

MELODIES OF MEANING: THE INFLUENCE OF BARI BII AND KANUTETE ON OGONI COMMUNITY LIFE

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DOI:<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15494974>

Abstract: The Bari Bii and Kanutete music groups have contributed educative roles, immensely to the development of Ogoni land. The Bari Bii has its stronghold Bari Bii, Kanutete, in Khana Local Government Area while the Kanutete music group is

Ogoni Communités, performed in Gokana Local Government Area all in Ogoni land. Through Rivers State their music, Ogoni communities are recognized far and near. These sociocultural groups have honoured invitations both within and outside the communities and these music groups were handed over to them by their forefathers and the music has passed on from one generation to another. This is revealed in the performances of their traditional dance, songs and instrumentations. The researcher tends to find out the reason for decline in the recruitment of members to the two music groups and also to ascertain the social and educative roles of the Bari Bii and Kanutete music groups and document their music. The aim of this study is to investigate the socio-cultural implications of the Bari Bii and Kanutete music groups of Ogoni, focusing on their social and educative roles. This will help for proper documentation and future knowledge. The methodology used here were oral interviews, observations and active participation which enhanced data collection and provided adequate materials added to literatures sourced at the libraries from journals, magazines, books, conference papers and internet sources. This helped for effective research methodology. The songs relied on, for this study, includes social songs, educative songs and entertainment songs. The texts of the songs are mostly in proverbs and in indigenous languages of the people. The idea is to collate, compile, translate, transcribe and analyze them, and through proper investigations highlight the social and educative implications amongst them. The findings revealed that the music of the two music groups are used as corrective measures in Ogoni communities. Their songs also serve as a source of information, entertainment and historical data to the folk communities. In recommendation therefore, the Bari Bii and Kanutete music groups playing a socio-cultural and educative music role in the communities, usher love, joy, peace, checkmate illicit behaviours, maintain norms and values, should be encouraged to function effectively in the communities, and not allowed to go into extinction.

Keywords: Ogoni Music, Cultural Preservation, Bari Bii, Kanutete, Socio-educational Roles

Introduction

The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups in Ogoni communities are age long music groups which have lasted for centuries from one generation to another. Ogoni is made up of four Local Government Areas,

namely; Eleme, Gokana, Khana and Tai. The *Bari Bii* music group is predominantly performed in Khana Local Government Area while the *Kanutete* music group is performed in Gokana Local Government Area. Although the music groups belong to all Ogoni communities, the host communities are Kong in Khana and Bodo City in Gokana Local Government Areas. These two music groups through their song texts, have the same ideology and mechanism to bring the communities together by providing good morals, social and cultural cleansing and passing on informations. Most of this information is passed on through texts embedded in their songs. Agu, (1990), informs that:

Music serves not only as a medium for entertainment and social relationship but as an intricate part of development of the mind, body and soul. It is assumed that the laws of the land are learnt through songs. The history of the tribe is learnt through songs and accepted behavioural patterns in the society are assimilated through music and dance (p. 49).

Bari Bii and *Kanutete* music are the most widely practiced and most accessible way of disseminating information and educating people in Ogoni communities. It is universally acknowledged and their effect differ from person to person and community to community. Music is an important means of information in Ogoni cultures. It serves several purposes in the communities. Music is connected with every of Ogoni activities. It is a life cycle that boosts morale and creates team spirit in order to ease tension. *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music are at the centre of every Ogoni culture, as it revolves around the socio-cultural, religious, economical life or nature of the people, Ogoni communities inclusive. Abugu (2014) “observes that traditional music reflects and encapsulates societal values and heritage. It projects people’s culture and chronicles their past. In Africa and Nigeria, music permeates every aspect of individual and communal life” (p. 307). The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups project the Ogoni norms and values and the communal life of the people. The songs of these music groups reflect the history of the communities and the relative peace enjoyed in the communities. The history of the communities is kept intact from generation to generation through their songs.

