

Mainstream Culture, Celebrity Subculture, and Youth Defiance in Lagos, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Among young Nigerians, Naira Marley is a crowd-pulling songster. To most of the older Lagos residents, the effects of his genre of music appear to pitch his young followers against the mainstream culture and predispose them to act defiantly against the mainstream culture. This article examines the impact of Naira Marley's music and lifestyle on the social well-being of Marlians in Lagos, Nigeria. The study adopted the qualitative method. Purposively, it selected 42 participants out of whom 30 were in-depth interview participants and 12 key informant interview participants who were all selected from communities across Lagos. The data were thematically and content analyzed. It found that the musical sermons of Naira Marley appeal not to the intellect but sentiments of youths to undermine their acquired social training before encountering the artiste and his ideologies. It concludes that Naira Marley's music is characterized by vulgarity, indecency, and strongly biased against women which further escalate the collapse of the core values of society among youths in Lagos. It, therefore, suggests a value reconstruction-driven family system that re-enacts the traditional role of the individual to enhance responsible child socialization to guarantee a safer Lagos.

KEYWORDS:

celebrity culture, songster, youth defiance, Naira Marley, Lagos

Introduction

Naira Marley is a Nigerian citizen having constitutional rights and corresponding limitations. These rights include the free display of his musical prowess, projection of his dressing expression, and propagation of his ideology. In so far as he lives his life and conducts his business within the provisions of the constitution and professional regulations, he is good to go. To keep the conduct of artistes within the ambits of the law, some regulatory agencies coordinate the governance of the Nigerian music space. The National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) licenses filmmakers and censors contents of films and videos in Nigeria; the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) guarantees the conformity of the broadcast industry with set standards in Nigeria; the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) enforces copyright laws; and the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) standardizes the cultural and entertainment components of the tourism industry in Nigeria (CAAtoorneys, 2023). Though polluting the cultural space for Naira Marley's impressionable

young followers prevents them from developing pure African identities, these agencies promptly interject to protect moral sanity.

Nevertheless, the impacts of Naira Marley's music and lyrical messages have constituted a common source of worry to most Nigerian parents. His moral brand epitomizes an organized rebellion against the young persons' use of mainstream culture. After his education abroad, Naira Marley returned to Nigeria to etch his genre of social terrorism on the minds of his captive young followers under the toga of advocacy. His gullible admirers must offend normative patterns and drop out of school to qualify as committed mentees. Sadly enough, he insulates his two women and four children, who live overseas from his Marlian ethos. In the environment where he keeps his children, the law frowns at proscribed conduct. Being a social influencer in Nigeria, Naira Marley infects others' children with mannerlessness that ranges from obscenity, nudity, and misogyny to cyber-criminality. His music entertains and relieves his teeming young followers of depression. However, screaming newspaper headlines such as "Naira Marley Was Once Wanted For Robbery and Sexual Assault In The UK"; "EFCC, slams 11 fraud charges against Naira Marley"; "Naira Marley Introduces New Dance Moves, calls It 'Tesumole"; "EFCC to arraign Naira Marley for Yahoo Yahoo"; "Nigerian pastor says Naira Marley is a demon and others seem to have appropriately depicted him.

If the role model of the contemporary youths is someone who makes the news more often not for the right reasons, does that kind of model possess the norms and values that can railroad the youth to the next higher level of discipline, hard work, and initiatives? Is his conduct then not suitably deserving of parents' apprehension? Does he have the moral credentials to be a role model for children? An attempt to answer these questions makes this social investigation inevitable in Lagos where youth deviance daily challenges dominant customary values. Conversely, the mandates of contemporary artistes worldwide transcend the narrow conception of audience entertainment. Artistes now construct acceptable social tastes in dressing, poise, and finesse that deepen the consciousness, empowerment, and application of acquired education among their followers. To preserve cultural maturity, Nigeria is perhaps at an age when parents should look back and reassume their customary role of training their children. It is for this fundamental reason that this article adopts the objective of explaining the role that the music and life of Naira Marley play in the rising antipathy between normative behavior and public defiance among the youths in Lagos. To realize this objective, this article answers the following questions. (i). Who is Naira Marley? (ii). How does his life and music impact his young followers in Lagos? (iii). How can his followers overcome the negative impact of his life and music to inspire integration in Lagos?

