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**THE ENGAGEMENTS OF COMMUNITY MUSIC ARTISTIC CREATION IN  
ATIBA LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OYO TOWN.**

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**Abstract**

The engagements of community artists and their creative works have been subjected to several debates in the past decades, owing various glaring challenges as a result of globalisation and cultural changes, which are experienced in African community since the colonial era. This study focused on Atiba Local Government, Oyo State. Although, community music occurs in virtually all parts of Oyo State (*Afijio, Oyo West and Oyo East*), *Atiba* Local Government is known for community musicianship and itinerant musicians. This research work thereby examined the engagements of community music artistic creation in *Atiba* Local Government. The ultimate goal of this work is to explore the current relationship of artists with the environment, the influences they receive, and whether projects with similar content can sensitize listeners to environmental issues. The research design deployed qualitative research methodology. These involves observations, descriptive, interviews methods and library resources. The findings show that Community music create a sense of same identity, uniqueness and the idea of their music is based on justice, power, authority, equality with an openness to achieve a common goal.

**Keywords:** engagement, community artists, globalisation, environment, artistic creation

## Introduction

It has become, perhaps impossible to exclude music from the human environment. This is basically because human beings are musically inclined. Most of the human activities revolve around music from birth, marriage, rites, religion, sports, entertainment, medicine, psychology, politics, science and technology, etc. Undoubtedly, music, as a natural phenomenon is an integral part of everyday life, and especially, it is at the centre of oral education, cultural life, social life and expression. Environment refers primarily to a setting where people cohabit and interact on regular basis. One of the avenues through which people interact or relate is through music. That is essentially why music cannot be divulged from social existence. Apart from this submission, music has cultural, economic, political and social values in which without these factors, a society or community cannot exist.

Many scholars have posited that music is a global and general language. That is to say that music is loved by many and used by many. From time immemorial, certain music have been appreciated and accepted generally across the world such as hip pop, reggae, jazz, rock, funk, etc. a lot of these genres of music were exposed to the world's population through the mass media such as radio, and television. Thus, they became global and enjoyed around the world. However, there are other genres of music that are not global, which means that they are performed within communities. These genres could be referred to as community music, such as; folk song, community choir, folk lore. Moon-light plays, community bands, festival songs and street musicians. They are mostly found in Africa, the Caribbean and localities where development or modernisation has not taken deep roots. It has its characteristics which are aptly different from the genres earlier mentioned. This tradition has existed long before western civilisation came to

Nigeria. It existed in the courts of Obas and other notable chiefs in the Yoruba land. Music serves different purposes but in all, musicianship reflected social realities of the communities and times. Music is culture bond and every environment represents their music which gives it highly memorial value and importance. Samuel (2009) opined that musical sound and meaning has a cordial relationship, thus the compositions and performances reflected the language spoken within such community. Be that as it may, it serves unique purposes and the artistes involved have special skills and, in most cases, they are professional in their own right. Music requires creativity in various dimensions: song writing, instrumentation, style, purpose and performative ability. Various artistes possess some of the above-mentioned qualities. Artistic creation from every perspective is often geared towards communication, awareness, sensitization and entertainment. A plethora of artistes have been known in a unique way to communicate as well as entertain using music as a tool and this gives room for variety which is considered as a spice of life. Another important factor that can determine artistic creation is the audience.

Although, musical activities can be seen at all social events, it doesn't actually mean the same thing as engaging community music. Today, Yoruba musicians (talking drummers) still migrate from one community to the other performing especially in weddings and other ceremonies. This is largely because most of the music used do not belong to the community or better still not form community artistes but that of popular artistes. This to a large extent has also reduced the value of community artists as they are less often patronised. This has become a great challenge to community music engagement in terms of survival and contributions to the immediate community. Popular artistes sing generally about social issues that sometimes might not reflect the exact situation in the community and

