

TRENDS IN GOSPEL MUSIC PERFORMANCE: SAMPLES FROM SELECTED PENTECOSTAL DENOMINATIONS IN PANKSHIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, PLATEAU STATE

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Introduction

Gospel music performance is presently a global, international, national, and societal phenomenon. No matter the type of music that one is inclined and exposed to, if it is not performed, it is not fit to be music at all. With regards to the performance of music generally, Kemien (1992) suggests: without a performance, music would remain soundless on a page. Unlike books and paintings, music speaks to us through a recreator, a musician who makes the printed music sound. A composition, even a familiar one, can be a fresh experience each time it is performances. In Plateau State, the performance of gospel music spreads like cancer by both veteran and up-coming gospel artistes. Effiong (2011) adds thus about the performance of gospel music:

Gospel music should be performed without fear or favour in the Church and outside the church by artistes who themselves have been called by God to carry on/spread the gospel message...Nigeria gospel artistes should perform gospel music without losing focus of its main purpose of evangelization of souls (p.910).

Talking about the sporadic efforts in the performance of gospel music at homes especially during family devotion times, Effiong (2009) further remarks:

Gospel music performance in Christian families is presently a household name in the sense that it is heard in Christian homes during their devotions or through audio and visual aids as praise, worships and hymns...Praise songs in tapes, VCDs and DVDs could be featured in our radios and

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal.. television sets and the entire family join in singing and dancing* (pp. 140-141).

Gospel Music

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary sees gospel music as 'a style of popular music usually performed by Black Americans singers in which religious songs are sung strongly and loudly'. Other musicologists and ethnomusicologists like Robert 1973: 3 and Ojo 1998:211 have defined gospel music variously but, the definition from Adedeji (2004:2) gives a more comprehensive outlook thus: A type of Christian music that preaches the 'good news' of Jesus Christ and made popular by public performance, the electronic media and information technology such as radio, television, the recording world and the internet.

Leon Dufour (1980:214) traces the word 'gospel' from its roots in the Greek, *evangelion* which means 'good news'. From the above assertions, Effiong (2011) summarizes the definitions thus: Since gospel means good news, then gospel music is a brand of Christian music which could be performed in or outside the church for the purpose of spreading the good news message of Christ by artistes who themselves have been touched by the redemptive works of Jesus Christ for all humanity. The performance of gospel music is both in the church and outside the Church liturgy.

The Coming of Gospel Music to North-Central Nigeria

Ajirire and Alabi (1992:4) suggest that gospel music is as old as the Nigerian Church and that it came at the inception of Christianity in Nigeria. Ojo (1998:210) states that gospel music emerged in the 1970s as a distinct genre but Adedeji (2004:64) disagrees with Ojo's assertions and states that there is historical evidence of the existence of gospel music in Nigeria prior to the 1970s. He explains further that 'Gospel music in Nigeria developed first from the music used by indigenous Pentecostal Churches in evangelistic parades between 1930s and the 1960s. To him, the developments of gospel music properly started in the 1960s; but then, when did gospel music spread to the northern and central parts of Nigeria?

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Adedeji (2004) further adds:

It was in the 1980s that gospel music spread to the North. There were several developments that also took place during this period. Apart from the fact that many new gospel artistes joined the existing one, 'gos-pop' style was also formed. In the 1980s. Nigerian gospel music was taken abroad by Christ Apostolic Church, good women Choir... Panam Percy Paul...(p.66).

The above assertion is very true because among the gospel music artistes mentioned is Panam Percy Paul who is "an acclaimed veteran gospel music artiste in Jos, Plateau State" since the 1980s.

Brief History of Pankshin Local Government Area

Pankshin as one of the oldest Local Government Area in Plateau State, was created in 1976. It is located about 120kilometers from the Jos, the state capital. Pankshin is blessed with cold climate, comparable to that of Europe. The Local government has a projected population of 191, 685 by 1991 population census, with 95,395 males and 96290 females. It is bounded by Mangu Local Government Council to the East, Langtang to the West, Kanke to the South and Quanpa'an LGA to the North. Among the tourist sites in Pankshin are the Hill top hotel, Wulmi hills, Dam. Volcanic mountains and Jibam bridge. It has numerous federal parastatals such as the popular Federal College of Education, Federal Road Safety Commission, Federal Fire service, Nigerian Custom Service, Nigeria Police Force, Nigerian Prisons (Correctional Center), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence among others. It is a land that is equally blessed with minerals resources like quartz, clay and kaolin and the like. The land is very good in agriculture; and has the following crops: Maize, rice millet, groundnut, guinea corn, locust bean, Irish potatoes, vegetables, fruits among others.