Literature Review

The real name of Naira Marley, the Nigerian hip-hop singer, is Azeez Adeshina Sanyaolu (BBC, 2019). He is the president of his controversial fan base, Marlians (Abraham, 2019). For this article, the term youth implies individuals between the ages of 18 and 35, who embark on personality improvement, and character formation and sometimes experience training that centers on human capital development (Salman et al., 2015). The Oxford English Dictionary, in December 2017, simplified Youthquake when it titled the concept as its 'word of the year' (The Guardian, 2017). It described the word in the context of the general election in the United Kingdom earlier in 2017 as "a significant cultural, political, or social change arising from the actions or influence of young people" (OED, 2017, n.p). In the context of the recent interest that the history of celebrity has attracted, Inglis (2010) situates the origin of celebrity in the mid-eighteenth century. Boorstin (1971, p. 58) says 'the celebrity is a person who is well-known for' his or her 'well-knownness'.

On the concept of celebrity culture, scholars argue that it is a culture where fame is the core concern and the media undertake marketing, profile-raising, and advertising (Penford-Mounce, 2009). For this reason, celebrity culture dominates the contemporary world in which "images of stars, people 'famous for being famous', are circulated and consumed daily" (Penford, 2004, p. 289). While celebrity culture is, in itself, not a bad idea, it becomes worrisome and poses a great concern to society if the behavior emanating from that background fails to connect with positive social development. While celebrities can act as a positive influence on the lives of their young admirers, the major anxiety is that celebrities act as role models for disruptive or detrimental behavior (Shaw, Whitehead & Giles, 2010). Perhaps, this informs why most Nigerian popular artistes make prosperity, drugs, and sex the leading themes of their musical productions (Adebambo, 2020).

If the youths in Lagos display different forms of loathsome behaviors, adult residents of Lagos will always refer to Naira Marley as the harbinger of tragedy. Hip hop has transcended violence or risk-generating phenomenon requiring an instant banning. Granted that it lacks rewarding social and economic opportunities for young followers, music has become a big business. The display of deviance and defiance by the youths must have underscored the suspicion of their parents about the promises of hip-hop music being more positive than negative (Johnson, 2021). The reality that "we live in an expanding culture, yet we spend much of our energy regretting the fact, rather than seeking to understand its nature and conditions" (Storey, 2003, p. xii) justifies this study and the gap in knowledge that this article hopes to bridge.

Theoretical Framework

This article adopts the social learning theory of Albert Bandura (1971) and the cultivation theory that Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli (1986)

propounded (Anaeto, Osifeso & Onabajo, 2008). Over the years, scholars have propounded numerous theories to explain the factors that drive human behavior. The social learning theory is one such theory that explains that individuals can acquire new behavior from observing and imitating others (Bandura, 1971). Thus, learning occurs when an individual goes outside his/her narrow opinions to explore the vast opportunities that abound for shaping the course and content of his/her daily routines. This theory suffers from the limitation of overlooking the channel that facilitates the transmission of learned behavior into demonstrable conduct. The filling of this observed void necessitates the inclusion of the cultivation theory which assumes that heavy TV viewership cultivates the perception of reality portrayed by TV and that viewers base their conclusions about reality and their actions in the world on the cultivated reality provided by the television. The television remains the only medium in the annals of human civilization that is credited with being the “chief creator of synthetic cultural patterns” (entertainment and information) (Anaeto et al., 2008). Granted that Naira Marley presents subcultural values that some younger citizens admire, his converts would not have been this widespread if not for the power of the television that promotes online viewing contact and facilitates the imitation of his mode of deviance and defiance.

Data Sources and Method

The study adopted the qualitative method. Relying on a combination of approaches, it deploys in-depth textual analyses, audiovisual and multimedia messages/domains, and the review of related literature, along with close observations and readings of the behavioral patterns that the fans of Naira Marley radiate. The target population of this study includes youths who are between 18 and 35 years old, community opinion leaders, and parents who reside in Lagos, Nigeria. Participants in the study were purposively selected. All 42 selected participants out of which 30 were in-depth interview participants and 12 key informant interview participants (6 males and 6 females comprising teachers, psychologists, and social workers) were interviewed at selected communities of Lagos State in 2022. The 30 in-depth interview participants (15 males and 15 females) who were purposively selected in consideration of their hairstyles, dress, and other mannerisms that are associated with Marlianism in addition to acknowledging being Marlians responded to in-depth interviews selected from communities across Lagos. This study obtained informed consent at the time of the initial screening for participation and again at the time of the individual in-depth interview.

