



New Generation Vice in Southeast Nigeria: A thematic Analysis of *Ndi Oke ite Akalia*

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Abstract

The quest for quick wealth by the younger generation in the South East is becoming worrisome as youths engage in vices like “Oke ite” rituals and sacrifices to get quick wealth without hard work. Some societal vices are exposed and brought to the fore through mediums like songs. This study aims to examine how the craze for quick wealth is encoded in the lyrics of the song titled “Ndi Oke ite Akalia” by Prince Chijioke Mbanefo from South east Nigeria. The song digs into the diabolical actions of internet fraudsters, stimulating reflection on the effects in the digital age. The song which served as data for this study was downloaded from the internet and transcribed, only the words of the song were transcribed. The thematic analysis focuses on patterns through which themes were derived, and how frequently the themes occurred in the song to foreground their importance. The research questions which this research provides answers to are: what are the themes in the song that show Oke ite as anti-human capital development, and in what ways are the potential usefulness of youths in Igbo land encoded in the lyrics of the song? And, how did the artiste chastise the different classes of people mentioned in the song that are involved in Oke ite practice? The findings of the study show that the alien culture of engaging in Oke ite practice imbibed by Igbo youths as revealed by the lyrics of the song are seriously against human capital development; as the involvement in Oke ite distracts one from harnessing one’s hidden inner potentials which Igbos youths had been known for. The study recommends that societal vices should not be swept under the carpet; they should be criticized in mediums like songs in order to deter youths from engaging in them. The study concludes that music is a potent tool through which societal vices can be corrected; Igbo youths should not be swayed into getting rich quick through diabolical means.

Keywords: Oke ite, Money-Making Ritual, Ritualists, thematic analysis, Igbo Culture

Introduction

The quick-wealth crave especially in the South east Nigeria is becoming alarming and taking new dimensions as youths indulge in reprehensible activities in order to get quick wealth. Activities youngsters believe give them quick wealth are Yahoo, Yahoo plus, and so on. Recently, youths have indulged in what is known as “Oke ite” an Igbo phrase which translates in English to mean “male pot”, or “massive pot”; it is a sacrifice they believe gets them the desired quick wealth. Most youths no longer want to work, but want to get wealth through Oke ite, this act is against the 21st century Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) which is mainly about human capital development, as it focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. These goals people can attain through hard work. In different societies, when a vice is increasing alarmingly, it is imperative that the danger such vice portends for the society is brought to the fore. Ugoala & Israel (2020: 742) point out that speakers including artistes convey their views to the audience through the choice of language, and song is one of the ways through which messages are sent around in the society. Songs fall within the multimodal semiotic resources for communication. This study examines the meanings encoded in the song “Ndi Oke ite akalia” by Chijioke Mbanefo, an Igbo musician. The Igbos are one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria, they are located in the South eastern part of Nigeria. Ndi Oke ite akalia is a thought-provoking Igbo highlife song that addresses the prevalence of “Oke ite” a societal vice in Igbo culture. The artiste sheds light on this phenomenon and its impact in the society. The “Oke ite” practice involves fraudulent individuals posing as cultural revivalists and ministers of local deities, exploiting people with claims of supernatural powers. They

use concoctions, often containing human and animal parts, herbs, and other elements, contained in a mud pot, to promise solutions to life's challenges and great fortune. The song "Ndi Oke ite akalia" delves into the recent diabolic activities of internet fraudsters, prompting reflection on the consequences in the digital age. Corollary from this, in the quest to highlight how the song "Ndi Oke ite akalia" is anti-human capital development, and exposes the social vice in Igbo land, the current study answers the research questions: what are the themes in the song that show Oke ite as anti-human capital development, and in what ways are the potential usefulness of youths in Igbo land encoded in the lyrics of the song? And, how did the artiste chastise the different classes of people mentioned in the song that are involved in Oke ite practice? Vices like Oke ite practice by youngsters and activities of dissident groups in the country are anti-human capital development Ugoala (2017: 188)



Figure 1. Oke ite (male pot or massive pot)

