



## Oral Literature and Sustainable Culture in Akoko Land, Ondo State, Nigeria

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### Article History

Received: 09.03.2025  
Accepted: 15.04.2025  
Published: 21.04.2025

**Abstract:** Oral literature exists in every human society and it is, therefore, a universal phenomenon. Like elsewhere in Yorubaland, oral literature has played a vital role in sustainable cultural norms among the Àkókó people of the Northeastern part of Yorùbá land. The study focuses on the motifs and cultural significance of Akoko oral literature in promoting the sustainability of Àkókó oral literature and culture. Its role in the preservation of cultural values cannot be eroded. Like several Yorùbá people whose cultures have received little scholarly attention, oral literature among the Àkókó people occupies a mere footnote position in the extant cultural sustainability in Yorùbá land. This is the gap this study seeks to fill. It examines the sustainability of oral literature for socio-cultural advancement. The study adopts an ethnographic research design. The study concludes that as far-reaching as the Western influence on oral literature, the sustainability of oral literature on the preservation and understanding of norms and values in Àkókó cannot be over-emphasized.

**Keywords:** Culture, Environment, Oral Literature, Sustainability, Technology.

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## INTRODUCTION

Àkókó is in the northeastern part of Yoruba land in the present Oñdó State, Nigeria (Olúkòjù, 2003). The exact date of the founding of the Akoko mini-states cannot be given in history. Still, oral sources and traditions suggested that it had grown to a moderately large size with enormous strength from about the 12<sup>th</sup> century when migration started at Ife in the pre-colonial period (Ògúntómìsìn, 2003). Àkókó is a geographical expression of people with diverse cultures. Akoko people share boundaries with Kabba and Yagba (now in the present Kogi State to the North and Northeast. Despite differences in cultures, the people in Àkókó land still retained Yorùbá language as the *lingua franca*. The Àkókó region is made up of multiple independent mini-states (Faboyede, 2015 citing Akinjògbìn, 1994) that have no centralised system of government in place. The Àkókó region comprises four Local government

areas: Àkókó North-East, with the headquarters in Ìkàrẹ̀-Àkókó, Àkókó North-West with the headquarters in Òkèàgbè-Àkókó, Àkókó South-East, with the headquarters in Işua-Akoko, and Àkókó South-West with the headquarters in Òkà-Àkókó. The Àkókó region is known for its rolling hills, forests, and fertile soil, making it suitable for agriculture. It is rich in tradition and possesses a unique cultural identity that shaped its history, customs, norms, and values. The region is known for its artistic heritage, including traditional festivals, music, and art. The Àkókó region is a major producer of crops such as cocoa, coffee, and cassava. They are part of the Yorùbá ethnic group (Meta Llama 3.2.). As a result of the importance of its culture, this study discusses the importance of the Àkókó people's oral literature in preserving cultural heritage that has significantly faced challenges from modernization and urbanization and its influence on Àkókó's cultural sustainability.

**Citation:** Deborah Bamidele AROBOSEGBE (2025). Oral Literature and Sustainable Culture in Akoko Land, Ondo State, Nigeria. *Glob Acad J Linguist Lit*; Vol-7, Iss-2 pp-31-39.

The study will be subdivided into six parts. The first part introduces the study. The second part covers the theoretical framework for the work. The third part covers traditional practices and oral literature in Àkókó land. The fourth part investigates the effects of modernization on the preservation and transmission of Àkókó oral literature. The fifth part examines the problems and challenges of oral literature in Àkókó land. The sixth part concludes the study and offers recommendations.

### **Definition of terms, contextual Discourse, and Methods of analysis**

Oral literature is a performed art that uses spoken words as a medium of communication (<https://www.faw.co.org>). Oral literature is a broad term that may include ritual texts, curative chants, epic, poems, musical genres, folk tales, creation tales, songs, myths, spells, legends, proverbs, riddles, tongue-twisters, word games, recitations, life histories or historical narratives through spoken words, from one generation to the next, without written records. Different scholars have defined oral literature in various terms. Finnegan (1970) defines oral literature as a verbal art of traditional culture transmitted by word of mouth. Oral literature was primarily oral before much of it was written. It is a rich and diverse aspect of human expression, often used to share cultural values, teach moral lessons and entertain. Oral literature teaches the people of Àkókó land like all other Yoruba communities, to understand the norms and values of their environment in different dialects of communication. Oral literature, a rich and cultural aspect of human expression was often used to share cultural values for moral teaching, ecstatic, and entertainment in the traditional setting of Àkókó land.

