

Philosophical Elements in *Àgídìgbo* Music and their Didactic Values for Promoting Effective Educational System for Africa

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Abstract

This work suggests that there is a decline in the moral values and cultural ethos among the African populace, largely attributed to a combination of leadership capital deficit and decadence in the school system. Hence, there is a need to dig into Africa's enduring indigenous knowledge system, including philosophical-based traditional music genres, was recommended as part of sustainable home-grown solutions. *Àgídìgbo* music among the Yorùbá of Nigeria is one of such vocal-based traditional forms, and in this context, this exercise explores Yorùbá philosophical nuances embedded in *àgídìgbo* music with a view to understanding their educational values. Qualitative research methodology was adopted, acknowledging that *Àgídìgbo* compositions are rooted in proverbs, aphorisms and parables; presented in symbols of skilled language using figures of speech, imagery and other poetic elements with moral values projected in the music based upon the Yorùbá philosophy of *omólúàbí*, whose attributes include *ìjúbà* (paying of homage), *ìwà pèlẹ́* (gentleness), *ìtẹ́pámósẹ́* (hard work), *àforítì* (endurance) among others. Thus, as an enculturative traditional African music, *àgídìgbo* music is a valuable genre for correcting social ills and reinforcing cultural values, as its musical excerpts are also veritable didactic repertoires for promoting cognitive and affective development.

Introduction

There have been several calls from many quarters, scholarly and otherwise, repeatedly directed at Africans on the need to be introspective and vigorously search for practicable solutions to the perennial challenge of leadership capital deficit plaguing the continent and her numerous institutions. The need to recapture lost opportunities and apprehend a promising future for Africa cannot be better stressed than now following a decline in and subsequent collapse of the people's enviable values and effective enculturative modes. Africa, no doubt, possesses an overwhelming humanity legacy that is efficacious to redeem numerous forms of moral drifts as well as mediate many defiant humanity practices through her purposive home-grown interventions. This divinely supreme wisdom was once deployed through advanced application of Africa's living heritage, especially as contained in her indigenous knowledge system. It also manifested within both the informal and non-formal settings that characterized Africa's traditional form of education. In this work, we attempt to interrogate how Africa's (more specifically Yorùbá's) philosophical nuances, as exemplified in *àgídìgbo* music, promote an understanding of the people's educational and enculturative values for the purpose of developing the total man.

Yorùbá is a term used after a people and the language commonly spoken in the six states of Southwestern Nigeria as well as in some parts of Kwara and Kogi states. They are made up of many sub-ethnic groups including Èkiti, Ìjẹ̀bù, Ègbá, Ìjẹ̀sà, Ìgbómìnà, and Ìlàje, with prominent cities in Yorubaland including Ìbàdàn, Oṣogbo, Abẹ̀okúta, Akúrẹ̀, Adó-Èkiti, Ọ̀yó, Ìjẹ̀bù-Òde, Ọ̀gbómòṣó, Lagos, Ọ̀ndó, Ìlẹ̀sà, Ìṣẹ̀yìn and Ilé-Ifẹ̀ (Omojola, 2012). According to Borokini and Lawal (2014), Ilé-Ifẹ̀ is generally regarded as the religious-cultural center for all the Yorùbá people. Besides Nigeria, descendants of Yorùbá are found in the Republic of Benin and Togo. They have also spread to several parts of the African diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean, notably Brazil and Cuba, as a result of the trans-Atlantic slavery that occurred between the 16th and 19th centuries (Omojola, 2012).

The Yorùbá are music enthusiasts just as the art is also an inseparable element of their culture. Music is found in many of their social ceremonies except a few occasions including the burial of a young person or at certain festivals, like Edi¹ as well as during an outbreak of epidemic disease (Euba, 1990). Another notable attribute of the Yorùbá is the fact that they possess a rich culture and tradition. They place a high premium on good character as evidenced in a philosophical principle known as *omolúàbí*. The training among them, usually through music, folk tales, festival, proverbs and other traditional elements is targeted at achieving an integrative and formative effect on the character, skills and mind, as well as the physical and spiritual abilities of the learner.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that the individual lives effectively and grows up to become a responsible citizen in the society. A person is considered an *omolúàbí* (good person) if s/he displays exemplary humane attributes, which include rendering help to others, respecting the elderly, leading a good moral life, speaking politely, not being lazy but hard-working, etc. All these virtues are well articulated in the people's music and in their day to day interactions.

