

# The Ethos of Homage-paying and the Assessment of Ethical Issues in Yorùbá Verbal Arts

Ayodele Oyewale

Dept. of Linguistics, African & Asian Studies

University of Lagos, Nigeria

[asoyewale@unilag.edu.ng](mailto:asoyewale@unilag.edu.ng)

## Abstract

*Characteristically, what is foremost in the mind of a typical Yorùbá artiste, whether as oníṣé-onà, òṣèré, apohùn, or ònkòrin, is to conventionally follow the cultural norms and values of paying homage before embarking on his or her oral performance. However, some artistes, and a number of people, especially the contemporary youths in the modern Yorùbá society seem not to have a thorough understanding of the significance of Yorùbá concept of homage. This is often due to 'civilisation', or self-acclaimed knowledge and a sense of personal achievements. Consequently, the recurrent phenomenon of disrespect and disregard for the Yorùbá norms and values is on the increase. With the present ethical problems, a well-organised Yorùbá society might remain a mere proclamation unless the ethical issues of respect are tackled. This paper, therefore, attempts a critical examination of the moral issues involved in Yorùbá homage-paying using seven explicit Yorùbá proverbial sayings on homage, selected Ifá verses, and two oral genres as case studies. The data on homage themes in the selected texts were carefully identified and subjected to literary analysis using the ethical determinism approach. Findings show that the early Yorùbá professional artistes had clear understanding on how germane the Yorùbá concept of homage is in human relation. Findings also show that, in virtually every modern-day community, evidence of moral decadence on disrespect and insubordination to societal norms and values are prevalent. The study makes its contribution by expounding societal knowledge on the relevance of homage in Yorùbá verbal arts and culture as evidenced in the data.*

**Keywords:** *homage; moral obligation; Yorùbá artistes; ethical determinism; Yorùbá verbal arts*

## 1. Introduction

As a moral obligation, homage symbolises the interconnectivity in human inter-personal relationships as well as between man and supernatural forces at the metaphysical level, according to Yorùbá worldview. At the same time, Yorùbá verbal arts is a community-based heritage and professional services with major interests in entertainment, information dissemination, artistic display through aesthetically composed performance with well-trained and resonant voice by an artiste. Composition and public rendition may be in a solo performance or sometimes with group members. In contemporary Yorùbá society, a traditional artiste is not well recognised or appreciated in the same manner as Hip Hop, Juju, Fuji, or Afrobeat singers. There is a seeming get-rich quick syndrome among the modern-day artistes. This ethical gap, therefore, constitutes a subject of research interest to highlight the disparity between how hard work and ingenuity of traditional artistes sometimes attracts only less and unattractive rewards compared to trending popular music artistes whose sounds are embellished with colourful jargons and slangs deemed acceptable to most modern-day youths.

The erroneous impression by most people is that a traditional artiste does not worth more than a pauper or beggar (*alágbe*). However, the perception has significantly changed today by virtue of people's understanding of their meaningful contributions to societal development, documentation of cultural values, and its conservative disposition towards 'making fortune'. There is, therefore, much to be unsettled with respect to Yorùbá verbal art, oral artiste and their prominent roles in the society. For example, notable among several themes that could be examined, which we actually interrogate in this study as gap to be filled, is the ethical issue on homage-oriented nature of Yoruba verbal and music arts. Scholars like Vansina (1973), Dáramólá (1979), Olátúnjí (1984), Ilésanmí (1989), Fálólá (2001), Fálétí (2009), Ajíkòbi (2007), Ògúndèjì (2010), Ìṣolá (2012), Orímóògùnjé (2017), among others, have worked extensively on the Yorùbá cultural milieu, its traditional entertainment industry or verbal arts.

However, there is, as yet, a dearth of work on the pragmatic approach to tackling the ethical issues of paying homage in Yorùbá culture with peculiarity to contemporary society. Being at liberty to do so or not to do so as a practitioner, is it justifiable for tradition to

compel an oral artiste to pay homage before performing regardless of his or her professional expertise? In response to this question, the universal professional ethics provides the ground of affirmation that homage be paid by an artiste before performance and underscores its relevance in the Yorùbá culture. Hence, the ethical idea of paying homage among the modern artistes, no doubt, is quite challenging nowadays. It is observable that the Yorùbá concept of homage involves a far-reaching disposition of submissiveness or humility which runs contrary to the modern idea of inter-personal relationship, especially by youth age-grades and certain self-opinionated individuals in society.

However, three considerations may be helpful to objectively examine the ethical issue on homage, especially with reference to Yorùbá society as a case study. First of all is to look at the theoretical issue of homage from the Yorùbá cultural background. Secondly is to take a careful look at the practical illustration of Yorùbá proverbs *viz-a-viz* some characters, on the ethics of paying homage as being portrayed in selected and transcribed Yorùbá verbal texts.

Additionally, one could study the Yorùbá concept of homage in comparison with the ethics of some professions. This would give a clear picture on the idea and relevance of paying homage as an entrenched professional ethic (*iwà-omólúàbí-ajemóşé*) and as a universal phenomenon which accentuates the Yorùbá philosophy on homage.

## **2. The Concept of Homage in the Yorùbá Cosmology**

The term homage, or *ibà*, is a Yorùbá ethical concept. Homage is one of the central concepts or topical issue and systematic principles by which the Yorùbá people do appraise how cultured an individual is. In accordance with Yorùbá societal norms and values, homage could be used interchangeably with “due respect,” “great honour,” “unembellished regard,” or “indisputable compliment” that is being conferred on a deserving personality within or outside a community. As a symbolic representation, homage is a deepest form of giving eulogy, public recognition, compliments or due esteem to the recipient in question. These signifying terms are comparable simply because they all have parallel significance with the Yorùbá word for homage. Homage, therefore, symbolises giving a well-deserved heartfelt acknowledgement, recognition or accolade to people regarded as

ancestors, traditional rulers, mentors or one's tutors, religious leaders, superior officers in ranking or status, either in formal or informal gathering as a result of personal conviction of indebtedness or superiority.

Homage, by Yorùbá tradition, is usually paid to a worthy individual based on the worthwhile achievements that such an individual has contributed or is contributing to communal growth and development and, sometimes, for the benefits of humanity as a whole. Therefore, from historical or cultural point of view, homage could be described as an innermost form of Yorùbá deepest salutation which portrays holding a person or the metaphysical power(s) in high esteem. This due appreciation or tribute could be to God (*Olódùmarè*), divinities (*àwọn ibo*), ancestors (*àwọn iṣẹrun-ẹni/òrun-ẹni*), or superior personality (*èèkàn-kànkànràn-láwùjọ*), a distinguished tutor (*olùkó-tó-yanranntí*), or mentor (*aláwòkóṣe-ẹni*) in one's profession. These are persons often considered to be advanced in knowledge, wisdom, exposure, experience, mentorship, social connection or supernatural power. The laudable accomplishments of such individuals could be in terms of specific sacrificial efforts being made, demonstration of intellectual knowledge, displaying an in-depth understanding about socio-cultural or philosophical issues of life, expression of wisdom capacity, intelligence, skilfulness, talents or expertise in career.

