

# MUSICAL ‘EDUTAINMENT’: FOLK MUSIC AS BAIT IN DIABETES AWARENESS CAMPAIGN OF EBIRALAND

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## **Introduction**

Information through music is fundamentally and imperatively human activities that associated with life. Information is power. When people are misinformed or under-informed, catastrophe happens. Diabetes is a disease that is common to both learned and unlearned in the society, which if people are aware of the causes, types, symptoms and probably how to manage or prevent it, the rate at which people suffer and die through this dreaded disease would have been reduced.

Among the Ebira community in *Ebiraland*, which consists of Okehi, Okene, Adavi and Ajaokuta Local Government Areas of Kogi-State, people are living with diabetes, both literate and illiterate. Diabetes is a gradual killer, which, if people are aware of the cause, symptoms, and cure of it, the rate at which people suffer under this dreaded disease would have reduced drastically or possibly wiped out completely. The emerging reality about the threat this sickness poses on its victims is as a result of shallow information or awareness from the medical practitioners. Hence, the popular sayings that ‘the sickness you don’t know can kill you’, is real in such a situation like this. As we all know, ‘health is wealth’; every other thing will be meaningless when one is not enjoying good and healthy living.

According to Scholes in Ekwueme (2001), folk music is an aspect of the term “folklore”. Folklore is a concept which embraces aspects of tradition, the belief system, philosophy, customs, superstitions and the arts and crafts of a group of people. Therefore, the definition of folk music as adopted by the International Folk Music Council is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission, and the factors that shape that tradition are:

- (i) continuity that links the present with the past,
- (ii) variation which springs from the creative impulse of the individual and the group, and
- (iii) selection by the community which determines the form(s) in which they survive (JIFMC, 1995 in Ekwueme 2001).

Folk music in Nigeria is the indigenous music originated from the people, performed by the people and for the people. It is handed down from one generation to the next, through the process of oral transmission. It is largely based on the myths and beliefs of the people, legendary and historical events, domestic and ceremonial activities as well as incidents in the life of the community. This is why folk music has been chosen by the researcher to use as a bait of awareness campaign because, it is people's music; people will understand it faster than any other types of music around them. Also, for the information to reach the grassroots; people that are being neglected daily by the Local Government, State government and Federal Government policies.

Entertainment-education as a bait for communication, especially in passing information and creating awareness in the grassroots is not in doubt. This has been used severally by many music professionals, politicians, schools and even hospitals to convey messages and to promote human cause on the global scene.

Issue of health is dominant in human existence. "Health is wealth" so they say. Scholars such as McClellan (1988), Aluede (2006), Moore (2013), Titus (2014), Reggemore (2016), to mention but a few, have proposed the use of music as therapy in curing sickness and diseases at different times, be it in the hospitals, worship and healing centres across the globe. However, none of the studies has used folk music through edutainment as awareness campaign for causes, symptoms and prevention of diabetes, especially among the Ebiraland community in Kogi Central of Kogi-State. From finding, there has been no organized campaign or awareness for this deadly disease called diabetes. People have been resorting to fate on the issue of diabetes both literate and illiterate within *Ebiraland*. This study is therefore intended to fill the gap in knowledge by providing information to people on the causes, symptoms, types, cure and prevention of diabetes through the instrumentality of entertainment-education in *Ebiraland*.

At the end of this study, the community of *Ebiraland* would have been informed and sanitized on the symptoms and prevention of diabetes in the land. The gap on how to contact hospital and Medical Practitioner on this particular ailment would have been catered for through this study. Also, it will also have served as the eye opener to many around the community on how to take care of themselves whenever they have health challenges, after all we are human and prone to various dangers of ailment everyday of our life. The whole process shall be documented and added to the body of knowledge with wide spread dissemination.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework on which this study is based is the theory of Edutainment. This theory model was developed by the Soul City (2000), a leading film industry based in South Africa with professional specialization in the use of Entertainment–Education (EE) for social change in the society. This theory postulates the effective promotion, advertising, partnership and networking steps needed to be in place to give the entertainment vehicle the best possible chance of having wide reach and popularity. It advocates that the edutainment vehicle could be of community drama, local storytelling, dance, poetry, song puppets, comic drama, soap opera, show music radio series, phone-ins and talk (<https://www.soulcity/community/redirect>). It further purports that all these, with a supportive environment and popular entertainment will promote family, friend and community conversation and education which in turn leads to people’s liberation, which is essential for positive social change.

