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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 59483

Title: Esthetique musicale et plaidoyer social : la chanson Souba Almari comme critique du mariage precoce au Niger,

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✔		
Techn. Quality			✔	
Clarity			✔	
Significance	✔			

Reviewer Name : **Dr. Abdul Haseeb Mir**

Detailed Reviewer's Repot

General Overview

This manuscript provides an interdisciplinary qualitative investigation into the intersection of engaged artistic creation, musical aesthetics, and social advocacy in West Africa. Specifically, the study explores how the song *"Souba Almari"* by the Nigerien musical group YANA (comprising artists Yac B. and Nana Ayouba Gna) acts as a critical medium to denounce child marriage, forced union, and systemic gender-based violence in Niger.

The conceptual framework synthesizes three complementary analytical lenses:

1. **Sociology of Culture:** Drawing on Émile Durkheim's concept of "social facts" and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "symbolic domination" and cultural production to model child marriage as an enforced, institutionalized social norm.
2. **Experiential Aesthetics:** Utilizing John Dewey's *Art as Experience* to explain how musical form, rhythm, and melodic emotion convert abstract social issues into immediate, affecting sensory experiences for listeners.
3. **Semiotics and Narratology:** Applying Roland Barthes' semiotic sign systems and Paul Ricœur's narrative time/emplotment to decode the tragic life story of the fictional protagonist, Halima.

The paper outlines the narrative trajectory of the song—from Halima's childhood interrupted by forced marriage to domestic servitude, adolescent pregnancy, obstetric complications, and her death. The authors combine text-based lyric analysis with an exploratory qualitative assessment of audience

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reception, drawing on Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan's anthropology of local norm negotiations and Paulin Hountondji's call for endogenous African discourse.

The paper offers a well-conceived examination of art as a tool for public health and social change in the Sahel region.

Key Strengths

1. **Innovative Interdisciplinary Framework:** Successfully combining Bourdieu, Dewey, Barthes, and Ricœur offers a robust theoretical foundation for analyzing popular music as both an aesthetic object and a social instrument.
2. **Close Semiotic and Narrative Decoding:** The thematic analysis of symbolic objects in the song (e.g., the mortar/pestle representing forced domestic servitude, premature pregnancy symbolizing structural body coercion, and early death symbolizing systemic policy failure) is well-articulated.
3. **Balanced Assessment of Art as Advocacy:** The authors avoid uncritical celebration by acknowledging that while engaged music triggers public debate, artistic advocacy alone cannot dismantle deeply entrenched socio-cultural norms without broader legal, economic, and institutional reform.

Recommendations for Improvement

While the manuscript is conceptually sound and well-written, the authors should address the following minor points prior to final publication:

1. **Complete Full English Translation of the Manuscript Body:**

While the submission metadata requests an English review and includes an English title, abstract, and keywords, the main text (Sections 1 through 4) is written in French. To ensure complete alignment with international publication standards and indexing requirements, the author should provide a complete English translation of the body text.

2. **Standardize and Format Translated Song Lyrics:**

In Section 3 (Results), several lyric excerpts are presented in French translation [cite: 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 151, 152, 153, 154, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252].

Improvement: Provide the original local language lyrics (e.g., Hausa or Zarma, depending on the song's original composition) alongside the English translations in parallel or indented block quotes so that linguistic and stylistic nuances are preserved for scholars of African popular culture.

3. **Detail Qualitative Reception Sample Parameters:**

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In Section 4.2 ("Réception sociale et dynamiques d'appropriation"), the authors cite informal exchanges and qualitative observations among youth aged 18–30.

Improvement: Add 2–3 sentences detailing the basic demographic parameters of this exploratory reception sample (e.g., number of listeners interviewed, geographic location like Niamey vs. rural districts, and method of interaction).

4. **Editorial and Bibliographic Formatting Cleanup:**
    - Ensure all entries in the References section follow consistent academic citation standards (e.g., complete publisher details, publication years, and uniform capitalization).
    - Fix minor typographical and spacing glitches in section headings throughout the draft layout.

Final Evaluation and Verdict

This paper contributes a thoughtful analysis of musical advocacy, gender rights, and social transformation in West Africa. The theoretical framework is properly applied, the lyrical data are engaging, and the scholarly conclusions are supported by the text.

The manuscript is **accepted with minor revisions**. Completing the full English body translation, incorporating original lyric transcriptions alongside their translations, and clarifying the reception sample parameters will make the paper fully ready for publication.

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