At its core, paying homage by an artiste is an act of mutual relationship, one that is cordial and endearing in nature to both the payer of homage and recipient. Also, it usually enhances the opportunity of getting maximum cooperation of the audience. On the significance of *ibà*. Orímóògùnjé (2017:21) affirms that:

... it is a way of making superior powers or a specific recipient feel elated, and thus, willing to surrender whatever is required of him/her. Among the Yorùbá, it is believed that the pioneers in any field of human endeavour should be respected by someone who takes after them in order to pave the way for his or her greatness.

The attitude of paying homage is learnt as part of one's home training or "*èkó-ilé*" during the formative years of a Yorùbá child, or as part of

professional training (*ikòṣẹ́mọ́ṣẹ́*) or personal bitter experience (*ifixiri-ara-ẹni-kògbón*). A Yorùbá proverb stresses that, “*Ilé la ti ñ kó ẹ̀ṣọ̀ ròde*” (Charity begins at home) or “*Bí a ti ñ kòṣẹ́, là ñ kó ìyára*” (skills or knowledge acquisition goes *pari passu* with smartness). This underscores the fact that learning the nitty gritty of a culture or profession is germane to becoming a well-mannered person and seasoned professional. The custom of paying homage is key for an apprentice learning any Yorùbá traditional profession (*iṣẹ́ iṣẹ̀nḅáyé Yorùbá*) or trade (*òwò ṣíṣe*). This, however, does not preclude people working in military or para-military units, corporate organisations or formal setting or in an institution of higher learning from living up to ideals. On imparting moral principles and values in children, as basic and fundamental process for everybody, Ajáyí (2012:7) asserts that:

The family inculcates cultural ideas in a person through direct instruction and through the emulation of parents, siblings and relations. In the family, children learn the societal norms, values, dos and don'ts, as well as the group culture which guide them to conform to societal expectations. Like charity, cultural transmission begins from home.

In the Yorùbá culture, justification for paying homage is placed beyond the controversy of cultural sentiments, especially to the legends (*àwọn akọni-ìgbàani*) and sages (*àwọn ọlògbón-dorí-eja-mú*) that have made sacrifices of great importance to the communities that have now outlived them. Attitudinal homage is connected with their ground-breaking efforts, prowess, charisma, and influence, positions of authority or sacrificial death for communal survival. More importantly, the prominent roles which such heroes or heroines might have played or are playing in mentoring individuals, especially the prospective trainees or young at heart leaders within the community, constitute the apparent reason or justification for being honoured. Therefore, statements akin to Yorùbá sayings like “*Tótó, ó ẹ se bí òwe o*” or “*Kí òwe náà ó jẹ ti ẹyin àgbà.*” (Permission for communicating in proverbs before (you) elder(s)) or (The proverb that I used is for the elders on seat) are examples of how a typical Yorùbá person does pay homage in speech-making if he or she is a younger person standing or sitting before an adult or a group of elderly people.

At any rate, the issue of paying homage is an outdated tradition from some modern youths' perspectives. However, one would discover and get convinced through Yorùbá traditional religious system, mythology, prose narratives and pragmatic life experiences that the long-established principles of homage is well-founded and relevant to modern society. Ideally, this social culture of homage naturally bridges the real (in terms of social stratification or status) or imaginary/conceptual (as related to metaphysical) gaps between two parties or forces of different ages or climes with complementary attraction or kinship.

### 3. The Attributes of Homage in the Yorùbá Cultural Milieu

The paradox of an artiste's success, especially in a Yorùbá communal setting, as related to professional performance and the necessity of homage, has to do with capacity to make decisive choices on time. Home training and the personal choice of imbibing its creeds is part of the "constraint" or motivational factor to doing things rightly or wrongly. Conformity to the morals of paying homage is a Yorùbá cultural identity that inspires audience participation and artistes' accomplishments, irrespective of an artiste's know-how. Nevertheless, mere act of paying homage, in and/or of itself, is not adjudged to be an outstanding performance for both reverence and skilful disposition are essential qualities for a professional artiste to be reckoned with.

However, there is a propensity to make choices that could lead to societal commendation or condemnation depending on compliance to the societal expectation and exceptional performance. Meanwhile, wrong choices for not paying homage, with its accumulated effects, may not jeopardise an artiste's performance immediately. Rather, such a deliberate nonconformity or inadvertence could be an opportunity for learning to do things better, provided the erring artiste lives to tell the story.

Indeed, Ifá warns against boisterousness, the using of language reminiscent of the religious knowledge. In *Òkànràn Méjì*, Ifá affirms that:

Èni tó ju ni lọ,  
 Ju 'fáa le ẹni lọ;  
 A díá fún Yèèpè  
 Tí nfomi ojúú ẹ̀gbèrè ọmọ  
 Ẹ̀gbà tí ọmọ náà dàgbà tán,

Aṣọ ọwò ni Olódùmarè dá fún un  
Ni ọmọ náà wá ẹni-ọwò...

Abimbolá (1976:230)

A person that is greater than one  
Is greater than Ifá divination in one's household;  
Being the Ifá divination that was performed for the nettle  
Who was crying with tears for bareness  
When the child grew up  
Olódùmarè prepared garment of honour for him  
And the child became honourable person....

*Yèèpè*, according to this Ifá verse, is being portrayed as having a natural power of commanding respect, because of its velvet-like bark that itches anybody that attempts handling it carelessly. Homage, according to the Yorùbá custom, could be paid through a monologue performance or reciting in a call-and-responses fashion and an interactive style between a performer and audience. The second way of verbal communication between an artiste and audience requires intermittent responses from the audience. Sometimes, paying homage also depends exclusively on some ritual processes (*ìgbésẹ̀ ajẹmètùtù/ìbọ*) peculiar to a particular communal festival, genre or divinity. Occasionally, the mystery about the Yorùbá indigenous socio-cultural custom on homage involves a measure of esoteric language (*ìpèdè awo*) that may not be rational to the audience that are present during a performance.

