

# **TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF OBOSI: RELEVANCE IN A RECESSED ECONOMY**

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## **Introduction**

Traditional music is so much adored by the Africans and Obosi community is not left out in the adornment trend because music is an integral part of their life from cradle to grave. In our traditional setting, traditional music is of paramount relevance because the African people's lives are filled with major social activities. As such, music plays important roles to mark their social occasions ranging from cultural, social, religious, to historical and entertainment activities. There is no occasion in Obosi community that is not celebrated with traditional music. The traditional music of Obosi from their earliest times in their history carries along with it the historical background of the town, their customs, traditions, norms, ethics, occupation and facts that is upheld till today so to foster solidarity, love, peace and oneness in the people's relationships – all to be healthy, wealthy and wise living in a recessed economy.

For further clarification, in a recessed economy like in the present day Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in Nigeria, the traditional music of Obosi is a strong instrument of encouragement and positive change through its lyrics, dances and instrumental performances to the people of Idemili North and the world at large. Presently, the power of Obosi traditional music is also portrayed in their social activities like Ito-Ogbo (Octogenerian) ceremony, Obiora/Offala festivals, marriage, burial, coronation and other socio-cultural ceremonies/activities. However, people find it difficult to cope and face economic and life challenges in a time like this (recessed economy). But with the traditional music of Obosi community, succour, solace, hope and sanity can be brought for

the masses to adopt, adapt and adjust (AAA) in an unfavourable environment of economic hardship in the country. Traditional music as a story and information box carrier, as well as its disseminator, spreads/transmits the past historical stories. These help the present situation so as to interpret the future for men's well-being in any economic situation and socio-cultural condition. Therefore, instead of averting, dodging or running away from such situations, a means of winning over or using the available means to overcome and possess our possessions could be achieved through traditional music. In Obosi, traditional music is good and is used in almost all the activities ranging from childbirth to burial, all to make people feel good and better in a recessed economy.

### **Concept of Traditional Music**

Traditional music is the local music practices of a community that is communally owned with an unknown author transmitted from one generation to another orally/aurally. Agu in Ibekwe (2011) defines traditional music as, "The folk music of a people which evolves as a corporate communal experience". (p.79) Likewise Ibekwe (2011) states:

*Accordingly, traditional music is such a practice that reflects the people's tradition without the influence of other culture. It encapsulates virtually all indigenous practices, which are integral to people's life within a given culture. By implication, traditional music is the people's way of life-expressed in verbal and physical action through sound combination processes (p. 79).*

Traditional music embraces all about a community's religion, food, dressing, instruments, behaviour, language and even their local dialect. Odogbor (2008) defines traditional Nigerian music as "the music, which constitutes the various music which the people of Nigerian use in their day-to-day life where both the language and style of rendition, and instrumental accompaniment are characteristically localized" (p. 68).

Traditional music also means songs and tunes which have been performed by custom over a long period (usually several generations), which are most often folk songs, country dance or similar types of folk music. Okafor (2005) states that, "Traditional music is a medium for the carriage of many aspects of the local environment – social pilgrimage, mystic wanderings, work, worship and recreation,

daily movement, habits and patterns of cultural expressions” (p. 87). In the same way, Okonkwo in Oguoma (2011) opines that, “Traditional music is indigenous music of the people, their way of life and integral part of each ethnic group” (p. 151). Traditional music in its entirety has the embodiment of a society’s integrity through its culture. It is the custodian of a community’s way of life because both are inseparable. Udoh (2012) avers that:

*Traditional music is a communal property with spiritual qualities that are shared and experienced by all. It is a product of the society and fundamentally, a collective act; therefore, it cannot be separated from the society as ours, Nigeria. It is an embodiment of a people’s culture – their way of life. Traditional music is truly the mirror of the people’s culture, therefore, the musical practices of such a people leads to a state of wholeness and unity, where the norms and customs of the people are truly maintained. The totality of this manifests the integrity of traditional music and a total revelation in the identity of such a people (p. 119).*

Traditional music is also a music that is practiced in a typical local setting of a community/society where the traditional practices as regards the people’s culture takes pre-eminence. Arukwe and Chukwu (2012) state that:

*Traditional music could be said to be a musical genre practiced in a traditional setting. The musical practice that was prominent in the pre-colonial times was the music of the ethnic groups, which was, and still is associated with traditional ceremonies, worships, dances, playing of traditional instruments (instruments which are sometimes synonymous to particular ethnic groups) and singing (either accompanied or unaccompanied) (p. 241).*

Traditional music is the indigenous music of a particular community or ethnic group as regards their culture and its musical practices which every member of that community enjoys freedom of participation. Okpara (2016) posits that, “indigenous music refers to the traditional or folk music of a people or culture; this is passed on from generation to generation through oral tradition” (p. 20). It is an African music practice according to the ethnicity of a particular community’s way of life. Thus, traditional music can be called indigenous music, native music, folk music, communal music or local music which is generally owned by a community and handed down from generation to generation through the words of mouth.

