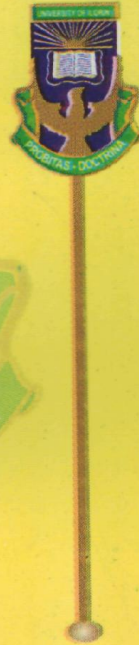


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THE PERFORMER

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Performance Practice and Compositional Devices in Dadakuada Music

By

Taiye Shola Adeola*

Introduction

Dadakuada is a musical genre that has gone through various phases of developments as a result of factors such as cultural cross-fertilization, religious affiliation and technological advancement. It is the most popular non-religious musical genre in Ilorin and is believed to have originated and introduced to Ilorin from neighboring villages. It has been in existence since about 1830 as a traditional musical genre for entertainment among the people of Ilorin and has come to be accepted as their own music particularly because of the language used in the performance known as "Yoruba Ilorin". We have discussed the historical development of *Dadakuada* and the subject of its origin in a previous work. (See Adeola, 1999:120-135).

Composition and performance runs simultaneously in African musical practice and *Dadakuada* is not an exception. Certain factors influence how compositions are generated and how performances are executed. These factors generate ideas that develop into methods, techniques or tools for composition and performance practices. The concern of this paper is therefore, to examine the composition and performance of *Dadakuada* music with a view to discussing the processes and devices employed in the performance and composition. Scholars such as Na'Allah (1992), Vidal (2003), Akpabot (1981), Idamoyibo (2003) and so on have also written about the aesthetics of *Dadakuada* music.

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Performance Practice of Dadakuada Music

Nketia (1974:35-36) identifies two types of performing groups in Africa. These are spontaneous or organized groups that are autonomous, and those that are attached to traditional establishment and are made up of musical specialists. While the spontaneous music groups are formed by people who are not in associative relationship but come together of their own accord to perform music prescribed for a specific occasion, the organized groups are performing groups that are more or less permanent units within the social organization. According to him, "Roles in the organized groups are distributed among members in some kind of associative relationship, when they perform in public, only those who are members can participate fully in their activities. The rest of the community are attracted to them, but they come as spectators and audiences with limited opportunities for active participation"

The *Dadakuada* group falls within the organized groups. As Olajubu (1981:71-85) rightly observes, "Most performance of Yoruba poetry are done by group of artists working together as a team. The soloists, chorus singers, and drummers forming an orchestra work together to produce a single work of verbal art, each person contributing his talent in the building of the poem, even the drummers with their talking drums, contributes ideas towards the realization of the oral poem".

The performance of *Dadakuada* music is determined by the occasion at which performance takes place. The venue and time of performance also vary. The venue can be anywhere chosen by those who employ the services of the musician. It can be in an open space, field, a courtyard or even a hall that is spacious enough. In most cases, the performance is usually held in the house of the celebrant. The performance can be at any time of the day. This is usually determined by the type of function, for example, child naming ceremony is done usually in the afternoon while celebrations for wedding ceremony is done in the evening.

Pre-Performance of Dadakuada Music

The pre-performance is the stage of conception and preparation for the actual performance. Notice of invitation to

perform at an occasion is usually given to the musicians long before the performance date. Usually, the group secretary or the booking officer accepts all invitations on behalf of the Band and bring it to the notice of the Band leader and Band at large. The Band leader does not accept any invitation without first consulting with the booking officer. Most of the musicians interviewed claimed that they do not have any rehearsal before their performances. Some however, claim that they have occasional rehearsal especially when they want to go and perform for a very important personality for whom a special composition needs to be prepared. In such cases, they claim that musical instruments are not necessarily brought out, what they do is more of learning new lyrics and tunes for the special composition. At this point, they attempt to poetise their oral art through brief rehearsals.

One of the musicians, Jaigbade Alao (the main informant) whose performance we witnessed a number of times say that when preparing for a performance, he could study the invitation card sent to them. The name of the personalities will be studied and any necessary information about such personalities that will enhance their performance will be sought. Information such as the home town, family name, profession and friends of such personalities will be investigated if not already known. In this case, the preparation done is to get necessary information about people who are likely to grace the occasion.