This mode of “cultural articulate connection” that is embedded in homage may be strange to the audience during the time and space of performance. Nevertheless, it is culturally considered to be a mutual sharing of understanding of philosophical ideas (*ohun ajẹmọ̀jìnlẹ̀-èrò*) between the physical and metaphysical realms. Consequently, the verbal communication of homage may not be that intelligible (*àgbóyé*), or logical (*nítumò-kan-gúnmó*) to most audience present. Most important thing is for homage to be presented expressively for acceptability between the person paying homage (*ajúbà*), few initiates (*àwọn awo*) and the recipient(s) (*eni/àwọn-à-pè-júbà*).

Suffice it to say that it is inconsequential for the non-initiates (*àwọn ọgbèrì*) to be preoccupied with the meaning of incomprehensible word(s) being employed in homage. Therefore,

physical contact with the metaphysical forces is not required for homage or invocation to take place (See Orímóògùnjé, 2017). This is one of the mysteries or complex aspects of the Yorùbá verbal arts. Although there are evidences in the Yorùbá verbal arts that reveal the pre-existence of Yorùbá divinities, they are somewhat parts of metaphysical mysteries as applicable to other religious beliefs. On how metaphysics as a branch of Philosophy arises from ontological wonder, with some unanswerable questions, Unah (1998:46) affirms that:

By ontological wonder, we mean an extraordinary kind of perplexity. This extraordinary kind of perplexity about the nature of things (i.e., man and the world) in turns gives rise to fundamental questions. A reflection on the baffling features of man and the world-the ontological wonder-gives birth to philosophy.

The aesthetics of this incomprehensiveness lies in the bewilderment of some audience to unravel the unknown behind the difficulties entrenched in the metaphorical coinages or archaic dictions (*òrò ikàsi*) being used spontaneously through inspiration in homage exchange. A Yorùbá adage that states, “*À kí ì jé niyì òrìsà*” (The non-responsiveness to greetings is the honour of a divinity) buttresses the Yorùbá belief in the non-intelligible-verbal *communiqué* between physical and metaphysical beings. Nonetheless, such incomprehensible encounters or concealed information, facts or figures, sometimes, could give room for confidential explanation upon inquiry by individual interested in knowing more after performance. Such after-performance clarification often goes with strict warning of dire consequences for divulging any information a non-initiate (*ògbèrì*) may be privileged to have. The reason being that occultic members are always dreadfully secretive according to a Yorùbá saying that “*wíwo lenu awo ñ wo*” (the initiate’s lips must remain mute).

Given the fact that a Yorùbá verbal artiste is sometimes under various influences, spirit possession or alcohol, it is adequate to add that there is no stereotype way of paying homage during performance. Homage could take the form of a conventional opening glee (*ìjúbà/ìsìde-eré*) before the commencement of full performance or be included intermittently (*àlàfìbò*) during performance. Through



creativity, there is an aesthetic way of slightly digressing from the normal *status quo* of paying homage with seemingly unnoticeable difference. This may not warrant the disapproval or interjection of some well-versed personalities that are knowledgeable about the contextual implication or principle of an oral genre during such a performance. Among the Yorùbá, there are different sign languages that often include occultist signs (*ipèdè awo*) body language (*ifojú-fara-sòrò*), professional codes (*ipèdè ajemósé*), romantic slangs (*ipèdè olólùfẹ́-méjì*) and religious conundrums (*ijìnlẹ̀-èdè-ajẹ̀mésìn*) etc. Also, there are emotional dispositions (*ifimòsilárahàn*) through actions or reactions, which culturally implies that an artiste or individual is proud (*ijọra-ẹ̀-lójú*), unruly (*alétílápá*), impolite (*alárìfìn-èdá*), flippant (*a-sòrò-şàkàşàkà*), recalcitrant (*kòlòrànsí-èdá*).

Therefore, there are attitudinal dispositions that are reflections that an individual is paying homage or not. For example, the usage of honorific pronouns and pronominals such as *ẹ*, *yin*, *won*, *èyin*, or *àwon* for a singular person or an elderly person, is a form of homage which shows how respectful a typical Yorùbá person is in a communal interpersonal relation. “Greetings are [a] crucial aspect of Yorùbá custom and it is beneficial to formal and informal relationships” (Oyèwálé, 2019:36).

Besides, inspiration (*imísí*) could engender an emotional feeling on how homage is rendered by a Yorùbá oral performer. Paying homage is a spontaneous action in acknowledging a noteworthy person or group of people. To this end, a poet’s obsession determines a performer’s homage presentation to his or her audience. According to Isòlá (2012), a performer, through creativity (*àtinúdá*), could display dexterity cum dynamism in his or her approach of paying homage.

#### **4. Significance of Paying Homage in the Yorùbá Commune**

It is hard to argue against the justification, validity or significance of ethics of homage in the Yorùbá communal setting. Ideally, paying homage involves willingness on the part of an individual to live according to societal norms and values with a view to showing compliance. But, the theme of homage in the Yorùbá oral genres often clearly shows that both the rewards and consequences for conformity or failure to pay homage are a pragmatic principle and lesson that inform the necessity for making the right decision in this regard.

Somewhat, it is well-founded to talk about individual's freedom, principle(s) or attitudinal differences; but, more importantly is to be realistic on possible negative impacts and its all-encompassing influence of noncompliance attitude on the society at large. Accordingly, Omoregbe (1993:4) defines ethics as:

... normative of science, that is, it deals with norms or standards of human behaviour. The aim of ethics is not to describe the way men do behave in practice, but to state the way men *ought* to behave. There is a big difference between what people actually do and what they *ought* to do, between the way they behave and the way they *ought* to behave. Ethics is concerned with the latter, that is, with the way men ought to behave, the norms of conduct to which human actions ought to conform.

On homage, the initiative of conforming to cultural norms or professional ethics is what we expressively term as 'Rapid Rational Response' (RRR). This serves in averting societal disorder, professional blunder, public disgrace, or regrettable action or reaction which is avoidable in the first instance. The combination of Yorùbá ethics of homage with professional adroitness, as applicable in most professions, constitutes what could be regarded as true professionalism. It implies that both unquantifiable qualities (*àwọn àmúyẹ́ aláìlẹ́gbẹ́*) are two sides of a coin or two of a kind in nature which could facilitate or truncate human progressive development according to Yorùbá belief. To the recipient(s) of homage, it portrays an acceptable attitude of humility, appreciation and compliance with the existing communal tradition. Paying homage is also a public expression of diplomacy, direct or indirect way of seeking for moral supports, and appreciation for uncommon privilege given to an artiste to perform before a highly revered Yorùbá Ọba, dignitaries and a general audience.