Ibekwe (2009) notes too that “music is one of the basic social services which no nation’s life can do without. It sensitizes, criticizes, entertains,

communicates and moulds character” (p. 13). The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music are used to checkmate deviant characters in the communities and their music sensitizes the communities of who they are, what they do, what they believe in and how they relate with one another in their communities and also criticize illicit behaviours in the communities. The moulding of the child’s character in Ogoni starts as soon as a child is born, the child lives with music; he learns about his community through music, his mother sings to him as soon as he is born and throughout his childhood. Through the *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* songs, he learns the norms and values of his people. Agordoh (1985) also observes that “events in the life of an individual, such as birth, marriage and death are marked with music” (p. 6). In concordance with these assertions, the *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music in the life of the Ogoni cannot be overemphasized, their music is used to mark events in the life of an individual, the birth of a child is heralded into the world with their music. During marriages, the *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music group through invitations, participate fully in the ceremonies and also participate in burial ceremonies. Their

music propels the Ogoni to the right directions and maintenance of their norms and values. Agu (1990) states that “as a child grows, he learns so many norms and values through music which opens his mind fully to his environment” (p. 50). In line with the above view that norms and values are learnt through music, Ajenifuga (2009) affirms that:

music in Africa portrays the totality of its cultural product. It cannot be separated from culture because in culture there is music and in music there is culture, music is also a means of preservation of culture especially in Africa where the people depend solely on oral tradition (p. 69). His opinion agrees with Merriam in Binode (2013) that:

If music allows emotional expression, gives aesthetic pleasures, entertains, communicates, elicits physical responses, enforces conformity to social norms and validates social institutions and religious rituals, then it is very clear that it contributes to culture (p. 9). This portrays that the culture of a community is embedded in their music. The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups are socio-cultural groups in as much as they honour all invitations both within and outside the communities. Their music is performed in any cultural activities celebrated in the communities. An example is the *yaa* puberty rite celebration which is the most expensive culture of the Ogoni people. The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music features prominently in the *yaa* celebrations. Their music is part of Ogoni culture. Onyeji (2012) confirms that “indigenous music of Africa reflects the cultural form in its own right.” (p. 48)

Nzewi (2010) asserts that “music is a creative rationalization of intangible stimulation which attains tangibility as structured configuration that engenders spiritual enrichment and psycho physical responses.” (p. 3) The above implies that music contributes immensely to psychological and physical growth of any society. Akpabot (1986) agrees that “one of the chief characteristics of African traditional music is its association with social and ritual ceremonies.” (p. 1) The music of the *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups are associated with ritual ceremonies. Ritual exercises are being performed before and after each performance for

the protection of the groups by the gods of the land and a successful outing for the group within and outside the communities. Premised on this, Udoh (2012) affirms that “traditional music is a communal property with spiritual qualities that are shared and experienced by all.” (p. 119)

Differences between the *Bari Bii* Music Group and *Kanutete* Music Group

- The *Kanutete* music group wear different shapes of masks during their performances to cover their identity, while the *Bari Bii* music group do not wear masks, the community sees and recognizes them.
- The *Kanutete* music group wears baggy trousers, over-sized old shirts sewn in old fashioned styles with worn-out shoes. The *Bari Bii* music group puts on red T-shirts, with different colours of George wrappers around their waists.
- Membership of *Kanutete* music group is restricted to only indigenes of Bodo City, while the *Bari Bii* group admits nonindigenes as members with the result that its current membership constitutes people from different communities within Ogoni land.
- While the *Kanutete* music group makes use of five indigenous musical instruments, which include two musical pots (*Kpuh*), one slit wooden drum (*Kere*), one metal gong (*Gila*), one drum (*Kete*); the

Bari Bii music group uses seven indigenous musical instruments. They are two slit wooden drums (*Akiri*), one drum (*Kere*), one big sized metal gong (*Gira*), one small sized metal gong (*Gira*), one musical pot (*Kana*) and one medium slit wooden drum (*Koo*).