The foregoing theory is relevant to and would be adopted for this study in its application to the method of creating awareness to the people of *Ebiraland* on the causes, symptoms, and also preventing diabetes among people of *Ebiraland*.

### **Research Methodology**

The researcher chose a survey research design as it best represents this study. Further information was drawn from books, journals and internet websites. There were oral interviews with the Medical practitioners in *Ebiraland*. The research is an explorative and intervention study of the knowledge, attitude, and prevention practices of spread of diabetes in *Ebiraland*. The researcher distributes questionnaires to the Medical practitioners in public and private hospitals in the land to ascertain the cause, symptoms and prevention of diabetes mostly in *Ebiraland*.

The researcher employed the services of Ebira, Yorùbá, Edo, Hausa, and Igbo speaking people as research partners. This people were used to write in indigenous languages, so as to compose music in indigenous tongue. Field trips to some Local Government Areas in *Ebiraland* were embarked on.

### **Brief Historical Background of *Ebiraland***

“*Anebira*” which was shortened to ‘*Ebira*’ mean people from Ebira. ‘*Bira*’ was a settlement located somewhere in Adamawa State. This name was adopted after their migration from ‘*Bira*’ to the lower Benue valley as a mark of identity (Ohiare, 1990). According to the tradition, the *Ebira* in this period formed part and parcel of the *Apa* group (the *Sukun*) who founded the Kwara ‘*rafa*’ confederacy consisting of ‘*Pindinga*’, ‘*Kan*’ and ‘*Kwararafa*’ (Ohiare, 1990). This was the time they were located in *Bira*, a name they came to be known with and identified by themselves. This was around 14<sup>th</sup> century. They later migrated from ‘*Bira*’ to ‘*abinse*’ in Benue State down to ‘*Agatu*’ between mid 14<sup>th</sup> and late 14<sup>th</sup> century. Early A.D 1500, they settled at ‘*Inoida*’ (Idah) that is the stock that ‘*Ebira tao*’ belong to, from there they migrated to ‘*Upake*’ (Opete) then to ‘*Uko Angwe*’ (Okingwe), where they now occupy. Other ‘*Biras*’ migrated from lower Benue valley to the four corner of the federation. Ebira history has it that Ebiras are ten in number supported by this adage “*Ebira vi onya di yak an oze ewoni*” meaning, *Ebira* is one and is been spoken in ten ways (Ohiare, 1990).

The possible ten *Ebiras*, according to Ohiare (1990) are these:

- ❖ Ebira Tao (Okene)
- ❖ Ebira Koto of Kogi State and Abaji of Abuja
- ❖ Ebira Etuno (Igarra) of Edo State
- ❖ Ebira Lafia of Nassarawa State
- ❖ Ebira Toto of Nassarawa State
- ❖ Ebira Idoma of Benue State
- ❖ Ebira Mozum of Bassa in Kogi State
- ❖ Ebira Opete (Eganyi) of Kogi State
- ❖ Ebira of Limet in Adamawa State
- ❖ Ebira Bida/Wushishi in Niger State

*Ebira ‘Tao’* are found majorly in north central part of Nigeria which has about 700,000 people according to National Population Census (1991). *Ebira* of Okene

settled in Kogi central or Kogi senatorial district of Kogi State and shares boundary with the *Igalas* at Itobe on the terminal south end of the Ajaokuta Bridge at the eastern part of the Kogi State. On the North, it shares boundary with Lokoja of Kogi L.G.A. On the west, it shares boundary with the Aduge in Ijumu L.G.A. of Kogi State. On the south, it shares with Okpella in Etsako L.G.A. of Edo State.

Ohiare (1990) further observes that the Ebiras are properly placed in terms of transportation and communication. There is an air strip at Adogo in Ajaokuta in Ajaokuta L.G.A of Kogi State. As a major link between the old north and south, there is a network of road which serves her. There is a Federal highway linking Abuja (Federal Capital) to Lagos State and Abuja to Benin that passes through the nucleus of the land. The Ebiras migrated to its present location on foot in the late A.D. 1700. The Ebiras People's Cultural Heritage

The musical culture of the Ebiras is rich in diversity with reference to aesthetic values. It is used as an important tool in every cultural event. It serves as a motivator in the traditional context in *Ebiraland*, whether in communal development or just for entertainment. Folksongs are regarded as an indispensable tool in enhancing the cultural identity of the people. Okafor (2002) explained that music in culture is reflective of the way of life of a group of people, because, music and culture are meaningful only when used in the context of human experiences. What makes up people's ability to live together is their cultural heritage that gives them the opportunity of expressing their self-esteem, moral values and legendry in a way which may be similar or different from those of other societies. Folksongs are being used in worship, occupational activities, daily experiences with regards to rites of passage, and most importantly, it is seen as an integral part of life of people.

