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## THE EFFECTS OF GESTURES USED IN ADOWA AND KETE PERFORMANCE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO AKANS IN GHANA

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper looks into the effects of gestures used in Adowa and Kete Traditional Dances in Ghana in line with their meaning. The motive behind this investigation was to give the youth excellent platform to appreciate the gestures in Kete and Adowa ensembles, as a way of promoting their cultural identity. Data collected for this investigation was analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. There were two major sources for the data collection; primary and secondary. Kumasi cultural center was visited during one of Ad[ K[se] festival and some pictures were taken on Kete and Adowa performances. Some pictures were also searched from the internet to serve as the secondary data for the project. These pictures were used during interview with the respondents. Some literature were reviewed on Kete and Adowa dances as well. The data were then transcribed and relevant portions were analyzed. The Visual Semiotic theory was used as theoretical framework. This theory deals with the interpretations of signs. Per the analysis it was identified that, the sixty one and above years aged group were the only group of people who understood these gestures. Though the youth and the middle age group can describe the gestures alright, appreciate its aesthetic nature but don't understand the meaning.*

**KEYWORDS:** Adowa, aesthetics, gestures, interpretations, Kete, semiotic.

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### Public Interest

The controversy of the meaning of gestures during Adowa and Kete performance has become a bone of contention. Whereas one school taught is much concern with the meaning of the gestures other school of taught is of the view that those gestures is meaningless but appreciate its aesthetic component. Gestures serve as non- verbal communication that gives information about the cultural and historical background of the people in the particular setting. The meaning to those gestures has endangered and that system of communication is dying off and this has negative influence on the culture. This paper can be meaningful to those who want to explore the cultural significances and aesthetic beauty of the gesture of the people of Ghana in general and Akans in particular.

### INTRODUCTION

This paper examined the socio – cultural phenomenon in the context of Akan in relation to some dances which have been a bone of contention between the youth and the aged. The ensembles in

question are Kete and Adowa dances and their gestures. The social identity and the culture preservation of any group of people in this world is paramount. The view of the public has been on the aesthetic beauty and the nature of the dances, the magical movements of the dancers and cheers and applauses usher them but the meanings those gestures carry and the beautification of the dance, is left hanging on the necks of the public, especially the youth. The formal motive draws the culture significance back and deprived the people who owned the culture from appreciating value of their own culture. The elderly who are knowledgeable about those meaning are dying with their knowledge and due to that this non-verbal language which serves as a means of communication and unite us is endangered and gradually dying off the shores of Ghana and Akans to be precise.

There is so many dances around the globe that people use to entertain themselves. Various dances are performed at different functions or different occasions when people meet. In every situations of one's life, there is a performance it doesn't matter where the person was. When someone is happy there will be a performance when someone is sad, there is a dance performance. Warriors perform to arouse their spirit to fight their enemies, priest and priestess dance on the shrines to get possessed by their deities to do their work and to praise them. Christians and other believers dance during worship to show their appreciation to their creator and other objects of worship. Dance is everywhere and so it forms part of our daily lifestyle and man cannot do without it. But the relevant question to digest was do people understand the meaning of the various gesture during these performances? Dance performance is always accompany by singing and drumming every dance has its own music that goes with it and so with all our traditional dances.

