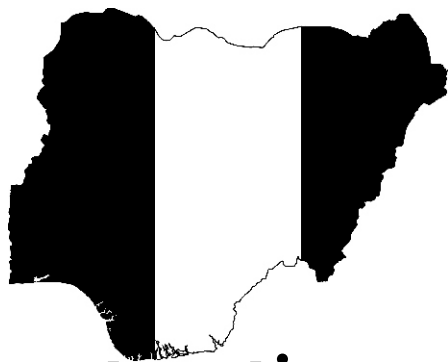


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V. Ayedun-Aluma, PhD
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The Framing of Political Messages in Ayinla Omowura's Song-Texts

Olayinka Egbokhare¹ & Israel Ayinla Fadipe²

Abstract

Studies on African popular music have revealed that African musicians engage in political discourse which they deploy to reconstruct nationhood. There is no doubt that popular indigenous musical genres, especially those that were prominent at one time in the past, have been given insufficient attention in research studies by African scholars. Many of these studies have been driven especially by social responsibility theory, hegemony and counter-hegemonic theories and so on. However, this study using framing theory and textual analysis approach, examined the political themes described in Ayinla Omowura's song texts of *Orin owo'le Eko (Lagos Rent Edit)*, *Ire wole de (Udoji Salary Increase)*, *National Census*, *Eyin Oselu wa (Our Politicians)*, *Challenge Cup* and *Late Murtala Mohammed*. Findings reveal that Lagos rent edict, Udoji salary increment report, 1973 national census, politicians' attitudes to elections, new currency introduction and 1972 change in the driving system are the dominant political events in the songs. Moreover, the social realities described include militarism, insufficient basic amenities, unemployment, policy implementation, hooliganism and electoral violence, rule of law, political class wrangling, among others. In addition, government and political leaders were mostly portrayed as benefactors, while masses were sometimes counselled, or mildly reprimanded by the musician. In conclusion, though the events described in the selected songs happened in the 1970's in Nigeria, these themes still feature in the country's socio-political realities and are germane to political discourses in the twenty-first century Nigeria.

Keywords: Portrayal, Political Communication, Ayinla Omowura, Popular Music, Nationhood

¹Department of Communication & Language Arts, University of Ibadan.
yinkaegbokhare@gmail.com

²Department of Communication & Language Arts, University of Ibadan.
israelfadipe77@gmail.com

Introduction

Framing of political messages by musicians hinges on the fact that prominence is given to some specific issues in their lyrics. Therefore, musicians frame issues in such a way that constrains the audience to interpret the issues the way they want. According to Lachapelle (2003:82), 'political information is mediated by several opinion leaders who then transmit information to the general public and followers'. Similarly, musicians as opinion leaders in their society comment on political issues that concern their listeners or fans. This assertion further confirms the effects of the media on the audience. On the other hand, when it comes to social growth and development, Nigerian popular music artistes' influence cannot be jettisoned. Scholars such as Omojola (2006), Olukotun (2005), Barber (1997), Waterman (1997) Akpabot (1986), have ascertained the role of contemporary music forms in the country and agreed that popular music has contributed to its socio-political development. Incidentally, notable musicians have concerned themselves with framing various political issues in the country at one time or the other. Olukotun (2005) specifically examined the hegemonic and counter hegemonic roles some music artistes played during the General Abacha military regime. So he affirmed that the roles these artistes played contribute to how they framed some political issues during that time. These political issues range from colonialism and the demands for independence, to political assassinations, and ethnic cleansing as they are documented by African music artistes (Manu, 2007; Omojola, 2006; Waterman, 1997; Pongweni, 1997). While describing how Zimbabweans employed songs to fight the colonial masters, Pongweni (1997:63) observes that, then, people made use of songs for pressing issues than 'any political speech or historical treatise'. The revolutionary speeches of Zimbabwean politicians were acknowledged to have contributed greatly in the nation's liberation. As a matter of fact, some of these speeches employed music platform to engender some dramatic social change.

For instance, Lasisi (2012) affirms that Ayinla Omowura's indigenous music should not be seen as only entertaining but also used for social change. She refers to how he employed satire to comment on political issues in Nigeria then. Waterman (1997) did a study on the unifying role of *Fuji* and *Juju* music forms among the Yoruba people in Southwest Nigeria, investigating the performances and lyrics of King Sunny Ade, Chief Ebenezer Obey, Dr Sikiru Ayinde Barrister and Chief Kollington Ayinla. He affirms the influence of these music artistes on different aspects of the people's lives. Emielu (2010) also discloses that though popular musicians

are usually regarded as entertainers, their lyrics are infused with ideological underpinnings which address important issues in their societies.

