

Gender Influence in Yoruba Festivals: A Case Study of Agbaasin Festival in Isanlu-Isin, Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract : All over the world and in the history of mankind, festivals have evolved to celebrate one thing or the other. The Yoruba people are no exemptions and they have several festivals which they celebrate at different times, for different reasons and in different communities. Because mankind is mainly of male and female, most of the festivals involve the two sexes, though different roles are usually assigned. In this paper, the writers examine the influence of gender in Yoruba festival using 'Agbaasin' festival in Isanlu-Isin, Kwara State of Nigeria as a case study. A research was conducted by visiting the priests, worshippers, and shrine of 'Agbaasin' during which interviews were conducted, documented, and analyzed. It was, thereafter, discovered that men dominated the process of celebrating the 'Agbaasin' festival even to the extent of cooking by themselves. The paper recommends that women should be more involved in political and communal activities, government should encourage and sponsor researches on gender issues and that, authors of books and writers of plays should create some fora to encourage women empowerment among the Yoruba people. It is hoped that this paper would contribute to the pool of literature available on gender issues among the Yoruba people of Nigeria.

Keywords : gender, Yoruba, festival, Agbaasin, Isanlu-Isin, Kwara State

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