Evil in the Traditional Religious Beliefs of UDI People of Enugu State

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ABSTRACT
The concept of evil is a ubiquitous aspect of global religions, and African Traditional Religion is no exception; this belief system is deeply rooted in the ancestral experiences and thought patterns of African communities. In this context, evil is primarily understood as a consequence of human failure to fulfil spiritual, social, and environmental obligations. This perspective views evil as a morally defined concept, arising from tangible actions rather than abstract notions. This study examines the concept of evil in the traditional religious beliefs of the Udi people of Enugu State, Nigeria. Through a qualitative research approach, employing in-depth interviews and participant observation, this research explores the Udi people's perceptions, experiences, and explanations of evil within their traditional religious framework. The findings reveal that the Udi people attribute evil to various sources, including supernatural forces, ancestral spirits, and human actions. The study highlights the significance of the Udi people's traditional religious beliefs in shaping their understanding of evil, as well as their strategies for coping with and combating evil. The concept of evil as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the traditional religious beliefs and practices of the Udi people, highlighting the need for greater appreciation and respect for indigenous cultures and worldviews.
Keywords: *Evil, Traditional Religious Beliefs, Udi People, Enugu State, Nigeria, Ancestral Spirits, Supernatural Forces, Rituals, Sacrifices, Taboos.*

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I.   Introduction

The belief in evil is found in almost all religions of the world. In African Traditional Religion, which Mbiti (1975, p.12) calls "the product of the thinking and experiences of our forefather…", the belief in evil is greatly sustained. In African Traditional Religion, it is always believed that evil, most times, is a product of human's negligence and inability to fulfill their religious and social duties firstly, to God, and other spiritual beings, secondly, to their fellow humans and the environment. In this sense, evil is most conceived in moral sense and defined from concrete actions rather than from abstract point of view (Schmidt, 2006). By implication, evil in African Traditional Religious thought, is as a result of human failings in their religious duties – this religious duties, as has been shown, is both horizontal (towards God) and vertical (towards man). The presence of evil is always feared and avoided among traditional religious practitioners as its effects is usually disastrous since it may affect both individuals and communities at large.

Among the Udi people of Enugu State, the belief in evil is greatly sustained. Among the traditionalists in Udi, there is a strong belief in evil. This is what Odo (2017, Personal Communication) affirms by saying that the belief in evil is a reality among the Udi people in their traditional religious understanding. Similarly, Oranyelu (2017, Personal Communication) says that since the belief in evil is universal, the traditionalists in Udi believe strongly in evil. Although the Udi people have a form of belief in evil as expressed in their traditional understanding, how this evil is conceived and understood has not really been investigated in scholarship. In other words, the understanding of evil has not been thoroughly investigated among the Udi people in their

traditional understanding. Seen from this perspective, the aim of this work is to critically study the conception of evil in the traditional religious milieu of the Udi people. The methodology applied in this regard is phenomenology which, according to Ejizu and Awajisuk (2014) seeks to study religious phenomena through the "eyes" of religious participant. Adopting phenomenology in this study also entails that oral interviews be conducted with knowledge exponents of traditional religion in Udi. Hence, oral interviews were descriptively presented in the study. Recommendations, based on the study's findings are also given in the study.

Historical Background of Udi People

Udi is a local government area of Enugu State Nigeria. Its headquarters is in the city of Udi on 232 highway. It has an area of 897km^2 and a population of 234,002 at the 2006 census. The tradition had it that Udi comprises of *Oshie, Umuneke* and *Ojebe-Ogene*. Oshie people comprise the *Nsude, Eke* and *Obioma* who share blood relationship. The Umuneke include *Amokwe, Obinagu, Agbudu, Umuabi, Abia* and *Umuaga* while Ojebe-Ogene centre comprises of *Ebe, Abor, Ukana, Awhum, Okpatu*, Umulumgbe and Umuoka and Ukehe. The mental instrument *Ogene* was said to have originated from the Ojebe-Ogene lineage. This musical instrument is mainly associated with the *Igbo* masquerade and since the time of our ancestors, its history as far as is known in south-eastern Nigeria can be traced to *Achi* in Enugu State and Awka in Anambra. One of the sons of the very influential Nwodo family of *Ukehe* exploited the *Ojebe-Ogene* identity to win overwhelming votes because tradition had it that when *Ojebe-Ogene* (their mother) died at *Ebe*, the first son Ebe invited all the sons for her burial, all the sons came except *Ukehe*.

