
**INFORMAL MUSIC EDUCATION: A CULTURAL RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINING,
ENHANCING AND PROMOTING THE INDIGENOUS MUSIC IN AFRICA**

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ABSTRACT

The most cherished African heritage is the music of Africa. African indigenous music is the pride of Africa, both within the shore of African nations and African people in Diaspora. Unfortunately, this African indigenous cultural music is currently undergoing a state of consistent decline and degeneration. The reasons for this is the disoriented mentality of African people, especially the present generations toward their indigenous culture, and the lost of values, focus and interest on African indigenous music by African elites. It is in response to these fact that this study is undertaken on the belief that, to revive, revitalize sustain, preserve and promote this cherished cultural heritage, informal/indigenous system of music education has been selected as an option that could salvage the fading, declining and degenerating nature of African indigenous music. The paper also determines to look at the place of informal/indigenous music teaching and learning, and how it could be intensified in our schools, homes and social occasions so as to give orientations and familiarization on the values of African indigenous cultural music to African people.

INTRODUCTION

The necessity and value of music in human life cannot be equated with any other human art form. Music, which is an aspect of man's culture, appeals to people every where and has been the heart of all human societies. Music, culture and society are interrelated and this relationship is considered as fundamental in the world of human beings. Music, which one of its definitions is the art of combining sounds in melodic, rhythmic and harmonic styles, so as to affect emotion, has been known to be a stable cultural trait that provides a useful base for determining the diffusion of other cultural traits.

Music plays various role in human activities such as political, social, religious, economical, and is a resource for cultural development of African nations. Owing to the cultural, political, social economical and religious value inherent in music its educational potential cannot be undermined or underrated. Since Africa occupies a unique place in the continent of the world, with her unique and distinctive musical characteristics, it is necessary and very essential that this African indigenous music should not fade out, decline and degenerate into oblivion. It is against this backdrop that this paper is developed to proffer strategy for sustaining and promoting African indigenous music through informal music education.

EDUCATION AND INDIGENOUS EDUCATION - CONCEPT AND EXPLICATION

Education may be difficult to define because of its universal conceptualization of its different meaning. Education, as a concept, has a varied understanding. To some education is the knowledge about anything, either it is technical or skill acquisition, or things concerns about citizenship or any kind of discipline or whatever else come under the head of education. To others, education means growing your mind with new ideas and understanding, while to another set of people, education means making an investment in your future, preparing for a career. Some further say it is a process of forming young people to fit into our culture and society. Nevertheless, research from literature variously describes education as thus:

Education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual, in its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmitted its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another (wikipedia.org/wiki education.)

Onibonoje, Omotoso & Lawal (1991:85) emphatically defines education as, which seems to be more acceptable, "the aggregate of all processes by which a person develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of positive value in the society in which he lives". They further posit that for education to be meaningful in the life of individuals the following ingredients must be present in the right proportions. These ingredients, according to them cover home training, institutional instruction, and acquisition of practical skills, moral excellence and good knowledge of one's environment. Education is a term that is complex to define and describe, but it is hoped that the contrasting way in which its essence is presented above will make it easy for readers to follow the argument involved in succeeding definitions and analysis. Education, according to the above definitions is a universal process occurring in all human societies involving the interaction members and lasting for a lifetime. The definitions above further describes Education as the process by which any society passes on its culture, that is, the aggregate of the social, ethical, intellectual, artistic and industrial (skills) attainments of the group by which it can be differentiated from other groups". The concept of education and its definitions is inexhaustible. It is a process that goes on formally and informally and has deep roots in the environment in which it takes place.

