

The Place of Folklore in the Music of Akpomedaye Ofua

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Abstract

This paper examined the role of music production involving Urhobo people's folklore as contained in the recorded music of the Chief Ofua (1925-2019), an Urhobo musician/orator. The investigation was based on the fact that Urhobo people's experience can be extracted from their numerous folklores since it is generally believed that customs and myths of the Urhobo society have been passed down using folklore through the generation of the Urhobo commoners. The contribution to the cultural experience of the Urhobo folk by Ofua ever concerned many musicologists and anthropologists of the Urhobo extract. This is capable of making his musical work go into extinction if his works are not reviewed and documented for reference purposes. Thus, the paper contextually examined the influence of Ofua genre of music in relation to the Urhobo socio-cultural experience. The paper is hinged on the ethnographic approach employed to enable the paper ex-tray Ofua's numerous Urhobo experiences through folklore and music. The paper found that Ofua was a notable composer who produced thirty-five (35) Urhobo folk music albums with which he shared various aspects of the socio-cultural experience of the Urhobo people. Also, his recorded music treasures the culture of the Urhobo, thereby sustaining the moral values contained in the songs. Therefore, the paper recommends among others that composers/musicians should record their music to make it accessible to the public.

Introduction

Urhobo people's experiences are contained in their numerous folklore the traditional beliefs, customs and stories of a community passed through the generations by word of mouth. Folklore uniquely links past generations with the present and future generations of a community. Most Urhobo orators are familiar with their ancient norms and values documented for easy assimilation to sustain the modern time experience of their people. One of the most effective devices and effectual mediums of communicating folklore is music.

Folk music is defined by Bruno Nettle (2020) as "the type of traditional and generally rural music that originally was passed down through families and other small social groups". According to the author, folk music embedded in oral tradition is learnt through hearing rather than reading. It is functionally associated with other activities found primarily in a rural setting. It exists orally, but has been preserved and transmitted through recordings by the music producer who uses modern technology in the process of its production. With the availability of different storage devices such as CDs, tapes, cassettes, Mp4, DVDs etc. Folk music does not only exist orally but is retrieved from devices for future usage. Thus, music production has contributed to its popularity and availability in different formats as producers can make them assessable to the public. It, therefore, features favourably as one of the traditional Urhobo music genres and as well a specialized area of music-making for a few Urhobo musicians.

The combination of oratory works and songs by Ofua has elevated Urhobo Folk songs to an enviable status. His music is distinct. He performs with humour as he interjects idiomatic expressions, proverbial statements and tales as he pauses on a track of music to intimate the young generation of Urhobo history long forgotten. His songs are typically African. According to Okoro and Efurhievwe (2011), Folk music typifies a melodious expression of tribal life with irresistible lyrics. A majority of the Urhobo neo-traditional musicians are prominent composers whose songs are melodious which include Ofua. It is against this background that the paper pays attention to Urhobo neo-traditional music regarding Akpomedaye Ofua's composition performance.

In Urhobo music scholarship, investigative preferences are generally given to Urhobo neo-traditional music performers such as Chief Okpan Arhibo, Johnson Adjan, Go-slow, Omokomoko Osiokpa and others. The abiding skill of Ofua, entrenched in his oratorical prowess, has received scant investigative priorities in the literature of Urhobo music research. One of the defining characteristics of his music is that he links his audience with the historical facts of past generations. Additionally, his performances cut across different social contexts involving Urhobo citizens in their happiness as well as sorrowful moments. The foregoing, his preservation of the folk heritage of the Urhobo people and the socialisation influence of his music, cast him as unique (Emama, 2020; Emama, 2022). Despite his music's uniqueness, and contribution to the cultural experience of the Urhobo populace, many musicologists and ethnographers have not deemed it necessary to assess his works to preserve their performance by documenting them for posterity. The continual neglect of Ofua's indigenous music will result in forgetting the type of music genre he introduced to encourage Urhobo community experiences. Therefore, it is the general objective of this paper to examine contextually the influence of Ofua's neo-traditional music in relation to Urhobo socio-cultural experiences.