Àgídìgbo music is a traditional social musical genre that is commonly used for relaxation, panegyricizing, satirizing as well as at ceremonies among the Yorùbá. The music is rooted in proverbs, aphorisms, parables, metaphors and traditions of the people with some coded song texts requiring deep understanding of culture. As an agency of education, *àgídìgbo* music is often presented using skillfully crafted language including figures of speech, imagery and other poetic elements in expressing deep Yorùbá philosophical nuances. Philosophical messages are often coded in terms of language presentation, their symbols are, more often than not, fragmented, leaving listeners to reason deeply in order to deduce the full meaning of the music (Idamoyibo, 2013:117). The foregoing could best be illustrated in a saying: *l'ówe l'ówe là á lù'lù ògídìgbó²; òlògbón ní í jó o, òmòràn ní í mò ó, ewé kókò la fí í şe é, ganmugánmú la fí í lù ú; kò gbòdò fò, bẹ̀nì kò sì gbòdò ya*, which was interpreted as: 'ògídìgbó drum is cryptically played like proverbs; it is only the wise that can dance to it and only the informed can discern it' (Olatunji, 1984; Samuel, 2015).

As common in many African societies, the concept of education among the Yorùbá is holistic, and practical-oriented. It is geared towards moulding character and ensuring the individual emerges as a useful member of the community. The principles governing virtues of the society are taught through exemplary lifestyles and a demonstration of good character by adults. Other media include: folktales, proverbs, poem, songs, myths, direct instruction, and other unwritten norms of the society. Awoniyi (1975) notes that the principle governing Yorùbá education is based on the doctrine of *omolúàbí* and the by-product of education is to make an individual an *omolúàbí*. Education is a life-long process, the whole society representing the 'school' system wherein numerous aspects of character-building as well as the development of physical and mental aptitudes, acquisition of good moral qualities, knowledge and techniques are properly cultivated. However, the people's enduring culture and society, which used to be grounded on traditional systems, have largely been overwritten by Western ones, and a holistic system of education as embodied in the *omolúàbí* system is on the wane. Western education with its postmodernist scepticism towards grand narratives and long-held codes of morality has made a casualty of such philosophies as *omolúàbí*. The present study aims consequently to stem the tide of this moral decentering in a society caught in the web as well as a liminal space between the traditional and the western. This, it aims to do by foregrounding the elements of *omolúàbí* in *àgídìgbo* music.

This paper is divided into four main sections. The second section following this introduction briefly draws attention to a few relevant scholars' positions and discourses under the sub-topic of the determinants of *Ọmọ̀lúàbí*. In the third section, the authors articulate specific issues bordering on *Ọmọ̀lúàbí* philosophical engagements as practised in *àgídìgbo* music. In the fourth and concluding section, there are attempts to draw out possible implications for educational advancement of Africa by calling attention to how to harness the valuable resources embedded in *àgídìgbo* music through well-targeted suggestions for purposeful interventions.

Scholarship on the Determinants of *Ọmọ̀lúàbí*

The subject of *ọmọ̀lúàbí* has been widely discussed by different scholars. *Ọmọ̀lúàbí* is defined as functioning or exhibiting inherent virtue and value of *ìwàpẹ̀lẹ̀* (gentleness); a well brought up or a highly cultured individual (Abimbola, 1975; Fayemi, 2009; Abiodun, 1983). Some other authorities suggest that the literal meaning of *ọmọ̀lúàbí* is: *ọmọ tí Olú-ìwà bí*, meaning: a child birthed by chief-of-good-character (Gbadegesin, 2007; Fayemi, 2009). Such an individual can be described as excellent in character. In the same vein, Oluwole (2007) defines *ọmọ̀lúàbí* as “*Ọmọ ti o ni iwa bi eni ti a kọ, ti o si gba èkọ*” (A child who lives by the precepts of the education s/he has acquired). All the foregoing descriptions allude to the fact that the hallmark of an *ọmọ̀lúàbí* is the person's moral pedigree, an issue to which we shall return later in this paper. Suffice it is to state that the principles underlining *ọmọ̀lúàbí* are usually expressed in moral or cultural values of the society as exhibited by an individual. Vital elements embedded in the *ọmọ̀lúàbí* philosophy include: respect for old age and the elderly, loyalty and appreciation to parents, honesty in both private and public dealings, as well as devotion to duty, empathy, sociability, hard work, diplomacy and intelligence amongst others. All these may also be expressed in various ways in the form of logic, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics or aesthetics manifesting in all aspects of their culture, music being a vital component.

