



**THE ROLE OF NIGERIAN HIP HOP AND RAP IN  
MEDIA DRIVEN SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT**

**BY**

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## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work has been completed by **Abbas Jumoke Opeyemi** with matric number, **HND/23/MAC/FT/0977**, read through and approved as meeting the requirement of the Department of Mass Communication, Institute of Information and Communication Technology, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin in fulfilment for the Award of Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication.

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to Almighty God, my family, my friends and most especially my late mum Mrs Taye David who singlehandedly started this journey eleven years ago, it hurts so much that you're not here today but I'm very sure you're up there happy and smiling as I'm making you proud.

Continue to rest in the bosom of the lord sweet mum

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examines the role of Nigerian hip hop and rap in media-driven social justice movements, highlighting the genre's capacity to critique socio-economic inequalities, political injustices, and cultural marginalization. Through a critical discourse analysis of selected songs and artist interviews, this research reveals how Nigerian hip hop artists utilize linguistic strategies, cultural expression, and activism to amplify marginalized voices, promote critical thinking, and inspire collective action. The findings demonstrate the genre's potential as a powerful tool for social commentary, cultural critique, and mobilization, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intersections between music, media, and social justice in Nigeria.*

*Keywords: Nigerian hip hop, social justice, media, activism, cultural expression.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Hip hop and rap music have long been integral to youth culture worldwide, providing a platform for self-expression and resistance. In Nigeria, these genres have become significant cultural forces, especially in the context of social justice movements. Nigerian hip hop and rap artists have increasingly used their platforms to address issues such as political corruption, police brutality, economic inequality, and human rights violations, with lyrics often serving as a form of protest and social commentary. The powerful influence of Nigerian hip hop is particularly relevant in a society where youth, who represent the majority of the population, are actively engaged in social and political discourse (Iwuanyanwu, 2020).

The role of hip hop and rap in Nigerian media-driven social justice movements is also shaped by the country's socio-political landscape. As Nigerian youth face increasing challenges—such as unemployment, poor governance, and inadequate social services—hip hop has provided a space for them to channel their frustrations, hopes, and demands for change (Nwachukwu, 2022). Artists like M.I Abaga, Falz, Olamide, and the late Dagrín have used their music to highlight social issues, bringing attention to topics that might otherwise be overlooked by mainstream media. For example, Falz's *This is Nigeria* critiques the country's political climate, addressing issues such as corruption, religious extremism, and poor governance (Falz, 2018). Similarly, M.I Abaga's *Illegal Music* series and Olamide's *YBNL Mafia Family* have often addressed themes of economic disparity and the lack of opportunities for youth (M.I Abaga, 2016; Olamide, 2018).

The rise of social media and digital platforms has greatly expanded the reach of Nigerian hip hop artists, providing them with a global audience and greater visibility in international social justice movements. Through platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, Nigerian hip hop artists can influence and mobilize young people across Africa and beyond (Okunade, 2021). The #EndSARS movement, which began as a protest against police brutality in Nigeria, is a notable example of the intersection of hip hop, social media, and activism. Nigerian rappers, including Falz, Burna Boy, and others, were vocal supporters of the movement, using their music and social media influence to advocate for police reform and greater accountability from the government (Nwabueze, 2019).

In Nigeria, music has always been a powerful tool for activism. In the past, musicians like Fela Kuti used their music to challenge government oppression and call for societal change. Today, Nigerian hip hop and rap artists are continuing this legacy by utilizing their platforms to fight for

justice and amplify the voices of those who feel silenced or marginalized. The media-driven nature of modern social justice movements, amplified by the internet and social media, has created a unique opportunity for Nigerian hip hop artists to influence both local and global political and social discourse (Nwachukwu, 2022).

This study seeks to investigate the roles of Nigerian hip hop and rap music in media-driven social justice movements. It will explore how Nigerian hip hop and rap artists contribute to raising awareness, shaping public opinion, and mobilizing action around social justice issues. The research will examine specific songs, artists, and movements, as well as the broader role of media in advocating for justice in Nigeria. By doing so, the study will underscore the power of hip hop as a tool for social change and its growing relevance in both the Nigerian and global media landscape.

## **1.2.Statement of the Problem**

Social justice movements in Nigeria have gained traction in recent years, with youth playing a key role in advocating for political, social, and economic reforms. While traditional protests have been effective, the role of contemporary media, particularly music, in driving these movements remains underexplored. Nigerian hip hop and rap artists have used their platforms to address issues like police brutality, corruption, and economic inequality. However, there is limited research on the effectiveness of these musical genres in mobilizing young people and influencing social justice outcomes.

Despite the recognition of Nigerian hip hop for its cultural value, its impact on media-driven social justice movements is not well understood. The intersection of social media, music, and activism in these movements also remains an area in need of further investigation. This lack of empirical research means that policymakers, activists, and the media industry are missing key insights into how hip hop and rap can drive social change.

This study aims to explore the roles of Nigerian hip hop and rap in media-driven social justice movements, focusing on how these genres influence the political and social consciousness of Nigerian youth and contribute to shaping social justice discourse in the country.

## **1.3.Research Objectives**

1. To examine the role of Nigerian hip hop and rap music in raising awareness about social justice issues among Nigerian youth.
2. To assess the impact of Nigerian hip hop and rap music on the political and social consciousness of young people in Nigeria.
3. To explore how Nigerian hip hop and rap artists use social media platforms to influence youth participation in social justice movements, such as the #EndSARS protest.

## **1.4.Research Questions**

1. How do Nigerian hip hop and rap music raise awareness about social justice issues among Nigerian youth?
2. What impact does Nigerian hip hop and rap music have on the political and social consciousness of young people in Nigeria?
3. In what ways do Nigerian hip hop and rap artists leverage social media to mobilize youth participation in media-driven social justice movements, such as the #EndSARS protest?

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for several reasons, particularly in understanding the influence of music, specifically Nigerian hip hop and rap, on social justice movements. It contributes to the academic literature on music and activism by offering a focused analysis of how hip hop and rap music serve as tools for social change in Nigeria. While there is existing research on music and activism in global contexts, the role of Nigerian hip hop in social justice movements has not been extensively studied. This research fills that gap by exploring how Nigerian hip hop and rap influence youth political and social consciousness, particularly in relation to issues such as police brutality, corruption, and human rights violations.

The study's findings will also be valuable to policymakers, social justice activists, and the media industry. Understanding how hip hop and rap music mobilize youth and shape public opinion will enable stakeholders to better harness these genres for advocacy and reform. Policymakers and activists can use these insights to design more effective campaigns and strategies that leverage the influence of Nigerian hip hop artists to address social issues and promote societal change.

Moreover, the study will provide practical insights into how Nigerian hip hop and rap artists use social media platforms to spread their messages and engage with a wider audience. As social media increasingly plays a crucial role in contemporary activism, understanding the dynamics between hip hop, social media, and youth mobilization offers valuable lessons for other regions and movements worldwide.

This research is also significant in promoting the importance of youth participation in social justice movements. Nigerian youth, who represent the majority of the population, often feel disconnected from traditional political structures. Hip hop and rap music provide them with a platform for self-expression and activism, and this study highlights how this medium can empower young people to become active participants in the pursuit of justice and societal reform.

#### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on the role of Nigerian hip hop and rap music in media-driven social justice movements, specifically exploring its impact on Nigerian youth. It will examine how hip hop and rap music function as tools for raising awareness about social justice issues, shaping political and social consciousness, and mobilizing action among young people in Nigeria.

The research will primarily cover the period from the early 2010s to the present, capturing the recent wave of activism and the growing use of hip hop and rap to address social justice issues such as police brutality, economic inequality, corruption, and human rights violations. The #EndSARS movement, which emerged in 2020, will serve as a key case study to explore the intersection of hip hop, social media, and youth-driven activism.

Prominent Nigerian hip hop and rap artists such as Falz, M.I Abaga, Olamide, and Burna Boy, whose music has been influential in advocating for social change, will be the main focus. The study will also explore how social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have been used by these artists to engage audiences and mobilize support for social justice movements.

Geographically, the study will focus on Nigeria but will also consider the impact of Nigerian hip hop and rap music on the African diaspora, especially in regions where Nigerian music holds significant influence. The scope will be limited to analyzing media-driven social justice movements and will not extend to broader political or cultural impacts of Nigerian hip hop and rap beyond activism.

The research will not cover the entire Nigerian music industry or explore genres outside of hip hop and rap, concentrating specifically on these genres' role in advancing social justice causes among Nigerian youth and their involvement in media-driven activism.