because people yearn for entertainment, this crucial aspect is jettisoned or sacrificed on the altar of entertainment. Whereas, engaging community musicians can serve other functional purposes apart from entertainment. This study is interested in understudying functions of community music and artistes. Music is pre-lingual, along with prehistoric art, was one of the earliest forms of communication and this is why music was not just inseparable from early communities, but was absolutely integral to positive community relations. In fact, anthropologists have now proven that early cultures with a strong musical tradition thrived and flourished featuring musical instruments like lyre, flutes, harps, xylophone, mbira etc, thereby enhancing their rich cultural heritage. However, a community with that reflect a social bonding is a source of inspiration for artistic creation and it is believed that songs, combined with some factors can sensitize the society and make it (society) adopts appropriate behaviours and actions within the context of sustainable development. This has the effect of forming a circular environmental feedback model through the artists, their works and the listeners.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is ecomusicology theory by Aron S. Allen (2014). This is to provide a platform at which the crucial issues as regards practice and relevance of community music are discoursed and how it has affected the sub-consciousness of the community members. Allen defines ecomusicology as the study of music, aural sound, nature, environment, culture looking at the stylistic and other related issues. This theory emphasis the relationship and correlation between music and the elements that constitute the environment. The concept looks at the lyrics, text of the songs by various musicians or scholars in consonance with their environment.

### **The Concept of Community Music**

A community comprises a large number of people with different approaches which varies in practices, religions, beliefs, norms but with the mutual understanding of living together in one accord, engages in communal practices and sharing the same ideologies and philosophies.

Music is an art of producing sound in time which expresses ideas, emotions, feelings, in certain form with the elements of melody, rhythms, melody, harmony, pitch, tempo duration and intensity. It is an expression of emotional feelings that create diverse reactions in the mind of the listener or audience. It is a total art which involves; dancing, drama, eulogising, chanting which are performed in an open or close arena.

Community music is an evolving discipline in music practices and studies, it is a field that involves lifelong musical participation with an emphasis on interaction through music, thus it's difficult to have a singular definition of what community music is. In global view, community music is a musical practice which are adaptable, thus include formal or non-formal teaching, with specific common aim. Community music implicate the connection between folk music practices, musicology, education, psychology, therapy, etc. Community music are set of common activities that reflect socio-cultural environment, economic and political ideology, aesthetic culture of a particular community. It involves some common activities that engaged musicians, community leaders, government, funding bodies etc. (Brown etal. 2014)

### **The Performance Practices of Community Music in Atiba Local Government, Oyo State.**

The Yoruba kingdoms and settlements occupy the South-Western area of Nigeria, which are extended to the nations of Benin and Togo. The geographical zone of South West Nigeria consists of six states, which includes; *Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Oyo, Lagos and Osun states.* Oyo State is a central state

in South-Western Nigeria, having Ibadan has its capital and also surrounded by other towns such as; *Oyo town, Iseyin, Saki, Okeho, Ogbomoso*, etc.

Oyo town is a historic town with the kinship title as Alaafin of Oyo, it is known for agricultural practices, commercial and trading activities with neighbouring communities like *Ilorra, Awe, Fiditi and Jobele*. The town border with other towns like *Ogbomoso, Iseyin, Okeho, Saki and Ibadan*. Oyo town features educational sectors such as Ajayi Crowther University, Federal School of Surveying, Federal College of Education (Special), Emmanuel Alayande University of Education in conjunction with public and private primary schools as well as Secondary schools. Oyo town have 33 local government Areas in which Atiba is one of them.

### Map of Atiba Local Government, Oyo, Oyo State.



Atiba Local Government

Atiba Local Government is situated in southern western part of Nigeria in Oyo State. The Local Government has its headquarters at Offa-Meta, in Oyo town. Other Local Government surrounding Atiba Local Government include; Oyo East, Oyo West and Afijio. The community however is known for its artistic achievements, rich cultural heritage and other artefacts which serve as a symbol of

historical significance within the Yoruba land. The community is known for mythical openness, endowed with warmth cultural significance. They have a sense of preserving and promoting the strength, pride and egoism of their culture. The idea of their community music is based on justice, power, authority, equality with an openness to achieve a common goal. The music is practiced on cultural basis which include the following:

- **Traditional Ceremonies:** music is used to engage in traditional ceremonies which includes rites of passage, weddings, coronations, initiations, house warming and so on.
- **Religious Ceremonies:** music serves as an important part of ceremonies in community such as during prayers, thanksgiving, sacrificial offerings, procession etc.
- **Festival Ceremonies:** music is often practice to promotes and enhance the practice of festivals among Oyo communal, such activities include *Egungun, Oro, Sango, Orunmila, Osun festival*, etc. which attract people at home and diaspora to celebrate the Yoruba cultural heritage.
- **Street Ceremonies/Performances:** community musicians often engage in street performances within the community, habitually from house to house.

### Map of Oyo Town

The map shows a visual representation of Oyo town and its local environment within Oyo state, Nigeria.