Review of Literature

Political communication is a process that has influence on all aspects of society's life and therefore takes place in a communication system that produces messages at the boundary between politics and the media. Lachapelle (2003) describes political information as the one mediated by several opinion leaders. These people consequently set the agenda or frame information and pass it across to the general public and their followers. According to Maarek and Wolfsfeld (2003), communication is always an essential tool in any political process. It is believed that political leaders employ it to communicate with the public; candidates competing for votes also depend on it, and so do combatants struggling for international attention and sympathy, or citizens debating public issues.

Gurevitch and Blumler (1997) cited in Galadima (2007:384) said 'political communication is the process by which politically relevant information is transmitted from one part of the political system to another and between the social and political systems'. The dissemination of politically relevant information involves people who share messages that impact their lives. In every society, different groups and individuals employ political communication tools to express their differences and celebrate their unity. So, political communication is a way of describing the interaction of different groups that influence political decision making in a country. Therefore, political communication is seen as the discursive process by which political information not only promotes awareness, but also can serve as a tool for ignorance, manipulation, consent, dissent, action, or passivity depending on how the information is used. Romarheim (2005) says political communicators first present new political information in a format and with a structure already somewhat familiar to the audience and then simplify the political mass communication, so as to ensure that the most important information gets through to the audience. Already, African music artistes are known as social change agents in their respective environments, performing functions that include being social commentators on political events. Also, according to Ani et al. (2014:133), 'Music is vital for the growth of political socialization in our society. At every level of political development, man engages his political spirit with music as a force that develops his or her psychical well being'.

Many studies have been conducted in the field of cultural studies which have shown the functions of various aspects of our cultures. Thus, investigating how political issues are framed in Ayinla Omowura's music is an attempt at filling this yawning gap. Also, the study affords the public to realise the role the late musician had performed in his society, thereby making the world know and appreciate better the indigenous African music. Benson Idonije, cited in Adesina (2015:10), comments on the significance of Ayinla Omowura music thus: 'I saw raw talent and artistic motivation at their best... in which Ayinla waited from one chorus to another, establishing social commentaries with thought-provoking proverbial and anecdotal lines'. Adesina himself affirms that Ayinla's devotion to social commentaries is unrivalled among his contemporaries. To him, 'Apart from informing, educating and entertaining a mass audience, Omowura's record usually parade sections similar to newspapers and magazines'. Setting public and private agenda, Ayinla frames societal issues which not only concern his teeming fans but affect nationhood.

African music scholars such as Akpabot (1986), Idolor (2002), Omojola (2006) and Faniran (2008) have established the fact that music has been an inherent feature in African culture and society since the earliest days of civilization. They have equally attested to it that African music is acquired as part of one's cultural and practical education. Music provides not only musical instruction but also a comprehensive preparation for life experiences. According to Abdullar (2009:5),

The traditional African cultures did not separate art from life; the two elements were inextricably intertwined. In many African cultures, musicians are the acknowledged authorities on history and mythologies.

In the contemporary period as well, just as how Abdullar has explained the functions of music in ancient times, music is being used to address issues that directly affect African people. From the issues of liberation, colonialisation to political matters, African music artistes continue to engage their different societies. This depiction fits the nature of Ayinla Omowura's *Apala* music genre which is the focus of this study.

Statement of the Problem

'Since the earliest times, man has often expressed his or her feeling through

music. The musical themes are often a reflection of societal issues that manifest in the world view of the musicians, their audience and the geo-political environment that they find themselves', say Ani, Aro and Okorie (2014:1). Apparently, scholars have researched Fela Kuti, Lagbaja, Obesere, Asa, and so on recently because of accessibility of their lyrics in terms of language and contents (Balogun, 2004; Olorunyomi, 2005; Omojola, 2006). However, some of the indigenous musicians in the 60s, 70s and 80s have been paid little attention to, let alone to investigate how the artistes framed social issues then to influence their audiences and determine the relevance of these issues in the twenty-first century socio-political occurrences in Nigeria. Again, Ayinla Omowura nicknamed *Anigilaje* is one of these often neglected musicians among others from this part of the world. Incidentally, Fadipe (2014) researched on communication codes employed in Ayinla Omowura's music and established that various indigenous codes are employed in the artiste's lyrics which he used to frame social issues. It is on this basis that this paper investigates the framing of political messages/issues in his song-texts. It equally determines how the problem of nationhood is deconstructed in the artiste's songs in post-colonial Nigeria; how constructions of nationhood or social realities are depicted in his song-texts; how political structures (government, political leaders and masses) are framed in the song-texts, and how rhetorical strategies and devices are employed to construct political messages and lessons.