Existing studies on *àgídìgbo* in Nigeria have either cursorily described the instrument or merely sandwiched the genre within the general classificatory modes rather than the philosophical messages embedded in the music. Also, a nexus between thematic derivatives of *àgídìgbo* music and their educational values is yet to be fully explored in scholarship. This exercise, therefore, investigates how philosophical strands are constructed in *àgídìgbo* music among the Yorùbá of Nigeria and draws their implications for developing a systematic and effective educational programme for Nigeria.

Omólúàbí Philosophical Engagements in Àgídìgbo Music

As stated earlier, Yorùbá philosophies entail a comprehensive system of belief and views regarding fundamental principles underlying their domain of activities and lifestyle. We also affirmed that these philosophies are largely codified in the concept of *omólúàbí* just as we stated that *àgídìgbo* music, being vocal with instrumental accompaniment, constitutes an important aspect of Yorùbá culture through which the society encodes its values, beliefs, and ideologies and through which meaning can be communicated and understood. By means of descriptive analysis, we attempt to identify some notable Yorùbá philosophical views embodied in the concept of *omólúàbí* as expressed in *àgídìgbo* music. Our data analyses are deduced from selected interview responses and musical contents (texts and excerpts).

a) Respect for the elderly

Àgídìgbo music is used to pay homage to elders and teach the younger ones how to respect old age. Homage paying in Yorùbá society is known as *ìjúbà*. It is a common practice for *àgídìgbo* artistes to commence their performance with texts that contain *ìjúbà*. This may be in form of a prologue marking respect for the elders. The elderly ones may be the musicians' progenitors, mentors, parents, patrons or fans. The music usually contains certain words that eulogize the personality being referred to whether such is a human or a spirit. Awoniyi (1975) has explained earlier that it is a cardinal element of Yorùbá education to honour the past before embarking on a new assignment. Therefore, the typical traditional Yorùbá usually acknowledges precedents and all higher authorities before undertaking music performances. Pa Ganiyu 'Dakaje³ buttressed this point when he stated:

Ìjúbà ẹ̀ ẹ̀ pàtàkì nínú orin àgídìgbo. Fífi orin kí awon àgbà jẹ̀ nkan pàtàkì nínú orin àgídìgbo kíkọ. A ma n fì orin bu ọ̀lá fún àwọn àgbà kí á ba lẹ̀ wá ojú rere wọn, nítorí pé àwọn ni yó sọ bóyá eré ó dùn tàbí kò ní dùn.

Translation

Paying of homage is important in the performance of *àgídìgbo*. In fact, singing praises of the elderly, in particular, is the hallmark of *àgídìgbo* musical presentation. We express deep reverence to the elders in order to secure their approval and attract favourable condition for our performance, especially since they are main determinants of the success of such performances.



Plate 1: Àgídìgbò musician and a band member playing drum and singing

Ìjúbà, according to Omojola (1987), is a particular structural outline that is related to traditional Yorùbá formal procedure in which musical performance starts with a prelude, which is in the form of homage paying to ancestral spirits. This is so because music is generally believed to contain certain magical powers that can be used to evoke the spirit of ancestors, thereby winning their favour. It can be deduced from the foregoing that when performers accord the elders due respect, they are assured of success in their music business. Yorùbá traditional musicians are also known to interact with and seek the benevolence of spiritual beings with the belief that human voice, designed for singing, can be ‘seized’ or ‘released’ depending on any prevailing situation. They hold the view that when a musician fails to honour the “elderly ones”, who may be some spiritual force within the vicinity, such a performer’s music endeavor may be in jeopardy. An example is presented below:

Ka ma a se lo ko ni hun wa

Moderate

ka ma a se lo ko ni hun wa

Call: *Ká máa şe lọ, kò ní hun wá*
Àgbà ó tì wá lẹ̀hìn
Ká máa şe lọ, kò ní hun wá

