



CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL OF ARTS AND DESIGN

Journal homepage: <https://cajad.centralasianstudies.org>



Adaptation of Apala Music Performance Techniques to the Conducting of Yoruba Art Choral Works

Oluseun Sunday Odusanya

B.Sc (Ed) (Ibadan); M.Div. CM, M.C.M (Ogbomoso), M.A (Abraka), Doctoral Student of the
Department of Music, Delta State University, Abraka – Nigeria

Emurobomẹ G. Idolọr (Fanim)

Professor, Ph.D. (Ibadan); M.A.; M.Ed.; B.A. (Hons); Dip. Mus. Ed. (Nigeria), (Professor of African
Musicology and Music Education), Department of Music, Delta State University, Abraka – Nigeria

Abstract

The conducting mode of African art music can extend beyond Western and theoretical approaches. Africans care about musical performances that convey their emotional and spiritual meanings. Therefore, an African conductor of an ensemble carefully crafts a lyrical interpretation that profoundly delves into notes, rhythms, and sounds and rests on locating layers of meanings that underpin the effectiveness of the written music. The discoveries and musical developments in African music performances, types of ensembles, and style vis -a- vis the conducting techniques had to change. These can be done using African performance techniques such as body movements and cues by the lead vocalist in the Apala music of the Yoruba people of Southwest Nigeria. The aforementioned suggests that conducting/directing African choral music, especially Yoruba art choral works, requires adaptation of traditional performance idioms and compatibility explored in live performances. This study is hinged on the Theory of Conducting Dynamism by Ossaiga (2020). This article examines the historical perspectives of *Apala* music and musical performance, the concept of conducting synthesis and adaptation and finally, the features of *the synthetic* conducting concept.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 10-Sep-2023

Received in revised form 15 Sep

Accepted 16-Oct-2023

Available online 01-Nov-2023

Key words: Choral
Conducting, African music,
Choral music, Traditional
music.

The writer analyses the performance and audience reactions in the concert vis-a-vis the utilisation of traditional performance techniques in *Apala* in a concert of selected Yoruba art choral music works. The responses of the audience were rated on variant scales which include a 4-point Likert scale – SA = Strongly Agreed, A= Agreed, D= The study adopted the disagreed, SD= Strongly Disagreed and unstructured interview questions. Analyses of the data collected from the questionnaire were calculated using the simple percentage scale of rating. Findings reveal that conducting manifests changes as it interacts with different musical cultures, contexts, conductors, and compositions. Unlike Western practice, the conducting is carried out by the master musician or the lead singer, while the voice arrangements and stylistic techniques are distinct. The study recommends that others present a template for broadening the scope of conducting beyond Western conducting nuances to accommodate traditional conducting models. Also, evolve a system of adaptation of *Apala* and *Juju* music performance techniques for conducting Yoruba art choral music.

Introduction

Music is a cross-cultural language that transcends ethnic boundaries, connecting people from all walks of life. Within the rich tapestry of Nigerian music exists a genre known as *Apala* - a powerful and rhythmic musical style deeply rooted in Yoruba traditions. *Apala* music has captivated audiences for generations with its mesmerising beats and soul-stirring melodies. The captivating performance techniques of *Apala* music could be seamlessly adapted to enhance the conducting of Yoruba art choral works. The same goes for traditional music among the Yoruba, like other African ethnic groups, as she provides a means for identity formations and connections among the people through its sacred and social functions. Agawu (2016: 27) states that "by and large, the presence of music...is a defining feature of most human societies". African music, mainly traditional music, and its performance practices function as art, as it involves a creative process which is both musical and extra-musical.

The conducting mode of African art music can extend beyond Western and theoretical approaches. Africans care about musical performances that convey their emotional and spiritual meanings. Therefore, an African conductor of an ensemble carefully crafts a lyrical interpretation that profoundly delves into notes, rhythms, and sounds and rests on locating layers of meanings that underpin the effectiveness of the written music. The discoveries and musical developments in African music performances, types of ensembles, and style vis a vis the techniques of conducting had to change. These can be done using African performance techniques such as body movements and cues by the lead vocalist in the *Apala* and *Juju* music of the Yoruba people of Southwest Nigeria. The aforementioned suggests that conducting/directing African choral music, especially Yoruba art choral works, requires adaptation of traditional performance idioms and compatibility explored in live performances.

According to Sadie (1984:58), "choral directing and conducting is "an art of directing musical performance through visible gestures designed to secure unanimity from ensembles, both of execution and interpretation." Similarly, Kennedy and Joyce (2007:23) define conducting as the "art of directing a musical performance through visible gestures." In agreement with Sadie, Kennedy, and Joyce, the researcher affirms the definitions and adds that the art involves training, administering, and leading a group in music performances. "Choral conducting is defined as a musical language or expression, a visual presentation of the conductor's musical ear and a means of communicating a musical idea visually to the ensemble via hand gestures and facial expression" (Adedeji, 2012, p. 11). The choral conductor's professional activities communicate musical elements such as dynamics, expressions, tempo, and articulation. The conductor's ability to communicate effectively through the choral group

or ensemble goes beyond the precision of notes and rhythms, including verbal and nonverbal conducting gestures.

Concerning the nonverbal communication of the choral conductor, Adetutu (2016:1) notes that "conducting is also about how the choral conductor communicates interpretative nuances to the choir to increase the quality of the choir." Therefore, conducting involves a communicative system of verbal and vocal art, the charisma of conductors, non-verbal communication and refraction in conducting the performance.

