

Amiedi Soup A Delicacy of Cultural Identity and Association in Uduophori Community of Delta State

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ABSTRACT

The need for cultural identity as a way of building society has drawn a lot of attention in recent times. This is because people are identified by their culture and can predict to a large extent what ought to be the likely behavioral pattern of individuals or group of people by investigating their cultural/traditional belief system and association. Amiedi soup is a cultural meal that has over the years grown to be a delicacy that families in Urhobo society can hardly do without. The people of Uduophori who are being showcased in this study are known to consume Amiedi soup among their people including those in the diaspora. Amiedi is a savory soup garnished with assorted traditional spices that stimulate the appetite for more. This study has become necessary because the soup has a lot to show in term of cultural and social identity of the Uduophori people of the Patani local Government. The qualitative research methodology was adopted for this research work, with focus on 40 households and five traditional titled Chiefs. The primary and secondary sources of data collection were explored. 15 (fifteen) households within the Uduophori community in Patani Local Government and 15 (fifteen) Households among the Uduophori community in Ughelli town in Ughelli North Local government and 10 (ten) households of indigenes of Uduophori who reside outside Delta State. 40 questionnaires were distributed to 40 households and the five traditional Chiefs were verbally interviewed. Primary and secondary sources of data were used to get a thorough analysis of the issues at hand. The research therefore concluded that there was an innate inbuilt instinct in man that serves as a magnetic force that produced cultural activities. Thus, culture initiate traditional foods, so cultural identity and associations are linear motor that cumulate into the traditional/cultural food of an environment.

Keyword; Amiedi soup, Culture, Identity, Uduophori Community, Delta State.

INTRODUCTION

Food has a cultural trait of an interrelated parts which can be tangible. Thus, it entails a complex step in achieving social life of an individual / community. There are wider ranges of food which has a positive / negative influence on culture, economic, social interaction, and behavioural pattern of the people. The food ways of a people are the arm of the traditional method that defined the people. Thus, its daily features in their daily diet, thereby shows the eating habit, culinary practices, ethnic origin, cultural beliefs and religions practices. Food is more than the ingredients that accumulated into producing the delicacy. The intricate method / procedure in the preparation of most foods has a cultural undertone which must be strictly adhered to, to achieve the cultural flavor and taste. A family status can be established by the kind of food likewise certain food are common among certain ethnic group, as such it can serve as medium of identification. (Devadas, 2002) defined food as any edible substance made up of these characteristics -solid, semisolid, liquid, can be eaten, swallowed and can digest into the body system without harmful consequence on the person. Such food contains ingredients that are useful to the body, keep the person alive, and provide energy for the enhancement of bodily growth and development and wade of diseases. Even though a balance and healthy diet is important in the attainment of a healthy lifestyle and the total development of a man. Thus, cultures, heritages, traditions, and the environment have a major

influence in the choice and preparation of foods. Amiedi is a savory soup garnished with assorted traditional spices that stimulates the appetite for more. Such delicacy can be predominantly peculiar among a cultural setting or distinctively peculiar to a tribe. Cuisine is a product of cultural beliefs and practices of the people. Thus, the encompassing circle of which a people is founded, and which control social behaviour and norms are established in their culture. Hence it showcases in their foods, arts, laws, dances, customs, habits, and dressings. This paper dives into Amiedi as a cultural cuisine of Urhobo extraction and how this traditional delicacy has served as a string that binds the Uduophori community to their ancestral origin.

Research Aims

The main aim of this study is to investigate some of our cultural heritages and determine why it has transcended generations.

To show their hidden qualities and why they are culturally accepted,

To show that our cultural heritages should be investigated and put in world view.