Traditional music can be performed with or without instruments because it is portable and handy. Therefore, it can be performed anytime, anywhere and in any occasion.

Njoku (2016) opines that, "Traditional music represents a core aspect of the life and culture of the Nigerian people" (p. 85). Moreover, Ezeugwu (2016) ascertains that, "indigenous music could be said to be local, native or traditional music of a people" (p. 3). Traditional music is an expression of thoughts and feelings as regards culture. Okafor (2009) had earlier stated that:

*Traditional or folk music in Nigeria is an expression of the traditional cultures. The traditional society provides avenues for musical expression through festivals, ceremonies, rites, rituals, work and recreation. This is the music that has been transmitted orally from generation to generation with allowances for each generation to make selections and variations from the original without destroying its tone of continuity (p. 2).*

The above statement shows that traditional music is prone to vetting so as to fit the present demands of the people, as far as the culture and indigenous values are not tampered with or get lost in the process of its vetting, sorting and selection of ideas as the situation demands. Agbidi (2011) avers:

*To the traditional Africa, music is a pleasant cultural pursuit and socializing force – an essential part of a child's growth and development. It is known to play a vital role in the life of the African from cradle to the grave. It heralds the birth of a newborn baby as singing and dancing thrill the air at the birth of a baby; children are lulled to sleep, marriage ceremonies are marked with music and songs befitting the occasion and at death, music plays a prominent role in the burial ceremonies (p. 128).*

Since traditional music in its all-round ramifications contains all about the people's identity including occupation, production, demand and supply of goods and above all the society's economy, its relevance in a recessed economy like ours should be viewed and imbibed to bring sanity to our economy for the better and best advantage of the masses.

## **Concept of Relevance**

The word relevance in this study is the term that talks about, relates to, points at and identifies the relationship between traditional music and recessed economy which we are presently facing in our country, Nigeria. Hence, Coulson, Carr, Hutchinson and Eagle (1982) assert that “relevance means bearing upon, pertinent to, the matter in hand” (p. 713). Hornby (2010) also defines relevance as “something or somebody having ideas that are valuable and useful to people in their lives and work” (p. 1243). Relevance as regards the study means the degree to which something (traditional music) is related or useful to what is happening or being talked about (recessed economy). It is the equality or state of being closely connected or appropriate to a period of time in music, history, economy, background, etc. Therefore, relevance in its general term means importance, useful, reliable, good, pertinent to, benefits of or the advantages of something. It also means functions, positive activities, profit/gains, contributions, good attributes, qualities of a music group, somebody or something as the case may be or in relation to the situation at stake. Relevance also means the nice potentials of a thing, person or topic or study in relation to the condition on demand. It can as well be seen as positive properties and good characteristics of something or somebody; hence, the relevance of traditional music.

## **Recession**

Recession according to Hornby (2010) means “a difficult time for the economy of a country, when there is less trade and industrial activity than usual and more people are unemployed” (p. 1226). Recession also means the backward movement or ‘a stop’ in the progress of production, manufacturing and supply of goods. It is a drop or stop of a favourable situation to an unfavourable one. It means inappropriate condition that is on-going or being encountered by a community. It is the set-back of a work, activity as regards economy of a family, firm, group, society, community, country, continent or the world at large. Recession can mean to severe from an activity. Coulson, Carr, Hutchinson and Eagle (1982) define recession as, “receding, withdrawal from a place or point, temporary decline or set-back in industrial or economic activity or prosperity” (p. 709).

It is the period of temporary decline during which trade and individual activities are reduced, generally, identified by a fall in general production in two or more successive quarters. Recession is the period when the economy of a country is unsuccessful and condition of businesses is bad. Recession can be referred to as a time of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) or Austerity Measure (AM) in a country's economy. It is a sort of enforced and unusual stress in the area of production, demand and supply with shortage of finance (money). Literary, recession is a fall or shortage of goods and money in what is economically obtainable.

### **Economic Concept**

Economy here refers to careful management of available resources in a country. It is the system according to which the money, industry and trade of a country or region are organized so that the community or members of a society will adapt to such a condition. Hornby (2010) defines economy as, "the relationship between production, trade and the supply of money in a particular country or region" (p. 466).

