**CHAPTER ONE**

**GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background to the study**

It is sometimes useful to think of music as a calculus, as a rigid system of numerical relationships. It seems, when you think about the fact that everything reduces to intervals and their relations, that fundamentally music theory is mathematical. It is sometimes useful, but it isn’t entirely accurate to think about music that way.

Music isn’t a calculus, music isn’t an abstract system of numbers, music is an expression. It is creative in the same way that painting appropriate is creative, and the difference between creative musical meaning and representing music mathematically is the difference between painting deeply, creatively and ordinary language, it is messy, subtle, complicated, expressive, nuanced and all of this is to say that music isn’t math, music is a language. And just like our painting by numbers sometimes difficult, there are things you can learn, rules if you like, that makeup the grammar of music. This is the system of notes, intervals, scales, chords.

Within the context of community organizing, protest songs have historically functioned to educate, motivate, and raise consciousness by affecting listeners both emotionally and intellectually. Such songs can be used in the classroom much as they have been used in practice: to simplify, concretize, and reinforce specific ideologies, and to foster group solidarity. Social work educators can add an emotional component to their classrooms and enhance student learning by teaching historical struggles, protests, and forms of oppression through song. Additionally, by teaching about the ways in which protest music has influenced specific movements and organizations, educators can provide students with opportunities to experience this music as a potential tool for community organizing.

This thesis will explain more below, and as the pieces in this special thesis all indicate. Music has long been used as a form for protest and social activism. It has the power to convey messages and emotions in a way that can inspire and mobilize people to action. Songs can be used to challenge the status quo or current situation, bring attention to important social issues, and offer alternative perspectives. And in the end all songs of social protest seek to do one thing, bring our attention to an issue that needs redress, which ultimately challenges the status quo In times of political and social dissatisfaction, musicians often use their platform to speak out and raise awareness and conscious about the issues they care about. For example, during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, many musicians wrote and performed songs that addressed the struggle for equality and justice. One of the most famous examples is "We Shall Overcome," a protest song that became an anthem of the movement. This thesis will emphasize the point that music or song should not be viewed in the idea of our present popular music, not viewed as song for just entertainment, should not be considered as the high art or songs composed for the elite class. But it should viewed as the style that define who people are/were, songs help to determine who individuals were/are. It is also broadly true of the wider socially-rooted view of music conveyed throughout this special issue.

According to McKerrell and Way, such an approach situates musical sounds and structure within the complexities of social life, engaging not only with the what and why of music as a cultural object, but also with the how and when of music as communication. Similarly, in recent years, there have been numerous instances of musicians using their music to protest against police brutality and racial injustice. For example, the #BlackLivesMatter movement has inspired many artists to write and perform songs that address these issues and call for change. To conclude this part, the relationship between music and protest is deep and long standing, because it inspire and create a sense of community among people who have common goals for change

Music should not be viewed as a means of protest and in this terrain it should be viewed as a form of protest. Since music can be seen as language, and language is form of communication. Then music is then act which is rooted in communication which is organized in sound and employ the use of words (lyrics) in way of creating expressions of feelings or revealing identity. Music in relation with politics is basically political in nature and made up of political way to express character of resistance or opposing what is not right politically. Music naturally has it ground in the society and it serves as an avenue open for social and cultural debate or discussion, and also open for political engagement or participation. So music takes it inspiration and muse from the society and its base with the system of conversing between individual and collective. Starting from individual to individual and individual to collective.

Music is highly better than other form of arts that can be used in protest in the society, because of it special power, cultural power when it performed. And it performance happens in public settings and within the surrounding that is accepted through distribution. And it has the ability to preach and capture the soul (mind, emotion and will) and also cause effective change in public, private, cultural and political settings. Music as a form of protest provides the place of revealing identity, meaning opening and exposing identity, which can be personal or self-identity and collective identity. According Hesmondhalgh, neatly summarise “A remarkable meeting point of intimate and social realms. It provides a basis of self-identity (this is who I am, this is who I’m not) and collective identity (this is who we are, this is who we’re not), often in the same moment. All cultural products have this potential.”

Yet music’s seemingly special link to emotions and feelings make it an especially powerful site for the bringing together of private and public experience. Music as a form of protest has the capacity to endure more than other forms of protest, even with process it face, like censorship. Music face strong legal censorship because of it impact in the society, and also because of the presence of abstract and non-verbal sound which is known as instrumental music.

Instrumental music is made up of various musical instruments playing together to create a composition. It can be used to convey emotions and set the mood, and it can also be used as a form of self-expression for the musician. Instrumental music has the ability to communicate without words and can be a powerful tool for emotional expression, it operate in the same way as verbal language The combination of the right lyrics, rhythm and instruments can build a group identity, stir strong emotions, engage audiences and amass people to take action. This makes music the perfect partner with protest for social change.

Unlike other forms and means, music could be memorized, repeated and disseminated. “The power of song will exalt the spirit of rebellion,” Hill claimed “ A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read but once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over. And I maintain that if a person can put a few cold common sense facts in a song, and dress them up in a cloak of humor to take the dryness off of them he will succeed in reaching a great number of workers who are too unintelligent to too indifferent to read a pamphlet or an editorial on economic science.” Music is a powerful tool that can be used to combat oppression. It creates change and raises awareness of past and present-day systemic problems in the United. As we have seen time and time again, there are huge systemic inequalities that go unaddressed, which can be incredibly detrimental to those experiencing injustices in our society. Studying the ways movements for social change have used music to make a difference is very enlightening because it shows what can be done to help support a movement. Actively becoming involved in the pursuit to create social change is necessary to stopping injustice.

Learning about protest music has brought to light the countless ways people can get involved and avoid being complacent towards issues that matter. Music can raise awareness of movements that aim to work towards social change, can drive political protests aimed to create solidarity between those who experience injustices and to raise awareness of the harm done by those injustices.

Music is a part of everyday life, people listen to music of their choosing. Traditional social movements were able to tap into the ‘music of the folk’ to their advantage. Current social movements need to do the same, using popular music, today’s music of the folk, as a way to create, or tap into, a shared history. Social movement culture that makes good use of popular culture, uses or creates free spaces for activists to come together, kindles emotions will come closer to achieving wide-spread change in society.

**1.2 Statement of the problem**

Most people don't pay attention to the message embedded in songs, they feel all songs are for entertainment and at such dance to the songs without giving/paying full attention to the lyric. The purpose of this project is to critically analysis few of the songs that people sing, bringing out the meaning of the songs in relation to protest.

**1.3 Aim and objectives**

Many have sang in protest to the mistreatment and the unjust verdict of the government. This project aims to

1. Reflect on the popular music responses to socio-political issues in Nigeria
2. Determine the roles or impact of the selected songs on socio-politcal terrain of Nigeria
3. Lastly to analyze and document the music for reference purpose. (social, textual, musical)

**1.4 Research Methodology**

The secondary source of date used include sourcing for relevant works in relation to protest music from the internet, library, journals etc. The data for this work are selected songs from popular artist who sang about the situation of things happening in the society/country.

**1.5 Scope of study**

This research work aims at collecting songs of selected popular musician in relation to protect and analyzing them.

**1.6 Limitations of study**

This research will be focused on a few protest music and it impact on the in pushing for change.

**1.7 Definition of terms**

**MUSIC:** Art concerned with combining vocal or instrumental sounds for beauty of form or emotional expression, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and, in most Western music, harmony.

**PROTEST:** A statement or action expressing disapproval of or objection to something.

**PROTEST SONG:** Is a song that is associated with a movement for social change and hence part of the broader category of topical songs (or songs connected to current events).

**A MUSICIAN**: Is a person who composes, conducts, or performs music. According to the United States Employment Service, "musician" is a general term used to designate one who follows music as a profession.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 MUSIC**

The word music comes from the Greek mousikê (tekhnê) by way of the Latin musica. It is ultimately derived from mousa, the Greek word for muse. In ancient Greece, the word mousike was used to mean any of the arts or sciences governed by the Muses. Later, in Rome, ars musica embraced poetry as well as instrument-oriented music. In the European Middle Ages, musica was part of the mathematical quadrivium: arithmetics, geometry, astronomy and musica. The concept of musica was split into four major kinds by the fifth century philosopher, Boethius: musica universalis, musica humana, musica instrumentalis, and musica divina. Of those, only musica instrumentalis referred to music as performed sound. (online etymology dictionary, 2010)

Music is an acting agency of mediating between the source (musicians and the listener or consumer) So there for, music is means of communication and it communicate as an language.

Music as a language has been defined by several scholars Henry Wadsworth Longfellow described it as "the universal language of mankind." This means music is a means of communication and also all around appreciated language.

Nigerian ethnomusicologist Akin Euba, who stated that "Music is a language of expression and communication that employs sound in organized patterns, using culturally specific conventions and idioms" (Euba, 1984).

The Tanzanian ethnomusicologist John A. Blacking defined music as "a complex, dynamic system of culturally specific sounds, structured by conventions that are learned and communicated through both oral and non-oral means, and used to communicate meanings and values within a social context" (Blacking, 1973).

Like language, music appears to be a universal human capacity; all cultures of which we have knowledge engage in something which, from a western perspective, seems to be music, and all members of each culture are expected to be able to engage with music in culturally appropriate ways (Olakunle 2021).

It's challenging to truly describe music in words. We all know how it makes us feel, and we know what we like when we hear it, but actually communicating this is the hard part. Author Victor Hugo wrote that “Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow described it as "the universal language of mankind." What do musicians have to say about it? To many of them, music is much more than something they just listen to or play for fun. Great musicians have a passionate connection to the music they play. While the music itself is their most important and accurate expression of how they feel about music, they've also managed to say a few poignant things to describe what music is to them.