Although the knowledge of music literacy is still low in Nigeria, especially with specialisation in conducting, experience has shown that performing gestures on display are from ethnomusicologists, composers, vocal or instrumental graduates, music educationists, and people who did not read music. These scenarios also brought about series of conducting/directing styles in the name of contemporary conducting practices. These varied conducting techniques and styles are built on emotional, intellectual, and spiritual attachment to traditional approaches to songs and music, which necessitate the contextual application of conducting designs and styles.

This study focuses on adapting Yoruba music performance techniques and how conductors can adapt them to conducting selected Yoruba art choral works to change appeals and make the audience appreciate the performance in concerts and social gatherings. The writer believes that other similar features inherent in African traditional music can be adapted into African art choral versions to arouse the audience's interest and make the music meaningful.

Statement of the Problem

Music is a vital facet of life in indigenous Africa. Efforts of choral conductors who utilise Western (conventional) conducting techniques have yielded some degree of effectiveness. Still, there needs to be more oversight in using traditional Yoruba performance techniques by conductors to achieve the goals of practical appeal to the Yoruba audience. It is one thing to compose works and another to interpret them appropriately to gain cultural relevance. Yoruba traditional music performance techniques that can be utilised in conducting are yet to be identified from relevant genres of Yoruba music, especially in *Apala*. The system of adaptation of the techniques in these sampled music genres is yet to be developed and formalised for general use. Therefore, this paper focuses on adapting the selected genres of Yoruba music performance techniques to conducting collected Yoruba art choral works to change, appeal and make the audience appreciate the performance in concerts and social gatherings.

Theory of Conducting Dynamism

According to Ossaiga (2020:108), the Theory of Conducting Dynamism states, "Conducting manifests dynamics when performed in different music cultures, contexts, with different compositions, and by different conductors". Thus, (a) choral conducting in Southern Nigeria results from music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors. (b) Dynamics in music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors affect conducting. (c) Dynamics in music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors are vertical and horizontal. Vertical dynamics are historical and time-based. It speaks of changes in conducting experiences as it evolves with music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors from one era to another. The horizontal dynamics are geographical. It speaks of changes in conducting experiences as it engages different music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors from one part of the world to another. (d) Conducting conventions point to the history and evolution of conducting with due regard to music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors, from one part of the world to another and from one era to another. Choral conducting practices in Southern Nigeria

point to conducting conventions in Southern Nigeria; and (e) Conducting evaluations are based on proper regard to relevant music cultures, contexts, compositions, and aspects of the conductor's personality. The "*theory of conducting dynamism*" is suitable for the study because also applicable to other performance studies in music and allied disciplines where conventions interact with traditions and innovations to create evolution in African music performance.

Historical perspectives of *Apala* Music and Musical Performance

Apala music is a traditional genre of Yoruba music that originated in Nigeria. Its rhythmic patterns and distinctive percussion instruments, such as the *agidigbo*, *sekere*, and *ogido*, characterise it. The lyrics of *Apala* songs often tell stories or convey social commentary, addressing topics ranging from love to politics. The melodies in *Apala* music are typically repetitive and hypnotic, with call-and-response vocals adding an interactive element to the performance. The fast-paced rhythms create an energetic atmosphere that invites audience participation through clapping and dancing. *Apala* music has evolved, incorporating influences from other genres such as jazz and hip-hop. This fusion has given rise to modern interpretations of *Apala*, attracting a wider audience while retaining its cultural essence. Despite its rich history and cultural significance, *Apala* music is less widely known outside Nigeria. However, efforts are being made to preserve this unique musical tradition through recordings, performances, and workshops.

The Musical performance of *Apala* music in Yoruba Land is used as pure entertainment. It is a genre of music that strongly afflicts people's cultural activities. An example is the indigenous music of the Yoruba people, which functions in the context of religious belief and worship as well as social events of the circle of life of the people. It represents their cultural way of life by establishing moral values and preserving historical evidence (Waterman, 1990). These indigenous Yoruba genres include *Àgídígbo*, *Àwúrèbè*, *Wéré*, *Àdàmò*, *Ìjálá*, *Orin arò*, *Gùmbè*, and *Kókómà*, which metamorphosed over the years into neo-traditional forms, courtesy of the advent of Arabic and European influences (Vidal, 2012). These new forms, which include *Àpàlà*, *Sákàrà*, *Wákà*, *Fújì*, *Jùjú*, and Highlife, were developed by exponents of the music, maintaining and preserving each genre's authentic musical and performance practice from one generation to another (Omojola, 2012). *Àpàlà* music, like *Sákàrà*, *Wákà*, and *Fújì* music, is an Islam-influenced neo-traditional genre. It is an indigenous musical heritage practised among the Yoruba people of Southwest Nigeria (Omibiyi, 1979). According to Omolaye (2012:38), Christian-oriented music includes; Juju and Highlife music, while Islamised-oriented popular music; *Àpàlà*, *Sákàrà*, *Wákà*, *Bàalúù*, *Séí*, *Dàadàkuàdà*, *Àdàmò*, and *Fújì*. *Àpàlà* music was originally a traditional Islamised music that has been modernised and developed into a piece of commercial dance music to commemorate whenever an occasion arises, such as naming, birthday, wedding, or funeral.