Review of Related Literature

Many studies have been carried out about money making rituals especially involving the sacrifice of human beings (Usman, 2017; Nnatuanya, 2022; Fanusionwu, 2022; Okeke et al.; 2023). According to Usman (2017), African communities have presented ritual sacrifice to their deities, which sometimes included human sacrifice. Nnatuanya (2022) through the interview method of data gathering, and from the religious point of view examines the rise of Oke ite among contemporary Igbo youths and the implications on the society. The study found that the reasons Igbo youths engage in Oke ite is laziness, lack of the fear of God, quest for quick money, among many other reasons. The study avers that key institutions in the society like the traditional institutions, government, and the church must work collectively to discourage youths from going into Oke ite. The research recommends ways of discouraging youths from practicing Oke ite through the creation of vocational and skills' acquisition centres, educating and re-orientation of Igbo youths, youth empowerment programmes, celebration and eulogising of positive values in the society and award of scholarships.

The Oke-ite money making ritual according to Fanusionwu (2022) is of two types; the oku awele and the ite awele. The oku awele involves using mainly animal parts and wild herbs and roots for its sacrifice which is constantly renewed with the blood of a ram either monthly seasonal or yearly. It is said to bring less wealth and success to an individual compared to the ite awele which requires human parts alongside some herbs and roots for the ritual to be effective. The ite awele involves the blood of a human being used for its renewal either monthly, seasonal or yearly as otherwise instructed by the witch doctor (Fanusionwu, 2022). This vice is spreading speedily in some parts of Igbo land, and people have spoken against the vice in various ways.

Okeke et al. (2023) worried by the fact that university undergraduates engage in social vices like Oke ite money-making rituals examine the believability of the efficacy claims of the Oke ite money ritual by Anambra youths using Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Undergraduates as the study population. The study employs the survey method and analysed the data got through the prism of the Technological Determinism theory. The research found that most Anambra youths are actually aware of the Facebook videos of the potency claims of the Oke ite money ritual by spiritualists and native doctors and believe in its efficacy; some youths believe that such rituals can only be effective for a short period of time for those who did the rituals; and that the after effect can be devastating. The study among other things recommend that relevant stakeholders in the society should engage in awareness creation on Facebook of the dangers of engaging in Oke ite rituals, and parents should also question their children's on the source of sudden wealth, this way, the Oke ite practice can be reduced or totally eradicated in Anambra state.

Similar to the above study, Nwafor et al. (2023) based on the view that social media platforms are potent media through which netizens engage in interactions, investigate the psychological consequences of social media in communicating Oke ite practices on youths in Anambra state. The study points out that witch doctors both male and female use social media platforms to advertise Oke ite as an effective source of quick wealth. The study sourced data through in-depth interview from selected youth leaders in nine towns in Awka South local government area, the Technological Determinism and Theory of Reasoned Action was adopted in the study to answer the research questions, and to analysis the data. The analysis of data shows that Facebook ranked the highest followed by WhatsApp in awareness creation and dissemination of information about Oke ite. However, according to the respondents, social media exposure did not cajole them into practicing Oke ite. The study recommends that the Nigeria government should enact laws that will help censor what is posted on the social media platforms by citizen journalists.

Ezeador and Okolisah (2024) aver that Oke ite in Igbo land is a charm prepared in a mud pot with different animal parts like monkeys, dogs, and elephants; sometimes, human parts like breast, penis, and other vital human organs are used. In addition to these, varieties of herbs, roots, strong alcohol and other materials are used to make the charm effective. Ezeador and Okolisah (2024) state that Oke ite is prepared by witch doctors who believe they have the power to give wealth to people desirous of quick-wealth. Ezeador and Okolisah (2024) quickly point out that youths involved in Oke ite believe that trading and doing other jobs is a waste of time. They warn that Oke ite practice is uncultured and evil, and totally against odinala Igbo (Igbo tradition).