Another preparation which all musicians interviewed talked about is the spiritual preparation. In the past, the musicians who practiced traditional religions called on their deities. Some went to native doctors to prepare traditional medicines for them to enhance their performance. Today, since the people of Ilorin have turned away from traditional religions to Islam, they usually go to the Alfas or bring the Alfas under their roof to make special prayers for them so that they would make good money at the performance. They also pray for protection and understanding among the Band members. Usually, such prayers are done very early in the morning on the day of performance or late in the night preceding it. One would wonder however the hypocrisy of the Alfas in opposing the musicians on the grand of Islamic religion and their involvement in the special prayers

they make for the musicians.

The hostile attitude by the Islamic adherents is born out of a number of reasons. One of such reason is the historical link between *Dadakuada* and the *Egungun* cult. This is seriously frowned at by the Muslims because as much as possible they do not want anything to do with what is not Islamic. Another ground of opposition by the Alfas is in the song text in which *Dadakuada* artists sing about gods or recognize some power other than that of Allah. It is not uncommon that the artists at performance pay homage to witches or wizards or make reference to some of the Yoruba deities like "Ogun", "Oya", "Sanpana" and so on, for example Odolaiye (1993) in a performance shortly after paying homage to Allah at the beginning of a performance said the following:

	Translation
Ap'eran ma wa'gun	One who kills a goat and not vulture
Olo kiki orun	The famous people of the night
Ida lowo yin	I pay homage to you
Atidi muje eran	Suckers of blood from bottom
Iya mi orere ooo	Oh my dearest mother

This is unacceptable to Islamic worship because it conflicts with the belief that it is only Allah that deserves to be praised and worshiped. It is also a common thing for the *Dadakuada* artists while praising individuals to compare them with some deities in an attempt to bring out the attributes of such individuals. The use of the qualities of deities to describe individual is also not acceptable to Islam.

A Quranic verse which warns the Muslim to avoid praise singers or poets because poets are described in the Quran as liars and exaggerators who must not be accommodated by serious minded people forms another basis for hostility. Quran, Sura 26 verses 224 to 226 has this to say about poets:

And the poets, it is those straying in evil who follow them,
See you not that they wonder distracted in every valley,
and that they say what they practice not.

These verses of the Quran is what many Alfa and Imams hold as weapon of attack on the *Dadakuada* artists and teach their people not to associate with them or even listen to their music. The use of

vulgar statements at performance by the musicians which portrays corruption and spiritual laxity is also not acceptable to the Muslim clerics.

On the day of the performance, the musicians will gather at the Band leader's house. The Band men will bring out the equipments to be loaded into their vehicle ready to move to the performance arena. Usually the Band Boys goes to the performance arena before the leader to set up the equipments. The Band leader does not usually show up at the venue of the performance until when the performance is about to start. He goes in his personal Car if he has one while the Band boys goes with the group's bus. If he does not have a personal car, the bus driver goes back to pick him when the stage is set for performance. If the performance is out of the Band's base and the leader does not have a personal car, he goes with the Bus in company of the group but does not stay at the performance venue until he is ready to go on stage.

At the performance arena, the Band boys get the instruments set making the people in that area aware that a Band will be performing later in the day. The secretary of the Band moves round with a book to collect names of individuals and groups present at the occasion whose names will later be used in praise singing. Any individual who also wishes to be praised will get his or her name across to the secretary who usually stands by the Band leader's right hand during performance to call the names to the Band leader in order of importance. It should be noted that the pre-performance activities is greatly determined by the occasion and the people involved.

On a particular occasion in which Alhaji Jaigbade Alao is to perform, we went to his house about two hours before the performance which was to take place at a compound not too far from the musician's own. It was a wedding ceremony and the bride was a daughter of a fellow musician. The performance was to start by 4:00p.m. We got to the musician's (our informant) house by 2:00p.m where we met him praying. This, he later told us was just a coincidence that it was not a special prayer for the performance which was to start about two hours later. However, he told us that he had previously employed the service of some Alfas to offer special

prayers the previous night. At about 3:00p.m, all the Band men had left for the performance venue to set up the equipment. The Band leader later went to join them in his personal car.

