

BETWEEN LITURGY AND SOUNDSCAPE: REHEARING GOSPEL MUSIC IN NIGERIAN ANGLICAN WORSHIP AS A SITE OF GLOBAL AND INDIGENOUS NEGOTIATION.

‘Iyanuoluwa Olaniyi AJAYI,

Department of Performing Arts, Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti, Ekiti State.

ajayi.iyanuoluwa@bouesti.edu.ng

ORCID NO.: 0009-0008-6399-0167

+2347031463948

Femi Elijah OLUBODUN,

Department of Performing Arts,
Bamidele Olumilua University of Education,
Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti, Ekiti State.

olubodun.femi@bouesti.edu.ng

+2349037692994

&

Paul ADEDEJI

Department of Music,
Mountain Top University,
Ibafo, Ogun State, Nigeria.

pauladedeji@mtu.edu.ng

+2349068964909

Abstract

This paper explores how gospel music is included into Nigerian Anglican liturgy, emphasizing how local liturgical customs and international musical genres are negotiated. It investigates how gospel idioms alter the Anglican soundscape in Nigeria through observations of church practices, musical repertoire analysis, and interaction with academic discourse on global gospel music. Results show that while gospel music challenges conventional ideas of liturgical order, authenticity, and authority, it also enhances worship through participatory performance, emotional expressivity, and culturally relevant musical adaptations. In order to show how music mediates identity formation, congregational engagement, and the feeling of the sacred, the paper also examines the theological and cultural ramifications of this integration. The study adds to academic discussions on transnational religious practice, cultural hybridization, and the changing role of music in modern Christianity by placing Nigerian Anglican worship within a worldwide framework.

Keywords: Gospel Music; Nigerian Anglicanism; Liturgical Negotiation; Global Christianity Soundscape; Musical Hybridity

Introduction

Gospel music has become one of the most popular and vibrant Christian musical genres worldwide, playing a major role in modern Christian worships in a variety of cultural situations. Its origins are firmly rooted in the religious and sociocultural realities of African American Christianity, where it evolved into a meaningful vehicle for expressing faith, resistance, hope, and collective identity in addition to being a musical genre. The daily reality of enslaved and disenfranchised African American populations influenced spirituals, work songs, and revivalist hymnody, which gave rise to early forms of gospel music. These musical genres served as platforms for religious contemplation and spiritual fortitude before solidifying into a unique genre marked by call-and-response structures, improvisation, expressive vocal delivery, and strong emotional involvement. (Adedeji, 2004; Ingalls & Yong, 2015).

Gospel music started to transcend its initial geographical and cultural limitations as Christianity spread throughout the world through missionary activities and diasporic contacts. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, technological developments like radio, records, and digital media platforms pushed its spread even further. Gospel music was able to spread worldwide thanks to these conduits, becoming ingrained in a variety of cultural and theological contexts all across the world (McKenzie, Muir, & Ingalls, 2024). But far from producing uniformity, this worldwide circulation made processes of adaptation, translation, and reinterpretation easier. Gospel music engages with native musical systems in every new setting, adopting regional rhythmic patterns, tonal structures, languages, and performance aesthetics. Through this process, gospel music is no longer a stable or monolithic genre but rather a fluid and evolving form (Agbo& Sylvanus, 2023; Adjagbára, 2023).

Gospel music has also become one of the most prevalent forms of Christian musical expression in African cultures, especially in Nigeria, where it has undergone substantial localization. Nigerian gospel music is a combination of indigenous musical traditions with international gospel idioms, creating hybrid forms that profoundly connect with local cultural sensibilities. African rhythmic vibrancy, tonal inflections from native languages, and performative features that highlight involvement and group interaction are frequently incorporated into these forms (Ayorinde & Ajose, 2022; Ojo, 1998). Nigerian musicians actively reinterpret and reconstruct the genre, exhibiting agency in crafting its meaning and purpose within their particular socio-religious settings, as opposed to passively copying Western gospel traditions.

