



## The Roles of Yoruba Songs on Pregnancy, Labour and Baby Care in Antenatal and Postnatal Clinic in Southwestern Nigerian Hospitals

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### Abstract

Several studies have been conducted on music and medical discourse especially musical discourse in the hospital. These have lead to several works on music and medical discourse which is commonly regarded as medical ethnomusicology. However, medical ethnomusicology studies particularly used as part of medical literacy in antenatal and post natal clinic are still largely unavailable. This paper therefore, examines the roles of Yoruba health related songs on pregnancy, labour, delivery and baby care during the health literacy classes in selected hospitals in southwestern Nigeria. Interviews, participant observation, cultural history and lyrical analysis of the recorded songs during such training were done. Based on health belief and transformative musicology theories the paper suggests that Yoruba songs used during health literacy classes is very functional, been rooted in socio-cultural life of Yoruba people. It serves as education, caution, entertainment, encouragements and as psychological therapy for the foutos, children, pregnant women, and nursing mothers.

**Keywords:** Yoruba Songs, Structure, Antenatal Clinic, Functions, Pregnant women, Nursing Mothers

### Introduction

Songs and singing cannot be separated from the daily activities of most African people, especially the Yoruba people of Southwestern Nigeria. Songs and singing is part of their daily activities. Beier (1956:23) rightly notes that "The Yorubas are indeed a poetic nation, because every person has his own praise songs, by which he will be greeted on all important occasions". Orimoogunje (2003:8) notes that "Yoruba societies are active users of verbal arts. The health-related genres are in the society ...also mothers are caring for their babies".

Several studies have researched into medical ethnomusicology. As a growing area of study for applied ethnomusicologists, Dirksen (2012: 11) asserts that medical ethnomusicology is rooted in the integrative, complementary, and alternative medicine approach to health and healing. Medical ethnomusicology examines how music can be used to access “biological, psychological, social, emotional and spiritual domains of life” (Koen et al. 2008a:4). Effectively, music may become “the bridge by which the physical and spiritual are connected and can be the most vital component of a healing ceremony or practice” (Koen 2009:4). Dirksen (2012: 12) notes that in contrast to music therapy, which more often draws on Western music practices, medical ethnomusicology explores world cultures and “music-medicine” healing traditions as a means to address disease care and prevention. Songs used in antenatal and post natal clinics are basically on health related issues and needed to be researched on as part of medical ethnomusicology discourse. Not only that they perform certain roles among the pregnant women and nursing mothers that attend the prenatal and post natal clinics.

Some studies have been done on medical ethnomusicology. These studies were based on research carried out in the Malaysian rainforest by (Roseman 1991, 2008); Central and Southern Africa (Janzen 1992), and Malawi (Friedson 1996). More recent studies largely center on music and HIV/AIDS, documenting the “theatre for development” movement in South Africa and Mali (Bourgault 2003), establishing music as a low-budget intervention for combating HIV transmission and encouraging “positive living” in Uganda (Barz 2008 and 2006), and demonstrating how community group-sponsored music initiatives have tackled HIV/AIDS education in Nairobi (Van Buren 2006, 2007, and 2010). The most recent resource on culture and AIDS in Africa updates and expands previous publications, bringing together perspectives of dozens of individuals from many fields and backgrounds who view music as a source of education, hope and healing (Barz and Cohen 2011).

According to Dirksen, (2012: 12) studies in music and autism and Alzheimer’s disease have also been represented in key texts. Among the vast number of chapters in *The Oxford Handbook of Medical Ethnomusicology* is one that describes Florida State University’s Music-Play Project, an applied ethnomusicology program that seeks to reach children with autism spectrum disorders (Koen et al. 2008b). The editor of the Oxford handbook has also published a recent musical medical ethnography (Koen 2009), which examines the work of practitioners combining music, prayer, and meditation

in Badakhshan, Tajikistan. One of the most unique aspects of this study from an ethnomusicological point of view is that the researcher measured blood pressure and heart rates and conducted an electrocardiogram experiment as part of his fieldwork in the Pamir Mountains.

