

## ATTITUDE OF THE DIGITAL GENERATION TOWARDS THE *UMUNNA* SYSTEM IN IGBOLAND

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Received: 10 May 2022

Accepted: 12 May 2022

Published: 16 May 2022

### ABSTRACT

*The Igbo traditional socio-political system is a well-organised structure that enhances cordial co-existence through the upholding of the cultural norms and values peculiar to each Igbo autonomous community. Sub-structures are particularly used within the Igbo socio-political system to ensure proper functioning of the society. One of such sub-structures is the umunna, which is patrilineal. This structure is fundamental to the administration of the traditional Igbo society. However, in recent times, it seems as if this structure is losing its place in the Igbo society, particularly among the digital generation. This is what motivated the present study titled: “Attitude of the digital generation towards the umunna system in Igboland”. The digital generation also known as the digital natives refers to people born and bred within the era of the widespread access to advanced information technology. The study seeks to find out the attitude of the digital generation towards the umunna socio-political structure as well as the factors that generate such attitude. The social psychological perspective using the attitudinal theory is used to explore the subject of study. Mixed research method is used. Data is gathered through survey using a structured questionnaire. The target population comprises the Nigerian Igbo males. The data collected are subjected to statistical and descriptive analyses. The hypothesis of the research is based on the premise that the digital generation seems to have a negative attitude towards the umunna socio-political structure in Igboland. Three null hypotheses are formulated. Four research questions and four objectives are stated. The findings of the study show that, though, the digital generation claims to have value for the umunna system, their attitude towards the system is to the contrary.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Attitude, Digital Generation, Igboland, Socio-Political Structure, Umunna, Value System*

### INTRODUCTION

The traditional Igbo society even before the advent of colonisation and modernisation is a well-ordered system. It is a republican and egalitarian society. Traditional structures (Ezenagu 27- 28; Nwachukwu 403-407; Oghojaforet *al.* 9) were in place within the system to ensure orderliness, uphold cultural norms and development of each community. One of such structures is the *umunna* system, which is patrilineal. However, in the last three decades this fundamental structure in the Igbo society is beginning to lose its place (Oriji, 263-264) particularly among the digital generation. It is, in this light, that this study examines the “Attitude of the Digital Generation towards the *Umunna* System in Igboland.” This study sets out to answer the following research questions:

Is the *umunna* system an integral part of the Igbo socio-political structure? What is the attitude of the digital generation to the *umunna* system in Igboland?

What value system is possessed by the digital generation of the practice of *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland?

Is there any difference in the perceived attitude of the digital generation and that of the older / non digital generation with the practice of the *umunna* system in Igboland?

Three null hypotheses are promulgated:

The digital generation does not have a negative attitude towards the *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland. (validates RQ2)

The digital generation does not have less or any value for the *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland. (validates RQ3)

There is no significant difference in the perceived attitude of the digital generation and the older generation to the practice of the *umunna* system in Igboland. (validates RQ4)

This study investigates if the *umunna* is an integral part of the socio-political system in Igboland. It, specifically, seeks to find out the attitude of the digital generation to the *umunna* system in Igboland. It also has the following objectives: To establish if the digital natives have or do not have value for the practice of the *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland and to find out if there is a significant difference between the perceived attitude of the digital generation and that of the older generation to the practice of the *umunna* system in Igboland. It also appraises the value system possessed by the digital natives and the older generation of the practice of *umunna* socio-political structure. Finally, the study aims to point out areas of differences in the perceived attitude of the digital generation in comparison to the older generation on the practice of *umunna* system.

The researchers, first of all, try to define and explain some key terms, then examine the methodology adopted for the study before embarking on the analysis of results and discussions. Finally, conclusions are drawn and some recommendations are proffered.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

### **Digital Generation**

The digital generation has a number of definitions but, generally, it refers to the generation of people born and raised in the era of great accessibility to digital information and communication technologies and whose exposure to and experience with those technologies arm them with a technological comfort and expertise with those technologies greater than those of prior generations ([www.igi-global.com](http://www.igi-global.com)). They are also referred to as the digital natives (Prensky1-6) or the computer age people. Onyemelukwe (3-4) is of no contrary view but she maintains that there is the need to differentiate between digital natives and digital citizens. To her mind, one may be born in the era of widespread access to information and communication technologies and will still not have a high level of digital literacy. Those who have a high level of digital literacy are known as digital citizens. Thus, in essence, digital generation comprises both digital natives and digital citizens. The invention of the IBM Personal Computers and later that of the Apple/Microsoft in the early 80s marks the

advent of the digital or New Media era. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the time frame marking the era of digitalization varies from one continent or country to another. For Africa and specifically Nigeria, digitalisation commenced in the later 80s to early 90s. In the context of this study, the concept of digital generation is used in its broad sense to mean those born at the advent of the New Media age.

