991:1) note that ideology is a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class. Each African society has its own set of unique practices which guides them. In fact, all existing societies have consolidated ways of doing things which has lasted for centuries which are quite different from

people of other world nations such as America and Britain. Some of the people's practical ideologies and philosophies include live and let live, hard work, sacredness and respect for human life. Proverbs, riddles, folklores, poems, songs, and idiomatic expressions of different types are evident and plays important roles in African ideology. Moral decadence, increase in conflict and attacks and lack of respect for human life and property is presently the other of the day but one of the available and easy ways available to curtail this effects lies in Africans imbibing those traditional practices, beliefs and statements/sayings that their communities were familiar with in the past and which really curtailed many evil practices. Most of these practical belief systems in African societies are part of their heritage. African ideologies and philosophies are also considered part of what makes up their culture and tradition.

In Africa, most communities look similar in terms of settings and environmental outlines, yet, each has its own distinct way of doing things to suit them and maintain order in their individual societies. Revered totems and objects of political and social activities are also likely to differ yet their functions when narrated often appears to be the same or similar. Also, traditional rules and regulations, taboos and traditions, may be either similar or differ from one community to another. Often, there are many 'dos and don'ts', rules and regulations that have already been established by the ancestors and enshrined in the customs and traditions of the land. Many of them have proved to be very useful in building a society that was less active in crime and which provided enough human security in the pre-colonial Africa. Thus, some of these ideologies and philosophies have already been lived, tested and certified by the forefathers. In all, African ideology is an embodiment of wisdom, thoughts and practices that can influence the society for good in recent times. For centuries, people have derived pleasure in keeping these vital guidelines to life and obeying traditional rules and regulations of their communities. Well practiced societal guidelines and use of traditional statements such as proverbs promotes individuals' image and African heritage.

### **Definition of Paremiology**

Paremiology is the act of studying proverbs. According to Balachandran (2008:1), the study of proverbs is called Paremiology and the origin of proverbs can be traced as far as the times of the great philosopher Aristotle. Igbo people of southeast Nigeria has traditional ways of ensuring that moral values, peace and most especially human security is ensured in their society for a very long time in

the past. Words spoken especially by the elders and some other adults who have the wisdom and mastery art are often spiced up with deep thoughtful statements such as proverbs and other forms of figures of speech. Speake & Simpson (2015:xi) has defined proverb as a traditional saying which offers advice and presents moral in a short and pithy manner. Having looked in-depth into the qualities of Paremiology, it has been discovered that the profuse use of proverbs is bound to restore more order to the society. Proverbs have a subtle but powerful means of making people think and see the clarity of life qualities. Clifford (1999:vii ) observed that proverbs is about vision and action. Igbo proverbs are very useful because they can be used in judging, counseling, healing, soothing, warning and encouraging people. It is a well known fact that if peace is to reign in a society, there must be a good management of crisis and this management starts with the words spoken. Kind statements and rude statements have the power to incite order or create war respectively. Thus, uttered words are powerful and they have the potential to influence the world. In Igbo land, there are proverbs for almost every situation or occasion.

There are words and proverbs said when someone is bereaved, for good conduct in children, for a choice of war or peace to the other warring party, for hard work and encouragement, for security of life and protection of territories, for praise and so on. Igbo people believe so much in the values that are hidden in proverbs and have used them profusely in the past and in the present times mostly by the elders alone. Proverbs are so much recognized that they are said to be the 'palm oil with which words are eaten.' Amongst the elderly or individuals conversant with Igbo proverbs, words are saved and words are chewed. Long arguments and expressions are deemed irrelevant because one to five proverbs thrown at the listener solves the problems of speaking too much. Again well cultured Igbo men take pride in garnishing their statements with well seasoned proverbs. They ensure that, while speaking, their statements contain proverbs that are convenient for the topic being discussed to strike home their meanings. This has been very useful in the training of children in most Igbo homes. Early use of proverbs on children enables them to grow with deep respect for life and it inculcates quality moral values in them. Many abominations and careless lifestyles have been avoided in the past because of the power of proverbs in traditional Igbo societies. Speaking about proverbs, Manser (2007) said that,

A proverb is a saying, usually short, that expresses a general truth about life; proverbs give advice, make an observation, or present a teaching in a

succinct and memorable way; we use proverbs or allude to them quite often in everyday speech. (p.ix).