Results

The following sections present the results from the analysis of the primary data collected and different secondary information reviewed under the three research questions of the study.

The Musical Trajectory of Naira Marley

In this section, this article specifically explores how the 'personality' of Naira Marley leads his followers to conflict with mainstream norms. Some scholars have defined him as both an enigma and a controversial character who has attracted widespread criticism for the supposed debauched contents of his music (Akande, 2019). Mabiaku (2020, p. np) wondered why Nigerians chose to rubbish the essence of Fela “in this corridor of nothingness.” He insisted that “everything Fela did was based on enlightening the people, waking up the minds of the people for the development of the society the right way with respect and regard for our cultures and traditions” (Mabiaku, 2020, p. np). A female parent of a male Marlian at Oshodi, an in-depth interview participant, spoke scathingly against the person of Naira Marley when she said:

After hustling alone to secure a university admission for my son, somebody who hides his children overseas and who himself is a graduate lured my son from school because he believes the school is a scam to become a drug abuser and hemp smoker. Fela never encouraged his followers to abandon school and never hid his children from his influence.

(Female IDI, Oshodi, 2022)

Born on May 9, 1994, in Agege, Lagos, Nigeria, he relocated as a teenager from Lagos, southwestern Nigeria to Peckham, southeast London where he had his formative years in the entertainment business. At age 20, his song Marry Juana (2014), which essentially promotes the smoking of marijuana boosted his music career. He became famous when he collaborated with Olamide and Lil Kesh on the song Issa Goal (2017). With the hit single “Am I A Yahoo Boy?” Naira Marley's popularity rapidly rose in 2019. As a result of his exploits in music, some authors have described Naira Marley as both a mystery and a notorious character who has received widespread disapproval for his music's supposed immoral contents (Akande, 2019). Aruleba (2020, nd) ran a critical but instructive commentary on Naira Marley on June 18, 2020. “...AzeezFashola is...known more for the very bad things: singing to propagate 'yahoo yahoo' [internet fraud], Indian hemp, and other vices. He has been on the wrong side of the law severally [i.e. repeatedly]...” The traditional purpose of being a music lover, everywhere, is for individuals to fulfill their desires for entertainment. Little wonder then that the young followers of Naira Marley imbibe both the positive and negative values of their music idols. A nineteen-year-old female Marlian, an in-depth interview participant, justified what Naira Marley represented in the lives of his young followers when she argued:

Naira Marley is a messenger of God. Were it not that God created him as a guide for our generation, the incidence of suicide would have been unbearable for Nigerian parents. He relieves us of frustration and depression. What is the need for bras and pants in a tropical temperature? The people who hate him do so because of an inadequate appreciation of the values he represents. God

blesses him because he appreciates what he does for the younger generation.

(Female Marlian IDI, Lagos Island, 2022)

Naira Marley rose “to stardom in 2017”. Ever since, “he has attracted an overwhelming number of (youthful) devotees who go by the label 'Marlins'”. The Marlian cult comprises “a network of local and diasporic fans of Naira Marley” (Sylvanus&Eze, 2021, p. 2). The fame and strong cult-like influence of Naira Marley transcends mere obsessive online admiration to displayed offline veneration among his teeming young followers who call him the Marlian President (Augoye, 2020). To be a Marlian, one must be a fan/follower who embraces the striking characteristics of Naira Marley's lifestyle (Olumide&Mopelade, 2020); obey unspoken rules (Effevottu, Adumati&Oje, 2020); and drop-out. These widespread disappointing practices constitute their route to redemption (Cheeka, 2020). Because it promotes drug abuse, internet fraud/scams, and a lifestyle of immorality among the Nigerian youth who support him, the music of Naira Marley generates considerable arguments (Eze&Sylvanus, 2021). The titling of his first major hit released as a South London resident, Marry Juana attests to this claim (Adeoye, 2021). Every country deserves the youth it raises. Whereas the Nigerian government and some elites openly condemn Naira Marley's apparent support for internet fraud in this song, some scholars argue that internet fraud is a consequence of the endemic and inherent systemic corruption in Nigeria (Odugbemi, 2019). A 22-year-old male Marlian, an in-depth interview participant, attempted to absolve Naira Marley from blame over the situations that led to cultural confusion among young persons in Lagos:

