

The Creative use of Themes in Contemporary Igbo Popular Music in Nigeria

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Abstract

Popular music is an offshoot of several musical typologies which are indigenous or acculturated, incorporating both local and foreign elements. Most popular musical styles or genres in Nigerian music scene evolved through various contributions from musicians of diverse cultural sensibilities. Furthermore, the musical practices of the Igbo are seen through their social, religious and cultural lives as their music accompanies every stage of human and social development (childhood – adulthood – death). Igbo popular music, being a contemporary genre, depicts both the language and cultural elements of one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria. The music has evolved owing to acculturation, economic factor, technology and globalisation. This article attempts to appropriate musical theme - a borrowed concept from Western classical music - into the structural form of Igbo popular music vis-a-vis its vocal and instrumental elements. It effectively analysed selected songs of prominent Igbo artistes/musicians and further established how these themes are creatively used in contemporary Igbo popular music. Three distinctive methods were deduced from the analysis - the antiphonal theme, instrumental theme and instrumental/ antiphonal theme.

Introduction

Music, as a thought process and expression of innermost feelings, is held in high esteem and appreciated by societies (both traditional and modern) all over the world. It is a universally recognised synthesis of the substance and style of human existence, promoting greater experiences for both the makers and the listeners and turning perilous emotional edges, vulnerabilities, triumphs, celebrations and antagonisms of life into hypnotic, reflective tempos that can be experienced privately or shared with others (Lull, 1992). On the other hand, popular music as described by Shuker (2001) can be likened to a person, product, practice, or belief that is liked or approved by a large audience or the general public. According to Onyeji (2004), popular music is a music targeted by the composer and maker to the ordinary man or the general public for immediate appreciation and consumption.

In Nigeria, popular music has evolved through series of changes and modifications. In his description of popular music in Nigeria, Frankel (2004) posits:

Nigeria is a giant in musical expression. From its hundreds of distinct ethnic groups have come seemingly limitless musical

expressions over the course of the last half century. Recordings of everything from pop to traditional music have chronicled the political cultural and stylistic history of a colonial nation, the struggle for self-determination, an emerging nation and the boom and bust of an African giant. Literally, tens of thousands of recordings have been made by record companies, scholars, amateurs, social clubs, broadcasters, cultural centers and a variety of other organisations.

Nigerian popular music was encouraged by the spirit of cultural awakening and identity representation among the different ethnic groups. Such enthusiasm and exuberance made several ethnic groups in Nigeria to come out with their own expressions of the existing musical styles stemming from their aesthetic perception and cultural sensibilities. The form of music produced mirrored a great deal of cultural and creative diversities (Ekwueme 2004; Fiofori 2011; Piero 2007). According to Vidal:

Various communities of taste and preferences emerged, each with its own value system of aesthetic evaluation dependent on the religious, social, political and cultural sensibilities that form and inspire the production of its creative forms (2012)

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that each ethnic group in Nigeria has its own set of values and customs which, by extension, affects the philosophy and creative instincts of its members. For example, Bright Chimezie, in one of his interviews with the researcher, stated categorically that his music epitomizes his cultural beliefs and affiliation; and that he cannot change this for any frivolities or mundane quest for popularity.

Today, Igbo-speaking people live all over Nigeria and in different countries of the world. As a people, however, the Igbo are located on both sides of the River Niger in villages and larger communities as reflected in their political organisation. Geographically, they occupy most of south-eastern Nigeria, namely Enugu, Anambra, Abia, Imo, Rivers (Ahoada area) and Delta (Asaba, Ika, and Agbo areas) States respectively. Igbo popular music is defined hypothetically by this researcher using two common parameters – the ‘language’ and the ‘people’. By language, we imply the collections of different musical compositions or songs, performed and recorded in the musician’s local dialect (Igbo). Furthermore, Igbo popular music can also be defined using the ‘people’ parameter as the overall interactions and contributions (both musical and non-musical) of Igbo musicians to the contemporary music scene in Nigeria. Several generations of Igbo musicians (especially the older ones) have given their best to the overall development of popular music in Nigeria. Most of their musical contributions have passed the test of time and have remained relevant even in the face of changing cultures, habits and tastes. Igbo popular music in Nigeria has had its fair share of acculturation from within and outside its domain.

