

A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF IGBO FOLK SONGS IN ENUGU-EZIKE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Igbo folk songs using a systemic functional linguistics approach. The objectives of the study were to document, categorize, and analyze the functions of Igbo folk songs. Data for the study were collected through oral interviews and the participant-observer method from Enugu-Ezike in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. The study was anchored on systemic functional linguistics theory. The data collected were analyzed descriptively and translated from Igbo into English. The findings of the study revealed that Igbo folk songs are categorized into work songs, dirges, war songs, cradle songs, birth songs, lullabies, and praise songs. The study also established that folk songs perform numerous functions, among which are entertainment, educational, economic, and sociocultural roles. The findings further revealed that communities in Igbo-Eze North are fond of criticizing societal evils through folk songs, thereby helping to enforce discipline and actualize societal norms and values. These findings synthesize a myriad of scholarly perspectives, providing a robust platform for understanding and preserving native customs that are at risk of extinction.

Keyword: Folk songs, context, theme and function.

INTRODUCTION

Folk song is a musical and spontaneous expression of the live experiences of folk life. Its essential virtues like music and spontaneity of expression are what we find in nature. Folk songs are traditional or indigenous songs of a society. even in the face of increasing western songs, traditional songs are still preserved carefully. These songs are not written down but are passed from one generation to another orally.

These traditional songs are accompanied with traditional musical instruments like drum (*Igba*) and metal gong (*agogo*) to mention just a few. In order to preserve these traditional songs, it is wise to document them especially for posterity. Folk songs could be categorized into lullaby songs, work songs, dirges, recreational songs, war songs, ritual songs, birth songs, among others.

Folk song scholars like Agu (1990), Ojukwu (2014) and Nnamani (2015) have all defined folk song in various ways, but we shall all be adopting the view of Ojukwu and Esimone (2014), which asserts that folk songs can be referred to as the expression of the totality of a people's way of life, their traditions, indigenous practices which are popular to them without interference of other cultures. This definition informs that a folk song is a kind of song that is associated with the culture, tradition and history of a particular community or society, which draws its lyrics from folklores of that community Odejibe (2014:178) asserts, folk songs used to be predominantly found among peasant's or country dwellers but have since spread to towns and urban cities where they chronicle the peoples lives in terms of designs, melody and rhythm; hence, they have to become traditional among them.

We note that the terms of folk song and folk music are used interchangeably. In a society where majority, of them are not literate, folk songs there, are composed and also transmitted orally. But in elite inclined societies, folk songs may be composed and transmitted by written notations among people who share the same sociocultural values, goals and interests.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The Igbo speaking people are situated at the eastern part of Nigeria. Political development since independence have split them into various states. Namely, Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi. This study will focus on Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state. Igbo-Eze North local government area is known for its rich tradition of numerous folk songs.

Unfortunately, not many of these folk songs have been documented in research. This study is an attempt to document, transcribe and analysis them. It will articulate some of the functions of folk songs.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The Igbo people like most other ethnic groups in Nigeria, use folk songs to connect to express their social, cultural values, attitudes, beliefs, worldviews, experiences, philosophies and aspirations. These social and cultural elements form the thematic frame work for the Igbo folk songs. Many folk songs in IgboEze North Local Government area of Enugu State deal with themes, which are universal such as human nature and human relationships. These includes relationships in marriage, king ships as well as between individuals of differing social and economic status. There are also songs in which the issues expressed are not necessarily peculiar to the people of Igbo-Eze North but perhaps receive more attention from Igbo North singers. A case is the idea of making

social commentaries on social issues and problems such as greed, theft, incest, selfishness and dictatorship. Some folk songs in Igbo-Eze North also focus on validation, upholding, encouraging and commending patterns of behaviors and attitudes, which are culturally acceptable in the community such as hard work, honesty, generosity, hospitality, kindness, love and marital fidelity. Igbo folk songs are sung during special occasions such as at work places, birth, during festival, political rallies, funerals, traditional marriage as well as religious worship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The related literature is reviewed under the following sub-headings: conceptual framework, previous studies, theoretical framework and summary of the reviewed literature.

Conceptual Framework

Under conceptual frame work, the following concepts are reviewed: folk songs, context, theme and function.

● Folk song

According to Euba (1986), folk song is the pivotal tool that connects the past to the present by giving a clear opportunity of understanding the past in the present, so as to have a better understanding of the present from the past. The definition according to Euba is instructive as it connects the nexus holding the view that, folk songs are usually historical narratives and also a form of documentation of events or a way of life. In the context of this study, folk songs are commonly seen as songs that express something about a way of life that exists now or in the past. It is a song that originated among a group of people, reflecting their cultural practices and traditions.