Economy is the state of a country/region in terms that the production and consumption of goods and services including the supply of money as well. It is the use of minimum amount of money, time or other resources needed to achieve something so that nothing is wasted, rather it will be useful to the present state of solving problems.

Coulson, Carr, Hutchinson and Eagle (1982) define economy as "administration of concerns and resources of a community" (p. 267). Economy is the qualitative administration of goods, production and supply with available resources when there is shortage of money.

### **Structural Forms and Styles of Obosi Traditional Music**

Structural form in music means the way in which the words of a music piece or parts of a music piece are arranged, organized or put systematically together. It is the orderly arrangement of music. Structural form also refers to sequential and careful plan of words that make up a piece of music in pleasing successions of sounds. It is the way in which the parts of something (music) are connected

together, arranged or organized in a special way. It is the shape, design or outline in which music is well arranged for performance.

In our traditional or African music, we have five main structural forms. Thus, Agu in Okpara (2016) outlines that, "The main structural forms in African music include the following . . . solos, call and response, call and refrain, solo and chorused refrain and the mixed structure" (p. 20).

1. **Solos:** It is the type of traditional music structural form that is usually performed by a single singer/performer. It is mainly prominent among farmers, carpenters, palm wine tappers, black smiths and some men at their work in their diverse occupations. The traditional minstrels also apply this form in their entertainment shows. Artisans in their work sing along to encourage themselves and gather more abilities, energy and strength to do work through traditional music.
2. **Call and Response:** In this type of traditional music structural form, the song leader/performer sings a phrase as a sort of introduction, then the chorus responds respectively and accordingly as to complete the introductory part of the solo with another short phrase. Call and response form is like Question (call) and Answer (response). Here, the response may be a phrase different from the call as regards the lyrics, texts or melody.
3. **Call and Refrain:** This is where there is an introduction and a paraphrased response. In call and refrain, the answer (refrain) may be a full repetition of the introductory part or exaggerated in an enlarged form. Hence, the enlarged/exaggerated form of call and response.
4. **Solo and Chorused Refrain:** In this structural form, the lead-singer or the soloist introduces the piece by singing, introducing or performing the whole music piece as it is composed/written, he/she will then cue in the chorus group part who will then repeat exactly what he/she sang. The cueing in is usually done with short introductory/leading phrase respectively and successively in acknowledgement and completeness.
5. **Mixed Structural Forms:** As the name implies, it combines/mixes all structural forms and styles in African traditional music. It is usually enlarged and decorated with many different/diverse styles like ululation, introductory

passage, prelude, interlude, exclamatory passages, wailing, stamping, overlapping, banging, whistling, whispering, etc.

### **Styles of Obosi Traditional Music**

Traditional and African music generally have styles of performance. In Obosi, such styles are used to achieve the effect of the performance and to create proper performer/audience relationship. Style in African/Traditional music means system, method or act of speaking, writing, singing or performing music. The traditional or indigenous musical styles are as follows: repetitive style, clapping, whistling, whispering, humming, yodeling, banging, stamping, wailing, ululation, syncopation, etc.

1. **Repetitive Style:** Repetition as a traditional music style is the act of singing, speaking, dancing or performing the song or performances as it was done by the leader. It comes when a whole musical line, phrase, sentence or verse is sung or performed exactly the way the leader did it.
2. **Clapping Style:** Clapping is the style of hitting the open palms together. It can be done several or consecutive times. Such sound is done in an organized way to give a pleasing sound. It can also be the 'jamming' of two open palms together to make a pleasing and systematic musical sound.
3. **Whistling Style:** This is the act of making a musical sound by forcing breath out when the lips are narrowly closed. Hence, it is the high-loud sound forced through small opening of the mouth. For instance, birds whistle. There is a musical or sports instrument called whistle because it makes a whistling sound.
4. **Whispering:** We whisper musical sound when we sing it very quietly so that no other person can hear it. It can be performed or dramatized closely to somebody's ear during musical display.
5. **Humming:** The act of singing a tune when the lips are entirely closed. It means to make a low continuous sound with closed lips. We make such musical sound during occasions and on individual formal or informal performances.
6. **Yodeling:** Yodeling is making/producing a musical tone/sound by changing the voice qualities frequently between its normal level to a very high level. In yodeling, the mouth is shaped like a circle to get the word 'yo o' in pronunciation. Female folks are usually noted for such style.