The literatures reviewed shows different medical ethnomusicology researches, however, none of the reviewed works attended to the roles of songs in antenatal and post natal clinics in Southwestern Nigeria Hospitals which lacuna this paper attempt to fill. Music usage during Antenatal health literacy is an aspect of health literacy that has received very little research attention among applied ethnomusicologist and medical ethnomusicologists. The main thrust of this paper therefore is to examine the use of songs in antenatal and postnatal literacy classes in southwestern Nigeria and the overall effects of the songs texts as used and acts upon by the expectant mothers, nursing mothers, and children that attend the clinics. This paper set out to answer the following; what is the typology of Yoruba songs on pregnancy, labour, delivery and baby care?, what are the effects of such songs on the pregnant women and nursing mothers attending the antenatal and post natal health literacy classes.

Participant observation, observation and interviews were employed, while visiting the selected hospitals and persons. The hospitals visited include, Obafemi Awolowo University Complex, OAU, Children Hospital Eleyele, Ile-Ife, University College Hospital, Ibadan Oyo State, Adeoyo hospital Ibadan among others. Interviews were conducted with nurses, nursing mothers, pregnant women in the hospitals visited. The cultural history and background of some of the songs were sourced, the songs textual meanings were analysed and musical structures were done. More so the songs been in Yoruba language were recorded and translated to English language.

This paper is based on the Health Belief and transformative musicology theories. Health Belief Model theory is one of the longest established theoretical models designed to explain health behaviour, by better understanding beliefs about health, (Harrison 1992, Nutbeam and Harris 2004). At its core, according to Nutbeam and Harris (2004:10) it suggests that the likelihood of an individual taking action related to a given health problem is based on the interaction between four different types of belief. The model predicts that individuals will take action to protect or promote health if;

They perceive themselves to be susceptible to a condition or problem. If

they believe it will have potentially serious consequences. If they believe a course of action is available that will reduce their susceptibility, or minimize the consequences. And finally if they believe that the benefits of taking action will outweigh the costs or barriers (10)

This theory is germane to the discourse on Yoruba Antenatal and postnatal clinic songs. Their susceptibility made the pregnant women and nursing mothers to listen and even sing the songs and also analyse the meaning with the health educator during the training. Also, the pregnant women with various health issues relating to the pregnancy do not want further health challenges for themselves nor for their pregnancy and thereby participated in the antenatal health education where songs are part of the training process. The theory is aptly applicable to the women as they acted in singing believing that it is less costs, and taking part will not be a problem to the pregnancy. They also, belief in practically taking care of their pregnancy, for their good, and the good of the unborn baby. Still on the model and antenatal health songs the model further explains that refinement have acknowledged the important modifying factors, particularly those associated with personal characteristics and social circumstances as well as the impact or personal experience. Added to this analysis of the model is the concept of self efficacy that is the belief in one's competency to take appropriate action as a further factor influencing the strength of the model in predicting behavioral change. Also Adequate literacy programmes on maternal care for expectant mothers through singing is very essential, since inadequate information on preparations for pregnancy, labour, delivery and baby care may result in medical complications for mothers during pregnancy, childbirth and delivery (Taiwo and Salami 2007). This is applicable to pregnant related songs used during antenatal clinic literacy classes. The song texts help the pregnant women to take daily actions on health issues during pregnancy, child birth and baby care, believing that it will reduce the complications for during delivery.

Transformative musicology is the musicology that aims at the transformation of individual and our World at large. It encompasses all musical activities that focus on transformative purposes (Adedeji, 2006a). The ambivalent nature of the power of music was demonstrated in Adedeji (1999), where he enumerated the anabolic and catabolic roles of music. The theory is applicable to pregnant women attending antenatal clinic. The Yoruba songs

texts contain messages that make pregnant women have change of altitude during pregnancy, delivery and child care.