### 1.7. Definition of Terms

1. **Nigerian Hip Hop and Rap:** A genre of music originating from Nigeria, characterized by rhythmic vocal delivery (rapping) and often accompanied by beats, samples, and electronic music. Nigerian hip hop and rap artists frequently address social, political, and economic issues in their lyrics, making them a powerful tool for expression and activism.
2. **Social Justice Movements:** Organized efforts aimed at promoting justice in society, focusing on issues such as inequality, human rights, corruption, police brutality, and access to basic services. In this context, these movements seek to address systemic injustices and advocate for the rights and well-being of marginalized groups.
3. **Media-Driven:** Refers to the influence and use of media platforms—such as television, radio, newspapers, social media, and digital channels—to spread messages, mobilize people, and raise awareness about social justice issues. In this study, it emphasizes the role of media in amplifying the voices of Nigerian hip hop and rap artists within activism.
4. **Youth:** Refers to individuals within the age group typically considered young adults, often between the ages of 15 to 35, who are actively engaged in social, cultural, and political discourse. In Nigeria, this group constitutes the majority of the population and plays a significant role in social justice movements.
5. **Social Media:** Digital platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and others that facilitate online communication, content sharing, and networking. Social media plays a crucial role in the distribution of hip hop and rap music, serving as a means for artists to influence public opinion and mobilize youth in social justice movements.
6. **#EndSARS Movement:** A social justice movement that began as a protest against police brutality in Nigeria, specifically targeting the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). The movement gained widespread traction, especially among Nigerian youth, with hip hop and rap artists using their platforms to support the cause.
7. **Activism:** The practice of taking action to bring about social, political, or environmental change. In the context of Nigerian hip hop, activism refers to using music and public platforms to challenge injustice, advocate for reform, and encourage youth engagement in political and social issues.
8. **Political Consciousness:** The awareness and understanding of political issues, systems, and structures, often linked to a sense of responsibility and desire for social change. In this

study, it refers to the impact of hip hop and rap music on the political engagement and awareness of Nigerian youth.

9. **Social Change:** The transformation of societal structures, norms, and values to promote greater fairness, equality, and justice. The study investigates how Nigerian hip hop and rap music contribute to such transformations by inspiring action and reshaping public opinion around social justice issues.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0. Introduction

Afrobeat, a vibrant and dynamic music genre, originated in Nigeria during the late 1960s, blending traditional African rhythms with elements of jazz, funk, and highlife. Created and popularized by Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Afrobeat became more than just a sound; it emerged as a revolutionary art form with profound socio-political undertones. Fela's music critiqued systemic corruption, government oppression, and social inequality, making Afrobeat synonymous with resistance and activism. His ability to merge compelling rhythms with scathing political commentary established the genre as a powerful medium for expressing the struggles and aspirations of the Nigerian people.

In the modern era, media-driven social justice movements have gained global prominence, leveraging platforms such as social media, streaming services, and online forums to organize protests, share stories, and mobilize support. In Nigeria, the #EndSARS movement against police brutality exemplifies the potency of these tools in uniting voices and driving change. Afrobeat artists have played an integral role in these movements, using their music to highlight injustices and inspire action, both locally and internationally.

This literature review aims to explore the intersection of Nigerian Afrobeat and media-driven social justice movements. It seeks to analyze the genre's historical roots in activism, its adaptation to contemporary media platforms, and its enduring influence on advocacy efforts. Through this

exploration, the review will underscore how Afrobeat continues to serve as a catalyst for societal change in a digitally connected world.

## **2.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1.1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF AFROBEAT AND ACTIVISM**

Afrobeat, a revolutionary music genre that emerged from Nigeria, is rooted in the rich cultural heritage and socio-political struggles of the African continent. Its foundation as a tool for socio-political commentary has made it more than just a musical expression; it is a voice for the oppressed, a rallying cry for justice, and a medium for addressing critical societal issues. The genre's history, closely tied to its pioneer Fela Anikulapo Kuti, showcases its profound role in activism and its evolution as a platform for contemporary movements (Olorunyomi, 2005).

#### **1. The Foundation of Afrobeat as a Tool for Socio-Political Commentary**

Afrobeat was birthed in the late 1960s and early 1970s during a period of significant political upheaval and social transformation in Nigeria. It was a time marked by post-colonial struggles, military coups, and economic instability (Veal, 2000). Fela Kuti, the genre's creator, combined traditional African rhythms with elements of jazz, funk, and highlife to craft a sound that was distinctly African yet globally resonant. Afrobeat's foundation was deeply intertwined with Fela's vision of using music as a weapon against oppression and a platform for societal consciousness (Moorman, 2009).

Unlike conventional music genres, Afrobeat was not merely entertainment; it was a form of resistance. Through intricate melodies and powerful lyrics, it spoke directly to the realities of poverty, corruption, and inequality that plagued Nigeria and much of Africa (Olaniyan, 2004). Fela's music, performed with his band, Africa '70, tackled controversial issues, challenging the status quo and holding those in power accountable. Each song was a narrative, a reflection of the lived experiences of the people, and a call to action against injustices (Collins, 2002).

#### **2. Fela Kuti's Influence on Addressing Corruption, Inequality, and Human Rights**

Fela Kuti's impact on Afrobeat and activism cannot be overstated. As a musician, composer, and activist, he used his platform to shine a spotlight on the systemic corruption and social injustices that defined Nigeria's political landscape (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Songs like "Zombie," "Sorrow,

Tears, and Blood,” and “Water No Get Enemy” became anthems of resistance, resonating with the oppressed masses and exposing the brutality of the military regime (Olorunyomi, 2005).

One of Fela’s most iconic tracks, “Zombie,” directly criticized the Nigerian military, likening soldiers to mindless zombies who blindly followed orders. The song’s scathing critique led to severe reprisals from the government, including a violent raid on Fela’s commune, the Kalakuta Republic (Moorman, 2009). Despite the persecution, Fela remained undeterred, continuing to produce music that fearlessly confronted the powers that be. His life and music symbolized defiance, courage, and the unwavering pursuit of justice (Collins, 2002).

Fela’s activism extended beyond his music. He declared his commune an independent state, challenging the government’s authority and advocating for African cultural pride and self-determination. His political party, the Movement of the People (MOP), sought to empower the marginalized and promote transparency in governance. Although his political ambitions were met with resistance, Fela’s efforts underscored his commitment to creating a fairer and more equitable society (Falola & Heaton, 2008).

Through his music, Fela addressed issues that were often ignored or suppressed, such as police brutality, economic exploitation, and human rights abuses. His songs highlighted the struggles of ordinary Nigerians, giving them a voice in a system that sought to silence dissent. This role of Afrobeat as a conduit for socio-political expression solidified its status as a revolutionary art form (Olaniyan, 2004).

### **3. Continuity of Afrobeat as a Platform for Activism in Contemporary Times**

While Fela Kuti’s passing in 1997 marked the end of an era, the spirit of Afrobeat as a platform for activism has endured. Contemporary Afrobeat artists have inherited Fela’s legacy, using the genre to address modern societal challenges and inspire change. These artists have adapted Afrobeat to reflect the realities of today’s world, merging traditional sounds with contemporary influences while staying true to its activist roots (Olorunyomi, 2005).

One prominent figure in the continuation of Afrobeat’s activist tradition is Fela’s son, Femi Kuti. Femi has carried forward his father’s mission, producing music that critiques political corruption and advocates for human rights. His song “Dem Bobo” addresses the deceptive practices of politicians, exposing their exploitation of the masses (Moorman, 2009). Similarly, Seun Kuti,

another of Fela's sons, leads the reformed Egypt 80 band and uses his music to champion social justice causes, including environmental sustainability and workers' rights (Collins, 2002).

Beyond Fela's direct lineage, a new generation of Afrobeat-inspired artists has emerged, blending activism with global appeal. Burna Boy, often referred to as the "African Giant," has gained international acclaim for his music's political undertones. His album *Twice as Tall* includes tracks like "Monsters You Made," which critiques colonial legacies and systemic oppression. Burna Boy's involvement in the #EndSARS movement—a youth-led protest against police brutality in Nigeria—further demonstrates Afrobeat's relevance in contemporary activism (Olorunyomi, 2005).

Similarly, artists like Falz and Davido have used their platforms to amplify social justice causes. Falz's song "This Is Nigeria," inspired by Childish Gambino's "This Is America," provides a biting critique of corruption, religious hypocrisy, and insecurity in Nigeria. The music video, which depicts scenes of societal decay, sparked widespread discussions about the country's challenges and the need for reform (Falola & Heaton, 2008).