### Values

The notion of values is multidimensional. However, in the context of this study, the term values is defined from the social-psychological perspective. Values are perceptions or beliefs viewed as highly upheld by an individual or a group. Generally, a value is expressed by the preference given to a thing either by an individual or a group. According to Kluckhohn, "A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action." (395). Schwartz defined values "as desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance that serve as guiding principles in people's lives" (2). Value is very instrumental to attitude evaluation. A value system refers to the set down principles or beliefs expected of an individual or a group. A value system often influences attitude direction.

### Attitude

An attitude is a viewpoint reflected in the intensity of the decisional direction taken regarding a thing, person or a situation. From the social-psychological perspective, Eagly and Chaiken (1993) defined attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour" (1). Haddock and Maio termed attitude a concept that expresses "an *evaluative judgement* about a stimulus object" (114). Generally, a decisional direction or "*evaluative judgement*" (Haddock and Maio 114) is often exhibited in the intensity or degree of the show of approval or disapproval towards a given object (thing, person or a situation). The intensity or degree of an attitude indicates how strongly or less the sensation of an entity is towards a specified subject-matter. Attitude or viewpoint is influenced by a lot of factors such as interest, status, belief, environment, norms and values etc. According to Katz, attitude serves four (4) functions namely: knowledge, utility, ego defence and value-expression (Haddock and Maio 120).

### Umunna

The word *umunna* is a compound word comprising of *umu* - children and *nna* - father meaning "*children of the father*". However, in its strict sense, this term is used to refer to the patrilineal descents of a family (usually extended), kindred or community in Igboland. For Oriji (268), it is a term used to refer to the descents of "common agnatic ancestry" in the Igbo society. For this paper, the notion of *umunna* is explored in the context of the later definitions.

## THE UMUNNA SYSTEM IN THE TRADITIONAL IGBO SOCIETY: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

### Structure

Uchendu (186) referred to the *umunna* structure as one of the androcentric features of the Igbo culture. Citing Chukwu, Osunwokeh described the structure as "a complex of interrelationship of people who share common ancestors or lineage" (4). The *umunna* structure operates at different societal levels: the micro-level (the immediate extended family); the mini-macro level (the kindred) and the macro level (the clan /community). At each of the levels, the meetings are convened at the *central obi*. The *central obi* is usually located in the compound of the eldest of patrilineage, *okpara*, of each of the

central importance to the sustainability of order and civility within the Igbo traditional society. Moreover, this structure has endeavoured the effective management of the traditional Igbo society more than what obtains in modern times. Hence, all hands should be on deck to ensure that it is sustained particularly among the younger Igbo generation.

## METHODOLOGY

### Theoretical Framework

This study is explored from the perspective of the attitudinal theory of social psychology. The multi-component model of attitude (Haddock and Maio 114) is specifically used in this study. This theoretical model views attitude as “summary evaluations of an object that have *affective*, *cognitive* and *behavioural* components” (Haddock and Maio 114). The cognitive constituent indicates the opinions and traits held of the attitude object; the affective constituent is the mental sensation towards an attitude object; while the behavioural constituent reveals the responses or comportments towards an attitude object (Haddock and Maio 115-117). This model is chosen for this study because it provides the tool for the summary evaluation of the digital generation’s attitude to the *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland.

### Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The survey research design was used for this study. The random sampling method was used in the collection of data. A total of seventy (70) respondents were involved. The respondents were drawn from the mainland Igbo states namely: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. Delta and River states were also included as some Igbo speaking communities exist in them. The target population were the Nigerian Igbo males starting from the consent age of 18 years. A structured Questionnaire on *Umunna* System (QUS) was used as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was subdivided into three sections: A, B and C. Section A was on the Bio-data of the respondents. Section B had 20 items that were structured using the Likert five (5) points scale measuring model with the lowest point, 1 (Strongly Disagree) and the highest point, 5 (Strongly Agree). Section C had two open-ended questions and 1 multiple choice question. The instrument for data collection was face-validated by experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation, and the subject matter. After this, the reliability and construct validity tests were performed. The reliability test was done using the Cronbach Alpha Statistic which gave an index of 0.852. This shows that the items of the instrument were 85% internally consistent. The construct validity was performed using factorial analysis. The communalities extraction gave a range of 0.673-0.942 with one item having a lower extraction of 0.543. This shows that the items on the questionnaire were both reliable and construct valid. The data were analysed using comparison of means, one-way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Chi-square Statistics at 0.05 level of significance using the SPSS version 23. The research was carried out under the condition of the principle of anonymity, and the data collected were used strictly for the purpose of research.

## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

### Respondent's Profile/Demography

**Table 1: Respondent's Characteristics**

Variable	Frequency	Valid Percentage (%)	Total (%)
<b>Ethnic Group</b>			
Igbo	69	98.6	
Non-Igbo	1	1.4	100.0
<b>States 2</b>			
Abia	15	21.4	
Anambra	22	31.4	
Delta	3	4.3	
Ebonyi	4	5.7	
Enugu	12	17.1	
Imo	12	17.1	
Rivers	2	2.9	100.0
<b>Age Range</b>			
18-35	29	41.4	
36-50	32	45.7	
51-65	7	10.0	
66 above	2	2.9	100.0
<b>Place of Birth</b>			
Igbo Village	28	40.0	
Igbo Town	20	28.6	
Non Igbo Village	9	12.9	
Non Igbo Town	13	18.6	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	32	45.7	
Married	37	52.9	
Separated	1	1.4	100.0
<b>Residence</b>			
Igboland	19	27.1	
Non Igbo State in Nigeria	45	64.3	
Diaspora	6	8.6	100.0
<b>Family Background</b>			
Both Parents Igbo	67	95.7	
Mother Non Igbo state	3	4.3	100.0
<b>Parents Educational Background</b>			
Both Formally Educated	38	54.3	
Both Not Formally Educated	23	32.9	
Only Father Formally Educated	7	10.0	
Only Mother Formally Educated	2	2.9	100.0
<b>Family Socio-economic Class</b>			
Very Comfortable	2	2.9	
Comfortable	32	45.7	
Averagely Comfortable	32	45.7	
Not Comfortable	4	5.7	100.0

From Table 1, the respondents who are of the Igbo ethnic group were 69 (98.6%) as they were the target population; and that of the Non-Igbo was 1(1.4). The age composition of the respondents were 29 (41.4%) for ages 18-35 years, 32 (45.7%) ages 36-50 which constituted the highest sampled age range; while ages 51-65 and 65 above were 7(10.0%) and 2 (2.9%) respectively. Across the states, the respondents had the highest sample in Anambra with 22 (31.4%) and Rivers had the lowest with 2 (2.9%). For the place of birth, respondents born in Igbo village and town were 28 (40%) and 20 (28.6%)

respectively, whereas those born in Non-Igbo village and town were 9 (12.9%) and 13 (18.6%) respectively. With regard to place of residence, 19 (27.1%) of the respondents were said to be residing in Igboland, 45 (64.3%) in Non Igbo State in Nigeria and 6 (8.6%) in diaspora. Also, the sample constituted the respondent's family background of which those whose parents are both Igbo were 67 (95.7%) but those whose mothers were Non-Igbo were 3 (4.3%). As for the parents' educational background, respondents whose both parents were formally educated had the highest sample 38 (54.3%) while those of "only mother formally educated" had the lowest sample of 2 (2.9%). In addition, with regard to family socio-economic status, respondents who claimed that they were very comfortable were 2 (2.9%) which is the lowest while those who were in the groups of comfortable and averagely comfortable both had the highest constituents of 32 (45.7%) each.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

### (a) Answers to Research Question

**Research Question 1:** Is the *umunna* system an integral part of the Igbo socio-political structure?

To answer this research question, items 1-2 of the questionnaire were used. Results obtained from the analysis were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Comparison of means on the Existence of Umunna System among the States**

State		Never heard	System exist
Abia	Mean	2.3333	3.2667
	N	15	15
	Std. Deviation	1.58865	1.83095
	% of Total Sum	22.0%	19.6%
Anambra	Mean	2.2273	3.9091
	N	22	22
	Std. Deviation	1.41192	1.37699
	% of Total Sum	30.8%	34.4%
Delta	Mean	2.0000	2.0000
	N	3	3
	Std. Deviation	1.73205	1.00000
	% of Total Sum	3.8%	2.4%
Ebonyi	Mean	2.2500	3.0000
	N	4	4
	Std. Deviation	1.89297	2.30940
	% of Total Sum	5.7%	4.8%
Enugu	Mean	2.3333	4.0833
	N	12	12
	Std. Deviation	1.66969	1.37895
	% of Total Sum	17.6%	19.6%
Imo	Mean	2.1667	3.1667
	N	12	12
	Std. Deviation	1.74946	1.85047
	% of Total Sum	16.4%	15.2%
Rivers	Mean	3.0000	5.0000
	N	2	2
	Std. Deviation	2.82843	.00000
	% of Total Sum	3.8%	4.0%
Total	Mean	2.2714	3.5714
	N	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1.55965	1.63806
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%

From Table 2 the respondents that said they never heard of the *umunna* system ranged from 2.0 - 3.0 across the states with Rivers having the highest and Delta the lowest mean score. On whether or not the system exists across the states, a range of 2.0 - 5.0 was observed across the states with Rivers state and Delta States having the highest and lowest observed frequencies respectively. This denotes an affirmation of the *umunna* system as an integral part of the Igbo socio-political structure particularly from the mainland Igbo states.

