

**Moral Instructions and Cultural Transmission in Toun Soetan's
Train Up Your Child Song**

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Abstract

This study explores the educational and socio-cultural importance of Toun Soetan's song *Train Up Your Child* as a medium of moral instruction and character formation in early childhood education in Nigeria. The study uses a qualitative research design based on content analysis and an ethnomusicological approach to analyse the lyrics, musical structure and messages of the song within its cultural context. The research is based on Social Learning Theory and Functionalist Theory, which focus on the importance of observation, cultural transmission and the social functions of music in influencing behaviour and upholding societal ideals. The results show that *Train Up Your Child* propagates important principles of parental duty, discipline, obedience, honesty, respect, accountability, and spiritual guidance. Through its simple vocabulary, repeated structure, and culturally familiar performing manner, the song serves as a useful tool for informal teaching, promoting the transmission of moral principles and social norms across generations. The study also shows that the song acts as a cultural resource for learning, identification, and socialisation in accordance with socio-cultural views on education. The song contributes to holistic child development and social stability by reinforcing positive parenting practices, and emphasising the importance of families in character formation. The study concludes that indigenous popular music can be a valuable pedagogical resource for moral education, cultural preservation, and character development. It advocates the inclusion of culturally relevant songs in early childhood education programmes and parent education initiatives to reinforce value education and responsible citizenship among young learners in Nigeria.

Keywords: Development; early childhood; moral education; music.

Introduction

Parenting plays a fundamental role in shaping children's educational experiences, moral development, and lifelong learning outcomes. Research has consistently highlighted the close relationship between parental involvement and children's academic achievement, character formation, and social development (Ko, 2018). Beyond formal education, music, as a cultural expression, has long served as a powerful tool for transmitting values, beliefs, and life lessons across generations. In many African societies, for instance, music is not merely a form of entertainment but also a medium for education, socialisation, and moral instruction.

Within the Nigerian cultural context, indigenous music frequently communicates messages about family responsibilities, child upbringing, and communal values. Toun Soetan, a renowned Nigerian gospel musician, has produced several songs that reflect African cultural values and Christian principles. One of her notable works, *Train Up Your Child*, emphasises the importance of intentional parenting in nurturing morally upright and responsible children. The song draws inspiration from both African traditions and biblical teachings, presenting parenting as a shared responsibility that significantly influences children's educational and personal development.

Creative activity is often shaped by the artist's experiences, environment, and cultural background. Toun Soetan's musical works reflect African heritage and societal values, with *Train Up Your Child* serving as an example of how music can communicate moral and educational ideals. In African tradition (Kalinde & Vermeulen, 2016), songs serve both instructional and entertainment purposes, making them valuable cultural texts for educational analysis. Accordingly, *Train Up Your Child* provides an opportunity to explore socio-pedagogical themes related to parenting, schooling, and child development.

Although numerous studies have examined parental involvement in education from psychological, sociological, and educational perspectives, relatively little attention has been given to the pedagogical significance of Nigerian gospel music as a resource for understanding parenting and education. Existing literature has largely focused on classroom practices, educational policies, and family engagement while overlooking the educational messages embedded in culturally relevant musical works. Consequently, there is a gap in scholarship concerning how songs such as *Train Up Your Child* can contribute to educational discourse, character formation, and value-based learning.

Despite the widespread popularity of *Train Up Your Child* among Nigerian families and Christian communities, its educational content and potential contribution to parenting education, character development, and classroom practice have not been adequately explored. Consequently, educators, parents, and researchers may overlook an important cultural resource that reinforces positive parenting practices, moral values, and children's holistic development. This study addresses this gap by examining the educational and socio-cultural significance of the song.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the intersection of music, parenting, and education. It demonstrates how culturally grounded musical expressions can serve as educational resources that reinforce positive parenting practices and moral values. The findings may benefit educators, parents, curriculum developers, and researchers by providing insights into the use of music as a pedagogical tool for promoting character education and strengthening collaboration between schools and families. Furthermore, the study expands scholarship on African indigenous and gospel music by highlighting the relevance music in contemporary educational practice, culturally responsive teaching, and the integration of indigenous knowledge into early childhood education.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the educational and didactic significance of Toun Soetan's *Train Up Your Child* in promoting parenting values and early childhood education in Nigeria. The objectives are to:

- i. examine the lyrical and musical composition of *Train Up Your Child* to identify its pedagogical and moral messages on parenting;
- ii. explore the cultural and educational significance of the song in relation to parenting, child development, and early childhood education in Nigeria; and
- iii. assess the relevance of the song as a pedagogical resource for promoting character education, value formation, and home-school collaboration in early childhood learning.

Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded in Social Learning Theory and Functionalist Theory. Social Learning Theory is a paradigm propounded by Albert Bandura that suggests children learn behaviours, values and attitudes by seeing, and imitating, and these shape their actions. The roles of music in society and in education are significant within the functionalist approach to music. This theory is used in this study to explore the importance of Toun Soetan's music in cultural continuity, moral education and societal stability.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design, employing content analysis and an ethnomusicological approach to examine the educational and moral values embedded in Toun Soetan's *Train Up Your Child* and their relevance to early childhood education in Nigeria. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study focuses on interpreting meanings, cultural values, moral messages, and educational themes expressed through the song rather than on generating quantitative data. The research is descriptive and interpretive, viewing music as a medium of moral instruction and cultural transmission within Nigerian society.

The study relies primarily on the lyrics and musical composition of Toun Soetan's *Train Up Your Child* as the principal source of data. Secondary data were obtained from scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other relevant literature on

music education, ethnomusicology, parenting, developmental psychology, and early childhood education. These secondary sources provide the theoretical and conceptual framework for interpreting the song's educational significance.

Train Up Your Child was purposively selected because it explicitly addresses parenting, child upbringing, moral values, and educational development. The song is widely recognised within Nigerian gospel music and contains themes that align with the objectives of this study, making it an appropriate case for examining the intersection of music, parenting, and early childhood education. The data were analysed using qualitative content analysis and ethnomusicological interpretation. First, the song lyrics were examined to identify recurring themes related to parenting, moral instruction, character formation, and educational values.

Review of Related Literature

Music as a Means of Moral and Cultural Education in Africa

Music has traditionally been an important element of African communities, serving as a means of communication, education, socialisation and preservation of culture. African music is not just a form of creative expression or pleasure like many Western ideas of music, but a part of the social, religious, political and educational life of communities. Indigenous African music is a reservoir of communal values, beliefs, rituals and traditions and helps in the transmission of cultural information from one generation to another. Nketia (1974) notes that “music in Africa is functional and social and songs are used to communicate moral lessons, historical accounts and social expectations. Music is closely related to the everyday life of the African people and is often employed to maintain social standards and collective identity.

In African communities, the educational role of music is manifested in its application during critical life cycle events, communal celebrations, festivals, and rites of passage. Music promotes acceptable patterns of behaviour through lyrics, rhythm, movement and performance practices, and discourages actions judged to be harmful to the well-being of the community. Often, songs are loaded with proverbs, metaphors, and stories that carry moral values and societal duties. Hence music is a potent vehicle for moulding attitudes, establishing social cohesiveness and ensuring cultural continuity (Nketia, 1974).

In certain African societies, children are introduced to cultural values through musical experiences from a young age. Folk songs, lullabies, songs for storytelling, play songs and communal performances are fun and memorable means for youngsters to learn what is expected of them in society. These musical forms serve not as recreational activities but as educational tools to improve cognitive, emotional and moral development. Children learn about respect for elders, teamwork, honesty, hard work, obedience and living together as they participate in songs and musical games. These ideals are at the core of the African ideology of communalism, which emphasises collective responsibility and societal peace (Mbiti, 1969).

Scholars have discovered that music plays a vital role in the socialisation process, assisting children in learning the standards and values of their community. One of the principal tasks of music, according to Merriam (1964), is educational - teaching social rules and preserving cultural information. Music is a medium through which civilisations articulate the appropriate conduct and reinforce the desirable actions. Songs are repetitive and emotionally engaging, making them a more effective learning and retention tool than many other forms of training. Thus, children engaged in musical activities are more prone to receive and recall the moral lessons included in the songs.

African indigenous music is a major contributor to the development of cultural identity among the youth. In a time of globalisation and increasing exposure to foreign cultural influences, traditional music is a crucial way to protect indigenous knowledge systems and cultural legacy. Akuno (2005) notes that indigenous musical traditions contribute to children's development of a sense of belonging and cultural consciousness by connecting them to their communities' history, language, and worldview. Children learn through music not only who they are but also their duties as members of society.