Furthermore, a Yorùbá artiste is duty-bound to pay homage while performing in his or her home front or in Diaspora (*ẹ̀yìn-odi*). The ambition of an oral artiste to perform frequently with a view to rising to stardom warrants the essence of having the temperament or mind-set of paying homage in every performance. As a way of

displaying self-re-training “*itúnra-ẹni-kó/itúnra-ẹni-bi*,” and professional etiquette “*iwà-iṣẹ̀tọ-ajemọ̀ṣẹ̀*”, it becomes imperative with conscious attitude of a typical Yorùbá artiste or personality to always remember his or her manners through traditional greetings and homage as applicable in each situation.

These traits could be well portrayed by exhibiting virtues like “*àpónlẹ̀*” (regard), “*iwàpèlẹ̀/iwà-irẹ̀lẹ̀*” (humility), or “*ifomọ̀niyànṣe*” (matured disposition/humanitarian service) which in summary is known as “*omọ̀lúàbí*,” (ethical behaviour). And, of course, “*à-ṣe-gboriyìn*” (celebrated performance) is the resultant effect for being homage-compliant during performance. Òjọ (1982:19) affirms that “the Yorùbá culture of greetings and its importance is human identity.” Rarely would a typical Yorùbá artiste be misled with an illusion of self-assumed arrogance over his or her know-how when relating with the sages or elderly ones in a formal or an informal gathering. In reality and for professional accomplishment, an artiste’s performance’s appraisal is not about his or her expertise display alone, or whether it is gender-based or endorsing of a tribal sentiment, but a holistic summation of audience objective evaluation. A Yorùbá proverb, “*Irú kì í yin ara rẹ̀ lóbẹ̀*” (the locust bean ought not to engage in self-praising as valuable spice in the soup) underscores the substantiated relationship between a performer and the audience.

Therefore, an artiste is expected to basically maintain constant self-restrain from overconfidence or from a feeling of self-importance. To be adjudged as a dynamic oral presenter is subject to audience objective approval with after-performance comments (*iṣẹ̀-gbénugbènu/ atotónú/ àrìwísí ò̀ǹwòran*). However, the audience’s subjective comments, at times, do not in any way decrease an artiste’s competence, self-esteem, self-confidence or self-worth as a person or as a professional. If a Yorùbá artiste claims to be courteous or cultured but demonstrating conflicting disposition to people deserving of homage, such attitude is incompatible with the ethics of his professional training or oath. So, it is logical to conclude on the fundamental reason why the Yorùbá people are so emphatic about the traditions of paying homage to people of great calibre and the metaphysical forces. In his submission about the logicity or validity of human thinking, Udefi (2012:120) affirms that:

Now, philosophy began in wonder and, like cosmology and mythology, concerns the basic beliefs of the people about the world, man and existence in their totality. The view that myths and cosmology may be said to characterise traditional or primitive society, does not imply that such society is impervious to some sort of rational or philosophic elements no matter how rudimentary.

To this end, the Yorùbá culture of paying homage can be viewed from different perspectives. First, it could be examined with respect to the historical background which portrays how people do socially connect and interact within a communal setting and expression of metaphysical belief. Second, the viewpoint could be from the nature of expressing mutual understanding as refined people through diplomacy in intra-/inter-personal relationship. Therefore, in discussing or to fully grasp the implied meaning(s) or relation between the Yorùbá concept of homage and verbal arts or performance, one must be well-grounded in the cognitive aesthetics of the particular cultural milieu and take cognisance of the above listed approaches. Otherwise, the expertise of an expert or a professional is basically required to unravel some embedded information or philosophical ideas.

Consequently, one can rationally validate that exhibiting diplomacy with audience through homage could naturally facilitate mutual bonding, self-confidence and enhance physical performance of an artiste. Besides, abiding by the professional ethics of paying homage involves a reciprocal relationship and principle of “give and take”. Therefore, homage, in this respect, could inspire communal idea for future performance (*à-ṣe-è-se-tún-ṣe*) for both the artiste and the (audience). The historic occasion of paying homage could prevent or resolve unwarranted protracted feud which may naturally degenerate to enmity problems between two Yorùbá artistes or personalities that are of different social or professional rankings.

A Yorùbá proverb affirms that “*Bòmọ̀dẹ̀ bá jùbà àgbà, á roko dalẹ̀*,” (if a child pays homage to the elders, he would have moral support of the adults’ in the inner circle). The term “*oko*” is a figurative expression which connotes an individuals’ source of livelihood, career development, or business ventures, as the case may be. The implied reality of this proverb is an advice that a well-mannered human being

would perpetually enjoy favourable dispositions and ethical supports by always treating communal elders with the honour and dignity which they justly deserve. The opinion of Faleti (2009) seems apt in this regard:

What I am saying in essence is that we do not teach our children enough Yorùbá culture at home. And sometimes, they cannot decide whether what they see on television is right or wrong. This is made worse by the moulding of the character of our children with the importation of foreign films into the country (Fálétí, 2009:212).

Paying homage, indeed, may have to do with occasions related to annual family-compound celebration (*orò agbo-ilé*), communal annual festival (*ọ̀dún ibílẹ̀*), and age-grade's initiation rites (*ìgbani-ségbé-ajemójó-ori*) among others. Homage is significant in acknowledging the inventive ideas, dedication or doggedness of a well-deserved personality or a Yorùbá divinity as being initiated in Yorùbá traditional religious system. By implication, such an individual or divinity is reckoned with as pacesetter or forerunner (*afinimọ̀nà*), ground-breaker, (*olùdásilẹ̀*) gatekeeper (*oníbodè*) or custodian of tradition (*agbáterù àṣà*). Better still, such an individual could be an elder statesman/community leader (*aṣíwájú-àwùjọ*) of a particular verbal art, a professional (*akòṣẹ̀mọṣẹ̀*) or originator of a novel idea which outlives him or her. According to Yorùbá cultural belief, paying homage by a priest (*olúwo/aborẹ̀/bàbálóòṣà/iyálóòṣà*), an artiste, a singer, or an apprentice (*omọ-iṣẹ̀/omọ-ẹ̀kọṣẹ̀*) could prevent truncating or jeopardising an existing mutual relationship between two parties of different epoch. As a way of paying homage, an artiste can allude to a saying like:

Mo júbà,  
Kí ìbà mi ẹ̀,  
Ẹ̀ jẹ́ kóde òní ó yẹ mí/wá...

I pay homage,  
Let my homage be acceptable,  
Let today's performance be rewarding for me/us.

Accordingly, as an ethical obligation of a professional, it implies that homage be duly paid by a performer (*òṣèréré*) on or off the stage. Similarly, the audience have the moral responsibility of providing an enabling environment, material gifts and financial supports in reciprocation to a performer's homage and skilful performance with artistic expertise.