On antenatal classes in Nigeria Taiwo and Salami (2007:3) explains that:

“Antenatal classes are organized in hospitals and health centers for pregnant women to intimate them with the necessary health information needed in pregnancy and post-natal period. The classes are organized by nurses and midwives to educate the women on pregnancy, labour and basic baby care skills. Sometimes, other medical experts, such as physiotherapists, nutritionists and gynecologists are invited to talk on specific issues, such as posture, exercise, diet, stages in foetus development, and so forth. Classes are organized to coincide with the days the women visit the hospital for their clinics”.

Taiwo and Salami (2007:4) assert that:

a typical class starts with a prayer, which could be led by the instructor or one of the pregnant women nominated by the instructor. After this, the entire class may be led to sing. Such songs are usually about domestic hygiene, nutrition, breast-feeding, immunization and so forth. Most of the songs are composed choosing the tunes of existing songs, while the lyrics are specifically chosen to reflect the thematic peculiarities of the lesson being taught. The idea of choosing tunes of existing songs is to make the learning of the songs easy for the women. In order to make a typical class lively, the women are enjoined to accompany their songs with clapping and dancing.

This paper focuses on the medical ethnomusicology aspect of the literacy classes, by examining the roles and structures of those songs and their impacts on the pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children in southwestern Nigeria.

**Categories Yoruba Songs for health literacy on pregnancy, labour/delivery and baby care**

Yoruba songs on pregnancy state are numerous and new ones are daily added during the antenatal clinic. As earlier mentioned the songs are mostly culturally embedded and meaning of the songs are culture bound. An example is the song text in song 1. below given below:

*È bámi gbé gbòsà fòkò mi o,  
Ọkọ olórí ire, tó fúnmi lóyún,  
Gbòsà gbòsà gbòsà gbòsà  
Ọkọ olórí ire tó fúnmi lóyún,  
Èmi a gbé gbòsà fún ra mi o,  
Èmi aya olórí ire tó mára dúró  
Gbòsà gbòsà gbòsà gbòsà,  
Èmi aya olórí ire tó mára dúró,*

Help me salute my husband  
The lucky husband that got me pregnant me,  
Gbosa, gbosa, gbosa, gbosa  
The lucky husband that got pregnant me

Another song on pregnancy is the song below:

*Mè ní bóyún kú o,  
Méní bóyún kú  
Ọba mímọ kọ letter sí mi  
mé ní bóyún kú*

I will not die with my pregnancy  
I will not die with my pregnancy  
The Holy king wrote a letter to me that  
I will not die during pregnancy

The song above is used by pregnant women during antenatal clinic as means of encouraging themselves. It is a religious song and tune. They believe that God gives children and that God who gave the pregnancy will help them to deliver safely. The song helps the psychological mind of the women to trust

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in God for safe delivery. It is a known fact that many women die during pregnancy.

*Ma foyún mi lẹwà jẹ àkàrà,  
Ma foyún mí lẹwà jẹ òlẹlẹ,  
Èmi fálàfià fún ọmọ mi  
ma foyún mi lẹwà jẹ àkàrà*

I will feed my pregnancy with beans cake

I will feed my pregnancy with moimoi

I want good health for my baby

I will feed my pregnancy with akara

The song deals with nutritional need of pregnant women and the need to eat balance diet that will help keep them and the feto healthy and strong. Beans mentioned here symbolize the need for protein and to avoid junks as pregnant women.

*Ọmọ ni yóò jogún o,  
aṣọ ìyè tí mo rà,  
Ọmọ ni yóò jogún o,  
iṣẹ ọwọ mi*

My children will inherit the costly cloth I bought

My children will inherit all the good works I have done

Another song on pregnancy, child bearing also include the one below:

*Múmi bí wéré o Olúwa,  
Mùmi bí wéré o Olúwa,  
Ká gbóhun iyá ká gbọ tọmọ,  
Lójọ ìkúnlẹ  
Kómi ma pọ̀jù kéjẹ ma pọ̀jù,  
Kí wọn má sa láító o,  
Jẹki n bí wéré ò Olúwa,  
jẹ ki n bí wéré ò Olúwa  
Ká gbóhun mi kágbọ tọmọ,  
Lójọ ìkúnlẹ,  
Mà jẹ n bóyúnkú o Olúwa,  
Mà jẹ n bóyún kú o Olúwa  
Ká gbóhun iyá ká gbọ tọmọ,  
Lójọ ìkúnlẹ*

