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## Introduction

Dance has grown to be a very useful tool for entertainment. Its close relationship with music makes it easier to be practiced and equally gives it a wide range of acceptance within today's entertainment spectrum in Nigeria. Dance is one of the most practiced forms of entertainment in Nigeria today, despite its ability to inform and educate, its entertaining qualities has been what people tap from mostly. Emoruwa (2006, P. 101-2) opines that:

Dance as an Art communicates, interprets and expresses ideas, thoughts, and emotions of human mind through movements, gestures, symbols, colours and other non verbal theatrical elements. if well conceived, dance has the capacity for spiritual edification, intellectual engagement, social cohesion and moral enrichment via intense entertainment.

Because of the entertaining qualities of dance, the youth in Nigeria have found it irresistible. Its union with music makes it a more admirable and adventurous endeavour, this is reflected in the numerous dance and music artists that churn out new styles and trends in dance and music to the delight of the youth. These dance styles are however effectively projected through the human body. Encarta Dictionary (2002) explains more that:

The body can perform such actions as rotating, bending, stretching, Jumping and turning. By varying these physical actions and using different dynamics, human beings can devise an infinite number of body movements. Out of range of

movements that the body is capable of performing, every emphasizes certain features in its dance styles. With different dance styles ranging from Galala, Alanta, Yahoozee, Azonto, Oliver twist and others, the youth have found the practice of limitless as their joy is established when they listen and dance to respective music. Incidentally, they are constantly motivated by available technology that drives their desires. Olalusi (2012, P.8) reiterates this by expressing that:

In Nigeria today, the youth are very susceptible to the of Interesting music, lyrical vibes and exciting beats and as such it is hard to find a youth without an i-pod, a wireless earphone, blackberry phone or other technological instrument or equipment that enable them listen to music uninterrupted.

However, when the fun becomes dull as a result of dancing alone, they find it a duty to go clubbing. Although the trend has become a very popular feature of entertainment in some major cities across the nation, we find it troubling that such a city as Ilorin that is found on religious upright which serves as a cynosure to other states in terms of its religious doggedness, is somehow beginning to be bedeviled by such increase in intense social activity. It is our prerogative in this paper to discuss the activity within the religious perspectives in Ilorin.

## Literature review

Definitively, particularly within the social context in Nigeria, there seems to be little or no difference between dance and entertainment. While the latter is in broad perspective, a wide range of different social activities, the former present itself as arguably the most potent of it all. Just as entertainment, dance has become a viable brand, spreading its tentacles within the promotional and customer relation/advertising weapons of various multinational companies. It has also opened up a vista for the derivation of new styles as well as a means of income for some youth.

Today's entertainment circle will however not be complete

neglect night club from the crux of its practice. Its entertaining potentials have been ferociously upheld by the youth who unrelentingly and regularly visit these night clubs. Microsoft Encarta (2012) provides a description of a club house thus:

Club houses can be built in formal ware houses and cinema, underground buildings and custom built buildings and generally have thick insulated wall and few or no windows, so that the neighboring buildings will not be disturbed by the powerful beat of the dance music as well as the flashing light and crowd noise generated throughout the night. This style of construction also keeps light and noise from the street from entering the club.

From the foregoing, one can readily subsume that night clubs are already prepared ground for continuous dancing *"throughout the night"*, and also with other refreshing paraphernalia (wine of various kinds) which seems to refine the entertainment they clamour for. No wonder Erenberg (1981, 42) believes that *"entertainment is the main attraction at some types of night clubs"*, this is a vivid reflection of such atmosphere in Nigeria.