Theoretical Framework

Framing theory is derived from the agenda setting theory. The latter ordinarily hinges on prominence given to issues in the media. However, McQuail (2007:379) says 'Framing is a way of giving some overall interpretation to isolated items of fact'. Entman (1993) cited in McQuail (2007) asserts that framing involves selection and salience. Furthermore, he explains that frames define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments and suggest remedies. Moreover, the essence of narrative is to help make sense of reports of experience, which it does by linking actions and events in a logical, sequential or causal way, and by providing the elements of people and places that have a fixed and recognisable realistic character. The basis of framing is that the media (musicians) focus attention on some events and place them within a field of meaning (Chyi & McCombs, 2004). Moreover, Gergen (1992) argues that framing plays a central role in defining social problems. As a matter of fact, it can be used to determine the way in which the public perceives the attributes of public figures. Ayinla Omowura's portrayal of political issues in his songs aligns

with this proposition that framing has to do with selection and salience of issues.

Research Design

The research design is based on qualitative approach. Specifically, textual analysis is used to analyse the themes in the selected songs so as to show the political events, realities and messages. Therefore, popular music genres are considered as cultural materials. The population of the study comprises all the twenty albums of Ayinla Omowura. Six albums (*Orin owo'le Eko*, *Ire wole de (Owo Udoji)*, *National Census*, *Eyin Oselu wa (Our Politicians)*, *Late Murtala Mohammed*, and *Challenge Cup 1972*) and ten different songs are purposively chosen because of their popularity among the artiste's fans. Also, the songs were listened to, transcribed and translated from Yoruba into the English language for analysis. After listening to the chosen songs, the following categories were derived in consonance with the songs' political communication role: agents of nation building, roadmap to nation building, problem of nation building and fallouts from nation building. These categories were further explicated with relevant excerpts from the song-texts.

Agents of Nation Building

When it comes to building the nation in any polity, the role of political elites has often come under heavy searchlight. For instance, the Nigerian political elite have often been criticised for their role in political affairs since attainment of self-governance in the sixties (Ademoyega, 1981). Many have questioned their sincerity in being true agents of change. For instance, 1979 political transition was a crossroads in the history of this nation because it resulted in second republic civil rule. The artiste paints the picture thus:

Leader: e da kun, e faraba le	Leader: please, be patient
Kokunrin re jo	let a man sight a snake
Kobirin pa	and allow a woman to kill it
Ki la wanfe	then what do we want?
Chorus: kejo ma ti lo	Chorus: it's for the snake not to escape!
La wanfe	that's what we want

However, Ayinla Omowura's use of local wisdom (*Kokunrin re jo/Kobirin pa...*) in form of analogy of complementary duty involving man and woman in the killing of a snake is thought-provoking in that he decried unwholesome bickering among political actors in the name of their service

to the nation. He asks: *ki la wanfe?* (What do we want?) If not to kill the snake, achieving the common goal, or what is the exact goal of nation building? Or what role should the political elite play? As timely as this admonition was then, considering the unpalatable experience of the first republic, second republic too suffered the same fate as the previous one. Obviously, if this advice was heeded by political actors at the time, there would have been less political turmoil and more political stability in the society. Specifically, Ayinla rebukes political hooliganism and eloquently displays his displeasure thus:

Leader: ta la ribawi

Bi o sa won konigbo aye

Chorus: mi o fe se kanselo o

K'Ayinla se minisita

Kogbe bon yo, kan gbe kumo

Kan so pawon nse toogi

Eni dan an wo

A dele ejoooo

Leader: but, who should be blamed
if not the disobedient people

Chorus: who are unhappy with being
councillors

and let Ayinla become a minister

only to produce guns and clubs

to say they are now thugs

whoever shows this attitude

will be taken to law courts

This development has been a recurrent feature which the political class is guilty of. Nowadays, politicians vying for positions first cultivate small armies of thugs and assassins which they use to unleash anarchy on the people they intend to govern during electioneering campaigns. The implication of this act is obvious, which is the proliferation of various ethnic militias that have become incurable blight in the well-being of the nation at the moment. Ayinla Omowura believes that without imbibing the spirit of sportsmanship, politicians who resorted to rash acts will be accountable to the law as nobody is above it. Again, while Nigeria was on the verge of another political transition in 1979, he canvassed politicians to eschew inordinate ambitions (*Bi o sa won konigbo aye/mi o fe se kanselo o/K'Ayinla se minisita*) and embrace magnanimity to allow peace reign.

Roadmap to Nation Building

The fact that national census is synonymous to national planning is indisputable (Ezeah, Iyanda and Nwangwu, 2013; Amangwai, 2016). Although the history of national census conduct is fraught with self-inflicted anomalies that have ever dogged the development of Nigeria, Ayinla Omowura painstakingly tutored his grassroots people on a recipe for

In spite of the fact that the artiste urged the leaders to ensure that national census benefits reach the masses, one wonders why these benefits are still elusive in the polity in the twenty first century.

Problems of Nation Building

Lagos is regarded as the commercial nerve centre of the nation, and so it is expected that the cost of living should be high. Due to the competitive spirit often exhibited by its teeming dwellers, ordinary basic needs of life are often being used by dwellers as leverages to cash in on their fellow Lagosians. For instance, most Lagos landlords/landladies are dreaded for their cut-throat rents for dilapidated structures which provide housing to tenants. From time to time, governments have had cause to intervene through enacting laws that regulate shelter problems in the society. Whether such interventions usually bring succour to the poor tenants cannot be ascertained sometimes. However, as an agent of social change and grassroots mobiliser, Ayinla Omowura took this matter up in one of his albums when Brigadier Mobolaji Johnson was military governor of Lagos state in 1972. This was two years after the debilitating civil war in the country. Ayinla declares that:

Lead: nusikan to mi l'owo
Nipa eto owo le fedira
E sun mo bi e wagbo...

Lead: some news just reached me
concerning federal tenement rates
let's draw close to hear it...

This excerpt from his song-text shows that government's policies do not often get to the masses if there is no intermediary. People do not get to enjoy these privileges. The artiste assumed the responsibility of an opinion leader by framing germane issues and current affairs to suit his fans' needs. Moreover, the introduction of federal tenement rates reflects the yearnings of the oppressed which should help to alleviate tenants' harrowing experience, and that Ayinla Omowura beckons to the grassroots 'to draw close' exemplifies the enormity of the matter in the building of harmonious ambience in such a society as Lagos at that time in the history of the country. Though the matter at hand is national, Lagos being the capital then, Ayinla named this album after it: *orin owo 'le ko*. After all, Lagos is a microcosm of Nigeria. All languages, tribes, tongues, cultures, struggles that manifest therein share the same experience. On the other hand, the experience of division was prevalent among Lagosians particularly and Nigeria in general then (Adedayo, 2015). The artiste rallies Lagos citizens together by canvassing support for the then military governor (*aye e ma tapa sijoba/E*

faram'Omobolaji). Equally, having been aware of the aftereffects of the Nigerian civil war on the citizenry economically and psychologically, he nonetheless pleaded with the people to listen to the governor, even depicting Mobolaji Johnson as having their interest at heart. By this again, he shows them that the task of rebuilding the nation cannot be done by one person alone.

Chorus: igboke gbodo Eko
lowo Mobalaji

governing Lagos
under Mobolaji

Lead: Birigadia Mobolaji Johnson

Brigadier Mobolaji Johnson

Masi 31 lo so sinu pepa

Announcing on 31st March in the
press

P'owo le ti din...

That house rents have reduced...

It is indisputable that the Lagos state's problems mirror the experiences of others in the country, and so should be a yardstick with which to measure one of the problems that were faced by the generality. Incidentally, there are some social realities which Ayinla Omowura frames in this song-text that vividly describe the problem of tenement rates in the country then. When pleading with house owners he comments that they too should not truncate government's policy of tenement rates' reduction and adjustment so that the masses do not suffer unnecessarily.

Lead: E jowo gbogbo landlord
t'oluwa kole fun

Please, all blessed landlords
by God

Chorus: won o ni da horo...

