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# Interactive Drama and Good Governance in Nigeria: An Appraisal of the Egume Project

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**Abstract:** Theatre arts discipline in Nigerian institutions of higher learning is evolving sociological interface with development studies in recent time. In this direction, the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Kogi State University, Anyigba- Nigeria, is running an academic programme titled, “Theatre and Good Governance”, as part of it’s curricular studies. This field of study is anchored on pragmatic principles that bear on the functional nexus between theatre and society on the one hand and the practical application of drama to development issues on the other hand. Ultimately, this proposal is grounded in culture friendly and local people centred strategies towards addressing good governance issues. It is positioned on democratic principle to facilitate dialogue between providers and recipients of development at the grassroots level. Such dialogue is substantially inclined to ascertaining local people perception and real needs. In this light, the Egume project was informed and occasioned by practical curricular requirement on good governance. The project availed itself of the instrumentations of Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI), Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Interactive Drama (ID) .Findings show that local people are creatively skillful, innovative, analytical and sensitive to good governance issues. In conclusion, the paper re-affirms the viability of interactive drama method for endogenous development. Among other suggestions made, the paper suggests that development theatre vis-à-vis indigenous folk media are creative and innovative mediums for giving voice to local people, as well as ascertaining their perspective in the development process.

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## Introduction

Our births and deaths are absurd. But our lives must not be. To find meaning in life is what makes us humane. Often drama mixes images of things we must accept-our mortality and weakness-with images of what we need to change-our daily social life. It is precisely here (drama) that we find our need for justice and not merely for food and clothing-it is our need for meaning to our life.

(Bond 1995)

The above dramatic postulation is grounded in cultural ideas, which inwardly informs the functional aesthetics of African educational activities in schools, colleges and universities, as well as the policies that concern such institutions of learning from local perspective and world view. The concept of culture proposes itself as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom

and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society (Tylor, 1871:1). African culture is characteristically progressive, rather than retrogressive in a changing world where science and technological advancements are increasingly affecting people's way of life. Culture is beyond mere masquerading, native festivity, traditional dancing etc. it also involves science and technology, our world view in its ramifications (Oni, 2006: 10). The national cultural policy of Nigeria stipulates that culture comprises material, institutional, philosophical and creative aspect. The material aspect has to do with artifacts in its broadest norm (namely; tools, medicine, utensils, housing, etc.); the institutional deals with the political, social, legal and economic structures erected help achieve material and spiritual objectives while the philosophical is concerned with ideas, beliefs and values, the creative concerns of a people's literature (oral tradition) as well as the visual performing arts (Oni 2006:10). In this sense, one can mention African culture, European culture, Asian culture, American culture and the host of other cultures around the world. However, the paradox of culture in Africa is that African nations are striving to adopt Western culture within the framework of their national policies. Unfortunately, the ever increasing attempt by African nations to fully adopt Western culture is yet to bear the desired result. The attempt to adopt Western culture, especially in the area of education has only succeeded in relegating African culture to the background in all ramifications. This situation in Nigeria is a common phenomenon. At the fiat of independence in Nigeria, a British system of education, coupled with a British philosophy of education were the legacies left behind by the colonial administration. The post-independence era in Nigeria witnessed a growing quest for a system of education and philosophy that will meet the needs of Nigerian people. For this reason, the Federal Government of Nigeria established an educational policy statement in 1977. The established educational policy statement articulated government's position on Nigerian educational philosophy at all levels of learning. The national objectives, which the educational philosophy advocated include,

1. the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
2. the inculcation of the right types of values and the attitudes for survival of the individual and the Nigerian society;
3. the training of the mind in the understanding of the world; and
4. the acquisition of the appropriate skills, abilities and competencies, both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to contribute to the development of his society ([www.eric.gov/./record/detail/186512](http://www.eric.gov/./record/detail/186512)).