### **5. The Significance of Yorùbá Proverbial Sayings on the Ethos of Homage**

From the researcher's personal experience and observation, various literal or symbolic ways of paying homage have been very helpful in paving ways for people that are unassuming with Yorùbá practice on homage. Moreover, according to many moonlight stories (*eré òṣùpá*), being practically genuine with homage principles has prevented many people from problematic situation and near-death experiences in time past. It is more challenging for the modern Yorùbá society to understand the concept of verbal arts and applying the beneficial principles in day-to-day inter-personal relationship. In his observation about the unnoticeable fortune embedded in the African verbal art, Ajíkòbi (2007:25) counsels that:

We should endeavour to dig and drink deep into our verbal inheritance and commit the rest voluntary dependency of our oral heritage which is the noblest choice for our race to avert a race suicide. It will be better for us black people if we stand as a formidable team to take a leaf out of these great African ambassadors' book and delve into our verbal art. Let us mine our verbal art which is our promising mountain of gold and grace with dedication, so that much flaring grace and glories will be imparted to the entire human family in great degree in a very short period.

The African (Yorùbá) idea of verbal art, as rightly observed by Ajíkòbi, can only be understood and appreciated when its ethical principles are employed for tackling societal challenges that are peculiar to African socio-political, economic and religious issues in the contemporary society. As being portrayed in the Yorùbá verbal arts generally, paying homage goes beyond mere dogmatic routine,

fulfilling obligation under compulsion by an artiste to please audience or society. The choice of paying homage by an individual is a public display of self-emptiness in the presence of the professionals, the senior colleagues, the *crème de la crème*, or fellow colleagues within the society. Consequently, the children or youths, that are consciously or unconsciously learning the rudiments of the Yorùbá cultural norms and values, could be moved to humility through the self-effacing nature of a public figure or well-acclaimed professional paying homage. The rationale or moral explanation behind giving honour to whom it is due is evident in these Yorùbá proverbial sayings:

- (i) *Bí oṃodé láṣọ bí àgbà,  
Kò le ni àkísà bí àgbà.*
- If a child has clothes like the elder,  
He cannot have threadbare clothes like the elder.
- (ii) *Bí oṃodé bá n gégì nígbó,  
Àgbà ní mọ ibi tí yòò wó sí*
- When a child is cutting a tree in the forest,  
Elder knows the direction of its fall.
- (iii) *Ibi tí a pè lóri, ẹnìkan kì í fì ibẹ̀ tẹ̀lẹ̀*  
An elderly person should not be disrespected
- (iv) *Ká dọ̀bálẹ̀ ká pa ìgùnwọ̀ mọ̀,  
Ó lóhun tó n ẹ̀ fún ẹnì.*
- To prostrate respectfully,  
Has its enormous rewards.
- (v) *A kì í gbé orí ẹ̀şin kí “olúwo” ẹnì.*  
Greeting your *maharishi* while riding horse  
is an insubordination.
- (vi) *Àìfàgbà fẹ̀nìkan ni kò jẹ̀ káyé ó gún.*  
A lack of due respect for an elder triggers  
societal disorderliness.

(vii) *A pa epo léyìn àgbà,  
Àgbà ñ bọ wá kàn ó,  
Kí omódé ó róhun pa.*

A youth that is disrespectful to an adult,  
Age is coming upon such,  
For young one's contempt as well.

From the contextual meanings of the above proverbs, what constitutes moral validation for paying homage is well exemplified. The Yorùbá concept of homage is made so distinct and clear that no individual can, by working against the societal ethics on inter-personal relationship, merit being treated with dignity and honour by future generations. So, in line with Yorùbá custom, the fundamental reason for paying homage is for every individual to guard against two fallacies. First is the idea that an individual's 'innovative idea or know-how' in a profession is completely uncommon or is the 'first of its kind.' Second, a personal erroneous impression that a renowned individual being celebrated in a particular profession or field of human endeavour is a self-made or self-sufficient person in his or her competence without the great impacts of predecessors' moral supports or consultation, coupled with personal self-re-training.

A number of seasoned and well-known Yorùbá poets, some of who double as oral artistes like Adébáyò Fálétí, Ifáyemí Èlèbuiḃon, Olátúnḃòsún Oládàpò Lánrewájú Adépòjù, Àlàbí Ògúndépò, Ògúndáre Fóyánmu, Sulaiman Àrèmu Ayílára (Ajóbíewé), are specialists in different Yorùbá genres. Their affirmations, in their recorded albums, have proved beyond reasonable doubt that no human being can attain his or her ultimate career fulfilment without the unrelented efforts and moral supports of some knowledgeable and experienced trainer(s) or well-wishers. Consequently, a trainee would first be under the tutelage of a professional before becoming a distinguished professional in his or her chosen career. Logically, the legacy of a professional tutor naturally shapes the roadmap which a prospective verbal artiste or professional (in the making) may adapt (*àwòta*) or emulate (*àwòkóṣe*) in the process of mentorship before developing his or her own self-adopted or personal style. More importantly, there is no high-ranking man in any field of discipline that has not, somewhat, leaned on the shoulder of a professional as a



leverage in acquiring knowledge (*imò*), experience (*iríri*), exposure (*ifinimòná*) and the indispensable nitty gritty of a profession (*àpadé-àti-àludé-işé*) in becoming prominent person in life. The following Yorùbá proverbs substantiate it all: “*Òbẹ̀ kì í mú kó gbé èèkù ara rẹ̀*” (a sharp knife cannot sharpen its wooden-handle) or “*Ádá tó mú yányán, kò le şánko fúnra rẹ̀, ènìyàn ló máa n şatókùn fún un*” (a very sharp cutlass cannot by itself cut bush, human being directs its way of cutting weeds).

We argue that individual ability in a chosen profession is more of a function of formal or informal training that such individuals must have acquired from a skilful or certified expert(s). The moral advice in the proverbs is for upcoming generations in every discipline never to quickly forget the foundational effort(s) which people that are well-established have made as sacrificial contributions in shaping the former’s career development. However, for critics and lay persons who may be quick to forget, the lamentable and irreversible consequences is similar to the axiom of “what goes around eventually comes around.” No matter how an individual disrespects a superior person, hovering over him or her is the evident *law of karma* of sowing and reaping which cannot be circumvented.