Various scholars have written extensively on *Àpàlà* music and the significant exponents who revolutionised the genre and promoted its preservation. Mustapha (1975), Waterman (1990), Ajirire and Alabi (1992), Olusoji (2008), Ajetunmobi et al. (2009), Omojola (2012), Lasisi (2012), Vidal (2012), and Ajetunmobi and Adepoju (2013) among others, all wrote on the origin of *Àpàlà* music and alluded to the exponents to include Muraina, Alao, Sefiu Ayan, Ligali Mukaiba, Ajadi Ilorin, Adisa Aniyameta, Raimi Dogo, Lasisi Layemi, Aminu Olaribigbe, Lasisi Onipede, Kasunmu Adio, Raji Owonikoko, Haruna Ishola, and Ayinla Omowura. These scholars all agree that Haruna Ishola and Ayinla Omowura are the two significant exponents and iconic musicians of *Àpàlà* music. However, in all literature available to this researcher, there is neither the mention of Ayinla Omo Alayan's name as an *Àpàlà* musician nor his musical activities and achievements. Although this might be attributed to his non-commercial album release and the resultant limited market and media dominance, all the same, Ayinla has attained an iconic status and popularity amongst the indigenous Yoruba people, as he is

E-mail address: editor@centralasianstudies.org

(ISSN: 2660-6844). Hosting by Central Asian Studies. All rights reserved.

relatively revered like Ishola and Omowura by many *Àpàlà* fans, due to his undiluted *Àpàlà* music.

The musical form employed in most indigenous Yoruba genres is the call and Response form. The lead voice starts a song, and the accompanying agents respond, like the Western' solo and tutti' form, with the whole music either in strophic or through-composed form. Omolaye also noted that strophic or through-composed form is usually employed in authentic *Àpàlà* music, as shown in Haruna Ishola and Ayinla Omowura's piece excerpts below:

Èbè La Bè Ó Olúwa' by Haruna Ìshòlá

Lead & Chorus

Call

Response

E-be la be o o O-lu wa, Ma ma je a r'o-gun mo ni Ni-ge-ri - a.

'Omi Tuntun Ti Rú' by Àyínlá Omowúra

Lead & Chorus

Call

Response

O mi tun tun ti ru, e ja ti tun wo nu o - do, e tun ma-a gbo, E je ki a mi a ba fa a ji bo.

Omolaye (2012) also noted that “contemporary *Àpàlà* musicians such as Musiliu Ishola, Olabode Davies, and others have downplayed this indigenous form, substituting it for Western choral and harmonic styles”. Ayinla Omo Alayan, on the contrary, has continuously employed the call-and-response form in his music, thereby preserving this original musical form in *Àpàlà* music. While the influx of appropriation of Western melodic and harmonic elements and the English language has eroded contemporary *Àpàlà* music of its originality, as heard in Musiliu Ishola and Olabode Davies' music, this does not occur in Alayan's music.

The following linguistic and musical analysis of Ayinla's lyrics shows that he ensures the speech melody in his *Àpàlà* music conforms to the tonal inflexion of the Yoruba language to give the correct meaning to each word. In Yoruba music, the speech melody is subject to the tonal inflexions of the language, making use of three phonemic tones: Low (L), Mid (M), and High (H). Ayinla Omo Alayan maintained this linguistic element in his *Àpàlà* music, using undiluted Yoruba lyrics by ensuring his melodies conform to the tonal inflexion of the language. This aid the intelligibility of the Yoruba lyrics in his music while promoting the correct and continuous use of the language.

Concept of conducting synthesis and adaptation

Synthesis and adaptation are two essential concepts in music conducting. Synthesis combines different musical elements, such as rhythms, melodies, and harmonies, to create a new whole. Adaptation is the process of modifying a piece of music to fit the needs of a particular performance or ensemble. The concept of conducting is a prominent practice in African general amusement renditions. The responsibilities in directing are sometimes placed on a single individual, or it could be made as part of the leader's obligation. Conducting is among the numerous African phenomena that saw their way into popular African genres like *Juju*, *Ijala*, *rara*, *Iremoje*, and *Isipa*. To this development, a conductor can use synthesis to create new and exciting musical textures. For example, a conductor might combine different rhythms to create a complex and driving beat or combine different melodies to create a rich and layered harmony." In effect, Yemi Olaniyan posits:

Master drummer named Muriana is known to be a special drummer who can move the audience to

give money to the group. Members of his group respect him. They are always sure to receive the right direction from their leadership (Olaniyan, 2001, p. 22).

In the same vein, as observed by Olaiyan, the conductor can also use adaptation to make a piece of music more accessible to a particular audience or ensemble. For example, a conductor might simplify the rhythms of a piece of music to make it easier for a beginner ensemble to play, or they might adjust the dynamics of a piece of music to make it more powerful for a large audience. The concepts of synthesis and adaptation are closely related. In many cases, a conductor will use synthesis and adaptation in the same piece of music. For example, a conductor might synthesise different rhythms to create a complex beat and then adapt the beat to fit the ensemble's needs. The ability to synthesise and adapt music is essential for any conductor. By understanding these concepts, conductors can create new and exciting musical performances that are tailored to the specific needs of their audiences and ensembles.