Help me to deliver safely O Lord  
Help me to deliver safely O Lord  
Let my voice be heard and that of the baby  
In the day of delivery  
Let the water and the blood be alright  
Let the water and the blood not be shortened  
In the day of delivery

According to Fasetan (2016- Personal Communication) “the songs we sing during antenatal has some psychological effects on us. Because we sing and dance during the training it relives us of fear of the unseen and unknown. Apart from this we feel the baby too moving in our tummy during the singing and dancing. It seems the babies in the womb are also enjoying the songs and the dance. Examining the roles of Yoruba songs on save delivery of pregnancy Orimoogunje (2003: 6) supports the notion of singing by pregnant women and nursing mothers. He affirms that:

Nursing mothers (in their performances of natal songs) in both modern and indigenous community based health centers. The nursing mothers go to the indigenous or orthodox health centers every appointed day. The nursing mothers and the expectant mothers come from different homesteads/ compounds and meet in the community-based health centers to contribute their own quota, by performing heath-related songs

Orimoogunje (2003:6) observes that:

natal songs works on the psyche of the enchanter, who is an expectant mother, while rendering the prayerful natal song. She believes that her expected day of delivery is in the hands of Oluwa/Olodumare, the Supreme being among the Yoruba. This belief equips her with courage, thereby erasing the unknown that may lead to other health problem”



(Idafe S. personal communication, 2016) asserts that the songs are basically songs of courage. Like the songs below:

*Kèmi má wo lá wò sunkún,  
Kèmi má wò láwò sunkún o,  
Èrù mó rà, èru mòrà sílẹ̀ dọmọ mi,  
Kí n má wò lá wò sunkún,  
Kí n yára gbé kúnmi jó,  
Kí n yára gbé kùn mi jó o,  
Ọmọ dára ọmọ dára,  
Lówà ní kùn mi  
Kín yára gbé kùn mi jó*

May I not look at the child's material and cry  
May not see my pregnant materials and cry  
The equipment bought for the arrival of my baby  
May I not look at it and cry  
I am dancing with my pregnancy  
I am dancing with my pregnancy  
Because favored and goodly baby is what I am carrying  
I am dancing with my pregnancy

Still another song on pregnancy and save delivery is the song text below:

*Ọmọ tó wà nínú mi,  
Ọmọ tó wà nínú mi,  
Ó yá gbagbára Olúwa,  
Ó yá gbagbára Olúwa,  
Ó yá ma yírapo,  
Ó yá ma yírapo,  
Ò gbọdò jókó lòdì,  
Ò gbọdò jókó lòdì,  
Ó gbọdò ni mí lára.  
Ó gbọdò ni mí lára*

The baby in my womb  
The baby in my womb  
Receive divine strength from the Lord  
Receive divine strength from the Lord

Begin to turn around  
Begin to turn around  
You must not seat advertly  
You must not seat advertly  
You must not bring trouble to me  
You must not bring trouble to me

The songs are prayer request songs. The pregnant woman does not want to see the loads bought for baby with the hope that baby is coming and then something happens while the materials and with me the baby is not. It is a prayer for survival, life, safety and safe arrival of the new baby. Also she lay hand on the baby in the womb and pray that he/she will be envelop in the power of God, turn normally, do not seat abnormally and do not stress me.

