

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA

Jacob O. Falusi PhD
Department of Music
Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo
jacvour@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

The role of leadership in National growth and societal development cannot be over emphasized because, as a leader, he or she is expected to play significant role in impacting positively on the economy leading to societal growth and national advancement. This paper discusses on the abuse of contemporary music and leadership in Nigeria by some past and present leaders. It uses library search to source data. The paper discovers the usefulness of contemporary music as the current trending and important medium through which leadership can be sensitized to upgrade societal value system which has been eroded by the corrupt influence of some men and women leaders. It offers solutions through the suggestion of the use of appropriate contemporary music and the choice of the right leaders in position of authority. This will go a long way in molding life and in transforming the characters of the younger generations who will eventually take over the mantle of leadership from the older generation.

Key words: Leadership, National growth, Contemporary music, Transformation

Introduction

The role of music in human societies all over the world cannot be quantified. It is seen as an important element of every culture and an imperative medium through which human philosophies, emotions and agendas are conveyed. Since the earliest times, man has often expressed his or her feelings through music. Hence, music is generally referred to as a humanly organized sound. And it is used to influence individual and group behaviors in different ways. In this regard, man tends to admire, appreciate and listen to music because of its effect on man's existential feelings because music often generates powerful emotions in man (Odutola, 2009). Odunuga (2011) defines music as an art of creating and making pleasant and organized sounds with the human voice or other musical instruments. Okafor (2005) corroborates that music is a system of expression which uses sound, rhythm and time. From the above assertions by Odunuga and Okafor, we can deduce that the functionality of music is observable from two perceptions. The first perception emphasizes the aspect of human factor that determines the organization and production of melodious sounds or songs. The organization and production of sounds can only exist through commitment on the side of human factor who organizes and produces the sound through human vocal instruments (voice) or by artificial mechanisms. This is in consonance with the concept that music is a humanly organized sound. The second perception emphasizes the musical elements of sound, rhythm and time.

Merriam (1964) corroborates and explicates the purpose of music in man's life as emotional, expressionistic, aesthetic, enjoyment, entertainment, communication, symbolic representation, physical responses, enforcement of conformity to social norms, validation of social institutions and religious rituals, contribution to the continuity and stability of culture and contribution to societal integration. From the above assertion we could see the functions of music in human existence as it performs such roles as emotional, which is the way we think and feel about a concept and conviction. It is also expressionistic in the sense that our thought, ideas and feelings can be demonstrated or expressed through songs or instrumental performance. Music is aesthetical and enjoyable as it reveals the beauty and the joy we derive through pleasant sounds. It also serves the purpose of entertainment and communication in the sense that music cools human tension and relaxes worried nerves, it is used in the mass media to communicate essential details of societal norms to the populace, besides it is used as surrogate speech through instrumental music such as the production of musical sounds through hour glass drum (Gangan - Yoruba) or flute (fere -Yoruba or oja - Igbo), It serves as symbolic representation as found in graphic representation in the music of songs, cultural meaning of sounds and deep symbolism related to human experience.

The aspect of physical response determines the use of music in choral and instrumental performance and in dancing to accompany physical activities as in work songs. It also provides opportunity for inculcation and enforcement of social norms through satirical songs to deter people from wrongdoing and societal evils. It also validates social institutions and religious rituals, that is, it performs the role of worship in every religious assembly and in social functions in the state house, schools and other events in the society. Music is used for cultural continuity and societal integration in the sense that music enhances the continuity and preservation of culture through cultural practices and cultural manifestations. It is also used to settle grievances and quarrels between opposing parties and is often used to unify people and communities.

