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The Social Use of Batonu Personal Names

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Abstract

Previous researchers on the use of Batonu personal names argue that there are different categories of Batonu names and using thirty (30) respondents, the researchers submit that the use of Muslim names has replaced the use of Batonu native names in all domains. However, the present study, using three hundred (300) respondents, visited the study area and identifies names that are used as personal names among the Batonu people. It also examines the social use of the names in formal and informal domains. The research adopted the theory of Domains of language use by Ferguson (1966). Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data on the various uses of personal names in intra and inter group interactions. There were three findings. Some showed names that were drawn from Islam and Christianity. Some names were also drawn from Batonu native names. Two domains of name usage have been identified. The informal domains consisted of home/community, peer-group and play ground. The formal ones comprised school, places of worship, certificates, wedding cards, almanacs and work places. It is evident that the Batonu native names are still frequently used with foreign or Christian and Muslim names in formal and in informal domains although with different degrees of use. This present study has shown that although a foreign culture may have an overwhelming influence over an indigenous culture, it does not mean that the indigenous culture will not thrive especially if the indigenous culture has traditional activities that can help sustain it.

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Introduction

The history of Batonu people of Baruten local communities is the history of semi-autonomous kingdoms which originated from Borgu Empire (see Welmers, 1952; Sanusi, 1983). The original Borgu Empire was made up of the present Borgu in Nigeria and the present Borgu in the Republic of Benin. Originally, Borgu was also an empire of three brothers namely Woru of Bussa (eldest), Sabi of Nikki in Benin Republic and Bio of Illo (youngest) in Kebbi State of Nigeria. The three were sons of Kisra who led them across the Sahara from Arabia through Chad to the present day Borgu (Stawart, 1985). It will be recalled that Borgu was divided amongst the three brothers. Woru was put in charge of the east and central, and he found Bussa as his capital. Sabi took charge of the southern and

western areas and made Illo as his own capital. As a result, Borgu-Nigeria became divided into three divisions namely north, central and south. The north includes Illo, Kaoje and Kwanji. The central area is placed under Bussa while the south includes the kingdoms of Kenu, Banara, Tabira, Ilesha-Baruba (in Ilorin), Okuta and Yashikira to mention but a few. Each of the above districts claimed hegemony over others. Kosubosu (an hamlet) is chosen as its headquarters.

Geographically, the territory enclosed within 9^0 and 12^0 parallels of Latitude and 1st and 4th meridians of east Longitude comprising an area of about ten thousand (10, 000) square miles, is the South-Western Borgu which is referred to as 'Batonu' land in this research. This land lies within high plains with few hills around (Sabi, 2017). The plains are broken by valleys while wet and dry seasons are distinct. During the dry seasons, most festivals and ceremonies are celebrated in Batonu land. Batonu land also marks the Western end of the Middle Belt region of Nigeria in Kwara State and it is bordered on the west by an international boundary of the Republic of Benin; on the east, it shares boundary with Kaima in Kaima local government area of Kwara State; on the northern axis, it shares boundary with Niger State while on the south it shares with Ọyọ́ State in Nigeria. In the Republic of Benin; Batonu is spoken in places like Parakou, Nikki, Kandi and Nantitingou. The major Batonu-speaking areas in Nigeria include Kosubosu (its headquarters), Okuta, Ilesha-Baruba, Yashikira, Chikanda and Gwanara in Baruten local government of Kwara State. Some of her neighbouring languages in Nigeria include Bokobaru, Bisayan, Nupe and Yorùbá.

Furthermore, the Batonu land emerged as a result of the colonial occupation of the region, which led to its demarcation in 1899 between the French and the British people as a result of the scramble for territories between the major European powers (Sabi, 2017). Before the demarcation, both Nigerian and Dahomean Borgu was a single political entity that cherished a common tradition and ancestry. After so many complex series of negotiations, there came the Anglo-French convention in 1898. In that convention, Borgu was divided between the British and the French people; Fredrick Lugard (on British side) and Decoeur (on the French side) secured a treaty on Nikki. Nikki and its provinces were given to the French while Okuta, Yashikira, Ilesha-Baruba and Gwanara districts were given to the British. The area enslaved by the British is referred to as the Nigeria Borgu which is made up of the present Baruten and Kaiama local government areas of Kwara State and Borgu and Agwara local government areas of Niger State. The French Borgu is the area enslaved by the French under the control of Dahomey which is now the Benin Republic. The people of Batonu land are a homogenous society which has linguistic variations and remain a single political and geographical entity. Three broad descriptive terms could be used to identify the groups of people who dwell or inhabit Batonu land. These include the Aborigines, the Wassangaris and the Commoners who are subdivided into Gando and Mareyo.