**What is Music?**

John Coltrane stated that "My music is the spiritual expression of what I am - my faith, my knowledge, my being ... When you begin to see the possibilities of music, your desire to do something really good for people, to help humanity free itself from its hangups ... I want to speak to their souls." (Richard Havers September 23, 2022).

Music as it is far beyond what the eyes can see and what the mouth can express. A renowned songwriter stated/quoted that music is the emotional life of people "Leonard Cohen Quotes." BrainyQuote.com

Ray Charles stated that "Music is nothing separate from me. It is me. You'd have to remove the music surgically...Music to me is like breathing. I don't get tired of breathing, I don't get tired of music." (Ray charles.quote coyate.com). Looking closely at the way Ray Charles stated what music means to him, it is highly impossible to surgical remove music from a person's life but he entitified music to be a part of his life; He sees Music as something that when taken from him will leave him empty. Music is far beyond the ordinary as it ministers to the soul, it is a language that even the lower animals understand.

Stevie Wonder further stated that "Music is a world within itself, It's a language we all understand." It has been proven that music is a universal language that the world understands no matter the ethnicity, region or continent.

Keith Richards stated sometimes ago "Good music comes out of people playing together, knowing what they want to do and going for it". Music is your own experience, your own thoughts, your wisdom. If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn. They teach you there's a boundary line to music But, there's no boundary line to art; Music goes as far as you can envision. I will say that "There isn't any limit to music, you can only go as far as you limit yourself".

Music has healing power. It has the ability to take people out of themselves for a few hours. The way people different person's understand music differ. I have come to see music as not just a thing done with the physical consciousness but something that is spiritual and has to be done as such. "The music is not in the notes, but in the silence between." Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

**2.2 PROTEST**

OS Eesuola speaking, says, Protest demonstrations are means of holding dissents or expressing discontent through public marches. At the macro level, they are globally considered an acceptable means of participating in politics, as stated in the Article 11 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and other international laws. But owing to the increasing spate of terrorism and violence across the globe, different countries of the world have recently made, interpreted and enforced different domestic laws to regulate protest rallies and political assembly of people in public places and this threatens democracy and political participation.

Examining the situations in the United States and Nigeria, this paper argues that while laws regulating protests may be inevitable in our increasingly terrorized world, their enforcement can also be manipulated for sectional political and even anti political advantages, depending on the character of the state in question, and the quality of its judiciary. Caution and suggestions are given on how not to hinder political participation and democracy while controlling protest demonstrations. Protest, though never a new phenomenon in human history has continually increased in the global scene today. Starting from France and Britain in 2010, to Tunisia, Egypt and Libya in what is yet to end four years after, protest has spread significantly across the globe, shaping political events and attempting to re write histories.

Dictators have fallen, nations have been turned around, and status quos have been changed in many countries due to the reason of protest demonstrations. This is in connection with the long term prediction that increasingly, "citizens are becoming more critical towards politicians" (Klingemann 1995:1), and this being 'critical' constantly manifests in protest; suggesting why "we are now experiencing a flood of research and theory which purport to speak to the issue" (Hollander and Einwohner 2004:533, cited in Eesuola 2012).

Protest is a form of political participation. Election, which is the most common form, is very ritualistic and periodized, and citizens often have no choice than to follow its rituals and periodization before they can achieve any political or social changes. With protest however, an opportunity is made available for citizens of a country to demonstrate their need for political change, or ventilate their angers on certain political issues that they do not agree with.

Quite often they do this through means ranging from rallies, strikes, street marches, sit-ins and so on. Demonstration is the most used means of protest all over the world today. All forms of protesting, or means, if we like, can, in a sense, be forms of demonstration since they need to be exhibited to press demands and make claims. By protest demonstration therefore, this means all forms of protest activities or actions that are displayed in the public place, usually to attract attention of the authorities to which protest is directed. But terrorists across the world have equally been laying claims to protest in a bid to explain or justify their actions. Analysis of Osama Bin Ladin’s statement between 1999 and 2004 has attracted the conclusion that Al Quaeda’s attack on the United States in 2003 was a protest against Western penetration of Islamic values and land in the Middle East (Halminton 2006, Payne 2008).

This may suggest that the Al Shabbab attack on a shopping mall in Kenya was a protest against the role that Kenya played in Somalia and still plays in East Africa, while in Nigeria, Book Haram lays claims to protesting against western education because of the way it had been perverted by Nigerian educated elite and Christians to create several irreconcilable contradictions in the country (Eesuola 2014). Another word that is closely used along with protest is social movement, claims. All these social phenomena are found in one field of study, and “protest and because they are all contentious activities on the part of some people making some holders” (pp. 3). Resistance, revolt, uprising and strike are equally related to protest, disadvantaged population living under the jurisdiction or influence of those power social movement are the terms that are, most of the time, used to describe them which Opp (2009) describes as “sustained challenges to power holders in the name of 2009).

**Why do people protest?**

Bad economic performance in a state, ethnic dominance, authoritarian deprivation, especially amongst the urban middle class and youth, who, as he presence of the middle class and the youth who are often the immediate victims of protest demonstrations are likely to occur in urban areas due to the overwhelming harsh socio-economic conditions.

Another reason people protest is rested in what Eisinger (1973) refers to as environment where protest occurs, and posits that “the political opportunity Political Opportunity Model. The POM refers to the nature of the entire political the nature and character of the political environment generally determine whether or will initiate or participate in protest, as well as the forms and dimensions that their not there will be protest in the first place, the class and stratification of people that structures have an impact on political behaviour” (Cited in Opp, 2009;1263); that protest actions will take.

**2.3 PROTEST MUSIC**

People have been using music as a means to express dissatisfaction for as long as we know, but why is it so powerful? “I thought that if you had an acoustic guitar, it meant that you were a protest singer,” sang Morrissey on The Smiths’ song “Shakespeare’s Sister.” Back in 1985, that might not have been an unusual point of view. The idea of protest singers as finger-picking folkies had been long cemented in popular culture, going back to the 60s, when Bob Dylan brought songs such as “The Times They Are A-Changin’’ to the masses, spawning countless copyists voicing virtues through their protest songs. Jennifer de Guzman. Paul McGuinness (2022), But this was nothing new. People have been using music as a means to express dissatisfaction with their lot for as long as we know.

Since medieval times in England, we have records of songs of protest. As sheet music became popular following the advent of the printing press, broadsides (single-page proto-newspapers) often featured ballads, which sang of familiar subjects such as love and loss, but also addressed matters that concerned the people of the day. The British Civil Wars gave rise to songs criticizing Oliver Cromwell, for example. These so-called “broadside ballads” gave way to songs promoting socialism, or lecturing about temperance, slavery, and other such moral matters. Mme. M. Sissieretta Jones (1899) The best of these remain alive today as national anthems or traditional folk songs.

The communal singing of songs was also used by slaves in the United States. While dancing was forbidden, the singing of songs was allowed – as long as they weren’t critical of their masters, of course. The slaves used songs such as “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot’’ and “Steal Away’’ as hidden messages of escape through the underground railroad. While perhaps not protest songs as we might think of them, this collective singing had a power that would become familiar around the world as songs the likes of “We Shall Overcome’’ and John Lennon’s “Give Peace A Chance’’ were chanted by thousands at protest marches. Throughout the 60s, both black and white artists would write and perform songs decrying racial prejudice and inequality.

Nina Simone’s ferocious “Mississippi Goddam’’ was a violent response to the bombing of a children’s bible group at a Baptist church in Birmingham, Alabama, in which four teenagers were killed. Sam Cooke’s powerful “A Change Is Gonna Come’’ became the anthem of the Civil Rights movement. He wrote the song after hearing Bob Dylan’s “Blowin’ In The Wind,’’ feeling almost ashamed that a white man had written it and not him. The song would be covered by the likes of Aretha Franklin and Otis Redding, but it would be another four decades before perhaps its most powerful reading, when the newly elected president Barack Obama told his supporters in Chicago: “It’s been a long time coming, but tonight, change has come to America.” Britannica (2013).

Motown records was known as the sound of young America, loved for its upbeat, dancing music, with finely crafted pop songs about boys and girls, and yet such was the strength of the civil rights movement that its artists, too, began bringing protest into pop, with the likes of The Temptations’ ‘Message From A Black Man’ and Marvin Gaye’s 1971 masterpiece, What’s Going On?. James Brown sang “Say It Loud – I’m Black And I’m Proud,’’ while Curtis Mayfield urged “People Get Ready.’’ The other focus of songwriters’ ire at this time was the escalating war in Vietnam. Bob Dylan’s scathing “Masters Of War’’ showed just how much the young man from Duluth, Minnesota, had learned from his hero Woody Guthrie. Many of Dylan’s message songs were covered by other artists – such as Manfred Mann’s take on “With God On Our Side’’ and Nina Simone’s forceful reading of “Ballad Of Hollis Brown.’’Wikipedia (1963).

Like Guthrie, it remains a matter of debate even today as to whether Dylan was a writer of protest songs or message songs, or whether he was simply writing about the changing times in which he lived (Wikipedia). But one thing that’s beyond question is that the floodgates were opened by the success of his songs of injustice. Barry McGuire scored a US No.1 hit in 1965 with “Eve Of Destruction,’’ which seemed to protest in much the same way that Marlon Brando rebelled in The Wild One (“What are you protesting against?” “Whadda you got?”), while mass gatherings such as those at Monterey and Woodstock were littered with protest songs. One of the most iconic moments at Woodstock was Country Joe &The Fish’s performance of ‘I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin’-To-Die Rag’, with its sing along chorus: And it’s one, two, three, What are we fighting for? Don’t ask me, I don’t give a damn, Next stop is Vietnam; And it’s five, six, seven, Open up the pearly gates, Well there ain’t no time to wonder why, Whoopee! we’re all gonna die.