The paper is hinged on the ethnological approach. According to the American Musicological Society (A.M.S) 2020, musicology is the study of music, encompassing all aspects of music (including folk music) in all cultures (including Urhobo Culture) and all historical periods. The approach is employed because the paper focuses on a genre of music studied from a cultural background. Thus, the above idea enables the author to provide an analytical interpretation of the musical performance under investigation. This approach correlates with the case study design used in this study which involves a qualitative method thereby enabling the researcher to provide a detailed study of a specific subject such as a person, group, place, event, organization or phenomenon. The study by Crowe, Cresswell, Robertson, Huby, Averg and Shelkh (2011), found that a case study design or approach is particularly useful when there is a need to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, and in this case, the issue for consideration is a detailed account of the contribution of neo-traditional music as performed by Ofua during his lifetime, to enhance the Urhobo people's experiences.

Evolution of Folk Music and African Experience

Folk music is an African concept of the type of music genre distinct from all other types of musical culture. Its development is contained in literature. Chris (2020) says "folk music takes its name from the German word *volke*, which essentially means the people". Based on this meaning, Chris thus states that folk music came to be used derisively as the music of the people. Ruehi Kim (2011) opines that folk music includes traditional folk music and the genre that evolved from it during the 20th-century folk revival. According to Ruehi Kim, traditional folk music is music that is transmitted orally and that includes music performed by custom over some time Idolor (1993) as cited by Efurhievwe (2014) "traditional music is the product of the people and for the people..., its existence is dependent on the degree of its usefulness in their daily undertakings". By implication, most African traditional folk music evolved from the custom of the African people generated from their experiences in diverse situations, rituals, wrestling, war, hunting, farming, ceremonies, religious life, social contexts, political system interaction, and trade among other contextual considerations. In other words, folk music is an aspect of a tradition in Africa, meaning It originated from the people's culture during its existence. It is as old as the existing communities, and ethnic groups in the African continent. This is because, African traditions are expressed through music, art, dance, story-telling ensembles and sculpture.

Percy Scholes (1977) confirms that the "folk music of Africa developed through the process of time by common people during both work and leisure as well as during religious activities". He found that manual labour often includes singing and the music reflects the character of the society that produced it. Thus, folk music while presenting cultural experiences is often carried out unintentionally but is consciously performed to relieve stress and strengthen the minds of those engaged in work. It means that folk music has a function in society as it has evolved into a stable practice among the populace. According to Aluede and Braimala (2005), "folk songs are the principal works used in the ceremonies that induce music making". They are collected unconsciously by motivated and inspired individuals who are willing to tell the experiences of their communities, in form of entertainment. Nnamani (2014) says that "folk music is a spontaneously composed

music of a race, tribe, group etc of a humble nature, orally transmitted from generation to generation with an unknown composer'. Since folk music appears to emerge from the members of the community who has become so much a part of the heritage of an ethnic group; it gives a feeling of common ownership whether the composer is known or not meaning that the source of folk music is the people. Its continued usage in the community is orally preserved, till the advent of recording devices.

Recording and Production of Folk Music

It is common knowledge that traditional music in some parts of Africa, including the Urhobo of Delta State, Nigeria, is passed down orally as against writing. The contents of the folk music were preserved because the songs gained acceptance by a commonness that acts as an archive of the song/music. Through repetition, folk music is imbibed by almost every member of the community. The constant performance of the music during social, cultural and religious activities enhances the knowledge of the subjects about some of the songs. Recording and producing the works of musicians have highly encouraged the preservation of the music and by extension, the cultural and social aspects inherent in the music.

Music recording is the physical record of musical performances that can thereafter be played back or reproduced. Recorded music complements live performances. Observations by the author indicate that recorded music is highly preferred by a majority of listeners because of its advantages. David Newhoff (2015) agrees that recorded music is the most valuable in comparison with unrecorded music. He provides a comparative analysis between live and recorded music to discover that though live performance can be great, by and large, recording enables individual listeners to form a personal relationship with music. He states that "we form a relationship with songs because they are recorded because they are portable and are, therefore with us in our day-to-day life." Chadr (2014) supports this view, noting that listening to recorded music is very valuable. According to him, recorded songs have a huge difference from live music in that they can be played anywhere, anytime and by anyone. This is made possible using Ipads, radios, CD players and other multiple devices. Another advantage of songs that are recorded is that they can be played over and over again. Whenever someone wants to listen to a certain song, they can just play it and listen to it. Chadr also reports that live music and recorded music have something in common. According to him, vocals and instruments at live shows match up very closely with their studio counterparts. It is against this backdrop that recorded music remains most preferred, particularly as it affects most musicians that are dead and therefore no longer performing live music; but their music is still relevant in society because they were recorded and preserved for the generations unborn to replay and enjoy them. Thus, the recording of music implies as in the case of Ofua's music as contained in his recorded formats.