The traditional world-view of Udi people

The study agrees with Ifesieh (1989, p. 20) that world-view has "its operational core as the sum total of ideas which an individual or individuals (SIC) within a group in and around them". This understanding shows the fact that world-view has a tie in with the way a group of people understand and conceive the world around them (Chigbo, 2016). Seen in this perspective, the traditional world-view of the Udi people relates with how they understand the world especially as defined in their traditional religious set up. Being a part of the Igbo "nation", the *Udi* in their traditional understanding of the world is similar to those of other Igbo clans. The beginning point of the Udi people's understanding of the world according to Odo (2017, Personal Communication, is the belief in *Chukwu* (God) otherwise called *Ezechiteoke* (the creator), the Supreme Being responsible for the creation of the universe. *Chukwu* is believed to have created all things including sky (eluigwe) and the *uwa* (earth) which make up the universe. The Udi people, like most Igbo people, believe that the sky is the abode of *Chukwu,* together with other spiritual beings. In Igbo traditional religious understanding, some of these spiritual beings that dwell in the sky with *Chukwu* (Ugwu and Ugwueye, 2004), and they include the divinities which among the Udi people are many. Some of these divinities include *Ugwu, Ohune, Enya anu*, and *Ala*, the Igbo earth divinity, etc. They are also believed to be the agents of Chukwu, and also act as intermediary between Chukwu and humans. Among the Udi people, these divinities have shrines with dedicated priests who minister to them and also help humans reach out to them.

After the divinities comes the belief in ancestors in Udi traditional belief. The place of the ancestors cannot be ignored in the traditional world-view of the Udi people. Ugwu and Ugwueye (2004) and Ifesieh (1989) calls the ancestors the departed heroes and heroines of African clans. Among the Udi people, ancestors are called *ndiinyi/nndi nnanyi*. They are also believed to be an integral part of the people's traditional religious world view. To the Udi people in their traditional belief, the ancestor ranks as the most loved spiritual beings of all. The ancestors are believed to have been "morally perfect" human beings while alive and as such, they are believed to have the right to correct and punish recalcitrant family members however they deem fit. Many Udi clans have traditional festivals honouring the ancestors. Examples of these festivals include:
1.   *Igodo* festival: Its season begins in *onwa ishuu*,
2.   *Idu nwaodo* festival
3.   *Egwu odo* festival
4.   *Akani* festival
5.   The *ohune* festival
6.   *Igwanesi* festival

Through these festivals, the ancestors are venerated through libations and prayers for protection and longevity of families and communities as a whole. Ancestors are also believed to reincarnate among the Udi people Okoafor (2017, Personal communication). This is a sign of blessing the families of ancestors and ensuring an "ontological" survival of the departed ancestors' names.

Among the spiritual beings, the Udi people also believe that there are malevolent spirits whose aim is to cause havoc to humans. Such spiritual beings are also believed to dwell together with human on earth (uwa). Hence, on earth, to the Udi people are found firstly, human beings, other created things in the physical environment (animals, trees, mountains, rivers, valleys, caves, etc), and malevolent spirits which may inhabit

trees, caves, rivers, etc. This is why among the Udi people, such evil spirits may be encountered in caves, rivers, mountains, and sometimes during odd times of the day/night. It is also a part of Udi traditional belief that there is the *alamuo,* (the underworld), where humans live when they depart the earth; this is also believed to be the abode of the ancestors.

A part of the world-view of the Udi people is that human's survival on earth is highly dependent on how well the humans maintained the relationship that should exist between the spiritual world and humans on the one hand, and the relationship that should exist between humans and the physical environment on the other hand.

The relationships are usually surrounded by taboos. Taboos are often called the *nso-ani* which acts as a fence surrounding the *omenani* (the approved "doings" of the people) through which the above relationships are maintained. It is always the desire of the Udi people in their traditional understanding to ensure the maintenance of these relationship for the survival of humans and that of the communities at large. An integral part of ensuring that these relationships are maintained is majorly through fulfilling religious duties to the spiritual world and then, maintenance of harmonious relationship among humans in the community.