- The *Bari Bii* allows women to participate fully in the group. Women are involved in the dance, singing and playing of instruments. The *Kanutete* only allows women to fetch water, cook and take care of their costumes.
- The *Kanutete* admits their members from the ages of 20 – 25 years with a registration fee of ten thousand (N10,000) naira while the *Bari Bii* group admits from the age of fifteen and above and their registration fee is two hundred (N200) naira only.
- The *Kanutete* musical instruments are kept in Kph-nene Pigalo's compound popularly known as *Kanutete* compound, while the *Bari Bii* musical instruments are kept in a big shrine popularly called *Amakiri*.
- Before actual performance, the *Kanutete* town crier, called *Domkere* goes round the community playing the metal gong to invite the people to their upcoming performance. On the other hand, the *Bari Bii* group uses their banner to move round the community to inform people that the group would be performing.
- For any performance outside the community, the *Kanutete* uses open vehicle and requires special house and care while the *Bari Bii* uses normal vehicle and can mix up with others and take care of themselves.
- During training, members of the *Kanutete* group rehearse on a daily basis and go back home after each training session while the *Bari Bii* are confined to the *Bari Bii* compound for their training which lasts for six months.

Similarities between the *Kanutete* and the *Bari Bii* Music Groups

- The two music groups are entertainment groups. Their music are used to entertain the entire communities and that is why people in different communities respond as soon as their music is played. Also their entertainment circle knows no bound; they perform at religious, political, social and cultural events and ceremonies.
- None of the two groups admits questionable characters, cultists or chief priests as members, and they do not perform in native doctor's compound.
- Through their songs, they expose injustice, deviant characters, social ills in the community; they also check-make their leaders and do not even spare anybody, including the king of the community no matter how highly placed the person is.
- In the two music groups, it is compulsory for male members to learn how to sing their songs, play the musical instruments and also dance to the music.
- The two music groups have been recognized both within and outside the State, for their cultural displays and music performance, and there were awards for that recognition.
- Both music genres are believed to be as old as their forefathers. They use indigenous musical instruments of the same type.

- The song texts of the groups are the same; the texts are insulting, and vulgar languages are used. They also use their song texts to praise individuals who have done well in their different communities.
- The two groups are socio-cultural groups that believe in the maintenance of their culture so that it will not go into extinction. These two groups are the main Ogoni cultural groups, without them miscreants will have their way in the community.
- Christianity has also affected the two groups. Some members have stopped participating in the groups due to their religious belief. Some ministers of the church have preached to their congregations that participating in culture is an abomination and ungodly. But some members are resolute to protect their tradition and the two music groups have been sustained.
- The forms in their songs are mostly in Call and Response Pattern, Solo Chorused Refrain and Mixed Structural Forms.
- Activities of the two groups have not been documented by any researcher both within and outside Nigeria.
- The two music groups have continued to praise and remember Ogoni leader, Ken Saro Wiwa who died in the course of fighting for Ogoni marginalization. They keep on eulogizing him in their song texts for history to be sustained.
- Their song texts are in proverbs and metaphor. They do not mention the culprits name but the songs reflect the person's action and character.



The *Kanutete* Music Group in Dance

Action in Bodo City

The Social and Educative Roles of *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* Music Groups

- They use their music to checkmate ill behaviours in the communities. Their songs reveal secret crime even if the crime is committed by the king (*menebon*) of the different communities. Such crime is



The Bari Bii Group Relaxing in revealed by the group's music. They do
Kaani I Community after Performance not shield crime, no matter how highly placed the person is. The 'Nebuchadnezzar' music of the *Bari Bii* music group and *Bere ko ni bee* music of the *Kanutete* music group are examples of their music. Their music indicted titled men who have harassed women in the community. The example of the songs and the first page of the scored music are attached.