The concept of conducting/"*synthetic*" and adaptation, according to Ossaiga (2020), was used to motivate and direct choral performance, especially the conducting of gospel music in Southern Nigeria. It involves many behaviours that point to the popular culture that the music hails. However, Western European conducting practices are sparsely used with dynamic behaviours through which choirs are motivated to perform gospel music in the study area. Observing the nuances that are utilised in conducting gospel music in southern Nigeria, Ossaiga Peace, while reporting Amunye Bob on synthetic conducting and adaptation, wrote:

In gospel music conducting, I combine applicable beat patterns with number counting and clapping to establish its meter and tempo and to bring in the accompanists. Once the instrumental introduction is accomplished, I use gesture and feet-stamping to move the ensemble in tandem with the music, Ossaiga, (2020:98).

Amunye's view of synthetic conducting promotes the use of diverse musical behaviours to motivate and encourage the ensemble. The beat pattern returns towards the end of the conducting to bring the performance to a close. "Number counting", in the view, refers to the Verbalisation of numbers that some of the conductors utilise in combination with other acts to establish meter, tempo, and cue in their choirs. His view reveals that the conductors beat time at the beginning and end of their performance. Using number counting, clapping, feet-stamping, and other nuances to move the choir, motivate, and encourage their singing reflects sonic and kinetic objectives in the conducting. Ekwueme (1993:32) also re-affirm the position of Bob Amunye when he states that "conducting is... standing in front of the group and beating time at a performance". Although conducting involves time beating, the essence of time beating is not acknowledged in the definition. Davey (2009:2) also submits that "conducting is an expression of music that uses the whole body; conducting transcends keeping the beat". Although Davey's definition sees conducting as an art that involves the use of the entire body, it fails to specify how the body is deployed in conducting. There is a need, therefore, to clarify how the entire body is used in conducting. It is expected that a definition of conducting should also include the goal of time heating and how the body language is used in conducting. In a study on improving conductors' vocabulary, Berz (2013:3) states that "the art of conducting is an entirely non-verbal activity; hence, conductors communicate their musical intentions to physical expression". He notes that through a tradition of clearly defined motions, conductors direct ensembles on a meter, tempo, dynamics phrasing, style, and other musical conventions. This implies that conducting is fixated and abhors change. However, conducting from the Middle Ages to the 18th century has periods of defining changes (Ossaiga, 2014). Thus, defining conducting in terms of tradition is not borne out of historical experiences. Rhonda Fuelberth observes that:

Conducting is a nonverbal art that includes facial expression, eye contact, body position, posture, and gesture non-verbal communication includes body movements, the use of interpersonal space, touch, posture, paralanguage, and gaze, in addition to physical appearance and personal habits, several aspects of non-verbal communication are intricately related to the nature of conducting gesture ... one hundred per cent of a conductor's communication is non-verbal in performance (Fuelberth, 2003, p. 13).

Fuelberth's view on conducting as non-verbal communication is instructive on the trans-gestural nature of the conductor. However, the exact deployment of gestures and other non- Verbal nuances in conducting needs to be evident in the concept. Conducting nuances utilised to conduct music in Southern Nigeria involve gestures, dance, foot stamping, and kinetics to motivate the ensemble. Ossaiga Peace, in his fieldwork, reports that "gospel music is performed using lead singers in gospel bands and instrumentalists in church choirs. Slang is used to communicate in gospel music performing. Gospel music conducting is a dynamic and explosive motivation of the ensembles to achieve their musical objectives, using Verbalisation, dance, swaying, feet-stamping, and clapping" Ossaiga (2020:77). His view reflects the use of slang in conducting gospel music and the dynamic manner of operating in the study area. It was observed that gospel music performing, and singing are expressive in the area. Conductors speak, yell, jump, and dance, thus, expanding the scope of freedom. Similarly, Sadie (1984:58) affirms conducting a musical performance through visible gestures designed to secure unanimity in ensembles, both of execution and interpretation".

Kennedy and Joyce (2007:23) also submit that "conducting of musical performance involves the use of visible gestures." The use of visible gestures" implies the availability of non-visible gestures. Limiting conducting technique to gesture, as espoused by Sadie (1984) and Kennedy and Joyce (2007), suggests that conducting is exclusively gestural; apart from the gesture, other forms of body language are utilised in conducting. The aforementioned is also "evident in African musical practice" Oluniyi (2014:26). In *Egungun* (masquerade) festival among Yoruba, the lead drummer is also referred to as the *Atokun*, someone who directs the masquerade in all its actions. Hence, the famous Yoruba people will say, "*Bi egungun ba Moore ori ya atokun*" (if the masquerade dances well in response to the directing, the director is amused or happy).