Ìṣòlá (2010) quotes UNESCO, 2002 defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group, encompassing, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles ways of living together, value systems traditions, and beliefs. The idea of culture has been debated among philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, historians, theologians, politicians, and literary men and women. Ilésanmí (2004) quoting (Menampampil, 1969, <https://archive.org>details>) defines culture as the total manner in which a human society responds to an environment. It includes customs characterising a social group; social heredity of a particular community; meanings, values, norms, actions, and relationships; beliefs, laws, traditions, and institutions; religions, rituals, languages, songs, dance, feasts, living habits, crafts, and equipment.

Cultural sustainability refers to preserving and promoting cultural heritage, including oral

literature for future generations. Yorùbá cultural sustainability involves documentation, community engagement, innovation, and revitalization of Yorùbá traditions. Cultural sustainability refers to the ability of a culture to maintain, preserve, and transmit its unique values, traditions, customs, and practices from one generation to the next while adapting to changing social, economic, and environmental contexts.

Many researchers have worked on the sustainability of Yorùbá culture. Ìṣòlá (2010) says we must go back to our culture and the surest way back is through our literature, oral and written. He explains that we have to force the attention of our youth back to their cultural heritage, first and foremost through well-dramatic programmes on the stage, on radio, on television, in films and in video. In addition, he says, traditional oral artists should be employed to teach the various oral expressions and chanting modes to the young generation in school. Agúnbiádé (2016) depicts that Yorùbá dress culture has been impaired and eroded by the insatiable craving for an alien culture that is, Westernization, by its people, and imitation of the dress sense of renowned public figures otherwise known as the celebrities. Agúnbiádé agitates for the inclusion of a culturally acceptable dress code at the various tertiary institutions considering the level of decadence being witnessed in our society with the advent of new media. Sàlámì (2020) depicts that corruption, maladministration and misplacement of priorities in Nigeria help to limit her management of the environment and the enhancement of sustainable development. Adéjùmò (2024) advocates that poets speak truth to power to engender a sustainable environment for the citizens of Nigeria. Oral literature plays a vital role in sustainable development in preserving cultural identity, transmitting knowledge and value fostering solidarity and promoting environmental awareness, which are crucial for building resilient and sustainable societies (AI Overview).

What can be deduced from the works of these researchers is that Yorùbá oral literature and culture are going into extinction. Different suggestions are made to revive them. It is observed that the status of Yorùbá oral literature and culture in Àkókó Area has not been researched. The gap which this work wants to fill. Thus, this study examines the mode by which oral literature is used to preserve and sustain Yorùbá culture in Àkókó North-Eastern part of Yorùbá land.

### **Theoretical Framework: Ethnographic Research Design**

Ethnographic Research Design is a qualitative research method involving the study of

people in their national environment to understand their culture, behaviours, and social interactions from their perspective (AI Overview). It focuses on in-depth understanding rather than numerical data or statistical analysis. Researchers often immerse themselves in the community or setting they are studying, observing and interacting with participants to gain insights. A key aspect of ethnography is participant observations, where researchers' activities participate in the daily lives of the people they are studying. Ethnography research aims to understand the social, cultural, and historical context in which people live and interact. Ethnographic Research Design was originally used in anthropology to study distant cultures. It is now used in various fields, including sociology, and marketing. The Design relies on various data collection methods, including observations, interviews, and analysis of documents and artefacts (Research. Life <https://researcher.life>). While many anthropologists contributed to the development of ethnographic research, Bronislaw Malinowski is widely considered the 'father of modern ethnography' for his pioneering fieldwork and methodical approach to studying social systems (AI Overview). <https://homework.study.com> depicts that Margaret Mead was the first American to use ethnography through her fieldwork in Samoa during the 1920s.

The theory is adequate for studying cultural phenomena, social behaviours, and community practices. It is believed that Ethnographic Research Design will be serviceable in examining the sustainability of oral literature for sociocultural advancement among Àkókó people. Participant observer and interview methods are used for the work.

The research used interview guides and unstructured questions to gain more insights as the targeted discussants were non-literates. The nature of the research demands that the study involve a period of habitation in Àkókó land to gain firsthand insights into the various aspects of the basic frameworks of their oral literature. The researcher participates in diverse ceremonies like traditional festivals, naming ceremonies, and marriages.