7. **Banging:** Hitting or striking an instrument with force so as to produce a loud musical sound. When such musical instrument is hit or struck briskly with force, it gives a 'bang sound' as if a door banged. Drums make or produce banging sound when harshly hit or struck with force.
8. **Stamping:** The act of producing musical sound by bringing down one's foot/feet heavily on the ground with force. There are stamping musical instrument of traditional origin like the blacksmith's echo.
9. **Wailing:** The art of making a long loud high cry musically, expressing sadness or pain or grief. It is also a prolonged plaintive inarticulate cry of pain, grief, bitterness. A lamentation sound resembling cry or pain. It is usually seen in a burial of a dear lost one or high cry for the dead. Women are mainly known for wailing. It is a high-pitched pitiable cry expressing sorrow, grief, bitterness, sadness or unhappiness and the like.
10. **Ululation:** Means producing or making musical sand by opening the mouth in a roundish shape, as the tongue is manipulated inside the mouth to move up or down, then agitated to form vibrating sound of ululation.
11. **Syncopation:** Is making strong rhythm weak or weak rhythm strong when singing or performing music. It can also be when playing a musical instrument by making strong rhythm/beats weak. We call syncopation shifted accent.

### **Traditional Musical Instruments of Obosi Community**

In the performance of traditional music of Obosi, traditional musical instruments are used to heighten the effect of the music. These instruments are also used to attract the interest of the audience during their entertainment. Traditional musicians like minstrels also use musical instruments for the accompaniment of their music as well. The traditional musical instruments also help in passing the information and messages across through decoding. Agu (2017) affirms that, "most information are passed through texts embedded in songs, while others are passed on through musical instruments, especially the talking drums" (p. 21). Likewise Nzewi in Agu (2017) posits that, "the use of drum syllables to encode and facilitate instrumental music education is fairly common. He reveals that drums like the 'dundun' (Yoruba talking drum) and the 'ikoro/ikolo' (the slit wooden drum) for example, are designed to encode and transmit messages which cognitive members of the society understand and decode easily" (p. 21).

Instrument also portrays the culture of Obosi community as well as their identity. Agu (2017) affirms that:

*The various instrumental and vocal music types associated with different ethnic societies in Nigeria portray their identity in specific ways and influence the various groups emotionally by challenging their patriotism and commitment to what their belief system stand for (p. 21)*

However, we should know that with the modern trend and innovation, traditional music is now not performed with traditional musical instruments only but with both traditional and western musical instruments. On the other hand, it is not a must that Obosi traditional music must be performed with traditional or western musical instruments. There are traditional and western musical instruments and equipment that are properly used in the accompaniment of indigenous musical performance. Thus, examples of African and western musical instrument which can be used in accompanying African traditional music are:

**A. African or Traditional Musical Instruments**

Igba	Membrane drum
Ichaka	Calabash beaded rattle
Ekpili	Tortoise shell rattle
Oyo	Basket rattle
Ubo aka	Thumb piano
Ngedegwu/Ngelenge	Xylophone (mainly 2 slab bucket type)
Udu	Musical pot

**B. Western or Foreign Musical Instruments and Equipment**

Guitar	Ubo akwara
Drum set	Igba di n'igwe (oke igba, nne igba, etiti igba)
Electronic keyboard	Ubo ugodu
Amplifier	Mgbamume ngwa egwu/onu egwu
Microphone	Mwelite onu

## Examples of Obosi Traditional Music

It has been earlier pointed out during the definitions of traditional music that there are traditional music types for every occasion; lullaby, wrestling, marriage, etc. Example of a lullaby (traditional music):

### I. Lullaby:

Nwa m ebena	My baby don't cry
Nwa m ebena	My baby don't cry
Ka nne gi nata	Until your mother returns
Nwa m ebena	My baby don't cry
Nwa m ebena	My baby don't cry
Ka nna gi nata	Until your father returns
Mkpo mkpo ite	The broken pot
Nne gi sinye	Your mother kept boiling
N'otu Obosi	At Obosi market square
Meriko meriko	Meriko, meriko
N'otu Obosi	At Obosi market square
Meriko meriko	Meriko, meriko
N'otu Obosi	At Obosi market square

### II. Lullaby:

Kpoo nne bata	Call mum to come
Kpoo nna bata	Call dad to come
Kpoo nwa Nwakude	Call Nwakude's child
Si ya jee sinye ite	Tell him to boil the pot
N'ajo ofia	At the evil forest
Isi aka mbo mbo	The fingers . . .
O di ole?	Are they how many?
Ife anyi ga-emelu Igbo?	What do we do to the Igbo?
Ka Igbo kwe	Igbo will believe (for Igbo to believe)

