

Gender, Tradition and Cultural Sustainability of Drumming in African Music: The Indigenous Sociological Theory of Ajobi and Ajogbe

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Abstract

The study discusses challenges facing scholarship in Africa within the Humanities and Social Sciences due to the application of Western models. It highlights the varied interpretations of the term "relationship" proposed by scholars, with emphasis on the Ajobi (consanguinity) and Ajogbe (co-residency) model developed by Akinwowo in 1980. This indigenous sociological framework aligns with contemporary efforts to foreground African intellectual traditions in scholarship. The discussion gives a clearer explanation of how Ajobi–Ajogbe relations operate within apprenticeship structures. This model is considered the most accurate depiction of African relationships, drawing from prehistoric practices within the Yoruba social order. The study suggests that certain practices, such as male children being sole drummers in the Ayan lineage, could threaten tradition, and proposes nurturing female children with drumming talents. Many scholars are continually bringing the gender enquiry to the fore. “This quest centres around how a people, society, or a nation view the role of men and women, particularly in the way they participate in, contribute to, and are rewarded by the prevailing social system,” Ezeokeke (2004). The ethnographic method used in the study includes interviews with Baba Alajede, Baba Akeem, Bisi Adunbarin-Keji, and Ayankishi (A skilful female drummer on the Bata, Omele Meta, and the daughter of Baba Akeem) in July and August 2025, in RCCG Camp, Agege, and Julius Berger, Lagos, Nigeria. and non-participatory observation advocates for integrating both male and female children from birth and neighbouring communities into apprentice relationships to preserve expertise. Ultimately, extending the Ajobi and Ajogbe ideology to include female children is proposed as a strategy to safeguard tradition and foster collaborative relationships within African communities. In conclusion, the study presents a connection between kinship ideology and cultural apprenticeship and argues that rigid lineage-based transmission may threaten the sustainability of drumming traditions.

Keywords: Ajobi and Ajogbe, Drumming-Tradition, gender, Female, Yoruba arts.

Introduction

Scholars in the Humanities have shown consistent and increasing uneasiness towards the reconstruction of Western theories that are Social Sciences inclined, to replicate more precisely African ideas. The challenges facing scholars in African include the non-suitability of the existing Western theories to core cultural documentation on African music. Principally, these theories present incorrect positioning, improper adjustment to cultural practices in Africa. A misalignment between frameworks that aligns with the study of nature, origin, belief and the distinction between rational justification, true knowledge and African authenticities, ancient foreign heritages, and basic speculative restrictions among others. These foreign concepts sometimes do not capture the intricacies of African artistic practices, leading to the sidelining of indigenous information on African cultural system.

One of the campaigns for simulations that represent the ideology of Africans in the explanations of their practices was proposed by Akinwowo in 1980. The Ajobi and Ajogbe classic by this author is a true sociological standard of the Yoruba culture concerning relationships. It has to a large extent provided a substantial circumstance of immediate and extended terms for relationships. This has without controversies strengthened arguments on the diversities and solidity of well-adjusted and defined relationships among the Yoruba. The realisation of the working relationship between Ajobi and Ajogbe kindled in me a need for its incorporation into the drumming tradition to facilitate an actuality of its Bravura continuity.

The drumming tradition is an integral aspect of the cultural activities of the Yoruba that have advanced and persisted from pre-colonial until the present time. The drumming institution irrespective of the ensemble represents a system of creative practices that deserves preservation despite all threats. Yoruba drumming denotes a lineage institution of performers on a variety of drum families, characterised by precise ideologies of mutual grouping and working relationships. Omojola (2017) defines drumming as a “tradition of musical activity, realised on a variety of drums, typified by specific principles of ensemble practice, combining drumming, songs, and dance, and performed within a wide range of sacred and secular contexts” (87). Omojola’s definition is apt for the understanding of the specificity of this tradition.

However, the focus of the paper is the incorporation of the Ajobi and Ajogbe ideal into the realism of the Bravura continuity of drumming tradition. Drum ensemble in Yoruba land includes dundun (Iyaalu, Isaaju, atele, gangan, kerikeri and gudugudu), bata (Iyaalu bata, Omole Ako, and Kudi), bembe, agba, gbedu, igbin, aguda and adamo among others. This ensemble performed independently until recently when the diversity of drumming emerged from the secular performance scenes, performances at sacred scenes still adhere strictly to traditional norms of isolated drumming in honour of the gods. The ensembles are differently shaped into hourglass and conical, and are played with leather or wooden beaters. Every ensemble is led by a lead drummer or Master drummer who takes responsibility for the coordination of the group and the training of younger drummers until they achieve proficiency on their drums.