In indigenous education, Quick in Onibonoje and others (1991:86) is more traditionalistic in his view of education when he relates education to indigenous education. He says "when a society develops a process related to its environment and passes it on from generation to generation, it becomes peculiar to the members and the environment and may then be safely referred to as indigenous, thus arises the term indigenous education". Tuzin sees what might be called education as "the socially interactive transmission of cultural knowledge which is not only trans-generational but also intra-generational (Tuzin cited in Adeogun. 2005:33). Here, education is interpreted as the process of perpetually constructing cultural knowledge within the contexts of people's practical engagement with one another. Taiwo (1980) in

Adeogun, defines indigenous education as "the education which each Nigerian community handed down to succeeding generation quite apart from the western style of education to the modern system or the formal education of the Koranic schools (2005:34). To Fafunwa, it is the type of education that existed before the arrival of Islam or Christianity in Nigeria (Fafunwa, 1974, cited in Adeogun 2005:34) Adeogun, in his own definition, looks at indigenous education as "that type of education given by the traditional Nigerian communities to its people for specific purposes and which was devoid of external influences. It is an education acquired by oneself through real life and communal experience (2005:34). According to all the definitions above, indigenous education is seen as a tribal or community based education in which it can be experienced in one's immediate environment.

In every culture, and society, education is bound to change and grow; the change and growth however may vary from one society to another. It is worth noting that despite fundamental and multi-consequential changes Islam and Christianity brought about Africa have used and are still using their indigenous systems of education to trade influences with external forces. This accounts for the emergence of Nigeria's traditional cultures, which Ekeh says:

Ultimately flow from pre-colonial indigenous cultures but their characteristic have been affected and even reshaped by modern experiences in which those cultures are forced to co-exist with one another. In this process of co-existence, they have acquired their own unique characteristics... These primordial (traditional) cultures must therefore be understood to be a special attribute of a multi-ethnic society, such as Nigeria is, in which indigenous institutions have been transformed from their isolated tribal forms of existence to widened cultural multi-ethnic entities in a national mould (Ekeh, 1989 cited in Adeogun 2005:35).

In traditional Nigerian societies there were systems of education before the colonial period. African societies had been involved in inculcating the culture of their group from generation to generation before their contact with non-Africans. The unique way of bringing in the traditional African society is called indigenous education. By indigenous we mean what belongs naturally to a place. It means something that is original, not initiated, in a place. It is something that originates within a group. External influences (Christianity, Islam and colonialism) have shaped the development of African traditional cultures. African has used their indigenous systems of education to shape their reception of the external influences. Omojola (2005) gave the example of these influences as "the spread and the continuum of much indigenous Nigerian music have been deeply affected by the agencies of Islam, Christianity On colonialism (P.2). According to Fafunwa, "the aim of traditional education is multilateral and the end objectives are to produce an individual who is honest, responsible, skilled, operative and conformable to the social order of the day. Fafunwa outlines the goals of traditional African education as follows: (1) To develop the child's latent physical skills; (2) To develop character; (3) To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of

authorities;(4) To develop intellectual skills; (5) To develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in the family and community affair; and (6) To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large (Fafunwa, 1974, in Adeogun 2005:36).

The indigenous system of education Fafunwa outlined is functionally versatile and its focus is on serving the society. Music education is an integral part of the indigenous African education system. Musical socialization involves the transmission of a common fund of musical knowledge, which enables individuals to operate as effective members of society in which they live, and fosters cohesion and awareness thereby permitting active musical involvement in public life. (Adeogun, 2005:38).

INFORMAL / INDIGENOUS MUSIC EDUCATION

One of the traditional art form that forms one of the aspect of indigenous education (music) demand discussion. We cannot effectively talk of indigenous music education without, first of all sourcing the meaning of music education itself. Since music is part of the system of cultural dispensation of an identified group, and culture encompasses music as its integral part, it is therefore pertinent at this point to examine briefly the meaning of music education. Music education is a field of study associated with the teaching and learning of music. It touches on the development of the affective domain, including music appreciation and sensitivity. The need to incorporate music training from preschool to post-secondary education is encouraged in many Nigerian societies because involvement in music is considered a fundamental component of human culture and behaviour. In African traditional societies, music education had existed long before the coming of the colonialists. This is because music is an integral part of the indigenous traditional African education system.

