



Evaluating Music Involvement As An Agent Proximate in Advertising And Politics: A Global Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Advertising and Music are intrinsically related in several fundamental ways than readily meets the eye. A cursory glance does not reveal their close relatedness, as when observed under empirical scrutiny at the motivic, functional and contextual levels. Given the context of this particular study, advertising ‘the business of trying to persuade people to buy products or services’ also seen as ‘ a business that makes things known generally or in public especially in order to sell them’, ontologically, grapples in a functional mode with the same concerns that music constantly fosters albeit in varying appropriateness. The dealings and business of advertising and music strives in their strategic modes as allies and agent proximate in the pursuit of private as well as public wellbeing of their respective publics. While the centrality of advertising is premised on the individual cum corporate interest to persuade its publics in order to advance an identified interest, music fosters divergent values, via emotion laden motif, to heroic predilections which may invariably attract social, political and economic benefits among others. The study observed that advertising over the years has modified its modus operandi strategically in order to effectively appeal to its target audience. Among its polemics, is the adoption of verbal as well as nonverbal apparatus in a particular format and alignment as communication semantics and signifiers. The realization that this level of advertising is fraught with setbacks in goods and services profiling as well as greatly obscuring resident delights and satisfaction that the advertised products portends, made the need for music involvement even more strident and urgent. Music’s spirit is well, alive and bubbling and in the hands of adept craftsman can bring about delectable and delightful experiences. In its sensuous modes, music provokes multiple sensory responses which are beneficial to advertisement. The levels of music affectations transcend the aural, visual and psychological thus provoking sine-aesthetics effects sometimes beyond human comprehension. Thus, it is these benefits that music affords advertising that this works explores.

Keywords; Music, Advertising, Politics.

INTRODUCTION

In our communities today, human activities are highly varied and diversified. In industrialized economics of the world, the production of goods and services and agencies responsible for production has increased several-fold. Unlike in developing economies where the quantum of goods and services in the market is still at the subsistence level, the challenge of how products can bring about optimal satisfaction and rake in maximum financial benefits has become a major concern of producers of goods and services. Industrialists, big as well as small producers are continuously developing strategies which will enhance the attractiveness of their wares. The strategies to enhance sales cut across the production spectrum.

Advertisement of goods and services fosters competition in the industrial and manufacturing space. Beside the valuable benefit of bringing goods and services to the public domain, inherent attributes are

usually amplified and shortcomings down played and often times out-rightly overlooked. Consumers' attitude towards consumption and patronage system is thus constantly experiencing modification to the extent of satisfaction derived from the goods and services so advertised. To some consumers, advertising can totally be misleading and a path to tread carefully. Some see it as a venture 'full of sound and fury signifying nothing', while others are attracted to the benefits and satisfaction the product and the advertisement (visuals and sonic) content offers the consumer. Cohen, cited in Nwokolo, observes that the press may not be particularly successful in telling people what to think but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about'. (p.133).

Nature and Strategy in Advertising

In order to rake-in maximum benefits from advertising, marketing departments in corporate holdings are responsible for planning and deployment of strategy for the sales of goods and services. In advertising goods and services, advertisement mix is vital if the desired goal is to be achieved. Advertisement mix, is 'the combination of methods that accompany and organization uses to advertise its products and services, for example on television or radio, in newspapers, or on internet'. (np). Advertisement mix, is tailored to address different segments of the publics for effective coverage and it include; strip advertising, spot advertising, mass advertising and eco advertising. Strip advertising is a continuous small amount of advertising for a product or service over a long period of time. It ensures a brand is constantly in the public eye, and is effective than one major, short-lived campaign', while spot advertising is advertising on television and radio'. Mass advertising is designed to reach large number of people by using television, radio, newspapers and internet'. Eco adverts are adverts that use natural materials, electronic methods or other methods that avoids using a lot of resources that harm the environment'. Whichever method or model of advertising that is adopted, the intention is to create a positive awareness for the purpose of achieving corporate advantage especially in monetary terms.

