

THE GENZEE BADIE AND AFRO-POP MUSIC PERFORMANCE AGAINST AFRICAN MORAL VALUES

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Abstract

This study delves into the complex relationships between Afro Pop music, sex, and African moral values among the GenZee Badie generation. Through a mixed-methods approach combining surveys, interviews, and content analysis, this research examines how Afro Pop music reflects and shapes the attitudes, values, and behaviours of young Africans regarding sex and relationships. The findings reveal a tension between the explicit content of Afro Pop music and traditional African moral values, as well as the significant influence of social media on the GenZee Badie generation's engagement with Afro Pop music and its associated cultural values. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex intersections between music, sex, and morality among young Africans, and highlights the need for nuanced and informed discussions about these issues.

Keywords: African moral values, Afro-pop music, GenZee Badie, Performance

Word Count: 126

Introduction

In recent years, the African music scene has been abuzz with the rise of Gen Z artists, who are redefining the sound, style, and sensibilities of Afro Pop music. This new wave of musicians, exemplified by the likes of Tiwa Savage, Wizkid, and Davido, has not only captured the hearts of young Africans but also sparked intense debates about the intersection of music, sex, and African moral values. The GenZee Badie generation, in particular, has been at the forefront of this cultural shift, embracing a more liberal and expressive approach to music, sex, and relationships. However, this shift has also raised concerns among older generations, who worry that the explicit content and suggestive lyrics of modern Afro Pop music are eroding traditional African moral values.

This study seeks to explore the complex dynamics between Gen Z, Afro Pop music, sex, and African moral values by examining the lyrics, music videos, and cultural context of popular Afro Pop songs, the study will delve into the ways in which this music reflects and shapes the values, attitudes, and behaviours of young Africans. Ultimately, the study aims to spark a nuanced and informed conversation about the role of music in shaping African cultural identity and moral values in the 21st century.

Background

The GenZee Badie generation, born between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in a world vastly different from that of their parents and grandparents. The widespread adoption of social media, the internet, and mobile devices has created a globalized, interconnected world that has

transformed the way young people consume music, interact with each other, and express themselves. Afro Pop music, a genre that originated in West Africa in the 1960s, has experienced resurgence in popularity among Gen Z Africans. Artists like Wizkid, Davido, and Tiwa Savage have achieved international recognition, collaborating with global superstars like Drake, Beyoncé, and Kanye West and have through the collaboration imported strange culture into their music and as a result eroded our black cultural values.

Methodology

The study adopts Content Analysis to analyze the lyrics and music videos of popular Afro Pop songs to identify themes, motifs, and patterns related to sex, relationships, and identity.

Aim

By exploring the complex dynamics between Gen Z, Afro Pop music, sex, and African moral values, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the ways in which music reflects and shapes cultural identity, values, and norms.

Theoretical Framework

The study employs a multidisciplinary theoretical framework that draws on concepts from sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, and musicology. The framework is guided by Cultural Studies Theory used to examine how Afro Pop music reflects and shapes the cultural values, attitudes, and behaviours of Gen Z Africans, the Social Learning Theory which explores how Gen Z Africans learn about sex, relationships, and identity through Afro Pop music and social media with how social media platforms shape the production, consumption, and interpretation of Afro Pop music, Postcolonial Theory that analyze how Afro Pop music and Gen Z African culture are shaped by the legacy of colonialism and the ongoing process of globalization and collaboration.

Several theoretical perspectives have been used to examine the relationship between music, sex, and moral values. Social learning theory Bandura, (1977) suggests that young people learn about sex and relationships through observing and imitating the behaviours and attitudes of others, including musicians. Cultural studies theory Hall, (1997) emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural context in which music is produced and consumed. Postcolonial theory Said, (1978) highlights the need to consider the legacy of colonialism and the ongoing process of globalization in shaping African cultural identity and moral values.

Discussion

The Intersection of Music, Sex, and African Moral Values

Afro Pop music has become a powerful platform for Gen Z Africans to express themselves, challenge traditional norms, and explore their identities. However, the explicit content and suggestive lyrics of some Afro Pop songs have raised concerns among older generations, who worry that this music is eroding traditional African moral values. In many African cultures, sex is considered a taboo topic, and explicit discussions of sex are often discouraged. However, Gen Z Africans are increasingly pushing back against these traditional norms, using social media and music as platforms to express their own views on sex, relationships, and identity.