Gospel Musical Practices in Pankshin Pentecostal Denominations

In Pankshin LGA, the Pentecostal denominations are varied and the increasing rate is both alarming and momentary. The following are some of Pentecostal denominations in the area:

- a. Chapel of Redemption
- b. Living Faith Church.
- c. Dunamis International Gospel Centre

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- d. Christ Embassy
- e. Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry
- f. Assemblies of God
- g. Redeemed Christian Church of God
- h. God's Grace Divine Ministry
- i. Reconcilatory Ministry
- j. La paix Church
- k. United Missionary Church of Africa
- l. Bible Faith Mission
- m. Rivers of Fire Gospel Ministry etc.

The List is endless, but the paper shall be addressing its trends and stylistic musical genres/styles in only five of the denominations. These are:

- i. Living Faith Church
- ii. Chapel of Redemption
- iii. Assemblies of God Church
- iv. Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry and
- v. Dunamis International Gospel Church.

The Pentecostal denominations today in Pankshin LGA keep increasing. The reasons for the proliferation of Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin LGA are today's technological developments, modernity, socio-religious music among others.

Adegbite (2000) describes the resultant effects that the proliferation of churches has caused in the Pentecostal denomination thus:

'As for Christian socio-religious music, religious fanaticism which has to do with the proliferation of many churches contributed immensely to the change. Apart from the change from traditional approach to worship, those churches have also adopted new systems of singing especially gospel singing. As a result of their exposure to foreign dance music in preference to the rigid hymn tunes and 'native airs' (pp.180-181).

The Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin today are many. "We should have over twenty (20) denominations under Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria in Pankshin, but only thirteen (13) are duly registered", The following are few examples of registered ones in Pankshin where gospel music is highly practiced: Living Faith, Church of

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* God Mission, Four Square Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Oasis of Love, Victory Chapel, Redeemed People's Mission, Bible Faith Mission, Charismatic Renewal Ministry, Dunamis International Gospel Centre, The Apostolic Faith, Maranatha Gospel Church. Foundation Faith Church, Christ Embassy, Mountain of Fire and Miracles, Chapel of Redemption among others.

Pentecostal denominations have been going through a lot of changes. These changes have been motivated by a number of factors such as Science and Technology, education, modernity, information and communication to mention but a few. The analysis of Adedeji (2004) about the revolutionary trend generally in Nigeria gospel music is perhaps an eye opener: The revolutionary trend in contemporary Nigerian gospel music is stimulated by education, modernity and technology actually started in the 1980s. Critics of the trends who claim that gospel music was already adulterated by secular features do not consider the fact that church which owned the music was also changing in the sense that it adopted to socio-cultural changes. As long as the church experience changes, its music is bound to change.

“Change” as it is commonly said, is the only permanent thing. Since the society is presently contemporaneous in nature, the church also is experiencing these contemporaneous tendencies vis-à-vis its musical practice in instrumentations, dance forms and arts of singing. Over the years, people have erroneously said that the church of today have been polluted by Afro-American musical forms-which they call “secular genres”. They have seen these musical forms like high life, Calypso, blues, rock ‘n’ roll among others, as being secular in nature. Well, in my own opinion, these musical genres are divinely given and imputed to the human race by God. The fact is that secular musicians/artistes are always (mostly) the first to use them in their secular music practices, and when gospel artistes later imbibe them, people consider their music practice as being “carnally inclined” or “secular”. These Afro-American musical forms are popular music genres because the initial practitioners were secular musicians/artistes whose sole aim was for entertainment.

Okonkwo (2006) gives further clarifications: Gospel music has usurped the rhythmic styles of popular music which include R & B, reggae, rock, rap, high life, etc. it becomes difficult to make distinctions which can only be clarified through the

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* song texts (p.161). Okafor (2005) adds: Popular music that deals with familiar themes and issues of the moment...popular music is therefore with broad, immediate and implicitly transient appeal. It is also social entertainment and dance oriented and draws its core clientele from urban dwellers (p.327). The practitioners of gospel music presently have the aim of evangelization and not entertainment as it is in popular music. The musical practices of gospel music in Pankshin Pentecostal denominations keep changing alongside the dynamic status of the society.