Proverbs is a mastery art. It is sweet to the ears and strikes the mind and brain to think fast when relating to a particular matter that is being discussed. Also important and difficult to separate from Igbo statements are several other idiomatic expressions such as onomatopoeia (saying of words that imitate the sound made by something such as O na-agba oso *dim dim*); hyperbole (the use of exaggerated words to strike home one's point such as O bulu ibu dika *enyi* - she is as fat as a *cow*); simile (draws comparison between two things such as O di ocha ka ugo - she is as fair as the white eagle; and metaphor (word used to express something in other to strike home a point such as O bu agwo - He is a snake). In Igbo land, numerous proverbs and idiomatic expressions are meant for different occasions. They are formulated words of wisdom borne out of experience of Igbo forefathers in the past. Replete with deep wise saying, proverbs are sometimes very hard for a layman to assimilate or comprehend. They are no mere words. Elders who use proverbs chew their words before uttering them because they can hold hurtful words and deep meanings depending on the occasion. With these qualities, going back to Igbo basic values and ideologies in the present world will restore order and sanity in humanity. The study of proverbs, Paremiology, and its practice needs to be activated once more because of its usefulness. The detailed study of Igbo proverbs proves that they are powerful tools which can change human behaviour for the better. They also have the capacity to inspire and stimulate deepest thoughts in the hearer. It stimulates moral values amongst the youths, peace in the society and respect for human life and properties. In the past, proverbs have left even elders and younger ones ruminating because some of them have difficult characteristics.

Whether being studied in schools to integrate its essence and values, that is the act of Paremiology, or whether the proverbs are being cited by elders, proverbs have to be reactivated to a maximum once again in Igbo society. The bottom line is that the values included in Igbo proverbs can reform the society - morals, peace and security-wise. In trying to give comprehensive overview of what Paremiology means, in *Proverbs: A Handbook*, Mieder (2004) note that,

Any interest in proverb whatsoever leads quite naturally to the question of what makes proverbs 'click,' that is, what differentiates these short texts from normal utterances or such subgenres as proverbial expressions,

proverbial comparisons, twin formulas, and wellerisms. When inquiring about definition, origin, history, dissemination, language, structure, meaning, use, and function of such phraseological units or phraseologisms, one enters the realm of proverb scholarship or Paremiology as it is called in Greek technical term. (p. 125)

### **Igbo Ideology and Worldview**

Every traditional society in the world has their views and manner of reasoning. Igbo people of southeast Nigeria is noted for their distinct ideology and philosophy. According to Kaldor (2007:102), some of these ideologies are forward looking or reformist as they come to terms with structural change in ways in which individuals are expected to benefit. The people have customs and tradition that are different from other races. They are basically farmers and traders and in recent times have expanded in what they do to make a living. They have expanded and scattered all over the nation, the continent and the world and are found in top positions where they do other kinds of works such as white collar jobs, professional works, and other forms of legitimate businesses that involves trading in higher pedestal. The people believe that despite whatever quantity of wealth an individual may possess, without good name, it is fruitless (*ezi afa ka ego*). They believe in justice and equity and in good moral conducts. More importantly they believe in hard work, truthfulness, and respect for human life. Nwafor-Ejelinma (2012:83) observed that most of the neighbours of the Igbo often misconstrue this innate cultural propensity and Igbo ethos of drive for excellence as greed, selfishness, avarice, and aggressiveness especially when they are outclassed and not witted in business enterprises and competition. The people also believe that *Igwe bu ike* – Unification of a group of people is strength. Only unity and peace can lead to good security of life and property. United people tend to protect and develop their territory more than the divided ones. Their unique belief that one must desist from engaging in the things that have been listed as taboos and abominations of the lands sanctifies their lands. The fear and anger of *chukwu abiama*, the supreme God, also tends to make people wary of their actions. Again, they believe in paying quality final respect to the dead. Good men who die are assumed to be the ancestors that are protecting the living. ‘Keeping the hands clean’ or what is called uprightness is their strong moral inclination. Most Igbo moral teachings come through the words and statements they make. They believe in profuse use of proverbs to correct people and shape their communities. The use of proverbs has worked for them for years.

