

Article

Evolving Trends in Radio Popularization of Nigerian Urban Music

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Abstract

Radio programming pivots on music. The time dedicated to music – whether as a jingle, background tune, theme music, signature tune, or on its own – attests to this. On the other hand, music is a vital aspect of the Nigerian society and one of the ways music can be experienced in Nigeria is by listening to the radio. With constant airplay, the radio determines what songs become generally accepted to the Nigerian consumer. As a result of this determinant factor, musicians and producers of urban music in Nigeria tend to create recordings that will suit the needs of the radio industry. Incessant replications of a musical style with sometimes incoherent and ambiguous lyrical content seem inevitable. Investigating the relationship between radio popularization of urban music and some evolving trends, this study relied on interview and observation for gathering of data.

Keywords: Urban music, radio, popular music, society, creativity, globalization

Introduction

Radio popularization of Nigerian urban music in this study refers to the amount of exposure or airplay given the Nigerian urban music by the radio while evolving trends can be appreciated in the level of influence exerted on the favoured choice of music or musical genres that receive airplay. The trends studied include stylistic, linguistic and innovative.

It has been reported that the kind of musical practices that occur in a popular setting is often informal. Informal musical practice such as composing and song-writing can result from a conscious or unconscious effort, but most importantly, without the interference of any kind of educational authority (Mak, 2006; Vitale 2011). Style in Nigerian urban music is flexible as conception does not necessarily take cognizance of certain compositional rules peculiar with classical/art music. Style in Nigerian urban music is the distinctive form that gives it its identifiable flair. It comprises the way the urban tune has been structured to expresses ideas and emotions in specific forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony and colour, (Onwumere, 2015).

The urban tunes are often in song forms and songs use words, hence the linguistic trend. This trend has to do with the choice of words employed in communicating various ideas in the Nigerian urban music and the possible reason behind the choices. Composers of these urban songs smartly and constantly manoeuvre words to create new ones, adding to already existing words. Lovers and sceptics of this genre consciously and unconsciously adopt these expressions in daily communication.

Creativity is noted to be at its strongest in the act of musical composition where knowledge, imagination, intellect and skill come together in one quest (Barnes,



2001). Since creativity and rigidity cannot work together, there is bound to be innovation in any creative endeavour. To verify how the stakeholders in the Nigerian urban music industry have been able to register creativity through knowledge, intellect, imagination and skill, innovativeness is showcased through a historical background of the Nigerian urban music spanning 2007 and 2017, laying bare the creativity of some earlier artistes of the genre who succeeded in igniting the creativity in later artistes.

Paramount to this study is access to the radio. Transportation by road is a major means of movement in Nigeria and vehicle audio systems are installed in cars, buses, vans and other forms of vehicles to keep the occupants entertained and informed. Private car owners listen to the radio on the move; commercial vehicle owners tune in to various radio stations to entertain their passengers during short and sometimes long trips; truck users also keep themselves amused with the stereo. Furthermore, mobile radio extends to telephones. Arguably, all mobile phones have FM radio pre-installed on them. Mobile phone users can tune in to any of the FM stations in their locality while at work, at home and anywhere. Good enough, using the mobile phone radio does not attract any fee or require any internet connection. There are also, radio sets available in various sizes and forms that can be powered with electricity and batteries. These are often found at home, offices, eateries, fueling stations and other places. Many of these sets are portable, making mobility easy. Indeed, radio pervades everywhere that man is found.

Given the typically repeated airplay of the urban music genre and a large broadcast audience, radio stations cannot but have a deep effect on the Nigerian urban music scene. It is on this premise that radio popularization of Nigerian urban music is significant to this research. For nearly three decades after urbanization hit the Nigerian society in the 1940s, highlife, juju, Afrobeat, apala, waka, dadakuada, igede and other forms of popular music amalgam sufficed the musical needs of the Nigerian urban adults. Various musical bands were functional, playing at some famous bars and clubs in Lagos, the centre of urbanization. In addition to the aforementioned genres and sub-genres of popular music, these bands played genres like jazz, twist, highlife, and the Caribbean derivatives like mambo, calypso and samba (Agu,1980). The musical flair of this period seems well-tailored predominantly for the consumption of adult urban dwellers. Foreign music consumption, however, remained the vogue for the Nigerian youth. It was not until the 1970s, when reggae spread to Africa from Jamaica through the electronic and print media, that the Nigerian youth rose to the challenge of inclusive music-making and consumption.

As the youth skilfully created their own style of the Jamaican reggae, there was a shift in focus from foreign music consumption to the home-grown derivatives – especially, the popular styles. They found a voice in reggae music, which continued for the next decade. In the early 1980s, Sugarhill Gang's *Rapper's Delight* ferried into the Nigerian musical scene from the United States of America, once again through the multimedia of radio, television, and newspapers. *Rapper's Delight* became very popular in Nigeria (Gbogi, 2016). Although the reggae genre still ruled the scene, there was a gradual unwinding from the roots reggae – which was reggae's major

subgenre—towards the end of the 1980s. Other variants of reggae such as dub, ragamuffin, rockers reggae, disco reggae, funk reggae and the dancehall emerged (Onwuegbuna, 2015a) and were readily accepted. By the early 1990s, the Nigerian youth were at home with rap music, hip-hop, ragamuffin (raga), and dancehall. With the advent of globalization and ease of access to the satellite, these urban youths cleverly fused the foreign genre with local styles (Christopher, 2012) giving birth to the musical phenomenon called the Nigerian Urban Music. With the help of multimedia in its popularization, this brand of music has ultimately become the core of the Nigerian youths' subculture.

In discussing urban music, popular music cannot be ignored because the former is a derivative of the latter. According to Onwuegbuna (2006), popular music is the entirety of that music with varied styles that developed from artistic manipulations and combinations of musical activities of distant cultures, times and practices. Some artistic forms within popular music are reggae, hip-hop, rhythm 'n' blues, highlife, Afrobeat, juju, funk, rock, disco, country, calypso, makossa, soukous, gospel, soul, and native blues. On the other hand, urban music is an encompassing name given to music that originated from black European slaves. Hip-hop, soul, and rhythm 'n' blues are musical phenomena found within the name urban music. Just as with the case in reggae, the Nigerian youth have skilfully crafted their own versions of urban music in hip-hop, namely Naija hip-hop, soul, and rhythm 'n' blues (R&B).

The Nigerian urban music genre has overtime reproduced itself stylistically and linguistically. The moment a style becomes commercially successful through constant airplay, other artistic endeavours tend to model in the same direction. Stylistic trends can be found in homogenous instrumentation, rhythmic patterns, vocal techniques, and chord progressions resulting from seemingly identical melodies. On the other hand, the languages employed in the urban music genre include English, the Nigerian Pidgin-English and the indigenous languages of various ethnic groups. Often, these are covertly fused thus: English blended with Pidgin, indigenous blended with English, or indigenous blended with Pidgin. Whatever combination is used comes in lots of metaphors. With the cultural and moral situation in the country, covert expressions are utilised in the urban music genre to pass messages without sounding offensive. Yet, in the Nigerian youth subculture, these expressions are well-deciphered, plunging the future generation into deeper moral decadence.

Aim and Objectives

The primary objective of the research was to investigate various aspects related to the popularity and influence of socio-cultural practices within society. The study aimed to achieve this by conducting a thorough analysis in the following areas:

Ascertain popularity indices in socio-cultural practices: The research sought to determine the extent to which specific socio-cultural practices are popular among individuals within a given community or society. By examining the prevalence and acceptance of these practices, the study aimed to shed light on the cultural preferences and trends within the population.

Ascertain the level of these indices in media practices: In addition to exploring the popularity of socio-cultural practices among the general public, the research also aimed to investigate the representation and portrayal of these practices in various forms of media. By examining the extent to which media platforms and channels showcase and promote these cultural elements, the study sought to understand the role of media in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards cultural practices.

Verify the level of application of these indices in urban music airplay: Another key focus of the study was to assess the incorporation of popular socio-cultural indices in urban music airplay. By analyzing the themes, lyrics, and messages conveyed in urban music tracks, the research aimed to determine the extent to which artists and producers draw inspiration from cultural practices and traditions in their creative works.

Determine the extent of popularity of urban music as a result of the practice: Lastly, the study aimed to investigate the impact of incorporating socio-cultural indices in urban music on the genre's popularity and reception among audiences. By examining the relationship between cultural influences and music consumption patterns, the research sought to evaluate the significance of cultural elements in shaping the appeal and success of urban music within the music industry.

Overall, the research endeavored to provide valuable insights into the interplay between socio-cultural practices, media representations, and urban music, highlighting the complex dynamics that influence cultural trends and preferences within contemporary society.

Review of Related Literature

Popularity

Heuger (1997) defines popularity as the quality or fact of being liked, favoured or approved by someone or people in general. He further narrowed it to popularity in music which could be described as a status of the high social relevance of music. It is a situation in which someone or something is popular (appealing, well-liked) with many people. Such expressions as 'gain in popularity', 'at the height of popularity', connote that popularity can grow just like a living thing if nurtured. Freedman (2015) explains that what makes someone popular is some kind of special attention known as input of energy and this phenomenon increases with attractiveness or beauty. In rationalizing the relationship between attractiveness and popularity, Cillessen (2011) asserts:

The heterogeneity of the empirical construct of popularity can be illustrated by a comparison to the construct of attractiveness. Research in social psychology has shown consistently that people who are considered physically attractive or beautiful are evaluated positively (p.27).