Chief Ofua Recorded Oratory and Folk Music

Ofua's contributions to the Urhobo community's socio-cultural experiences are evident in his recorded oratory/neo-traditional music. Previous sections of this paper reveal that recording or recorded music is valuable because observation from the study shows that the art of recording music makes it available to the citizenry at all times and can be used overtly. The advantage of recorded music is premised on the fact that, after the death of the composer who before death produced live music performances on devices, can be related to his recorded music. In the case of Ofua, though he is dead, his music exists not only in the mind of those who witnessed his live performance but also in his music being listened to and viewed on the devices that stored his recordings. Though Ofua is dead he is alive via his recorded music.

Classification of Urhobo Songs by Ofua

Ofua classified Urhobo folk music into eight (8) categories.

1. Merrymaking
2. Mourning
3. Labour
4. Circumcision
5. Marriage

6. War
7. Moral
8. Immoral

These eight categories of Urhobo music guided the song text recorded in the music produced by Ofua. Each and all of the areas so mentioned exhibit an aspect of the experiences of the Urhobo folks. Ofua was able to propagate the experience of the Urhobo community in his song texts-cum-oratory in line with his identification of the commoners' experience. In other words, his composition was informed by each of these classes of songs as contained in his recorded music. This type of song text is peculiar to African traditional music.

African music, like those recorded by Ofua, is a vital part of everyday life in Africa. It is a part of religious ceremonies, festivals and social rituals. Songs are used for important events as expressed in Ofua's recorded music. Some of which depict a person's life circle (birth, coming of age, marriage and death). Many of these songs are used for curative measures; bringing rain; and religious dances. This is in tandem with the African belief that music serves as a link between the living and the spiritual world. Therefore, as observed by the researcher, everyone plays an active part in the musical life of the Urhobo community. According to the Cameroon Tribune (2020), merry-making graces festivities. Oluwatosin (2013) says that festivals are celebrations of important events in every human society which bring together people from all walks of life. The deduction from the above notion is that African music like those of Ofua's plays functional roles in society.

Merry-Making Songs

Most of the recorded songs performed by Ofua were devoted to merry-making in the contexts of marriage ceremonies, burials, festivals as well as religious gatherings. The main objective of merry-making is to provide entertainment to an audience. A happy mood is often accompanied by either live music or recorded music, during an event that brings people together during festivities. By implication, festive activities are worthwhile experiences because they are backed up by live music or recorded music. This fact is also contained in Adegbite's (2006) findings. According to him, the ultimate purpose of music making is for the individual's, enjoyment, the social group, or the community as a whole. This is witnessed in a variety of contexts at home and public places, in work situations, during creation or social ceremonies and ritual occasions. In addition, Delsaux (2015) says "music is a phenomenon linked to the mental process, emotions and psychological arousal. It is an intangible product that is consumed like food". Also, he discovered that people enjoyed music for different reasons. He found that some do so because music arouses in them some specific emotions while some do because of self-realization or to construct fantasies of augmented realities. Thus, merry-making is one of the realities experienced by people when they encounter music, especially when the music is culturally performed and replayed from a recorded device.

Mourning Songs

Ofua shows that the Urhobo indigenes express their sad moments through mourning songs. It is African culture to relieve sieves from a sad experience by seducing the bereaved to consolatory music that is capable of reducing the emotional affliction caused by death in a family or community, the neighbourhood. It appears that Ofua was a specialist in performing dirge. Hence, he could identify Urhobo music as consisting of songs of mourning. He might have performed memorial songs as part of his collection of folk songs during his lifetime. A dirge means a song of mourning performed in memorial of someone dead. As one might imagine, a dirge is usually quite sad or a mournful sound. As an orator-cum-musician, there is no doubt that Ofua was capable of performing dirges. These types of songs have been featured in funerals. Choosing funeral songs is often seen as an important part of personalizing a funeral service for loved ones. It is an opportunity to pay tribute to the dead personality, and his hobbies or simply say farewell with one of his favourite songs. Urhobo commonalty like their neighbouring such-ethnic groups shares and express their mournful experience through a dirge.