The features of *synthetic* conducting concept

The features of *the synthetic* conducting concept are also in use during traditional festivals or gatherings where someone is saddled with the responsibility of controlling (directing) the events in an occasion; such an individual is identified as *a token* (director). This view underscores the passionate, explosive, and choreographic features of *synthetic* conducting, as choral conductors in the terrain utilise audibly and elaborate behaviours in their conducting. To this effect, the conductor must embody showmanship and stagmanship. These are used to motivate (the) choir to sing, dance, sway, clap, and feet-stamp. Although some of the practices associated with the leading may be considered excessive, they effectively express the music. The conducting practice in this form is a fusion of sonic, dramatic, kinetic, explosive, passionate, Western European, street, and personal musical nuances in directing gospel music. The conducting is called *synthetic conducting*. Although the conducting is used to direct gospel music, the conducting style also applies to other genres that share performance

According to Ossaiga (2020:106), it could be deduced that "choral conducting modes in respect of *synthetic* conducting in Southern Nigeria is predominantly an emotive, explosive, and a lively art that sparsely employs time beating, lavishly engages clapping, feet-stamping, kinetics, and dancing to elicit singing, movement, dancing, swaying, and other musical acts from the choir". Although the *synthetic* modes of conducting have been applied to Western European art music, Nigerian art

music, and gospel music, the styles apply to other genres of music. *Synthetic* conducting features include; (a) rare use of beat patterns, (b) audible counting and fingers snapping, (c) feet stamping, (d) clapping and (e) popular dance/kinetics. Alayande (2019:52), also while presenting his view on *Expressive conducting*, a non-verbal nuance observes that the "conductors utilise body language, kinetics, and *palming-soling*". Other conducting features include Body Language, which refers to body art, namely, bowing and *extended gestures*. According to Alayande (2019:53), Bowing in Expressive Conducting is "the lowering of the head towards the choirs.

In *Extended conducting*, and turning indicates *fine*". During bowing, the head is lowered gradually towards the choir, thus signalling to the ensembles that the performance is ending. At the end of the bowing, the choir stops vocal production, thus bringing the performance to a close. Bowing is rare among the choirs, as recorded by the researcher in his fieldwork report. However, it is the technique some conductors use to bring their performance to a close. It is important to note that it is the only *fine-indicating* technique some conductors use. The conductors observed were conducting features of the extension of gestures beyond the grasp of standard conducting texts. The *extended gestures* are *thumbing*, *tipping-pulling*, and *waiting hands*. There is a shortage of studies on gesture in conducting; however, few accessible studies are now reviewed. A more centred perspective of music instruction investigation as it relates to nonverbal communication attempts to define conducting gestures beyond verbal communication as facial, hand, and body, along with finger development.

In a study on meaning in music gestures, Iazetta (1997:7) remarked, "Gesture is a form of body movement that can communicate." Bandt et al. (2007:16) similarly agree with Iazetta that gestures as "emergent gestalts that convey effective motion, emotion and agency by fusing otherwise separate elements into continuities of shape and force" It is noteworthy that it is gesture's ability to communicate or convey intentions that underscore its usefulness in conducting. These concepts of gesture reviewed in this study underscore that gesture in conducting is a form of body language aimed at communicating musical intentions useful in evoking musical responses from ensembles. While the relevance of these concepts is noted, the literature needs to specify the details that constitute gestures used in conducting.

On eyebrows in conducting, Freed (2006) observes that a conductor who raises their eyebrows while conducting might encourage a lighter or brighter sound from the choir. In line with Freed (2006), Wis (1999) states that choral conductors should use the raising of the eyebrow to discourage "flat singing." Manternach (2012) reports that "lib-rounding" and "eye-brow-raising" by conductors affect the ensemble's vocal production as participants mimic conductors' lip-rounding and eyebrow-raising during the performances.

Ensembles' unconscious responses to the conductor's facial expressions are examples of non-conscious mimicry. Chartrand, Maddux, and Lakin (2005) report that viewing behaviour or gesture performed by another person propels humans more likely to carry out the same activity without being conscious of it. Other studies suggest that mimicry helps the observer predict specific reactions (Wilson & Knoblich, 2005) or communicate empathy with a subject (Bavelas et al., 1986). An extension of the principle of corresponding behaviour between a conductor and an ensemble includes ordered movement, dance, clapping, and other "extended conducting-related" practices. From the reported studies, it is deducible that facial expression is an essential technique in conducting, which makes the ensemble respond accordingly to the conductor's facial expressions while conducting a piece of music to accomplish the musical intentions. Other facial gestures unattended include a smile, frown, blinking or eye-catching, inhalation and exhalation.

While presenting his view on choral interpretation as it relates to choral singing, John Manson submits

that "interpretation is the recreation of an emotion preconceived by the originator of some works of art in such a manner that it can be understood and felt by another. For music, it is an effective portrayal of those feelings which the composer intended to be projected by his creation" (1961:4). From the view of Guck and Manson, an interpreter must understand the emotion itself as well as its method of expression. Ogunlade (2014:24), quoting Ekweume, also points that "interpretation of music by the conductor is more than transforming what is on the printed page of music into sounds to convey to the audience what the composer intended when he put the score on paper". The conductor must also bring to life those not apparent in the musical score but convey the composer's intention. Webb (1993:251) also corroborates with Ogunlade and Ekweume when he said, "interpretative marks in the music represent bold, expressive decisions; they are the base of performance, planned carefully and stated to the audience also meld into a composite expressive sound in performance." Incongruent with the view of Webb and Ogunlade, Dipert opined that "conductors should present as intended by the composer because conductors are more likely to achieve performance with greater aesthetic merit if they follow the composer's intentions than if they do not". (Dipert, 1980:205;208).

From the views of Webb (1993), Ogunlade (2014), and Dipert (1998) conclude that interpretative marks in conducting should be given serious attention as the conductor possess a vast technique of choral musicianship also being conversant with the style and characteristics of the music played. Interpretation from the viewpoint of the conductor, according to Ojo (2017:14), differs from interpretation in singing and playing in that the conductor must transmit the emotions in music instead of listening to them. In the African concept, attention is given to interpretative decisions, which also calls for a needed adjustment in sound and timing to communicate the project-required feelings in performance. Both the decision-making and the execution aspect of that process require deed practice.