Still on the history of the Batonu people, the Batonu land is predominantly a wooden region and the major occupation is farming. The Batonu people inhabited the savannah zone and are blessed with natural resources. Rainfall is ample and crop farming is common. They also supplement farming with hunting. Markets of the people of Batonu include Okuta market, Gure market, Ilesha-Baruba cattle market (in Kwara State), Chikanda market, Shinawa market, among others. People come from different parts of the country to purchase yams, yam flour (known as 'èlùbọ́' in Yorùbá), cassava, maize, guinea corn and groundnuts which are the major agricultural products of the people of Batonu for commercial purposes. Up till now, animals like sheep, goats, cattles and poultry serve as foods and for income while horses are kept for transportation and military purposes.

The Batonu people are also said to be good archers and good night-guards. Many of them have worked in neighbouring areas such as Yorùbá land. There is the belief that they have herbal prowess and this is the reason why it is claimed that one man alone can watch over a town or a village and be seen at various parts of such a town. But most of the Batonu natives who work as guards are said to have come

from Dahomean Borgu that is now in the Republic of Benin. These people are referred to as great warriors and herbal experts because they are said to have fought many wars with their neighbouring villages (Sabi, 2017).

Culturally, festivals of Batonu people also interest people and the festivals make people from different parts of the world to visit the area. Such festivals include the '*Gaani'* festival, the yam festival, the marriage ceremony, the naming ceremony, *Eid-el-Malud, Eid-el-Kabir* and *Eid-el-Fitri* festivals. Of all the festivals mentioned above, the '*Gaani'* festival seems to have gained much attention because it reminds the people of their common ancestry. The festival is a state festival and it is a well known, age-long festival that has been associated with the people. The festival is used to appease the Batonu land. It is, therefore, very paramount to the people and it helps the Batonu people economically, politically and socially. The '*Gaani'* festival is loved by all. The festival is celebrated and held with pride by the Batonu people. It has survived western and colonial influences, because its observation in the past years and in recent times is alike except for few modifications. The *Gaani* festival began as a means of celebrating the new yam before the advent of Islam.

Linguistically, Batonu is a language of the Gur, a sub-group of the Niger-Congo family of the Niger-Kordofanian phylum which is spoken in Nigeria (see Sanusi 1983, 2001). It is the language of the people called 'Batombu' or 'Batonu' (a name given to the native speakers). Both the language and its speakers are popularly referred to by non-native speakers such as Yorùbá and Hausa as "Baruba" or "Bariba" or Burgawa". Scholars like Welmers (1952) and Sanusi (1983) claim that they have voltaic and Sudanese roots and that their society is patrilineal. The Batonu language is spoken as a first language in two adjacent countries in West Africa: Nigeria and the Republic of Benin (Welmers, 1952, 1973; Sanusi, 1983; British Broadcasting Corporation, 1993). In all, native speakers of Batonu language are a little above 400,000 in both Nigeria and the Republic of Benin (Sabi, 2017). While the Batonu population in Nigeria is said to be 60,000, that of the Republic of Benin is 342,000 (see Vanderaa, 1991; Sabi, 2017).

Studies that have been conducted in the areas of naming and names are common in books and journal articles. Some of such researchers whose findings are in books include Searle (1958), Strawson (1959), Sowande and Ajanaku (1969), Adeoye (1972), Babalola and Alaba (2003) and Ogunwale (2003). Some others whose works have appeared in journals are Evans-Pritchard (1948), Geertz (1973), Goodenough (1965), Ekundayo (1977), Akinnaso (1980), Oyetade (1995) and Ikotun (2010, 2013, 2014). One deduction from the previous studies shows that while Evans-Pritchard (1948) and Geertz (1973) claim that names do not have semantic contents and that they are mere labels, other researchers argue that names have socio-cultural information because they are reflections of events, values and beliefs.