Because it was a fellow musician's daughter that was getting married, many musicians were at this particular performance. As a matter of fact, they were all *Dadakuada* artists numbering about twenty-five. They were already seated on mats in front of the celebrant's house, waiting for the musician of the day to come and start their performance. Jaigbade later came to join them on the mat. He sat with them for a while until he was ready to start the day's performance.

Dadakuada musicians always dressed in uniform attire. Usually *Buba*, *Sokoto*, and *Aghada* or just *Buba* and *Sokoto*. The Band leader usually wears a different clothe from that of the Band boys/Men. They are usually arranged in two groups based on the functions they perform in the Band. This includes the chorus group and the group of drummers. In the chorus group, the Band leader and his assistant whose number ranges between three and six are at their back. Also by the Band leader in front to his right is the Band's secretary. The chorus group also has a sub group leader known as "*Omomose*" which literally means the child knows the business. "*Omomose*" is believed to know the appropriate chorus to be sung to every verse rendered by the leader. He is thus regarded as the head and best of the chorus group. The drummers are placed to the left side of the stage and they sit in a semi circular form, each sitting by a microphone used to amplify their instruments.

The audience forms a circle round the performance Arena putting the Band at one extreme of the circle. At the centre of the stage which is usually a plain ground or on rear occasions a raised platform is a table upon which the amplifier and sound mixer are placed. The speakers, depending on their numbers, are usually placed at the four corners of what constitutes a stage usually at the extreme thereby putting the performers between them. The speakers in front of the stage at the extremes form a space which is used as the dance floor for those who come forward to give gifts to the musicians when they are praised.

Actual Performance of Dadakuada Music

The actual performance is in three stages, these are the early stage, middle stage, and the final stage. This could otherwise be categorized as the introduction; Body and ending. The early stage is characterized by rather slow tempo music. It is at this stage that the Band leader pays homage to God and the people around him. He also announces the presence of the Band. There is usually no praise singing at this stage except for God and the Band leader. However, recognition of the celebrant and dignitaries is done. This stage also features satirical statement and general comments about facts of life. Performance at this stage may be done sitting down initially and there is often no dancing by the audience. Another feature of the early part of performance is regular stoppage of performance. The leader announces to the people around the presence and readiness of the band for the day's performance. Thus, the crowd begins to gather around. There is no rigid order of performance. The performance is usually determined by the situation in the performance arena. Usually, most musicians start by paying homage to God and to their masters by reciting some Quranic verses to call God into the occasion. They then go on to sing about themselves, usually the lead singer sings about himself, individuals in the band like the lead drummer and the band members at large.

There are some occasions however, when the performance does not start with homage but with the praise of the band or the band leader. Jaigbade Alao in one of his performance started this way;

Translation

Olola lo bi wa	It is the rich that gave birth to us
Olola lo bi wa	It is the rich that gave birth to us
Ai somo olosi enia	We are not children of a pauper
Olola lo bi wa	It is the rich that gave birth to us.

(Live performance of Alhaji Jaigbade Alao at Oloje area, Ilorin on the 12th August, 1993)

At another occasion, Alhaji Jaigbade started the day's performance with the recitation of quranic verses this way:

Translation:

Bisimilahi al-Rahmani	In the name of God the
Rahimi	beneficent, the merciful
Makama aliya	In high position

Warafa'a Nau	We exalt him
Makama aliya	In high position

(Live performance of Alhaji Jaigbade Alao at Isale koko area, Ilorin on the 3rd September, 1993)

The opening performance of *Dadakuada* thus varies between paying homage to God, ancestors, great musicians and the announcement of self or prayers for success in the day's business.