Problem Statement

Studies on Yoruba drumming tradition by Alan-Dworsky (2012), David Locke, (2026) Akin Euba (1990), Madesto-Amegago A. (2026), Nketia Kwabene (1974), and Nowick Gray, (2023) have essentially concentrated on male dominance and were viewed from the cultural perspectives with total disregard for female inclusion and the revitalisation of the institution. Thus, it presents a biased perception, signifying an intense confirmation for further research. This study, therefore, investigates the incorporation of Ajobi and Ajogbe ideals into the inclusion of females for the actuality of the Bravura continuity of the drumming tradition. This may help in the provision of an all-inclusive drumming practice for children born within and without the legacy. The adoption of male and female children outside the ancestry of drumming provides a skilled avenue for the actuality of its Bravura continuity.

In contemporary Yoruba society, male children are becoming too engaged in fraudulent internet practices, ritual killings, and kidnapping, these have dwindled their interest in skill acquisition and have endangered the drumming tradition. The Master drummers are getting old by the day, and their drumming expertise must not die with them, there must be a floorless transmission avenue.

Methodology

This study is premised on the Ajobi and Ajogbe research model. Hence, it draws on both primary and secondary databases that include interviews, and non-participatory methods to provide a

relationship ideal from the perspective of female inclusion in drumming tradition and the salvaging strategies for female children to enhance its continuity.

I interviewed Baba Alajede, Baba Akeem, and Ayandiran at The Holy Ghost Service of The Redeemed Christian Church of God, July 2025, and in Agege, Lagos in August 2025 where I observed diligently the attention paid to male children at performance and the ones paid to female children., I also interviewed Bisi Adunbarin-Keji, at the Solid Rock Assembly, at Berger, Lagos. Ayantoyosi (A skilful drummer on the Iyaalu and the daughter of Baba Alajede) and Ayankishi (A skilful drummer on the Bata, Omele Meta, and the daughter of Baba Akeem) were interviewed in in July and August 2025 respectively. Ayantoyosi and Ayankishi showed their displeasure on the segregation suffered at home just for being female. They complained that even though they play the drums very well, they were never allowed to join their father's ensembles.

I used the stratified sampling methods, where the population is divided into three groups, based on gender, skills and age, and samples are taken from each group. This was done to ensure representativeness, reduce sampling error, guarantee adequate representation, increase precision and allow for accurate analysis. I used the transcribe and the cultural analysis of subcultures method.

Objective of the Study

The study aims to investigate the Ajobi and Ajogbe relationship ideal and its incorporation into children born within and without the drumming tradition and the actuality of the exceptional continuity.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. investigate what exactly constitutes the Ajobi ideal and its relationship as an enhancer of the drumming tradition;
2. examine the effects of the issue of Ajogbe as a group identity of co-habitation and cultural conformity as it relates to the incorporation of the neighbouring children into the drumming practice;
3. study the Performance Practice of the drumming tradition;
4. Investigate the characteristics of apprenticeship structure and how it relates to proficiency;
5. study the repertoire transmission and ensemble roles within the Dundun ensemble as strategies for the continuity of the drumming tradition in Yoruba land.

Research Questions

The following research questions serve as guides to the research on the field by giving the study a definite direction.

1. How does the study of Ajobi ideal relate to or enhance the drumming tradition in Yoruba land, and what exactly constitutes the ideal?
2. Why is it necessary to examine the issue of Ajogbe as a group identity of co-habitation and cultural conformity and how are the neighbouring children incorporated into the drumming practice?
3. What are the determinants for the drumming practice in African music?
4. What characterises the apprenticeship structure and how it relates to proficiency;
5. How does ensemble roles aid the repertoire transmission in Yoruba land.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework on the Ajobi and Ajogbe notions has been engaged by many scholars, including Esan Oluwatobi David and Awe Solomon Kolawole (2025) in their discourse on the Yoruba Concept of Alajobi. Esan, O.D. and Awe, S. K. on “The Yoruba Concept of the Okun Omo Iya as a Critique of Martin Buber’s ‘I Thou’ and the Quest for Environmental Sustainability”, Chibvongodze, Danford Tafadzwa (2016), on Ubuntu: An Analysis of the Role of African Philosophy and Ethics in Environmental Managements, *Journal of Human Ecology*, Ojebode (2020) embraced the Ajobi and Ajogbe theory in his redefinition of communal association, and Akinwowo Akinsola (1983).

