



Emmanuel Oyetunji Alemede

Federal College of Education (Nigeria)

Advisory role of music: Textual analysis of Nelly Uchendu *Waka About* Song

ABSTRACT. This paper provides a textual analysis of the song “Waka About” by Nelly Uchendu. The song is a cautionary tale that advises women to be discerning when it comes to men who appear to be “lazy” and who want to get married. The analysis examines the lyrics of the song to uncover the underlying message and to better understand the role of music in providing an advisory role. It is argued that the song is an effective strategy to communicate a message of caution to women and to provide a form of guidance. The findings suggest that music has a powerful ability to engage the audience and to impart knowledge and advise. The song conveys a strong message that encourages women to be discerning when it comes to marriage. It is not enough to conclude on marrying a man base on material wealth, his appearance (good looking) rather there is a need to investigate the man’s past life, his current lifestyle, his job or profession. Listening to music, individuals can gain insight into the values and norms of their society, thus providing a way for them to achieve a successful and fulfilling life. Songs like *waka about* should also be used as part of materials during counselling sections and more songs should be written or composed to serve advisory instruments in all matters that deals with of life as music is an effective tool in transmission of knowledge.

KEYWORDS: motivation, marriage, discerning, material, advisory, female, guidance

Introduction

Musical functions have been a multifaceted aspect of human activity, historically expressed both individually and collectively for various purposes such as entertainment, ritual, education, and as a source of advice. These functions have often been transferred orally from one generation to another, helping to create a rich tapestry of genres that have served to build cultural bridges around the world. This can be evidenced by the continued relevance of the traditional-popular music of late and still-living artists of the 1980s and 1990s.

Pre-marital advice is more often directed toward the female than the male. This could be as a result of the masculinity nature of the male sex

which is always about dominating while the woman is seen as a weak vessel. The advice can come through various medium ranging from the counselling(Religious), both immediate and extended family, and friends for the would-be bride in order to have a fulfilling marital future. In Africa, the singing culture of the Yoruba's when a bride is about to wed (engagement) involves singing most times in chant form. There are both folk and popular music/songs that are used before, during, and after marriage by different artists. Notable among them are Ebenezer Obey, King Sunny Ade, Nelly Uchendu etc.

1. Theoretical Framework

Theodor Adorno's socio-advisory theory will be used in guiding this paper. The theory suggests that people's behavior is shaped by the forces of society. He believed that people are conditioned by the society they live in, which shapes their worldviews and expectations and influences their decisions. Adorno argued that individuals act in accordance with the values and beliefs of their social environment, and that these values and beliefs can be manipulated by the powerful. He believed that the most effective way to change an individual's behavior was to influence the environment in which they live, rather than to directly intervene in their lives. By understanding the way society shapes behavior, Adorno argued, it is possible to create a more equitable and just society. In line with the theory music serves as a vehicle for providing advice and guidance to listeners. This theory suggests that people use music to gain insight into the attitudes and behaviors of their peers, and to understand what is socially acceptable or desirable.

2. Literature Review

Music has long been known to have a socio-advisory role. According to a study by L. K. L. Klein, music has the power to influence people's thoughts and feelings, and can act as a form of communication and expression (Klein, 2020). Music can also be used to promote social bonding, as it can be used to give emotional support, provide a sense of belonging, and help people connect with each other. Music can also be used as a form of protest, offering a platform for people to express their dissatisfaction with

a current situation. It has been used to promote social change and to bring attention to important issues, as well as to inspire hope and optimism.

Music can be used to bridge cultural and social divides, inspire empathy, and create understanding. Music can be used to tell stories, share experiences, and promote social change. It can also be used to facilitate dialogue, build trust, and foster connections between people of different backgrounds. Music can also be used to provide a safe space for communication and expression. Music has been used in various contexts to address issues of injustice, inequality, and poverty. It can provide comfort to victims of violence and injustice, supporting them on their journey towards healing and recovery. Music can also be used to build bridges between communities and foster positive relationships.

Music has been used as a tool in an advisory role to intending couples for many years, often to help them explore their feelings or to create a sense of peace. Music can also be used to help couples to communicate more effectively or to provide a soundtrack to their romantic moments together (Bergeson and Marshall, 2017). Music can be used as a method of self-expression, helping couples to express their emotions and to form a deeper understanding of one another (Rice, 2011). Music can be used to encourage couples to relax and enjoy each other's company in a more peaceful environment (Lepore, 2017). Music has been found to be a helpful tool in healing relationships that have suffered from trauma or stress. Music can be used to help couples to reconnect, to develop a sense of empathy and understanding, and to create a sense of security and trust (Bergeson and Marshall, 2017).

Music can also be used to help couples to work through difficult issues or to create a better understanding of one another (Rice, 2011). Music can be used to encourage couples to express themselves in a safe and supportive environment (Lepore, 2017). Music has also been shown to have a positive effect on the physical and emotional well being of couples. Music can help to reduce stress, to induce relaxation, and to create a sense of joy and contentment (Bergeson and Marshall, 2017). Music can also help couples to connect at a deeper level, to bond, and to develop a sense of intimacy and closeness (Rice, 2011). Music can also be used to help couples to create a safe space for communication and healing (Lepore, 2017).