Some scholarly works have classified popular musical genres or typologies under identifiable categories using the parameters of 'mode of creation' and 'mode of instrumentation'. Based on the mode of creation, Euba (1989) postulated three categories:

1. Those musical styles that evolved from pure Western pop, like for example: country music, ballroom dance, jazz music, soul, swing and rock music respectively.
2. Those that were created through the means of acculturation — that is, use of both African and Western musical elements; highlife music, Afro beat are good examples
3. Music genres popularised by certain ethnic groups in Nigeria. For instance, juju music, waka music, apala music, ikwokirikwo music. (quoted in Oikelome 82)

Obidike identified postulated four (4) distinct categories, based on the mode or group of instrumentation applied in those musical styles:

1. Popular music based on Western/ European Brass bands
2. Popular music based on Guitar bands
3. Popular music based on Islamic and indigenous traditions, and
4. Popular music based on Euro-American Pop bands.

These categorisations remain relevant and applicable in the typologies or styles emanating from Igbo popular music. Prominent among these musical styles is the Igbo highlife which has endured the Nigerian music scene right from the 1950's down to the present moment. Many Igbo exponents (especially older musicians) have made their marks through this medium, thus creating a formidable presence in the Nigeria music industry. Others (especially the younger musicians) have thrived in their music forays through musical styles such as, hip-hop, gospel, rap, R&B and also through creative combination of these musical styles. The following are some of the notable musicians of Igbo extraction in Nigeria, past and present, in no particular order:

Table 1: Igbo popular musicians in Nigeria

Older Musicians	Middle-aged Musicians	Younger Musicians
Chief Osita Osadebe	Onyeka Onwenu	P square,
Oliver De Coque	Bright Chimezie	Naeto C,
Vincent Okoroego	Tony Okoroji	AfricanChina, Obiwon,
The Ofeges	Mannix Okonkwo	Bracket
Oriental Brothers	Christy Essien- Igbokwe	Nigger Raw
Nico Mbagha	Chika Okpala	Flavour
Nelly Uchendu	Dora Ifudu	Sunny Bobo
	Chris Mba	MC Loph
	Charles Oputa	Duncan Mighty
		Ikecheukwu

Note: Some of the musicians listed above are identified with stage names and aliases

Problem

Popular music is a contemporary music genre that evolved basically from the traditional settings and socio-cultural tendencies of a group of people. It adopts more of antiphonal approach, that is the use of Call and Response in its vocal framework and are consistently accompanied by instrumentation made up of both local and foreign materials. However, this work attempts to decipher through systematic analysis of few randomly selected Igbo popular music from different generation of musicians (1960 till date) how creatively themes are used within the vocal and instrumental structures of the musical styles.

Answers will be given in this article to these salient questions: What is musical theme? How is creativity achieved in popular music? How are themes creatively used in Igbo popular music?

It is unarguable that Nigeria music industry showcases all manner of popular music genres, localised hybrids and the imported ones. But the scope of this paper reflects on just four selected Igbo popular music of different styles. Attention is also given to Igbo musicians (both young and old), who are popular and known for their numerous and recognisable contributions to the development of popular music in Nigeria.

The selected songs/ musicians are:

1. Osondi Owendi by Chief Osita Osadebe
2. Ube Nwanne by Bright Chimezie
3. Halleluyah Chi m le by Onyeka Onwenu
4. Na Abania by Chinedu Okoli (Flavour)

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study, which is approached from a qualitative perspective, is hinged on "**Musical Appropriation**" as defined and applied by Chapman. In his description, appropriation can be used as a neutral umbrella term to describe all of the events that involve the adoption of musical elements across cultures (Chapman 2007). Though thoroughly criticised and labelled by few scholars as 'robbery' (Dawes 1997), 'syncreticism (Rice 2005), and 'Hybridization' (Guilbault 1997), this concept actually has valuable cultural sensibility and aesthetic influence on the creative process of African artists/musicians (Hall 1997). Musical theme, as an idiom expressed and used within the classical music of the Western origin, is appropriated effectively into the Igbo popular music genre through its vocal and instrumental form. This paper however, adopts a systematic approach in ascertaining how themes are creatively used in the contemporary Igbo popular music through the adoption of the principles of the use of musical themes in the Western classical music.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this paper for its data gathering, analysis and discussion of findings is the quantitative research method called "content analysis. This method aims to identify and count occurrences of specific

themes or dimension of texts and through this, one is able to draw inferences about the messages, images and representation of such texts as well as their wider social significance (Hansen, Cottle, Megrine, & NewBold, 1998). This article has adopted this approach in-order to systematically analyse the musical content of the selected Igbo popular songs with a view to decipher the creative use of themes within the vocal and instrumental forms.