### Research Question 2: What is the Attitude of the Digital Generation to the Umunna System?

Items 3-9 were used to report the attitude of the digital generation to the *umunna* system in research question 2. Responses obtained were presented in Tables 3-5

**Table 3: Place of Birth**

Place of Birth		Part of Umunna	Attend Meetings	Relevant Structure	Against Belief	For Elderly	Not Involved COS Money	No Value for Umunna
Igbo Village	Mean	3.8214	3.3214	4.5357	2.0000	2.5357	2.0000	3.0000
	N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Std. Deviation	1.30678	1.54089	.92224	1.18634	1.40059	.94281	1.38778
	% of Total Sum	39.3%	38.8%	42.1%	44.8%	43.0%	42.1%	40.2%
Igbo Town	Mean	4.4500	4.0000	4.4500	1.6500	2.0000	1.7000	2.9500
	N	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
	Std. Deviation	.60481	1.25656	.99868	.74516	.85840	.73270	1.14593
	% of Total Sum	32.7%	33.3%	29.5%	26.4%	24.2%	25.6%	28.2%
Non Igbo Village	Mean	3.3333	3.2222	3.4444	1.3333	3.1111	2.2222	3.2222
	N	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
	Std. Deviation	1.41421	1.48137	1.50923	.50000	1.05409	1.30171	1.56347
	% of Total Sum	11.0%	12.1%	10.3%	9.6%	17.0%	15.0%	13.9%
Non Igbo Town	Mean	3.5385	2.9231	4.2308	1.8462	2.0000	1.7692	2.8462
	N	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
	Std. Deviation	1.39137	1.18754	.72501	.80064	1.15470	.92681	1.46322
	% of Total Sum	16.9%	15.8%	18.2%	19.2%	15.8%	17.3%	17.7%
Total	Mean	3.8857	3.4286	4.3143	1.7857	2.3571	1.9000	2.9857
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1.22229	1.42006	1.04317	.94628	1.21626	.93483	1.33507
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In Table 3, the responses were based on the Place of Birth. The mean range with regard to being part of the *umunna* was 3.33- 4.45. This indicated that all the respondents agreed that they were part of the *umunna*. For attendance at meetings, the mean ranged from 2.9231 – 4.0000, with those born outside the Non-Igbo towns and villages indicating disagreement and less agreement respectively to meetings attendance. All the respondents agreed the *umunna* structure was relevant with the mean range of 3.4444 - 4.5357. However, those in the Non-Igbo towns and villages were less affirmative than those in the Igbo towns and villages. On belief and lack of finance, the ranges were 1.3333 - 2.0000 and 1.7 - 2.0 respectively. This indicated that they all disagreed that these factors had any effect on their attitude to the *umunna* system. Perceptions on consideration of *umunna* as being for the elderly showed a mean variation of 2.0000 - 3.1111 with all in

disagreement except for those born in Non-Igbo villages. As regards the issue of “No value for *umunna*, the mean responses ranged from 2.8462 - 3.2222. This points out a general situation of slight indifference or outright indifference as regards value for the system.

**Table 4: Residence**

Residence		Part of Umunna	Attend Meetings	Relevant Structure	Against Belief	For Elderly	Not Involved COS Money	No Value for Umunna
Igboland	Mean	4.0000	4.0526	4.2632	1.7368	2.6842	1.7895	2.7895
	N	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
	Std. Deviation	1.10554	1.12909	.99119	.93346	1.37649	.91766	1.22832
	% of Total Sum	27.9%	32.1%	26.8%	26.4%	30.9%	25.6%	25.4%
Non Igbo State in Nigeria	Mean	3.8889	3.1333	4.2889	1.8222	2.3111	2.0000	3.0667
	N	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
	Std. Deviation	1.21023	1.48630	1.10005	.98371	1.16428	.97701	1.37179
	% of Total Sum	64.3%	58.8%	63.9%	65.6%	63.0%	67.7%	66.0%
Diaspora	Mean	3.5000	3.6667	4.6667	1.6667	1.6667	1.5000	3.0000
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Std. Deviation	1.76068	1.21106	.81650	.81650	.81650	.54772	1.54919
	% of Total Sum	7.7%	9.2%	9.3%	8.0%	6.1%	6.8%	8.6%
Total	Mean	3.8857	3.4286	4.3143	1.7857	2.3571	1.9000	2.9857
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1.22229	1.42006	1.04317	.94628	1.21626	.93483	1.33507
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The responses in Table 4 were on the effect of residence on the attitude towards the *umunna* structure. The respondents all agreed being part of the *umunna* structure and attending meetings with the respective mean ranges of 3.5 – 4.0 and 3.1333- 4.0526. Nonetheless, those residing in Igboland were more assertive. All the respondents also agreed that the *umunna* structure was relevant with the range of 4.2632- 4.6667. On value for the *umunna* system, the people residing in Igboland had a mean value of 2.7 which showed that they disagreed to not having value for the system. Whereas, the respondents residing outside Igboland in the other states of Nigeria and in diaspora had mean responses of 3.0666 and 3.0000 indicating the indifference to the *umunna* system.