The emergence of protest or a political popular music in the 1960s as songs might “help to save the planet” (Seeger, 2009 as quoted in Pareles, Eyerman & Jamison, 1998:2, authors’ emphasis retained). Akin to these popular consciousness”. This phenomenon is expressed, they argue, been inextricably linked in the popular imaginary and public history both protest music and activities and movements for social change have ‘protest’ songs (Denisoff, 1983). Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison in (popular) protest music-making and, through this, “an expression of popular music with resistance, rebellion, rejection of the status quo and and Joan Baez, for instance, became iconic for writing and performing social norms, and oppositional politics. This is particularly the case in reflected in the popularity and commercial success, particularly from ‘save’ or change the world for the better with their music.

Bob Dylan Mythology connecting protest music with social change can be seen in It is little surprise that these myths about protest music and social the early 1960s and beyond, of artists who answered Seeger’s call to been associated with progressive politics of ‘the left’ (Berger, 2000). mass-mediated, advanced capitalist and later neoliberal democracies, as with social change and youth revolt. At the forefront of this linkage are claims made by folk musician Pete Seeger, that “if used right”, protest authors, Ray Pratt (1990:viii) sees the 1960s as a watershed moment (1998:2) have located some of the mythology around such artists, 2014) and the protest music they produced, in their notion of “the sixties of more fundamental social longings”. Yet, while referring to a “nostalgic persistent and enduring myths connecting social protest produced as what have been known as ‘finger-pointing’, ‘topical’, ‘message’ or as a longing for “a better, more innocent time ‘when we were good’” change have claimed some hold in mass consciousness. They are ideas fetishisation” of the much-reproduced and mediated versions of the decade, Pratt cautions against dismissing “efforts to establish a political downplay some “

As Eyerman and Jamison (1998:2) not have significantly moved people into direct social action, it has Women’s Liberation movements. I want to add that it is not only conscious. More importantly, however, is what these myths reveal about make between protest music and social change in mass consciousness. Key in the contentions of these authors is the critical linkage they similarly warn, viewing such expressions in this way tends to overlook or formation that have greatly contributed to the notion, in public consciousness, that protest music can make people more socially protest music itself, but the persistent myths around this mass cultural functioned to highlight the causes of the Civil Rights, Anti-War and and critical form of contemporary mass culture.

There is also the neo Marxian’s Legitimacy-Stability explanation of protest. “personal constraints that may increase the cost and risk of participation, such as full political regime that lacks legitimacy. Then there is the issue of biographical Propounded mainly by O’Connor (1973), legitimacy-stability claims that man protests against the polity if he lacks confidence in the political regime, and that protest demonstration depends, first, on his biographical availability, that is, majority of the people in a particular polity will protest or support protest against a availability which claims that that whether or not an individual would participate in. It is the case of biographical availability that political musician, Fela Anikulapo time employment, marriage and family responsibilities” ( Eesuola:2012: 29-30).

Kuti referred to in his song, Sorrow, Tears and Blood which he composed to incite the Nigerian people against the draconian practices and policies of the Nigerian state "Dem always get reason to fear""They give reasons for their fear" The reason people do not want to protest are what we refer to as biographical availability, and Fela, in STB, list them thus: during the military interregnum (Eesuola:2012). Fela sang:

**"Dem fear to fight for freedom" "They are afraid of fighting for freedom"**

**"I no want die, I get one wife, I get one child" "I don't want to die, I have a wife; a child"**

**"Dem fear to fight for justice" "They are afraid of fighting for justice"**

**"Dem fear for the air around them" "They are afraid of the air around them"**

**"Dem fear to fight for happiness" “They are afraid of fighting for happiness"**

**"My people self dey fear too much" "My people are too cowardly"**

**"Dem fear for the things dem no see" "They are afraid of invisible things"**

**"Mama dey for house, papa dey for house" "My mother and father still live"**

**(Anikulapo-Kuti, Fela, Sorrow Tears and Blood, cited in Eesuola 2012)**

**Some have expressed the view that protest music dried up after the death of Fẹlá Aníkúlápò Kútì in 1997.**

**CHAPTER 3**

**DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

Popular Music has shaped cultures and societies around Nigeria, passed down from generation to generation. It has the power to alter one’s mood, change perceptions, and inspire change. While everyone has a personal relationship with music, its effects on the culture around us may not be immediately apparent. Popular music is an essential aspect of all human civilizations and has the power to emotionally, morally, and culturally affect society. When people from one culture exchange music with each other, they gain valuable insight into another way of life.

Learning how music and social bonding are tied is especially crucial in times of conflict when other lines of communication prove to be challenging. Popular music, as a social-cultural right, may aid in the promotion and protection of other human rights.

It can help in the healing process, dismantling walls and boundaries, reconciliation, and education. Around the world and in Nigeria specifically popular music is being used as a vehicle for social change and bringing communities together. At the core of our everyday experience with popular music, we use it to relax, express ourselves, come to terms with our emotions, and generally improve our well-being. It has evolved into a tool for healing and self-expression, often dictating how we, as individuals, take steps to impact society. The following can be seen as the reflection on some popular music response to socio-political issues in Nigeria. (www.savethemusic.com.2023)

**3.1 Popular Music Responses to Socio-Political Issues In Nigeria**

Falz's "This Is Nigeria" is a song that speaks to the various issues plaguing Nigeria as a country. Through the song, Falz provides social commentary and criticism of the political, economic, and social realities of Nigeria. The song's lyrics touch on a range of issues, including corruption, insecurity, poverty, religious and ethnic tensions, and government incompetence.

One of the most prominent issues addressed in the song is corruption, which is a major challenge facing Nigeria. Falz addresses this issue by mentioning the "politicians wey thief some billions and no dey go prison" line, which is a reference to the widespread corruption in the country, where politicians and government officials embezzle public funds for personal gain and they won’t face the necessary panel and right justice for their corrupt act.

Unah explains that , Falz makes several references to corruption, calling out politicians who have been accused of stealing from the government. By many accounts, corruption is one of Nigeria's biggest problems. According to a U.N. report, roughly $4.6 billion is spent on bribes in Nigeria each year.( Linus Unah , Not Everyone Is Happy Wth Nigeria Vira Version Of “This Is America)

In the Nigerian education system, a fraudulent and corrupt act occurred, which was reported by the media and other officials. A woman known as Philomina Chieshe, who was a Jamb sales clerk, reported that a snake had sneaked into the accounting office of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation (JAMB) Board in Makurdi and made off with N36 million in cash, which was partially derived from the sales of university admission forms. Reports and investigations revealed that Chieshe finally confessed that it was her boss, Samuel Umoru, who withdrew all the money piecemeal. Ms. Philomena Chieshe was subsequently suspended.

Falz references “Madam Philomena,” specifically Ms. Philomena Chieshe, and the disappearance of N36 million from her office. He uses this story to respond to the rampant fraud and money laundering in the country. Falz calls out Madam Philomena for claiming that an animal was responsible for the missing money, stating that this is unacceptable given the severity of the situation.

The issue of insecurity is another key theme in the song. Falz talks about the constant fear of attacks and violence that Nigerians live with, particularly in the northern parts of the country where the Fulani Herdsmen killing and causing havoc in the country and it has been ongoing for several years. Falz metioned this in line “Fulani Herdsmen still they slaughter Carry people they massacre”. He also references the issue of police brutality, a problem that has been highlighted by the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria.

In terms of responses to the song, there were mixed reactions. Some people praised the song for its frankness and honesty in addressing the challenges facing Nigeria. Others criticized Falz for being too political and accused him of promoting a negative image of the country. Despite this, the song was widely shared on social media and became a viral hit, with many Nigerians resonating with the themes and issues addressed in the song.

In conclusion, the song "This is Nigeria" by Falz confronts the issue of government incompetence, specifically how the government handles challenges that affect the country. The song's chorus "This is Nigeria, everybody be criminal" effectively captures the deep sense of hopelessness and disillusionment that permeates Nigerian society due to the country's problems. Through his lyrics, Falz exposes and highlights these issues, while also urging people to speak out and take action to effect change.

Lagbaja's "Suuru Lere" addresses several issues in Nigeria and provides a response to them through the lyrics of the song.

The song highlights the problem of corruption in Nigeria, which is a major issue that has affected the country for several years. Lagbaja expresses his frustration with corrupt officials who use their positions to enrich themselves at the expense of the people.

The song acknowledges the high level of poverty in Nigeria and the struggles of the masses to make ends meet. Lagbaja encourages the people to be patient and work hard, while urging the government to do more to alleviate poverty.

The song speaks against injustice in the society, with Lagbaja lamenting the suffering of the people and the lack of fairness and equity. He calls on the government to do more to ensure justice and equity for all.

The song touches on the issue of political instability in Nigeria, with the constant change in government and lack of continuity in policies. Lagbaja encourages the people to be patient and to work towards a stable and sustainable democracy.

The song also addresses the issue of lack of basic amenities such as good roads, electricity, water, and healthcare. Lagbaja urges the government to provide these amenities to the people.