The songs in focus were selected after careful evaluation of the antiphonal and instrumental structures inherent in the songs. Contextual analysis was done through reference to books, journals, web publications, unpublished theses and so on.

Musical Theme

According to Dictionary of Music, a theme is a musical idea or succession of notes that forms an essential structural part of a composition. It is most times perceived as a complete musical expression in itself, separate from the work in which it is found (Drabkin 2001 and Dunsby 2002). A theme assumes its structural importance when those elements (melodic and rhythmic) which make up the theme are repeated and developed within a composition. Historically, this concept (theme) has featured in various musical compositions both vocal and instrumental right from the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and modern periods respectively. Music or composition based on one theme is called **mono-thematic**, while music based on several themes is called **poly-thematic** (Sadie and Tyrell, 2001). Musical theme, therefore, differs from theme music or theme song as this refers to a song or other musical theme that occurs from time to time during the performance of a musical operetta, film, etc (Alan I. & Martin E, 1986).

The following are different stylistic approaches by popular composers of Western classical music in the use and application of themes:

1. Fugues
2. Sonata form
3. Theme & Variations
4. Inventions

Fugue

This is a form of disciplined imitative contrapuntal writing which evolved in the 17th century. A fugue is written for number of consistent voices or parts using accepted structural principles (137). The main theme (Subject) of a fugue is usually announced by the first voice in the tonic and an imitation (answer) of it by another voice in the dominant and each are accompanied with counter-subjects. There are two types of fugue writing which are Real fugues and Tonal fugue. J.S. Bach is considered to be the father of fugue as he wrote on the 'Art of fugue writing'.

Example 1:



Theme from Fugue no.2 in C Minor (Well-Tempered Clavier) by J.S Bach

Sonata Form

Also known as sonata-allegro form or first movement form is a large scale musical structure used widely since the middle of the 18th century (early classical period). Sonata form consists of three main sections: an exposition, a development, and a recapitulation and the idea is basically the organisation of thematic and harmonic tonal materials within the three sections of the musical form. The tonal material is first introduced in the exposition; it goes further into elaboration and contrasts in the development and then resolves harmonically and thematically in the recapitulation. Sonata form is the most common form employed by composers in instrumental works of classical music such as, sonata, symphony, concerto, string quartets and so on. How thematic materials are employed and utilised within the three sections in a sonata form is represented thus:

Exposition	Development	Recapitulation
Theme 1	Freedom	Theme 1
Major I V V	Modulations V	Major I
Minor i iii iii	Modulations V	Minor i

Example 2:



Theme from Sonata 16 in C major (Sonata Facile) by W.A. Mozart

Theme and Variation

In this form of music, a theme which is introduced is repeated in an altered or varied from using either the harmony, melody, rhythm, counterpoint, timbre or any combination of these (Copland, web). The theme may retain some features of its original version, while others are discarded, developed or replaced.

Example 3:



Theme from the Harmonious Blacksmith (Theme & Variation) by G.F Handel

From the various examples given, it is deduced that in every musical structure, both vocal and instrumental, a theme (mono-thematic) or themes (poly-thematic) play pivotal role in the build up or creation of musical forms which by extension brings about unity and cohesion in entire composition. Composers

of the Western classical periods, especially of the baroque period really applied this technique in every of their compositions both for vocal and more intently for instrumental music.