Considering scholars' view on musical interpretation in choral performance as a conductor, thoughtful interpretation relies on a thorough and deep understanding of the music, composer, etc. The essentials are anticipated to serve as benchmarks for the conductor to develop interpretative abilities and self-creative heartfelt interpretations. There may be no higher way to gain a loyal interpretation of a musical work than to observe it to advocate for the composer, who is always in the audience to hear his or her work performed. Of course, each conductor will render a different realisation of a musical work. Humans believe that all conductors should interpret and cultivate the idea and desire to allow the composer's intentions, both the letter and the spirit, to display and emerge in possibly new ways in their performance.

Findings reveals that incorporating these techniques and approaches, choral conducting in the performance of Yoruba art music can capture the essence of *Apala* music, creating an authentic and engaging musical experience.

Table 1: Techniques used to direct *Apala* music performances

Statements	SA	A	A	SD	D	D
	F (%)	F (%)	SUM SA/A	F (%)	F (%)	SUM SA/A
Use of verbal communication by the vocalist to control the tempo. e.g. <i>eso pele elegbe mi o, leso-leso. (poco-a-poco)</i>	63 (50)	63 (50)	126	- -	- -	-
Singers use a combination of melismatic singing and improvisation to express emotions.	22 (17.5)	102 (80.95)	124	1 0.8	1 0.8	2

Very slow body movement in dancing style during performance	34	90	124	2	-	2
	27	71.4		1.6		
Instrumentation at the beginning of the song serve as entry point.	56	70	126	-	-	-
	44.4	55.6				
<i>Apala</i> music is characterized by a distinct vocal style.	40	86	126	-	-	-
	31.7	68.3				
Involvement of the audience in dancing during live performances.	70	55	125	1	-	1
	55.6	43.7		0.8		
Sense of creativity in <i>Apala</i> music is indefinite.	40	80	120	-	6	6
	31.8	63.5			4.8	
<i>Apala</i> music often employs call and response patterns between the lead singer and chorus.	66	60	126	-	-	-
	52.4	47.6				
Instruments used in <i>Apala</i> music are the " <i>Gudugudu</i> " (a low-pitched drum), the " <i>Agidigbo</i> " (a thumb piano), and the " <i>Sakara</i> " (a tambourine-like drum).	60	66	126	-	-	-
	47.6	52.4				
The African instruments used to accompany <i>Apala</i> music provide rhythmic patterns and accents.	66	60	126	-	-	-
	52.4	47.6				
Grand Total	517	732	1249	4	7	11

Table 1 above reveals the respondents' responses regarding the Techniques used to direct *Apala* music performances. The statement "Use of verbal communication by the vocalist to control the tempo. e.g. *eso pele elegbe mi o, leso-leso. (poco-a-poco)*, 'Instrumentation at the beginning of the song serves as entry point', '*Apala* music is characterised by a distinct vocal style.' '*Apala* music often employs call and response patterns between the lead singer and chorus', 'Instruments used in *Apala* music are the "*Gudugudu*" (a low-pitched drum), the "*Agidigbo*" (a thumb piano), and the "*Sakara*" (a tambourine-like drum)', 'The African instruments used to accompany *Apala* music provide rhythmic patterns and accents', records a collapse value agreement value of one hundred and twenty-six (126) respondents representing 100 per cent. Meanwhile, other statements are validated as 'Involvement of the audience in dancing during live performances records a collapse value agreement value of one hundred and twenty-six (125) respondents representing 99.2% and one (1) collapse value of disagreement. Furthermore, the statements on 'Singers use a combination of melismatic singing and improvisation to express emotions and Very slow body movement in dancing style during performance records one hundred and twenty-four(124) respondents respectively, which correspond to 98.4% respondents. Similarly, the statement on 'Sense of creativity in *Apala* music is indefinite records one hundred and twenty respondents (120), representing 95.2% and a collapsed figure of sic (6) respondents in disagreement with the statement, which represents 4.8%.

Summarily, the respondent's frequency counts of the collapse of strongly agree (SA) and agree (A), which correspond to 99.1%, and the collapse of strongly disagree (SD) and disagree (D) of eleven

(11), which corresponds to 0.87%. The above response reveals the respondents' responses regarding the Techniques used to direct *Apala* music performances strongly affirm that the techniques or strategies to direct *Apala* music cannot be overemphasised. Therefore, anyone who will adapt the techniques to any field of art, especially in conducting, will be mindful of those techniques while fusing them into the conventional conducting patterns to direct Nigerian Art choral works.

