

**COMMUNICATION (LANGUAGE) AND THE PLACE OF HUMAN VALUES IN  
AFRICAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN IGWEBUIKE PERSPECTIVE**

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**Abstract**

*The most common and complex word that the human being has always encountered is Communication; and, this is because communication is everything and all that exist in human life and endeavour. It is an apparent answer to the painful divisions between self and other, private and public, and inner thought and outer world. Communication as an activity evolves and not just around the human person; but, around the world in which the human person lives; it is a wide range of different behaviours involved in the dissemination of information. It is these complexities of what communication is that has led to other complexities in the world in which we find ourselves. The thesis of this paper understands the dynamics of communication as a process; and does not intend to proffer solution to the problems of communication as an activity; but, the paper posits that language as a medium of communication has a very strong influence on human values especially in promoting African human values that are fast going into extinct in the face of globalization. The paper argues further that African languages have a very strong foundation to help restore and retain human values as that are ontologically African. Hence, this is highly reflected in the Igwebuike philosophical enterprise which offers the basis for restoring and retaining our African human values. The paper adopts a qualitative research method through multidisciplinary engagement; and, adopting a theoretical framework from an Igwebuike perspective is to help contribute to the sustainable development of a value system in Africa.*

**Keywords:** Language, Communication, Human Values, Igwebuike, Sustainable Development

## **Introduction**

Language is communication and communication is language; just as communication evolves so does language evolves because they go hand in hand. The only difference is that communication is an aspect or a part of language; and communication is wider in scope than language. To speak of language is invariably to speak of communication; but, to speak of communication does not transcend into language. John Peter argues the difficulty of defining communication and this is because of the fact that communication is a both a universal phenomenon (because everyone communicates) and a specific discipline of institutional academic study<sup>1</sup>. It is not just a specific discipline; but, it encompasses all disciplines. As such, it is very difficult to undermine the role communication plays in every facet of human life and existence; and, this include human values which is an integral part of the formation that constitute human life and existence. Human values flows from what is communicated; and it fashions out how life should be lived. To neglect communicate from human values and consider them incompatible and uncorrelated to each other is to undermine communication and languages which are vehicles to which human values can be built. Language contributes to the growth of human values; it is language that makes us human through the mastery of a complex system of words and complex sentences. More so, language helps us to express our feelings and thoughts – this is unique to our species because it is a way to express unique ideas and customs within different cultures and societies. Our African societies have constantly re-echoed the need for language retention, restoration and retaining what is peculiar to our languages in Africa; but, unfortunately there is a fast relinquishing and degeneration of African languages; and, this is affecting the African values that are expected to build a value system in Africa towards the realization of an African Sustainable Development (ASD). This paper posits that there are various indices and determinant factor for the realization of sustainable development in Africa; but, through the vehicle of language, it helps in establishing African Human Values and would help to fast tract development that is sustainable. Hence, the paper further posits and establishes that communication is a vital tool in improving our African Human Values (AHV). This paper explores and adopts a qualitative research framework to underscore the Igwebuiké perspective on the promotion of African Human Values in sustaining Africa's development through language and communication.

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<sup>1</sup> Peters J.D *Institutional Sources of Intellectual Poverty in Communication Research* Communication Research. 13(4) P.527

## **Conceptual Clarification**

### ***Communication***

The word communication comes from the Latin word *communicare* meaning “to share”. Communication may be defined as the giving, receiving or exchange of information, opinions or ideas by writing through speech or visual means or any combination of the three so that the material communicated is completely understood by everyone concerned. Martha Onjewu defines “communication as the interaction between two parties using verbal or non-verbal symbols to achieve set personal or organizational goals”<sup>2</sup>. This implies transferring thoughts, information, emotions and ideas through gestures, voice, symbols, signs and expressions from one person to another. Therefore it is the act of developing meaning among entities or groups through the use of sufficiently mutually understood signs, symbols, and semiotic conventions. In the field of mass communication, communication encompasses a lot; and, hence this paper shall not dwell extensively of the various models or types of communication; but, it shall rather discuss communication in every ramifications (be it verbal or non-verbal) as a means or process of applying communication principles especially through symbols, spoken languages within a particular culture (African Culture) and to detect how values are expressed in communication, and to correlate those African human values with attitudes or behaviors<sup>3</sup>. Through our African languages we communicate with one another and express our thoughts and feelings as well as using our African symbols to communicate values that are peculiar to Africans. It is within this context that communication is defined for the purpose of this research paper.