Generally, however, the variables that Yorùbá do consider as factor for holding an individual in high esteem and that warrants being respected include the level of intelligence “*làákàyè*,” age “*òjò-orí*,” wealth “*olá*,” level of experience “*ipele iríri*,” professional expertise or skills “*imòşşe*”. Although, paying homage is not a prerequisite for achieving professional expertise during performance, it is a requisite to showing oneself as a distinguished professional or civilised individual working according to Yorùbá professional or communal ethics. Hence, a performer is required to acknowledge the professional know-how of the personalities who are present or absence during every performance according to this Yorùbá aphorism:

*Àràbà ni bàbá*

*Àràbà ni bàbá*

*Èni a bá lábà ni baba*

Abimbólá (1976:82)

The kapok tree is the father

The kapok tree is the father

Whosoever we meet in the farm-shack is the father

Much of the ethical messages being portrayed from failure of the characters in the texts on paying homage are moral lessons for modern-day artistes and individuals desirous to learn from past mistakes of others. Given the fact that perfection is not a human attribute, the human being is liable to making mistake(s). Nevertheless, a Yorùbá proverb succinctly cautions that, “*Wèrè èniyàn ní fì ọ̀rọ̀ ara rẹ̀ kọ̀gbọ̀n*” (only a fool learns from his or her personal mistakes). Therefore, it is imperative to examine how homage serves as professional ethics that enable Yorùbá artistes to avoid false impression or preventable mistakes during performance. It portrays situational experiences where characters learn critical lessons from conformity and failure that could have been averted.

#### **6. Homage as Professional Ethics for the Yorùbá Verbal Artistes**

Throughout Yorùbá history, the oral performers in various situations are well-accustomed to paying homage on the basis of fulfilling established cultural heritage and values. The transcribed texts being examined present scenarios of characters facing daunting challenges and critical decisive moment as to whether to observe the professional ethics of paying homage or not. Using traditional poetry as medium, Uzochukwu (2001:1) expounds on the misconception about the relevance of the verbal arts, especially in the modern society. He asserts that:

But the absence of “literary forms and techniques which have been introduced through formal education” does not in any way detract from the merits of traditional poetry as a work of art. So, in spite of the misconception that illiterate performers cannot produce valuable works of art, traditional poetry has aesthetic qualities of good literature.

It is evident from the excerpt that verbal arts are very relevant in illustrating vital issues in both ancient and contemporary society. It is impossible to affirm the reality of the significance of verbal arts and yet argue that homage as vital part is inconsequential. Evidence abounds in verbal arts that a Yorùbá artiste needs more than theoretical

knowledge or skills acquisition to excel professionally or socially in his or her career. A verbal performance by a Yorùbá singer, oral poet, dancer, actor, or chief priest involves a number of codes of conduct and processes. The typical setting or scenery often includes different elements such as here listed: a performer, relevant colourful costumes, a well-set stage, moonlight or gas lamp, musical ensembles, songs and dance, audience who sometimes double as recipients and co-performers, creativity during performance, artiste's expertise in display, gifts items, audience overall appraisal, among others.

These features must be linked with homage in acknowledging the existing works of professional artistes or artiste. Therefore, the concept of verbal arts performance in the Yorùbá cultural milieu reflects the components in quasi-scientific processes which involve "testing" a scientific hypothesis. It is on these premises or assumptions that an artiste could "proudly" articulate his or her verbal prowess and inventive aesthetics in performance with a view to having a booming outing. To understand the transcribed texts under study, it is important to note the kind of disillusionment that set in about the characters' usage of (homage) as characterisation of human success or failure.

### **7. Portrayal of Homage as a Theme in the Transcribed Texts of Yorùbá Verbal Arts**

There is a need to critically examine the Yorùbá concept of homage and what it entails for people living in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a society radically different from ancient Yorùbáland. As applicable to some religious precepts in different climes, Yorùbá culture affirms giving honour to whom it is due. To the Yorùbá people, the categories appropriate to be so honoured are: "*Olódùmarè*" (God), "*Irínmọ̀lẹ̀/Òòṣà/Ìbọ*" (Divinities) which could be either "*Olúkòtún*" (benevolent ones) or "*Olúkòsì*" (malevolent ones), "*Àwọ̀n Ìyàmi*" (the witches), "*Èṣù-Láàlú*" (Yorùbá trickster divinity), "*Ògún Lákáayé*" (Yorùbá god of iron), *Ọ̀rúnmilà* (Yorùbá god of wisdom), among others. Others that are also noteworthy include "*Ọ̀run-eni/Ìṣẹ̀run-eni*" (one's ancestral spirits), "*Àwọ̀n Ajogun*" (the eight belligerent enemies of man), "*Àwọ̀n Wólí*" (the Christian prophets), "*Àwọ̀n àfàà*" (religious priests in Islam), "*Alágbára-ayé*" (the powers-that-be in the world), "*oyún-iní*" (the foetus), and "*àsé-id*" (spermatozoa).

Abimbólá (2006:72) also outlines in *Ọ̀wọ̀nrín Méjì* that homage is due to "*eégún-ilé*" (ancestral masquerades of one's father's

house), “*òòṣà-òjà*” (one’s mother), “*Orí*” (one’s destiny), “*Ilẹ̀*” (the ground), and “*Olú-bòbòtiribò-baba-ẹbò*” (the human mouth). Paying homage to the “mouth” is a metaphorical way of instructing individual, with best humanly possible efforts, to conform to societal values for people’s positive remarks. Symbolically, “spoken words,” according to Yorùbá belief, have unseen forces that enhance their potency, either for people’s blessing (*iwúre*) or curse (*ẹ̀pẹ̀*). According to a Yorùbá proverb that “*A kì í gbélé ẹni ká fọ̀rùn rọ, ẹnu aráyé ẹ̀bọ*” (Domestic neck injury rarely occurs, but people’s negative public statements must be appeased). The Yorùbá also believe that “*Àròkà jà joògùn lọ*” (The potency of ill-will gossip is more efficacious than charms). The actual warning is about being careful for unseen metaphysical power(s) embedded in the human spoken words as being portrayed in the praise-poetry of a Yorùbá town:

Àkúrẹ̀ Olóyèmekùn,  
Omọ a múdà silẹ̀;  
Fogun ẹnu pa ni!

Àkúrẹ̀ Olóyèmekùn,  
The progeny of who lays down the sword;  
And kills one with verbal war!

Thus, this is an advice for “self-fortification” through diverse ways of appeasing to humanity’s unconstructive remarks that may damage reputation/career or be inimical to a person’s progress in life. Besides, the underrated children that are physically underaged (*eni-a-jù-lo-lójó-orí*) but who, in reality, are “elderly” (*àwọn àgbà*) in the metaphysical realm (*ayé àìrì*) within a community are inclusive.