Quasi Nature of Music

The definition of what constitute music in any society is referential to the sound patterning and rhythmical movements resulting from verbal, nonverbal and performance on musical instruments. In traditional African cultural background, music is conceived both in terms of its spiritual and physical essence. Music by its very nature accommodates varied and often multi-dimensional elements as part of its inbuilt mechanism. The transvestite nature of music which enhances its potency at meeting several human needs foist on it an unassailable degree of acceptance as a formidable human relations mechanism both as a connoisseur of human creative elements, intellect and as a foremost human character exposition and expression'. (Musa Makhu, p.125). It is a cultural mechanism that governs social construct in traditional African societies. Because it is spiritual, it is ever present even when not visibly seen or acknowledged. In esteemed African sensed musical ensembles, the resident spirit of music is readily felt and response is spontaneously engendered. Reflecting on the nature of music, Vidal, defines music 'as a paragon of experiences and activities of the human being. It is in part a reflection of those experiences and activities, in part a model for both'. (p.24).

The levels of affectation of music at the individual and at the level of society vary greatly from culture to culture. In the 21st century Africa, it was firmly the argument of music scholars especially the ones of African background, of the preponderance of music in Africa at occasions and events more than anywhere else around the world. While the scenario has not changed substantially, new technology in Europe, Asia and elsewhere has greatly increased and influenced music associated social conviviality in otherwise music less dependent societies. The import of this development, is that music is now readily available, access-able and ubiquitous and for all who so desires.

Given the composite and as well as the cognate nature of music as prime mover and motivator of dormant sensorial human organs, recourse to its usage at eliciting attention, holding the gaze, and mind control of listeners by vendors of goods and services has become rampant. Commenting on the power and influence of music on man, Don C. Walters observes, 'from earliest history, man have recognized the power of

music to express feelings, stir emotions, and influence thoughts and actions'.(p.3). In traditional African societies of old, music as medium of advertisement was not lost on the people. Among the Akan's of Ghana, In Ghana traditional society, eligible maidens searching for husbands go to the market place and sit down at vantage points; and as unmarried males they fancy as husbands pass by, they shake their rattles to attract attention' (Akpabot, p.92). In Ghana as in Nigeria, young girls use beads as a mark of beauty on their waist. As they go about their daily duties, the rattling sound of the beads makes people take notice that they are around. Thus beads servers two purposes- as ornaments of beauty and as aural stimulus' (Akpabot, p.92).

Social contexts highlighted above have not significantly shifted from what obtain in modern society wherein goods and services are advertised covertly and in most instances blatantly. The deployment of music in its cultural contexts as examples above suggests, is strictly in tandem with the philosophy of the cultures involved. Thus, Greeks' views of music have greatly influenced the taxonomy of music practice in Greek society and the influence it had on the society. Early Greek writers were influenced by the philosophy of Apollo, Orpheus, that music reflected in microcosm the laws of harmony that rules the universe. They believed that music influences human thoughts and actions'. Akpabot, clarified this further, as he observes that 'in general, complex music reflects a complex society and simple music simple society. Music values are also reflective of general values'. That, 'the music behavior of a particular society causes them to react in a particular way'. (p.42).

More relevant to African environment is the implied functional significance that musical sound evokes as soon as it is perceived. Music is associated with issues and events in the society, and the impulse to participate and or satisfy one's curiosity, is thus heightened. The sound of the gong, rattles, bells, drum, heralds an important announcement, assembly or invitation to an event of tribal significance. Music and music instruments in African traditional society, both in the sound and symbolic modes conveys and communicate some information and message. In the symbolic mode, a drum when upturned, signify mourning, literarily suggesting that happiness has departed from the abode where it is so displayed. When hung on a tree in front of a house, it suggests and signify that a child in that homestead has just been circumcised and the drum can only be brought down when the wound as healed successfully (Akpabot, p.41).

Music more than any other art form possesses an ingrained sensuous-rhythmic mechanism which is universal in nature. Beside the specific cultural verities which distinguish music's of cultures in their peculiar microcosm, the art form presents substantial similarities in various forms the world over. This similarity in music making, contexts, reactions to music, to the instruments of music, fosters universal understanding and enjoyment of music. Advertising firms have tapped into this commonality domain of music to craftily enunciate adverts which are rich in musical contents, in which consumers the world over finds meaning and relevance. Adverts peddled by multinational firms such as Coca-Cola, are in this category. Here, the musical motif that are employed are usually familiar to the viewing/listening public without significant loss of focus and understanding of the sponsors intentions.

