Globalization and Islamic Music (Asalatu) in Nigeria

Olayinka Akanle | ORCID: 0000-0002-4707-4491
Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria; Department of Sociology, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa
Corresponding author
yakanle@yahoo.com

O. Omoniyi
Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria
omoniyi303@gmail.com

Abstract

This article explores Asalatu, a form of Islamic music among Yoruba Muslims in Nigeria, against the backdrop of globalization and the impact of Western music. The article points to observed changes in the music and musical possibilities within increasing secularization. Drawing on ethnographic data, the article illuminates tangential issues such as the use of the mother tongue for Islamic music as opposed to Arabic, and the introduction of dance to Islamic music to account for the changes. The article is a major contribution to knowledge in the fields of religion in Africa, Islamic studies, and popular/material culture. Globalization has closely knit nations together such that there is an acceleration of the integration of nations into the global system. Accounting for changes in Islamic music as a result of globalization helps provide insights into the nature of society, whether increasingly religious or secular.

Keywords

Asalatu music – globalization – Islamic music – Yoruba – Nigeria
1 Introduction

The debate on whether the world is tending more toward secularity or religiosity continues to linger (Akanle and Adejaré, 2018). This is so especially because of the massive effects of globalization on the nations of the world and the cultural diffusion that this has birthed (Akanle 2022a, 2022b). Globalization has increased secularization in a variety of ways since globalization hinges largely on rationality. Globalization affects most developing countries of the world that do not have their roots in the local culture but are rooted in Western culture. This can be described as Western secularization, which came to be through globalization (Paas 2019). Others have argued that although Western secularization has a massive influence and is highly impactful on developing countries, the secularization that they experience is defined by a process known as indigenization of secularization (Samarin 1966; Toren 2003; Abbink 2014; Paas 2019). This term refers to a form of secularization that is not influenced by the West (Chunga and Tostensen 2020). This article considers secularization according to Marian et al. (2013), who refer to secularization as a religious decline or a declining influence of religion on the public sphere. From the perspectives of applicability and process, this applies to the Nigerian context particularly in regard to real behavior and religiosity beyond religion for negotiation of public goods (Toren 2003).

There are several elements responsible for secularization, with music playing perhaps the most dominant role in the twenty-first century since many young people are lovers of music. The influence of Western music has spread the world over; it has also influenced religious music in developing countries. It is therefore important to consider the question: is it possible to embrace globalization and still be religious, and not have an increase in secularity? This question continues to generate debate. This question is considered by focusing on music, African people, globalization, and religion. Music is an art that is central to human evolution and human survival in several basic ways. Music, dance festivals, and other public expressive cultural practices are primary ways that people articulate the collective identities that are fundamental to forming and sustaining social groups, which are in turn basic to survival.

Through music, individuals or groups can express emotions, sustain friendships and community, and also inspire mass social and political movements (Turino 2008). From the African perspective music is of vital importance to life. Africans utilize the power of music to ponder their engagement within a community. Musical participation creates a medium through which Africans relate to the world and associate themselves with its dealings. It is transferred from one generation to another and sustains each generation. It achieves this
by giving value to the basic strengths of the culture that empower the efforts of persons in the community since they give every situation an interpretation (Waterman 1990). In traditional African societies music making generally is organized as a social event meant for the enjoyment of freedom and special occasions, for the performance of traditional rites, festivals, ceremonial gatherings, building bridges, clearing paths, and basically any form of collective activity (Idioh 2011).

As part of the results of globalization, changes occur in attitudes and behaviours of local people. They are forgetting their own traditional culture and copying imported modern culture and behaviour. Despite the argument that the basic goals of globalization are maximizing development and providing benefits to the local community, it has also affected the society (Amit 2015). In Nigeria the youth prefer modern music and instruments, which has had consequences for the nature and forms of traditional religious music in communities. The rise of mechanical reproduction, the broadcast media, and the entertainment industry during the twentieth century have all had a significant impact on the traditional form of music (Denora 2000).