Contemporary Music

The term "Contemporary" means the time or period to which reference is made, it also refers to the state of belonging to the same time (Hornby, 2010). In its relation to music as contemporary music, it means the music of recent time or music composed by different musicians or composers but in the same period. The contemporary music of recent time and period is usually performed in fast rhythm and tempo. The lyrics or text of the composition always synchronize with the rhythm and the dance steps. Contemporary music is present almost everywhere, and it is easily available through the radio, television, home videos, performance in places of worship, societal functions, various recordings, the internet, and new technologies. The aforementioned media allows adolescents to hear it in diverse settings and situations alone or shared with friends. Parents are often unaware of the lyrics to which their children or wards are listening to or watching through audio-visual because of the increasing wave and use of downloaded music using headphones. Sometimes, contemporary music, especially popular music, which include reggae, ragga, jazz, rock etc has negative influence on the lives of adolescence. Thompson (2013) explained how psychologists, professors, media-analysts, and other communication experts cited specific studies and stories in their arguments on how music produces harmful effects leading to suicide, aggression, sexual promiscuity, racial stereotypes and substance abuse. However, there are aspects of contemporary music which include gospel, fuji, juju, modern folk etc. with good lyrics which are meant for character reformation.

Good contemporary music can only be made functional when the right types of leaders are in the helms of affairs. Because, with the right leadership in position of governance, there will be proper regulation on contemporary music being promoted and executed for societal consumption by the music industry and musicians in Nigeria and other African societies. The present political atmosphere in the country due to setback in leadership role and the abuse of contemporary music by contemporary music exponents requires a tool that will engender good governance and appropriate contemporary music that will pave way for the enthronement of good leadership. It is against this background that the thrust of this paper rest on.

Conceptual Clarifications

There is need for the clarification of some concepts which are used in this paper. These include leadership, national growth and contemporary music.

Leadership

A leader is someone who leads, guides or directs the affairs of a group, organization, department, section, state or a nation. The purpose of leadership is to pilots the affairs of a group (subjects) to a resounding success that is, to carry out the required assignment as stipulated in the group or organizational mission's statement in order to achieve the desired organizational goals and objectives. A leader must know the way and must be assertive in showing it. Without confidence every competence a leader possesses pales into insignificance because it is the leader's confidence that instills confidence in those who follow him that is, his subjects and motivates them to go the extra mile in order to achieve set goals. Leaders who are confident are trusted by the populace because they are sure of what they want through him and that he has the charisma and demonstrable knowledge of what they want through the trusted leader. In this regard, the leader's confidence attracts people to him and earns him their trust because without the followers' trust in the leader not much could be achieved. A competent leader is never threatened by the achievement and outstanding performance of his subjects or those who work with him, rather he is proud of their achievements and he is propelled to put in his best and also encourages his followers to step up in their commitment and be their best in their assigned responsibilities. (Olanrewaju, 2019).

A leader or someone in position of leadership is very highly respected and valued in society. According to Chidobi (2007), leadership is not a passive status, nor does it revolve upon a person simply because he is the possessor of some combination of traits. Rather, the leader acquires leader's status through the interactions of the group in which he participates and administrates his capacity for assisting the group to complete its task (p.96). From this assertion, it is expected that anyone who finds himself in leadership position is not supposed to be inactive but rather active toward the pursuit of the group or administrative goals and objectives. Brown (1967) in Chidobi (2007) sees leadership as a total interaction between the leader and the led. It therefore means that before any meaningful achievement could be attained in any organization there should be good rapport and social interaction between the leaders and the subjects.

Smith et al in Chidobi (2007), defines leadership as a process of influencing others toward the achievement of the organizational objectives. This corroborates that leadership is the ability of an individual to influence others to work beyond ordinary levels to achieve set goals. This definition shows that good leadership is contagious, in the sense that a good leader influences others' life through his distinguishable leadership qualities that facilitates easy and effective achievement of the organizational goals. In this way, leadership cannot be considered outside a group or organization rather it must be seen in its effects on group or organization's behaviour.