For the purpose of relevance and effectiveness, music used in carrying through advertising of goods, services and political campaigns, dote and rely on trending musical genre and styles for the necessary piquancy. Because, such music enjoys considerable fan-base and followership, it easily and readily elicits considerable airplay and attention especially of the young generation in the society. The music draws on trending and current musical motifs; in terms of instrumentation, lyricism, dance while taking cognizance of the target public. In atypical modern, western and European setting, adverts directed at the young generation of consumers is likely to be laden with heavy metal and synthesizers background for it to be appreciated. This brand of strident high fidelity musical styled bands has a great impression on the young generation in those climes. Synthesizers that offered a range of preset sounds and effects were used increasingly for commercial purpose, from advertising jingles on television to motion pictures sound tracks' (np). On a different level of musical affectation however, a somber and subdued musical background in advertising highly purposeful and elevated themes is a common experience especially in image laundering and crises management oriented advertorials.

Musical Branding in Advertisements

Musical branding in advertisement is not a recent phenomenon in the advertisement of goods, services and in personality profiling. It has been a regular feature and component of drama and operatic works for centuries. Musical branding is the tradition of associating to a particular, phenomenon, individual, character in drama, spirit, idealism and ideation, a sonic identity or sound signifier, as a reference to and second nature of the phenomenon in question. In traditional African drama, Sango, the Yoruba thunder deity has a sonic or sound identity in Bata drums. Bata drums are high pitched tension drums dedicated specifically to Sango worship by his descendants and followers. Significantly, Sango's embodiments and referential qualities and attributes of fiery temperament, trans normal and foreboding mien are replicated in the drum's creation. Relatedly, in staging Sango epic drama, Bata drums forms the fulcrum of musical orchestral performance. It is essential towards realizing the episodic and transcendental nature and essence of the performance.

Musical branding in operatic works especially of Italian origin is referred to as leitmotif. Technically, it operates as identity substitution, dualism mechanism, ethereal presence and essence of the operating phenomenon in question at any given moment. As an eddy, while wind, in some cultures suggests the presence and operation of a spirit force even though not visible to human's, so the sound of Bata drum heralds Sango or his spirit into human presence. The sound of Bata drum is thus emblematic of Sango as a deity and as allusion to his proclivities within the spiritual space and domain of the adherent's universe. In enacting Sango dramaturgy, Sango as the heroic dramatic persona presence is of essence to the realization of the plot. By the mythical nature of Sango legend, he is possessed of great supernatural powers, which includes power to appear and disappear at will. By this mystical nature, only very few people desire to be in his presence because of what they perceive as his fiery and unstable personality that is highly volatile. Among others, of Sango personality traits is gust of wind and sudden displacements of objects without human assistance. The manifestation of these signs and symbolism especially when realized in the context of sound of Bata drums, amplifies the signification of Sango presence or influence at play.

In the world of commerce, musical branding is becoming a huge phenomenon, a trend increasingly embraced because of its commercial success rate. One of the most successful and renown communication platforms in Nigeria is MTN. Two principal insignia out-rightly set MTN Nigeria aside as a corporate entity from its competitors; the brand colour and sound motive or signal. Yellow is the colour, and the corporate cliché, 'yellow Nigeria', and the colour yellow became a familiar adornment on the Nigerian geographical space at the inception of the corporation existence in Nigeria. In audio visual communication platform such as television, the dual brand identities of sound and colour are used simultaneously to advertise the brand. Here, while the colour is appreciated visually, the music is perceived aurally. On radio however, the musical signal and colour brand are both performed on the sound modes; using musical instrument and voice.