From our study, we discovered that the major objective is to dance and socialize, the dance done however stems from the contemporary African dance movements/creatively fashioned Nigerian movements as motivated by the music through the maneuvering techniques of the disk jockey (DJ). Interestingly, the dances are individual responses to the music that emanates. Begho (1997, P.180) corresponds our assertion thus:

Little wonder then that there are usually many different dances as there are Individuals on the dance floor. The movement of any two people forming

A couple need not rhyme. Each couple of the lot is as different from others

As there are individuals. An observer may, therefore, get the impression of

Movement *"confusion"* notwithstanding the interest

that any movement  
Or groups of movement may arouse.

Lamentably, the night club scene in Nigeria has become something else especially in Lagos. The constant endemic situations of poverty, joblessness, hunger and strife in the country has turned most young girls to night crawlers who unashamedly allow men explore their body for financial gain. In fact, in Lagos and some other bubbling cities around Nigeria, some night clubs are known to engage in some luciferic activities where the men and ladies are ostentatiously squalid all in the name of fun and money. Alarming, the young girls and ladies found in this night clubs are university undergraduates within these cities. Adurokiya, Agboola and Afonja (2008) in an article titled *"Night clubs where ladies dance naked"* comment that:

If your daughter is still in the primary or secondary school, you sleep under the same roof every night, (and of course you check on her in the middle of the night), the question may be redundant to you. But if yours is in a higher institution and you live miles apart, you may begin to worry where she is and what she does every night, especially on Saturday nights.

This perverse entertainment they derive pleasure in, turns them to nubile young ladies who allow inordinate crave for materialism, influence of western culture and the present economic downturn in the country to continuously drive them. While parents are confident that their wards are fulfilling their studentship in their respective schools, the children are bent on hurriedly making money to better their lives and conditions.

Although, the extreme nature and conditions of night clubs in Lagos and other vibrant cities across the nation is totally different from Ilorin experience, it is only natural to fear and seek for ways to obliterate such unforeseen challenges, particularly as youths from these different cities and towns are registered students of University of Ilorin, Kwara State University Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State Polytechnic, College of Education, Ilorin respectively. Certainly, club dancing in Ilorin pose a challenge on the religious life in Ilorin, and while it may be a futile effort to completely annihilate clubbing, judging from its already acknowledged presence in Ilorin, there are obvious stringent measures that must be taken to ensure

at the religion which is constantly held in high esteem suffers no downturn relevance.

History of Ilorin: A glimpse

Chronologically, Ilorin dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. [www.Wikipedia.com](http://www.Wikipedia.com) (2012) documents that:

Ilorin was founded by the Yoruba, of the three largest ethnic groups in Nigeria, in 1450. It became a provincial military head quarters of the ancient Oyo empire, it later became a northern Nigeria protectorate when the Shehu Alimi (Descendant of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio dynasty) took control of the city through the spread of Islamic religion.

It is evident that Ilorin initially started out as a Yoruba state before its transformation into a central northern state as it is currently adjudged to be. However, Afonja had his fair share of rulership while it was still within the confines of the Yoruba's. [www.onwar.com](http://www.onwar.com) reveal that:

Afonja was related to the Alaafin himself and may have coveted the title, though it is not clear how strong his claims were. Aole ordered him to attack the town of Iwere located on top of a steep, presumably on the assumption that he would fail and be forced to commit suicide. Afonja instead staged a rebellion, with the support of the Oyomesi and the Onikoyi, he marched on the capital and forced Aole to commit suicide himself in about 1796.

Afonja's importance grew in leaps and bounds after 1796 and he held a prominent place of pride in Ilorin. That is why till date he is still being highly revered in words and in songs in Ilorin. However, not long after gaining power in Ilorin, his powers suddenly began to diminish and in an attempt to recover his powers, a war ensued and he was killed in the war.

From another outlook, Sheik Alimi who arrived Ilorin at a different time and circumstances also had notable contributions to the discovery and development of the town. As an Islamic scholar, he found his way to Ilorin on that purpose, he however had other experiences as a result of his missionary obligations. [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) (2012) again documents that:

During the course of his explorations, Sheik Alimi discovered a river

that flows through villages which he sought to know its origin. That river is river Asabuh known today as river Asa. He traced the origin of the river to the present day Ilorin. He thus began to visit the area with the aim of propagating Islam. He later settled at a hamlet within the vicinity of the river. The hamlet was occupied by Olufadi. Around this location were other hamlets like Idi Ape, Oke Suna and Gambari which also had their traditional heads.

