

Youths in Modern Music Industry and the Disruptive Impact on Yoruba Cultural Sustainability

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Abstract: Yoruba people of southwest Nigeria have a rich culture that served as a means of identifying themselves amidst the comity of ethnic groups in Nigeria. From the time immemorial, this cultural value had been preserved and sustained from generation to generation despite the infiltration of the European imperialists who came to introduced new ways of life into Yoruba communities. One of the viable and veritable tools that Yoruba people employed for transmission of this rich cultural heritage is music. But today, with the in-coming of the Youths into music industry, the traditional music has been termed “old school” and obsolete, hence music has sadly enough, played disruptive role rather than constructive role in sustaining the Yoruba cultural values. It is against this background that this paper examines the traditional music vis-à-vis the modern trend of music among the Yoruba youths and its consequences on the Yoruba cultural values. The paper concludes that the in-coming of the youths in music industry should be exploited to detach Yoruba culture from the apron of the former colonial overlord. This could be achieved by appreciating our own cultural values, rather than injecting and transmitting immoralities and other vices which negate our cultural values through the so called modern music.

Keywords: Youths, Traditional, Modern, Music, Cultural sustainability.

Introduction

Music is essentially part of every culture on the surface of earth, but it varies widely among cultures in style and structure. It is crafty arrangement of sound across time whereby most musical experiences involve producing or listening to physical characteristics of sound such as pitch and timbre (Butler, 2009). Hence musical activity involves singing, dancing and playing musical instruments. Alade (2006) posited that music and dance are inseparable but used in connection with various functions and most important of these are during religious ceremonies, ritual practices and cultural festivals especially in the Yoruba setting. Music as it is being positioned in the society as a way of

life places it within the centrality of culture which is the totality of a person's identity. The Yoruba as one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria has been gaining international attention for their arts, music, and roles in African history (Christopher, 2019). The Yoruba has a very vibrant popular music scene that has come to reflect her cultural richness, most of which was fashioned towards domestic needs.

Yoruba music is traditionally centred on folklore and spiritual/ deity worship utilizing basic and natural instrument such as clapping of hands and locally made drums. This type of music is made by the people in Yoruba communities to promote culture and moral values. This music is transferred from one generation to another. Traditional music is often purposeful rather than entertaining. It is made to give warning against bad behaviour in the society and serves as custodians of moral law and social critics. It is equally made for commemorative functions and also used to express one's mind (Olabode, 2019). As it was believed by most Greek philosophers, listening to music based on certain modes in use at the time is beneficial to the development of young person's character, and warned that listening to music based on certain other modes may have harmful and negative effects (Butler, 2009).

Besides, it is often made to accompany rituals, sports, funerals, marriages, births, war or the dances of the famous Yoruba masquerades (Babatunde, 2019). This indicated that music is very important for every aspect of people's lives. Special songs were composed to meet up with specific purposes of every aspect of life. Traditional Music equally reflected in language use where emphasis is laid on the use of Yoruba languages. In the traditional setting, Yoruba music was not influenced by foreign music, but served as a source of value and commitment and was regarded as an important component of Nigerian popular music scene (www.nigeria.com, 2019). Thus the same cannot be said of modern day Yoruba music which has evolved and adapted itself through contact with foreign instruments, talents and creativity.

Youths and Modern Music Industry in Yoruba Society

Youths could be conceptualized differently from one society to the other. Some may view it on the basis of age and dependency while others on the basis of ability and strength. But in this context we are viewing youth as the set or group of people that are yet to enjoy full adult status but are no more classified as children. This is the period when they freely have contact with environment to observe and learn in order to build their character in consonance with the acceptable norms and values of the society. This period is regarded as formative age of building their own social life contrary to the cultural claims of the society that they fall into. At this level they want to bridge the gap between the dependency of childhood and the independence of adulthood (Olukayode, 2004). Onwunah (2011) as cited by Babalola and Fasiku (2017), highlighted some of the attributes of the youths as; creativity, exuberance, hardwork, courage, altruism and adventure. Youths are very audacious and willing to test and confirm new ideas. Youths are pragmatic in pursuing any act they believe in, unlike the old people who takes time to study, reflect

and then act. At the youthful age, it is assumed that a threat is being posed to the acceptable norms and values of the society whereby the dominant culture gave way to the emergence of youth culture, and the most visible aspect of the youth culture is prevalent in the modern music industry.

The modern music industry in Nigeria society today has strong roots in the existing traditional music and culture while its development and modernization has occurred through needs, contact, foreign influence, religion, governance system, the economy as well as urbanization among other factors (Wale, 2016). The modern music industry as a concept signifying the production, commercialization and consumption of music. Whereby sophisticated communication technology of the modern day is being used to turn music into commodity within the paraphernalia of multimedia like recordings, video, film, television, magazines, books. It is the industry that signifies several activities and organizations by different artistes working towards specific goals with common aim of processing and distributing musical products to the consumer for the purpose of making profit (Ojukwu, Obielozie, Esimone, 2016).