Trends of the Spread of Gospel Music in Nigeria

Tracking the origin of gospel music, Garret (1996:636) claims that the term 'gospel music' was first used in 1644 for the puntan tract by Nathaniel Homes 'to mean a kind of popular congregational song inspired by not art but heart'. Ajirire and Alabi (1992:72) trace the origin of gospel music to America and assert that 'gospel music' came from the white "revivalist" hymns of the 1890s. Roberts (1973:171) maintains that it was Dorsey who was responsible for coinage of the term 'gospel music' in the 1920s. Since then, a lot of claims and assertions have been given to the origin and eventual development of gospel music in Nigeria. Ajirire and Alabi (1992) suggest that gospel music started with the inception of Christianity in Nigeria thus: The Nigerian gospel music is as old as the Nigerian Church. Apart from the normal Church services conducted with songs, in Nigeria, Christian festivals like Christmas, Easter and Harvest are celebrated with a special service of songs performed by the choir (p.74). Nwoka (2000) adds on the characteristics features of music at the inception of Christianity in Nigeria:

The Mission Churches which characterized Nigerian Christianity from its inception imbibed the solemn music of the Euro-American parent churches. The boisterous natures of Africans were caged in white-man's organ music during worship. This was a great contrast to the frenzy of musical communication in African Traditional Religions where music and dancing are twin powerful means of worship and thanksgiving (p.58).

Other scholars see gospel music as being of recent origin in Nigeria. Ojo (1998) for instance states that: Nigerian gospel music emerged in the 1970s as a distinctive genre when choral groups moved their performance from the liturgical setting in Churches into the public domain. This transition adapted gospel music for entertainment and commercial purposes. The texts of the songs are based on

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* biblical and traditional Christian concepts, but their performance combines both western and traditional musical instruments.

Adedeji (2004:64) disagree with Oyo's assertions and states that there is historical evidence of the existence of gospel music in Nigeria prior to the 1970s. He explains further that 'Gospel music in Nigeria developed first from the music used by indigenous Pentecostal churches in evangelistic parades between 1930s and the 1960s. He remarks further that: It is observed that the origin of Nigerian gospel music is traceable to more than one source. We can therefore conclude that all the aforementioned developments led to the birth of Nigeria gospel music in the 1960s. As submitted by Vidal (1986:81), the era of native airs ended in 1969 and the 1970s...Nigerian gospel music began before 1970 and it made good use of native airs. Thus, there was a kind of overlapping, in which gospel music started while native-airs were still in currency. In the early 1960s, Church choirs were invited to sing on the Radio and Television stations. This trend popularized native-airs and other hybrid church forms.

Trying to ascertain how gospel music started in Nigeria, some writers have pertinently traced the origin of gospel music in Nigeria to the spread of Euro-American gospel music. In support of this school of thought, Etim (1998) says that gospel music started with "foreign influence" of Africans in diaspora: Lady Evangelist Toun Soetan and Gifty Duke traced the root of 'gospel' to the Africans in the diaspora who spontaneously raise chorus during worship. This act, according to them culminated into the gospel music of recent times

Omibiyi-Obidike (1994) brings the liturgical and the non-liturgical use of gospel music thus: Gospel music originally was used in the Church and was performed at special festivals such as Harvest, Thanksgiving and so forth. However, with the electronic technology and the need for youths to have the type of music that caters for their social interest, gospel music was taken out of the confines of the church. Okafor (2002) in totality, supports Omibiyi-Obidike's claims. About the developmental trends of gospel music in Nigeria, head: That was the era in which Nigerians wrote very beautiful Handelian counterpoints, but in Nigerian languages. And that was also the period when people collected Nigerian folk songs and arranged them for the choral stage and even modified them and used the tunes for

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* worship. That was the trend that really developed into what we call the gospel music of Nigeria of today.

Adedeji (2004) gives a clue as to how gospel music spread to the northern part of Nigeria. It was in the 1980s that gospel music spread to the North. There were several developments that also took place during this period. Apart from the fact that many new gospel artistes joined the existing ones, 'gos-pop' style was also formed....in the 1980s, Nigerian gospel music was taken abroad by Christ Apostolic Church good women choir led by Mrs. D.A Fayosin, Panam Percy Paul and Bolar Are, gospel music.