**Table 5: Family Socioeconomic Class**

Family Socio-eco Class		Part of Umunna	Attend Meetings	Relevant Structure	Against Belief	For Elderly	Not Involved COS Money	No Value for Umunna
Very Comfortable	Mean	5.0000	3.5000	5.0000	1.0000	4.0000	1.5000	4.5000
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Std. Deviation	.00000	2.12132	.00000	.00000	1.41421	.70711	.70711
	% of Total Sum	3.7%	2.9%	3.3%	1.6%	4.8%	2.3%	4.3%
Comfortable	Mean	3.9688	3.4375	4.1250	1.5937	2.2500	1.7500	3.0000
	N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
	Std. Deviation	1.20441	1.50134	1.23784	.75602	1.19137	.80322	1.34404
	% of Total Sum	46.7%	45.8%	43.7%	40.8%	43.6%	42.1%	45.9%

Table 5: Contd.,

Averagely Comfortable	Mean	3.8125	3.5625	4.5000	1.9375	2.5313	2.1875	3.0000
	N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
	Std. Deviation	1.22967	1.24272	.62217	.98169	1.16354	1.02980	1.31982
	% of Total Sum	44.9%	47.5%	47.7%	49.6%	49.1%	52.6%	45.9%
Not Comfortable	Mean	3.2500	2.2500	4.0000	2.5000	1.0000	1.0000	2.0000
	N	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Std. Deviation	1.50000	1.89297	2.00000	1.73205	.00000	.00000	1.15470
	% of Total Sum	4.8%	3.8%	5.3%	8.0%	2.4%	3.0%	3.8%
Total	Mean	3.8857	3.4286	4.3143	1.7857	2.3571	1.9000	2.9857
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1.22229	1.42006	1.04317	.94628	1.21626	.93483	1.33507
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 5 captured the responses on family socio-economic class. Data obtained in this table revealed that all respondents in the comfortable socio-economic classes with mean responses ranging from 3.4375 – 3.5635 agreed to attending meetings. On the contrary, respondents who were not comfortable had a mean response of 2.25, indicating disagreement to attendance of meetings. On the question of the *umunna* being for the elderly, those in the very comfortable socio-economic class agreed that the system is meant for the elderly whereas other economic classes disagreed. With regard to the value for the *umunna* system, those who are in the very comfortable class had a mean of 4.5 showing agreement. The comfortable and averagely comfortable were indifferent considering their mean response of 3.0 while the “Not Comfortable” had a mean response of 2.0 depicting disagreement.

### Research Question 3: What Value System is Possessed by the Digital Generation of the Practice of *umunna* Socio-Political Structure?

Items 10-20 were used to ascertain the value system possessed by the digital generation of the practice of *umunna* socio-political structure. Responses obtained were presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Comparison of Means for Value System

Age		Not Relevant	Increase of Evil	Not Necessary by Parents	Loss of Obligations	Meetings with Kinsmen	Only Financially Obligated	Communicate them	Live Outside	Done Online	The Stories Heard	Parents do Not Want
18-35	Mean	2.1379	2.5517	2.8966	2.8966	2.9310	2.5862	2.6207	2.4138	3.3448	2.4138	2.2759
	N	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
	Std. Deviation	1.12517	1.40372	1.29131	1.31868	1.33446	1.26822	1.32055	1.11858	1.34366	1.42722	1.25062
	% of Total Sum	45.3%	41.8%	44.4%	45.4%	37.4%	41.9%	40.9%	36.8%	38.0%	44.0%	46.5%
36-50	Mean	1.9375	2.5000	2.6875	2.5938	3.1875	2.5625	2.8750	3.0625	3.7188	2.1563	1.8750
	N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
	Std. Deviation	1.10534	1.19137	1.28107	1.34066	1.57475	1.41279	1.45358	1.36636	1.22433	1.34667	.87067

	% of Total Sum	45.3%	45.2%	45.5%	44.9%	44.9%	45.8%	49.5%	51.6%	46.7%	43.4%	42.3%
51-65	Mean	1.5714	2.8571	2.4286	2.1429	4.4286	2.7143	1.8571	2.7143	4.1429	2.5714	2.0000
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	Std. Deviation	1.13389	1.21499	1.27242	1.46385	.53452	1.38013	1.06904	1.25357	1.06904	1.39728	1.00000
	% of Total Sum	8.0%	11.3%	9.0%	8.1%	13.7%	10.6%	7.0%	10.0%	11.4%	11.3%	9.9%
66 above	Mean	1.0000	1.5000	1.0000	1.5000	4.5000	1.5000	2.5000	1.5000	5.0000	1.0000	1.0000
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Std. Deviation	.00000	.70711	.00000	.70711	.70711	.70711	2.12132	.70711	.00000	.00000	.00000
	% of Total Sum	1.5%	1.7%	1.1%	1.6%	4.0%	1.7%	2.7%	1.6%	3.9%	1.3%	1.4%
Total	Mean	1.9571	2.5286	2.7000	2.6429	3.2429	2.5571	2.6571	2.7143	3.6429	2.2714	2.0286
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1.10906	1.27087	1.28931	1.34095	1.44899	1.32573	1.38193	1.27567	1.27445	1.37178	1.06283
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 6 presented the perception of the different age ranges on the value system possessed with regard to the practice of the *umunna* socio-political structure. The mean value obtained on the item “meeting with kinsmen” showed that the digital generation had a mean of 2.931 depicting disagreement to attending kinsmen’s meeting while non-digital natives had a mean range of 3.18 - 4.5 showing affirmation to participation in kinsmen’s meetings. The respondents all agreed that provision be made for virtual participation. This shows a great paradigm shift particularly on the part of the most elderly of the non-digital generation.