By logical extension, the aforementioned philosophical principles on education are pragmatically captured by the National Universities Commission (NUC). This advisory and regulatory body for Nigerian universities proposes to be a dynamic regulatory agency acting as a catalyst for positive change and innovation for the delivery of quality education in Nigeria ([www.nuc.edu.ng](http://www.nuc.edu.ng)). Since it's inception in 1962 as an advisory and regulatory agency, the National Universities Commission over the decades has been functioning with the responsibility of promoting quality education at the university level. In the late 1990s, the National University Commission licensed the establishment of more state and private universities in the six geopolitical regions of Nigeria. Hence, Kogi State University (KSU) was established in 1999 and it commenced academic activities in April 2000 ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kogi\\_State\\_University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kogi_State_University)). The Faculty of Arts and Humanities was one of the six pioneering faculties at the commencement of academic activities in Kogi State University. The Department of Theatre Arts was also established within the faculty at the same time. In September 2007, the National Universities Commission awarded the Department of Theatre Arts full accreditation of its academic programmes. For the purpose of our preoccupation in this concern, *Theatre and Good Governance* was one of the newly initiated fields of study in the Department at the point of accreditation in 2007. This field of study is informed by the philosophical template upon which academic studies in the Department operates. The philosophy of the Theatre Arts programme is to produce students who are not only skilled in the theories of Theatre Arts but

would integrate theory with practice for development purposes. Indeed, students are made to realize that Theatre Arts operates on the philosophy of praxis in which theory precedes and defines practice. It is also designed to prepare students who are capable of rational and high intuitive reasoning of social, political, cultural and economic societal events for literary and theatrical productions (Department of Theatre Arts, Academic Programme, 2006:4).

The scope of *Theatre and Good Governance* as an academic field of study is designed to blend theory and practice in terms of socio-political pedagogy from both local people and modern people perspectives. The course studies the role of theatre as an instrument for socio-political education. It demonstrates the use of theatre in mobilizing and stimulating ideas on good governance in our society. The course also teaches how theatre can serve as veritable tool for assessing the difference between reality and ideal. Students are expected to work as group with a chosen stakeholder using the model of improvisation and interactive sessions to discuss issues in the areas of good governance (Department of Theatre Arts, Academic Programme, and 2006:6).

In the light of the foregoing background and pragmatic tenets of Theatre Arts programme at Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria, the paper seeks to interrogate the Egume community project on good governance with the following objectives:

1. Establish the concept and functions of interactive drama for good governance education at the local level.
2. Determine how good governance knowledge can be imparted on local people through their own indigenous expressive art forms.
3. Suggest practical sociological research tools that will demonstrate the use of interactive drama as a viable method for good governance education at the local level.

In achieving these objectives, the paper proposes a pragmatic inclination towards examining the practical interface between interactive drama and good governance education from local perspective. The paper will avail itself of field school appraisal method in view of the set objectives. To this end, it is hoped that this interactive drama based persuasion on good governance education will respond to the thematic preoccupation on endogenous development in Africa

## **Interactive Drama and Good Governance**

The idea of drama has its origin in the Greek word-“dran”, which means, “to do” (action). Invariably, this means that drama is a practical activity. By logical extension, therefore, the interactive nature of drama is a slant in favour of pedagogical praxis within the scope of socio-political ideas in society. In this regard, drama is used as a method of imparting governance knowledge through popular approaches that are based on local perspective and real needs. It is popular in approach in the sense that it is defined within the ambit of democratic principles. Thus, it is a drama of the people, by the people and for the people. It is a drama of the people, given that the governance issues are common to the people. It is a drama by the people, because the people are the makers of the interactive drama process from their own local perspective. Ultimately, the benefits of the interactive drama are for the people. Therefore, it is obviously that the democratic parlance makes interactive drama a viable tool for self-evaluation, self-presentation and self-prescription in good governance. The conceptual lace between interactive drama and good governance provides an enabling environment for the role of the theatre activist in the process of decision-making and the process by which decision are implemented or not implemented (<http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/projectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp>). In this conceptual

context, the role of the theatre activist is significant. The role of the theatre activist, therefore, is to get the people.