We'll continue our music, there's no cause for alarm
 The elders have assured us of their support
 We'll continue our music, there's no cause for alarm

Res: *Ká máa şe lọ, kò ní hun wá*
Àgbà ó tì wá lẹ̀hìn
Àgbà ó tì wá lẹ̀hìn
Ká máa şe lọ, kò ní hun wá

We'll continue our music, there's no cause for alarm
 The elders have assured us of their support
 The elders have assured us of their support
 We will continue our music, there's no cause for alarm

The elders are duly acknowledged as both repository of wisdom and knowledge and the performers' benefactors; they in turn are expected to reciprocate the gesture of the one who pays obeisance. The interdependent relationship is clearly expressed in the exercise of duties/rights of both parties, either as giver-receiver or young-old basis. Any adult that "respects" a young person also deserves to be respected and the symbolism is concerned with the complementary roles of the old and the young in the affairs of the community (Onwubiko, 1991). A Yorùbá proverb that explains this well is *owó omode ò tó pepe, ti àgbàlagbà kò wọ akèrègbè* (The hand of a child cannot reach the ceiling/shelve, likewise, that of the adult cannot enter the gourd.). This means both elders and young ones have their limitations but each must compliment the other in order to ensure success. However, *àib'òwọ f'ágbà ni kò j'áyé ó gún* (lack of respect for the elderly led to a chaotic in the world). The need to give due diligence to protocol is evident from the foregoing.

Apart from this, *àgídìgbo* musicians often deploy music as they pay homage to their ancestors and progenitors in a bid to seek due recognition for their protection as well as efforts at 'supernaturally' attracting good patronage for their music. This is done through praise singing of the family progenitor. The excerpt below also is an assured testimony of the support of the elders for the musicians towards ensuring successful performance outings.

Daada ni

Daa-da ni o mo ti se ba fa-won to ni - le daa da ni

From the foregoing, it is evident that paying homage (*ijúbà*) to the “elders” (*àwọn àgbà*) such as parents, community leaders, spiritual powers, elders, women and other fans at the commencement of *àgídìgbo* musical performance is crucial to a successful music profession. By according these personalities due respect, *àgídìgbo* musicians are affirming their loyalty and simultaneously seeking the favour or benevolence of such higher authorities who are sometimes believed to be in custody of esoteric power through which they can control the affairs of men. Indeed, it is the general belief of the Yorùbá that greater favour is bestowed when more praises and homage are accorded the elders. The power relation at play between the terrestrial and celestial beings can be explained in the context of *ijúbà* in Yorùbá culture. Adeduntan (2014) notes that *ibà* is an acknowledgement or an appeal as well as the Yorùbá expression of admission of inferiority before powerful human and supernatural forces. As part of songs and poetry, the performer’s intention is to appease the identified class of superordinates in order to appropriate their power or forestall antagonism. The *ijúbà* section is usually taken by the leader of the *àgídìgbo* band. It is quite similar to what obtains in some Yorùbá musical arts performance such as *jùjú* and *fújì*.

Use of Euphemism

The use of euphemism in place of certain words and as a means of avoiding vulgarity is common in *àgídìgbo* music composition and performance. The musicians occasionally find a way of regulating the Yorùbá engagement with sex-related matters and words connected with them. This is in line with Yoruba restrictivist ideology, wherein there is a prohibition of certain words from many interpersonal encounters, especially in public spaces or in the presence of children (Salami, 2006). In maintaining decorum in the society, *àgídìgbo* musicians mediate their points through the use of coded language. This viewpoint was expressed by one of our informants in a song, where he refrained from mentioning the male genitals, but adopted euphemism in describing the contentious state of impotence of an individual named Ganiyu:

<p><i>Aṣiwèrè èyàn ló ñ pe Gàniyù l’ákúra</i> <i>Adé, yẹ kinní ẹ wò, só ñ le dáadáa?</i> <i>Ṣòkòtò kékeré ò gba ipá</i></p>	<p>Only a madman will regard Ganiyu as impotent Ade, examine your thing (penis); is it virile? Small pair of trousers cannot contain hernia</p>
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Also, *àgídìgbo* musicians occasionally make use of metaphor in addition to euphemism when describing any word that has to do with sexual parts of a man or woman. They engage some vague words or phrases in place of any term(s) that might be considered too direct, unpleasant, harsh or highly offensive in normal Yorùbá conversational settings. This is probably why their music has gained much acceptance among the adults, unlike many modern popular musicians who make use of direct words in describing sex-related issues.

