

COMMUNICATING MORALS THROUGH MUSIC: AN EXPLORATION OF TRADITIONAL YORUBA MUSIC OF EBENEZER OBEY, SUNNY ADE AND SIKIRU AYINDE BARRISTER

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Abstract

The study examined the moral lessons in the works of three select Yoruba musicians. King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister's music genre were explored to ascertain their moral value contents in relation to societal issues and their influence on their audiences. Survey design was applied, while data were collected through structured questionnaire administered on fans of the musicians. The data were analysed with simple statistical tools – frequency, percentage and tables. The findings revealed application of moral themes in the music of the three Yoruba artists. They further showed that the influence of the moral lessons in the music of these musicians on their listeners was profound and reflected in the moral rectitude that the listeners exhibited. Based on these findings, the study, among others, recommended the application of music replete with moral values, beyond entertainment, as strategic tool for social orientation, advocacy, enhanced education and sensitisation of listeners to stem the tide of current moral decadence that is prevalent in the society. It is also recommended that artists of other music genres in Nigeria should take cue from these three Yoruba musicians and incorporate moral themes and lessons in their music for the moral improvement of the society.

Key Words: African music, Communication, Juju music, Moral lesson, Popular music, Yoruba music

Introduction

Nigeria's moral fabrics have been badly dented by high magnitude of social ills and vices. At all levels of social strata, these endemic issues have negatively affected the country's regard, standing, name, image and reputation, even beyond the shores of the country, (Aliede, 2012; Ekeanyanwu, 2006; Aliede, 2005) and thus, requires some urgent solutions. For one, corruption is ingrained in all facets of the Nigerian society. A cursory look at any institution in the country would reveal different shades of corruption, all of which arise from moral and ethical decadence. Soola (2007, p. 6) affirms that "ethics is concerned with morality and an individual's capacity to make moral judgements, expose the right cause and take the right action or appropriate decision in given situations". As ethics or ethical problems apparently arise from lack of this single critical ingredient, morality, it means that the genesis of corruption, moral or not, starts from man himself. This also supports the fact that ethical communication is a major socio-cultural value that often features in an African man's daily experience.

Hybel & Weaver II (2001), as well, is of the view that ethics involves both ends of communication process-senders and receivers and that consumers of media products should expect ethical presentation. In expressing his opinion on how to tackle ethical dilemma that confronts African societies, Dalfovo (2002, p. 8) posits that: "Every society and culture develops its conventional code of ethics, in the case of an ethical crisis like one being experienced now, a society needs to pass from the conventional to intentional code. An intentional code facilitates the recovery of both the communal and the practical dimensions of ethics." Evidently, this is a practical approach to solving ethical crisis in any society. It starts from being able to move from the realm of conventional code of ethics to intentional code of ethics. But achieving this feat is hinged on understanding those conceptual problems of ethics.

Ozumba (2001) lists ethical conceptual problems as rightness and wrongness; obligation and duty; good and evil; free-will and determination, and justice and punishment. Definitely, these concepts also help in throwing more light on the nature of corruption. Moral corruption expectedly arises from ethical crisis or dilemma which has permeated the society. On his part, Kigongo (2002) observes that ethical crisis in African societies stemmed from colonial experiences which have changed so many African values. Elechi Amadi in his book *Ethics in Nigerian Culture*, also bemoans the failure of religion as an institution in enforcing ethical precepts in the society. He submits, thus, that: "It is doubtful whether religion, imported or native, can continue to play this role, for already it is apparent that fear of the gods is diminishing steadily" (Amadi, 2005, p. 105).

Consideration of these ethical dilemma and crisis points at the need for serious ethical orientation. Besides, culture is believed to be the communal capacity to make meaning in a certain manner out of existence essentially. The various forms of endogenous communication in African cultures are found in folklore, folktale, theatre, music, dance, proverbs, riddles, jokes, slangs, storytelling, chants, poetry, etc. Particularly, the use of indigenous popular music for moral awakening becomes vital for this study because of its essence in the modern African society, (Barber; Walterman, 1997). Again Idolor (2002, p. 4) quoting Jager (1974) submits that: "Music which sociologically consists of ideas and about certain kinds of sounds does not exist in isolation. These musical ideas are intertwined with non-musical ideas and beliefs with regard to other spheres of life such as religion, work, leisure...morality, human dignity and utility. Music is part of a style of life, of a so-called cultural pattern".