### **The Traditional Practices and Oral Literature in Àkókó Land**

The transmission of values and traditions is the most basic requirement for the sustainability of a culture. If a culture cannot teach its children, the ways of the elders, and the stories and histories of its past, then it is clear that it will have little hope of keeping these alive in the future. Akoko people, by tradition, have ways of teaching their children diverse aspects of its traditions, even the face of an unhealthy civilisation that affects the sustainability of such

culture. Ìṣòlá (2010) has rightly said that we need to attract the attention of children and youths with massive, well-plotted riveting stories, folktales, cartoons, and songs that can effectively compete with the glamorous garbage they encounter daily on the internet. The Yorùbá folktales where children are taught the Yorùbá wisdom abound in Àkókó land. Àkókó people have various Native Yoruba tales (folk tales) about the tortoise, and those without tortoises which often act as a parable teaching the young the traditional ways of life, but also stress the importance of living in harmony with the environment. For instance, *Itan Ìjàpá àti Àkùkò* "The story of the tortoise and the cock (Adébóyè, 1982) teaches children to abstain from the act of jealousy, *Ìtàn Aláṣòótọ́ Omọ*, the story of a dishonest child in (Àmòó 2005) teaches honesty in whatever one does. There are myths from when the land and Ancestor spirits were created, an idealised past where the land was shaped and blessed and man and nature lived in complete understanding and harmony. This created a spiritual bond between the natives and the land, a belief claimed to help foster a sense of environmental stewardship among the native people today. Similar stories are found worldwide in cultures that were once oral. Every town in Àkókó like all towns in Yorùbá land has creation tales that narrate the beginning of every community.

The Yorùbá value proverbs very highly, for they are considered the wisdom lore of the race. Adégbíté (2024) refers to the words of Avoseh (2013) who noted that a lot of cultures and peoples have proverbs that are important to them because those proverbs convey socio-epistemological purposes that are foundational to their living. A proverb is a short familiar sentence expressing a supposed truth or moral lesson; it often requires an explanation beyond the literal meaning of the words used. A proverb is context-dependent which can only be applicable in the context in which it developed. Proverbs are considered to be traditional and originate from the observation of natural phenomena and human relations, old people are regarded as a repository of proverbs (Olátúnjí, 2005). Proverbs were intended to live beyond the individuals who created them. There are two parts to every proverb, namely a message and a lesson or moral; the message is not to be taken at its face value, and that lesson takes more than a passing understanding to imbibe (Ṣótúndé, 2009). Some of the proverbs used in Àkókó land include; *Ìtàn kàn kì í fọni lépo lẹ̀mẹ̀jì* No one should be tripped and break his pitcher twice by the same stump. This proverb illustrates the Yorùbá man's attitude to avoidable mistakes it underscores the philosophical mindset of the Yorùbá man to situations that could be considered inexcusable or stupid. *Èni tí kò kẹ̀wọ̀n, tí kò kọkú, tó bá lóun óò lówó, ẹ́ sá fún un*. Avoid the penniless hoodlum who thinks nothing of going to jail

or being killed but wishes to become rich. *Eni tó jìn sí kòtò, kó ará iyókù lógbón*; He who falls into a pit teaches others a lesson this means that one should learn from the mistakes of others.

Every community in Àkókó land has a dialect apart from the standard Yoruba language spoken in Yorubaland. Naming in Yoruba is significant. There are Yorùbá traditional names that relate to religion, family, and occupation to mention a few. A Yorùbá adage says; *Ilé la ñ wò kí a tó sọ ọmọ lórúkọ*: Family antecedents influence what names are given to babies. For instance: *Ògúnràntí*, 'Ògún remembers me' and '*Òṣunwálé*, *Òṣun* comes home' are from the traditional religious group of Ògún (Yorùbá god of Iron) and Òṣun (one of the Yorùbá goddesses) respectively. Other names that do not belong to any religion include Onípèdè 'The comforter has come', Adeṣínà 'The coming to the world of this child has opened a fortune for me'. There are predetermined names *orúkọ àmútòrunwá*. Adéoyè (1982) depicts that children with predetermined names are the set of children that we assume were given birth in circumstances that are not normal. For instance, the names 'Táiwò' and 'Kèhìndé' are for twins. Taiwo is the name given to the first to be born while Kèhìndé is the second of the twins. Dàdà is for a child born with dreadlocks or unusually curly hair. Other predetermined names are; Ìgè a child that came out of the mother with legs either male or female, Òkẹ- a child enclosed in an amniotic sac at birth to mention a few (Agúnbíadé, 2024). Tribal marks are for identification especially, during inter-tribal wars. Only a few Àkókó people have tribal marks on their faces.

