

Yorùbá Performatives, Social-Media Involvement and Creativity: A Retrogression or Positive Transformation?

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Abstract

Among the people of Southwestern Nigeria, *Oriki* in a broad perspective is one of the Yorùbá orature, flexible in use at different contexts of ceremonial events. Therefore, this study takes into consideration the relevance and the use of *Oriki* performative art as a form of Yorùbá presentation with its fluidity and context of use. However, taking a critical survey of the Yorùbá orature as an art, the paper reviews its presentation forms, structure, features, and people involved in the art, prior to, and currently in this modern age. This is with a mind to interrogating the use of Yorùbá *Oriki* art as evident on social-media platforms, and its transformative shift from what it was in the indigenous settings. The source(s) of data for this study shall include social-media platforms such as the Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, U-Tube, and WhatsApp among others, while other relevant information shall be extracted through print journals, and interview which is gender sensitive of selected artists, performers, and a sizeable number of users of the platforms. While interrogating the effects of the use of *Oriki* on social-media platforms, the paper further examines the level of creativity of youths in the use of Yorùbá performative arts as a source of solving socio-economic issues and socio-cultural relevance as aided by technology. The paper attempts to answer some queries of retrogression or positive transformation of the art and how it improves the lives of people. Issues of fixed form and fluidity of some Yorùbá orature, as found classified in works of scholars (Olatunji (1974), Barber (1980), Ogúndèjì (1991) among others shall be reviewed duly. Reception and Socio-cultural theories shall premise the theoretical framework for proper analysis. The study with copious data and analysis, showcases the relevance of the upsurge of youths' involvement, and interest in engaging social media platforms for the promotion and preservation of *Oriki* arts through live or recorded performances. The study concludes with a view that as nefarious as some posts on social media platforms may be, the same social media platform continue to create outlet for youths to booster their socio-cultural and socio-economic essence. Through several important tools that are available technology is enabled on social media, youths are further encouraged to engage the platforms to transform life positively, shape life better, towards becoming the best to the public space, and for promotion and preservation of culture to the world at large.

Keywords: *Yorùbá orature, Social-media platforms, Creativity, Youths and Yorùbá Cultural promotion*

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1.0 Introduction

This study is set to review the art of *Oriki* performances in the indigenous settings of the Yorùbá culture in a broad perspective, as one of the Yorùbá oratures found in Southwestern Nigeria. This study critically reviews the use of *Oriki* performative arts which was solely found among the Yorùbá, during festive events, and more of a stage life show at a time in history. While chanting and recitation of *Oriki* was considered more of a restricted physical sphere of act, this study sees it as a growing and fast spreading art beyond the shores of Yorùbá settlements. *Oriki* is now a global genre with the use of social media. The study also takes into consideration the relevance of the use of *Oriki* performative arts inclusive of the issue of fluidity of its features, and as becoming a modern art among the youths. In general, the paper takes a chronological, and critical survey of the Yorùbá orature as an art, however, pays attention to the forms, structure, style of its presentation, prior to the modern age when socio-media platforms were not in view to assess the current situation. This paper therefore seeks to ask, and to answer few questions related to the use of *Oriki* art, its style of presentation, and how youths now engage it. The questions to interrogate for analysis include what forms the art takes in recent times? For *oriki* performative to dominate the hearts of youths, through the social media platforms, especially on Youtube, Facebook and others, what effect(s) has the social media platforms on the audience, the youths, and adults of recent time? To answer these queries, samples of youths, artists, and social media reactions posted at the performances of four purposively selected artists are presented, with a view to justifying our findings and position for further recommendations.

2.0 The Social Media Platforms, Creativity, and *Oriki* Performative Art

2.1. The relevance of social media platforms cannot be undermined following the current huge patronage of all kinds of people within different age brackets and purposes. This is why the study also interrogates the use of Yorùbá *Oriki* arts on social-media platforms as one of the popular genres which now form a tool on social media application platforms for users to enjoy with ease. The word social media have been defined from varied perspectives by scholars and users of the platforms. Social media refers to the several tools that permits users to create, share and interact with any information or content created by self or by other people through connection in an online platform(s). In effect, social media enables the applications that permit people to communicate, share resources, information, and it allows for mass distribution of one-way message from an individual to a group of people or many, thereby transforming the communication system into interactive horizontal networks that connects the local and the global.

In reference to the definition of social media and sharing Tanja Krsteva's view (2018)¹, our reference point for this study and data is the Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, U-Tube, and WhatsApp which are application that the social media houses. This is in tandem with the views of scholars, and in particular reference to Bruce Lindsay as quoted by Fwatshak (2019) who defines social media thus:

...Internet-based applications that enable people to communicate and share resources, and information. Some examples of social media, include Blogs, discussion forums, chat rooms, wikis, Youtube channels, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. Social media can be accessed by computer, smart and cellular-phones and mobile phones text-messaging (sms).

(Source: Bruce Lindsay in Fwatshak (2019: 5-32)²

Within the ambit of the above definition, and scope of this study, apparently, the current researcher agrees with the definition of social media as quoted above.

2.2. Creativity is a self-issue with motifs or varied intentions, but any item or art created is meant for accessibility, and assessment which can be subjected to open or undisclosed criticism. The social media platforms allow for open criticism, constructive or a total condemnation, depending on the perspective of, and angle of reasoning of an individual to content created. This is why a popular view that, any item or individual personage who patronizes social media platforms directly or indirectly already willingly gave the global assess to him/herself, or on the content created for discussion, and criticism by the platform users. This study observes that for a number of contents created and posted by artists, youths and other class of people on Facebook or Tik-Tok platforms, several people and of gender class do engage the posts by passing comments. Such comments are some of the content for data analysis in this study.