### III. Wrestling/War Song:

Gbalililili mgba	Wrestle on and on
Gbalililili mgba	Wrestle on and on
Gbalililili mgba	Keep on wrestling
Gbalililili mgba	Continue wrestling

Onye metelu . . .	Who woke up the . . .
Nwagu no n'ula?	Sleeping cob?
Mgbe nne agu	When the mother
N'abia agbana oso	Comes, don't run away
Onye metelu n. . .	Who woke the . . .
Nwagu no n'ula?	Sleeping cob . . . ?
Mgbe nne agu	When the mother
N'abia agbana oso	Comes, don't run

#### **IV. General entertainment song:**

Obosi d o o n o o o	Obosi I plead you o o o
I, mana omelife na-atukwa	Whoever that commits evil
Araba egwu	Should be afraid of Araba
Araba d o o	Araba please
Egbuna anyi o o o	Don't kill us o o o

#### **Relevance of Obosi Traditional Music in a Recessed Economy**

At a time when there is famine or economic hardship in a country like Nigeria, there are many ways and means of solving such a problem so as to adapt and forge ahead. However, in the past, many folk tale songs/music were used to teach people how to cope during famine. Such traditional music tales stories about tortoise in the land of animals and his cunning behaviour towards his fellow animals. In addition, traditional music teaches people how to work hard through folk songs and stories; thus, teaching how to cope when such situation arises. Hence, in any economic stress, there must be a way out. As such, traditional music is one of the major tools that should be applied through its performance to solve the recession in the present society's economy. Ibekwe (2009) affirms:

*The role of traditional music in nurturing the Igbo child is given exposition in various musical activities engaged by children at different stages of development. The Igbo child's musical training involves learning and responding to simple rhythms in form of nodding, clapping, tapping simple rhythmic instruments such as empty tins, cans, bottles and then graduating into more intricate*

*musical sounds and rhythms. At later stage, sounds are translated into more meaningful signs and symbols. Folk songs, folk tales and storytelling are part of early childhood musical education, which are fashioned to bring about the child's fundamental developmental need in society. The child commonly and most effectively reacts to the prevalent social habits of his immediate environment and through adequate exposure to the potentials which traditional music offers, the child grows up to be a useful member of the society (p. 53).*

This proves that in a recessed economy the child or individual is nurtured from his/her early stage in life to adult stage so as to adapt in any condition/situation. Thus, the person becomes useful to himself/herself and to the society at large through the performance and use of traditional music because the traditional music carries along with it the culture of the community where the evils of the people are exposed and rejected. It also teaches the occupation of the land and the benefits of hard work, self-reliance and self-employment to overcome the hardship in a recessed economy. Ibekwe (2009) maintains that:

*The traditional music of a nation as a matter of fact is the main custodian of its traditional values. The importance of this traditional music does not end with traditional values; it extends to its usefulness to the overall development of a child. It also plays important role in eradicating or controlling some abnormal behaviour in individuals. Obviously a nation's development is judged by the extent it manages both human and material resources creditably (p. 61).*

The traditional music of Obosi community helps in shaping the character of its youths by engaging them as traditional music performers, entertainers, minstrels during socio-cultural activities. Moreover, the children, youths, adult and every individual up to the aged are directly or indirectly occupied and involved in the work force through participation in traditional music. Hence, instead of being involved in armed robbery, prostitution and other social vices, traditional music keeps them reasonably busy. Forchu (2012) asserts that:

*The contribution of Nigerian traditional music in promoting the social, religious and material life (thereby raising the standard of living) of the Nigerian is enormous. This is glimpsed through*

*participation in musical activities (by individual members of the society and collectively as member of the society) as performers and as the audience. The contribution is observed in the spheres of health, economy, education, social control, symbolic representation, literature, communication, emotional expression, aesthetics, rejuvenation, maintenance and continuity of history and tradition, facilitation of religious and social events and creation of group identity and solidarity. All these foster development (p. 211).*

The fact that traditional music is integrated in the life style of the Nigerian community, likewise, Obosi is not left out as it is part of the Nigerian society. Therefore, the traditional music is relevant in the family and societal life of the people.

