

# Music Education as a Panacea for National Development

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## Abstract

This paper appraises music as an essential part of Nigerian culture and its implication for national development. It discussed music as important aspect of culture and the rationale for the inclusion of the subject in Nigerian schools at all levels of education. It also explicates music education available in the community as well. The Music provides utilitarian education, information, entertainment and enlightenment. It uplifts the soul of the citizenry in a hard economic situation. It corrects and helps to discipline people's behaviour thereby contributing effectively for national development. Some important literatures were reviewed. The result shows that music contributes to national development of Nigeria. It produces the aesthetics and useful feeling (emotion) used in national development. It is also useful as a medium that preaches the words of faith to the society which uplifts their spiritual feelings making them to possess good morals which aid in national development. The paper ended up with the conclusion that Music is the engine which impels the national development when adequately used with recommendation of improvement on the study of the subject in Nigerian schools.

**Keywords:** Music Education, Music as an integral part of Culture, Need for Music Education in Schools, National Development

## Introduction

Music is a general phenomenon that cuts across racial, cultural, social, educational, and economic barriers, which enhances cultural appreciation and awareness. Its symbol systems are important as letters and numbers. Music integrates mind, body, and spirit as well as provides opportunities for self-expression, bringing the inner world into the outer world of concrete reality, which in turn offers the avenue to "flow states" and peak experiences. It also creates a seamless connection between motivation, instruction, assessment, and practical application leading to "deep understanding." Also Music makes it possible to experience processes from beginning to end, develop both independence, collaboration and thereby provide immediate feedback and opportunities for reflection. It makes it possible to use personal strengths in meaningful ways and to bring into understanding sometimes difficult abstractions through these strengths. It merges the learning of process and content thus improving academic achievement which results in enhancing test scores, attitudes, social skills, critical and creative thinking. Music exercises and develops higher order thinking skills including analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and "problem-finding." It is essential component of any alternative assessment program which provides the means for every student to learn.

Throughout history, music has been one of the most common means by which man expresses his emotions, feelings and sentiments. The primordial man used music to express fear, pain and danger. Music was an important part of oriental mysticism. The Asian Indian developed a system of melodic modes called raga to express moods, days and seasons chanting form the core of Tibetan religious music. In seventeenth century Europe, music was used to represent the state of the souls. African traditions are replete with the use of music as part of rituals, ceremonies and social associated with the proper growth and functioning of institutions of society. Music over the ages has proved to be one of the indispensable arts cultivated by man for the growth, nurture and transfer of his institutions and values to future generations.

Pythagoras (c.550 B.C.) described music as an expression of universal harmony which is also realised in arithmetic and astronomy. In fact, music originally is one of the nine arts over which the daughters of zeus presided in classical Greek mythology. To Plato (400 B.C) music is the appropriate means of social and political education. Plotinus (270 A.D) described music as having mystic and occult power. Boethius (524 A.D) summarized these various views by dividing music into three types; musica mundane or cosmic harmony first propounded by Pythagoras; musica humana which he described as the harmony of soul and body; and musica instrumentalist which he described as the harmony produced by musical instruments. To the modern musicologist however, music is a play with sound, a paragon of the experiences and activities of man; a reflection of those experiences and activities as well as a model for both. It is properly interwoven into the culture of every society of the world. It is a way of living built up by a group of human beings.

Conversely, the pleasure that music gives to the human mind and soul is universally accepted. It is most widely practiced and accessible of all the available arts. It is easily available and associated with entertainment and

relaxation that has serious implication in the social and economic development of a country. Some countries earn lots of revenue through cultural music and music tourism. The simplification of modern technologies has provided for the export of good quality music in such a way that wider market is available for the artists and their countries to earn more money. The various cultural music and dance of Nigeria is a huge asset that can generate revenue if taken abroad. In spite of the huge revenue that could be earned through the diversity of cultural music of Nigeria, the potentials (artists) have never been exploited properly. The educational policies and the implementation strategies are faulty as regard music education in Nigeria; therefore music education should be subjected to serious scrutiny in order to bring out the benefit and prospect embedded in the art to the nation economy. The major concern of this paper is to examine ways in which music education could meaningfully contribute to the nation's economic development.