The occupational activities of the Ebiras people are farming, carving, pottery, weaving, hunting and commerce. Ohiare (1990) wrote that culture embraces everything which contributes to the survival of a people with their heritage where folksongs are used in accompanying performances that promote their culture. Culture is dynamic and this explains why it has remained a veritable tool in reaching out to the people in historical knowledge and information transmission. Here, Folksongs are used through performances to depict the totality and collective responsibilities of the people on how to express their daily verbalized existence and in promoting continuity in the society.

Ebira culture has a set of values and norms governing the behaviour of the people, and this is learnt through socialization which could be derived from folksongs. The ability to improve on the laid down tradition is what makes the society dynamic and this is aided using folksongs. The Ebira tradition has been able to bring music closer to the people by involving everybody in music making events. In Ebira, music performance is a collective responsibility which has helped in the growth and social development of the society. Because the people are in close affinity with their tradition and culture, it sums up to make it easy to impart any form of cultural education to them.

### **The Perspectives of Folk Music**

Folk music is seen as a basic concept of music that entails folk song, folk tales, folk dance, drama and language. The styles of Nigerian folk songs are related to the multitudes of ethnic groups in the country, each with their own techniques, instruments and songs. Folk songs are one of the most prevalent forms of folk lore. It unites a poetic text with a melody. The poetic imaginary determines the character and emotive quality of the melody. Folk song usually has a well-defined strophic structure. Bohlman (2005) defines folk song as traditional music that has been played by ordinary people in a particular society. Also, according to Craig (2008), folk song expresses the common experience of the people; all important events in their lives from cradle to the grave are accompanied by their songs. This means that folk song gives the people a lot to think about, with regards to what they are able to grab as knowledge of past experiences, so also the current happenings. What is learnt from folk song is internalized for future use in a formal setting to develop self.

To people of *Ebiraland*, folk song is used to recount or tell stories of real events and this is one of the reasons why in traditional setting, the people include it as a forum for teaching about past history of the society. This could be used to improve and remind children of the importance of songs that narrate on tradition (Ohiare 1990). Folksong can as well be used to impart knowledge to persons who understand the language of the song. It normally consists of a comparatively simple melody to which several stanzas are used. Folk songs are reflective of what every society wants, to accommodate in promoting her heritage from one generation to another. Nzewi (1991) says folk song evolves as corporate communal experiences. This reveals that it serves as a tool for communication and education. This is the

reason why folk songs have been chosen as a tool to communicate the information on diabetes to the Ebiraland populace: the cause, symptoms and prevention.

### **Meaning of Diabetes and the Types**

Diabetes is the presence of excess sugar in the blood due to insulin hormone deficiency and/or destruction of the receptor sites. Currently, there are three types of diabetes:

**Type 1** diabetes results from a cellular mediated auto immune destruction of the  $\beta$ -cell of the pancreas.

**Type 2** encompasses individual who have insulin resistance and usually have relative (rather than absolute) insulin deficiency (journal at [www.Cogent.O.A.com](http://www.Cogent.O.A.com)). Gestational diabetes

Gestational diabetes is the result of hormonal changes during pregnancy. The placenta produces hormones that make a pregnant woman's cells less sensitive to the effects of insulin. This can cause high blood sugar during pregnancy. Women who are overweight when they get pregnant or who gain too much weight during their pregnancy is more likely to get gestational diabetes. Diabetes is a non-communicable disease that has attained great significance in the sub-Saharan region, with Nigeria being the most affected. Diabetes could be very deceptive in the sense that one may not feel sick as the blood sugar level can damage blood vessels in no distant time. Many persons with the condition suffer a reduced life expectancy and quality of life. Diabetes places an extra burden on the individuals and families affected, especially for the majority of patients unable to access quality health care. Diabetes-related morbidity and mortality continues to increase due to population expansion, urban migration, declining physical activity, and dietary factors (journal at [www.Cogent.O.A.com](http://www.Cogent.O.A.com)). The organization of diabetes cares in most urban centers is poorly coordinated, especially at the primary and secondary tiers of the public health care system, with consequent poor outcomes. Though, there is no such organization in the four Local Government Areas in Kogi senatorial central district of Kogi-State; thus life expectancy (just about 50 years), which is low in the region, is further reduced by the double jeopardy of communicable (e.g. tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria) and non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and its closely related morbidity and hypertension.

