


Proverbs 31:10-31: Autochthonous wives' roles for stable families in Ohafia matrilineal society



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Matriliney is a kinship system in which descent is traced through the mother's line. This cultural diversity within the African continent is found among the Ohafia village group of Southeast Nigeria. In Ohafia matrilineal society, many men are married to autochthonous Ohafia wives, that is, women who are natives of Ohafia by birth. Culturally, the children of a man who married an autochthonous wife belong to his wife's brothers and sisters. This encourages many husbands to abandon the responsibility of training their children. They use their resources to train their sisters' children. Consequently, the burden of children's upbringing usually becomes the responsibility of wives, and this interferes with their contributions in ensuring that their families are stable. This article aimed to compare the roles of an autochthonous wife with the attributes of wisdom displayed by the capable wife of Proverbs 31:10-31. This pericope is an alphabetic acrostic poem in which wisdom is personified as a wife. Literary analysis was employed in interpreting the pericope while comparative analysis was used in the interplay between the text and the prevailing cultural practice in the Ohafia community. Findings from this study revealed that some of the qualities of wisdom expressed in Proverbs 10:10-31 are replicated by many autochthonous Ohafia wives in their bid to ensure the functionality of their families. On the other hand, some of the traits of wisdom expressed in the text are lacking among autochthonous Ohafia wives.

Contribution: This study contributes to gender studies, theology and culture, and religion and society. The article compares the roles of autochthonous Ohafia wives in maintaining stable families with the distinguishing attributes of wisdom displayed by the capable wife of Proverbs 31:10-31. It beckons on autochthonous Ohafia wives to embrace wisdom, because wisdom is principal to sustain God's order for family life.

Keywords: Matriliney; Ohafia community; autochthonous wife; stable family; Proverbs 31:10-31; wisdom.

Introduction

Traditionally, a family refers to a group of people living together and functioning as a single household, usually consisting of parents and their children. Every member of a family has specific roles to conduct which are primarily aimed at ensuring a stable family system. As the head of the family, the primary role of a husband is to provide for his household. He provides the financial resources with which the needs of the family members are met. The man's headship connotes authority, leadership, and responsibility (Parker 2003:5). A wife takes care of the home and manages the resources that have been made available by the husband. She may assist in providing resources for the family by venturing into businesses and careers. The children take care of house chores such as sweeping and mopping the floor, washing dishes, washing cars, et cetera. Iffih and Ezeah (2004:66) note that 'In every family, certain activities must be performed for the family to endure and to maintain the standard of living appropriate to its status'. Similarly, Meyers (2008) submits that:

[F]amily life is task-oriented; without the labour of women, men, and children, sustenance would not be possible. The division of labour by gender, albeit with some overlap, was the most efficient way to accomplish the myriad household tasks. (p. xliii)

When members of a family show commitment in discharging their roles, the family becomes stable for a mutual relationship. However, when members of a family neglect their roles, the family becomes unstable and mutual relationship is hindered. A stable family is peaceful and progressive, and the members live harmoniously.

This article argues that the Ohafia matrilineal kinship system poses some challenges in ensuring stable families in the Ohafia community. This is usually prevalent in a marriage relationship

between an Ohafia man and an autochthonous Ohafia woman. Children from such marriages culturally belong to the woman's brothers and sisters. Anya stated in an interview that contrarily, in a marriage between an Ohafia man and a foreign woman (a woman who is not from Ohafia by birth), the children culturally belong to the man's brothers and sisters. Nsugbe (1974:83) referred to a foreign woman as a 'purchased' woman. The status assigned to such a wife is different (not 'inferior' but simply 'valuable') as compared to the status of an autochthonous wife. By the Ohafia custom, the children from such marriages are regarded as full and free-born citizens and belong to their father's matrilineage. Imaga, an interviewee, stated that this cultural identity encourages some men to marry foreign women to perpetuate their matrilineage.

According to interviewee Eke, the Ohafia matrilineal kinship system compels many men who married autochthonous Ohafia women to shy away from their responsibility over their children and, in turn, makes women uncooperative with their husbands. Oyeoku (2006) states that Ohafia women lament that their husbands abandon the responsibility of taking care of their children, but concentrate on caring for their sisters' children and when it is time to give out their daughters' hand in marriage, they will claim all the dividends arising from the marriage. Due to the traits, which this cultural practice behoves on the male folk, the contributions of wives in ensuring stable families are undermined. Uguru-Kalu (2017:26) avers that 'There is no doubt that this generates much tension in many homes. The effects go beyond the families in question and go on to affect the society at large'.