In conclusion, the message of "Suuru Lere" is one of hope and encouragement in the face of the various issues affecting Nigeria. The song acknowledges the problems facing the country but also provides a call to action for both the government and the people to work towards a better future. Through its use of Yoruba proverbs, bata drumming, and other musical elements, the song captures the essence of Nigerian culture and resonates with many people who can relate to the issues addressed in the song.

"20-10-2020" is a song by Nigerian singer Burna Boy that was released in 2020 in response to the issues faced in Nigeria, particularly the #EndSARS protests against police brutality, bad governance and the killing of Nigeria youth in lekki, Lagos Nigeria by the Nigeria Army in order to forcefully stop the #EndSARS protests. The song reflects Burna Boy's frustration with the Nigerian government and its inability to provide basic amenities and justice for the people.

The lyrics of the song touch on a number of issues that have plagued Nigeria for decades. One of the most prominent issues is police brutality, which is highlighted by Burna Boy's references to the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and their notorious abuses of power. He sings about the pain and suffering that young Nigerians have endured at the hands of the police, and how the government has turned a blind eye to their plight.

Another issue In his song, that brings attention to the issue of corruption in Nigeria. He criticizes Nigerian politicians for their greed and self-interest, pointing out how they have plundered the country's resources with impunity. Burna Boy also highlights the lack of basic infrastructure, essential amenities, and employment opportunities in Nigeria, including the absence of good roads, electricity, and clean water, which have contributed to widespread poverty and suffering. He conveys this message in the line: "The money wey you thief yapa for your azza, You don turn our graduates to common beggars All the book them go no matter Cause you no go get job if you no know Godfather." This implies that politicians have embezzled the country's resources, leading to unemployment and desperation amongst graduates who are unable to secure employment without powerful connections. The song narrate the government’s brutal act and the “lekki massacre”. In the song, the sound of gunshot, noise, protesters talking from the protest ground was used to emphasize more about the incident.

Burna Boy's message in "20-10-2020" is a call to action for Nigerians to demand change and hold their leaders accountable. He encourages young people to speak up and take action against the injustices they face, and to unite together in the fight for a better Nigeria.

The song received a lot of positive responses from Nigerians, particularly young people who resonated with Burna Boy's message. Many praised him for using his platform to speak up about important social issues, and for encouraging others to do the same. The song also gained international attention, and helped to raise awareness about the situation in Nigeria.

Overall, "20-10-2020" is a powerful and timely song that reflects the frustration and anger of many Nigerians towards the government and the issues facing the country. Burna Boy's message of hope and unity resonated with many, and the song helped to inspire a new generation of activists and advocates for change.

Mr. President" is a song by African China that was released in 2006. The song addresses several issues affecting Nigeria at the time, highlighting the various problems the country faced under the leadership of then-President Olusegun Obasanjo. The song was a response to the challenges that the Nigerian people were facing, and it expressed the frustration and disappointment of the artist and the people.

One of the issues the song addresses is corruption. African China criticizes the president and other leaders for being corrupt and for failing to use their positions to serve the people. He highlights how the common people suffer and struggle to make ends meet while those in power enjoy the spoils of corruption.

The song also addresses the issue of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. African China talks about how the youth are unable to find jobs and how this leads to an increase in crime and other social vices. He also talks about how the government is not doing enough to address these issues and how they are neglecting the welfare of the people.

Another issue the song addresses is the lack of basic amenities and infrastructure in the country. African China talks about how the government has failed to provide basic things like good roads, electricity, and clean water. He highlights how this lack of basic amenities affects the lives of the people and how it is an indictment on the government.

Furthermore, the song touches on the issue of ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria. African China laments how these conflicts have claimed many lives and how they are a hindrance to national development. He calls on the government and the people to work together to address these issues and to build a united Nigeria.

In response to the song, many Nigerians applauded African China for speaking out against the government and highlighting the issues they faced. The song became popular in Nigeria, and it was played at protests and rallies calling for change and accountability from the government. African China was praised for using his music to speak out against social injustices in the country.

In conclusion, "Mr. President" by African China is a powerful social commentary that addresses the various issues affecting Nigeria at the time. The song highlights issues such as corruption, poverty, unemployment, lack of basic amenities, and ethnic and religious conflicts. The song became popular in Nigeria, and it was used as a rallying cry for change and accountability. African China was praised for using his music to speak out against social injustices in the country, and the song remains relevant to this day.

"Sorrow Tears and Blood" is a song by the legendary Nigerian musician Fela Kuti, released in 1977. The song was written as a response to the brutal military dictatorship in Nigeria at the time, specifically the government's violent response to a peaceful demonstration by the Kalakuta Republic (Fela's commune and recording studio). The song was a powerful critique of the government's actions and became a rallying cry for those fighting against the regime.

The song addresses a number of issues that were affecting Nigeria at the time, including police brutality, corruption, and government oppression. Fela Kuti was known for his political activism and his music often spoke out against the injustices and corruption that were rampant in Nigerian society. "Sorrow Tears and Blood" was one of his most direct and powerful statements on these issues.

The song starts with a mournful saxophone melody, setting the tone for the lyrics that follow. Fela sings about the violence and oppression that the people of Nigeria are facing, and how they are forced to live in fear of the police and the military. He sings about the way that the government uses violence and intimidation to suppress dissent and silence opposition.

One of the most powerful lines in the song is when Fela sings, "Dem regular trademark, na original bad man policy." This line refers to the government's use of violence and oppression as a standard policy, something that is ingrained in the system and unlikely to change. The song also addresses the issue of corruption in the government, with Fela singing about how the politicians are stealing the people's money and using it to live lavish lifestyles.

The chorus of the song repeats the phrase "Sorrow, tears, and blood," a powerful statement about the suffering that the people of Nigeria are enduring. The song also features a call-and-response section, with Fela shouting "Eh-heh!" and the backup singers responding with "Awa n'gboro!" This section is meant to evoke a feeling of solidarity among the listeners, a sense that they are all in this together and that they can fight back against the oppression.

The response to "Sorrow Tears and Blood" was mixed, with some people praising Fela for his bravery and others criticizing him for his outspokenness. The government at the time was particularly hostile to Fela, and he was frequently arrested and beaten by the police. However, the song became a rallying cry for those fighting against the regime, and it remains a powerful statement against oppression and injustice to this day.

Overall, "Sorrow Tears and Blood" was a response to the many issues that were affecting Nigeria at the time, including police brutality, corruption, and government oppression. Fela Kuti's music was a powerful tool for social change, and this song is a testament to his commitment to using his art to fight against injustice.

**3.2 The Roles of Selected Songs on the Socio-Political Terrain of Nigeria**

The socio-political terrain of Nigeria has always been a fertile ground for musicians to express their views and opinions through protest songs. These songs are often used to raise awareness, spark conversations, and call for action on pressing issues affecting the society. Over the years, several artists have used their music as a tool for social change, creating anthems that have become rallying cries for the masses. This project seeks to determine the roles or impact of selected songs on the socio-political terrain of Nigeria, with a focus on Lagbaja's "Surulere," African China's "Mr President," and Falz's "This Is Nigeria."

**Socio-Political Awareness**

Falz's song was used to raise awareness about the various issues plaguing Nigerians, including corruption, insecurity, poverty, and other problems. The song's lyrics highlighted these issues and sparked conversations and debates on social media and in the mainstream media, leading to increased awareness and a call to action.

The song raised awareness about the political abnormalities, fraud, and illegal acts of the government in authority. It also enlightened listeners about how criminal acts have become a normal lifestyle. Falz also talked about how politicians abuse their powers and how religious leaders manipulate their members by collecting their funds for worship and alms, which are then used to build institutions that are difficult for their members to afford.

Additionally, the song shed light on how politicians and aristocrats support and sponsor killers, looters, and thugs to manipulate their way to success. This act has made them evil, yet they still run for political positions.

Through his song, Falz exposed and influenced listeners about how politicians and aristocrats maneuver their way out of consequences and justice for their bad behaviors, avoiding charges and penalties. It expose that the system of government is not working proper anymore, the duties of the judiciary are now settle in the force agency department. And also talk about the security and force agency being not reliable for securing them

Olagunju 2019 interviewed falz and the artist stated that “My mindset from the beginning was, and is still, social consciousness. I set out to make music that reflects what I am going through, about what I experience and about what is happening around me. I think I have been able to make that kind of art with everything I have done, even with the feel good music. If you listen carefully, if you pay attention to the lyrics, every song depicts what I go through, what is happening around me. As an artiste, you must learn to mirror your immediate environment, things that speak to you as a person. That is what I have been able to do over the years”.

The song "Mr President" by African China addresses issues such as corruption, poverty, unemployment, and poor governance. It speaks truth to power and demands accountability from those in leadership positions. The song brings us to the awareness that our country is not in the right condition as it should be. We can all testify, even as of now, how basic amenities are so hard to get.

It also exposes how citizens really lack basic amenities and are very sad. For example, fuel for transport and its price being increased for a very long time. These amenities are so hard to get despite being owned by the country. He exposes how aristocrats keep looting money and resources, even getting away without facing charges and penalties, while the low-class citizens in the country will get into a little crime act and even get punished. The song exposes this partial system running through the county. The song does not support illegal acts, but African China uses this illustration to explain the imbalance and partiality.

He also exposes the birth of police brutality, which involves lies and corruption. They always confirm wrong information. Generally, the song has created awareness of the failures of the government.

The song **"**Surulere" by Lagbaja brings the listeners and citizens to a state of consciousness and awareness of past happenings or history, which is the basic start of the song. The song exposes the realities of living in Nigeria and serves as a reference point for existence, in conversation with the most recent definitive political decision in the country's history.