National Growth

The term “growth” means the process of growing physically, mentally or emotionally (Hornby, 2010). It also means development, and in its relations to a nation (country or state), it is simply referred to as National growth. National growth simply means the process of development as it affects a country or state. This can also be inferred to individual growth that encompasses the physical, the mental reasoning and emotional aspect which are the essentials for man’s meaningful living and sustenance under the planet earth. Likewise, national growth in broader perspective encompasses both the human resources, natural resources, economic status, educational status, technological development, geographical and physical development, infrastructural development, agricultural advancement, commerce, health sector, music and tourism, industrial sector, increase in population and GDP etc. Growth or development as a concept may be said to have begun in the seventeenth century to imply a growth in economic activities leading to an enhancement of lifestyle and social values. Nevertheless, its definition lacks precision as people often regards the acquisition of wealth, empire, technology, religion, political or military etc. as development. This scenario, that is, quantitative approach continued for a period over two centuries till after its subjection to deep scrutiny by other thinkers, philosophers and scholars who later realized that the attainment of a higher level of social life is of more importance (Okafor, 2009). In this regard, development can be viewed as a process of social transformation through which a hitherto tradition-bound community is made to accept, acquire and imbibe the characteristics of a modern and industrial society to enhance good living conditions.

Linden (1989) corroborates this by defining development as a process which aims at achieving self-reliance and improved living conditions for the underprivileged majority” (p.36). From the above assertion, a nation where the majority are at lower ebbs of the ladder that is, where only few are privileged to improved living condition cannot be affirmed to be experiencing real national growth as applicable to the Nigerian state. Because they are yet to attain the state of self-reliance as applicable to most regions, states and local governments in Nigeria who still depend largely on monthly allocation from the Federal purse. Umenziwa (2006) in Okafor (2009) opined that, ‘a new description of development has been advanced in disciplines like philosophy, anthropology, theology and religion. This form of development makes the good and destiny of the human person the central concern as well as its guiding principles. It therefore transcends development paradigms that make mere profits, structures and material well-being ends in themselves...’ (p.31).

The above assertion emphasized the need for human capacity development because every development in all sectors of the economy must culminate in improving the living standard of the people. The Nigerian case of national growth in most of the states’ focus is usually on the physical elephant project at the expense or neglect of the development of human capacity. Today many of the states are owing workers’ salaries and other emoluments. These developments are impediments and setbacks to National growth which must be urgently addressed.

Contemporary Music

Contemporary music simply means music of the present time. All categories of music which are composed and performed in this century, or dispensation can be simply called contemporary music. The music of Nigeria includes many kinds of folk and popular music, some of which are known worldwide. Styles of folk music are related to the multitudes of ethnic groups in the country, each with their own techniques, instruments, and songs. Little is known about the country's music history prior to European contact, although bronze carvings dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries have been found depicting musicians and their instruments. Forms of contemporary music include popular, theatrical/comedy, modern folk, gospel and classical music.

Popular Music

Popular music is music liked or enjoyed by many people. It is a style of music which focuses on current events in society. Popular music is the same as music for the urban middle class; it includes different music from classical to heavy metal. Its newest version “Pop” music had come from the roll n’ roll evolution (Lamb, 2013). It appealed to teenagers that focus on rhythms and romance (the free dictionary). From its inception in the street of Lagos, Pop music in Nigeria has long been an integral part of the field of African Pop with the influence and instruments from many ethnic groups especially the Yoruba. Popular music include highlife, reggae, ragga, jazz/blues, hip-hop, country, juju, fuji, waka etc. The earliest style of Nigerian popular music was palm wine music known as Juju and high life which spread in the 1920s among Nigerians and nearby countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Ghana. In Nigeria, palm wine became the primary basis for Juju, a genre that dominated pop music for many years. It was a traditional Yoruba music that was made popular by exponent musicians in the likes of Ebenezer Obey, Sunny Ade and Shina Peters, I. K. Dairo etc.