It is counterintuitive to isolate Naira Marley's contribution to the moral decay among young persons in Lagos. Other contributory variables such as the ailing economy, insecurity; spineless education, unemployment, corrupt elite class, and injustices exacerbate moral decadence in Lagos. In all of these, politicians who forced young persons to receive coronavirus vaccines that imperil their long lives are good but Naira Marley is bad. We have heard.

(Male Malian IDI, Ojo, 2022)

Granted that most artistes entice audiences and profit off of people's “sustained interest in the depiction of sexually explicit images” (Endong, 2016, p. 33), some others still concentrate on accepting responsibility for advocacies that seek to empower the youth. Nigerian hip-hop is a tool of national unity. However, it should run critical commentary on youth empowerment. In this regard, everything about Naira Marley is not indicative of irreversible cultural disapproval. He married women, not men. He acknowledges being the father of four children (Marley, 2019). He launched his Marlian Records in 2019 and YouTube recognized him as Nigeria's most viewed artiste. To his credit since

2017, he has released the following singles: Issa Goal (2017), Japa (2018), Am I A Yahoo Boy? (2019), Opotoyi (2019), Soapy (2019), Puta (2019), Mafo (2019), Tesumole (2019), 'Aye' (2020) and As E Dey Go (2020) (Sylvanus&Eze, 2021, p. 6). Some Nigerians see Naira Marley as a hard worker having won the year 2019 by releasing smash hit singles and also was best on different musical channels on television and radio. In 2020, he won the Soundcity MVP Awards for Viewers' Choice for Soapy. Also, Naira Marley was nominated for the City People Music Awards for Artist of the Year and City People Music Awards for Street Song of the Year for Soapy in 2019 and was nominated for the Soundcity MVP Awards for Song of the Year for Soapy and the Soundcity MVP Awards for Best Pop Artiste in 2020 (Augoye, 2020).

Impact of Naira Marley and His Songs on Lagos' Youths

In this section, this article explores how the role of Naira Marley's music combines with his 'personality' to predispose his teeming followers to consistent violation of mainstream norms in Lagos, Nigeria. The essence of “music may influence young people's behavior through its lyrics” and “substance use references occur more frequently in rap/hip-hop than in other music genres” (Harakeh&TerBogt, 2018, p. 1819). Therefore, the finding of a study indicating that listening to rap/hip-hop music was associated with more marijuana use (Oberle& Garcia, 2015) appears to support a verifiable reality in the context of Naira Marley's influence on his followers in Lagos. The status-conferring credential of the media reinforces the credibility and visibility of celebrities and makes the escape of their committed adherents inconceivable, if not impossible. Even though the defining attributes of Marlians suggest a commitment to mannerlessness, beltless, braless, drug-abuse friendly, disrespectful, dreadlock wearing, fearlessness, having focus only in respect of cybercrime, sex, and masturbation, a theme depicted in 'soapy' (Olugbile, 2020). From the foregoing implications, it is clear that the impact of Naira Marley on his followers is multi-dimensional. An 18-year-old male Marlian residing in Agege, an in-depth interview participant, sees Naira Marley as an apostle of liberation and argues:

Why must our parents and elders request us to fear them when they are not masquerades? Do they not know that respect and fear are not synonyms? They want to kill our originality and replace it with a lack of imagination and turn our confidence into diffidence. Is it a crime for us to come into this world through our parents? Whether our elders' culture is mainstream or ours, the subculture is irrelevant. What is important to social cohabitation is the happiness of everyone in his/her social ecosystem. We have discovered that school is a scam and this offends the old school. We have searched for and found the truth. It is setting us free. Thanks to Naira Marley.