**Bari Bii Music Group Song:
 Nebuchadnezzar**

NEBUCHANEZZAR

Ogoni Folk Song

BARI BII GROUPS

The musical score is written for nine parts, all in 12/8 time. The parts are:

- CALL**: Treble clef, 12/8 time, two measures of whole rests.
- RESP./CALL**: Treble clef, 12/8 time, two measures of whole rests.
- RESP.**: Treble clef, 12/8 time, two measures of whole rests.
- AKIRI (SLIT...1)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- AKIRI (SLIT...2)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- KOO (WD. DRUM)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- GIRA (T. GONG)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- GIRA (M. GONG)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- KERE (DRUM)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of whole rests.
- KANA (POT DRUM)**: Alto clef, 12/8 time, two measures of eighth-note patterns.

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Kanutete Music Group Song:

Bere Ko Ni Bee

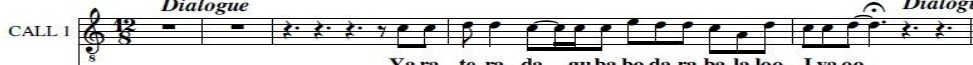
BERE KO NI BEE

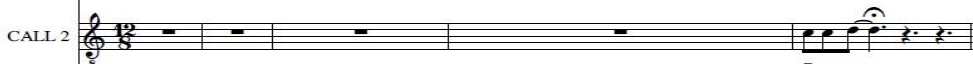
KANUTETE CULTURAL GROUP

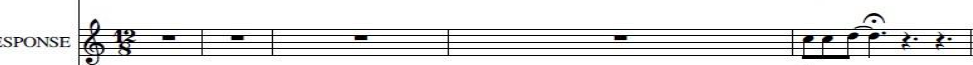
Ogoni Folk Song

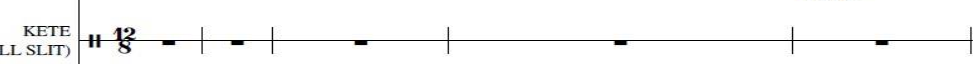
...


Dialogue

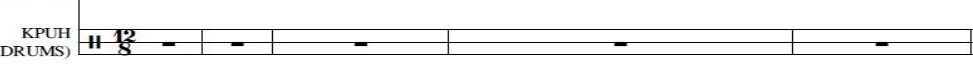
CALL 1  *Dialogue*
 Ya-ra te-ra da gu-ba bo da ra ba la loo I-ya oo


CALL 2  I-ya oo

RESPONSE  I-ya oo

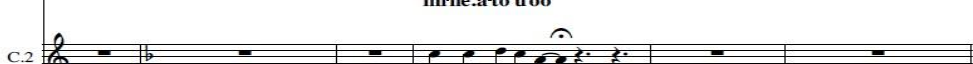
KETE (SMALL SLIT) 

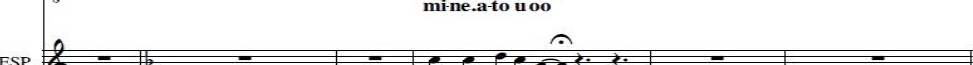
GIRA (METAL GONG) 

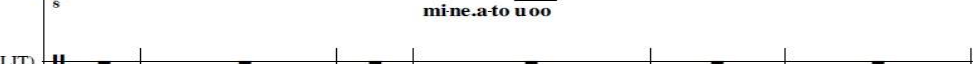
KERE (SMALL DRUM) 

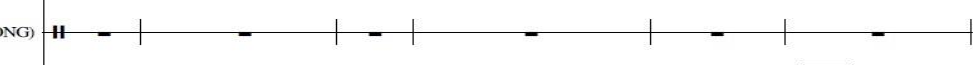
KPUH (2 POT DRUMS) 

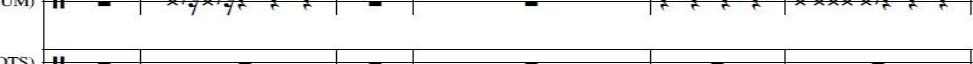
6


C.1  *Dialogue*
 mine.a-to u oo


C.2  mine.a-to u oo

RESP.  mine.a-to u oo

K(SLIT) 