### ***Sustainable Development***

The term ‘sustainable development’ is considered very much appropriate when defining development. It is very much safe to define what development is within the context of sustainable development so has not to get in a complex and cumbersome academic exercise that is characterized with the definition of ‘development’. Hence, sustainable development is a compound notion that consists of two separable concepts; the concept ‘sustainable’ and ‘development’ to depict a process of realizing a goal that is progressive and to sustain such goals. According to Anslem Jimoh “the two separable concepts can be considered as process notions in the sense that they are not projects to be completed but an on-going exercises or processes that involve creating and recreating, as there is always

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<sup>2</sup> Onjewu A.M *Essential English for All Students*. Kaduna, Nigeria: Sunjo A.J. Global Links Publishers, 2020 Pg 91

<sup>3</sup> Fleischmann R.K *Information and Human Values* (New York: Springer Publications, 2014) P. 51

room and need to improve on whatever is on ground”<sup>4</sup>. Sustainable development can be defined as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs<sup>5</sup>. It is very much important to note that the term ‘sustainable development’ has been criticized, nevertheless, the term has evolved over time and it is still evolving. This paper shall restrict its definition to Anslem Jimoh and the definition as projected by UNESCO.

### ***Human Values***

The origin of the term *value* comes from the Latin word *valere* which means ‘to be of worth’. The concise Oxford Dictionary defines the term *value* as the ‘worth, desirability or utility of a thing’<sup>6</sup>. The term value itself is very complex and abstract; and most times difficult to define for they are as comprehensive in a nature as our human life. According to John Dewey, “Value means primarily, to price, to esteem, to appraise, to estimate. It means the act of cherishing something holding it clear and also, the act of passing judgment upon the nature and amount of its value as compared with something else”<sup>7</sup>. Values are defined as something which are desirable and worthy of esteem for their own sake; human values are defined as those values which help man to live in harmony with the world; and, are the virtues that guide us to take into account the human element when we interact with other human beings. Human values are, for example, respect, acceptance, consideration, appreciation, listening, openness, affection, empathy and love towards other human beings<sup>8</sup>. Human values are universally accepted and ontological to human nature as a means of approaching life essentially doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong. As such, making right decisions helps in creating a society with a value system.

### ***Igwebuiké***

The proponent and advocate of Igwebuiké Philosophy is Ikechukwu Kanu Anthony which he considers to be an African principle of living life captured not basically in an Igbo world<sup>9</sup>. Nonetheless, the word Igwebuiké is derived from an Igbo word; and, it is an expression of the combination of three Igbo words. It can be understood as a word or a sentence: as a word, it is written as *Igwebuiké*, and as a sentence it is written as *Igwe, bu,*

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<sup>4</sup> Jimoh A. *Philosophy and Development* In an Unpublished Works submitted for Publication in a Book Chapter On Gotanism. As of the time this paper is been written the works of Jimoh A had gone to press. As such, referencing this paper be considered in view of when the paper is published.

<sup>5</sup> *Sustainable Development* UNESCO. 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2015. Retrieved 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/values/human-values-meaning-nature-and-types/86964>. Retrieved Online 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/values/human-values-meaning-nature-and-types/86964>. Retrieved Online 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/values/human-values-meaning-nature-and-types/86964>. Retrieved Online 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

<sup>9</sup> Kanu I.A *On the Origin and Principles of Igwebuiké Philosophy*. In a journal of Religion and Human Relations, Vol 11 No.1 2019 P.160

*Ike*, with the component words enjoying some independence in terms of space. Literally, *Igwe* is a noun which means number or multitude, usually a large number or population. The number or population in perspective is entities with ontological identities and significance; however, it is part of an existential order in which every entity is in relation to the other. *Bu* is a verb, which means *is*, *Ike* is a noun, which means strength or power. *Igwe, bu* and *ike* put together means ‘number is strength’ or ‘number is power’. However, beyond the literal sense of *Igwebuike*, it means *otu obi* (one heart and one soul) – *cor unum et anima una*<sup>10</sup>. According to Ikechukwu Anthony Kanu:

The Principles of *Igwebuike* Philosophy refers to the values or framework that shapes *Igwebuike* philosophy. These principles are the values or frameworks on which philosophy on which philosophy stands. While these principles guide *Igwebuike* philosophy, it also justifies *Igwebuike* philosophy. These principles include: the principle of identity, the principle of contrariety, the principle of hierarchy and the principle of unity<sup>11</sup>

The implication of this principle as expressed in the thought of Ikechukwu Anthony Kanu brings to bare that *Igwebuike* is a propeller and a driver for the transmission of human values, norms and customs of the Igbo people<sup>12</sup>.