The middle stage in *Dadakuada* performance is characterized mainly by praise singing. It is at the point that much dancing is done. The tempo at this point becomes faster than it was at the beginning of performance. This stage also features a lot of climax caused by excitement in which the band leader can raise a song that calls for a bit of vigorous beating and dancing usually when people are on the dance floor. At this point of the performance also, the band is bestowed with various gifts especially money. Other items like clothes can also be given. Individuals who wish to be praised specially do make their request through the *Boto*. The *Boto* is a member of the group who is very mobile. He engages himself in bringing commique into *Dadakuada* performance through actions and gestures. He is also a very good dancer and he is allowed to dance freely all through the performance. General comments on moral issues or things happening in the performance arena also feature at this middle stage of performance. The band leader can sing educational songs or comment on political issues. Jestings is also a main feature of this stage. All through the performance the "*Janasi*" passes funny comments based on the songs being rendered. This brings about constant humor to the performance.

The middle stage of the performance is also a time of display of virtuosity on the part of the band leader as a singer and a dancer and also on the part of the drummers especially the lead drummer. It is also usually a time to display the dancing ability of the "*Boto*" and at times the chorus group. One could say that the middle stage of *Dadakuada* performance is basically devoted to praise singing and it is the body or thrust of the whole performance.

The final stage of the actual performance is usually the rounding up of the day's performance. If it is an all night performance, this final stage usually comes up at about 3:00 a.m. By this time,

people must have finished dancing and will just be seated listening to the band performing. If it is a performance that takes place during the day, the band leader decides when it should come up, but it is usually between thirty minutes or an hour to the end of the whole performance. At this point the band leader switches over to what they call "Wassi" in which he begins to sing on moral issues, especially doing good, not sleeping with other peoples wives and so on. He also makes satirical statements more than he did at the early and middle stages of the performance. It is also at this final stage that the band leader thanks everyone who has given him one gift or the other. The thanksgiving is usually not restricted only to that performance experience but also to previous performances.

Songs of thanksgiving and adoration are also rendered to God and to ask for his protection as they journey back home. The band leader can also sing the praises of his band members calling them one by one and the role they played in the day's performance. He thanks them for a job well done.

Towards the end of everything, the audience now moves to the dance floor for the final dance. This dance is usually a general dance and it is always the climax of the whole performance. Farewell songs are sung at this point and people dance more vigorously.

Post-Performance

As soon as the performance is over, if it is a performance that is done during the day, the band settles down to eat the food that the celebrant has prepared for them. If it is an all night party, the band members usually settle for their drinks usually beer which must have been kept for them for that purpose. This is always a time of relaxation for the band and a time of much talking and joking. The band leader is also not left out; they talk about things that happened in the course of performance. While the band members eat their food, people come around to talk to them especially with the band leader who must have been surrounded by people who are not necessary beggars but want some gifts from the musicians.

Another event after the performance is the dismantling of the gadgets to be loaded in the vehicle that will take them back home. While this is done, the man in charge of the money will be busy

counting the money that was realized during the performance. He takes records of it and informs the band leader about it.

All other activities take place later when they get back to the band leader's house. Alhaji Jaigbade said that the first thing he does when he gets home is to eat the food that his wife will immediately set before him on arrival. He said the food must have been prepared in anticipation of his arrival. One major event at the band leader's house is the off loading of the equipment and the sharing of the money. Although the musician may have other source of income, they depend on the money they make at performance for their living. Hence, it is a practice to share money at the end of each performance. How the money realised at performance is shared varies from one group to the other. In the case of Alhaji Jaigbade Alao, he said a percentage of the money is put in the band's account depending on the whole amount. The remaining is then shared into two. One part is given to him as the band leader for the chorus group and the other part is for the drummers. According to him, it is he (Jaigbade) that gives each drummer his own share of the money.

In the case of Alhaji Saka Kolobo, the division of money is done solely by him, the band leader. He decides what ever amount will be kept in the band's pause for the maintenance of the equipment and their bus and what should be the share of each member of the band.

There is usually no room for re-appraising the last performance in preparation for subsequent ones since there is usually no rehearsal except on very special occasions.

Instrumentation in Dadakuada

Dadakuada is a vocal music with instrumental accompaniments. The musical instruments used in *Dadakuada* have changed over the period of times in its development. As the musical type develops, so does the instruments used in it. Essentially, the Yoruba *Gangan* drum marked the inception of *Dadakuada*. It was the introduction the drum to an already existing performance that gave birth to *Dadakuada*. Two drums were used and more were added to them later (Adeola, 1999: 124).