● Context

There must be an occasion that necessitates the performance of oral literature. This occasion could be an important moment in the life of a community or an individual e.g work song, an installation, a funeral, a marriage celebration or village festival. Oral literature is important but without context, it is lifeless context as a concept is what comes before and after a word, phrase or statement helping to fix meanings. Webster (2006) defines context as the whole situation, background or environment relevant to some happening or personality. Mbah and Mbah (2007:81) say context is “the setting of oral performance, which helps to explain what is being done”

● Theme

Theme is the central idea surrounding a work or art. It is the central message the songs express.

● Function

According to wikipedia, function in (also refers to as harmonic function) is a term used to denote the relationship of a chord or a scale degree to a tonal centre. The idea of function has been extended further and sometimes used to translate antique concepts, such as *dynamis* in ancient Greece or *qualitas* in medieval Latin.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is premised on the systemic functional linguistics theory propounded by Halliday (1994) in order to achieve the stated objectives. The Halliday’s systemic functional linguistic theory is a theory which proves to be a powerful concept in studying texts. The theory is more interested in the manner by which language is utilized in social setting so as to attain a specific target. This theory is designed to explain the understanding between culture, society and language use. The theory asserts that every language use plays an active role in shaping the social and cultural context in which it operates.

The systemic functional linguistics theory is adopted as the theoretical framework of this study because folk singers use language to communicate to the society the message contained in their folk songs. The folk singers also use language to ridicule people whose behaviours are at variance with the society’s values and norms. In doing these, the singers use language to shape the social and cultural life of the community through linguistic and paralinguistic features embedded in the folk songs.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Some studies have been carried out by different scholars on folk songs in various communities across Africa. Some of these works are reviewed here. Kanu (2024) carried out a study on the implications of folk songs for education in Africa. The objectives of this study is to study African traditional songs, its dimensions or types and its contribution, particularly to the area of education. To achieve this, the phenomenological and hermeneutic methods of inquiry were employed. The findings of the study reveals that African traditional songs, handed down from one generation to another orally, permeates every facet of African life, and occupies a fundamental place in the African life, and occupies a fundamental place in the African traditional educational heritage. It recommended the employment of African indigenous songs in educational institutions in Africa, more importantly at the primary

and secondary levels. In this way, the African will be taught within categories that he or she understands and appreciate.

Thwala (2017) carried out a study on the thematic analysis of selected Tinga Bisa songs of south Africa. This research work intends to categorize, classify and analyse the themes of selected Tinga Bisa songs that are sung by various families, clans and nations' groupings during national ceremonies. Tinga Bisa are the regiments of girls that are known for cultural dance, game and mimic songs. The domains of history, love, nature, politics or dissatisfaction and education are reflected in their songs. The dramatic rhythmic, lyrics, rhyming combinations are enhanced in most songs. Despite the specific thematic groupings of songs in this study, they encompass the totality of values, norms, and culture of people. The thematic and interpretative analysis are employed to explore the explicit and implicit, rational and irrational phenomena which exist as potential guides for the life and behaviour of the people.

Ojukwu and Esimone (2014) examined how Igbo folk music could be used in inculcating morals in adolescents. The objective of the study is to examine the role of Igbo folk music in a child's upbringing. It is also aim at proffering an approach by which Igbo folk music can serve as a vehicle for moral rejuvenation and an aid in curbing moral decadence in adolescents. Survey and bibliography are employed as the methodology and the theoretical framework which emphasized that human beings develop philosophically and psychologically in a progressive fashion. The study concludes by suggesting that since the life of an Igbo person rotates around the traditional music of his / her community. The positive societal norms, attitudes and ideals can be inculcated through the early introduction of an African child to the traditional musical arts through formal school. Cheneje (2017) conducted a study on the stylistic analysis of Kabras folk songs. This study sought to identify the prominent features of style in Kabras folk songs and how they affect the interpretation of Kabra folk song in the framework of prototype theory and relevance theory. Through oral interview to the respondents and analysis of specific Kabra folk songs, the researcher finds that the prominent features of styles in Kabras folks songs: are neologism, code-switching, symbolism, metaphor and allegion. The study also found out that the Kabras community is fond of criticizing the societal evils through singing of folk songs. The folk song with apt use of figurative language is highly acceptable rather than the one without figurative language.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employs qualitative research design with a descriptive paradigm. The data for this study were collected from a total of ten groups' performers of folk songs in ten communities in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State. Six groups of women performers and four groups of men performers were used for the study. The choice of these groups of performers was motivated by level of their popularity and knowledge of Igbo Eze North folk songs.