The Concept of Evil in Udi Traditional Religious Belief

The people of *Udi* believe in the concept of evil in the conception of their world view. The understanding of evil among the Udi people has a tie with *omenani* which guides both the horizontal and vertical relationships expected of humans. According to Okafor (2017, Personal communication), Udi people traditionally believe in the *omenani* and its "breaking/contravention" is believed to be *aru. Aru,* in Udi conception (just as generally believed among the Igbo people) are evils against the spiritual realm (God, divinities, ancestors/and humans generally). Although *omenani* is generally believed in among the Udi people, its contents may vary according to towns and villages that make up *Udi* people; this is because what may constitute *aru* (abomination) in one *Udi* town may slightly differ from that of another *Udi* town. This not withstanding, there are basic contraventions of the *omenani* which qualify as *aru* among Udi people. Some of these include killing of human beings, incest, adultery (on the part of womenfolk), revealing of the identity of masquerades, killing/desecration of totems, children fighting their parents, etc. These *aru* are usually punishable because of the gravity of the offence involved; they are usually offence against God, ancestors, etc.

Understood in this sense, evil among the Udi people amounts to contravention of the *omenani* in whichever form. Put differently, evil in traditional Udi understanding amounts to not keeping the *omenani* which has been sanctioned and approved by the ancestors, and Chukwu. Why the Udi people mostly conceive evil in this manner, according to Odo (2017, Personal Communication) is because of their belief that contravention of *omenani* disrupts communal ethos and spells doom not only for offenders but for the community at large. In this regard, contravention of *omenani* is seen as evil against God, divinities, ancestors and humans generally. As such, it has repercussions if not well-reverted through appeasement of whichever spiritual being that was offended.

On natural evil, the researcher found out that the Udi people in their traditional understanding conceive it (natural evil) as having humans/supernatural causes. Like most Igbo people do in their traditional conception of natural evil, the Udi people traditionally hold that natural evils like landslides, floods, falling of trees, collapse of buildings etc, are believed to have supernatural causes. Because of the traditional belief of the Udi people that the "spiritual realms controls the physical realm" natural evils are also thought to be punishments for human's certain actions that offended God, divinities, ancestors etc (Oranyelu, 2017, Personal Communication). Hence, when landslides, house collapse, excess rain etc are witnessed, the spiritual realm are usually appeased through sacrifices because it is believed that they are angry with the people.

Since there is a belief in malevolent spirits, that inhabit the earth together with human beings, the Udi people belief in the activities of these malevolent spirits. The activities of these spirits usually spell havoc for humans in forms of causing still birth for pregnant women, death of children through *ogbanje* spirit, etc. This relates to issues of witchcraft which is regarded as evil among the Udi people according to Oranyelu (2017, Personal Communication). Witchcraft is a complex phenomenon among Igbo people generally in which there is a belief that humans, out of wickedness/jealousy, spirituality and sometimes in forms of animals, wreak havoc to their fellow human beings. The Udi people in their traditional belief, see witchcraft as evil and as such, people known to practice witchcraft are usually taken seriously. Seen in this light, retrogressions in families, crop failures, barrenness, death (sometimes) and misfortunes are sometimes attributed to the activities of witches in traditional conception of evil in Udi. Hence, evil among the Udi people is mostly conceived from the perspective of human failings in their religious responsibility to the spiritual realm, immoral actions of humans to their fellow humans, and the activities of witches.

Types of Evil

Evil can be broadly classified into metaphysical evil, physical and mental evil and moral evil. Lee A. Belford () also classified evil under two broad categories, namely: natural evil and moral evils. The natural evils include such things as earthquakes, pestilence and storms while moral evil are caused by hate, lust, greed, etc.

Metaphysical Evils

These refer to sufferings and pains, which human beings experience from such natural occurrence on earth that disrupt life and activities of man. They include earthquake, cyclones, volcanic eruptions, flooding, landslides, etc. Earthquakes bury people and animals alive, volcanic eruption pour hot lava on people and can claim thousands of lives, over flooding that claims lives, damage buildings and investments are few examples of suffering people undergo from natural phenomena which are not necessarily caused by man, though some may result from man's selfishness and unfriendly attitude to nature.