The studies above show that Oke ite practice actually exists in Igbo land. The studies have sourced different data to show that Oke ite exists. What the studies did not cover is using song as data to expose the themes encoded in songs to support the cry that Oke ite is anti-capital human development. This study furthers knowledge in this area through unravelling the themes that show Oke ite as anti-capital human development in the lyrics of the song “Ndi Oke ite akalia” by Chijioke Mbanefo.

Song as Didactic

The use of song is not just limited to entertainment. Balkin (1999), Lowe (2002), and Lee (2009) contend that there is indeed value in using music to enrich existing literacy programs, and incorporate song outside the formal music education context. Sacks (2007) echoes Balkin (1999), Lowe (2002), and Lee (2009) stand by suggesting that music has the ability to stimulate the brain in ways that nothing else can, leading to higher level thinking. Turpin & Stebbins (2010) aver that “songs often convey more meanings, significances and resonances than an ordinary speech utterance” (p. 2). Stressing the value of song, Stadler (2021, p. 1) points out that “Songs mirror each generations’ wishes, desires, values, hopes, humor, and stories and rest on unfathomable traditions of our cultural and human history”.

Patel (2008) states “The central role of music and language in human existence and the fact that both involve complex and meaningful sound sequences naturally invite comparison between the two domains” (p. 3). Patel (2008) view perhaps necessitates Trinick (2012) study which relates to music and language. Trinick (2012) examines whether a determined application of songs in learning can present new dimension to the current language programmes, and also offer compelling and engaging atmosphere for learning. Through a scrutiny of a wide range of literature, key principles relating to: sociocultural, cognitive, affective, and linguistic importance and concerns of song for language learning are identified. The study suggests that if song is integrated in classroom environment, language-learning opportunities may be maximised, and that each song should encode language features that draws attention to the branches of language study.

Stadler (2021) argues that formal song transmission needs to make explicit the norms and rules that govern the relationships between the song, teacher and pupils. Stadler notes that songs are also rule-governed in terms of a grammar, and that children’s song are the most elementary musico-linguistic genre. He further addresses teachers’ role in song diffusion and provides insights into how songs are studied empirically. He posits that unearthing the song, teacher and pupils’ relationship enhances the scientificity of research in the field.

Palmer & Booth (2024) concerned with the declining rate of students in science education, sought to know if music and song could be used as a tool of engagement for science students. They conducted a search of composite education databases for pertinent scholarly articles published between 1993 to 2021. The twenty-six articles that served as data for the study revealed four themes: broad use of music and songs as pedagogical tools, limited long-term studies, evidence of learning progress, and the common goal of commitment. The outcome of the study shows enthralling proof for the unparalleled role of music and song in nurturing students’ engagement in basic school science lessons. The study emphasises the incorporation of music and song into science classes enriches

the educational environment and also adds to an arts-infused learning that will enhance students' performance across a wide array of curriculum fields.

Parada-Cabaleiro et al. (2024) propelled by the dearth of research in the relationships between lyrical content, its temporal evolution over the last decades, and genre-specific variations, investigate the dynamics of English lyrics of Western, popular music over five decades and five genres, using a wide set of lyrics descriptors. The study found that pop music lyrics have become easier to understand over time, and also that the structural complexity has decreased. They also confirm previous studies finding that the emotion described by lyrics has become more negative and more personal over the last five decades.

In spite of the efforts by previous studies to examine the purposes, evolution, linguistic composition of songs, there still exists a gap in research in terms of how diabolic practices by youths are encoded in song in the 21st century. This study unearths how diabolical means of making money in the 21st century is anti-capital human development.

Methodology

The study is qualitative and adopts the thematic analysis technique of data analysis. The thematic analysis is driven by the research questions. The themes are identified whenever the artiste comes up with a new issue. According to Turpin & Stebbins (2010, p. 8) "Songs are often much more difficult to translate than speech". The song analysed in this study is interspersed with different sounds at intervals, only the words were transcribed into the written form before the analysis, this made it easier to familiarise with the themes in the song. The song is interspersed with sounds to enhance rhythm; the sounds are not part of the transcript. The criteria for each code is interesting patterns, the data was coded manually. All the excerpts were coded, and similar patterns were put under the same theme before the analysis; the coded excerpts were then sorted into potential themes, different codes combine to form a theme. Through this method, main themes and sub-themes were identified and named. The excerpts were purposively chosen.