Globalization has led to serious threats to local folk music (Amit 2015) and other forms of traditional music, as well as religious music. Because of various factors that are broadly categorized as liberalization and globalization, indigenous folk music and religious music have been greatly influenced by Western music. People have become more inclined toward modern forms of music and have started giving it greater importance. As a result, they are becoming increasingly detached from their own traditional forms of the music of their indigenous culture, history, and people. This study examines Asalatu music and dance and how it has been affected by globalization in different ways.

2 African Music from the Nigerian Perspective: The Yoruba Context

In order to properly examine Asalatu music practiced by Yoruba Muslims in Nigeria, it is important that to first consider how African music has been influenced by globalization. For Chernoff (1979), African music is a cultural element and activity in which a group of persons arranges, organizes, and involves themselves in the context of communal relationships. Music has both social and religious significance to the African people (Nketia 1974).

This is particularly important as demonstrating a mix of secularity while still holding to religiosity (Nketia 1974) in the context of globalization and secularization. Music is considered both secular and religious to African people and is also seen as a means of upholding morality in society. To the
native African music has significant meaning and performs certain functions in the society (Nketia 1974; Chernoff 1979; Omobowale et al. 2016). It is in fact nearly impossible to understand African culture without an appreciation of music (Chernoff 1979; Piero 2003; Omobowale et al. 2016). African music has been influenced by music from other places, especially Western music, and vice versa. According to Piero (2003), in the 1980s Western countries discovered the folk music of Africa, Afro-rock. This genre was made popular by Western-based commercial groups, such as Osibisa, a Ghanaian-named group (Piero 2003). During this period of exchange, western popular music embraced some components of African music, while African music adopted the Western music approach, particularly its studio and recording techniques (Piero 2003). The musical methods and genres of the various African nations, such as South Africa’s mbaquanga music, Zimbabwe’s jit music, Zaire’s soukous music, Nigeria’s juju music, and Ghana’s highlife music, had the opportunity to advance and be propagated all over the world, particularly against the background of the increases of the 1980s (Piero 2003).

Nigeria is very important when discussing African music, especially as it pertains to religious and traditional music and how it has been globalized through Western influence. Nigeria is the most populous nation on the African continent and has always been at the forefront of the international entertainment and music scene (Akanle, Adesina, and Uchendu 2016). The Yoruba region of Nigeria is known as the originator of juju music. Juju music is described as the African equivalent of American folk-rock. In the 1920s juju music was birthed as the music of the rural poor in the same way as blues. It was transformed in 1958 by Isaiah Kehinde Dairo, who made it an urban phenomenon and blended an accordion into the ensemble in the 1960s (Omobowale et al. 2016). Another development to juju music was added by prolific Nigerian musicians Ebenezer Obey and King Sunny Ade, who turned it into an exercise in trance (Piero, 2002 Omobowale et al. 2016). Juju’s foremost entrance onto the world scene came through Africa’s most populous city at the time, Lagos. As is the case with other genres of music in Africa, juju music was influenced by globalization and Western music in particular (Omobowale et al. 2016, Waterman 1990). Eventually juju was blended with other styles of music from both local African and Western music (Waterman 1990; Piero 2002; Omobowale et al. 2016).

There have been changes in the nature of African music over the years as social forces continue to have a significant impact on it. According to Waterman (1990), within West African society when social institutions change the music that served those institutions will be readapted or detached relative to the traditional form of music, religious music in particular. While there is a measure of resilience in indigenous music, it is also possible to observe the hybridity
of religious and secular music as a strategic approach to religious rejuvenation and retention/attraction of modern adherents, particularly the youth and those educated in the Western sense. There is every reason to believe that this relationship will continue, and that the future of traditional music will remain linked to social development (Akanle and Omoniyi, 2017).