Labour Songs

For the most of Delta State of Nigeria, the Urhobo group is known as a community of agrarians and forms a significant part of Africa. An agrarian society is any community whose economy is based on producing and maintaining crops and farmland. Thus, labour in the farmland is accompanied by songs. Most recently, Agro-Nigeria (2014) reports that a Nigerian singer and songwriter Oyebamjo, also known as D'Banji produced a song to encourage agricultural awareness. Ted Olso (1992), found agricultural themes in Appalachian folksongs where the song text states that "the farmer is the man who feeds them all". This means that musicologists recognize work songs as well as agricultural songs as practised in Urhobo and other parts of the globe, songs are associated with agricultural activities in rural India. Work/labour songs are usually sung at the time of planting or harvesting. These music genres are raw upon the images and metaphors such as the plough, rainy day and the tender grain shoot swaying gracefully in the breeze. People give vent their hopes, fears and aspirations through these songs. Listening to labour songs, especially by farmers is capable of easing stressful experiences during manual labour.

Circumcision Songs

Circumcision is an ancient practice among the Urhobo people. It is performed for both male and female children. It is considered a ritual and religious obligation for the community and is celebrated through songs. It is also practised as an aspect of the cultural experience in Urhobo as well as in most African societies. Jeff March (1997) acknowledged the practice of circumcision in Africa. He found that circumcision is cultural to Africans. The study by Weiss and Polonsky (2007) found that globally, 30% of men are circumcised mostly for religious reasons. In addition, they revealed that in many African societies, male circumcision is carried out for cultural reasons, particularly as an initiation ritual and a rite of passage into manhood. This report points to the fact that the experience is celebrated with circumcision songs. Rose Brandel (1954) referred to the experience in her study, "the music of African circumcision rituals." It supports the idea that circumcision is a cultural and religious experience. It implies that whenever the ritual is performed, it is accompanied by singing. Megan Carpentier (2009) found that music can comfort and also enable babies to cope with pain. According to him, male babies who heard music during their circumcisions do have lower heart rates and decreased pain. It suggests that circumcision songs are performed to aid the patient cope with the pains being experienced during circumcision sessions, and also to play the function of religion.

Marriage Songs

Ofua identified a marriage song as one of the music genres performed to express the experiences of Urhobo. Cultural or traditional marriages in Urhobo are widely and elaborately celebrated. Marriage ceremonies are potent means of expressing joyful moments by families and friends. Couples are often seen dancing to marriage songs as an aspect of the marriage consummation. Juliet Dakpo (2020) said marriage songs are performed during entrance, reception, and couple dance and exist respectively, and those songs according to Mulaudzi (2013) are often accompanied by various styles of dancing. He revealed that marriage songs reflect cultural and social aspects of the communal rite that cannot be ignored in society. He says that these aspects of songs are part of the cultural worldview. Messages in various languages expressing indigenous wedding songs are disseminated by various artists and communities to illustrate this. In addition, marriage songs express values such as morality, usefulness and success. These songs serve as vehicles of communication to enforce marriage cultural practices, without taking into consideration the harsh realities the community is facing. The cultural meanings and functions of marriage are conveyed through song lyrics amongst the Urhobo. Thus, people carefully craft/compose songs on marriage to serve functional and educational purposes. Knowledge is learnt while enjoying the music of an indigenous performer during a marriage ceremony.

War Songs

The repertoire of Urhobo songs is derived from their war experiences in commemoration of their victory over rival sub-ethnic groups or neighbouring communities. Conceptually, a war song as contained in

Wikipedia is a musical composition that relates to war or a society's attitudes towards war. It may be pre-war, anti-war or simply a description of everyday life during the war period. War often leaves behind a lot of memory; to remember aspects of the war, gifted composers can use their songs to relate the experience from a historical point of view. Ogonna Agu (1991) agrees with the idea that the history of the Nigerian-Biafra civil war is contained in songs composed to express different experiences people had during the war that was beyond what words can describe. Anakwa Dwamena (2018) says that war songs are performed to reconstruct the struggle during civil unrest in a given country. He cited the experiences of the struggles in many African countries including Zimbabwe. He revealed that music was the worst 'gun' used because the oppressed could not afford weapons. According to him, popular songs were central to the century-long fight to end colonialism in Africa with particular reference to Zimbabwe. He said war songs connect the living with the world of the ancestors and record the struggle for those to come. He revealed that revolutionaries sang at rallies held in urban centres and at all-night vigils called mas'ungwes', where guerrillas and peasants would come together to sing. Zimbabwe's experience is similar to other parts of Africa, which used war songs to mobilize their people to resist colonial rule and oppression during the war. Thus, war songs are by far, the most important genre of Urhobo literature in their oral tradition. They are sung in Urhobo as a community ensemble, particularly during festivals and wrestling competitions respectively.