Any item of data that are useful in addressing the research question(s) are coded. Through repeated iterations of coding and further familiarisation, the researcher can identify which codes are conducive to interpreting themes and which can be discarded. The inductive approach of thematic analysis adopted in this study focuses on the latent level of analysis where the analysis goes beyond just meaning, but proceed to examining the underlying ideologies, norms and concepts in the data. The lyrics were divided into excerpts, in all 84 excerpts emerged, and ten themes emerged. Due to the length of this article, two excerpts were randomly chosen to represent each category of theme. In all, twenty-two excerpts were used in the analysis section. In the current study, the Igbo word "Dibia" in the data analysed is translated in English as "Ritualists". Dibia is a shortened form of dibiala (master of things of the land, community, cosmological forces, fortune, misfortune, illness, and remedy)" (Uzochukwu, n.d., para. 2). Explaining who the dibia is, Ogbukagu (2008, p. 485) believes that the Dibia is the traditional medicine person (man or woman) charged with prescribing and/or executing sacrifices (aja) and also performing all sorts of esoteric and diabolical duties. Dibia are herbalists and healers of diseases.

Ihentuge (2023, p. 51) categories Dibias in Igbo land into six: Dibia ngborogwu na mkpa akwukwo/Ahihia (herbalist)-specialists in discovering, and treating all manners of sickness using roots, herbs, tree trunks and other natural materials. Ezemmuo (Chief priests of oracles)-serve as mediators between the people and the oracles, their major role is to see to the maintenance of the moral order of the society. Dibia Mgba Afa/Dibia Afa, these are seers, and soothsayers; they make all kinds of spiritual inquiries regarding issues, and provide solutions to issues. Dibia nha mmiri are rain makers or rain doctors. Dibia owu Mmiri are mediators between the water goddesses and man; they are specialist dibias who help cure people with mental issues, they also work to help people who have issues relating to water spirits. The last is Dibia Ogba Okpukpu/Dibia Okpukpu (bone doctors)-these are the orthopaedic doctors; they specialize in the treatment of bone related issues. From the categories of Dibia in Igbo land by Ihentuge (2023), the Dibia in the song analysed in this study does not fall into any of the categories, so the "Dibia" in the song is translated into English as "Ritualist".

Theory

The study adopts Clarke and Braun's (2013) six steps in thematic analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006) assert that Thematic Analysis is a process adopted for identifying and analysing patterns of meaning in a dataset. Put in another way, Thematic analysis is a qualitative method of analysis deployed by researchers to categorise and analyse recurring themes in a data, this process is driven by the aim and research questions guiding the study. The dictates of thematic analysis help in conscious studying of the identified dataset so many times in order to excerpt the meaning of the various themes encoded in the dataset.

The chronological process of Clarke and Braun's (2013) step in Thematic analysis is: the researcher getting familiar with the dataset chosen for a study, generation of codes to be assigned to similar pattern in the data, next is, combining the codes into themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) aver that “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to a research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (p.10). At this stage, research questions can emerge. The next step is the researcher reviewing the theme, and determining the importance of the themes. The final step is the reporting of the findings. These steps as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013) guides the analysis of the data in this study. As quickly pointed out by (Braun and Clarke 2020) though the six steps are arranged in a sequential order, the researcher should know that the analysis does not follow a straight course of moving linearly through the steps, but rather requires the researcher moving back and forth as the data dictates. The thematic analysis helps to unearth themes that are related to the subject investigated.

Of the two approaches to thematic analysis: inductive and deductive, this study adopts the inductive approach which involves generating themes from the data without biases; you go into the analysis without having idea of what codes and themes will come out. According to Patton (1990), an inductive approach shows that the identified themes are closely connected to the data.