2.3. *Oriki* chant performances, *èsà-egúngún*, *iyèrè Ifá*, and *Alámò* Èkìtì chants or poetic recitations are such open genres and content creations of performers in contemporary period that have transformed from live stage presentations, or audio-visual recordings for purchase, to the global village called social media platforms for different users and open criticism. As against the fixed time in the years of the Yorùbá people which feature most of the presentations solely at festive or celebrative life events, this study observes that the *Oriki* chant and other creative art performances have moved from stage to life on social media for a wider, and more critical or sensitive audience. To this researcher, the global village as enabled by social media platform, as technically created a continuum for the artists to involve more like-minds, and critical audience to assess their creative works, and for better opportunities for the cultural preservation and promotion of their artistry.

When in search of the level of creativity of youths in the use of *Oriki* Yorùbá performative arts, and in the attempts to answer some queries of retrogression or positive transformation of the art, our access to the social media pages of some artists provided the current researcher with numerous data for analysis. While we are conscious that accessibility to the platforms and data sourced have its disadvantages, yet, it is a fact that one cannot undermine the advantages of the use of *oriki* to the performers, to the users of the various platforms, where the selected artists upload their creative presentations that might have been performed somewhere off the social media, or that is intentionally created for uploading to the social media platforms because of their interests to communicate with the public, and the global village. All, for the purpose of values intended to earn.

¹ <http://korporativnabezbednost.mk/dokumenti/ISCCS17/TanjaKrsteva.pdf,p.3> (accessed 3/12/2018)

² In Bruce Lindsay as cited by Capt. Montagnese in his paper, entitled: *Impact of Social media on national security*.

How do I mean? Most content creators have their ulterior motives either to create fun, for the purpose of whiling away their time, to solve the challenge of boredom, or to gain audience for socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural relevance. In essence, the social media platforms access grants different viewers the opportunity to learn, enjoy, and relaxes their nerves or task their brain with the posts of these *oriki* chanters.

Within the culture of Yorùbá people, and among the users of the language, in general, particularly in Southwestern Nigeria, *Oriki* has become a household component and tool in the hands of the young, old, actors/actresses, women and men. As against the indigenous setting dated 19th century when *ijálá*, *èṣà-egúngún*, *iyèrè Ifá*, and *Alámò* chants and *oriki* recitations in socio-cultural settings of the Yorùbá culture were found performed or enacted at festive celebrations among the older generations, it is now found performed not only by the youths on live stage events, but it is now placed on social media platforms for the enjoyments of people beyond the coast of Africa. Without unnecessarily emphasizing the fact, *Oriki* genre - as an art is found engaged at celebrations such as - Chieftaincy/Coronation events - (*Oyè jìjẹ*), Housewarming (*Ìṣilẹ̀*), Child-christening (*Ìṣomplórúko*), Marriage (*Ìgbéyàwó*), Birthdays (*Ayẹyẹ Oríkádún*), Burial/Interment (*Ìsínkú*) and at other socio-cultural activities. In actual fact, the performances of “surprise birthday celebration gifts” or “prank celebrations” as people refer to online, and in contemporary time on social media are such interesting scenarios with the creativity vibes which the youths enthusiastically engage in performing and posting online.

The surprise birthday celebration gifts to the celebrants feature more of the *oriki* performative arts for creating the expected fun. It also serves as historical allusion sometimes for alluding into great achievements or lineage relevancies of some people, which may be hidden and unknown to the public. The performances of the *oriki* online at such celebrations also serves foregrounding history, for exposing the hidden but appreciating culture, and individuals concerned. This study avers that most of the *oriki* recitations or chant performances posted on social media platforms by the youths serve as a source of fun creations, and economic relieve for the performers while preservation and promotion of culture in recent times also thrives globally.

3.0 Literature Review: Yorùbá *Oriki* Performances and Social Media

In the culture of the people of Southwestern Nigeria, *Oriki* in a broad perspective is one of the Yorùbá orature, flexible in use at different contexts of ceremonial events. The performance of *Oriki* genre is gender inclusive, and it is all inclusive of the adults, and the aged who are vast in the storage of history, and people who stores knowledge of their environment at heart, and into the brain without muddling or distorting facts as they bring it alive with funfair to people. *Oriki* is found inclusive of the texts in other major genres of Yorùbá oratures like in the *ijálá* (hunter's chant)- (see Àjùwòṇ, 1981) *Èṣà Egúngún* (masquerade chant art) and *Èkún-iyàwó* chant (bridal or nuptial-chants), *Ifá kíkì* (*Ifá literary corpus recitation*), *Alámò* chant among others. This is rightly observed by Ògúndèjì, (1991 & 2022). However, the performance of *Oriki* as a genre thus exists as a full-fledged performance, and the recitation is capable of standing as a genre type on its own. Within the culture of Yorùbá, this research is in accord with the earlier scholars' classifications on oral literature (Olukoju, 1978), Olatunji, 1982), Beier and Gbadamosi, (1959), and explanations of Adeoye (1989), and Ogundèjì, (1991 & 2022) that oral literature of the Yorùbá where *Oriki* features prominently can be categorized. Ògúndèjì (2022) avers that most of the stylistic features and figurative elements round texts of the Yorùbá oratures make the genres very impossible to wear a fixed nature. The current researcher also corroborates the view and emphasizes that the classification of oratorical chants and recitation modes of Yorùbá genres are flexibly classifiable.