This study will be underpinned by an Old Testament wisdom literature: Proverbs 31:10–31. The text extols the value of wisdom by expressing the virtues of a noble wife. Literary analysis of Proverbs 31:10–31 shows that it is a long alphabetic acrostic poem in which wisdom is personified as a capable wife. Literary analysis is the act of identifying the key elements in a text and how they support the main idea or purpose (Caulfield 2023). Hale and Thorson (2007:965) note that 'the poem celebrates the character and capability of a godly wife, a wife who can be said to personify wisdom'. It presents an 'ideal wife' who displays many qualities of wisdom that have been mentioned throughout the book of Proverbs. George (2018) states that Proverbs 31:10–31 provides a detailed metaphor of feminine wisdom in the context of a family and a community. The poem speaks of the worth of a good wife to her husband, her diligence, her ability to provide for her family, and her attentiveness to the needs of others. This study therefore aims to compare the roles of autochthonous Ohafia wives (hereafter AOWs, except in sub-titles and beginning sentences) in maintaining stable families with the traits of wisdom observable in the poem of the capable wife.

Descriptive analysis was employed to interpret the primary data which through informed consent, was obtained from 55 interviewees. Descriptive analysis is a qualitative research method that seeks to study, describe, and interpret the lived

experiences of a group of people within a particular locality (Davison 2014:1). The interviewees were selected through the purposive selection method from across the villages that make up the Ohafia community and they voluntarily participated in the interviews.¹ They comprised community leaders and married men and women from various families in Ohafia. These are the categories of people, who as a matter of their involvement in family affairs, observe the actual trends in families. The interview was guided by five structured questions (Appendix 2), which centred on investigating the features of the matrilineal kinship system in the Ohafia community and the problems associated with the cultural practice in relation to peaceful co-existence in families. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms are used to indicate the informants in this article.

Structure and close reading of Proverbs 31:10–31

Proverbs 31:10–31 is the epilogue of the book of Proverbs. Although the text has a central message, it has a simple, coherent, and tripartite structure. In the text, wisdom is personified as a wife of noble character, virtue, and industry. McCreesh (1985:41) opines that the statements made about this wife are familiar to statements made earlier about wisdom. Wisdom is also personified in Proverbs 1:20–33; 3:16; 4:6, et cetera; so, it is argued that the woman here is also a personification of wisdom (Yoder 2001:304). The first part (Prov 31:10) is an introduction to the poem in which there is a rhetorical question that emphasises the worth and rarity of a capable wife. The second part (Prov 31:11–27) is the heart of the poem wherein the qualities of the capable wife are laid bare. The third and last part (Prov 31:28–31) is the conclusion of the poem in which the poet emphasises that character is more valuable than beauty. The close reading of this pericope is therefore based on this tripartite structure.

The introduction of the poem (Prov 31:10)

With a rhetorical question, this introductory part expresses the worth of a capable wife. Murphy (1999:154) opines that 'this verse begins with a question to emphasise the rarity of such a wife'. The expression, *ēšet-ḥayil mī yimšā*, [A capable wife, who can find?] suggests that a capable wife is a rare treasure. In the Old Testament, the term *ḥayil* [capable] is commonly used to describe a woman who is *capable, strong, noble, valiant, or excellent* as can be seen in Proverbs 12 and 13, and Ruth 3 (Miller 2004:54). Hence, the expression '*ēšet-ḥayil* [capable wife] denotes a strong and virtuous wife. The statement which follows the question, *wārāḥōq mippnīnim mikrāh* [for her value is far above jewels], lends credence to the fact that a capable wife is rare (Henry 1996:574). Texts such as Proverbs 2:4–6; 3:13–15; 8:11; 16:16; 20:15; Job 28; Ecclesiastes 7:23–24; 8:17 reverberate the rarity of wisdom and liken it to silver, gold, hidden treasures, and precious jewels; wisdom is incomparable with anything one desires. Proverbs 16:16 notes that it is better to attain wisdom than to get silver and gold.

1. Appendix 1 outlines the interview information.

The attributes of the capable wife (Prov 31:11–27)

The poet begins his exposition by noting some of the benefits that the husband of the capable wife enjoys. In v. 11, the expression ‘The heart of her husband trusts in her’, implies that her husband is confident that she will always support him in making adequate provisions for members of his household. According to Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1993:674), ‘her husband has the confidence to leave for her the management of his household to devote himself to public and weightier duties’. The expression *wšālāl lō’ yešār* [he will not lack gain], in the second line of v. 11 suggests that the capable wife engages in ventures from where she gets some gains for the use of her family.

