

African Natural/Cultural Communication Media: A Survey of Meanings and Usage at Traditional Ceremonies

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ABSTRACT Culture has a very broad meaning. Culture has been defined as the total way of life commonly followed by the members of a society; culture is also a social legacy, a tradition, which an individual acquires from his group. The study attempts to examine the universal meanings of eight selected African natural communication media: missing beads, cockcrow, female hairstyles, kolanuts, masquerades, moon, talking drum/trumpet, and tribal marks, exploring through survey method, the meaning of these African media items; their cultural significance and usage at ceremonies in Africa. The universal meanings of the words support the fact that each word has both biblical and cultural origins particularly in Africa. Data collected from Babcock University academic and non-academic staff from the three Nigerian major cultural groups, within the age range of 36 and 50 years and above reveal that items have significance and are "a must have" for African ceremonies ranging from chieftaincy, naming, marriage and cultural festivals such as *Egungun* and New Yam festivals. Ultimately this study would contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for re-awakening the significance of these and many more natural African communication media among the youths at home and in the Diaspora.