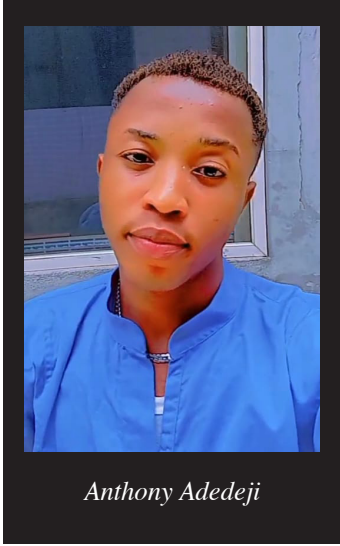


# FAMILY VALUES AND LIFESTYLE IN THE IGBO COMMUNITY OF NIGERIA.

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The Igbo community, predominantly located in southeastern Nigeria, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and strong emphasis on family values. Family is the cornerstone of Igbo society, playing a crucial role in shaping the community's social, economic, and spiritual life. This article explores the family values and lifestyles most common to the Igbo community,

highlighting their significance and how they influence the daily lives of the Igbo people.

## Family Structure and Roles:

The Igbo family structure is traditionally patriarchal, with the father serving as the head of the household. He is responsible for providing for the family, making key decisions, and maintaining order. The mother, while playing a supportive role, is equally important as the caretaker of the home, nurturing the children, and ensuring that the family's needs are met.

Children are considered blessings and are highly valued within the family. They are raised with a deep sense of respect for their elders and are taught the importance of contributing to the family's well-being from a young age. The extended family, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, also plays a significant role in the upbringing of children, fostering a sense of community and collective responsibility.

## Core Family Values include the following:

- **Respect for Elders:** Respect for elders is a fundamental value in the Igbo community. Elders are regarded as the custodians of wisdom and tradition. Their opinions are highly respected, and they play a key role in

decision-making processes within the family and the wider community.

- **Unity and Collectivism:** The Igbo people place a strong emphasis on unity and collectivism. Family members are expected to support one another in times of need, and the success of one member is often seen as the success of the entire family. This sense of collectivism extends beyond the immediate family to include the extended family and the broader community.
- **Hard Work and Education:** Hard work and education are highly esteemed in the Igbo community. Parents instill in their children the importance of diligence and perseverance. Education is seen as a pathway to success and is often pursued with the aim of improving the family's social and economic status.

## Modern Influences and Changes

In recent times, modern influences have brought changes to the traditional family values and lifestyle in the Igbo community. Urbanization, globalization, and economic pressures have led to shifts in family dynamics. For instance, the extended family system is gradually giving way to the nuclear family structure, particularly in urban areas. Additionally, the pursuit of education and careers has led to more individualistic lifestyles, especially among the younger generation.

However, despite these changes, the core values of respect for elders, unity, and the importance of family remain deeply ingrained in the Igbo community. Efforts are being made to preserve these values in the face of modernization, ensuring that the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo people continues to thrive.

Family values and lifestyle in the Igbo community are deeply intertwined, shaping the social fabric of the society. While modern influences have brought changes, the essence of the Igbo family's values continues to be respect, love and diversity.