Furthermore, according to the previous researchers, names that are reflections of events, values and beliefs include names that are brought from heaven, names that show people's belief in deities, chieftaincy names, war names, nicknames, names that are given to those that die and are perceived to have been born again, names that exhibit family professions and the ones that show people's belief in reincarnation. Ikotun and Aladesanmi (2012) and Ikotun (2013) have also shown that the introduction and acceptance of Christianity in some areas of Nigeria have made some Nigerians to re-work their names. For example, while Ikotun (2013) argues that some names that are products of acculturation are being adopted by some Yorùbá people instead of the tradition-based Yorùbá personal names Ikotun and Aladesanmi (2012) report that some Yorùbá Christians have either deleted the noun phrases (NPs) of their surnames because the NPs show reference to some Yorùbá deities or replaced their surnames with biblical or Christian names. Another research endeavour that has to do with the focus of this present research is Fakuade et al (2018). Fakuade et al (2018) identify the different Batonu names and submit that the use of Muslim names has replaced the Batonu names in both formal and informal domains. In this paper, we are

interested in the use of Batonu personal names and three questions that have not been addressed by any of the previous researchers are (1) Have the Batonu native names been completely replaced by Muslim names? (2) Are there no occasions where Batonu native names are used? (3) Does it mean that Christian names are not used among the Batonu people? These questions will be addressed in this research work.

One area of previous research works that is of interest to our present study of Batonu personal names is culture. Culture is defined by Taylor (1892, p.1) as:

> *that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and all other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*

According to Andarh (1982, p.5) also,

> *Culture embraces all the material and nonmaterial expression of a people as well as the process with which the expressions are communicated. It has to do with all the social, ethical, intellectual, scientific, artistic and technological expressions and processes of a people usually ethnically and or nationally or supranationally related and usually living in a geographically contiguous area; what they pass on to their successors and how these are passed on.*

However, the interaction between naming and culture shows that previous researches on naming practices or personal names are in two categories. For example, Evans-Pritchard (1948) and Geertz (1973), who belong to the first group or category, claim that in some cultures, names are mere labels that do not have linguistic structure and semantic contents. The second category which comprises Searle (1958), Martins (1959), Strawson (1959) Goodenough (1965), Ekundayọ (1977), Akinnaso (1980), Adeniyi (2004) and Ikotun (2010, 2013, 2014) submits that names reflect events, values and beliefs which have psychological and socio-cultural information.

Furthermore, according to Akinnaso (1980), all human beings or group use personal names as a system of individual identification and that the linguistic and cultural implications vary from one culture to another and that the Yorùbá naming system is based on home contexts such as beliefs, lineage, individual social values and expectations. For example, Yorùbá names that are reflections of beliefs, lineage, individual social values and expectations have been divided into different categories and some examples are presented below (see also Ṣówándé and Àjànàkú 1969; Adéoyè, 1972; Babalọlá and Àlàbá 2003; Ìkọ̀tún, 2013; Ògúnwálé, 2016). The first category claims that there are some names that are called 'àmútòrunwá' (names that are brought from heaven) and some examples are: *Ìgè* (a child who presents the leg first rather than the head at birth) and *Ọ̀kẹ́* (a child born with an unbroken membrane). The second category is concerned with the names of Yorùbá deities or gods and they include: *Ògún* (The god of iron), *Èṣù* (The law enforcer) and *Ifá* (The god of wisdom) to mention but a few. The third category comprises names that are called 'ìnagije' (nicknames).

In addition, names that belong to the fourth category include 'orúkọ àbíkú' (names that are given to those that die and are perceived to have been born again or have staged a comeback). An example of such names is *Kúkọ̀yí* (Death rejected this one). Names that show individual social values and expectations like *Ọdúnọlá* (Festival of happiness) belong to the fifth category. The sixth category contains names that deal with 'iṣẹ́ ìdílé' (family professions) such as *Ọdẹ́wálé* (A hunter came home). The seventh category consists of names that show the Yorùbá people's belief in 'asẹ̀yìnwáyé' (reincarnation) like *Ìyábọ̀* (The mother came back) while names such as *Àbíkẹ́* (Praise name) and *Àkànjí* (Praise name) that are drawn from 'oríkì' (eulogy) belong to the eighth category. We agree with the previous researchers that claim that there is an interwoven relationship between naming and culture. We also want to submit that it is not only African names that are reflections of events, values and beliefs, names of people from several other ethnic groups of the world especially the Jews and the

Arabs also reflect values and beliefs. Some examples of such names among the Jews are as follows (see Insight on the Scriptures, 1988):

Ezra	(Help)
Joshua/Jehoshua	(Jehovah is Salvation)
Nehemiah	(Jehovah comforts)
Peleg	(Division)

Similarly, some examples below are also presented among the Arabs (see The Holy Quran):

Abdul Raheem	(The servant of God that is merciful)
Tahmeed	(Thanking God)
Miftau	(Key)
Hajara	(Stone)
Abdul Hakeem	(The servant of God that has wisdom).