Akan is the language of the people called Akans. The Akans are the largest ethnic group in Ghana. According to the 2012, national population census, 51.1% of the Ghanaian population is Akans and about 47% of the population speak Akan as non-native speakers. The Akans occupy the greater part of the southern sector of Ghana. Akan is spoken as a native language (L1-first language) in eight of the sixteen regions in Ghana namely, Ashanti, Eastern, Western, Central, Brong, Ahafo, Bono East, Western North Regions. They are sandwiched by the Ewes in Volta Region of Ghana. The Akans are made up of various dialects that are mutually intelligible. These are Asante, Akuapem, Akwamu, Fante, Akyem, Agona, Assin, Denkyira, Twifo, Wassaw, Kwawu, Bron and Buem. Some Bono speakers are found in Cote d' Ivoire. Akan is studied from primary school up to the university level. Akans have many ensembles which movements are in line with beauty and very esthetics in nature but their performances are very simple and embrace common understanding. But Kete and Adowa movement goes be young ordinary. Since the gestures are folded with cultural elements they need cultural mind set to interpretate them. Some of the ensembles of Akan as mentioned are: Dansuom, F[nt]mfr[m], B]soe[, Sikyi, and many others.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study was survey using Visual Semiotic theory. This theory deals with the interpretations of signs. Signs can be in indexical, iconic or symbolic relationship with a referent (Sharp 2011, p2). Signs refer to items with specific meanings. This might be in form of gestures, images or inscriptions. The main requirement is that it must be meaningful in the society. Signs are indexical if they have an inherent relationship, such that there is a link between the sign and what it represents. Hence. Storm is indexical of rain. Iconic signs have a direct relationship with the referent. Thus, a photograph or caricature is iconic, pointing out the referent directly. The final item is the symbol. This involves an arbitrary relationship between a referents and the symbol. A ready example is the flag representing a particular country. The arbitrariness involves the fact that the flag may be changed as there is no rigid connection between the two. Once the ideology behind the flag is disowned, the flag becomes an ordinary piece of cloth. This theory is relevant to this current study, because Visual Semiotics examines the gestures displayed by the Kete and Adowa dances and balance it with it meaning.

The second aspect of the Framework is Clark's (1996) Theory of Layered Meanings. In this theory, it is assumed that texts have different layers / levels of meaning. There is the surface level found in the denotational meanings of expressions, and there is the underlying meaning, arrived at through implicature of imputed meanings. These level of meaning are very important in unravelling both the deep and surface structures of still texts as well as the dramatized versions of moving texts. Layered Meaning Theory explores the different layers of meaning inherent in the Kete and Adowa dances.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) talk about multimodal social semiotics, which focuses on signs in all forms, as well as the sign makers and the social environments in which these signs are produces. Wei (2011) proposed that, certain actions, such as translanguaging, whether in speech or writing, transform a whole cycle of actions during which each action is transformed. He refer to this phenomenon as resemiotization. Actions are resemiotized, that is, they are redesigned, from one semiotic mode to another, with new meanings emerging all the time. Halliday (1989) refers to resemiotization with particular reference to multimodality. He argues that the inevitably transformative dynamics of socially situated meaning – making processes require an additional and alternative analytical point of view. This is what Li Wei (2011) proposed as moment analysis; moving the analytic focus from frequency and regularity to creative and critical moments where a specific action leads to a transformation of a cycle of actions.

### **Literature Review**

A lot have been said about dances, (Opoku 1964; Duodu 1994; Nketia 1965; Agyekum, 2010) every area has its own dance that they use according to the location and the historical background of the people in that area. The dance portray the historical and cultural lifestyle of the people and as such a dance performed by people from the north can only be entertained and not understood

by the people from the south and vice versa. Adowa and Kete among the various dances performed in the Asante, Bono and Eastern region of Ghana and those dances have gestures as a tool for communication. Those gestures serve as non-verbal communication that gives information about the cultural and historical background of the people in the area. The meaning to those gestures has now become endangered and that system of communication is dying off and this has negative influence on the culture.

People observe and enjoy the aesthetic beauty of the gestures but have no idea the meaning that they carried especially the youth. Duodu (1994) music and dance has been an integral part of the life of the Akan family. Like all the Akan states every aspect of their life has its own music accompaniment. The Akan sing and dance when they are happy, they sing and dance when they are sad or in sorrows. They sing 'aho' songs when they are at war to spur their warriors to fight. During the time of peace, they sing and dance to praise the kings and the chief. The sing songs of abuse when they are at loggerhead with one another to abuse their opponents. When they are at the shrine worshipping, they sing, drum and dance to arouse their spirit to possess the priest.

Dance is an aspect of culture that embodies and articulates the philosophies of the culture of its origin. It is one of the oldest of the art forms and according to Sorell (1967)... before man found means of artistic expression in measured movement enjoyed the sensation of stepping, turning, swaying, swimming, stamping and leaping. This affirms the notion that most dances are as old as man himself and in Africa they are mostly an organization of our daily activities. Doudu (1994) describes dance as the peoples art and in his extrapolation he points out that people of all walks of life express themselves through movement / dance and that the typical African has at one time in his lifetime danced. Opoku (1964) further explains that dance is life expressed in dramatic terms and as such we dance to show that we are alive whilst, on the other hand, stillness connotes death. As a symbol of identity, dance is reflective of the constant conception and re-conception of self and society, thus confirming and sustaining the dynamism of culture (Nketia, 1965).

