

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

IMPERATIVENESS OF MUSIC FOR CHILD'S UPBRINGING IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS AMONG THE NIGERIAN ANGLICAN CHURCHES

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Abstract

Scholars have documented literature on the roles of early Christian missionaries as well as African Indigenous Churches (AIC) on formal Education in Nigeria. This paper examines the musical activities among the Sunday school children in Nigerian Churches, to highlight the text content and its functionality in the socio-religious upbringing of children in the society. This research was conducted through oral interviews, a field recording of music and bibliographic methods which is limited to a few selected Anglican churches in Ogiyo-Remo Community of Ogun State in which the Yoruba language form the major language of communication in their Sunday school. Research findings revealed that children are better assimilated with the teachings of their teacher through the various songs taught at the church. Also, Sunday school teachers receive better participation and attention from the children during the singing session than in any other activity. The music was observed to play important functions in imparting religious education in the children, moral training, documentation and preservation of Biblical stories as well as recreational and entertainment functions. It was concluded in this research study that the imperativeness of music is evident in the functional roles it plays in Sunday school. Apart from Bible study and sermon, music serves as one of the major devices of imparting religious and moral knowledge to the children because it is more relevant and most effective in yielding positive and desirable results in these children.

Keywords: Musical activities, Nigerian Anglican churches, Sunday school and Child's upbringing.

Introduction

Music is an integral and functional part of African cultures and religions. In the traditional, Islamic and Christian religions, the vocal and musical instruments music play vital roles in all forms of worship because through music, people can evoke both human and supernatural spirit to achieve some divine purposes. In religious worship, music also can create solemn moods and bring forth feelings that words many times fail to evoke. From the primitive period in Africa and Nigeria in particular, music has always been an integral part of all religious worship and as a cultured indicator.

According to Asaolu (2018:2), the African musical culture extends to the Christian churches and, of course, the Anglican Church by way of cultural adaptation. Music, which is one of the arts most characteristic of African life is used in most of the institutions, operating at various levels of intensity spanning from signalling (for example, when a particular drum rhythm pattern announces the start of a ritual) to that highly emotive level which surpasses language itself in its ability to link man with the world of his spirits and ultimately, his Supreme Being. It is a common practice among the Nigerian people to indoctrinate their children into their belief

systems and religious practices. The Moslems make sure that their children learn how to take part in all the daily Muslim prayers and (or) learn Arabic to read Quran; while the Christians also make sure their children go with them to the church for Sunday worship. Church worship on Sundays is usually divided into two sections. That is, the adult church and the Sunday school or children's church. This is usually done because of the relevance in terms of the mode of worship and the content which is suitable for each age category.

Music forms part of the most common devices used by the children pastors and the Sunday school teachers to entertain and draw the attention of the children as well as keep them involved in the worship process throughout Sunday services. Apart from the difference in the mode of worship and content of religious teaching for each category of the church, the use of music, function and theme of song texts for each category differs.

This study is an enquiry into the lyric content of the Yoruba songs for the children in the Sunday school in selected Churches in the Ogijo-Remo community to carefully observe the relevance and functions of the songs as well as its implication on the moral and spiritual upbringing of Christian children in the society. This methodology includes oral interviews, participatory observation and recording of songs involving 10 selected Anglican Churches in the Ogijo-Remo community of Ogun State. Also, the relevant bibliography is reviewed.

Theoretical Framework

Sociological theory as popularized by Herbert Spencer in Adejumo Arinpe (2005) contends that 'norms and institutions are regarded as 'organs' that work towards the proper functioning of the entire 'body' of society. Therefore, music is human behaviour in that is, it is the product of people living within the society and the primary function of music is to aid in the integration of society. The functionality theory, on the other hand, stressed the role of music in promulgating positive change in society. Among the Yoruba, the aesthetics of any music genre is predominantly rooted in the relevance and functionality of such music within the society and it had been advanced that no music is or should be without a purpose. Therefore on this note, music is indispensable to the proper promulgation of the activities that constitute a society. It is a universal human behaviour and without it, it is questionable that man could truly be called man, with all it implies (Merriam. 1964).