The type of thematic approach adopted in this study is the Reflexive thematic analysis; it takes the inductive approach which allows the codes and themes to emerge from the data after studying the data so many times. According to Braun and Clarke (2019), Reflexive thematic analysis is about a researcher's thoughtful and deep engagement with a data set and the researcher's insightful engagement with the investigative process (p, 594). This analytical process leads to a highlight of the significant patterns of meanings encoded in the data. The flexibility of this approach allows for the changing, removing, and addition of codes as the analysis progresses. After going through the lyrics of the song, the lyrics that exemplify each theme was noted, on the whole the song was divided into one hundred excerpts, and ten themes were identified. Due to time constraint, and the page limit of journal articles, two excerpts were chosen for each theme. The themes are: Prevalence of Oke ite in Igbo land/cause for concern (POIL), Laziness by some youths (LSY), Evil practices by Ritualists (EPR), Hard work by the Igbos (HWI), Harnessing one's inner potential (HOIP), Parental/Guardian negligence (PGN), Chastisement of Oke ite patronisers (COP), Chastisement of Ritualists (CR), Advice to Ritualists (AD), and Advice to Igbos in General (AIG).

Analysis

Prevalence of Oke ite in Igbo land/cause for concern

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 1	Ndị na-agwọ Oke ite akalĩa n'enu ụwa doonu ogini na-emezi oo?	So many people are involved in Oke ite, please what is happening?
Excerpt 2	Ụwa anyị nọ n'ime ya taata nụ Oke ite ka a na-ekwu; onye ukwu na-agwọ, onye nta na-agwọ, ndị Oke ite akalĩa ooo!	The world we are in now, Oke ite is prevalent, everybody is into it, Oke ite practitioners are becoming rampant ooo!

The artiste introduced the song in excerpt 1 and sets the tone for the song. In this excerpt, the artiste out rightly calls the attention of the general public to the prevalence of Oke ite in the larger society; and goes on in excerpt 2 to warns that Oke ite is a cause for concern, since all are involved in it both big and small.

The Evil Practices by Ritualists

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 3	E jee be dibia e weta isi mmadu doonu ufodu ebere ara nwaanyi bia a gworo fa Oke ite doonu fa eburu dobe n'unu were na-acho ego oyibo nu.	Some will visit ritualists with human head, some will cut women breast for the ritualist to prepare Oke ite, after the preparation they will keep it in their houses for money yield.
Excerpt 4	O buru ndi mmadu ka i na-agworu, i hugo na o bu wayoooo!	Ritualists you claim that you prepare charms for others, why don't you prepare for yourself, you see it id fake!

Excerpts 3 and 4 exemplify the evil practices by some ritualists, Oke ite practitioners visit the ritualists with human parts, some with human heads, some with women's breasts to be used in preparing Oke ite for them. The linguistic

items “human heads” and women’s “breasts” foreground that the ritualists have no value for human life. Human parts are used as exchange commodities for perceived money. Excerpt 4 uses the Pidgin item “wayoooo” meaning “deception” to shame the ritualists about the scam and sham of their practice.

Laziness by some Igbo youths

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 5	Mmadu one na-agbazi boyi? Mmadu one na-amuzi afia o!	How many people go for apprenticeship? How many people are learning trades again?
Excerpt 6	Oru aka e ji wee mali ndi Igbo gboo, mmadu one na-amuzi?	Igbos are known for crafts; how many people are into it?

Excerpts 5 and 6 show the laziness that characterise the youths of nowadays. The artiste uses the adverb “again” to imply and link the listeners to the knowledge that Igbos used to learn trades, and further explains in excerpt 4, that Igbos used to be known for crafts, and now nobody is interested in learning crafts anymore. Igbos are not all lazy, the artiste shows hard work by the Igbos through the excerpts that follow:

Hard work by the Igbos

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 7	Igbo na-agbasi mbọ ike ooooo.	Igbos are hardworking ooooo
Excerpt 8	Ife e jiri mali ndi Igbo n'elu uwa bu igba mbọ nū; ufodu na-azu afia, ufodu na-arū orū oyibo, ufodu na-arū orū ugbo	Igbos are known for hard work in life, some are known for trading, some are into white collar jobs, some are farmers.