The Adowa dancer almost always begins and ends his/ her movement with the right foot. Moreover, each step must correspond to the rhythm pattern of the dawuro (gong). Adowa is a funeral dance, it is comprised of symbolic gestures, facial expressions, body movements, body language and general communications of the body and face that will tell the audience or mourners that this is a sorrowful dance.

Adowa being a traditional funeral music and dance of the Akan people of Ghana was originally associated with funerals but it is now performed in many different contexts and functions. It is counted among the frequently performed dances at traditional ceremonies such as puberty rites, marriage, funerals naming ceremonies, and traditional festivals etc where it serves as a means of communication and entertainment. (Nketia, 1973; Green, 2012; Anku, 2009). Adowa has long been adopted by Ga women albeit as a complement to the warriors with which its music is sung by men. The main texts of these songs are retained in the original Twi or Fante Akan dialects. The coastal Adangme people also perform Adowa as recreational music (Nketia, 1963).

Opoku (1966) A dance form not rooted in the past, which is of the resent only casting no shadow into the future dies with the generation that create it. To the Ghanaians /African, constant practice of the dances and the documentation of the dances to the public is the most important way of continuing and maintaining the dance form.

Kete came from the Volta Region even though it agrees and identifies as an Asante court dance, Akans do not have a specific root of the name. Kete happened to be hunters drumming and this is because the original Kete is Ab]fogor]. So the Asantes conquered the Kete dance during war at Kete Krachie. This is evident of the symbolic cloth used to cover the Kete drums known as sum ne mogya, Meaning darkness and blood. Everything our ancestors did had a meaning. Sum ne mogya further explains that if one goes to war and there is no death, they should still be blood. There are varied accounts of the origins of the Kete dance.

Kete orchestra, unlike that of Adowa, is restricted to the king's outfit. It is only the king who has the Kete orchestra. It is the king who allows his paramount chiefs and his nobles to have Kete orchestra. Kete is usually played when the king is in grief like when a royal passes away. It is also played during festivals. Always a song is sang to precede the drumming and immediately the drums come in, singing stops. The king, his paramount and the royal can dance the Kete archestra with handkerchiefs in the hand and sandals. Any other person who wants to dance should lower his cloth to the waist and remove his sandals. (Osei, 2002).

The Kete dance has gone through many changes since its break away from the older Adowa from. Joseph Kaminski (2012) states that, the music of Kete is reputed to possess the power of attracting good spirits... Nketia (1963). Explains that, the surrogated texts extol high moral values through the telling of heroic ideals and Kete. Contemporary Kete dancers may not necessarily be indigenous. Akans miss out on the symbolic meanings and philosophies of the Kete dance movements they articulate. For example dancing with the Ahenema, which is not permitted to commoners is very prevalent at certain observed performances during varied social occasions. Opoku (1966), states that, for the ordinary citizen the situation fan be more taxing; when dancing he must remember to show respect for the royal drums by baring his shoulders and wearing his Ntama, or toga between his armpit and his waist. He must be more circumspect in his use of gestures than he would be in freer, informal, recreational dances.

Both the Adowa and Kete dances are distinguished by their charming walking movements and complex footwork; as well as gestures of the hand and delicate bending and twisting of the body. At the heart of the dance is the communication skills between the master drummer and the dancer. There is an unspoken language between the dancer and the drummer. The symbolic dance gestures of these two dances. Adowa and Kete have specific meanings and hence the communication is not only between the master drummer and the dancer but also between the master drummer, the dancer, the audience and spectators.