To take decisions for themselves on what their needs are and how they can best organize themselves to achieve this needs. This functional role qualifies the theatre activist as a social educator among the people. In his new role as social educator, the activist aims at stimulation a process of self determination and self- help, which he values as a result of the various potential learning experiences the process provides through active participation. It is only through active participation that the people can develop themselves. A development, which brings about changes in mankind and his environment; which encourages communal feelings that are rational, mature, objective and systematic while discouraging individualistic ones which are often plagued with emotion and impulsive action (Alachi 1996: 64). The good governance educator debunks individualism by advocating group action local perspective. The activist tries to structure, systemize and broaden the scope of the people's thinking. By so doing he will have helped them without any form of interference on their thoughts and actions to develop their potentials. The activist uses skill to supply the stimulus by asking questions that will set the people thinking till they achieve a definite structure and he ensures as far as possible, that the conclusions they have reached after having thought about the project are not only relevant to their needs but practicable (Alachi, 1996: 65).

As in the case of good governance, grassroots movement seems to differ considerably from planners and politicians on their approach to the macro dimensions of change. What essentially matters for them is to bring about, within the horizons with which they are familiar, changes which are both possible and meaningful to their own lives. It matters little to them whether what they do is replicable elsewhere, or in conformity with ideal models of society constructed elsewhere (Rahnema, 1992:170). In this perspective, the concept of interactive drama and good governance education establishes a pragmatic template, on which the psychosocial and economic implications of African development process can be critically analyzed and ascertained comprehensively. Significantly, the concept provides a unique and alternative resolution on the contentions that contribute to endogenous development in Africa. In this context, the concept dwells on holistic interpretation and consolidation theory and practice in university education. This is focused on bridging the gap between formal and non-formal education towards collective efforts in finding solutions to the governance problems and needs of local people in Africa. By and large, the concept of interactive drama and good governance education is founded on the premise of local perspective, diagnosis and treatment of governance issues. This is practically carried out through the auspices of local people's indigenous art forms. This concept of interactive drama and good governance education has the following functions in practical terms:

1. Interactive drama facilitates internal initiative in addressing good governance issues, rather than external prescription to local people's governance problem.
2. Interactive drama also facilitates the development of local people's imaginative repertoire. This is practically possible in the sense that while playing and interpreting a role, the performers cum the participants are facilitated to imagine various governance related situations within the locality. Hence their imaginative capacity is broadened and developed.
3. Interactive drama facilitates group or teamwork. It brings stakeholders together in a performance forum. Issues raised during the drama performance are collectively analyzed and discussed, in order to find the way forward.
4. Interactive drama also facilitates the adaptation of local people's expressive art forms such as drama, songs, music, proverbs, puppetry, mask/masquerade etc. for development purpose in their community.

Interactive drama serves to give the local people endogenous voice in their own language and idioms and from their own local perspective, diagnosis and treatment of governance issues.

## **Egume Locality: Origin, Language and Culture**

In retrospect, the name of the community, “Egume”, has socio-political inclination. According to oral tradition, the founder of Egume, Akogu Omoga, was a great warrior resident at Idah, the seat of Igala kingdom. Akogu Omoga was not favourably disposed to the royal class politicking at Idah. Thus, he promulgated that “sitting is better than standing” when it comes to royal rumble. On this score, Akogu Omoga perceived himself as a potential leader and a war ensued between him and the ruling class at Idah. He left Idah and settled at a place called “Ogo Egume” close to Idah. The ruling class at Idah saw Akogu Omoga’s close proximity to Idah as a threat. Consequently, another war ensued which forced Akogu Omoga to migrate to the present Egume site in Dekina Local Government area of Kogi State.

The organizational structure of Egume traditional council consists of the Chairman/district head, Onu Egume, the Gagos (council of chiefs), Ogoyi Anyigba, Achimere and other subordinate chiefs. The present Onu of Egume, Alhaji Etila Ajeka has been on the throne since 1974.

Egume is located within the warm humid zone of Nigeria. There is distinctive wet season dichotomy. The wet season last from about April to the end of September or early October while the dry season lasts from about October to about the end of March or early April. Rainfall is heavy and the effects of the harmattan can be severe, especially from about November. The vegetation is essentially the guinea savanna type with mixeddeciduous forest patches. (53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Enthronement of the Attah Igala: Programme of Event, 2009:15).