A proper reading and review of existing works of scholars such as Adeoye (1969 & 1989), Barber (1984), Adeboye, (2000), Akinyemi (2001), among others on *oriki* show that there are existing useful information about what *Oriki* connotes to the society of Yorùbá at large. Akinyemí (2001) for instance, interrogates the use of *oriki* in Òyó town, in the ancient time among the royal bards, and others who engage in the art. Adeboye's (2000) study exposes researchers to various compilations of (*oriki iran* or *orilẹ̀*) lineages praise poems, and their history. The current study differ in structure and outlook to the existing works on compilation or discussion on *Oriki* genre, with its merits as it assesses the transformative process, and advantages that the use of *Oriki* among chanters online have on the culture of Yorùbá in recent times. Also, that the youths are trouping in to engage the art of *oriki* genre as a source of income, and to spread its knowledge beyond the shores of Nigeria, this study thinks differently but is set to add values to the works of earlier scholars following a new perspective.

When *Oriki* (praise poetry) is engaged at a performance, culturally the feature shows some references to subject matters on people. Practical examples are *Oriki* for a wealthier individual (*Oriki bọ̀ròkinní*), *Oriki Orúko Abisọ* (praise christened names), *Oriki Orilẹ̀* - as found showcased in Ajóbíewé's *Oriki Orilẹ̀ wa* (2007), and in the creative works of Fáléyẹ's (2008) - *Tótó Qba* and *È máa tú yagbà* (2010), that showcases the *oriki orilẹ̀* of HRM Olúbùsẹ's Lineage, achievements, aspirations, and views. In addition is Fáléyẹ's (2010) *oriki* chant

performance in *Òrè Olóore Odùduwà* dedicated to the lineage of entire Òtùn Mòbà and HRM Ọba Pópóplá of Òrè kingdom with a view to unearthing the *Orilè* of the royalty, his family lineage and other values found in the kingdom. The creative works by the artists and other indigenous chanters use *Èsà-Egúngún* chanting mode to present the *oriki iran* and *oriki idilé* (family or lineage praise poetry performances). For identification, and as an art that some artists are known for, there exists artists or performers¹, who engage the use of *Oriki* solely in his presentation as a genre style, to the admiration of his listeners or audience at all social events. However, we discovered that some of the artists use certain chanting mode styles like *Èsà-egúngún* or *Ìjálá* chanting mode rendition to showcase their mastery of Yorùbá history, to expose their gifted sonorous voices, and latent talents at the performances of the any Yorùbá genre.

The advent of ICT technology is what gave birth to social media platforms and its availability for users in diverse ways. The social media platforms are construed to mean different things to different people. Scholarly works of Campbell (2005)², and Muhammad (2011)³ are very instructive with different angles of deep reflections on how youths think and get distracted with the opportunities created through the social media, and modern technological tools. The survey conducted to review the relevance of social media creations from different perspectives exists but not serious work on its transformative relevance on its use for chant performances as this researcher engaged. Quite a number of scholars among Jubril (2001) are of the view that the patronage of social media platforms and its applications are destructive. Jubril (2019: 74) opines that:

Modern means of information communication networks such as mobile phones and social media contained deliberate applications that are targeted towards the destruction of the good norms and values of the unsuspecting users, especially the Muslim youths and all other that may share religious beliefs or faith.

The above view may be true of social media platforms in particular when viewed from the religious perspective and securing youths' life from other type of posts which social media platforms may expose someone to. This is why the scholar and a few others viewing from the moralistic religious perspective objects to the use of websites, and social media platform generally. However, the popular sayings in Yorùbá thus:

Èkò ẹlẹkò ni ẹgbà ẹlẹgbà
(what one detests, is a food to another)
and
Tibi-tire la dá ayé
(the world was created with dual faces)

The above Yorùbá submissions captures the sustained view in this paper. As nefarious as some posts on social media platforms may be, we are of the view that the same social media also have several important tools that can transform life positively, shape life better, towards becoming the best to the public space, and the world at large. It is in this view that we see through comments of social media platforms what their views and feelings are, about learning through the pages of the Youtube, Facebook and Tik-Tok created by the artists and in reference to the thrust of this study- oriki performance patronage and promotion of cultural *oriki* genre in discussion.

4.0 Theoretical Framework

As mentioned above, the analysis of the data at our disposal is approached from the theoretical framework and views of Hans Robert Jauss (1960) who opines that the assessment of literary texts in work of art cannot be isolated from the audience's angle. This could be accepted or rejected for factors of the societal mores, ethics or on a personal essence. Therefore, the active role of the audiences in assigning meaning to a work of art are critically considered. Essentially, this study observes that the *oriki* or chant performances of the four selected artists would not be meaningful if not interpreted by the audience who serve as the listeners, viewers or people passing the comments on their posts, as we engaged for analysis through the social media platforms. Additionally, is the relevance of Stuart Hall's (1973) postulations who expanded reception theory with a view to involving encoding and decoding aspects of the texts in any speech or action-related literature. This informs that

¹ Sùlaimón Ayílárá, a.ka. Ajóbíewé is an *Oriki* artist and an expert in this area. His works on *Oriki Orilè* is a typical example for reference.