Lagbaja exposes the truth about the former military ruling government, which was ruled by dictators who never had time for the citizens and used all the power they had over the citizenry. He makes the citizens of Nigeria aware that they were just struggling for life and not enjoying their stay in the country. He presents the past ills of the government and its inability to make a positive change in the country.

Lagbaja also creates awareness of issues and dissension between politicians. He also provides solutions to these issues in order to impact the citizens, stating that only peace and patience can help solve the issues affecting the country. He also creates awareness and reveals that the lack of progress in the country is the fault of everyone. This means that everyone should be ready to take on the responsibility of making a better country and protecting the democracy system of government in the country, while consciously calling citizens to do better.

Overall, "Surulere" by Lagbaja is a powerful song that highlights the realities of living in Nigeria, while also serving as a call to action for citizens to take responsibility for the country's progress and development.

**Symbol Of Resistance**

These selected songs have become symbols of resistance, opposing the oppression and abnormalities in the country.

Falz's song created awareness and built consciousness, which was embraced by the youth and other Nigerians who felt disenfranchised and marginalized by the system. It gave them a voice and a platform to express their frustrations and demand change.

Lagbaja's "Surulere" serves as a powerful resistance against the oppression of the Nigerian government. The song is critical of the government's failure to provide basic amenities and services for its citizens and inspires youth to become more politically active.

African China's song's impact was felt immediately after its release, as it became an anthem for the youth who were disillusioned with the government. The song's message resonated with the people, and it quickly became a symbol of resistance to the government's failure to address the country's critical issues. The song was played at protests and rallies, and it became a rallying cry for the youth who were demanding change.

The success of "Mr President" brought African China into the limelight, and he became a prominent voice in the fight against corruption and injustice in Nigeria. He continued to release socially conscious music, and his music became a source of inspiration for the youth who were fighting for change. Even though the songs have been released for a long period of time, they are still being sung by citizens.

According to Falade Report, he said, "It is not surprising that a song as old as ‘Mr President’ was played at the #EndSARS protests: ‘Mr President’ captured the bad leadership in the country when the song was released in 2006, but it has become an evergreen song because it continues to reflect the concerns and worries of Nigerians. The song also points to one of the most common allegations levelled against SARS—framing innocent Nigerian youths for crimes they did not commit.”

Furthermore, the songs inspired other artists to use their platforms to address social issues in their work. They showed that art and music could be used as a tool for social change and activism.

**3.3 Political contest of Lagbaja “Surulere”**

The song begins with bell sound, which has a great and significant meaning. It signify crying loud out to the listeners and Nigerians, calling them out to what to the message he's about to pass. Also calling all Nigerians to the issues that needs redress. The bell also symbolize the tradition of Africa in the use of bell to draw attention to a vital information.

The next is slang “three gbo sa” with a general response this indicates voices and people coming together in oneness and unity to speak about the issues affecting them.

**Verse 1**

**Melo la fa ka**

**Leyin adipele**

**Amo lagabra Olorun, ola nbo wa dara**

**After many many years of waka for bush**

**Eventually we enter democracy**

**But instead to progress**

**Na fighting we dey fight**

**If democracy go work**

**We must get patience small**

**To destroy very easily**

**But to build nko**

**Eh Wahala ni o**

**Afi ka ni suuru**

**U to lojo**

**Suuru lere o**

**E ma je a f’ayo fo**

The verse one starts with the line **“**Melo la fa ka”. Meaning what more can we say. The next line “Leyin adipele” meaning After many years of wandering in the wilderness “Amo lagabra Olorun, ola nbo wa Dara”meaning But by the grace of God, we have entered into good times Adekogbe (2020, p 1) state that “Lagbaja examined the multi-needs of Nigerians in terms of education, health and other socially connected needs which have to be cared for one by one by drawing from the rich Yoruba proverbial statement with a conclusion that everything will be in well by God’s power.”

This opening verse sets the stage for the rest of the song, which is a commentary on the state of democracy in Nigeria. “After many many years of waka for bush”references the struggle to enter democracy after years of military rule, and suggests that the current state of affairs is not ideal, despite the fact that they have entered a period of relative peace and stability. The next line state “ But instead to progress Na fighting we dey fight”.Lagbaja expresses frustration with the lack of progress that has been made since entering democracy. He acknowledges that there is fighting and unrest. The next line “If democracy go work We must get patience small”.He suggests that in order for democracy to work, people need to be patient and willing to put in the work to build something lasting. He explained that destroy is easy and we should mindful that to build takes time, which is the best for all. He emphasizes the importance of patience and perseverance by repeating the phrase "Suuru lere o" ("Patience is good").

**So therefore**

**O military**

**Ko military**

**O democracy**

**Ko democracy**

**O policitian**

**Ko politician**

**Suuru lere o, e ma je a fayo fo o**

**O legislature**

**Ko legislature**

**O certificate**

**Ko certificate**

**O gba master**

**Ko gba master**

**O gba Mrs.**

**Ko gba Mrs**

**All na democracy lesson, e korin**

In this part, Lagbaja critiques different elements of democracy, including the military, politicians, and government institutions. He called out on the law makers of Nigeria “O legislator”, depicting the disagreement that had happened, even till today. We see this abnormal and lack of peace within the Nigeria government and her arms of government. This same issue Lagbaja called out happened June 22, 2010 in Abuja. At the Nigeria House of Representatives. The House of representative, speaker introduced a motion for his impeachment and the House of Representatives members opposed him, and it turn to brawl and disagreement. He emphasizes the need for patience and perseverance in working towards a better democracy.

**(Chorus)**

**Ki la wa se**

**Sejo lawa f’aye gbo**

**Ki la wa se**

**Seb’aye la wa je nibi**

**E ba fi iyen le**

**E je a j’aye ori nibi**

**Bo ba dola**

**Ka mi a ran wahala wa lo**

**In the chorus Lagbaja introduced questions that are lofty**

**The first lines says “Ki la wa se Sejo lawa f’aye gbo**”.

Meaning what are we here for, are we here to listen to stories all along. Are we not here to enjoy our life. Olaniyan (2023), explains further that Lagbaja posed a set of rhetorical questions: “What did we come to do? Did we come to listen to stories? What did we come to do? We have come to the world to enjoy. So, let’s leave all our worries and merry. When tomorrow comes, we’ll continue with our struggles.”This clarifies that we are not here to focus our minds on our worries and comments but we should be happy and we will carry on tomorrow with it challenges

**Baa ba ni a so’ko s’oja**

**A b’ara ile o**

**If we search ourself nobody innocent o**

**Baa ba ni a so’ko s’oja se a f’ara ile lori**

**Everybody guilty patapata**

**Nobody innocent o**

**So make we stop all this hypocrisy**

**Make we get patience small**

**Build better democracy, orin**

This verse is a reflection on the current state of society, particularly in Nigeria. The first line, expression“Baa bani a so'kos'oja', 'A b'araile o”means that if we throw a stone into the market, it will hit a family member of the person who threw the stone. This emphasizes the need for caution in our interactions with one another, as our actions will ultimately have consequences. We should acknowledge our responsibility for our actions and use this understanding to overcome our differences and work together to strengthen our democracy

The verse also saying that if we were to honestly examine ourselves, we would find that nobody is innocent. The line "If we search ourselves nobody innocent o" means that everyone has some level of guilt or responsibility for the current state of affairs. The following line, "Baa ba ni a so’ko s’oja se a f’ara ile lori, everybody guilty patapata, nobody innocent o," is a repetition of this sentiment. Adekogbe (2020, p 1),also state that, “It was observed in this music that if we eventually want to dig to the root of corruption in Nigeria, everyone will be connected either directly or indirectly, everyone will have a price to pay.”

The next two lines, "So make we stop all this hypocrisy, make we get patience small," suggest that we need to stop pretending that we are innocent and instead acknowledge our individual and collective roles in the current situation. The call for "patience small" is a reminder that building a better society takes time and cannot be achieved overnight.

The final two lines, "Build better democracy, orin," are a call to action. The word "orin" means "song" in Yoruba, and it could be interpreted as a call to sing a new song or create a new narrative for the future. The line "Build better democracy" implies that the current system is not working, and we need to work together to create a better one.

**E je a rora o**

**Suuru lere o**

**(Bridge)**

**Bo ba baje ko se tunse boro o**

**Ohun elege ni democracy yi o**

**We must be patient o**

**But vigilant o**

**Bi e ba sun e ma se pa’ju de o**

**Ka ma so won towo tese o**

**Oju lalakan fi nsori o**

**Awon arije ndi ibaje nbe ntosi o**

**E fura o**

**Pansa ofura pansa ja’na o**

**Aja ofura aja jin o**

**B’onile o fura ole a ko lo**

**Ifura logun agba o**

**Democracy yi o gbodo tuka o**

**E ma je a fayo fo o**

**Ka ma se bi omuti o**

**To muti gbagba ise o**

**To wa dakeregbe bo’ri o**

This verse is delivered as a speech in music, lagbaja addressing the listener and calling for patience and vigilance in building a better democracy. The verse begins with the artist encouraging the listener to be patient and to have a calm demeanor, stating "E je a rora o, Suuru lere o" which translates to "Let us be patient, patience is good".

Lagbaja stated in the lines “Ohun elege ni democracy yi o”.This literary means this democracy is fragile and slight, so therefore we must be handle it with care. And we should make mistakes with it.

