

# PRESERVING IDENTITY: A SOCIO-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF YORUBA FAMILY COMPOUND NAMES IN OFFA TOWN

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## Abstract

*Names are related to history and tradition because names of things and objects provide the source of origin of each of the objects or things they name. This study is a socio-semantic analysis of selected family compound names in Yoruba language with particular focus on Offa town in relation to their literal meaning and socio-cultural function(s). Reference is made to the semantic features of the names in order to indicate their English equivalent translations for clarification and adequate understanding of the analysis of the work. Oral interview technique was the instrument for data collection and the data was analysed using Bertrand Russell's Descriptive Theory of Meaning which is a socio-semantic analysis using Descriptive Content, Meaning through Descriptions, Reference and Description, Cultural and Social Context. This framework provides a structured way to analyse the rich semantic layers embedded in the family compound names of Offa town, helping to reveal their deeper significance within the community. Visits were made to the heads of the family compounds considered and relevant questions on the historical source of the origin of each of the family compound names as well as the reason for its emergence and meaning were asked. It reveals that the primary functions of the names are for identification, for indicating directions and locations and these names possess socio-cultural importance based on the relationships they share with the linguistic community where the names originated from.*

**Keywords:** Family Compound names, Linguistic Community, Historical Experiences, Culture Offa

## Introduction

Languages are elaborately structured and this forms the basis for their descriptions. Language, as defined by Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021), is a system of conventional symbols employed not only for communication but also for cultural expression identity formation, and the construction of meaning within specific social contexts. This view underscores the central role of language in both reflecting and shaping social realities, making it an essential tool for understanding how naming practices function within a community. In the context of this study, language serves as a vital means through which the semantics and socio-cultural values embedded in family compound names in Offa town are communicated and preserved. Literal meaning (description) of

these names directly corresponds to the social realities they signify whether those are occupations, reputations, values or clan histories. Names and the act of naming are as old as the origin of human beings, human languages and the society in general. Searle (2010) suggest that a name is a linguistic device used to refer to an object, person, or entity, and its functions as a marker of identity. Naming is an activity that can never be neglected especially because of its historical significance in the traditional and contemporary society. A family compound name is literally known as 'Oruko Agbo Ile' in Yoruba language. It is one of the most reliable means of identification and of indicating or showing the direction of a place within Offa linguistic community. Most of the names which were given to respective Offa family compounds are as

old as the historical origin of the town. This then means that the names were given based on the ancestral origin and on the kind of things that were associated with and were peculiar to each family in Offa traditional society.

However, despite the above mentioned social functions that a family compound name performs in Offa community, the problems demanding answers here are two. The first one is that younger generations of some of the family compounds are abandoning the names of their compounds due to reasons ranging from social to religious not bothering about the socio-cultural effects and consequences of such an action.

Also, due to extended family expansions and increase in the family sizes, members of these families especially the younger generations tend to relocate their immediate family members to other areas of the town and build their own apartments where they live to be independent and enjoy more comfort. Such members do not often retain their original family compound names which at times they consider out dated thus they abandon the names of the compounds. The younger generation are probably unaware that the names which formed the origin of each compound are a source of pride and honour to the respective families bearing them. Such names, as given also have values associated with their meanings. This, then, means that once the names are abandoned, the values they possess also vanish with them and the youth born into these houses also lose their identity associated with their family compound names. It is against this background that this study is set to be conducted to explain the meaning of each family compound name and state the social cultural functions of it in order to alter the reasoning of the generation of children born into the family compound with the hope that unexpected consequence that may be caused by such a social deviation resulting

in loss of values and self-identity from these names are avoided. Thus, this study explores the socio-semantic analysis of family compound names in Offa town.

Sociolinguistics, which studies the relationship between language and society, is a broad field of linguistic studies. Wardhough (2011) defines sociolinguistics as the study of the relationship between language and society that uses it. He explains that language both reflects and shapes social structures ‘Sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with the goal of better understanding the structure of language and how languages function in communication’.

