



Transcription and Analysis of *Nnyong Eyen Unen*: Its Implications and Lessons for Contemporary Young People in Annang Land, Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the transcription and analysis of *Nnyong Eyen Unen* (Roaming Chick), which is a popular folk song used by young people in Annang land for both entertainment and educational purposes. The main purpose of the study is to draw relevant lessons from this song for contemporary young people in Annang land located in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. By extension, the lessons derived from this song would be beneficial to numerous young people in other climes. Research into Annang folk songs and their functionality in the delivery of moral instructions to young people in contemporary times are rare. This study seeks to fill the gap by an exhibition of this Annang folk song to the public space, both for study and entertainment purposes. After a field trip, recording, and allusion to internet sources, the author made a transcription of the song using a descriptive/analytical method and notational software application for the study. *Nnyong Eyen Unen* is a story about a roaming chick that is too young to roam about on its own without the control of the mother hen. The song reveals the potential dangers and risks associated with inexperience and juvenile adventures. The artistic and creative minds of the progenitors who use it to advise young people against wayward behaviour in society are conveyed. The study recommends more scholarly attention to the collection of Annang folk songs, including those from other climes, as hubs of lessons for young people in contemporary society.

Keywords: Annang Land, Contemporary, Implications and Lessons, Nnyong Eyen Unen, Transcription and Analysis, Young People



Introduction

The Annang people are the aborigines who occupy the Northern part of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Annang refers both to the tribe and the language spoken by the people. Their language is closely related to the Efik and Ibibio languages, and as such, they mostly share the same linguistic form of their folksongs. According to Udondata (2011) "Annang people trace their origin to the Bantu-speaking and Zulu hunters in Central Africa... in the First and Second Centuries BC when they left the Central African area ...into the Cameroon region in the 3rd Century BC and crossed over to settle at Eket (p. 12). Later, they travelled from the Benue valley and crossed to the South-Eastern part of Nigeria with their first settlement in Arochukwu before moving to their present territory in Akwa Ibom (Toby, 2023, p. 16).

Annang people have a rich cultural heritage that is defined by language and traditional music genres. Their traditional music genres are mostly characterized by dance and folk songs. To a very large extent, folk song (which is an aspect of folk music) play a prominent role in their activities when young people gather for any events/ceremonies in their local communities. Writers agree that folk songs play a vital role in the dissemination of information and transmission of cultural values from one generation to another. For instance, Okafor (2017) observes that folk songs are used to convey messages in a wide range of contexts "from childbirth, circumcision, lullabies, games, stories, folk tales, marriages etc." (p. 20). In the same vein, Okpakwasili (2023) supports the view of many other authors (such as Nketia, 1974, Nzewi, 1991, Agawu, 1988, Agu, 2000, and Onyeji, 2006) that "one of the major characteristics of African music (folksong) is that it has functions" (p. 232). These functions give rise to the lessons that are ingrained in folk songs and traditional music across the African global south and beyond (Erhiequeke, 2020). As a matter of fact, in the past, folksongs, tales, folklore, ballads, and myths were effective media for the delivery of lessons, teachings/education for young people in the traditional societies and cultures around the world. This is no longer the case in contemporary times!

Today, young people as well as adults prefer to rely more on social media, the internet, and AI sources for the extraction of lessons/information due to the influence of technology, modernism, and modernity. They are basically the Gen Z and Gen Alpha stocks who are born in the digital age with the internet and, more recently, with AI-assisted handles. Excessive reliance on social media and other internet sources by young minds exposes them to unsuspected dangers as they are likely to approach these outlets as *Nnyong Eyen Unen* (Roaming Chick). Given this impending danger, the main objective of this study is to raise awareness of the need to explore relevant folk songs (such as *Nnyong Eyen Unen*) in our traditional societies that can offer useful lessons to contemporary young people in order to guide their youthful impetuosity and exuberance in our society.