Following this line of thought, Okafor (2005) corroborates with the discourse on the attractiveness of the Carribean and American pop styles to the Nigerian youth, hence its popularity amongst them. Onyeji (2016) affirms that indeed the youth and

the youth at heart are responsible for the popularity of those styles and this popularity can be measured in consumption and commercialisation.

Heuger (1997) having given a sociologist point of view on popularity further presents it from various disciplinary angles. For the economist, popularity equals sales potentials, thus popularity-issue becomes a strong criterion for investments. Cultural theorists on the other hand, assess popularity as a product and stabilizing element of a criticized dominant ideology. The Positivist focuses on the quantitative aspects and views popularity as the degree of dissemination measurable, for example, in airplay statistics or sales figures. The Music historian regards popularity as a feature of certain musical styles. Social observers, Chatzopoulou, Sheng and Faloutsos (2010), prove that popularity on YouTube can be measured in view counts, comments, ratings and favourites. In other words, a user views a video and gives feedback either by posting one or more text comments, or rate the video on a five-star scale, or add it to his/her set of favourite videos. On other social media platforms, particularly the picture-oriented, popularity metrics include number of likes and comments. Whatever the view, Ammer (2004) deduces that what is popular during one period may not necessarily be popular at some other period. Popularity, therefore, has a life span. According to Tagg (1987), "McPhee...models this as a system in which a cultural item, once chosen by and given exposure by media, gains popularity that motivates further exposure, which eventually exhausts popularity" (p. 1). In corroboration with the notion of popularity having a lifespan, Brem and Reichert (2016) report a response from an interview with a radio programmer thus: "...it takes approximately 100 plays to bring a new song to the attention of an (his) audience...If it (the new song) is no longer popular, it gets completely removed from the station's program" (p.48).

Popularity, being a social phenomenon, hinges on social influence. Collective attention from the media, youth and progressive-minded seems to have bestowed popularity on Nigerian urban music. Out of the three, the youth have been noted to be the strongest proponent of the genre considering that they "constitute not only the largest chunk of the population, amounting to 70 per cent, but also the most vibrant segment of that population" (Usua & Michael, 2015). Relevance and attractiveness are some of the qualities which attract popularity. Urban music as a pop genre handles matters of the moment and ultimately presents itself as relevance as well as multifunctional. Globalisation and commercialisation have so beautified this artistic phenomenon that it has become appealing to many youth. On the other hand, the popularity of the radio as a medium is unparalleled. While newspaper, television and internet are to a large extent appealing to people of a certain level of literacy, the radio makes itself popular amongst people, in spite of their social, literacy and economic status. Interestingly, Usua & Michael (2013) observe that ever since it was realized that music is attractive on the radio, there has been no going back.

Urban music

Erroll and D'Amico (2015) write that urban music is a catch-all phrase for hip-hop and R'n'B while Belz (2005) adds that it is music that generally started off with the black people but is now listened to by a wide audience and includes a number of genres like soul, R&B and hip-hop within it. Considering that these genres are

forms of popular music, urban music is, therefore, a derivative of popular music. In defining popular or pop music, Birrer (1985), gives four categories. The normative definition views pop music's popularity as inferior, while the negative sees pop as distinct from art and folk. The sociological refers to pop's appeal to social groups and the technologic-economic definition relates to mass communications. Onwuegbuna (2015b) suggests defining the phenomenon according to specifics. He outlines stylistic, sociological, process-based and theory-based definitions. The stylistic confines itself within the particular styles of each genre and sub-genre of pop music rather than its general feature. Sociological concerns itself with pop music as it relates to the mass media, mass consumption, its ability to reflect social identities and cultural currents. In the process-based definition, the procedural steps and the various means by which pop can be experienced are highlighted while the theory-based seeks the elements of music that are revealed in and peculiar to pop music. Though three decades apart, there are obvious points of confluence in Birrer's and Onwuegbuna's definition classification. The following reveals adoption of one or two of the aforementioned categories for definition. Ammer (2004) defines popular music as a large category of music, consisting basically of works designed to please the general public. Okafor (2005) describes it as music that deals with familiar themes and issues of the moment thereby making it easily accepted and understood by a lot of people. Adedeji (2017) explains further that popular music generally, has been regarded as the type of musical form or practice with audience satisfaction in mind. Wilson (2018) notes that as much as the material in pop music is taken seriously by many people, it might not be out of place to call it 'light music' because of its transient nature. This nature does not in any way denigrate its worth.

As a pop form, therefore, urban music is "transient, amenable to innovation and alteration. Because it is commercially oriented, it is ephemeral... it always establishes its base with the cultural current. And because it deals with political and social issues of the moment, it is widely acceptable" (Agu, 1980:119).

Urban Music Styles

Rap and Hip-hop

For more than thirty years, hip-hop has evolved from local subculture to a global phenomenon. This style, which was birthed in the '70s has gone from Bronx Streets to Madison Avenue and beyond (Kajikawa, 2014). Adedeji (2016) avers that the origin of hip-hop can be linked to the genesis of rap music, which is traceable to The Bronx, an ethnic community in West New York. Here, DJs mastered the art of talking over sampled beats in a particular manner. Improvisation and chanting being the basic features of rap music, can be related to the storytelling tradition of Africa. As recorded in Teach Africa – World Affairs Council of Houston's article – Storytelling provides entertainment, develops the imagination, and teaches important lessons about everyday life. The storyteller employs gestures and body movements, singing and facial expressions to make stories memorable and interesting. Bilal, Dyal, Meyer, Preda and Vargas (2015) report that in the African storytelling tradition, villagers utilized handmade instruments to tell stories about their families and local events. This exacting style of talking while music is playing is called rap. Furthermore, traditions journeyed when Africans were taken hostage

and sent to America during the Atlantic Slave Trade, slaves employed this form of music and singing as a coping mechanism from the pain of slavery while they worked in the fields. Rose (1994) notes that it is the strain between cultural fractures produced by post-industrial oppression and the binding ties of black cultural expressivity that sets the crucial frame for the development of hip-hop. Some hip-hop musicians include rap music as the foundation of hip-hop.

R&B and Soul

Meeus (2010) notes that the soul music genre emerged out of a combination of gospel music and rhythm and blues. Overtime in the history of black music, gospel had been its greatest inspiration. However, the conversion of the gospel song '*My Jesus Means the World to Me*' into a secular '*I Got a Woman*' by Ray Charles gave birth to soul music as a distinctive musical genre. In support of this, an entry in the rhythm and blues section of Microsoft Encarta (2009) corroborates that the genius (Ray Charles) fused gospel music with rhythm and blues (R&B) to establish a distinctive style that came to be known as soul music. The same entry notes three important styles that emerged from R&B in the 1960s. They are the Chicago soul, influenced by gospel-music songs; the Motown sound, which combined polished songwriting with a straightforward vocal delivery and the southern soul which is the most gospel-influenced style of R&B. Born originally out of racial restrictions, oppression and discrimination, Rose(1994) notes that soul affirms black musical history while Scaruffi (2005) reports that soul music was enabled by an unstoppable trend towards black and white integration, as more white folks gradually accepted the idea that black culture was not evil or degrading after all, but just different. Just as rap is the foundation of hip-hop, rhythm and blues is the foundation of soul music. Gospel music gave Soul its original emotion. Some soul music artistes include James Brown, Nina Simone, and Aretha Franklin.

R&B, hip-hop and classic soul have been fused into a more recent genre known as neo-soul. This artistic expression has also established itself as a sub-genre of urban music. Its exponents include Tony!Toni!Tone!, D'Angelo, Erykah Badu, Angie Stone, Lauren Hill, Joss Stone, Alicia Keys and John Legend. Some Nigerian R&B and soul musicians include Asa, Nneka, Banky W, Waje, Bez, Darey, Cobhams Asuquo, Niyola, Omawumi and Praiz.

Culture

On a general note, culture is a people's way of life. It is the belief, customs, practices and social behaviour of a particular nation or people (Microsoft Encarta, 2009). Seen as the vital cement and primary means of intercommunication with the outside world, culture is the soul, materialization and the capacity for change of every social group (O.A.U 1969). Conduits of culture include music, language, dressing, religion and general belief system. Culture is dynamic. Okafor (2005) notes that borrowing from another culture is not a bad thing, for acculturation is fundamental to cultural growth. Friedman (2002) supports that it is pertinent to have a strong culture, as well as the openness to adapt and adopt from others. Music as a major cultural conveyor is "a universal art present in all human settlements and cultural expressions. It generally cuts across cultural, social, educational and political bounds, enabling borrowing and enjoyment of music art interculturally" (Onyeji,

2016:6.) Although “cultures may spread their influence to diverse regions, these regions tend not to abandon their own values and interests but merely incorporate the new ones into a broader view of the good of life” (Kaplan & Kelly, 1994:123). This is the metamorphic story of Nigerian urban music. For as much as the Western world has spread her influence to Nigeria, the region has also endeavoured to marry her musical culture with that of the western world. It is therefore not out of place that earlier studies have peddled with the sentiment that Nigerian hip-hop is a subaltern copy of the American (culture of) hip-hop (Gbogi 2016). With acculturation and increasing commercialization of popular music, global culture has risen as a “threat to regional cultural self-expression and artistic diversification posed by globalization” (Onwuegbuna & Igbokwe, 2012:212). Aided by the electronic media, the western societies that once colonized some third world countries, have steadily and undoubtedly conquered their colonies culturally (Uche,1999).