(Male Marlian IDI, Isheri, 2022)

One of the critical accusations leveled against Naira Marley is the sexualization of women. The expectations of music producers and marketers appear to conduce with the reality within the submission that the weaponization of sex promotes the sales of mediated products. The Nigerian entertainment industries acknowledge that “obscene images help to sell records, through the depiction of sexually explicit images” (Endong, 2016, p. 33). Where is the agency of government saddled with the responsibility to ensure ethical compliance? Corruption has probably sedated it to eternal sleep. In his discussion of women and sexual morality as a cultural component, Omer (2018, p. 31) contends that “the practice of nudity is not a common phenomenon in the lifestyle of the African woman who represents strength and virtues that describe her as an epitome of morality and dignity and a propagator of the African culture”. Although music and dance are means of accessing and measuring enjoyment through entertainment which is consistent with our inherent cultural behavior, research has found that some offensive dance steps emanating from recent hip-hop music in Nigeria erode our cultural values, and are not polite for public consumption (Abiodun, 2017). Therefore, Naira Marley must have crossed the cultural and linguistic geography to act defiantly against the cultural authority such that “no other contemporary and living Nigerian popular musician has attracted so much condemnation...” (Sylvanus&Eze 2021, p. 2). A 17-year-old female Marlian residing on Lagos Island, an in-depth interview participant, provided the following explanation when she was reminded of how sexually vulnerable she has been in the Marlian group:

Iyenkoka aye o (that does not concern anybody.) Outside the Marlian group, was my entire being not vulnerable to poverty, frustration, and other forms of deprivation? Adults appear jealous of the independence that Naira Marley fought and won for us from the conservatives. If I tweak for my age mates to admire, how does that affect adults who will never mind their businesses? Is it their bum I exercise? Those who are not pleased with the progress we are making should be kind to give a working transformer a big hug. Is it by force we should subscribe to adults' restrictive mainstream constraint? They accuse us of not wearing pants and a bra. Hmmm, oga Ade, park well, if God wanted to cover all you call our privacies, he would have provided natural lids. *Gbagbe e. A mobo se nlo*. (Forget that thing. We understand the rhythm).

(Female Marlian IDI, Lagos Island, 2022)

The presence of new forms of communication technologies promotes the fanatical attraction of young people to celebrities (Okere&Uzom, 2012). They have changed the pattern of cultural perception, consumption, and application by youths to whom different kinds of popular culture are appealing (Effevottu, Adumati, & Oje, 2020). The role of the media in the interpretation of the artistes' messages further makes the impact of Naira Marley's music on youths more

predictable in Lagos. To the extent that youth hold celebrities as role models, the lifestyles of their selected models will continue to shape their perceptions of reality and even career choices such that they swallow the restraints and intemperance of their role models hook, line, and sinker (Okere&Uzom, 2012). Naira Marley's profound usage of substances has given him the name "Igbolabi", which means "we have given birth to weed". He is also popular for his uncouth musical expressions and lewd lifestyle (Gidado, 2019). A 47-year-old male social worker residing at Mile 12, an in-depth interview participant, looked at the weight of the impact of Naira Marley on the future of Lagos' youth and lamented:

There has been no epoch of sexual immorality that can be compared with what happens now in Lagos. In the name of social sophistication, boys sag to expose their pants. The situation is worse with ladies who now proudly proclaim that they are done with pants and bras. Nakedness is not cultural in Lagos. Contemporary youths commonly defend the nothingness of sex. The devaluation of sexual privacy exposes whoever defends its sacredness to endless online and offline attacks.

(Male Social Worker IDI, Mile 12, 2022)

In a study conducted by Cundiff (2013), he found that sexually explicit media and the negative images of women portrayed in hip-hop culture have influenced youths such that aggression and violence are closely associated with cultural views of masculinity. Explaining the deviant lifestyle of the self-proclaimed president of the No-Belt Gang, Naira Marley, a psychologist said could be traced to the kind of upbringing he had (Olayimika, 2020). A 65-year-old male community leader in Badagry, an in-depth interview participant, blamed the current trend of behavior not only on Naira Marley but on the permissive social system that provides the cultural fertilizer for the growth of unhealthy alternative lifestyles:

The way the politicians have exposed the roots of the traditional family to the vagaries of bad weather with the lack of social provisions has caused a lot of systemic dysfunctions in the upbringing of contemporary children. If the natural teachers of children who are supposed to perform their character formation competently fail to do so, more of Naira Marley will emerge to deepen the cultural tragedy that the present adolescents have started.