Generally, the culture of paying homage is a non-verbal aspect of Yorùbá daily lived experience, inter/intra-personal relationships and an occupational obligation. The Yorùbá believe that there are limitless opportunities for paying homage by a skilful artiste who has outstanding professional training and a well-grounded foundation in the Yorùbá cultural milieu. The natural predisposition of women adds one more viewpoint to the concept of homage when being considered from a gender perspective. It is an endearing and personal attribute that usually gives a typical Yorùbá woman an *entrée* into upper-class

circles. In the praxis of Yorùbá verbal arts, an artiste could commence his or her performance thus:

*Ìbà ni n ó fòní jù,  
Aré/Orin mi dọla...*

I will only pay homage today,  
My performance/song is scheduled for tomorrow ...

Evidently, the statement that performance or songs would come tomorrow in this context underscores the idea that homage takes precedence and it is equally important as a full complement of the main performance itself. The underlying principle is that those who are being acknowledged by a performer through homage are duty-bound to co-operate, sometimes, impulsively rendering logistic assistance for an artiste's optimal performance as well as material and financial rewards in appreciation. Apparently, this Yorùbá conventional *modus operandi* of commencing a performance reveals how emphatic the Yorùbá are on homage. In the Ifá corpus, Ọ̀rúnmilà demanded some outward performance from his children to show his superiority as father and divinity status, but the non-compliance of his last-born child was responsible for his return to heaven.

In *Ìwòrì Méjì*, Ifá frowns at Ọ̀rúnmilà's last-born child, King Ọ̀lówó's affront, which he publicly displays to his father, Ọ̀rúnmilà. On his festival day, Ọ̀rúnmilà demands the former to pay homage like his elderly brothers by saying "*À ború, bọ̀ yè, bọ̀ síṣẹ̀*", meaning "may you continuously makes successful divination" (See Abimbóla 2006:40-42). Consequently, upon the former's refusal, Ọ̀rúnmilà, the Yorùbá divinity of wisdom, out of annoyance, returns to heaven. The resultant effect is the disorderliness in the world till date according to the mythology.

Also, a Yorùbá proverb that states, "*àifàgbà fẹ̀nikan ni kò jé káyé ó gún*" (Not giving honour to whom it is due is the bane of world disorderliness) justifies Ọ̀rúnmilà's reaction. Out of magnanimity, he gave them sixteen cowries (*ikin méréndínlógún*) as divination materials for them to be using in consulting the Ifá oracle for individuals or communal inquiry about mystifying issues of life. A Yorùbá divinity that homage is always given to, due to his powerful

influence across the board, either for good or evil, is Èṣù-Láàlú. His praise-poetry goes thus:

Ìbà Èṣù-Láàlú,  
 Láaróyè, ẹbọra tí í jé Látọpa;  
 Ò-bélékún-sunkún, kẹrù-ó-bélékún,  
 Èlẹkún n sunkún, Láaróyè n sùnjẹ!  
 Ògbúńgbú onímú erin,  
 Onímú erin ló fokó ẹfàrá tí gbogbo èniyàn n tò.  
 Okó dá gbọnhún, ẹrù dà ódò,  
 Èlẹrù n wẹrù, Láaróyè n wókó ẹ kiri...

Homage to Èṣù-Láàlú,  
 Láaróyè, a goblin known as Látọpa;  
 The one whose empathy scares the crier,  
 The crier is shedding tears, Láaróyè is shedding blood!  
 Short man with elongated elephant's nose,  
 The one with elephant's nose constructs bridge for  
 passers-by with his penis  
 His penis got broken, loads scattered into the river,  
 People are searching for loads, Láaróyè is looking for  
 his broken penis ...

Although, the excerpt sounds figuratively or mythological, the homage being dedicated to Láaróyè recounts and celebrates the great sacrifice he made for using his manhood as a bridge-builder for people crossing at a critical moment. Ògúnníran (2010), in his book titled *Eégún Alaré*, depicts how Òjẹládé, a well-known professional travelling theatre masquerade (*Eégún Alárinjọ*), having learnt his lesson in a bitter way, conforms to verbal professional ethics of paying homage before commencing his subsequent performances. Ògúnníran presents the artiste's remorsefulness thus:

Ọba k'ẹ ẹ pé o, mo jú o,  
 Mo júbà k'ibà mi ẹ:  
 Ìbà ni n ó kọ jú ná, aré mi d'ẹyin!  
 Mo júbà bàbá mi  
 Òjẹlárinnàkà, Ọkọ Ìyádùnní:

Òun l'eégún aláré, a bi koko léti aṣo;  
Afinjú Òjè tí gbé kowèè j'òògùn ilàyà...  
Ògúnníran (2010:41)

Long live the king, I pay homage,  
May my homage be acceptable  
I'm paying homage today; my performance comes later!  
I pay homage to my father  
Òjèlárinnàkà, Ìyádúnní's husband:  
He is a masquerade with knots at the helms of his attire  
A spick and span masquerade that uses kowèè for  
daring charms...

The homage-related themes in the transcribed texts of some Yorùbá genres present a general exposé of the pragmatic experience about the Yorùbá concept of reverence. While Abimbólá (2006), through the Ifá literary corpus figuratively lists the deserving categories of people whom homage is due, he also illustrates the heated disagreement that transpires between Òrúnmilà and his child on ethical issue on homage. Conversely, Ògúnníran (2010:41) celebrates and affirms the successful outing witness by Òjèládé, a travelling-theatre masquerade (*eégún alárinjò*), for paying homage after having learnt his lesson in an acrimonious way. Initially, his defiant affront (*páàgùn*) prevents him from paying homage, as requested by the senior masquerades where he performs to the admiration of the audience, but met his Waterloo afterwards. By the cultural standards in any culture or clime, paying homage is not essentially imperative. Omoregbe (1993:5) subscribes to this:

Ever before we started studying ethics, we already have sense of morality and we already make moral judgements even without reflecting explicitly on the principles underlying our moral judgements. Ethics presupposes that we already have a sense of morality, and it is systematic study of the fundamental principles underlying our morality.

The seemingly “civilised and know-it-all” attitude of some contemporary youths is comparable to that of Òjèládé. Although most youths are not into the Yorùbá traditional verbal art as profession,

occurrences abound that show the non-compliance attitude in their relationship with adults. Some observable personal instances that can be referenced include the attitude of ‘survival-of-the-fittest’ by some students during entrance and exit from an elevator with elderly people present. Besides, ignoring a frail-looking aged adults who remains standing in a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) bus while youths are sitting down ‘comfortably’ in hours-long journeys is a total deviation from the Yorùbá cultural values of respecting elderly people. As insignificant as this may seem, it is against the Yorùbá societal moral principles for a youth to walk majestically past an elderly person without greetings or offering a helping hand to carry his or her bag or loads.