Moral Songs

Moral values are highly prized in African cultures; songs are employed to teach moral lessons to children. These are principles commonly held by communities and were passed orally by past generations. It is believed that communities were built upon a moral values system to be learnt and practised by the new generation as the fabric of society. Since the song is a communicative tool, composers in Urhobo music often use their songs to create social awareness towards neglected moral standards in modern society. Music on ethics introduces the listeners to the acceptable norms of the community. This is because the moral standard is connected to fundamental human emotions and experiences that motivate us in distinctive ways. Thus, composers draw their audience's attention to issues of moral values such as the overriding love and concerns that parents feel for their children; the sympathy and empathy we experience when we perceive the suffering of others; the sense of duty and loyalty we pay to our family associates and close social groups, or broader communities to which we belong; the indignation we feel towards those who threaten us or we love; the feelings of bitterness, unfairness and injustice we experience when we are treated poorly: for no just cause; the positive feelings associated with having the freedom to make our own choices and determine our future; the feeling we have toward those who exhibit courage and compassion; and the guilt or shame we feel when we have violated a trust or otherwise failed to live up to the expectation we endorsed. Most of these are found as themes in Urhobo music dealing with the moral ethics of society. The objective of moral esteems: evidenced in songs is to help the character and personality of individual members of a community, to improve and be compactable with acceptable norms, customs and culture of a given place.

Mbaegbu (2015) found that music plays an indispensable role in African walks of life- in politics, socio-economic engagements, religious worship, integral development and moral life. According to him, the primary objective of music is to influence the developmental project in Africa and the overall acknowledgement of their indispensable role in the active and meaningful behaviour of Africans and this case, the Urhobo people. Ojukwu and Esimone (2014) agree that morals are inculcated in adolescents through folk music. The authors are of the view that the traditional music of a community, including the Urhobo communities, contains moral instruction capable of educating youths in the development of morality. They revealed that most traditional songs convey moral concepts such as obedience, respect for elders, humility, perseverance, etc. The above observation implies that Urhobo music contains moral messages that can be deployed to educate the younger generation. Thus, while Urhobo music directly educates people on their moral values, it is performed by the inhabitants, the lyrics assist the audience to learn the acceptable values of the community to protect the morals of the people experienced by the people.

Immoral Songs

Immoral as a term refers to conduct. It applies to one who acts contrary to or does not obey or conform to standards of morality. Songs considered immoral are performed in the cultural context to draw attention to the need to shun immoral practices by members of a community. It attempts to highlight the sanction that is attached to immoral conduct and practice.

A majority of African communities celebrate their festivals with immoral songs. Some Urhobo communities, called this genre of music "Ighomo" which is performed in a comical style, by a community ensemble. It is performed to illustrate the experiences of individuals considered immoral and to serve as a reminder of the primitive measures attached to such default. Urhobo culture forbids immoral behaviour such as adultery, harlotry/ fornication. The protection of their sacredness in sexuality is one of the moral values held in Urhobo traditional society. Songs are composed to caution and counsel those involved in anti-social behaviour involving sexuality. Okafor (2018) reveals that "sex and sexuality are attached sacredness and that in some cases, it can be classified as a taboo if some rules guiding such activities is ignored or violated". The concept of the sacredness of sex and sexuality as applicable to Urhobo people at various degrees have an understanding of sexual relationship as a sacrosanct factor to the image of a group, and a respectable phenomenon which every member of the group must adhere to as the rules guiding them.

Ofua's Contributions to Urhobo People's Experiences through Recorded Music

Urhobo people's cultural experiences are a collection from many people, especially musicians whose compositions contribute in no small measure to the understanding of Urhobo culture. Some Urhobo sons and daughters made contributions towards the production and publication of the Urhobo people's experiences. In this respect, Ofua could be held in high esteem for his invaluable contributions via oratory, music composition and recording. He was the first orator in Urhobo land to wax record in the studio. He was said to have recorded and produced up to thirty-five (35) albums of present and future relevance. His efforts aligned with the aspirations of the Urhobo people which characterize their renewed commitments to the cultural acquisition, preservation and its transfer to posterity. Ofua's musical works were performed and recorded to achieve the objective of expounding the growth of the cultural experiences of the Urhobo communal. One of his foremost recorded music is titled: "Ona Goma, Ona goma" which was launched on July 20, 1996. Then he made a clarion call to all willing and interested competent Urhobo orators, on the need to follow suit to ensure that orator's liberation and emancipation in the area of self-reliance and publicity are eminent. Since then, there have been steady growth and improvements in the Urhobo oratory and music industry, such that many orators today have also waxed records and albums of their own. These landmark achievements in the development of Urhobo oratory cum music, practically substantiate Akpomedeaye Ofua as the founder and father of Urhobo oratory in Urhobo land.