The choice of this folk song became necessary after witnessing its performance (many years ago) by students of the Queen of Apostles Seminary in Afaha Obong, located in Annang land of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It was rendered by means of oral tradition since those in the 'Special Choir', as they were



called, could only learn the song orally from older members by rote. Apart from the routine savvy for entertainment, the singing of folk songs was introduced by the School Authority as a way of inculcating moral discipline, self-composure, communal spirit, confidence, and mutual trust as they went through their academic formation and studies. Hence, the methodology of the study is practice-based/observation and a descriptive survey approach. The method of data collection included recording materials and sourcing the internet for facts that were ad rem for the study. The data were transcribed and subjected to analytical segmentation based on the textual structure of the song, its melodic phrases, and general lessons deduced from the song.

The analytical segment of this study is as important as its transcription. Through transcription, the folksong is preserved as a valuable heritage and the collective creativity of past generations whose voices are re-echoed in the present times. The song is a satirical caution to *Nnyong Eyen Unen*, who is not just a 'roaming chick' but a roaming child (a roaming girl-child) in this context. Traditional people are fond of using metaphors, inanimate objects, and animal names to pass important information politely to the public. This is not limited to the Annang culture since there are similarities found across different cultures in other climes around the globe. A typical example is the Igbo folk song titled *Nwammilina-eruwelele* (A stream that flows gently).

Theoretically, this research is guided by the theory of Ethnomusicology (i.e., the study of traditional music associated with different cultures). This is not only a 'field trip and studying of tape recordings' (Klatzow, 1999, as cited in Herbst, 2005, p. 113). It follows the modern trend of ethno-musicological studies in which critical attention is devoted to in-depth examination of folk music in order to decipher their *raison d'être* and value for ethnic folks that make use of them. From its earliest beginnings with Kunst (1950), ethnomusicology is the study of music "of all peoples" in its cultural context. In more recent times, the theory expands to cover the study of traditional music from the point of view of its indigenous contents, social concerns, morals, rituals, sonic implications, meanings, and its relevance to the people who perform it. Ethnomusicologists in contemporary times examine how music functions within the community and not merely study Western music notations. In this regard, Agawu (2016, p. 49) opines that "traditional music is wedded to those things that traditional people do in the context of traditional life". *Nnyong Eyen Unen* (Roaming Chick) upholds one of the Annang traditional ways of imparting cautionary advice to young people using folk songs.

A Brief Review of Annang Folk Songs and Their Uses

In the past, the Annang people assigned a prime place to folk songs as an important vehicle for the transmission of information and moral lessons to young people in the community. This was a normative strategy that was required to sustain the cultural identity of the people and a medium of social commentary in matters relating to good conduct and morality. In this way, it could be said unequivocally that Annang folk songs constitute a library of social commentary, primordial philosophies, and cultural



heritage wherein lies the collective wisdom of the Annang people. Okafor (2017) defines a folk song as follows:

A folk song is one that people have found to be an integral part of their culture. Put in another way, it is a composition that has grown with a race or a nation or even a community and whose authorship is enshrined in the midst of antiquity, that is, whose origin is unknown but which can claim community authorship because generations of the race, the community, or the nation have grown with it and added to it. (p. 17).

Through folk songs, the past repository of ancestral wisdom is communicated to the present generation in order to establish a link with ancient wisdom that remains intrinsically relevant to new generations. This fact makes folk songs a constant cultural indicator that defines different communities and their worldviews. It could be said that folk song is a library of ancient wisdom.

In line with Agu (1990), Omibiyi–Obidike (2002); Okafor (2005); and Udoh (2006), Udoh (2025) gives the following summary of the characteristics of folk song: “It is communal and a collective art that expresses the expectations, sentiments, legends, myths, and the history of its people...and is culture-bound. It is part and parcel of the people’s way of life... (p. 07). Being part and parcel of traditional music, Annang folk songs are primarily handed down from one generation to another as unwritten history through oral traditions. Agu and Ibekwe (2024) define traditional music as “... indigenous music of a people burdened with their cultural values, beliefs, religious and political system as well as economic and other related values” (p. 102). Also, as a part of traditional music, Annang folk songs can praise, rebuke, warn, and threaten. Bukola (2024, p. 2690) points out that “Praise poetry as widely known is one of the artistic weapons for the propagation of African cultural values.” The folk song titled *Da Ekpelkot*, (Hark Brave Lion) is a typical praise song in honour of a famous hunter who has made a good hunt and is returning home in admiration by his friend.