Gospel music in Nigeria is used in more traditional liturgical traditions like Anglicanism in addition to Pentecostal and evangelical churches, where it is most prevalent. This cross-denominational spread emphasizes the function of gospel music as a unifying and transformational force, as well as the porous character of musical practices within modern Christianity (Agbo& Sylvanus, 2023). Its existence in a variety of worship environments is indicative of larger processes of religious adaptation and cultural interchange, where local customs and global influences combine to create new forms of worship expression. The global spread of gospel music also poses important queries about cultural authority, ownership, and authenticity. Although the genre has historically been linked to African American religious experiences, its broad acceptance and cultural adaptations throw into question any one notion of what "authentic" gospel music is. A growing number of academics contend that authenticity is a dynamic, contextually negotiated construct created by local practices and meanings rather than a rigid adherence to original forms (Ingalls & Yong, 2015). In this way, rather than having strict

artistic limitations, gospel music is a multiplicity of expressions connected together by common theological orientations like praise, testifying, and spiritual contact.

To further understand the changing function of gospel music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy, a global viewpoint is required. It is better viewed as a component of a larger pattern of international musical interaction and local reinterpretation rather than as a departure from established liturgical conventions. As a result, Nigerian Anglican worship becomes a place where historically rooted liturgical traditions and worldwide gospel influences converge to create a complicated and negotiated musical landscape. Analyzing this relationship offers important insight into how music serves as a vehicle for the ongoing construction and redefining of cultural identity, theological significance, and communal experience in modern Christianity.

Anglican Musical Tradition

As one of the oldest Christian traditions in the world, the Anglican Church has a rich liturgical and musical history in which music is an essential part of worship rather than a decorative element. A systematic liturgical system inherited from the Book of Common Prayer, which arranges worship into meticulously planned sequences of readings, prayers, responses, and musical elements, is fundamental to Anglican identity. According to this theory, music has both aesthetic and theological functions, mediating the sense of the sacred, influencing congregational participation, and confirming doctrine (Ilori, 2021; Odewole, 2018). Western ecclesiastical and art music traditions have historically had a significant impact on Anglican musical practice. Choral anthems, organ accompaniment, Gregorian and Anglican chant, and metrical hymnody are all examples of this influence. A wider aesthetic that values order, restraint, and formal expression in worship is reflected in these forms' emphasis on musical discipline, harmonic structure, and notational accuracy (Ilori, 2021). As a key liturgical agency, the choir which is frequently well-trained leads and occasionally represents the congregation in musical worship. In this way, Anglican music has historically upheld a distinct separation between performers and listeners, supporting a hierarchical and structured paradigm of involvement (Odewole, 2018).

During the nineteenth century, missionary activities, especially those of the Church Missionary Society, brought Anglican musical traditions to Nigeria. Missionaries brought Western liturgical frameworks and musical traditions along with Christian doctrine, and these were codified within the nascent Nigerian Anglican Church. Hymnbooks, cathedral choirs, and organ accompaniment consequently came to represent religious devotion as well as ecclesiastical legitimacy and continuity with the Church of England (Odewole, 2018). This procedure is a reflection of larger colonial processes in which indigenous musical manifestations were frequently marginalized and Western musical forms were positioned as normative and authoritative.

Nigerian Anglicanism developed a distinctly formal musical culture as a result of the institutionalization of these traditions. This culture is marked by a strong emphasis on liturgical order, rehearsed choral performances, and devotion to written notation. Processional hymns, canticles, anthems, and recessional music were among the genres of music that were allotted to specific liturgical moments as part of a tightly regulated worship system (Ilori, 2021). This methodical approach aligned musical expression with theological notions of transcendence and order by reinforcing a sense of solemnity and reverence. But even with this solid historical base, Anglican music has changed throughout time in Nigeria. As the church interacts with its sociocultural surroundings, processes of contextualization and adaptation have developed over time. These include the growing acceptance of indigenous musical instruments in certain cases,

the translation of hymns into native languages, and the use of African tonal inflections in choral performances (Ayorinde & Ajose, 2022).

These developments show how local cultural realities and inherited Western norms are constantly being negotiated. However, there are still conflicts between the need for more expressive and culturally relevant forms of worship and the maintenance of traditional Anglican musical forms. Anglican music may seem more formal, constrained, and less receptive to modern musical trends as compared to other Christian traditions in Nigeria, especially Pentecostal and charismatic groups (Agbo & Sylvanus, 2023). Particularly among younger congregants who are increasingly exposed to modern gospel music through media and popular culture, this perceived rigidity has increased pressure for liturgical and musical adaptation. There are important concerns of cultural identification and ownership raised by the persistence of Western-derived musical patterns in Anglican service. Even while these customs are now firmly ingrained in Nigerian Anglicanism, their roots in European ecclesiastical practice demonstrate the long-lasting effects of colonialism. African churches face the difficulty of striking a balance between preserving liturgical continuity and encouraging worship styles that really represent indigenous cultural expressions, as academics have pointed out (Odewole, 2018).