This industry is booming today in the wake of internet and digital revolution whereby large number of youths (musicians) launching out daily their video on television, YouTube, Instagram and other media outlets. It has become a type of business that is saturated with mediocre in music who wants to copy the style of the reigning musician without professional advice to earn their living, while the marketers who are merely traders also determine the type of music that such musician should produce on a large scale. With this, music has changed from its traditional purpose to social entertainment and dance oriented which found its expression mostly in pubs and night clubs. The younger generation that dominated this modern music industry has taken to Hip hop and Rap type which require the use of electronic devices and incorporated new ideas, values and lifestyle from the western world.

It is worth mentioning that before the discovery of Hip hop and rap music the traditional music had been hybridised by the maze of musical acculturation which has changed the face of Yoruba music without destroying the traditional values. Two trends were easily discernible; there were musician that played traditionally-derived music on European instruments, this group were playing high life music. The second group were those discarded European instruments to form small group of performers using guitar, traditional drums and solo singers to produce Juju, Fuji, Apala, Waka music (Ashiwaju, Areola, 1995). During this period, the needs of the adults were met with these forms of music while youths merely participated as chorus singers or played instrument for adult musicians. This created an avenue for the youths to learn and develop to take up these kind of music. Hence during the period, youths had no enduring local music of their own (Nkechi, 2019). In view of Hip hop and rap as the entry point of the youth into modern music culture, the youth today see music differently from what adult generation thought of it.

The invention of this modern music encapsulated by the youths as a short cut of making fame and fortune while many of them careless to give adequate thought to what they should compose as song. Notwithstanding, Hip hop and rap by their nature accommodates all forms of messages and sound. The easiest way with which such music are produced, without any training in music skills and the acceptance of a celebration of the absurd led to creation of strange cacophonies of songs, beats and images which the promoters are impatient to market for quick returns. It is a common phenomenon today in the music industry that indecency and the absurd sell fast (Nkechi, 2019). Therefore, the high visibility of these young people with shared musical preferences, fashion, beliefs and ideas led to creation of sub-culture in the Yoruba society. Such emerging sub-culture captures the social, political and economic spirit of the time and whatever is going on around them is translating into the music, fashion and behaviour they use to identify themselves (Olukayode, 2004)

Disruptive Impact of Modern Music Industry on Yoruba Culture

The world culture had been a concept of great usage and identification since the last decades of the 19th century till the present day. One of the widely accepted definitions of culture is that Edwards B. Tylor, a British anthropologist, in his book titled *primitive culture* where he states that “culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, moral, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Balogun, 2018). Thereafter, several scholars have given various definitions of culture in accordance with their background and orientation. Most of the definitions depict culture as important aspects of society which deal with such elements as institution, values, norms, ideas, ethos, science and skills (technology) as well as human conduct or behaviour within the society as these elements survive from one generation to another (Asiwaju, Areola, 1995). Scrutiny from the 1988 cultural policy for Nigeria, the relevance of culture is widely expressed as the “totality of the way of life evolved by people in their attempt to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization, thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours” (Ajah, nd). Surmise from this, it is obvious that culture varies from one location to another and distinguishes people from one particular location to the other which mainly form the identity.

Yoruba, therefore, as one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria, have had more time to develop distinct culture which had grown and made impact on sub-Saharan Africa and as well gained international attention. Some of the cultural values and qualities that were highly treasured generally among the Yoruba in the traditional society include obedience to parent, decency, honesty, patriotism, hard-work and hospitality. Also, there was repugnance of, and condemnation of such vices as individualism, selfishness, laziness, stealing and robbery, waywardness, pre-marital and extra-marital affairs, extravagance and indecency. All the afore-mentioned desirable qualities are impacted into the youths

through proverbs, taboos, folklores and folktales which are mainly expressed in music in order to ensure societal peace, harmony and progress that will keep the society going (Balogun, 2018).

However, with the development and involvement of the youths in modern music, there was a decline in the Yoruba cultural values. Today, the youths have taken advantage of technological innovations to be identified with the global culture, especially in the gratification of impulses to create their own kind of music which is locally known as “naija Hip hop”. This music has come of age as the primary index of youth identity in Nigeria generally and Yoruba in particular (Gbogi, 2016). The Hip hop music which is the music by the youths and for the youths today is ubiquitous and notorious, and seems to be overshadowing the traditional and other popular music that has helped to shape the socio-cultural life of Yoruba people, and to address some of the societal issues (Nkechi, 2019 & Ashiwaju, Areola, 1995).