There are some standards or norms to observe, the breaking of which is followed by the supernatural penalty. Every member of the community is to guide this behaviour. One has to obey all the regulations of the cult and observe its taboos (Awólàlú, and Dòpámú, 1979). Taboo is what Yorùbá people call *èèwò*. Meaning things forbidden, things not done. In Àkókó land, like other Yorùbá communities, the action or conduct of one man within the community can affect the other members for good or for evil. To prevent man from becoming rebellious and thus endangering the welfare of society, there are set patterns or codes of behaviour for the individual and the community as a whole. These are taboos that are prohibited. Other aspects of oral literature include; poems, songs, legends, genres, and tongue-twisters. All these were used to train their children before the advent of modernisation, foreign religions, and Western Education generated some changes that debar the progress of the preservation and transmission of oral literature in Àkókó land. We shall examine the effects of modernisation on the traditions of the people of Akókó land.

### Effect of modernisation on the preservation and transmission of Akoko Oral literature

The present and future oral literature sustainability has numerous challenges brought about by modernisation that threaten to alter or eradicate traditional forms of expression. The challenges will be discussed under the following sub-headings; language shift and loss, globalisation and cultural homogenisation. While not all change is necessarily bad, these challenges weigh heavily on those who value the insights, moral teachings, history, and sheer enjoyment found in folklore and mythology. Observation shows that elderly people in urban areas no longer have time to narrate stories to children in Àkókó land. They are either tired after the day's work or they feel it is unnecessary to do so. Children on their part, prefer watching cartoons to listening to stories

### Language Shift and Loss

The loss of traditional languages and the death of minority languages do not seem dramatic when viewed within the contexts in which these events occur. In Àkókó land, research work reveals that people abandon their languages and customs to seek economic improvement. For example, government incentives induce people to emigrate or resettle and bring their children into schools where the imperative is to learn the national language and as much as possible of the international language. For instance, as there are more people in big towns like Ìbàdàn, Lagos, and Abújá also Àkókó community has more people in Akoko local government area headquarters: Ìkàré, Òkèagbe, Òkà, and Ìṣùà. More people move there for greener pastures thereby jettisoning their traditional language.

Language is the property of the community. Most indigenous languages are fading away. Language shift is another widespread and serious problem that often leads to language loss and language death. Language shift occurs when a community of speakers of one language becomes bilingual in another language and then gradually ceases to use the first language. Àkókó people as noticed today in their day-to-day activities, like their counterparts in other states in Nigeria, speakers of Yoruba now shift to the English language; they prefer to speak the English language which they believe to be the language of the elites, the economic language, and the *lingua franca* of the nation to the detriment of the Yoruba language which is their traditional language. This also affects the naming system. It is observed that the spellings of some Yoruba names are changed to the extent that parents cannot recognise their children's names when they see them on Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok. For instance, Yorùbá names are written as follows:

horluwahkemmysorlar instead of  
Olúwakémisólá,  
horpheyhemhy instead of Ọpéyemí,  
horlerdunni, instead of Ọládùnńí,  
Dammirlorhla, instead of Dámilólá,  
Haryo Myde, instead of Ayòmidé  
Horlakunle instead of Ọlákúnlé

There are two types of language shift: the first occurs when a speech community voluntarily changes to speak another language; the second occurs when a speech community is forced to speak another language. The result of language shift is that the native language on which the community's oral tradition is based is forgotten and no longer passed on to subsequent generations. Those who speak the traditional language are seen as uncivilised, uncultured, and even barbaric. Different stories are heard from illiterate grandmothers who went to urban areas to nurse their grandchildren. For instance, many of them were not free to discuss with the infants or children because they did not understand the English language being spoken by the children. They are not allowed to converse with them in the indigenous language. Some of them have to use body language before they can be understood. For instance, a grandma pointing towards the refrigerator then points towards her mouth to demonstrate how one drinks water to tell the grandchild to give her drinking water. In Yoruba Land, family antecedents influence the names we give to babies. Şótúndé (2009) would have loved to see those who are from traditional religious backgrounds preaching the gospel without changing their traditional names but he couldn't because the names were changed. Ọlájubù (1978) depicts that when most Yoruba people are converted to the new religion, they change their traditional names. This decline in the use of the native language and names is often supported by political and economic pressures put on the speech community to use the dominating language.