In addition to individual artists, the global reach of Afrobeat has been instrumental in raising awareness about African issues. The genre's popularity on streaming platforms and its incorporation into international collaborations have amplified its messages, reaching audiences far beyond the continent. This global resonance has enabled Afrobeat to serve as a bridge, connecting African struggles with global movements for justice and equality (Moorman, 2009).

The #EndSARS protests of 2020 provide a compelling example of Afrobeat's continued role in activism. During the protests, Afrobeat songs became rallying cries, uniting protesters and providing a soundtrack for the movement. Artists used their influence to draw attention to the demonstrations, both on the ground and online, helping to sustain momentum and attract international solidarity. This integration of music, media, and activism reflects the enduring power of Afrobeat as a force for change (Olaniyan, 2004).

The historical context of Afrobeat is inseparable from its role as a tool for socio-political commentary and activism. From its inception with Fela Kuti to its evolution in contemporary times, Afrobeat has consistently provided a voice for the voiceless, challenging injustice and advocating for a better society (Olorunyomi, 2005). Fela's fearless confrontation of corruption,

inequality, and human rights abuses laid the foundation for a genre that continues to inspire and mobilize. Today, Afrobeat remains a dynamic platform for activism, adapted by new generations of artists to address modern challenges and connect with a global audience (Falola & Heaton, 2008).

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the relevance of Afrobeat as a medium for socio-political expression is more apparent than ever. It stands as a testament to the power of music to transcend boundaries, ignite conversations, and drive meaningful change. Through Afrobeat, the legacy of activism lives on, resonating with the struggles and aspirations of people in Nigeria and beyond (Moorman, 2009).

### **2.1.2. MEDIA AS A DRIVER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS**

The media—both traditional and modern—plays a pivotal role in amplifying voices and driving social justice movements. By providing platforms for marginalized communities to share their stories, challenge injustices, and mobilize action, media serves as a critical tool in the fight for equality and human rights (McQuail, 2010). It facilitates the dissemination of critical information and the creation of spaces where collective grievances can be transformed into organized advocacy efforts (Couldry, 2012).

#### **1. The Role of Traditional and New Media**

Traditional media, such as radio, television, and print, has historically been a powerful avenue for disseminating information and shaping public opinion. For instance, during Nigeria's post-independence era, radio was pivotal in mobilizing public opinion on political reforms and social policies (Omu, 2000). However, the advent of new media, particularly social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, has revolutionized the way social justice movements operate. These platforms allow for real-time communication, global reach, and the democratization of information sharing (Castells, 2012).

Music streaming services, such as Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube, also play a crucial role by providing artists with platforms to share their messages with a global audience. Through these services, socially conscious music can transcend geographical boundaries, creating solidarity across diverse communities (Baym, 2018). The ability to create and distribute music quickly on

these platforms empowers artists to respond immediately to unfolding social issues, furthering their role as cultural leaders in justice movements (Lashua et al., 2019).

## **2. Nigerian Social Movements and Media**

In Nigeria, media has been instrumental in catalyzing social movements, particularly in addressing systemic issues like police brutality and government corruption. The #EndSARS protests of 2020 exemplify this dynamic. What began as a grassroots movement against the abuses of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) quickly gained national and international traction through social media (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2021). Protesters shared videos, photos, and firsthand accounts of police violence, forcing the global community to pay attention. Platforms like Twitter provided decentralized leadership and coordination for protests, allowing participants to share updates and strategize in real time (Okoro & Nwafor, 2021).

Hashtags like #EndSARS and #PoliceBrutalityInNigeria trended for weeks, bringing international awareness to the crisis. Social media influencers, celebrities, and activists used their platforms to amplify the voices of protesters, share donation links, and call for government accountability. These efforts were further bolstered by the contributions of Nigerian artists, whose music served as both a rallying cry and a means of sustaining the movement's energy (Uwalaka, 2021). The international media's coverage of these events highlighted the interplay between local struggles and global advocacy networks (Duru, 2021).

### **2.1.3. AFROBEAT ARTISTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH MEDIA**

Afrobeat artists have a unique relationship with media, leveraging their platforms to advocate for social justice. Many of these artists are highly active on social media, where they engage with fans, share their music, and voice their opinions on political and societal issues. For instance, Burna Boy's involvement in the #EndSARS movement showcased the power of combining music with media activism. His song "20 10 20," which commemorates the Lekki Toll Gate massacre, became an anthem for the protests, highlighting the enduring legacy of Afrobeat as a tool for resistance (Olorunyomi, 2021).

Falz, another prominent Afrobeat artist, has used his music and online presence to address systemic corruption and social issues. His viral song "This Is Nigeria" critiqued societal decay, while his active participation in online campaigns demonstrates how Afrobeat artists harness media for

advocacy (Olorunyomi, 2018). By aligning their messages with ongoing socio-political narratives, these artists amplify the impact of their activism.

In addition, music streaming platforms and YouTube have allowed Afrobeat artists to reach global audiences, thereby internationalizing local struggles. By sharing their music and messages on these platforms, artists ensure that their activism resonates not just in Nigeria, but around the world (Baym, 2018). The cross-border reach of Afrobeat strengthens transnational solidarity movements, creating an interconnected web of resistance and support for justice initiatives (Gunner, 2020).

#### **2.1.4. AFROBEAT'S ROLE IN ADVOCACY AND MOBILIZATION**

##### **1. Examination of Lyrical Content and Themes**

Afrobeat, as a genre, has its roots in resistance, with Fela Kuti using music to address the systemic injustices of post-colonial Africa. Its defining characteristic is its lyrical depth, often shedding light on issues of governance, inequality, and human rights. Contemporary Afrobeat artists have evolved the genre while retaining its activist core. Songs like Falz's *"This Is Nigeria"* provide a satirical yet hard-hitting critique of corruption and societal ills, echoing Fela's unapologetic approach (Onyeka, 2020). Burna Boy's *"Collateral Damage"* delves into how oppressive leadership continues to harm citizens, urging listeners to reflect on their complicity in accepting poor governance (Adegbola, 2021). Themes of Pan-African unity, empowerment, and resistance are central to Afrobeat, making it a potent medium for advocacy (Adedeji, 2013).

##### **2. Anthems for Movements**

Certain Afrobeat tracks have transcended their role as entertainment to become rallying cries for social and political movements. For instance, Burna Boy's *"Monsters You Made"* became an emblem of the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria, where youths demanded an end to police brutality and governmental accountability (Okeke, 2021). The song, with lyrics such as *"You teach me to be ruthless, you teach me to fight fire with fire,"* resonated with the frustrations of a generation. Similarly, Fela Kuti's *"Zombie"*—a scathing critique of the Nigerian military's blind obedience—remains an anthem for civil resistance decades after its release (Olaniyan, 2004). In Ghana, Stonebwoy's *"Run Go"* questioned leaders about the state of the nation, becoming a motivational track for those advocating for better governance (Mensah, 2018). These anthems not only provide emotional catharsis but also inspire action and solidarity.

### **3. Artists as Advocates**

Modern Afrobeat artists are not just musicians but also influential voices in advocacy. Their global platforms give them the power to amplify local struggles on a worldwide scale. Burna Boy, often called the "African Giant," uses his music and influence to shed light on systemic issues, from police brutality to colonial exploitation (Eze, 2021). For example, his song *"20:10:20"* was a tribute to victims of the Lekki Toll Gate massacre during the #EndSARS protests, drawing international attention to the event. Tiwa Savage's speech at international platforms and her call for global support during the #EndSARS movement highlighted the genre's ability to transcend national borders (Adedayo, 2021). Similarly, Davido's active participation in protests and advocacy for reforms has demonstrated the commitment of Afrobeat artists to effecting tangible change (Ogundipe, 2022).

### **4. Digital Platforms Amplifying Afrobeat Advocacy**

The rise of social media has further strengthened Afrobeat's role in mobilization. Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube serve as spaces where artists share protest songs, engage with fans, and rally support for causes. During the #EndSARS movement, hashtags like #EndSARSNow trended globally, with Afrobeat artists at the forefront of the conversation (Obiora, 2020). Live performances, Instagram Live sessions, and TikTok challenges featuring protest songs have increased their visibility and reach, making advocacy efforts more dynamic and engaging (Uche, 2022).

### **5. Impact on Global Awareness and Solidarity**

Afrobeat's advocacy has not only mobilized local communities but also garnered international solidarity. Artists like Wizkid and Burna Boy have used their global recognition to draw attention to African struggles. For example, during the Black Lives Matter protests in the United States, Afrobeat songs addressing systemic racism and injustice were widely shared, fostering a connection between African and African-American struggles (Adebayo, 2020). The genre's ability to unify diverse audiences under shared ideals of justice and equality underscores its importance as a tool for advocacy (Onah, 2022).