The above assertions are very true because among the gospel music artistes mentioned in Panam Percy Paul who has been "an acclaimed gospel music artiste" in Jos, Plateau State since its inception. Talking about the factors that led to the developmental trends/features visible from the 1960s to the 2000s, Adedeji (2005) comments: In the history of Nigerian gospel music, two factors that had the greatest impact on its development were the technology and musical styles of the period. As far as recording technology is concerned, the 1960s were dominated by the use of phonodisc. In the 1970s, it was cartridge. In the 1990s and 2008, CDS, VCDs and Digital Audio and Video Networks became prominent. Today, Nigerian gospel music has more than one hundred well-established artistes and groups that practice its diverse styles

Trends in Plateau Gospel Music Performances around Year 2000

The trends of gospel music experience in 1990s continued and became stronger in the 2000s with "veteran artistes" like Panam Percy Paul, Jerry Jinang and Bulus Datiri making impact. Several other gospel artistes have emerged in the 2000s in Plateau State. The list is endless, the following are worthy of special mentioning: Ernest Dades, Ezra Jinang, Dorcas Bentu, Pam Monday, Kefas Diyals, Dave Azi, Edwin Isa Ladan, Solomon Damulak, Daps, Lani Stephens, Pic Owochie, Rahila Sarauniya, Elsie Adum to mention but a few.

The trends in the 2000s is witnessing a high technological advancement in the recording, production and packaging of gospel music. In spite of the high cost in digital and visual recordings, gospel artistes in Plateau State are almost in a daily

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* basis, waxing their albums in Compact Disc (CD), Video Compact Disc (VCD), Cassette Tapes, Digital Video Disc or Versatile Disc (DVD) to mention but a few, using devices like the Video Cassette Recorder (VCR) and other electronic and digital recording techniques. Daramola (2001) observes:

Electronic amplification has been recorded in electronic musical instruments, while a number of instruments which generate tone electronically are being invented; Bizarre self-sound-producing instruments are also being introduced in amazing profusion (p.98).

Electronic and information technology has been a strong reason for the effects of gospel music in Plateau State and the nation at large. This scientific/technological means of getting things done faster is a plus in the gospel music scene in Plateau State. The trends started with the waxing of albums in cassette, to video tapes, compact Disc, Video compact Disc and today, it has evolved to Digital Video Disc. Talking generally about the advantages of the digital recording techniques in today's gospel music, Adedeji (2004) further comments:

The digital recording technique is considered faster and cheaper. This fact also attracts more gospel artistes on a daily basis...digital recording are found to be neater though stereotyped in terms of stylistic arrangements (p.81).

Today, the digital keyboard (with a good MIDI system) for instance, is used in live performances. The studio engineer manipulates the buttons of electronic gadgets, computer, mixers and keyboards to programme drum beats, choral progressions in songs, rhythmic structures and the like to accompany him and produce works for others. Also, the contemporary keyboardist of today can with the use of a good keyboard, get the sound tracks of his works recorded on the diskettes and thereafter, inserts the diskettes on his digital keyboard in a live performance. Effiong (2002) adds thus about the present keyboard instrument and its effects:

The present contemporary composer has total control over his composition. Using the present keyboard instrument, for example, a gospel/contemporary composer can conveniently record the nuances of pitch, rhythm, dynamics and timbre that he could never expect from a performer...the present keyboard instrument has voices of the various musical instruments already installed. Once you press the button to

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal.. whichever, the nuances of that instrument and its voice effect is reproduced (p.42).*

Trends in Pankshin Gospel Music Performance: 2012-2022

From 2012 to 2022, gospel music performance in Pankshin (especially among the non-liturgical) is becoming more commercialized rather than the original intention of evangelization. So many practitioners are emerging only for its commercial purposes. Only a handful few still maintains the original purpose of evangelization in their messages. Secondly, most gospel music artistes in Plateau State as a whole and specifically in Pankshin are becoming crazy for titles, fame and popularity party because gospel music is becoming globalized. For example, since the 1990s to the 2000s, some gospel music artistes in Plateau State have been traveling abroad probably in search for foreign currencies, sponsorship or on invitations for ministrations, and many have started receiving honorary Doctorate awards (Effiong, 2002).