## **The Symptoms**

During an oral interview with two medical practitioners; Dr. Ade Ayinmode of Specialist Hospital Obangede, Okehi Local Government of Kogi State and Dr. Nelson Idivibia of the School Clinic, Federal College of Education, Okene, they both agreed that diabetes is a defect in the body's ability to convert glucose (sugar) to energy. They say glucose is the main source of fuel for our body. When food is digested, it is changed to fats, protein or carbohydrates. Foods that affect blood sugar are called carbohydrates. Carbohydrates when digested, changes to glucose. When we eat carbohydrates, they are broken down into the form of energy which the body recognizes and utilizes, which is called glucose. Glucose is then transferred to the blood where the cells use them for energy. For this transfer to take place, insulin is needed. The organ that produces this insulin is known as pancreas. They are produced by better cells in the pancreas. When production of insulin is insufficient, diabetes develops in persons. When an individual develops diabetes, the process is truncated. This is not a palatable condition to live with.

The following serves as the likely symptoms of diabetes that can be easily noticed in its victim:

1. Excessive thirst and hunger
2. Frequent urination
3. Drowsiness or fatigue
4. Dry, itchy skin
5. Blurry vision
6. Slow healing of wounds
7. Sometimes, the victim, after urination, ants gathered round the urine. These and more are likely the symptoms of diabetes, which the victims should take seriously and visit the nearby hospital for easy access to medical care.

## **Prevention of Diabetes**

According to some of my informants (medical practitioners) and collaboration with internet materials, some prevention tips are suggested below:

- 1. Cut sugar and refined carbohydrate from your diet:** Eating foods high in refined carbs and sugar increases blood sugar and insulin levels, which may lead to diabetes over time. Avoiding these foods may help reduce your risk.



- 2. Work out regularly:** Performing physical activity on a regular basis may help prevent diabetes. Exercise increases the insulin sensitivity of your cells. So when you exercise, less insulin is required to keep your blood sugar levels under control.
- 3. Drink water as your primary beverage:** Water is by far the most natural beverage you can drink. Drinking water instead of other beverages may help control blood sugar and insulin levels, thereby reducing the risk of diabetes.
- 4. Lose weight if you are overweight or obese:** Carrying excess weight, particularly in the abdominal area, increases the likelihood of developing diabetes. Losing weight may significantly reduce the risk of diabetes.
- 5. Quit smoking:** Smoking is strongly linked to the risk of diabetes, especially in heavy smokers. Quitting has been shown to reduce this risk over time.
- 6. Follow a Very-Low-carbohydrate Diet:** Following a ketogenic or very-low-carbohydrate diet can help keep blood sugar and insulin levels under control, which may protect against diabetes.
- 7. Minimize your intake of processed foods:** Minimizing processed foods and focusing on whole foods with protective effects on health may help decrease the risk of diabetes.
- 8. Eat a high-fiber diet:** Consuming a good fiber source at each meal can help prevent spikes in blood sugar and insulin levels, which may help reduce your risk of developing diabetes. Take much fruits, protein like foods and reduction of carbohydrate.

You have control over many of the factors that influence diabetes. Rather than viewing pre-diabetes as a stepping stone to diabetes, it may be helpful to see it as a motivator for making changes that can help reduce your risk. Eating the right foods and adopting other lifestyle behaviors that promote healthy blood sugar and insulin levels will give you the best chance at avoiding diabetes (<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/prevent-diabetes>)

**Folk Songs Composed by Azimazi, J.A., Arranged and Scored by The Researcher, for Awareness Campaign of Diabetes in *Ebiraland*:**

**Song 1**

Ebira	English
<p><i>Uku isuga ana kareyi ani, uku ono omawuoza, ewu ohura yetuo, aguvi avo aaka wu nini, umeme nye gnwu yetuo nine, anavo kuoguo asi uto pete.</i></p>	<p>The diabetes being spoken of doesn't kill, if it's quickly discovered, that is why you are being told, how you can easily discover it, please be attentive.</p>



**Song 2**

Ebira	English
<p><i>We hehemyi upe wu, onyai ne vi uku isuga, onyai ne vi uku isuga nine, onyai ne vo uku isuga, use use na azamau re, ka onyai ne vi nku isuga.</i></p>	<p>If you urinate many times (may be 10) before day break. It could be diabetes (sugar disease)3x. Quickly o for diagnosis, it could be diabetes (sugar disease).</p>