However, the theory reinforcement for this research is Ajobi and Ajogbe by Akinwowo Akinsola Asuwada (1983). This theory presents the Lineal and collateral relationships based on blood and birth and the 'Social bond created by sharing the same roof or contiguous shelters'. The theory explains how Alajobi (those related by blood) and Alajogbe (those co-residing) interact to form a cohesive society, essential, though different, variations of social bonding”. It submits that there is a necessity to decolonise the Humanities, revive African culture to create dynamic and also reflect the desires and intentions of the existing generation. Empirically, the term innovativeness has been encompassed and revised by researchers in ethnomusicology in the course of the transcriptions and documentation of their field research.

Akinwowo (1980) affirms Ajobi and Ajogbe (whose English equivalents are consanguinity and co-residency respectively) as primordial forms of asuwada eniyan that are human society. Anthropologists, speaking generally, define consanguinity as the facts of linear and collateral relationships based upon blood and birth; while co-residency, I will define it as the fact of sharing the same or contiguous shelter, whether or not the

sharers are related by blood. The derivative concept ajobi may be defined as that which sustains all kinds of lineal and collateral relationships, while the derivative concept alajogbe, as that which sustains persons or individualised groups who are living together, under one roof or in contiguous shelters in a locality (Akinwowo 1980:18).

The theory highlighted the incorporation of sociological theory with musical training to involve bridging the gap between musical sounds/performances and the social contexts, power structures in drumming, and cultural meaning they reflect. This is achieved by viewing drumming not just as an art form, but as a sociological object or technology of the self that shapes social identity. This theory was applied to understand gender, drumming musical genre and its sustainability to create and maintain boundaries, identities and resisting practices.

Akinwowo used the terms to describe “variations in socialisation in relationships in Yoruba land” but in the context of this study, the terms are used to explain the prerequisite for the actuality of the Bravura continuity of the drumming tradition.

Investigating what exactly constitutes the Ajobi ideal and its relationship as an enhancer of the drumming tradition

Yoruba society dictates the structure of drumming performance ethics that is gender discriminative as it favours the dominance of men within the tradition. Euba (1990) and Olaniyan (1993) explained that the "traditional belief is that Dundun drumming and practices are exclusive to the male gender with dire consequences for female children engaging in it". Male children born into the drumming family have been taught from childhood to induce the necessary potential of drumming conventionally as initiated by their Ayan (god of drumming) heritage. The sacrifices to this god indulge the constriction of the genre to only males and exclude females for many reasons, several of which are menstruation, marriages, childbearing, and breastfeeding, among others. From childhood, the teaching of the varieties of drumming, the purpose of drumming, and diverse practices of drumming arts among the Yoruba form the foundation of the Ajobi training effectiveness. The description of the Ajobi influence in drumming is rudimentary, substantial, and collective in ensemble preparation (Layade, 2018c).

Pertinent to this discourse is the nature and discipline of the children within this drumming institution. The drumming tradition is a coded one, the core of which is restricted to the Ajobi lineage. When drummers teach non-initiates drumming, they limit the training by hiding some

aspect of the oral tradition that enables the bravura essence of the genre. Drumming is guided by oral tradition and the performance repertoire is dependent on the drummer's exposure to the core oral privileges endowed to the drumming lineage. Baba Alajede, the leader of the dundun drummers in Lagos State, owns the privilege of inheriting a drum that is now 116 years old; this may be compared to the difference between the Stradivarius Violin and any other kind of performance. The tone of the drum is very clear because the leather used for the membrane is unique, no one has been able to identify the kind of leather, nor ascertain the kind of wood used for the drum shell. The drum is so old yet, the leather has not worn out, and neither are there any devaluing qualities on the wood shell. The wood shell is heavier than any other dundun drum in Yoruba land and the quality of the leather strap is equally magnificent.

Baba Alajede confided in me by revealing a long-time secret that guides the training of the Ajobi and the Ajogbe drummers, he said drumming to the Ajobi is caught and not specifically taught. According to him, the drumming tradition is more of absorption than actual teaching, he noted that drumming to a lineage drummer is a way of life and an avenue for day-to-day communication of his experiences. The chance a child in a drumming family has to acquire bravura skills is numerous and peculiar because of the rapport he has with the master drummer, who also is his father. The advantage is similar to the experiences of Mozart and their sister who learned directly from their fathers, at a time when the environment and training of the music arts required bonding for the manifestation of the bravura skills.