Some Select Sayings and Proverbs of Akpomedeaye Ofua

Sayings and proverbs exist in nearly all African traditional societies, and Urhobo people are not exceptional. The community experiences are expressed in their sayings and proverbs, which are capable of making those who hear them, become wise. Collections of Ofua's ideologies in Urhobo wisdom literature constitute about twenty-seven (27) themes. His sayings focused on: tolerance, accessibility, a high sense of discipline, forgiveness, patriotism, democracy, fairness, honesty and accountability, selflessness, God-fearing, mediation, peacemaking, sincerity, uprightness, generosity and compassion, gossip, promotion of equal rights, impious to reason, bitter-mindedness, sectionalism, fragility, impartiality and consideration for the less privileged, public opinion-oriented, even distribution of rights and privileged. He preaches humility and a sense of belonging to the common man and preparedness to appreciate their challenges. Treat people's matters with the importance and urgency they deserve. Each and or all of these themes are aspects of the Urhobo worldview and ethical values that distinguish a cultural Urhobo ethnicity. These themes not only produce a comprehensive compilation of fifty-seven (57) sayings by Ofua but also contribute to the wisdom

literature of the Urhobo people. The text and meanings of some of these sayings are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Proverbial Saying and Interpretations

S/ N	Text	Meaning/Interpretation
1.	The thief that has gone to steal cassava has no time to steal cassava stems.	Stealing is not a good venture because it involves haste and waste. Do not carry an elephant and still pursue a grasshopper.
2.	The true greatness of any man in God's sight is not in the amount of material or financial possession but in the amount of selfless service, he/she has rendered to humanity.	Helping others is the best way to live in the present world. Life is not how far but how well.
3.	The bird does not announce its stolen egg, it is the owner of the bird that does so.	People should learn to be concerned about their business. There is a division of labour in life. One must know one's limit.
4.	You must get to the outskirt of a town before you get into it.	We are to hear a subject matter before we can conclude on it. Look before you leap.
5.	The eldest man in a community cannot die in a strange land.	It is not difficult to know who the most suitable and qualified persons for the position of authority are. Justice must always prevail.
6.	A pregnant woman cannot sleep with her belly facing the ground.	There are rules and regulations guiding everything. Every situation, circumstance or condition has its protocol that must be observed.
7.	The lizard always climbs up but when it wants to lay its egg, it will come down	Everything has its appointed time [despite its delay] it will eventually take place (in due course). After a storm comes a calm.
8.	The palm of a man does not grow hairs.	Certain things are impossible in the annals of man.
9.	No one can boast of sleeping with a blind man	Everyone has an area of speciality in life. Each person has his or her comparative advantage over another person.
10.	Even if all the teeth leave the mouth the tongue remains because he has been there before the teeth came.	Indigenes always identify with their community no matter what happens despite all odds.

Data Presentation and Analysis of Song Texts as Recorded by Ofua

Recorded music performed by Ofua as contained in song texts is subjected to analysis using themes found in the music. Four of the selected song texts are presented for discussion in the light of Urhobo people's experience addressed in the recorded music. Tables are employed to present the songs' text and their English translation. In addition, the song texts are further interpreted to convey their cultural meanings as well as the moral lessons derived from the very music in the context of the Urhobo worldview.

Table 2: Song Text and The Translation

Song Text	English Translation
Ihwo ri kuẹ omagbe, re ma goma	People that come together, are stronger
Wọ tọ rẹ ekrun rẹ aghan nu, wo che vwirho ọ me nuẹ ne nuwe	You pick a bunch of brooms, before you break it bends before you
Ubiagha si oma nẹ aghan, ọbẹvwirho rẹ	A stick of broom detached from the bunch, is not difficult to break
Ehọ rẹ evun rẹ orho ide vwe ukoko, ma niẹ nẹ ọso wo otọ re	Fowl in a community if they have assembly the hawk would have come down
Eravwe rẹ evun rẹ aghwa, ide vwo te urhi kididi rẹ orhuẹn kẹ ọyen yivwi kpẹ aghwa	Animals in the bush, if they co-operate no hunter would dare go to the bush
Ede roro rhe roro kpo, Ihwo rẹ ikwẹ omagbe keye ma goma	When we consider it here and there; those who are united are stronger

Source: Field Survey by Efurhievwe (2020).