Culture and Traditional Foods in Nigeria

Nigeria is a country of diverse people with diverse culture and traditional practices. The diversity in tribe and ethnicities are embellish with distinctive food recipes that are unanimously acceptable in that environment. So traditional food is food that are biologically accepted by all and are produced, distributed, and consumed in a particular environment or within a region. Food has a strong traditional base; thus, it is treated with a great respect and value. Most of such traditional food are prepared based on traditional knowledge using the local fiber and local roots, vegetables, leaf and species. The production and consumption of such locally produced food is based on the local / cultural philosophy that existed since these foods were handed over from generation to generation as healthy and nutritionally good for common consumption. Hence it has captivated the mental state of minds of the locals to concluding that their traditional food is superior to the foreign foods. Man's relationship with nature and the desire to stay alive and stay safe led to the consumption of these different kinds of foods, leaf etc. any leaf that does not affect the people adversely is considered as edible and safe for human consumption. Agriculture is a staple work for the locals in Nigeria. Through this they produce crops that are commonly consumable in their environment. These foods are traditionally edible and help in maintaining good health and physical fitness; thus, it culture emanated from the primordial practices of the primitive age. Man's inward desire to satisfy his predisposition for survival was characterised by the ecological adjustment of food and seeking protection for life. Hence culture transform the lives of the primitive society by altering man's immediate habitation, support the productions of food, clothing, and shelter by employing the psycho-social activities to liberate the social structures of the society with distinct cultural traditions. Nigeria is a Nation of about 371 distinct tribes with unique traditional foods and cultural delicacies (Ajao, 2017). In the Northern part the commonest food is Tuwo Masara/Chinkafa and Kuka Soup. The Eastern part the most appreciated food is Abacha, Akwu, Oha soup/ Bitter leaf soup with fufu. The South West of Nigeria which is occupied by the Yoruba's speaking people has pounded yam, fufu with vegetable soup, plantain flour with gbegiri as the must appreciated foods. The South South of Nigeria is made up of 48 different tribes which spans through six States namely, Bayelsa, Edo, Delta, Rivers, Cross Rivers, Akwa Ibom. These states house foods that are peculiar to them. Delta Sate, which is my focal point, is made up of five tribes namely Ibo, Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw and Itsekiri. They all have different foods that are special and has cultural intonations.

Traditional Foods from the Three Major Senatorial Zones of Delta State

Delta State is a State with cultural diversities and variations which occur within the ethnic cultural belief system and different ecologies that made up the sub sector of the State. Each ethnic group shared a common cosmological belief, which is expressed in the diverse traditions, occupations, dances, folklores, and oral literatures. These has made the different ethnic group unique and independent of each other. Thus, they are culturally agrarian societies, with an ecology that support the type of agricultural activities that are peculiar to their environment. The Delta Ibo are both fish and crop farmers, the Ijaw's and Itsekiri's are predominately fish farmers, while the Isoko's and Urhobo's are both Fish and crop farmers. These has influenced the kind of traditional foods that are prevalent in these zones. The strong involvement in agriculture which can be referred

to as heritage occupation has not allowed the people to suffer food scarcity and nutritional deficiency; because they produce and consume their agricultural products. Traditional food reduces excessive spending of low-income earners on imported foods especially in this era of high cost of product. (Okeke, E. C., et al 2008) define traditional foods as food produced locally in a particular cultural environment. Thus, they are culturally and socially, acceptable for the consumption of the locals. Therefore, the locals identify them as indigenous food that are of nutritional benefits to the people. Delta States is politically divided into three senatorial zones- Delta North, Delta Central and Delta South which are the five major dialects apart from other minor dialects. The Delta North is made up of the Aniocha Oshimili, Anuani, Kwale, and Ika the major dialect is Ibo dialect. The Delta central is made up of the Urhobos which are the largest single tribe in Delta State, and they speak the Urhobo dialect. While the Delta South comprises of three major tribes namely the Ijaw's, the Itsekiri's and the Isoko's. The Ijaw's speaks Izon dialects, the Itsekiri's speaks Itsekiri while the Isoko's speaks Isoko dialect. In like manner their traditional foods are different. **Delta North:** the common name for people of this region is called Anioma people. They are the Igbo speaking people of Delta State, Nigeria. They span across 9 Local government areas and speak different varieties of the Igbo language- Oshimili/Aniocha, Enuani, Ukwuani/ Ndokwa, and the Ika language. These are the common soup in Delta North that can be seen in most of the homes within the region. Ofe Ujuju soup, Nsala Soup, Egusi Pepper soup, Ogbono soup, Njuju soup, Okro soup, Banga soup garnished with vegetable, Oha soup, Ofonugbu bitter leaf soup these can all be served with Eba, pounded yam or Akpu. **Delta Central:** these are the popular food among the Delta Central people - Owho soup with starch, Banga soup with starch/Eba, Iribo-Otor soup, Ukodo made with Plantain/Yam Pepper soup, White Melon pepper soup, Isha soup with starch, White Igbagba Ofofo (Okro pepersoup, Banga rice and Coconut rice. These were all common food among this region.