In terms of language and style, Annang folk songs are framed in the context of oral literature with aesthetic values and artistry. They form a significant corpus of oral literature of the Annang people (Okon 2021, p. 1). They do not project complex rhythms as could be seen in other Nigerian cultures. For example, Yoruba folk songs are known for their complex rhythms that reflect the cultural background of the Yoruba people (Badru et al, 2024). Annang folk songs have simple melodies that portray a strict correlation of speech and melodic tones. The maintenance and correlation of speech and melody give rise to close intervallic patterns that make it possible to safeguard the meanings of the folksong texts in Annang land and in most Sub-Saharan African societies (Nwabara, 2006, p. 138). Drawing from Okpokwasili (2023), that the main function of a folk song is “culture representative”, Annang folk songs portray the following usages:



Expression of communal life

There is a common understanding in Africa that music is inseparably linked to communal life. This is evident in the cohesive tendency of music to serve as a unifying force that binds the community together as the people express their social solidarity and group mien. For this reason, Okafor (2005, p. 88) affirms that “in African culture, music is an entity rather than mere mental creation or conception.” Citing Hornbostel 1928, p. 59) Okafor (2025) adds that in Africa, “music is the life of a living spirit working within those who dance and sing” (p. 88).

An aspect of oral literature

As a form of oral literature, folk songs reveal the creative abilities and thought patterns of the people in their traditional society. Through folk songs, Annang people express their skills in the use of literary devices such as metaphors, proverbs, irony, assonance, and more to convey messages directly or indirectly to the people in their cultural domains. Annang folk songs constitute a reservoir of knowledge and traditional wisdom used by the ancients to articulate their experiences about life, their aspirations, investments, and religious and socio-cultural interactions.

Annang folk song as social commentary

Social life involves the interaction and the relationship between individuals, people, and groups who co-exist within a given society/community. Folk songs are used to enforce social control in order to regulate mutual inter-human relationships and mutual co-existence in society. In fact, most Annang folk songs are used for social control. Social control was of paramount importance for the people in the traditional society so as to checkmate incessant cases of war, conflicts, dishonesty, disobedience, disrespect, theft, laziness, waywardness, and promiscuous behaviour in the society. There are Annang folk songs with relevant themes that focus on social subjects such as marriage, love, security/vigilance, work, and many others. Examples of these folk songs on marriage include *KpaNkana* (Cunning), on love *Etung Odok Aba* (Sharp-beak Bird Digs an Opening) and on security/vigilance *Eyen Ekulkot* (Small Bush Rat).

Preservation, teaching and transmission of indigenous language

Language is a vehicle of communication used by people to pass information from ancient times to the present. Every language is intelligible only to those who understand the meanings associated with the words (lexicon) of the language. When information emanates from indigenous languages, the indigenes are more likely to understand the deeper meanings of the message than foreigners and outsiders. This is mostly seen where proverbs, metaphors, and fairy tales constitute the central themes of the message. Annang language and most indigenous African languages make an elaborate use of proverbs and imagery in their tales and folk songs, which require translations and interpretations. In this way, Annang folk songs serve the dual purpose of language learning and folk song singing to the succeeding generations in



Annang land and beyond. Hence, the Annang language is preserved in its original form for the younger generation as resource material for researchers of folk music/ethnomusicology and indigenous language studies.

As a technique of oral composition

Annang folk songs are the product of oral composition through which the ancients expressed their compositional abilities in the creation of traditional songs. Oral composition may be described as spontaneous music composition carried out by gifted and talented traditional musicians in their various communities. In other words, it is basically a 'composition in performance' (Nzewi, 2007, p. 13) and an unwritten music that emerges because of intuition. Oral composition is a kindred form of oral tradition, a method of communication as a mouth-to-mouth delivery of information to people in their various cultural domains. Since the folk songs were not written down, the people developed retentive memory and frequent performances of the folk songs, especially during moonlight at night, as the only means of preservation and propagation of the songs to succeeding generations. In this way, the oral composition and transmission of folk songs enhance the collective integration of the people in their communities as they perform the folk songs.