The use of gospel music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy must be understood in light of this historical continuity, cultural negotiation, and growing tension. Anglican liturgy's fixed format presents both opportunity and limitations for creative musical expression. On the one hand, it restricts improvisation and spontaneity; on the other, it offers a solid structure that allows for the selective integration of new musical elements. As a result, Anglican worship in Nigeria becomes a vibrant place of engagement where modern influences and inherited customs coexist, interact, and occasionally clash.

Problem Statement

Gospel music has been increasingly prevalent in church services, despite the long-standing predominance of structured, Western-derived liturgical music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy. This development creates a conflict between the emotive, improvisational nature of gospel music and the formal, controlled structure of Anglican musical history. Although gospel music has been extensively researched in Pentecostal and popular Christian contexts, little is known about its role and function in Anglican liturgical settings, especially in non-Western situations like Nigeria. Because of this, little is known about how these two different musical traditions coexist, interact, and have an impact on Anglican liturgy. This situation raises significant issues regarding cultural identity, liturgical authority, and musical appropriateness, creating a serious information gap. The continued incorporation of gospel music in discussions of both Anglican liturgy and worldwide gospel music runs the risk of being misinterpreted, insufficiently conceptualized, or disregarded in the absence of concentrated scholarly investigation.

Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this paper is to investigate the ways in which gospel music is incorporated into Anglican worship in Nigeria and to consider the consequences of this integration for cultural identification, theological expression, and musical practice. It aims to present Nigerian Anglican worship as a vibrant soundscape where indigenous musical sensitivities and worldwide gospel influences converge.

The following research questions serve as the study's compass in order to accomplish this goal:

1. How does Nigerian Anglican worship incorporate gospel music into its liturgical framework?

2. How does gospel music alter the performative and auditory aspects of Anglican services?
3. How do congregants, clergy, and musicians resolve conflicts between indigenous musical manifestations and Western liturgical traditions?
4. What can be learned from these exchanges about cultural ownership, authority, and authenticity in the worldwide distribution of gospel music?

Gospel Music in Global Perspective

In today's global Christian soundscapes, gospel music plays an important role as both a musical genre and a means of religious expression. It is situated at the nexus of faith, cultural identity, and resistance due to its historical origins within African American Christianity. Spirituals, work songs, and revivalist hymnody gave rise to early gospel traditions, which mirrored African American communities' real-life struggles with oppression, hope, and spiritual fortitude (Adedeji, 2004; Ingalls & Yong, 2015). These early components gave rise to a musical practice that is now defined by call-and-response frameworks, improvisation, emotive vocal delivery, and a focus on individual and group testimony.

But to comprehend gospel music only in terms of its American roots would be to ignore the intricate historical and cultural processes that have made it a worldwide phenomenon. Gospel music has spread widely and become ingrained in a variety of religious and cultural contexts thanks to missionary growth, diasporic migration, the recording industry, and modern digital media (McKenzie, Muir, & Ingalls, 2024). Instead of uniform replication, this worldwide circulation has produced a variety of localized expressions influenced by particular linguistic, cultural, and religious settings (Agbo & Sylvanus, 2023).

Previous viewpoints that presented gospel music as a one-way export from the United States to the rest of the globe are being challenged more and more in scholarly discourse. Rather, the agency of local communities in reinterpreting and altering gospel idioms to represent their particular sociocultural circumstances is highlighted by recent studies (Ayorinde & Ajose, 2022). For example, gospel music in African contexts often combines native rhythmic structures, tonal language patterns, and performative aesthetics to create hybrid forms that are both locally rooted and globally informed (Adjagbára, 2023; Ojo, 1998). Essentialist ideas of genre purity and authenticity are challenged by these adaptations, which are generative rather than merely imitative, creating new sound identities.