3 The Intersection of Islamic Religion, Islamic Music, and Music in Nigeria

The African continent is very religious, and Christianity and Islam particularly have influenced many practices in Africa (Bosch 1974; Stevens 1991; Chunga and Tostensen 2020). Although Africans have embraced religion from other areas, they have skilfully linked their own indigenous practices to it. One example is the religious movement known as ‘aladura’ (foreign-indigenous interchange) in Nigeria (Stone 1998). The continent has also linked music to the practice of religion, embracing both Western and indigenous music in religious worship. The place of music in Islamic worship is of interest because of the dynamic nature it assumes. In Islamic divine worship music is almost nonexistent. To a great extent, this is due to the attitude of Islamic religious practitioners who totally ignore it in Islamic liturgy. Music making in Islam has been a controversial issue.

A sharp distinction is always drawn between music, which some Muslims view as sinful (haram) and morally demeaning, and what musicologists would consider the religious use of music, which is accepted as good by Muslims but not considered to be music. Because of this illegitimacy of music in Islamic religious beliefs, there has been no clear-cut definition of what Islam actually conceives as music. However, what is not conceived as music are the Mosque music traditions that are tolerated in Islamic orthodoxy. Mosque music is comprised of the reading of the Quran, the call to prayer (adhan), and hymns and songs for various Islamic festivals. Songs and music that are socioreligiously biased are conceptualized as basically different from secular songs and music, and are related to in that manner (Daramola 2007). It is noteworthy that it is increasingly difficult to draw a distinction between Islamic music rendered in mosques and that performed by secular musicians because the lines between contexts of Islamic music are essentially blurred.

Islam is one of the prominent religions among the Yorubas. The apathetic attitude that Yoruba Muslim leaders had toward music at the inception of Islam in Yoruba land was inherited from that of the Alalukuranis (missionaries) who introduced the religion to the people. They were strongly critical of
the use of music in Islam. In spite of this, some of the religious practices make use of music, either directly or indirectly. According to Daramola (2007), today the use of music in Islamic religious events has gained wide acceptance among Yoruba Muslims.

Also, among the Yoruba today the argument about the nonadmissible and the admissible is understood as liturgical (for worship) and nonliturgical (for social occasions) respectively. For a greater percentage of Yoruba Muslims, especially the semi-affluent (middle class) and affluent (high class), both liturgical and nonliturgical music are admissible depending on the context for which each is used (Daramola 2007). Muslim youth and musicians are the most vocal about this new concept of Islamic music among the Yorubas. They believe that in order to prevent Islamic music from being second-rate or total extinct, innovation, which is forcing itself on this religion and its music as with any other religion in the world, should be allowed as an element of change and development. From the contact and interviews conducted in his study Daramola (2007) discovered that Yoruba Muslims recognize certain elements of melody in the performance of some aspects of the Islamic liturgy. These aspects are classified as ‘fixed tradition’ in Islamic musical culture. However, performance of these aspects varies from one region to another. Other musical practices are regarded as hybrids of both Islamic and traditional musical cultures, one of which is Asalatu music.

4 Methodology

This article was part of and based on a larger qualitative study conducted in Ibadan, Nigeria in 2016. Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo state and the third-largest metropolitan area by population after Lagos and Kano, with a population of over three million (Obuen, Akanle and Omobowale, 2022). Ibadan is also the largest metropolitan geographical area, of Oyo State. Ibadan is essentially a traditional yet modern city. It is home to Yoruba people in Nigeria. Islamic education among the Yorubas originated in Ibadan through the activities of Hausa traders and Mallams living in Ibadan before the imposition of British rule (Oladiti and Kamal-deen 2015). Islam is the dominant religion in Ibadan. Next to the Olubadan’s palace is a gigantic mosque where the chief imam holds his Friday Jumu‘ah service sermons (Ibadan Metro 2015).