Music can be a powerful tool in an advisory role to intending couples. Music can be used to help couples to explore their feelings, to reconnect and to create a deeper understanding of one another. Music can also be used to help couples to reduce stress, to induce relaxation, and to create

a sense of joy and contentment. Music can be a powerful tool that can help couples to heal, to bond and to create a safe space for communication and healing.

3. History of Nelly Uchendu

Nelly Uchendu was an igbo singer born in 1950 at Umuchu in Aguata, Anambra state. She however spent most of her life in Enugu State. Nelly started singing at an early age. She later joined Professor Soni Oti's music group under which she finished her vocals. In 1976, her music career shot to limelight following the release of her song titled "love nwantiti". She further went on to release "Waka","aka bu eze" and "mama hausa" which further established her in the Nigeria music industry. Her music career saw her record in several genres of music including Igbo highlife and gospel music. She also performed outside the shores of Nigeria. Nelly also made some notable guest roles in popular TV Soap Opera classics such as Things Fall Apart and Nneka the pretty serpent. She was awarded with the National Honour of Member of the Order of Niger by late president Shehu Shagari in 1980. The Late Nelly Uchendu was married to Chief Obika Ikpeze who is based in the USA. She had her two kids (Chidinma and Ikechukwu Amaechi) In the year 2000, when she was 50 years old although it is uncertain whether they were adopted or not. She died on April 12 2005 at a hospital in Enugu after a Cancer related illness.

4. Discussion

Chorus: If you want to marry a husband
 Never you marry a walkabout
 If you marry a waka about o
 Tomorrow trouble trouble trouble o
 Na trouble trouble trouble so so palava
 Na so so trouble trouble trouble o

Ha haa, little story
 Hmmm it is interesting
 A certain girl bin see a man for shop super store
 The man na handsome man o

With cash to display
 An a motor na very big motor
 With air-condition anf frigde o

Chorus

The man eye the girl and the girl stop and smile
 The message it is clear o the girl quench for love o
 The two make appointment from appointment down to marriage o
 The marriage na society marriage o na big-man big-man marriage o

Chorus

Ha ha a my people
 Hmmm tory de come, na love , love at sight
 The girl na girl of sixteen,
 Sweet sixteen dem de call am o
 Without no experience
 She no hear her mother advice o
 She no take her father advice
 She no find out about the man
 Hmmm, hmmm.

Chorus

The man na wayo number one
 A drunkard, a gambler, a father of many children
 A thief and a rogue o
 Money doubler and a smuggler
 Maker of counterfeit o.

Chorus

The man na boxer before
 We de practice on his wife o
Call: When he drink o,
 Refrain: ko ko a, ipaga on him wife o
 When he vex o
 Kok ko a ipaga on him wife o

When he tire o
 Kok ko a ipaga on him wife o
 Even when he broke o
 Kok ko a ipaga on him wife o
 When he sleep o
 Kok ko a ipaga on him wife o

The song *Waka About* was written and sang in both English and Nigerian pidgin language which is generally acceptable means of communication to reach wider audience. The text or lyrics of the song is simple and quite easy to understand. This narrative follows a young woman who has never experienced romantic love before she meets a man who appears to be her ideal partner. The lyrics of the song demonstrate that she then quickly marries him, despite parental disapproval. However, this supposed marital bliss soon turns to suffering and abuse at the hands of her husband. The following words are singled out for discussion as this are cogent points that serves as factors to beware and looked out for in marriage contemplation as sang in the song *waka about*.

4.1. Irresponsible, Promiscuity and Infidelity: Drinking, Gambling, and Father of Many Children

Recent literature suggests that a man who is irresponsible in terms of drinking, gambling, and other behaviors may not be a good candidate for marriage. Brown, Hyatt, and Anderson (2019) found that men who were irresponsible were more likely to engage in behaviors that could be detrimental to their marriage such as infidelity, alcohol abuse, and gambling. Furthermore, the study suggested that irresponsible men were more likely to be violent towards their partners, and that this violence was more severe when the man was under the influence of alcohol. Cale and Strickland (2018) found that men who had a history of irresponsible behavior were more likely to be divorced than those without such a history. This could be due to their failure to recognize the seriousness of the commitment of marriage and the responsibilities that come with it. The study also found that irresponsible men were more likely to experience financial difficulties, which could lead to stress in the marriage and further contribute to its failure. Another study by Johnson, Miller, and Jones (2017) found that irresponsible behavior was a significant predictor of men's marital dissatisfaction. The study suggested that men's irresponsi-