#### **Research Question 4: Is there any difference in the Perceived Attitude of the Digital Generation and The Non-Digital Generation on the Practice of *umunna* System in Igboland?**

Items 3-9 were used to compare and also account for the difference in the perceived attitude of the digital generation and the non-digital generation on the practice of *umunna* system in Igboland. The Responses were as reflected in Table 7.

**Table 7: Comparison of means for Attitude across the Age Groups**

Age		Part of Umunna	Attend Meetings	Relevant Structure	Against Belief	For Elderly	Not Involved COS Money	No Value for Umunna
18-35	Mean	3.9655	3.1724	4.0345	1.6552	2.4483	1.6897	2.7931
	N	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
	Std. Deviation	1.05162	1.41595	1.23874	.81398	1.35188	.71231	1.42376
	% of Total Sum	42.3%	38.3%	38.7%	38.4%	43.0%	36.8%	38.8%
36-50	Mean	3.7187	3.5625	4.5312	2.0000	2.4375	2.0938	3.0000
	N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
	Std. Deviation	1.34966	1.43544	.84183	1.07763	1.16224	.96250	1.27000
	% of Total Sum	43.8%	47.5%	48.0%	51.2%	47.3%	50.4%	45.9%
51-65	Mean	4.0000	3.4286	4.2857	1.4286	1.8571	2.0000	3.2857
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	Std. Deviation	1.41421	1.39728	.95119	.78680	.89974	1.52753	1.25357
	% of Total Sum	10.3%	10.0%	9.9%	8.0%	7.9%	10.5%	11.0%
66 above	Mean	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	1.5000	1.5000	1.5000	4.5000
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Std. Deviation	.00000	.00000	.00000	.70711	.70711	.70711	.70711
	% of Total Sum	3.7%	4.2%	3.3%	2.4%	1.8%	2.3%	4.3%
Total	Mean	3.8857	3.4286	4.3143	1.7857	2.3571	1.9000	2.9857
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1.22229	1.42006	1.04317	.94628	1.21626	.93483	1.33507
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The responses presented in Table 7 were the perception of the people in different age groups. The mean responses ranged from 3.7 to 5.0 which implies agreement across the age groups that they were part of the *umunna* system. The respondents also agreed that they have been attending meetings judging by their mean responses of 3.1724 to 5.000 with respondents within the age bracket of 18-50 having lower mean values as opposed to the age bracket 51 and above that strongly agreed to attending of meetings. Respondents perceived that the structure of *umunna* was relevant to the present society owing to their mean responses ranging from 4.0345 for ages 18-35 to 5.0 for ages 66 above. The respondents across the age ranges disagreed that *umunna* system is not only meant for the elderly and they were not involved due to money. On the item no value for *umunna* system, the responses ranged from 2.7931 to 4.5000. The ages 18-35 disagreed to having no value for the *umunna* system while those of 36-50 were indifferent with a mean value of 3.00. On the contrary, ages 51 and above agreed that the younger generation had no value for the system.

#### (b) Test of Research Hypotheses

##### **Hypothesis 1: The Digital Generation does not have a Negative Attitude towards the *umunna* Socio-Political Structure in Igboland**

To test for the hypothesis 1, the Chi-Square statistic was used and Table 8 featured the results.

**Table 8: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.007 <sup>a</sup>	12	.020
Likelihood Ratio	16.128	12	.185
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.884	1	.089
N of Valid Cases	70		

a. 14 cells (70.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

The Chi-Square statistic was used to test whether there existed a negative attitude of the digital generation towards the *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland. It was observed that  $\chi (12) = 24.007$ ,  $p = .02 (< .05)$  which is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and a new one reformulated: there exists a negative attitude by the digital generation towards the *umunna* system in Igboland. This result is in line with the observed responses in Research Question 2.

**Hypothesis 2: The digital generation does not have less value for the “*umunna*” socio-political structure in Igboland.**

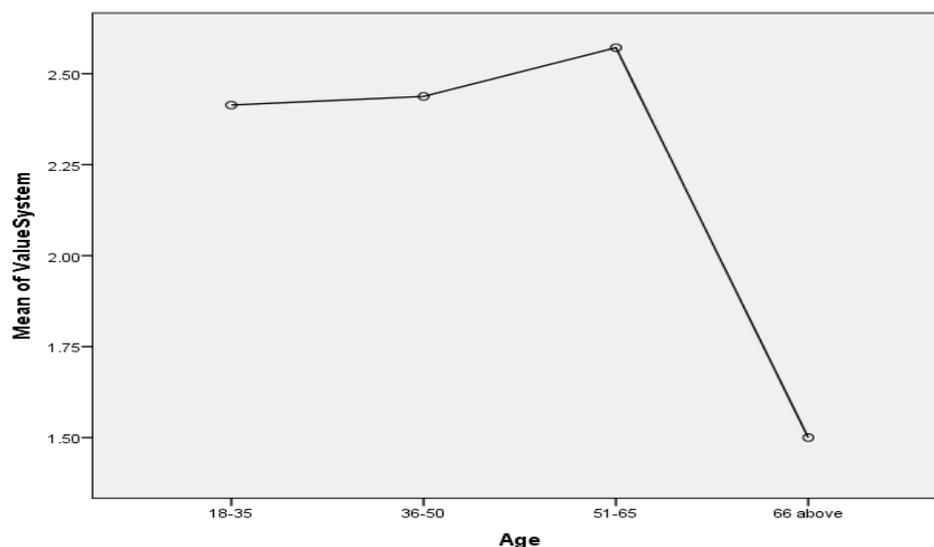
**Table 9: Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