Family compound names in Offa are linguistic items embedded in a specific socio-cultural context. By analysing them this research is exploring how language reflect social identities, family histories, occupations, status or values within Offa town. This aligns with Wardhaugh’s idea that language carries social meanings.

Saeed (2022) defines semantics as the study of meaning in language it encompasses the analysis of words, phrases, sentences, and text to understand how meaning is conveyed. Semantics investigate various aspect such as words meanings, sentence structures and the relationship between linguistic forms and their meanings.

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the study of meaning in language. It examines how meaning is expressed through linguistic element such as words, phrases and sentences. Unlike syntax, which deals with the arrangement of these element, or phonetics, which addresses their pronunciation, semantics is solely concerned with the meaning conveyed by linguistic objects.

Socio-semantic is an interdisciplinary field that explores the relationship between social factors and the meaning of words and expression within a

language. It combines insights from sociology, linguistics, and semantics to understand how social context influence the way meaning are constructed perceived, and communicated. Socio-semantics studies how social context influence the meaning of words and expression and the interaction between linguistic structures and social environments, highlighting the role of structures and processes in shaping meaning (Van Dijk, 2009).

This study examines how language functions within social contexts to convey meanings and where meanings are shaped by social interactions and cultural practices.

### **Brief Sociolinguistic and Historical Setting of Offa**

Olafimihan (1940) says, the Offa people speak Yoruba, which is one of the major languages in Africa and one of the principal languages of Nigeria, along with Hausa and Igbo. It is spoken by one of the largest ethnic and cultural groups of Nigeria. Offa town in the sociolinguistic setting speak the Ibolu dialect of Yoruba language which originated from the town. Offa is the headquarters of the Ibolu communities and a major town geographically situated in the North Central region of Nigeria, specifically in Kwara state. Geographically it is part of the Yoruba speaking region in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Many researches have been carried out on the concept of names and naming most especially with respect to personal names, praise names, family names, surnames, cognomens, nick names as well as inscriptions on vehicles. Similarly, the problem of naming in Yoruba land is not new but literature available to the researcher shows that little has so far been done on family compound names, especially with reference to Offa linguistic community. Family compound names in Offa town are a significant part of the

community's cultural heritage and social identity. These names encapsulate a wealth of historical, cultural, and social information. However, despite their importance, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding and documentation of the socio-semantics of these names. This study seeks to fill this gap by systematically analysing the meanings, origins, and socio-cultural implications of family compound names in Offa Town thereby preserving this aspect of the community's intangible heritage and contributing to the broader field of socio-linguistics, anthro linguistic/ ethno-linguistic and cultural studies.

### **Research Questions**

- i What are the literal and idiomatic meanings of each of the family compound names in Offa linguistic community?
- ii How do Offa Yoruba language speakers generally relate/interpret the meaning of each of the family compound names to the source of its origin based on social reality?
- iii What are the socio-cultural functions that surround each family compound name in Offa?

### **Review of Related Literature**

Names serve as a means of indicating an identity and of showing a direction, however, the social cultural functions of a name has gone beyond this importance. Names have both cultural and semantic functions to perform in the contemporary society. Available literature has shown that names perform a variety of functions in our traditional and modern societies. Abdulrasheed (2014) observes that names are basically given for differentiation of people to ease identification. She also asserts that most African names are given for socio-cultural reasons because someone's name is believed to be the reflection of his future.

She is also of the opinion that names go far as shaping and moulding a person's character and how one's life would be. It can then be added to the foregoing discussion that our names are capable of reflecting some aspects of our traditional culture, individuality, as well as traditional occupations that are associated with our ancestral origins.