² Campbell Marilyn: *The impact of the mobile phone on young people's social life- paper presented to the Social Change in the 21st century* - Conference Centre for Social Change Research Queensland University of Technology. 28 October 2025 - Unpublished Conference paper (Retrieved 24/01/2015)

³ Muhammad, S.U. – *Youth Problems: Issues that affect Young People*. Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House, 2011.

the audience perception is very relevant to whatever meanings we give to the lyrics and assemblage of texts in the performances of the artists. In the same way is the perspective of Bennett Susan who applied reception theory to the performative activities of theatre with emphasizes on their actions and how the audience perceived the theatrical elements in use. Robert Holub's (1989) approach is very instructive in this study. The study borrows a leaf from the humanistic approach as employed by Hiscock (2020) to subject our various interrogations of their performances to a balance on how humanistic their work of arts are.

5.0 Methodology

This study takes into consideration the relevance of the Social Media in the current age. The use of *Oriki* performative art as a form of Yorùbá presentation with its fluidity and context of use on social media platform(s) are the subject matter in this discussion. This is why the social media platforms such as the Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, U-Tube, and WhatsApp among others which the selected artists also engage to promote their mastery of the art, to solicit for people engaging them outside and through online, and to showcase (posts) their works, are the considered the choice for our data collection. The main source(s) of data for this study include the social-media platforms, while other information is duly extracted through print journals, and interviews which is gender sensitive through the inclusion of selected social media platform, male and female followers of the artists, and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sampling views method involving the users of social media was employed to infer views and position. Content analysis is engaged for proper analysis.

6.0 Sample Research Questions

In our focus to answer some queries on issues of retrogression (if any) to the use of *Oriki*, a set of structured questions were put together for this study. These are some:

- (i) What is the declining factor(s) discovered in the manner of the use of social media platform for the promotion of *Oriki* Art?
- (ii) How has the social media involvement brought shame to the household name of the *oriki* chanters and the art in general? the upsurge of the users and performers on social media platform
- (iii) What is the value(s) added to the promotion and preservation of the Yorùbá oral genre?
- (iv) Through the social media platforms, are there any form(s) of dynamism brought into the performatives of the Yorùbá art?
- (v) In what ways have the performers benefited from the use of social media platforms?
- (vi) why the use of social media platforms for the promotion of cultural and genres?

The above questions were drawn up and administer to the social media users to generate data for analysis.

7.0 Selection of the Artists for Data and Discussion

In discussing the thrust of this paper, and for clarity of thoughts, I have purposefully selected four artists cutting across four States in Southwestern Nigeria and categorized them into two broad areas. These are the male and feminine categories. The artists are Adéolá Sákírát (Àpèkè Ajóbátá) from Ìrāwò in Òyò State, Àyindé Chanter from Kwara Ìgbómìnà axis, and Sulaiman Ayílárá (Ajóbíewé) from Ìlā-Òràngún in Ìgbómìnà land of Òsùn State, Nigeria. The fourth chanter works together as a pair. By name, they are Wùmí and Fúnmi òn Àsà Èkiti. The age bracket of the two group chanters is between age 25years and 45years, except for Ajóbíewé (in his 70ties) who is more elderly than all others. Àyindé Chanter falls between the category of the ladies' age group. The last two as mentioned above, are in the male categories while Adéolá, Wùmí and Fúnmi are in the feminine category. The selection is for balance, and factors of assessment of content for cultural promotion, which is the focus of this study, and for acceptability online to justify the position taken on this analysis. Adéolá Sákírát, Wùmí and Fúnmi are all female chanters.

7.1 The Chanting Modes and Performance Nature

Adéolá Sákírát is popularly referred to, as Àpèkè Ajóbátá, who engages *Ràrà* and *Èsà-egúngún* chanting mode to present her artistry and use of *Oriki* on social media platforms. She is also known to have her bátá dance group, and these is why her troupe is referred to as Àpèkè Ajóbátá group. She performs both on

physical social live events, and posts more of her works on social platforms such as Facebook¹, tick-tock among others.

Wùmi and Fúnmi are young two ladies with appellation of Àsà Èkìtí² on social media. They hail from Èkìtí and perform using the popular *Alámò* Èkìtí mode of chanting their artistry to the public. The two ladies co-sing, co-chants, and feature prominently in most surprise birthdays, marriage events commissioned by people in recent times. Also, these two artists comments on socio-political matters and diasporic issues to relate with Èkìtí people outside Nigeria through their creativity and posts online space. This study shows that these ladies have over 3k followers, and people do comment, and show appreciations for their creativity, gifted sweet voices and method of communication to the people through socio-media platform users.

Àyindé chanter³ engages in *Oriki* performatives. He performs *iyèrè -Ifá* sometimes but engages more of *èsà-egúngún* chanting mode while using *oriki* in his performances and posts to communicate with people online. His recorded performances on social media platforms such as tick-tock and Facebook, among others are numerous. Information gathered shows that Àyindé chanter is a thespian, who uses his distinctive sonorous voice to chant *oriki*. He also uses *ràrà*-Islamic related chant mode or presentation sometimes, depending on context of his performance. He is renowned for his expertise in *Oriki* knowledge as a chanter and has his own group too. He is well known among traditionalist in Lagos and Kwara States for his expertise and relevance at socio-cultural activities among the youths and elites for his presentations. To his credit are the titles of Akéweje of Ilorin and Bóbajè of Awowo. His works are accessible on the attached link⁴. His production includes *Ajé Olókun*, *Oriki Ayérónfè* for *Oba Onikùn*, *Kéwú sòrò* and *Ìbà rẹ Olórún* among others. Àyinde chanter has a tune of 4.2k and 1.5k followers in some of the *oriki* pages in used as data in this study. Over 901 viewers, and between 30 to 70 comments as at the time of the data for this study was downloaded on his Facebook page. His work on *Ìbà Apanimáyodà*⁵ is a compilation of *oriki* that speaks on the belief system of people on *Ìyà mi*, the powers and other values as contained, which although is not a focus of this presentation.