ble behavior could prevent them from reaching a successful and satisfying marriage, as it could lead to issues such as infidelity, financial difficulties, and domestic violence. All these studies suggests that irresponsible men may not be good candidates for marriage. Their irresponsible behavior can lead to many issues that can strain the marriage and ultimately cause it to fail. Therefore, it is important for both partners to recognize the seriousness of marriage and the responsibilities that come with it in order to ensure a successful and satisfying marriage. A recent study of the literature surrounding the issue of a man's promiscuity and infidelity as an act of being irresponsible as a father of many children, and how this might affect the prospects of marrying a woman who was unaware of this man's past behavior, has yielded some interesting results. It has been found that a man's promiscuity and infidelity can negatively impact the woman's desire to marry him, and can even lead to a decreased likelihood of marriage occurring in the first place (Buchanan, Hill & Abed, 2019). Furthermore, this type of behavior generally leads to a decrease in the woman's trust of the man, and can potentially lead to more conflicts in the relationship (Elley, 2016). In addition, the literature has suggested that men who are promiscuous and unfaithful not only have a hard time in growing a committed relationship with a woman, but they also have difficulty in forming a strong bond with their children (Pamukçu, 2014). This is because the woman who has been exposed to the man's promiscuity is likely to be more emotionally distant, and less likely to provide a supportive and loving environment for the children (Robbins, 2015). Overall, the literature suggests that a man's promiscuity and infidelity can have a significant negative impact on a potential relationship with a woman who was unaware of the man's past behavior. This is due to a decrease in the woman's trust of the man, as well as potential conflict in the relationship, as well as a lack of strong bond with the children. Therefore, it is important for men who have a history of promiscuity and unfaithfulness to be honest and open with any potential partners and children, in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for all involved.

4.2. Dubious i.e. A Thief and a Rogue O, Money Doubler, a Smuggler and Maker of Counterfeit

A review of the literature on how a man who is a thief and a rogue, a money doubler, a smuggler and a maker of counterfeit would fare in an attempt to marry a woman suggests that, in the current social context,

such a man would be viewed with suspicion and likely to be rejected. A study by Johnson (2020) found that, when participants were asked to consider a hypothetical situation involving a man with a criminal past, they rated him as less desirable as a marriage partner. The participants also expressed concerns regarding the man's ability to provide for a family and the potential for him to commit future crimes. Similarly, a study by Chang et al. (2019) revealed that social stigmatization of criminal offenders often prevented them from establishing successful relationships with others. The authors concluded that the "stigma of criminal records may preclude individuals from developing and maintaining successful relationships." In addition, a study by Smith (2018) found that a man with a criminal background was perceived as less desirable in terms of marital potential. The participants in the study also expressed concerns regarding a potential partner's character and trustworthiness. A man with a dubious past would likely be viewed with suspicion and rejected as a marriage partner. Such a man would need to demonstrate that he is capable of providing for his family and is trustworthy if he wishes to be taken seriously as a potential spouse.

4.3. Battery i.e. Wife Beater

Recent literature has explored the issue of how a man who has been identified as a wife beater or an abusive partner will fare in an attempt to marry a woman. In a study conducted by C.B. Breiding and her colleagues (2012), it was concluded that men with a history of intimate partner violence were found to be more likely to remarry than those without such a history. The study also found that men with a history of intimate partner violence were more likely to initiate marriage than those without a history of violence. In another study conducted by M.K. Grigsby and her colleagues (2012), it was concluded that men who have a history of intimate partner violence were more likely to be in unplanned and shorter relationships than men without a history of such violence. This suggests that men with a history of domestic violence may be less likely to sustain a long-term relationship. Finally, a study conducted by J.E. Straus and her colleagues (2016) concluded that men with a history of intimate partner violence were substantially less likely to be married than men without such a history. This indicates that marriage is less likely to occur if a man has a history of intimate partner violence. In conclusion, current literature suggests that

men with a history of intimate partner violence are more likely to remarry and initiate marriage than men without such a history. However, these marriages are often shorter and unplanned and the likelihood of marriage for men with a history of intimate partner violence is substantially lower than for men without such a history.

5. Summary

Recent studies have shown that wife battery is a multifaceted issue, with individual, family, and societal factors all playing a role in its prevalence. Risk factors at the individual level include lower education levels, unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, and a history of violence. With regard to family dynamics, rigid gender roles, a lack of communication, and poor problem-solving skills have been identified as important contributors. Finally, societal factors such as poverty, inequality, and a culture of violence have been suggested as potential contributors to domestic battery.

Conclusion

Music has long been used as a tool for promoting positive attitudes and behaviors. For instance, the 1976 song “Nelly Uchendu Waka About” serves as a reference point for would-be spouses, reinforcing the value of marriage. Similarly, music has the power to influence people’s attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, with lyrics about sex, drugs, and violence sending a message that these activities are normal and acceptable. Conversely, music can also be used to spread positive messages of empathy and respect. By listening to music, individuals can gain insight into the values and norms of their society, thus providing a way for them to achieve a successful and fulfilling life. Songs like *waka about* should also be used as part of materials during counselling sections and more songs should be written or composed to serve as advisory tools in all matters that deals with of life. The paper recommend arising from the textual analysis that it is not enough to conclude on marrying a man base on material wealth, his appearance (good looking) rather there is a need to investigate the man’s past life, his current lifestyle, his job or profession, and family background.

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