Abdulasheed (2014) identifies eight different anthroponomastic divisions of names as follows:

- \* Given names which are also known as personal names or first names.
- \* Surnames which she terms family names or last names and are shared with other members of the child's immediate family.
- \* Matronyms which are family names inherited from one's mother, maternal grandmother or any other female ancestor.
- \* Nicknames which are names added to or substituted for the proper names or substituted for the proper names of people as in affection, ridicule or familiarity.
- \* Clan names which denote a group of people united by kinship and decent. She adds that these kind of names are given in that respect to share common ancestor which is a symbol of the clan's unity.
- \* Patronymys which are names based on the given names of one's father, grandfather or even an earlier male ancestor.
- \* Teknonyms which is the practice of referring to parents by names of the children especially the first child of the family.
- \* Ethnonyms which are names applied to given ethnic groups. She further divides this sub-division into two categories:
  - i. Autonyms/Exonyms which is the name of the ethnic groups been created by another group of people; and

- ii. Endonyms which denote self-designation, where the names are created and used by the ethnic groups themselves.

It has been buttressed from the foregoing discussion that, like most family compound names in Yoruba land, compound names in the Offa traditional society are highly symbolic in that they are traditional names designated for easy identification, and location. Such names, as derived by the traditional ancestors, are also provided based on traditional occupations of the immediate linguistic communities, different indigenous traditional and modern forms/modes of worship, migration and settlements, royalty, war and conquest, traditional artefacts, new extensions, colonial residency among others.

### **Family Compound Name**

A family compound name is referred to as 'Oruko Agbo Ile' in Yoruba language. Such a name as defined can be seen as an inscription on a house which serves as one of the most reliable means of identification and of indicating or showing the direction of a place within Offa linguistic community. Names here are signs which consist of a signifier and a signified with a relationship of a signification linking them. Most of the names are given based on their ancestral origin and on the kind of things that were associated with and were peculiar to each family in Offa traditional society. This could also be lineage name borne by children as passed on from one generation of a clan or compound to the other. A clan in this case, may be defined as a group of related families mostly born by blood living in different households but still being given a compound name as is the case with most parts of Yoruba land in the South West of Nigeria. Faleke (2010) observes that a family compound name denotes the ancestral origin of a group of people that are related by blood which can either be in the extended or nuclear family system. She states further that, in Yoruba

land, a family compound name has been held in high esteem in that it gives a clue to the ancestral origin of people who are related by birth. In view of this, such a name can then be said to be hereditary and ensures a continued remembrance of the lineage of the bearer(s) for a very long time.

### Names and the Yoruba Culture

Like in most other languages and cultures, Yoruba names are well reflected in

| <b>Oruko (name)</b> | <b>Oriki (pet name)</b> | <b>Orile (totem)</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.a <i>Abiodun</i>  | <i>Alao</i>             | <i>Erin</i>          |
| b <i>Fagbemi</i>    | <i>Akande</i>           | <i>Ogo</i>           |

On one hand, *Oruko* means a name while *Orile* can be described as a foundation and crucially important in tracing a pedigree or an origin. *Oriki*, on the other hand, is a praise name. Oduyoye again culled from Johnson (1969), describe an *Oriki* as: an attributive name, what a child is, what he or she is hoped to become. If a male, it is always expressive of something heroic, brave or strong; if a female, it is a term of endearment or praise. In either case, it is intended to have a stimulating effect on the individual.

### Theoretical Framework

Bertrand Russell's descriptive theory of meaning is adopted in analysing the current research. Russell's Descriptive Theory of meaning, proposes that names and definite descriptions serves not merely as linguistic labels, but as expressions that refer to or denote specific entities, individuals or facts in the real world. For Russell the meaning of a name lies in its capacity to describe and pick out its referent, often through embedded descriptive content.

In the context of this study, many family compound names in Offa function precisely as definite descriptions. That is, as linguistic expressions that carry descriptive content about the family's origin, role achievement, social status, or historical identity. This framework provide a structured way to analyse the rich semantic layers embedded in the family compound names in

the Yoruba grammar and culture. It can also be said that Yoruba names are as old as the origin of Yoruba as a tribe, a language and a people. Oduyoye (1972) observes that before the coming of Christianity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to Yoruba land, bringing with it the concepts of Christian names and surnames, a Yoruba person's full name had three components as presented below:

Offa helping to reveal their deeper significance within the community. This analysis focuses on how the name refers to its object through descriptions and properties.