Civilization has today led to an upsurge in the movement of many Igbo youths to the cities and this has limited their intimacy to vital customs such as hearing and speaking proverbs and other idiomatic expressions. This is why there is urgent need for the reassessment and embrace of all these vital Igbo worldviews and core values which the Igbo people are noted for.

### **Igbo Proverbs on Moral Values, Peace and Human Security**

As stated above, Igbo proverbs are many and has a set of it that addresses every topic of human life activities. There are proverbs that concentrate on moral values, peace and human security among so many other topics. Hartman (2009:24) note that moral conduct is always conduct towards persons, but never except in connection with other kinds of values and counter-values...moral values presupposes other goods and the specific quality and worth belonging to them. Similarly, Ugwueze (2011:1) observe that African culture from the perspective of its relevance for the present day African people...are useful today and demonstrates how we can use it to bring Africa back on its feet. Commenting on human security, Martin & Owen (2013:1) observe that for many people the idea of human security may be hazy while Freks & Coldewijk (2006:15) explained that human security is about everyday realities of violent conflict and poverty, humanitarian crisis, epidemic diseases, threat, injustice and inequality; it is also about freedom from want; individuals and communities, global humanity as a whole, have come to be seen in this perspective as references of human security.

Typical Igbo states in Nigeria include Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo. Igbo people have belief systems that have guided them for years in which is comprised so much discipline, uprightness and respect for human life. Fear for repercussions of evil deeds led to reduced crime rate before this period. They also have statements that cautions and corrects people as stated before. Their proverbs, riddles, metaphor, hyperbole, simile are some of the grammatical expressions used in spicing up words and which strikes basic points into the minds of the people without much ado. Igbo proverbs are so powerful that they stimulate imagination and images in the minds of the listener and persons saying them. This is because in their physical and practical everyday life, Igbo people are object-inclined. This means that their world is a world where physical objects play deep roles. Talk of the use of the kola nut which has its own list of words, proverbs and incantations. The *nzu*, and *ofò*, each has its own words, statements, prayers, that make them potent and active. Objects play important roles in Igbo

lives and that is why their proverbs and folktales are often likened to objective imaginations, onomatopoeic, hyperbole, metaphor, similar and so on. There are proverbs that promote hard works and its gains, good wishes, good moral behaviour, uprightness, caution, life values, war or peace, unity and progress and human security. Some of these are listed below:

**Igbo Proverbs That Build Moral Values:**

Igbo proverb: *Ugo chala acha adighi echu echu*

English translation: A bright eagle never fades

Practical meaning: It is wrong for one to tarnish one's good image

Igbo proverb: *Afu ekwughi na egbu okenye. ma ekwuo anughi na egbu nwata*

English translation: When an adult sees a disaster and refuses to speak out it kills him, but when an adult sees a disaster and speaks out, it is the fault of a child not to listen Practical meaning: Obedience to elders' corrections is important to children to avoid calamity

Igbo proverb: *Okuko nti ike na anu ihe na ite ofe*

English translation: The stubborn chicken hears inside the soup pot

Practical meaning: It is better to listen to good advice before it becomes very late

Igbo proverb: *Ukpana ukpoko gbulu, nti chiri ya*

English translation: The grasshopper that was killed by the locust is deaf

Practical meaning: Disobedience to correction leads to one's downfall

Igbo proverb: *Ijiji na enweghi onye ndumodu na eso ozu ala n'ini*

English translation: A fly that has no adviser follows the corpse to the grave

Practical meaning: A person that does not listen to advice always makes regrettable mistakes

Igbo proverb: *A tuoro omara o mara, a tuolu ofeke, ofenye isi n'ofia.*

English translation: Tell a wise man something, he understands, tell a fool, he runs into the bush

Practical meaning: An intelligent person will always listen to advice

Igbo proverb: *Nwata erugheru juwa ese ihe mere nna ya, ihe mere nna ya eme ya*

English translation: When an immature child tries to take revenge for what happened to his father, what happened to his father will also happen to him.