G(M.GONG) 

K(S.DRUM) 

KP(2POTS) 

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Bari Bii music group Song:

So I Bira Bari Bii

SO I BIRA BARI BII

BARI BII GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

The musical score is written for a BARI BII GROUP and includes the following parts:

- CALL 1**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of whole rests.
- CALL 2**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of whole rests.
- RESP.**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of whole rests.
- AKIRI (SLIT...1)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- AKIRI (SLIT...2)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- KOO (WD.DRUM)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of dotted rhythms.
- GIRA (T.GONG)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- GIRA (M.GONG)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of eighth-note patterns.
- KERE (DRUM)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of whole rests.
- KANA (POT DRUM)**: Treble clef, 12/8 time signature, two measures of eighth-note patterns.

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Kanutete Music Group Song:

Pa Pii Panh

PA PII PANH

KANUTETE CULTURAL GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

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The musical score for 'Pa Pii Panh' is written in 8/8 time. It includes the following parts:

- CALL 1:** A vocal line starting with a rest, followed by a melodic phrase.
- CALL 2:** A vocal line with a rest.
- RESPONSE:** A vocal line with a rest.
- KETE (SMALL SLIT):** An instrumental line with a rest.
- GIRA (METAL GONG):** An instrumental line with a rest.
- KERE (SMALL DRUM):** An instrumental line with a rhythmic pattern.
- KPUH (2POT DRUMS):** An instrumental line with a rest.
- C. 1:** A vocal line starting with a rest, followed by a melodic phrase.
- C. 2:** A vocal line with a rest.
- RESP.:** A vocal line with lyrics: *anh anh anh be ne go di be oo*.
- K(SLIT):** An instrumental line with a rest.
- G(GONG):** An instrumental line with a rest.
- K(DRUM):** An instrumental line with a rest.
- PK(POTS):** An instrumental line with a rest.

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Bari Bii music group Song:
Ogoni Kingdom

OGONI KINGDOM

BARI BII GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

CALL 1

CALL 2

RESP.

AKIRI (SLIT...1)

AKIRI (SLIT...2)

KOO (WD.DRUM)

GIRA (T.GONG)

GIRA (M.GONG)

KERE (DRUM)

KANA (POT DRUM)

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Kanutete Music Group Song:
Saro Wiwa

SAROWIWA

KANUTETE CULTURAL GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

...

CALL 1

CALL 2

RESPONSE

KETE (SMALL SLIT)

GIRA (METAL GONG)

KERE (SMALL DRUM)

KPUH (2 POT DRUMS)

3

C.1
Saro wi-wa o mea do-lo

C.2
Ken sa-ro wi wa o

RESP.
mea do-lo

K(SLIT)

G(M.GONG)

K(S.DRUM)

KP(2POTS)

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Bari Bii music group Song:

Naa Mue Dam

NAA MUE DAM

BARI BII GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

CALL 1

CALL 2

RESP.

AKIRI (SLIT...1)

AKIRI (SLIT...2)

KOO (WD.DRUM)

GIRA (T.GONG)

GIRA (M.GONG)

KERE (DRUM)

KANA (POT DRUM)

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Kanutete Music Group Song: *Tangha Di Yelo*


TANGHA DI YELO

KANUTETE CULTURAL GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

...

Dialogue

CALL 1 

CALL 2 

RESPONSE 

KETE (SMALL SLIT) 

GIRA (METAL GONG) 

KERE (SMALL DRUM) 

KPUH (2POT DRUMS) 

4

C. 1 

C. 2 

RESP. 