The data for the analysis of this was collected at Offa town, Offa Local Government Area, where the names of the family compound houses being considered are found. The local government area has four prominent words which are sub-divided into 12 wards, namely: *Balogun*, *Esso-a*, *Esso-b*, *Esso-c*, *Igboidun*, *Ojomu Central-1*, *Ojomu Central-2*, *Ojomu South East*, *Ojomu North/northwest*, *Shawo Central*, *Shawo Southeast* and *Shawo Southwest*, with each words having family compound houses.

### Data Collection Technique

This research used oral interviews to gather data. Visits were made to heads of the family compounds considered where relevant questions were asked on the historical source of the origin of each of the family compound names as well as the reason for its emergence and meaning. The reason for employing the use of these heads as the major instruments for collecting the data is that the compound heads, as the name implies, are the heads of the family compounds and in most cases, the oldest and the most knowledgeable as far as the origins of their respective family compounds are concerned. By this, it then means that the best information and the most reliable data are expected to be gathered and

collected from this category of people. The data collected from this primary source was recorded using an audio tape recorder which were later transcribed.

Offa town has 270 family compound names but 25 family compound names were picked from each of the four prominent wards, given a total of 100 but only 50 of such names were randomly selected and eight were considered due to space constraint. The reason for this random selection is that family compound names have different communal functions to perform in Offa linguistic community. Besides this, a smaller sample size is more manageable and practical for detailed analysis especially due to limited time and space.

#### **Analytical Procedure**

The data was analysed using Bertrand Russell's Descriptive theory of meaning. The

analysis was systematically done by providing a structured framework for understanding how the family compound names convey meaning. Analyzing these names through Russell's lens allows for unpacking the descriptive content embedded within them. Data analysis used the Descriptive Content, Meaning through Descriptions, Reference and Description.

#### **Presentation of Data**

The data collected for this study consist of the fifty family compound names in Offa, which have been categorized into the four thematic categories. The following section present the data as presented in a tabular form. The table contains two columns. It is in the first column that the data are presented and the second column is the translation.