This implies that music as a cultural artefact is about life itself. Music, quoting Olabimtan (1981) in Idolor (2002) is seen as one of the effective means of socializing and educating young and old members of the society. While explaining the element of cognitive worldview of a Yoruba cultural community, Faniran (2008, p. 19) defines culture as "ethos, values or the normative definition of how the people should behave in the social situation". It is pertinent to say then that music as a cultural artefact has the capacity for social orientation, social order or/and social engineering. This observation is also confirmed by Osu (2005, p. 9) when he submits that: "Music that calls for social change is good music: good music is an elixir for social

change; it stirs the soul and spirit and energises people into action for positive change. Music has been known to galvanise people (sic) for revolution and social engineering.” The role of music and musical arts education in African society traverse both socio-cultural and didactic functions; serving as social interaction, economic empowerment, political commentary, cultural indicator, historical preservation and educational tool. In Nigeria, while music functions in the context of the people’s sacred beliefs and secular lives, nevertheless, it aids in preserving and propagating their history because it inculcates moral values and transmits cultural knowledge from one generation to another.

Music has been part of man’s history and basic tool of communication since his inception. Though scholars such as Fleming (1970) and Brace & Burton (1979) affirm that music predates man’s being, it, however, serves as a medium through which man expresses his state of being, because through it his history can be acknowledged and documented. Idolor (2015, p. 69) corroborates this claiming that one of the valuable roles of music is “to document the history and culture of the people”. This is evident in traditional sub-Saharan Africa where music is used to celebrate life, as it heralds its beginning in the cradle and marks its finale in the grave. Various scholars have written on the essentiality of music to life among Africans. Chernoff notes that music “characterizes a sensibility with which Africans relate to the world and commit themselves to its affairs” (1979, p. 154). On the nature of meaning in Nigerian music, Omojola (1989, p. 105), espouses that it often serves “as a means of communication”, transcending musical considerations, while Vidal (2012, p. 12) opines that “musical expressions in Nigeria reflects the various characteristics of the cultures and traditions of its...(various) linguistic groups”, thus, should be strong instrument for communicating moral revisal and transformation.

In moments of ethical crisis music is applied as an elixir for social change or reorientation. Music is very didactic naturally (Idolor, 2002). On her part, Barber (1997) states that popular music is the most protean, adaptable, transferable of arts and the only one to make noticeable impact on popular audience through its communicative messages. She further admits that African music genres such as highlife contain a lot of philosophical thoughts. Nevertheless, other African popular music genres such as Yoruba Juju and Fuji are also veritable musical genres that are imbued with philosophical and moral nuggets.

Statement of the Problem

Undoubtedly, the level of moral corruption that arises from fundamental ethical problems in Nigeria calls for ethical orientation. To engage in such pursuit, the mass media would invariably be of necessity as tools for ethical value dissemination. Soola (2007) affirms that ethical or moral concern is more critical now considering the mass media’s reach and influence in terms of media literacy status of its largely heterogeneous and predominantly literate audiences in the developing world such as Nigeria. As a matter of fact, media’s current high level of reach is due to sophisticated technology and this has to be followed by positive and meaningful impact or development. Certainly, any aspect of moral communication in form of ethical reorientation becomes more meaningful when it is anchored on the use of popular indigenous media.

Thus, the use of popular music is very important in communicating ethics, morality and values. Onyeji (2002, p. 32) confirms this while noting that “some texts of pop music criticises the ills of the society...they have also served as weapons for socio-political change through regular comments and criticisms on the general conduct and behaviours of the citizens of a particular society”. Although Omibiyi-Obidike (2007) classifies popular music into three types, this study focuses on the type that developed from indigenous practices and influenced slightly by Christian religion and the kind that developed from indigenous practices but influenced slightly by Islamic religion. Examples of these type of popular semi-indigenous music genres are Juju and Fuji. It is believed that exponents of these music genres usually rely more on the use of indigenous cultural strains, styles and artefacts such as proverbs, praises, stories, riddles, folktales, folklores, etc, to pass critical comments and criticisms on the perceived ills in the society. Choosing foremost Juju and Fuji music maestros, Ebenezer Obey, King Sunny Ade and

Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, the study additionally endeavoured to determine the moral lessons embedded in their music. It was, therefore, embarked upon in order to determine the theme of moral reorientation in the popular music of the chosen three music artists. Besides, bid to establish their moral lessons was further motivated by the fact that scholars do not strongly portray music as a popular arm of communication, except in rare instances it is presented as a tool of entertainment, means of relaxation or source of escapism. Hence, this is as well an attempt to redirect interest into music as an essential arm of communication and therefore, an instrument of social engineering that could perform as many other roles as other arms of communication, if properly and effectively deployed.