Apart from his obligation as a cleric, Sheik Alimi went on to be an historian, an anthropologist and ethnologist by virtue of his discoveries of, and relationship with Ilorin.

### Ilorin and Religion

Undoubtedly, Islam is the epicentre of Ilorin's religious activities; the reason not farfetched is due to the historical antecedents which reveal the foundation of the city stemming from Islamic missionary activities. Never has there been a time when Islamic religion was trivialized in Ilorin, with countless mosques, Islamic schools and clerics, and several Islamic programmes in the city, Ilorin boasts of the most revered city in Nigeria with astute allegiance to the Islamic religion. This is exemplified further by the common cliché that "*Ilorin is the home of Islam*", and equally popularly sung thus:

**Song:** Awon alfa wa ni Ilorin, ni Ilorin, ni Ilorin  
To n ko wa ni kewu, ni kewu, ni kewu  
Ore olorun ni wa n se.

**Translation:** Our Islamic cleric in Ilorin  
Who teaches us the Qur'an regularly  
They are the friends of Allah.

The devotion to Islam and its doctrines is clearly reflected in the five (*sub'h, suh'r, ash'r, magrib and ishai*) daily prayers observed and the profound celebration of important dates and festive periods of the Islamic calendar. Johns (1993, P.37) generally aver that:

For Muslims of today, the Qur'an is an event which entered history through the life of Muhammad and the revelations given to him. It is experience as a whole beheld as a total revelation, complete in itself, and able on its own authority to confront any other book, any other religious tradition.

The above indicates why the Islamic religion is highly revered and efficiently practiced in Ilorin. However, despite the initial monopoly of religion that watered the fertile land of Ilorin during its formative years, a number of factors allowed for and enabled the practice of other religions most notably Christianity. While there was no profound historical antecedent on the coming of Christianity into Ilorin like its Islamic counterpart, migration and immigration coupled with unassailable modern and contemporary influences has allowed for its practice.

In Ilorin today, there are about twenty five different denominations of churches whose aim is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Although the influence of Christianity in Ilorin cannot be compared with Islam, its worship centers all around the town houses a considerable number of people, majorly non indigenes who are residents of Ilorin for a variety of reasons. While the five daily prayers, jumat prayers on Fridays and recently Sunday morning nasfat has become regular for Muslims, midweek services of bible study, prayer meetings and evangelism coupled with Sunday services has been the usual weekly dosage for the Christians, not forgetting the traditional worshippers who have held on to the age long ancestral mode of worship in Ilorin.

### Club Dancing in Ilorin

Club dancing can be considered the height of entertainment in Ilorin. It has been and continues to be a medium of socialization for the youth who are a conglomerate of indigenes and non indigenes. With the world advancing in all facets of human endeavour, particularly entertainment and the attraction of the youth from all around the nation through the establishment of higher institutions of learning, clubbing has become a popular entertainment spot in Ilorin.

Although the Ilorin emirates have severally refused this trend as part of

the life styles to be accommodated in Ilorin, the doggedness of the different night clubs, the emergence of a few others and the constant customers that patronize in and around Ilorin has contributed in folding their hands. Thus, in Ilorin today, the night clubs and other social gathering are made public for all.