Oral interview and participant observation constituted the instrument for data collection. The data were elicited from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources of data collection included oral interview and participant observation while secondary sources of data collection included written sources such as dissertation, journal articles and so on. After assembling the folk songs, the researcher made effort to categorize the folk songs collected, identify the themes and function of the folk songs.

Data presentation and analysis

This section presents and analyses the data collected based on the following categories of Igbo folk songs: dirge, birth songs, marriage songs, lullaby songs.

Dirge Songs

Dirges are songs used in consoling, counselling on encouraging a deceased family living in this world that eventually everybody must die. Through folk songs deeds of death are revealed as we could see in the dirge songs numbers 1 and 2 "onye na-ewotenu anui ose" "A kparu oke eshu" respectively. The funeral songs of Igbo Eze North people portray the characteristics of funeral songs, even a stranger dictates them. The funeral where ritual will be performed, the ritual songs will be sung and accompanied with the instruments. The dirges progress in various stages. The singer sings the songs of invocation and supplication. In African societies, they believe so much in divinities and folk song is performed for them during funeral and rituals. There is a belief that the soul of the dead person is welcomed or received by the spirit of the ancestors. These folk songs are performed according to the status of the person. In Igbo Eze North community, funeral ceremonies are never done without song suitable for it.

Song number 1 is a typical example. “onye ne-ewotenu anyi ose”

Onye ga-ewotenu anyi ose?- who will bring us pepper?

Onye ga-ewotenu anyi ose? _ who will bring us pepper?

Me anyi woru-gbayaaru olu- so that we can use it to clear our throat

Itodo nwa eze wotenu anyi ose- Itodo nwa eze give us pepper

Me anyi woru gbayaaru olu – so that we can use it to clear our throat

Ọlu anyi soore uzo oso – let our voice follow the path it is treading

O hare emu, o ruure Idah- May our voice sound high so as to reach Idah

As the deceased's relations sing the above song, they clap their hands and dance, calling on the deceased children to give them edible things like kola, wine and food. This song is usually sung when the *umuada* (kindred women) are feeling hungry. During the singing of such a song, the deceased children come out with some gifts for the deceased relation. In this context, the live of the above dirge which says, “Onye ga-ewetere anyi ose” (who will bring us kola or pepper) is a funeral song that has nothing to do with death. This song, however plays a very important role in the funeral context where members of the bereaved family might forget to serve mourners who have arrived at the funeral grounds from their various homes. Thus, after waiting for a while without being served food or drinks might take centre stage at the funeral ground and sing this dirge and the bereaved family would immediately know that such sympathizers have not been served food, kola or wine. This would draw the attention of those who have the duty of providing food, kola and wine to the kindred women to quickly discharge their duties according to custom.

Song 2: A kpuru oke eshu

A kpuru oke eshu -the bull has been caught

Ne nkwi eyeru onu – and the fence is let open

Egbe e wuru nwa ooku _ the kite has taken the chick

La ne ugare elu- very high up the sky

Nko e rughu – the hook cannot reach it

Me eka erugi – neither do the hand reach it.

Here, the dirge singer compares death to a bull that has been taken away from its enclosure (fence) left open. In this dirge, comparison is evoked by the use of metaphor. It is not unusual that a comment is made about human life and action through reference to non-human activities. This dirge implies that when the owner of the house dies, the house becomes desolate at other times; the dirge singer uses metaphor with euphemism. In other words, the mourner avoids using the name “death”. For example, in the above dirge, “egbe” (kite) that takes the heirs chick symbolizes death.

Work songs

The Igbo people delight in communal activities like group farming, hunting, cooking, dancing, and even burials. During such occasions, there are songs that accompany them. The occasions for work songs include almost all contexts in which monotonous labour is involved, though conventions as their use vary in different societies, thought conventions as their use vary in different societies. There are cooperative songs for hoeing, weeding, sawing, pounding, grinding maize, as well as for road work. The work song below illustrates work for planting of crops such as cassava, yam, maize etc.