Value System			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.440	3	66	.725

**Table 10: ANOVA**

Value System					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.862	3	.621	.518	.672
Within Groups	79.124	66	1.199		
Total	80.986	69			

As shown in Table 9, the Levene Statistic was not significant at .05 level of significance which shows that the sample fulfilled the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) condition of homogeneity of variance. Hence, we could conduct the ANOVA test. To test the variability in the responses, One Way ANOVA was used at 0.05 level of significance, ANOVA results yielded:  $F(3, 66) = 0.518$ ,  $p = .672 (> .05)$ ; which is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis that “the digital generation does not have less value for the *umunna* socio-political structure in Igboland” was upheld. The mean plots of value system against age was shown in fig 1. It was observed in the mean plots that the non-digital generation (particularly the elderly) had a very strong disagreement on the values claimed to be held by the digital generation. However, this perception of the most elderly generation was not statistically significant.



**Figure 1: Means Plots of Value System.**

**Hypothesis 2: There is no Significant difference in the Perceived Attitude of the Digital Generation and The Older Generation on the Practice of *umunna* System in Igboland**

**Table 11: Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

Attitude			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.243	3	66	.301

**Table 12: ANOVA**

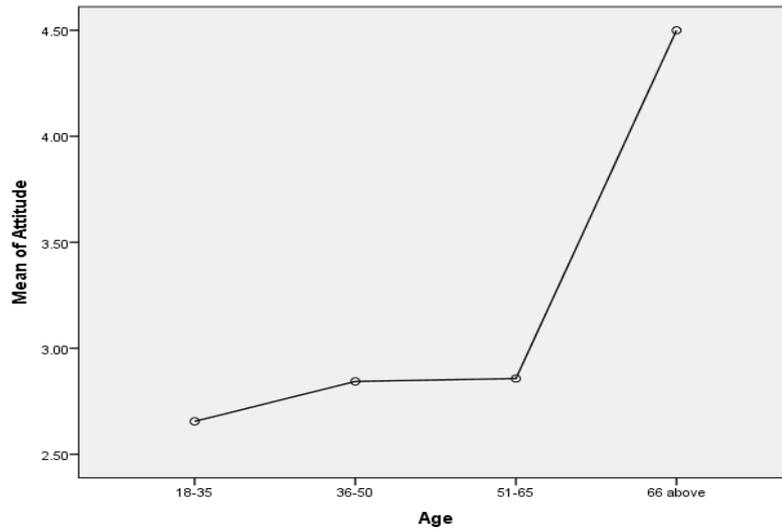
Attitude					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.458	3	2.153	1.866	.144
Within Groups	76.128	66	1.153		
Total	82.586	69			

**Table 13: Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Attitude							
	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
LSD	18-35	36-50	-.18858	.27535	.496	-.7383	.3612
		51-65	-.20197	.45227	.657	-1.1050	.7010
		66 above	-1.84483*	.78517	.022	-3.4125	-.2772
	36-50	18-35	.18858	.27535	.496	-.3612	.7383
		51-65	-.01339	.44813	.976	-.9081	.8813
		66 above	-1.65625*	.78280	.038	-3.2192	-.0933
	51-65	18-35	.20197	.45227	.657	-.7010	1.1050
		36-50	.01339	.44813	.976	-.8813	.9081
		66 above	-1.64286	.86111	.061	-3.3621	.0764
	66 above	18-35	1.84483*	.78517	.022	.2772	3.4125
		36-50	1.65625*	.78280	.038	.0933	3.2192
		51-65	1.64286	.86111	.061	-.0764	3.3621

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 11 showed that the Levene Statistic was not significant at .05 level of significance which shows that the sample fulfilled the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) condition of homogeneity of variance. Hence, we could conduct the ANOVA test. To test the variability in the responses, One Way ANOVA was used at 0.05 level of significance, ANOVA results gave:  $F(3, 66) = 1.866$ ,  $p = .144$  ( $>.05$ ); which is not statistically significant. In table 13, the Multiple comparison table showed significant differences between age groups 18-35, 36-50 and 66 above. But in general the Analysis of variance showed no significant difference. Thus, the null hypothesis that "There is no significant difference in the perceived attitude of the digital generation and the non-digital generation on the practice of *umunna* system in Igboland" was upheld. The mean plots of attitude against age is shown in fig 2. It is observed in the mean plots that there were differences in the responses of non-digital generation (particularly the elderly) and the digital generation but the differences were not statistically significant.