The standards of applying the principle of *native intelligence*, simple courtesy, and good manners as illustrated in this analysis of Yorùbá concept of homage in verbal arts should provide the guiding steps in for reverent disposition of both the youths and adults in the modern-day Yorùbá community. Leading a life punctuated with arrogance and outrageous acts by some modern-day youths has negative effects which prevent disrespectful individuals from gaining wisdom, knowledge or experience from the elderly. Whatever “broad” knowledge being acquired in formal education with its associated benefits is considered to be minor to human existence and human value without any measure of a sense of humility. Thus, it would stand to reason that, parents have great task of training their children to practise the virtue of paying homage to whoever deserves it in their respective communities.

The inability of some people in acknowledging the wisdom and experience of elders or the voice of reason has made many such individuals to be victims of circumstances. Indeed, adults and elders in the Yorùbá society, just like other climes, if duly and humbly consulted for advice, have pragmatic ways of helping youths respond to critical issues or tackle problematic situations which they may be facing. Historically, handshake, as part of greetings or exchanging of pleasantries, was not part of the Yorùbá culture. Also, the imbibing of Western culture and its free-thinking ideas has become an ethical issue as youths are always, consciously or unintentionally, first to stretch their hands to shake hands with adults. In a way, the “open-mindedness” or “generosity” that comes with handshakes is making some youths lose the vital aspect of Yorùbá norms and values on



having good inter-personal relationship. In light of these reflections on this recurrent and somewhat haughty attitude, it is evident that a lack of good manners in the modern-day Yorùbá society calls for a systematic re-orientation for the present generation.

### **8. Conclusion**

Through a review of Yorùbá concept of homage and some scholarly works, this paper has clearly established the fact that paying homage is fundamental and key, not only to the verbal artistes but to an upcoming and well-established individual as well. Central to our study of the Yorùbá concept of homage is the question of why most people are finding it difficult to follow the *modus operandi* of their professional ethics in paying homage as a sign of due allegiance. According to the Yorùbá societal norms vis-à-vis verbal professional ethics, homage must be paid to whom it is due and it must be done according to procedures, and at the right time too. Learning about this Yorùbá practice is for the purpose of entrenching ethical and correctional measure to curtail certain seemingly minimal but costly mistakes which are often taken for granted in Yorùbá society today. One of the ways by which an individual can have a measure of good inter-personal relationship with people in Yorùbá community is by abiding by the principles of homage-paying. Besides, we also observe that the Yorùbá peculiar communal living depends on both conventional greetings and, by extension, on paying homage as and when due to the deserving people. The transcribed Yorùbá verbal arts texts investigated in this study point to different instances of people who pay homage and those who refuse but with negative aftermaths. These serve as a model for individuals to learn from. Evidently, the humble attitude embedded in paying homage is connected directly to the successful outing of every verbal artiste as a representation that the custom is not outdated but very relevant to tackling the contemporary menace of unethical insubordination, self-opinion and self-exaltation over little accomplishments by some people. We have argued that having both theoretical and pragmatic knowledge and experience about the Yorùbá concept of homage as an ethical issue is, therefore, essential because its ethical principles are applicable in all professions and human endeavours, and that ultimate fulfilment in life depends on it, at least to some extent.

### References

- Abimbólá, W. (1976). *Ifa: An exposition of Ifa literary corpus*. Ìbàdàn: Oxford University Press.
- Abimbólá, W. (2006). *Ìjìnlẹ̀ ohùn ẹ̀nu Ifá (apá kìn-ín-ní)*. Ìbàdàn: University Press.
- Àjàyí, S, A. (2012). “The Concept of Culture” In *African culture and civilization*. Àjàyí, S.A (ed.) Ìbàdàn: Atlantis Books. 1-11.
- Ajíkòbí, D. (2007). *Verbal arts: A promising mountain of gold*. Ìbàdàn: Kraft Books Limited.
- Dáramólá, O. & Jéjé, A. (1979). *Àsà ati ìse Yorùbá* . Ìbàdàn: Onibon-Oje Press and Book Industries (Nig.) Ltd.
- Fálétí, A. (2009). “Òmọ̀lúàbí – The golden attributes of a Yorùbá man: Growing or dyeing?”, Ògúndèjì P.A. & Àkàngbè, A. (eds.) *Òmọ̀lúàbí: Its concept and education in Yorùbáland*. Ìbàdàn: Cultural Studies Group.
- Fálolá, T. (2001). *Culture and Customs of Nigeria*. London: Greenwood Press.
- Ilésanmí, T, M. (1989). *Ìsẹ̀ Ìsẹ̀nàbáyé*. Ilé-Ifè: Ọ̀báfẹ̀mí Awólówò University Press Ltd.
- Ìṣòlá, A. (2012). *Òrìṣà wo ló n gun ò̀nkòwé?* Ìbàdàn: DB Martoy Books.
- Ògúndèjì P. A. (2010). “Ìwà”, Ìrèlè, A. and Jéyìfò, B. (eds.) *Encyclopaedia of African thoughts Language and literature series*, Volume 11, London: Holders and Stoughton.
- Ògúnníran, L. (2010). *Eégún Alaré*. Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Limited.
- Òjọ́, A. (1982). “Ìwà Ọ̀mọ̀lúàbí” In *Ìwé Àṣà ìbilẹ̀ Yorùbá*. Ọ̀lájùbù, O (Olóótú) Ìkejà: Longman Nigeria Limited. : 18-22.
- Ọ̀látúnjì, O. O. (1984). *Features of Yorùbá Oral Poetry*. Ìbàdàn: University Press Limited. Nigeria.
- Omogbe, J, I. (1993). *Ethics: a systematic and historical study*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers
- Orímòògùnjé, O. C. (2017). “Ìbà: The Sine-qua-non in the Yorùbá Indigenous Healthcare Practices” In *Religion and human development: Essays in honour of Prof. Yasir Anjola Quadri*.
- Imam, Y. O. et al (eds.) Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, Ilorin: 20-28.

- Oyèwálé, A. S. (2019). “Yorùbá Concept of Communalism in Selected Poems of Olátúnbòsún Oládàpò and Ifáyemí Èlèbùibon”, *Ihafa: A Journal of African Studies*. Department of Linguistics, African and Asian Studies. University of Lagos, Àkòkà, Lagos. (10), 1:107-130.
- Udefi, A. (2012). “Philosophy, Mythology and an African Cosmological System”, *Ìbàdàn Journal of humanistic studies*. Ìbàdàn: Faculty of arts, University of Ìbàdàn, 21 & 22: 114-126.
- Unah, J. (1998). “Some Perennial Questions of Metaphysics”, *Metaphysics, phenomenology and African philosophy*. Ìbàdàn: Hope Publications: 46-66.
- Uzochukwu, S. (2001). *Traditional funeral poetry of the Igbo*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Vansina, J. (1973). *Oral tradition*. Australia: Penguin Books.