Physical and Mental Evils

Under this category comes anything that brings physical, body and mental pains to the individual. Disease and sickness (both physical and mental) and bad death are forms of physical evil. Some diseases are hereditary, some are curable, and some are incurable.

Moral Evils

Moral evil include all forms of vices, avarices and wickedness. They result from man's selfishness and inhumanity to man. Man's inhumanity to the environment may cause high degree of evil, which can result in loss of life. Patrick in Anyacho (2018) lists moral evils to include injustice and cruelty, greed and hate, vice and crime, domestic tangles and divorce, exploitation of labour and oppression of the poor, smuggling and bootlegging, bribery and corruption. Any of these views has levels of suffering, sorrow and bitterness associated with it. The list of moral evil is inexhaustible, hence some people tend to see more evil than good in the world.

Causes of Evil among the *Udi* People

In African religion, sin is always attached to wrong doer and ultimately the wrongdoer is a human person. The causes of evil among the *Udi* people as also expressed in other cultures may include the following:
i.   Lack of self-control
ii.   Spiritual curses
iii.   Instinct and genetic trait
iv.   Lack of knowledge of the consequences
v.   Parental foundation
vi.   Friendship or peers

Lack of Self-control:

Lack of self-control stresses on not having the urge to overcome certain situations. According to Agha ((2003), it is a moral action which calls for self-sacrifice and self-denial. Self-control is the mane of maturity. It helps one to overcome the evils of extreme indulgence as well as the dangers of excessive repression. Agha further stated that; one who attains a maturity stage is able to control himself but where one lack such control, it means that he has not reached the maturity stage and it leads the person into evil action such as abortion. Acts such as abortion and other sexual misconduct are seen as evil resulting from lack of self control. The Udi people believe that if a girl child is matured and especially if married she will have no need to abort pregnancy which may result from her sexual activities. This student specifically chose the evil of abortion because the people of *Udi* have strong condemnation for this act which is believed to be more common with youths. According to Ekwutosi (2008), abortion is the removal of an embryo or foetus from the uterus, resulting in its death. In abortion, the foetus dies while yet within the generative organs of the mother, or it is ejected or extracted from them before it is viable, that is, before it is sufficiently developed to continue its life by itself. The *Udi* people believe that life starts at conception. They, like other Pro-lifers sees abortion simply as murder, i.e. direct killing of an innocent person. In the words of Maduakonam, those guilty of abortion are individuals who decided to terminate life which means killing willingly and voluntarily.

Abortion in *Udi* thus is an evil action caused by lack of self-control. Odo, I.E. (Personal communication, 24th Feb, 2016) says that abortion is a moral offence which is evil and a taboo before the land, and any woman that is not married and committed has offended the land and no man will marry her unless she cleanses the land with nine (9) tubers of yam, nine (9) kolanuts and nine (9) cocks; probably representing the nine months the baby would have stayed in the womb.
One may be ignorant of the human embryo and cloning to be morally bad. According to Ekwutosi Maduakonam;

Stem cell therapy is morally problematic because it can jeopardize the early embryos that have moral status of human conception and therefore should be accorded the dignity and respect human person deserves (Maduakonam, Personal conversation, 25th February, 2016).

In the words of Maduakonam, human being should not be treated as a mere object. Man must remember that he has dignity which should not be neglected or tramped upon anytime. Thus Kant in Omoregbe (1999:32) holds that man is never to be treated as a means but always as an end in itself. Traditionalists vehemently oppose every act that tends to separate the unitive end of marital intercourse from its procreative end.

Moreover, any form of experimentation or research on a human embryo performed on it not for its own benefit but for that of others is unethical and gravely immoral. The tradition of *Udi* people forbids this type of research because it is against the law of the land (Oranyelu, Personal conversation, 25th February, 2016).