Although the research utilized an explorative and heuristic research design, it was essentially descriptive. A purely qualitative method was adopted for data collection, but within this a data triangulation method was used for complementarities and robust processes that could enhance data quality and
reliability as well as the validation of findings. The qualitative method is very useful because it enables an in-depth exploration of the research issues at stake, especially in heuristic studies such as this. It also has the merit of enabling researchers to understand the sociocultural processes on which the actors, actions, patterns, and notions on Islamic music and Asalatu music in particular are based. It examines the nature and processes of change and continuity in Asalatu music as well as its dance, instruments, environments, strategies, and trajectories. The qualitative approach also presents the influence of globalization on Asalatu music and dance in Ibadan. The data collection methods used were in-depth interviews (IDIs), key informant interviews (KIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and extended observation. A total of 20 in-depth interviews and 20 key informant interviews were conducted. The accidental and purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting respondents. Interviewees were Islamic adherents in the study area. The collected data was analyzed and presented as verbatim narratives and ethnographic summaries.

5 The Nature of and Changes in Asalatu Music

This section examines the nature and processes of change and continuity in Asalatu music as well as its dance, while examining some relevant associated issues. Based on the results from the primary data, it was found that the nature of Asalatu music focuses on praising Almighty God (Allah) for the good things he has done. This shows that it is a very significant aspect of Islamic worship among Yoruba Muslims in Nigeria. Although the majority of Yoruba Muslims support Asalatu music, some argued that there is no such thing as music in Islam, only chant and poetry. During the interview session one of the respondents, a devout Muslim, reported, ‘The Asalatu music is an important aspect of Islamic worship especially on Sundays. It is an avenue for Muslims to come together to discuss issues and listen to preaching in Islam. The music is used to praise Allah’ (ID1/Male/32years/Akobo/Trader).1

Based on our study, Asalatu music is widely accepted among Yoruba Muslims. However, it is worth noting that some who do not see Asalatu music as Islamic still support it because they believe that it brings togetherness among the youth. One of the respondents asserted: ‘First and foremost, there is nothing called music in Islam, what we have is poetry and chants. So I feel the Asalatu music gives the youths something to hold on to’ (KII/Male/26years/Orogun/Engineer).

Asalatu music is traditionally performed with a specific kind of instrument, the Bandiri. Historically, Bandiri is best regarded as a musical genre
and instrument usually performed and used by Islamic Sufi adepts originating from northern Nigeria. Northern Nigeria is commonly regarded as the origin and epicenter of Islam in Nigeria. A popular approach is to take the secular genre and instruments and bring them to the religious space. For example, the Sufi adepts usually take popular Hindi film songs and instruments and transform them to songs and instruments that praise Prophet Mohammed. However, with the growing influence of globalization, modern instruments such as drum sets, guitar, and piano have been introduced. As one respondent explained, ‘Classically, it is the bandiri that is used but development has led to the emergence of sophisticated instruments like drum sets, guitar, and piano used for performance. Some musicians even go to studios to add beats to the song’ (K11/Female/64years/Ojoo/Self-employed).

Some feel the adoption of other instruments besides Bandiri has affected Asalatu music, although there are varying opinions. One of the reasons why some frown on the introduction of modern instruments may be because they believe that it reduces the spiritual significance of the music and makes it similar to other kinds of music that are not Islamic. From our study we gathered that globalization continues to influence Asalatu music as more and more modern instruments are introduced into it, thus reducing the use of the classical Bandiri.

On the language and technology commonly used in Asalatu music, the Arabic language was found to be the key language in Islamic religion. However, our study revealed that the music has moved from being performed purely in the Arabic language to being performed in the local dialect, Yoruba. Thus the music has assumed a different dimension. One of the ardent listeners to Asalatu music stated,

In the past, the Asalatu music was performed basically in Arabic language. In fact, it was 95 percent Arabic and 5 percent Yoruba language to convey the message to people. But today the music is performed more in Yoruba with very little Arabic language. So it is not really what you can call Asalatu. (ID1/Female/22years/Akobo/Trader). The increasing use of the Yoruba language as opposed to Arabic has generated mixed feelings among Yoruba Muslims. While some see it as a means to better praise and worship Almighty God (Allah), others see it as not being Asalatu. Some fear that if this trend continues Asalatu music could soon become indigenously secularized.