Consequently, the study attempted to authenticate the claim that moral lessons are imbedded in these music genres, especially in those of the Yoruba popular musicians: King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, and thus, ascertaining if such communicated values are capable of influencing the moral status of Nigerian society.

Objectives of the Study

The cardinal goals of the study were:

1. To determine how moral lessons are presented in King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister's music.
2. To ascertain how moral lessons (values) derivable from their music relate to the conceptual problem of ethics in the society.
3. To investigate the reactions of the audiences of these Yoruba musicians to the moral lessons therein.

King Sunny Ade: Providential Gift to Juju Music World

Chief Sunday Adeniyi Adegeye MFR (born September 22, 1946) is a Nigerian juju singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. He is simply known as King Sunny Ade. He is considered one of the most influential musicians and regarded as one of the first African pop musicians to achieve international fame.

Sunny Ade's family is of royal descent from Ondo. His mother, Maria Adegeye (née Adesida), was a trader, while his father was a church organist. Ade started playing drums in juju bands alongside Sunday Ariyo and Idowu Owoeye when he was a teenager. Despite being the son of a Methodist preacher, he dropped out of college in 1963 to pursue his musical interests. Sunny Ade left grammar school in Ondo City under the pretence of going to University of Lagos. His chosen was to be much later seen as both personal and well-intended.

Since the evolution of juju music in Nigeria in the thirties no exponent has made more lasting impact in the genre than King Sunny Ade. As a singer, composer and guitarist, he has succeeded over the years in taking this Nigerian social music type to international heights. He is regarded as one of the first African pop musicians to gain international success and has been called one of the most influential musicians of all times. Ade came on the scene in 1966 following his induction as a samba player in a small group led by showman and comedian Baba Sala, whose real name was Moses Olaiya. And with his own ten-piece band, the Green Spots, Ade made his first record in 1967, playing the guitar solos himself. He, however, blazed into prominence a year after with a hit single in praise of Stationery Stores football Club which carved him a gold disc as a result of its massive sales, which too, brought him to limelight.

Sunny Ade began his musical career in Lagos. He first joined a travelling musical comedy troupe and by 1964 he was leading Moses Olaiya Adejumo's Federal Rhythm Dandies on lead guitar. After temporarily playing with Tunde Nightingale, he started a band, Sunny Adé and His High Society Band in 1965. The following year, he renamed his band the Green Spots, possibly as a cheeky homage to the famed Juju band I. K. Dairo's Blue Spots from the 1950s. According to the *Guinness Encyclopaedia* of Popular Music, the Green Spots played "a rapid yet comfortable type of Juju distinguished by tight vocal harmonies and beautiful lyrical guitar

work". Sunny Ade's band went through multiple name changes, initially and among them: African Beats and Golden Mercury.

He has been a prominent musical figure in Nigeria since the mid-1960s and an international star since the early 1980s, having been ordained as the "King of Juju Music" by a group of journalists and music critics in the late 1970s. His Juju style uses synthesisers and other electronic technology, including computers. His performance style is largely a praise music performed in a local Nigerian Yoruba language that mixes guitars with drums (Waterman, 1990, p. 10). Explaining the dynamic stage presence and versatility of Sunny Ade, Jon Pareles of the *New York Times*, notes that Ade was influenced by Tunde Nightingale's "So wa mbe" Juju style and is "one of Juju's great inventors.":

King Sunny Ade, whose unruffled tenor is one of rock's kindest voices, would pick up a melody above the velvety harmonies of the backup singers or smilingly trade call-and-response dialogues with them or take his turn in friendly dance performances as a drummer encourages him with improvisations. Sunny Ade's music is rooted in the Yoruba tradition of singing philosophical lyrical lyrics ("ewi") and dignitary praise songs. His music serves as a record of his people's oral culture for posterity. He is credited with popularising the pedal steel guitar in Nigerian mainstream music. In addition to dub and wah-wah guitar licks, he introduced synthesisers, tenor guitar to the Juju music repertoire. Sunny Ade states that he utilises these instruments as replacements for traditional Juju instruments that were difficult to come by and/or prohibitive to tour with. For example, as a sound-alike for an African violin, he added the pedal steel guitar to his repertoire. He also created his own sound and instrumental with his band, which he typically utilises as an introductory song during live concerts.