The disruption of Yoruba culture through modern music could be traced to excessive exposure to the media and the absence of music content that gives primacy to Yoruba moral code. The modern society today is filled with media materials that glorify corruptive tendencies. Majority of the youths involved in the modern music today dress in crazy manner, this tends to encourage many youths to imitate this mode of appearance which later end up in promoting eroticism and violence (Dosumu, 2009). Music which is an instrument of change in any society has its own technique, instrument and language while every performance has its targeted audience and almost all the modern music is targeted towards the youths. The music one listened to defines one's identity and determines the kind of person one becomes in the years to come, because it leaves a mark on the psyche that re-directs the person towards a new personality and towards a new activity (Ojukwu, Obielozie, Esimone, 2016).

Music has been a veritable medium of language use and development in every culture. Hence, with the rise of some musicians that are singing Hip hop music which is the product of globalization, Yoruba language have become threatened by the use of foreign language which in turn introduced western way of life into the Yoruba society. This kind of music accommodates all sounds and messages which does not make any meaning or add any value to the society. The lyrics and beats released through this music is far removed from what Yoruba consumers were familiar with and this directly impact our youth who are still extremely malleable to the world around them (Dosumu, 2009). The modern day music industry mainly dominated by the youth do not explore music as a means of education or for sermonizing on good behaviour but most musicians reap a lot of wealth by corrupting the society through their music, the youth are mostly vulnerable as far as the depreciation of culture and moral values of the Yoruba societies are concerned (Ojukwu, Obielozie, Esimone, 2016).

We cannot deny the fact that modern music industry today serve as means of generating employment for the teeming population of unemployed youths. But the fact still remains that absurdity, immoral attitudes and ineptitude are found more among these

musicians. Many of them today have become a source of moral decadence. The youths are no longer identifying with the socio-cultural values of their immediate societies. Traditional and cultural values do not appeal to them, while the culture of decency and modesty is almost totally absent among the youths (Balogun, 2018). Many of these musicians tend to western ways of dressing with pair of trousers and shirt, some of them are over dressed with big neck chain which nearly reached their knees, putting on of earring, dreadlock and plaiting of hair, piercing and tattoo of body as well as sagging of trousers mostly common among males while the female ones dress half-naked. Some even appear on the stage in nude form, only with ordinary pants and bra.

In Yoruba culture nudity is an action that is sacrilegious to society's moral order, but otherwise viewed as an informal protest mechanism employed by women to up turn the unfavourable rule and decision of cruel leader against women folk or the general society. However, this dressing habit has become the latest among our youths today which considerably promote indiscriminate sex and sexual harassment among the youths (Balogun, 2018). In other way round, dreadlock and plaiting of hair by male in the Yoruba society was an act that belong to some religion sect. For instance the Sango worshipers were normally appear in plaiting hair while a child born with dreadlock fondly called *Dada* among Yoruba, hence these have become common dressing habit among our youths today.

Music content and lyric undoubtedly suggest the mind-set of its composer and consumer which may advertently inform their future action. With the celebration of Hip hop as modern music which is common among our youths today in Yoruba society, the intellect and state of mind of these youths have been affected. It was part of Yoruba culture that achievement through hard work and social responsibility were the aspirations of the youths, but today, quick and short way to material and wealth acquisition has become the ultimate aim of our youths. Since music is viewed as a potent instrument for mobilising people into action, hence, different contents and lyrics of these Hip hop music have mobilised the youth who were the major consumer of these music to be involved in most prevalent social vices in the society.

To buttress this fact, it suffices to give some instances of such songs and the suggestions that the content portrayed into the mind-set of the youth; "*Ki in sa ti lowo*" meaning; just to have money in album titled *Omo Baba Olowo* which was released in 2012 by David Adedeji Adeleke popularly known as Davido. "*Yahooze*" which was released by Olu Maintain on December 2007 which the lyric goes thus;

Ewo awon boys yi
 karmakaze on a ketto level
 yahooze, e jami si jo!
 Puffy Tee (Puffy Tee)
 Oh oh
 Yahoo, oh oh (3x)
 Yahooze (4x)
 The music

If I hammer(hammer, hammer).
 First thing na Hummer (Hummer Hummer)
 1million dollar (dollar, dollar)
 Elo lo ma je ti n ba se si Naira(too much money, now)
 Owo..... (https://genius.com/Olu-maintain-yahooze-lyrics)

These kind of music encourage youth to get rich by any means. Notwithstanding majority of Nigerian youths today tends to popular cybercrime otherwise known as Yahoo Yahoo. Many has even gone far beyond this and tend to ritual means of making money otherwise called “*yahoo plus*”. Another popular album titled “*shayo*” was released by Bigiano on January 2009 which the lyrics go thus;

First of August na the date o
 Na so me and ma friends
 Sit down we relate o
 Say make we gather people come jubilate o
 Cos na my success I dey try celebrate o
 You see

You can't afford to come late
 Cos my gate go dey close like eight o
 And if you come so quick
 Girls dem yapa you can start to relate o

And if you wan to chocolate o
 Holy and drink already don circulate o
 But if you feel intoxicate o
 Sit down in a place and start to dey meditate meanwhile.....