Delta South: Delta South is made up of three ethnic traditional groups namely the Ijaws', Isokos' and the Itsekiris'. Therefore, their traditional foods are different from one to another even though there are some traditional foods that cut across the zone. So, the research looked at the common food among the people of this region according to the ethnic group. **The Ijaws foods:** The Ijaws' are the largest ethnic group in the Niger Delta region. Thus, they are the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria. The Ijaws' can be found in 6 states of the Federation, with the largest population in Bayelsa State. The Ijaws' have a lot of unpopular but rather appealing delicacies for different occasions such as the ceremonial dishes, regular dishes, and traditional snacks that showcased their culture and traditions. Probably because they are a riverine people, they love fish, sea foods like prawn, periwinkles, and shrimps other popular foods are; Polofiyai a very rich Ijaw soup made with yam and palm oil. Kekefiyai: is a traditional Ijaw pottage made with chopped unripened (green) plantains, fish, seafood, game meat "bushmeat" and palm oil. plantain:asted fish and plantain; fish fried with palm oil and served with fried plantains. Kiri Igina; is a special soup prepared without cooking on fire; is made up of ground ogbono, smoked fish, ground fresh pepper, onions, and salt. These soups are served with Eba or Fufu.

Major foods in Isoko land: Isoko people are found in the Isoko region of Delta State and Bayelsa State. The Isokos' speak the Isoko language, a language of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo family which is very similar to the Urhobo language (Williamson,2011). James W. Welch asserted that Isoko language is a dialect of Urhobo language, and many people shared this opinion. The major soup in Isoko land comprise of Owo Soup, Egusi Pepper Soup with fresh fish and Starch, Okro pepper soup with fresh fish or Igbagba –Ofofo, Iribotor Soup or Ogbuvie soup · Goat White Egusi Soup Epuru. Epuru: pepper soup base, boiled yam, plantain.

THE CUISINE OF THE ITSEKIRI: the Itsekiri people are also called Jekri, Isekiri, or Ishekiri. They made up a significant percentage of the population of the modern towns of Sapele, Warri, Burutu, and Forcados. They speak a Yoruboid language of the Benue Congo branch of Niger-Congo languages and share elements of culture with the Yoruba, Edo, Urhobo, and Ijaw. These are the delicacy peculiar to the Itsekiri people of Warri Kingdom- Iwo,Egidiye, Iyanyan, Gbafilo, Omilo seeds which are the usual pepper soup spices found in Warri Kingdom; and dry pepper, crayfish, Okra, prawn, salt, dried fish, Meat, Periwinkle are the essentials in making this great meal. Epuru (Yam and Plantain cooked together, Ogolo-Obe-eyen, Gbagba-ikpogiri, Usin/Owo Soup. Usin: Cassava, palm oil Owo: palm oil, pepper, gari/starch, green plantain, potash, bitter leaf, cray fish, fish, periwinkle, salt. Gbagba Ukpogiri, Okro pepper soup. (Britannica, Encyclopaedia.2019)

Relationship between Food and Culture in Defining a People.

Culture is a symbol of identity; it is what shows your origin because it encompasses all aspect of human existence. Food is an aspect of culture that is very important and can be used to distinguished between people, tribes, and trace people existence. Different food can be traced to different cultural settings. People like and dislike cannot be totally separated from their cultural practices and belief system. Food transcends an individual or generation because it is handed down from generation to generation, so it is treated as sacred and eating with an air of veneration. Due to urbanisation and modernisation many elites rarely eat their traditional food which most often lead to a disconnect between them and their foundation and ancestral home. Furthermore, some traditional foods are used as connector to their ancestors some for religious worship hence they can delineate the individual closeness to cultural artifact. Thus, the kind of food eaten in an ethnic group, the ingredients for preparation and the process can portray an ethnic association within a larger group. The word culture is seen as the totality of a man's value system, in-depth knowledge and language which is the communicative skills, rituals, habits, lifestyles, attitudinal display, beliefs, folklore, rules, and practices in which a particular people are known for. The culture of a people is as important as the people because it is the culture that shape the behaviour of the people by teaching and aligning the people to the generally accepted societal norms and standard. Wherever culture / cultural etiquette is affected negative identity is formed and strange characters are exhibited. Thus, food is fundamental in cultural issues it's not only nourishes the body, but serves as a cementing bond among individuals, communities and strengthen communal relationship and unity. The family is the smallest cluster of the society that are bonded together by relationship and family ties. Food plays a significant role in giving a distinctive character within a family. It helps to discover attitudes, age difference and ritual beliefs. In determining human community identity food plays a major role.