The Ajobi relationship in drumming determines the factors behind the natural surroundings of the child drummer, his drum interpretation, and his absorption ability. The Ajobi bond represents in the child drummer, the philosophies, performance recommendations, and ethical prospects that are reflected as fundamental and imperative in the child/father relationship structure. The drumming institution incorporates an Ajobi child drummer into the collective origin and distinctiveness of the Ayan ancestry, which holds in high admiration the convention and practices of logical and inventive accomplishments of the descent. The Ajobi custom in drumming is established or communicated through work/play, play/work procedures that are in the form of observation, absorption, and retention of facts and acceptance of performance opportunities with gratitude to the master drummer. These events may be sacred or secular, with proper performance requests from the organisers of the events or a gate-crashing event. In the Ajobi relationship, mutual

spectacles transpire between father and child whenever the father keeps all the earnings for the day to himself without any sharing formula. These theatrical activities are instruments that bind the father to his child and that work in favour of the child, who instead of being paid gets core drumming extracts from his father.

Furthermore, in ajobi relationship, the transmission of the genre is usually through oral literature where a father tells the child drummer about Ayangalu, the ancestry of the drumming institutions; the child also absorbs the different oral poetry that forms the core drumming performances as he recites it daily both verbally and on his drums. He also through daily rapports with the father absorbs indigenous songs used as repertoire at drumming events. This relationship originates from the artistic preparation shaped out of performance comportment, passion for drumming, and ideals that denote the drumming practice. The Ajobi influence in drumming presents a tripartite affiliation amid drumming interpretation, ethos or principles of drumming, and the societal expectations from Ajobi drummers. These three jointly connect and inspire respectively in substantial proportions.

Ajogbe as a group identity of co-habitation and cultural conformity and how the neighbouring children are incorporated into the drumming practice

“The Ajogbe relationship has multifaceted dimensions and practice of stewardship” (Layade, 2018c) and creativity are characteristic of Yoruba accomplishment through a relationship that is not blood linked, but by chance and desire, lives with the master drummer. I will to a large extent describe the obvious vagueness associated with the duties of an Ajogbe, child drummer. A scholarly investigation of this aspect of the study postulates some details that have verified the challenges of an Ajogbe drummer that are discussed accordingly.

The first major challenge of this child drummer is communication; he must first and foremost comprehend the non-verbal drumming practice of the talking drums, (which he might not have been used to before the decision of his father to lend him to the master drummer until he becomes a master himself). He must learn how the drummers communicate, which drum says what, and how they relate in the ensemble. Communication is an absorbing factor that serves as fundamental upon which the entire drumming arts depend. This is a dynamic part of the drumming institution that an Ajogbe child must pay special attention to, and a mastery of it greases the mastery of the bravura essence in drumming. The Ajogbe training allows children who are not born into the

drumming heritage to learn the art of drumming from the master drummer by paying a token called apprentice charge. This is a daily routine stewardship that requires that a child goes to the master drummer's house every day except Sunday to assist the master in every way possible. He goes there early to clean the drums, sweep his house, take the refuse to the refuse site, and fetch water from the well or river among others. After this daily routine, the child is now permitted to sit at the drummers' circle to learn by observation, incorporation, and later by practice.