As material for African art music composition

Composers and ethnomusicologists are now turning more scholarly attention to the study and transcriptions of folk music (including folk songs) with the view of extracting musical materials from them for the creation of new works. This is a development that transcends the extraction of materials from Western music models, as was the case in the past. Some composers who were influenced by Western music models include T. K. E. Philips and Fela Sowande (Vidal, 1993; Onyeji, 2019). Conversely, compositions based on materials extracted from folk music include *Ukom* by Uzoigwe which is derived from Igbo traditional music for the funeral of old women or for new yam festival titled 'Ukom' (Uzoigwe, 1998), "Annang Dances" by Udoh based on traditional music of Annang people such as the folk song titled *Ekpelno EbotMi* (Udoh, 2012), and *Ekpri Ekanem* by Akpakpan derived from an Efik folk song titled *Ekpri Ekanem* (Akpakpan, 2006). The application of materials drawn from indigenous music adds a true African identity to the new compositions. In a similar vein, a composer of neo-choral music can draw materials from this folk song for a great choral masterpiece for contemporary choral expression.

English Translation of Text

<i>Nnyóngéyèùnènn,</i>	Roaming chick,
<i>Nyóngdíúfök,</i>	Come back home,
<i>Simmíndiën o!</i>	Be here now!
<i>Nnyóngéyèùnènn o,</i>	Come back home roaming chick,
<i>Nyóngdí.</i>	Come back.



Òyómsòkéèsiě? What do you want outside?
Sópsimmíndiě! Hurry down here now!
Átiántánánòèdèm; It kicks sand on its back;
Ákòngàkpôngèbènádiàn. It picks unripe pear along.

Transcription of *Nnyong Eyen Unen*

Moderato ♩ = 80 **NNYONG EYEN UNEN** *Trans. Emmanuel B. Ukpong*

Treble 1: Nnyong e - yen u - nen Nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o

Treble 2: Nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o

Tr. 1: nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o nyong di u-fok nnyong e - yen u - nen

Tr. 2: nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o nyong di u-fok nnyong e - yen u - nen.

Allegro ♩ = 120

Tr.1: Nnyong e - yen u - nen, nyong diu-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di.

Tr.2: Nyong diu-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di.

Tr.1: nyong diu-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong o - yom so ke e - sien? nyong diu

Tr.2: Nyong diu-fok nyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di. Nyong diu

Tr.1: fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong sop sim mi n - dien; nyong diu-fok nyong e-yen u -

Tr.2: fok nyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di. Nyong diu-fok nyong e-yen u -



22

Tr.1

Tr.2

27

Tr.1

Tr.2

31

Tr.1

Tr.2

36

Tr.1

Tr.2

41

Tr.1

Tr.2

50

Tr.1

Tr.2

Analysis of *Nnyong Eyen Unen*

Textual Analysis of *Nnyong Eyen Unen*

The folk song titled *Nnyong Eyen Unen* (Roaming Chick) is written in Annang language, which has a close affinity with the Efik and Ibibio languages spoken in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States in the southern part of Nigeria. These three languages are classified into the Niger–Congo languages that belong to the Central–Cross of the Lower Delta and the Lower Cross arm of the Lower Benue–Congo (Bendor,



1989; Connell, 1991 & Ukpe, 2018. P. 22). The song is a warning from the mother–hen to the baby–chicken *nnyong eyen unen* that is roaming around outside the care of its mother. *Nnyong eyen unen* in this context is used as a metaphor to refer to a roaming child, particularly the girl–child, who leaves the home at will without the permission of his/her caring parents. Roaming poses security threats to the baby–chick, which stands the risk of being devoured by soaring birds such as hawks and other wild animals that may be moving around. The textual plot is characterized by literary devices that require further analysis as follows:

The use of metaphors

A metaphor is a word used to refer to a reality that is different from the word. It is a word that carries an indirect meaning to what it portrays. Metaphors in the African context are social commentaries that could be understood within the socio–cultural milieu of those who make use of them. Some metaphors are used proverbially, while others may be used as a paradox.