This study discusses indigenous (informal) music education and value inherent in it. Indigenous (informal) music education is that which embraces traditional or indigenous, or local getting of music teaching and learning. According to Adeogun (2012:24) "music education is a natural processes by which member of the community gradually imbibe skills, knowledge and attitudes appropriate to musical life in their community". It is a means whereby the knowledge, traditions, ideas and communicative musical creation of a society are passed on from generation to generation with those idioms of musical culture which are not self-propagating, but demand conscious leaning of a wide range of materials and skills which cannot be acquired by individual in the normal process of enculturation (Nketia, 1975:8)

Traditional or indigenous music is an expression of the traditional culture when performed. This is true as Okafor (2009:9) asserts that traditional society provides advances for musical expression through festivals, ceremonies, rites, rituals, work and recreation. All the above descriptions of how indigenous music education function in the society point to the fact that this system of music education in traditional African societies is that which has transmitted

orally from generation to generation which, according to Okafor, "with allowances for each generation to make selections and variations from the original without destroying its tone of continuity" (2006:2) This musical socialization involves the transmission of a common form of musical knowledge, which enables individuals to operate as effective members of society in which they live, and which fosters cohesion and awareness in public life.

Music is an integral part of traditional Africans educational initiation, practice and experience that operated on, according to Adeogun (2012:248), 'the principle of music is life'. and "the development of musical awareness constitutes a process of education" (Chernoff in Adeogun, 2012: 248), as music is of essence to education, the arts and life.

THE VALUE OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC EDUCATION AS AN ASPECT OF CULTURAL EDUCATION

The importance or value of indigenous music education structured in informal or traditional setting cannot be overlooked owing to numerous roles it plays in the African child and in the African society. It will be ludicrous to state that even though indigenous music education does not take place in the formal classroom structure where the formal or westernized learning takes place, it does not mean that those learnt outside the classroom are not effective or worthwhile, such that could create impact in individual and the larger society. Large number of African societies view music education structured under formal (classroom) settings as the only worthwhile education, but sees the ones structured outside the classroom (informal) as unworthy, such that has no educational potentials on the students. In literature, numerous writers on African indigenous music pointed out the importance or value of informal system & practice of music education. Flolu and Amuah (2003: 84) states that "The provision of effective music education should be put back into the wider context that encompasses national indigenous values, belief and objectives". To contain and affirm their stand on the national or indigenous education as the effective type of education, they further authoritatively affirm that:

The cultural policy of..... has among its objectives to 'act as the impetus for the evolution of national (indigenous) culture from the plural cultural make up of our state, in a blend that acknowledges the vitality of each individual component culture (p.85).

According to them, with regard to this art, the policy states that "The state shall preserve, promote and established conducive conditions for creativity by encouraging the establishment of strong national professional". It goes on to say... "It shall also see to the protection of traditional natural contexts for aesthetic expression" (p:85). In recognition of the informal settings of indigenous music as effective music education. Flolu and Amuah opines that a more thought has to be applied to the traditional setting in which African folk arts are practiced so that presentation in modern theatres does not distort completely the original artistic elements and values inherent in them" (p.86). The above assertion point to

the authenticity of music education in informal or indigenous settings, as the best education in the context of national acceptance. To confirm this statement, Bullivant (1983) cited in Flolu and Amuah (2003:86) states:

What are being sought are a national (indigenous) arts culture and all the arts that must contribute to the selection from the socio-cultural group's stock of valued traditional and current public knowledge (artistic) conceptions and experiences.

Flolu et al, in regard to Bullivant Comment, stresses that:

True national cultural education, however begins only when students confront the complexities of intercultural relationships and of the resulting artistic and aesthetic problems. The study of music in culture should therefore be aimed at enhancing people's feelings, critical and creative thinking, and imagination of music and art in order to reinforce the public's capacity for change and promote growth in our artistic and aesthetic sensitivities (p.86).