There is scientific interest in the link between music and moral growth. Research suggests that music might alter attitudes, emotions and behaviour by offering models of proper behaviour and stimulating thought on ethical issues (Campbell, 2004). In African setting, songs usually talk about issues like honesty, respect, responsibility, dedication, and social justice. These topics help to shape moral consciousness and urge people to support community values. Hence, music continues to be an efficient medium of transferring values, moulding behaviour and encouraging responsible citizenship among the younger generation.

The importance of music in African communities means that it is also a resource for culture and education. Music is not just a kind of entertainment but a dynamic medium to communicate and sustain knowledge, morals and societal ideals. Its power to touch emotion, strengthen memory, and encourage involvement, makes it especially valuable for the education of children and the formation of character. Therefore, it is important to grasp the pedagogical role of music in order to appreciate its contribution to cultural sustainability and moral education in current African societies.

Music and Socialisation of children in Nigeria

In Nigeria, traditional and popular music have an important part in the socialisation of youngsters. Indigenous songs frequently carry teachings on respect for elders, hard work, honesty, discipline, obedience and communal living. These principles are entrenched in musical performances, carried on from generation to generation via oral traditions.

Nigerian music, scholars have noted, mirrors the society's expectations on family life, child upbringing and citizenship. Music is an informal educational medium by which children learn cultural standards and acceptable behaviours (Omojola, 2012).

Parents, schools, and community leaders often use songs to teach morals and to enforce acceptable standards of behaviour. Music, thus, adds to the formal educational processes by delivering culturally relevant learning experiences.

Scholars have also studied the effect of popular music on youngsters. Much of today's pop music has been criticised for encouraging materialism and improper behaviour. However there are musicians who intentionally create musical works that promote positive ideals and social responsibilities. Such works give opportunity for moral instruction in familiar cultural settings.

Early Childhood Education and Character Building

Early childhood education is widely accepted as a key period of cognitive, emotional, social and moral development. During this period toddlers learn basic attitudes, beliefs and actions which can shape their future development. The National Policy on Education in Nigeria stresses the importance of character formation, social standards and cultural knowledge in early childhood education activities.

Piaget's theory of moral development suggests that children learn society principles through interactions with parents, classmates, and social institutions. Similarly, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory highlights the importance of cultural instruments and social interaction in children's learning and development. Music is a cultural tool that allows the transmission of values and social expectations, which makes it especially relevant in early childhood education.

Research has shown that songs and musical activities improve memory, language development, emotional regulation, and social skills in children. Educational songs are particularly effective because they blend enjoyment with education, making it easier for youngsters to acquire complicated concepts through repetition, rhythm and involvement. Musical learning practices are now widely recognised as essential parts of holistic childhood development.

Toun Soetan's 'Train Up Your Child' as Moral Pedagogy

Toun Soetan is quite popular among Nigerian gospel and indigenous music practitioners for her songs that talk about family values, the upbringing of a child, moral responsibility and societal ethics. Her song *Train Up Your Child* is very notable in that it touches upon one of the most fundamental issues in African societies; the moral and social upbringing of children. The song highlights the importance of the role of parents in developing the character, behaviour and future of their children. In terms of lyrics, the song describes parenting as not only a biological role but a moral one that includes deliberate guiding, discipline and transfer of values.

The main idea of *Train Up Your Child* is that parents are the major agents of socialisation and character building. The song continually calls on parents to put time and energy into raising children who will be responsible and useful members of society. This concept coincides with the socio-cultural view of child development,

which views learning and moral development as a result of the interaction between the child, family and the larger community (Vygotsky, 1978). In many African countries, the family is the primary institution through which children learn social standards, cultural values, and expectations for behaviour. Hence, parental participation is viewed as important to the effective formation of morally upright persons (Mbiti, 1969). The song stresses the idea of parental responsibility. The words emphasise the fact that the future behaviour of children is intimately associated with the high standards of guiding and teaching provided to them in their early years. This approach is consistent with traditional African educational theories that hold that moral teaching begins in the family and is supported by the community. Fafunwa (1974) observes that indigenous education of Africans stresses a lot on character formation, respect for elders, self-discipline and societal duty. Seen this way, *Train Up Your Child* is a warning to parents not to abandon their educational and moral responsibilities, which could produce negative consequences for the child, family and society.