Another style of popular music is Fuji which evolved from Apala music, which was a traditional style from Ogun state, Western Nigeria. It was very popular in the 1960s. Its earliest exponents include the like of Haruna Ishola, Shefiu Ayan, Ayinla Omowura and few others. Apala lyrics consisted of improvised praise and passages from the Quran as well as traditional proverbs. The emergence of Fuji through Apala was in the late 1960s. The word Fuji was named after mount Fuji in Japan according to Ayinde Barrister. Fuji was a synthesis of Apala with the ornamented free rhythmic vocals of *Ajisari* devotional musicians. The first notable stars of Fuji music were Ayinde Barrister and Kollington Ayinla. Both Fuji and juju were characterized by deep Yoruba proverbs which promotes peaceful societal order and enhance social integration. In traditional Yoruba world view, peace and social integration are generated through communicative relationship especially during musical and dancing process. Waterman documented that an effective performance of juju and Fuji predicates not only the structure of an ideal society but also its interactive ethos and peace (Ogunrinade, 2014).

Waka music was a fusion of juju, fuji and traditional Yoruba music. The first exponent of Waka music was Salawa Abeni in 1976 and in 1980s. Her influence through the exploration of Waka music earned her the acronym "King of Waka music" in 1992. This music is classified under contemporary music with the injection of fresh blood in the likes of Tilaman, Timikorus and Dollar Billz bringing back the old school into new school. Highlife originated from Ghana and was made popular among the Igbos in the early 1950. The most popular highlife performer was E. T. Mensah, followed by Bobby Benson and his combo Band. This was the first highlife band to attract audience across the country. Other exponents include Jim Lawson, Prince Nico Mbarga, Victor Olaiya, Stephen Osita Osadebe, Oliver De Coque, Celestine Ukwu, Oriental brothers, Sonny Okosun, Victor Uwaifor and Orlando Ganza Owoh. Afro beat music has elements of highlife and other style of West African music. It is the collection of musical forms whose origins are traceable to foreign countries. However, the pattern theme and general concept of the music have been modified to reflect the realities of the Nigerian society. Okafor (1989) argued that these are the imported musical forms based on the up-to-date rock idioms from the West and which have other socio-political implication to black solidarity. Afro music includes Afro beat, Afro rock, jazz-rock and Congo music. Afro beat exponents include Fela Kuti, Orlando Julius Ekemode etc.

Reggae music consists of the fusion of Africa and Caribbean music. This is a form of imported music that is traceable to Jamaica, and highland in Caribbean. Historically, Reggae emerged as a meeting point of gospel and plantation Negro songs in the 1960s. Terakota was the first exponent of this form of music. By 1980 and 1990, Nigeria Reggae stars included Majek Fashek, Ras Kimono, Evi Edna Ogholi, the Mandators, Orits Wiliki, Sony Okosun, Blackky, Maxwell Udor, Daniel Wilson, Daddy Showkey. It has been very popular and growing over the years, especially in the 21st century. In this genre of music, African musicians incorporate Jamaican Patois into their lyrics and beats. Nevertheless, Reggae music is not just a musical art but also, a social political movement of Jamaican black youths whose main objectives was and still is to protect against man's humanity. The contemporary Reggae artistes include the likes of Patoranking, Duncan Mighty, Timaya, Orezi, Burna Boy, etc. who are attracting younger audience.

Hip-hop music emerged in New York City when a group of people were fighting because of the tension from urban renewal programmes and recession. The person named Bambaataa made a group that helped people to channel their anger into music and dance rather than physical brawls. Hip-hop or rap music that can be narrative vocal which was spoken in rhythm continuously had become a way to communicate in their place. Across the globe, hip-hop music was incorporated into their local culture that had become the means of cultural expression (Bennett, 2001). It was brought to Nigeria in the late 1980s and grew steadily throughout the first part of the 1990s. The general rapid growth of the entertainment scene with support from the media helped to popularise Hip-hop music in Nigeria. The exponents of Hip-hop include De Weez, Black Masquaradas, Plantashun Boiz, Solomon Dare, P-square, Kiss Daniel, Adekunle Gold, Mc Galaxyetc.