Different songs based on socio-cultural life, religious tunes are also rearranged to suit labour and delivery state of the pregnant women. This song is part of repertoire that is constantly sung during health literacy among the pregnant women. One of the songs is here below:

Gba gbogbo ògò lórí mi lójó ikúnlè,  
Aráyé kò lè bá ọ pín o, nínú ògò rẹ  
Receive all the glory in the day of my delivery  
The world cannot share of your glory

Wéré lẹ ó ma gbọ e e e,  
Wéré la ó ma gbọ,  
Wéré la ó ma gbọ,  
Wéré la ó ma gbọ  
lójó ikúnlè Jésù wa gbogbo,  
Wéré lẹ ó ma gbọ  
we will hear good news  
we will hear good news  
in the day of your delivery  
Jesus will revive his glory  
We will hear good news

*Wa jó o, u ma wa jó,  
ìyá ìbejì wá jó ko lè bí wéré*  
Come and dance, come and dance

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Twins mother come and dance  
So that you can have safe delivery

Another song still based on labour and delivery is written below:

*Lọjọ ìkómọ jáde,  
lọjọ ìkómọ jáde,  
kórí mi má kọ gèlè,  
Kára mi má kọ aṣọ,  
Kẹsẹ mi má kọ bàtà,  
Lọjọ ìkómọ jáde,*

In the day of naming in the day of naming  
May my head not reject head tie,  
May my body not reject cloths  
May my legs not reject shoes  
In the day of naming

Naming celebration in Yoruba land is a day of joy. And so the texts of the songs pray for long life and good health for the nursing mother.

On the care of Babies, nursing mothers, music play vital roles in that it showcases ways mothers need to care and train their children. Orimoogunje (2016:93) asserts that: “The use of verbal arts in the Yoruba indigenous healthcare practices extends beyond the domestic context....The groups involved in this context nursing mothers in both the indigenous and orthodox health centres”. Various songs are used among nursing mothers in post natal clinic. Some of the songs are given below:

*Irunmu mi fi mí sọmọ gègè tẹmi yémi,  
lun mi fi mí sọmọ gègè tẹmi yémi  
lun, Bíṣu ọmọ bá jinná,  
kó má mà jómi lẹnu,  
Báya ọmọ bá wọlé,  
kó má mà lémi síta,  
lun mi fi mí sọmọ gègè tẹmi yémi*

The reason why I am caring for the baby is known to me  
The reason why I am caring for the baby is known to me  
When the child’s yam is cooked let it not burn my mouth  
When the wife comes in let her not send me out

The reason why I am caring for my baby is known to me

Yoruba people in parents depending on their children when they are old. Both financial and other need they may request for their children. Likewise the natural law of retribution, sowing and reaping comes to mind. The song says I am taking good care of my baby so that when I am old he can take good care of me too. The song says when the yam of the child is cooked. The yam symbolizes the prosperity and wealth of the child when he is now a grown up person. Yoruba believe much in dependence and also to '*jeun omo*'. According to (Atinuke Adesanya, Personal Communication 2016) says that I am taking care of my baby now so that when I need shoe I can tell him/her to get one for me later in life

Another song is:

Torí ọmọ mò ẹ wá,  
torí ọmọ mo ẹ wá o,  
Ọmọ dára, ọmọ dára,  
Ijó ọmọ dùn jó,  
Ijó ọmọ dùn jó,  
Kò síjọ e,  
kò síjọ ẹlẹyà lésẹ mi,  
Ijó ọmọ dùn jó

It is the cause of child that I came  
It is the cause of child that I came  
Children are good, children are good  
It is the cause of child that I came  
The dance of children is easy  
The dance of children is easy  
I do not have cracy dance with me  
The dance of children is easy

According to (Atinuke Adesanya<sup>i</sup>, Personal Communication 2016) the songs we sing are educative, it reduces fears, it helps our body system especially the dance is a form of helping us to keep fit. She further notes that they use the songs to entertain ourselves. If we are just seating down you know different evil thoughts will like to him to the mind but getting one busy makes us free from evil thought and mind especially on the pregnancy, delivery and other related issues. The songs teach us how to care for our children, their health, our own health our surroundings and handling of

pampers. Also, examining studies on the use of music in health care among the Yoruba people Orimoogunje (2003:1) notes that

the social contexts of verbal arts in the Yoruba indigenous healthcare delivery system explains where performances of the genres are found. ... there is no specific spot (venue) set aside for the rendition of the said genres when applied for healthcare practices. Various places that could be used for the performances are individuals' compounds, consulting rooms, and health centres/hospitals