The proliferation of Western culture-laced music through access to the radio can be mirrored in the work of Okorie who carried out research in Narayi Highcost, Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State. Here, the occupants are predominantly youths and the result shows a 100 percentage affirmation to ownership of a radio set, and ultimately, accessibility. 59% listen to the radio daily; 22% weekly; 18% occasionally. 41.6% of the population strongly agreed, while 29.8% agreed to the assertion that indigenous music being aired has a touch of foreign influence.

Globalization

Globalisation is essentially linked with culture. According to Tomlinson (1999), globalization is simply the whole world working through a process of control in which the West draws all cultures into its territory. Idolor (2004) notes:

As a phenomenon, globalisation is an imposing development that can hardly be resisted by any society that operates communication network. Music has conspicuously been in this phenomenon, but where a country fails to export her musical arts to the global market via the agents of globalisation, she ends up consuming others’ music, later subsumed and finally suppressed (p.107).

In consonance, Salawu (as cited in Endong, 2015) asserts that the real motivation of globalization is to re-colonize the world and aid the hegemony of the cultural values of the United States-led Western in the world. In discussing the potency of globalisation on artistic cultural expression, Sanneh, (2005) notes how rapidly hip-hop traverses from the shores of America to other parts of the world and assume various names. While citing Mundy, Mugovhani (2016) avers that although globalisation brings to developing countries – like South Africa – such opportunities as extending her horizons, sharing knowledge, engaging in collaborative innovation and networks, challenging old assumptions, and opening up new opportunities for innovation in artistic ventures, it is also accompanied by challenges. Tyler (2010) succinctly notes that globalisation comes with a high spiritual and cultural cost. Nigeria has paid this cultural high cost of globalisation in myriads of ways. Musically, globalization opened new avenues for innovations and alterations in

artistic expressions, which is commendable. on the other hand, the country has been faced with an onslaught of moral debasement associated with the urban music genres. This may have elicited the statement from Onyeji (2016): “Undoubtedly..., the heavy reliance on sexual issues and sexuality in the contemporary popular music of the twenty-first century raises strong concerns about the focus of the genre” (p7).

Sexuality can be mirrored in the dress pattern, language, and general lifestyle of the performers and consumers of this musical phenomenon. Idolor (2007) also notes that it is not out of place to see Africans imitating, practising and even adopting behavioural patterns related to the music of the Western world, and considering them as modern. The electronic media, being one of the conduits for globalization, has aided the propagation of this Western-culture-centred music and the behavioural patterns associated with it. In line with this, Nigerian media houses have been noted to be custodians of foreign culture (Ukonu & Wogu,2006).

Radio Popularization of Music

Radio is one medium noted for its capacity to reach wide and far. Usua and Michael (2015) concur that radio endears itself to people in all social level and as well reach them at all literacy levels. A Nielsen (2013) study observed that radio has the ability to deliver mass impression through reach and frequency. In comparison, video and programmed streaming lack this combination of reach and frequency, which are integral to music’s sales cycle. To reinforce this, Dertouzos (2013) states that radio stations, record labels and recording artists are widely believed to enjoy a symbiotic relationship. In other words, the record industry uses radio to promote its artists and music to hundreds of millions of radio listeners, while radio catch the attention of listeners and advertisers by airing this recorded music. Atoyebi (2001) reports that the primary aim of radio is to entertain and in fulfilling this objective, music becomes a crucial part of its programmes. He names three categories of music that radio—as the case with Radio Nigeria—airs which are popular, classical and cultural. In consonance, Nwuzor (2000) informs that radio is really suitable for entertainment, information dissemination and education purposes.

It is noteworthy that man is drawn to music as Onwumere (2015) quips that music is made for man and man for music. Also, Onyeji (2016) declares that there must be a musical type that interests even the most hardened of all human souls and minds. Amidst getting informed, people are attracted to the radio to listen to music. Bakare (2005) opines that countless programmes on the radio are built around music as an essential bait. In fact, music fills the greater part of radio’s daily programme. In support, Sterling (1992) observes that an enormous majority of radio programming consist of various types of recorded popular music.

With its ubiquitous and personal nature, simplicity of operation, the advantage of cost-effectiveness, adaptability and portability, radio has the advantage that no other medium of mass communication has enjoyed. This is why radio seeps into nearly every community where humans are found more than any other medium (Daramola, 2003; MacBride et al, 1980; Usua & Michael, 2015). Also, the Nielsen (2013) study on music discovery process shows that broadcast radio is by far the

number one method for discovering music. With reference to radio in North America and Britain, Negus (2008) states that radio networks offer one of the most vital promotional outlets for recorded music.

Radio popularization of urban music in Nigeria

The origin of radio popularization of urban Nigerian urban music could be linked to the Nigerian Broadcasting Code's stipulation of a 60 per cent local media content in the programming of all media houses in Nigeria. This insistence could only mean that prior to the release of the code, foreign programmes dominated the airwaves of many, if not all, media outlets in Nigeria. Aimed at indigenization of media content, the code states thus:

- (i) [to] seek, identify, preserve and promote Nigeria's diverse cultures;
- (ii) to critically select the positive aspects of foreign cultures for the purpose of enriching the Nigerian culture;
- (iii) to develop and promote the application of indigenous aesthetic values (NBC Code 2010, pp.12–13, as cited in Endong, 2015:108).

Going back to the history of (radio) broadcasting in Nigeria, O. S. Coker, as cited in Adejumobi (1974) reportedly writes:

Broadcasting in Nigeria dates back to 1932; in fact, December 1932, when the BBC started what they called the Empire Service and Lagos was one of the receiving centres. For a short while, Lagos would only receive; it could not re-broadcast, and even then if it had wanted to re-broadcast, there were not many receiving sets. So, between 1932 and 1934, the primary duty of the station was to receive, but the station evolved a system in which it could redistribute BBC news. The program was wholly BBC – nothing local, and in fact, until 1951, when the Nigerian Broadcasting Service was inaugurated, most of the programs on the wireless (because it was under the Posts and Telegraphs Department then) was BBC programs, with one or two local items (p. 48).

Emedolibe (2013) observes that patronage of the Nigerian indigenous music started declining since the last 20 years and peaked in 2012. This downward situation is linked to the overwhelming dominance of the hip-hop culture, such that exponents of other forms of music have cowered in. Reason for this is not far from the assertion that traditional forms of music in Nigerian have vanished from the musical calendar of most broadcast stations (Olatokun, 2000).

Indigenisation of media content, therefore, became critical. Good enough, Endong (2015) notes that the indigenization philosophy has garnered the support of a good number of critics who are firm on defending 'Nigerianity' in all aspects of life. Radio, being an integral part of the broadcasting entity in Nigeria has strived to operate within the Nigerian Broadcasting Code as Okorie (2013) bares that radio broadcast stations were mandated to air 80% of local content in order to promote and preserve the Nigerian culture. Radio's ability to popularise music in Nigeria is seemingly not a daunting task because Okafor (2005) avers that:

The Nigerian situation now is that a man who has an AM set can listen to at least, six domestic stations at any point in the country. Most of the stations broadcast music for at least 52 per cent of their airtime which is at least 18 hours a day. Radio then becomes a powerful medium of musical prorogation in Nigeria (p.336).

If radio is able to propagate music wide and far in Nigeria and has been mandated to air local enormously, then its contribution to the emergence of indigenous music artistes is unparalleled (Atoyebi, 2001). Music has been renowned as being an expressive art, a channel for cultural dispersal, a fertile ground for identity formulation and a crucial tool for the propagation of culture (Adedeji, 2016). Nigerian urban music, being a blend of the western and Nigerian culture has become a medium for regional cultural expression in Nigeria through language, philosophy, and inclusion of local instruments in its orchestration. Its popularization on radio arguably falls within the specifications of the Nigerian Broadcasting Code. As has been stated earlier, what is popular during a period, may not be popular in another period (Ammer, 2004).