The song also touches upon the concepts of discipline, obedience, honesty, respect and accountability. These ideals are always emphasised as good qualities that children should be encouraged to develop early in life. Respect for elders, in particular, is an essential aspect of African value systems, and it is frequently seen as the basis of social concord and communal cohabitation (Gyekye, 1996). The song also promotes cultural values of obedience and respect, such as the recognition of authority, following the social laws, and contributing constructively to the life of the society.

Another significant part of the song is that it cautions parents against negligence. As the song says, badly trained children can be a source of grief, disappointment, or social embarrassment. This statement echoes an African saying that a child's moral failure (or success) is typically tied to the quality of parental instruction during his or her upbringing. Such views are congruent with social learning theory, which states that children learn attitudes and actions through observation, imitation and reinforcement by significant adults in their surroundings (Bandura, 1977). By describing the results of bad parenting, the song tells parents to get involved in the moral growth of their children.

The power of *Train Up Your Child* pedagogically, is not only in its message, but in its musical structure and performance manner. Repetition and simple language, catchy phrases and emotional vocal delivery are all used in the song to make it easier to understand and remember. Educational psychologists have long been aware that repetition is beneficial for learning and memory consolidation, especially for young children (Bruner, 1966). The song's repetitiveness allows the listener to absorb its moral lessons and quickly recall them during everyday life.

Furthermore, the song uses straightforward and culturally recognisable language, which makes it easy for everyone to understand regardless of their level of education. This makes it more successful as a tool for informal teaching and learning in

communities. Nketia (1974) says that African songs use simple language and repetitive structures to allow for successful communication and participation of a group of people. These strategies cement musical messages into communal consciousness, making them more likely to affect attitudes and behaviour.

The pedagogic function is amplified by the song's vocal style. Her voice is urgent and heartfelt as she asks the listener to examine their own stances and responsibilities as parents. According to Merriam (1964), the emotional impact of music enhances the ability of music to communicate the goals of society and influence human behaviour. The song is an effective instrument of moral instruction by virtue of the combination of a substantial lyrical content and an attractive vocal performance.

In addition to being a source of entertainment, *Train Up Your Child* can be read as a moral pedagogy that complements the formal and informal processes of education. The song is a teaching tool based on culture that teaches the concepts of ethics to the parents and the children. It shows that indigenous folk music can be a tool for value education, character building and societal development. These musical materials can be used in early childhood education to reinforce good practices, encourage family participation, and preserve cultural values.

The pedagogical importance of the song is better understood when contextualised within present day Nigerian society where discussions about deteriorating moral standards, youth indiscipline and poor family structures have become public conversation. *Train Up Your Child* encourages responsible parenting and good upbringing of children, and so contributes to wider initiatives to raise the ethical behaviour, cultural identity and social responsibility of younger generations. Hence the song is a testimony to the potential of indigenous popular music as an excellent tool of moral instruction and holistic development of children.

Socio-cultural Perspective on Music and Learning

Socio-cultural theory provides a good foundation for understanding the educational significance of Toun Soetan's *Train Up Your Child*. Socio-cultural theory is based on the work of Vygotsky (1978) who argue that learning is inherently social and happens via interaction with others and through the use of culturally significant tools and symbols. Vygotsky believe that cognitive growth is not done in isolation but is influenced by social interactions, language, cultural practices and involvement in communal life. Interaction with parents, teachers, friends and other members of society who pass on the cultural values and conventions to younger generations leads to the acquisition of knowledge. In this context, mediating tools such as language, stories, proverbs, songs and music are cultural strategies that promote learning and social development.

Music is especially significant among these cultural tools because it brings together language, emotion, memory and social contact in ways that foster learning and cultural transmission. Vygotsky (1978) suggests that cultural tools connect people to society through the internalisation of socially valued knowledge. In African nations,

music is one of the most efficient ways through which communities impart moral lessons, cultural expectations and social duties. African music is ‘closely tied to social life’ and is often ‘used as a teaching aid to reinforce accepted patterns of behaviour and to convey the communal values’ (Nketia 1974, p. 4). People acquire not only cultural traditions but also the ethical codes of social relations through music.

From a socio-cultural perspective, *Train Up Your Child* might be considered a cultural product that supports the transmission of knowledge about parenting, child development, and moral behaviour. The song relates to the social ideas about the responsibility of parents, and the significance of raising children who are disciplined, honest, respectful, and responsible. These values are not expressed as individual preferences but as social expectations based on the cultural traditions of the Nigerian and the larger African society. Thus, the song works as a conduit for transmitting and preserving cultural information across generations.