Dadakuada bands in the present day performance have basic

musical instruments. They are *Gangan*, *Omele*, and *Akuba*. It must be said that the number of such instruments depends on how large the group is and also the presence of some of the instruments in the band's collection also vary depending on the choice of the band. People like Jaigbade claimed to have used *Agogo* and *Sekere* in the past but they have stopped their usage. A standard band which is neither too large nor small in size has the aforementioned musical instruments as follows: six *Gangan* drums, out of which one serves as the *Iyalu*, two *Omele*, one serves as *Aropo* which they say brings all other instruments together; one is used as "*Keremu*". This drum is usually tied tight and improvises most of the time especially switching around to embellish the dance steps of people on the dance floor. There is usually one or two *Akuba* drums in a band's collection. The *Akuba* is essentially used as an accompaniment to other drums often time; it keeps the time line.

In a fairly large band, the numbers of *gangan* drums are as much as ten. In this case, some of the drums are doubled on the same role. Instruments like *Agogo* and *Sekere* are also used as accompanying instruments. The most recent development is the use of Western drum set which is popularly known among the artists as "*Jass*". The drum set was introduced by Alhaji Jaigbade Alao in 1994. According to him this is to keep abreast with modern developments in the music scene.

The *Iyalu* is played by the lead drummer. He is a very important member of the band in that he dictates the tempo, movement and to some extent, the general mood of the performance both with the lead vocalist and the other drummers. At times he reminds the lead singer some tunes he has forgotten by playing such tune on his drum or calling the name or praise of someone in the audience on the drum for the band leader's attention.

Compositional and Performance Devices in Dadakuada Music

The music of *Dadakuada* like other African musical genre is generally spontaneously composed at performance. There is however the possibility of the *Dadakuada* artist to have a pre-composed song for a performance which is improved upon at performance. Although most of these artists actually claim that they do not rehearse before

going out for their performances, they usually have concepts, lyrics or other ideas for compositions which they articulate through their power of improvisation at the actual performance. It is therefore difficult to separate the composition of *Dadakuada* from its performance. However, whether the music is pre-composed or done at performance, the fact that compositions are made could not be neglected.

According to Akpabot (1986:101), Nigerian traditional music is essentially a process; but within that process there is a definite structure. Many devices employed in *Dadakuada* performance and composition are conscious or deliberate, while some are unconscious in the sense that they are not pre-planned but could still be identified as devices used in the performance and composition both in the text and in the music. Some of the devices identified are discussed as follows:

Dialogue

Dialogue is one of the techniques employed in *Dadakuada* performance and composition. This is a technique that has characterized *Dadakuada* since the close of its early stage to the middle stage. It is still a feature today but it is not used as much as the other techniques. This technique involves a dialogue or conversation between the leader and *Omomose* that is the chorus group which is either done through pure singing or at a song-speech level or even a combination of both. It could be in form of questions and answers or in a way that the chorus group picks up or completes some statements made by the leader or vice versa. There is a deliberate treatment of songs as though they were speech utterances. Nketia's (1974:177-178) submission about the use of rapid delivery of text, explosive sounds or special interjections, vocal grunts and even whisper in African music is also evident in *Dadakuada*.

Use of Instruments

Musical instruments are also used as a technique for *Dadakuada* performance and composition. This involves allotting special lines for musical instruments like the *Iyalu* to be played as part of a whole composition. (The *Iyalu* is the lead drum of the *dundun*

ensemble found among the Yoruba of the Western part of Nigeria).

It is common to use the drum to make a speech which serves as introduction to vocal rendition or as a bridge between it. This is to further heighten the meaning of the song being rendered or to be rendered. It is also a common thing for the leader to ask the singers to keep quiet and the musical instruments will play on as a form of interlude in a performance. In such a case the lead drummer who usually plays *Iyalu* does a lot of improvisation on his drum. The drummer could also make some speeches or proverbs relevant to what is being said by the singer for emphasis. For example, in a song by Alhaji Oba Alabi, the lead drummer starts the song by making the following statement on his drum;

Mo dupe olorun o pami lekun modupe

I'm grateful God has not caused me any sorrow I'm grateful.