Global Telecommunication Company in Nigeria, the owners of Glo Network, also adopts musical and colour branding to advertise their products to the publics. While it uses green as its brand colour and identity, the brand music signal is performed on the verbal mode. The brand's musical signal; 'glo with pride', is familiar to its consumers all over Nigeria. Aside from the customized music branding as discussed above, both platforms, MTN and GLO had used music immensely as a medium of sales promo periodically. Periodic and seasonal promo to boost sales and advertise new products on their platforms is a regular feature of their sales strategy. Festive occasions such as Easter, Christmas, Id celebrations are occasions for these corporate bodies to promote their products using popular music stars and music as the cynosure of these promotions.

Musical branding of telephony products, assumed a new dimension in Nigeria over the years as Glo telephony network adopted two popular music artist as Glo music ambassadors. King Sony Ade and Lagbaja are prominent music artist's associates of the Glo brand. Musical branding in this case involves the deployment of instruments of music such as lyrics, dance style, costumes (brand colours), amidst visual exhibition of the brands products. This practice is in contradistinction to the practice of relegating

music to the background in products promotions. Here, music is the principal element, and not subordinated to any other scape in the design.

Musical Curtain in Advertisement

As a matter of regular occurrence and practice, various products brands use music as a vehicular module to promote sales. The tradition is about a century old practice. It is the earliest form of music support for the promotion of goods and services. The tradition is perhaps derived from similar experience from drama and theatrical performances in Asia, Africa, Europe, and elsewhere as musical compositions, (sheet music) is performed to impact audience appreciation of action on stage. By its' nature functional music helps the viewing audience to enjoy the actions and appreciate the undertones and overtones, which includes the specific intentions of the director' (Musa-Makhu, p.168). On this level, the musical statement and substance, is not the primary concern on the overall scale of preference of the message design. Its critical essence, lie in the foregrounding emotive fusion that music and action objectify at the particular moment as the action unfolds on television, radio or stage. Hence there is music for war, love, peace, and music that expresses fear, anger, reverence, anxiety, desire, gloom, triumph and every other nature within man's scope of mental reckoning'(Musa, Makhu, p.34).

In similar vein, Al Ghazzali, observes that 'the heart of man has been so constituted by the renders man besides himself with ecstasy. These harmonies of that higher world of beauty which we all the world of spirits. They remind man of his relationship to that world and produce in him an emotion so deep and strange that he himself is powerless to explain it. The effect of music and dancing is deeper in proportion as the natures on which they act are simple and prone to emotions. They fan into a flame whatever love is dormant in the heart, whether it be earthly and sensual, or divine and spiritual'.(Al Ghazzali, p,34). Thus, composers of advertorial statements, being it musical or product sequence and ordering, seeks to ride, overtly or covertly on the 'hidden fire' resident in music to advance their commercial interests.

Strategically, consumer's emotions are the target of music involvement in products advertisements. Depending on the advertiser's philosophy and critical objectives, music advocacy is directed at consumer's consciousness and subconscious sensual and emotional sensitivity sometimes in a subtle and at times blatant manner. Critical music building blocks in form of rhythm(movement), timbre (tonal colours), music dynamics, and at times dance, are invaluable ingredients in such musical advertorials. The medium provides musical support for the sale and advertisement of all manners of products such as edibles; sweets, biscuits, beverages to non-edibles such as air conditioners, washing machine, refrigerators, to services such as banking and finance, insurance, among others.

Music and Politics

Political campaigns are an essential and intriguing component of democratic process around the world. Music advocacy suffices for the individual as it applies to a larger social unit. It not only provides the individual with a platform to call for redress, it also facilitates an avenue for purgation and self-cleansing' (Musa-Makhu, A. p.128). Recounting an incident surrounding mayoral campaigns in USA, Bateye recalls; Politicians have themselves performed music to buttress their election prospects. A notable case is that of the Afro-American Marion Barry. During his electoral comeback to the position of Mayor of Washington D.C. in 1995, after a shameful removal from office and imprisonment he sang the following stanza of the hymn Amazing Grace as virtually his soul campaign tune. Amazing grace, How sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me, I once was lost, But now I'm found, Was blind, But now I see'. (Bateye, p.406). Bateye concluded that; 'the citizens of Washington must have been touched by Barry's claim of repentance, and quest for forgiveness, for they voted him in' (p.407).