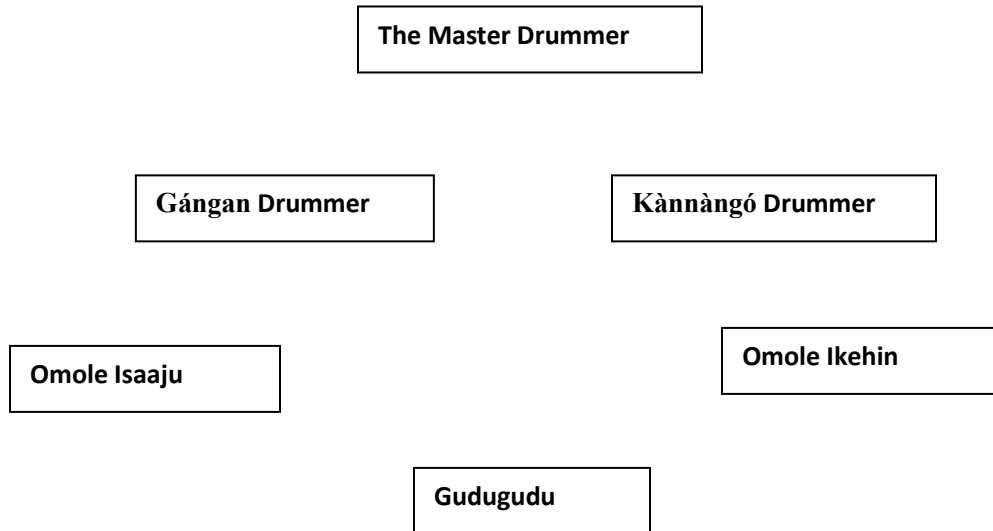
Secondly, an Ajogbe child learns to pay respect to elders and older drummers; he learns the procedure and the expression of admiration for Ayangalu, the god of drumming (Oral interview, Baba Alajede). He gains the conduit to stimulate understanding of and esteem for man and the deity. This attitude commends the Ajogbe child to the master drummer and his company and, by chance, draws subsequent interactions between them. It also fosters concord, cohesion, and coherence through the consequential alliance of mutual ties. There is always a close rapport between the Ajogbe child and the master drummer that enacts a good working, creative bond.

Thirdly, according to Baba Akeem, the child begins to imitate, represent, or imitate rhythm on any surface that can reproduce his rhythmic aspiration.

Performance Structure and Practice of Yoruba Traditional Drummers

According to Baba Alajede (Oral interview, July 2025), the Dùndún family is a foundational ensemble of hourglass-shaped drums that have been the verbal messenger, providing conversation between family members to talk, give instructions, recite family histories and deliver praises of deity(ies) Àyàn Àgalú, families, lineages and royalties of West Africa for generations. The act of Yoruba drumming in Nigeria is vastly focused on oral tradition categorised by classified collaborative roles of all ensemble members, which includes dynamic rhythmic repetition in circular styles, speech-surrogate practices (verbal drumming), and close contact with dancers and audiences. Centered on the Dùndún and Bata ensembles, performances are rarely fixed in duration, relying on the cues of a master drummer to guide the rhythm, speed, and performance leadership. All the drums are played with a curved drum stick, known as the kongo. Dundun drumming is structured under the strict leadership of the Master drummer.

Figure 1. The Performance Structure



The Master Drummer

Baba Akeem (Oral interview, August 2025), describes the Master drummer as a skilful custodian of Yoruba oral repertoire, transmitting complex rhythms and historical information to the audience. They are often from a specialised, hereditary drumming lineage (Ayan family), where traditional mastery is passed through generations in specialised families. An Ìyá-Ìlù master drummer leads a talking drum ensemble, where they serve as composer, arranger, and performers in both royal courts, public festivals and social events. They used the hourglass-shaped “Iya Ilu” to talk, by mimicking spoken Yoruba tones, this is called verbal drumming. They are highly trained in Royal history, festivals’ ritualistic events, and performers at city squares and private social events. A drummer can play for 15 and 20 years before earning the “Master” designation, and can play for over 30 years before becoming an “Ijoye Onilu” (Chief Drummer).

The Gangan Drummer

A Dùndún Gangan drummer is an expert on the Gangan drum, a Yoruba musician from South West, Nigeria, who plays the drum with dexterity and precision. He is a master artiste who used tension cords to alter pitch, imitating the tonal and conventional patterns of the Yoruba language, usually for traditional, social, or ceremonial music. He specialises in praise singing of the deities,

ancestors or individuals. The drum acts as a conversational bridge, providing harmonic answers to the lead drum. He doesn't only play music, but convey messages of historical importance.

The Dundun Kànnàngó, Drummer

Dundun Kànnàngó, drummer is a diligent traditional musician who takes his role in the ensemble seriously. Kànnàngó is one of the ensemble drums often acting in contrast to the Ìyá-Ìlù, or gangan. It provides faster, high-pitched rhythmic embellishments. The drum is double-headed and placed under the armpit. It has laces that the drummer squeezes to increase tension and raise pitch, allowing it to mimic the tonal tones of the Yoruba language.

Omele Isaaju and Omele Ikehin

These are the smallest versions of the Dùndún (hourglass-shaped) ensemble; they play secondary roles by performing alternating recurring outlines in a hocket style. They often play in hocket techniques, where a musical phrase is fragmented and interplayed between two drummers. While the Ìyá-Ìlù acts as talking drum, the supportive omele drums create interlocking rhythmic patterns. Hocketing allows the melodic/rhythmic phrase to be split artistically using the rest punctuation and attack systems.