From the above comment, it is obvious that engaging in one's cultural arts is challenging. Involvement in national (indigenous) musical art (by student) enhances (their) ethnic feeling and creative thinking such that base on critical and imaginative analysis. This analytical reality poses a task of confronting intercultural conflicts and relationships and solving them through cultural artistic and aesthetic means.

Effective informal music education is such that enlightens general public to be responsible to their cultural theatre and how they could be fully involved in their practice and performance. Flolu and Amuah, in line with this thought assert that "music education's task today lies not just in making children interested in folk music but in how its practice can help them to develop a positive and responsive attitude to music and art of all kinds" (p.87). Rose (1984) in Flolu et al argues that "the challenge is to help students establish firm and sensitive ties between their formative feelings and the materials artifacts which they encounter" (p: 87). According to Ross in Flolu, "the function of arts (informal music education) in general education is to give (learner) children- by whatever means and in whatever medium- experience of sacred and of the numinous; not by information (as in formal classrooms structures or settings) but by experience (p.87). In line with what Ross says, Tait declares that (music) education becomes meaningless if it fails to provide students with - an understanding of their experiences (indigenous experiences). By the same token, music education fails if it does not help them understand their musical experiences" (Tait 1992 in Flolu and Amuah 2003: 87).

Omibiyi (1972) was not left out in this view on indigenous (African) education. According to her, music education in Africa should be able to (a) alter the attitude of African school children from one of cultural inferiority to that of cultural relativism (2) develop a musically

enlightened public: and (3) provide a strong foundation of music education for future African music specialists. (Omibiyi 1972, in Flolu Amuah 2003:87). From the opinion of Omibiyi, the focus of African music commentators, according to Flolu et al, is that:

Music education must now focus on music as an aspect of the national culture. Its aim should be to develop in the future generation the productive, perpetual and reflective abilities in arts, in order to enable then contribute to national artistic excellence through the medium of music. It should consider as of part of its goal the creation of a musical heritage derived from current practice which will meet the challenges of the modern world, and which will facilitate a continuous development of children's musical abilities to the highest level possibilities (p.88).

Elizabeth Orhrle, in her article ***Intercultural education through music: Towards a culture of tolerance*** declared the report of a UNESCO commission that cultural incompatibility is found at the very origin of many conflicts' (1996:97). In addressing the problem of cultural incompatibility some educators in the field of music, according to Orhrle, posits that "intercultural education through music is one way of raising people's level of tolerance for that which is different. Intercultural education through music could be the meaning of correcting those barriers and prejudices which isolate one from the other (p.96). The notion of education through music instead of music education, as the name "music education' according to Orhrle, enjoys little credibility in the minds of the westerners. To him, "education through music emphasizes the importance of music and education because it stresses the education of the whole person through the process of music making as opposed to stressing only the transmission of particular knowledge and skills" (p:96). Orhrle stress that "synonymous with 'educate', are 'edify' enlighten' 'illuminate', and uplift. Thus to educate is more than rearing individuals in their own socio-cultural ways; although that is important. To educate emphasizes the serious purpose of opening the mind and heart of the educated so that they may be better able to sift out the truth of matters and nurture the "reasoning heart" (p:97) Chernoff, in identifying the African music education, asserts that "music is associated to life in Africa... The development of musical awareness... constitutes a process of education; music's explicit purpose, in the various ways it might be defined by Africans, is essentially socialization (Chernoff, 1979, in Orhrle 1996:97). Charles Leonard contends that music education is a unifying force with social significance (Leonard in Orhrle 1996: 97). To him, as also believed, cultural music is an aspect of art that open the door to indigenous civilization. It makes the student know and learn the marvelous expressive role of music and dance in the real life and to appreciate the expressive import of such music.