Highlife was once the popular music phenomenon in vogue at a time in Nigeria and viewed as a means of cultural expression. Other genres and subgenres of popular music have trended at different intervals too (Onwuegbuna, 2022). Atoyebi (2001) attests that radio does not only bring artistes to limelight but also promotes indigenous music and ultimately, indigenous culture. In listing examples of artistes brought to limelight, courtesy of the radio, he mentioned the likes of Fela Ransome Kuti, Steve Rhodes, Sam Akpabot, Akinwande Oshin, and Soji Bucknor. These were exponents of Juju, Afrobeat, highlife and genres that were notably reigning during their historical periods. Today, Nigerian urban music artistes which include Tuface, Nigga Raw, Olamide, Ruggedman, Wizkid, Wizboy, Flavour, 9ice, Techno, Kiss Daniel, Davido, Asa, Phyno, have rode to stardom on the airwaves of the radio networks. These artistes and their contemporaries have not only been able to coalesce Nigerian musical culture with foreign influence but have kept hold of a strong indigenous identity (Falola & Heaton 2008). Hip-hop, being the most popular and most commercialised subgenre of the urban music phenomenon in Nigeria has arguably, become immersed in the regional ways of life in Nigeria. The world at large can observe the Nigerian culture through what is now known as the Nigerian hip-hop. In view of the various names of this genre, Sanneh(2005) notes that when the hip-hop goes abroad (from the shores of America), it usually goes underground while changing its name and modifies its identity. Hip-hop in Nigerian today is known by such nomenclature as *naija hip-hop*, *gbedu*, or simply *naija* (Falola & Genova, 2009; Gbogi 2015), *Afro hip-hop* (Adedeji, 2016) and has dominated the Nigerian radio airwaves for more than a decade. On the premise of cultural reliability, the Nigerian urban music becomes a tool for indigenous cultural expression and fits within the specifications of the Nigerian Broadcasting Code for radio airplay, hence its popularization.

Research Methodology

This research adopted a descriptive survey design. According to Wokocho (2015):

A descriptive research design helps provide answers to the question of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem; a descriptive study cannot conclusively ascertain answers to why. Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe “what exists” with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (p.102).

The descriptive design is appropriate for this study because it facilitated the collection of data from a sample of radio stations in Rivers State, Nigeria, described how they popularize Nigerian urban music and exposed the evolving trends associated with this popularization. These characteristics will be described without manipulating any variable in the study.

The population for this research consists of radio stations in River State, Nigeria. Rivers State is one of the States in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria, whose capital—Port Harcourt—is a major urban centre. With one major federal university and state university, colleges of education and polytechnics, the state can boast of a good number of youths who are the major consumers of urban music. Bearing this in mind, radio stations within the state tend to air this genre of music more. Also, some stations in the state like Cool FM, Wazobia FM, Treasure FM (FRCN) and Family love FM have branches in other major cities of Nigeria. With this, the researcher can have a glimpse of radio stations’ modus operandi outside Rivers State. According to Edozie (2017), 14 FM radio stations are competing for audience attention in the Garden City. This number excludes Radio UST FM (University of Science and Technology), Uniport Unique FM (University of Port Harcourt) and a recently established station, Wish FM. When added, it brings the total to 17 radio stations, tallying with the number retrieved. The latter list was last updated in October, 2018 presenting it as more current. Internet radio is not included, as it does not fall within the scope of this study.

In Nigeria, radio stations are easily accessed coupled with readily available devices that aid this access. Having established earlier that radio’s programmes hinge on music, radio stations, therefore, appear to be an effective platform for music popularization.

Within the sample area of this study, there exist such subgroups as commercial radio, state-owned or state-run radio and federal run radio. Furthermore, there are all-talk and sports stations such as Nigeria Info FM and Today FM (Michael & Usua, 2015). They were all handled as radio stations. Another vital point to note about simple random sampling as it relates to this study is that the researchers easily counted all the members of the population for the study before drawing the desired sample. To draw the sample, this study employed the balloting method while sample size was derived by using Taro Yemen’s Formula. In using Taro Yemen’s Formula to calculate sample size, this formula required only a knowledge of the population size.

Fig. 3.1
$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(a)^2}$$

Where

n=sample size

N=population size

a= level of significance usually at 0.05

Here, N =17 and a = 0.05

$$\text{Therefore: } n = \frac{17}{1+17(0.0025)} = n = \frac{17}{1+0.0425}$$

Sample size = 16

As a result of the qualitative nature of data required in this research, the instruments of interview and observation were employed. A researcher-structured interview was conducted face-to-face to elicit the required data and thereafter analyze responses. The researchers paid close attention by listening to various recordings of urban music being aired on radio stations to study certain elements and gather data. We visited 16 radio stations and conducted a face-to-face interview which lasted between 60-80 minutes. Dialogue was recorded using a mobile phone voice recorder for subsequent referencing and analysis. Notes were also taken when necessary.

Analysis of data was centred on the four research questions spurred by this study. For data analysis, content analysis method was used while interpretation of data was done by screening through the primary data for words and phrases most commonly used repeatedly by respondents. Using the open coding system which is one of the major properties of qualitative analysis, the raw data was organised to make sense of it and further categorised upon structures that hinges on that of the questionnaire and common themes. These common themes, deduced from scanning through primary data were clustered, further reduced to aid an evaluation across responses from the individual interviewees. By reducing the content in this manner—handy and controllable representation of data collected—analysing is made easier. Krippendorff (2013) avers that this step is necessary, whether in qualitative or quantitative content analysis.

Nigerian Urban Music

Urban music arrived in Nigeria in the 1980s and flourished without bounds into the 1990s. Noted to have gained popularity in Lagos, urban music has over a period of three decades provided for the youth an identity, escape route from unemployment, an avenue for self-expression and criticism. The economic and social situation in Nigeria at the advent of this genre was near chaotic as the military-ruled autocratically. Lack of freedom for the press, devaluation of the Nigerian currency, unemployment, and inflation were some of the features characterising this period. The Nigerian youth easily found a voice in the sub-genres of urban music. With a hike in the prices and subsequent scarcity of various foreign products—music inclusive—the Nigerian youth resorted to cleverly creating his own brand of the foreign music brought to him through radio and satellite television. At first, it came as a subaltern copy of the American variants, then ethnic linguistic manifestation took over from the early 1990s. By singing or rapping in the Nigerian languages, particularly the Yoruba language, over a near-foreign instrumentation, the various genres of urban music gain popularity and won the hearts of many Nigerian youths. Unavailability of record labels to sign up new artistes and a proper music

industry did not deter the youth from making his own music, even on a low budget. The artiste worked in the stead of a producer, A&R manager and marketer. Later on, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the use of computers and low-cost music software, improved the quality of music production, displacing the Western copy of urban genres (Adedeji, 2014; Adedeji, 2016; Adedeji, 2017; Babalola & Taiwo, 2009; Christopher, 2012; Gbogi 2016; Onwuebuna, 2010).

Some of the early groups and solo artistes of the urban sound include Junior & Pretty, Daniel Wilson, Plantashun Boiz, and Remedies. To partake in the budding phenomenon, there was an influx of Nigerian artistes from the Western Diaspora. They include JJC and the 419 squad, Naeto C, Eldee da Don, Madarocka and the S.O.U.R.C.E. Clik. Later, other acts include P-Square, Styl-Plus, Modenine, U.G.O., TySu, Ice Prince, Chris Akinyemi, Asa, B-One, Terry tha Rapman, Olamide, Banky W, Six-Foot Plus, M.I Abaga, Ruggedman, Duncan Mighty, African Kings, Black Jesus, Whiteboy Pee, Sauce Kid, Nefe Stone, Mastaplan (MP), Freestyle, Ill Bliss, Elajoe, Sasha, B.o.u.q.u.i, J-bif, Tony Merlot, Jesse Jags, Weird M.C, Jazzman Olofin, Baba Dee, The Mo' Hits crew, Tannaz Records Family, C TySu, Faze, 9ice, Phyno, Timaya, Chemistry, Lord of Ajasa, Skuki, Mr Belushi, Darey, Mojizzle, Cobhams Asuquo, and a host of others.

Development of Nigerian Sub-Genres

Ajgunle Dancehall: As urban music flourished in Nigeria from the early 1990s, there arose a sub-genre with no name in particular. Having originated from a suburb in Lagos known as Ajgunle, the music easily took its name from its origin. A re-interpretation of the reggae genre, dancehall is a “dance floor-oriented style, ...combines reggae, calypso and disco grooves, but de-emphasises the chopping sound of the rhythm guitar. ...musical accompaniment of dancehall sounds is deftly sequenced on computerised studio equipment and carefully mixed to achieve the desired effect” (Onwuegbuna 2015b, p. 43). A further re-interpretation of the Jamaican dancehall gave birth to the Ajgunle dancehall style. This style dominated the Nigerian music scene with songs that include *Dem Go Dey Pose* by Baba Fryo featuring DJ Flava, *New Dance* by Marvelous Benjy, *Danfo Drivers* by Mad Melon & Mountain Black, *Daddy Showkey's Dyna*, *Free Madness* by Terry G, *Daddy Fresh's Eleru Gberu e*, *Stereo Man's Sample Ekwe* and *African China's Crisis*. Notably, there exists a large music market known as *Nasamu* in Ajgunle, although this has little to do with the success of the artistic endeavour that emanated from the area (Adeniji, 2018). Its success can be credited to its song texts—which often decried social ills, sufferings of the populace, and general day-to-day life of the common man in Nigeria—often delivered in Pidgin English, a language rated as having the highest number of users in Nigeria (Gbogi, 2016). Another success indicator is its danceable feature accompanied by various dance routines that reigned among the Nigerian youth. *Galala*, *Suo* and *Konto* were the dominating dance styles of the time which were brought to fore by the Ajgunle dancehall sub-genre.