## **Language**

The local people of Egume are originally Igala speaking people. They speak the language bearing the same name, a language classified by linguistic experts as belonging to the Kwa Group of the Niger Congo family. As a result of the strong linguistics affinities, Dr. Femi Akinkugbe (University of Lagos) has recently classified Yoruba, Itsekiri and Igala as belonging to what he calls the proto-Yuroboid subgroup in the main Kwa group. The language itself is undergoing scientific studies and recent efforts by Tom Miachi, Yusuf Etu and the Late Professor R. G. Armstrong have enhanced understanding of aspects such as the orthography (now being systematized) as well as tone marking. Today, Igala Orthography is one of the twenty – seven or so Orthographies recognized by the National Education Research and Development council of the Federal Ministry of Education, as having got an acceptable orthography, out of about three hundred main languages that exist n Nigeria today (53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Enthronement of the Attah Igala: Programme of Event, 2009:15).

## **Culture**

The culture of the Egume people is generally defined within the culture of the Igala people. Their culture is very similar to the culture of most other Nigerian people, especially those from the geographical middle-belt, southwards, to the coast. Cultural practices such as Kingship, funeral ceremonies, beliefs, marriage, masquerading, modes of dress, body adornment etc. are very similar to those of their Nigerian neighbours in the sub-region mentioned above. For instance, the Egwu Masquerades of Igala are similar and indeed are related to the Egwugwu or Nmanwu of Igboland, Egwugwu of Asaba (Delta State) the Alekwu Afia of Idoma, the Eku of Ebira, the Gunu and the Ndeako Gboya of the Nupe but for slight differences (53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Enthronement of the Attah Igala: Programme of Event, 2009:15).

Specifically, the people of Egume own a stream which is named “Adali”. The goddess of “Adali” is appeased with sacrifices and festivities annually by the people of Egume. The local people of Egume also have a festival known as “Egbe”. This festival derives its name from Egbe forest where the Akogu Omoga, the founding father of Egume is believed to have been buried. The forest serves as royal graveyard. The chief priest of Egbe forest is known as Oregelewu. He serves as the mediator between the dead ancestors at Egbe forest and the people for good health, bountiful harvest, child bearing, peaceful communal living, harmony, protection, wealth and prosperity. The acceptance of Oregelewu’s sacrifice at the ancestral forest culminates into Egbe festival.

The local people of Egume uphold the virtues of hard work, honesty, hospitality, and respect for elders, as well as catering for elderly ones. Their communal life is kin-based. The nuclear family is the smallest social unit but this is inseparably tied to the extended family system involving the lineage and the clan. All members of these extra nuclear-family units regard one another as “brothers” and “sisters”. A number of agnatic families combine to form a clan and a number of them may constitute a hamlet or even village. Often the members of such hamlets or villages trace their origin to common apical ancestors. The sociological arrangement is, itself a factor that promotes unity and peace among the people (53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Enthronement of the Attah Igala: Programme of Event, 2009:15).

## **The Egume Interactive Drama Project**

But if Theatre/Drama is to be so effective, it must be geared toward solving specific problems for specific targets. Conventional Theatre (or drama) falls short of this because it tends to be commercial and entertainment is its cardinal point. In designing Theatre/Drama for change what we need is to properly identify the problem, its cause, the people’s attitudes, cultural practices and beliefs so that we disorient them for a desired purpose (Kisense, 1999:73).

The Egume project on good governance was carried out by the pioneering 300 level students of the programme during the 2007/2008 academic session. Three years later, a follow-up exercise on the Egume Project was conducted by the third set of the good governance programme during the 2009/2010 academic session. The first phase of the project was organized with the following objectives:

1. To examine good governance issues from the perspective of community members.
2. To facilitate community members with drama skills in their own language and idioms, so that they will be empowered to voice out their governance problems.
3. To ascertain the relationship between youth and leadership in the community.
4. To test the practicability of the drama based pragmatic principles in good governance, which the students have learnt in the lecture room.
5. To establish a drama based evaluation parameter for subsequent good governance research work in the community.