K(SLIT) 

G(GONG) 

K(DRUM) 

PK(POTS) 

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Bari Bii music group Song:

Adam O

ADAM O

Ogoni Folk Song

BARI BII GROUP

The musical score is arranged in a system with eight staves. The first two staves are for vocal parts: 'CALL' and 'RESP./CALL'. The next two staves are for 'RESP.' and 'AKIRI (SLIT...1)'. The following two staves are for 'AKIRI (SLIT...2)' and 'KOO (WD. DRUM)'. The last two staves are for 'GIRA (T. GONG)' and 'GIRA (M. GONG)'. The score is in 12/8 time. The vocal parts have lyrics: 'A - dam o ni - ye o - le' and 'A - dam'. The instrumental parts include a 'KOO (WD. DRUM)' part with a complex rhythm and a 'KANA (POT DRUM)' part at the bottom.

CALL

RESP./CALL

RESP.

AKIRI (SLIT...1)

AKIRI (SLIT...2)

KOO (WD. DRUM)

GIRA (T. GONG)

GIRA (M. GONG)

KERE (DRUM)

KANA (POT DRUM)

A - dam o ni - ye o - le

A - dam

A - dam

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Bari Bii music group Song: Bari Adora

BARI A DORA

BARI BII GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

CALL 1

CALL 2

RESP.

AKIRI (SLIT...1)

AKIRI (SLIT...2)

KOO (WD.DRUM)

GIRA (T.GONG)

GIRA (M.GONG)

KERE (DRUM)

KANA (POT DRUM)

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Kanutete Music Group Song: Nadule Dedee

NADULEE
Ogoni Folk Song

KANUTETE CULTURAL GROUP

CALL 1
Na - du-le oo

CALL 2
Na - du-le o, na - du-le o, de-dee

RESPONSE
Na - du-le o, na - du-le o, de-dee

KETE
(SMALL SLIT)

GIRA
(METAL GONG)

KERE
(SMALL DRUM)

KPUH
(2POT DRUMS)

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NYO KPARI

BARI BII GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

The musical score is written for a BARI BII GROUP and consists of nine staves. The first three staves (CALL 1, CALL 2, and RESP.) are in treble clef with a 12/8 time signature and contain whole rests. The remaining six staves (AKIRI, KOO, GIRA, GIRA, KERE, and KANA) are in alto clef with a 12/8 time signature. The AKIRI parts feature a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The KOO part features a drum pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. The GIRA parts feature a gong pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. The KERE part features a drum pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. The KANA part features a pot drum pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is divided into two measures by a double bar line.

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Kanutete Music Group Song: *Lela Ee Loo*

LELA EE LOO

KANUTETE CULTURAL GROUP

Ogoni Folk Song

...

The musical score for 'LELA EE LOO' is presented in a multi-staff format. The top section includes staves for CALL 1, CALL 2, and RESPONSE, followed by instrumental parts for KETE (SMALL SLIT), GIRA (METAL GONG), KERE (SMALL DRUM), and KPUH (2POT DRUMS). The bottom section features vocal parts for C. 1 and C. 2, along with instrumental parts for K(SLIT), G(GONG), K(DRUM), and PK(POTS). The lyrics are written below the vocal staves.

CALL 1: Anh e le la e loo anh

CALL 2: (Empty staff)

RESPONSE: (Empty staff)

KETE (SMALL SLIT): (Musical notation)

GIRA (METAL GONG): (Musical notation)

KERE (SMALL DRUM): (Musical notation)

KPUH (2POT DRUMS): (Musical notation)

C. 1: e le la e loo, anh e le la e lo, anh e le la e lo, anhye i li

C. 2: (Empty staff)

RESP.: (Empty staff)

K(SLIT): (Musical notation)

G(GONG): (Musical notation)

K(DRUM): (Musical notation)

PK(POTS): (Musical notation)