Gospel music has emerged as one of the most well-known and significant forms of Christian musical expression in Nigeria, influencing various religious contexts. Its predominance is especially noticeable in Pentecostal and evangelical movements, where it serves as the main medium for spiritual contact, worship, and evangelism (Ayorinde & Ajose, 2022). But its impact goes beyond these contexts into more traditionally liturgical traditions, such as Anglicanism, illustrating the porous and flexible borders that define modern Christian music practice (Agbo & Sylvanus, 2023). Gospel music's worldwide appeal is further enhanced by its performative and experiential aspects. According to Ossaiga (2024a), gospel music in Nigeria is a performative act that engages the body, emotions, and collective consciousness rather than just being an auditory artifact. Its focus on involvement, expressivity, and spontaneity stands in stark contrast to more structured liturgical traditions, providing an alternative worship model that emphasizes affective engagement and immediacy. It may relate to a variety of audiences while upholding fundamental theological concepts because of its performative quality, which increases its adaptability across cultural contexts.

Gospel music's widespread popularity also poses important queries about authenticity, representation, and authority. Despite the genre's historical roots in African American religious experience, claims to exclusive ownership or authoritative definition are complicated by its broad adoption across various cultural contexts (Ingalls & Yong, 2015). Subtle hierarchies among Christian music cultures around the world can be reinforced by the continued use of American style standards for "authentic" gospel, which can hide the validity of regional manifestations.

The global gospel soundscape is greatly influenced by modern media and technical infrastructures. Gospel music spreads quickly across national borders via recordings, broadcasts, and digital platforms, promoting both style convergence and cultural interchange (McKenzie et al., 2024). As internationally prominent styles gain popularity and may marginalize local differences, this circulation promotes hybridization and creativity but also adds inclinations toward standardization.

Gospel Music in Nigerian Anglican Worship

A major advancement in the development of liturgical practice, the use of gospel music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy reflects broader changes in the religious and cultural environment of modern Christianity. The growing use of gospel music indicates a shift toward more varied and culturally relevant expressions of religion, even though Anglican worship has traditionally been organized around Western liturgical music traditions.

Gospel music is incorporated at certain points in the liturgy that allow for some freedom in certain Nigerian Anglican settings. These could include youth activities, offertory segments, thanksgiving services, choir ministrations, and special occasions like harvest festivals or church anniversaries. Instead of serving as a direct substitute for conventional hymnody and choral repertoire in these situations, gospel music frequently serves as a supplementary form (Ayorinde & Ajose, 2022). Its incorporation broadens the expressive scope of worship and offers chances for increased congregational participation and emotional engagement.

Anglican worship gospel expressions have unique stylistic characteristics that set them apart from traditional liturgical music. Syncopated rhythmic patterns, call-and-response frameworks, repeated harmonic progressions, and improvisational vocal and instrumental methods are some of these characteristics. Gospel music often allows for spontaneity, allowing performers to react in real time to the spiritual atmosphere of a service, in contrast to the comparatively set and notated frameworks of traditional Anglican hymns and anthems (Agbo& Sylvanus, 2023; Adjagbára, 2023).

This change in style is further demonstrated by the instrumentation. Even though the organ is still a prominent component of Anglican music, modern gospel performances frequently include keyboards, drums, bass guitars, and occasionally electric guitars. Gospel works frequently feature stylistic idioms that deviate from typical Anglican accompaniment methods, such as extended harmonies, rhythmic embellishments, and improvisational interludes, even when they are performed solely on the organ (Ossaiga, 2024b).

The performative aspect of gospel music in Anglican settings is equally important. Gospel music places more emphasis on expressivity, physical engagement, and affective communication than the more subdued performance style usually associated with Anglican liturgy. While

congregations frequently participate through clapping, swaying, or vocal affirmation, choir members and worship leaders may use gestures, movement, and increased vocal intensity. This performance aspect blurs the lines between performers and attendees, transforming worship into a social and engaging experience (Ossaiga, 2024b; Ayorinde& Ajose, 2022).

However, institutional limits and expectations influence how gospel music is included into Anglican worship. In order to make sure that musical choices are in line with theological and liturgical norms, clergy and church authorities frequently exert control. Because of this, gospel music in Anglican contexts may be modified to conform to the service's decorum. This may lead to slower tempos, less obviously charismatic dynamics, or the choice of texts that prioritize doctrinal clarity. These modifications draw attention to a continuous struggle between upholding liturgical order and allowing for expressive freedom (Odewole, 2018).