Naija Hip-hop: With the gradual emergence and growth of Naija hip-hop, Ajgunle dancehall receded into near oblivion. Hip-hop evolution in Nigeria has alluded to the Nigerian youth's desire to find a voice and avenue to expectedly effect a change

in the ill-fated socio-economic and socio-political landscape the nation. Being a borrowed phenomenon, Nigerian artistes have overtime imbued the sub-genre with local cultural dynamics. Some of the elements that define the sub-genre are rapping, sampling, DJing, breakdancing, scratching and beatboxing. Graffiti is also associated with hip-hop, though not popular in Nigeria. Rap is often used interchangeable with hip-hop arguably because of the historical background of the duo. In hip-hop, long poetry-like spoken or sung form is common. This is sung or spoken over repetitive, highly rhythmic accompaniment, typically produced and manipulated with music producing software.

Gbogi (2016) identifies four stages in the development of the Naija hip-hop. The first is the Phase of Mimesis. This is the stage of imitation and mimicry. Fuelled by the popularity of *Rappers Delight* – a defining rap song – in Nigeria at a time when hip-hop was beginning to attain success in the United States, some seemingly amateur Nigerian musicians began to mimic this Americans style. One of such is Dj Ron Ekundayo, who in 1981, mimicked the American rap culture in his song ‘The Way I Feel’. This piece was arguably reckoned as the first rap and hip-hop record by a Nigeria. Influences from ‘Rapper’s Delight’ and Kris Okotie’s disco tunes were obvious in Ekundayo’s hit single. Ekwueme notes that “...in spite of this naïve attempt at imitating contemporary Euro-American pop music, a wide gap shows between the foreign pop and its local imitation” (p.166). Other early Nigerian rap/hip-hop artistes were Dizzy K Falola, Rapmaster Lexy Meila, Dili I. Jukson, I.C. Rock and the group, Sound On Sound. To buttress the foregoing, Gbogi writes:

...general experimentation with Americanisms and American hip-hop continued as attested in Dizzy K.’s “Saturday Night Raps” (1982), Kingsley Bucknor’s “You Gotta Keep On Luv’in’ Me” (1985), Dili I. Jukson’s “Rapp and Checkout Music” (1985), McDormett’s “Let’s Hear the Funk” (1986) and Gee Tagbas’ “Rap Dazz” (1986) (p.174).

These proponents paved the way for the birth of the Nigerian rap and hip-hop scene, with the musical trail for the upcoming acts to tag along.

Following the Mimesis Phase closely is the Domestication of the Nigerian hip-hop with Emphasis’ 1991 recording of ‘Which One You Dey’. Breaking off from the Americanism of their predecessors, Emphasis delivered their song texts in the Nigerian Pidgin English, opening up an era of homecoming for hip-hop. Junior and Pretty’s *Monika* recoded by Storm Records further captured the indigenization process of hip-hop in Nigeria. From *Fufu Flavour* album where *Monika* emanated also came the hit single, *Bolanle*. Towards the late 1990s, more hip-hop artistes followed the domestication trend. They include, Tribesmen with *Shake Body* (1999); Ruff, Rugged & Raw With *Wetin Dey* (1995); and Remedies With *Sakomo* (1998); *Sakomo* was delivered in a blend of Yorùbá and English on a sampled beat of MC Lyte’s ‘Keep on Keeping on’ (Amos, 2012; Adedeji, 2017).

The third developmental stage of Nigerian hip-hop highlighted was the Local Dispersal Phase. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Nigerian hip-hop had attained media and commercial successes within Nigeria. Various groups and artists sprung up, and competition gradually gained momentum. These paved the

way for effective dispersal of this musical phenomenon through the media, hence its growing popularization. The final stage identified is the Global Dispersal Phase. This fourth phase opens up an international spread of the genre. With the advent of globalisation aided by the electronic and print media, consumption of the Nigerian hip-hop journeyed from the purview of Nigeria to other nations of the world.

Rhythm and Blues: This sub-genre of urban music was noted to have been in existence since the 1940s, making it a parent to hip-hop. According to Bowman (2008), it originated from the sociological, industrial, and technological changes that took place in the United States just before and during World War II (1939-1945). R&B parades elements of blues and Afro-American folk music. Overtime, R&B incorporated some elements of jazz and soul music. Vocal delivery of the sub-genre is often smooth, and sometimes sung over a hip-hop beat. Generally, R&B singers often alternate between gentle, smooth, harsh and raspy timbres, giving the music a wide range of emotional expression (Encarta, 2009).

In Nigeria, some R&B songs also feature a couple of rap passages, for example, Styl-Plus' *Olufunmi* (2003). This trend has often left a thin line of difference between the R & B and hip-hop genre. Writing about the current trends in R&B, Bowman (2008) also states that by the mid-1990s, elements of rap such as sampling, scratching (a percussion technique that involves running a record needle manually across vinyl records) and declaimed vocals had become part of the dance-based, post-disco R&B. At this time, the hip-hop culture had become established in the Nigerian music scene and so was influenced by the trend of the time popularize by radio and other media forms. Many Nigerian artistes who started off as R&B musicians often featured a couple of the *Naija hip-hop* genre in their albums or even perform as singles, seemingly for commercial reasons. Little wonder Erroll & D'Amico (2015) state that many argue about the music being called R&B today, which pales when compared to its forerunner mainly because it is now producer-driven, lacks the realistic soul of classic R&B, and all seemingly sounding the same. Notable Nigerian R&B singers include Styl-Plus, Banky W, Tuface, Wande Coal, Praiz, and Waje.

Afro-soul: Nawasadio (2008) gives a literal meaning of the word Afrosoul as, regarding Africa as the centre of one's concern that is, being Afro-centric economically, culturally, politically, and religiously. Going by this definition, Afro-soul music can be said to be music with European elements but having Africa at its centre or soul. As a sub-genre of the Nigerian urban music, it fuses the black American soul music with Nigerian instrumentation, language and philosophy. Notable Nigerian Afro-soul artistes include Asa, Nneka, Brymo, Darey, and Bez. Just like their African counterparts, these Nigerian acts are yet to record huge commercial success with the international market the way the Nigerian hip-hop and R&B stars have. Collaborations with internationally renowned artists have become one of the major ways of assessing international success. Denselow (2007) typifies the case of Simphiwe Dana, an Afro-soul singer in South Africa yet to receive international recognition though praised to the high heavens back home. She was noted to be the best thing to have happened to Afro-soul since the exit of Mariam Makeba. Afro-soul, Afro-jazz, Afropean and Afrobeat are subgenre of the urban

music that is firmly similar as a result of the African and Western elements of music fusion. Some Afrojazz artists include Lagbaja and Simi.

Modern Trends in Nigerian Urban Music

Commercialisation: One reason for urban music spread in Nigeria is commercialisation. Writing on one of the most consumed subgenres of urban music, hip-hop, Watkins (2007) points out that record companies, fashion labels, sports franchises, food and beverage companies sell their products with hip-hop. This is one aspect of the commercialisation syndrome of urban music in Nigeria. Many corporations and businesses have utilised various sub-genres of the urban music to make huge profit. Onwuegbuna and Igbokwe (2012) note that the music of Femi Kuti and that of Lighthouse Family were used to advertise the products of some international conglomerates. Obviously, urban music is no more just about representing the voice of the youth and people but also stands for the voice of countless brands, products, services and causes. Another facet of commercialisation is employing the services of urban music artistes to perform catchy theme songs for advert purposes. Obviously, the focus is not on the music but the personality of the artist. Asa's I believe for Sky Bank, Glo Unlimited sung by Lagbaja, Psquare; Banky W Etisalat song (0-8-0 9ja For Life); Airtel's I Go Dey By Your Side performed by The Trybe and seven notable contestants of The Voice Nigeria; MTN Pulsing P by Wizkid, Iyanya and K Cee and many more that exist or yet to exist all attest to this point of view.

Collaboration is yet another feature of commercialisation in Nigerian urban music. Borrowing the words of Kun (2002) while describing hip-hop, Nigerian urban music can be said to have become "internationally recognized as a dominant commercial force" (p.580). Collaborations with artistes of international repute had set the wheel of international recognition rolling for the home grown artistes. According to Onwuegbuna and Igbokwe (2012),

2-Face Idibia became the first artiste to win the Best African Act Award at the 2005 MTV Base Music Awards in Lisbon, for his *African Queen*, he and his hip-hop-oriented music became a model for his contemporaries. He then went ahead to collaborate with the Jamaican international *dancehall* star, Beenie Man, in the song *Nfuna Ibanga*; and yet another collaboration with Wyclef Jean (another Jamaican superstar) in the song *Proud 2 Be African*. D'Banj was the next to win an international award that opened the door for collaborations with the American rap megastar, Snoop Doggy Dog. Soon after, collaborations between Nigerian Afro-hip-hop artistes and many international stars across the globe became the vogue (p.217).

Profit and commercial gains are therefore a driving trend in the production, packaging and performance of urban music in Nigeria.