Adaptation of performance techniques in *Apala* music as conductor

Statements	SA	A	A	SD	D	D
	F (%)	F (%)	SUM SA/A	F (%)	F (%)	SUM SD/D
Use of eye contact, signaling in the performance	80 63.5	46 36.5	126	-	-	-
Use of Rhythmic suggestions, instrumental suggestions	46 31.7	80 63.5	126	-	-	-
Movement of the head by the conductor to demonstrate the mood of the song.	60 47.6	60 47.6	120	2	4	6
In addressing the tempo, and dynamics the conductor embrace verbalisation.	50 39.7	76 60.3	126	-	-	-
Use of musical accompaniments like talking drum Gangan), gudu-gudu, etc in the music performance.	66 52.4	60 47.6	126	-	-	-
The use of gestures and leadership attitudes that can be termed as forms of spontaneous directing.	60 47.6	60 47.6	120	2	4	6
The conductors at liberty of expressing his or herself in the conducting of the musical performance.	45 35.7	80 63.5	125	1	-	1
In addressing the tempo and dynamics, the conductor can engage vocalisation: “ <i>die die, koma ro were-were</i> ”. (Little by little, <i>Piano</i>)	40 31.7	86 68.3	126	-	-	-
Grand Total	447	548	995	5	8	13

Table 2 above reveals the respondents' responses regarding the Adaptation of performance techniques in *Apala* music as conductor.

The statement " Use of eye contact, signaling in the performance, Use of Rhythmic suggestions, instrumental suggestions, In addressing the tempo, and dynamics the conductor embrace verbalisation, Use of musical accompaniments like talking drum Gangan), gudu-gudu, etc in the music performance and In addressing the tempo and dynamics, the conductor can engage vocalisation: “*die die, koma ro were-were*”. (Little by little, *Piano*) records of a collapse value agreement value of one hundred and twenty-six (126) respondents representing 100 per cent. Meanwhile, other statements are validated by

conductor at liberty of expressing his or herself in the conducting of the musical performance. Which also record a collapse value agreement value of one hundred and twenty-six (125) respondents representing 97.6% and one (1) collapse value of disagreement, which represents 0.87%. Moreover, the statement Movement of the head by the conductor to demonstrate the mood of the song and, The use of gestures and leadership attitudes that can be termed as forms of spontaneous directing record one hundred and twenty (120) respondents respectively, which corresponds to 95.2% of respondents and six (6) collapse values of disagreement, representing 4.8%.

Summarily, the respondent's frequency counts of the collapse of strongly agree (SA) and agree (A) is nine hundred and ninety-five (995), which corresponds to 98.7%, and the collapse of strongly disagree (SD) and disagree (D) of thirteen (13), which corresponds to 1.3%. The responses above reveal the respondents' responses above reveal the respondents' responses regarding that Adaptation of performance techniques in *Apala* music as conductor strongly affirm that the techniques or strategies to direct *Juju* music are unique in their musical art. It also of positive impact on the Audience. Therefore, more scholarly discussion should be engaged in the new development of the act of conducting, considering the aligned art as it affects the cultural context of the performance. The test is capable of having a positive effect on the Audience. Therefore, it is a welcome development in scholarship for further discussion.

Summarily, findings reveal that *Apala* performers in Southern Nigeria involves the utilisation of diverse communicative techniques in directing their band in manners that reflect different music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors. Various music cultures, contexts, compositions, conductors, and creativities determine conducting in Southern Nigeria. Although the choral conductors are Nigerians, they are exposed to Western, and popular music cultures which they have absorbed from their education, the mass media, and the environment. While the conductors attribute their conducting skills to Western music culture, most of the choral conductors also employ indigenous, and popular music nuances in directing their choirs, while performing Nigerian art pieces, and gospel music, respectively. Therefore, Western conducting traditions in respect of gestures, beat patterns, posture, and emotional restraint are used to elicit choral sound while performing Western European art pieces, Western European and Nigerian music nuances are used to elicit sonic, and kinetic elements from the choirs. The popular music elements used in conducting gospel music are emotive, and audible instructions, clapping, movement, and feet-stamping. These elements are utilised to elicit choral kinetics, and acoustics from the choirs. Thus, choral conducting in the study area points to three music traditions, namely: Western, Nigerian, and popular music cultures. From these findings, the "*theory of conducting dynamism*" was abstracted, explaining how dynamics in music cultures, contexts, compositions, and conductors impact conducting from time to time, and from one part of the world to another

In conclusion

The adaptation of *Apala* music performance techniques to the conducting of Yoruba art choral works requires an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates subjects such as history of music, solfeggio, harmony, voice production, and conducting. Arts-based methods, experiential learning, and musical narrativity can enhance the conducting practice. Understanding the historical development of choral conducting and the training of future music art teachers can provide valuable insights for the adaptation process. This paper therefore recommends among others that training of future music art teachers in choral conducting should be considered in the adaptation of *Apala* music performance techniques to Yoruba art choral works. This is to enable effectiveness in developing the specific skills and abilities required for choral conducting. It also encourage incorporation of *Apala* music performance techniques into the conducting text and curriculum, future music art teachers can be

E-mail address: editor@centralasianstudies.org

(ISSN: 2660-6844). Hosting by Central Asian Studies. All rights reserved.

equipped with the necessary skills to adapt and conduct Yoruba art choral works.