Cultural and Traditional Beliefs behind Diet

The culture of a people hinges on what they belief. This has at a large extent influence the social system of the people. It has multiple effect on what they eat and don't eat, accept, tolerate accommodate, judge as good/bad food. Every food created by God is eaten in one geographical location or the other. People are attached to food that is peculiar to their cultural ethnic denomination more than others. Through such food people shown/displayed their cultural identity and retain it as a generational affiliation. Though they eat food from other areas, towns, cities as a show of love, acceptance, and relationship to people of other background. People are nostalgically and wistfully attached to food from the areas where their families lived, where they were born and where their ancestors originated from. These determine their likes and dislikes it also has a physiological impart on the people. Thus, this shows why some communities treated certain foods as taboo which has transcend many decades. It was because such cultural values/norms were passed from generation to generation through nonverbal communication that existed between parents, children, society, and the citizenry within such geographical location. Hence there is acceptance, continuity, and universal practices of such values. The well-being of a people is determined by how nourished and healthy they are. A population can be healthy when they eat the right proportion of food; and involve in the right nutritional practices which can be an indicator to societal development. Thus, the food we eat affect the total body development, which in turn is a precondition for sustaining the collective social, economic, political, and human development. Only healthy and well-nourished individual can contribute positively to the development of their society. The individuals made up the society, so if the individuals are not well fed / deprived of some good quality food that can enhance growth it can lead to retardation or hinder growth. Some communities have laws, customs and traditional practices that prohibit some groups within that environment from eaten certain foods. This exclusion from such food is because of what is termed cultural belief and practices. For instance, as a growing up child we were not allowed to eat eggs; because it was believed that if a child eat egg that child will steal later in life. We were not also allowed to eat the head of a fish because it was a general belief that as a child you will not be knowledgeable in school. Likewise In some communities' women were not permitted to eat some part of any animal killed, it must be eaten by men. Thus, many communities denied certain group of the population of foods that were rich in proteins, irons, and carbohydrates. (Gamuchirai & Shackleton, 2019), emphasised that within the sub-Sahara Africa, Cultural practices and taboos were major reasons why woman and young children were restricted from eaten certain foods.

The Relationship between Food and Culture

Africa is blessed with greenish vegetations. There are a lot of fruits, vegetables tubers, grains, nuts; every month of the year there is a particular fruit available for the populace. The relationship between food and culture is complex because food is an everyday activity that enhances the substance of life. The human life is dependent on the kind of food eaten. Furthermore, the type of food a person eats can show the cultural affiliation, cultural background, upbringing and to a large extent the society and environment of birth. Therefore, food can serve as a source of identifying a person's social class, community, ethnic group and even nationality. In African there is a relationship between food and class. Through food one can view a person's status social class and the social changes within that environment. Despite the effect of globalisation and modernisation which has positively affected industrialisation, productions, and distributions of food all over the world; People still expresses personal preference of certain food over another. Majorly the cause is connected to cultural belief and system of upbringing. People are more attracted to food they were acquainted with and had prior knowledge of the taste; these determine their value and level of acceptance of such food. Food and culture are interrelated, culture and food differentiate a people's social class, environment and one geographical location from another. They both influence every area of human existence including communication, interactive skills, and the abilities to do things well. These were determinant fact of how we view other people and the influence we have on them. Different cultures have different types of food that has span through decades. Some are as old as the community; the importance and value attached to them has made them to be handed down from generation to generation. There is a general saying that you are what you eat (Vatika,2018). Food and culture have strong influence on our tradition, religion, relationship with others and on human ethical behavioural patterns. Food is an essential part of the African families / African traditional worship because it fosters ties and bonds among brothers within the nuclear and extended family. In the traditional setting in Nigeria, among the village people children within the same family eat in the same place with the same plate at the same time. This is a culture that enhances and promote collectivism and the uniqueness built on collective acceptance of one another, unity and togetherness. Therefore, food has help to foster close relationship among siblings, relatives, age grades and community members. It inspires and strengthen the ties among the individuals and inculcate on the younger generations the acceptable attitudinal behaviour, practice and morals that are positively accepted within that society. In the urhobo culture there is a ritual that goes with food – food was not served carelessly to adult, they were served carefully with respect and with three or four types of dishes on a tray, carried gorgeously to serve on the table. The traditional dishes used to serve food is called “Ewere” it is a dish made with mold, traditionally made to keep food warm for a period. Thus, through this medium there is an unwritten and unvocal communicate expressed within that context. Therefore, the food prevalent in certain locality is dominantly the function of the cultural practices in that locality. So, food has a multidimensional function and plays diverse roles in the development of the society. It sharpens the individuals within the society by playing educational roles, traditional roles, and transmitter of cultural etiquette to the next generation. Thus, food and culture are not only important to an individual, it also built the society because a healthy and well behaved individual will make up a descent society. So, investigating the food practices of a community can-lead to having an in dept knowledge of the cultural practices and belief system of that community.