From personal observation and in line with the above author, gospel music specifically in Pankshin churches (from 2012 – 2022), use good instrumental backups in praises and when singing the hymns. Virtually, all secular popular of Afro-American musical forms like, reggae, calypso, blues, disco, rock 'n' roll, hip-hop, high life, country, jazz, makossa among others are used. The musical instruments are more of the western type with very limited traditional musical instruments. For example, percussion drum, trumpet, violin, trombone, timpani, keyboard, lead guitar, rhythm guitar, bass guitar, saxophone-violin, clarinet, recorders, bells, xylophone to mention but a few are used during praises, worships and during the hymnal singing.

Selected Denominations and their Gospel Music Performance

The paper samples five (5) Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin which includes: (i) Living Faith Church (ii) Chapel of Redemption (iii) Assemblies of God Church (iv) Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry and (v) Dunamis International Gospel Church. The above-mentioned denominations have the same characteristic features vis-à-vis their musical performances, stylistic arts of instrumentations, vocal techniques, dance and choreography. As a case study, the Chapel of Redemption is used and is shown below; representing the other five (5) denominations:

Chapel of Redemption

The Chapel of Redemption Federal College of Education Pankshin loves music and encourages virtually all kinds of gospel music performances. Categories of musical groups that performs during the service are (a) Shekinah Choir (b) Redemption Choir (c) Sabon Rai (d) Women Fellowship etc. The Chapel at inception in 1996 had only the Redemption Choir. Without the musical instruments, they could sing and clap in their worship to the Lord. Sometimes in 2004, musical instruments were bought and this enhanced their mode of worship as members of the choir started using the musical instruments such as the percussion drums, keyboards, Konga drum, bass guitar and lead guitar. The choir is more of a gospel musical band and today, it has grown to a full blown contemporary gospel music band group; singing and accompanying with lots of musical instruments like the Saxophone, electric guitars, keyboards, percussion drums, trumpets, clarinets among others. The redemption choir employs the performance techniques of hand clapping, dance and choreography, conducting and contemporary arts of singing, using musical forms like the reggae, hip-hop, rock 'n' roll, Makossa, high life, hip life among others in their gospel ministrations to God.



Figure 1 Praise and Worship going on in Chapel of Redemption lead by the lead vocalist.



Figure 2 Praise and Worship going on in Chapel of Redemption; some instrumentalists and band members

The Shekinah Choir on the other hand is more of a Choral Choir that sings in parts; that is, in Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. The Choir came into existence in 2006, in the Chapel of Redemption. From the initial membership of about five (5), it has grown over the years to about eighty (80) members. The nature of their songs is mostly classical and anthems with the organ voice of the keyboard musical instruments used mostly for accompaniment (personal observation).



Figure 3 Ministration by Shkinah Choir



SHEKINAH CHOIR
CHAPEL OF REDEMPTION
FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



Figure 4: Shekinah Choir

EXALT THE LORD

39 Hallelujah Chorus

Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Revelation 19:6

Allegro

f Introduction

Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah!

Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah!

For the Lord God om-nip-o-tent reign-eth. Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! For the Lord God om-nip-o-tent reign-eth. Hal - le - lu - jah!

This vocal score is complete and uniform with most editions.

TEXT: George Frederick Handel
MUSIC: George Frederick Handel; from *Messiah*

HALLELUJAH CHORUS
Irregular meter

Figure 5 A classical piece performed by Shekinah Choir

Sabon Rain a Kowa (New Life for All) is a traditional high life gospel group that was formed in the Chapel of Redemption sometimes in 2011. Their songs are mostly in call and response, with traditional melo-rhythmic drum beats using mostly, the Hausa dialect. The following traditional musical instruments are mostly used to accompany their mode of singing; local Konkra drums, Xylophone, rattle, musical pot among others. The characteristic traditional art of dancing has a lot of melo-rhythmic, stylistics, choreographic and charismatic flows. These actually make the group to be outstanding and desirous to behold.



Figure 6: Sabon Rai Don Kowa (New Life for All) group ministering

The Women Fellowship was equally formed in the Chapel of Redemption in 2006. Although it is not centrally a singing group, because members of the fellowship do other things like counselling, visitations, prayers/intercessions, evangelism, teaching among others. However, the fellowship sings every Sunday alongside instrumental accompaniments in contemporary worship, reggae, high life and rock 'n' roll styles.



Figure 7: Women Fellowship Ministration

Trends in Gospel Music of Pankshin Pentecostal Denominations

The contemporary stylistic trends to be considered here are the physical enthusiastic, skilful and emotional features that are used in the worship of God or in paying allegiance to the Supreme Being (God). These features could be artistic, instrumental and vocal and are only applicable to the gospel music practices in the Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin.