The performance of Adowa begins with a chain Adowa songs without instrumental accompaniment. The lead singer introduces songs as a warm up before drumming sets in. The master drummer then calls the ensemble to attention beginning with the first bell. The master drummer's text signal to the bell in Akan language is Adawuraa Kofi, ma wo ho mene so [!! (Adawuraa Kofi let your presence be felt). The first bell player responds by striking the bell to show his readiness to perform. The master drummer then invites the instruments immediately one after the other starting with the first bell then to the second bell until all the instruments are ready to start the performance (Anku, 2009; Arthur, 2015). The elements which make up the aesthetics, the semiotics and certain contexts of the Kete dance form. This is imperative because to understand the socio-politico-cultural role of kinesthetic communication in Akan societies, one must understand through analysis, the sociolinguistic structure of dances like Kete. Firenzi (2012) opines that, one of the more useful analytic approaches to investigating dance practices in precolonial, Colonial, and post-colonial contexts is to look at the role of tradition in different dances, and how this connection to the past has not played a role in the manipulation of these dance practices for political or social purposes.

Kete, formally a court dance, raises discussions on the concepts of power and identity due to its changing role from being a royal dance for in the past to a ceremonial. Functional and open-to-all performance form nowadays. The shift from Adowa to Kete ushered new aesthetic, meaning and contexts through the expression of movement disparities in faster paces. Some Kete performers in their pursuit to grace a given cultural activities like funerals, festivals and the like, with their aesthetic beautiful dancing, employ Kete movements in the wrong context much to the dissatisfaction of some early dance practitioners of the dance form. Kete dancers who may not necessarily be native of Akans miss out on the symbolic meanings and philosophies of the Kete dance movements they articulate. For example, dancing with the Ahenema, which is not permitted to commoners is very prevalent in Akan set up nowadays.

According to Duodu (1972) "philosophical utterances and ideas which are difficult to express or risky to proclaim verbally are embodied in symbolic dance movement" It is contend here that kinesthetic engagement of movements into dance context brings meanings and create aesthetics beautiful within the Akan society. As such, the context meaning and aesthetics movement in the dance become relevant to the theme of the performance and remain paramount in the dancing. Therefore, context, aesthetics, meaning and movement must intertwine to support social values upon which they draw their inspiration.

Giurchescu (2001) explains this point further by drawing together all the social and philosophical elements in the community through the dancer. She states that the, structure of dance maybe deliberated as a culturally determined "program" where social, historical and environmental factors interlock with the physical psychological and mental feature. Yartey (2014) further clarifies this statement by supporting the allegation that dance is an indispensable element in many important rituals and ceremonies in Africa which serves as a vehicle through which symbolism and other coded messages are manifested. Kete delivery of Asante's values such as, for example,

a dancer dancing barefooted climaxes a socio-political domineering – the prestige of the dancer and the movements performed barefooted highlights social identities and roles. In regards to dance changes and their related knowledge, there is this growing fear that our future generations will be at the disadvantage end when it comes to references to our traditional dances especially Kete and Adowa dances.

Opoku states that to Africans, life, with its rhythms and cycles is dance. Dance is a language, a mode of expression, which addresses itself to the mind, through the heart, using related relevant and significant movements, which have their basic counterparts in our everyday activities. For a deeper insight into our way of life, our labors, material cultures, aspirations, history, social and economic conditions, religious beliefs and disbeliefs moments of festivity and sadness ... in short, our life and soul and the realities are revealed... in our dance (Opoku 1964).

Albert Mawere Opoku in his description above on the role of dance in the Ghanaian society contends that the African sees dance not only as beautiful movements pertaining to the body as well as the pleasing nature of rhythm but also a constellation of cultural elements that is an essential part of life. However, through carefully selected movements of cultural behavior, dance serves as a sustainable tool used by the individual and the traditional community to communicate their views feelings and stuffs of social importance, and thus our thoughts must match up to cultural backgrounds.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methods and techniques that were employed for the data collection. These includes, research design, population and sample size, source of data and collection procedure and instrument for data collection. The research design employed for this investigation was qualitative and quantitative because decided to compare results of the two geographical location taken the two dances into account in the domain of social class and status about the dances. This method actually aided for real information. It was purposive because the right people and the right information were gathered within a short time. The sources of data were both primary and secondary sources. Data for the study was gathered from various situations that was related to the traditional dances in question.

### **Location**

Two location that were used for this survey, Nkoranza near Techiman in the Bono East Regional Capital and Atebubu Municipal Capital of Atebubu – Amantin Municipality.