This philosophy finds expression in the Yorùbá saying: ‘*a kii fi gbogbo ẹnu sòrò*’ (One does not express oneself with the entire mouth). Oyetade (1994) describes this as propriety-related taboos bordering on reasons of decorum in communicative situations. To be considered communicatively competent in Yorùbá language, Oyetade contends that the speaker must master the grammatical rules and equally understand the correct forms of contextualizing situations for different categories of people as well as the restrictions on the use of certain words and expression in specific contexts. Therefore, in order to avoid violating certain moral codes or being in bad taste to social norms of people, alternative expressions are provided in the language either to cushion the effect of the original one on the addressee or for some other reasons. For instance, *ńkan ọmọkúnrin* or *ńkan ọmọbínrin* are used instead of *okó* (penis) and *òbò* (vagina) respectively because of this type of restriction among the Yorùbá. Adejumo (2010) also explains that this restrictivist ideology takes root from the Yorùbá concept of *ọmọlúàbí*, and captures gentlemanliness, respectability and socio-cultural responsibility. Since the *ọmọlúàbí* is expected to restrain from vulgar talk, certain words, such as *ara* or *ojú ara* (body) *kinní* (the thing), *ńkan ọmọkúnrin* (man’s something), are used in replacement of direct mentioning of human genitals. The Yorùbá believe that certain words should not be uttered in the public, as they are regarded as *òròkòrò* or *ìsókúso* (vulgar words). This point is reinforced by Salami:

The Yorùbá people, for example, do not often describe the genitals by their technical terms. It is also taboo for example, to mention women’s menstrual activity by name. Although swearing (*eébu* in Yorùbá) may be revolting, it is not considered as bad as using vulgar or obscene words (*òrò rírùn*) among the Yorùbá people. Thus, it is possible for a Yorùbá speaker of English as a second language to react more negatively to such taboo words relating to genitals than to such swear words as ‘bastard’ and ‘bitch’. In other words, Yorùbá speakers of English as a second language might tend to avoid the use of the sex-related taboo English words more than the swear words (Salami 2007: 2).

However, there are certain occasions where exceptions to the rule obtain for the sake of aesthetics, and musicians could express such forbidden words/terms. This is not unusual since musicians tend to possess some form of poetic licence. On a comparative note, contemporary young music artistes make use of direct words in their music, unlike their traditional and much older counterparts. The tradition of avoidance of vulgarity is, by and large, upheld by a majority of traditional *àgídígbo* musicians in their performances.

Hard Work

Hard work is another element in Yorùbá philosophy that is promoted through *àgídìgbo* music. All our informants alluded to this fact in their responses during interview sessions. For instance, Mr. Abdul-Rasheed Iroko maintained that:

We use our music to promote hard work because a lazy person is a worthless person in Yorùbá society. Laziness is not part of the traits of *omólúàbí*. As you see me, I am a man of many professions; I'm a farmer, a hunter, apart from being a musician. When I do not have an outing engagement, I go to farm or hunt as I cannot stay idle.

This point was corroborated by other key informants, who noted that *àgídìgbo* music promotes hard work and that it is used to satirize lazy people. This explains why all *àgídìgbo* musicians found in our study combine other occupations with the music. One of them reiterated this point with a proverb: “*ònà kan ò wọ'jà, òun ló mú káfíntà tó tún fi ñ di 'kòkò*” (many routes lead to the market; by the same token, a professional carpenter may occasionally practice pottery). Therefore, exploring different opportunities toward multiple streams of income flow ought to be the priority of any hard working person, which may sometimes require combining one's profession with any other practice. *Àgídìgbo* musicians stress the value of hard work in their music and lifestyles. Pa Sangoyemi affirmed that:

As you can see, I am a carpenter, a farmer apart from being a musician. I make my *àgídìgbo* myself. If you are hardworking, as a musician, you have to look for an alternative to music business because you don't go for outing every day. *Àgídìgbo* musicians usually combine other works such as farming, hunting, carpentry, instrumental technologies. Adding another occupation will support you financially as this also show that you are a hard working musician. Laziness is not an attribute of *omólúàbí*.