Creativity in Popular Music

Reid and Petocz (2004) opined that creativity is viewed in different ways in different disciplines: in education it is called "innovation"; in business "entrepreneurship"; in mathematics it is sometimes equated with "problem-solving", and in music it is "performance or composition". A creative product in different domains is measured against the norms of that domain, its own rules, approaches and conceptions of creativity. In Psychology, the Behaviourists explain creativity as nothing more than 'the random shuffling of known bits and pieces until, by accident, the pieces fall into a new configuration (quoted in Oberholtzer 1990). Creativity is a phenomenon whereby something new and valuable is created (such as an idea, a joke, an artistic or literary work, a painting or musical composition, a solution, an invention etc.). In his own definition, Robert described creativity 'as the tendency to generate or recognise ideas, alternative, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves'. He further gave three reasons why people are motivated to be creative:

1. need for novel, varied, and complex stimulation
2. need to communicate ideas and values
3. need to solve problems (396)

Unlike, classical music, which is claimed to be the music for the intellectuals, popular music does cut across all classes of individuals within the societal strata. Obidike succinctly asserts that 'the most widespread and cross-ethnic in its practice, acceptance and patronage is popular music' (188). It serves the rich, poor, old, adult, youth, children, higher, middle and lower classes respectively. It is music by the people, for the people and carry's the people's identity through its carriage of common cultural and ethnic features and characteristics. This musical identity could be perceived through linguistic criteria (Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Efik etc); musical form (Fuji, Apala, Ikwokilikwo, Akwete etc) or instrumentation (Bata, Ekpili, Ogene, Kaakaki). Popular music (especially in Nigeria and most African societies) has been observed to have usually been transmitted or expressed through the following mediums:

- Folklore or folksongs
- Individual/ corporate experiences, idiosyncrasies, peculiarities and affiliations
- Syncretic forms

By folklore, we imply different kinds of myths shared or believed within a particular community or ethnic group over a long period of time which revolves around historical events, mode of evolution and possibly, important legends/ deities or gods which hitherto have represented the lineage of the

people. Furthermore, folksongs are songs that emanate from these myths and they help to explain scenarios and happenings within the myths. Additionally, musician's lifestyles, experiences, tastes, philosophies, cultural and religious affiliations and so on, are most times embedded into their songs for mere purposes of identification, awareness and moral sentiments. While syncretic forms, on the other hand, denote all manner of fusions or combinations of two or more musical elements or idioms (local or foreign) to form a unique musical style or hybrid.

The goal and aspiration of every practicing contemporary popular musician is to reach out to larger audience through the import of his music irrespective of race, religion, ethnic and political differences. The music, which is a creative product, is however exported to other cultures through various digital and electronic media. Going by this reality, a musician creates his or her music having at the back of his mind the consideration of the listening public. He or she creates the music to soothe the dictates and musical taste of the listening audience in order to attract and maintain unflinching patronage and financial support. Creativity in popular music, therefore, stems, not only from the musician's aesthetic need and satisfaction, but also from the fulfilment of the aesthetic yearnings and expectations of the listening public.

As earlier mentioned, these musical genres or styles are creative works by different categories of musicians. However, most of the styles are imported from other cultures (Europe and America most especially) but the musical contents vary, based on personal or corporate creativity imputed into them. This paper will discuss the various ways and methods creativity is applied into musical styles or genres.

Tune – tune is an important aspect in the creation or composition of any music especially the popular genre. A lot of creativity goes into composing a tune for any music genre because it is the vehicle that carries the words (lyrics), thus giving it the desired meaning intended for the listening audience. The more simple and catchy a tune is, the easier for the listener to retain and sing more often. In contemporary popular music, the chorus line of any song is made simpler and quite interesting in order to make it indelible in the minds of listeners. Tunes in popular music are composed not in any formal way like it is done in classical or art music. While some musicians adopt the method of singing into recording devices, tunes gotten through intuition or inspiration and learning the same by rote; others who have basic knowledge in theory of music may write down the tunes using musical signs such as staff notation or tonic sol-fa. The structure of a tune is usually made up of notes within musical scales (pentatonic, hex tonic, diatonic), and these scales (especially in Africa) are peculiar to certain ethnic groups or cultures due to linguistic configuration or tonal inflections derived in spoken language. A highly creative and innovative musician has what it takes to retain his audience's interest, patronage and taste in his kind of music due to dynamism in tunes. For example, some creative

artistes in contemporary Nigeria in the 21st century include Tuface, Lagbaja, Mr Flavour, Asa and a few others.