Moreso, traditional music goes to the extent of yielding profitable foreign exchange to the nation which is of immense help in the present recessed economy. Forchu (2012) supports by stating that:

*Music contributes to the advancement of the national economy as well as the financial situation of individual members of the society. Some foreign exchange earnings result as a direct consequence of the music industry in Nigeria as seen in the patronage of Nigerian music, especially by Nigerians in Diaspora, as well as other nationals, particularly in the neighbouring countries such as Cameroun, Ghana, Republic of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and others (p. 212).*

Traditional music of Obosi helps people to be self-reliant, folk music band owners, professional music entertainers and folk art-song performers. Hence, some have become folk music live band directors who earn their living through music making. This genre of music is on high demand in the town especially during marriage ceremonies. Forchu (2012) agrees that:

*The impact of Nigerian music particularly, traditional popular music such as fuji, apala, dadokuada, akuko na-egwu, goje music and creating more job opportunities for members of the Nigerian society. Thus, the generation of new jobs and income for the musicians and the personnel of the recording studios, storage and*

*marketing agencies are all credited to the music industry. The general well-being of these individuals and their families will be enhanced if the environment is more conducive to the optimal development of the music industry (p. 212).*

As such, the music industry is also a beneficiary because they are kept busy as well as making money from it. In the present economic recession of Nigeria, traditional music has great and serious relevance in bringing sanity to the people in terms of reducing worries and tension over economic hardship and stress because it affects the feelings of people psychologically which in turn affects the people's integrity and personality. Keke and Obiekwe (2012) opine that "traditional music has a great impact on the social and cultural integrity of Nigeria in this noble project of re-branding the entire nation" (p. 303).

In terms of expression of inner thoughts and feelings, traditional music of Obosi encourages the high freedom of expression so as to point at the right values and acceptable norms of the society. While abnormal behaviour are discouraged with traditional satirical music, economically, it gives information on the needed goods to be produced, already produced ones and labour market for them through traditional music jingles and songs. It is also used to create awareness over spoiled food poisoning and the dangers of malnutrition and how to increase the economy by going to the rural areas to farm. Traditional music is also used to encourage people in buying 'homemade' goods. Keke and Obiekwe (2012) agree:

*Traditional music was the best means of communication to the people without fear or favour in the language they understand. Through traditional musical there existed a lot of freedom of expression, security, love, brotherly protection, high moral values according to the norms of the society and communal interest (p. 305).*

The lyrics of traditional music also serve as a strong tool in encouraging local products by using the local dialect in its original language of a particular community like Obosi so as to bring the economic information to the grassroots' understanding. This is also applicable in using traditional music to impart in them how to produce or prepare some local foods and some agricultural products to help people cope during economic recession. Keke and Obiekwe (2012) affirm that:

*Through song-texts, a person learned moral codes of his land. He also learned about his language, the things his people lived by and how the society worked. All these were learned through music that ranged from simple folk tunes to highly specialized ritual music, incantations and minstrelsy (p. 305).*

In the area of socio-cultural growth which in turn helps to up-hold its people during economic stress or fall in supply with shortage of finance; traditional music acts as a source of immense tool in helping the people to be encouraged; since hard times do not last, but strong people do. Therefore, it will be for a short while because no condition is permanent. Keke and Obiekwe (2012) believe that:

*Nigerians value traditional music a lot. One cannot talk of people's social and cultural life without mentioning their musical performances. Culture is people's way of life, beliefs, arts, attitudes, music, resulting in a behavioural pattern which gives a particular society a distinct, unique and peculiar identity and music plays vital roles in the cultural transmission both in time and space which are immense values to the society (p. 304).*

Therefore, in a time like the present day economic recession in Nigeria, traditional music is an instrument to restore economic sanity socially, culturally, psychologically, therapeutically, morally, intellectually, spiritually, and economically.

Keke and Obiekwe (2012) aver that:

*The integrity of traditional music in the Nigerian society is held to a very high esteem because it plays a vital role in all important stages of the life of Nigerian. The stages of life from birth to death are made lively, spirit-filled, enriched and coloured with music, dance and drama. Traditional music in Nigeria serve many functions which range from avenues for entertainment and relaxation, custodian of the people's culture, religious and traditional noble life styles to a medium through which noble ideas as well as vices are acknowledged or condemned, encouraged or discouraged (p. 304).*



Traditional music is not only directly relevant in a recessed economy but it also affects other areas of life like character moulding and general welfare of the society indirectly. This in turn affects the economy because a morally trained mind is the one that is sound to work and working to improve the economy during recession. Ibekwe (2009) asserts that:

*Among other activities that help to shape, mould and reform character, traditional music plays the greatest part. It is functional, richly imbued with societal ethics, norms and values. It is this functional aspect that makes it most relevant in society (p. 53).*

Traditional music of a community like Obosi bridles people's tongue from 'busybodies'. It trains them physically through moonlight play songs and culturally through folk tale songs with counting games that involve songs. All these help to enliven the spirit of a community towards achieving better goals in life for both healthy and wealthy living. Arukwe and Chukwu (2012) aver that:

*With traditional music, people's spirits were exalted. People lived quality lives. People were conscious of what they did and what they said at all times, because traditional musicians, who were, so to say, the voice of the community, could use whatever members of a culture did or said to compose satirical songs. They were morally careful of their life style (pp. 241 – 242).*

Traditional music in the recessed economy of our nation, Nigeria and Obosi in particular has multipurpose relevance in the people's well-being. This is seen in the substantial role it plays in the overall development of the nation in a recessed economy. Youths and up-coming generations through traditional music are eager to be creative in helping themselves out, thus, making them to be productive and helpful to themselves and the nation economically, politically, religiously, administratively and socially.

Forchu (2012) affirms that:

*As a result of the multi-dimensional nature of music and its integration into the African lifestyle, it is an indispensable tool in the achievement of many pursuits such as political, social, cultural, religious and economic endeavours. For this reason, many communal activities are accompanied by music for it*

*enhances the effectiveness of specific actions on particular occasions, thereby contributing as a part, to the whole socio-cultural system (p. 209).*

In the light of our present situation in Nigeria, traditional music has immense and numerous relevance in all round efficiency in terms of self-sufficiency and provision of healthy assets to life. Odogbor (2008) noted that:

*Economically, traditional music has provided source of earnings to individuals and communities. Community singers as well as makers of traditional music have benefited from engaging in traditional music practices. During social gathering, especially traditional marriages, funerals, etc certain persons may come together (either pre-planned or spontaneous) to perform traditional music (p. 70).*

The traditional music of a community is relevant in the churches. They are also very functional in the shrines by diviners and native doctors. Economically, it gives them competency in their operations and a viable means of livelihood and lively spirit, body and soul. Odogbor (2008) states that:

*Traditional music has also functioned in religious observance of Nigerian people. More importantly, traditional religion thrives in some degree, on music during worship sessions. Through music, transcendental relation are established between the worshippers and the object of their worships; messages are given, sent and delivered in songs (especially in traditional religious contexts) through intermediaries who are under some form of spirit possession. Traditional melodies have also gained in-roads into churches, the combination with other instrument, the integration of these traditional music elements has enhanced worship sessions in the church (p. 70)*

In the areas of work or labour force, traditional music and music as a whole play greater part to ensure massive/maximum production with less effort/energy. In a recessed economy, it helps the labour department and their resource/force to ensure large quantity in their productivity for both raw materials and finished consumer goods. In addition, healthy living and therapeutic well-being is given through traditional music because greater part of the healthy standard of a

particular society in a recessed economy is contributed by such traditional music. Hence, health is wealth because a healthy person is also a wealthy person. Sound body in a sound mind boosts the labour force to positive increase in the nation facing economic recession thereby saving lives from malnutrition and death from hunger. Agbidi (2011) affirms that

*in Africa, there are wok songs which not only deal with labour, but also accompanying rhythmic work by groups and make it easier...music plays a therapeutic role for the sick, bereaved and trouble mind, sustaining courage and creating psychological awareness (p. 132)*

Furthermore, Agbidi (2011) notifies that, “in economic life in Africa, songs function as an aid to corporate” (p. 132).

In a recessed economic life, traditional music encourages and promotes artistic reasoning, creativity, entrepreneurship and imaginations, in the areas of how best to coin raw materials for better production, thereby enhancing hard work to sustain families, communities and the nation at large. Historical background of people's genealogy, their heroic attributes, traditional occupation, their local/subsistence or large scale agricultural proceeds. Moreover, in the contemporary “Nollywood” department, the relevance of traditional music is such to be expressed. It plays serious relevant roles in clarifying some ambiguities in drama profession. It serves as prelude, interlude and epilogue in movies. It is used for introductory part of the play to get the keen attention of the audience.

Traditional music is powerful in the retention and sustenance of community's identity. This is portrayed in the traditional music of African slaves called ‘Negro Spirituals’. Here, their native songs were in them and born in them. During their maltreatment and forced wicked labour by their slave masters, the slaves sang songs of their traditional music and recalled most of them to remember their homelands. Such traditional music full of passion and human feelings helped in reducing the pains accrued from their masters. Not only that such traditional songs were sung to relieve the suffering, that remnant of their native, local and traditional language were still there in them which they fused in the language of their masters during their forced labour in the plantation work. This later gave birth to popular music which has gained much ground especially in contemporary Nigeria.

Therefore, in a recessed economy, traditional music gives background to popular music which popularly helps the nation in solving its economic hardship.