Holy go dey flow like fire
 Shayo go dey flow like water
 Anything you want make una order.....

This party no be joke o
 All the place just dey full of smoke o
 All the boys wey dey down don dey toast o
 Even all the girls don eyeballs don compose o.....

Dance to the beats as bigiano dey flow
 This na my time I spend my dough
 Even if I like I go smoke igbo o..... (genius.com)

Shayo according to Yoruba literary meaning is drinking to stupor, hence it has become a general believe among the young artists that the use of drugs enhance their performance while some of their fans who see them as their role model also indulge in the use of drug. This act and lyrics of their music has lured many youths to drinking of alcohol, and smoking of marijuana and use of other hard drug. While some female youths have become promiscuous and tend to sex worker popular tagged as *olosh*. Infers from the content and lyrics of most of these music many youths both male and female had turned to drug addicts (Ojukwu, Obielozie, Esimone, 2016).

Another instance worth to be cited in these modern music industry is the composition of young musicians under the aegis of Marlians movement. A Marlian is a staunch follower of controversial blended Afrobeats and Hip-hop Musician Azeez Fashola, popularly called Naira Marley. As a young Yoruba musician his philosophies and beliefs totally negate Yoruba cultural beliefs. His beliefs that are shared by his followers are among followings;

1. They are expected not to care or give a hoot about pleasing the public but must stick to their guns and must be controversial.
2. Believe that cybercrime or “Yahoo-Yahoo” are not all that bad
3. Don’t wear a belt, Marlians are No Belt Gangs (NBG)
4. Believe younger once shouldn’t graduate from the University; they have to drop out.
5. Don’t wear pants (for females) and boxers (for male)
6. Love controversial life styles and care not about what people think or say so long it makes you happy (Osola Samuel, 2021)

The belief and philosophy of this movement breeds thug and crazy youths in Yoruba society today (Nkechi, 2019). No wonder, the rate of army robbery, kidnapping, thuggery, prostitution and other related social vices keep on increasing among the youths against the concept of hard work, decency, honesty that constitute the Omoluabi ethos in the Yoruba setting.

However, the modern music industry engendered unacceptable music and behaviour while the artists, producers, D.Js, marketers and others that involved celebrate fame and fortune at the expense of societal values. They take the advantage of this to promote their products in the media and at events targeted at selling their products to the youths. This also encourages the spread of moral decadence. To most of the artists, what matter to them are the material gain and social status that music accord them. In a bid to achieve this, some of these artists were initiated into occult who will in turn initiate some of his fans. With this, the chain of cultism had extended to all the educational strata in our society. The activities of such group are dreadful and pose threat to the society.

Conclusion

Culture, as important parts of quality of life serves as a tool for social, political and economic development of the societies due to the fact that it determines how people live, work together and manage their natural environment. And for this function to be fully

actualised, there is need to sustain culture. Kopfmiller asserts that where culture is not sustained, there would be a crisis of existence, sustainability should be the central soul and object of any culture. Therefore culture is sustained when it meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By sustaining cultural life of the people three major goals are bound to be achieved;

- i. Securing human existence
- ii. Maintaining society's productive potential
- iii. Preserving society's option for development and action (Jigen Kopfmiller, 2011).

In the light of this postulation, culture must be preserved, and its diversity must be protected from the onslaught of westernization and international cultural uniformity. To achieve this, the following recommendations are suggested and if adherent to, the modern music industry which is majorly dominated and controlled today by the youths will therefore be in frontline position to transmit the rich cultural heritage of Yoruba from one generation to another without being mangled.

Firstly, any music that is released by any musician must be adequately censored before such reaches the consumers, In the process, the body in charge of censorship should beam their searchlight on every component involves in the modern day music industry to ensure that all arts of immorality are not allowed to spread into the society through music.

Furthermore, government should endeavour to tackle the problem of increasing poverty and joblessness that are seriously affecting our youth today. This will curb the mad rush into music industry by waxing out and selling records that contain immoral lyrics and postures which has brought uncountable damage on societal values.

The media houses and promoters in the music industry should ensure that music that promote immorality, and which runs contrary to our traditional values should be banned from having foothold in the society. While their efforts should be geared to promote those music that tends to display the core value of Yoruba culture.

In addition to this, there must be adequate and regular education for the musicians and the key players in the industry on the need to showcase the Yoruba culture through their dressing and language use. This assignment should be carried out by the ministry and parastatal in charge of culture and orientation for the sustainability of human values.

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