Praise 'N' Worship

Praise 'n' worship is a contemporary genre in gospel music that is very rampant not just in the Pentecostal sector but in every other branches of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). The question to be answered is "How is praise 'n' worship practiced in the Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin and its environs?" Before delving into its performance practices (which may attempt to answer the question) the definition of praise 'n' worship is paramount. Firstly praise 'n' worship is the combination of two distinct but interrelated logical words. Owen (2003) sees praise as:

Praise is telling out in some way the mighty acts of our God. Speak it out, shout it out, play it out on musical instruments. Let everybody know about it. You can't say God is mighty quietly, you just have to shout it (p.2).

Praise is to tell or make know the act of the Lord wither through the instruments of music or by expressive instrumentality of our voices. In praise, we can commend, appreciate, speak good of, and compliment the faithfulness of God. Adika (1997:28). Robbins (1990:1) and Effiong (2009:141) have elaborately discussed about this subject.

Worship is seen by Owne (2003:3) as to 'to bow, prostrate crouch in homage, adoration or to adore'. Adika (1997:28) sees it as 'a high form of praise whereby you lift up your eyes to heaven in reference to your maker to worship, to bow before the object of worship and then make obeisance'. Effiong (2009) distinguishes the two inter-related terms:

Worship is not synonymous with praise as most people envisage. Worship is an act of showing strong religious feelings of love, respect and admiration to God. Worship is an act of service, and it is a lifestyle. For example, the giving of offerings in the church is an act of worship. Worship is what you do to honour and reference God. (p.14).

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Adedeji (2007:203-204) sees praise 'n' and worship as an amalgamation of the two performance practices to form a single style. Ojo (2002) interestingly informs that:

While praise looks normal, worship looks abnormal in the sense that, praise is always sung to beat and sensible while worship is always slow and left to control of the spirit and (may) end unpredictably in terms of duration...(31).

The conglomeration of these two performance practices makes the genres/styles unique. In the Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin and its environs, praise are characteristically very fast while worship session could employ large format or as led by the Spirit. The praise session precedes the worship and vice versa.

The Living Faith Church, Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry, and Dunamis International Gospel Centre are very good in praise 'n' worship music genres. There is always the praise and worship leader, otherwise called the soloist, lead vocalist or cantor. He or she is mainly to intone the songs while others respond. Those that respond are known as the backup singers. The chorus section or songs have short texts or lyrics. The lead vocalist uses short leading phrases. He improvises as he leads. The progression goes along in call and response patterns. There are instrumental accompaniments to the songs with musical styles like reggae, makossa, rock 'n' roll, high-life, hip-pop etc. The nature of the songs are determined by the styles that are to be used in accompaniments.

There are lots of musical instruments that are being used during praise and worship in these three churches. These musical instruments: keyboards, lead guitars, bass guitars, percussion drums, konka drums, trumpets, saxophones, hourglass drums, among others. Praise and worship session combines the instruments and the voices. The musical instruments are connected to a power source (Electronic device) and they are made possible with the use of these gadgets: The 32 Channels Mixer, The Amplifier, Bass Combo, Wireless Microphones, Wired Microphones, The Receivers, the Speakers; which are categorized into (1) the single woofers (2) double subwoofers (3) feedback speakers among others, The public address system with good connections, balancing of sounds etc. provide excellent sound distribution networks, good sound mixing, good resonance of sound and excellent amplification. From personal observation, the

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* duration for praise and worship in these three places of worship is between 20 to 30 minutes.

Hymnal Singing

Blom (1954) explains what hymnal singing was originally means to be:

A song in praise of Apollo in ancient Greek and God in the Christian churches, where it was first sung in plain song, and still in Roman Catholic church, later especially in the protestant churches, particularly the Lutheran and Anglican, a tune harmonized in four parts and so sung if there is an established choir, but by the congregation normally in an octave higher in unison with organ accompaniment (p.251).