Song 3: I gaghi anọ nkịti

I gaghi anọ nkịti – you should not stand idly at work

Onye ike gwuru ya lawa – you should not stand idly at work

Onye ike gwuru ya lawa – you should go home when you are tired

I gahi anọ nkiti – you should not stand idly at work

Onye ike gwuru ya lawa – you should go home when you are tired

In cooperative work, such as planting cassava, yam, or maize, the gang must move at one pace. If one or some of the group members stop work, stand and aimlessly look at others or just be there, it discourages those who are working hard because others don't appreciate laggards, they would sing the above given song.

The implication of the above song is that it serves as an advice to members of the society that one should work hard in whatever one is doing especially if the work involves many workers together. It is better to continue the task in unison with the grown rather than stay idly and disturb others from working hard. The function of this song being analysed is to give constant reminders to workers that whenever they have to do something in group, they should not seem to discourage others. It also goes down to making sure that good working habits and individual values are upheld, individual commitment and reputation in the village or wherever one is should be exhibited in

random with societal values of these sentiments expressed above are entrenched in an individual, the song then would have achieved its function.

Song 4: Anyi na-ako ede

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Call | refrain |
| <i>Anyi na-akọ ede</i> | <i>ede mara mma okuko</i> |
| <i>Anyi na-akọ ede</i> | <i>ede mara mma okuko</i> |
| <i>Ndi be anyi na-ako ede</i> | <i>ede mara mma okuko</i> |

English translation

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Call | refrain |
| We plant cocoyam | we derive joy in planting it |
| We plant cocoyam | we derive joy in planting it |
| Our people plant cocoyam | we derive joy in planting it |

The structural design applied in the above song (song 4), the musical ideas are combined into call and response. The song text is often short and repetitive so as to achieve an extended performance.

Birth songs

When a baby is born, the mother of the baby intones a birth song thereby inviting the women in the community to her home. On arrival, they dance and praise God for the new arrival. They also give such gifts as money and food items to her. The song numbers 5 and 6 are typical examples.

Song 5: *Qbugh ma nwa*

Qbugh ma nwa - if not for a child
Onye ga-enye m - who would give me
Ukwu jioji - George wrapper
Onye ga-enye m - who would give me?
Velvet-velvet

Song 6: Anyi biaru onu nwa

Anyi biara ọhụ nwa – we have come to rejoice over a child
Anyi biara ọhụ nwa – we have come to rejoice over a child
Onweghi ife yili nwa – nothing is greater than a child
Ugo agbala ekene m gi oo – tall eagle i am greeting you
O nweghi ife igili nwa – nothing is greater than a child
Rekodu na-ekene go oo – Record is greeting you
O nweghi ife yili nwa – nothing is greater than a child

The announcement of the birth of a child is sometimes encoded in the number of long hoots or calls made by the paternal grandmother. The sex of the baby is often not announced directly but is encoded in reference to tools or trade depending on the prevailing occupation in the locality. For examples, the palm-wine tapper's climbing rope (igbu-nkwu) would refer to a male child, while broom (aziza) or trading basket would refer to a female child.

Marriage songs

Marriage ceremony in Igbo Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State is a very big one that attracts different kinds of marriage songs from the folk and different groups from both sides of the bride and bridegroom. During the period of marriage, a kind of music played lures all the visitors and relatives into singing and dancing as seen in the example below.

Song 7: Chinye ya igodo

Chinye ya igodo – give her the key
Chinye ya igodo – give her the key
Chinye ya igodo na ọ natago – give her the key she has returned
Chinye ya igodo – give her the key
Chinye ya igodo na ọ natago - give her the key, she has returned

In this song, the folk of the maiden who is to get married will sing folk songs that will express what is happening and what marriage is all about. The folk songs performed during marriage ceremonies in Igbo Eze North have song texts in which comments are made in subjects of general interest. Most of the folk songs serve as pieces of advice to the new couples and aspiring couples that could be there. The marriage songs are mainly rendered by the maiden folk.

Song 8: Q naa be di ya

Q naa be di ya - she has gone to her husband's house

O naa - she has gone

Q naa be di ya - she has gone to her husband's house

O naa - she has gone

Q naa be di ya - she has gone to her husband's house

O naa - she has gone.

The above song is used by the bride's age mates to accompany the maiden to her husband's house.