Subsequently, the second phase of the project was organized to achieve these follow-up objectives:

1. To determine whether the good governance drama was by any means an end in itself.
2. To determine whether the good governance view opened up by the interactive drama facilitated further discussions amongst community members.

3. To determine whether the interactive drama formed the bases for the next line of action in Egume community.
4. To determine the extent to which the interactive drama impacted on community members in Egume.
5. To determine the effectiveness of the drama method in practical good governance terms, especially from local perspective.

The first phase of the Egume project was organized with the university students facilitating the community workshop. The student group served as the catalyst group or social educators. The writer served as the project coordinator during the workshop process, which lasted for one week.

The seven days are shared into activity days as follows:

- Day One: Advocacy visit to Egume community
- Day Two: Selection and training of interactive drama participants
- Day Three: Community Research – Data collection and data analysis
- Day Four: Interactive drama skits formation by community participants
- Day Five: Rehearsals
- Day Six: Interactive drama performance
- Day Seven: post performance discussion

During the advocacy visit, the catalyst group met with the traditional council in Egume and received their permission and blessing. At the same time, the catalyst group made the objectives of the community workshop on good governance known to the traditional council.

The second day brought the facilitating group in contact with community members who would want to participate in the programme. They were selected with consideration to demographic factors, social status and gender issues.

The community research involved data collection and analyses based on responses from information collected during FGD and SSI.

The community participants are facilitated on the fourth day to formulate drama skits based on the analyzed findings from FGD and SSI. They are creatively engaged in the process of play creating drawing from existing situations in their own locality. In this sense, drama stands like a mirror reflecting real life images on stage. Thus, it provides a factual basis for the local people to interactively discuss their problems.

The community participants are facilitated to act out the roles in the formulated drama skits. Such drama skits are improvisational and episodic. They do not follow the rules of a well-made play, and they do not require professional approach to acting out roles. The bottom line is that the local people should reflect their lives on stage.

The performance that followed on the sixth day brought community stakeholders together in a performance forum. Good governance issues, which were common to community members, were raised in the drama presentation. The drama presentation challenged the people to look at their own local

governance problems and to think about them critically. The interactive drama skit for the improvisational performance is illustrated below:

## **The Interactive Drama Skit**

### **Episode One:**

The Onu of Egume consults with his council of chiefs on an intended trip to see the State Governor at Lord Lugard's House, Lokoja. While the consultation is going on; the youth leader reminds the Onu of the State Governor's promise to provide infrastructural facilities in the community. On his departure to Lokoja, the Onu assigns his chiefs to take charge of local affairs in his absence.

### **Episode Two:**

Akanya, one of the deputy Onu's sons is hiding in a bush path. An unsuspecting teenage girl is walking along the bush path with a basket of cassava. She's on her way home from the farm. Akanya comes out of his hiding place and attempts to rape the girl. The girl cries out for help. As she struggles with Akanya, the basket of cassava falls down. Her cry attracts a number of farmers from the nearby farms. On arrival at the scene of the incident, they apprehend Akanya and rescue the girl. Akanya keeps boasting that he is untouchable in the community: "I can get away with any deviant act in this community, because my father is a chief..."

### **Episode Three:**

A court session, two culprits are standing before the council of chiefs. One of the culprits is Akanya who attempted to rape a teenage girl. The other is a deviant fellow who was caught stealing some tubers of yam in a farmstead. After hearing from witnesses and the culprits, the presiding chief in collaboration with other chiefs decides to free his rapist son, Akanya, while the thief receives punishment for stealing. The presiding chief equally went ahead to dismiss the head of the vigilante group for arresting his rapist son, Akanya: "why should the vigilante leader expose a chief's son to public ridicule".

### **Episode four:**

The Onu returns from Lokoja amidst a grand reception at his palace. His deputy briefs him on community governance during his absence. While he briefs the Onu, he avoids mentioning the issue relating to his rapist son, Akanya, as well as the dismissal of the community vigilante group leader. The youth leader takes the floor to address the council and reports the suppressed issue of injustice to his royal highness. The Onu expresses dissatisfaction with his council of chiefs and demands for the reinstatement of the vigilante group leader: "If the seat of communal governance is corrupt, what will happen to the entire community...?"