This, therefore, implies that without human beings there would be no music because it is the man that determines what music is and what good or bad music is. Music for any religious worship in any society must function as the agents of propagating religious education and helping in promoting good morals in the society.

Nketia (1987:175) remarks that Christianity regards music as an integral rather than a marginal aspect of worship. For Christians, the Holy Scripture (Bible) is most important among books, because it is God's reliable and unailing word, a record of God's acts in human history, and "rule of faith and practice." It is believed that if God wanted to say something to the Church about worship and its music, it will be found in the Bible.

AfolabiAlaja-Browne (1981)observed that Nigerian church musicians began to compose their church hymns using indigenous languages around 1902. Also, Euba notes that the melodies of the new hymns align with the inherent tonal patterns of the texts. These new hymns employ a rhythmic style that is closer to that of traditional music. Further links with traditional culture are evident in some of Nigeria's indigenous church music which is usually accompanied by

traditional instruments and dance. This kind of music may be observed in the Cherubim and Seraphim churches. Omojola(1998: 9) while examining the influence of the European culture and language on the musical idioms of church music in Nigeria remark thus:

European influenced musical idioms have been emerging in Nigeria since the beginning of this century. These idioms can be classified into four distinct categories: indigenous Church music, urban syncretic popular forms, modern folk opera and Nigerian modern Art Music. The emergence of these forms is a result of a historical process that began in the middle of the nineteenth century (Omojola 1995: 9).

Adedeji (2004: 6) while discussing the Nigerian Gospel music styles described the indigenous style as that music that derived its musical elements mainly from indigenous musical sources. They include 'native' traditional 'classical' and 'spiritual styles. 'This category differs from others on the basis that they originated here in Nigeria and hence sound more African because of their closeness to the root-traditional African music.

Ekwueme (1972: 8) Native airs in Christian worship transports the soul of the worshipers to the presence of their maker. The congregants sing together in one voice and the expression that comes with it is always priceless. Ekwueme further observed that of all the diverse kinds of music made by Africans, adults and children alike, the human voice plays by far the greatest part. It was also shown that group activity more than individual music-making is the preferred and more common mode. The primacy of choral music has therefore been established in traditional African culture'.

Owing to the indigenous musical activities which took place here and there within the Anglican Church, and which as a whole gave significant and positive results to the birth of Native Airs and other forms of indigenized music, the leadership of the Church applauded them and it was more pronounced in the Lagos and Ibadan Provinces, which were the first of its kind; in encouraging this within the Anglican fold. There were episcopal instructions as regards its usage in divine services. The instruction further made it clear that there was no longer merely a wish for adaptation of secular African tunes, but a desire for new music similar to the indigenous music. In other words, Africans should be encouraged to compose new music containing an African idiom, and this certainly leaves room for a cultural process.

The introduction of mission schools helped to create an atmosphere conducive to the teaching and practice of European music in Nigeria (Omojola 1994: 534). According to Robert Kwami (1994: 334), the development of Western education in Nigeria commenced in 1842. At the Yoruba mission of the Christian Missionary Society, the curriculum was comprised mainly of reading, writing, arithmetic and singing. 'Later, formal music education started with some teacher training colleges and secondary schools which expanded their curricula to add lessons in theory of music, singing and concert shows'. (Asaolu, 2018: 71).

Methodology

This research was conducted through oral interviews, a field recording of music and bibliographic methods which is limited to seven (7) selected Anglican churches in Ogiyo-Remo Community of Ogun State. The Yoruba language forms the major language of communication in their Sunday school. Below is the demographic distribution of the respondents for the study.