The artiste reminds his audience that Igbos are hardworking in excerpt 7. In excerpt 8, he further elaborates the theme of hard work by the Igbos through listing some of the trades that Igbos are known with like trading, white collar job, and farming. Related to the theme of hard work by the Igbos, is the theme of harnessing one’s inner potentials the excerpts below show this:

Harnessing one’s inner potential

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 9	O nweezi onye cholu igba mbọ n'elu uwa doonu onye obuna na-agwo ogwu e ji akpata ego.	Nobody wants to partake in hard work, everybody is involved in money-making ritual. (AIG)
Excerpt 10	Jee choq akaraka i ka i were mara ife i na-emenu.	Go and look for a vocation, so that you know what to do.

The artiste laments the indolent attitude of some people in excerpt 9, people are just interested in money-making ritual. The artiste in excerpt 10 advises Oke ite practitioners to go and look for a vocation, and engage in meaningful enterprise through using their potentials. Apart from the activities of Oke ite practitioners, and ritualists, the artiste has something to say about parents as shown in the excerpts below:

Parental/Guardian Negligence

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 11	Makana ndi nne na ndi nna taata n'ala Igbo na fa enweezi onu okwu n'ebe nwa fa no.	Because parents today in Igbo land do not have much say in the activities of their children.
Excerpt 12	Ife fa nozi n'elu uwa nke a taata; o chaa achaa gbuta, o chaha acha gbuta. Ebe nwa si bute ego na ego bu ego.	What parents are into now, they don't care about the source of wealth of their children, money is money.

The artiste laments the negligent attitudes of mothers and fathers, according to the artiste parents no longer have a say in the activities of their children in excerpt 11. In excerpt 12 the artiste uses an idiomatic expression to describe the careless attitude of parents, whatever be the source of money they don't care to know. The values of ndi Igbo is backgrounded, parents no longer ask questions about the source of wealth of their children.

Chastisement of Oke ite Patronisers

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 13	Dibja a na-agbara ọsọ mbọsị buru gboo ya ka onye ọbuna na-ejezi	Visit to ritualists that was a taboo in those days, is what everybody is patronising.
Excerpt 14	Ndị na-egbu mmadụ were gwọọ ogwu doonu e gbuo nwanne i ọ ga-asọ i?	Those killing for money rituals, if your sibling is killed will it please you?

In excerpt 13, the artiste reminds his listeners that patronage of ritualist was a taboo in the past, but now, everyone patronises ritualists. The artiste implicitly warns that Igbo's values are changing. In excerpt 14, the artiste asks a soul rousing question through asking Oke ite practitioners that kill for money-making, that will it please them if their siblings are killed also?

Chastisement of Oke ite Ritualists

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 15	Dibja na-edisiivu ndi mmadu ka m na-aju, dibja na-agwo otolo, ike nke i ọ di n'elu?	Ritualist that are deceiving people my question is for you. Ritualists curing dysentery, can you cure yourself?
Excerpt 16	I na-agworo ndi mmadu Oke ite, i na-ebunye ndi mmadu egoooo. O gini nari i igwo nke I ka I were bute ego?	You claim you are preparing Oke ite charm for people, so that they can get money, what stops you from preparing for yourself so that you can get money?

The artiste implicitly reminds the ritualists in excerpt 15 that their so called powers are limited, since they claim they make money for others, but cannot make money for themselves. The artiste says the ritualists are deceivers. In excerpt 16, the artiste further chastises ritualists through rhetorical questions asking why ritualists fail to make money for themselves but claim to do for others.

The artiste did not just highlight the problems and dangers of Oke ite, he proffers solution on how Oke ite can be eradicated in the following excerpts:

Advise to Ritualists

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 17	Ihe a ye-eme i ọ di yi mma mee ye onye ọzọ.	What constitute good for you, you should do to others.
Excerpt 18	Umụ okorobia ndi i na-anara akaraka fa, na-ana akaraka fa n'iyi doonu o. Ya ka m na-agwa i, ọ ruho i na ọ ga-erutu umu i.	The young men you are destroying their destiny, if it does not get to you, it will get to your children

The artiste in excerpt 17 advises ritualists that what is good for them, they should do unto others. The advice is reiterated in excerpt 18 that what goes around comes around that the ritualists' children will eventually be a partaker of the evil of their fathers.