During the post performance discussion, the stakeholders were engaged in discussing the issues raised during the drama presentation. They analyzed the issues from local perspective and sought to find a way forward from where they were in the scheme of good governance. In a plenary session, issues relating to the vigilante group leader dismissal, the unfriendly relationship between the youth and the chiefs/elders, the issue of continuity with the drama method, community partnership with donor organizations and other concerned bodies were critically analyzed, discussed, and solutions were proffered collectively. The proffered solutions, which include the reinstatement of the vigilante group

leader, establishing cordial relationship between the youth and chiefs, continuing the drama method for good governance via the community based organization-Youths Global School of Dramatic Arts provided the basis for the follow-up investigation after three years.

## **The Follow-up Investigation on the Egume Project**

The end of the performance (drama presentation) was not the end of the project, but actually the beginning of another phase – the follow-up... (Nda, 2007:174). As earlier mentioned, three years after the interactive drama workshop on good governance, a follow-up investigation was conducted in the community in 2013. Participatory learning appraisal (PLA) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools that are common to sociological research were used for the follow-up investigation. The tools include Semi-Structured Interview (SSI), Focus-Group Discussion (FGD) and Trend Analysis. These tools were used to illicit data on:

- Whether local people can recollect the interactive drama project on good governance and the story line of the drama.
- The availability and suitability of interactive drama in addressing good governance issues.
- The adaptability of the drama approach and its capacity to consolidate local people's expressive art forms for communication towards self-mobilization, self-assessment, self-presentation and self-efficacy.
- The impact of the Egume good governance project on youth in the community.
- Level of communal governance amongst community stakeholders in Egume.

Focus group discussion was conducted with a total number of 42 discussants in Egume community. Out of this FGD population size, 10 discussants were members of the traditional council (including the traditional ruler: Onu-Egume). 12 discussants were community youth members while the remaining 20 discussants consist of older men and women in the locality. A total of 3 FGDs were conducted in the community. A summation of 20 respondents was involved in the Semi- Structured Interview that was conducted in the community. Within this SSI population size, 5 were community leaders, 7 were youths and 8 were married men and women in the community. Transect walk was conducted with the objective of triangulating and authenticating data that were collected from FGD and SSI sessions.

## **Findings**

A majority of the local discussants and respondents during the FGD and SSI still recollect the Egume interactive drama on good governance project vividly. A significant number of the youths and elders remembered the character of the vigilante group that was unjustly dismissed from his security job, because he exposed a chief's rapist son to justice. They also remembered the Onu's decision and position on the issue of injustice being demonstrated by his council of chiefs. The youths that participated in the drama making process recollected the local proverbs and songs that were used. The Onu-Egume, Chief Etila Ajeka was able to recollect that the community workshop was held in 2007:

*“Some university students came to Egume about four years now. They taught our children in Youths Global School of Dramatic Arts how to use drama in addressing local issues on leadership. I remember the drama very well”. (Chief Etila Ajeka, SSI-Egume community).*

However, a few of the discussants and respondents were not familiar with the interactive drama but were familiar with the Kogi State University students.

On availability and suitability of interactive drama as an instrument for addressing good governance issues, it was unanimously agreed by local discussants and respondents during the FGD and SSI that the interactive drama based strategy was a functional tool. This position was also authenticated during the transect walk exercise, especially when respondents agreed that the drama approach is functional and suitable for addressing leadership issues from local perspective.

Majority of the discussants and respondents testify that the content of the interactive drama clearly reflected the reality of existing governance issues in Egume community:

*The drama used our culture to capture things that happened in our community here, especially the issue of the deputy chief dismissing the vigilante group leader from his job. It happened in real life. (Salifu Godwin, SSI-Egume community).*

They were of the opinion that the episodic storyline of the drama was linear and comprehensible without complications. That it captured their local reality like a photographic shot from a camera. And critical issues that were raised during the post-performance discussion were comprehended vividly.

A significant number of the discussants and respondents during the FGD and SSI were delighted that they were familiar with the characters in the drama. This is based on the fact that indigenous names, language, proverbs, fauna and flora were used. It also subscribed to some of the reasons why the discussants and respondents were of the opinion that the drama strategy was not only available but also suitable. A number of the women and men appreciated the use of songs, dance and music within the context of addressing good governance issues.