Amiedi As A Cuisine For Cultural Identity

Amiedi as a diet

A Cuisine is known through the kinds of ingredients used in the preparation, the structure of meals and the etiquette of eating. It is a social and community interaction that is passed from generation to generation. The constituents of traditional Cuisines are acquired early in life in form of a transferred experience from mother to child / guidance to wards. Thus, affect our eating habit in a progressive conservative manner which form part of our personality. Changes might occur because of interaction with other culture, exposure, development, and education. Hence led to the introduction of adding new ingredients. But the traditional taste will determine the perception of judgment, which therefore define good or bad meal. In homogeneous communities, food habit is maintained and cherished. Even public restaurants cook must include traditional cuisines to attract patronage because it is viewed as a home – cooked diet. In fact, apart from history, religion, language, and culture that are generally accepted as a determinant factor for cultural identity, food is one of the unassuming elements of cultural identity. For instance, no matter how long one has left home, may be as immigrants whenever / wherever one's local traditional food is displaced a nostalgic feeling will pop up. Thus, it is a silent display of your intrinsic attachment to your ethnic food which is a sign of identifying with the culture. Furthermore, cultural identity is

foundationally based on the cultural food of the locals. Most traditional food is as old as the history of the people. Due to this the ingredients are planted within the community which made it easier for everybody to identify with and handed down to subsequent generation. The cooking procedure hardly change because if the right cooking instructions are not adhered to, the taste of the food will change, then the traditional satisfaction it ought to give will be lacking. The relevance of such cuisine is that because it is seen as a delicacy and the recipe are cheap and readily available within the locality it is eating daily. With this every female child within the locality consciously and unconsciously learnt the cooking procedures. Therefore, wherever these dishes are displaced it awakens the cultural consciousness and attachment of the food as a nature delicacy.

Amiedi (banga soup)

Banga soup / stew is a common soup among the people of Edo state, Delta State, Bayelsa and among the Igbos as well but Amiedi is a type of Banga Soup that is peculiar to the Urhobos' in Nigeria. Thus, it is special because of the types of local ingredients used in the cooking of this delicacy. It has a special flavour that is specially and peculiar to this soup and is not found in any other type of food. The taste and flavour made it acceptable to all, a diet for both the rich and the poor and for all occasions. It is very easy to prepare and with all the ingredients readily available in the local market.

Ingredients

The major ingredients are red palm nut locally called Banga. This is garnished with a lot of different species such as "aidan fruit" "rohojie", "beletete", scent/bitter leaf, onion grounded pepper, crayfish, salt, meat/fish periwinkle. For the Urhobos' it is so special that it is served with a special earthen pot known as 'evwere'. It is mostly served hot/ warm with starch or eba and boiled unripe plantain/ yam to go with it.