The Gudugudu

This is the oldest and smallest bowl-like shaped Yoruba drum of the talking drum family. It plays the role of the bell by serving as a timekeeper in Dùndún ensemble. It produces a high-pitched, sharp, and loud beats, providing a steady, rhythmic foundation. It is worn around the neck and played with a leader strap by the youngest person in an ensemble.

Ajobi and Ajogbe drumming is a non-verbal manifestation avenue through which drummers present their experiences and creative ability to their audience. It is equally instructive to discuss the elements of which the two issues relate in ensemble sustenance, as how these are used spring from the soundness of human and creativity manifestation in drumming. The relationship between the Ajobi and Ajogbe drummer is different from that of the Ajobi and the master drummer, and the Ajogbe and the master drummer, there is much to be said about them that will make sense to an African man. This knowledge can be applied to demonstrative work connections where the Ajogbe learns basically from two sources, the master drummer and the Ajobi child drummer.

This aspect of the work will shed new light on specific questions about how these three factors relate, such as the thoughts felt by the Ajogbe drummer, the impressions of the Ajobi drummers, and the expectations of the master drummers from the children's drummers. The master drummer always seeks to adopt the Ajogbe child drummer as his child whenever he observes or discovers an exceptional musical ability in him (The concept of adoption in Yoruba land is a bit different from what it is in the Western world, the child still relates with his biological father as a father but sees the master drummer as a father figure). The master drummer has a radical authority on both the Ajobi and the Ajogbe drummer; he has an exclusively social predisposition to single-handedly inspire the creative ability of these children. He purposefully set up a modality for their motivation by performing intriguing varieties of drum music to the amusement of the child drummers.

It is necessary to conceptualise a background for the study of the Ajobi and Ajogbe relationship in drumming creativity. One component of that structure is an idea that has been characterised as "the domineering inspiration" by Layade (2019a). This concept assumes that active participation in ensemble training requires domineering inspiration from the master musician, whose bravura ability is persuasive. The absorption of this perception by the participating body varies from person to person based on their ability. The longing for the creative acquaintance that the master drummer is willing and ready to provide depends absolutely on the readiness of the child drummers. Morris (1994) affirms that "Modern studies in developmental psychology place critical importance on early experience or early exposure to learning".

The Characteristics of Apprenticeship Structure and Drumming Proficiency

Ayandiran (Oral interview, July 2025), affirms that Drumming is a musical classification considered as a blend of methodical/physical dexterity, rhythmic meticulousness, and deep musicality conveyed through the apprenticeship system. There are strict prerequisites for an intended drummer that includes technical expertise, effectiveness in timing, understanding of dynamic forces, and flexibility in rhythmic interpretations, to mention but a few. Successful drummers often possess a combination of technical skills and personal traits that make them effective musical artistes.

Nketia (2016) asserts that traditionally drumming has specifically assumed a radical dimension in the course, but the concurrent inheritance of the residuals of missionary and colonial intervention

in music, also predicted the duality of old and new, Indigenous and colonial that would continue to pervade social and cultural life in contemporary contexts in the post-colonial Nigerian society. Nketia thinks that a tradition that hinders productivity should be reconstructed to facilitate inclusiveness as inspired by this study.

Samuel (2009) affirms reasons for the exclusion of female children in drumming based on the following details: Women are prohibited from playing Bata drum because of *Ida* (tuning paste) paste on the Centre of the *gudugudu*, and *omele meta* Bata drum; it is believed that *Ida* is a sacred paste is exclusive for male contact. It is assumed that any woman who comes in contact with tuning paste will be barren. From the explanation of *Musibau*, it is deduced that the naming of a child born into the Bata family holds on the sixth day, the Ayan-affiliated name intended for the child will be pronounced into the two ears of the newly born child. The mother will be made to sit by the doorway and 6 or 9 people will be throne aboard the roof of the house in preparation for the child's initiation into the Ayan drumming rites. Thereafter, a fish stew will be prepared with *efo Ayan* (*Ayan's* vegetable) a specific kind of vegetable meant for the mother of the Ajobi male child to eat as a form of ritual. On the 7th day, all the materials to bathe the newly born child must be borrowed from the neighbourhood; this is significant to the warding off of shame that instigates drummers to perform even at events without proper invitation.