In the Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin and its environs today, hymns are sung with various musical instruments as accompaniments using the available and suitable Afro-American musical forms, genres/styles. Everybody in the church is involved in the singing. For example, the clergymen, song leader, choir, children, instrumentalists, conductor and the congregation are all involved in the performance of the hymn, and sometimes in a standing position. Kennedy (1996) supports this assertion thus: A hymn is a song of praise to a deity or a saint, particularly associated with hymns are especially popular for congregational singing. Every member of the church has a role in the performance of the hymns today in Pentecostal denominations. There are instrumental preludes, interludes and postlude in hymnal singing with the conductor directing this musical force and the lead vocalist (with backup singers) giving his improvisational roles, while the choir sings in part and the congregation sings in unison. Effiong (2002) analytically explains further the patterns of play of the hymns in todays' Pentecostal denominations:

...The keyboardist gives the introduction by playing the first phrase of the hymn with other electronic musical instruments, accompanying solemnly/softly. The voices and other instruments (brass, woodwind) enter with contemporary musical forms like reggae, high life etc according to the nature of the song. Before the last verse of the hymn is sung, the various instrumentalists play the entire verse, and the choir/congregations enter. The percussionist gives the rhythmic effects. The bass guitarist maintains the melodic pulse structure. The bass voices blend in accordance with the

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal.. tonal centre maintained by the instrumentalists. In fact, the harmonic, rhythmic and melodic structure of the hymn is followed concurrently. The result is that a lively contemporary hymnal is presented. The percussionist at the last phrase of the song slows down the tempo/beat of the song. This shows that the hymn is about to end. The vocalist, instrumentalists and the entire congregation end slowly as the song fades away (solemnly) (p.72).*

Among the five (5) denominations under study, Chapel of Redemption, Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry, Assemblies of God Church and Dunamis International Gospel Centre are good in hymnal singing. Chapel of Redemption, for example, makes every worshipper to sing at least a hymn every Sunday. This is done after every other group would have ended their ministrations. The leader of the service or the Pastor in charge, always ask the congregation to stand up and sing the hymn; as chosen by the service leader. As the hymnal singing processes, all the musical instruments especially the keyboard will provide the prelude before the choir, and the congregation joins in the hymnal singing. There is also the instrumental interludes at the middle of the hymn and sometimes, the postludes.

In some Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin today, especially in Chapel of Redemption, Assembly of God Church and Dunamis International hymnal singing is observed twice or three before the end of the end of the service. It could be performed as the service starts (call to worship), after other special ministrations like special numbers by individuals and before the final benediction. In some Pentecostal denominations, like in Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry, the pastor in charge allows hymnal singing to be interfaced as he gives the sermon (charge). In fact, there is no strict and fast rule as per the number of times hymns could be sang in Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin. The underlying truth is that hymns are presented with full instrumental accompaniment, in line with suitable secular/popular genres.

Effiong (2002) adds that the services leader determines (as may be led by the Holy Spirit) the number of times hymnal singing is carried out in Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin and its environs. The performance of the hymn is done not just in its original metrical, poetic, strophic, orthodox and with organ

P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal.* accompaniment but with the use of all available musical instruments and in reggae, jazz, high-life, country, rock 'n' roll and hip-hop contemporary genres/styles.

Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

1

Words and Music by JOHN NEWTON, JOHN P. REES
and EDWIN OTHELLO EXCELL
Arrangement and additional chorus by CHRIS TOMLIN
and LOUIE GIGLIO

Moderately slow $\text{♩} = 60$

Cape 3 (D)

Keyboard
(Guitar)

A - mas Grace - ing - Grace, how - sweet the sound, that saved
Grace that taught my heart to fear, and Grace

a wretch like me, I once
my fears re - lieved. How pre -

was lost but now I'm found, was blind
did that Grace ap - pear, the hour

but now I see. 'Twas

Figure 8 an example of a hymn performed by the denominations; Redemption Choir, Living Faith Church, Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry, Assemblies of God Church and Dunamis International Gospel Centre.

Dance is literally defined as the rhythmical movement of any or all parts of the body in accordance with the specified or unspecified duration of time. It is the medium or expression of emotions and other innate urges which in most cases, involves intense mental capacity and skills. Nkeia (1975) gives the features of dance as:

Dance is a social and artistic medium of communication. It can convey thoughts or matters of personal or social importance through the choice of movement, postures and facial expressions (p.207)

Dance is none of the gospel music performance techniques in Pankshin Pentecostal denominations. It goes with music, which of course makes it to be inter-related. Music and dance are consciously performed and they form active part of worship. Choreography on the other hand is not farfetched from dance. It is the art of designing, directing and arranging the steps and movements in dances and in any piece of music. Effiong (2002) gives further analytical distinctions between choreography and dance thus:

It is not so farfetched from the normal arts of dancing. The main difference is that this technique requires intensive/extensive motive. It involves body discipline/exercise, flexibility of the various parts of the body and to decode and respond correctly to the sound, and intention of the music...it is a group affair (58).