Religious poetry

During the coronation of traditional priest in Elugwu ezike in Igbo Eze North Local Government Area, the following folk songs are sung:

Song 9: Nene hani anyi ne anyi akagi enya

Nene hani anyi, n' anyi akagi enya- mother leave us for we are in a state of ignorance

Nene hari anyi, maka na anyi amagi ihe - mother leaves us for we are full of ignorance

Onye amaghi ihe bu ya ga ama- it is left for those that lack knowledge

Onye kara enya tu, ya ga-ama- it is left for those who are in the state of knowledge

Q lqpha - *Qlqpha*

Q lqpha is an epithet for the priest, in this song the singer is appealing to the deity to exercise some restraints in punishing them (the adherents of traditional religion) on the basis that their actions were out of ignorance. This indicates that in most cases the songs and dancing by *inyama mma* (women cult initiates) are honoring the deity they are serving. Although the songs and dancing add luster to the celebration of the coronation of a traditional priest, they have veiled but more important effect of curbing recalcitrant and criminally minded members of the community who had broken the norms and customs prevalent in the community.

Also, one of the informants, has this song to sing at the coronation of a traditional priest in Elugwu Ezike.

Song 10: Ejekomu ozi nne ziri m

Ejekomu zi nne ziri m - I am running an errand for my mother

Ejekomu ozi nne ziri m - I am running an errand for my mother

Ozi nne oo - mother errand oo

Ozi nene lolq - errand for mother lolq

Nene lolq ugbabe - mother lolq ugbabe

Ozi nne anaghi agwuike - one does not feel tired when running an errand for his mother

Ozi nne anaghi awo ashua - one does not encounter losses for running his/her mother's errand

Ozi nne bu uru - running mother's errand is full of gain

Ozi nne bu urun kariri ishi afwua - the gain accruing from running one's mother's errand is greater than the losses.

Lolq is an epithet for the priestess. In this song, the singer is extolling the good qualities of the goddess she is serving. There is repetition of "nene lolq" and "ozi nne ziri m" to intensify that she (the singer) is not acting on her own. She is rather performing the role assigned to her by the goddess (nene lolq). running errand for "nene lolq" is full benefits.

Furthermore, with their ritual dancing and singing, women warm the hearts of the gods who, by their nature, hate evil and always want to get rid of them.

Disarmed by the traditional immunity enjoyed by the women, people with deviant behaviour are either compelled to mend their ways or flee from the community. This indeed has been a very significant and effective mechanism of social control in many African countries moonlight song.

Moonlight songs are songs which are sung at moonlight in the village square where moonlight plays are normally staged. This takes place after dinner when moonlight is in the sky. Children, youth, men and women normally come out from their respective houses for the moonlight plays at their leisure time before returning to bed. They usually perform a lot of activities with moonlight songs as seen in the excerpts below.

Song 11: Kpukpumkpu ogele

Kpukpumkpu ogele - *Kpukpumkpu ogele*

Kpukpumkpu ogele - *Kpukpumkpu ogele*

Ogene, ogene - *ogene, ogene*

Kpukpumkpu ogele - *Kpukpumkpu ogele*

Ogene, ogene - *ogene, ogene*

Onye je-ekpu ogene ? - who would stop to dance?

Ogene, ogene - *Ogene, ogene*

Ike je-ekpu ogene - *Ike it is your turn*

Ogene, ogene - Ogene, ogene
Ugwu je-ekpu ogene - Ugwu it is your turn
Ogene, ogene - Ogene, ogene

Song 12: Okereke Okereke dududu yaya

Okereke Okereke dududu yaya - Okereke Okereke dududu yaya
Okereke Okereke dududu yaya - Okereke Okereke dududu yaya
Okereke kereke dududu yaya - Okereke Okereke dududu yaya
Kwenu o ga na-aga, o ga na-aga ngwom – let us agree that we shall be ngwom moving
O ga na-aga ngwom – we shall move ngwom

The men and women usually amuse themselves through story-telling while sitting around the fire or without fire. Moonlight songs instil a sense of cooperation in the children and also prevent or reduce boredom in the community. In fact, there is no specific time for moonlight play songs. But the first person to come out from his/her house will make a call that attract or draw people from their houses to come for the moonlight play songs at the village square. The songs are normally accompanied with hand-clapping.