Orimoogunje (2005) examines the various Yoruba verbal arts used in the Yoruba indigenous health care centre and notes that The Yorùbá verbal arts in indigenous healthcare practices have strong informative functions that urge mankind to be aware of the appropriate step to be taken towards ensuring cure within the indigenous healthcare delivery system. He further highlights the different Yoruba verbal arts used in traditional health care to include;

“*orin-ìbọ* (Liturgical songs), *ìbà* (homage). *Ọfọ* (incantations), *àyájọ* (myth-like incantations), *ìwúre* (supplicatory blessings), *èpè* (curse), *èbè* (propitiation) and *orin-ìbejì* (twin babies' songs) *oríkì* (verbal Salutes), *orin-ìremọlẹkún* (lullabies), *orin-erésùpá/orin àlọ-onítàn*(moonlight songs) and *orin-ìpàdé ọlọmọwẹwẹ* (natal songs) used in the indigenous healthcare delivery system are a bit more secular than the ones earlier mentioned above” (3).

(Oluwaseyi Oluwadarasimi<sup>ii</sup>, 2016 Personal communication) the purpose of the songs is to thank God first. Because many are looking for this kind of a gift and could not get it. So before anything the nurses gather us together to thank God. The songs are songs of praise to God. The songs are used to make the children glad too since songs are things that make one glad. When baby

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is sick we remember some of the songs the text of some of the songs reminds us how to go about helping the weak come back to health.

Fasetan Eunice<sup>iii</sup> (2016 Personal Communication) the songs restores and strengthens our faith that we will deliver safely. It also tuned our mind to the past women in the Bible who had safe delivery

Like the song

*Wẹrẹ lewé rí bọ o kúrò lára igi,  
Ọjọ ikúnlẹ mi ò wẹrẹ ni kó jẹ,*

Leaf leaves the tree without pain and catastrophe  
My day of delivery will be peaceful

Aminat Abiodun<sup>iv</sup> 2016 personal communication) “Some of the songs are songs of request and petitions for ours elf and our baby to me”.

*Má jẹ n lórí àṣẹti,  
bámí ẹ kó yọri  
Má jẹ n lórí àṣẹti,  
Kẹlẹgàn má gàn mi o baba,*

Do not let me have tragedy in this pregnancy  
Help me to end well  
Do not let me have tragedy in this pregnancy  
so that mockers will not mock me my father

(Adelekan Rounke<sup>v</sup> 2016, personal communication) the songs increases our joy our hope and confidence that we will have safe delivery. Some of us may be sad from home but getting to antenatal and singing such sadness will just disappear. So it bring a kind of relieve from depression and stress.

Like the songs below

*Ọwọ mi mẹwẹwá o,  
ọmọ ni n hó fi gbé o,  
Àrán olódódó o,  
ọmọ ni n hó fi pọn,  
Ọmọ o e pé dàgbà,  
Kékeré jòjòlọ mo ti bí tẹmi ọmọ o,  
e pé dàgbà*

I will use my hands to carry my baby

The flowery mantle will use it to back my baby  
Children grows, children don't  
Small and tender I will have my own child  
Children grow fast.

Yoruba believe in reproduction, the importance of having children is like coming to the world in vain if a couple does not have it. And the stigma attach to barrenness is also really worrisome. That is why people will do all it takes to have children.