### **Issues and Problems in Communication (Language) and Sustainable Development**

Communication is vital for establishing agreements because some facts and information cannot be given verbally, translation must play the critical role of being the most important communication medium, with a language translator assuring the message’s quality and correctness. Communication in itself has a long issues of problems as far as understanding, encoding and decoding a message is concern. This difficulty is even worsening in an environment where there is multiplicity of languages. The multiplicity of languages is a major dividing factor in societies and countries all over the world; and this impedes on so many aspect on that which can lead to sustainable development. According to Francis Onyeugwuetom Chukwudi Njoku, the propeller of what constitutes a state is shared ancestry and cultural attitudes and by extension language<sup>13</sup>. This implies that a

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<sup>10</sup> Kanu Anthony, I *Igwebuike: An African Complementarity Philosophical Framework* (United States of America: Igwebuike Research Institute:2020) P. 3

<sup>11</sup> Kanu I. A *On the Origin and Principles of Igwebuike Philosophy*. In a journal of Religion and Human Relations 2019 P. 165

<sup>12</sup> Dyikuk JJ A Glance at Traditional Modes of Communication Through the Lens of Liturgical Inculturation: Perspective from *Igwebuike* and Shikrot Traditions. In a Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development, Vol. 3 No.8. (A Publication of the Association for the Promotion of African Studies:2020) P.17

<sup>13</sup> Njoku FOC *Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy* (Enugu: University of Nigeria Press, 2019) P. 72

common understanding and shared language can advance the progress of a nation; but, the problem arises in the fact that multiplicity of languages hinders communication and spread of education, and therefore aggravates international confusion, misunderstanding, mutual fear, and suspicion and trust deficit. Language differences can affect sustainable development when a country and its members have poor communication amongst members of different languages; and, amongst communities and the government. It can lead not only to mistrust and to political tension, but also to poor levels of illiteracy and problems in the judiciary when different languages may be used and transcripts required in order for a case to be heard<sup>14</sup>. Language as an aspect of communication opens an individual to the world of a particular culture; as such, a language barrier is any linguistic limitation that produces confusion or limits comprehension of the immediate society, culture and environment one find themselves. Evan Bradley enhances this discourse thus:

Not only does language bridge several scientific disciplines – natural and social – but linguistics also has roots in the humanities, and the connection between language and culture is undeniable. Modern scientific linguistics contributes to this tradition by employing its tools and techniques to describe and document linguistic diversity. This diversity includes not only the standardized norms of languages, but the many dialects and variations that are spoken in different regions and subcultures, signed languages, and the languages of peoples whose languages and cultures are in danger of extinction<sup>15</sup>.

In the thoughts of Marielle Zagada,

Language isn't just a way to communicate; it's a component of culture that makes it unique and specific. When language and culture are discussed, the phrase "language is culture and culture is language" is often mentioned because the two are always intertwined. This means that the language you speak reflects what your values and beliefs are<sup>16</sup>.

M.I Nwoko agrees to this fact as he outlines major characteristics of nation as "a community of people, with common natural sentiments of loyalty and identity, common ethnic heritage, common territory, future, history and sovereignty not limited to specific purposes<sup>17</sup>. It is language that connects this community of people; with common ethnic

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<sup>14</sup> The Encyclopedia of World Problems & Human Potentials <http://encyclopedia.uia.org/en/problem/137300> Retrieved Online 14th July, 2022

<sup>15</sup> <sup>15</sup> Bradley E *Because Language is Essential to Human Interaction*, 2017 <https://www.whysocialscience.com/blog/2017/12/5/because-language-is-essential-to-human-interaction> Retrieved Online 20th July, 2022

<sup>16</sup> Zagada M *More than Words: How Language Affects the Way we Think* in an Online Article Published in May ,13<sup>th</sup> 2020 <https://www.gofluent.com/blog/how-language-affects-the-way-we-think/> retrieved online 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