In v. 12, the expression *gāmāthū tōb walō’-rā’* [she does him good and not evil] means that she desires to constantly make her husband happy. Longman (2006:543) is of the view that “the good that she does him” not only includes material benefits, but also moral, and spiritual blessings’. The phrase *kōl yāmē ḥayyeyh* [all the days of her life], calls to mind that marriage should be a lasting relationship that only death can end (Keil & Delitzsch 1891:374). In Proverbs 31:13, the expression ‘She seeks wool and flax and works with willing hands’ indicates that the capable wife is always busy with her hands; she is ever willing to produce something for her family and commercial purposes. The word *ḥēpeš*, which literally means *pleasure, delight, and joy* is here translated as *willing or eager*. In v. 14, the expression *kā’ ōniyyōt* [like ships] is used to liken the capable wife to the ships of the merchant and informs that she brings her food from far away. Sieg (2004) argues that the rare occasions that prompted her to buy her food from afar, could be because of her desire to introduce variety and elegance into her household with items that were not locally grown or sold.

Her commitment to her family is further buttressed in Proverbs 31:15. She is aware that there is much to do during the day; so she resorts to working for some hours at night; she assigns tasks to her maidens at night so that, once the day breaks, she can go about her daily tasks with the confidence that the maidens already know the tasks to carry out. Proverbs 31:16 informs that she invests her money in businesses. The message of Proverbs 31:17 is that the capable wife is full of strength. The *qal* perfect verb *ḥāḡar* literary means ‘gird’; in the context of this verse, it is used to refer to the capable wife as one who is physically strong, and always ready to engage in worthwhile activities.

Proverbs 31:18 records that she does not off her lights at night. The *qal* perfect verb *tā’am* literary means *sense* and denotes a ‘discovery made after a careful evaluation’. The work of her hands is good because she is patient, innovative, and diligent in producing the best. Proverbs 31:19 emphasises her skillfulness. In the Hebrew Bible, the word *kīšōr* [distaff] is found in this verse only. According to King and Stager (2001:152), ‘The distaff and the spindle were used in the process of spinning and weaving flax or other fibers’. Proverbs 31:20 employs a synonymous parallelism to emphasise her generosity. In the first line, the term used for

hand, *kap*, is singular, while it is dual, *yād*, in the second line. Clements (1989:372) asserts that ‘in the Hebrew culture, it was common for women to play a large part in their community and impact those around them’.

Proverbs 31:21 states that the capable wife is not fearful for her household because of snow, for all her household is clothed in scarlet. Scarlet is conspicuous for its beautiful colour and valued for its double texture and warmth. Her household cloth in scarlet because she is wealthy; her wealth is from the many businesses she ventures into. Proverbs 31:22 records that she also makes beautiful clothes for herself. According to Proverbs 31:23, because of her unique character, her husband is respected among the elders of the land. Clarke (1996:258) supports that ‘He is respected because he is the husband of a woman who is admired and honoured’. In Proverbs 31:24, the poet re-emphasises that she makes garments for commercial purposes. In Proverbs 31:25, the word ‘*ōz* literary means *strength*. The word ‘*ōz* which is translated as *strength* in v. 17, is the same word that is used in v. 25. Proverbs 31:26 notes that the capable wife does not relent to teach members of her household in kindness and love. This is the most distinguishing virtue of the capable wife (Clarke 1996:258). Proverbs 31:27 re-emphasises that she is committed to the affairs of her household.

The conclusion of the poem (Prov 31:28–31)

In v. 29, the word used for ‘excellently’, *ḥayil*, is the same word used at the beginning of the poem for *capable*. The verse refers to her as ‘most excellent’. Proverbs 31:30 calls to mind the fleeting nature of physical beauty. The term *ḥēn* literarily means ‘favour and grace’. In Proverbs 31:31, the imperative expression, *tānū-lāh* [give her], indicates that the capable wife deserves to be honoured. She is committed to the affairs of her home; she should reap the fruits of her labour. Both at home and in public places, the capable wife should be respected for her outstanding virtues.