Instrumental fusion: Typical instruments used in a particular musical work usually distinguish and classify it into a genre. One can say Jazz is noted for saxophone, trumpet and bass. In the same vein, juju music is characterised by sounds from the

talking drum; Highlife features lead guitar and brass instruments; Afrobeat is also noted for saxophone and its drumming grooves. Nigerian urban music is not noted for any particular instrument but is however heavily dependent on sounds from computerised keyboard and music production software. The urban music beats are also made from a blend of local instruments or instrumentation style and Western electric beats. Sounds from the talking drums, woodblock, rattle, slit drum, reed flute and others local instruments are often mixed with the piano, harmonica, electric guitar, bass guitar and recorded samples to create modern and appealing improvisations that are dance-based. Wizkid's *Fever* features the little metal gong, guitar, harmonica samples and trumpet sound that gives it a highlife feel; Tekno's *Choko* blends samples of xylophone with computerised drumming playing complex rhythmic patterns, bass and lead guitar; Kiss Daniel's *Mama* showcases slit drum samples, electric guitar, drums performed in the Nigerian local style and a crescendo string-like sound; Olamide's *Wo* is basically a blend of the programmed slit drum and drum samples; Phyno's *Obiagu* renders rap lines over a blend of sounds from local drums, long gong, slit drum, rattle, woodblock, piano and samples of sounds that characterise hip-hop. This contrasts his *Fuwa Sawa* which features basically the piano and drum.

Stylistic fusion: Another common trend in urban music practice is fusing an already existing style of music with an artiste's stylistic endeavour. It is not out of place to find a Nigerian urban musician rendered a seemingly soul, R&B or hip-hop lines over an Afrobeat, Juju or highlife undertone groove. Instances of this are Olamide's 'Wo' (Fuji), Falz's 'Jeje' (Highlife), Yemi Alade's *Knack Am* (highlife in the style of Igbo gospel music popularly known as 'Ariaria'), Humble Smith's *Focus* (afrobeat), Reekado Banks' *My Lover* (highlife), Timaya, Phyno and Olamide's *Telli Person* (highlife), Simi's *Joromi* (afrobeat), Phyno's *Fada Fada* (in the highlife style of the Kegite gyration music).

Sub-genre diversification: Nigerian urban musicians have often tried their hands on various subgenres of the urban music. This arguably is a survival strategy in an industry where existing and upcoming artistes are competing for the same audiences' attention. As the radio and other media outlets popularise dance-driven music, lyric-driven music pales and the artistes diversify to stay commercially relevant. Momentary crossing over from rap to pop, R&B to hip-hop, soul to afrobeat, from dancehall to hip-hop highlife (hiplife) becomes an evident trend in the Nigerian urban music practise.

From one of the pioneers of the Nigeria urban music, Tuface Idibia, his 2006 *Grass 2 Grace* Album featured 13 tracks comprising of dancehall (*One Love*), R&B (*True Love*, *E Be Like Say*, *If Love Is A Crime*), Hip-hop (*Ocho*, *4 Instance*, *No Shaking*), Carribean style (*My Love*). Tuface is supposedly an R&B artist. Other artistes with diversified blend in their albums include Asa - *Asa* (2007), P-Square - *Game Over* (2007), Dbanj - *Entertainer* (2008), 9ice - *Gongo Aso* (2008), MI - *Talk About It* (2008), Banky W - *The W Experience* (2009), Wande Coal - *Mushin To Mohits* (2009), SDC - *The Dreamer Project* (2011), and Flavour - *Blessed* (2012). Jonathan (2018) notes that Olamide's (2017) album *Lagos Nawa* has only two rap songs out of 17 tracks. The one-time rap artist has the other tracks in the album as mixed

versions of sing-rap and outright singing. Other rappers whose various single revealed diversification of genre include Falz (*La fete* and *Jeje*); Phyno (*Augment* and *Zamo Zamo*); Ycee (*Juice*).

Responding to the notion that he now sings more than he raps, Phyno says,

I don't blame any fan that thinks that way. The truth is, to me I think I grew from what I used to be. The fans are not wrong at all but the same fans change as well. They go to the club where they don't play rap songs and they make the pop artist a bigger artist. You rap and remain the smaller artist. You need to be where the other artistes are so at the end of the day, if you think you have what it actually takes to do both then you're actually more versatile and that's what the industry is about. Drake raps, he sings... Music is music at the end of the day (interview granted Hip Tv, **published on April 23, 2018**).

He rounds off by advising that fact should be called fact and the fact is that no Nigerian rap artist has ever won an award in the history of Nigerian music.

Sampling: Originally, sampling has to do with digitally isolating sound bites and often blended with drumbeats to accompany raps. Lately, this phenomenon has metamorphosed. Onyeji (2016) notes that one of the general trends associated with popular music in Nigeria is the appropriation of existing musical lines and lyrics to new ones. This is also generally known as sampling. It could occur as the lyrical, instrumental or melodic lifting of an existing musical idea and appropriating to a new one. This is meant to be done with proper copyright permission. However, there has been no reported case of an artist suing another for using his idea without permission in Nigeria. This aspect of the music business is, arguably, overlooked in Nigeria for yet unverified reasons, hence its proliferation. Below are some Nigerian urban songs where ideas from other works had been sampled.

Table showing sampling in Nigerian urban music

Original Artist	Song Title	Sampling Artist	Sampled In
Lagbaja	Gra Gra	Davido	If
Jide Obi	NTA 'Tales By Moonlight' signature tune	Kiss Daniel	No Do
VIP	Ahomka Wo Mu	Wizkid	Manya
Rex Lawson	Jolly Papa	Flavour	To Be A Man
Bob Marley	I Shot The Sheriff	Phyno	Landlord
One Direction	Story of My Life	Adekunle Gold	Sade
Kojo Funds and Abra Cadabra	Dun Talking	Davido	Fall
Childish Gambino	This is America	Falz	This Is Nigeria
Rihanna	Under my Umbrella	Banky W	Ebutte Metta
Chaka Demus & Pliers	Bam Bam	Timaya ft Olamide	Bam Bam
Jay-Z ft Linkin Park	Numb/Encore	Teni	Case
Victor Uwaifo	Joromi	Burna Boy ft Zlatan	Killin Dem
Bob Marley	Turn Your Lights Down	Rudeboy	Reason With Me

T	Low		
Akon	Locked Up	Davido	Nwa Baby
Onyeka Onwenu	Iyogogo	Psquare	Bank Alert

Features of Nigerian Urban Music

Philosophy: From inception, black cultural expressivity has been the main philosophy behind the development of urban music. As the genre traverses various regions and many cultures accept the phenomenon, this initial philosophy began to pale against the cultural backdrop of the indigenous regions. Philosophy generally covers a system of ideas, opinions, beliefs, or principles of man’s behaviour based on the totality of how he perceives his existence and the universe (Onwuegbuna, 2015a). The philosophy of the Nigeria urban music can be captured in the lyrics of the music. Love, self-praise, the celebration of materialism, societal ills, sexiness (praise for the female genital organs) are some of the notable themes captured in Nigeria urban music.

Rhythm: Ammer (2004) states that “The movement of musical tones with respect to time” is known as rhythm and that “...The concept of rhythm thus takes in METER (the patterns of time values), BEAT (accents), and TEMPO (rate of speed)” (p.348). The foundation of the rhythmic structure of Nigeria urban music is laid upon a simple quadruple metre of which represents four crotchet beats in every measure of the music. This reveals why most of the urban songs fit perfectly into the rhythmic ⁴ostinato below:

Fig. 1



This line can be heard clearly being played by some percussion instruments in countless urban songs that are aired on the radio, parties, streets and clubs. This rhythmic pattern also forms part of the instrumentation for the songs as typified in Runtown’s *Mad Over You*. With a side drum playing the pattern as an intro for two measures, the following ensued:

Fig. 2

The above lead and rhythm guitar lines are played against the rhythm in 4.1 above to create a popular pattern that is one of the characteristic features of what some urban music consumers colloquially refer to as *tungba* (dance) music. This instrumentation pattern has proven to be attractive to many Nigerian pop musicians as it is clearly appropriated in countless songs being aired on radio and

undeniably getting the attention of urban music lovers. Artists whose music have been noted to propagate this pattern of instrumentations are some of the biggest names in the urban music industry. They include, Davido, Tekno, Wizkid, Iyanya, Reekado Banks, Burna Boy and Psquare. An infusion of the Afrobeat or highlife rhythmic groove with the above is also notably in vogue.

Fig 3. Afrobeat drumming groove as propagated by Tony Allen (Faber,2015).

The image displays four staves of musical notation for an Afrobeat drumming groove. The first staff, labeled 'DRUM SET', shows a 4/4 time signature with a complex pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, including rests and accents. The second staff, labeled 'DR.', shows a similar pattern with different rhythmic values. The third staff, labeled 'HH VARIATIONS', shows a series of eighth notes with accents. The fourth staff, labeled 'ADD HH FOOT', shows a series of eighth notes with accents, including a 'D' symbol for a foot drum.

A combination of the drumming and variation above is a common rhythmic pattern in the instrumentation in most Nigerian urban songs. Some songs include Killin Dem (Burna Boy), Joromi (Simi), Amaka (Tuface), Pana (Tekno), and Focus (Humble Smith).

The accent in urban music is either regular, syncopate or a combination of both while tempo is generally between 76-108 MM and 120-168 MM indicating andante (walking pace – exemplified in Tekno’s *Pana*, Olamide’s *Mo Ti Gbana*) and presto (fast, lively – exemplified in Burna Boy’s *Killin Dem*) respectively. The former tempo is more favoured. MM stands for the number of quarter notes per minute.