It is after the statement by the lead drummer that the other drummers and singer join. The use of instruments as a technique is more obvious in the use of it to set the tempo and mood of a performance. The maintenance of the tempo and mood is also done through the use of musical instruments.

Another way in which musical instruments especially the talking drum is used as a compositional device is in the vocal reproduction of sound made by the talking drum. It is a common thing at a point in performance to see the drummer and lead singer in the art of reproducing verbally the sound of the drum, which is usually statements, proverbs or the praise names of individuals, families, towns, or clans.

Take a Break Technique

This is the type of technique employed when the leader of the group wants to pass on some messages that he wants people in the audience to get clearly. He stops the drummers by saying "o to e duro na" meaning (it is enough wait). At this point, the drummers rest their nerves, for they must have been playing for long. The singing is however, done by the lead singer and the chorus group. At times, it could be in form of a speech by the leader or in the form of singing by the leaders and the chorus by the group or a combination of both. The drummers and singers as the case may be do come in at a point which

is usually dictated by the leader singing.

Improvisation

This is a technique employed by the *Dadakuada* artists all through the performance. It is essentially a technique employed by the lead singer and the lead drummer. The nature of *Dadakuada* itself is such that makes room for a lot of improvisation, since it is not written and it is determined by the situations that surrounds the performance at any given time. There are usually short phrases which serve as chorus from the lead singer to take his bearing from. He does on the spot composition based on the text of the chorus which could be on any topic and even the melody of such a chorus.

Improvisation as a technique in *Dadakuada* performance and composition is used to lengthen a piece of music. It is also used as a means of showing the virtuosity of either the lead singer or the lead drummer. The lead singer rests when the drummer is improvising and the chorus is silent while the lead singer is improvising. They listen attentively and follow him so closely that they know what to sing in response.

Repetition

Repetition is also a technique inherent in *Dadakuada* performance and composition. It is usually achieved through melodic and rhythmic phrases. There are repetitions of some lyrics for the purpose of emphasis which the solo and chorus employed. Choruses are often repeated with or without variations. It is a common thing for a lead singer to sing phrases that are repeated after him by the chorus group without any variation.

Use of Speech

The use of speech in performance is an occasional occurrence in *Dadakuada*. This is usually employed to explain things to the audience or pass on some messages to the audience. This is done with the instrumental accompaniment.

Call and Response

The call and response technique is common to African music in general. In this case, the leader who is the soloist sings some lines which are responded to by the chorus. The solo part is usually characterized by improvisation in which case the leader develops the song and is responded to by the chorus group with or without variation depending on what the soloist does. The responses are usually short choruses after the long lines of text by the leader. It is also a common thing to have the leader and the chorus group.

Compositional and performance devices in *Dadakuada* music is highly contextual and depends so much on extra musical factors such as the type of occasion, the people involved, the mood of the performers, knowledge of history, knowledge of current affairs and what happens at the performance arena. Kirkegaard (2002:15) reinforcing this view submits that in Africa as in most other continents, it is hard to talk about music without taking into consideration how the dance is performed, how the lyrics relate to social, cultural or political events and happenings.

The devices identified in *Dadakuada* music could however, not be said to be exclusively peculiar to it because such devices have been found to be common to African traditional music composition and performance and echoes even in modern, art or popular music. Oyadiran (2003:17) citing Vidal asserts that stylistic diversities that characterize the works of Nigerian composers of art music is as a result of their creative expressions spiced with ethnic characteristics. The use of devices such as repetition, call and response, improvisation and so on which features even in art and popular music makes *Dadakuada* compositional and performance devices globally recognized and thus can be subjected to further musical scrutiny in terms of style and structure which we have attempted in other works (see Adeola, 1999:68-85).

Sources of Thematic Materials

The *Dadakuada* artist derives materials for his composition and performance from a number of sources. These include the performance itself in context and other sources outside the performance ranging from politics, current affairs, and religious belief of the artist to the traditional and cultural beliefs of the society.