### Song 3

Ebira	English
<p><i>Itahu oturawn kiki, oi vi, aa yara, onyaike vi uku isuga, use use na azamau re, ka onyai ne vi uku isuga, onyaine vi uku isuga nine, onyaine vi uku isuga.</i></p>	<p>If you have a small injury and it doesn't heal but get worse, it could be diabetes (sugar disease). Quickly go for diagnosis, it could be diabetes (sugar disease)</p>



### Song 4

Ebira	English
<p><i>Ewu a rise ewa kuoro, agowu wu egwu poro, onyai ne vi uku isuga, use use na azamawu re, ka onyaine vi uku isuga, onyai ne vi uku isuga nine, Onyai vi uku isuga.</i></p>	<p>If you eat well but do not add weight and you are always tired, it could be diabetes (sugar disease). Quickly go for diagnosis, it could be diabetes (sugar disease)</p>



### Song 5

Ebira	English
<p><i>Aha oni ewu hehemyi tu, oda me du heyi niye, Ihine guizor ere yor, Onyaine vi uku isuga, onyaine vi uku isuga nine, onyaine vi uku isuga.</i></p>	<p>Wherever you urinate, when you check and ants gathered to lick it after some time, it could be diabetes (sugar disease) 3x. Quickly go for diagnosis, it could be sugar disease.</p>

23

A - ha o - ni e - wu he - nyi tu o da me du ne yi ni a ye i - hi - ne 'zor e re

26

yor on - ya - i ne vi 'ku 'su - ga on - ya - i ne vo 'ku 'su - ga ni - ne on - ya - i vi u - ku su - ga

### Prevention of Diabetes

Ebira	English
<p><i>Ukwu suga o ukwu sug Ukw suga o ukwu suga, diabetes kwu suga ni diabetes onorukwu ni</i></p>	<p>Sugar's diseases o sugar's disease, sugar's diseases o sugar's disease, diabetes is the same as sugar disease, diabetes is the same as sugar disease</p>

U - kwu su - gao u - kwu su - ga u - kwa su - gao u - kwu su - ga

5

di - a - be - di - a - be - te - s o - no - ru u - su - ga ni di - a - be - di - a - be - te - s o - no - ru u - su - ga ni

Ebira	English
<p><i>Huni suga aguvukwu suga, huni suga aguvukwu suga, Isan anyi starch royinani o.</i></p>	<p>Abstain from sugar because of sugar's disease abstain from sugar because of sugar's disease also abstain also from anything starch.</p>

9 Hu-ni-su-ga a-gu - vu-kwu su-ga hu-ni su-ga a-gu vu-kwu su-ga i-san na-yin starch ro-yin a - ni \_\_\_ ni o

15 i-san na-yin starch ro-yin a - ni \_\_\_ ni o a-su ya te ke-ne na-vo wa zu zi-zi u-vi kwu su-ga a-su ya te ke-ne

21 na - vo wa zu zi - zi u - vi kwu su - ga

Ebira	English
<p><i>Asure hubo Asure hu cigar, asure hubo asure hu cigar, Uvikwu suga, Isananyi starch nyinakwoze, Uvikwu suga, Wa banyi twa honya, novowa zuse zizi.</i></p>	<p>Stop smoking weed, stop smoking cigarette, stop smoking weed, stop smoking cigarette because of diabetes, refine anything starch because of diabetes, if you are fat in a place work around.</p>

## Conclusion

This paper examined the use of indigenous music of Ebira people in the campaign, on the awareness of the symptoms and prevention of diabetes in *Ebiraland*; being the indigenous music that is understandable and versatile among the old and the young, the civilized and the uncivilized citizen of *Ebiraland*. Using the conceptual framework of entertainment-education, the study passes information on the impact and severe damages diabetes can cause to all and sundry within the local government area covered, if people live in ignorant of the deadly disease. The songs were meticulously composed to educate the listeners about the symptoms and prevention of diabetes, so as to reduce the spread and the deadly action it could impose or cause the community dwellers in the future.

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- Journal at [https:// www.cogent.o.a.com](https://www.cogent.o.a.com)

### **Primary Source**

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6. Pa. Audu Ugodo- An Elder in Okene community
7. Mr. Shaibu - A traditionalist and Politician
8. Mr. Omeiza Emmanuel- A youth leader in Obeira community