### **Population and sample size**

Nkoranza is a town with a population of about nineteen thousand (19,000) people. It is a multilingual community and as such a lot of multicultural practices such as different forms of dances are observed there during funerals and festivals. The survey was conducted on the street in front of the queen mother's palace where most of tradition occasion are held. Atebubu is a

Municipal town with a population of about twenty five thousand (25,000). It is a multicultural community and as such different cultural practices are observed during festivals and funerals. The survey at this location was conducted at lorry park where traditional activities and performances are featured.

**Table 1** Respondents (Nkoranza)

Town	Age(s) Range	Number
Nkoranza	13- 30	25
	31 -40	25
	41 -60	25
	60 & above	25
Total	-	100

**Table 2** Respondents (Atebubu)

Town	Age(s) Range	Number
Atebubu	13- 30	25
	31 -40	25
	41 -60	25
	60 & above	25
Total	-	100

In each towns 100 people were selected for the study. (25) being between the ages of 13-30 years, 25 people were between the ages of 31 -40 years, 25 peoples were also between the ages of 41-60 and the last 25 people were 61 years and above. This ratio was the underlying formula in each town therefore in totality two hundred people were selected for the study.

**Table 3** Gender Distribution of Respondents (Nkoranza)

Town Nkoranza	Number of Respondents	%
Male	35	35
Female	65	65
Total	100	100

**Table 4** Gender Distribution of Respondents (Atebubu)

Town Atebubu	Number of Respondents	%
Male	50	50
Female	50	50
Total	100	100

Table three and four is a pictorial form of the distribution of gender on the questionnaire and the interviews conducted.



### Source of data

There were two major sources for the data collection primary and secondary. A visitation was made to Kumasi cultural center during Ad[ K[se] festival to take pictures of Kete and Adowa performances and their instruments or ensemble. Funeral grounds were also visited for some pictures for the study. Some pictures were also searched from the internet to serve as the secondary data for this investigation. These pictures were coded and categorized for the analysis. We read from authorities about Kete, Adowa and dances. The data were transcribed and relevant portions are analyzed below through the content analysis.

### Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings.

The finding were based on the data gathered from my expeditions from the Kumasi Cultural Center during Ad[ K[se] and the funeral grounds were transcribed and analyzed. The questionnaires used for the data collection were also analyzed for glossing. The investigation was carried out based on Kete and Adowa performance. The analysis of gestures find in the Adowa and Kete traditional dances of the Akans. It was observed that, a lot of gestures are portrayed during traditional dance which communicate certain information to the public. Aesthetically, those gestures are very pleasant to the eyes and it's admire by all and sundry but meaning it carries is difficult to comprehend.

Different gestures are made during the performance, one person can perform different gestures in one dance but those gestures carries different meaning to the audience. The themes of such meanings in the dance performance include, power and authority, love, unity, affection, hatred, pains and sorrows, anger and hunger and so on.

### Some pertinent questions led to the discussion were:

- i). Can Adowa performance demonstrate or express joy?
- ii). Do you understand the gestures you said they are beautiful during the performance?
- iii). Can Kete performance demonstrate or express joy?
- iv). Do you understand those gestures?
- v). How significance are these gestures to the people of Akans?
- vi). What impact do these performances have on Akan People?
- vii). Do the youth know the effects of these gestures?
- viii). Then what should we do as a nation?

### Some Gestures and their Meaning in Adowa and Kete Dance

- i In Adowa dance when a dancer places both hands on top of the head it signifies the behavior of crying, it means that: **she is in trouble / she is in crisis**
- ii Claspings the hands behind the back also expresses loneliness: **she is now lonely, she has lost a loved one;, may be a mother or a father, a husband or a wife.**
- iii Clenching the fists over the stomach with the arms crossed indicates; **Now when she is hungry, who is going to give her food?. She is now an orphan, Nobody is going to care for me. She don't have anybody to turn to.**

iv Tapping or swinging the hands signifies: **pain – you are hurt.**

In fact, just as Asante's funerals do not totally involve an expression of sadness, there are various Adowa movements to express joy, love, peace, and so on;

i. The movement to express joy involves; **throwing up the arms and clasping the hands in jubilation.**

ii. Love and peace is expressed by: **crossing both hands and fingers in a clasped position.**

iii. For example, at the loftiness of a dance, if the Asante or Bono dancer suddenly **falls with his / her back into the arms or lap of another community member, particularly a prominent state official, he/she wishes to convey that she/ he depend on him.**

iv. The theme of unity is always presents in Adowa dance and is conveyed by; **crossing the arms and hands with palms opened, or by placing the two palms against one another vertically, as if the dancer has his/ her hands clasped in prayer.**

On the whole, Adowa and Kete movements, with their gestures, affirm critical values and beliefs of the Akan community. In this way, with each successive performance the role of the Akan traditional dances as a vehicle for expressing Akan's ethnic identity is not only ensured, but also liven up with both individual spirit and the collective enthusiasm of the people of Akan.