Afro Pop Music and Sexuality

Research has shown that Afro Pop music often contains explicit lyrics and suggestive imagery that can influence young people's attitudes and behaviors regarding sex and relationships Ogundipe, (2015) & Okome, (2013). For example, a study of Nigerian Afro Pop music found that many songs contained lyrics that objectified women and promoted casual sex Adeniji, (2017). However, other research has suggested that Afro Pop music can also be a powerful tool for promoting positive messages about sex and relationships, such as safe sex and mutual respect Adeoye, (2019).

African Moral Values and Sexuality

African moral values regarding sex and relationships are shaped by a complex array of cultural, religious, and historical factors Mbiti, (1969) & Opoku, (1978). Research has shown that many African cultures place a strong emphasis on modesty, chastity, and respect for elders and tradition Ojo, (2009) & Korieh, (2010). However, the influence of collaboration, globalization and urbanization has led to changes in traditional moral values and practices regarding sex and relationships Aina, (2017) & Makinde, (2018).

African Didactics and Moral Values

Many of the African poetry teach moral, edify social norms and values, promote and preserve our cultural heritage. The Anthology of African poetry annotated by K.E Senanu advocated for freedom of the black race. Woke Afro pop music lyrics on the other hand desecrated and violated the piety and virtues inherent in the African culture, tenets and precepts.

GenZee Badie Generation and Afro Pop Music

Research has shown that the GenZee Badie generation is highly influenced by Afro Pop music and its associated cultural values and practices Adegoke, (2020) & Fadipe, (2020). For example, a study of young people in Lagos, Nigeria found that many used Afro Pop music as a way to express themselves and connect with others Adeyemi, (2019).

Context Analysis of Selected Afro-Pop Lyrics

Sample 1: Rema: *Bad Commando*

Bad man dem know
Dem know say I be bad commando

The position of African concepts of having a good name is eroded and dragged in the mud here if an African child is proudly saying or is proud to say that he is *bad*. An average African child is expected to bear and strive to keep a good name. He has dual responsibility to keep and protect his father's or family name, make his own name and also make sure he protects the good name he has made for himself. But when a new culture says something is *bad* or calls something *bad* where or when in actual fact they mean to say *good* it becomes a cultural problem. Take for instance a brilliant boy who scored 100% in Mathematics is nicknamed or labeled *the baddest boy* even when he has done something good and achieved something great. This type of speech culture is not found in African Traditional culture and does not promote our cultural heritage. But when the African-Nigerian Afro pop artiste Davido has named himself *baddest boy* even when everyone knows that he is actually doing good for himself, there will be a gradual cultural shift and coinages of rough, vulgar words that will be naturally acculturated into African

Modern Language as a result of contact with Afro pop music.

Sample 2: Asake's *Terminator*

My banana, oh my bana'
Come chop my bana'
Sh'oni power?
B'oni, kowa
Elemi l'oma last

In lines above, The African Traditional culture is against all forms of sexual immorality chiefly in practice or in behaviour, in thinking or in words. Also, the christian ethos of chastity preaches to flee from every appearances of evil, with zero tolerance for sexual immoralities, fornication, pre-marital sex, prostitution, and so on. Therefore, what Asake's *Terminator* is bringing to the table of culture and practice, all in the name of woke pop music is but to be criticized. The lyric of the song is practically inviting people to come to the sex table to come and eat a particular type of *banana* which metaphorically depicted a *dick* and to be vulgar a *penis*. The underlying implication or the interpretation of this could not be anything other than *sex*.

Sample 3: Tiwa savage's *All Over*

And if you tell me say make I bend low (bend low, bend low)
I no go waste time but to do like so (bend low, bend low)
Iba di mi jo ibadi mi jo disco
This loving loving no be chop and go

Sample 3 shows the clear picture of the evil and dirtiness inherent in Afro pop music and how modern African child is lured into committing sexual havoc which contradicts African traditional tenets. For instance, the lyrics from Tiwa savage's *All Over* presents an African lady who will not say no to clubbing and partying and who will not say no to pre-marital sex or allowing a man to have carnal knowledge of her even right at the club as the party goes on, so long the man will not run away later.