Sulaimon Ayílára, otherwise known as Ajóbíewé is an household name in orature or *èsà-egúngún* chant performative business. Over 50years dated back in his life, Ajóbíewé grows in the industry and artistry of chanting *oriki Oriḽè* as well as grooming youths to perform with him. To his credits are more five audio records⁶ and two popular audio-visual albums. The most memorable and applaudable of them all, are the *Oriki Oriḽè Ilẹ wa* - part I and II released in (2007 & 2008) with more than 14 *oriki* of different towns, and the release on to the social media platform went so viral in (2011, 2023 and 2024). His YouTube and Facebook pages are also linked to his works⁷. The performances of these artists formed the core texts for analysis with comments of their fans and other social media users. For all the selected artists, some sampled comments were cropped for content analysis and interrogated for analysis.

7.2 Interrogating *Oriki* Art and the Social-Media Transformative Involvement

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/16moyeXPJ5>

² Fúnmi and Wùmi on Ewà Àsà- <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1GGWzW6guF/>, and <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/18sYqDeoHL/> - No place like home. This is one of their performances posted online.

³ Akéweje of ilorin- <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/!1AQi7KTZu8/>, <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1E32viLcnm/> - On *Ajé, Oriki Ayérónfè* for *Oba Onikùn, Kéwú sòrò* and *Ìbà rẹ Olórún* (901 viewers and 30 comments) and his works include “*Ìbà Apanimáyodà*”) among others.

⁴ Akéweje of Ilorin: <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1E32viLcnm/>

⁵ There are other young youths in the who performs *oriki* online, this include: the lady who chant in the film *Ajé Osòròngà* - she has over 1.1k likes, 281 shares and more.

⁶ His works include *Oriki Ilẹ wa*, *Àsà Igbeýawó*, *Oriki Ilẹ-Ife*, *Ìlá- Òràngún*, *Ìbàdàn*, *Oriki Ìjèshà*, *Sakí*, *Ọyó*, *Ègbá*, *Oriki Ògbómòshòp*, *Oriki Ede*, *Ìkòyí*, *Ifon*, *Ìdòfihan*, and specifically for politicians such as his chants on Oyetólá's birthday, and for some royalties such as found in *Oriki* of the Royal Elégùshì, and other lineages in Yorùbá land. *Ọrọ̀ Ìshítí*, *Ìmọràn ọkọ*, *imọràn Aya*, and so on. His data shows that he has 1.1k viewers, 1.9k in some and 4.4k viewers and comments in some cases.

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/sulaimon.ajobiewe.1/>

This study observes that the youths between the age fifteen and forty-five years, and another category of elders in the arts as found in Ajóbiewé's instance, and inclusive of gender have in a way added creative ingenuity assisted by technology to the existing manners of showcasing *oriki* genre¹, and the promotion of the cultural norms of chanters, and among the Yorùbá *oriki* performers. The reason for this position was that showcasing *oriki* performance were more of a stage live show, during festive celebrations such as at annual egúngún festive period, or when an affluent individual or a royalty is celebrating. That was when the chanters were often engaged by people to showcase their talents and mesmerize people with their God given voice and content. However, while the context of the performances cannot be said to have been totally changed from the form, this study brings to the fore that the aid of technology, particularly the social media platforms through which the artists are able to record and posts their performances, has positively transformed the Yorùbá cultural orature content beyond the limited space of stage.

In addition, the small skit in form which is sharable within few seconds (2 to 3seconds or 2mins at most) shows the structural changes, and fineness added to the performances of Yorùbá genres. Sometimes with the background of their presentation, and nature of effects inserted in the performance package, which allows the artists to present their artistry piece with contemporary mixed with indigenous nuances of relevance can be said to have added value to the promotion of the art. When the artists are required for purposeful celebrations related to birthdays, housewarming, burial celebrations, and marriage anniversaries, technology-based recording facilities now allow them to be more apt, creative and share directly to their engager, and also to use the same text and performance as a means of advertisement on other social platform where many others could see their work and patronize them for similar presentation. The artists also engage the platforms they register with, to communicate their views on social media to address issues of morality, pun, funny, beliefs, and politics when they are connected to people who matters in the society. Through their posts on social media, their fans, and other people who are able to further patronize them in later social activities are connected. For instance, below are some cropped comments to buttress our position:

Very nice of you, pls can you make something
like this for my birthday. (Yemi Adebisi, 2024).

Another comment runs thus:

Who wants to tell me that the Yoruba language isn't sweet?
I love my language too much. Odua a gbe yin maami...
(Fagbire Shola, 2024)

The above excerpts are few samples of typical comments from 339 people that were very positive and encouraging for subsequent patronage of Àpèkè Ajóbàtá's post on FBK. (the link is footnoted).