Modern folk- Traditional music

Traditional music from Nigeria and throughout Africa is almost always functional, in other words, it is performed to mark a ritual such as a wedding or funeral and not to achieve artistic goals. Although some Nigerians, especially children and the elderly, play instruments for their own amusement, solo performance is otherwise rare. Music is closely linked to agriculture, and there are restrictions, for example on which instruments can be played during different parts of the growing season. In our contemporary time, modern folks have emerged. These include folk songs or tunes which are modified or re-arranged to sweeten the trends of events of the 21st century or the contemporary time. Also, newly composed or arranged folks and newly composed songs using the old folk tunes using different metres which are usually sung in fast tempos by modern composers and performers fall under this category. Some exponents of modern folks include the likes of Bella Hardy, who composed Bella Hardy's songs lost and stolen, considered to be beautiful and simple and Christy

Moore who composed folk tales, helping people to issues of the day with his voice. Many folk tunes and songs are used to address prevailing circumstances such as unpleasant situations in society. Some folk tunes are satirical in nature such as warning against committing crime or societal evils.

Theatrical Music

This is simply traditional music used in a theatrical production without adaptation, because Nigerian Theatre make extensive use of music often. However, there are also distinct styles of music used in Nigerian opera. Here, music is used to convey an impression of the dramatic action to the audience. Music is also used in literary drama, although its musical accompaniment is more sparingly used than in opera. Again, music communicates the mood or tone of event to the audience. In the past, both Hubert Ogunde and Ade love of blessed memory produced soundtrack of the movies by exploring the richness of the Yoruba language in their productions. With the influx of the European, apart from their geographical spread production across the country, they now typically used foreign instrument film extract and recorded music. Modern day Yoruba film theatre music composers among whom Tope Alabi is one, have variously accompanied dramatic action with original music. The comedians also are making waves in this contemporary time as they combine music with their spoken dialogue while thrilling the audience. Other exponents include home video /theatre films producers like Mike Bamiloye (Mount Zion), Moses Adebayo (Mount zion), Maduakor, J. C. (Gethsemane theatre Ministry), Shola Mike Agboola (Evom Films Inc.) etc.

Classical Music

Classical music is music written or composed, produced and performed by trained musicians or professional musicians. It is not popular among the youth or the uneducated society, but it is very popular in the literate society among educational scholars, especially music professionals and those with flair for serious or classical music. Some of the classical music of the past centuries from 16th to 21st centuries is still performed in this contemporary time. Works by Handel, Beethoven, Brahms, Bach, Mozart etc. are still performed in this era. In the 20th century, Nigeria produced several classical art composers. These include Fela Sowande, Akin Euba, Ikoli Harcourt Whyte, Ayo Bankole, Ayo Dedeke, Prof. Meki Nzewi, Prof. Lazarus Ekwueme, Prof. Dan C. C. Agu, Joshua Uzoigwe, Sam Ojukwu, Sam Akpabot, Godwin Sadoh etc. Other classical composers of the 21st century include Prof. A. I. Onwuekwe, Prof. Stephen Olusoji, Prof Christian Onyeji, Prof. Atinuke Popoola, Prof. Kola Olawale etc. Classical music are used are used as incidental music. They are used in concert, chamber and recital programme, independent celebration, and for special occasions.

Gospel Music

Contemporary gospel music is one of the trending music of the 21st century in Nigeria and every part of the world. The term 'gospel' means good news. Most contemporary gospel songs are used in joyful occasion such as wedding, birthday, thanksgiving, harvest, religious worship, crusade etc. It is also used on mournful occasions such as burial ceremonies and outings. Gospel music serves the purpose of deep spiritual meditation while listening to it either at home, in the bus, at work, at restaurant, and in places of worship. It gives assurance of faith and raises one's faith level; it is also used in general entertainment. Nigeria has produced many gospel artists which include Bola Are, Tope Alabi, Chioma Jesus, Dunni Olanrewaju, Funmi Aragbaye, Nathaniel Bassey, Mercy Chinwo, Sinach, Dunsin Oyekan, Bidemi Olaoba, Ada Ehi, Frank Edwards, Ebuka, Joe Praise, Gaise Baba, Judy Kay, Lara George, Mike Abdul, Moses Bliss, Mega 99, Osinachi Nwachukwu, Sunmisola Agbebi, Victoria Orenze etc.