Throughout the 1970s, Sunny Ade established himself as a Juju music pioneer. He introduced a steel guitar to his instrumental mix in 1976 and experimented with new beats and guitar types regularly. Ade and his African Beats made appearances in large summertime music festivals in the United States in the mid-1980s, impressing audiences and critics with the sophisticated interplay among a large number of musicians on stage (Waterman, 1990). Sunny Ade is a heroic performer. He is a nuanced musician, who knows tempo and timing and frequently does two or three-hour shows. He is a visiting lecturer at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and the first Nigerian ever to be nominated for the Grammy awards.

King Sunny Ade produced many hit records and tracks. Some of them are: *The Way Forward* (1982), *Synchro System* (1983), *Juju Music* (1982), *Let Them Say* (1987), *E Dide* (1995), *Odu* (1998), *Seven Degrees North* (2000), *Merciful God* (2000), *Ja Funmi* (1982), *Aiye Nreti Eleya Mi* (1998), *Mo Ti Kole Mi Sori Apata* (1986) and *Ona Mi La* (1986). A review of his songs shows how constantly the musician expounds the importance of virtues such as humility, unity, love, hard work, conscientious living, patriotism etc. His music records are full of morals and advice for the listeners, with the songs drawn from mostly his personal experience to educate and entertain listeners. His songs are interlaced with rich Yoruba statements/oratory/lyrics that are full of wisdom for the discerning mind.

Overview of Ebenezer Obey's Juju Music

Ebenezer Remilekun Aremu Olasupo Fabiyi MFR, known professionally as Ebenezer Obey was born on 3rd April 1942 in Island Maternity in Lagos (formerly called Mercy Hospital). After his delivery in Lagos, his mother went back to Idogo, Yewa South Local Government of Osun State, where he hails from and was brought up. Ebenezer Obey's formal musical activity began early as a choir boy in his church's Sunday school and later as the leader of his school band - Methodist Primary School. It was during his school days as a prefect, while telling other students to 'obey', that he got his nickname. At Methodist secondary modern school, he began to take special interest in music and familiarized himself with many musicians of those days.

Obey stopped his education at secondary modern school and left his village in the 1950s for Lagos, where he played the guitar and Agidigbo (thumb piano) in several bands while working as a clerk in a pool company. He met two elderly people, Sir Akinbobi Salvage and

Bangbose popularly known as Abembo Mayana while playing guitar on the street of Mushin in Lagos, who paid Obey one pound two shilling after his first day of performance with them. From there, he began to receive regular invitations to play for different groups through which he later got introduced to Fatai Rolling Dollar at the age of sixteen. Rolling Dollar was not a bandleader by then, but an instrumentalist playing with Joe Araba. Obey claimed he actually formed the Fatai Rolling Spot Band, where he served as a composer and played Agidigbo music, a genre championed by Adeolu Akinsanya who later became a mentor to Obey.

After tutelage under Fatai Rolling-Dollar's band, Obey formed his first band - the International Brothers in 1964, playing Highlife-Juju fusion. The band known for its Yoruba percussion, vocals and layered guitar sounds, soon gained popularity. It later metamorphosed into Inter-Reformers in the early-1970s, with a long list of Juju album hits on the West African Decca musical label. The encounter of Ebenezer Obey with Mr. Cress, the Managing Director of Decca in Lagos was an event that turned his life around for good. His first (singles) album released on DECCA records was 'E wa wo ohun oju mi ri'. Yet, the album that brought him fame was 'Olomi gbo temi'.

Obey established his own identity in the field of Juju music by fusing Highlife into Juju, using his vocal prowess as the magic. Before him, everybody sang together, everybody did vocal and the leader led but he had his voice dominate his music, while giving half a minute to the band boys. That allowed his meaningful lyrics to sink very well, a novel and accepted innovation, making his music become a hybrid of highlife and juju. Whereas Dairo and other juju artists performed many songs dealing with women and their beauty, Obey's lyrics sang in a voice described as both sweet and velvety were more religious. Obey began experimenting with Yoruba percussion style and expanding on the band by adding more drum kits, guitars and talking drums. In his musical career he won Silver Disc, Golden Disc and Platinum Disc.