While in some cases, the artists are appreciated for promoting the culture, some viewers requested for the artist's direct phone contact for possibly to engage her for further assignments as the one they saw her performed. While in some cases, the artists receive cash gifts, and other connections. A comment from Adeyemi Kuye, (2024) and more than 50 others who comment showed appreciation of her nature of chanting mode, while more than 50 people also passed comment reflected on the sweetness attached to her voice and mode of chanting thus:

Better voice ooo, nice one.
Den sends me ur line.
I may call u for occasion very soon madam –
(Downloaded on FBK, 2025 from Salawu Taye)

On *Oriki Tápa- Àkànjí Olómi tútù*: another comment read thus:

Please I need this woman number, I want to give her work
pls am from Igboho more but I live in the North – (see:
Isah Ibrahim on
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BrFmAxfbw/>)

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1AD7ENkw>.

In some cases, some social media users requested for another *oriki* performance which showcases another town, family lineage and thus, the artist through such request releases another skit (performance), which social media platform users learn through. Examples of such request goes thus:

...Sister, please, I need *oriki* àwon edun Omo Elerin...

(FBK- Funmilayo Rahman, 2025)

The above request were made by Alh Abolaji Moh Saheed, Yahya Salima, Olaitan Oluwole (downloaded on FBK, 2025) among several others.

Such social media users' requests are always a charge to the artist to recoup, strategize and come back to shine on their platform if they have the real talent and mastery of the content to showcase for further patronage. The analysis shows that 3.1k reacted to Àpèkè's post, 339 comments in writing, (51) showed love, (4) were amazed in love, (2) sent surprised emoji, 1 and another (1) one were dazed with Wao! as comment. Another instance was when she posted *oriki* performance on her work entitled: *Oriki Àràgberí*, someone says:

Please give me your telephone number.
I so much love Rara music. I remember my late Mum.
May Almighty Allah grant her alijannah fridaos.
Aminyahlahu – (Whyky Bakare: downloaded on FBK, 2025).

The joy of any artist is when she/he performs, and she has a compliment showing how competent, how interesting her performance has transformed peoples' mind into giving her gift or if her piece has aroused a kind of nostalgic feelings in them. As seen from the comments of viewers of the artists, Àpèkè Ajóbàtá arouses feelings of love for the culture, the art and for her sweet voice and mode of chanting her *oriki*. This is often the case with Ajóbíewé when he performs using his very welcoming voice and in an esoteric way that the crowd could not resist his performance but showers him with monetary gifts, request for his contact to engage him in live social performances.

As for Wùmí and Fúnmi who chants *oriki* using *Alámò Èkìtì* chanting mode, people show love, likes, and encourage them with monetary gifts, chat them directly on their WhatsApp pages for contact and more performance jobs beyond their online posts. In the case of Àpèkè Ajóbàtá, she responds to her fans as she is found sending her contact number and responses to people who requests for it. When she chants, she arouses positive vibes or feelings from her audience such that she receives words of encouragement to engage in putting more of her bests. She receives donations and other job links or connections which makes her happy too, and to boosts her economy. Some of her life performances are linked to her Facebook page for people to see and from the posts this study infers that some of the people who once comment and requested for her contact actually gave her new performances as she mentions it. So, it is not just art for art's sake as the performances of the stage shows in some pasts portrays the Yorùbá artists. The crop of youths who ventures into posting their cultural performances online are receiving commission, they get new job or performance offer, and the platforms serves as advertising outlets for them. One other comment that corroborates out position is seen below:

...Send your number tu this or call me on this number ...
am (Osunsoko Kehinde)

Further findings shows that some social media users receive their contact information and give them very huge amount of money for the delivery of their brilliancy, and competence. Some also connect the artists with people who are celebrating birthdays, or marriage anniversary to also chant their *oriki* for the purpose of enjoying cultural indigenous *oriki* chants as they perform, or to just enjoy their God-given talent and voice at social functions.

In some cases, listeners, viewers, and social medial users learn through the posts of the artists and they do not hide the fact. Some are bold to express their feelings about how funny, and powerful the artist in discussion is able to ease off their tension at listening to the lyrics of the *oriki* recitation or chants. The patronage and comments of users of the Facebook or other social media platforms and as sent to the artists serve as boosters, encouraging and to making them go outside their limited scope to engage in more appealing compilations to showcase their talents.

You are superb, incredible, fabulous. If there is anything more than excellent that is you. I love and respect you...please keep the fire in you burning. Let our tradition reign supreme and keep showcasing us with more renditions.

(Sourced from FBK- Ayodele Sodimu, (2025))

The other advantage of social medial platform outlets for performances which have given a face lift to the use of *oriki* or other orature chants in general is that the issue of fluidity of time and content to engage is open than when oratorical performances have just been accessed as a yearly or bi-annual events. The arts in the millennium age and to the genz age now is with ease, and more knowledge are tapped from co-artists, viewers, and others to improve on their creativity.

In particular, the youth's influx into the social media platforms to showcase themselves, for the required patronage of people online, and being able to use their latent talent in a more globalized platform has more advantage than its negativity. The reason for this position is that other people outside immediate Yorùbá Southwestern Nigeria who might have been used to the use *oriki* and its components or people who do not have total grasp of what oratorical performatives are, outside Nigeria, and African continents have access to the social media platforms too. In a way, the orature, culture and the artistic ingenuity of any artist online goes beyond just his/her constituency. This is a positive transformation enabled by social media. In the view of this researcher, despite some teething disadvantages that social media platform may have, we see the influx of the youths in the performative of *oriki* and other cultural performances on social media as earning more positive transformation and values to the promotion of Yorùbá chant culture than being retrogressive.