### **Globalisation and Cultural Homogenisation**

Globalisation has set a negative precedent for the future of traditional societies. Indigenous peoples will often feel that by abandoning their traditional ways of life and language, they will achieve a higher quality of education and income for their children. However, this choice is usually followed by several social and psychological problems that result from a loss of identity and culture. The clear-cut goal of adopting another language is rarely achieved, and poor results often leave the community in limbo between their original and newfound ways of life. In Àkókó land today, many are ashamed of speaking the Yorùbá language because they think that doing so is uncivilized.

The process is usually a long-term one of marginalization, with the speech community in question typically choosing to utilize another, more powerful language in domains of prestige, economic advancement, and education. This marginalization is often a result of the aforementioned acquired utopian view of modern societies.

These cultural and linguistic shifts are the products of globalization. Through increased contact with the Western world, indigenous societies have been both willingly and unwillingly exposed to foreign ideals and societal structures. This exposure, in effect, led to an undermining of their traditional ways of life. As they begin to see the benefits of the new customs, their practices become viewed as obsolete or outdated.

These views and conditions have brought forth a need for revitalization and affirmation of our culture for future generations including oral literature. Revitalization of oral literature is a growing trend in academia and, more importantly, in cultures. It is evident that many, if not all, forms of oral literature in Akoko land are slipping not only into obscurity but also into extinction. This is true of many indigenous peoples' traditions and not only due to external forces. It is better to think of ways to revive these traditions.

### **Strategies for Promoting Oral Literature Sustainability**

Given the validity and significance of oral literary works for society, a sustainable movement and changes in society today require a suitable strategy and pattern. Currently, the following situations such as the effect of the development of science and technology, the consequences of the expansion of the role of film and music, the entry of foreign cultures, and the internal local culture itself, threaten the existence of oral literature. As a rich national heritage of the Yorùbá and an important part of a culture's identity and self-esteem, oral literature must guarantee its sustainability. The main problem right now is how to maintain the existence of oral literature because it is closely related to people as the carriers and the dynamics of society itself. Efforts to guarantee the survival of oral literature must be done carefully and cautiously. Directed movement and changes in our society today and the changes in materials and patterns of life cause a change in the role of oral literature in society. With a variety of functions and roles, oral literature requires an interactive strategy between society, culture, and oral literary works.

### **Education and Awareness Programs**

The issue of oral literature's future sustainability is vital not only for the future of

literature, anthropology, and folklore but also for indigenous groups whose traditions are at risk. To preserve these traditions effectively, we must be proactive and move beyond simple documentation in the hope that some texts will be remembered. Educational programs at all levels are a good start. The aim of such a programme must be to produce a new generation of scholars trained in the complex art of oral performance, and scholars who can write authoritatively about their traditions. For indigenous groups, new educational initiatives are also important. The community-based programmes that encourage literacy and the appreciation of traditional genres with younger members are the best. These are often controversial in the context of minority and majority education. The right to make thoughtful and informed choices about the future of traditional culture is one that Indigenous groups can ill afford to surrender. Understanding the political and legal issues that bear on the rights of these groups is also germane. Scholars of traditional literature need to involve themselves in this knowledge-production process. An area that needs further research and exploration is the use of information technology both as a tool for the preservation of tradition (e.g. recording, archiving) and as a means for the creative adaptation of tradition to rapidly changing social and economic milieus. The Àkókó oral literature can be digitalized, soft copies can be made for instance, Àjàgbó songs in Ògbàgì-Àkókó, Aringínyà in Ìkàré-Àkókó and Eré Òyò in Ikún-Àkókó can be produced in Discs. It is noted that some of the Yorùbá oral literature has been documented to save them from extinction. Some of the documentations include *Ìrèmòjé* (for hunter's chants during burial ceremony) (Àjùwòṅ, 1981), *Ìjálá Aré Qdẹ* (hunter's chants during any other ceremony apart from burial) (Yèmiítàn 1963), *Àkójopò Àlọ Ijàpá Apá Keji* (folktales) (Adébóyè, 2023), and *Yorùbá Proverbs and Philosophy* (Şótúndé) to mention a few. Since Àkókó land is part of the Yorùbá Community, all the aforementioned books on Yorùbá oral literature are also useful for Àkókó community but there is still the need for more documentations in Àkókó land as there are many traditions and oral literature in Àkókó that are yet to be documented.