In this study of Batonu personal names also we will determine the Batonu personal names that reflect events, values and beliefs.

Another area of interest to our present study of Batonu personal names is acculturation. Turnbull (2010) defines acculturation as "the adoption of the behaviour patterns of the surrounding culture". The surrounding culture, in this case especially in Nigeria, may mean Christian culture, Islamic culture and any other Nigerian culture like the case of Yorùbá culture in Ebira land. Research studies that show some African names as products of acculturation include Ìkọ̀tún and Aládésanmí (2012), Ìkòtún (2013) and Fakuade et al. (2018). Names that are products of acculturation which Africans now adopt either as first names or surnames can be classified into four categories. For example, Ìkọ̀tún and Aládésanmí (2012) report that while some Noun Phrases (NPs henceforth) of some Yorùbá personal names which show the names of some Yorùbá gods such as Ifá, Ògún, Ọya and Ṣàngó have been replaced with the Bible 'Olúwa' (Lord), some of such NPs have been deleted completely. Examples of such names are in categories A and B below.

Category A

Ògúnyẹ́mí ⟶ Olúwáyẹ́mí

(The god of iron fits me) (The Lord fits me)

Ògúnbùnmi ⟶ Olúwábùnmi

(The god of iron has given me) (The Lord has given me)

Ṣàngóḿbíyìí ⟶ Oluwabíyìí

(The god of thunder has given birth to this) (The Lord has given birth to this)

Category B

Fájẹ́milóhùn ⟶ Jẹ́milóhùn

(The god of wisdom made me to have a voice) (Let me have a voice)

Fágbénró ⟶ Gbénró

(The god of wisdom upheld me) (Uphold me)

Ògúnbíyìí ⟶ Bíyìí

(The god of iron has given birth to this) (Gave birth to this)

Ìkọ̀tún (2013) and Fakuade et al. (2018) have also discussed the adoption and use of foreign names by Africans. While Ìkọ̀tún (2013 discusses the adoption and use of Biblical and European names by some Yorùbá Christians, Fakuade et al. (2018) discuss the adoption and use of Islamic/Muslim names by the Batonu people. We want to add also that, at present, using personal names as a system of individual identification especially with reference to ethnicity, it is difficult to identify some Yorùbá Christians as Yorùbá and some Yorùbá Muslims also as Yorùbá. This is because while some Yorùbá Christians adopt Biblical or European names as first names and surnames, some Yorùbá Muslims adopt Islamic or Muslim names as first names and surnames. So, there are instances where some Yorùbá Christians are now addressed as "Daniel Enoch", "John David", "Johnson Macaulay" and "Benson Gold" while some Yorùbá Muslims are addressed as "Abdulganiyu Quadri", "Jimoh Usman", and "Abdulrazak Allison" to mention a few. However, one question that will be addressed in this present research is: Are there some Batonu personal names that have been modified or reworked or rejected?

The research work that has been carried out on the use of surnames among the Yorùbá sub-ethnic groups is also of interest to our present study. A surname is a name that is common to a family and is often used with the English titles such as Mr, Ms, Mrs or Miss (see also Turnbull, 2010: 1503). Ìkòtún (2014) argues that surnames form one of the parameters that can be used to distinguish the Yorùbá sub-ethnic group members from one another and such surnames which indicate Yorùbá sub-ethnic group affinities are tradition-based personal names which depict traditional religions or deities that were peculiar to each Yorùbá sub-ethnic group before the advent of Christianity. According to him, the tradition - based surnames now serve as reminders of the religious activities of the Yorùbá people before the advent of Christianity.

Similarly, three other inferences can be drawn from the use of tradition-based surnames. First, the use of tradition-based surnames can also help to distinguish a member of one ethnic group from another. For example, tradition-based surnames such as *Dúrójayé* (Stay to enjoy life), *Ògúnyẹ́mí* (The god of Iron fits me) and *Fáṣèyí* (The god of wisdom made this) will indicate the users of the surnames as Yorùbá while users of surnames like *Uzor* (A road for success), *Orji* (Nothing will happen to me because I am a god of myself) and *Mbadiwe* (The villagers are angry) are from the Igbo ethnic group. Second, there are some names whether tradition-based or not which can help to distinguish members of a family from another members of another family in a community. Such names may include 'Fájémisin' (Ifá has allowed me to worship), 'Odewale' (The hunter has come home) and 'Ayodele' (Joy has reached home) to mention a few. Third, the linguistic and cultural information contained or present in tradition-based names show how the users of such names see and interpret the world around them. Again, in this work, we will find out if the Batonu personal names still include tradition-based names.