Advise to Igbos in General

Excerpts	Igbo	English
Excerpt 19	Mana ife m na-emezi ka ndi mmadu malị bu na okuko a gwotalu n'ogwu, ọ na-esokwa ogwu ana.	What I am making everybody to know that ill-gotten wealth will easily vanish.
Excerpt 20	Umụ Igbo jee choonu akaoru ka m na-ekwu. Oke ite akalia ooooo!	Igbos, go and look for a vocation, that is what I am saying. Oke ite is too much!

The artiste uses idiomatic expression in excerpt 19 to advise the general public that money gotten through dubious means will also vanish through dubious means. In excerpt 20, the artiste advises Igbos in general, ritualists, Oke ite practitioners, and all others inclusive to go and look for meaningful trades to engage in.

Discussion

The themes in the song that show Oke ite as anti-human capital development are multifarious addressing all involved in Oke ite practice in Igbo land. Beginning from a thematic generalization of people involved in Oke ite practices to specifics like ritualists, parents, and youths, the artiste is able to highlight and foreground the evil practices that hinder human capital development—one of the Sustainable development goals of the 21st century. The themes of laziness by some youths, evil practices by ritualists, parental/guardian negligence show how human capital development are stalled in the society. The song serves as a social commentary, highlighting the dangers and deception associated with “Oke ite” practice, and urging listeners to be sensitive and watchful in the face of anti-human capital development practices like Oke ite.

The artiste is able to encode in the lyrics of the song the potential usefulness of youths in Igbo through themes like “Harnessing one’s inner potential”, drawing the attention of the youths to their inner potential which they can harness to make genuine wealth. The theme of “Hard work by the Igbos” points to the fact that the hard work which the Igbos are known for should not be jettisoned by the youth for the quest of ill-gotten wealth. The theme of “Advice to Igbos in General”, shows that in spite of the vice of the prevalence of Oke ite in Igbo land, the artiste encourages all Igbos including the youths through the theme of hard work. The artiste implicitly asks soul-rousing rhetorical questions to youths involved in Oke ite, invariably pointing out the dire consequences of Oke ite practices. The artiste uses the rhetorical device—palilogia which involves immediate and successive repetition of a word or phrase to create emotional feeling in order to foreground the theme. The artiste’s constant repetition of the clause “Ndi na-agwo Oke ite akalia oo” (Oke ite practitioners are becoming rampant) in the song, not only unifies the melody of the song, but also creates an urgency for the total eradication of Oke ite practice in Igbo land. The repeated clause helps reinstate the overall theme of the prevalence of Oke ite practice in Igbo land.

The classes of people mentioned in the song are the ritualists who claim to have powers to give people money through Oke ite practice, negligent parents, and Oke ite practitioners (both young and old). The artiste chastises the ritualists, negligent parents, and Oke ite practitioners through asking them hypothetical questions that may likely make them stop Oke ite practice. Hypothetical questions in the song like: ewere ara nne i o ga-aso i? (if your mother’s breast is used, will it please you?), Ndi na-egbu mmadu were gwoo ogwu doonu e gbuo nwanne i o ga-aso i? (Those killing for money rituals, if your sibling is killed will it please you?). Negligent parents were also chastised through idiomatic expression like “o chaa achaa gbute, o chaha acha gbute”, meaning the source of wealth does not matter.

Conclusion

This study concludes that songs are potent tools through which societal vices are brought to the fore. The Song analysed in this study serves as a social commentary, highlighting the dangers and deception associated with ‘Oke ite’ practice, and urging listeners to be discerning and cautious in the face of such fraudulent practices. The artiste addresses important societal issues while entertaining and educating his audience.

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