### **Music as an integral part of Culture**

Music is generally defined as an organized sound that has its concept varying from one society to another. Everybody in every culture recognizes music when he hears one or needs it. Furthermore, music is culture-bound, meaning that every culture decides on what is music; therefore it is culture that gives music its definition, this was corroborated by Jagga (1974) when he explains that:

*Sociologically, the concept of music is defined by the society and it is concerned with the organized ways in which people behave towards one another when they listen, produce, and reproduce those sounds which they perceive as music.*

This implies that a specific sound that is regarded as music to a particular culture may have no music meaning to another culture. In other words, what is accepted as music to one culture may represent an ordinary sound to another culture. Okafor (2005) reiterates this by saying

*But it is only when the sounds have been organized by man so as to achieve certain effects or express certain ideas or emotion that we call that music. Expression of certain ideas or emotion is very important in definition of music because man must have an objective for organizing the sound*

It is the culture that determines what is accepted as music to its people. Music can be referred to as an expression or art that is most accessible to human beings in any situation in their lives—crisis or calm, work and worship play or war, recreation or reflection (Okafor 2005). It is used as a medium of communication, to express ideas, emotions and melancholies. Also to move, mobilize people and rally them to solidarity. Music is a cultural expression, a phenomenon that is part of communal or cultural activities. Confirming this assertion, Adeogun (2009) observed that

*...a society's continued expression of her socio-musical being, doing, spirit, feeling, beliefs and values is perceptible in both the content (e.g. material, traditions, practices) as well as the process (e.g. daily living, spirit, communication) p; 72*

It is an event that expresses and carries forward the action in the activity. The cultural activity's meaning is partly embodied in the music that is part of it. To this end, its study implies the study of the associated activities. Does this sit well with education providers and sponsors? If not, how can the academia accommodate the prevailing attitude all of which is related to perception of music? One needs to remember that music is a way of knowing.

Again, in African setting, nothing important happens without music (Senoga-Zake in Akuno 2010) It is also an economic activity both at personal and national levels, music products and production are a means of employment. Many who decline a music offering in the curriculum are unaware of music's potential. The music industry is a thriving one, and needs personnel equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes that will make it a reliable player in the economy.

### **Rationale for the Inclusion of Music Education in Schools**

Historically, cultures have expressed their joys and sorrows, triumphs and defeats through the beauties of music. There is a wide variety of reasons to teach music, regarding both music itself, and music's effects on a person. The true reasons to teach music are those that are fundamental to being affected emotionally by it. Music is beautiful, whenever and wherever humans have existed music has existed also. Through sound, we can feel the complete spectrum of human emotion; both the deepest despair to elation beyond which most peoples lives will ever reach. Beyond motor skills, reading notation, and an understanding of theory, a music education allows students to develop themselves as more expressive human beings.

Today in our society, the ease and availability of recorded music allows people to experience a wide variety of music through listening, although this does have its drawbacks and snags. In the past, the only way to experience music was through performing it yourself. Since this is not necessary today, educators need to provide and foster experiences of making music, whether in a concert band, rock band, chorus, orchestra, folk group or simply alone at home for the pleasure of developing musical skills. Schools need strong music programs; to develop the love of making music in as many students as possible, by using many musical outlets as possible, to foster lifelong connections with music. Learning to perform music develops many skills in a student. Joanne (2002) outlines five main values of music-Music affects people intellectually, emotionally, physically, personally and socially

The theory of music is an intellectual skill, governed by physics yet guided by how humans perceive sound. Music theory is more often taught in a classroom setting similar to other school subjects, although its lessons permeate musical performance as well. Emotionally, no subject matches music in its expressive breadth. The organization of sounds in melody, harmony and form allow musicians an expansive palate and aesthetic taste of ideas and emotions to work with. It can even be expressively complex yet technically simple, allowing young students insight into these feelings well before they are capable to find this emotion in other subjects, for example, reading classic literature in English class. Music develops complex and precise mind and body connections. Performing on musical instruments develops intricate motor skills that people would not otherwise come by. Music is very effective at developing coordination in even the youngest students.

The emotional aspects of music are closely and personally tied to the performer. Music affects the body to feel, ranging from the thrill of a first kiss to the despair of losing a loved one. Making music can be an escape from the daily grind for anyone, even if it is not your profession. The study of music develops maturity and responsibility. In their practice students will advance their skills in time management, as they will quickly learn how to effectively allocate their attention and problem solving, learning how to work past stumbling blocks in their practice without a teacher's immediate guidance. Leading students to this point, when they are thinking critically and independently about music is the ultimate goal for any music program.

### **Music Education in the Community**

Many formal activities within the community expose individuals to and require from participants a level of ability in music making. Several learning opportunities are embedded in community institutions. The church, for example, is an institution that affords much music learning both formal and informal through choral activities (Obiero and Michel in Akuno 2010). Church choirs not only participate in music for church services, but they also take part in music festivals. These afford members the experience of an exciting and varied music repertoire, exposing them to varied levels of skill development and knowledge acquisition. Youth clubs and similar associations provide opportunities for artistic development among young talented individuals. Through participation in music, dance and drama, the youth develop interest in the arts, including music. Often, many want to pursue systematic training seeing this as a career path. With no proper policy provisions this will not happen, as the so called polytechnics focus on crafts of technological and not artistic nature. However, several forms of semi-structured music teaching exist in clubs and churches, where instrument playing skills are the focus of learning.