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Findings

The *Bari Bii* music group has its strong hold in Khana Local Government Area and the *Kanutete* in Gokana Local Government Area. These two groups have common ideology in their song text. They provide some valuable information and knowledge to Ogoni communities. The adults consistently

imbibe moral sense of judgment, social traits and virtues by watching these music groups and listening to their messages. The youths on the other hand, learn about things happening around them, including their culture, history of Ogoniland, general knowledge and moral instructions through the songs rendered by these two performing groups. Their songs not only entertain their audience, but they effectively serve as one of the means of transmitting norms, ethics and virtues to members of Ogoniland, immoral behaviours are taboo and these groups do not spare individuals who indulge in such acts. They expose them in public through their songs. Some of the guilty ones are compelled to go into exile in shame when exposed. The two groups use their songs to correct the ills and regulate the irregular conducts in their communities. The texts of their traditional songs embody a lot of educative words and information for the people. The language of their songs are mostly vulgar and in proverbs and metaphor, but the offenders know themselves as soon as the person's name is mentioned (slay songs). The songs can be sung in polite or impolite flavor and sometimes they are socially controlled to avoid problem in the community. Therefore, songtext serves as a warning to others and a corrective measure to those with irregular conducts. Although some of their songs serve as praise songs or unifying factor to individual or group of individuals who have done well in the communities. They also use fictitious names in their song texts but the message has been sent across to the community without mentioning the person's real name. During performance, the two music groups attract crowds of people. Invitation comes from individuals or community or even the Church, for entertainment. During any gathering, even with the existence of acculturation and enculturation among the communities, these musical genres are still guarded from outside influence. In recruitment, the *Bari Bii* music group admits people from other communities within Khana Local Government Area but the *Kanutete* does not admit members outside the community when the music is practiced.

During performance, the *Kanutete* music group wears masks as well as during games. Their costumes, which include the masks, are designed for entertaining their audience. People from the audience mingle freely with them, the masks they wear notwithstanding. The *Bari Bii* group does not wear masks during performance. The instrumentation of these two groups spurs their audiences into action and they dance to the rhythm of the music. The *Bari Bii* music group uses seven musical instruments during their performance while the *Kanutete* use five. Before and after performance, the *Bari Bii* returns their musical instruments back to their spiritual father's shrine (*Amakiri*) for preservation; while the *Kanutete* returns theirs to *Kanutete* compound, where Mama *Kanutete* resides with her son who is also a member of the group. The *Bari Bii* musical instruments constitute two small slit wooden drums (*akira*), one big slit wooden drum (*koo*), two metal gongs (*gira*), big and small membrane drum (*kere*) and one musical pot (*kana*); while that of *Kanutete* include one small slit wooden drum (*kete*), one big metal gong (*gila*), one membrane drum (*kere*) and two musical pots (*kpuh*). The two groups through their song texts disgrace offenders in their communities as corrective measures, and without apology as they render no apologies for doing that. Besides, the culture shields them from arrest in this regard. They have the protection of the community and cannot be arrested by law enforcement agents or be harassed in the community, no matter how highly placed the individual exposed is in the community.

Civilization has affected the music of the two groups; the cultural practices are being replaced by new elements that are a combination of more Western and less indigenous tradition. Movements of youths from rural area to urban areas, the crave for Western and new kinds of music in vogue and the usage of electronic media in musical performances seem to distract the youths from participating actively in their cultural practices. Today in *Bari Bii* music group, different communities merge together to keep the group alive before now different communities play and form their own *Bari Bii* music group. Currently, most of the youths who are members of the *Kanutete* music group live in urban areas, sometimes they do not come home to honour invitations sent across to them. Although traditional activities still hold in these communities, there are noticeable changes in the reactions of their audiences. The excitement exhibited by the communities has waned. In the past, their songs which exerted much authority and positive influence of the community, are now seen as barbaric and unethical. The community feels that there is need to either reform or scrape some of them. These feelings and reactions from their audiences, negatively affected the mood and performance output of the groups. Despite all these, the two music groups strongly exist in their communities and still use their song texts to sanitize the communities. For the songs to be accepted in any community, they must make an impact on individuals and the community. This is because they are required to serve as entertainment and moral values for shaping and reshaping behaviours of individuals and upholding the norms in the community, as well as projecting the socio-cultural values that guide the community. Song texts serve various functions, and if properly projected, every societal values will be maintained and cherished.