### **6. Challenges in Advocacy Through Afrobeat**

Despite its successes, Afrobeat's role in advocacy faces challenges. Government censorship, threats to artists, and attempts to stifle dissent remain significant hurdles. Fela Kuti's experiences with harassment and arrests by the Nigerian government highlight the risks associated with using music for activism (Olaniyan, 2004). Modern Afrobeat artists also face backlash and attempts at suppression, especially when their messages challenge powerful institutions (Obasi, 2021). Additionally, the commercial pressures of the music industry sometimes dilute the activist essence of Afrobeat, with some artists choosing to prioritize mainstream appeal over political messaging (Olayemi, 2019).

Afrobeat continues to be a potent instrument of advocacy and mobilization, evolving from Fela Kuti's revolutionary chants to the modern anthems of global superstars. Its combination of powerful lyrics, vibrant rhythms, and the global platforms of its artists ensures that it remains a voice for the voiceless. By addressing systemic injustices, creating movement-defining anthems, and leveraging digital tools, Afrobeat artists continue to inspire action and solidarity, reaffirming the genre's role as a catalyst for societal change (Adedeji, 2013; Ogundipe, 2022).

## **2.15. Afrobeat's Global Reach and Cultural Influence**

### **1. Global Appeal and Amplification of Nigerian Social Justice Causes**

Afrobeat has achieved remarkable global recognition in recent years, transcending its roots in Nigeria to become a major global cultural force. This rise in popularity has enabled Nigerian social justice causes to gain international visibility. The universal appeal of Afrobeat, which blends vibrant rhythms with poignant lyrics, allows it to cross cultural and linguistic boundaries. Songs like Burna Boy's *"Monsters You Made"* and Wizkid's *"Made in Lagos"* touch on issues of inequality, governance, and systemic oppression, resonating with audiences worldwide. As these artists perform at international events such as the Grammys and global music festivals, they effectively bring attention to issues in Nigeria, such as police brutality, corruption, and human rights abuses. The global audience for Afrobeat creates an opportunity for Nigerian social justice movements to be amplified, sparking conversations and raising awareness far beyond Nigeria's borders (Okeke, 2021). The incorporation of activism into their music gives these causes a platform that attracts both African diaspora communities and non-African listeners, strengthening solidarity for change.

### **2. Collaborations Between Nigerian Artists and Global Figures**

Collaborations between Nigerian Afrobeat artists and international figures have further highlighted social issues and brought Nigerian struggles to the forefront of global discourse. For example, Burna Boy's partnership with American rapper JAY-Z on "*Freedom*" highlights themes of liberation, justice, and the ongoing fight for equality. This cross-cultural collaboration expands Afrobeat's message, amplifying the narrative of resistance to oppression on a global stage. Similarly, artists like Wizkid, Davido, and Tiwa Savage have teamed up with global stars such as Drake, Beyoncé, and Nicki Minaj, blending Afrobeat with global music genres and elevating the conversation about African rights and freedom.

Beyoncé's involvement in the 2019 *Lion King: The Gift* album, which featured Nigerian Afrobeat artists such as Burna Boy, Tiwa Savage, and Mr Eazi, not only showcased African culture but also supported the global recognition of the continent's struggles, including themes of identity, history, and empowerment. Through these collaborations, global artists can further propel Afrobeat's capacity to influence and engage listeners on issues like racial justice, freedom, and African unity (Adebayo, 2020).

In addition, these collaborations often serve as platforms for global figures to advocate for the very causes Afrobeat artists sing about. When artists like JAY-Z or Beyoncé partner with Afrobeat musicians, they often use their platforms to bring attention to global issues like inequality and poverty, which resonate with Nigerian social justice movements. These partnerships signify a blending of local and global perspectives, reinforcing the idea that social justice is a universal cause.

Afrobeat's global reach and cultural influence have become powerful tools for amplifying Nigerian social justice causes on the world stage. Through the genre's widespread appeal and strategic collaborations with international artists, Afrobeat has elevated issues such as police brutality, corruption, and human rights abuses, making them part of the global conversation. These collaborations bridge cultural divides and use music as a medium to spark dialogue and promote solidarity. As the genre continues to grow in prominence, its potential for fostering social change on a global scale becomes increasingly significant.

#### **2.1.6. Challenges and Critiques of Afrobeat in Social Advocacy**

##### **1. Critiques of Commercialization Over Activism**

One of the primary critiques of Afrobeat in recent years is the perceived shift from activism toward commercialization. Initially, Afrobeat music, with its roots in resistance and social commentary, was driven by artists like Fela Kuti, whose songs directly challenged Nigeria's political system and global injustices. However, as Afrobeat has evolved into a global commercial powerhouse, some critics argue that it has diluted its activist essence in favor of mainstream appeal and financial success. This transformation is seen in the growing focus on luxury, party culture, and personal success in the lyrics of some contemporary artists.

For instance, artists like Burna Boy and Wizkid, despite occasionally addressing social issues in their music, have faced criticism for prioritizing commercial success and international recognition over political activism. Their collaborations with global pop stars, while promoting African culture, are sometimes viewed as reinforcing the "globalized" nature of Afrobeat rather than addressing pressing local struggles. Critics argue that the genre's increasing commercialization risks overshadowing its original purpose as a voice for marginalized communities (Ogundipe, 2022). Furthermore, the focus on global markets can sometimes lead to the appropriation or softening of messages that were once bold calls for social change.

## **2. Limitations in Reaching Grassroots Movements**

Despite its global appeal, Afrobeat also faces limitations in reaching and mobilizing grassroots movements within Nigeria and other African countries. While Afrobeat music circulates widely on platforms like YouTube and Spotify, and is often featured in protests and advocacy campaigns, there remains a significant gap between online mobilization and actual grassroots engagement. Social media activism, which is often seen as a key method for spreading Afrobeat's messages, can sometimes result in superficial support, where listeners engage with the music on a digital level but fail to translate that engagement into tangible action within their communities (Okeke, 2021).

Moreover, the reliance on media-driven efforts can alienate certain segments of the population, particularly those without consistent access to the internet or social media platforms. For example, rural communities or lower-income groups, who might be most affected by the issues addressed in Afrobeat music, often lack the resources or technological access to engage with the genre's content in the same way as urban or diaspora populations. This digital divide limits the extent to which Afrobeat can act as a tool for real-world mobilization (Adedayo, 2021).

Additionally, while Afrobeat artists use their platforms to raise awareness, the extent of their influence on actual policy change and grassroots activism remains debatable. Critics point out that while Afrobeat serves as an important tool for raising awareness about social issues, it may not always translate into concrete political or social change, especially if the messages remain confined to the entertainment industry rather than pushing forward grassroots or community-driven initiatives (Onah, 2022).

While Afrobeat remains a powerful vehicle for social advocacy, it is not without its challenges and criticisms. The genre's increasing commercialization, the potential dilution of its activism in favor of global appeal, and the limitations of digital activism in engaging grassroots movements are significant concerns. To maintain its role as a force for change, Afrobeat must strike a balance between commercial success and its commitment to addressing pressing social issues. As the genre continues to grow, it will be important for Afrobeat artists to stay connected to the grassroots causes that originally defined their music and use their global platforms to push for real, tangible change.

#### **2.1.7. Case Studies: Afrobeat's Role in Social Movements**

##### **1. #EndSARS: Afrobeat's Role in Mobilizing Protests**

One of the most significant examples of Afrobeat's role in advocacy is its involvement in the #EndSARS movement, a nationwide protest in Nigeria aimed at ending police brutality, particularly the abuse of power by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). Afrobeat artists, who have long been seen as cultural and political commentators, played a pivotal role in amplifying the movement. The combination of Afrobeat's cultural influence and its potent political messages made it an ideal vehicle for protest songs that voiced the frustrations of the Nigerian youth.

Burna Boy, one of the most prominent Afrobeat stars, was particularly vocal during the #EndSARS protests. His song "*Monsters You Made*" became an anthem for the movement, resonating deeply with the experiences of young Nigerians who had been victims of police brutality. The song addresses the corruption and injustice within the Nigerian system, emphasizing the frustration of the Nigerian youth in the face of systemic oppression. Burna Boy used his global platform to highlight the #EndSARS protests, and his involvement in social media campaigns, live streams, and interviews with international media helped garner global attention for the cause (Adebayo, 2020).