7.3 Issues of Retrogression in the use of *Oriki* Art

Rather than any form of declining, or retrogression in the use and performances of the art, the art has in a way created and continue to create job opportunities for youths and adults alike. The knowledge of the art creates more fun, relaxation avenue for people who patronizes the social media. It serves as an avenue for people to learn their culture and acquire more information in a more relaxed form in the corners of their houses or comfort zones.

7.4 Interrogating the Level of Creativity enhanced with Social Media

While interrogating the effects of the use of *Oriki* on social-media platforms¹, the paper examines the level of **creativity of youths** in the use of Yorùbá performative arts. The youths are far more creative in using the arts, than the old forms and the structures involved, thereby bringing more of the contemporary elements into play while foregrounding that they are in a more encouraging /appealing form to more people globally.

I love and respect you...please keep
the fire in you burning. Let our tradition reign supreme and keep
showcasing us with more renditions.

(Sourced from FBK- Ayodele Sodimu, (2025))

The above are such encouraging comments to forge the artists ahead.

From our survey, the social media platforms create space for senses of humor, while also creating space for research for viewers and people collecting data for different purposes. Additionally, the social media platforms further serve as entertainment outlet for different purposes. Many people do not really invite the artist to perform for them as the case may be for some users of the platforms, however, some people who fancies the art, and who would readily want the artists to come and perform at their social functions also engage the social media platforms to search for content to relax, or to learn. However, it is a truism that even the people who originally invites the *Oriki* performers and some social media. One particular comment says:

...you are so good, I heard new version this *oriki* today...

The above statement serves as a confession by someone who is used to the *oriki* arts and must have been listening or watching artists perform, but she confesses that she learnt something new after watching Apeke recites the *oriki* of *olókùn ẹsin* lineage. Yet, another viewer says:

¹ Adeola Sakirat (Àpèké Ajóbàtá): on *Oriki Ìkọ́ Olókun Esin* –
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1FApWgJ78N/>,
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1Bq2GuF112/> she has more that (3.2K) viewers and we gathered more than 339 comments as content to analyze.

... Especially the beginning part of it. And secondly, all olókùn esin has their origin from old empire. I'm an Ibadan olokun esin but my forefathers migrated to settle in Ibadan to become an Ibadan indigene. (see Apeke on - *Orikì Ìkọ́ Olókun Esin*: FBK- Oyekanmi Waheed Abiola (2025))

Some viewers requested for other Orìkì of their towns and so on:

What this study observes is that she does the *orìkì* chants sometimes using acapella mode (without drum and songs) and yet, people love her work and voice. The art has in a way create job opportunities for youths and adults alike. The knowledge of the art creates more fun, relaxation avenue for people who patronizes the social media. Involvement of the social media platforms now serves as an avenue for people to learn their culture and acquire more information in a more relaxed form in the corners of their houses or comfort zones. The performative art or the use of the genre on social media platforms now creates more time for people to learn at their chosen time. The social media platforms creates space for senses of humor, while creating space for research, and it further serves as entertainment outlet for different purposes. The Yorùbá culture have different concepts to showcase the bad from what is good. In reference to characters, attitude and relationship, these concepts are often shared by artists and orìkì performers in their songs, chants, and communication with their audience. The three selected chanters in the current research are found to be creative in this respect. In one of such senses of humors created to entertain her viewers, Àpèkẹ́ recited a text on a concept of ideal or bad phenomenon as residual in Yorùbá culture, when she exhibits it clearly with sense of humour in her chant thus:

Kò dá a o.... 1.
È ẹ̀ mò pé kinní òhún ò dá a ni?
Kò dá a kálè ó maa bóbìnrin eni sùn,
Koko ó gbéná dání
Kò dá a o. 5.

It is a bad attitude o...
 Don't you know that it is not ideal?
 It is a bad attitude for the concubine to copulate with
 Another man's wife while the real husband holds touch light,
 It is not ideal o...

The humour in the above expression commanded several comments, and people felt entertained. While from another perspective, her viewers' comment on the knowledge gained, and as entrenched in the performatives of Àpèkẹ́ Ajóbàtá rather than just the funny, and entertainment aspect of her performances is also evident in the excerpt below. States thus:

Àríkọ́se ni oooo (2x)
Orin èmi Àpèkẹ́é ooo
Àríkọ́se ni oooo.

It is seen and adopt for knowledge.
 The songs/chants of I, Àpèkẹ́é Obabinrin of Yorùbá land
 Is the one informing you of the ideals,
 My chants are for knowledge.

The above song which came at the end of one of her recitations are evident of her ideal interest to train people, and to exemplify the very good aspect of Yorùbá culture through her chants and as a person. While Àpèkẹ́ and other artists engaged in this study are commended for their show of Yorùbá culture through their chants and orìkì performances, it observed that some people patronize social media platform for other essences which do not showcase culture in the right way, or to encourage youths with their dress modes. It can be said of Àpèkẹ́ and Ayindé chanters that they are modest examples of middle-class age performer online, and whose manners, and dressing accompany their performances very well. This is as apart from their show of good performance skill, with very distinctive sonorous voices to woo their viewers to cultural elements that they display. The artists are indeed great ambassadors of Yorùbá culture and orature promoters, who showcases orature and the cultural modesty of her people. This is a level at which youths are also encouraged to learn, enjoy, and add value to the time, and data usage to engage watching their video posts on social media platforms.