The use of Assonance

Assonance denotes the use and repetition of vowel sounds at regular intervals in a text (Okon, 2021, p. 50). It could be the same vowel sound or different vowel sounds that are repeated at varied points in a piece of work. In this song, the vowel sound “o” is repeated concurrently. The said vowel sound occurs at the endings of each statement where it is applicable, as in bars 2, 14, 30, 34, and 38. Assonance connects and lays emphasis on each statement that precedes it in the folk song. Analytically, it is used to enrich musicality, create mood, and enhance memorability.

Rhetorical question

Rhetorical questions are raised mainly to express anxieties without expecting a reply. The question, ‘*oyom so keesien?*’ (What do you want outside?), is an example of a rhetorical question in the folk song addressed to the key protagonist ‘*nnyong eyen unen*’. It suggests that the ‘baby chick’ does not need to roam about outside since it has enough reserves in the house. It functions as a persuasive device meant to instil fear and discourage the roaming chick from abandoning its dangerous outings.

Rhythm of texts and voices

The song texts portray rhythmic features that clearly affirm a correlation between the words and their melodic contour. The rise and fall of the voices correspond with the rise and fall of the words that constitute the texts. The rhythm of the texts compels the melody and indeed the entire song to move in a particular way. In this way, the musicality of the song and the meaning of the texts are mutually achieved. Annang language has five main levels of tone marks that determine the contextual meaning of words, namely, high tone (´), mid tone (–), low tone (`), falling tone (^) and rising tone (˘) (Udondata, 2006,



pp. 34–35). This is also in agreement with Agu (2024, p.35) that “All African songs conform with the principles guiding the relationship between speech–tone and melody.” For instance, the textual rhythm of the statement “*nyong di ufoknnyongeyen unen o, nyong di*” (come back home roaming chick, come back) fully corresponds with its musical rhythm in bars 2–5. This rhythmic trait applies to other words in the *nnyong eyen unen* song–text. However, there are instances in the song where the melodic contour does not correspond with the rising and falling of the words, as could be seen in the opening passage “*Nnyong eyen unen*” (bars 1–2). In bar 1, the word *Nnyong* has a low tone mark with the C– tonic note instead of a high tone mark. In spite of this case, the meaning is not compromised. It is an instance in which the “musical interest overrides the textual interest as postulated by Onyeji (2006, p. 153) in his study of Igbo vocal music *Ndiamumaugha* (False prophets).

Musical analysis of *Nnyong eyen unen*

Form/structure

The folk song is mainly characterized by the call and chorused refrain form, written on two treble staves. It opens with unison passage using quadruple meter, in bars 1–6, before it digresses to compound duple meter with harmonic parts in bars 7–53. The opening passage in quadruple meter serves as a brief exposition of the song. The first treble (soloist) signifies the calls, while the second treble takes the chorus refrain in the compound duple section. In this duple section, the soloist makes different statements as calls while the chorus (second treble) responds with a different refrain that completely differs from that of the soloist. The fragment below quotes an example of this arrangement as indicated by the slur marks (bars 7–11):

7

Tr.1

(a)

Nnyong e - yen u - nen, nyong diu - fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di.

Tr.2

(b)

— Nyong diu - fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di.

Slur mark (a) signifies solo statement while slur mark (b) depicts the response. This formal structure supports the views of many researchers that African folk music is mostly characterized by the call and response, call and chorused refrain styles. For example, Agu (2024, p. 1) states: “The commonest forms of African vocal music include solo and chorus alternations, solo and chorused refrain and solo and chorus alternations with ostinato accompaniment.” The notes of the solo call move sequentially in 3rds downwards while the notes of the chorus use close undulating intervals of 2nds.