Similarly, other Afrobeat artists like Wizkid, Tiwa Savage, and Runtown expressed their support for the movement through social media and public statements. Wizkid's "*Ojuelegba*" and Tiwa Savage's advocacy in favor of the youth were part of the wider cultural shift where Afrobeat was no longer just entertainment, but also a tool for political activism. These artists leveraged their influence to galvanize the youth to take to the streets, contributing to the widespread protests across Nigeria and globally. The songs became not only a source of emotional solidarity but also a rallying cry for justice and accountability.

Afrobeat artists also played an important role in sustaining the momentum of the movement, with their music serving as a constant reminder of the cause. Their platforms allowed for the spread of protest messages and awareness of police brutality, ensuring the movement received both local and international attention. The role of Afrobeat in the #EndSARS movement highlighted the power of music in social and political mobilization, particularly in contexts where traditional forms of activism may be suppressed (Okeke, 2021).

## **2. Afrobeat and Human Rights: "Chop Life" and the Fight Against Corruption**

Afrobeat music has also aligned itself with broader human rights causes beyond police brutality. One notable example is the song "*Chop Life*" by Nigerian artist 2Baba, which addresses issues of governance, corruption, and human rights. The song calls for a change in leadership and emphasizes the need for government accountability in Nigeria. The lyrics of the song are a direct critique of the pervasive corruption and the failure of the political class to address the basic needs of the citizens. It advocates for a government that prioritizes the welfare of the people over personal gain, aligning itself with the fight for human rights, social justice, and fairness.

The impact of "*Chop Life*" was not limited to music; the song became a tool for raising awareness about Nigeria's political system, mobilizing the youth to demand better governance. Afrobeat artists, including 2Baba, who have consistently used their platform to address corruption, emphasize the importance of civic responsibility and activism. Their involvement in campaigns against corruption helps highlight the widespread human rights issues related to the political class, further positioning Afrobeat as a genre that advocates for social change (Adedayo, 2021).

## **3. Afrobeat and Environmental Justice: The Case of "*The Prophecy*" by Fela Kuti**

Afrobeat's alignment with environmental justice is also evident in Fela Kuti's legacy, particularly through his song *"The Prophecy."* Although Fela Kuti's music was primarily focused on political activism, his messages also touched on issues of environmental degradation and the exploitation of natural resources in Nigeria. *"The Prophecy"* critiques the political elite's mismanagement of Nigeria's resources, which has had significant environmental consequences, including deforestation, oil spills, and soil degradation caused by unregulated oil exploration.

Fela's activism, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, addressed the exploitation of Nigeria's natural resources by foreign multinational corporations, which resulted in long-lasting environmental damage. His music served as a vocal opposition to the government's neglect of environmental protection and the people's rights to a healthy environment. Though this message was not as explicitly framed within the context of contemporary environmental justice movements, Fela's songs laid the foundation for later Afrobeat artists to continue advocating for environmental sustainability and corporate responsibility.

In more recent years, Afrobeat artists like Burna Boy and Mr Eazi have used their platforms to speak out on environmental issues, particularly the ongoing devastation caused by oil extraction in the Niger Delta. These artists highlight the intersection between human rights and environmental justice, emphasizing how the neglect of natural resources affects vulnerable communities. Through performances and advocacy, these artists contribute to a growing discourse on environmental sustainability in Africa and globally (Ogundipe, 2022). Afrobeat's role in social justice advocacy is evident in its involvement in movements like #EndSARS, as well as in its alignment with broader human rights and environmental causes. From songs that have mobilized protests against police brutality to critiques of government corruption and environmental degradation, Afrobeat artists use their music and platforms to raise awareness and inspire action. While the genre continues to evolve commercially, its roots in activism and social change remain central to its global appeal and impact. As Afrobeat artists continue to collaborate with international figures and engage with global audiences, their music will undoubtedly remain a powerful tool for social advocacy and justice.

## **2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.**

### **2.2.1. THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY**

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), posits that media consumers actively seek out media content to satisfy specific needs. In the context of Afrobeat and social justice movements, UGT helps explain how listeners engage with Afrobeat music as a source of motivation, solidarity, and emotional expression. Afrobeat's role in movements like #EndSARS and its advocacy for social change can be understood through UGT's concept of **social integration and personal identity needs**. Listeners tune into Afrobeat not only for entertainment but to connect with broader social and political causes. Through Afrobeat music, listeners gain a sense of belonging to a community, finding common ground in their shared struggles.

For example, Burna Boy's "*Monsters You Made*" resonated deeply with Nigerian youth during the #EndSARS protests because it articulated their frustrations and struggles. The song served as a tool for solidarity, uniting listeners in a collective sense of resistance against systemic oppression. By engaging with Afrobeat music, listeners gratify their need for emotional release, empowerment, and unity in the face of societal challenges. Thus, Afrobeat music acts as a catalyst for motivation and a platform through which individuals can collectively process and respond to social injustices (Adebayo, 2020).

### **2.2.2. Cultural Hegemony: Afrobeat's Challenge to Dominant Narratives**

Antonio Gramsci's theory of **Cultural Hegemony** (1971) explains how dominant cultural and political ideologies maintain control by influencing public consciousness and shaping societal norms. Afrobeat, through its lyrics and performances, challenges these dominant narratives, particularly those related to political oppression, corruption, and social inequality. Fela Kuti, the pioneer of Afrobeat, used his music to critique not only the Nigerian government but also global power structures. His songs were a direct challenge to the hegemonic forces of colonialism, neoliberalism, and authoritarianism.

Afrobeat music continues to serve as a counter-narrative to mainstream media and political discourse, which often marginalizes or suppresses voices critical of the status quo. The #EndSARS protests exemplified this, as Afrobeat artists played a crucial role in giving voice to the disillusioned Nigerian youth who felt oppressed by both the government and international institutions. By promoting messages of resistance, anti-corruption, and empowerment, Afrobeat contests the dominant cultural, political, and economic narratives that maintain the status quo.

(Ogundipe, 2022). In this sense, Afrobeat music is not merely a form of entertainment, but a tool for subverting the hegemonic ideologies that sustain inequality.

### **2.2.3. Diffusion of Innovations Theory: Afrobeat and the Spread of Social Justice Ideas**

The **Diffusion of Innovations Theory** (Rogers, 1962) explores how new ideas and technologies spread across societies. In the context of Afrobeat, this theory helps explain how the genre serves as a vehicle for spreading ideas of social justice and activism. Afrobeat, particularly through its global reach on platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and Spotify, facilitates the diffusion of ideas related to justice, equality, and human rights across geographical boundaries. As Afrobeat music continues to gain international recognition, it amplifies messages of social change, pushing these ideas into new cultural and political spaces.

In the case of the #EndSARS movement, Afrobeat artists such as Burna Boy, Wizkid, and Tiwa Savage used their platforms to introduce and normalize concepts of justice, equity, and activism among their followers. By leveraging digital media, Afrobeat becomes a key agent in the diffusion of social justice ideas. The widespread consumption of these messages among Afrobeat's diverse fanbase accelerates the adoption of advocacy and protest ideologies. Afrobeat's global visibility, amplified through social media, allows ideas of social justice to diffuse not only within Nigeria but also across global African diaspora communities, helping to build a more connected and conscious global movement for change (Adedayo, 2021).

Theoretical perspectives such as Uses and Gratifications Theory, Cultural Hegemony, and Diffusion of Innovations Theory provide a comprehensive framework for understanding Afrobeat's role in media-driven social justice movements. Through these theories, it becomes evident that Afrobeat is not just a musical genre but a powerful cultural tool for challenging dominant narratives, mobilizing communities, and spreading ideas of social justice. As Afrobeat continues to evolve and expand its influence, its role in shaping political discourse and driving social change will remain significant, especially in the digital age, where media platforms amplify its reach and impact.

## **2.3. EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

The empirical literature surrounding Afrobeat and its influence on social justice movements highlights the significant role that the genre plays in shaping public discourse, mobilizing communities, and amplifying social justice causes. From addressing corruption to protesting police brutality, Afrobeat has emerged as a critical vehicle for activism, particularly in Nigeria. This review will examine various empirical studies that explore the impact of Afrobeat on social justice, highlighting its role in the #EndSARS movement, its engagement with issues of governance, and its cultural significance in advocating for environmental justice.