Description of autochthonous Ohafia wives

Autochthonous Ohafia wives refer to women born to Ohafia parents and married to Ohafia men. They are bequeathed with customary rights (protection, support, inheritance) and privileges (shelter) by their matrilineal groups. This category of wives receives continuous assistance from their matrilineal groups. For instance, Ohafia matrilineal groups rally around their married women if marital disputes occur. They mediate intending to settle the dispute between a husband and wife. However, in cases of intractable marital differences, a woman’s matrilineal group intervenes by resettling and rehabilitating her. During an interview, Onwuka revealed that they take up the role of training their children if their husbands fail in their fatherly responsibilities. They are immune to widow inheritance which is a customary obligation among some Igbo groups but rather, their matrilineal groups serve as a shield in the death of one’s husband, expressed by interviewee, Eke. Widow inheritance is a cultural practice whereby a man marries his late brother’s wife.

Traits of wisdom in Proverbs 31:10–31 vis-à-vis autochthonous Ohafia wives' roles

Proverbs 31:10–31 is a poem aimed at inculcating wisdom for successful living. Hubbard (1982:1334), Crenshaw (1998:3), and Parker (2018:19) note that wisdom literature was a literary form common in the ancient Near East in which there are huge collections of wise sayings and instructions for successful living. The books categorised as Israelite wisdom literature are Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes (Habtu 2006:773). A recent debate questions the traditional notion of wisdom tradition in Israelite literature. It raises questions such as:

Is the wisdom literature a genre or mode of literature, or do we need new terminology? What relationship does the wisdom literature have with the rest of the corpora of the Hebrew Bible? (ed. Sneed 2015:3; Weeks 2016:21)

The Old Testament canon is extraordinarily rich in different genres such as narrative, prophecy, poetry, wisdom, law, apocalyptic literature, et cetera. All the books that are regarded as wisdom literature teach what it entails to live a good life (Kirk 2017:218). Notwithstanding, wisdom literature and other parts of the Old Testament are interrelated concerning their thoughts on the fear of God. It reverberates the concept of Yahwism observable in the other parts of the Old Testament. The authors of the books of the Bible had varying worldviews and target audiences which guided the composition of their books. Hence, ascertaining and understanding the genre of an Old Testament text is crucial to interpreting the text accurately.

Since the poem of the capable wife is a personification of wisdom, this article does not submit that the capable wife is an exact model of what AOWs should be. The article hinges on pointing out what wisdom entails in the poem and whether AOWs exhibit wisdom in their homes, especially in their relationship with their husbands. In the Old Testament wisdom literature, wisdom is profusely associated with 'Fear of God'. Proverbs 1:7a, 9:10a, and 15:33a affirm that 'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge'. One who has a relationship with God impulsively lives in wisdom (Weiser 1964:452). One whose mind is influenced by the fear of God is enthusiastic about observing the order that God established (Whybray 1965:96). In God's plan for marriage, wives are expected to be helpmates to their husbands (Gn 2:18).

Wisdom is indispensable for anyone who desires to continually fit into God's plan. Biwul (2013) avers that:

The primary theological factor that brought the capable woman to public recognition resides in her godly wisdom and the fear of God. The fear of God provides guidance for moral, social, economic, and family life. (p. 288)

Proverbs 31:30 is the culminating point of this passage, wherein the key virtue of this woman is mentioned, 'fear of the Lord' as it is earlier the beginning point of wisdom (Prov 1:7; Prov 9:10) as well as the pinnacle (Prov 2:5; 3:7) (Geysler-Fouche 2019:339). Hence, wives who live in wisdom

operate within the bounds of God's intent for husband-and-wife relationship.

One of the qualities of wisdom expressed in Proverbs 31:10–31 is industriousness. The capable wife in whose honour the poem was composed, is ingenious and hardworking. The profit she realises from her many businesses is for the common good of her entire family. The poor and needy also benefit from her industry. Similarly, AOWs are very inventive and hardworking. They engage in many income-yielding ventures to train their children in school. This is primarily a result of the Ohafia matrilineal system which encourages many husbands who married AOWs to abandon the responsibility of taking care of their children, because their children culturally belong to their wives' brothers and sisters. Husbands commit their resources to training their sisters' children and abandon their own children. As a result, Arunsi pointed out in their interview, these wives are saddled with the responsibility of the upbringing of their children and as a result, they pass through a lot of financial, emotional, and psychological stress.