Majority of the discussants and respondents during the FGD and SSI opined that the interactive drama was flexible to a large extent. The Christian youth amongst the participants agreed that the drama could be compared to the type of drama they do in the church for moral lessons. They collectively agreed that drama could be used for self-mobilization, self-assessment, self-presentation and self-prescription. However, they opined that the community needed further facilitation in the drama making process for an enhanced empowerment in other areas of local concern.

In terms of impact, the FGD and SSI participants are of the opinion that the interactive drama on governance impacted on the local community in a number of ways. One of the participants, Mohammed Yakubu, the president of Egume Youth Development Association (EYDA), stated during an FGD with youth group that:

*We (youths) resolved with the traditional council that the head of the vigilante group be reinstated. In effect, the leader of the*

*vigilante group has been reinstated. (Yakubu, Youth FGD: Egume community).*

A respondent, Mallam Abu Alaji has this to say on the impact of the Egume project:

*Our children (Youth Global School of Dramatic Arts-Egume) are trying on their own. During our Egbe traditional festival, our children (Youth Global School of Dramatic Arts-Egume) act drama on how we can maintain good governance in Egume (Alaji, SSI-Egumecommunity).*

The youth leader, Mohammed Yakubu states further that:

*Before the Governance intervention project in Egume, the youth of the community do not have access to the palace. We are allowed to access the palace in times of youth restiveness in the community. At such times, we are invited to the palace to be interrogated. Things have changed now. I have been given membership in the traditional council as youth leader. We now hold our meetings at the Onu's palace Yakubu, Youth FGD: Egume community.*

Beyond these impact indicators, churches and mosques within the community are said to be availing themselves of the drama approach on governance. However, some of the participants are of the opinion that the impact of the local and state governments is yet to be felt in respect of communal governance in Egume community. The Onu-Egume is of the opinion that the Egume good governance project ought to be government sponsored, so as to expand its scope beyond communal leadership issues.

## **Discussion on Findings from the Follow-up Investigation**

Drawing on the foregoing spectra from discussants and respondents, the Egume project has demonstrated the practicability of the drama approach in addressing good governance issues, especially from local perspective. The view that the base group- *Youths Global School of Dramatic Arts*, Egume, are now using drama as a means of addressing leadership issues during Egbe traditional festival is significant:

*Our children (Youth Global School of Dramatic Arts-Egume) are trying on their own. During our Egbe traditional festival, our children perform drama on how we can maintain good governance in Egume (Alaji, SSI-Egume community).*

This may not be unconnected with their participation in the drama making process through which they have acquired interactive skills to look at communal issues from their own perspective. This is an indication of continuity, which ultimately translates to empowerment. However, the availability of drama as a research provides the possibility of focusing on the qualitative aspects in drama. For example, capturing the participant's experiences, even though it can be difficult as drama is a process in this context. The process cannot be observed only from the outside, as it is dynamic and the participants in drama are affected differently and can

experience the same thing in different ways. Consequently, it is difficult to measure from the outside how local participants experience drama. Therefore, in order to be able to enter into a process, an inside perspective is needed instead (Lepp, 1999:101).

Having been empowered to carry on their own, the knowledge they have acquired through the drama process will remain as an indelible benchmark in their memory. This is predicated on their ability to recollect what they learnt during the interactive drama workshop:

*“Some university students came to Egume about four years now. They taught our children in Youths Global School of Dramatic Arts how to use drama in addressing local issues on leadership. I remember the drama very well”. (Chief AtilaEjeka, SSI-Egume community).*

Perhaps, this alludes to the popular Chinese proverb that says “if you give me a fish, you have fed me for a day. If you teach me how to catch fish, you have fed me for a life time”. In this instance, the pedagogical capacity of drama can not be overemphasized. Drama as a method of governance education is inclined to cultural action in the sense that the local people of Egume created their culture. This position points to one of the participant’s comment that:

Before the Governance intervention project in Egume, the youth of the community do not have access to the palace. We are allowed to access the palace in times of youth restiveness in the community. At such times, we are invited to the palace to be interrogated. Things have changed now. I have been given membership in the traditional council as youth leader. We now hold our meetings at the Onu’s palace Yakubu, Youth FGD: Egume community.