<sup>17</sup> Nwoko MI, *Basic World Political Theories*, 5

heritage and common territory that identifies a people to who they are. Justin Dyikuk underscores African Traditional Communication as the basis in which Africans can communicate effectively despite the emergence of Information Communication Technology (ICT) which has almost scuttle the African traditional media anchored in the way and manner cultures disseminate information either through verbal and non-verbal means as subscribed in songs, dance, proverbs, drama, folklore etc<sup>18</sup>. To underscore African Traditional Communication is to underscore languages spoken by Africans through whatever mode of communication; it is difficult to extricate language from traditional media as long as such language does not fundamentally constitute what defines a people. For example, the town crier in a local settling is the medium and the voice of communicating to the people in which messages are passed and information are gotten through the language of the people. In turn, the people understands the intention of what is communicated; messages are hardly misrepresented and misinformed because the language of communication provides the matrix of understanding for effective communication; and, this reduces mutual suspicion, tensions, and moral crisis.

Nigeria is one of the countries where there is mutual suspicion amongst ethnic groups as well as political tensions due to the different languages spoken amongst members of the same state; this political tensions and mutual suspicion has extended to religious intolerance to the point that various religious interpretation of what constitutes human values and what can be obtained as human values has led to man's inhumanity to man. Diverse languages and multiple communication models and medium ought to add spice in the society; unfortunately, the current situation really suggests that so much represents what ought to be a gift than what is obtainable as a disaster to Human values. Most children who speak their languages fluently understand human values more than those who have lost touch their languages. This is because languages have their mode that shapes the developmental process of the human person through which they becomes agents of transformation of culture. It is in this regard that human behaviors are transformed.

### **The Influence of Communication (Language) on Human Behaviours**

Language is central to the African traditional media and communication; and, it is important to understand that human behavior cannot be understood if we separate language and social practice. Language without social practice and social practice without language are senseless. It therefore becomes very apt to underscore the fact that language

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<sup>18</sup> Dyikuk JJ *The Intersection of Communication in Igwebuikie and Trado-Rural Media: A Critical Evaluation*, In *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development*. Vol. 2 No.3 (A Publication of Association for the Promotion of African Studies: 2019) P.176

is an essential component of social practice that influences human behavior. Speaking, writing, and reading are integral to everyday life, where language is the primary tool for expression and communication<sup>19</sup>. Communication, and the language used in communicating can help us better understand ourselves and why we behave the way we do. The language we use is considered as a cultural, social and psychological phenomenon. According to Swati Johar:

Language has been considered as a social behavioral phenomenon and an indicator of the structure of cognitive processes dealing with functions such as communicating, imaging, learning and perceiving. Communication is enriched through coverbal or nonverbal behaviours... and speculates the implications of these behaviours to significantly improve speech recognition and understanding. The association and interdependence of verbal and nonverbal elements has been highlighted and various research approaches and challenges focusing on interpretation of human behaviour...<sup>20</sup>.

Evan Bradley a psychologist argues further:

Every day, we use language to communicate, argue, learn, negotiate, document, legislate, and celebrate. In the industrialized world, we are bombarded daily by language from radios, televisions, websites, signs, and talking devices; while in less technological societies, knowledge is transmitted orally. A better understanding of languages (individually), of language (as a collective human ability), and of their speakers helps us to better understand how society functions and how to improve it, and this is the domain of the study of linguistics<sup>21</sup>.

Human values are enhanced through social practice so as to improve the world. This social practice is the function of human behavior that occurs through the influence of language. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ludwig Wittgenstein argued that the language we speak can influence the way humans think and act<sup>22</sup>. Through language people are connected in beliefs and values; according to Daniel Everett

Language can be considered a cultural tool to relate a community's values and ideals and is shaped and molded by these residents over time; for example,

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<sup>19</sup> <https://news.stanford.edu/2019/08/22/the-power-of-language-how-words-shape-culture/> Retrieved online 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

<sup>20</sup> Johar S. *Language, Communication and Human Behavior*. In a Book Chapter, *Emotion, Affect and Personality in Speech*, 2016 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314583139\\_Language\\_Communication\\_and\\_Human\\_Behaviour](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314583139_Language_Communication_and_Human_Behaviour) Retrieved Online 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