The study of domains with reference to language use and language maintenance is also relevant to our present study of Batonu personal name usage. Studies that have been conducted with reference to domains include Ferguson (1966), Kaye (1972), Gambhir (1983), Ìkọ̀tún and Soyoyè (2002). According to Ferguson (1966), there are three dialects of the Arabic language and that while one of the dialects is the standard variety that is used in inter-group interactions, the other two which are Christian and Muslim dialects are the low varieties and are used in intra-group interactions. He also argues that the varieties, that are functionally kept apart, are genetically related and they have mutual intelligibility. However, reactions from Kaye (1972), Gambhir (1983), Ìkọ̀tún and Soyoyè (2002) show that Ferguson's (1966) distinction between the High and Low varieties is debatable. They argue that while some elite may use the High variety in both intra and inter-group interactions, those who are not well read and who are likely to be in the majority will certainly use the Low varieties in formal and informal domains or intra and inter-group interactions.

We agree with Kaye (1972), Gambhir (1983), Ìkọ̀tún and Soyoyè (2002) because the

highly educated ones may decide to use the High variety in both formal and informal domains while the illiterates will use the Low varieties in both formal and informal domains as well. We are also of the opinion that, considering the socio-linguistic studies carried out by Gòkè-Paríọlá (1983), Ẹkúndayọ̀ (1977), Oyetade (1990) and Ikọ̀tun (2006) on code-mixing and linguistic borrowing, it is not unlikely that speakers of the High and Low varieties will code-mix words from the varieties that are available in their linguistic repertoire both in inter and intra-group interactions. In other words, we insist that the educated and the uneducated will use both the tradition-based and foreign names that are known to them as forms of address in inter and intra-group interactions. However, in our present study of Batonu personal names, we will consider the concept of language use by Ferguson (1966). This will help us to determine the domains of personal name usage among the Batonu people of Nigeria.

Language shift or name shift is also of interest to our present study of Batonu personal names. According to Fishman (1991), language shift is a "process whereby intergenerational continuity of the heritage languages is proceeding negatively with fewer speakers, readers, writers and even understanders." Evidence from existing studies on personal names shows that Fishman's (1991) definition of l anguage shift can also include name shift. For example, a research carried out by Fakuade et al. (2018) on Batonu personal names shows that there is a shift in Batonu naming practices. They argue that the shift is caused by the introduction and acceptance of the Islamic religion in the Batonu land. We agree with Fakuade et al. (2018) that the phenomenon of foreign cultural systems namely Islam and Christianity has strongly affected the use of tradition-based names especially as first names among several ethnic groups of the world particularly where Islam and Christianity are dominant.

As far as first names are also concerned, we can say that, using Fishman's (1991) definition, name shift is not only a process where intergenerational continuity of the tradition- based names is proceeding negatively with fewer users but also with high detestation by several people. But, there is a difference between Christian and Muslim influence on naming practices among some ethnic groups in Nigeria. Among the Yorùbá Christians, first names are in two categories. The first category comprises names that are drawn from the Bible and they include John, Paul, Luke, Abraham, Mary, Dorcas and Joseph to mention a few. The second category consists of names or derivations that are sentences which may have the Biblical *Olúwa* (Lord) as their NPs or may appear as verbal phrases (VPs) and the names will reflect the parental beliefs, aspirations and desires. Examples of new derivations which some Yorùbá parents now adopt as names for their children are: *Tijésùnimí* or *Tijésù* or *Nimí* (I am for Jesus) and *Tolúwani* or *Tolú* (He/She is for the Lord). The case with the Muslims is different because Arabic names are still preferred and are commonly used. For example, only names like Ibrahim, Hajarat, Sekinat, Bashir and Mohammed to mention a few are still adopted by the Muslims.