### **Music as a Channel to National Development**

Usually, when mention is made of music, people tend to look at it from the local entailment that music provides or perhaps adding colour to the events. However, if the roles and functions of music are to be critically examined, especially to the development of nation it is clear that the role of music have gone beyond the narrow perception of the less informed. Music is fully part of manifestation of cultural heritage of a given society, which provides not only an outlet for creativity but that of self expression of noble thoughts and feelings. Looking around in the prevailing circumstances of our nation, Nigeria one can see very closely the connection between music and education as they play positive impact on national development. The arrangement of organized sound made by voices or instruments in a way that is pleasant or exciting to the organ of hearing to form emotionally expressive compositions is derives from man's nifty creativity. It a medium with which man expresses his feelings, experiences and activities in relation to his environment to his fellow man in the society (Ogunrinde et,al, 2012). In his assertion Ihekweazu in Nosiri (2010) postulates that

*The purpose of music him (man) understands his past and contributes to the shaping of the present and the future he expresses and document s himself, his feelings, hopes, aspirations, disappointments, sufferings and joys through the various media of the arts, such as music. P; 76*

Obliviously, man uses music to communicate effectively with the various group members of his community. To Omojola (1989) music in traditional Nigerian societies provides an efficient means through which community-shared values and skills are transmitted from one generation to another. As an educational forum, the idiom of music presents its own unique communicational procedures. More fascinatingly, music is one of important means through which human communities are organised for the flowing handing over of their culture from one generation to another. Therefore, music is one of a complex system used to express the totality of human thoughts ideologies, feeling and emotions which are paramount important to national development.

Furthermore, Nigeria popular music industry like any other in the world, embrace economic capabilities. This is evident by the increasing record sales which seem to challenge Nigeria's unstable economy. For example, statistic of record sales in Nigeria shows that in 1981, 4.5million records were sold; in 1986 5.5million; in 1991 8.5million and in 1995, 12 million records were sold nationwide (Gronov and Saunio in Emielu, 2008). The World Bank estimate of music sales around the world stood at 6 billion dollars per year. A quarter of this estimate (\$1.5 billion dollars) is said to be derived from African music, especially the popular music genre. Because of the huge potential of the music industry in Africa, the World Bank has agreed in principle to divert a substantial part of its annual \$300 million dollars allocation for culture to six African countries. There is therefore a huge economic potential in the popular music industry which if fully tapped, can replace crude oil as the mainstay of Nigeria's economy. Nigeria can tap into this huge possibilities and the economic helping hand provided by the World Bank, which will translate in concrete terms into actual National Development( Emielu, 2008).

Looking at popular music and its prospective, it is a huge channel not only for nation development but for providing job and wealth creation to several numbers of people ranging from song writers , music publishers, composers, arrangers, producers, music recording and marketing companies, printing companies, cassette, CD, VCD, DVD manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers of musical recordings, dealers on musical instruments, studio and stage sound engineers, musicians, singers, dancers, promoters, talent scouts, entertainment writers, stage designers, lighting crew, structural engineers, advertising practitioners, media houses and many more professionals, income generation and distribution in the popular music industry is broad-based and far reaching. Not to mention monies accruing to government through various taxes across professional lines (Emielu, 2008).

At a seminar organized at the University of Lagos, a few years ago by the Federal Ministry of Education and Culture, Professor Vidal made some recommendations on how we can develop and exploit our traditional Nigerian musical instruments for profits through setting up an industry for the manufacture of musical instruments with factories in designated zones throughout Nigeria(Vidal 2000). The industry will be charge with the task of researching, developing, fabricating and manufacturing traditional musical instruments for local consumption, as souvenirs for our tourist industry, and as toys for children within and outside the country.

Vidal (2000) explicates further that the United States of America toy industry makes millions of dollars as profit every year through fabricating into material objects, aspects of American culture, both moral and technological toy robots, spaceships airplanes teddy bears as well as toy musical instruments produced by the toy industry serve as the basis of education, entertainment, information and enculturation of American children. Is it not time, one may ask, to bring into reality our cultural notions and ideas through material fabrication for purposeful utilization for social and economic gains? Is it not time to build an African pipe organ? To create an African orchestra consisting entirely of African musical instruments standardized, modernized and practicalized? When will our various traditional dances be formalized, standardized and brought to artistic levels on an international and comparative scale for the purpose of aesthetic appreciation, education and information in today's global market? When do we build our own entertainment centres for tourist attraction, and for which our cultures in view of their varieties and diversities, serve as great potential sources?