One major factor that has brought about change to Asalatu music is technology. The music has evolved to the use of tape recorders as well as filming music videos. One of the respondents observed, the word ‘Asalatu’ means prayer. The music has developed to the use of recorders to record
the music, even shooting videos for people to watch on their television. Due to technological advancements and what is in vogue, music in Nigeria has changed over the years. The Asalatu music is no exception as it is moving toward the trend to the point of shooting music videos where we can watch the Islamic artiste singing the Asalatu music on television. (IDI/Male/27years/Bodija/Student)

Since the term ‘Asalatu’ refers to prayer, the goal of Asalatu music is to praise and worship Almighty God (Allah). The use of technology has made that more possible since Muslim adherents can now listen to Asalatu music and watch the music videos from the comfort of their homes, which will better educate the listener. Technological advancements have also brought about changes in Asalatu music. For example, technological studio effects can improve the sound of the singer’s voice.

6 Globalization and Increasing Secularization?

According to a key informant, the introduction of dancing into Asalatu music is one of the significant changes because dancing is not especially permitted in Islam: ‘We should note that dancing in Islam is not acceptable. The bandiri gave rhythm to the way the song was performed but you don’t have to dance to it. However, this has changed as people now dance to it’ (KII/Male/34years/Akobo/Trader).

The effect of globalization on religion is far-reaching since religion continues to evolve as society does. The increasing secularity of society keeps affecting the religious faithful since the changes that affect society also affect religious music. Certain changes have been introduced into Asalatu music that have affected the lyrics and introduced dance. One of our informants observed, ‘I noticed that apart from the fact that there has been improvement over the years in terms of the introduction of music videos, I feel some of the lyrics of the music is outside the preaching and teaching of Islam’ (IDI/Female/28years/Ojoo/Employed). Another informant reported that the lyrics now describe local happenings: ‘The lyrics of the music have changed as the musicians reflect happenings in the world to compose songs and sing. The dance has also changed with the introduction of new instruments’ (KII/Male/30years/Ojoo/Engineer).

During the key informant interview another respondent explained that the factors responsible for the changes include globalization and westernization: ‘Factors responsible for these changes are modernization and westernization.
The introduction of the internet has brought about changes in the Asalatu music because people can now download the music online and listen to it on the phones’ (k11/Male/44years/Security Settlement/Music composer).

The introduction of dance, the use of local language, and the use of technology for Asalatu music are some of the changes that the music has experienced. Although not all Muslims support these changes, most people have come to accept them. However, the lyrics of Asalatu music is one issue that many Muslim faithful view as a cause for concern since some Asalatu artists now use social events as opposed to the Quran for the topics of their songs. If not well handled, this could lead to an increase in the secularity of her members.

As a result of globalization and technological advancement, many Muslims make use of social media. These changes are seen as having both positive and negative effects. Some respondents affirmed that technology has led to the creation of social media groups online that serve as an avenue for the Islamic faithful to have discussions with one another. Today there are social networks or groups in social media owned by Asalatu musicians, and some Muslims belong to such groups.

Some of the respondents viewed the technological changes in Asalatu music unfavorably and decreasing its religious nature. One respondent expressed her opinion that: ‘Technology has contributed to the changes in the Asalatu music because the Asalatu of today is not the one I used to know. As a result of these changes, I stopped attending Asalatu on Sundays’ (1d1/Female/22years/Sango/Student).

However, another informant supported the technological changes because it has stopped many youths from converting to Christianity: ‘I like the changes that have taken place in the dance and lyrics of the Asalatu music because it has changed some of our Muslim girls. It has helped them remain in Islam instead of leaving the religion to marry Christians and then convert to Christianity. By listening to the music, they are kept occupied’ (k11/Female/25years/Ojoo/Trader).