Analytical Viewpoint and interpretations

- i) Title of the Song Text; Unity is Power
- ii) Composer: Akpomedaye Ofua
- iii) Objective: To Pursue the Unity of Urhobo Culture
- iv) Discussion and Interpretations of the Song Text:

The theme of this recorded music by Ofua is "Unity of Urhobo". This theme is contained in the motto of Urhobo Progressive Union (UPU) titled: URHOB OVO'VO meaning: Urhobo is one (a concept of unity). The composer observed that there was a gap created by disunity among the Urhobos and in an attempt to fill the gap he performed the song as his contribution to awakening the Urhobo people to unity of purpose for the Urhobo in the diaspora. According to Ofua, "people that come together are stronger" because unity is strength. Thus, the song text signifies that strength is derived from the unity of purpose. He employed the metaphor derived from a bunch of brooms that cannot be easily broken. The strength inherent in a bunch of brooms is compared to the power of unity in recorded music. He illustrated the weakness brought about by disunity to a stick of broom detached from the bending stating that it becomes easily broken. So, it is when people are not united, they are likely to be conquered by challenges. This is tantamount to being an island. Thus, the moral lesson from the recorded music is that it is better to fight a common course together than to fight it individually. Therefore, the music counsels the Urhobo people to be united.

Table 3: Song Text and Its Translation

Urhobo Version	English Translation
Ohwo rẹ ọguọghọ agbada, obroma rọyen dje, obo ọ viẹre vẹ uwerhi	A person who dismantles a bridge, cuts off himself, he sleeps on the river bank
Eseophẹ rẹ Ọghẹnẹ wọ me vwerote	The grace of God takes care of it
Wọ riẹ ohwo rẹ o rukẹvwe-e	If you do not know the person that helped you, the good becomes evil,

ẹse kẹ umwemu ohwo rẹ umwemu muo ma fia o kpo asan rọ da riemu o duvwẹ uyovwi hwoma	he who does evil beyond measure truncates where he goes to eat and places a curse on himself
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Source: A field survey by Efurhievwe (2020).

Analytically View Point and Interpretations

- I) Title of the Song Text: The Dismantled Bridge
- II) Composer: Ofua:
- III) Objective: To Caution against Working against Public Interest
- IV) Discussion and Interpretation of the Song Text:

This recorded music took its theme from the song text. The theme is “Self-deceit”. The composer implies that he who does wicked against public utility will eventually inflict sorrow on himself. He says that a person who dismantles a wooden bridge after crossing, to deprive others of crossing, has also cut off himself because he too depends on the bridge to return. The message of the music is clear and amounts to self-deception to think that destroying public utilities will be suffered by only others. The caution from the music offers the moral lesson that the protection of public facilities is an aspect of patriotism. The song seems to counter the disruptive and destructive attitude of individuals in our communities. Thus, there is virtue in working in the interest of the public. It also implies that caring for the utility and facilities in public places is a good quality to be cultivated. The composer made it clear in the song that, "if you do not acknowledge the good done to you, it becomes evil. Such an individual is like one who does evil beyond measure. He will be depriving himself of where he goes to eat since he places a curse on himself.

Table 4: Song Text and Translation

Urhobo Version	English Translation
Owian rẹ obọ vẹ ọ rẹ unu ohwohwo ghere ohwo, obo rẹ obọ wan re, kẹ ọyen ugbunu ria, obo rẹ ugbunu ria kọyen oma vwọruobọ	The work of hands and mouth is to care for each other what the hands labour for is what the mouth eats what the mouth eats makes the hands fat

SOURCE: A Field Survey by Efurhievwe (2020)

Analytical ViewPoints and Interpretations

- I) Title of the Song Text: The Hand and Mouth Complements Each Other
- II) Composer: Ofua
- III) Objective: To Show that life is based on complementing one another.
- IV) Discussion and Interpretation of the Song Text:

The theme of this music performed by Ofua is “Complementing Efforts of Others”. The translation justifies this theme. Efforts have to be complemented to be meaningful in supporting one another. Assisting others to achieve their purposes is a positive disposition towards them. A positive response from such action is similarly benefited by the individual offering the assistance. The song suggests that those who assist others stand to gain from their efforts in the long run. It is illustrated by the interaction between the hands and the mouth. What the hands labour for is what the mouth eats. In return, what the mouth eats makes the hands fat. The complementary nature of the hands and the mouth is metaphoric. Individuals in society that discovers the value inherent in assisting others, or complementing the efforts of their neighbour are numerous. The moral lesson and implication of this to the Urhobo community is that they should learn to appreciate the efforts of others and also be willing to render assistance as at when due so that the outcome will be for the benefit of all.