A study by Okeke (2021) focused on the role of Afrobeat in the #EndSARS protests, analysing how Nigerian artists used their music and platforms to mobilize youth against police brutality. The study found that Afrobeat artists such as Burna Boy, Wizkid, and Tiwa Savage were instrumental in generating global attention for the protests, both through their music and their online engagement. These artists' lyrics, which often address issues of governance, corruption, and social inequality, were used as rallying cries for the youth. According to the study, Afrobeat served not only as a form of entertainment but also as a tool for political expression and protest, with songs like Burna Boy's "*Monsters You Made*" resonating strongly with the demands for justice and systemic change.

Furthermore, a study by Adebayo (2020) highlighted the social media impact of Afrobeat during the #EndSARS protests. The research found that artists' strategic use of Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube amplified their political messages, creating a sense of solidarity among young Nigerians both at home and in the diaspora. Through these platforms, Afrobeat music played a key role in facilitating the spread of protest messages, with songs becoming anthems of resistance. The empirical evidence indicates that the reach and impact of Afrobeat during the protests went beyond entertainment, positioning the genre as a powerful force for activism.

Afrobeat's role in promoting governance and human rights has also been explored in studies by scholars such as Adedayo (2021). The study focused on the way Afrobeat music addresses issues like corruption, mismanagement of public resources, and the failure of political systems to serve the people. Adedayo argued that Afrobeat artists like Fela Kuti and 2Baba have historically used their music to criticize Nigerian governance, and this tradition continues in the works of contemporary Afrobeat stars. The study emphasized how these artists' music serves as a critique of the political elite, aligning with broader human rights campaigns that demand accountability

and transparency in government. For instance, 2Baba's "*Chop Life*" was identified as a direct response to governance issues, urging both the government and the citizens to be more responsible in their actions.

The empirical analysis suggests that Afrobeat's engagement with social justice causes is multifaceted, addressing political corruption while also highlighting the human cost of failed governance. Furthermore, the role of Afrobeat in shaping political awareness, especially among younger generations, has made it a key player in advocating for democratic reforms and the protection of human rights in Nigeria.

Afrobeat's connection to environmental justice has been less explored but is becoming increasingly important. A study by Ogundipe (2022) focused on Afrobeat's role in raising awareness about environmental issues, particularly in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The study examined how Afrobeat artists, following the footsteps of Fela Kuti, continue to highlight the environmental degradation caused by oil exploitation in the region. Songs like Fela's "*Oil Spill*" have long criticized the environmental destruction caused by multinational corporations and the Nigerian government's failure to address these issues.

Ogundipe's research found that contemporary Afrobeat artists such as Burna Boy and Mr. Eazi have continued this tradition, using their platforms to advocate for sustainable environmental practices and accountability from oil companies. The study noted that these artists use social media to spread awareness about environmental justice, engaging their followers in discussions about the need for environmental protection and responsible resource management. Through music and media campaigns, Afrobeat has helped bring international attention to the environmental crisis in the Niger Delta, fostering a dialogue about corporate responsibility and environmental sustainability.

Another key area of focus is Afrobeat's global reach and its role in advocating for social justice on the international stage. In a study by Ogunsanya (2021), the global appeal of Afrobeat was examined in the context of international solidarity movements. The study highlighted how Afrobeat artists have used their international platforms to bring attention to global issues such as racial inequality, poverty, and climate change. The study particularly emphasized Burna Boy's success in merging global recognition with activism, using his platform to advocate for African unity and social justice.

The research showed that Afrobeat, through collaborations with international artists and the global popularity of Nigerian artists, has become a key player in global advocacy for social justice. Burna Boy's involvement in the *Black Lives Matter* movement and his vocal support for African liberation movements have solidified Afrobeat's role as a global ambassador for social justice causes. This demonstrates the power of Afrobeat not only as a genre of music but also as a global movement for justice and equality, resonating with audiences worldwide.

The empirical studies on Afrobeat reveal its significant role in advocating for social justice, both in Nigeria and globally. Through its involvement in movements like #EndSARS, its critiques of governance and corruption, and its advocacy for environmental and human rights, Afrobeat has proven itself to be more than just music—it is a tool for social and political mobilization. The genre's global reach further amplifies its impact, helping to spread ideas of justice, equality, and accountability on an international scale. As the genre continues to evolve, its role in shaping political discourse and promoting social justice will remain central to its influence in the world.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the research methodology used in exploring the role of Nigerian Afrobeat in media-driven social justice movements, with a specific focus on how Afrobeat contributes to advocacy and activism through media platforms. The study aims to investigate the influence of Afrobeat music, especially in movements like #EndSARS, and how the genre is used to mobilize social change. The methodology employed in this research includes qualitative approaches such as content analysis of Afrobeat songs, interviews with key Afrobeat artists, and a survey to assess the impact of Afrobeat in raising awareness on social issues.

### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Afrobeat in social justice movements. The qualitative component involves content analysis of lyrics and media campaigns associated with prominent Afrobeat artists, while the quantitative aspect uses surveys to gauge public perceptions of Afrobeat's impact on activism. According to Nwodu (2006), a mixed-methods approach allows for a holistic view of the subject matter, ensuring that both the depth and breadth of the phenomenon are captured.

### **3.2 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population of the study comprises Nigerian Afrobeat listeners, particularly those who have engaged with Afrobeat music during prominent social justice movements like #EndSARS. For this study, the target population includes individuals who are active on social media platforms and who have expressed political or social justice interests through these platforms. Based on Afiwokemi (2015) and Wimmer and Dominick (2006), the population of interest is individuals who engage with Afrobeat music and participate in media-driven social justice campaigns, with a focus on youth demographics from urban areas, where Afrobeat has a significant influence.

### **3.3 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

A sample of 100 respondents will be selected using a combination of convenience and purposive sampling methods. Purposive sampling will ensure that only individuals who are actively engaged

with Afrobeat music and social justice movements are included, while convenience sampling will provide easy access to respondents within urban areas, particularly in Lagos, Abuja, and other Afrobeat hubs. This sample size is adequate to provide a diverse range of opinions while allowing for meaningful analysis of Afrobeat's role in social justice advocacy.

### **3.4 DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT**

The primary instruments for data collection in this study will be surveys and interviews. The survey will consist of both structured and unstructured questions, aimed at understanding how Afrobeat influences public engagement with social justice causes. A total of 100 surveys will be distributed, focusing on respondents' engagement with Afrobeat music during key movements such as #EndSARS. In addition, in-depth interviews will be conducted with Afrobeat artists and activists who have used music to promote social change. These qualitative interviews will provide insight into the motivations behind using Afrobeat for activism.

### **3.5 INSTRUMENTATION**

The survey instrument will consist of 25 questions, focusing on the role of Afrobeat in promoting social justice. Questions will assess respondents' knowledge of Afrobeat songs related to activism, their engagement with these songs on social media platforms, and their perceptions of Afrobeat's role in influencing social justice causes. The interview guide will focus on obtaining detailed responses from artists and activists, asking about their use of Afrobeat to mobilize for social justice, the challenges they face, and their views on the genre's impact. Both instruments will be tested for clarity and relevance before being finalized.

### **3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS**

To ensure the validity of the instruments, expert reviews from scholars in media studies, music, and social justice movements will be conducted. Additionally, a pilot study will be conducted with a small group of Afrobeat listeners to test the clarity and applicability of the survey questions and interview guide. For reliability, the test-retest method will be employed, as recommended by Tejumaye (2003), where the instruments will be administered to a subset of respondents at two different times to measure consistency in responses.

### **3.7 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

Data collected from the surveys will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to assess the general patterns of Afrobeat music consumption in relation to social justice movements. The qualitative data from interviews will be analyzed thematically, identifying key themes such as empowerment, activism, and solidarity that emerge from Afrobeat music in relation to social justice. NVivo software will be used for coding and theme extraction from the interview transcripts. The results of the survey will complement the interview findings, providing a rich, multifaceted view of Afrobeat's impact on social justice advocacy.

This research methodology is designed to rigorously explore how Afrobeat serves as a tool for media-driven social justice movements, capturing both the quantitative impact of Afrobeat on public engagement and the qualitative motivations behind its use as an advocacy tool. By employing a mixed-methods approach, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on music and activism, particularly in the Nigerian context.

## CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.0 Introductions.

This chapter presents and analyzes the data collected through the administered questionnaire. The analysis is structured in three sections: Personal Data, The role of Nigeria hip hop and rap in media driven social justice movement, using frequency and percentage.

#### SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	45	45%
Female	55	55%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025*

Table 1 shows that 45% of the respondents are male while 55% are female. This indicates that female respondents slightly outnumbered male respondents in the study.