Despite the fact that it still cannot measure up to the quality and quantity of night clubs in Lagos and other major cities in Nigeria, Ilorin boasts of some night clubs which accommodates different classes of people majorly students. They are (but not limited to):

Eclipse

Club Orient

Princess Luxury

Cloud Nine

Davista

Atmosphere

These night clubs are opened exclusively during weekends, but they are only appendages of a much larger business venture which offers variety of services to its esteemed customers throughout the week. Eclipse is located within the premises of Bekandims hotels along University road, tanko Princess luxury is located along pipeline road, off tipper garage, club orient is located along Government Reserved Area, while others are located within the premises of some hotels around Ilorin. It is even shocking to find out that some night clubs are mobile; conveniently moving their tentacles from one hotel to another. Such is the popularity some night clubs have assumed over the years.

Just like every other entertainment business venture, each night club has its specialty and also attracts different customers who have constantly identified with them based on preference. While all of them employ the disk jockey (DJ) around town, the expertise of the DJ is prime to the night clubs attraction of customers. In a discussion, Ani Adaobi, a student of the University of Ilorin reacts to this stating that *"Although the space in princess luxury is not as big as others, they have the best DJ who has been able to mix his music to the satisfaction of customers, including me"*. And while the night clubs charge little or no fees for guys, ladies are allowed free entrance with virtually no limits to their numbers, due to the sensitivity

their gender as compared to their male counterpart. Tsaku (2012, P.331) press better that: *"entering a night club requires a flat fee called "cover charge". Early arrivals and most times ladies often have "cover waived".* The links and other paraphernalia are equally made available for sale as there is zero tolerance to bringing in drinks to the night club.

### Religious Implication of Club Dancing in Ilorin

From a general outlook of its practice, club dancing represents the hub of entertainment in Nigeria. Certainly, irrespective of the various measures taken to stop its practice in Ilorin, a number of factors as we have discussed militates against such attempts. However, because of its age long religious culture and way of life, some of these adopted western cultures, particularly club dancing pose a significant threat to the sustenance of the often admired religious stands of Ilorin.

A number of factors can be identified as adding to the impetus giving to the prominence of night clubs in Ilorin, and this we find unfortunate. First, it has been discovered that students who are based in Ilorin refuse to go to school from their respective houses because of the freedom they tend to get away from home, although some of them point to seriousness in studies as a reason for this, most of them have other agendas of being away from home; one of which could be clubbing and other social activities.

The danger in this is that parents tend to partially or completely neglect their tasks of training and watching out for their children when they themselves are being swayed by the enormous work they have to do to raise money for their upkeeps. Even women who are commonly regarded as the mothers who watch over the children when the father has gone all day working have equally had themselves engaged in a financially rewarding venture due to the growing economic challenges the country faces. Unfortunately, they are indirectly deviating from the religious principles that govern parent's duties towards their children. Just like the Bible in Proverbs 22 vs 6) advises that parents should *"train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it"*, Abdulwalid (2000, 74.) observes that

The crucial role of both parents in the formative education and development of a child is stressed in the famous saying of the prophet,

peace be unto him: "Every child is born in a natural state of goodness. It is his parent who make him into a Jew, a Christian or a magician.

The above is a pointer to the role the parents play in training and developing their children in the right perspective. Unfortunately, some parents have not really done that and have consequently contributed to their behavior in their respective schools. In a discussion, Ani Adaobi reports an alarming situation of a young University of Ilorin lady who is popularly known to use hijab at home and even in school, but becomes something else at night. She describes that;

I know this particular girl, a University of Ilorin student who covers Her body from head to toe throughout the week and even at home as colleagues and friends testify. It is however surprising that she does a completely different thing at night. She is a club addict and thus she contradicts her usual religious dress sense during the day.

In further discussion, she explains that she was in this lady's birthday party where drinks of different sizes and colours and people of different class were present. Obviously, she represents the group of students who rents houses despite being residents of Ilorin. In that regard, she assumes the role of a chameleon as she becomes a different thing at night other than the religious personality she paint of herself during the day. This is an implication and equally a way of trivializing the Islamic religion as well as tarnishing the image of her family. The same can be said of some young ones who are particularly children of pastors and deacons and are completely opposite of what their fathers preach from the pulpit.