In payment of taxes, collection of revenues and dues, the traditional music of a people is used as a strong driving force that can propel them to concur. It is believed that an average African man is musical; such that in certain situations when every other means of getting something from him fails, just use music, especially the music of his community (traditional music), which will then make him lose his 'tight-grip' so as to comply. Hence, all the people are involved through traditional music to increase the better life of a people during economic recession. Thus, Nzewi in Ekong (2008) supports by stating that:

*Music assists the folk governmental system in collecting dues and fines; in promoting and marshalling community and group labour. It celebrates communal accomplishment, officiates in the administration and execution of justice, espouses and popularizes good progressive government while it warns, exposes and heckles, as well as being instrumental in correcting and overthrowing unpopular government (p. 19).*

Therefore, for any government to succeed in a recessed economy, music, especially traditional in its original, local and native language has the weapon to pierce in the heart in understanding what they will do to sustain, survive and succeed in such a situation. This is achieved through traditional music jingles and advert songs.

Traditional music also serves similar purposes in art and sciences. Most information about goods, its production, demand, cost and supply are passed on to the people through traditional music. Moreover, traditional music, traditional song texts, lyrics and words are information and serious message carriers. Agu (2017) affirms that, "most information are passed on through texts embedded in songs, while others are passed on through musical instruments, especially the talking drums" (p. 21). It is worthy of note that Fela Anikolapo Kuti used music in both traditional and popular contexts to expose the weaknesses and failures of the government in a recessed economy. He also advised them on how best to manage the public resources instead of embezzling them so as to manage and stop recession. Nzewi in Ekong (2008) affirms that:

*Music is a ubiquitous social organizer. It supervises the operations of established government; assists in the maintenance of the laws of the land; safeguards and perpetuates tradition; discourages the degeneration of personal or corporate morals; promotes social equity and fights injustice, crowns rulers; welcomes birth; buries the dead; enforces and enlivens all purposes of communal get-together (p. 19).*

Traditional music is quite a relevant tool/instrument of solace and succour in a recessed economy through making people to be independent of themselves and free from creating reliability as many youths today are usefully engaged to work, in studios; some notate traditional music using music notating applications (Finale/Sibelius etc.), some work as pop-folk or trado-popular music artistes/stars. Some also work as Nollywood traditional/folk singers. It gives a community like Obosi a unique identity as we can see in their famous traditional music group of Igba Araba known for its socio-cultural performances. Such traditional musical group is gainfully self-employed by entertaining people thereby reducing the tension of unemployment in a recessed economy. Thus, the traditional music of an ethnic group gives them hope economically because they gain life experiences which they acquire to manipulate the present situation for a better future. Forchu (2012) states that:

*Traditional music addresses strong and deep emotional feelings, the expression of which may not be permissible in speech and deed, by the society, thus cutting as a catharsis and providing relief for emotions (which if retained could cause harm to the individual and the society) and enhancing resolution of conflicts and solution to problems. Furthermore, music stimulates emotions such as longing, passion, grief, joy, religious exultation and feelings in the performers which they express and pass on and share with their audience. This creates feelings of intense unity and harmony, which are felt during performances, fostering the well-being of the individual and the society as a whole (p. 215).*

The above statement is geared towards achieving greatness with the available means of resources in a recessed economy. Thus, no matter the severity of an economy, one can still adopt, adhere, adapt and adjust (A.A.A.A) in any situation so as to cope and live for a better future. As a result of this, in a recessed

economy one can still socialize to help in bringing things to normalcy and sanity to means of livelihood.

## Conclusion

Traditional music and music in general is life. Life is having abundant health. While abundant health is wealth. Wealth is an improved economy even in the time of recession. Traditional music is the embodiment of the societal values, norms, ethics, occupation, religion, food, agriculture, as well as economy. As such, in a recessed economy, it is very relevant. Moreover, it transfers the needs, customs and the general culture of its people at a particular time from generation to generation. Self-employed traditional music artistes work as entertainers, instrumentalists, makers/carvers of traditional instruments, etc. Their audience and listeners in turn are kept busy to learn, thereby keeping them entertained as well. Studio technicians are also seriously engaged to work. Transporters of these works take the finished products to final consumers; all to the success and relevance of traditional music in a recessed economy.

Therefore, we should all be encouragers of our traditional music. A hungry man is an angry man, but traditional music can help to quench its negative effects on the individual or group. Many top popular music artistes get the lyrics and melodies from traditional music. Thus, traditional music serves as a sort of entrepreneurial asset and encourager to people in any recessed economy.

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