## RESULT FROM FINDINGS

Two hundred (200) questionnaires were designed and sent out for two hundred (200) respondents one hundred (100) from each of the town to answer, those who were selected were based on their age and level of education. The question was to find out from the respondents whether he or she has idea or not on the gesture displayed.

**Table 1 AGE GROUP- ATEBUBU**

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
(13 -30)	(25) 23	92
(31-40)	(25) 20	80
(41-60)	(25)22	88
(61 & above)	(25) 20	80
Total	(100)85	85

**Table 2 AGE GROUP- NKORANZA**

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
(13 -30)	(25) 24	96
(31-40)	(25) 20	80
(41-60)	(25) 19	76
(61 & above)	(25) 21	84
Total	(100) 84	84

**Table 3. ATEBUBU and NKORANZA (Adowa and Kete Performance)**

Watched the performance of the 3 dances	Age(13-30) Number of respondents	(31-40) Number of respondents	(41-60) Number of respondents	(61 & above) Number of respondents	Total no Number of respondents	(%) percentage
Yes	36	40	50	50	176	88
No	14	10	0	0	24	12
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200	100

From the above tables, it was cleared that out of the 200 respondents 176 responded Yes representing 88% and 24 representing 12% responded No to whether they have watched performance of the Adowa and Kete dances before. This shows that, they are aware of the three dances and their performances. It was also noted with concerned that ages between 13- 30 are the deficient in the witnessed of these performances.

**Table 4. ATEBUBU and NKORANZA (Gesture in Adowa)**

Both hands on top of the head	Age(13-30) Number of respondents	(31-40) Number of respondents	(41-60) Number of respondents	(61 & above) Number of respondents	Total no Number of respondents	(%) percentage
IDEA	7	11	25	41	84	42
NO IDEA	43	39	25	9	116	58
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200	100

From table 4, the number of respondents who answered they have IDEA of the gesture **putting both hands on top of the head** in Adowa performance were 84 representing 42% out of 200 whilst 116 representing 58% answered NO IDEA. Out of these number the youth between the ages of 13-30 were the category of respondents who have greater number of No Idea of the meaning of the gesture and the 61 and above age group have a higher number of meaning of that gesture.

**Table 5 ATEBUBU and NKORANZA (Gesture in Kete)**

Clasping the hands behind the back	Age(13-30) Number of respondents	(31-40) Number of respondents	(41-60) Number of respondents	(61 & above) Number of respondents	Total no Number of respondents	(%) percentage
IDEA	2	9	18	25	54	27
NO IDEA	48	41	32	25	146	73
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200	100

From table 5, the number of respondents who answered they have IDEA of the gesture **Clasping the hands behind the back** in Kete performance were 54 representing 27% out of 200 whilst 146 representing 73% answered NO IDEA on the gesture in Kete performance. In the domain of Kete performance too the youth between the ages of 13-30 were the category of respondents who have greater number of No Idea of the meaning of the gesture. According to the table as much as 48 out of 50 respondents have no idea. Here again the 61 and above age group have a higher number of meaning of that gesture.

**Table 7 ATEBUBU and NKORANZA (Gesture in Adowa)**

Tapping or swinging the hands	Age(13-30) Number of respondents	(31-40) Number of respondents	(41-60) Number of respondents	(61 & above) Number of respondents	Total no Number of respondents	(%) percentage
IDEA	0	2	11	13	26	13
NO IDEA	50	48	39	37	174	87
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200	100

From table 7, the number of respondents who answered they have IDEA of the gesture **Tapping or swinging the hands** in Adowa performance were 26 representing 13% out of 200 whilst 174 representing 87% answered NO IDEA on the gesture in question in the Adowa performance. In the performance in question the youth between the ages of 13-30 were the highest respondents to No Idea in the demand of the meaning of the gesture on table 7. According to the table zero out of 50 respondents have no idea.