Music in Nigeria political landscape have been as boisterous, controversial, sometimes contemptuous and entertaining. Olaniyan, notes that, 'in the 1983 presidential race between Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the NPN and Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the UPN, special campaign songs including party anthems and jingles were composed. For example, Shagari supporters sang: Yoruba: Olorun lo yan Shagari, Shehu Shagari. E yaabawadibo fun, Shehu Shagari. English; God has chosen Shagari, Shehu Shagari, Join us to

vote for him, Shehu Shagari, as a song of elevation' for Shagari. (Olaniyan, p.425). Meanwhile, supporters of Chief Awolowo were not coerced in any way as they 'reassured their candidate of their votes by stressing that there is nobody who can satisfy them as Awo'. Yoruba: Atupaiye, atupaiye, Gbogbo was I' a o fi riran, Atupaiye. English: The lamp of wisdom (2ce), All of us will be led by it, Lamp of wisdom. The song reflects on the UPN symbol of candle light' as 'song of faith'. (Olaniyan Oluyemi, p.429).

In 2019, as Nigeria conduct elections into various democratic offices, the political campaigns are no less full of controversy amidst a heated atmosphere. Two leading parties are the People Democratic Party PDP and the All People Congress APC. The presidential candidate of PDP in the 2019 elections is Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. Atiku's campaign team have composed songs to praise him and to slide his opponents. His pedigree as a businessman, philanthropy, conviviality and his multiethnic disposition is harped on to sell him to the public. His surname Atiku, has been changed into musical motive; Atikulate, as campaign acronym representing all that is good and fair. PDP's motto for the election is 'Let's get Nigeria working again'.

All People's Congress APC presidential candidate for the 2019 general elections is Muhammadu Buhari. The party has however set aside the 2015 party motto of 'Change', to 'Let's move to the next level' in 2019. 'PMB did it', represents Buhari's achievements from the point of view of his party APC. His campaign song reflects the multicultural nature of Nigeria in his appeal for a second chance in office. The music is performed in several of Nigeria ethnic dialects, Igbo, Ijaw, Yoruba, and others.

The civil society and human rights groups in Nigeria as well as the International community continue to appeal for best practice in all of this. Leading performing artists, musicians as well as members of the Nigeria actors' guild have collaborated in raising public awareness on the need for violence free elections. Popular hip hop artiste 2face Idibia, is among those championing this campaign. The group's music advocacy goes thus: No sell your right ooh (2ce). No matter what they pay you. No sell your vote ooh. No matter what they tell you. No go and fight ooh. Because their pikin no go join you. Shine your eyes well well. Na your future be that ooh. So that we can make Nigeria great ooh. The song which is performed in Nigerian pidgin English is also performed in Idoma and Hausa dialects. The music is enjoying regular airplay on television and radio because of its appropriateness and relevance in the current electioneering campaigns.

Summary

Several reasons accounts for the overwhelming presence and involvement of music in the broadcast media. The spirit of music and musicality; the phenomenon which underlie the delight the average person derives from listening to and participating in music making is of foremost consideration' (Musa-Makhu, p.94). As a cultural exposition of a people's attitudes, music among others serves as a repository of those values and in performance, mirrors the cultural self for posterity and development purposes. In all cultures around the world, music performance more than anything else is associated with joyfulness and the state of being happy. Music also have the capacity to make those who are troubled and unhappy to be consoled and ultimately become comforted and achieve a measure of, and a state being happy.

As a cultural document, people that own it are familiar with its etiquette both at the sonic, rhythmic, and at verbal and nonverbal modes. The integrity of the people is not far and distant from the integrity of music in vogue at any given period and verse versa. Thus, the mode of music that sellers of goods and services employ to sell self, in case of politics and goods by manufacturers, thrives on the knowledge of targeted publics musical taste at a given period. Music at this level is designed to affect the psychological or temporal mind by deliberately encoding signals that the target public accepts and relates with favorably. Taken off-guard and the questioning mind appeased, or albeit temporarily, the onlooker sees the advertised product from the advertiser's point of view; as charming, adorable, satisfying, and a friendly franchise is struck.

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