It must be noted that the composition of *Dadakuada* is done spontaneously at performance. Hence, the inspiration is drawn for the composition essentially from what happens at performance venue and the musician's ability to think and create using some other sources highlighted above. The melody more or less accompanies the text because of the tonal nature of Yoruba language and the limited or restricted pitches used in *Dadakuada*. While some of these sources serve as thematic materials in themselves, some of them are only a basis for creation of themes.

The religious belief of a *Dadakuada* artist serves as a source for his thematic materials. This is seen usually at the opening of the performance while homage is being paid to God. It is a common thing to hear the recitation of Quranic verses at the performance. Idowu (1962:5) says that the religious belief of Yoruba permeate their lives so much that it expresses itself in multifarious ways. It forms the theme of songs, makes topics for minstrels, finds vehicles in myths folktales, proverbs and sayings and is the basis for their philosophy. Songs that have religious undertones are sung at performance. The teachings of Prophet Mohammed about diverse topics are passed on to people at performance. The need to serve God and be true to Him usually forms the theme of songs occasionally.

Current affairs form another source of the thematic material of *Dadakuada*. The musicians at times help to disseminate news about things going on in the town to the people. The musicians being part of the society are aware of occurrences in the society and often use them as materials for their composition. Comments on political issues both on the local and national level form the text of the musicians. The artists also comment on behalf of the society about what the people feels especially economic situation and the developments in the society such as building of new mosques, construction of new roads or other projects. These often form the theme of *Dadakuada* composition. For example Alhaji Oba Alabi in one of his performance used the building and opening of Ilorin Central Mosque as his theme:

Leader: Idera wole de o
O ba wa lale jo

Translation
comfort has come unto us
It has come as our guest

Masalasi titun	New Mosque
Boto: Gbogbo wa la serire mbe	all of us should be congratulated
Chorus: Idera wole de o	comfort has come unto us
O ba wa lale jo	It has come as our guest
E ku ori re Masalasi titun	Congratulations
Leader: Omode 'lorin; Alagba 'lorin	the young has a song; the elder has a song
Eku eri re ti mosalasi titun...	Congratulations for the new mosque

Comments on politics are also common. At a time in Ilorin when people who belonged to different camps in politics were against themselves during the first republic. It became very common to find artists singing in support of their own candidates. Some however, sang to plead that people should not fight themselves.

Personal affairs also form thematic materials for the artists. Artists do sing about their private lives especially their relationship with women and clashes that they have with other people within the community. The performance is usually an opportunity to abuse one's enemies, or expose the misdeed of people in the society. For example a song by Alhaji Oba Alabi goes thus:

	Translation
Eniti o feran wa	Whosoever does not like us
Jowo ma ya si wa rara	Please don't mind him at all
Bi mo ba ni o mo yasi	If I say you should not mind him
Olosi o pe rare ni nkan...	The pauper will call himself somebody

Oriki (Praise name) is another very important source of thematic material for *Dadakuada* composition. *Oriki*, including *Orile* are in fact the essence and most dominant element of all forms of Yoruba poetry. *Oriki* in itself is a material used for composition. It gives detailed information about individuals, lineages and clans. Vidal (1969:56-59) in one of his articles states that *oriki* is a descriptive song. "It describes the ancestors of a person their virtues qualities and special attributes as well as their weakness. It also describes the town from which the individual comes making reference to scenery and the

characteristics of the inhabitants. The *Oriki* of an individual blended with his personal attributes serves as ingredients or themes for composition to praise an individual". The gods are also praised at performance.

Olajubu (1981:79) says that "every Yoruba thing, idea or person that has a name has a set of *oriki* with its "set" text. Therefore, every person, city, community, place, object god, concept, animal and plant has its own *oriki*. Among human beings some names, for example, *Ajayi*, *Idowu*, *Ojo*, *Babalola* and *Adeshina* have their own specific *oriki* which are in turn applied to any other person that takes on any of such names. Thus *oriki* contains the greatest and largest store-house of the verbal materials for the composition of Yoruba oral poetry. Therefore, its mastery is very essential for the success and reputation of the artists. The quality of his chants/composition is judged partly by the length, range and "correctness" of *oriki* he employs. His prosperity as an artist also depend largely on it as Yoruba tradition enjoins an individual whose *oriki* including *orile* is being chanted to react promptly by giving the artists gifts of money and materials according to the strength of his purse, the quality of the rendering of such *oriki*, the personality of the individual and the importance of the occasion".