However, in view of our knowledge of Yorùbá and Igbo cultural systems of inter-generational continuity of *Ọlọ́jọ́* festival at Ilé-Ifẹ̀ or *Ọ̀ṣun Òṣogbo* festival in Òṣogbo or *New Yam* festival in Igbo land and the naming practices, it is not unlikely that there are some Batonu people who, though their parents are Muslims and they were given Muslim names at birth, decide to endorse the Batonu cultural norms and the naming practices now that they are of age. We are of this opinion because there are instances where some Yorùbá people whose ages are below forty years and who are addressed *Ifáṣèyí* (The god of wisdom made this one), *Ifáyẹ́mí* (The god of wisdom fits me) and *Ifásanmí* (The god of wisdom is beneficial to me) even when their parents answer either Christian or Muslim names. In our present study of the Batonu naming practices, we want to expand the scope of the existing studies and find out if Christianity also has a negative effect on the Batonu naming practices. In our opinion too, we are not convinced that thirty (30) respondents are sufficiently representative of the sixty thousand (60,000) Batonu speakers. Therefore, we will use three hundred (300) respondents so as to confirm whether there is a shift from the use of Batonu names to the use

of only Muslim names as revealed by Fakuade, et al. (2018).

Methodology

This study is descriptive and it adopted the theory of domains of language use by Ferguson (1966). The data for the research were collected from three sources: attendance registers in primary and secondary schools where bio-data of students were clearly shown. This was to ascertain personal names that were used in schools. Questionnaires were used to collect data on the various personal names in the home and intra-peer group interactions. Data from this source helped to ensure natural language use with reference to personal names that were used in intra-group interactions. Similarly, data from the school domain as well as data from home and intra-peer group interactions helped us to confirm if there were differences between personal names that were used in formal and in informal domains. Interviews were also conducted among some elderly Batonu people in Kwara State to determine the cultural factors that influence the use of personal names that were given to children when they were born. Three hundred people were randomly selected for the interview.

Results and Discussion

This section contains the presentation of findings and the analysis. The findings show the use of Batonu personal names which comprise Batonu native and Christian/Muslim names in both formal and in informal domains. The findings and the analysis are divided into two sub-sections. The information in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 below shows the different categories of names that are adopted as personal names among the Batonu people.

Table 1. Religious names

Islamic Names			Christian Names	
S/N	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
1.	Zakari	Fatimoh	Joshua	Dorcas
2	Mohammed	Rukayat	Daniel	Janet
3	Yahaya	Halimat	Isaac	Hannah
4	Yusfu	Jelilat	Emmanuel	Ruth
5	Jimoh	Hawawu	John	Elizabeth
6	Abdullahi	Nafisat	David	Mary
7	Abdukabir	Sekinat	Gideon	Martha
8	Abdulkareem	Ayishatu	Ezekiel	Comfort
9	Ibrahim	Fausat	Peter	Deborah
10	Bashiru	Jemilat	Paul	Esther

In Table 1 above, there are two categories of names. The first category consists of Islamic names while the second category comprises Christian names.

Table 2. The use of Batonu personal names in Formal Domains

DOMAINS	RESPONDENTS	BATONU NAMES	MUSLIM/ CHRISTIAN NAMES	TOTAL IN FIGURES	PERCENTAGE (%)
School:					
Primary	40	24(60%)	16(40%)	40	100%
Secondary	35	20(57.14%)	15(42.85)	35	99.99%
Tertiary	25	15(60%)	10(40%)	25	100%
Church:	100	73 (73%)	27 (23%)	100	100%
Mosque	100	68 (68%)	32 (32%)	100	100%
Certificates:					
Birth/Death registration:	100	62 (62%)	38 (38%)	100	100%
Marriage.	100	59 (59%)	41 (41%)	100	100%
Wedding cards	100	57 (57%)	43 (43%)	100	100%
Almanacs of Batonu Couples.	100	60 (60%)	40 (40%)	100	100%
Workplace	100	66 (66%)	34 (34%)	100	100%

From Table 2 above, it can be observed that about 24 of the respondents, representing 60% of the population used Batonu native names in primary schools while in secondary schools, 20 respondents, representing 57.14% used Batonu native names. In the tertiary institutions, 15 of the respondents, representing 60% used Batonu native names. In the religious circle (church/mosque), the result showed that 73% (73) of the respondents who are Christians and 68% (68) of the respondents who are Muslims used foreign names (Christian/Muslim names), while 27% (27) and 32% (32) of the respondents used Batonu native names.

