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The Kinship and Cultural Ties of Ogbaru: *An Interconnected Igbo Community Across State Boundaries*

By Chukwunwike Ossai

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By Chukwunwike Ossai · Cultural Heritage · Ozikoro.com

Ogbaru is one local government area(LGA) that is in Anambra state, in south-central Nigeria, and its headquarters is Atani, one big port town that is near the Niger River. It's not just land, Ogbaru, it's a home for plenty of Igbo people who have deep roots and strong family connections that pass through Anambra. Ogbaru...



Young men of Ogbaru, during the Ogbaru boat festival photo @mr_nhn

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in south-central Nigeria, and its headquarters is Atani, one big port town that is near the Niger River. It's not just land, Ogbaru, it's a home for plenty of Igbo people who have deep roots and strong family connections that pass through Anambra. Ogbaru people share blood and culture with people like Anioma in the Delta State and Ndoni in the River State, showing that they are like one big family with history, tradition, and a river that joins together. The place that Ogbaru is and who is there, Ogbaru sat down close to the Niger River in his West side, from Okpoko that's is going up to Ogwu-lkpele that's near Rivers state down south. The Orashi River marks its east, separating it from places like Ogwu-Aniocha and Ossomala. Other Igbo neighbours like Ihiala, Okija, Ozubulu, Oraifite, Ogbaru, and Oba are in the northeast. Inside Ogbaru, you will see plenty of towns and villages: Atani, Odekpe, Ochuche, Umunankwo, Okpoko, Obeagwe, Amiyi, Ohita, Ogwu-lapel, Ossomala, and more. Ogbaru has about 197,800 people, mostly Igbo, who speak Igbo very well. Christianity is the main religion that holds the ground there. How kinship works in Ogbaru: In Igbo culture, kinship is a big deal that involves blood, marriage, and how you connect with your people. In Ogbaru, this family tie is not a small matter. They have a tight bond with Anioma in Delta and Ndoni in Rivers because they share an old history and lineage. A long time before the white man drew the state line, these areas had been rolling together, trading, marrying, and living as one. Even now that the state has scattered them, that family vibe is still strong. Anioma side: Anioma People in Delta are mostly ndi Igbo too, and they have towns like Agbor that have been rolling with Ogbaru. The Niger River that passes both places is like a wire that connects them. They farm, fish, and even fight alike. Some Ogbaru people on the west side of the river, like Oko-Amakom and Umuolu, are inside Delta now, but they still feel like one with Ogbaru. Ndoni Link: The Ndoni people in Rivers State are near Ogbaru, too. They are still close to the river and get the same blood. Their farming, fishing, and fighting methods in old times matched. Some said it's moving around freely, and trade joined them way back This kinship is not just mouthed. It shows in marriage, festivals, and how they used to help each other. For example, at the Ogbaru Boat Regatta



Festival, you can see Anioma or Ndoni people coming to join, proving that family ties are still kicking. How they live and what they hold them with Ogbaru people are farmers and fishermen from old times. The Niger River and its small stream give them plenty of fish, and they grow Rice, yam, and cassava that feed Anambra and Delta markets. During the Biafra war, Ogbaru lacked food stores, even though the roads didn't reach them very well. They have a warrior spirit, too—stories say they know how to fight to guard their own. The family system is tight. In Igbo land, there are Umunna of people who come from one ancestor. In Ogbaru, this Umunna group usually runs marriage, land, and even how they settle disputes. If you were born in Atani, your kin can reach Ochuiche or cross the river and go to Anioma. Marriage can join families more—a man from Odekpe can marry a Ndoni woman, and they will go and still call each other “Nna” (father) or “Nne” (mother) in respect. History and How Kinship Grows Ogbaru was there before the white men landed. They have their leader and way of ruling that doesn't need a king - every village has its leader. The Niger River made them meet traders and church people early, like in 1904 when the Anglican church showed up in Atani. This open door made them mix with the outside, but they didn't lose their root. The kinship between Anioma and Ndoni started long ago. Some say people moved along the river, and some say a trade brought it. Like Agbor, which used to bring big trade, the Ogbaru people paddled canoes to meet them. Even when colonial people split them into states, that blood tie didn't cut; it was like the thread that held cloth tight. How things are now Today, Ogbaru still feels that kinship, but life has twisted small. Floods used to disturb them very well. Places like Ogwu-Ikpele, Ossomala, and Atani suffer when the Niger River rise. Trade is still there, but it's not like before when they used to run river businesses. The second Niger Bridge that they are building can bring them closer to the other Igbo people and south-south, but it won't change. The family they have with Anioma and Ndoni. They are still united abroad, like the Ogbaru National Association in the USA. They are doing scholarships and projects to keep Ogbaru strong, showing that kinship is not dying. Even if you are in America, your roots are still calling you. Ogbaru is a land of family

that didn't just stop in Anambra. It's a kinship with Anioma and Ndoni through the Niger River, joining Igbo people across states. They are farmers, fishermen, and warriors who know how to hold their own, and their family tie keeps them standing. Whether it's for the festival, marriage, or just helping each other, Ogbaru people will show that kinship is a power that can't be broken easily.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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An enthusiast in tech with deep passion for studying and showcasing the vibrant cultural heritage of southern Nigeria . Combining my skill with my obsession towards African history and traditions to create contributions that impacts the digital space.



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