The opinions on whether technological changes are favorable to Asalatu music vary. However, many Muslims in Ibadan view it as good because it keeps young Muslims occupied so they do not convert to or marry into other religions. Although Asalatu music is accepted among the Yorubas, the question of what makes Asalatu music good is an important one. Although the answer differs, one thing that all respondents agreed on is that music is said to be good Asalatu music if it renders praises to Allah in the form of citations from the Holy Quran. One informant captured it this way:

‘I judge a good performance of the music based on the way it is performed as well as the content of the music, if the music tells how to pray
and perform ablution and teach me how to practice the Islamic religion the right way’ (K11/Male/40years/Akobo/Song composer).

Knowing what makes good Asalatu music as well as differentiating it from other kinds of music is important. Respondents stated that Islamic music teaches morals, uses citations from the Qur’an, preaches about Allah, and is a part of worship in Islam, which other kinds of music do not do. Asalatu music preaches about the activities of the Holy Prophets of Allah, and how to make the world a better place. Good Asalatu music would make Muslims more spiritual and give no room for secularity, despite the influence of globalization on it.

6.1 The Influence of Globalization (Modernization) on Asalatu Music in Ibadan

According to the research participants, modernization (globalization) has affected the Islamic religion to a large extent. In Nigeria the influence of globalization on Islam is higher in the south compared to the north. One of the advantages of modernization to Nigerians is that it has made transportation to Mecca easier for many Muslims who travel for pilgrimage. This is captured in the explanations of one respondent:

I think modernization (globalization) is more like change. Modernization (globalization) has influenced Islam to a great extent in the sense that it has made things very easy. I could remember my grandfather telling me that in those days it took several months and even years before they could go to Mecca. But today it is a matter of days. (1D1/Male/23years/Bodija/Student)

Modernization (globalization) has had profound influence on Islamic culture. Islam has accepted the liberal way of life of the Western societies. In the past the Islamic culture was quite rigid; someone who goes against the tenets of Islam was seen as a blasphemer and will be severely punished, but with modernization the Islamic culture is less rigid and tends to be liberal. (1D1/Male/25years/Ojoo/Artisan)

Islam becoming more liberal in practice is one change that is accepted by some Yoruba Muslims. From our study it was clear that most Muslims who embrace westernization tend to be more liberal as opposed to those who do not.

Westernization has also affected Islamic music in a number of ways, as revealed from the data gathered in the field. However, the emergence of Asalatu music has caused divisions among Muslims in some ways: ‘Westernization
has really affected Islamic culture. In the north, there is no such thing as Asalatu, it is only common here in the southwest. The Yoruba people have divided the Muslims with the introduction of this Asalatu music and dance’ (IDI/Male/23years/Orogun/Student).

This polarization is the result of the different ways in which Muslim adherents see modernization and its effect on the practice of the religion, with some fearing that modernization will increase secularization. Modernization has made it possible for people to listen to Asalatu music in their homes without necessarily doing so at mosques. The view of one of the respondent illuminates this finding: ‘Modernization has really impacted Islamic religion. For instance, Asalatu music is not only performed at the mosque but one can listen to it in the comfort of their homes since it entails praises and worship to Allah that can be done anywhere. This is what modernization has done’ (IDI/Male/25years/Orogun/Employed).

The impact of modernization on Islamic music is also seen in the use of the modern instruments used to perform the music. Modernization has had some positive effect on Islam as it has been argued that it has made it possible for youths to remain in Islam through Asalatu music. A key informant averred that:

Modernization is good in Islam. If not for the Islamic music some youths would have left the religion for Christianity. Modernization, with the emergence of the Asalatu music, has encouraged the youths to practice the Islamic religion better. People can now dance to the music which makes it interesting. Thus those youths now remain in Islam [since] what makes them leave Islam for Christianity is now made available. So the Asalatu music is modernized for enjoyment by the youths. (KII/Male/36years/Security settlement/Engineer)

Data gathered from the field also revealed that the Islamic culture has adopted certain good and bad elements from Western culture. Some Muslim adherents see the introduction of music videos as making Asalatu music interesting and consider it a good thing. However, they also criticized it because women were seen dancing to the music and musicians, especially the females, wear jewelry, which is not befitting of Islamic women. They argued that the dress of the musicians can sometimes be a negative influence on the listeners:

The best thing adopted is that the visual aspect of the music has really changed. Before we only listened to audio recordings but now we can watch music videos of the Asalatu music. The worst thing is the
influence of the Yoruba on Islam through the Asalatu music. Originally women are not even supposed to dance to the music, but on the music videos we see women dancing to the music and they wear jewelry to sing and dance, which is not the true way Islam should be practiced. (KII/Male/26years/Bodija/Self-employed)

However, another informant saw the dancing in Asalatu music as a good thing:

I am not too conversant with the Asalatu music but I like the ones I can dance to so as to feel the flow of the music. It is no longer about the musician singing alone but also the audience or listeners dancing to the beat of the music. But these Islamic musicians don’t care because all they care about is to make money. (KII/Male/34years/Security Settlement/Engineer)

Western secularization as well as indigenous secularization seems to be a problem associated with Asalatu music despite its positive influence on Islamic music. This is further worsened as Muslims now embrace other genres of music that go against Islamic tenets. Our study revealed that the respondents listen not only to Islamic music but other genres of music. In fact, many preferred other kinds of music to Islamic music. This is one of the reasons for the continual changes to Asalatu music to make it more appealing to Islamic adherents.

7 Conclusion

According to the findings of this article, Islamic music, as exemplified in Asalatu music, has undergone certain changes. These changes are substantially the results of globalization and westernization. However, we are not suggesting that Islam is the opposite of globalization, secularization, and modernization. Our research and findings as well as narratives are pragmatic and empirical in explaining and tracing the changes being observed in the context of this study. As Asalatu (Islamic music) changes and exists within globalization, it is resiliently maintaining its intrinsic identity and originality, but not without self-rejuvenation in order to continue its appeal and acceptance. This is especially important among the younger generations to guarantee the music's sustainability.

There have been technological changes in the instruments used to perform the music. More recent innovations and instruments such as the use of piano,
guitar, saxophone, and drum sets have replaced the bandiri. Asalatu music is now sometimes sung in the local dialect, Yoruba, with only little use of the Arabic language, unlike in the past when the music was sung purely in Arabic with little or no local dialect. This local content reflects the dynamism and resilience of the music. The music is now transcribed into audio recordings, and videos are now being made for people to watch in the comfort of their homes. There are even studio effects in the music now being performed. Asalatu music can be watched and downloaded online to one’s phone or computer, unlike those days in which one had to go to the mosque to watch it being performed. The Western way of singing has influenced Asalatu music such that it is now being performed like hip-hop music and Afrobeats. This is drawing concerns about secularization, especially among the ultraconservatives.

While many people see the secularization of Islamic music as a needed and welcome development in the area of entertaining people, there are others who see it as a deviation from the tenets of Islam (Daramola 2007; Piero 2003). Generally, based on our findings, Islamic music in Nigeria is going through undeniable changes and transformations, although the music remains resilient. The nature and process of this adaptation and resilience are still evolving. The struggle for identity, membership, sustainability, and moderation is evident and geared toward acceptance and preservation, particularly in regard to the younger generation. Only time will reveal the eventual direction and outcomes of this struggle, but researchers and scholars must be on the watch to be able to understand its processes, patterns, trends, and consequences.

References

GLOBALIZATION AND ISLAMIC MUSIC (ASALATU) IN NIGERIA


**Notes**

1 The ethnographic summaries and excerpts in this article are rendered in English for reasons of consistency. Some interviews were conducted in the Yoruba language while others were conducted in English. The interviews conducted in Yoruba were translated and transcribed by competent language personnel. Importantly, field officials were native Yoruba speakers so no meaning was lost by presenting these data in English.

2 We adopted globalization and modernization as synonyms in this section because most of our participants were more able to understand modernization as globalization in processes and consequences during fieldwork. The term ‘globalization’ was found to be too technical for them to relate to, unlike ‘modernization’. We adopted this approach because the two concepts have the same implications in this context.