Spiritual Curses:

This refers to curses from the ancestors which is from our forefathers (*ihe mmadu metalu* (what one does for self). These curses can lead to killing of oneself or an individual which can result to suicide. Ekwutosi (2008) observed that: suicide is a direct taking of one's life due to one's own authority. It is a moral act positively or negatively by which a person directly brings about his or her own death in circumstances where others do not coerce him or her to the action. In the words of Ekwutosi, suicide is directly willed in the senses that living alive is not needed because of the evil committed. In Udi, any person caught in the act faces the consequences of evil committed. Odo I.U. (Personal conversation, 25th February, 2016) says in the traditional setting, especially Ezeagu and Udi, that if somebody died as a result of suicide that such death is an abomination before the land and burial is according to the instruction of a diviner.

Moreover, before a deceased is buried, certain ritual or sacrifices has to be performed. Then during the burial of the deceased, the people that bury him or her cut the rope and nobody cries and it must be in the evil forest without any casket.

Instinct and genetic trait:

According to Ekwutosi, it is the science or study of heredity in general and genes in particular. Odo, E.O. (Personal conversation, 25th February, 2016) said that genetic trait is from the gene which is called *agburu*, or even lineage or blood. For instance, for a man who is a robber, the tendency is that his children or one of his children must resemble him or her. That is why the Igbo people says *ihe agwo muru aghaghi idi ogologo*. (One must resemble his parents). Instinct on the other hand is a natural tendency for people and animal to behave in a particular way using the knowledge and abilities that they were born with rather than thought or training. That things will lead one to do what he does not want to do, for instance, a situation by which one knows the customs and tradition of the society and did not abide by it, is because of instinct and he may even take or sell away the image of gods to foreign country. It is evil action and such type of evil is not easy to shade off in the community, depending on the type of *chi* (god) one has which means that the instinct led the person to stealing and it is an act of theft known as stealing. In Udi, stealing is a serious offence which the gods does not take for granted (in fact, an abomination). To steal a yam is a sin against the earth goddess. Once the person is caught, the person has defied the land and the mother earth punishes the offender which requires that the offender must appease him using rituals otherwise, calamities or disaster may befall him or her.

Lack of the Knowledge of the consequences Evil Act:

People commit evil acts for acclaimed lack of knowledge. This is a very big problem for one to commit any evil and he or she is ignorant of it. For example, a situation where one committed fornication and yet he did not know that it is evil against the land. Ugwu J.O. (Personal conversation, 26th February, 2016) observed that if a woman slept with another man while claiming ignorance or lack of knowledge about the consequence that it is still an evil and the land forbids it especially in Udi. Any person caught in this type of act is definitely dealt with even if he/she claims ignorance of the consequences. The man cleanses the land and even the woman does so and it must be according to the instruction of a diviner.

(Oranyelu, Personal conversation, 25th February, 2016) said that since Christianity came into their land they condemned our way of life saying that it is barbaric, juju, fetish and it has done more harm than good but they do not know that our religion has its commandments which is preserved the names given to our children, proverbs, etc. He enumerated other forms of evil actions such as a man sleeping with his daughter, one who impregnated his cousin, a man who impregnated his mother-in-law, one who cleans his buttock with sacred tree such as *ofo*, *ogirisi* etc. some people commit these offences without knowing the consequences.

Peers or Friendship

Peer refers to a group of people of the same age or social status. One may follow bad peers or friends not knowing that the person could be an armed robber, or a cult member. Robbery is an evil act thus; robbery is a statutory offence in Nigeria which as provided in section 14 of criminal justice. Robbery is an evil action which the people of *Udi* forbids and even the land holds the offender. Hau (1978:6) asserted that any form of forcefully taking another persons property is stealing. Also Lockkey (1995:7) added that robbery is an evil action and the land punishes the offender in form of calamities, disasters and even mental imbalance. Evil acts when committed may lead to the offenders. Such bad deaths are influenced/caused by bad peers or friends.