(Male Community Leader, IDI, Ikeja, 2022)

However, hip-hop music is often filled with demeaning, female objectification, sexualization, indecent dance steps, drugs, and violence in their lyrical and visual contents (Cundiff, 2013). These predispose the youths to avoidable violence and criminal disposition. In the process of forming an identity, music provides young persons with the resources that conduce with their preferences in the choice of access to integration into the youth culture and attain

group identity (Lynch, 2014). But after initiation, what becomes of the cultural orientation they had acquired? How does their new status enable them to support mainstream norms to achieve idyllic happiness in society? Nowadays, the fastest way of getting any message to the youth is through the entertainment industry. Sadly, in doing this, artistes such as Naira Marley have thrown caution to the wind. Marlians idolize Naira Marley despite his apparent disregard for law and order, because when someone barefacedly publicly showcases practices considered to belong to the private domain without legal consequences, then youths would replicate the event because it conduces with their preference for acting out conduct that society prevents (Olayimika, 2020). A 20-year-old female Marlian residing at Ojota, an in-depth interview participant, accuses the adults of being envious of her generational breakthroughs. She continued:

Adult life in Nigeria is full of and governed by hypocrisy. An attempt to accuse Naira Marley amounts to the pot calling the kettle black. The adults hate the guy simply because he demystifies all the realities they want to be protected. The older generation should thank God we have not gone to the extreme level of the alternative lifestyle of same-sex marriage. If we do, what will they do? Is it, not our lives? These adults should just chill for the sake of equity!

(Female Malian IDI, Ojota, 2022)

Rescuing the Captured Youths to Reduce Victimization in Lagos, Nigeria

This section proffers solutions to the problems of the victimization of young persons in Lagos arising from Naira Marley's spiritual and intellectual captivity. To the extent that the Marlian movement glorifies vices, it deserves urgent attention (Ademiluyi, 2020). Customarily, formal education occurs in schools. Through it, learners develop critical life skills and learn to discern right from wrong to promote eventual self-retrieval from the unhealthy captivity by Naira Marley and his ilk. If Naira Marley considers schooling a scam, he symbolizes the social version of Boko Haram's terrorism in Nigeria. History demonstrates that countries with rapid growth and prosperity all took education seriously and spent it wisely (The World Bank, 2019). If the public policy fails to invest in education, unemployment, crime, and drug abuse gain ascendancy (Deak&Tanama, 2021) to justify Naira Marley's nauseous schooling is a scam philosophy. It will also validate the perception among students that their academic studies fail to prepare them adequately for work (European Commission, 2018). Therefore, educational policy should introduce training programs that will teach desirable competencies with the technical ones to equip students with the capacity to function well in society and the workplace (European Commission, 2018). Analyzing the unique relevance of education to overall development, a male university teacher, an in-depth interview participant, argued:

Educational policy should focus on the redefinition of methodologies and curricular reviews such that learners can

become employable upon the completion of their education. When students graduate and are gainfully employed, the claim among Marlians that school is a scam will stop to hold water. When the returns on education become mouth-watering, the followership of Naira Marley will suffer predictable attrition. In this effort, the family will need to be empowered, involved, and become champions of reinstalled family values.

(Male University Teacher, IDI, Ojo, 2022)

Closely tied to education is vocational training. Despite its importance, in many countries, participation in VET has traditionally been stigmatized in favor of university studies, although the recent socio-economic changes are changing approaches toward VET (Aldossari, 2020). In this regard, a 27-year-old female postgraduate student, an in-depth interview participant, explained her frustration about vocational education as it affects career progression in Lagos:

The argument for the inferiority of vocational education to basic university education is not new. If a university graduate and a graduate of a vocational institute apply for the same job where the graduate of a vocational institute appears more manifestly competent, the graduate will be employed. Although successive governments have tried to equilibrate the certificates using different approaches, there is a need for an educational policy declaration on the reconciliation of both certificates. This will further help young persons to realize the futility of their claim that the school is a scam. Here, public policy should strengthen the family as the hub of society to access young persons.