History of Urhobo' as a people

The word Urhobo was the name of the founder of the Urhobo ethnic group. According to the Urhobo voice Newspaper published by Dr Ifie Emmanuel of Agbarha-Otor; the man called Urhobo migrated from Ethiopia in the North of Africa. He was a contemporary of Oduduwa they both cross the Sahara Desert at different times to establish their race. Although there was another school of thought headed by Late Prof. Otite of Okpara-Inland who claimed that the man Urhobo migrated from Egypt East of Africa across the desert. They unanimously agreed that the man Urhobo was from the descendants of Nimrod in the Bible, a great hunter and respected farmer. The Urhobos are one of the major tribes in Delta State Nigeria. They occupy the southern part of the state, which is northwest of the Niger Delta. The major dialects are Urhobo delineate the people as a group and not a territory. The Urhobos' have a population of about 4million, they are surrounded by the Isokos' in the Southern part, Itsekiri and Ijaw in the West, Benin in the North, Ijaw in the South, and Ukwani in the Northeast. It is a geographical area covered with evergreen forest with different species of palms. The Urhobos practices two types of traditional ruler ship – namely the gerontocracies and the plutocracies. In most Urhobo cities the title Ovie which means king is traditionally the custodian of authority. The symbol of culture, tradition, the highest and most respected political figure in the kingdom. The generally accepted chieftaincy titles in Urhobo land that formed the king's court are the Otota (speaker), the Ojajoro, the Olorogun, the Ikoikpokpo (the executioner), and the Ogbu (Warrior); although there are other titles, but they are peculiar to the different kingdoms.

Local Government in Delta State of Urhobo Extraction

Ethiopia East; Ethiopia West; Okpe; Sapele; Udu; Ughelli North; Ughelli South; Urwie; Warri South and Patani. The Urhobos' are culturally located both in the land and in the river banks which can explain why most of their myths, histories, belief system, philosophies, traditions, masquerades, festival, dancing are associated with water. In the Urhobo calendar four days make a week – Edewo, Ediruo, Eduhre and Edebi. Edewo and Eduhre are seen as sacred traditional days where deities, spirit, ancestors, and ancestral worships are performed. Most market in Urhobo kingdoms are held in either of these days, religious worship are also carried out in these days. Traditional marriages, payment of bride price and other traditional / cultural activities that affect community life are carried out in either of these days. The Urhobos' holds their cultures, traditions, and ancestral worships in a

high honour; that they believed that ancestral spirit participated in farm activities and enter the forests on Edewo and Eduhre days. So, farmers hardly work on these days in order not to disrupt their activities. The Urhobo calendar has 28 days making a month called Emeravwe. Most of the cultural festivals are performed in the harvesting months which are Asa, Eghwre, Orianre and Urhiori. These are the peak of the harvesting season which serves as period of rest for farmers. This was a period when farmers participated in cultural activities, while gods and spiritual forces were honoured.

Food: The Urhobos' have foods that are peculiar to them. Apart from being nutritional values of these foods, the recipes were commonly found within the region. Ukhodo (a yam / plantain dish) Oghwevwi (palm oil soup) with starch or eba, Usi (starch) palm nut soup known as Amiedi/ Banga soup served with usi /garri and unripe plantain. The accompanying ingredients are Iriboto, iriberhare and Okpariku.

Uduophori an Ancient Community in Ughelli Kingdom

Historically the Uduophori people where from Ughelli descent, from the Otowodo quarters in Ughelli town. The Ughelli kingdom was a great kingdom that was established about 1400AD. Ajuwe Ughene was the first reigning king of Ughelli, he ruled between 1400 to1460AD. After his death his heir apparent namely Ajuwe Inarhe succeeded him reigned between1461 to1524AD His reign was oppressive, abusive, and inhuman hence the migration of some section of the community known as Ughelli- Urhie group through the bank of the river Forcados and settled there.

These earlier immigrants journeyed through the bank of the river Forcados because it was safer for them to travel through the waterways; instead of the tropical forest that were laden with dangerous animals. The first point of settlement was the bank of the river Forcados. As at then the river was the largest part of the river Niger, it was a reliable and conducive environment because of the movement of people and goods from the waterways to the inland. In 1856 about (165years) ago the Uduophori settlement by the water side was attacked by the detachment of the Royal Niger Company's soldiers based in Ganagana. This came because of the crisis between Edebebi and Uduophori two neighboring communities, which lead to Edebebi relocating across the river for security purposes which is the present day Bayelsa State. While Uduophori also moved away from the river side to up land in the present day Uduophori town. So, the present day Uduophori was established in 1856, the immigrant left Ughelli with some basic elements that were culturally traceable to the Urhobo people of Ughelli extraction -such as cultural and traditional, foods, festivals, dressing, names etc. Ameidi is one of the cultural foods that distinguished the Uduophori community from most communities in the local Government. Patani Local Government is predominately Izon communities with about three Urhobo communities of which Uduophori community is one of them. Furthermore, because the Uduophori people migrated from upland they practiced farming as a major occupation, they planted crops such as sweet potatoes, cassava, pepper, okra, vegetables etc Ameidi is a widely consumed food in Uduophori, there is no occasion without the preparation of Ameidi. The preparation of Ameidi brought about a nostalgic feeling of their historical attachment to their origin. This meal has been passed down from generation to generation.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research methodology was adopted for this research work, with focus on 40 households and five traditional titled Chiefs. The primary and secondary sources of data collection were explored. 15 (fifteen) households within the Uduophori community in Patani Local Government and 15 (fifteen Households among the Uduophori community in Ughelli town in Ughelli North Local government and 10 (ten) households of indigenes of Uduophori who reside outside Delta State. 40 questionnaires were distributed to 40 households and the five traditional Chiefs were verbally interviewed.