May your houses not
become desolate...

To maintain all round harmony in the state Ayinla Omowura begged the house owners by praising them significantly. Advocating their support is a social reality that hints at supposed unbridled power held by house owners then. Also, in the following excerpt he makes reference to another social reality,

Lead: Eniti o n'aya
Isoro ni pe k'ana e o ku

He who doesn't have a wife
Cannot lose an in-law to death

Chorus: Eniti o ko le
Isoro nipe ko gbowo ile

He who doesn't have a house
Cannot collect a house rent

E ma a jo o let's dance for joy

Chorus: fawon osise ijoba wa ni Najiria for our govt. workers
in Nigeria
Lead: won so pe ekunwo titun de it is said that new
increment has come
Chorus: moba won jo I'm happy for them
Emi naa ba won yo I too rejoice with them
Ire ajetuntun de new incomes has come

Yet the workers' reaction is a reflection of the struggles for wage and salaries increment since the forties with the colonialists (Salawu et al 2013), and which still dogs governments-workers relations step till now. If history of workers' travails regarding income inequality struggles is reckoned with, one may see the reason why the artiste has called for celebration. He frames this perennial problem as the triumph of the Nigerian workers, insisting that

Lead: owo Udoji ti di sisan f'awon osise Udoji raise is a must
for workers
Chorus: Baba loke dakun ki o mo won lowo God, let them derive
benefit from it

And Nigerian government then was portrayed as not having any choice but to pay the workers' arrears of three months. By extension, he also calls our attention to the social reality at that time about the plight of workers in the private organisations. He was aware that this category of Nigerian workers would be discriminated against when it came to the enjoyment of this goodness. So he reminded the government thus

All: Ijoba ologun, adupe All: military government, we thank you
O do wo yin the matter is left to you
E je ka sanwo Udoji let's pay this Udoji increment too
Fun awon prafeti kanmpini to private company workers
Ki re o kari for the goodness to spread
round

His belief is that minimum wage should not be restricted to government workers alone. Therefore, he made a case that workers in the private sector too should benefit from the largess. However, he is not assertive in his canvassing for private sector workers' case. Instead, he resorts to persuasion, using himself as an example of a private employer who pays his

band members salary increment.

Lead: Anigilaje Ayinla

Chorus: o san wo Udoji fun se wa...

Lead: Anigilaje Ayinla

he too paid us Udoji increment..

In reconstructing a national problem on salary increment with minimum wage, Ayinla Omowura supports the Nigerian public and private workers and challenges government to its responsibility of catering appropriately to the welfare of its citizenry irrespective of the employer. His rhetorical device to achieving this is grounded in the fact that he displays his currency regarding the plight of an average Nigerian worker. After all, what does any worker want, if not minimum wage?, as he describes it in this excerpt when rounding off this point:

All: gbogbo onise owo

A tawon ti won nsise osu

Owoni gbogbo wa n fe

all artisans

and white collar jobs workers

we are all looking for money

Another problem associated with nation building which Ayinla Omowura devotes some time to explain to the masses is the introduction of a new currency in 1973. The implication of his educating his people is in the consideration of the level of literacy then in the country. So, he urged them to patiently learn how to differentiate between the new and old currencies so as to avoid mistakes.

Lead: Eniba mowo ohun ka

Ni o nilowo

Chorus: Mofe lo e,

Ayinla Omo anigilaje

Whoever that can count the money

Shall have it

I want to use it,

AyinlaAnigilaje

By taking his time to show the masses these differences, he attempts to reduce confusion and suffering which normally happens at the introduction of new practices or developments in the polity. Apart from this, money seems to be the only incentive for Nigerian workers by which they should not be short-changed due to ignorance.

Furthermore, the issue with Ayinla Omowura commenting on the change in the driving system from left-hand to right-hand driving in Nigeria is understood from the recurrent statistics of fatalities on Nigerian highways. After praising the advent of the system, he then captures masses' fears

regarding this new development:

Lead: Ni joti won koko	The first day
beresini l'owotun	of right-hand driving
Chorus: Gbogbo eniyan lo	it's everybody
ma mberu	that panicked
Lead: Won o fe go ri titi nijo yen	They didn't want to ply roads
	that day
O jo won lo ju	They were puzzled

Cautioning against reckless driving during this period, he advised drivers to reduce their trips first, and then increase after it appears they have mastered the new driving system. In the same vein, he commended the federal government's effort in providing more roads and expanding the old ones. In short, Ayinla Omowura's commentaries on these problems in the seventies show that building a nation is a huge task.