**Figure 2: Means Plots of Attitude.**

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study show that the *umunna* system is still considered even by the digital generation as an integral part of the Igbo socio-political structure. However, the attitude of the digital generation towards this structure is to the contrary. They claim to value this structure but most of them do not uphold this value as the elderly ones are firmly doing. Compared to the older generation, their attitude particularly at the behavioural attitudinal level shows that their degree of value for the structure is less owing to some factors. Some of the factors are: Lack of education and failure to ensure the integration of the younger generation into their sociocultural sphere; loss of confidence in the structure due to perversion of justice and misplaced values by custodians of the structure. Other triggering factors are:

Lack of proper understanding of the importance of the *umunna* system and its functionality within the Igbo traditional system. This has brought about a negative perception of the *umunna* structure by the younger generation who see the structure as primitive, fetish or meant for the elderly.

Poor leadership strategies, hence lack of objective and proper structuring of the *umunna* system to meet up with the challenges and needs of our contemporary times.

Culture disconnect or hybridity as well as identity loss, emanating from migration, globalisation and advances in technology.

Parents and elders not educating the younger generation on their cultural norms and values. Hence, we have a younger generation with misplaced values or amoral values. Some digital natives do not even know about their cultural identity.

Perceived increase in evils, vices within the traditional Igbo society which also reflects in the *umunna* system. This has brought about the loss of the societal and moral obligations of the *umunna*. Even among some *umunna* leadership, the following vices are being perpetrated: greed, covetousness, financial misappropriation, conspiracy pervasion of justice and truth etc. In addition, thanks to kidnapping, assassination and robbery that have increased the problem of insecurity, fear is created in the hearts of many preventing them from participating in any cultural activity at home.

Confidence in Western socio-political structures put in place rather than the traditional socio-political structures like that of the *umunna*

In an ever changing world, the timing of the meeting is not convenient for some of the youth owing to their vocation or job practice.

Given the industrious nature of the Igbo, many in search of greener pastures live outside their native communities. Where the place of their residence is very far from their native community, they find it difficult to attend at the *umunna* meetings.

Unemployment with the attendant lack of financial independence is another reason why the natives are not participating in the *umunna* meetings.

As a result of generational gap in world view and perception, the digital natives are not interested in the dynamics of the *umunna* as operated by the elderly generation

Perceived injustice against a family by the *umunna* could make the younger generation of the concerned family to distance themselves from the *umunna*.

Heavy levying by the *umunna* without giving due consideration to members' socioeconomic status.

Due to the misplaced values in today's traditional Igbo community, some think that with their money they can acquire anything they wish in life and, therefore, do not need the *umunna*. They forget that "onye nwere mmadu ka onye nwere ego". And also that "Mmadu ka e ji a ka!"

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Okuko ghara kpom, kpom, gini ka o ga-iji zua umu ya?* This is a proverb in Igbo that validates the fact that the needful must be done to ensure sustenance. The research findings have clearly demonstrated that the value of the *umunna* structure in the traditional Igbo society cannot be downplayed. It goes without saying that the needful should be done to ensure that the future upholder of this structure are actively involved in the *umunna* system to ensure proper mentorship and passage of our cultural values as it is said that "Okuko natu kpom, nwa ya a na-ene ya anya n'onu. (When the mother hen is pecking, the young chicks watch her beak). The following are therefore suggested ways of ensuring that the digital natives are actively involved in the *umunna* system:

Parents and elders should educate the younger generation on the importance and functionalities of the *umunna* structures within the traditional Igbo society.

The digital generation should be educated by their parents and elders on their cultural norms and values. Parents and elders should also facilitate and ensure the sociocultural integration of the younger generation. They should be taught to have a good knowledge of their cultural identity, be proud of it and uphold it wherever they may find themselves.

There should be consideration of the convenience of the meeting scheduled date and time to most people particularly the younger generation.

Levies should be apportioned according to the financial ability of each person.

There should be decentralisation of the *umunna* meeting for convenience and efficiency while maintaining the annual or biannual general meeting and get-together at the central obi.

The *umunna* modus operandi should be restructured to align with the challenges and needs of our present times. Cultural enlightenment programmes should be introduced during some sessions of the *umunna* meetings.

Digitalisation should be used to bridge physical distances. Leadership of the *umunna* meetings could explore the online virtual platforms to ensure that those that are not able to attend in person due to very cogent reasons are not left out in meeting sessions.

The opinions of the younger generations should be respected. They should be given room to vote and also to be voted into leadership positions, a condition of fairness.

The manning of the *umunna* should be by well-meaning objective-oriented leaders that will adopt an all-inclusive leadership approach devoid of self-seeking, biases and prejudices. The leadership must also uphold a high degree of financial integrity and transparency.

The *umunna* should periodically organise empowering programmes that promote the well-being of the youths.

General societal re-orientation should be mounted where evil is strongly condemned while love and togetherness are encouraged.

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