<sup>21</sup> Bradley E *Because Language is Essential to Human Interaction*, 2017 <https://www.whysocialscience.com/blog/2017/12/5/because-language-is-essential-to-human-interaction> Retrieved Online 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

<sup>22</sup> Huemer W. *Ludwig Wittgenstein, Language and Philosophy of Literature*. In a Book Chapter *The Literary Wittgenstein* (Eds) John Gibson & Wolfgang Huemer (New York: Routledge, 2004) P.19



looking at the many idioms the Chinese culture has on family, you can definitely see how much they value that relationship. Another is with a unique Korean word *nunchi meaning eye measure* that has no English translation. This word relates to the Korean belief in gauging how people are thinking and feeling in order to create connection, trust, and harmony<sup>23</sup>.

The fundamental building block of communication is language, whether it is a spoken language or unspoken emotions that represent the language of the mind<sup>24</sup>. It then becomes very imperative as researchers to avoid taking for granted the influence on communication on human behaviour. Several studies that illustrate how different elements might have an impact on behavior include, In a work titled *Behaviour Matters: Communication Research on Human Connections* shows how communication has a big impact on peoples life<sup>25</sup>. Ineffective communication techniques cause frustration, which causes act-out behaviors. Students will feel less frustrated and behave more positively in the classroom the more they receive assistance with effective communication<sup>26</sup>.

The social media with its positive influence has also created another level of influencing human behaviour. When we experiment with technology, especially with social media, human behavior evolves more. People now utilize social media on a daily basis to such an extent that it is gradually changing how we behave. Face-to-face encounters, which are essential for personality development, socialization, and communication training, have been eliminated from people's lives, particularly those of younger generations. Children are struggling to interact with others, which could result in antisocial behavior. Social media has facilitated easy life comparisons. People have problems with self-esteem and depression as a result of being dissatisfied with their existing situation. Social media use has also been linked to online abuse and bullying by anonymous users, which can cause issues with privacy and self-worth. Most research have found that children's aggressive attitudes and behaviors rise as a result of the violent games on social media. Social media has also been used to promote misinformation and rumors online, which has increased the number of violent crimes committed in society. For instance, recent reports of kidnappers on WhatsApp have resulted in the murders of innocent persons in several Indian cities. With the advent of social media, avoiding bad news and its detrimental effects on our

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<sup>23</sup> Everett D Language: The Cultural Tool. In the Guardian News Website of the Year an article <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/mar/15/language-cultural-daniel-everett-review> retrieved online 20th July, 2022

<sup>24</sup> Nirah J Et al Exploration of Communication and Individual Behaviour Relation. In International Journal of Trend in Research and Development, Volume 3(1) [www.ijtrd.com](http://www.ijtrd.com) assessed online 26th July, 2022

<sup>25</sup> A Booklet on *Communication Matters: Communication Research on Human Connections*, Decade of Behaviour, 200-2010, frog

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

lives has virtually become impossible. This may have long-lasting psychological effects, including thoughts of our world imploding, tension, and anxiety<sup>27</sup>. Social media has altered not only the way we think, but how we behave and conduct ourselves in public nowadays; and, it has extended to our human values in areas of family morality, political culture and other areas of human endeavour and areas that would have led to authentic and sustainable development. Despite the positive impact of the social media to human development, it is not possible to throwaway the baby with the bathing water.

### **African Languages as a Tool for Effective Restoring and Retaining African Human Values: An Igwebuiké Perspective**

Every philosophical perspective has a history, as well as guiding ideas or values that give the particular way of thinking value. The origin is typically the outcome of a response to a certain situation, which may be actual or hypothetical; although, it is named after an Igbo term, the concept of Igwebuiké has worldwide applicability<sup>28</sup>. The values or framework that forms Igwebuiké philosophy are referred to as its principles. These tenets serve as the philosophy's guiding concepts or conceptual frameworks. Igwebuiké philosophy is guided by these ideas, and it is also justified by them<sup>29</sup>. African languages have ingrained African values, customs, and morality. The attempt to exterminate African languages would be extremely risky for our long-term, comprehensive development. The Igwebuiké principle reflects a global phenomenon that relates to people's ethical and charitable behavioral habits. The communitarian concept embodied in the Igwebuiké principle further illuminates the numerous social communication channels while showcasing the people's cherished culture, including their mores, traditions, and customs<sup>30</sup>. According to Justin Dyikuk, "Igwebuiké is a mechanism for ensuring unity and the desired synergy for discussion within and outside Igbo land"<sup>31</sup>. He went further to argue "as the lungs or vital organ of Igbo tradition of South Eastern Nigeria, Igwebuiké philosophy means *number is strength* or *number is power*. It is a worldview which engenders communication and culture through complementarity, harmony, and communality"<sup>32</sup>. It is this complementarity, harmony and communality that is a driver of human values through the vehicle of language. Thus, communication in Igwebuiké encompasses that solidarity,