Fallouts From Nation Building

Though it is good to plan, the failure to do so, or doing shoddy job of planning can lead to disaster. Due to its importance, Ayinla took time to comment on the fallouts of this initial failure. The assassination of General Murtala Mohammed in 1976 during the coup led by Buka Dimka is framed by Ayinla Omowura as a conflict between the forces of good and evil. As a public figure, he sees the murdered military head of state as a symbol of good, while Dimka and his cohort as the enemy of state. In his natural mournful tone for occasions as sombre as this, he begins the preachy dirge:

Lead: Eni se rere	He who does good
Chorus: O ni lati ri hunrere	Shall surely experience good things
Lead: Eda to nseka	A human that does evil
Chorus: Ko da kun ko gbe kasi le...	should please desist from evil...

Urging people generally to desist from evil, Ayinla Omowura shows that evil can never triumph over good, though it may tarry for long. Invariably, he believes there can never be national development if evil is allowed to fester in the polity or if promising leaders like the late Murtala Mohammed get killed senselessly. Incidentally, looking keenly into the history of political assassinations and attempted assassinations in this country, it is easy to see that the victims often times have been the most promising in the polity. Has anyone cared enough to do the catalogue of these victims and

estimated what their invaluable contributions would have been in the quest for building the nation? Has anyone ever wondered? One can see why Ayinla Omowura decries this evil. For him to have waxed two songs for the late Nigerian leader shows that he was well loved by Nigerians. He was popular with the musician's grassroots fans.

Lead: Omo eniyan le o	People can be dangerous
Taatin Febuari lo sika	He did the evil on 13 February
Maasi 5 ni won ri mu	He was captured on 5 March
Ki ika ma ranti pe	Let the evil one remember that
Esan ni la tike...	Justice will happen definitely...

Therefore, when agents of nation building get hacked down, this constitutes a disservice to the nation itself. And in this circumstance when someone that provides the direction is gone, polity and people grope in the dark looking for ways to survive. Kidnapping is one way some desperate citizens have resorted to. Ayinla Omowura commented on this devilish act twice. In the first instance, it was the kidnap of a child sent to fetch water during water scarcity in Abeokuta. Water is a basic necessity of life which Ayinla Omowura, in elucidating the benefits of national census for masses' consumption, emphasises. The scarcity of water in Abeokuta in the early seventies is captured eloquently by him:

Lead: Ninu osu febuari	Lead: In February
Gongo so	An incident happened
Omi di gooluL'Egba Alake	Water became gold in Abeokuta

It is surprising for ordinary potable water to have become scarce suddenly. This situation appears even unbelievable for the fact that in February rain should have started falling. Therefore, the artiste's commentary is very canny at this point. Subsequently, he describes how people engaged in battles over securing one or two buckets of expensive water at different places in Abeokuta. This avoidable incident became more aggravated by the kidnap of one of the children that went to fetch water.

Lead: Ohun to se le L'Abeokuta	What happened in Abeokuta
Nitori omi o...	Because of water...
Taoridi, gbengbe se le	Taorid, something big happened
Opo ariwo lo ta	Great pandemonium ensued
Wipe won j'omogbe nidi odo	That a child was kidnapped
Nita Dekunle	At Dekunle's place

Eyi a tori omi?

Did this happen because of
water?

The kidnap issue raised in this song is still relevant in contemporary times with kidnapping now all over the country, whether for ritual purposes or to claim ransom. Obviously, this issue is a disturbing national matter. Desperate people kidnap children and use them for money rituals. The second time Ayinla Omowura mentioned this issue, he offered some warning to the people to be more vigilant:

Lead: Se ri laye ogun
E o gbodo mowo to bo

You see this period in the state
You mustn't pick money on
the ground

Chorus: Ti joba nso ninu redio

The Government's warning
on radio

Lead: O ma tinsele
Kalarasora

Now it is happening
Let everyone be warned

Unsuspecting children that picked such money were said to have turned into biros and matches! As incredible as this sounds then, people were warned to take note. Bizarre things do happen.

Lastly, Ayinla Omowura explains the influence of inflation on an average household too. When there are increases in the prices of commodities, the masses groan, and he serves as their mouthpiece. Then he painted the picture of large families, beer price and frivolous young men as they were affected by the austerity.