Conclusion

Music is a unifying factor in Ogoni communities. The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups are the major music groups that bring together children, youths and adults in the communities. Their music serves as a means of communication, entertainment and dissemination of information, and the information disclosed by them cannot be relegated to the background. The *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups are highly respected, regarded and feared in the communities because of their song text. They put all informations received into songs, and they use their songs to insult, educate members of the community. The songs of insult and warning do not go down well with the offenders, but others regard and admire them. The groups are respected for their knowledge in proverbs appropriately applied in the song texts, and for their efforts in sanitizing the communities. Music and culture are interwoven and music has proven itself to be very potent and consistent in transmitting core natural values among Ogoni communities. It also recognizes the fact that traditional music gives identity to the people, by expressing their value systems, norms, beliefs and customs. The existence of any community depends on its tradition. Music is an instrument used to pass information to the community, correct the ills and regulate the irregular conducts, communication and entertainment in these communities. The song texts of the *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups comprise of lots of social and educative words, and information for the people who are familiar with the language. Those who do not understand the language interpret the melody through the mood and emotions of the performers. The two music groups

are respected for their ability to convert all information received to songs through which they indict offenders of the norms and values, or praise those who have done well in the society, as well as for historical purposes.

The continuity and discontinuity of the *Bari Bii* and the *Kanutete* music groups are left in the hands of the communities and the Church. The Church, especially the Catholic Church and the communities, play a great role in sustaining the groups. The Church invites the music groups for performance during church activities and the music groups honour such invitations without hesitation. The Church plays great role for the survival of the groups without minding the song texts. The *Bari Bii* and the *Kanutete* music groups in Ogoniland play important roles as singers, dancers, composers and instrumentalists. For a music group to be recognized in Ogoniland, they must have concise knowledge of the historical background of the community, norms and values of the people, versed in proverbs and fluent in their native language. They always keep in touch with members of the community, in order to get information from them on any ills committed in the community. Their songs serve as a unifying factors to usher in peace, love and progress among the people and also to praise individuals who have done well both within and outside the community. The music and songs are mostly performed by men in the community and the text of the song reflects the purpose of the performance. Therefore, the music groups with their music socialize and educate the community on recent happenings in different communities.

Recommendations

1. Culture is the identity of a community, the *Bari Bii* and *Kanutete* music groups should not be allowed to go into extinction. The cultural rites should also be made compulsory to children within the appropriate age brackets to register as members, for continuity. As soon as a child in the community becomes a toddler, he should be introduced to the traditional music of his people. This step would help maintain their cultural heritage and sustain the process of transfer of their musical knowledge from generation to generation.

2. The two music groups have performed within and outside Rivers State, and took first positions in local competitions. They should be encouraged to participate in international competitions too, to bring to limelight, the image of Nigeria, and Ogoni, in particular. Socialization in the two music groups provides great opportunity to the child to learn the rules and regulations in the community. for providing these virtues, it is strongly recommended that these groups should be sustained by all means.

3. The Church and the two music groups should work together to maintain Ogoni cultural heritage while sustaining continuity and change to achieve a more appreciated performance standard by all and sundry. Their instruments

which are purely indigenous, are held in high esteem. The seven musical instruments of the *Bari Bii* music group are kept with their spiritual father (*amakiri*) in the shrine and the mask and five musical instruments of the *Kanutete* music group are kept in *Nwi Nwi* compound, that is *Kanutete* compound. All these instruments should be well preserved and well protected for the upcoming generations.

4. The Local Government Authorities in the four Local Government Areas of Ogoniland which includes Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme should evolve a scheme to assist the music groups to record their music on CD for future research and financial gains. The *Bari Bii* music group has already recorded two volumes of their music for commercial purposes, but the government has the responsibility of preserving the recordings in archives for future references and research purposes.

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