Language: the language employed in communicating the ideas inherent in an urban song is relevant to its commercial success. Though urban songs are less lyric-oriented lately, there is still some level of pertinence in language usage. In addition to English – Nigeria’s lingua franca – and the constitutionally recognised Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba, the Nigerian Pidgin English is seen as an ideal language for the conveyance of ideas in urban songs. Despite how much of the other indigenous Nigerian languages are featured, particularly, the constitutionally unrecognised, the Nigerian Pidgin English stands as the most favoured. Attesting to this is the plethora of songs in the language. Furthermore, Owing to the fact that no ethnic group or class can lay claim to its ownership and with a large number of speakers, Pidgin English becomes indeed a viable language for communication in Nigerian

urban songs. Tobalase (2010) observes that artistes who seek commercial success in the huge market of popular music often employ code-switching as a stylistic innovation in songwriting. Also, code-switching occurs when the people of a given region have more than one language. The latter presents an accurate description of the language situation in Nigeria. Besides the foregoing, words are also intentionally employed in the urban music culture to signify meanings and intent that may be misread in the long run. Still, Located in the area of uncertain semantics and a major feature of language usage in urban music practise, is the creation of slang expressions. Signified meanings and slang expressions are youth-focused and so determining the meanings of expressions in these realms pose some difficulty for consumers who do not share in this youth culture. Gbogi (2015) surmises that this could be the reason behind the ascription of meaninglessness to the urban music genre—particularly, the hip-hop subgenre—by members of the older generation. Instance of this is Tekno’s *Pana*. The song title in itself does not seem to have a specific meaning hence its usage as it pleases the user. Another controversial word in the song is ‘cassava’. To an average listener, cassava stands for a phallus. That was obviously the intended meaning because **when asked what cassava meant in the song, Tekno responded thus:**

“For me, it’s just a plant, a big plant...It’s not as big as a yam, but it’s equilibrium to it.” Referring to the female interviewer, he said, “you can get it off there (off-camera). I’ll give you more, you know, you can get an invitation.” When asked why he insists on having a ‘big’ cassava, he responded, “I can show you... in real life” (that is, off-camera). (Tekno, October 16, 2016).

Below are the lyrics of the song.

PANA by Tekno

[Verse 1]

Folake, gimme love oh	<i>(Folake, give me love)</i>
Na you dey catchi my shot oh	<i>(You are the one who catches my shot)</i>
For your sake, I go go church oh	<i>(For your sake I will go to church)</i>
We go drive around for my Porsche oh	<i>(We will drive around in my Porche)</i>

[Chorus]

Baby, Pana	<i>(Baby pana)</i>
They say you like wahala oh	<i>(They said you like trouble)</i>
Eh, I getti wahala oh	<i>(I have trouble)</i>
Baby, Pana	
Anywhere that you go	<i>(Anywhere you go)</i>
I go follow you dey go	<i>(I will follow you)</i>
Baby, Pana	
They say you like cassava	<i>(They said you like cassava)</i>
I getti big cassava	<i>(I have a big cassava)</i>
Baby, Pana	
My love for you will never die, will never die	

[Bridge]

Eva-Eva oh baby, Eva-Eva
Baby you too sweet, fajaba (Baby, you are too sweet)
My baby, dance to the Lagbaja
Make I take you to Gwagwalada (Let me take you to Gwagwalada)

Eh Baby, dibi-daba-diba-dobo
Adaba-dibi-daba-dede-baba
For your sake I go kill show oh, eh-eh
Show you love like you've never seen before

Words in the song above like *pana*, *fajaba*, *eva* are clearly the artistes' coinages to create certain rhyming effect in the song just like *dibi-daba-diba-dobo adaba-dibi-daba-dede-baba*. *Fajaba* had to rhyme with *Lagbaja*, who is an Afrojazz/ Afrobeat musician. He enjoins *Folake* to dance to the music of the artist in question. *Gwagwalada*, on the other hand, is a suburb very close to Abuja, the Nigerian Capital. The three lines with ending words *fajaba*, *Lagbaja* and *Gwagwalada* may have been used metaphorically, but it is clear that these ending words were solely used for the rhyme they create. In the course of the song, Tekno's reference to the fictional *Folake* (which is a feminine name in the Yoruba language) as *nwanyioma* and *nwanyiocha* (meaning 'beautiful woman' and 'fair woman' respectively in the Igbo language) reveals the effective use of code-switching in an inter-tribal situation. While Tekno belongs to the Igbo speaking part of Nigeria, *Folake* is connected to the Yoruba speaking part of same country. The use of Pidgin English in the greater part of the song is indeed an indication that the language cuts across social class and ethnicity in Nigeria.

Like *Pana*, the prominent coinage in Wizkid's and Tiwa Savage's *Ma Lo*, arguably left a lot of observers wondering what the invention could mean. According to the Tiwa Savage,

"When I did it, everyone went like 'roboskeske? take that out'.
We almost took it out... please don't ask me what it means..."
And then, when asked what it meant she answered,
"We're on radio, I'll tell you off-air". When interviewee insisted, she said,
"It means anything you want it to mean. Roboskeske is like a street slang, it's
just, you know
when you wanna roboskeske, when you're in a roboskeske mood"
(Tiwa Savage, interviewed on 21 September, 2018.)

Below is the chorus of the song *Ma Lo*
Roboskehskeh roboskehskeh
If no be you then tell me who o (If not you, then tell me who)
Dem go *sempe* dem go *sempe* (They will *sempe*, they will *sempe*)
Nobody messing with my boo

Unlike the early generation of popular musicians in Nigeria, the urban musicians have on one part continually added to the street vocabulary, as many youths and youth at heart can be found using some of the expressions in daily communications.

Just like D'Banj's 'Koko', Samklef's 'Baba God Noni', Tekno's 'Pana' and Tiwa's 'Roboskeske' found their way easily into the world of the Nigerian youth subculture. The latest addition is Victor AD's 'Wetin We Gain' and more are still in the making.

On the other hand, using words to covertly publicise certain culturally unacceptable ideas has exonerated many Nigerian urban songs from receiving the NBC ban. This has proven over time, to foster moral breakdown amongst the Nigerian youth. Coupled with the commercial successes that accompany most of the songs, it becomes easy for upcoming artistes to perceive this act as a profit spinner, hence its perpetuation. As noted earlier, Onyeji (2016) observes that "...the heavy reliance on sexual issues and sexuality in the contemporary popular music of the twenty-first century raises strong concerns about the focus of the genre" (p.17).

Vocal technique: The procedure or skill required in the production of sound using the human voice is referred to here as vocal technique. Due to the brevity of the melodic lines in Nigerian urban music, vocal production is basically relaxed and not focused upon by the majority of consumers. With short melodic phrases that are sometimes half chanted, vocalising can be done by anyone who breathes, with properly functioning voice box and a good sense of pitch. Back-up vocals are often rendered in a two or three-part harmony. Singers such as Banky W, Bez, Praiz, Waje, Tjan, Timi Dakolo, Cohbams Asuquo who are vocally skilled are relegated to the confines of strict R&B and Afro-soul. These subgenres of the Nigeria urban music are not as widely consumed as the '*Naija hip-hop*' styles. Iyanya, Tiwa Savage, Chidimma, Praiz, Wande Coal, Yemi Alade are some Nigeria urban music artistes who are also skilful vocalists that arguably shifted to the performance of the '*Gbedu*' (Nigerian hip-hop) style and its lack-of-depth singing technique obviously for commercial reasons and to attain the anyone-can-sing status in their songs. This 'surface' singing is often enhanced by adapting to the mood and message of a piece – as in Orezi's *Call the Police* – or switch timbres – as in Davido's *Fire*.

Besides singing with unstrained vocal dexterity, the influence of a singing style prominent in an artist's locality is often felt in the rendition of his/her musical works. Most urban music artistes who are of the Yoruba tribe or live in Lagos adapt to the fuji/juju vocal technique and texture, which is Islam-Arab influenced. This is typified in Mountain Black and Mad Melon's *Danfo Driver*. In Asa's *Eyo*, a song in the Afro-hip-hop style, English lyrics in the chorus (where the children run *around*, there's laughing *in the crowd*, I hope it still *remains the same*) were rendered as though they were some Yoruba words by embellishing with a Yoruba/Fuji/Juju tonal inflexion reflected in the italicised words. In Phyno's *Fada Fada*, a clear distinction between Phyno and Olamide's rendition of their individual solo lines was obvious as Phyno showcased the Igbo heavily-accented speaking elements while Olamide's was an adaption of the Yoruba singing texture. Victor AD's *Wetin We Gain* also reflects the latter singing style. Although an indigene of Delta State, his singing style was a bold declaration of one who was born and raised in Lagos State. Yemi Alade and Flavour often showcase the Igbo tonal inflexions in their vocal renditions. Others simply adopt a blend of the reggae/ragga half-strained and half-relaxed vocal style. Example is Tiwa Savage.

Tonality: Tonal centre of the Nigerian urban music styles is structured in line with the Western diatonic major and minor scales with the former more favoured. More relevantly, it is observed that the total centre of any piece is more of a very comfortable one for the singer and one that fans can sing along to.