Migration and immigration is an unavoidable occurrence in any area or state. As some move out owing to certain circumstances, some move in too and while some move in temporarily, some move in permanently too. Interestingly, there are situations that make some temporary migration seemingly become permanent and this is as a result of education. There is no doubt that the educational development of Ilorin and its environs, particularly in the higher institutions have contributed to increase in entertainment and socialization, Hence the popularity of night club and club dancing. A question that demands a sincere and valuable answer is why must night club or club dancing be an all night affair? Since dance and

ertainment itself are for leisure, to relax the body, make friends and have one wonders why all night which is usually considered unholy hours is at the youth embrace. Although an empirical study has not been taken to view its general effect on religion throughout the nation, the fact that it is all night affair pose a significant challenge to religion in Ilorin. As we observed, Friday and Saturday nights are mostly designated for clubbing in Ilorin night clubs, this means that for both Muslim and Christian who attend, there is likely to be nothing like nasfāt and church service on Sunday morning or night vigils on Friday nights.

In other to justify patronage of night club and its effects on religion in Ilorin, this writer embarked on an empirical study through the questionnaire method, the questionnaires were shared among university of Ilorin students and Kwara State polytechnic students. 200 copies were distributed together. The results are shown below.

#### Section one

| Age        | Per cent |
|------------|----------|
| Ages 18-25 | 77%      |
| Ages 26-35 | 21%      |
| Ages 35-45 | 2%       |

1.

| Level             | Per cent |
|-------------------|----------|
| 400level students | 28%      |
| 300level students | 31%      |
| 200level students | 14%      |
| 100level students | 16%      |
| OND&HND students  | 11%      |

2.

| Status  | Per cent |
|---------|----------|
| Singles | 88%      |
| Married | 12%      |

3.

| Religion   | Per cent |
|------------|----------|
| Muslims    | 56%      |
| Christians | 44%      |

| Ethnicity                  | Per cent          |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Indigenes based in Ilorin) | 68% (37% are not) |
| Non indigenes              | 32%               |

#### Section two (a)

6.

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| Those who go to clubs       |
| 39%                         |
| Those who do not go to club |
| 61%                         |

7.

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| Those who go out after school        |
| 47%                                  |
| Those who do not go out after school |
| 53%                                  |

8.

|                                                |
|------------------------------------------------|
| Clubbing as favourite means of socializing     |
| 38%                                            |
| Clubbing not as favourite means of socializing |
| 62%                                            |

9.

|                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Do your parents know and approve of you going to night club? |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|

#### Section two (b)

| S/N | Do you agree to the fact that?                                                                   | SA  | A   | D   | SD  |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1   | Socialization in Ilorin is not yet encouraging?                                                  | 68% | 16% | 4%  | 12% |
| 2   | The presence of higher institutions in Ilorin and nearby areas is helping socialization?         | 71% | 22% | 7%  | 0%  |
| 3   | Religion is a hindrance to socialization in Ilorin?                                              | 54% | 9%  | 6%  | 31% |
| 4   | Students don't learn well when they socialize?                                                   | 11% | 7%  | 6%  | 76% |
| 5   | Influx of different people/students from all around the nation increases level of socialization? | 74% | 18% | 8%  | 0%  |
| 6   | Clubbing is bad in Ilorin?                                                                       | 17% | 49% | 27% | 7%  |
| 7   | Clubbing should not be all night?                                                                | 40% | 6%  | 51% | 3%  |
| 8   | Clubbing should be stopped because of religion?                                                  | 22% | 19% | 38% | 21% |
| 9   | Clubbing is majorly for dancing?                                                                 | 83% | 8%  | 9%  | 0%  |
| 10  | Club dancing is erotic and should not be encouraged?                                             | 13% | 8%  | 48% | 31% |
| 11  | Both old and young go to club majorly to dance?                                                  | 46% | 33% | 21% | 0%  |