A fundamental assumption of socio-cultural theory is that learning initially happens at the societal level and then internalised at the individual level. Vygotsky (1978) calls this process the transition from interpsychological functioning (amongst persons) to intrapsychological functioning (inside the individual). In the context of *Train Up Your Child* the song may be first experienced in a social context, such as a house, church, school, family gathering, or community event. During these interactions youngsters experience the messages of the song through listening, singing, conversation and observation of adult responses. Through repeated interactions with these messages over time, youngsters internalise the ideals encoded in the lyrics, and internalise external societal expectations to become personal beliefs and conduct standards.

The instructional value of the song is also particularly pertinent to the role of language in socio-cultural learning. According to Vygotsky, language is the main cultural tool that civilisations use to transfer knowledge and influence cognitive development. Through its clear, direct, and culturally familiar language, the lyrics of *Train Up Your Child* express expectations about child rearing and parental duty. This kind of language accessibility makes it possible for people of diverse ages and education to understand each other. Bruner (1996) asserts that social meanings are transmitted through symbolic systems such as language and stories that enable individuals to interpret their social surroundings. The song, thus, acts as a narrative tool for the listener to decode and internalise cultural values of family life and moral conduct.

Moreover, social-cultural theory emphasises the role of directed involvement and social modelling in learning processes. Children learn attitudes and actions by seeing and copying important persons in their lives (Rogoff, 2003). The song further encourages this process by clearly placing parents as role models and primary educators in children’s life. The frequent exhortation of parents to “train up” their children reinforces the expectation of adults as active agents in children’s moral and

social development. This message resonates with African indigenous educational philosophies that emphasise collaborative responsibility in child-rearing and view moral teaching as a joint responsibility of parents, extended family members and the wider community (Fafunwa, 1974).

The socio-cultural view also stresses that learning is inseparable from cultural context. Human growth is impacted by the values, customs and social practices of a specific culture. *Train Up Your Child* expresses profoundly held African concepts of family responsibility, respect for elders, communal accountability and moral discipline. These ideals are in line with what Gyekye (1996) calls the moral bases of African communal living in which the action of an individual is judged by its effect on the welfare of the family and community. The song weaves these concepts into a musical form, making the cultural knowledge accessible, memorable, and emotionally engaging.

Another significant part of socio-cultural theory is the belief that cultural products are involved in the construction of identity. Music is not just a medium for conveying information, but also assists people to foster a sense of belonging and cultural identity (Campbell, 2004). With its emphasis on traditional values and responsible citizenship, *Train Up Your Child* reinforces those cultural norms which affect a child's awareness of self-concept and his position in society. The song thus helps in the development of individual character and collective identity, and motivates individuals to adopt behaviours which foster social cohesion and community growth.

In addition, the repetitious character of the song facilitates the process of internalisation described by socio-cultural theorists. It is a potent pedagogical approach as it enhances memorisation, and consolidates learning outcomes. From the words in the song to the messages in homes, churches, schools and media places, children and adults are constantly being reminded of what society expects of them as parents and children. This method slowly incorporates these principles into everyday behaviours and social interactions. Music is a powerful instrument of social learning and behavioural reinforcement because it combines emotional involvement with repetition of messages. (Merriam, 1964).

Train Up Your Child has particular socio-cultural importance with respect to early childhood education. Young children learn best when schooling is rooted in familiar cultural situations and accompanied by meaningful social contact. The song is an example of how indigenous music may be a culturally appropriate resource for instruction that can supplement formal educational techniques. The teaching of lessons on discipline, respect, obedience, honesty and responsibility through the familiar framework of a song provides a chance for holistic learning, which encompasses cognitive, emotional, social and moral development.

Ultimately, the socio-cultural framework reveals that *Train Up Your Child* is not only a musical composition but a cultural tool for mediating learning, reinforcing societal values, and supporting character building. The song, by its lyrical substance,

performance style and cultural significance, aids the transmission of collective knowledge of responsible parenting and good childhood behaviour. Its educational importance is in its potential to connect informal and formal learning environments, and contribute to the conservation of cultural values and the promotion of social integration for younger generations.