Questionnaire

The secondary materials were derived from published books, journals, articles, and online materials written by reputable scholars, while the primary materials were collated from the responses from the questionnaires distributed among the households and oral interview granted to the traditional titled chiefs. The research population was 45 comprises of households within the traditional Uduophori community, households within the

modern Uduophori community and those in diaspora. While the Chiefs were the links between modern, history, and tradition, within and outside the community. Thus, involving the chiefs gave the researcher access to vital information at no cost. Also, the involvement of those in diaspora exposed the researcher to a dimension of cultural cuisine that can be explore for further research work.

Presentation and Analysis

The secondary data that were retrieved from various scholarly works were interpreted as it concerns Amiedi and culture. The questionnaires were distributed among the modern Uduophori community which is in Patani local Government; a dominant Ijaw community with only two Urhobo towns namely Uduophori and Odorubu. The traditional and historical Uduophori was in Ughelli town, in Ughelli North local Government. Forty-five questionnaires were distributed in this order: fifteen (15) households within the traditional Uduophori community, Fifteen (15) households within the modern Uduophori community, ten (10) households with those in the diaspora and oral interview with five chiefs from Uduophori community. Through these questionnaires the researcher gathered that despite the many years of existing within the Ijaw territory, the Uduopori people maintained the eaten of amiede as a cultural tie between them and their historical background. Thus, the eaten of Amiede gave them a nostalgic feeling of their traditional historic background. Though not compulsory but in their subconscious behavioural patterns Amiede and starch is one of the best foods in every home within the community. It was also gathered that at every major occasion such as Uduophori day, traditional marriage, and burial ceremonies this delicacy must be present. It is a delicacy that ignite the fire of love, togetherness, and brotherhood among the people. To strengthen this cultural tie between the modern Uduophori and the historical Uduophori, the Chiefs in the modern Uduophori were installed by the King of Ughelli kingdom and there is a regular meeting among them. Also, every Uduophori person is regarded as part of the Ughelli kingdom. The Modern Uduophori community maintain relationship with their historical background through their menu, dialect, dressing and the kind of Chieftaincy title taken in the community. These they unwittingly Passover to the next generation. Furthermore, from the oral interview granted by the Chiefs it was gathered that the chiefs were proud and elicited to have been able to trace their foundation back to their origin. The children in the community grew up to be acquainted with the systematic method of cutting starch. The cutting of starch is not only systematic but patterned in a model that can be repulsive to a first timer. Going by the questionnaires from the households in diaspora, it was discovered that even though most of children whose parents are in the diaspora have not visited the community; majority of the children have an institutive aptitude for Amiede and starch. They also develop the skill for cutting starch without being taught. Most of the parents sees these attitude as unexplainable traditional knot that bound them to their cultural ancestral homes even though, they have never been there. The researcher gathered that, though most of these households in diaspora hardly cook this meal at home but the unexplainable curiosity among their children for this traditional meal is inexplicable. The enthusiastic and excitement for this special meal has led to most of the children eaten it whenever they encounter the meal with a lot of excitement and satisfaction that is beyond their parents 'imagination. Most parents in diaspora saw this as an invisible string binding them to their traditional historical foundation that keep reminding them of home.

Conclusively, most societies are identified by their food, which is the type of food they produced / eat. So, interest in traditional food goes beyond the locality, State and Nation into the global sphere. Traditional food creates an avenue for people within the locality and foreigners to identify with the culture in which the food represent. It has a salient voice that speaks about the culture, the people and what they represent so eating traditional food depict identifying, associating, and accepting the culture, the people and the society which the food represented.

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