**1. 50 Family Compound Names in Offa and their Meanings (Àádóta Orúkọ Agbo-Ilé, L'Ófà àti itumọ wọn)**

| S/No | Family Compound Names at Òfà | Meaning in English Language                                                        |
|------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.   | Ilé Àbíyè                    | The home of Safe delivery.                                                         |
| 2.   | Ilé Adó                      | The home of gourd.                                                                 |
| 3.   | Ilé Aàrẹ Onilù               | The home of the Chief Traditional Drummer.                                         |
| 4.   | Ilé Ajipèlédè                | The home of people that kill pigs every day.                                       |
| 5.   | Ilé Aludùndún                | The home of traditional drum beaters.                                              |
| 6.   | Ilé Atagisorò                | The home of firewood rich traders.                                                 |
| 7.   | Ilé Akínlòfi                 | The home of a brave person who uses Yorùbá traditional jean (Ofi).                 |
| 8.   | Ilé Olóólà                   | The home of the people who do circumcision as a profession.                        |
| 9.   | Ilé Ìgbá                     | The home of locust bean.                                                           |
| 10.  | Ilé Arofà                    | The home of Bow and Arrow makers.                                                  |
| 11.  | Ilé Alubátá                  | The home of Bata drummer (a special kind of drum beaten during Sango worship).     |
| 12.  | Ilé Aláró                    | The home of Tie-dyeing professionals.                                              |
| 13.  | Ilé Onígá                    | The home of calabash dealers.                                                      |
| 14.  | Ilé Olòdẹ                    | The home of Chief traditional hunter.                                              |
| 15.  | Ilé Àyánsolá                 | The home of traditional drummer who drums to acquire wealth.                       |
| 16.  | Ilé Ọsunté                   | The settlement of Osun devotees.                                                   |
| 17.  | Ilé Adákérin                 | The home of silent walker.                                                         |
| 18.  | Ilé Adíkùkù                  | The home of boxers.                                                                |
| 19.  | Ilé Àíkú                     | The home of Immortal.                                                              |
| 20.  | Ilé Abògúnugún               | The home of Vulture feeders.                                                       |
| 21.  | Ilé Agbèjańlá bọfá           | The home of Priests that use big fish for sacrifice of Ifá.                        |
| 22.  | Ilé Asálófá                  | The home of Ofá emigrants.                                                         |
| 23.  | Ilé Bèribépòó                | The ome of Decapitation and cutting of poles                                       |
| 24.  | Ilé Iyá Ọba                  | The home of King's mother.                                                         |
| 25.  | Ilé Apónbi                   | The home of people who wrap kola nuts with leaves.                                 |
| 26.  | Ilé Amúkùdè                  | The home of Forestalling death.                                                    |
| 27.  | Ilé búgbà                    | The home of Loud bang.                                                             |
| 28.  | Ilé Ọlá                      | The home of Wealth.                                                                |
| 29.  | Ilé Lálẹmi                   | The home of Wealth floats on water.                                                |
| 30.  | Ilé Abúbiesù                 | The home of A kind of demon.                                                       |
| 31.  | Ilé Agbójúlógún              | The home of people who solely rely on inheritance.                                 |
| 32.  | Ilé Onígòòsùn                | The home of The former settlement of the royal father of Igòsùn town               |
| 33.  | Ilé Bámilékú                 | The home that chases chase death away                                              |
| 34.  | Ilé Lẹmòmùn                  | The home of Head of Islamic Mission's House                                        |
| 35.  | Ilé Amúnìlódò                | The home of the people who capture people from the riverside or waterside          |
| 36.  | Ilé Májẹdun Elégún           | The home of Performing masquerade dancers                                          |
| 37.  | Ilé Ọlọya Oriòkúta           | The home of Oya devotees who settled on the rock                                   |
| 38.  | Ilé Abòrisà                  | The home of deity worshipper                                                       |
| 39.  | Ilé Adífá                    | The home of Oracle Consultant                                                      |
| 40.  | Ilé Odiwo                    | The home that a Deaf diviner                                                       |
| 41.  | Ilé Sàngó                    | The home of God of Thunder                                                         |
| 42.  | Ilé Olúáwo                   | The home of Ifá chief priest                                                       |
| 43.  | Ilé Onise                    | The home of Herbalist                                                              |
| 44.  | Ilé Ọjọmu                    | The home of chieftain to the royal father                                          |
| 45.  | Ilé Saàwò                    | The home of chieftain to the royal father                                          |
| 46.  | Ilé Olúghẹnse                | The home of other potential and legal kingship title contenders as the ruling king |
| 47.  | Ilé Éésà                     | The home of Next in command to the ruling royal father                             |
| 48.  | Ilé Báálẹ Ijẹwù              | The home of 'Ijewu' Compound head                                                  |
| 49.  | Ilé Balógun                  | The home of Warlord                                                                |
| 50.  | Ilé Bashòrun                 | The home of the head of Ọyọ kingmakers (Ọyómẹsi)                                   |

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

### Datum 1

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | Ilé Àbíyè                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | The name “Ilé Àbíyè”, “Ilé”: in Yoruba translates to “house or home” “Àbíyè” refers to “safe delivery”, a term associated with child birth                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | The meaning of “Ilé Àbíyè” denotes a place where safe deliveries (child birth) occur. The names have historical roots, commemorating a notable mid-wife or a family renowned for their successful and safe deliveries over generations.<br>The name suggests a place known for successful and safe births, potentially a place of significance in the community for its association with positive outcomes in childbirths. |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | - The name “Ilé Àbíyè” refers to a place known for safe delivery of children. The compound is identified not by its physical attributes alone but also signifies a lineage of care and protection, highlighting the family’s contribution to the wellbeing of the community.                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In the context of Yoruba culture, where names often carry significant meanings and convey important information, “Ilé Àbíyè” is rich with cultural significance. The name provides a descriptive summary of the compounds reputation and its importance within the community. “Ilé Àbíyè” is more than just a label; It encapsulates the idea of a place where safe deliveries occur.                                      |