At work place, 66% (66) of the respondents used Batonu native names while 34% (34) used foreign names. On certificates of birth and death, the result revealed that 68% (68) of the respondents used Batonu native names as against 32% (32) who used religious/foreign names. 59% (59) of the respondents used Batonu native names under marriage registration while 41 % (41) used religious/foreign names. 60% (60) of the respondents used Batonu native names on Almanacs while 40% (40) used foreign names. Here, Batonu native names and foreign names were used but there is a more preponderance in the use of Batonu native names over Christian/Muslim names.

Table 3: The use of Batonu personal names in Informal Domains.

DOMAINS	RESPONDENTS	BATONU NAMES	MUSLIM/ CHRISTIAN NAMES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)
Home/Community	100	88 (88%)	22 (22%)	100	100%
Naming	100	72 (72%)	28 (28%)	100	100%
Peer-groups	100	74 (74%)	26 (26%)	100	100%
Playground	100	75 (75%)	25 (25%)	100	100%

Table 3 shows the use of Batonu native names in informal domains. Such domains include homes / communities, peer group/ playground. The Table shows that 88% (88) of the respondents used Batonu native names at homes/ communities as against 22% (22) of the respondents that used Christian/Muslim names. 74% (74) of the respondents used Batonu native names among peers in their various groups while 26% (26) used religious names. On playground, 75% (75) of the respondents used Batonu native names while 25% (25) of the respondents that comprised Muslims and Christians used non-Batonu native names. Here, the use of Batonu native names is predominant over religious names in informal domains because Batonu native names are culture-based.

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Table 4. Use of Batonu and Muslim/Christian Names

Age	N	Name at Home/ Community		Name known at School		Name known at Workplace		Name known on Birth/Death Certificates		Name on Wedding Cards		Name on Almanacs		Name in Mosque/ Church			Name on Playground		Name among Peer group	
		B	M/C	B	M/C	B	M/C	B	M/C	B	M/C	B	M/C	B	M	C	B	M/C	B	M/C
6-12	100	88 (88%)	22 (22%)	59 (59%)	41 (41%)	-	-	62 (62%)	38 (38%)	-	-	-	-	47 (47%)	34 (34%)	19 (19%)	75 (75%)	25 (25%)	74 (74%)	26 (26%)
13-20	100	76 (76%)	24 (24%)	56 (56%)	44 (44%)	-	-	59 (59%)	41 (41%)	-	-	-	-	45 (45%)	38 (38%)	17 (17%)	70 (70%)	30 (30%)	71 (71%)	29 (29%)
21-30	100	63 (63%)	37 (37%)	54 (54%)	46 (46%)	61 (61%)	39 (39%)	57 (57%)	43 (43%)	55 (55%)	45 (45%)	64 (64%)	36 (36%)	59 (59%)	31 (31%)	10 (10%)	78 (78%)	22 (22%)	84 (84%)	16 (16%)
31-40	100	66 (66%)	34 (34%)	58 (58 %)	42 (42 %)	59 (59%)	41 (41 %)	55 (55%)	45 (45%)	58 (58%)	42 (42%)	60 (60%)	40 (40%)	53 (53%)	33 (33%)	14 (14%)	75 (75%)	25 (25%)	74 (74%)	26 (26%)
41-50	100	63 (63%)	37 (37%)	55 (55%)	45 (45%)	57 (57%)	43 (43%)	53 (53%)	47 (47%)	56 (56%)	44 (44%)	58 (58%)	42 (42%)	52 (52%)	25 (25%)	23 (23%)	74 (74%)	26 (26%)	72 (72%)	28 (28%)1
51-60	100	61 (61%)	39 (39%)	68 (68 %)	32 (32 %)	79 (79 %)	21 (21 %)	74 (74 %)	26 (26 %)	60 (60%)	40 (40%)	65 (65%)	35 (35%)	54 (54%)	26 (24%)	20 (20%)	72 (72%)	28 (28%)	62 (62%)	38 (38%)
61-70+	100	64 (64%)	36 (36%)	66 (66%)	34 (34%)	73 (73%)	27 (27%)	75 (75%)	25 (25%)	62 (62%)	38 (38%)	61 (61%)	39 (39%)	56 (56%)	25 (25%)	19 (19%)	70 (70%)	30 (30%)	64 (64%)	36 (36%)

Legend:
N = Number of respondents
B = Batonu name
M = Muslim name
C= Christian name
M/C=Muslim/Christian name

Table 4 distinguishes the use of Batonu native names from the religious names in various domains. The domains include home/community, school, workplace, names on certificates, on wedding cards and on almanacs. It is evident from the findings that 88% (88) of the respondents made use of Batonu native names at home as against 22% (22) who used religious names. This is an indication that Batonu native names are more preferred and used at home/community than religious names. 72% (72) of the respondents claimed that Batonu native names are used during naming while 28% (28) used foreign names. Among the peer-groups, 74% (74) made use of Batonu native names as against 26% (26) who used Muslim/Christian names. On the play ground, 75% (75) of the respondents adopted Batonu native names as against 25% (25) that used foreign names.