According to the interviewee Ama, wives channel their resources to the training of their children, and this significantly endears them to their children. On the other hand, the negligence displayed by men towards their children gradually strains their relationship with them. Some wives take advantage of this to directly or indirectly make their children defiant to their fathers. This also affects the relationship between a man and his in-laws. Afor informed in their interview that this usually shows when a man's mother-in-law visits for *Omugwo* [postpartum care] or when there is a ceremony that directly involves the family of the man and the woman. The ecstasy and conviviality which are usually associated with the visit of a man's mother-in-law for *Omugwo* are greatly affected because of the man's reluctance to perform his duties. Equally, if a woman's family have a ceremony such as a funeral or marriage to carry out, the man does not give his support (financially and otherwise), because the wife and children belong to another matrilineal group.

Geysler-Fouche (2019) notes that:

Proverbs 31:10–24 describes with practical examples, the positive contribution that the capable wife makes in her husband's life. This metaphor is used as a summarising closure for the book and emphasises the value that wisdom can have in a person's life. (p. 341)

The capable wife maintains a significant stable relationship with her husband and children; she aims to improve their lives. She earned her husband's trust because of her diligence, resourcefulness, and the wisdom she exhibits. Divergently, many AOWs do not support their husbands because of the realities of the Ohafia matrilineal system. Rather, they extend financial assistance to their mother's brothers and sisters. According to an interview with Ebi, the pressure that these wives encounter daily makes them withdraw their subservience and support from their husbands because they are aware that their matrilineal group will readily receive them back in the case of separation or divorce. One's matrilineal group determines,

to an extent, the success or failure of a marriage. If a wife is not determined to overlook the unrestrained behaviour of her husband, her matrilineal group could negatively influence her to the detriment of her family. In the interview with Okala, an intractable marital dispute with his wife is usually inflamed whenever she involves her maternal uncles and aunts, as they would always point accusing fingers at him even when he is not at fault, thereby creating more tension in the family. During an interview, Nkata, stated that a wife's matrilineal group usually provides support (food items and other things) for her family and as a result, they tend to interfere a lot in the affairs of her family.

The interviewee, Aguwa, emphasised that the Ohafia matrilineal system makes wives more accommodating of their maternal uncles and aunts than their husband's uncles and aunts. Nkuma, in their interview, laments that he observed that whenever his maternal uncles and aunts visit his family, his wife embarks on a journey because she does not want to cater for them while two of his wife's siblings have been living with them for over 12 years. Moreover, his mother-in-law started living with them 15 years ago when they had their first child. In an interview, Uche, asserted that the most worrisome is that these wives make their children have more regard for their matrilineal group; their children are closer to their mother's matrilineal group than their father's matrilineal group.

The inheritance of properties of a deceased man is usually reckoned through the man's matrilineal group; often, very little or nothing is left for the maintenance of the deceased man's wife and children. Nwankwo (2016:44) reports that 'In the Ohafia Community, the property of a dead man is shared among his relatives with little or nothing left for the widow and her children'. For the interviewee, Arua, this inheritance system compels wives who are economically productive to withhold their resources from their husbands. This creates tension in the home as an economically productive wife does not readily support her husband, particularly in the acquisition of lands and properties. According to the interview with Otusi, it is no longer news that some Ohafia wives acquire lands and properties without the consent of their husbands. If both the husband and wife decide to withhold their support from each other, the result is usually devastating because it affects the children's upbringing.

Conclusion

Proverbs 31:10–31 is a popular Old Testament text which expresses the inestimable worth of wisdom. In the text, wisdom is personified as a wife, a capable wife. The capable wife, an embodiment of wisdom, is diligent in all the works of her hands. Day and night, she works both for her interests and that of all her family members. Thus, she is fully committed to the upkeep of her husband and children. Being the personification of wisdom, the poem of the capable wife therefore does not offer a holistic approach to family life, especially concerning the relationship between a husband and his wife, parents, and their children; hence, the poem centres on the various expressions of wisdom in one's life. It celebrates the rarity of wisdom and identifies what wisdom entails.

Rather than submitting that AOWs should emulate the lifestyle of the capable wife, the study brought to the fore the various aspects of convergence and divergence between the capable wife of Proverbs 31 and AOWs. The Ohafia matrilineal kinship system greatly undermines the contributions of AOWs in maintaining stable families. The realities associated with this cultural practice encourage this category of wives to be industrious; this virtue is profusely evident in the poem. The capable wife's commitment to her husband is a major aspect of dissimilarity; many AOWs do not support their husbands because their husbands neglect their fatherly responsibilities towards their children; the wives also withdraw their submission towards their husbands. The interplay between the text and the social phenomenon indicates that among many AOWs, there is a deviation from the established order God created. Someone who lives according to wisdom and in the concept of fearing God, lives in a relationship with God. This entails living out the love and grace one receives from God. Hence, the poem of the capable wife beckons on AOWs to embrace wisdom, because wisdom is principal to sustain God's plan for family life.