The artist then goes on to highlight the importance of being patient and vigilant in building a functional democracy, stating "We must be patient but vigilant o, “Bi e ba sun e ma se pa'ju deo" which translates to "If you sleep, you will be taken unaware". The artist emphasizes that the citizens must be alert and aware of what is happening in the government, so they can hold leaders accountable and avoid being taken advantage of.

The artist also stresses the need to stop the hypocrisy and work towards building a better democracy, stating "Ka ma so won towo tese o, Oju lalakan fi nsori o" which means Let us stop the hypocrisy and face the reality.

Towards the end of the verse, the artist uses a Yoruba proverb to describe the consequences of bad leadership, stating "Ifura logun agba o, Democracy yi o gbodo tuka o"which translates to "The medicine of an elderly person is discernment, this democracy must not scatter and fail ". The artist is drawing attention to the fact that if nothing is done to fix the current state of democracy, the consequences will be severe.

**Bridge**

**Onibata yi ki lo wi, je ngbo**

**Omuti gbagbe ise**

**O da’keregbe bo’ri**

**O da’kere**

**O d’akeregbe**

**O da’keregbe bo’ri**

**Suuru lere o**

**Sugbon e mo ja a gbagbe ‘ra o**

**Te ba lo gbagbe ‘ra peren ehh**

**Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin o**

**Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin lokokan**

**Baa ba ba’yi je mo sorry fun gbogbo yin o**

**Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin lokokan**

**Baa ba loko suuru sorry fun gbogbo gbo gbo, gbogbo gbo gbo, gbogbo yin o**

**Mo sorry fun gbogbogbo yi lokokan**

**Ah … Baa ba ba yi je, mo sorry fun gbogbo yin o**

**Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin lokokan**

This part Lagbaja, introduced the bata drum to give warning to the listeners with a Yoruba Proverb that is instructive. Although the bata percussion has been applied even from the beginning of the song. But at this part Lagbaja gave more insight about what it was saying “Onibata yi ki lo wi, je ngbo”.Meaning the bata player we want to hear you clearly.The usage of the bata in line with the proverb is highly creative, instructive and inspiring for the listeners.The bata drum and proverb serve to reinforce the message of the song.The phrase “Omuti gbagbe iseO da’keregbe bo’ri” is a Yoruba proverb that translates to the person who forgets their work. In the context of the song, it serves as a metaphor for the Nigerian people who have become complacent and forgotten their responsibility to hold their leaders accountable and demand good governance. The repetition of the proverb emphasizes the importance of remembering this responsibility and taking action and also is chanted in a call-and-response format between the lead singer and the chorus, with the bata drums punctuating each line. Lagbaja is reminding the listeners that patience is key and it leads to the next line which gives answers to the listeners if they fail to listen to the proverb and warning.

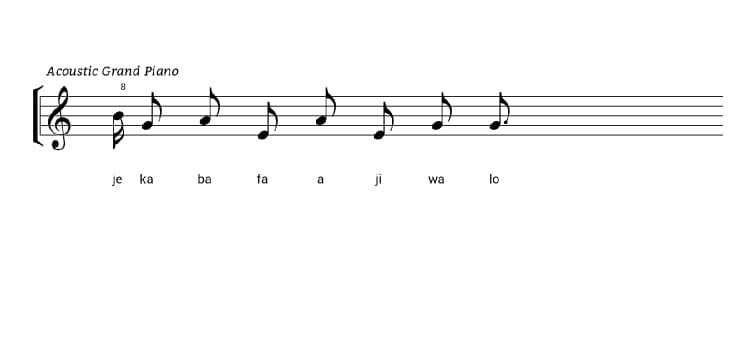
He said if paradventure the fail to listen and it turns into worst case then, they are the most pity one’s. The line state“Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin o Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin lokokan”. The English translation of this words are I apologize to everyone . But in this song, Lagbaja means I feel pity and sorry for your loss, if you fail to follow my advise.

Motolani also state, that “On the bridge of ‘Suuru Lere,’ Lagbaja sympathetically sang, “Mo sorry fun gbogbo yin o, mo sorry fun gbogbo yin lokankan…” In English that means, “I’m sorry for you all (Nigerians) one by one…” If Lagbaja reviewed the tenets of the song, he would realize that his warnings were not heeded.” ( motalani 20 years after Lagbaja’s warning on ‘Suuru Lere,’ Nigeria is in trouble)

Adekogbe (2020, p 1)“Lagbaja then concluded the musical track by expressing the passion in his hearth on the “sorry situation” of Nigeria.”

In conclusion, Lagbaja's "Surulere" is a powerful commentary on the state of democracy in Nigeria, and a call to action for the people to be more vigilant and actively work towards a betterfuture. The song's combination of traditional West African music and contemporary lyrics makes it both musically and socially significant.



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**Social Analysis of “Surulere”**

"Suuru Lere" by Lagbaja has been widely regarded as a social commentary on the state of Nigeria at the time of its release in 2000. The song addresses issues of corruption, poverty, and injustice, among others. The lyrics speak of the need for patience and vigilance in the face of these challenges, and the call for a better, more just society.

The song was met with widespread acclaim upon its release, with many praising its message and Lagbaja's delivery. It quickly became a hit in Nigeria and across Africa, and has since been recognized as a classic of Nigerian music.

Many have also noted the impact that the song has had beyond its initial release. In the years since its debut, "Suuru Lere" has become a rallying cry for social justice activists and political movements in Nigeria and beyond. Its message of hope and perseverance in the face of adversity has resonated with many who continue to struggle against the same issues that Lagbaja sang about over twenty years ago. This song addressed the Nigeria legislators at the early stage of democracy in Nigeria, it happened that senators usually have dissension in the House, this song calmed the political abnormalities and restored peace and stability.

In addition to its social significance,"Suuru Lere"is also notable for its musical style. The song blends elements of traditional Yoruba music with contemporary Afrobeat and jazz influences. The use of the bata drum and other traditional percussion instruments gives the song a distinctly African feel, while Lagbaja's saxophone solos and the song's jazz-inflected chord progressions add a modern twist.

Overall, **"Suuru Lere"** stands as a testament to the power of music to inspire social change and promote cultural understanding. Its enduring popularity and continued relevance are a testament to its status as a classic of Nigerian and African music

**3.4 Political contest of Falz's song “This is Nigeria”**

Falz’s “This Is Nigeria,” released on May 25, 2018, mimics American musician Childish Gambino’s “This Is America (song).” The music was released to express dissension, representation of official corruption, police brutality and extrajudicial killings, email scams, drug abuse, and spiritual fundamentalism.The song begins off with the voice of human rights attorney and activist Femi Falana, Falz’s father.

**Extremely Poor. The medical facilities are poor. We operate a predatory, neocolonial capitalist system, which is founded on fraud and exploitation and therefore you are bound to have corruption. Many criminal cases are settled in police station.**

In the case of the intro, the Music Artist Falz (Folarin Falana) open up his mind and employ spoken word rather than traditional singing to convey his message. This is a common technique in hip-hop and other forms of spoken word poetry, where the emphasis is on the delivery and rhythm of the words rather than the melody. By using spoken word, Falz is able to communicate his message in a more direct and forceful manner, which is well-suited to the protest theme of the song.

**Ehee, Ehee Ehee ee ewo**

**Ehee, Ehee Ehee ee ewo**

**Ehee, Ehee Ehee ee ewo**

**Chorus**

**This is Nigeria**

**Look how I'm living now**

**Look how I'm living now**

**Everybody be criminal**

**This is Nigeria**

**Look how we living now**

**Look what we eating now**

**Everybody be criminal**

**Chorus end**

The chorus explains the body and the musical motif of the song. This reveals the abnormalities, illegal and corrupt lifestyle that has now become a standard living of the country Nigeria.The chorus brings to the listeners attention, about the issue of illegal and immoral that has become the society standard of living. The line "Everybody be criminal," which highlights the pervasive corruption and lawlessness in Nigeria. The chorus repeats the opening line, reinforcing the idea that criminal behavior is rampant in Nigeria. The repetition of the phrase "look how we living now" draws attention to the deplorable living conditions and poverty that many Nigerians face.

**This is Nigeria**

**Just because I'm on TV now**

**Person wey get no work**

**Is checking to see**

**If my watch is original**

**This is Nigeria**

**Wey da Madam Philomena**

**Money vanish from your office**

**36 million**

**You talk say na animal**

**This is Nigeria**

**Never end the recession o**

**When looter and killers and stealers are still contesting election o**

**Politicians wey thief some billions and billion no dey go prison o**

**Police station dey close by 6**

**Security reason o**

The line, "Just because I'm on TV now," highlights the idea that success in Nigeria is often equated with wealth and material possessions. Falz then contrasts this with the reality faced by many Nigerians, who are struggling to find work and make ends meet. The line "Person wey get no work is checking to see if my watch is original" shows how poverty and envy can lead to distrust and suspicion among people.

The next few lines address the issue of corruption, specifically the case of the missing money from the office of Madam Philomena. Falz calls attention to the fact that 36 million naira (equivalent to roughly $100,000) went missing, and yet the authorities claim it was an "animal" that took the money. This is a reference to a widely publicized incident in Nigeria where officials claimed that a snake had swallowed 36 million naira from a government office. Falz then moves on to the issue of politics, pointing out that despite the country being in a recession, corrupt politicians are still contesting elections and stealing billions of naira with impunity. He highlights the fact that the justice system is often unable or unwilling to hold these individuals accountable, as evidenced by the fact that many of them do not go to prison.

Finally, the last line of the song, "Police station dey close by 6, security reason o," is a commentary on the lack of security and safety in Nigeria. The fact that police stations close early due to security concerns shows just how dangerous the country can be for its citizens.