Textual Analysis and Discussion of Results

The song *Train Up Your Child* has a strong moral and educational message, which is about responsible parenting and raising children properly. The opening lyric, “Train up your child in the way of the Lord,” sets the fundamental theme of the song and instantly defines child training as a parent’s responsibility. The statement is evocative of the biblical mandate in Proverbs 22:6 that underscores the significance of leading children on routes that are morally acceptable in their formative years. The song draws on the strong religious orientation of many Nigerian families and communities by placing its message within a familiar religious framework.

The lyrics are straightforward and repetitive. Instead of using difficult literary devices the composer uses simple language that can be easily comprehended by listeners of many educational and social backgrounds. The song’s fundamental message is emphasised by the repeated phrase “Train up your child.” This is both a command and a warning. Repetition is a pedagogical tool that helps to retain and internalise moral principles. The song is simple, therefore, it is good for children, parents, teachers, and religious communities.

Another important textual characteristic is the promise in the phrase “and when he is grown, he will give you peace.” This remark establishes the theme of reward for appropriate parenting. The song treats child upbringing as an investment that pays into the age of adulthood. The notion of “peace” may be seen as emotional contentment, family stability, social respectability and the absence of behavioural disorders. This view is consistent with the traditional African view that children are expected to bring honour, support and comfort to their families by excellent conduct and responsible citizenship.

The addition of the phrase “my mama o” gives the song a significant cultural and emotional element. In many African musical traditions, kinship phrases such as “mama” are employed to promote closeness, emotional connection, and social engagement. The expression brings to mind a worried parent pondering the necessity of bringing up children. It also mirrors oral performance traditions in which songs are constructed to elicit audience engagement through call-and-response frameworks and familiar vocabulary. Further, the language displays a concern with moral formation underneath. The lyrics, however short, hint at the merits of obedience, discipline, respect, duty and godliness. The emphasis is not only on academic accomplishment or material wealth but also on character building. This emphasis resonates with traditional African educational philosophies which consider moral training and social responsibility as important aims in child-rearing (Fafunwa, 1974).

Thematic Analysis

The recurring call to “train up your child” places parents in the position of primary educator and moral guide for youngsters. The song emphasises the significant role parents play in developing their children’s future behaviour and character. This result is consistent with the socio-cultural viewpoints that consider the home as the primary learning and socialisation institution (Vygotsky, 1978). The expression “in the way of the Lord” stresses the significance of moral and religious training. The song indicates that a good upbringing is more than just providing for basic needs; it also includes spiritual and ethical teaching. The lessons of religion are stated as fundamental principles of character, self-control and responsible behaviour. The phrase “he will give you peace” is a reference to the long-term effects of parental engagement on child development. The song implies that good child rearing is directly correlated with positive future results. The subject is based on the concept that responsible parenting promotes social stability and family wellbeing. The song encourages principles of excellent character like obedience, respect, discipline and accountability. These ideals are not stated but rather suggested through the focus on moral instruction and mentoring. The creation of character is the main goal of the educational message of the song.

Discussion

The results show that *Train Up Your Child* is a culturally embedded tool of moral instruction. The song transmits important concepts about parenting, child development and social duty using simple words, repetitive rhythms and accessible musical styles. Its educational message is quite consistent with the ancient African notions of child-rearing that emphasised the transmission of moral values, communal duty, respect for elders, and compliance to societal standards (Fafunwa, 1974; Gyekye, 1996; Mbiti, 1969). In many African civilisations, the moral growth of children is considered to be the duty not just of the parents but of the community as a whole, and music has traditionally been a vehicle for the transmission of such values from one generation to the next (Nketia, 1974).

The analysis also shows that the song is an informal education to complement the conventional early childhood education. Children are exposed repeatedly to the lyrics and melodic patterns of the song and, in so doing, are exposed to ideas of obedience, discipline, honesty, respect and responsibility, while parents are reminded of their responsibilities as primary educators and role models for their children. This finding supports the claim of Merriam (1964) that music fulfils significant educational and socialising roles, reinforcing accepted behavioural patterns and perpetuating cultural knowledge. The song’s repeating pattern also represents the educational notion that repetition helps young learners learn, retain, and internalise value (Bruner, 1966). Thus, *Train Up Your Child* serves as a useful instrument for moral education and character development in the home.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory which emphasises the significance of cultural products in mediating learning and social development (Vygotsky, 1978). From this perspective, the song serves as a cultural

resource for the transmission, negotiation and internalisation of societal norms about parenting and child behaviour. The lyrics have culturally relevant knowledge on responsible parenting and moral behaviour, therefore aiding the transference of social standards between generations. Participation in the performance and repeated engagement with the content of the song fosters character formation, moral growth, and social integration, as children and adults alike become active participants in a process of social learning (Rogoff, 2003).