Oyo

### **The Purpose of Deploying and Engaging Community Music in Atiba Local Government, Oyo State.**

Community music which are activities that foster development in the arts, economy, cultural life, education is deployed in Atiba local Government, Oyo state for the following reasons:

- To promote indigenous music and community culture (music, dance, theatre)
- Community music create a sense of same identity, through language, traditions, religion thus bringing people together.
- Community music increase the economy activities of the community by helping to build social capital thereby promote team spirit, this also serve as a source of income to the performers/ musicians.
- To promote enculturation of Western concept into local conceptualization.
- To enhance active leaning, stimulate affiliations with public schools and promotion of social integration.
- It also serves as spiritual nourishments, stabilizing the connection with ancestral spirit and an avenue to promote the culture

- It promotes oneness between young and old and increase participation in Community music.

### **Artistic Creation of Community Music in Atiba Local Government, Oyo State.**

Artistic creation involves the process of inventive imaginary of concepts by artiste to create some intentions from his or her perception and acuity so as to devise a significant conception. It encompasses skills, discipline, expertise, ideas, creativity and ingenuity in various areas such as literature, music, fine arts, drama, films etc. Artistic creation in a community is a significant part of community music in Atiba local Government, Oyo State. The Artists create numerous ways of reflecting culture, values and community music within the community, such ways include;

**Through the performance of folk songs;** folksongs are music of the grassroots people, performed within the specific community. Folk songs are an important tool that connects the past to the present by giving a clear view of understanding the past in the present in other to have a better understanding of present from the past Samuel (2013) in Ajayi (2020). Folk songs are generally elements of our traditional performances and activities which are seen as important occurrences and derived from its context as well as content of happenings which are transmitted orally from generation to another (Ajayi, 2020). The performers of folksongs sometimes engage the young children often during the moonlight plays

- **Through Recreational Activities:** recreational activities involve relaxation activities such as sports, games, swimming, boxing, riddles and jokes etc. All these activities are stimulated and enhanced in conjunction with community music. Artistic creation in community music therefore fosters social happenings through recreational activities.

- **Through Art Identity:** Art images serve as a medium or means of which traditions, heritages, values, norms and beliefs are expressed and transmitted from one generation to another.
- **Through Educational Settings:** There are several educational institutions from primary to university level at both private and Government enterprises. Artistic creations are thus engaged either as the course of studies or during performance activities to promote the prospect of educational status within the community.

### **Effect of Globalisation on Community Music in Atiba Local Government, Oyo State.**

Globalization has a momentous impact on community music within the Atiba Local Government, Oyo State. The evolution of globalization had brought about the emergence of new musical styles and genres around the community, which therefore resulted into the amalgamation of traditional and contemporary musical styles. This on the other hand has enable the artists to explore and experiment new forms of musical forms, styles and practices.

Also, globalization has led to a degeneration in the population of community musicians who engaged in traditional forms of music. The influence of Western popular musical elements had dominated the performance of traditional musical practices, and this had however led to reduction in the level of social acceptability of community music

Problems of identifying artists individual style and creativity is another challenge affecting the performance of community music through the effect of globalization. As a results of globalization, most of the community artists find it difficult to identify or maintain their originality, idiosyncrasy, peculiarity as well as ingenuity.

Hybridity of cultures has also affected the cultural practices of community music, having influenced and westernised the identity, values, heritage and culture of the community.

Globalization however, has also leads to pluralism in cultural practice of community music. This however, has led to diversity in religious practices, politics and therefore brought about individual conceptualisation of community music.

Transformation of Digitalisation, the value of music is dramatically revolutionised through the act of alteration and adaptation of digital functionality, this however has affected the performance of community music.

### **Conclusion**

Music evokes strong emotions and heightened states of awareness, strong emotions are associated with evolution (reproduction and survival) and this is why traditionally, societies with a musical culture have been able to flourish, because music coordinates their emotions, helps important messages to be communicated and motivates individuals to identify with and support other members within their community.

Reviewing the style of community music in Atiba Local Government, Oyo State gave an insight on the benefits of the community music. Everyone and anyone can make music which thereby help to bring communities together across generations, social classes and income brackets. The study revealed the concept of community music, the performance practices, purpose for deploying and engaging community music, significance of Artistic creation in a part of community, as well as the effects of globalisation on community music in Atiba Local Government, Oyo State. The findings of this study has revealed the level of communication in music by community artists which has added to the increasing body of knowledge in this research as this will foster researchers in preserving traditional music and also serve as a

veritable document for any researcher who may wish to undertake studies in the area of community music in Nigeria.

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