**Babaa, oshe o, Babaa, Oshe o Babaa**

**My brothers and sisters I want you to put your hands up right now because your miracle is coming this week. If you believe let me hear you say Amen.**

**This is Nigeria**

**Praise and worship we singing now**

**Pastor put his hands on the breast of his members**

**He's pulling the demons out**

**This is Nigeria**

**No electricity daily o**

**Your people are still working multiple jobs**

**And they talk say we lazy o**

**This Is Nigeria**

**There is plenty Wahala sha**

**Fulani Herdsmen still they slaughter**

**Carry people they massacre**

**This is Nigeria**

**Works in my area**

**This is democracy**

**Political hysteria**

**Yahoo yahoo don't tear everywhere**

**Now we act like it's so cool**

**Casting the P being castigated just by trying to noble**

**This is Nigeria**

**Look at my nation o**

**SARS stop me for road any explanation you go talk am for station o**

The second verse start with the religious lifestyle and it bad side, which is popular in the country, the issue of religious leaders using their position to take advantage of their congregants. Falz describes a situation where a pastor is touching the breast of a female member, claiming to be casting out demons. This is a reference to the widespread problem of sexual abuse by pastors and religious leaders in Nigeria, which has been widely reported in the news.

The line “No Electricity Daily”vet the issue of infrastructure, specifically the lack of consistent electricity supply in Nigeria. Falz points out that people are still working multiple jobs despite this, contradicting the belief that Nigerians are lazy. This is a common stereotype perpetuated by some people, including politicians.

He also focus on the ongoing issue of violence in Nigeria, particularly the Fulani herdsmen attacks that have claimed many lives. Falz also references the issue of internet fraud, known as "yahoo yahoo," and the fact that some people see it as a normal or cool thing to do, despite its negative impact on society.

In the final line, Falz criticizes the state of democracy in Nigeria, highlighting the political hysteria and the mistreatment of citizens by the police force, specifically the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). SARS has been accused of many human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings and harassment of innocent citizens.

**(Sir am, Sir look am sorry, am just a student. Am a student of the University of Lagos. We are just coming from the club. Ok so my friend and I. No sir I had my ID to prove.)**

**Ehee, Ehee Ehee ee ewo**

**Ehee, Ehee Ehee ee ewo**

**Ehee, Ehee Ehee ee ewo**

**This is Nigeria**

**Look how I'm living now**

**Look how I'm living now**

**Everybody be criminal**

**This is Nigeria**

**Look how we living now**

**Look what we eating now**

**Everybody be criminal**

**(This is breaking, transmission of ah, transmission eh, transmission.)**

But what happens everyday is that, the system has allowed it. For instance there is no law that allows you to take money from the church, invest in business, and privatize it. No. It is only in Nigeria were you can take money from the church, money contributed by poor congregation members. You go and set up a university that the members cannot attend. Cannot send their children to. It's against the rule and the law of God. It's against the constitution.

The outro, falz gave total summary of what the message is all about. Falz uses protest music to call attention to issues of corruption and inequality in Nigeria, particularly within religious institutions. The statement you provided is an example of the kind of social commentary that is present throughout the song.

Falz highlights the issue of corruption within religious institutions in Nigeria, particularly the practice of collecting money from poor congregation members and using it for personal gain. He points out that there are no laws that allow this kind of behavior, and that it is a violation of both the rule of law and the principles of God.

The statement also touches on the issue of inequality in education in Nigeria. Falz notes that some religious leaders use the money they have collected to set up private universities, which are often too expensive for the poor to attend. This creates a situation where the rich have greater access to quality education, while the poor are left behind.

In conclusion, "This is Nigeria" is a powerful critique of various issues plaguing Nigeria, including corruption, infrastructure, violence, and human rights abuses. Falz uses spoken word to deliver his message in a direct and impactful manner, drawing attention to the urgent need for change in Nigeria.

**Social Analysis of This is Nigeria**

Falz's "This is Nigeria" is a social commentary on the ills of Nigerian society, highlighting issues such as corruption, violence, and poverty. The song was released in 2018 and has since sparked a lot of discussions and responses from both the Nigerian public and the international community.The song opens with a sample of a newscast, with a reporter describing the dire situation in Nigeria. Falz then goes on to rap about the various problems plaguing the country, using lyrics such as "Police station dey close by six, security reason o" and "Fulani herdsmen still dey slaughter, carry people dey massacre."

The release of "This is Nigeria" sparked a lot of responses from both the Nigerian public and the international community. Some people praised the song for shining a light on important issuesand starting important conversations. Others criticized the song for being too negative and painting an overly bleak picture of Nigeria.

One notable response to the song came from the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), which issued a statement saying that the song was "unfit for radio" due to its "vulgar lyrics." This sparked a lot of backlash, with many people accusing the NBC of attempting to stifle free speech.

Overall, "This is Nigeria" is a powerful commentary on the state of Nigerian society, and has sparked a lot of important conversations about the issues it raises. While some people may criticize the song for being too negative, it is clear that Falz's intention was to bring attention to the problems that need to be addressed in order to create a better Nigeria.

**3.5 African China’s “Mr President”**

African China is the stage the name of Chinagorom Onuoha, a Nigeria musician known for his socially conscious and political charged music.

**Food e no dey**

**Brother eh water no dey**

**And our country no good o**

**Everyday for thief one day for owner e**

**Poor man wey thief maggi**

**Omo dem go show him face for crime fighter (Crime fighter)**

**Rich man wey thief money**

**Omo we no dey see their face for crime fighter**

**Tell me something I don′t know**

**Rich man go dey halla prayer (Modupe)**

**Poor man go dey shout (Anwuola me e)**

**Rich man go dey halla prayer (Modupe)**

**Poor man go dey shout (Anwuola me e)**

The verse 1 of African China's song "Mr President," the artist presents a scathing critique of the Nigerian political and economic system. The song is a protest against the rampant corruption, poverty, and inequality in the country.

The opening lines of the verse highlight the lack of basic necessities such as food and water, which are essential for human survival. The phrase "And our country no good o" emphasizes the overall poor state of the nation.

The next line, "Everyday for thief one day for owner e," alludes to the cycle of corruption where those in power use their positions to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor. The poor man who steals something with less value will be punished, while the rich man who steals large sums of money is never held accountable.

The artist contrasts the treatment of the poor and the rich by the criminal justice system in the lines "Omo dem go show him face for crime fighter (Crime fighter) / Rich man wey thief money / Omo we no dey see their face for crime fighter." The phrase "omo dem go show him face" means the poor man will be publicly shamed and humiliated, while the rich man is shielded from the public eye and protected from prosecution.

The repeated refrain "Rich man go dey halla prayer (Modupe) / Poor man go dey shout (Anwuola me e)" draws attention to the stark contrast between the privileged and the marginalized in Nigerian society. The rich man offers prayers of thanks while the poor man is left to shout and protest for their basic rights.

General, this verse effectively uses vivid imagery and contrast to highlight the inequities and injustices in Nigerian society, painting a bleak picture of the state of the nation.

**Chorus**

**Mr President**

**Lead us well**

**If you be Governor**

**Govern us well**

**If you be Senator**

**Senate am well**

**If you be police**

**Police well well no dey take bribe**

**Oya lead us well (Nne me e)**

**Govern us well**

**If you be Senator**

**Senate am well**

**If you be police**

**Police well well no dey take bribe**

The chorus of African China's "Mr President" is a call for good governance and effective leadership in Nigeria. The chorus is a simple repetition of the same phrase with slight variations, highlighting the different positions of leadership in the country, from the president to the police.

The first two lines, "Mr President, lead us well. If you be Governor, govern us well," implore those in positions of political power to exercise their responsibilities properly and with the well-being of the people as a priority. The following line, "If you be Senator, Senate am well," is a plea for members of the Nigerian Senate to carry out their legislative duties with diligence and honesty.

The final line of the chorus, "If you be police, police well well no dey take bribe," is a direct challenge to the Nigerian police force, which has a notorious reputation for corruption and brutality. The phrase "police well well" is a Nigerian pidgin expression that means "do your job well," while "no dey take bribe" means "don't accept bribes."

The repetition of the phrase "lead us well" and "govern us well" emphasizes the need for accountable leadership and a functional government that works for the people, while the call for the police to "police well well no dey take bribe" echoes the public's demand for a reformed police force that upholds the rule of law and protects the rights of citizens. The chorus of "Mr President" serves as a rallying cry for Nigerians to demand better leadership, accountability, and transparency from their elected officials and public servants.

**Fuel e no dey**

**Brother eh transportation no dey**

**And our road e no good o**

**What about the NEPA people o**

**We no get light**

**Everybody just dey halla**

**Fuel no dey na how we wan survive**

**Many youth ready for work**

**But as work no dey**

**Na how dey wan survive**

**We be giant of Africa**

**But to get visa enter Ghana na WAEC**

**My God policeman go see white**

**E go tell you say I say that thing na red**

**Tell me something I don't know**

**Make una lead us well**

**No let this nation to fall inside well**

The second verse of African China's "Mr President" continues to express the challenges faced by Nigerians in their daily lives. It highlights issues such as the lack of fuel and transportation, poor road conditions, and unreliable power supply from the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA).

The verse also addresses the high unemployment rate in the country, as many youths are willing to work but cannot find jobs. This results in a struggle for survival, as people are unable to afford basic necessities like fuel and transportation.

The verse ends with a commentary on the corruption in the police force. Indicating that the police force are not true and open to the citizen. In this the citizen have no trust in them.