In America, the entertainment industry makes a lot of money and creates thousands of jobs for American citizens independent of government efforts. At this juncture, it is pertinent to examine the experience of a renowned musicologist, Professor Vidal while in the United States of America. He came across a State Department termed "The Department of Human Development" Here, experiments and tests are carried out on a continuous basis during the first few months of a child life. These tests are meant to show evidence of native ability and development or lack of it. The tests are in additions to those carried out on every child at birth to determine the presence or absence of human potentials necessary for human development in all the sense faculties of the human race (Vidal 2000). The experience of American sensitivity in relation to national development is that no country can develop if it lacks human potentials. National development therefore means human development. Nigeria is potentially great today because of its human potentials. Nigeria is developmentally poor today because

its great human potentials have not been fully developed. There can be no national development without human development. When the people of a country are under-developed, then that country will remain under-developed. It is the mind of human beings, the state of development it attains, that is responsible for designing and building bridges, motorized vehicles, aero planes, space ships and space laboratories, refineries, roads, shelters and identifying and all those technological wonders that describe and identify advanced civilizations in the entire continent. Mere acquisition does not necessarily constitute development. It is the ability of a nation's people to create and produce that constitutes development, and this cannot be realized if the people themselves are under-developed.

The question now is what then is the role of music and culture in the campaign for national development which is being defined as human development? Music promotes creativity. Children exposed to the creative arts (including music) at the nursery and primary levels of education have been found to develop imaginative and creative approaches to solving problems. American children are exposed to the art and practice of music from nursery through primary and secondary to tertiary education, as part of their educational curriculum (Vidal, 2000). This policy is aimed at developing creativity and imagination in the children regardless of their future profession. Educators are of the view that music aids the development of imagination and creativity in a child, and those future doctors, lawyers, engineers, scientists and leaders need this quality if they are to group and find solutions to societal problems in their various professional callings.

Creativity and imagination are required for solving problems. Our social, economic and political problems would be better solved through the application of creativity and imagination, our entire cosmology with its awe-inspiring and infinite space and time dimensions was brought into being through the application of imagination and creativity by supreme intelligence. Imagination means the ability to visualize what can but is not, while creativity means the ability to bring such abstract notions into the realms of reality for our material, spiritual, social, economic, political and psychological benefits. Music and culture offer unlimited potentials for national development at both the material and human levels in a pluralistic, multilingual and multicultural nation such as Nigeria. In order to harness, grow, nurture and harvest these potentials for our material and spiritual benefits, a reorientation of our approach to national development is imperative. We must put man at the centre of our national development. We must make him the focus of our development. It should be the responsibility of our leaders to ensure that every Nigerian child, irrespective of creed, belief, class, race or ethnic origin is provided with the social opportunities for full development and realization; physically, mentally and intellectually, especially in this age of global technological culture. Music and culture through appropriate and qualitative education offer great promise for the development of this potentially great nation called Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

Having examined the rationale for the inclusion of music education in schools and ways by which music conveys general development to our nation, it is quite clear that Music as an integral part of culture should be offered in the education curriculum of every Nigerian child from nursery through primary and secondary to tertiary levels, as part of the strategy for national development which is "human development". The curriculum content of Nigeria's educational system should be severely overhauled with a view to making music education an important tool for national development with provision for adequate facilities to aid the teaching of the subject. The teaching of the subject should be made compulsory, especially at both elementary and secondary school level throughout the nation. Popular music and its practices of each ethnic groups of Nigerian should be properly included in the curriculum content especially in the tertiary institution of higher learning. It is not too late to start. Not starting at all is worse. If we succeed, the course of humanism would have been further advanced and humanity will for ever be grateful.

## Recommendations

The following were found to be the solutions to the major problems confronting the teaching of music as a subject in Nigerian schools.

- \*Provision of syllabus to schools reflecting the true African culture and be converted to behavioural aspect of learning.
- \*Facilities like musical instruments and teaching materials should be provided by the the school authority and the government.
- \*Teachers who are well trained to handle the items in the syllabus should be employed.
- \*Teachers should use the various types of methods suggested for instruction.
- \*More periods should be given to applied music to encourage the students to learn music in the school.
- \*Identifying and pooling the expertise of resource persons all over Nigeria and beyond.
- \*Assessing and dissemination of relevant literature and learning materials to the stakeholder.

- \*Advancing and increasing use of methods of indigenous music knowledge and musical instruments in applied music.
- \* Effective use of musical materials available within a community setting for music teaching – illustrations and exercises.
- \*Assisting the teaching and research capability of local music teachers through local, regional and Pan African seminars.
- \*Dialoguing with Ministries of Education as well as curriculum planners on emphasizing popular music and African music content in music education at all levels, in recognition of the centrality of music in building cultural-national identity in the global context.

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