In the Pentecostal denomination in Pankshin and its environs, dance and choreography are greatly performed, especially in Living Faith Church, Dunamis International Gospel Church and Chapel of Redemption. They are done in a stylistic manner. Being a group affair, all the choreographers will meet together to practice, learn and rob their minds together on the dancing steps to be employed. The particular track in a gospel music album of any artiste of their choice is brought and inserted into a cassette player. Sometimes, an already visual western gospel music choreographed work is brought in a Video Compact Disc (VCD) or the Digital Compact Disc (DVD) while they watch all concentrations, to see the features, rhythmic structures and interjections of the choreographers. Through this, they learn to choreographed work, all the choreographers have to put heads together to agree with the rhythmic effects, demonstrations and movements of any of any or all parts of the body to go in line with the message from the cassette/album/tract.

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Choreography is an organized and stylized form of dance. The dance steps are always in uniform and in a rhythmical way. As the choreographers demonstrate their steps skilfully, singing is never done. They may sometimes mime. They wear beautiful costumes which adds colour to the performance. Their shape formation can be lines, circles, angles, figures of eight, twisting of the body, angular among others. The moving in choreography could be walking, striding, skipping, jumping and galloping.

The following steps may be followed by choreographers:

- i. They may begin with taping to the music (after perceptive listening) with their right or left legs.
- ii. The lifting up of arms slowly or abruptly follows.
- iii. Movements of some parts of the body could be done rhythmically.
- iv. Members can demonstrate at the same time or in contrary motion with expressions.
- v. The end can be immediate, abrupt, or slow with members maintaining a certain position and bodily posture/shape.

Dance and choreography are among the stylistic performance techniques in contemporary gospel music in Pankshin Pentecostal denominations and its environs.



Figure 9: Picture of Choreographers in Active Ministration

Conclusion

The performance of gospel music, which is a brand of Christian music covers about one third of the service period in most Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State. This paper examines the stylistic techniques in five (5) Pentecostal denominations and shows the contemporary development trends of gospel music from 2012 to 2022. The five (5) Pentecostal denominations have virtually the same stylistic techniques in hymnal singing, praise and worship, dance and choreography. The denominations are: Chapel of Redemption, Living Faith Church, Dunamis International Gospel Centre, Assemblies of God Church and Citadel of Gospel Truth Ministry, all in Pankshin local Government Area of Plateau State. Pictorial diagrams showing them ministering are shown in the paper. With these developmental trends and uniformity in the stylistic techniques vis-à-vis the changing nature of the world, the gospel music performance in Pankshin LGA is getting greater impetus and advancement. Hence, the journey so far with gospel music in Plateau State generally and Pankshin LGA specifically after sixty two years of independence is a progressive and encouraging one.

Recommendations

Having gone through the trends in the performance of gospel music in Pankshin LGA of Plateau State, the following recommendations are paramount:

- a. Since the performance practice of gospel music is a progressive one in Pankshin LGA, Plateau State, and the practitioners should do all they can to develop themselves musically. How? They should go to music schools, attend seminars, workshops, conference and be trained in the theoretical and practical aspects of gospel musicianship.
- b. Gospel music performing artistes in Pankshin LGA of Plateau State of today should do all they can to develop themselves technologically and scientifically. They should be computer literate. Most musical instruments of today are electronically computerized. It takes literacy and current knowledge to master their uses. The basic knowledge they will get will assist them in the nuances of sound production (both vocally and instrumentally) and most importantly, in their compositions of gospel music, using computerized music software.
- c. The gospel music artistes/performers in Pentecostal denominations in Pankshin LGA of Plateau State (in my close observation), use mostly reggae, high life

- P. K. Effiong: *Trends in Gospel Music Performance: Samples from Selected Pentecostal..* and makossa (up shoot of calypso) in their performances. I strongly recommend that they should be versatile to employ other contemporary styles like hip-hop, blues, jazz, country hip life among others in their performance and compositions since the society is dynamic today.
- d. The development trends of gospel music in Pankshin LGA of Plateau State from the 2012 to date have been fully studied and written down. I therefore recommend that all musicologists, ethnomusicologist, gospel music artistes and enthusiasts should study, use and apply this documented researcher paper, and with time, continue with the progressions.

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