#### **Collaboration with Indigenous Communities,**

Collaboration with Indigenous communities is not only meant for the preservation of oral literature but also to preserve the cultures and traditions of the societies in which they originated. It is the duty of anyone working with oral literature to respect the cultures from which the stories come. Native communities are often cautious of the danger of outsiders, especially academics, who come to collect stories and then use them for personal gain, giving nothing back to the community. This has led to legislation in many places giving control of a culture's

stories to that culture, meaning that in some cases there are limitations in the areas the researchers can visit. For instance, during the Aringíyà festival in Ìkàré, Oṅdó State, Nigeria, non-indigenes are not allowed to take photographs or do any video (Arówóşẹgbé, 2014). Collaboration with these indigenous communities is the only morally acceptable means of collecting their stories, and quite often the community will wish to record its own stories in written form or adapt them for media such as radio or television. In this case, the role of the collector becomes that of the facilitator rather than the collector in the traditional sense. This is where the ethnographic design adopted for this work becomes useful. Since the researcher is a participant observer, he will be able to know where to come in. By collaborating with the native communities, the collector can ensure that the high quality and integrity of the stories are maintained while furthering understanding and appreciation of the tradition. For instance, some educated Obas and their chiefs in Akoko land of Ondo State, Nigeria documented the story about the origin of their towns. Examples of such documentations include; *Ìtàn ilú Ìgásí* The History of Ìgásí, written by Olójèḗ of Ìgásí Àkókó (Ọba Ipínlayé, no date), *Ìtàn àti àşà Ìlú Kákùmò Àkókó*, The History and Culture of Kákùmò Àkókó (Aminu, no Date). Others are *A Short History of Arigidi-Àkókó* by Orojo (2008) and *Ìkàré Myths and Legends* (Arowolo, 2017). Most of these stories are read on Radio and shown on television. Lecturers in indigenous languages discover that many traditions, whose knowledge was essential to maintaining the religion, are rapidly vanishing. Hence, students are sent out to ask elders of different towns in Akoko to supply them with the history of the origin of their cities and their dialects on tapes, which were then transcribed and indexed (Arówóşẹgbé 2013). This type of work serves as their projects in partial fulfilment of their B.A. (Hons) Degree examinations. Examples can be found in the Department of Linguistics and Languages at Adékúnlé Ajásin University, Akùngbá Àkókó. Teachers of Yoruba Language, Literature and Culture formed themselves into groups. They researched the origin of each of the towns in Àkókó land, Oṅdó State and got their findings documented (Maliki, (ed). 2023). The tapes could be used to determine the content of public performances of rituals, or as a basis for education programs about "traditional" life. In the long term, it is expected that the tapes and transcriptions will provide a learning resource for young people trying to understand their religion, and a record for the people themselves when the elders who made the recordings are gone.

#### **Integration of Oral Literature in Media and Arts**

In today's day and age, the most efficient means of reaching mass amounts of people is through

modern technological advancements in media. The sad fact prevalent around the world, whether in developing or developed countries, is that indigenous oral traditions and cultures are being lost or forgotten with the introduction of new generations. Moribund languages, epics, myths, and songs could all find a new lease of life when authors, film producers, or artists are inspired by oral literature. This inspiration from media and arts could be due to an increased global awareness of the environment or through educational projects described earlier. The actual repackaging of oral literature into media will allow not a select few individuals from a village or tribe to enjoy their culture, but potentially reach people and communities from all walks of life. For instance, some people who have few educational or awareness opportunities have their culture eroded to an extent where legendary figures in the community cannot recite their rich oral tradition. Most wives cannot recite their husband's praise names. Gone are the days when wives recited their husbands' praise names and received a huge amount of money. This is where the integration of oral literature into media can greatly assist Àkókó groups. It is not only a tool for educating outsiders about the culture and issues involving such communities, but also a means of empowerment for the community when they can experience a record of their fading culture and see it projected to all walks of life. The ethnographic design used makes the collection easy. The researcher and the indigene become close to each other. This makes the collection to be easier.