Gospel music's reception and adoption in Anglican worship are greatly influenced by generational dynamics. Younger members of the congregation usually support its inclusion as a way to make worship more accessible, interesting, and culturally significant because they are frequently more exposed to the modern gospel through popular culture and the media. Older members, on the other hand, can worry about the possible decline of customs, considering gospel music to be less respectful or not sufficiently consistent with the established Anglican identity (Agbo& Sylvanus, 2023). The use of gospel music is a reflection of larger cultural processes related to identity development and localization. Nigerian musicians use unique musical sensitivities, such as local languages, rhythmic patterns, and performance aesthetics, to reinterpret worldwide gospel forms rather than merely copying them. Rigid divisions between "foreign" and "local" music are challenged by this localization, which creates hybrid forms that are both global and indigenous. Gospel music thus serves as a vehicle for the expression and reimagining of cultural identity in Nigerian Anglican liturgy (Ayorinde& Ajose, 2022; Adjagbára, 2023).

Another indication of a change in the function of music in liturgical practice is the use of gospel music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy. Traditionally, music in Anglican liturgies was seen as a disciplined, reflective, and theologically grounded endeavor, carried out by trained choirs within predetermined liturgical sequences. This model is challenged by the increasing popularity of gospel music, which emphasizes community involvement, emotional engagement, and participatory performance as essential components of worship. This change implies a reassessment of the role that music plays in the holy encounter, expanding the theological imagination of worship beyond formal liturgical constraints (Ayorinde& Ajose, 2022).

It is important and necessary to understand that conventional forms do not always vanish as a result of this integration. Rather, gospel and Anglican musical styles often coexist, interact, and even have an impact on one another. Gospel rhythms can be incorporated into traditional hymns, and gospel compositions might be arranged to correspond with liturgical purposes. The mixed soundscape that defines modern Nigerian Anglican worship is a result of this mutual relationship.

Theological and Cultural Implications

Gospel music's incorporation into Nigerian Anglican liturgy has significant theological and cultural ramifications that go beyond aesthetics to the actual experience of faith. In Anglican liturgy, music has historically served as a theological instrument for doctrinal articulation, supporting the narrative and ceremonial dimensions of worship. Congregational understanding of salvation history, divine qualities, and ethical obligations is shaped by the theological truths

encoded in hymns, canticles, and choral anthems (Ilori, 2021; Odewole, 2018). Gospel music enters this liturgical setting with its own theological textures, frequently focusing on spiritual development, emotional expression, and personal experience. Through bodily and emotionally charged musical interaction, this invites congregants to meet God both cognitively and affectively, adding additional layers of theological discourse to worship Ayorinde & Ajose, 2022; Agbo & Sylvanus, 2023).

From a cultural perspective, the use of gospel music in Anglican worship is a compromise between native expression and imported liturgical patterns. In its localized Nigerian form, gospel music reflects the cultural imagination of worshippers by incorporating African rhythmic sensibilities, vernacular languages, and communal modalities of performance (Adjagbī, 2023; Ojo, 1998). Liturgical settings become more accessible, interactive, and meaningful to the congregants' life experiences as a result of this cultural resonance, which encourages a stronger identification with the act of worship. The negotiation of culturally relevant music creates room for pluralistic and hybrid expressions of faith by challenging the implicit hierarchy that has traditionally favored Westernized hymnody as the normative standard within Anglican liturgy. These musical changes encourage contemplation on the nature of reverence and holiness from a theological and cultural perspective. While gospel traditions promote spontaneity, bodily participation, and communal voice, traditional Anglican norms frequently associate solemnity with restraint, controlled order, and limited congregational agency.

This conflict prompts both leaders and members of the congregation to reevaluate what a reverent experience with the divine entails: can reverence arise through emotive, participatory, and culturally rooted expressions of worship, or is it only connected to formality? Gospel music implies that holiness is negotiated rather than fixed, depending on how theological interpretation, congregational response, and musical form interact. The ramifications are further deepened by social and generational factors. Younger worshippers who are aware of contemporary religious expressions and worldwide gospel trends frequently find spiritual energy through musical involvement that speaks to their social and cultural realities. Such expressions, which indicate a complex negotiation of authority, tradition, and adaptation, may be seen by older congregations as disruptive or inconsistent with Anglican decorum. Adopting gospel music is therefore more than just an aesthetic decision; it is a living conversation between cultural identity, religious understanding, and generational sensibility.