Practical meaning: Being over inquisitive kills a person

Igbo proverb: *Choo ewu oji mgbe oge ka di*

English translation: Search for black goat while there is still daytime

Practical meaning: It is better to do things in time to avoid regrets

Igbo proverb: *Aru gba afo obulu omenani*

English translation: A bad habit that lasts up to a year may soon become a custom.

Practical meaning: It is always better to correct bad behaviour in a person or in the society in time before it becomes part of them

Igbo proverb: *Agwa nti ma onuighi, egbuo isi nti esoro*

English translation: When the ear is told to behave and it refuses, when the head is cut down, the ear falls with it

Practical meaning: One should listen to good advice to avoid calamity befalling him

### **Igbo Proverbs on Peace and Unity:**

Igbo proverb: *Okwu di nro ne ezida onuma*

English translation: A soft word/reply reduces anger

Practical meaning: Humility when one errs will lead to forgiveness

Igbo proverb: *Anyuko mamiri onu, ogba ufufu*

English translation: When people urinate together, it foams

Practical meaning: Unity and harmony makes the society progress

Igbo proverb: *Ofu onye siere ora, ora elisie, mana ora sielu otu onye, ogaghi elisi*

English translation: If one person cooks for the public, they will finish the food but if the public cooks for one person, he will not finish the food.

Practical meaning: One person cannot do what the public can do; Unity is strength

Igbo Proverb: *Otu onye tuo izu, o gbue ochu*

English meaning: Knowledge is never complete as two heads are better than one.

Practical meaning: Opinion of others matters for better decisions in the society

Igbo proverb: *Agwo otu onye huru aghaghi ibu eke*

English translation: A snake seen by one man is easily labeled a python.

Practical meaning: Multitude gives more strength and clarity to events

Igbo proverb: *Aka nri kwo aka ekpe, aka ekpe akwo aka nri*

English translation: The right hand washes the left hand and the left hand washes the right hand.

Practical meaning: Life is better when in collaboration with others

Igbo proverb: *Gidi gidi bu ugwu eze*

English translation: Strong influence of a king is his pride

Practical meaning: Unity is strength

### **Igbo Proverbs on Human Security and Live and Let Live:**

Igbo proverb: *Egbe bere, ugo bere, nke si ibe ya ebene, nkwa kwa ya.*

English translation: Let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch; the one that tells the other not to perch, let his wing break.

Practical meaning: Let no one wish evil for the other to avoid getting back the repercussion

Igbo proverb: *O bialu be onye a bia gbula ya, o naba mkpu mkpu apuna ya n'azu*

English translation: One who comes to visit a person should not come to inflict evil on him so that when he leaves, he will not develop a hunchback

Practical meaning: Have good intentions for people to avoid repercussion of bad deeds

Igbo proverb: *Ebe onye bi ka o na awachi*

English translation: One takes good care of where he lives

Practical meaning: People protect their territory and ensure it is conducive for their good

Igbo proverb: *Oko k'oba mmadu ojekwuru mmadu ibe ya, ma okoba anumanu o jebe n'osisi*

English translation: When an animal feels itchy, he rubs his back against a tree; but when a human being feels itchy, he looks for his fellow human

Practical meaning: Human life has more value in communication with other fellow human beings especially in times of need

Igbo proverb: *Onye dina kaa ute ya, o laru n'ala*

English translation: If one sleeps roughly on his mat and damages it, he sleeps on the floor

Practical meaning: People should protect what they have

Igbo proverb: *Obu oke no n'uno gwara oke no n'ofia n'azu di na ngigia*

English translation: It is the house rat that informed the bush rat that there is fish in the perforated fish safe

Practical meaning: It is always someone who knows one that hurts one

Igbo proverb: *O bu osisi ka a siri na a ga-egbu okwuru*

English translation: It is only the tree that will hear that it is about to be cut yet it stands

Practical meaning: Human life is important and they do everything to protect it

Igbo proverb: *Ofu aka luta mmanu ozuo ora onu*

English translation: If one finger touches oil, it spreads to the other fingers

Practical meaning: A bad behaved person can attract bad name to a whole community; need to be careful with one's actions