In conclusion, from the available literature, informal or indigenous music education is the effective African music education in Africa?. Even though many African elites place more emphasis on formal classroom education as the viable means of education, he also affirm that informal or indigenous music education cannot be overruled, relegated and overrated,

since its value to African child is more than the western formal oriented music education. Professor Abraham Schwadron, a late professor of music in University of California and one of the most prolific and thoughtful writers on intercultural education through music, retained an idealistic hope that:

By searching out value systems in music cultures throughout the world, music education will assume an inclusively valuable humanistic role - one that is alert to cultural differences and commonalities while nurturing aesthetic self-realization from a rich field of musical potential (Schwadron, 1984 in Orhrle 2003:97).

Ruth Wright, in agreement with Schwadron. also advises that:

The integrated nature of musical activity was emphasized. It is argued in this paper that this integration should not apply to work in the classroom alone. Pupil's musical skills, knowledge and understanding cannot be fully developed by classroom music making in isolation. For a significant number of pupils, however, especially those from less affluent backgrounds, their practice involvement in music making outside the classroom may be very limited or nonexistent. (Wright 1998:71 in Orhrle 2003:98).

Meki Nzewi, an ardent and adherent campaigner of functional African traditional institution and respector of human group that has a distinctive body of indigenous music knowledge and practice which is passed on from one generation to another as a process, has an operative system of music education, irrespective of its pedagogical manifestations. He affirms that:

A distinctive body of music knowledge proposes that there must be in existence, constant and standard norms of phonic as well as material rationalizations which determine uniqueness in creativity, production and appreciation for the gamut of a culture's music practice. These, then, constitute the prerequisites, also the models, for meaningful, authentic music creativity or experiencing in any form with the culture (1978.457).

African music education, according to Nzewi, is largely informal process, even in the instances of musical families and trades. He further stress that informality does not imply that informal music education lacks philosophy and systematic procedure in transmitting the knowledge of a music culture. Sharing with his ideology and philosophy, it is discovered that informal music education in African cultures greatly determines the pedagogical strategies for formal music education of the west. I come to believe that for the fact that there is no necessary verbal theorization or classroom teaching and writing, do not mean that music education is not functional or attained or practiced. Many African scholars or elites develop preference for western music as against African traditional types. Some tends to look at music education curricular structured under formal (classroom) settings as worthwhile

education that have educational potentials on the learner than that structured under informal or indigenous settings. However, in literature, numerous writers on African indigenous music pointed out the importance or value of informal practice of music education.

STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINING, ENHANCING AND PROMOTING INDIGENOUS MUSIC IN AFRICA

In every worthwhile venture or Endeavour, and in any degeneration, there is always behind it a strategy for reviving, enhancing, sustaining and promoting it. Therefore, the strategies for sustaining, enhancing and promoting the indigenous music in Africa are based on the following survival strategy. They are:

Family/Home Training Strategy: This is the strategy developed by parents or members of the family intentionally to teach, sustain and enhance the practice of indigenous music of the community. Here the teaching should be based on the principle of simple imitation through example of simple demonstrations of music and dance. The learning should be based on the principle of slow absorption of musical experiences. In this strategy the child's first lessons in music should be given by the mother and the father. Immediately after birth the child, when strapped on the mothers back or laps, should be accompanied with beautiful traditional music melodies. As the child grows up to the stage of walking the father and mother, when carrying or walking along with the child for any daily task, should deliberately teach the simple rhythms of community's indigenous music and dance.