Obey's music is philosophical; it commands one's critical attention. Secondly, Obey's music is an exercise in social experience and national orientation. His songs are not just the regular sycophantic praise singing for the sake of money. What you hear is what you have seen around you. Or what you should be expecting, for good or for ill. The strength of Obey's music is its ability to draw you close within the ambit of shared cultural, social and national experiences. The songs weave rich Yoruba sayings/statements into an intricate musical complexity. The result is music that speaks wisdom for living.

The high point of this unique style of music was *The Horse, the Man and His Son* (1973). This song portrays the mature and quintessential Obey at the height of his musical prowess. This is an existential song that rehashes the theme of man's journey through life and the albatross of ruinous expectations we often carry with us. The moral lesson, Obey's counsel is that no matter what you do, the world still sees you as essentially incapable, weak and foolish: "Kosogbon to'le da, ko si'wa to le wu, ko so'na to le gba, to le fi ta'ye lo'run o!" (No matter the wisdom or the good behaviour or the manners and ways you explore, you can never hope to satisfy the world). This lesson cuts to the heart of the African world where the extended family system and the social reciprocity framework conduce often to the impoverishment of a person. Obey was a teacher, educator, preacher and entertainer. His other deep themes can equally be found in *Ewa Wo Ohun Oju Ri* (1964), *Aiye Gba Jeje* (1965), *Ore Mi Ese Pelepele* (1968), *Alo Mi Alo* (1975), *Eda To Mo'se Okunkun* (1977), *Aimasiko* (1987), etc.

Apart from the fascination with philosophically inspiring songs, Obey's musical corpus is divided between spiritually sensitive songs, which defines his latter efforts, like *Orin Adura* (1965), *Orin Ajinde* (1966), *Edumare Dari Jiwon* (1975), *Adam and Eve* (1977), *What God has Joined Together* (1981), *Count Your Blessings* (1990), etc; and socially tuned songs like *Paulina* (1967), *Pegan Pegan* (1969), *Esa Ma Miliki* (1971), *In the Sixties* (1979), *Je Ka Jo* (1983), *Womanhood* (1991), etc.

Chief Ebenezer Obey Fabiyi also comes from the stock of that generation who were truly patriotic and care about the progress of the Nigerian Project. Again, that is a dying practice in Nigeria. Musicians today have become adept in pandering to the desires of the powerful for

gain. Music is, for them, no longer a stentorian tool for generating strong constructive and reconstructive feelings about one's fatherland. In music history, Peter Wagner did this to a glorious though tainted height. Ebenezer Obey inserted himself into the patriotic circle with Gari Ti Won (1965). This was followed successively by To Keep Nigeria One (1967), Isokan Nigeria (1969), Operation Feed the Nation (1976), Current Affairs (1980), The Only Condition to Save Nigeria (1984), Formula 0-1-0 (1989), and so on.

Chief Ebenezer Obey is famous for the sweet-sounding beats of his songs and the didactic message of most of his tracks. In a world where moral decadence is on the rise, music can help, such that songs are not for entertainment and socialization alone. For this musical maestro, songs should not serve to entertain alone; they must also serve as tools for change in society. His music records are full of morals and advice for the youth, with the songs drawn from his personal experience to educate the youth and guide them on the right path. When adults make mistakes, those mistakes should serve as a warning and guide for the young, and that is one of the common elements of Chief Ebenezer Obey's songs. A quick mental review of his songs will show how incessantly the musician hammers the importance of virtues such as humility, hard work, love and patriotism. He has often been referred to by critics and reviewers as the only musician of the Juju music order whose focus is not on singing about women, alcohol and other themes popular among musicians in the same genre. His songs are didactic, encouraging and good projectors of real-life issues.