Besides, the results show the instructional potential of indigenous popular music in early childhood education. The song's use of culturally known language, religious focus and memorable musical structure makes it a valuable teaching resource for developing ethical behaviour and cultural identification among young learners. This is in line with research which highlight the importance of culturally relevant instructional materials in boosting children's involvement, knowledge and sense of belonging (Campbell, 2004; Akuno, 2005). The song provides relevant learning experiences based on children's everyday social reality through indigenous cultural experiences and common moral principles.

The results also suggest that the song helps preserve cultural heritage by reinforcing indigenous ideals about family duty, respect for authority, and communal living. In the era of globalisation and the growing influx of foreign cultural influences, indigenous popular songs such as *Train Up Your Child* provide significant outlets for the preservation of local values and cultural identity (Nketia, 1974). Its moral message and cultural content promote the appreciation of cultural heritage among children, and the development of behaviours that contribute positively to the society.

The study reveals that indigenous popular music can serve as a great educational resource for the overall development of the child. *Train Up Your Child* is not a work just for entertainment show; it is also a medium for value education, cultural transmission and socialisation. The song exemplifies how music may contribute to the cognitive, emotional, moral and social development of children, while at the same time consolidating the values of the family and the expectations of the community. Its usefulness as a teaching aid calls for more inclusion of culturally appropriate musical materials in early childhood education programmes and parent education programmes in Nigeria. (Fafunwa, 1974; Vygotsky, 1978).

Conclusion

The study concludes that *Train Up Your Child* by Toun Soetan is not only a piece of entertainment. It is a pedagogical resource that is based on culture, and fosters the holistic development of the child through the integration of moral, social, cultural and spiritual education. The analysis showed that the song conveys vital values, such as discipline, respect, obedience, honesty, parental duty, and social accountability, which are necessary for character development and responsible citizenship. The simple lyrics, repetitive structure and accessible musical style of the song are useful in reinforcing positive patterns of behaviour, and in passing on cultural values from one generation to another.

The study also found that *Train Up Your Child* is a sort of non-formal education, complementing traditional early childhood education. The song functions as a cultural product that embodies and communicates society's expectations of parenting and child behaviour. The educational content and cultural relevance of indigenous popular music reveal the song's potential to make substantial contributions to value education, ethical development, cultural identity creation, and social integration among young children. The findings, therefore, highlight the value of indigenous popular music as an alternative instructional resource for Nigeria's early childhood education system.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, the study recommends that educators, curriculum planners, parents and policy makers should recognise and use culturally relevant musical resources as supplementary tools to promote ethical behaviour, cultural understanding and responsible citizenship. The systematic inclusion of indigenous songs that promote moral values and positive social conduct in early childhood education curricula would contribute to children's overall development. Teachers should also use culturally relevant musical materials as instructional aids to teach learners character education, social responsibility and cultural consciousness.

Additionally, parents should use educational songs in home-based learning to increase family-based learning experiences, as well as to teach moral values. Curriculum developers and educational authorities should work with musicians/musicologists, cultural practitioners and scholars in the creation, documentation and integration of value-based musical materials in educational subjects/courses. These measures would help to preserve cultural heritage and increase the effectiveness of moral and civic education.

Finally, further research on the educational importance of other indigenous and popular Nigerian songs on the promotion of children's cognitive, social, emotional, cultural and moral development is recommended. Broadening research in this area will increase our understanding of the role of music as a culturally sensitive pedagogical instrument, and enhance efforts to incorporate indigenous knowledge systems into modern educational practice.

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Appendix: Excerpt of *Train Up You Child*

Train up your child

Olufunmilola T. Oladipo

The musical score is written for Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Tenor (T) voices. It is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The lyrics are: "Train up your child in the way of the Lord and when he is grown he will give you peace my ma - ma o Train up your".

Soprano
Train up your child in the way of the Lord

Alto
Train up your child in the way of the Lord

Tenor
Train up your child in the way of the Lord

S
and when he is grown he will give you peace

A
and when he is grown he will give you peace

T
and when he is grown he will give you peace

S
my ma - ma o Train up your

A

T