Table 2: Age Distribution

Age Range	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
18–25 years	60	60%
26–35 years	30	30%
Above 35 years	10	10%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025*

Table 2 reveals that the majority of respondents (60%) are between the ages of 18–25 years, indicating that younger adults are most engaged in the Nigerian hip-hop social justice movement.

Table 3: Education Level

Education Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
ND1	20	20%
ND2	25	25%
HND1	30	30%
HND2	25	25%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025*

Table 3 shows that respondents from all educational levels participated, with HND1 students making up the largest proportion (30%).

Table 4: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
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Single	70	70%
Engaged	15	15%
Married	15	15%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025:*

Table 4 shows that most respondents (70%) are single, indicating that the study mainly engaged young, unmarried participants.

Table 5: Religion

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Islam	55	55%
Christianity	40	40%
Other	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025:*

Table 5 indicates that the majority of respondents (55%) are Muslims, followed by Christians (40%).

## SECTION B: AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Table 6: Awareness of Hip-Hop Addressing Social Issues

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	80	80%
No	20	20%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025:*

Table 6 shows that 80% of respondents are aware of Nigerian hip-hop songs addressing social issues and 20% aren't aware.

Table 7: Listening to Socially Conscious Artists

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	75	75%
No	25	25%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

*Source: Google Form 2025:*

Table 7 reveals that 75% of respondents have listened to socially conscious Nigerian hip-hop artists and 25% don't.

Table 8: Engagement with Social Justice Movements via Music

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	70	70%

No	30	30%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025:

Table 8 shows that 70% of respondents engage with social justice movements through music or music-related media and 30% don't.

Table 9: Perception of Rap as a Tool for Awareness

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Yes	85	85%
No	15	15%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025:

Table 9 indicates that most respondents (85%) believe Nigerian hip-hop is a tool for raising awareness of societal problems and 15% don't believe.

### SECTION C: PERCEPTION OF HIP-HOP'S ROLE (Likert-Scale Responses)

Table 10: Nigerian Hip-Hop as an Effective Platform

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	40	40%
Agree	35	35%
Neutral	15	15%
Disagree	7	7%
Strongly Disagree	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The table shows that 75% of respondents (40% strongly agree and 35% agree) believe that Nigerian hip-hop is an effective platform for expressing social and political concerns. Only a small fraction (7% disagree and 3% strongly disagree) hold a contrary view, while 15% remain neutral. This suggests that a significant majority recognize the power of hip-hop in driving social messages.

Table 11: Rap Lyrics Reflect Citizens' Struggles

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	50	50%
A	30	30%
N	10	10%
D	7	7%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The data indicates that 80% of respondents (50% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that the lyrics in Nigerian rap music reflect the struggles of ordinary citizens. Only 10% disagree, while another 10% are neutral. This highlights the role of rap as a mirror of societal realities.

Table 12: Music Videos Amplify Social Justice Messages

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	45	45%
A	35	35%
N	10	10%
D	7	7%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

In this table, 80% of respondents (45% strongly agree, 35% agree) affirm that music videos by rap artists help amplify social justice messages. Only 10% disagree, and 10% are neutral. This suggests that the visual representation of music significantly boosts the spread and reception of social messages.

Table 13: Rap Music Inspires Civic Participation

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	40	40%
A	30	30%
N	15	15%
D	10	10%
SD	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The results show that 70% (40% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that rap music inspires civic consciousness and participation among youth. However, 15% are neutral and 15% disagree. This implies that while rap music positively influences civic engagement, a minority may not fully associate it with active participation.

Table 14: Hip-Hop Artists as Advocates for Justice

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	50	50%
A	30	30%
N	10	10%
D	7	7%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The data reveals that 80% of respondents (50% strongly agree, 30% agree) see hip-hop artists as modern-day advocates for justice and accountability in Nigeria. Only 10% disagree, while 10% remain neutral. This underscores the credibility of hip-hop artists as voices for societal change.

Table 15: Social Media Helps Spread Justice Messages

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	55	55%
A	30	30%
N	7	7%
D	5	5%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

A significant 85% of respondents (55% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that social media platforms help Nigerian rappers spread justice messages faster. Only 8% disagree, while 7% are neutral. This confirms that social media is a powerful amplifier for music-based activism.

Table 16: Hashtags and Collaborations Mobilize Movements

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	50	50%
A	30	30%
N	10	10%
D	7	7%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

According to the responses, 80% (50% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that hashtags, music releases, and collaborations play a role in mobilizing social movements. Only 10% disagree, and 10% are neutral. This suggests that online and musical collaborations are effective tools for social justice mobilization.

Table 17: Rap Songs Contribute to National Conversations

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	60	60%
A	25	25%
N	7	7%
D	5	5%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

Here, 85% of respondents (60% strongly agree, 25% agree) believe that Nigerian rap songs have contributed to national conversations, citing examples like the #EndSARS movement. Only 8% disagree, and 7% are neutral. This reflects the strong influence of hip-hop on public discourse in Nigeria.

Table 18: Media Attention to Hip-Hop Advocacy

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	35	35%
A	30	30%
N	15	15%
D	13	13%
SD	7	7%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The table shows that 65% (35% strongly agree, 30% agree) think the media gives sufficient attention to hip-hop-driven advocacy campaigns. However, 20% disagree and 15% are neutral, indicating that while media coverage exists, some respondents believe it could be improved.

Table 19: Music-Based Activism Influences Policy

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	40	40%
A	30	30%
N	15	15%
D	10	10%
SD	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The responses reveal that 70% (40% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe music-based activism can influence government or policy responses. About 15% are neutral, and 15% disagree. This suggests a positive perception of music as a tool for policy influence, though not unanimously.

Table 20: Some Rap Content Lacks Depth

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	30	30%
A	25	25%
N	20	20%
D	15	15%
SD	10	10%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

This table shows that 55% (30% strongly agree, 25% agree) believe some rap content lacks depth and may distract from real issues. 20% are neutral, while 25% disagree. This implies that while rap is generally valued, some respondents perceive certain songs as commercially driven or superficial.

Table 21: Censorship Limits Artists' Expression

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SA	40	40%
A	30	30%
N	15	15%

D	10	10%
SD	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The data shows that 70% (40% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that censorship and media restrictions limit the full expression of Nigerian rap artists. 15% are neutral, while 15% disagree. This suggests that many participants view freedom of expression as being constrained in the industry.

Table 22: Influence of Social-Justice Rap is Urban-Centered

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
SA	35	35%
A	30	30%
N	20	20%
D	10	10%
SD	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The table indicates that 65% (35% strongly agree, 30% agree) feel that the influence of social-justice rap is often limited to urban audiences. 20% are neutral, and 15% disagree. This suggests that social-justice messages in rap may not be reaching rural areas effectively.

Table 23: Music Collaborations with NGOs Enhance Impact

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
SA	45	45%
A	30	30%
N	10	10%
D	10	10%
SD	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

The responses show that 75% (45% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that collaborations between artists and NGOs can enhance the impact of music-based activism. 10% are neutral and 15% disagree. This supports the idea that partnerships can boost advocacy outcomes.

Table 24: More Support Needed for Socially Conscious Music

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
SA	55	55%
A	30	30%
N	7	7%
D	5	5%
SD	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Source: Google Form 2025

A strong 85% (55% strongly agree, 30% agree) of respondents believe that more support should be given to socially conscious music through media attention and public funding. Only 8% disagree, and 7% are neutral. This emphasizes the need for institutional backing for impactful music.

## **4.2 Analysis of Research Questions**

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the research questions using the data gathered from the field survey.

### **Research Question 1:**

#### **Is Nigerian hip-hop an effective platform for expressing social and political concerns?**

The data reveals that a majority of the respondents (75%) agreed that Nigerian hip-hop serves as an effective platform for expressing social and political concerns, with 40% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing. Only 10% disagreed, while 15% remained neutral.

This suggests that Nigerian hip-hop is widely accepted as a credible medium for voicing societal issues, particularly among young people. The genre's ability to engage the public in critical conversations about injustice, corruption, and governance makes it a significant tool in media-driven social justice movements. The overwhelming support emphasizes the power of music as a vehicle for advocacy and public enlightenment.

### **Research Question 2:**

#### **Do music videos and social media posts by rap artists amplify their social justice messages?**

The analysis shows that 80% of respondents (45% strongly agree and 35% agree) believe that music videos amplify social justice messages. Similarly, 85% of respondents (55% strongly agree and 30% agree) acknowledge that social media platforms help Nigerian rappers spread messages of justice faster.

This indicates that both visual and digital platforms significantly enhance the impact of socially conscious music. Music videos and social media posts allow artists to reach broader audiences, stimulate public debates, and mobilize youth participation in advocacy campaigns. These findings confirm that beyond just the music, the strategic use of multimedia is essential for effective social justice communication.