In the same vein, Pa Ganiyu Agboluaje also asserted that:

A lazy person cannot be an *àgídìgbo* musician; or well known. *Àgídìgbo* requires serious dedication before anyone can become an expert in it. Before I became an expert, I used to rehearse my instrument (*àgídìgbo*) at all times. As you can see, I also combine music with farming. Can you now see that a lazy man cannot be a musician and farmer at the same time? So, we use our songs to criticize lazy attitude in the society. That is one of the contributions we make to our society. We believe that whatever a man is doing should be done with all seriousness because there is no other way to achieving lasting success other than working hard in one's profession.

We contend on another front that a lack of, or low level of Western education by *àgídìgbo* musicians is responsible for their low socio-economic status and financial predicament, hence the need for them to combine music performance with other jobs to be able to meet their basic personal needs and their families'. Nonetheless, the point that *àgídìgbo* music projects the Yorùbá philosophy of hard work as the acceptable path to honour or reaching the zenith of one's chosen profession cannot be simply discarded. Not only that, the Yorùbá people believe that if one is constructively occupied and working, such an individual will not have time for any unwholesome engagement. This is explained in another proverb that: "*ojú tó dilẹ̀ ni irorẹ̀ ń sọ*" (Pimples usually infect an idle face). In other words, an idle hand is the devil's workshop. Some *àgídìgbo* songs are used to discourage laziness among the people because an idle man is liable to become an evil messenger. The excerpt below, as sung by one of our informants explains the fact that when a man is idle, he will be assigned any frolicsome matters in society because he who is constructively engaged will have no time to frivolities:

<i>Igun méréin nílú ú ní,</i>	A town usually has four corners
<i>Odún leşin í bímọ,</i>	A pregnant horse usually delivers after a year
<i>Oşù méfà ní tàgùntàn</i>	A pregnant sheep delivers her kid after six months
<i>Ojọ kokànlélógún ladiyẹ boku eyin,</i>	It takes twenty-one days for a hen to incubate her eggs
<i>Òfófó ní í t'úlé</i>	A tale-bearer is the one that usually cause trouble in a home
<i>Ilé tó dilẹ leşin í kú sí</i>	A dead horse is usually found in an idle house
<i>Obinrin tó dilẹ ní í we konkoso</i>	An adulterous woman will always open her flamboyant hairdo for all and sundry
<i>Bòisì tí ò níşé ní í sinkú àbíkú</i>	Idle boys are usually called upon to bury 'born-to die' children
<i>Baálé ilé tí ò níşé lolójú bá-mi-dèrù-</i>	An idle head of the family is ever available to take on the duty of
<i>-b'omọ mi</i>	scaring a stubborn child with his 'bulged' pair of eyes

All our informants maintained that an idle person can neither succeed in learning nor becoming an expert *àgídìgbo* player. To this end, *àgídìgbo* music is used to encourage individuals to embrace hard work to avoid distress or hardship in life in the near future. The Yorùbá also believe that hard work does not kill, but idleness does. This is further stressed in a wise saying that: *eni tó bá mú'şé jẹ, kò leè mú'şẹẹ jẹ* (s/he who abdicates his/her duties will sooner or later suffer penury). Akingbileje (2010) explains some Yorùbá proverbs that are used in teaching hard work in Yorùbá society. Such proverbs include: *kíjípá l'aşọ oḽẹ, òfì l'aşọ àgbà: àgbà tí kò ní òfì, kó rójú ra kíjípá* (strong woven cloth is for the lazy man, superior clothing materials are for the elderly; an elderly one without superior cloth should endeavour to purchase strong woven cloth). In addition, some of them made the following quotation: *'oyé ni yó kílò fún onítòbí kan soşo* (it is Harmattan's harsh condition that will be the undoing of an individual with only one piece of dress). This is predicated on the notion that a lazy person would not be able to afford a change of raiment and by extension cannot meet up with the demand of basic necessities of life, including clothing and shelter. A metaphoric statement that explains this is *'àgùtàn kò p'aşọ èşin dà'* (the sheep has not changed its clothing of yesteryear), connoting that a lazy person can be identified by his one and only dress.