Phrases

The folk song consists of five basic phrases with varied lengths as indicated with numbers (1–5) and slur marks below:

Treble 1
Nnyong e-yen u - nen
Nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o

Treble 2
Nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o

Tr. 1
nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o nyong di u-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen

Tr. 2
nyong di u-fok sim mi ndien o nyong di u-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen

7 **Allegro** ♩=120
Tr. 1
Nnyong e-yen u - nen, nyong diu-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di.

Tr. 2
Nyong diu-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di.

Phrases 1–4 have equal lengths of two bars each while phrase 5 has four bars in line with the words. The phrases are melodic units that convey complete textual meanings associated with the words. Each phrase is a complete statement that sustains the main message to avoid conflict of meanings inherent in the folk song. They determine the melodic structure and the suitability of the notes. This is in line with Agu (2024) who pointed out that “An African text, statement or sentence determines the nature and structure of its melody; while the melodic structure of an English text, statement or sentence is determined by musical notes” (p.113). Each phrase corresponds with a group of words for clarity of thought and ideas in folk music genres.

Repetition

Repetition is a major feature of African music. This is necessary due to the short melodic ambit of most folk songs and other songs of African descent. Repetitions of parts of the song or the entire song compensate for its short length to enhance interest and creativity in African traditional music types. Thus, most African songs achieve long lengths through repetition, as in this folk song.

Apart from the refrain segment of the song, there are many repetitions of phrases as a major characteristic of African music. Two types of repetitions are seen in the song, namely textual repetition



and melodic repetition. An example of textual repetition is the text '*nyong di ufoksim mi ndieno*' (come back home, be here now) is repeated in bars 2–4. Melodic repetitions appear in the refrain and the solo call variants as in bars 7 – 15 on the extract below:

Scale/tonality

The song is based on the heptatonic (seven-tone) scale transcribed on tonic C-major. This shows that the song has a definite tonal center of a major scale. Quadruple section uses the heptatonic scale while the compound duple section employs just five notes from the scale. After the highest (octave) cadential supertonic note in the opening quadruple section, the compound duple section employs five notes drawn from the scale for its melodic variants throughout the song. The five notes are CDEFG seen in bars 7 – 11 and 27 respectively as represented in the excerpt below:



Most Annang folk songs make use of the heptatonic scale. This is partly since folk songs are clear choral music that require an extended scale pattern. This does not rule out the fact that other scale patterns exist in Annang traditional music genres. The pentatonic scale system is widely used in most of the instrumental music/dances such as *Abang* and *Ekpo Masquerade* play. The scale has close intervallic structures of 2nds, 3rds, and 4ths with rare long-range leaps.

Overlapping voice

Overlapping occurs in bars 14, 26 and 30. In this case, the soloist overlaps with the refrain. While the chorus refrain is taking place, the soloist sings on the last refrain note to catch up with the rhythmic structure of the song as in slur marks (c) and (d) below:

Tr.1
nyong diu-fok nnyong e-yen u - nen o nyong o - yom so ke e - sien? nyong diu

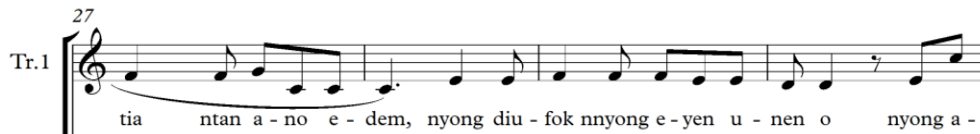
Tr.2
Nyong diu-fok nyong e-yen u - nen o nyong di. Nyong diu

In this case the soloist takes the cue from the refrain on the half beat in bar 14 as the chorus refrain is about to end. This is an instance of partial overlapping in Annang folk music genres. Overlapping is a pick-up device used in traditional folk music to enhance dialogue, social participation and collective performance in an ensemble and choral theatre. It creates a form of polyphony in such a way that the ends of the “phrases overlap with the beginnings of others so that there is no break in the flow of the sounds” (Nketia, 1974, p. 153 & Arom, 1991, p. 218).