(Female Postgraduate Student, IDI, Yaba, 2022)

Some stakeholders should consciously reverse the rapidly nose-diving fortune of young citizens in Lagos. The celebrity has become “a key site of media attention and personal aspiration, as well as one of the key places where cultural meanings are negotiated and organized” (Marshall, 1997, p. 72–3). As key stakeholders, parents must keep diagnostic eyes on the materials that their children glean from the entertainment industry (Adebambo, 2020), which redefines their personalities. Constructive parent-child connection is intimately linked to the mental health and well-being of family members (Risi, Pickard, & Bird, 2021). Therefore, when parent-child communication is effective, children are more likely to develop a mindset that is favorable for growth and self-esteem (Saraff, Tiwari, Rishipal, 2020). A 68-year-old psychology teacher, also an in-depth interview participant, explained how the relationship of parents with their children determines the reactions of the latter to outside influences:

Parents should help their children manage their behaviors and build their self-esteem through rewarding relationships and positive discipline. Rather than deploying archaic approaches of condescension and patronage as strategies to recover them from the influences of their despicable role models, parents should

cause young persons to retrace their steps with love. Moreover, public policy should strengthen and make family environments its focus for the improvement of parental skills to bond and engage with other community members on boundaries, rules, and decision-making. This way, the parents' skills for engaging and communicating with adolescents to improve their intrapersonal relationships at the community level would have rewardingly enriched their learning outcomes. It is only an empowered family that can enable parents to support the mental health of their children, and their well-being and guide them on when to seek help to upgrade their behavioral profiles.

(Male Psychologist IDI, Ojo, 2022)

Beyond the profit-making motive, the private business establishments in Lagos must also commit to corporate social competence. This expectation began to enjoy public interest when Bowen (1953, p. xi, 6) posed the question “What responsibilities to society may businessmen reasonably be expected to assume?” His concern then centered on managerial decisions, policies, and actions that would be followed based on the values and objectives of society. In contemporary times, companies are under an obligation to implement corporate social responsibility (CSR), through which they engage to enhance community well-being (CWB) through returnable business traditions and corporate resources input (Lestari, Hamzah, & Maelah, 2019). To enhance community readiness for response and recovery from any form of shock, building and furthering community resilience (COM-R) is a desirable intervention (Rubin, Ntontis, Drury, Aml, & Williams, 2019). Therefore, enterprises must be answerable for their effects on communities and the environment where their work is domiciled (Rowe, Nowak, Quaddus, & Naude, 2014). Although communities possess numerous types of capital making the communities creative, steady, and protected against external trauma (Allen, Sheate, & Diaz-Chavez, 2012), these companies should play a significant role in empowering the young persons in the community to be useful to themselves and society. A 45-year-old CEO at Agbara Industrial Estate, an in-depth interview participant, analyzed how the corporate social responsibility of businesses impacts the younger persons in their communities:

Organized private investments in the communities of Lagos should engage the young persons at the level of scholarship provision, recreation, and empowerment. They could sponsor competitions that could deepen scholarship and creativity among young people. With these engagements, the young person will have less attraction for drug-driven commitment to artistes and recognize the family as the bastion of hope for young persons in Lagos.

(Male CEO, IDI, Agbara, 2022).

To promote intergenerational equity, one of the 11 Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development, the participation of young persons is central (UN ECOSOC, 2018). Therefore, to achieve sustainable, inclusive, and stable societies by 2030, young persons must be actively engaged in sustainable development efforts (UN DESA, 2018). In this regard, public policy has to set a foundation for healthy growth, lifelong knowledge, and social unity (UNICEF, 2017), that is conducive to “interactions that are responsive, emotionally supportive and developmentally stimulating (Center on the Developing Child, n.d.). For this reason, public policy must promote the inclusion of young people in decision-making on matters affecting their lives. A 56-year-old female journalist, also an in-depth interview participant, focused on how public policy intervention could help recover young persons who are under the captivity of Naira Marley, she added:

There should be policy provisions to prevent children's exposure to corrupting online materials to avoid the mitigation of the acquired core values of Nigeria. Public policy should identify some citizens whose conduct is exemplary for immortalization to serve as credible role models for children to build their personalities around their activities. Moreover, policy attention should focus on the clearly defined restructuring of vocational and informal education to enable children to tap into the vast cultural resources of the environment. Marlians who have no focus should be rehabilitated and empowered. It is not enough to blame everything on Naira Marley. Most homes daily struggle with domestic violence. Children whose parents entertain with domestic violence series will simply go out to seek Naira Marley's assistance to launch them into practical violence that surpasses the ones they experience within their families.