Lyrical Content/ Song Text – music is seen by many as a communicative agent and this is greatly achieved through the use of lyrics or song texts. As a symbolic expression, music can only communicate, and be responded to by the people who understands or can decode its message. Due to technological advancements, music is transmitted to larger audience through multimedia (digital, social and electronic). Consequently, audiences participate in popular music physically (singing along, tapping, clapping, dancing); emotionally (reminiscing, romanticizing, achieving spiritual highness); and cognitively (processing information, learning, stimulating thoughts) (James Lull 1992). For the sake of creativity, popular musicians in Nigeria adopt different textual methods such as the use of metaphors, proverbs, archaic expressions and cryptic utterances (Akpabot 1998) through the use of various languages such as, native languages (mother tongue), English language or the fusion of both English and Native language. Creole or Pidgin language can also be adopted. Another important aspect of lyrical content is that of theme, that is, what the music is talking about. Song themes may include one of the following, love, societal ills, personal experiences, worship and adoration, sex advances, political slogans, corporate jingles and host of others. Akpabot (1998), in discussing African song through its tune and text, grouped all song themes or titles into the following six major categories:

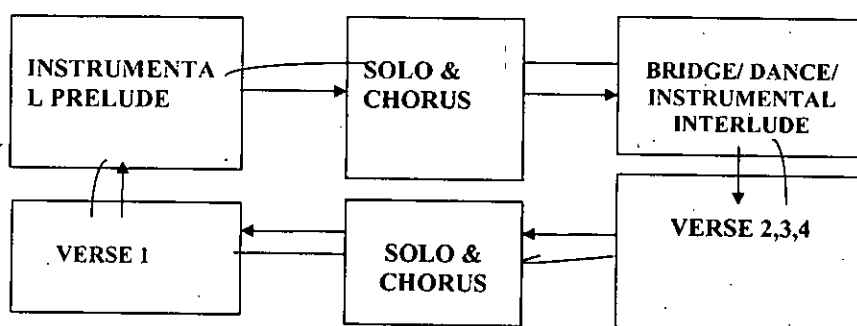
- a) Ritual songs used specifically for the worship of ancestral and non-ancestral gods
- b) Songs of social control (gossip song, obscene song, insult and scandal)
- c) Philosophical songs
- d) Protest songs
- e) Educational songs (historical, talk of legends and myths)
- f) Songs of entertainment (women's song, children songs, cradle songs, nonsense songs).

Instrumentation – African music in general are usually accompanied with one form of instrumentation or the other (either percussive or melodic). The instruments, especially the percussive ones, supply the rhythmic structure and help put the music in constant motion. Different ethnic groups, especially in Nigeria, have their peculiar musical instruments that are unique. Since the incursion of western cultures into Nigeria's socio-cultural lives, musical instruments of Western or European origins have been incorporated into Nigeria's music culture especially after colonisation. Different musical genres, as it were, have specific array of musical instruments (both local and imported ones) that go with the type of music generated. Musicians, especially in the 60's, 70's and 80's, learnt specific melodic instruments (of Western origin) such as, Trumpet, Hawaiian guitar, and Saxophone to enhance their performances on stage. Most of them also formed their musical identity, band or group name using the sound derived from these major instruments. However, since the advent of civilisation and advancement in information

Technology, the use of musical instruments has been drastically reduced. Moreso, since the advent of digital recording studios, different musical sounds derived from various musical instruments have been digitally inscribed on special audio applications (fruity loop, acid xpress, zynewave podium, sony acid music studio, etc) and can only be accessed through the use of computers and laptops. A lot of music scholars and critics have attributed lack of creativity, mediocrity, laziness on the part of young musicians or artists to this modern technological trend. Notwithstanding, few Nigerian musicians have really distinguished themselves through their music by their high level of creativity and ingenuity. These musicians have achieved this great feat based on some factors which may not be commonly shared, like personal experiences, musical exposure (both locally and internationally), educational background, great musical ability, high intelligence and so on.