Singing speaking voice

This is a form of speech melody used to enhance the effective intelligibility of the words spoken. Here the words are more important than their musicality since they carry a nuance of authority. In this folk song, singing-speaking voice patterns occur in bars 26–28 and 30–32 with the statements, “*atiantananoedem*” (It kicks sand on its back); “*akongakpongebenadian*” (It picks unripe pear along). The extract below quotes an example of speech melody as illustrated with the slur marks:

Tr.1
nen o nyong sop sim mi n - dien; nyong diu-fok nyong e-yen u - nen o nyong a -



Implications/Lessons

In terms of its socio-cultural dynamics, this folk song (by extension) applies to the laissez fair attitude and excessive liberalism displayed by young people in Annang land (and beyond) in the contemporary society. In recent times, there is a perceived culture of impunity permeating the social stratum of our society in which young people oppose the instructions given to them by their superiors in the family, in schools as well as in churches and in the society at large to embark on dangerous exploits in defiance of societal control.

In tourism and migrations, the dangerous migrations embarked upon by young people in recent times is the outcome of *nyong eyen unen*. Many young people risk their lives in the high seas such as the Indian Ocean in an attempt to leave their land in search of greener pastures in other lands other than their own homeland. The high degree of brain drain recorded in the contemporary Annang society and beyond is a key factor of urban drifts (discouraged by this song) that impoverish the rural sector of the economy. When the rural area is eroded due to urban migration, the socio-cultural norms and the people's traditional identity are gradually heading to extinction.

In pedagogy, the teaching of folk songs and their relevance in ethnomusicology studies offers a leeway to the discovery and evaluation of traditional folk wisdom embedded in the thought patterns of indigenous peoples of diverse cultures.

In terms of social control and social commentary, *nyong eyen unen* is a caveat that discourages the prevalent habit of reckless roaming of the streets by young people in our contemporary society. This kind of behaviour culminates in anti-social activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and many other social vices.

The security apparatus of modern-day society is enforced by this folk song. This is seen in the instruction given by the mother-hen to the roaming chick in the statement "*oyom so keesien?*" (What do you want outside?). By implication, young people are warned to be security conscious as they explore the environment around them.

Conclusion

The 53-bar song titled '*Nyong eyen unen*' (Roaming chick) is a short Annang folk song with relevant lessons to direct the conduct of young people in Annang land and beyond in contemporary



society. A transcription of the folk song was done using two treble staves to facilitate its analysis and findings. Its textual plot clearly shows indigenous knowledge rooted in oral tradition and oral composition as a means of information dissemination associated with the Annang traditional society. Traditional music (folk song) is not just art but a means of transmission of indigenous knowledge. The song expresses a sense of poetic structure in which metaphor and symbolism of *nnyong eyen unen* (roaming chick) refer to humans and not mere objects. The folk song is characterized by the call and chorus refrain/response, with the soloist making the calls in treble 1 while the chorus uses treble 2. Major features in the song include proper phrases, repetitions, heptatonic scale pattern, overlapping voice pattern, singing speaking/speech melody patterns. The phrases correspond with full statements that allow for proper meanings of each of the melodic phrases. Annang folk songs (and other African folk songs) are useful tools for the socio-cultural and moral upbringing of young people in contemporary times. Hence, the study advocates the integration of folk songs in music pedagogy and the need to draw inspiration and lessons that could shape the moral fabric of our society from them.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

- Greater scholarly attention should be given to the structural and metaphorical dimensions of Annang folk songs so that their cultural relevance is not lost to future generations.
- Contemporary indigenous composers enrich modern choral and art music compositions by drawing inspiration from folk songs.
- Cultural institutions and performing ensembles should be encouraged to adopt arranged versions of indigenous folk songs to preserve them as living traditions rather than relegate them to the status of mere entertainment songs.
- Integration of folk songs in music pedagogy and inspiration from folk songs for character formation of young people should be considered in the curriculum of music studies;
- Future research will examine how metaphors in indigenous music can inform wider discourses on socio-cultural identity and sustainable communal co-existence in African societies.



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