Consequences/Implications of evil in Udi

Wrong doing can never be neutral. It always has consequences to the perpetrator. The account of Genesis chapter three which narrated the story of the first fall of man in Adam serves as introduction to what amount to a series of anecdotes intended to show how sin, once admitted in the world, spread everywhere, bringing death and destruction in its wake. McBrian (1981:16). St. Paul also in the New Testament talks about the effect of the sin of Adam (1 cor. 15:21-23, Romans 5:12-21). When he stated that we are affected by the sin of Adam. Adam's disobedience made us sinners because Adam disobeyed God. Also among the *Udi* people, there are other forms of calamities brought about by evil, these may include blight, famine, murderous anger, and all kinds of anti-life phenomena. Magesa (1998:155) categorizes these calamities as affliction, usually perceived as illness or disease. The casualty if disease in human can be explained in three ways, using the description of David Westerhind (1989), such as Suprahuman casualty, human casualty and mainly physical. Oranyelu, E.O. (Personal conversation, 26th February, 2016) said that falling from a palm tree or hurting oneself while hunting, could be signs of the anger of the gods. Even when the victim is guilty, it is still important that the fact be known that something must be done about it in form of appeasing the gods. Bkerke (1981:112). The ancestor may cause illness and suffering. This is often diagnosed by religious specialists (diviners) who usually reveal the particular offence committed and thus facing punishment as the consequence of negligence. This happens when the living abandon his duty of not remembering the ancestors during libation thus facing punishment as the consequence of negligence. In Udi, a man who commits suicide is not given a full funeral rite as the consequence of his or her sin. The burial place is often very far from home, and it is a taboo for woman either to bury or come in contact with such a body. Suicide as an evil has great consequent among the *Udi* people. to the Africans is evil and must be dealt with. Suicide is an affront to the Supreme Being and his agents like the divinities, ancestors, spirit agents and to man. Since suicide is an abomination, those who commit it are usually rejected in the spirit world and may become hovering ghosts. Any family with suicide history is seen as a cursed family.

According to Eboh (1999), society is largely responsible for shaping the life of the individuals. Each human group or community has a culture or a pattern of behavior. Thus, any society has an immense power over the behavior of the individuals in that society. One can say that culture/society dictates the moral tone of any society. The point to be noted is simply that whatever moral evil any society disapproves and fights, that evil dies a natural death. The cases of corruption, embezzlement of public funds etc. are been encouraged by the society. The individuals who are involved in such evil are usually celebrated in some societies. How would you explain a situation where a worker is promoted to a higher position or appointed to a higher post in government and his people will saddled him or her with a lot of request on what he/she should do for them before he or she leaves the post. By implication, they are telling such a person to get money at all cost and develop their place. In the words of Eboh (1999), it means that society or community is also responsible for the evil of corruption. Thus if calamities descended on them everybody should face the consequences. Agha (2004) rightly observed that wrong way leads to failures and frustrations. There are right ways and wrong ways of living and pursuing the end. In the words of Agha, failure and frustration comes through a wrong way and frustration may cause a lot of harm.

In the olden days, evil acts were minimal because of fear of ancestors and gods. According to Ekeokpara (2001), "a very clearly defined code of morals existed theoretically". The fact that sanctions were applied when offences were committed in *Udi* shows that the code of morals was a practical code and not merely a theoretical figment of the mind. Basden ((1982:18) asserted that Christian missionaries introduced morality but this information might have been a misconception. In most instances, Europeans' observations about the traditional religion and culture of the Africans were used to justify especially their strong judgment about the African mental and moral characters. This was clearly shown in the observation of Burton (1999) who says that:

The Negro is still at the crude dawn of faith-fetishism and he was barely advanced to idolatry.... He has never grasped the ideas of personal deity, a duty in life, a moral code or a shame of lying. He rarely believes in punishments which whether true or not are infallible indices of human progress.

The Europeans had legal ways of prosecuting offenders but Christianity had no institutional moral custom guiding them, on most occasions they leave judgment to God, even if they had to punish anybody people still violate laws and nothing happens to them but in African setting, one faces the consequences. In Udi, Odo E.O (Personal communication, 26th February, 2016) gave an example that our fore-fathers regarded to the extent that it is advisable that one should be sincere in what he/she does because any evil committed must be punished. Odo went ahead to give an instance of a man who is a driver and went on a legal trip but the young boss issued him a query that he had no knowledge of the journey. The man, feeling cheated answered the query and took it to the shrine of *Ani Agu Ndi Owere* and tabled it before the gods. On the second day, the boss out of respect for the gods called him and asked how much he wants him to pay him. Contrary to this, the boss of the said driver would have taken oat if it were in modern society, the person may take an oath and nothing happens because Christ gives us a searching grace but African Religion gives out immediate punishment.