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<sup>27</sup> Jain P *Social Media: Impact on Human Behaviour and Society* <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/social-media-impact-human-behavior-society-piyushi-jain> assessed online 26th July, 2022

<sup>28</sup> Kanu IA *On the Origin and Principles of Igwebuiké Philosophy*. In *Journal of Religion and Human Relations*, Volume 11 No. 1, 2019 P. 159

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 165

<sup>30</sup> Dyikuk JJ *A Glance at Traditional Modes of Communication Through the Lens of Liturgical Inculturation: Perspective from Igwebuiké and Shikkrot Tradition*. In *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development* Vol. 3 No.8, 2020: P.17

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*

complementarity and synergy the Igbo people enjoy from their mores, tradition and culture which aids their day to day communication process and eases ways of relating with one another is central to the restoration of human values that will help promote sustainable and integral development<sup>33</sup>. Therefore, the African Traditional Media is still very much central to the formation of human values for the realization of sustainable development. A given people's views, attitudes, systems, patterns, behaviors, culture, and historical narrative are all mixed together in traditional media. Other components include masquerades, witchcraft, rites, rituals, music, dance, drama, costumes and artifacts as well as symbolic and cosmological existence from the cradle to the grave. It is the combination of customs and conflicts, harmony and strife, cultural convergences and divergences, cultural tangibles, interpersonal relations, symbols, codes, morals, myths, and literature of the people<sup>34</sup>.

Igwebuiké, as an ideology, promotes the idea of African community rooted on indigenous African culture, tradition, and epistemology. It communicates the idea that we are all connected—each component links to the overall. The links and experiences of interrelationships and interconnections are the basis of the dynamics of the African reality shown in Igwebuiké. It is holistic in the sense that it includes all aspects of being—spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical. Igwebuiké expresses the ability to be empathetic toward the other by relating the aforementioned perspective to African ethics. In the pursuit of creating and upholding a community, it encompasses reciprocity, dignity, harmony, and humanism<sup>35</sup>. Igwebuiké goes beyond the self to feel the pain of the other as though it were my pain and the redemption of the other as though it were my redemption, in contrast to Western ethics that place a strong emphasis on individual rights, sometimes to the point of promoting selfish interests at the expense of the interests of others. It emphasizes our responsibilities to one another as well as how attached and related we are to one another. It suggests that my humanity and your humanity are closely linked. Therefore, the result is that when others are degraded and oppressed, I am diminished<sup>36</sup>.

The ideals of humanness, care, respect for others, compassion, mutual assistance, group responsibility, reciprocal obligations, interdependence, etc. are the foundation of the Igwebuiké philosophy. Three characteristics of humanity are acknowledged: human dignity, human equality, and universal brotherhood and sisterhood<sup>37</sup>. The African views

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<sup>33</sup> Dyikuk JJ, 22

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Kanu IA Igwebuiké and African Ethics

<https://www.igwebuikeresearchinstitute.org/igwebuikopedia-articles.php?open=25> Assessed Online 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

all people as members of one big human family. This concept of brothers or sisterhood finds expression in virtues like hospitality, generosity, empathy, sympathy, compassion, etc. as its practical application.

### **Conclusion**

Because of its significance, Igwebuiké can be seen as the foundation for understanding and interpreting African ethics through the lens of language and communication. The importance of Igwebuiké causes African ethics to be based on the imposing pillar of human values that can help in the realization of sustainable development. The core purpose of communication and language can be extended to promote the welfare of the individual and the community. The human person is therefore at the center of African human values; the human person is instead viewed as a brotherhood or sisterhood and is not defined according to his or her color, nation, religion, creed, political leanings, material contribution, or any other factor. Therefore, it emphasizes the value of the human person, the equality of brothers and sisters, and the equality of opportunities for all - a society that is egalitarian, that is, where everyone has the same chance to grow personally while cooperating.

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