- SA- Strongly agree
- A- Agree
- D- Disagree
- SD- strongly disagree

## OBSERVATIONS AND DEDUCTIONS

From the above tabular illustrations of the empirical study through questionnaire evidences that clubbing and club dancing is a well embraced form of socialization in Ilorin, especially among the youth who are majorly students. From the illustrations, a total of 68% strongly agreed that socialization is not discouraging in Ilorin. In fact, from verbal utterances of some students, they feel Ilorin is too dull for their liking and when questions were raised to some students about relocating from Ilorin, most of them use the Yoruba popular bouncing word; "olorun maje", meaning, God forbid. Some students claim that it is education, particularly the constant academic calendar of the University of Ilorin that has encouraged them to come to Ilorin. Out of 68% indigenes of Kwara state, only 21% are based in Ilorin, while the remaining 47% are residents of other cities across the nation, 32% are however, non indigenes of Kwara state.

To further buttress our submission that the youth/students are the main occupants of night clubs in Ilorin, 88% and 12% of our respondents are females and married respectively, but among the 39% who go to night clubs, a whopping 37% are singles while 2% are married. The remaining 51% and 49% are singles and married who do not go to night club. Confirming the religious popularity in the city, the numerical stands indicate that 55% are Muslims while 44% are Christians. However, both have a share of indigenes and non indigenes that are based in Ilorin.

Section two (B) reflects some striking opinion about clubbing and club dancing in Ilorin, for instance 71% strongly agree that the presence of higher institutions in Ilorin and nearby areas helps socialization, while no one (0%) strongly disagree. Also 74% strongly agree that the influx of different people from all around the nation increases the level of socialization, while no one (0%) strongly disagree. From the dance perspective, a huge 83% believes clubbing is majorly for dancing, a meager 9% disagree and again no one (0%) strongly disagree.

The submission and deductions from the questionnaire analysis are consistent and therefore justify our position in this paper. Although 200 respondents of the questionnaire have diverging opinion on some of the

questions raised, the opinion that there are religious implications of club dancing in Ilorin is incontestable. However, there is supreme logic in believing that there is the need for ameliorating this clubbing and club dancing syndrome, at least to considerably satisfy religion and socialization in Ilorin. The following points are valuable.

1. Structures should be laid down on how some social programmes are conducted. The Kwara State Government, the spiritual leaders and stake holders should provide modus operandi that does not go against the image of the religious practices prevalent in Ilorin, particularly not disreputing the age long Islamic standards the city is built on.
2. The dress sense and pattern of the youth should be moderated. The strictness of this in the environs of ojaoba area in Ilorin town on Fridays may not suffice or be adequate as there are many public places where youth (especially ladies) have developed the habit of exposing parts of their body. The dress code restrictions in the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University is a pointer to the effect it could have on re-engineering moderation among others in town.
3. Parents especially those who are not based in Ilorin should work out a monitoring mechanism which will help curtail the excesses of their children. The guardian model (though a few practice this) is a good one and perhaps if there is no relative or family friends of the family around, the parents can encourage their children to build a friendship network which would allow them contact the friends when the need arise. Similarly, except if extremely necessary, parents whose domain is not that far from school should encourage their wards to go to school from home. Apart from its financial advantages, it would help them monitor the movements of their wards, especially at night and during weekends.

## Conclusion

Religion and Art are two separate entities. Though both are a reflection of God's creation, religion is God personified, while Art is man personified, as each art should rather complement than hinder the obligatory dictates of religion. As we have exemplified in the paper, there is a great deal of harm coming the way of religious practices due to the unchecked and uninhibitiveness of socialisation, especially club dancing in Ilorin.

However, if the points harnessed above are put to use, at least the adage that "when you are in Rome, you behave like Romans" will be entrenched in the psychology of the youths and club dancers in Ilorin.

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## Interview and External link

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