(Female Journalist, IDI, Lagos Island, 2022)

Discussion

The finding of this article disagrees with Njoku (2020) that Naira Marley is an extraordinary singer whose iconic creative genre puts in the category of the well-known Fela AnikulapoKuti and Bob Marley. However, it is consistent with the argument of Mabiaku (2020) that drawing a line between Fela and Naira Marley amounted to trivializing the essence of a martyr per excellence. This article corroborates the finding of Ogunnaike & Akoja (2020) about the dominant portrayal of premarital sex, “babymamarism”, drug use, alcohol usage, female debasement, slang, seductive dance steps, and indecent dressing in the lyrical contents of Naira Marley's work. Also, the finding of this article is consistent with an earlier one by Onayinka, Rufai, Opele, & Oyesanya (2022) that the lifestyle of Naira Marley influences the abuse of drugs among young persons and conduces with the observation of Uzuebunam (2017) that celebrity lifestyles greatly and negatively influence the youth who see them as a role model. The article similarly supports an earlier finding of Sylvanus&Eze (2021) that Naira Marley attracts

more massive condemnation than any living Nigerian musician. Conversely, the finding of this article that Naira Marley adorns nudities, violence, and drugs to adversely influence the youth contradicts that of Onwuka (2021).

The finding of this article that through corporate competence, some commercial enterprises could promote the resilience of young persons contradicts that of Adebambo (2020) which found some Nigerian banks in December 2021 to have sponsored a one-week performance at a concert for N60 million to Naira Marley who symbolizes sociocultural deviance. However, in agreement with the finding of Abulencia (2021), this article observes that education helps people to find solutions to life problems and contribute to society. The article also agrees with the finding of Deak&Tanama (2021) that failure to invest in education facilitates unemployment, drug abuse, and crime that predispose vulnerable young persons to indoctrination. Participants agreed with Adebambo (2020) that parents should be proactive by keeping diagnostic eyes on the online materials that their children interact with which define their personalities.

On the whole, there is an interlocking relationship between the findings of this article and Rowe, Nowak, Quaddus, &Naude (2014) concerning the enterprises being answerable for their effects on communities where they transact their businesses. Bandura (1971) holds that learning takes place when a person explores resources that are external to him/her to shape the direction and substance of his/her daily schedule. The application of social learning theory has helped to explain how the young followers of Naira Marley socially learn his defiance and apply it. However, this theory ignores the channel that enables the display of learned behavior in demonstrable behavior. Bringing in the assumption of cultivation theory that extensive viewership of TV cultivates what the viewer perceives as the portrayed reality and uses this as the premise for conclusions about reality and responses in the world helps to bridge the theoretical gap. To this extent, the combination of both theories helps to explain the problem that this article addresses holistically.

Conclusion

In the past times, artistes were philosophical in their quests to project positive values and preach constructive messages through their songs. This was to enable young people to embrace virtues and shun vices. When artistes put their influence to good use, their teeming young followers display commendable morality. Despite the widespread perception of Naira Marley as a musical spectacle, this article finds that he has a remarkable adverse influence on his young followers. In contemporary times, however, young people in Lagos are extremely exposed to celebrities in the entertainment industry. More frequently, these young people emulate the behavior, attitudes, and lifestyles of their choice celebrities. Using the tremendous influence that Naira Marley wields in the music industry, there is no wonder that millions of young people see him as a great mentor because he teaches them self-confidence and inspires them to be daunting. While male Marlians drop out of school and wear no belts, female

Marlians do not wear bras and pants. In light of the data, this article finds the defiance of mainstream culture by Marlians rather repugnant to civilized conduct in Lagos and recommends that celebrities should provide positive mentoring to young persons. It suggests a value reconstruction-driven family system where parents proactively socialize children to re-enact the traditional role of the individual for the display of enhanced responsible citizenship that finds alternative lifestyles very unattractive to guarantee a safer Lagos.

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