Gospel-infused worship pushes the church to reconsider liturgical music pedagogy at the level of ecclesial praxis. Maintaining the integrity of Anglican liturgical framework while fostering an environment for innovation that is both culturally and spiritually relevant is a challenge faced by choir directors, organists, and music educators. This emphasizes that music in worship is simultaneously doctrinal, cultural, and relational, necessitating creative musicianship, theological literacy, and awareness of social norms.

Authenticity, Power, and Identity

The use of gospel music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy presents important issues regarding cultural identity, authority, and authenticity. These issues are reflected in larger international discussions concerning the spread of musical genres. Gospel music unavoidably faces conflicts between its historical roots, regional variations, and established religious standards as it spreads across national and cultural borders. The debate over what defines "authentic" gospel music in a

liturgical setting that has its roots in Western Anglican tradition is one area where these conflicts are most noticeable.

In this regard, authenticity encompasses both cultural and musical aspects. According to some academics, like (Ingallset *al.*, 2015), call-and-response rhythms, improvisation, and passionate delivery are among the stylistic components associated with gospel music's African American roots that help it maintain its authenticity. The ability of local communities to reinterpret gospel idioms in ways that speak to their particular spiritual, linguistic, and social realities is crucial to cultural authenticity. As a result, authenticity in Nigerian Anglican worship is negotiated rather than imposed, with musicians, clergy, and congregants working together to decide which elements of international gospel music fit both local cultural expression and liturgical appropriateness (Ajose, 2022; Ilori, 2021).

In this negotiation, power dynamics are crucial. In Anglican services, clergy and institutional authority frequently serve as gatekeepers, establishing the parameters of permissible musical performance. Their choices reinforce hierarchical structures of power by influencing repertoire, performance style, and theological framing. By bringing innovations, modifying rhythms and harmonies, and expressing cultural and spiritual concerns, musicians and congregants simultaneously exercise agency. This interaction shows that power in worship is neither absolute nor unidirectional, but rather flows among a number of individuals who work together to shape the changing soundscape (Ossaiga, 2024a).

Another crucial aspect is identity building. In Nigerian Anglican worship, gospel music serves as a vehicle for the expression of both individual and collective identities. Engaging in gospel-infused liturgy reinforces both local cultural specificity and a sense of belonging to a global Christian tradition. As they mediate between locally inflected gospel practices and Western-derived Anglican forms, choir members and musicians negotiate their professional and spiritual identities, helping to create a hybrid musical and religious identity that reflects both indigenous rootedness and global belonging (Ajose, 2022).

These processes are also shaped by institutional and economic factors. The creation, distribution, and appreciation of particular musical genres are influenced by churches, recording studios, and media outlets, which establish what is acceptable or desirable in places of worship. The intricate relationship between power, commodification, and spiritual practice in the global gospel music ecosystem is highlighted by these structures' intersections with cultural and theological factors (Agbo& Sylvanus, 2023). Examining gospel music in Nigerian Anglican liturgy shows how closely identity, power, and authenticity are related. Global influences, institutional authority, local culture, and spiritual meaning all come together in musical practices, which constitute sites of negotiation. The resultant soundscape is neither fully global nor fully traditional; rather, it is a hybrid area where conflicts are skillfully handled and where new manifestations of religious identity, worship, and song are always emerging. Analyzing these relationships highlights the significance of taking into account both local and global aspects of gospel music, demonstrating how interaction with a globally circulating genre may modify and enhance a historically Western liturgical practice.

Conclusion

This study has looked at how gospel music is included into Nigerian Anglican worship, showing how indigenous customs and international musical genres combine to create a dynamic and negotiated soundscape. The analysis shows that gospel music serves as a transforming force that alters musical practice, theological expression, and cultural identity inside the church; it is much more than a stylistic addition to liturgy. Gospel music is incorporated into Anglican worship through intricate procedures of negotiation and adaptation. Between the expressive, improvisational aspects of gospel music and the regulated structures of Anglican liturgy, musicians, clergy, and congregations actively mediate. Repertoire choice, performance practice, congregational involvement, and the merging of musical idioms all demonstrate this negotiation, resulting in hybrid forms that are both globally and locally anchored. Essentially, the liturgy becomes a place where innovation and tradition coexist, allowing for both creative transformation and continuity.