They perform classical repertoires but are sometimes paid peanuts and are even called *onilu alagbe* meaning, drummers are beggars. They are never ashamed because shame is dealt with at birth. All these rites are meant to initiate male children of the Ajobi lineage into the drumming institution. These rites were exclusive to male Ajobi children, by leaving out the female children from the rites; even the rights to play the drums are automatically taken away from them. There are also certain rituals done on the drums that further clarify the accounts for their segregation from drumming. However, there is a way out of all these problems, as suggested by *Baba Alajede*, who asserts that female children can perform on drums upon which no ritual has been performed and that both Ajobi and Ajogbe children should have equal rights to the drum ensemble to expand the scope of participation and also to enhance the possibilities of showcasing female children and their already versatile dispositions to drumming.

The emerging trend in Yoruba society is beginning to circumvent the old *dundun* and *Bata Ajobi* and *Ajogbe* drumming tradition Layade (2018b), (two prominent drums in Yoruba land) in order

to maximise the opportunity these drums avail them. The practice of skill transfer in dundun institutions for example does not necessitate any exceptional awareness, finance, or gender. One does not have to possess any extra individualities, musicianship, and genetic association by having a relationship directly with the Ayan lineage, the Ajogbe scenario plays out here. The people pioneering this new philosophy are dundun merchants and enthusiasts who are more interested in monetary gains than aesthetics or doctrinal ideals. The process of skill acquisition and transfer in dundun tradition follows the orthodox practices of either apprenticeship by birth, affiliation, or acquaintance.

Apprenticeship by affiliation involves the candidates being enrolled with experienced drummers to be taken through the process of drumming over some time. Apprenticeship by an acquaintance was once the commonest means of skill transfer. It is the type of absorption of cultural rites that involves training of relations or offspring of Ayan lineage. Any of these methods is acceptable to the mainstream of dundun traditional drummers. However, the point of divergence between those practitioners may be referred to as liberal drummers and perfectionist drummers in the art of ensemble practice concerning the suitability of the recruitment of women into the drumming institutions. While the liberalists are amenable to women learning the art and trade of dundun drumming, the hardliners completely rebuff the idea.

Describing the exemplified significance of the perfectionists, it further posits that; “However, the second group of female dundun practitioners who could aptly be designated as perfectionists and initiators of conventional customary practice, declined to ascribe any credit to feminine percussionists in the Yoruba society. As far as they are permitted to admit, feminine percussionists are not “serious or real” experts on the art. Their hostilities are instigated by the transcendent and applied details of the rituals and traditions that forbid women. The non-recognition or exclusion of female drummers essentially begins from the cultural description of the actuality of the Ayan ancestry and the indigenous drumming associations. According to Samuel (2009), the designation Ayan is chiefly the exclusive rights or a generally acceptable tag and symbol of distinctiveness of the lineage, which customarily refers to ‘drummers with specialised skills that are culturally defined and regulated’. Drummers that do not belong to the Ayan ancestry but who through migration attempt the drumming vocation are denoted as *Äyanyojuran*” (trespassers) and they are considered as uninhibited drummers. While the female children born into the Ayan ancestry bear

the name “Áyan” attached to their names (Ayamoke. Ayanbowale and Ayanseyi among others) they are neither taught the drumming skills nor stimulated to play them due to their gender. Unlike their male counterparts, young women are traditionally not destined to become drummers (161).

The drumming space has been liberalised in such a way that the old rituals and myths that pervaded it for long are now being sidelined. It is not unusual now to see ladies as apprentices in roadside dundun shops in urban Yoruba cities. The reason for this may be socialisation or liberalisation as it were, but the old practices have given way to convenience. Ayodele (2017) has affirmed that the formal-informal partnership of the Ajobi and Ajogbe among delinquency switch arrangements and participants are required to improve community participation in delinquency control in Egba land. Music is a very potent tool for delinquency switch in Yoruba land. It is imperative to note that ensemble practice is fast becoming an illusion in Yoruba land and that the concentration of the ensemble apprentice on male children is already failing, partly because of the internet's fraudulent practices where youths choose to pursue shadows instead of concentrating on the art of drumming. Every hand must be on deck to rescue this tradition. It has become necessary to incorporate the Ajobi and Ajogbe notion into female inclusion in the ensemble to enhance the bravura continuity in drumming.