Igbo proverb: *Onye hapu onu ya, uguru aracha ya.*

English translation: When one fails to lick his dry lips, the harmathan will lick it

Practical meaning: People must endeavour to protect their territory always otherwise enemies can come in and destroy it

### **Recommendation**

Having stated the value of Paremiology to the restoration and promotion of moral values, peace and human security of life and properties, the paper insists that invaluable Igbo traditional values should not be overlooked but appreciated and activated once more. It is recommended that Igbo elders both adults and youths should use Igbo expressions like proverbs more in recent times because it promotes their customs and traditions. People who pioneer the affairs of their communities such as kings are encouraged to use more of proverbs in addressing their people during meeting and gatherings in order to revive the fundamental Igbo values, ideology and philosophy. Profuse use of proverbs identifies true

Igbo sons and daughters wherever they are. In the olden days, human life is respected and moral values were deemed important because proverbs and other idiomatic expressions were used in correcting and advising the people. Because of its quality in the current world of so many forms of crises, it is recommended that Igbo people in particular and other African societies go back to their traditional values that are constructive to reformation of character and security of their environment. Special statements such as proverbs should be embraced more at the moment when addressing people. Apart from being used in advising and correcting abnormal behaviour, proverbs are used in healing, consoling and addressing conflict situations in inter-community clashes. This is necessary because, according to Kaldor (2007:16), the developing international norm in favour of intervention to protect civilians from wholesale slaughter will no doubt continue to pose profound challenges to the international community.

In most schools in Igbo land, it is recommended that the study of proverbs called Paremiology be engaged in now to inform young pupils and students of the value of their traditional proverbs. In the tertiary institutions, cultural intuitions such as Institutes of African Studies should teach Paremiology and its value to human society in correcting moral behaviours of the youths. It is again recommended that parents should use proverbs on their young children at home because while it saves words, it permeates faster into their brains as it creates images of contradicting good moral values. Igbo kings should talk more to the youths of nowadays through the use of proverbs when addressing the importance of hard work, uprightness, effect of indulgence in evil activities, importance of peace, the sacredness of human life and security of their territory. This is because Igbo proverbs are so vast and deep in meaning that it has suitable ones for every human problem or need. A seasoned Igbo man knows when to use each sets of proverbs for each occasion that comes up. More importantly, it is highly recommended that all the basic and constructive ideologies of the Igbo people be written down by astute researchers and scholars and duly documented for future use. Many elders with deep knowledge of proverbs and other information on Igbo communities are dying, hence, the need to do this now. In the words of Ndukaihe (2006:18), our approach generally should be descriptive, comparative, analytic and evaluative. In sum, this paper recommends that all bona fide Igbo sons and daughters who wish to identify themselves as core Igbo indigenes should look inwards now and embrace the values in proverbs as well as make good efforts to include them in their daily speeches and statements. Proverbs have all it takes to make good points during conversations, caution,

correct, bring peace, improve moral values, integrity and provide security to communities.

## Conclusion

The paper has tried to describe Paremiology which is the study of proverbs. It has narrated the reasons why Africans and precisely Igbo people should embrace their cultural values such as proverbs once more especially at this time. Change is constant and Igbo societies have moved on with more rapid development. Some of their cultural values seem to have been gone with the changes. Crime, lack of peace and low respect for human life and human security are now common within and around Igbo communities, the nation and the continent in general. This is blamed on the practical neglect of constructive cultural values of the people. The paper has tried to state that it is still not too late to recall the vital core Igbo ideologies and practices. Paremiology, the study of proverbs should be studied now and where they are not being studied, people who know how to say them should once again take pride in them and resume speaking them. This will indirectly teach the younger ones. The use of proverbs in correcting and reconstructing human character has been described as invaluable in this paper. The paper stated that in proverbs are deep words with meanings on how one should live good productive life, desist from evil which comes back to hunt one, respect for human life and respect for elders which prolongs life. The paper gave some examples of proverbs that build moral behaviours in people; that provides and advocates the value of peace and human security as regards human life and their properties.

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