Ebenezer Obey is one of the Nigerian musicians who use music as a means of entertainment and social reformation through moral teachings. He has since the inception of his music career been a moral philosopher who believes that music should be an avenue to teach and build moral values in society. His first album, *Ewa wo ohun ojumiri* (This is what I saw), was based on a story that was intended to teach the youth a lesson that robbery is a vice that they must not venture into. Music, to him, is an inspiration meant to transform and build society. Though his music is a mixture of juju and highlife, it is filled with philosophical thought that emanates from Yoruba indigenous knowledge. He acknowledges the supremacy of God as the ultimate ruler of human life in his songs. To him, God is the source of all inspiration. He also teaches the importance of virtues such as fear of God, repercussion of evil, reward, forgiveness, benevolence, appreciation, the sanctity of marriage and the role of time in human existence. Indeed, Ebenezer Obey was beyond a musical artist.

Overview of Sikiru Ayinde Barrister's Fuji Music

Sikiru Ololade Ayinde Balogun MFR was born on February 9, 1948. He died on December 16, 2010. He was better known by his stage name Ayinde Barrister. He was a Nigerian singer-songwriter, song producer and music performer. He is regarded as the pioneer of Fuji and Were music. After his break into music in 1965, he went on to release over 70 studio albums. Ayinde Barrister started playing music at a young age as an Ajiwere singer during the period of Ramadan; he continued playing music in between various jobs. He worked as a typist, also known today as secretary, for Nigerian Breweries and was later enlisted as a clerk in the Nigeria Army during the Nigerian Civil War. He served in the 10th Brigade of the 2nd Division of the Nigerian Army under Col. Adeniran and fought in Awka, Abagana and Onitsha. On his return from the war, he was posted to the Army Signals Headquarters, Apapa and later to the Army Resettlement Centre, Oshodi. He left the Army to become a full-time musician and proceeded to start a full-fledged band of 34 percussionists and vocalists called the Supreme Fuji Commanders.

Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister was arguably one of Nigeria's best-known singer-songwriters who played an essential role in the evolution of the music of his homeland. The leader of the Supreme Fuji Commanders and a smaller group, the Africa Musical International Ambassadors, Barrister had continued to be - even in death - one of the leading purveyors of Fuji, an exciting, amplified dance music combining juju, apala and traditional Yoruba blues that he introduced in the late '70s. Throughout his life, Barrister had been preoccupied with singing. By the age of ten, he had mastered a complex, Yoruba vocal style that was traditionally

performed during the holy month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the lunar calendar during which Muslims observe their fasting. Although he briefly attended a Muslim School, Yaba Polytechnic, in 1961, financial difficulties prevented him from continuing.

Leaving school, he found employment as a stenographer. During the Civil War that swept through Nigeria between 1967 and 1970, he served in the Army. Signed by the Nigeria-based Africa Songs Ltd. label, Barrister recorded many ground-breaking singles during the 1970s and '80s. With his heartfelt vocals set to a rhythmic mix of talking drums, claves, bells, sekere, drum set, and Hawaiian-style guitar, he laid the foundation for Fuji, which he named after Mt. Fuji, the Japanese mountain of love. The style has been described as "Juju without the guitars" and a "percussion conversation".

In his lifetime, Sikiru Ayinde Barrister (SAB) produced a total of 127 LPs, many of which are insightful. In his epic album tagged *Aye* (1979) he chronicled the theory of creation; philosophy of good and bad; law of attraction; fate; different races and the truth. He also reported the difference between the white and black race - difference between success and failure - and what made the white race to continue to record success in their endeavours. He wondered in the record if the black race had been doomed, giving several anecdotes such as the fertiliser which is a product of waste products translated into wealth. But the black man is indifferent to utilising the wealth to the betterment of his society. He equally reported vividly his tourist visit to Disney World in Orlando, Florida, USA, lampooning the black race to develop its own tourist attractions instead of travelling in droves to foreign lands. Also, in his album titled 'Nigeria' (1983) Sikiru Ayinde Barrister as a master story-teller, narrated in a dramatic monologue the political history of Nigeria as well as its heads right from 1960 when it got independence from the British. He climaxed the album with a word of caution to politicians not to rig elections. He also preached sportsmanship among the political parties and their flag-bearers to accept the eventual results of the polls. Also, he preached good mannerliness, integrity, character and hard work in his songs. There are many other hit records produced by Sikiru Ayinde Barrister in a period spanning over forty years. Some of them are: *Ijo Olomo*, *Fuji Garbage* (1988), *Current Affairs* (1988), *Oro Ibo*, *Barry at 40* (1988), *Barry Wonder*, *Family Planning*, *Music Extravaganza* (1990), *New Fuji Waves* (1991), *Ise lgun Ise* (1982), *Iwa* (1982) and many others.