Table 5: Song Text and the Translation

Urhobo Version	English Translation
Mi mrẹ ogoro ọ diẹ ugbenu da ame 3× Ẹkpa ro kpẹ evun ame, nẹ ọyen mrẹ omoni ẹvan Ogoro vwịẹ ogbivwiẹ, ọ nẹrhẹ o vwịẹ ọhwẹre 3× Ẹkpa rẹ okpẹ evun rẹ ame, nẹ ọyen mrẹ omoni ẹvan	I saw a toad drinking water at the seashore 3× The foolish ones who went to the riverside, claimed he saw the brother of a crocodile The toad had a mysterious birth by giving birth to the tadpole 3× The foolish one who went to the riverside, claimed he saw the brother of a crocodile

Source: A Field Survey by Efurhievwe (2020)

Analytical ViewPoints and Interpretations

- 1.) Title of the song text: Toad Drinking Water on the Land Surface
- 2.) Composer: Ofua
- 3.) Objective: to Confront the Foolishness in Most People

Discussion and Interpretation of the Song Text

The theme of this song text is: "Foolishness". The theme aligns with the graphic illustration found in the song text. As the objective shows, the music was performed to confront the unwise thinking and reduced mental soundness in most people that endanger their progress and relationship with others. This is because it is unbelievable to think that a toad would drink water on the land's surface. It is common knowledge that toads live and drinks water from river, ponds and gathered waters. Thus, it becomes imprudent to say a toad is seen drinking water on the land surface. In contrast, the family member of a crocodile is not found in rivers. The song was performed to draw an individual's attention to the danger of seeing only the wrong aspects of things or people. Such assessment in the opinion of the composer is considered thoughtlessness. This is because the contrast portrayed in the song points to the fact that some inhabitation sees only impossibilities and as such acts irrationally. These types of persons are often in opposition to facts and argue blindly because they are not able to comprehend the truth even though it is clear before them. The consequence is that such categories of individuals are not willing to cooperate without any good reason. This is an act of folly. The moral lesson from this music suggests that there is the need to evaluate a situation critically, demonstrate cognitive ability and show a high sense of moral judgment based on acceptable standards.

Conclusion

Folk music is a tribal music-making method culturally accepted for viewing the past experiences of previous generations. It contains basic elements of morality and virtue that represent the norms and values of a given ethnic group. Urhobo folk music is a piece of specialized music that composers perform to provide entertainment during marriages, burials, festivals, birthdays, housewarming ceremonies, recreational activities, and ritual and religious affairs among others. However, not many musicians specialize in folk music performance. Notably, Ofua composed and produced thirty-five (35) Urhobo folk music, dealing with different themes that address and reveal many aspects of Urhobo indigenous experiences. Many Ofua's works are still in circulation today because of their recording qualities which have preserved the majority of the songs for the benefit of the present and next generation of the Urhobo community. To this end, the paper concludes that the recorded music of Ofua should be practised in this contemporary society. His recorded music treasures the culture of the Urhobo, and subsequently sustains the moral values contained in the songs. It shows cases of the daily experiences of the Urhobo indigene in Delta State, Nigeria.

Recommendation

Recording music enables producers to preserve musicians'/composers' songs that express their thinking about the happenings in society. Thus, the paper recommends among others that:

1. Musicians/composers should record their music to make it accessible to the public and to benefit posterity.
2. Musicologists, particularly in the special area of music recording, should employ recorded Urhobo folk music stored on DVD, CD, Mp4, computers, etc techniques for the practical training of their students. as teaching aids for instruction. These devices convey moral lessons, singing
3. Department of Music in Tertiary Institutions (Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education) should make the collection of recorded folk music of Urhobo indigenes an aspect of their research efforts. This will encourage both faculty members and students in music education in their research practice. It will equally bring about cultural revival and reconstruction of the Urhobo communal experiences as contained in their music.

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