Lead: Ile aye se nyi lo so pin
Omo Adamo, se nroju aye

The world is coming to an end
People, can you see this?

Chorus: Se ri lati bi odun meta
Ni nkan tin ye ge
Koseniti o kanni le aye

You see for the past three years
Things have become difficult
There's no one that is not
affected

Discussion

Ayinla Omowura employed frames to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments and suggest remedies to these problems (McQuail, 2007; Adesina, 2015; Adedayo, 2015). In deconstructing nationhood, he

criticised the role played by political elite in the build up to 1979 elections exposing their wanton avarice for political positions (Olukotun, 2005). Also, he condemned the assassination (Manu, 2007) of the Late Murtala Mohammed in 1976. He cursed and exposed the antics of kidnappers who lured children for money rituals, in the same manner he rebuked the greed of house-owners and their agents and urged everyone to accept the Lagos Tenement Rates in 1972. In addition, he portrayed the fears of Nigerians on the introduction of new driving system and warned against reckless driving when Nigeria changed from right to left-hand driving system. The seventies, in addition, is noted for its economic prosperity in Nigeria. Yet, Ayinla Omowura sees the contradiction in the attendant inflation which made him to lament the incongruity, and advise the masses to adopt austerity measures to survive the situation.

Historically, musicians are noted to function as intermediaries between government and its people (Pongweni, 1997). They are known to offer perspectives on pressing issues which political speeches do not frequently touch. Few times when politicians do touch on these issues their imports do not get to reach the grassroots maybe due to language, distance and lack of technology. Ayinla Omowura's enthusiasm in constructing social realities such as 1973 national census, 1974 Udoji wage increase and new currency depicts the artiste's change driven role among the grassroots people.

This study identifies government (military regime of General Yakubu Gowon), political leaders and masses, specifically residents of Abeokuta in Ogun and those of Lagos as political structures, which Ayinla framed in his song-texts. He singled out and praised Mobolaji Johnson's role in the Lagos Rent Edict, Sir Ademola Adetokunbo during national census in Ogun State, General Yakubu Gowon for census and Udoji increment and Generals Obasanjo, Yar'adua, Danjuma and Murtala Mohammed for the success of 1979 political transition. However, he condemned those leaders that showed inordinate ambitions that nearly truncated the transition. According to Ani et al. (2014), musical themes are often a reflection of societal issues that manifest in the world view of the musicians, their audience and the geo-political environment that they find themselves. Ayinla Omowura's role as a social agent of the masses makes him to affirm that he is their teacher, 'announcer' and intermediary between the masses and government. He informed and educated his audience by framing salient societal issues spiced with doses of realities. Regarding rhetorical strategies employed by him in reconstruction of nationhood, Ayinla Omowura uses didactic tone

with his framing of these issues. In short, Adedayo (2015), citing Benson Idonije, says Ayinla Omowura performs his role by establishing social commentaries with thought-provoking proverbial and anecdotal lines.

Conclusion

More than two-third of Ayinla Omowura's albums are dedicated to a deconstruction and construction of nationhood. This is exemplified in the manner he commented on social realities and events in the findings. They are presented in sections with captions: agents of nation building, roadmap to nation building, problems of nation building and fallouts from nation building. Incidentally, 1970s happened to be the most productive period of his professional music career during which time he actively engaged public issues such as national census, military coups, inflation, kidnapping, salary increment, introduction of new currency, driving system and tenement rates edict, and the Nigerian political elite. Evidently, in post-colonial Nigeria nation building poses a herculean task. The question is, how have these issues fared in the current efforts at building the nation close to sixty years after independence? Ayinla Omowura has already indicated what the people want, what an average Nigerian craves, whichever part of the country they may be found: water, light, shelter, employment and peace, which are supposed to be dividends of a progressive nation. Therefore, it cannot be doubted that Ayinla Omowura's music continues to engage socio-political realities which still strike a chord in the twenty-first century Nigeria's quest at nation building.

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Albums

1. Orin owo'le Eko, Vol. 4
2. Ire wole de (Owo Udoji), Vol. 7
3. National Census, Vol. 5
4. Eyin Oselu wa, Vol. 16
5. Challenge Cup, Vol. 3
6. Late Murtala Mohammed, Vol. 9