Owe (Proverbs) is another source of thematic materials for *Dadakuada* performance and composition. Proverbs are short wise sayings. Usually well known and handed down orally from one generation to the other and containing words of advice, warning or wisdom. Proverbs is frequently used in everyday discourse among Yoruba. It is believed that someone who knows a lot of them is wise. Proverbs are used as ingredients for compositions of satirical songs, praise singing or criticism and for emphasis in some cases. Songs of criticism or abuses are usually proverbial. The performance, for a musician, could be an avenue for him to abuse his enemy or say whatever he wishes to say using proverbs. Adegbite (2003:31) submits that proverbs play dual role in a musical performance. As a wise saying, it enriches the lyrical expression of a song and conveys specific messages.

History is another source that a *Dadakuada* artist relies on for his

thematic materials. Musicians who involve in praise singing are usually vast in the history of the land, especially history of various families including those that are not from their own immediate locality. It is believed that musicians are important in the education of the society about the history of the land which is often revealed during performance when individual or clans are being praised. It is therefore not surprising to hear musicians give the family history of a person by simply asking for his name and town. The historical facts are used as materials in praise singing especially when the home town of the individual involved is mentioned. The knowledge of the history surrounding the birth of people who bear particular names in Yoruba land do serve as material for composition.

Contextual Occurrence at performance is another source of thematic material. Occurrence at performance are usually adapted and used as basis for thematic materials for performance and composition. Many things happen during performance that usually give the musicians materials to draw from. The ability of a musician to adapt performance situation to enhance his performance is highly appreciated among the people. In the course of collecting the materials for this research, during one of the performances by Alhaji Jaigbade Alao, the celebrants did not show up on the dance floor. The musician therefore composed a song right there to ask them to come up on time.

Conclusion

Attempt has been made in the foregoing to discuss the performance practices and compositional devices in *Dadakuada* music. As with most African traditional musical genres performance and composition are connected. Performance generates compositional ideas just as compositions enhance performance. Factors that influence and determine the composition and performance arts of *Dadakuada* are interwoven, so a compositional device can as well be a performance technique. It is the conclusion of this paper that the structure of *Dadakuada* music in terms of text and music has direct bearing with the performance and compositional tools that the music employs.

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Oral Interview

1. Interviews conducted with Alhaji Jaigbade Alao who is the main informant for this research in Ilorin on several occasions between June and November, 1993.
2. Interview with other musicians in Ilorin as follows:
 - i. Alhaji Saka Kolobo, a dadakuada musician on the 10th July, 1993.
 - ii. Alhaji Oba Alabi on the 4th of July, 1993.
 - iii. Alhaji Amao Dogbajari, a dadakuada drummer on the 10th of July, 1993.

- iv. Alhaji Baba Miliki, a Fuji Musician in Ilorin on the 12th of July, 1993.
- v. Alhaji Aremu Ose, a Dadakuada musician in Ilorin on 12th July, 1993.
3. Interview with Abdulrasheed Na'Allah, a scholar on Oral poetry in Ilorin on the 10th of January, 1993.
4. Interview with Yemi Zubir, a broadcaster with the Radio Kwara, Ilorin on 15th January, 1993. He was for many years the producer of Dadakuada music on Radio kwara.

Discography

Recorded live performance of Alhaji O ba Alabi on the 4th July, 1993.
Recorded live performance of Alhaji Odolaye Aremu in Ilorin on the 7th August, 1993.
Recorded live performance of Alhaji Jaigbade Alao in Ilorin on the 12th August, 1993.
Alhaji Oba Alab,i OR GLP 127 Vol.3. Olatubosun record company. 1988.
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