It is also generally believed that a lazy man's status is servitude to a hard working person. A timeless Yorùbá saying which lends credence to the foregoing issue is: 'work is the antidote for poverty; if you work hard, you will become great in life'. It is essential to work hard in order to reach one's desirable height and to increase one's earnings, otherwise the joy of satisfaction from any achievement may be short-lived. This is corroborated by Adeniji-Neill (2011) that *omólúàbí* is a person who strongly believes that continuous hard work brings about luck; a well-articulated principle in *àgídìgbo* music.

Call: *Ojú oró ní í lékè omi* I shall vanquish my enemies
Òşibàtà ní í lékè odò In the same fashion that currant leaves lay afloat on river
Lójó 'yàwó ọmọ mi, n ò ní tẹ I shall not be put to shame on my child's wedding day
Res: *Lójó 'yàwó ọmọ mi, n ò ní tẹ* I shall not be put to shame on my child's wedding day
Call: *Pépéyẹ ò lóṭàà, lójó 'yàwó* Duck has no enemy, on my child's wedding day
Res: *Pépéyẹ ò lóṭàà* Duck, sure has no enemy

Self-Effacement

Self-effacement is a feature in the *ọmọlúàbí* philosophy of the Yorùbá that is identifiable in *àgídìgbo* musical performance. The musicians believe that an arrogant person cannot maintain a consistent trope or limelight on the music stage because no fan will like to associate with such an individual. One of our informants: Pa Ganiyu stated as follows:

I had to swallow my pride when I wanted to learn *àgídìgbo*. When I travelled to Oyo, I was introduced to my mentor known as Salawu "*Ojú abo*" (woman face)... he was being called so because he usually dressed like a woman, wearing gown, putting on earring and cosmetics like a woman. Then *Ojú abo*, who was a native of Oyo, handed me over to one of his band members, a left-handed lady by the name Àkòndò. I had to put off the toga of "I know it all", ate the humble pie, otherwise, I would not have learnt anything. After I had started my own band, I voluntarily offered her money sometimes after performance outings. But before then, I had to humbly understudy her, though later on, I engaged myself in rigorous personal practice with a lot of trial and error....

It can be inferred from the foregoing that the music arena is meant for those who can humble themselves. Thus, humility remains a vital ingredient in the recipe for successful music profession. It is an attribute which promotes and precedes the act of paying homage to elders, community leaders, men and women in the society as well as beings in the unseen world who sometimes possess metaphysical powers. To this end, it is believed that an arrogant musician may not go far in the music business no matter how highly talented s/he may be. The arrogant is susceptible to die mysteriously in line with this Yorùbá saying: "*ó ti fi ẹnu kọ*, or *ó ti ẹnu gbó bí ọwọ*" (he stumbled through the mouth or his death was caused by his mouth).

As a result, *àgídìgbo* musicians do not joke with the matter of humility in their music performance. They also use music to remind their audience of the importance of humility. Nzewi (1980) explains that traditional\folk songs are used to illustrate morals in order to instruct the children on the expected and acceptable codes of behaviour demanded by the society. Such acceptable codes include humility, good deeds, perseverance and patience. To this end, music is used to emphatically condemn social vices, including disobedience, haughtiness, greed, laziness, selfishness, and other social misdemeanours.

It is the same principle of humility that regulates the conduct of *omoluabi* and it manifests in his lifestyle. A child is taught from the childhood the importance of humility as s/he grows up. This teaching may come in the form of proverbs, folktales, wise sayings, observation or direct instruction, depending on the situation at hand. The Yorùbá also have a saying: *ògà tí ñ yó ó rìn, ikú ñ pa á, bèlèntàsé òpòlò tí ñ gbéra rẹ̀ dálẹ̀* (the chameleon that moves gently was not spared the agony of death, how much more the frog that is leaping about), signifying that humility can prolong one's life but arrogant persons are liable to die young. The virtue of humility is thus seen promoted through *àgídìgbo* music in Yorùbá society.