Vocal Forms/ Structures – the major characteristic of African music, which is evident in all its musical styles or genres, is the aspect of logogenity, that is, word based. Popular music in Nigeria equally wears the logogenic features and thus places great emphasis on the vocal arrangements of its musical styles typologies. According to Theodor Adorno (a social theorist and musicologist) ‘popular music is standardized in the sense that its musical form contains a verse, chorus and bridge, and that these elements can be varied without much distortions to the whole structure of the song (Darbyshire, 2012). Going by this assertion, we can infer that creativity in popular music lies in the creative use or manipulation of these elements – verse, chorus, bridge and instrumental interludes with themes that create the desired unity and structure. The form or structure of any popular music, in whatever style or hybrid, can be represented thus:

Diagram 1



From the above, the arrangement can be altered in any form or structure depending on the creative input of the musicians or music experts like producers, sound engineers and others. Within these sections, themes are creatively used to maintain the structural unity of the music.

Analysis and Results

The selected songs are analysed systematically through division of the same into opening, middle and closing sections respectively. By this systematic approach, the use of theme(s) within each section will be deciphered effectively. Basic information is provided on each of the song, as well as a brief profile/background of the musicians. The theme of the song as used by both the voices and the instruments is illustrated in musical form while the various sections are presented in a tabular form for easy understanding.

Osondi Owendi (Chief Osita Stephen Osadebe)

Year of release: 1984
Genre: Igbo Highlife
Tonal centre: Key of F (heptatonic scale)
Duration: 7mins:52secs
Beat structure: 4 beats measure
Lyrical content: Igbo
Translation: Different strokes for different folks: while some rejoice, some are sad

Theme:

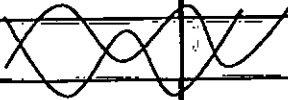


Presentation of Vocal and Instrumental Structure Within the Song

Lead Voice	
Back-up	
Horns	
Lead guitar	
Rhythm guitar	
Bass guitar	
keyboard	
Conga	
Drum Set	

Vocal structure – Lead and Back-up voices

Instrumental structure – Solo instruments & Percussion instruments

	OPENING SECTION:		MIDDLE SECTION			CLOSING SECTION	
	Introduction	Instrumental prelude	Antiphonal section	Instrumental break	Solo section	Antiphonal/ Instrumental	
Lead Voice							
Back-up			THEME			THEME	THEME
Horns		THEME					
Lead guitar							
Rhythm guitar							
Bass guitar							
keyboard							
Conga							
Drum Set							

Indicates silence of instrument or voice within a section



Indicates the leading instrument or voice in a section

In the opening section above, the lead guitar initiates a call while the rest instruments respond in a slower pace, this sequence is repeated thrice. All instruments join after a short call from the lead guitar, the horns section introduces the **theme** (3times) towards the end of the section.

The middle section starts with antiphonal singing, the lead voice gives a cue and the chorus refrains with the **theme** (Osondi Owendi). The interaction between the lead voice and the back-up voices gave rise to a harmonic technique called – **overlapping**. Afterwards, an instrumental break ensued that allowed the lead guitar to have its sway. The lead voice continued singing in a solo manner towards the end of the section.

The music concludes with both the lead voice and the trumpet solo giving cues while the back-up voices refrain with the **theme** (Osondi Owendi) repeatedly.

Short Biography

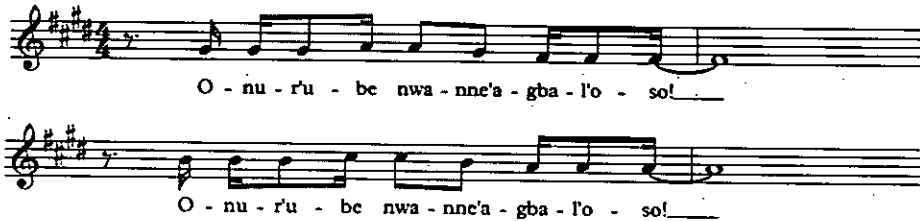


Osita Osadebe was born in March 1936, in a town called Atani in Ogbaru Local government of Anambra state, South-eastern part of Nigeria. He came from a family of singers and dancers it was in his high school years in Onitsha (a major commercial city in Anambra state) that he picked up interest in music. His musical career started in Lagos (Southwest of Nigeria) where he performed at nightclubs and also became a member of 'The Empire Rhythm Orchestra' led by E.C Arinze, where he improved his musical skills. His first album 'Adanma' was released commercially in 1958 and later wrote over 500 songs during his musical career. In