Some responses by respondents: (reference to **4.1 index**)

Youth (age 13-30) *“No how can one uses Adowa to express joy. You look at where the performance take place. Is always perform during funerals and festivals and all these place are used to remember our ancestors. Therefore Adowa ensemble cannot be used to express joy. The gestures in the performance is very beautiful anyway”.*

Youth (age 13-30) 1. *“Those gestured do not mean anything. It is part of component of the dance or the performance”.*

Middle age (31-40) *“Yes it can. The performance itself expresses joy. Especially the gestures the performers exhibit during the occasions. I always become excited when I seen them performing”.*

Middle (age 31-40) *“No but I admired them. I don’t think they have special meaning. Sometimes when the performer is tied you see he/ his falling with her back into the arms or lap of another community member, particularly a prominent state official, to rest a bit. That is all, there is no significance in the gestures that the performer makes”.*

Aged (61 and above) *“Yes almost all our dances can demonstrate joy to us. Before the advent of missionaries those were the performances that guided our livelihood. It was performed during festivals and funerals. The various gestures used by the performer have meaning attached to them. They don’t use them for nothing. When you see a performer throwing up the arms and clapping the hands in jubilation during, performance than that movement expresses joy. Again when a performer crossing both hands and fingers in a clasped position, it signifies love and peace and many others”.*

Aged (61 and above) *“An instrument used to define any human being is language after language is their symbols used in their non- verbal communication. That is why every nation has flag is a symbol that represent that nation. Therefore gestures in these performances are essential as language after all they convey thoughts and ideas. This means that gestures are part of our heritage and we need to preserve it. Gestures significance are enormous some express joy, love and peace, unity, power, hardworking, comfort, and many others. So every member in our*

*society should learn these gestures and their meanings if they want to the through member of our society”.*

Aged (61 and above) *“I don’t think so, because the social media and technological advancement have immersed in the minds of our youth so much that they have forgetting their cultural heritage. They don’t attend festivals neither do they attend funerals. Ironically, the youth are the future kings and queens so you can imaging the future”.*

Age (61 and above) *“The nation should embedded these Ghanaian Languages performances in the curriculum so that it will be taught in the school. Though there are some aspect of cultural studies in the basic school curriculum, it is woefully insignificance, more aspects of our cultural practices should be added. When the youth learn them in school as they do to other subjects, they will learn to practice them”.*

## CONCLUSION

Non- verbal communication is one of the most important way of transmitting messages to people and its response in social context is very crucial and effective. Gestures in our traditional dances performance are among the non- verbal way of sending messages across to individual in a special way. Adowa and Kete among others are some of the ways of communicating through gestures. Various gestures have been found which give different meanings to the society but understanding those gestures is a little bit difficult to both the youth and the adults. Even though the contemporary chiefs have little ideas about these gestures, it is only the trained dancers in the king’s court that have in-depth knowledge about those gestures Reaching to them is a little bit a challenge or difficult and if care is no taken, they will die with their knowledge leaving the rich non- verbal or these sign language to accommodate non- existence in the nearby future. The interview interaction with the social groups it was found out that the youth and the middle age citizens don’t know anything about Adowa and Kete performance gestures, if the aged sixty and above years are only group of people who understand these gestures in these performance than this study can affirm that, the future is not bright in terms of Adowa and Kete performance.

## Funding

From the data analysis. People have little idea about the gestures, they can describe the gestures alright, appreciate its aesthetic nature but the meaning of the gestures is lacking. This discredited them for being truly Akans. This paper can be insightful to those who want to explore in the other Akan ensembles. It is also an eye opener to the youth of today to acknowledge the importance of the gestures Adowa and Kete performance but not only to appreciate its aesthetic nature. The various tables above demonstrated these without fear of favors, in favour of the aged and admonished that the youth who are the future leaders have short fall in the semiotic and layered meaning theories in respect to Adowa and Kate Performances. This aesthetic device youth should do well to inculcate them and comprehend them as well. In this vain the Akan cultural heritage in line with various performances will be preserved. Because it is pointless for the youth to appreciate the aesthetic beauty without having knowledge in the meaning of the gestures used by the dancers.

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