Filial Relationship

Close feeling and togetherness are other philosophical lessons that *àgídìgbo* music promote within Yorùbá worldview. The band leader in *àgídìgbo* music exemplifies this by carrying his members along in his bid to achieve a successful performance outing. He allows them to express themselves within the ambit of their supportive roles during the performance being fully aware of the symbiotic relationship he shares with them and their valuable contributions. One of our informants noted that one his band members once wanted to betray their trust by acting against the principle of togetherness, but he suffered the consequences. Pa Ganiyu explained that:

A musician has nothing to gain from pride except shame. One day, one of my band members-*Ologido* (conga player) wanted to betray the principle we usually employed in our performance at outings. He boasted that even if *àgídìgbo* and other musical instruments stopped playing during the performance, his *ogido* alone could sustain the performance without any noticeable difference. What he failed to realize was that I kept the word close to my chest. So, it happened one day as we were performing at an important ceremony, I gave a sign to other instrumentalists to stop and he was left alone to continue to play, but it turned out that the production became poor that people stopped dancing ...Of course, he suffered the shame eventually.

Since the Yorùbá believe that *àgbájọ ọwọ la fi í sọyà; àjèjé ọwọ kan kò gbèrù dórí* (together we stand, divided we fall), the philosophy of unity, collective responsibility and togetherness also manifests in the form of audience participation as they chorus the refrain or dance to the music. Without effective audience participation, *àgídìgbo* music is not quite interesting. The stated philosophy gives room for unity of purpose and togetherness among both the performers and their audience. Samuel and Olapade (2013) noted the same principle as permeating the entire Yorùbá cultural fibre and governed by what is known as ‘the spirit of togetherness’ or collective responsibility. Musicians usually express their feelings as they perform and they carry the audience along as they offer lessons through the song texts. An example of songs in which betrayal is frowned at is seen in the excerpt below:

o da mi loju ko ni d'ale

Moderato

O da mi lo ju ko ni d'a le e ni ke ni tin da le o da mi lo ju ko ni d'a le

Literarily, ‘I am confident; anyone who betrays will not last till evening (never live long)’. For any good speaker of Yoruba language, the use of pun is noticeable in the foregoing example wherein the singer plays on the word ‘*d’alé*’ (will not last till evening, or never live long), and ‘*da’lè*’ (betrays). Besides the elements discussed here, other attributes of *ọmọlúàbí* contained in *àgídìgbo* music are contentment, advocacy for fidelity, dedication, humour, and generosity and so forth.

Conclusion and Implications for Africa’s Educational System

The concept of *ọmọlúàbí* is expressly seen in *àgídìgbo* musical practices. The principles of *ọmọlúàbí* are usually expressed in moral values of the society, such as *ìwà pẹlẹ* (gentleness), *àforítì/ ifàyàrán* (endurance/ dedication/ longsuffering), *itẹlórùn* (contentment), *ọlàwọ* (generosity), *itepámọsẹ/ akínkanjú* (hard work). Some of these Yorùbá philosophical stances that are exemplified in the concept of *ọmọlúàbí* as expressed in *àgídìgbo* music. *Àgídìgbo* music presents these and many more as it speaks in a deeper thought to the people. People listen to the arrangement of its sound, organization of its ensemble and composition of its texts in order to learn one lesson or the other. On this, Akuno (2007) explains that indigenous musical genres are symbols of cultural identity, a role emanating from collective participation in their construction and preservation.

Traditional African music serves the purpose of teaching, correcting and reinforcing cultural values among the citizens, thereby perpetuating the norms, customs and traditions of the land. It is, therefore, important that traditional *àgídìgbo* music be incorporated into Nigeria's school system right from the primary school level. The music can provide a systematic and scientific teaching and learning opportunity for Nigerian school systems. In addition, it can serve the purpose of teaching, correcting and reinforcing cultural values among the pupils with a view to inculcating the norms, customs and traditions of the people to the young minds. We, therefore, recommend that excerpts from traditional music such as *àgídìgbo* music should form part of repertoires for music education in Nigerian primary schools.

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Endnotes

¹ Edi festival is celebrated by the Ife people of Yorùbá, it is celebrated for Moremi, an Ife heroine.

² *Ògìdìgbó* consists of a set of single-headed drums in its ensemble. It is cryptically played in proverbs.

³ Pa Ganiyu 'Dakaje is a traditional *àgídìgbó* exponent hailed from *Iwo* Òsun State. The researchers were with him on several occasions for interview and interaction being one of the key informants. Despite his eye challenge, he is a notable *àgídìgbó* exponent in *Iwo* and its environs. He plays the *àgídìgbó* and sings very well. He was above 80 years old during the fieldwork.