From a theological perspective, gospel music broadens the ways in which worshippers encounter and communicate the sacred. Its focus on involvement, emotional involvement, and individual testimony enhances Anglican worship's contemplative and regimented style while providing a variety of opportunities for spiritual encounters. Nigerian congregations can express their agency in forming worship practices while interacting with international musical influences thanks to the cultural integration of gospel music, which celebrates local identity and innovation. This study contributes to ongoing scholarly concerns on transnational religious practices, cultural hybridization, and the changing significance of music in spiritual life by placing Nigerian Anglican worship within a worldwide perspective on gospel music. It challenges presumptions about the rigidity of ecclesiastical music and highlights the creative potential at the nexus of global and local practices, showing that even historically structured liturgical traditions can be transformed through engagement with global musical flows.

Future studies could broaden this investigation by comparing various denominational contexts in Nigeria and other African nations and examining the ways in which gospel music interacts with various liturgical frameworks. Further aspects of gospel music's local and global significance might be revealed by investigating how media, technology, and digital platforms have shaped its distribution, reception, and stylistic development.

References

- Adedeji, S. O. (2004). *Nigerian gospel music: A study of its styles* (Unpublished PhD Thesis), Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, 904 pp.
- Agbo, B. (2024). Indigenous compositions for post-colonial liturgical music in Nigeria. *Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies*, 6(1), 85–100.
- Agbo, B., & Sylvanus, E. P. (2023). Exploring how trends in Nigerian popular gospel music shape religious pedagogy. *Practical Theology*, 16(5), 536–550. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1756073X.2023.2213129>
- Adjagbára, F. E. (2023). A study of Nigerian gospel songs: Implications on Christian worship and society. *Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy and Culture*, 4(9). <https://doi.org/10.51699/cajlp.v4i9.991>
- Ayorinde, O., & Ajose, S. (2022). Music and spirituality in Africa: Gospel music, spirituality, and everyday meaning-making in Nigeria. *Religions*, 13(12), 1227. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13121227>

- Ajose, T. S. (2022). 'Me I no go suffer': Christian songs and prosperity gospel among Yoruba Pentecostals in Southwest Nigeria. *Culture and Religion*, 21(4), 387–408. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14755610.2022.2140173>
- Ajose, T. S. (2024a). "We Evangelists Are Creative": Yoruba Pentecostals' music-making on prayer mountains in Nigeria. *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, 21(1), 23–44. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/18125980.2024.2401835>
- Ajose, T. S. (2024b). Performing spiritual solidarity: Christian music and #EndSARS protest in Nigeria. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 36(4), 550–567. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13696815.2024.2391748>
- Ilori, B. O. (2021). *Music in Anglican liturgy* [Handbook]. CCIGNATURE Printers.
- Ingalls, M. M., & Yong, A. (Eds.). (2015). *The spirit of praise: Music and worship in global Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity*. Penn State University Press. <https://doi.org/10.5325/j.ctv14gph87>.
- McKenzie, D. D., Muir, P. E., & Ingalls, M. M. (Eds.). (2024). *Black British gospel music: From the Windrush generation to Black Lives Matter*. Routledge.
- Odewole, I. O. O. (2018). Singing and worship in an Anglican church liturgy in Egba and Egba West Dioceses, Abeokuta, Nigeria. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 74(1), a4584. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4584>
- Ojo, M. A. (1998). Indigenous gospel music and social reconstruction in modern Nigeria. *Missionalia*, 26(2), 210–231.
- Ossaiga, U. P. (2024a). Performative dimensions of gospel music artistry in Nigeria: Implications for church music directing. *African Journal of Religious and Theological Studies*, 2(1), 90–101. <https://doi.org/10.62154/ajrts.2024.02.010387>
- Ossaiga, U. P. (2024b). Decolonizing Western conducting: Gospel music conducting practices in twenty-first-century Southern Nigeria. *African Journal of Religious and Theological Studies*, 2(1), 158–172. <https://doi.org/10.62154/ajrts.2024.02.010463>
- Owoaje, T. O. (2020). Intercultural expressions in the Yorùbá native air tradition of Rev. Canon J. J. Ransome-Kúti. *African Musicology Online*, 10(1), 20–39.