### Datum 2

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | Ilé Àdó                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | The name “Ilé Àdó” comprises: “Ilé” in Yoruba, this translates to “house” or “home”. “Àdó”: This term translate to “Gourd”: a type of plant that produces large hard shelled fruit often used as containers or utensils in many cultures. These suggest practicality resourcefulness and versatility. The name has historical origins linked to a notable ancestor who was a skilled craftsman, trader and user of gourds in important ceremony. |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | The meaning of “Ilé Àdó” denotes a place associated with gourds. The name implies that the compound people are known for their connection to gourd through cultivation, craftsmanship, trade or some other significant association with these items.                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | - The name “Ilé Àdó” refers to a specific compound by describing its primary characteristic: Its notable association with gourds. The reference to this compound is understood through the descriptive content or historical significance tied to gourds within this place.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names often carry rich descriptive meaning that reflect important aspects of a place or family. “Ilé Àdó” suggests a compound with a distinctive connection to gourds, which is an essential aspect of its identity or economic activity. The name signifies not only a physical location but also the cultural or economic significance of gourds to the family or community associated with the compound.                   |

The analysis of the above family compound names reveal a significant number of names that reflect the occupational heritage. This demonstrate a strong connection between the family’s historical occupation and their identity. This names not only signify the family’s traditional source of livelihood but also convey a sense of pride, expertise and cultural significance. Just as the name implies, “Ilé Àbíyè” represents a place where safe deliveries /child birth take place and well-known for their successful and safe deliveries over generations. “Ilé Àdó” refers a compound with a link to gourds, which is an essential

aspect of its identity or economic activity of the family. The use of occupational names highlight the importance of work and profession in shaping the community’s social fabric and identity. Furthermore these names provide a window into the community’s history, revealing the traditional occupation that were prevalent in the past. They also underscore the values placed on hard work, skill and specialization in the community over all the analysis of family compound names related to occupation offers insight into the community’s cultural values social organization, and historical heritage.



### Datum 3

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | “Ilé Ọsunté”                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | ‘Ilé: In Yoruba, this translates to "house" or "home"<br>“Ọsunté”: Refers to the Yoruba deity Osun, associated with rivers, fertility and healing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | “Ilé Ọsunté” donates a place associated with devotees or followers of the deity Osun. The name implies that the compound or its inhabitants are known for their connection to the worship rituals or cultural practices related to Osun, highlighting a spiritual or religious affiliation.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | The name “Ilé Ọsunté” refers to a specific compound by highlighting its primary characteristic: being associated with devotees of Osun.<br>This reference is understood through the descriptive content which provides insight into the religious practices, beliefs or cultural rituals related to Osun within this place.                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names often carry descriptive meanings that reflect spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, or religious affiliations. “Ilé Ọsunté” suggests a compound where devotion to Osun, the deity associated with rivers and fertility holds significant importance.<br>The name signifies not just a physical location but also the cultural or spiritual significance of Osun worship within the family or community associated with the compound. |

### Datum 4

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | Ilé Abòrìṣà                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | “Ilé Abòrìṣà”. The name “Ilé bọ̀rìṣà” comprises: “Ilé” in Yoruba, this translate to “house” or “home”.<br>- “Abòrìṣà”: This term refers to “Idol worshipper”, indicating a lineage known for its devotion to certain deities. It signifies that the family includes priests, custodians of shrines, or other key religious figure that practice traditional religious worship involving deities or idols.                                                  |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | “Ilé Abòrìṣà”. It denotes a place where idol worshippers live or gather. The name conveys the idea of a compound associated with the practice of idol worship. Highlighting its religious and cultural significance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | - The name “Ilé Abòrìṣà” refers to a specific compound by describing its primary characteristic: being the residence or gathering place of idol worshippers.<br>- The reference to this compound is understood through the descriptive content, which provides insight into the activities and beliefs of its inhabitants.                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names are often rich with descriptive and contextual meanings. “Ilé Abòrìṣà” carries cultural weight, indicating a place where traditional religious practices involving idols are prominent. The name signifies not only a physical location but also connote a rich tapestry of cultural values and historical significance. It symbolizes community’s respect for traditional spirituality and the maintenance of cultural heritage. |