Sample 4: Davido's *Sweet in the middle*

You can find me in the middle
I go die for dey middle cause you go
Sweeter for middle you know you know you know
Come to the middle you know you know you know
Make I kiss am for middle you know you know you know
After party you can share my bed
Gave me the pussy came I'm such a G
Dick so good she don't wanna leave baddest

In lines above, the level of vulgarity inherent in Afro pop music is greatly felt as words such as *pussy*, *dick*, are grossly and apparently mentioned without reservations. Davido's nickname *baddest* is also clearly pronounced. Meanwhile, *sweet in the middle* in the lyrics, is a metaphor for *pussy*, as the vagina is located in the middle of human body. Vulgarity is never part of African

cultural heritage as blatantly used lavishly here in Davido's song. An average African child would be corrupted by the lyrics of this song.

Sample 5: Naira Marley: *Put a*

Sometimes when I open Instagram is bum I see
Nigbami ti'n ba shi Insta (IG) idi ma ni
 Different sizes and types of bum
Idi araba, idi oro, idi abajo, idi arere, Idi ganlebe, idimu
 Away with your dirty bum
Gbe'di jor t'ani idi ofo (t'ani idi ofo)
 Ha! you will not sleep
Ah! E ni sun
 Do not stroke the bum and forget to caress the nipple
Ma lo te idi gbabe nipple, (gbabe nipple)
 Baby girl be strong to shoot your bum and not run away
Ye oh baby, ma'sa gbori duro yo'di fun (yo'di fun)

In Sample 5, one wonders how morally bankrupt many Afro pop music artistes can be and also imagine the damage their lyrics have caused the African society. The cultural implication of this is that these profane songs are with us and with our children and are not far from their mouths. Could it be possible to sing a song and not act the song? A critical look at the content of Naira Marley song in sample 8 above has spoken loudly enough that the good morals, social norms and African cultural values is gradually being pushed to extinction without remedy through the Afro pop lyrics engraved in African child brains.

Sample 6: DJ Enimoney ft Olamide, Kizz Daniel, LK Kuddy & Kranium:

Send Her Money
 As i dey shaa the girl, with my kondo She dey shout abeg
 As I was fucking the girl with my dick, she was shouting to take it easy
 She dey tell me, she wanna go to the bed
 She wanna bend low, like the back of my benz
 Shaa mi...

 And back (butty/bum) i no dey show no mercy
 Butty gat me screaming 'lord have mercy'

In the lines above, immorality is well pronounced as metaphors such as shaa and kondo which depict fuck and dick respectively, are used in the lyrics. Again, nothing tells us in the lines that the sexual escapades that happened are done by legally married couples because no married man will refer to his wife in African culture as 'the girl' has seen in the lines, but what we have in the lines is a representation of a mere hook up and hang out which is not supported by African traditional culture. The fact that the name of God is called or weaved into immorality 'Lord have mercy' as seen in the lines, shows a complete lost of soul into perdition and eternal damnation all in the name of music. The screaming of 'Lord have mercy' is not 'a sincere call to be saved' from the immoral act but serves as exclamation to savour and enjoy the sweetness of the butty while having sex with a wrong person or while in the immoral business.

Sample 7: Mr P. ft Niniola: *One More Night*

You say I be your tomato
 Wanna see me tomorrow
 Give me one more night
 I know you're high and wanna get down tonight
 You sipping Henne in the club and it feels so right
 So we can get down at the back of the club tonight
 'Cause I just want to handle you

In the lines above, the sipping of Hennessy depicts that sexual immorality becomes easy with taking of liquor. The fact that the musician claims that it is so right to sip Henne in the club is an indicator that probably an average young person may be misled or confused as to which is right or wrong through the music they listen to. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the type of music one listens to; defines or controls or have impact or shapes ones behaviour and beliefs.

Conclusion

The study highlighted the complex relationships between Afro Pop music, sex, and African moral values among the GenZee Badie generation. Further research is needed to fully understand the ways in which Afro Pop music shapes and reflects the attitudes and behaviors of young Africans regarding sex and relationships.

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