Witches and wizards are often held responsible when misfortune befalls an evil doer. The individual may have committed one form of sin or the other against the gods or society when the gods punish them severely they tag it to be attack. The fear of the attacks of the gods could deter one from going to commit any acts of evil.

The activity of masquerades in *Udi* also portrays the consequence of evil. The masquerades are used to punish evil people with covered faces, they attack anybody who violets the custom of the land. Masquerades are so sacred that in the olden days, they can never show themself to a woman of its mean and candour and a woman never partake in masquerade festivals because woman never keeps secret. There are a lot of things done in the masquerade cult during initiation rites which are evil but in the modern time, a masquerade never stay discuss with a woman so it is an abomination before the gods but in the modern time, people call it socialization.

At this juncture, evil is on the increase in the modern society, take for instance, in Udi, a Rev. Priest impregnated his daughter and if it is the traditional setting, any priest who does such will be punished by the gods or the ancestors.

Evil acts such as adultery, rape, fornication, stealing were not so rampant in the olden days, because of the fear of the gods. They believe that anyone caught in this type of evil action will be punished by the community

II.   Conclusion

Evil stems from wrong choices. The Udi people strongly believe that the rejection of what is right in her customary laws leads to evil. God through the ancestors of the *Udi* people has made laws governing all things and is working out a supreme purpose that requires us to make a choice between two ways of life. Just as evil spirits, aide some *Udi* people to make the wrong choice, so has much of humanity ever since. *Ajo-Nmor* (evil spirit) keeps deceiving people and tempting them towards desecrating *Udi* land. *Ajo-Nmor* (evil spirit) and his cohorts are orchestrating ever more evil and projecting humankind along the spiritual pathway toward oblivion. All the major evils like abortion, suicide and others mentioned in this work results from personal choices made under the sway and influence of the *Ajo-Nmor* (evil spirit). *Ajo-Nmor* (evil spirit) triggers the weak nature of humans (a nature that hates God) towards offending the land. The carnal mind is enmity against good norms of *Udi*-Land for it is not subject to the good laws.

III.   Recommendations:

The following recommendations are made to awaken the consciousness of the moral decadence in Udi Enugu State.
1.   Morality should be observed in all religious practices as it helps to unite a community.
2.   The Umuada should assist the Elders on the need of awakening the youths os as to observe to the laws and norms in Udi community and the society at large.
3.   There is need to proffer solutions since morality has degenerated so the Udi people and the society need coercion and punishment so that evil tendencies could be checked
4.   The elders should provide skill acquisition, such as vocational jobs so as to checkmate the immorality.
5.   A functional attention should be paid to African traditional religious priests to assist them to gain ground like their counterparts in Nigeria. This is important because their religious fights for the maintenance of morality and ethics move the two foreign religions in Nigeria.
6.   Shrines should be renovated and reconstructed to make worshipping arena more attractive so that more people can come and learn the moral values built in the religion and practices them for a better society.
7.   Excursions to the traditional religious places should be built in the secondary and undergraduate programmes to improve their knowledge of customs and norms of the society so that they can desist from those disapproved system of living.

8.   There is need for collaboration between the practitioners of Christian and Traditional Worshippers in Udi so that some skirmishes will be resolved for better understanding of each religious strength curbing evil in the society.

The Researcher interviewing Igwe Odalije of Umuavulu, Abor.

The researcher in Ohune shrine with some adherents and elders.

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List of Informants

S/N	Name of Informants	Stating the Community	Occupation	Address of Informant	Date of Interview
1	Odo Ustus Nwaodo	42	Herbalist	Ebe	24/02/17
2	Oranyelu John	38	Diviner	Ukana	25/02/17
3	Okonkwo Grace	50	Traditionalist	Umuabi	26/02/17
4	Okafor Francis	34	Traditional Ruler	Okwe	27/02/17
5	Ugwueze Benjamin	69	Traditional Ruler	Eke	27/02/17
6	Ngeze B.	88	Traditional Ruler	Abor	28/02/16
7	Ugwu Jude	89	Elder	Amokwe	28/02/17
8	Okafor Chijioke	46	Trading	Enugu Obodos	28/02/17
9	Israel Madike	66	Diviner	Umuoka	27/02/17
10	Mauricee Idenyi	71	elder	Amaezike	24/02/17