REFERENCES

1. Adedeji, F. (2012). Principles of Choral Directing for the Nigerian Contemporary Church is an unpublished paper presented at Lagos's Overture Music Choral Directing Workshop on February 11th.
2. Adetutu. J.O. (2016). *Communicating the Aesthetic and expressiveness in African Church Choral Music: The Conductors' Task*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Church Music, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso, Oyo State.
3. Alayande. T.M. (2019). *Impact of Effective Communication In Choral Conducting Performance*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Church Music, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso, Oyo State.
4. Agawu K. V. (2016). *The African Imagination in Music*, Oxford: Scholarship online Bandt, R., Duffy, M. & Mackinnon, D. (2007). *Hearing Places: Interdisciplinary Writing on Sound, Place, Time and Culture*. London: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
5. Berz, W.L. (2013). "Conducting Improvement: Vocabulary and More". Retrieved from *Bulletin of the Council of Research in Music Education*.
6. Davey, J. (2009). "A Guide to the Principle of Choral Conducting". Retrieved from <http://www.jamesdavey.org/PrinciplesofChoralConducting.pdf>. Accessed 25th May 2013.
7. Ekwueme, L E. N (1993). *Choir Training and Choral Conducting for Africans*, Lagos, Nigeria Lenas Advertising and Publishing Ltd.
8. Freed, D. C. (2006). "Rehearsal Break One-Handed Choral Conducting: Disability or Blessing" *Choral Journal*, 47(2), 57–58.
9. Fuelbert, R. J. V. (2003). "The Effect of Various Left Hand Conducting Gestures on Singers' Perceptions of Inappropriate Vocal Tension". *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing* 1(1) 13-21.
10. Green, E. H.A. (1992). *The modern conductor*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
11. Idamoyibo, A. A. (2013). The Training and Performance Practices of Yoruba Indigenous Drummers. *Journal of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists*. No. 4. Pp. 182-188.
12. _____ (2011). Musical Arts and Indigenous Knowledge System: Understanding, Reproducing the *Ijala* Musical Genre in Yorubaland. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences*, 6: 244-250.
13. _____ (2006). Musical Arts Education and Opportunity for Entrepreneurship in
14. Nigeria. In Mokobia, J. and Ojie, N. (Eds.), *Readings in General Studies: Nigerian Peoples. Culture and Entrepreneurial Sills*. Abraka University Printing Press. Pp: 279-292.
15. Idolor, G. E. (2002a). The Theorist and the Performer in African Musical Practice. In
16. _____ (Ed.), *Music in Africa: Facts and Illusions*. Ibadan: Stirling- Horden. Pp: 54 - 63.
17. _____ (2002b). Music to the Contemporary African. In Idolor, G. E. (Ed.), *Music in Africa: Facts and Illusions*. Ibadan: Stirling-Horden. Pp: 1-23.
18. Julian, F. D. (1989). "Non-verbal Communication: Its Application to Conducting". *Journal of Band Research*, 24 (2), 49–54.

19. Kennedy, M. & Joyce, B. K. (2007). *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Music*. Oxford: Oxford Press.
20. Madsen, C. K., & Frederickson, W. E. (1993). The experience of musical tension: A replication of Nielsen's research using the continuous response digital interface. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 30(1), 46–63. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jmt/30.1.46>
21. Madsen, C. & Madsen, C. (1978). *Experimental research in music*. Raleigh, NC: Contemporary Publishing Co.
22. Manternach, J. N. (2012). "The Effect of Nonverbal Conductor Lip Rounding and Eyebrow Lifting on Singers' Lip and Eyebrow Postures: A Motion Capture Study", *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing*, 4(1), 36-46.
23. Ogisi, A. A. (2008). The Origin of Concert Music in Nigeria. *EJOTMAS: Ekpoma Journal of Theatre and Media Arts Vol. 2 (1-2)1–12*. Retrieved from www.ajol.info/index.php/ejotmas/article/view/121002/110429 on December 9th 2019.
24. Ogunlade, J. D. (2014). Church Choral Directing: In African Tradition. A Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) Performance Dissertation at the Department of African Church Music, Faculty of Church Music, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho.
25. Ojo, A.O. (2017). Conductor's Interpretation of Selected African Choral Church Music. Unpublished Master of Church Music Thesis, Faculty of Church Music, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomosho, Oyo State.
26. Oluniyi, M. O. (2014). Origin and Development Directing in Juju Music Performance. Ile-Ife. *Department of Music, Obafemi Awolowo Journal of Music and Dance*. Vol.4 (3). Pp: 25-33.
27. Omojola, B. (1995a). Nigerian Art Music. Ibadan. IFRA. Onyeji, E. (2008). Culture and Literary Music Education in Contemporary Nigeria: A Spotlight on Solo Folk Song Arrangements for Studies in Voice. *Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts*. Vol.5. Pp: 123–139.
28. _____ (1995b). Nigerian Art Music: With an Introduction Study of Ghanaian Art Music. Retrieved from <<http://books.openedition.org/ifra/608>> on 26th November 2018.
29. Ossaiga, U. P. (2020). Conducting Practices of Selected Formally Trained Choral Conductors in Southern Nigeria as Demonstrated in a Concert. A Doctor of Philosophy Degree (Music) Thesis. Delta State University, Abraka. Delta State.
30. _____ (2014) Expanding the Frontiers of Conducting with Special Reference to Gospel Music. A Master of Art (Music) Dissertation. Delta State University, Abraka. Delta State.
31. Randel, D. M. (1986). *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
32. Sadie, S. (1984). *The Groove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, London: Macmillan Press Limited.
33. Wilson, M. and Knoblich, G. (2005). "The Case for Motor Involvement in Perceiving Conspecifics". *Psychological Bulletin*, 131, 460-473.
34. Wis, R. M. (1999). "Physical Metaphor in the Choral Rehearsal: A Gesture-Based Approach to Developing Vocal Skill and Musical Understanding" *Choral Journal*, 40(3), 25–32.