*Kò dá a o....
Kí ègbòn jogún àbúrò
Kò dá a o,
Kí baba ó jogún omo
Kò dá a o,
Kégbòn jogún àbúrò
Kò dá a o....
Kórèè dalè ọ̀rẹ́
Kò dá a o.
Kògàá kó jogún ọmọ-isé.
Kò dá a o.*

It is not ideal....
For the senior to inherit the junior
It is not ideal....
For the father to inherit the son
It is not ideal....
For a bosom friend to inherit her friend
It is not ideal....
For the boss to inherit his subordinate.
It is not ideal....

The above excerpt is a level at which viewers learn the deep thoughts of the Yorùbá beyond the fun. Symbolically the artist is making fun of the of bad attitudes through her creation, but she is also communicating to all sensible individuals of what things are right to do and what not to engage in among different classes of people- the lead, and the leader, the younger and the senior, the main husband, and the concubine, among others.

In another vein, with respect to language use, such elements as mentioned in Olatunji's (1984) view that is a propounding text often found in artists' manner and choice of language to showcase or introduce him/herself, these elements are found in their works. This seem to be a kind of legacy, as such reference to self, and act of boldness of an artist is exhibited at communicating the reality, the ideal attitude to the public. With fineness Àpèkẹ́ creatively introduces herself, giving the legacy of what she preaches, and as a reference document to who says what: She states thus:

*Èmi Àpèkẹ́, Ajóbàtá,
Olóólà-ajù àkókọ
Obabínrin Yóòbá ní n so bẹ́ẹ̀, n ọ̀ yọ̀ọ̀ wí,
Ohun tí kò dá a, kò dá a...*

I, Àpèkẹ́, the bata dancer,
The first Olóólà-ajù
The female-King of Yorùbá is the one who say so,
I am not scared to say so...
What is not ideal is not ideal...

The artists boldly gives herself the credit and warns with boldness on what she teaches.

In Ajóbíewé's *Àṣà ìyàwó*, the artist teaches, informs, and entertains through his performance and recitations of *oríkì orilẹ̀* of several communities, towns as mentioned in the work as it centers on Yorùbá culture. It is no gainsaying that the *oríkì* chant performance in his works are basically documenting history and sharing such information is relevant to global village. This is a useful knowledge that is being shared to the masses in large turnout, at a singular push of a button on social media than when presented to when it is posted online. The youths and other researchers will learn more on what is/are expected of a man and a marrying woman in the society. People who are able to access the share information or listening and viewing his presentation are culturally learning and enjoying the art at the comfort of their zones and time.

From all indication, the fluidity and flexibility of *Oríkì* arts performance on social media is to the advantage of the culture, as well as for the artists, the users and the generation yet unborn in as much as they have data to access it, they will learn easily and appropriately. The upsurge of youths' involvement, and interest

in the promotion, sustainability, and preservation of the *Oriki* arts, through live or recorded performances is also an added value, which serves as a booster to the youths' socio-cultural knowledge and socio-economic quintessence. Only the artists can attest to the income generated within a week or in a month as against the mode of selling their product when social media was not involved in their artistry promotions. Definitely by inference and confirmed from the data sourced, the artists makes more gains, have more fans, and are more populous than they were prior to the invent and involvement of the social media platform involvement in their activities of relevance.

Conclusion

This study reflects on *oriki* as a Yorùbá genre and performative arts is beyond the shores of Africa while it also justifies the upsurge of youths' involvement, and interest in the popularization and promotion of *Oriki* arts through live or recorded performances as seen posted on social media platforms recently. The study exhibits various reasons such as socio-cultural, socio-political and for socio-economic which are salient factors of youths' upsurge in engaging the *Oriki* arts on social media outlets. The study highlights with evidences, the propellant for sustained interest of audience, and the artists in general for their continued patronage of the social media platforms. The paper justifies the need for the continuous use of social media platforms for the engagement of Yorùbá cultural values with reference to the *oriki* arts, which now serves as platform for learning the art, unlike the ancient time which were through stage performances or recorded and through formal outlets. However, the study informs that several other advantages exists through posting *oriki* arts performances on social media platforms as it encourages soft form of advertisement for the artists, and the people who patronize them for fun or other social interactions.

Through this study, it is evident that social media platforms now serve as a platform to advertise the native performative products, to showcase their creativity to online users, who engages *Oriki* artists or performers. The study also shows that the use of *Oriki* has become a booster to the youths' socio-cultural awareness, and of the culture, the performance techniques, as well as serving as a source of learning the antics of the job, and socio-economic essences. The paper argues that the fluidity or flexibility of *Oriki* performance has enabled a positive transformation of the ancient artistry of the Yorùbá to a more global village, while also enlarging the scope of social interactions through the media platforms.

The study however advocates for monitoring of contents, to ascertain proper representation of facts, truths, and protection of original creations of the artists, with a view not to mis-inform people but towards providing useful information and civil content for entertainment of all users. This recommendation is in tandem with the checks and balances that few of the social media outlets such as Facebook and Telegram platforms engages in posting creators' works. In addition, this study posits that the promotion and popularity of *oriki* and other Yorùbá oratorical arts by the youths and others, on social media platforms is to the advantage of the Yorùbá culture, the users and the generation yet unborn for the purpose of learning through the documentations which are retrievable at any time. Hence, the social media platforms are like the storage pool for retrieving arts and artistry history which the likes of the four artists selected for analysis in this study showcase. The study justifies that the upsurge of youths' involvement has more positive relevance for cultural improvement, particularly for the youths themselves; interestingly, that the promotion and preservation of *Oriki* arts through live or recorded performances that serves as a booster to their socio-cultural and socio-economic essence.

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