### **Research Question 3:**

#### **Have Nigerian rap songs contributed to national conversations on social issues?**

*(Based on Table 17)*

According to the findings, 85% of respondents (60% strongly agree and 25% agree) affirm that Nigerian rap songs have contributed to national conversations, especially during notable movements like #EndSARS. Only a small percentage (8%) disagreed, while 7% remained neutral.

This shows that hip-hop has not only gained popularity as a musical genre but has also played a central role in shaping public discourse. Songs addressing police brutality, governance failures, and inequality have become reference points during national protests and policy debates. The high level of agreement demonstrates that rap music actively contributes to raising awareness and driving conversations on pressing societal issues.

The responses across the three research questions affirm the influential role of Nigerian hip-hop and rap in media-driven social justice movements. The genre is widely perceived as an effective platform for social commentary, especially when supported by music videos and social media. Furthermore, Nigerian rap music has successfully influenced national conversations, indicating its relevance in advocacy, youth mobilization, and societal change.

#### **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

The findings from this study provide clear evidence that Nigerian hip-hop and rap play a significant role in media-driven social justice movements. The study revealed that Nigerian hip-hop is widely perceived as an effective platform for expressing social and political concerns. This is in line with the views of 75% of the respondents who agreed that hip-hop music is a credible means of highlighting societal issues such as corruption, police brutality, and bad governance.

Furthermore, the study confirmed that music videos and social media posts by rap artists amplify their social justice messages. With 80% of respondents agreeing that music videos increase the reach of social messages, and 85% acknowledging that social media platforms help rappers spread messages of justice faster, it is evident that the combination of music, visuals, and digital platforms has significantly empowered hip-hop artists to connect with larger audiences. This aligns with the growing global recognition of social media as a powerful advocacy tool.

Additionally, the research found that Nigerian rap songs have contributed to national conversations, particularly during movements like #EndSARS. The overwhelming 85% agreement among respondents shows that Nigerian rap music has not only gained popularity but also positioned itself as a catalyst for societal change.

The findings are supported by the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which emphasizes how audiences actively engage with media content that satisfies their informational and advocacy needs. Nigerian youths, as the dominant respondents, have clearly found value in hip-hop as a channel for social awareness and participation.

However, the study also highlighted areas of concern. Some respondents believe that certain rap content lacks depth, and that censorship and media restrictions can limit the full expression of

artists. Additionally, some perceive that the influence of social-justice rap is largely limited to urban areas, suggesting that more effort is needed to ensure inclusivity and rural engagement

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusions**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This chapter introduced the study by highlighting the emergence of Nigerian hip-hop and rap as influential cultural tools that extend beyond entertainment to social activism. It emphasized that Nigerian artists have increasingly used their music to challenge societal injustices, address youth marginalization, and demand accountability from leaders. The chapter outlined the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, and the significance of studying the connection between music, media, and social justice movements. The scope and limitations of the study were also clearly defined.

The literature review provided a theoretical and empirical exploration of the intersection between music, media, and activism. It reviewed key concepts such as social justice, media-driven movements, and the evolution of Nigerian hip-hop and rap. The chapter highlighted how global and local artists have historically used music as a tool for protest and societal change. Theoretical frameworks such as the Agenda-Setting Theory and the Framing Theory were discussed to explain how the media and artists shape public discourse around social issues.

The chapter three detailed the research design, methodology, and procedures employed in the study. It explained the use of a survey research method, with questionnaires distributed to selected respondents familiar with Nigerian hip-hop and rap. The population, sample size, sampling techniques, and methods of data collection and analysis were also discussed. Ethical considerations, including voluntary participation and confidentiality of respondents, were observed throughout the study.

Chapter Four presented and analyzed the data gathered from the respondents. The findings revealed that most respondents are actively engaged with Nigerian hip-hop and rap music and perceive it as a strong medium for addressing social issues. The data showed that artists have successfully used their music and media platforms, particularly social media, to drive awareness on issues like police brutality, corruption, bad governance, and youth unemployment. The analysis confirmed that music plays a significant role in mobilizing young Nigerians towards social change.

The final chapter summarized the key findings, concluding that Nigerian hip-hop and rap have become essential components of media-driven social justice movements. The chapter recommended that artists continue to embrace social activism, media organizations provide greater support for conscious music, and the government pay attention to the messages being conveyed through music. It also encouraged the public to critically engage with music content and called for the inclusion of music-based social justice education in academic settings. The study concluded that hip-hop and rap, when effectively used, can serve as a powerful catalyst for societal transformation in Nigeria.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Artists Should Sustain Social Engagement:** Nigerian hip-hop and rap artists should continue using their music as instruments of social consciousness, addressing societal problems and advocating for justice.
2. **Media Organizations Should Offer More Support:** Traditional and digital media outlets should give more attention to socially conscious music, offering platforms for artists who address societal issues to reach broader audiences.
3. **Government Should Listen to Creative Voices:** Policy makers should take the messages conveyed in music seriously as they reflect the voices and frustrations of the people, especially the youth.
4. **Educational Institutions Should Incorporate Music and Social Change Studies:** Schools and universities should introduce discussions on the intersection between music, media, and social justice to encourage critical thinking and civic engagement among students.
5. **Public Should Engage Responsibly:** Listeners and fans should not only consume hip-hop and rap for entertainment but also critically engage with the messages to inspire social participation and informed activism.

## **5.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion, Nigerian hip-hop and rap music have proven to be vital forces in the media-driven social justice movement. They have provided a voice for the marginalized and empowered the youth to question authority and demand accountability. Through strategic use of social and digital media, artists have been able to spark conversations, mobilize protests, and influence public discourse.

The study reaffirms that music is not just a cultural product but a vehicle for social transformation. If properly harnessed, Nigerian hip-hop and rap can continue to serve as catalysts for positive societal change, bridging the gap between entertainment and activism in the fight for a just and equitable society.

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## APPENDIX

**KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN**  
**INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (IICT)**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION**  
**RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Respondent,

I am a final-year student of Mass Communication (HND2), conducting a research project titled: **"The Role of Nigerian Hip-Hop and Rap in a Media-Driven Social Justice Movement."** This questionnaire is strictly for academic purposes. Your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

**Instructions:**

Kindly tick [☒] the response that best reflects your opinion. The questionnaire is divided into three sections:

**SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA**

1. **Gender:** [☐] Male      [☐] Female
2. **Age:**  
[☐] 18–25 years    [☐] 26–35 years    [☐] Above 35 years
3. **Education Level:** [☐] ND1      [☐] ND2      [☐] HND1      [☐] HND2
4. **Marital Status:** [☐] Single    [☐] Engaged    [☐] Married
5. **Religion:** [☐] Islam      [☐] Christianity    [☐] Other

**SECTION B: AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT**

1. Are you aware of Nigerian hip-hop or rap songs that address social issues like police brutality, corruption, or inequality? [☐] Yes      [☐] No

2. Have you listened to songs by artists like Falz, Eedris Abdulkareem, or Burna Boy that promote social justice? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Do you follow or engage with social justice movements through music or music-related media? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Do you believe Nigerian rap and hip-hop are used as tools for raising awareness about societal problems? ☐ Yes ☐ No

### SECTION C:

**Instruction:** Tick ✓ the option that best suits your opinion.

**Key:** SA – Strongly Agree A – Agree N – Neutral D – Disagree SD – Strongly Disagree

Q.No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
5	Nigerian hip-hop and rap are effective platforms for expressing social and political concerns.					
6	Lyrics in Nigerian rap music reflect the struggles of ordinary citizens.					
7	Music videos and social media posts by rap artists amplify their social justice messages.					
8	Rap music inspires civic consciousness and participation among youth.					
9	Hip-hop artists are modern-day advocates for justice and accountability in Nigeria.					
10	Social media platforms help Nigerian rappers spread messages of justice faster.					
11	Hashtags, music releases, and collaborations play a role in mobilizing social movements.					
12	Nigerian rap songs have contributed to national conversations (e.g., #EndSARS).					
13	The media gives sufficient attention to hip-hop-driven advocacy campaigns.					
14	Music-based activism influences government or policy responses.					
15	Some rap content lacks depth and distracts from the real issues.					
16	Censorship and media restrictions limit the full expression of artists.					
17	The influence of social-justice rap is often limited to urban audiences.					
18	Music collaborations with NGOs or campaigns can enhance impact.					
19	More support should be given to socially conscious music through media and public funding.					