In 2021, the general report on female participation in drumming is just two (2) percent, Layade (2020). In the January 2022 reports on drumming has reduced to one (1) percent Layade (2021b) because of the growing discrimination against female drummers, even though female drummers are as skillful as their male counterparts, they are seldom patronised. Female children born into the Ajobi drumming lineage are often more in number than the male and they are also very enthusiastic towards the tradition of drumming, but the master drummers who double as the fathers of these female children alleged it a taboo to admit them into the drumming institution. Despite the rejection of these female artists, a number of them persist in secretly decoding the idiomatic, proverbial, and chronological knowledge of the genre through secret means. If the female children could compete with their male counterparts despite their limitations, then they can perform even better if they are absorbed into the drumming custom. Regardless of the virtuoso abilities of these female children, they formed an inconsequential fraction of drummers in Yoruba land. Drumming has been referred to as the dialect of passion and excitement in Yoruba land Layade (2021a). Generally, girls are more emotional than their male counterparts and may be in a preferable

condition to express the dialect of urge and anticipation better in definite drumming and drumming interpretation. There are major differences between female and male drumming in Yoruba land, the male plays the drum quite well but the female drumming is suggestive of exclusive

The repertoire transmission and ensemble roles within the Dundun ensemble as strategies for the continuity of the drumming tradition in Yoruba land.

Layade (2018a) affirms that drumming in the contemporary Yoruba culture requires a brilliant display of exceptional skills in an impressive style. Performances of core traditional court music require wrist flexibility and procedural acquaintance with oral tradition that takes a while for even the Ajobi drummers to absorb. The drummers that operate under the bravura tradition are very few; they are the Ijoye Onilu who performs on their drums with a methodical capability and striking magnificence. Their performances are always lively, captivating, and financially rewarding.

Conclusion

The Ajobi and Ajogbe classic is a true sociological standard of the Yoruba culture concerning relationships. It has to a large extent provided a substantial circumstance of immediate and extended terms for relationships. The Ajobi and Ajogbe sociological models have constantly been under threat of globalisation and civilisation thereby causing a shift in the age-long communality that had ruled in the drumming tradition. The long years of poverty that pervaded the Yoruba rural land occasioned the movement of drummers from the interiors to the urban where life is considered pleasant and economic survival is more guaranteed. Thereby, in the process of moving along with their trade, they were constantly in quest of new hands in aid of the trade. The invasion of Yoruba land by the missionaries, Christianity in the 18th century, and Islam in the 14th century- also contributed to the shift in Ajobi tradition to Ajogbe model of commonality. The missionaries brought into the Yoruba tradition a new culture of training and knowledge transfer which altered the traditional models known to the drumming culture. Although, there are efforts by scholars in the field of music and those who give preference and prime considerations to the Ayan family in the discharge of drumming tradition; to perpetrate the old drumming tradition which emphasizes the Ajobi model the overwhelming societal influence that favours the liberations of the trade is prevalent. The effect of these is the proliferation of trade within and outside the Yoruba geographical space. Infusion of styles and practices that is not incongruent with the tradition of the

Yoruba people. In a few instances, a complete jettisoning of the old Yoruba dundun tradition which had characterised the people for less known and foreign practices emerges.

The drumming lineage is now endangered as male children from the drumming lineage are becoming too distracted to focus specifically on drumming while others from this ancestry perceived the tradition as derogatory, a signal of danger to the drumming tradition. Relationships between the members of the drumming family are always spectacular to behold in local and extended performance contexts but it segregates the female folks from the drumming culture. The ensemble members co-relate just as the ensemble relays in performance. The Ajobi and Ajogbe model by Akinwowo (1980) is a prerequisite to this study. The model was re-emphasized by Payne (1992), when he reiterates, by describing it as the realisation of an approach that employs an indigenous African viewpoint to theorise an emic sociological prototypical African society. This is bounding on the master drummers and learner drummers who reconstruct the knowledge of drumming by reconstituting the ensemble and also by its integrative notion. The study explores the question of female inclusion in Yoruba hereditary drumming traditions associated with the Ayan institution. The central argument is that applying the relational philosophy of Ajobi–Ajogbe can support the continuity of drumming traditions by allowing broader participation, including female apprentices. This has without controversies strengthened arguments on the diversities and solidity of well-adjusted and defined relationships among the Yoruba. The realisation of the working relationship between Ajobi and Ajogbe kindled in me a need for its incorporation into the drumming tradition to facilitate an actuality of its Exceptional continuity.

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