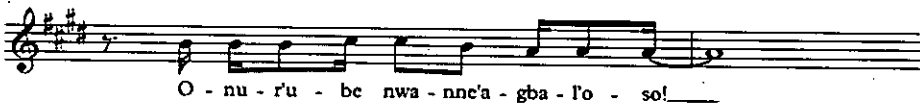
1984, he released a hit album 'Osondi owendi' which sold so well and earned him the status of the leading highlife musician in Nigeria. He died in St. Mary's Hospital Waterbury, Connecticut on 11th May 2007 after suffering of severe respiratory disease at the age of 77 years. His music contemporaries were Prince Nico Mbarga, Rex Lawson, Celestine Ukwu, Eddie Okonta, Victor Uwaifo.

Ube Nwanne (Bright Chimezie)

Year of Release: 1990
Genre: Igbo Highlife (Zigima sound)
Tonal centre: Key of E (heptatonic scale)
Duration: 9mins:59secs
Beat Structure: 4 beats measure
Lyrical Content: Igbo
Translation: Do not turn away from a brother's cry
Theme 1:



O - nu - r' u - be nwa - nne'a - gba - l'o - so!



O - nu - r' u - be nwa - nne'a - gba - l'o - so!

Theme 2:

Trumpet & Saxophone



Short Biography



Bright Chimezie (alias Okoro Junior) was born in 10th of January 1960 in Ekeoba, Ohuhu in Umuahia, Abia State of Nigeria. As a young boy in his home-town, he was in the choir and was also known to be a very good dancer and entertainer for which, and he gained some recognition. During his time at Eke Oba Community Secondary School he established the Modernized Odumodu Cultural Dance Group which, according to him, specialized in story telling through music. His musical career started when he left his home-town for Lagos after disbanding his cultural group in 1979. While in Lagos, he played for several night clubs like, Phoenician Nite Club, Gondola Club and Tee Mac Connection. He worked for the Nigerian Custom for three years (1980 – 1983) before going to Onitsha on invitation by Rogers All Stars Recording Company with his debut Album 'Respect Africa' which shot him to limelight. He later formed the Zigima Sound, a coinage from Igbo word 'Ozi I Ga Ma' meaning, 'the message everyone should know. He professed to be the modern day oracle that bears tidings from the spiritual realm to the physical. He has been in the frontier of Nigerian musicians in exporting Igbo popular music genre to foreign lands.

PRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE SONG

	Opening Section				Extended Middle Section											
Lead Voice			TH1		TH1				TH1				TH1			
Back-up						TH1			TH1		TH1		TH1		TH1	
Trumpet & Sax									TH2				TH2			
Lead guitar			XXXV													
Rhythm guitar																
Bass guitar																
Keyboard																
Conga																
Drum Set																

200

Theme 1 is used extensively within the antiphonal section (Solo and Chorus), while theme 2 is used repeatedly in the instrumental section as initiated by the trumpet and the saxophone instruments immediately after the antiphonal or solo section.

Halleluyah Chi m le (Onyeka Onwenu)

Year of Release: 1984 (In the Morning Light Album)
Genre: Igbo Gospel Funk/Soul
Tonal centre: Raised key of C (heptatonic scale)
Duration: 3mins:47secs
Beat Structure: 4 beats measure (starts on the 3rd measure)
Lyrical Content: Christian texts (Igbo)
Translation: Halleluyah, my Lord!
Theme:

Hal-le-lu-yah Chim le Je-ho-va Chim i-me-la; E-b'i-gwo-rom o-ria jim le, a-ga-ma-tu - ru-Gi nma nma:

Short Biography



Onyeka Onwenu (Elegant Stallion) an indigene of Arondizogu, Imo state, was born on 17th May 1961 into the family of Nigerian foremost educationist and politician, D.K Onwenu as the youngest in the family. She is a graduate of Wellesley College in Massachusetts USA where she obtained Bachelors in International Relations and Communication and the new school for Social Research in New York where she completed a Master degree in Media Studies. Before her foray into music, Onyeka Onwenu had practiced journalism with the Nigerian Television Authority just after her return from New

York as United Nation representative in 1980. Her first album 'Endless Life' was released in 1982, and marked her breakthrough in the music industry. Subsequent albums came in succession and this earned her the title 'Queen of African pop music'. She ventured into the acting world with Nollywood having featured in numerous home videos and won herself the African Movie Academy Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role in 2006. Being a strong advocate of better standard of living for women and children in Nigeria, Onyeka Onwenu entered into politics and was appointed the chairperson of Imo State Council of Arts and Culture in 2013. She is currently the Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer of the National Centre for Women Development in Abuja she is also one of the judges on X Factor West Africa, the world's biggest singing reality TV show.

PRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE SONG

	OPENING SECTION		MIDDLE SECTION							CLOSING SECTION			
Lead Voice	THEME 2x	THEME 2x	Verse 1	TH		Verse 1&2	TH	Verse 3	TH		Verse 1&2	TH	
Back-up				TH			TH		TH			TH	
Horns													
Lead guitar													
Rhythm guitar													
Bass guitar													
keyboard													
Conga													
Drum Set													

The theme here acts like the Refrain sung by both the lead and back-up voices respectively within the antiphonal section. The instrumental section supplies a steady accompaniment with occasional interludes initiated by the lead guitars.

Na Abania by Chinedu Izuchukwu Okoli (Flavour) featuring Dat Nigga Raw (Rapper)

Year of Release: 2005
Genre: Hip-hop, Highlife and Rap (Hip-life)
Tonal centre: Lowered key of B (heptatonic scale)
Duration: 4mins:33secs
Beat Structure: 4 beats measure (starts on the 2nd measure)
Lyrical Content: Igbo and Pidgin English
Translation: Tonight
Theme:




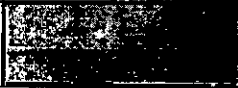


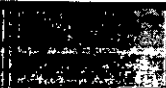




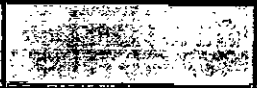
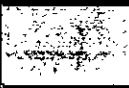
Short Biography



Chinedu Izuchukwu Okoli (Flavour) an indigene of Umunze, Orumba South LGA in Anambra State, Was born on 23rd November, 1983 as the first son of a large family of siblings. He started his music career as a church drummer at the age of 13 and became a professional drummer after his music training under one Mr. Odor. He also learned how to play the keyboard instrument and music production under Dekumzy, isi Charles and Nnachie. Flavour released his first album **N'abania** in 2005 and other subsequent albums, **Uplifted** (2010), **Blessed** (2012), and **Thankful** (2014). He is presently a

singer, songwriter, recording artist, dancer, and actor and has won several music awards both within and outside Nigeria. His contemporaries are MC Loph (late), Mr Raw, Bracket, Tiwa Salvage, Darey, Iyanya, Chidinma and several other artists.

PRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE SONG

	OPENING SECTION	MIDDLE SECTION						CLOSING SECTION	
Solo Voice	THEME RAP (4x)	VERSE 1	TH	VERSE 2	TH		THEME	ONOMATOPOEIC	THEME 8x
Rap voice						RAP			
keyboard									
Drum Set									

Discussion

From the foregoing, the creative means in which themes are used in Igbo popular music has been shown both musically and diagrammatically. Going through the analysis, the following can be deduced:

1. **Antiphonal theme** – this is theme which in most cases contains the main theme or message of the song and is repeated severally by the lead and back-up voices respectively. The lead voice may initiate the theme and the back-up voice(s) refrains or it may come after each verse rendered by the lead voice.
2. **Instrumental theme** – can be described as a phrase usually different from the main theme and introduced by solo instruments such as trumpet, saxophone, lead guitar, keyboard while accompanied by other percussive elements (conga, drums, timeline, and so on). This phrase may come before or after an antiphonal section as prelude or interlude respectively.
3. **Instrumental/ Antiphonal theme** – this is a theme performed by both the instrumental and antiphonal sections. In most cases a solo instrument introduces the theme and the voices (lead and back-up) re-echo or refrain it. The theme may also feature as instrumental interludes within the song, though in an improvised form.

Conclusion

Musical themes are very much relevant in the contemporary (popular) music. From a critical look into the different musical styles, we can deduce that Nigerian music has its form, structure and standardization. This article has discussed extensively the method in which themes are creatively used in contemporary Igbo popular music through in-depth analyses of the context and the musical content of some selected articles and songs. It is hoped that study will inspire research in popular music of other ethnic groups.

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