The drama used our culture to capture things that happened in our community here, especially the issue of the deputy chief dismissing the vigilante group leader from his job. It happened here in real life. (Salifu Godwin, SSI-Egume community).

Extrapolating from the above comment, the essence of educating the people on issues of governance is to challenge them towards assessing their situation critically and be compelled to find a way forward. The comment made by one of the discussants shows that the drama process was not an end in itself. It provided them with a cause to achieve a desired effect through critical analysis, discussion and finding solution to their problems:

*We (youths) resolved with the traditional council that the head of the vigilante group be reinstated. In effect, the leader of the vigilante group has been reinstated. (Yakubu, Youth FGD: Egume community).*

Another significant resolution that emanated from the drama process for good governance is on the issue of the unfriendly relationship between the elders and the youth of the community:

*Before the Governance intervention project in Egume, the youth of the community do not have access to the palace. We are allowed to access the palace in times of youth restiveness in the community. At such times, we are invited to the palace to be interrogated. Things have changed now. I have been given membership in the traditional council as youth leader. We now hold our meetings at the Onu's palace Yakubu, Youth FGD: Egume community.*

On the whole, the drama process on good governance has impacted positively on the local people. This is an indication that local realities can be changed through drama in a governance transformative situation, which is founded on local perspective. Thus, their language and idioms, songs, dance and music are subscribed within the context of development in society. Interactive drama vis-à-vis folk media within the context of good governance education are valuable, they convey 'information' but because they contribute to the domestication of development (Johnny and Richard, 367). In this regard, the interactive drama praxis denotes the action, reflection, and transformation of a people as they engage with one another. Those involved in praxis can anticipate that such action, reflection, and transformation should help create a just and better world (Taylor, 2003:35).

## **Conclusion**

This paper has attempted to establish a drama-based template upon which "the capacity and theory-building of universities and research centres in endogenous development" can be innovatively enhanced. Operating on the platform of tertiary education, the paper focused its searchlight on the academic field of *Theatre and Good Governance*, which is a curricular programme of the Department of Theatre Arts, Kogi State University, Anyigba - Nigeria. In this respect, this discourse has attempted to establish a functional lace between theory and practice. The study availed itself of the Egume good governance experience based on local perspective. In carrying out this task, the practical instrumentation of interactive drama readily finds expression in the Egume experience. This is in response to the evolving interdisciplinary interface between theatre arts and development studies in tertiary institution. In this regard, drama practically functions on pragmatic principles in order to empower the local people through the auspices of their expressive cultural heritage. Ultimately, this approach to addressing governance issues seeks to give the local people a voice in their own language and idioms. To this end, the following interactive drama based suggestions are imperative to endogenous development:

- Department of theatre arts in tertiary institutions and concerned agencies should avail themselves of the drama method in good governance education. The approach will enable such department and concerned agencies to train local community based organizations (LCBOs) in using interactive drama as a tool for good governance education in local African development process.
- Advocacy visits should be conducted in target communities before the interactive drama workshop on good governance. Three intensive advocacy visits should be carried out, because such visits involve identification of organizational structures, selection of trainee participants, and identification of existing expressive art forms for information and communication purposes.

- Base on emerging interdisciplinary approaches to endogenous development, Interactive drama for good governance practitioners should adopt sociological methodologies. A viable capacity in the use of PRA and PLA tools will be relevant.
- Although the Egume interactive drama project on governance was strictly an academic exercise, it behooves on tertiary institutions to partner with donor organizations, governments, cooperate bodies and other concerned agencies for an extensive and collective effort.
- Above all, the use of interactive drama for endogenous development should be grounded in folk media. This includes local system of information, communication, education, socialization, worldview, religion, politics, economy etc. within the cultural matrix of their local heritage. This will bring about local perspective enhancement in creativity and innovation towards the desired fruit in African endogenous development process.

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