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Competing interests

The author declares that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced her in writing this article.

Authors' contribution

O.G.C. is the sole author of this research article.

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Data availability

The majority of the data for this study was gathered through interviews and therefore novel. The data that support the findings of this study are available from the author, O.G.C., upon reasonable request.

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Appendix 1

Interviews (pseudonyms are used for the names of interviewees)

S./no.	Name of interviewee	Date of interview	Place of interview
1	Abam	15 Dec. 2023	Nkwebi Ohafia
2	Afor	22 Dec. 2023	Asaga Ohafia
3	Aguwa	19 Dec. 2023	Asaga Ohafia
4	Agwu	16 Dec. 2023	Ebem Ohafia
5	Ajike	23 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
6	Ama	20 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
7	Anya	18 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
8	Arua	19 Dec. 2023	Asaga Ohafia
9	Arunsi	17 Dec. 2023	Elu Ohafia
10	Ebi	20 Dec. 2023	Asaga Ohafia
11	Ejim	21 Dec. 2023	Elu Ohafia
12	Eke	23 Dec. 2023	Okagwe Ohafia
13	Ekpe	18 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
14	Eme	22 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
15	Enyi	20 Dec. 2023	Nkwebi Ohafia
16	Ibem	19 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
17	Idika	18 Dec. 2023	Elu Ohafia
18	Igwe	19 Dec. 2023	Okagwe Ohafia
19	Ike	17 Dec. 2023	Nkwebi Ohafia
20	Imaga	21 Dec. 2023	Eziafor Ohafia
21	Imeri	16 Dec. 2023	Ebem Ohafia
22	Kalu	23 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
23	Mba	20 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
24	Mmecha	15 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
25	Mmeri	21 Dec. 2023	Oboro Ohafia
26	Ndiya	22 Dec. 2023	Ebem Ohafia
27	Ngele	16 Dec. 2023	Ihenta Ohafia
28	Njoku	18 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
29	Nkata	23 Dec. 2023	Abia Ohafia
30	Nku	19 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
31	Nkuma	15 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
32	Obuba	18 Dec. 2023	Asaga Ohafia
33	Ogbu	19 Dec. 2023	Okagwe Ohafia
34	Oguelu	17 Dec. 2023	Okon Ohafia
35	Ojo	16 Dec. 2023	Eziafor Ohafia
36	Okala	20 Dec. 2023	Ebem Ohafia
37	Okorie	23 Dec. 2023	Isi-Ugwu Ohafia
38	Olugu	15 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
39	Onuka	21 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia
40	Onwuka	15 Dec. 2023	Okon Ohafia
41	Orie	16 Dec. 2023	Okon Ohafia
42	Orji	18 Dec. 2023	Elu Ohafia
43	Otusi	20 Dec. 2023	Nkwebi Ohafia
44	Ozua	19 Dec. 2023	Nkwebi Ohafia
45	Uche	17 Dec. 2023	Isi-Ugwu Ohafia
46	Udo	20 Dec. 2023	Elu Ohafia
47	Uduma	15 Dec. 2023	Ebem Ohafia
48	Uguru	17 Dec. 2023	Oboro Ohafia
49	Uka	15 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
50	Ukeju	16 Dec. 2023	Ebem Ohafia
51	Ukiwe	21 Dec. 2023	Amangwu Ohafia
52	Ukoji	17 Dec. 2023	Akanu Ohafia
53	Ukpabi	15 Dec. 2023	Okagwe Ohafia
54	Ukwa	20 Dec. 2023	Ihenta Ohafia
55	Uma	23 Dec. 2023	Amaekpu Ohafia

Appendix 2

Structured interview questions

1. What are the cultural peculiarities in the Ohafia matrilineal society?
2. What are the problems associated with the Ohafia matrilineal kinship system in relation to peaceful co-existence in families?
3. What do you understand by the concept 'Autochthonous Ohafia wife'?
4. What are the traits of Autochthonous Ohafia wives?
5. How do the cultural realities obtainable in Ohafia matrilineal society interfere with the roles of autochthonous Ohafia wives for stable families?

Key concepts: Matriliney; Ohafia community; autochthonous wife; stable family; Proverbs 31:10–31; wisdom.