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from the information in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4. For example, in Table 1 above, there are two categories of names. The first category consists of Islamic names while the second category comprises Christian names. This means that, it is not only Muslim names that are used in Batonu, Christian names are also used. This finding is contrary to Fakuade et al (2018) who only recognize the use of Muslim names alone. Based on this finding, it can be argued that this present study has provided additional information to the previous work. Similarly, from Table 2 above, it is clearly shown that the use of Batonu native names gained dominance over foreign names (Muslim/Christian) at different levels of education. The reason for this is not far-fetched. Batonu people believe so much in their culture and they hold naming in high esteem. This is why they cling to their native names.

In the religious circle (church / mosque), it is evident that most of the adherents of these foreign religions prefer to be called by the names associated with their faith, particularly when they are within their religious circles. Those foreign religions discriminate against names in Batonu. Hence, this result is in line with Fakuade et.al (2018) where they revealed the dominance of only Muslim names over the Batonu native names. However, it is not only Muslim names that are used; Christian names are also used as shown in Table 1. The dominance of Batonu native names over all other names at workplace shows that the place of work consists of so many tribes and many people want to be identified with their places of origin. On the issuance of certificates of birth and death, it was observed that Batonu native names were more frequently used than foreign names. This again indicates that the Batonu people have implicit belief in their culture. In informal domains as shown in Table 3, the use of Batonu names is more frequent. This means that the Batonu native names are culture-based.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the data presented above is that Batonu people are more favourably disposed to the use of their native names than Christian/Muslim names which they considered as names that were not indigenous to them. The reason for their positive disposition or loyalty to the use of indigenous names is not farfetched. First, the Batonu community is largely or predominantly an agrarian society with over 90% of the inhabitants being illiterate. As a result of their occupation and their rustic lifestyle, their loyalty to their native names is never in doubt. Second, Batonu is a minority language group, therefore, users of the native names may continue to see the need for the use of the native names in order to preserve their identity as well as preserve their culture from going into extinction. Third, it is to be noted that the information in Tables 2 and 3 is in agreement with the information in Table 4. This implies that the culture of the Batonu people inexorably impinges on their socio-cultural lives as it is reflected in their preference for native names as against foreign names.

Similarly, since hegemony of Christianity and Islam in the Batonu community does not seem to have impacted positively on their

lives, it may be said that the Batonu people display a high level of patronage to their native names. The present research work has shown that although a foreign culture may appear to have an overwhelming influence over an indigenous culture, it does not mean that the indigenous culture will not thrive especially if the indigenous culture has traditional activities that can help to sustain it. However, are there differences between the Batonu native names in Nigeria and that of the Republic of Benin? The answer to this question can be the focus of another paper.

Conclusion

We have identified different Batonu native names as well as Christian and Muslim names that are used among the Batonu people. The Batonu native names include: pre-ordained names, circumstantial/event names, lower/upper class names, chieftaincy/title names, occupational/professional names, reincarnated/ancestral names and derogatory/nicknames. We have argued that the Batonu people and some African ethnic groups share the same world-view with reference to naming in some cases. We have also examined the use of Batonu personal names and have shown how Batonu personal names are used in formal and informal domains. The research revealed that the use of Batonu native names is more predominant than the use of Christian/Muslim names in almost all domains except in the religious domain where most of the religious faithful show their adherence to Islam or Christianity. Our position is that the use of Batonu native names is more dominant than the use of Christian/Muslim names. This is in agreement with the number of respondents that claimed more frequent use of Batonu native names than the Christian/Muslim names. For example, while the use of Muslim and Christian names constituted about 26.72 percent of all the names in Batonu, the use of native names represented 73.28 percent. Therefore, this present finding is at variance with Fakuade et al. (2018) who claimed that the Batonu people favoured the use of Muslim names in both formal and informal domains.

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