S/N	NAME	GENDER	AGE	CHURCH ADDRESS	DATE OF INTERVIEW
1.	Jacob Oladeji	Male	40	St Barnabas Anglican Church, Eyita Street, Ogijo-Remo.	20/01/19
2.	Funmilayo Adeoye	Female	35	St Andrews Anglican Church Likosi-Remo	30/1/19
3.	John Adeogo	Male	43	St Silas Anglican Church Idomogun, Street, Ogijo-Remo	27/01/19
4.	Sola Olukoya	Male	39	St Mathias Anglican Church, Eyita Street, Ogijo-Remo.	20/01/19
5.	M.O Onagbesan	Female	33	All Saints Anglican Church, Idomogun Street, Ogijo-Remo	27/01/19
6.	O. Odumosu	Female	40	St John Anglican Church, Last B/Stop, Ogijo- Remo	03/02/19
7.	Christiana Olusola	Female	47	Anglican Church of Advent, Eyita, Ogijo-Remo	27/01/19

Historical Background of Sunday School

According to documentation by McGill Library, Robert Raikes and Thomas Stock first established a Sunday school for the poor and orphaned in Gloucester in 1780. Although there were earlier Sunday schools, Raikes and Stock have become the recognized originators. Their efforts led clergy and laypeople to establish similar schools throughout England, thus setting in motion the Sunday School Movement. By 1800, 200 000 children were enrolled in English Sunday schools, and by 1850, this number had risen to 2 million.



(<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history>)

Timothy Larsen (2008: 131) also recorded that the Sunday school movement began in Britain in the 1780s. Sunday schools were originally established to teach reading, writing, arithmetic and catechism to the 'deserving' poor and enrollment was decided upon by visits with parents, nominations from subscribers, and individual student applications'. He explained further that 'the English Anglican evangelical Robert Raikes (1725-1811) was the key promoter of the movement. This soon spread to America as well. Denominations and non-denominational organizations caught the vision and energetically began to create Sunday schools. Within decades, the movement became extremely popular and by the mid-19th century, Sunday school attendance was a nearly universal aspect of childhood. Even parents who did not regularly attend church themselves generally encouraged their children to attend Sunday school.

Sunday School in Anglican Church in Nigeria

In Nigeria, Rev. Henry Townsend and Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther (a Yoruba ex-slave) returned to Abeokuta after their ordination in England in 1842. Nigerians began to believe in Jesus as the Lord and Saviour of the entire world with the untiring efforts of these evangelists. On December 25, 1842, in Abeokuta, Nigerians were able to celebrate for the very first time, the glorious annunciation that the Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, was born. There and then the concept of Anglicanism was birthed. In 1846, Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Rev. Henry Townsend, Rev. Golmer and Mr Phillips worked together to consolidate the Yoruba Mission of the CMS. In 1857, Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther led the CMS Niger Mission to Onitsha and environs to find a formidable native pastorate. Samuel Ajayi Crowther was elected Bishop in 1864 and posted to oversee the Niger.

According to Robert Kwami (1994: Pg.124), the development of Western education in Nigeria commenced in 1842. At the Yoruba mission of the Christian Missionary Society, the curriculum comprised mainly of reading, writing, arithmetic and singing. Later, formal music education started with some teacher training colleges and secondary schools which expanded their curricula to add lessons in the theory of music, singing and concert shows. The introduction of mission schools helped to create an atmosphere conducive to the teaching and practice of European music in Nigeria (Omojola 1994: 534). Owoaje (2012: 66), quoting Ajayi (2001), states that:

The origin of church music among the Yorùbá can be traced to the activities of European missionaries in Lagos and its environs which began towards the mid-nineteenth century. The immediate result of the endeavour was the establishment of churches and mission schools in the southwestern part of Nigeria, particularly, Ab?ìòkúta, Badagry, and Lagos. In Nigeria, the Anglican Children Ministry aims at the following:

- To train teachers that will train and teach the Children;
- To bring up children and teenage people in the fear of the Lord;
- Helping children and teenagers in becoming better Christian and disciplined citizens;
- Instructing children and teenager people in the Anglican faith;
- Guiding them to study the Bible and pray daily; and
- Helping children to be faithful ambassadors of Christ on earth and at last, make heaven. (<https://www.anglican-nig.org/researchers>)

As observed in this study, Churches have a separate venue purposely provided for the teaching of Bible lessons, worship with music and preaching religious messages relevant to the children between the ages of 3 and 16 who attends the children section different from the main church meant for the adults only. Sunday schools in Anglican Church are open to both the children of the members and other children whose parents are not members. Musical instruments like trap drums, other local drums and tambourine are usually provided for the musical performances in the Sunday school.

Functions of Music in Sunday School

For this study, a total of 40 songs was collected from different Sunday schools to translate them and examine their themes and the contents of the song texts. Critical; study of the lyric content of the Yoruba songs performed in the Sunday schools in this community has revealed that music and theme of the song play numerous functions as an integral part of the school activities and also serves as the co-moral and spiritual upbringing of the young children in the society. Based on the lyric content and context of performances, these functions are as follows:

Religious Function

It was observed that lyrics of music in the Sunday schools contain themes that teach religious knowledge which include belief and faith in God, Obedience to God's commandments and love for God and other people. Lyrics of songs also play the religious role of teaching the children about being dutiful to God through our activities on earth and the belief in Heavenly rewards for every good or bad deed on earth. The following song '*Kini Ise Re S'oluwa*' is an example of a song that plays religious functions in Sunday school:

Kini Ise Re S'oluwa

Kini se - re s'O-lu-wa ki ni se - re s'O-lu-wa a ni o da-wo o lo o da

A-ni o korin o lo o ko, a pe o s'i-pa-de o lo o lo O-jo i-da-jo la o be-re pe

ki - ni se - re s'O - lu - wa

Yoruba:

*Kini ise re s'Oluwa
Kini ise re s'Oluwa
A ni o da'wo o looda
Ani o korin o looko
Ojo idajo lao bere pe
Kini ise re s'Oluwa*

Translation:

What is your obligation to God?
What is your obligation to God?
You are asked to give an offering, you refused
You are asked to sing His praises, but you
refused You will be asked on the judgment day
that What is your obligation to God?

The song above plays the religious function of teaching the children to believe in the existence of Heaven and judgment day as well as to be responsible to God by serving Him through our roles in the church of God. Other songs in this category include '*B'ojo ba nro*', '*Emi o tele Jesu*' and '*Owo Jesu, ema fi ra epa je*'.

Moral values and training

The songs by the children in Sunday schools also contain lyrics that functions as one of the major tools in imparting moral values in the children as well as training them to become good citizens in society. Children are taught these songs in Sunday school for them to always remember the parental and societal expectations concerning them. Funmilayo Adeoye (oral interview) explained that the songs teach them to be obedient to their teachers and parents, and also to be of good behaviour at all times. The song '*Omo Olorun to Nparo*' below, is an example of a song that plays moral functions in Sunday school:

Omo Olorun To Nparo

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Omo Olorun To Nparo'. It consists of four staves of music in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff starts with measure 1 and ends with measure 4. The second staff starts with measure 5 and ends with measure 8. The third staff starts with measure 9 and ends with measure 12. The fourth staff starts with measure 13 and ends with measure 16. The lyrics are: Om-o O - lo -run ton pa-ro ta lo fi jo - (measures 1-4); Om-o O - lo -run ton pa - ro to lo fi jo - (measures 5-8); O -moO -lo -run ton pa-ro ta lo fi jo ton pa - ro (measures 9-12); ta lo fi jo ton pa - ro ta lo fi jo (measures 13-16).