The analysis above reveal a number of names that reflect the community’s rich cultural heritage and spiritual traditions. This demonstrate a strong connection between the families’ heritage and community’s traditional practices, customs and spiritual roles. These names convey a sense of reverence, respect and spiritual significance, highlighting the families historical involvement in traditional practices, such as idol worship, divination, and priestly duties. “Ilé Ọsunté” relays the worship of Osun

deity within the family the religious practices, beliefs or cultural rituals related to “Ilé Osun and “Ilé Abòrìṣà” being the residence or gathering place of idol worshippers. These names provide insight into the community’s spiritual landscape, revealing the role of traditional practitioners, priest, and spiritual leaders in shaping the community’s believe, values and practices. They also highlight the value placed on spirituality, ritual and tradition in the community.

### Datum 5

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | ‘Ilé Ojomu’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | Ilé Ojomu consists of 'Ile': This translates to 'house' or 'home'.<br>‘Ojomu’: This term can be interpreted as "a chieftain to the royal father", indicating a place or family associated with a chief or chieftaincy role related to the royal family.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | ‘Ilé Ojomu’ denotes a place associated with the residence or position of a chieftain who serves or is related to the royal father.<br>The name implies that the compounds are known for their connection to a chieftaincy role within the royal family or community, highlighting a position of authority, honor and ceremonial significance.                                                                                            |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | The name ‘Ilé Ojomu’ refers to a specific compound by highlighting its primary characteristic: being associated with a chieftain to the royal father.<br>This reference is understood through the descriptive content, which provides insight into the hierarchical or ceremonial role of the Ojomu within the royal lineage or community.                                                                                               |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names often carry descriptive meanings that reflect hierarchical positions, familial roles or ceremonial titles. ‘Ilé ojomu’ suggests a compound where the chieftaincy role to the royal father holds significant importance.<br>The name signifies not just a physical location but also the cultural or social significance of the ojomu's role within the royal lineage or community associated with the compound. |

### Datum 6

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | Ilé Sààwò                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | ‘Ilé: In Yoruba, this translates to "house" or "home".<br>“Sààwò”: This term can be interpreted as "a chieftain to the royal father," indicating a place or family associated with a chieftaincy role related to the royal lineage.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | “Ilé Sààwò” denotes a place associated with the residence or position of a chieftain who serves or is related to the royal father.<br>The name implies that the compound or its inhabitants are known for their contribution to a chieftaincy role within the royal family or community, highlighting a position of authority, honor and ceremonial significance.                                                                           |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | The name ‘Ilé Sààwò’ refers to a specific compound by highlighting its primary characteristic: being associated with a chieftain to the royal father. This reference is understood through the descriptive content, which provides insight into the hierarchical role of the Sààwò within the royal lineage or community.                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names often carry descriptive meanings that reflect hierarchical positions, familial roles or ceremonial titles.<br>“Ilé Sààwò” suggests a compound where the chieftaincy role to the royal father holds Significant importance.<br>The name signifies not just a physical location but also the cultural or social significance of the ‘Sààwò’ role within the royal lineage or community associated with the compound. |

The analysis of the above family compound names signify royal lineage or connection or connection to the monarch, demonstrate a strong connection between the family’s heritage and the royal institution. These names convey a sense of prestige, honor, and nobility, highlighting the family’s historical ties to the monarch. The use of royal names also underscores the importance of the monarch in the community’s social hierarchy and cultural heritage. Furthermore, these names

provide insight into the community’s system of governance, revealing the role of the monarch in shaping the community’s history and identity. They also highlight the value placed on loyalty, service, and leadership in the community. The analysis of the family compound names indicate royal lineage, offers insight into the communities social structure, cultural values and historical heritage. It also emphasizes the significance of the monarch in Offa’s rich cultural landscape.