Theoretical Framework

To further illuminate the paper, two theories were examined viz: agenda-setting theory and social responsibility theory.

Agenda-Setting theory is one of the media effects' theories relevant to this work. The theory was propounded by the duo of Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in 1972. The theory assumes that the mass media set agenda for general discussion by the audience. By these agenda, people's thinking is shaped along with issues presented. Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso (2008) note that the agenda-setting theory presupposes that the facts which people know about public issues tend to be those which the mass media present to them. Also, the significance which they ascribe to the same issues tends to be proportionate to the amount of attention given to the same issues in the media.

They proposed that the following could be responsible for agenda-setting:

- (a) The number of times an issue is reported
- (b) Using headline and picture display strategies to play up a report in the media and
- (c) Reports that give room for "points and counter-points".

The relevance of this theory to the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister is that it relates with how Juju and Fuji music are used to set agenda for public discuss among its listeners. The more the music is played repetitively, the more its messages are well absorbed, assimilated and acted on.

Social Responsibility theory is one of the normative theories also relevant to this study. The theory was propounded in 1963 by F.S. Siebert, T. B. Peterson and Wilbur Schramm. The premise of social responsibility theory is that the press should be socially responsible to the

society. This theory is relevant to the study because the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister have some elements of social responsibility. Their music has been used to preach democracy and call on different segments of the society to unity, be peaceful and progressive. They have equally used their music to deliver various moral lessons to their listeners, audiences and admirers.

Methodology and Data Presentation

The study adopted survey design which involves drawing up questions on aspects of a subject to which members of the population are requested to react to and by so doing provide answers to the agitating issue. The population of the study was all the adult audience of Juju and Fuji music in South-West Nigeria.

Multi-sampling techniques were used in getting the sample size of 400 respondents of the population for the study. Purposive sampling technique was first used to select adult audience/listeners of Juju and Fuji music in four states of the South-West namely; Lagos, Oyo, Ogun and Osun States. Quota sampling technique was also used to select 100 respondents each from the states. Again purposive sampling method was applied to get adult audience of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister’s music as the sample.

The instrument for data collection of the study was structured questionnaire designed in close-ended format to elicit the music audiences’ views on the subject of enquiry. The instrument was in two sections. Direct method was applied in administering the instrument, with the aid of trained research assistants. At the meeting venues, copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents, who filled and returned them on the spot. This method was considered suitable because it ensured high return rate of the instrument. The data were analysed with the use of simple statistical tools – frequency, percentage and tables.

Out of the four hundred copies of the questionnaire administered, 389, which represents 97.25% of the sample was successfully filled and returned, while 11 which stands for 2.75% is the mortality rate for the copies that were not correctly filled and returned. Therefore, all decisions were based on the 389 copies returned.

Table 1: Awareness of the use of moral themes in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister by the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	340	87.4%
No	49	12.6%
Can’t say	0	0
Total	389	100%

Table 1 above shows that the respondents were aware of the use of moral themes in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister. Most of them alluded to being mindful of these moral themes while listening to their music.

Table 2: Yoruba music genre with more prominence to moral lessons

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Juju	103	26.5%
Fuji	115	29.6%
Apala	107	27.5%
Others	64	16.4%
Total	389	100%

The table indicates that the respondents selected various types of Yoruba music as the most prominent for moral lessons.

Table 3: Extent of the use of moral lessons in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister

Very high	High extent	Low extent	Very low extent	Can't tell	Total
205 52.7%	184 47.3%	0 0	0 0	0 0	389 100%

Data on Table 3 indicates that a greater number of the respondents affirm that moral lessons are very high in the music of the selected three Yoruba musicians; the data indicates very high rate of the use of moral lessons by these musicians in their music.

Table 4: Various moral themes used by these Yoruba musicians in their music

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Time	30	7.7%
Patience	45	11.6%
Contentment	51	13.1%
Hard work	71	18.3%
Love	82	21.1%
Honesty	69	17.7%
Others	41	10.5%
Total	389	100%

Table 4 specifies the variety of moral themes used by the three selected Yoruba musicians being studied in their music. Data on the table show that various moral themes are used in the music of these Yoruba musicians.