The song above plays the moral function of condemning the act of untruthfulness and also instructing the children that a child of God is not expected to tell lies. Other songs in this category include '*Je Omo Rere*', '*Semi L'omo Rere Bi Samueli*' and '*Omo Esu Lo Npariwo*'

Entertainment and Recreational Functions

Some of the songs in the Sunday schools serve the entertainment and ceremonial functions. Jacob Oladeji (An informant) revealed that some of the Sunday school children are too young to

concentrate on the Bible teaching and preaching for a long period. Therefore, the songs and other musical activities in the Sunday school serves as entertainment for the children and thereby prevent them from sleeping during the service period. The music in this category also functions as a tool for exercising the body through movements. The following song 'Jesu Kore Da Sile' in spoken verse form is an example of a song that teaches morals in Sunday school:

Song title: 'Jesu Kore Da Sile' (In spoken verse)

Yoruba

Solo: *Jesu Kore da sile,*
 Chorus: *Mo he e*
 Solo: *Jesu kore da sile,*
 Chorus: *Mo he e*
 Solo: *Mo he, mo he, mo he*
 Chorus: *Mo he e*

Translation:

Jesus pour down blessings
 I picked them
 Jesus pour down blessings
 I picked them
 I picked them, picked them, picked them
 I picked them

During the performance of this song, the Sunday school children bend down while singing to demonstrate how they picked up the blessings poured down by Jesus. This invariably serves as body exercise and recreation to the children because many of them see it as fun. Another song in this category includes 'Awa Omo Jesu Da' during which the children raises their hands to signify in response that they are children of God.

Documentation of Biblical stories

Other functions of music for children in the Sunday school in Anglican churches include documentation and preservation of Biblical stories. Some of these songs contain lyrics that document and teaches Biblical stories which the children learn to remind them of various Biblical stories or passages they have learnt in their conventional school or Sunday school. Songs in this category include "Judasi Oro Ti O Da"



Yoruba:

Judasi oro ti o da
Awa dupe o
Jesu jinde

Translation:

Judas, despite your evil deed
 We are indeed thankful
 That Jesus resurrected

The song above recount the Biblical story of how Judas betrayed Jesus Christ which led to his crucifixion and how he was resurrected on the third day. Songs in this category enable the children to be able to easily memorize and recollect the Bible stories/ Other songs in this category

include ' *Jesu Feran Awon Omode*' which narrated the story of how Jesus Christ showed love to children in the Bible.

Research Finding

During this research, it was observed that the majority of the Sunday school teachers are in the teaching profession. It was also discovered that the Sunday school children are familiar with their teachers because many of the children attend public schools in the same community where these teachers are living and working. This made it easier for the Sunday school teachers to monitor these children at home, school and in the church.

It was also discovered that the Sunday school children are better assimilated with the teachings of their teacher through various songs taught at the church. It was also observed that many of the children were not able to ordinarily remember the content of the theme of the message taught by the teachers during sermon and Bible study, except through the songs they learnt. Furthermore, Sunday school teachers receive better participation and attention from the children during the singing session than any other activity. Music as well plays important functions in imparting religious education in the children, moral training, documentation and preservation of Biblical stories for recreational and entertainment purposes.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Since it is the major obsession of Children Sections in Anglican churches in Nigeria is to bring up children and teenagers in the fear of the Lord, helping children and teenager people to become better Christian and disciplined citizens, the Children section of the church or Sunday school section of the main church were set up and administered by male and female adults who have volunteered to teach and cater for the spiritual and moral upbringing of the children during the worship session on Sundays irrespective of their background and status.

It is therefore important to note that this study has highlighted that the imperativeness of music is evident in the functional roles it plays in Sunday schools. Apart from Bible study and sermon, music serves as one of the major devices of imparting religious and moral knowledge to the children because it is more relevant and most effective in yielding positive and desirable results in these children.

The researcher, therefore, recommends that government, individuals in the church, voluntary philanthropic Organizations and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should develop an interest in the Sunday schools by encouraging and assisting the teachers of Sunday school financially to procure musical instruments and all other materials like video projectors, cameras, screens, microphones and sound equipment needed in the Sunday schools. This is necessary because of their positive roles in child upbringing.

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