### ***Transmission of Values and Traditions***

Value systems are by nature embedded in specific cultural contexts. The retention of cultural heritage is essential to the maintenance of diverse value systems in our increasingly globalized world. Now more than ever, as Western conservation and development organizations seek to involve Indigenous and other local rural communities in projects to conserve biodiversity and sustainably manage natural resources, there is a recognition of the need to understand the cultural context of these peoples. Failure to consider this has, on many occasions, led to the undermining of traditional practices and systems, often with the intent to improve them, but with results that have been detrimental to both the ecosystem and the Indigenous community. In extreme cases, it has led to the loss of cultural identity for such communities and the adoption of a dependence on external systems. In this context, we can say that the sustainability of the culture and the sustainability of the environment are closely linked, and any means of knowledge transmission that aids the understanding of this link is of great importance.

Through the use of metaphor, symbolism, and specific contexts in the performance of the literature, much information about the worldview and specific ecological knowledge of a culture can be conveyed to the attentive listener. It has been argued that much traditional ecological knowledge is embedded in Yorùbá myths, legends, and other forms of story. Studies of indigenous knowledge in various parts of the world are bringing to light the practical uses of such knowledge in keeping biological diversity and the sustainable management of resources. By comparing the lessons embedded in the stories with events in the recent or distant past, it is sometimes possible to show a causal link between adherence to traditional practices and the maintenance of a healthy ecosystem.

The transmission of knowledge, values, and traditions is essential to the sustainability of any culture. In Western culture, writing has been the primary means of transmission, and in this sense, the existence of oral literature in any form is coming to be seen as an alternative form of expressing specific forms of knowledge. For example, it has been shown that certain ecological knowledge held by indigenous peoples worldwide is best expressed in oral form. It is said that one knows the culture of a community by studying its literature. How long this alternative will be available is unclear. With the current dominance of mass media and its homogenization effects, all forms of small-scale and non-literate oral literature are under considerable threat. In terms of knowledge transmission, much of the value of oral literature lies in the subtlety with which it teaches certain forms of knowledge.

### ***Community Cohesion and Identity***

Community Cohesion and Identity is another doctrine that upholds the sustainable characteristics seen in these close-knit communities (Àkókó). These traditional systems still function as a means of running the community; decision-making and dispute resolution were and, in many cases, still are carried out in public and these public meetings were and, in some cases, today are the only venue for the community to voice their views or grievances to affect change. The venue for the meeting can be the front of the palace or the marketplaces in every community in Àkókóland. This and the fact that oral literature is often a reflection of society 'help to foster a collective memory, and develop our awareness of the social values and customs that have existed over time... by its nature strengthens the bonds of community'. Gaining knowledge of their ancestors' ways of life and the issues and events they faced will strengthen the feeling of knowing who they are and where they came from. The voice of any nation is in its literature (Ìṣòlá, 2010). The interview method lets

the researcher know the story surrounding each community before reaching their present destination.

## CONCLUSION

Sustainable culture is a holistic concept that depends on the integrated behaviour of a cultural community and its interactions with the environment. It can only occur when a culture can maintain a stable, continuing, balanced relationship with its environment. Sustainable culture is not bounded by time and can happen in a variety of historical contexts, from small continuing family groups to complex civilizations. This has led to a widespread failure to recognize environmental predicaments cultural roots and potential solutions. The paper has established that culture is culturally sustainable when it can maintain its core traditions, ways of life, and ideology. It should be able to teach its children the ways of elders and the stories and histories of its past. The ethnographic design used depicts that many cultures in Akoko land are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain the interest of their children in traditions and values. The role of technology in preservation cannot be over-emphasized; audio recordings are made using tape recorders and mobile phones. With the cooperation of traditional bearers, some of the items are transcribed and translated. The histories of towns in Àkókó land are being documented, individually and collectively. We need to attract the attention of children and youth with massive, well-plotted riveting stories, folktales, cartoons, and songs that can effectively compete with the glamorous garbage they encounter daily on the internet as noted by Ìṣòlá (2010). We need to find ways of inserting African issues into the agenda of the knowledge age to make modern Information Communication Technology (ICT) relevant to African languages. Community cohesion and identity uphold the sustainability of culture. The most efficient means of reaching the mass of people is through modern technological advancements in media. Film producers or artists are inspired by oral literature. Collaboration with indigenous communities will help to preserve oral literature, cultures, and traditions of the societies in which they originated. Therefore, oral literature is a product of culture and a shaper of culture. The study concludes that as far-reaching as the Western influence on oral literature, the sustainability of oral literature on the preservation and understanding of norms and values in Akoko cannot be over-emphasized

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