Every healthy community cultural performances should be attended with the child. The child should be allowed to watch or participate in the age-mate play within the community. Every healthy community performance activities should be witnessed by the child as he/she is growing up. From here the principle of slow absorption takes over. As the child attend, watch, imitate and demonstrate, he/she absorb slowly the musical or performance experiences. The child learns what the music required in terms of bodily movement and vocal effort he formed through these early experiences of habit of listening to the music of his people. The parents should be able to develop in the child the sense of pitch, the cradle song being the medium of instruction. The songs to teach him/her should be simple melodically and range of voice shouldn't extend beyond two, three or four intervallic notes. The musical intonation should be kept as close as possible to the speech tones, because the child learned the songs whose intonation was speech-like more readily than those which follow the complex intonations. As soon he is able to sing or dance, the child's role and level is changed from that of a listener to that of a more active participant, which is the next stage of development and strategy. The child should not be punished when he babbles fragments and short rhythms before finally able to join in the actual sing or dancing. It is the duty of the parents to see that their children could sing and dance properly and appreciatively; and to make sure the child is made to become a socially and culturally-educated African.

Cultural /Festival Active Participation Strategy: This is the strategy of active participation in the cultural or festival performance of the community. This is where other or major musical activities supplement the teaching of the parents. The child, as soon as he is of age, should be allowed to join and participate in musical games, community performance and other cultural performances led by the older ones. The consistent following and participating in the performance makes the child learn in what Smith calls "a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythm and the main steps of the festival dances" (1962:7).

Furthermore, the child's musical training is given to him through social experience. Here much importance should be attached to child's participation with the adult in musical activities. He is now regarded as a role player and has an integral part to play in all adult performances. He should be allowed to follow and perform with the adult anywhere and any times. He now becomes part and active participant in every community performance and he is regarded as one of the promoter of indigenous culture on performance in the community.

Academic/Institutional strategy: This is the strategy designed by school or institution through curriculum or extra-curricula intentionally cultivated to enhance and promote cultural or indigenous music. This strategy could be designed formally or informally by the school or institution. These schools and institutions could be Nursery/Primary schools, Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools; others are federal and state ministry of Arts & culture's Troupe, National Institute of cultural orientation (NICO) performers and other private music establishments and community cultural singers and Dancers. In these settings the role of special/ professional indigenous music educators are indispensable. Special/ professional indigenous cultural music educators should be engaged. The job is to teach or educate the pupils or students the techniques and technicality of cultural or traditional performances. There might not necessarily be a structured and formalized classroom curriculum designed for indigenous music teaching, but the specialist educators whose job is to think about experiences and situations and spontaneously and creatively design a mood for indigenous music practice should be engaged. As professionals, these specialist workers are able to bring special insights and ways of teaching. Here the focus is on spontaneous process of helping people to learn indigenous music performance. The process works through conversation with students and the exploration of what is necessary and appropriate and enlargement of experience through demonstrations and imitations.

Bush School Strategy: This is the strategy that is designed and responsible for the musical training of the young people. These schools should be held in a selected place during the periods determined by the council of elders. The school should be designed to prepare the youths for entrance into full tribal adulthood. Before they could participate in any community performance they have to go through a systematic series of indigenous educational experiences which could give them the necessary skills for taking their place in the tribe.

Singing and playing should be considered important part of the bush school activities. The children and youths could be trained in these skills by the elders of the tribe. This training enables the elders to discover the potential leaders of songs and dance and prepare them for more important roles in any tribal performances. The emphasis is on the retention of existing patterns and musical styles. In this bush school, Smith said "the child is taught the traditional responses and current bodily movement for the songs and dances. He learns the rhythms plays by his ancestors. Songs, dance and drumming are the traditional activities of the bush school" (P.7)

CONCLUSION

This paper discussed the informal/indigenous music education and the values inherent in indigenous music education, and the strategies suggested for sustaining, enhancing and promoting it in Africa. It is true that the wave of civilization, globalization, information and communication technology and other science and technological innovation and development, has affected indigenous culture to the detriment of their survival in the next decade or millennium. This phenomenon has affected the choice and fashions of the youths who are to take the lead after those present indigenous cultural leader fades and die away. The need to preserve, sustain and promote this dying indigenous music and dance has informed the writing of this paper that our cultural music and theatre should not fade into oblivion to the caricature of the envying west.

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