Structure of Yoruba songs on pregnancy, labour and delivery

Impacts of Yoruba songs pregnancy, labour and delivery

Analysis of Yoruba Songs

In song 1 the song tune is a Christian derivative one, the tune was taken from the song text below:

*Ẹ bámi gbósùbà fọba ọrun o,*  
*Ọba alágbára tó dámi sáyé*  
Help me glorify the King of Heaven  
The king who created me on the earth

In song 1 above and several other songs discussed in this paper it is a common thing for Christian or traditional religion or folk tunes to be used in fixing health related songs. Since the tunes were already known to the majority of the people singing. This is in consonant with Vidal (1986:78) who identified traditional Yorùbá ritual, ceremonial and folk melodies as the initial resource area from which some health literacy songs were derived. In traditional Yorùbá culture, like other African cultures, Folktales constitute a rich aspect of folklore. Okafor and Ng'andu (2003) stated that 'Storytelling is a common art in sub-Saharan Africa 'Adapted Yoruba folktale and ceremonial melodies to newly composed text in idiomatic Yoruba language reflecting health related issues. Yoruba ceremonial and folktale songs constitute the resource materials from which health literacy songs were adapted. In a bid to make the literacy class interesting arrangers which in anonymous composers resorted to the adaptation of well known traditional melodies, substituting the original text with newly composed health related texts.

Another important fact about the song is the Yoruba concept of *orí* in song line 2, 4,6 and 8. Several studies have studied the concept of *orí* among the Yoruba. Adedeji (1987) and Olusegun-Joseph (2014) both agree that among the Yoruba *orí* literally denotes the physical human head, but at a

connotative level, it stands for the individual's essence of divinely appointed personality. They further assert that *orí* otherwise known as *orí inú* 'the internal head' is perceived as the controller of the individual destiny. At creation, *orí* is believed to kneel before the creator to collect its portion, *ìpín*, its portion. Yoloye as cited by Olusegun-Joseph (2014:524) asserts that "The portion is determined in three ways, partly by a free choice of *orí* (*àkúnlàyàn*), partly by a free gift of the creator (*àkúnlègbà*), and partly by affixation (*àyànmó*)". The Yoruba are of course aware of the biological process of conception and birth. Nevertheless they believe that the process of creation and the choice of portions take place for each conception. Olusegun-Joseph (2014:524) further explains that;

The Yoruba's adoration of the power of *orí* in the individual's life often leads them to worship it as a type of guardian angel, so that they are not derailed from their destinies. In referring to the role of *orí* there is often an association with its power to chart a positive destiny for the individual, and this is purportedly recognized in the individual's attainment of social sanctioned traits of character and honour. This becomes all the more important in the assumption that another person's *orí* may be invoked to aid individual: a parent for the child for instance. In this vein, the Yoruba identify an *olórí ire* ( a possessor of an enviable accordant *orí*).

Adedeji (1987:3) notes that "*orí* determines one's career, success, choice of wife, husband, and prosperity and so on". I add that *orí* determines someone ability to conceive or not. Pregnant women see themselves as *olórí ire* being able to conceive and also see their husband as *olórí ire* been able to help the wife to conceive. And therefore sing about it to praise their husbands and themselves during the antenatal clinic.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has examined the function of songs in antenatal and post natal clinics in southwestern Nigeria. It elucidates the categorization of the songs



and the effects of the songs. The songs were categorized as pregnant related songs, labour and delivery songs and baby care songs. Among the pregnant women and nursing mothers in the antenatal clinic visited by the researcher, songs plays the role of entertainment, it helps in physical fitness, reduces depression and anxiety, it educate on basic body cares during pregnancy, food taken, bathing, type of cloth and shoes to wear. It also includes how to prepare for labour and delivery, how to push the baby at different stages during delivery. The song brings hope to the dejected and fearful pregnant mothers. We therefore conclude that more avenues should be created and more songs on other languages should be included so that pregnancy women who do not understand the language can benefit maximally from the song texts and the music

### **Endnote**

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<sup>i</sup> Atinuke Adesanya. Personal Communication October 18, 2016, Ijebu-Igbo, Ogun State, Nigeria

<sup>ii</sup> Oluwaseyi Oluwadarasimi. Personal communication, October 24, 2016, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

<sup>iii</sup> Fasetan Eunice. Personal Communication, October 25, 2016, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

<sup>iv</sup> Aminat Abiodun Personal Communication, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 Ibadan, Oyo State,

<sup>v</sup> Adelekan Rounke. Personal communication, October 23, 2016, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

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