War songs

These are songs people sing while going to war. These songs act as stimulants and energizer. The people of Igbo-Eze North also use war song when there is dispute between the village and boundary towns as seen in the excerpts below:

Song 13: Nzogbu nzogbu

Nzogbu nzogbu - smash people to death, smash people to death
Enyi mba enyi - elephant town elephant
Nzogbu - smash people to death
Enyi mba enyi - elephant town elephant
Nzogbu nzogbu - smash people to death, smash people to death
Enyi mba enyi - elephant town elephant
Zogbuo nwoke - smash man to death
Enyi mba enyi - elephant town elephant
Zogbuo nwaniyi - smash woman to death
Enyi mba enyi - elephant town elephant

Song 14: Onye akpakwana agu aka nodu

Onye akpakwana agu aka nodu – you dare not touch the lion's tail
Onye akpakwana agu aka nodu – you dare not touch the lion's tail
Ma o di ndu ma o nwuru anwu – whether it is alive or dead
Onye akpakwana agu aka nodu – you dare not touch the lion's tail
Ma o di ndu ma o nwuru anwu – whether it is alive or dead
Onye akpakwana agu aka nodu – you dare not touch the lion's tail

These songs act as stimulants and energizer. The songs are blended in a systematic way and in rhythmic pattern that will suit the movement of the warrior. Igbo-Eze North war songs may remind the people of the past havoc the war might have done to them and this will annoy them more and make them fight like wounded lions and not look back. When they are going to war, they sing war songs. When they win the war, they come back with songs that appease all the gods as they sing prayerful songs to the gods.

Functions of folk songs in Igbo-Eze North

Function is the term for what something does, what it accomplishes and the social purpose it serves. Igbo folk songs perform the following functions: moral education, economic function, entertainment and political functions.

Moral education

In the ancient Igbo society, the indigenous educational system existed before the arrival of Islam and Christianity. Folk-song was one of the prevalent weapons used for moral education and eradication of decadence. The lyrics of folks are used for moral control through ridicule, sympathy, praise. Each parent or guardian knows the consequences that follow ill-moral life in the society like a young woman getting pregnant without marriage, stealing, therefore, they do everything to educate their children of the consequences that follow the violation of the laid down values and custom. The lyrics of folk songs usually contain the do's and don'ts of the society's

values and the consequences that follow suit if violated. Folk songs serve as a link for education and cultural transmission.

Entertainment function

Certain Igbo folk songs are sung for pleasure and relaxation. As sung, they seek to relieve tension because of their humorous nature. Igbo-Eze North folk song is simply that of entertainment. For instance, the music of worship is not cultivated merely out of a dread of God or the gods and ancestors but because it is emotionally satisfying. Songs are not only for emotional expressions but also for reinforcing conformity to societal norms, validations of social institutions and religious rituals and symbolic representation.

Political functions

Folk song often plays a strong part in politics in Africa, especially in Igbo-Eze North Community. Politicians use the occasions of folk music performance to employ musicians for their own purpose to demonstrate their power and control over their subjects and to propagate their political interests and political agendas. For instance, during political campaigns, many Igbo-Eze North politicians organize folk music performances and use the music to campaign for elections. When politician win elections, they organize Igbo-Eze North folk song performances to celebrate their victory, inviting folk musicians to perform music for them and their supporters.

Economic functions

The aesthetic aspect of Igbo-Eze North folk songs are economically significant. Folk singers who are invited to perform music at social occasions such as wedding, festivals and political conventions are often rewarded for their performance. However, it is important to note that the economic function of folk songs especially in Igbo-Eze North is not restricted to direct monetary values. The most visible economic benefit is the material gains which the musicians receive for their performances. They combine the job of performing folk songs with farming because the money and the materials they get from performing music is usually not enough to support them and their families

CONCLUSION

Africa and the Igbo in particular utilize folk songs beyond entertainment purposes, the appreciation is highly event oriented, and that is why the songs are carefully selected not in isolation but to match each event. The nature and scope of folk song in Africa is generally related to the aims and purposes of a specific social event or to the needs of the performer. For that reason, no musical activity is selected or performed in isolation. Folk songs are widely transmitted by oral tradition. From the study of these folk songs and interaction with respondents it is evident that many of these songs were inspired, other emanated from human experiences. These songs could be accompanied by instruments or performed without instruments.

The findings of the study reveal that Igbo-Eze North folk songs are categorized into birth songs, work songs, dirge, moonlight songs, marriage songs, war songs among others. Each context of the situation provides the type of folk song sung by the folk singers. The study, also, found that Igbo-Eze North folk songs perform the following functions: entertainment functions, political functions, religious functions, moral education and economic functions. The folk song is a forum for the expression of diverse ideas and opinions. It can be used to educate and abuse or amuse people. The knowledge, belief, art, moral, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a given society can be learned through the folk song.

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