Table 5: Frequency of application of moral themes in the music of the selected Yoruba musicians

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Often	67	17.2%
Seldom	0	0
Always	322	82.8%
Total	185	100%

As shown in Table 5, for the majority of the respondents to specify that the moral themes are applied always in the music of the selected Yoruba musicians implies that they appreciated the lessons and values embedded in the moral themes of the musicians.

Table 6: How receptive are listeners to the moral lessons in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very receptive	293	75.3%
Receptive	96	24.7%
Moderately receptive	0	0
Not receptive	0	0
Total	389	100%

The responses of the respondents to the question on how receptive the listeners are to the moral lessons in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister is presented above. The result shows that the audience are receptive to the moral lessons in the music of these musicians. Thus, the musicians are able to impart ethics and values in their listeners.

Table 7: Impact of use of moral themes in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Enhances quality of life of listeners.	33	8.5%
Engenders moral rectitude in the audience	96	24.7%
Reduces societal ills	47	12.1%
Enhances music acceptance by the audience	34	8.7%
Educates listeners on ideals and ethics	88	22.6%
All of the above	91	23.4%
Total	389	100%

The respondents here gave variety of answers to the question on the impact of the use of moral themes in the music of King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Sikiru Ayinde Barrister. The diversity shows the high rate of the usefulness of the moral themes which the listeners greatly appreciate and value.

Conclusion

The study examined the moral lessons of music as an instrument of communication, focusing on three select Yoruba musicians: King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister. The generated data show that the massive application of moral themes in their music which strongly influences the lives of the listeners positively, hence the audience rely on them to enhance their moral rectitude. Their music contains virtuous, educative and positively influences contents. This has further improved the position of Yoruba popular music in the global music community. They also indicated that the music impacted and improved the quality of life of the listeners which is reflected in the level of moral rectitude of the audience as communicated by the musicians. It as well revealed high listenership to the music of these select Yoruba musicians. It was also discovered that the audiences are aware of the use of moral themes in the music of these musicians. This verdict agrees with the findings of Sowande (1946), that 70% of African music deals with ethical subjects while the rest addresses topics of ordinary life. Also, Mano (2007) in his seminal work on *Popular Music as Journalism in Africa*, African musicians do not just entertain their listeners. They also provide ‘news’ through music. African musicians inform and mobilize citizens on topical issues including health, economic and political hot topics that are usually neglected or insufficiently covered in many fledgling democracies in Africa. Mano (2007) further found that apart from entertainment, African musicians effectively articulate political and non-political matters in ways reflecting and affecting the concerns, fears, anxieties, losses and aspirations of many Africans.

These results also substantiate the agenda setting and social responsibility theories which were used as theoretical foundation of the study. Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso (2008) explain that the agenda-setting theory presupposes that the facts which people know about public issues tend to be those which the mass media present to them. Also, the significance which they ascribe to the same issues tends to be proportionate to the amount of attention given to the same issues in the media. Hence, as the musicians dish out moral lessons in their music, the listeners give attention to these lessons and their ways of life are affected positively. Too, the premise of social responsibility theory is that the press should be socially responsible to the society. In this context, the musicians are socially responsible through their music. This is evident in the morals that they preach in their music in order to make the society better.

The data as well exposed the influence of high utilization of moral themes of the music of these Yoruba musicians. It enhances the quality of life of the listeners as they apply the moral lessons embedded in the songs, engenders moral rectitude in the audience, reduces societal ills, increases music acceptance by the audience and finally educates listeners on ideals and ethics. These further fulfil the ultimate communicative objectives of the musicians which include: entertaining, informing, educating, socialising, conscientising, awakening and mobilising.

Recommendations

In furtherance of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. With music established as a strong communicative tool for moral rejuvenation, musicians should be encouraged to further infuse their music with strong messages capable of strengthening societal values and moral rectitude.
2. Nigerian musicians should be oriented to see themselves as crusaders in the crusade of regenerating and transforming Nigeria's apparent morally bankrupt society by ensuring their products are anchored on moral lessons.
3. Nigerian music audience should be entertained with musical varieties that are replete with moral lessons to stem the tide of moral decadence that is prevalent in our society.
4. Musicians of other music genres in Nigeria should take cue from these three Yoruba musical artists and incorporate moral themes and lessons in their music for societal improvement.
5. More attention should be paid to music as a formidable tool of communication with potentials and efficacy for positively influencing societal transformation.

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