Musically, the second verse has a similar structure to the first, with a repeating melody and rhythm. The use of repetition reinforces the message that these issues are ongoing and persistent problems. The instrumental accompaniment is minimal, with a simple drumbeat and guitar chords providing a rhythmic foundation for the vocals. The sparse instrumentation highlights the focus on the lyrics and message of the song.

**Alhaji wey pull Khaki**

**Say the name of him party**

**People destroying people**

**Na the name of the party**

**Election for my country na paddy paddy**

**Wayo wayo**

**Arrange no ni**

**People wey vote them in still dey live in pain**

**This na disgrace I am so ashamed**

**Me don collect shop permit collect trading permit**

**Raiding permit you still dey burn shop**

**You wan tell me say you no know when them pay**

**Why you dey make us dey live in pain**

**Make una lead us well**

**No let this nation to fall inside well**

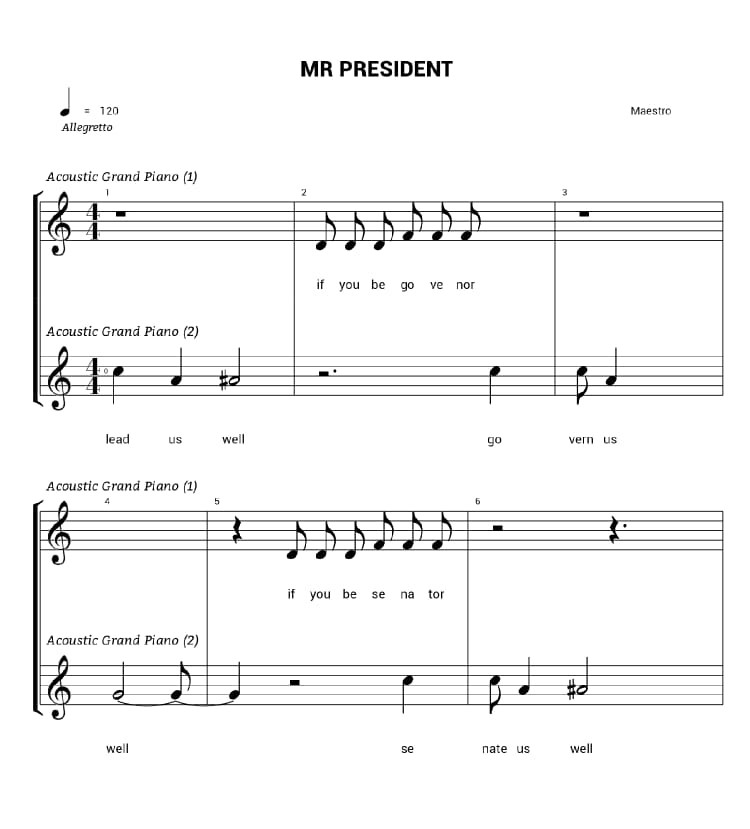
In verse 3 of "Mr President" by African China, the focus is on the political situation in Nigeria, specifically on the corruption and injustice that permeates the electoral process. The verse begins with a reference to an "Alhaji" who wears military clothing and mentions the name of his political party, implying that politicians often use their status and party affiliation for personal gain rather than to serve the people.

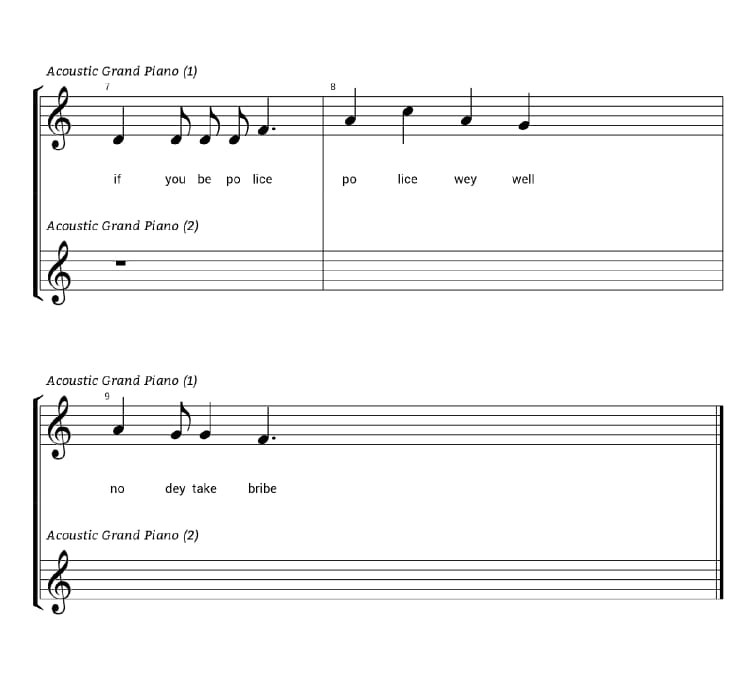
The lyrics highlight the destructive impact of politics on the Nigerian people, with the line "People destroying people, na the name of the party" suggesting that political affiliations are used as a justification for violence and exploitation. The lyrics also criticize the electoral process, with the line "Election for my country na paddy paddy, wayo wayo" implying that elections are often rigged or manipulated.

The verse goes on to express frustration with the government's failure to address the needs of the people who voted them in, with the line "People wey vote them in still dey live in pain." The lyrics also touch on the issue of corruption and bribery, with the line "Me don collect shop permit collect trading permit, raiding permit you still dey burn shop" suggesting that corrupt officials use their power to extort money from the people and destroy their businesses.

The verse concludes with a plea for leadership and accountability, with the line "Make una lead us well, no let this nation to fall inside well." The verse highlights the political and economic challenges facing Nigeria and calls for a change in leadership and governance to address these issues.

In conclusion, "Mr. President" is a powerful protest song that highlights the issues faced by ordinary Nigerians and calls on the president to take action. Through his music, African China is drawing attention to the need for change and using his platform to amplify the voices of the people. The song is an example of the important role that protest music can play in inspiring change and calling attention to social issues.

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**Social Analysis for Mr President**

"African China - Mr President" is a socio-politically conscious song released by Nigerian musician, African China, in 2006. The song addresses the corruption and poor governance in Nigeria, with a call for leaders to be accountable and responsive to the needs of the people.

The song opens with a spoken word introduction that highlights the need for good governance, and the failure of Nigerian leaders to meet the needs of the people. The lyrics of the song are delivered in a mix of Pidgin English and Nigerian local languages, which helps to connect with a wider audience and convey the message more effectively.

The song features a blend of traditional African sounds with modern-day afrobeat, which creates a unique sound that helps to capture the essence of the message.

The song was well-received by Nigerians, especially the youth who could relate to the message. Many praised African China for speaking out against the government, and for using his platform to bring attention to the plight of the people. The song was also used as a rallying cry during protests against the government and for social justice.

However, the song was not without controversy. African China was reportedly blacklisted by the government for the message in the song, and the music video was banned from being aired on national television. Despite these challenges, the song remains a classic in Nigerian music history and a testament to the power of music to inspire social change.

In conclusion, "African China - Mr President" is a powerful and socially conscious song that addresses the failures of Nigerian leadership and calls for accountability and good governance. The song resonated with Nigerians and was used as a tool for protest and social justice. Despite the challenges faced, the song remains a testament to the power of music in inspiring social change.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation**

**4.0 Introduction**

This chapter explores the summary, conclusion, recommendation and work citation for this project.

**4.1 Summary**

This project aims at understand the relationship between music and protest, how music as a form of protest can inspire and create awareness and build consciousness.

The project draws majorly on secondary source of date used include sourcing for relevant works in relation to protest music from the internet, library, journals etc. The data for this work are selected songs from popular artist who sang about the situation of things happening in the society/country, to provide insight into the musicians’ creative processes and socio-politiacal context that influence their music..

The study focuses on the use of music as a tool for social activism and examine the textual analysis, musical anaylsis and social analysis of the songs. The project aims to conduct a musical analysis of protest music by the selected song “this is Nigeria” by Falz ,“Mr President”, by African China and “Surulere” by Lagbaja.

Through this discuss and analysis, the project aims to contribute to a better understanding of the role of music in promoting social change political awareness in Nigeria.

**4.2 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this musical analysis of protest music by selected Nigeria popular musicians has revealed the significant role music plays in shaping society and bringing about change. The selected musicians, through their music, have been able to voice out their frustrations with the government and societal issues. They have used music as a form to communicate their message to the masses and also called for action for change and peace. Furthermore, this study has shown that protest music is not just a form of entertainment but also an important medium for social and political activism. It has the power to ignite social movements, spark conversations, and effect change. This project has shed light on the importance of analyzing protest music, as it provides insight into socio-political issues in Nigeria and how they can be addressed through music. Overall, this study emphasizes the need fot government and other relevant stakeholder to take into consideration the message contained in the protest music and address the issues raised. It is also recommended that further research can be conducted on the impact of protest music on society, particularly in Nigeria, to gain a better understanding of its’s role in promoting social justice and change.

**4.3 Recommendation**

Music need to be viewed as something some distance past what we dance and shake our heads to. Music need to be viewed as an agent of exchange and as a medium of evangelizing, sensitizing and educating. The variety of songs you pay attention to defines your character sometimes; therefore, I posit that people ought to not solely hear to songs however listen to the ones that are educative, informative and speaks to our souls and about what is occurring around the society. It is vital that we keep protesting for our right as music is one of the peaceful medium that can be adopted to pour out our anguish. If the residentssets to the streets in protest, the greater ops will high jack it and it will be brutal for the citizens.

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