Form: In discussing popular music's theory-based definition put forward by some scholars, Onwuegbuna (2012) states the unanimous conclusion drawn by these scholars who believe that popular music can be identified by its lack of structural complexity and depth. Rather,

...it revolves around a basic song structure of ABABCB. In this formal structure, A is the verse, B is the chorus, while C is the bridge or refrain sections of the song. The ensemble techniques combine folk and technology-spawned musical instruments and the instrumental arrangements still maintain the song structure (p.14).

A myriad of the Nigerian urban music are structured in line with the ABABCB form. For instance, Simi's *Joromi* (ABABCB), Orezi's *Call The Police* (ABABCB), Asa's *Fire On The Mountain* (ABABCB), Duncan Mighty and Tiwa Savage's *Lova Lova* (ABABCB), Psquare's *No One Like You* (ABAB), Dbanj's *Fall In Love* (ABAB). A couple of them feature the call-and-response structure. Olamide's *Wo* is an example. With the difference in words distinguishing verse from the chorus, the melodic phrases are the same from beginning till about the end. Melodic difference occurred within a mere 8 bars out of a total of 104 bars that the song fits into.

Texture: When compared with earlier popular music genres that rocked the airwaves of the Nigerian music scene such as highlife, reggae, juju, afrobeat, fuji, and makossa, the Nigerian urban music genre is light in density and texture. The genre favours the homophonic texture than the polyphonic. Vertically, the chords formed by the tuned instruments fall within the I-IV-I-V-I and iii-vi-ii-V-I progression, whether inverted or in root positions. The percussive instruments combine appropriately in harmonic combinations that suits the former. Horizontally or melodically, monotony is rare and a judicious mixture of the conjunct and disjunct motion can be heard. The vocal lines, often simple and brief phrases, are rendered sometimes in a call-and-response mode.

Results

Having scanned through the primary data for repeated phrases and words from the various respondents, themes were identified. Popularity indicators in socio-cultural practices as relates to urban music in Nigeria have been identified as a 'catch-phrase', 'beats', 'bandwagon effect', 'NBC factor', 'social media responses', 'telephone calls', and the 'ubiquitous nature of the radio' as a medium of popularizing the musical phenomenon in view.

All 16 investigated radio stations affirm that the presence of catch-phrases (or hook) in a song is a major indicator that such songs will peak in popularity hence the popularization of such artistic endeavour. Other relevant factors in urban music practice that got a unanimous affirmation from all interviewed stations are beat of songs and ubiquitous or omnipresent nature of the radio.

Bandwagon effect occurs when radio stations compete in airing a particular song. In other words, station B airs a song that was aired by A while station C follows in airing same song aired by A and B. This index is relevant (R) for 9 stations, not relevant (NR) for one station, which happens to be an all-talk station, and of minor importance (MI) for six stations. NBC factor garnered 4 Rs, 10 MIs and 2 NRs. The general argument posed by the MI stations was that, although the NBC determines what kind of songs to be aired content-wise, the body does not establish the eventual popularity of the said song.

Responses garnered from various radio station's social media platforms regarding certain urban songs is another major popularity index in radio popularization of urban music in Nigeria. These responses from followers of the said radio station reveal the number of likes a song—particularly a new one—garners, indicating its acceptability tendencies by the general public. This yardstick eventually forms the basis for its exposure on various radio stations. As a measure, 10 radio stations confirmed its relevance (R) while 6 go with minor importance (MI). Telephone calls gathered 9 Rs and 7 MIs

In measuring the level of these indices in media practices identified themes are as follows: maintaining relevance in the media landscape, encouraging direct contact with/from artistes, visiting the artistes online platforms for new releases in the bid to set the pace as first radio station to air such songs, non-payment to artistes for songs aired, using the Nigerian urban tunes to build good listenership base, time factor in airing certain songs, lack of rotational policy guiding the number of airplay a song gets per day, and older songs getting less air plays.

For maintaining relevance, responses show 15 Rs and 1 MI. Direct contact with artistes stands at 13 Rs, 2 MIs and 1 NR; Artists' online platform showed 11Rs, 4 MIs and 1 NR; Payment for songs aired got all NR from all 16 stations. This is because no artists get any form of payment from radio stations for airing their songs. This gives the stations the liberty to air whatever urban music—that meets the NBC criteria—whenever they deem fit and whatever number of times they choose to. On the other hand, upcoming artistes give unofficially recognised monies to presenters in the bid to encourage airplay of their songs. This tends to affect decision-making at the point of various songs' exposure. Building a good listenership showed 16 Rs; time factor gives 9 Rs, 6 MIs and 1 NR; rotational policy 13 MIs, 3 NRs; Older songs getting less airplay showed 13 Rs, 3 MIs, 1 NR.

Radio presenters' choices in the application of popularity indices is relevant for all stations interviewed hence the 16 Rs. Twelve Rs represent stations whose audience's requests impact the songs aired at a certain period in the radio airtime, while 2 NRs come from an all-talk radio station and all foreign- old-school station respectively; The 2 MIs can be seen from a state-run and another all-talk radio stations respectively. For stations that pride themselves in knowing what the listeners want to hear, \audience and station choices are relevant, hence the 11 Rs. On the contrary, this factor is of minor importance to 4 stations and not relevant to 1 station. All 16 stations endorsed that airing Nigerian urban songs are beneficial to both their station and the audience members.

In trying to be pacesetters, radio stations in Port Harcourt Metropolis compete in playing breaking Nigerian urban songs. It is common to tune in to different radio stations and hear the same song being aired, though at different times. This has continually created the bandwagon effect. Considering its ability to develop a region socio-culturally, many radio stations pay more attention to airing the Nigerian urban music. Thirteen respondents affirm relevance, 2 attest minor importance while 1 considers it not relevant. For innovativeness in artist, urban songs popularised by radio stations tend to have a part to play. Twelve Rs, 3 MIs and 1 NR attest to this.

Two out of the sixteen stations interviewed are government-run. The musical focus of these two is the Nigerian urban music. Nigeria Info, being an all-talk station occasionally lighten the talks with music, often the Nigerian urban music genre. Following closely is Today Fm which also gives more time to talks than airing music and musical programmes. Classic FM distinguishes itself by playing more foreign songs ranging from the 1970s – 1990s. Intermittent featuring of Nigerian music that falls within the stated years was observed. However, the urban music genre is rare. Besides Classic FM, all the other 15 stations (93.8%) within Port Harcourt Metropolis focus on the Nigerian urban music.

Conclusion

Weisband (2015) attests to the ability of radio to make new tunes and styles familiar, lasting, memories. In reinforcing the rigours of becoming successful in the Nigerian popular music industry, Adedeji (2016) reports on a lecture offered by Ruggedman – who is one of the pioneers of the Nigerian Urban Music – to aspiring artistes in Hip-hop 101 (2007), an introduction in the “*Ruggedy Baba*” album. In the words of Ruggedman (as cited in Adedeji, 2016):

Pick out two songs to radio as your first single, for 9ja [Nigeria] a dance track and a slow one for the mingle cut like 200 to 300 copies, if you can, [try and] design a sleeve for it... Drop at least eight copies in each radio station not just in your city, if you can [drop it] around the nation, follow up with SMS and occasional phone calls... (p. 263).

This excerpt puts the radio in the position of the most important means of exposure for the Nigerian urban music practitioner and his musical endeavours, both at the advent of the genre and subsequently. Furthermore, the banning of a song from airplay is supposed to have a receding popularity and commercial effect on it. However, radio presenters often enlighten the audience about the said song and even provide an alternative means – usually, the internet – to experience the song. Even without airplay, radio’s power to popularize cannot be overemphasized. Supporting this discourse, Rothenbuhler (1987) states:

Radio exposure largely determines which recordings become popular and which remain obscure. Furthermore...the recording industry measures the value of particular songs in terms of how much airplay they receive and the sales airplay helps stimulate... (p. 101).

From the foregoing, it is evident that a song does not become known until a form of exposure is given to it. Therefore, radio stations cannot use the popularity of a song as a criterion for airplay. Worthy of note is the assertion that radio stations play songs that other radio stations play. Numerous airplay from one radio station stimulates further airplay from other radio stations. As a result, the radio-listening public is bombarded with a particular song until acceptance is inevitable. Observably, the internet has been noted to be a major propagating medium for music. Findings have also shown that radio stations source the music they air from the internet, making it accessible to the old, young, learned and unlearned.

Frith (as cited in Onwuegbuna, 2013), expresses the fact that there is a play of politics in the manner at which artists package their endeavours and this is all about the choices made by stakeholders in any musical activity that are directed at achieving their vested—mostly commercial—interests. For this study, the stakeholder in view is the radio. Findings have shown that the radio plays a key role in popularising music generally and the trends associated with such music. Not putting into full considerations the impact a song being aired makes on the listener, garnering traffic to the station seem the paramount concern. Numerous airplay have proven to be a good indicator that a song is doing great in the market and this commercial success triggers the adaptation of that song's success indicators in the next song to be produced. This has watered down on the creativity of many Nigerian urban music practitioners who end up churning out numerous songs that sound alike.

While working on creativity, it will be of great help to have the NBC code reviewed. From the instances discussed earlier, the reason behind some Nigerian artistes' inability to explain openly the meaning of certain invented words and expressions in their songs leaves one wondering if the works are totally fit for airplay.

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