### Datum 7

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | Ilé Balógun                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | The name “Ilé Balógun” consists of “Ilé” in Yoruba translate to house or home. “Balógun” this term interpreted to a “warlord” or a leader in warfare, typically denoting someone on high rank or authority in military matters.<br>The name “Ilé Balógun” implies a rich heritage and a storied past where ancestors played crucial roles in the defense and leadership of their community.                          |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | “Ilé Balógun” denotes a place associated with the residence or leadership of a warlord. The name suggest power and authority, suggesting that the family has a history of military leadership or command as a warlord, the individual would wield significant influence and control, indicating a family with a notable social and political status. The family is seen as protectors and defenders of their people. |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | The name “Ilé Balógun” refers to a specific compound by highlighting its primary characteristics: being associated with a warlord.<br>The reference to this compound is understood through the descriptive content, which provides insight into the leadership roles significance within this place.                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names often carry descriptive meanings that reflect societal role, historical figures, or significant attributes<br>“Ilé Balógun” suggest a compound where warrior status is esteemed, the name signifies not just a physical location but also highlight the family’s significant social and political status, their role as protector and cultural guardians within the community.              |

### Datum 8

| Component                           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Term</b>                         | ‘Ilé Bashòrun’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Descriptive Content</b>          | The name ‘Ilé Bashòrun’ suggests ‘Ile’: This translates into ‘house’ or ‘home’. ‘Bashòrun’ this term refers to a significant position in Yoruba chieftaincy, historically held by a chief counselor or war chief who advises the king and plays a crucial role in military affairs.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Meaning through Descriptions</b> | ‘Ilé Bashòrun’: it denotes a place associated with the residence or role of a Bashòrun specifically a war chief.<br>The name implies that the compound or its inhabitants are connected to the position of a war chief within the Yoruba cultural and historical context, indicating a place of leadership, strategic counsel and possibly military authority.                                       |
| <b>Reference and Description</b>    | The name “Ilé Bashòrun” refers to a specific compound by highlighting its primary characteristic: being associated war chief.<br>This reference is understood through the descriptive content, which provides insight into the role, authority and historical significance of the Bashòrun within the community or lineage associated with the compound.                                             |
| <b>Cultural and Social Context</b>  | In Yoruba culture, names often carry descriptive meanings that reflect positions of authority, historical roles or significant titles. ‘Ilé Bashòrun’ Suggests a compound where the war chief holds prominence.<br>The names signify not just a physical location but also the cultural or historical importance of the Bashorun’s role within the family or community associated with the compound. |

The analysis of the above family compound names in Offa reveal a number of names that evoke bravery, strength and military prowess. Such names demonstrate a strong connection between the family’s heritage and the values of courage, resilience, and martial excellence. “Ilé Balógun” is associated with defence and leadership of their community. “Ilé

Bashòrun” refers specifically to the compound of a war chief. These names convey a sense of family’s historical achievement in battle, warfare, and defence of the community. The use of names associated with bravery and strength also underscores the identity. Furthermore, these names provide insight into the community’s history of conflict, warfare,

and diplomacy, revealing the role of brave warriors and strong leaders in shaping the community's destiny. They also highlight the value placed on honor, loyalty and sacrifice in the community. The analysis of family compound names associated with bravery, strength, and military prowess offers insight into the community's cultural values, historical heritage and social identity, emphasizing the significance of martial tradition in Offa's rich cultural landscape.

### Conclusion

This study explores the socio-semantic dimension of selected family compound names in Offa town, revealing the intricate ways in which these names encapsulate historical, cultural and social meanings by analyzing the semantic components and the social context in which these names are embedded, the research has shown how they serve not only as identifiers but also as carriers of collective memory and social values. The findings demonstrate that family compound names in Offa town are rich in cultural significance, often reflecting the ancestry, profession, achievements or notable characteristics of the founding families. These contribute to the identity of the community, reinforcing social bonds and continuity across generations.

Moreover, this research highlights the importance of preserving these names as part of the intangible cultural heritage of Offa town. As urbanization and modernization continue to impact the community. It is crucial to document and maintain the socio-semantic richness of these names for future generation.

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