Abuse of Contemporary Music and Leadership in Nigeria

The trends at which the upcoming young artists are exploring modern-day contemporary music portend great threats and danger to good governance and national growth. In consideration of daily events of life cycle, the present modern days artistes of mostly popular music such as reggae, Hip-hop, ragga, Afro beat, Fuji, Juju etc are erring seriously as they grossly abuse the use of contemporary popular music in their compositions and performance. Most of the songs they sing centre on love, lust and immorality. The projection of most of these songs emphasize love and sex, rebellions, revenge as expressed by such songs saying 'Do me I do you', desire to become rich overnight not minding the consequences; as some youth can damn the consequences of making money rituals as long as they could be classified among the rich using expensive cars and living in mansions in the society. Contemporary popular music has undoubtedly had its greatest impact on Nigeria's younger generations as young people look for role model to pattern their lives. Unfortunately the role models they discovered in the world of contemporary popular music do not always serve as the best model to follow. On leadership issues, some of the people who had been saddled with leadership responsibilities in position of authority in the country right from the time of independence had not lived up to societal expectation. Many of the leaders are corrupt with doubtful integrity as many of them always use financial influence to seduce their opponents and the generality of the electorate to ride to power. The allegation of corruption is on the increase in

all sectors of the economy e.g. education, health, national assembly, judiciary, presidency, executive in the state, state houses of assembly, local government etc.

Contemporary Music, Leadership and National Growth

A leader is someone who leads, gives instruction or directs others. According to Chidobi (2007), one may like to know whether there are special characteristics or attributes that mark out a leader from his followers. Are these qualities inherited or acquired? Is it through that leaders are born not made? researchers have carried out studies of the relationship between personality factor and leadership. All the characteristics associated with leadership are not inborn. They are skills and competences of an interaction nature which can be acquired through training. The right type of leaders with enviable qualities for effectiveness in leadership responsibilities are needed in position of authorities in our nation today. The qualities of a good leaders according to Olanrewaju (2019) include the following among others; humility, optimism, reality, courage, compassion, decisiveness, and building consensus. The right leaders are those who make the best decisions because they avail themselves of the best of information. Installing the right leaders with aforementioned qualities will engender good governance and national growth.

There is the need to use appropriate contemporary music which include gospel, theatrical, fuji and juju (old schools), modern folks, and classical art music to teach respect for elders, uplift of moral values, industry, integrity, compliance to societal rules and regulations, obedience to civil rules, and inculcation of Godly fear. This type of music can also instil optimism, hope and faith in the progress and advancement of the country, vision and patriotism as expressed through the recitation of the National anthem. Through the appropriate use of contemporary music, the message in the national Anthem can be inculcated in the citizenry. And with the right leadership in positions of authorities right from the presidency and in all parastatals, Nigerians greatness shall be a thing of reality.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper has discussed on contemporary music and leadership in Nigeria. It has also highlighted the problems of leadership and abuse of contemporary music by the exponents whose majority is the younger generation who are to take over the mantle of leadership from the outgoing older generation. It is against this background that the paper recommends among other things that the younger generation be given proper orientation on the good values of the society they live in. This development can be made possible through appropriate use of good contemporary music that preaches morals and respect for our father land as expressed in the National Anthem lyrics. Complimentarily, there is an urgent need for putting the right leaders in positions of authorities today who will be able to enforce good morals in the younger generations through their own enviable examples. In this regard, they will be able to ensure that proper supervisions are done right from the learning stages of elementary through secondary to tertiary levels of education; before saddling the individuals with national responsibilities after their examination and graduation with outstanding performance in learning and worthiness in character.

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