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DEVELOPING PARADIGMS FOR SOLVING MUSICAL ARTS EDUCATION PROBLEMS IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A STUDY OF THE ADOPTION OF Pasmae's MAT CELL INITIATIVES IN OYO GEOGRAPHICAL ZONE

SAMUEL, KAYODE M.

ABSTRACT: *The state of musical arts education in Nigerian schools is worsening despite considerable attention by numerous concerned scholars. Appraisal of conclusions from available literature shows very little empirical evidences to back up scholars' assertions as well as lack of strategic models to critically assess level of severity of the problems confronting music education at different educational levels. Using Pasmae's MAT cell project guidelines, this paper uses case studies of secondary schools in Oyo geographical zone to critically assess the problems associated with musical arts education in Nigerian institutions. It also offers some suggestions to tackle them and advocates for the development of organized assessment/analytical framework (possibly an adoption or contextual adaptation of the MAT cell guidelines) as a vital step towards developing paradigms for purposeful interventions.*

INTRODUCTION

Musical arts education is an important programme in the development of the social and cultural aspect of a nation. Through it, a nation can fully realize and utilize her human resources in terms of norms, customs, folklore and generally her traditions. The inclusion of music in the Nigerian school curriculum is a testimony of the recognition of its potential in national development by educational policy makers. According to Nwadukwe (1995), music education aims at the vocational, intellectual, emotional, physical and social development of the learner with the aid of equipment and materials. Vocationally, music education equips the child with a career. Furthermore, intellectually, it combines with other subjects to help the child conquer obstacles in his environment. Socially, music introduces the child to team work during music performances. Emotionally, music helps the child to express his feelings through numerous activities and physically,

Samuel, Kayode M. is a Lecturer, Music Department, Oyo State College of Education, Oyo, Nigeria.

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music exercises and trains the body of the child through different activities. Okafor (1988) also stated that the general aim of music education is to equip the individual to perform music in the society and to contribute to the economy. The person so prepared is to perform either as an artist or as a teacher. In view of this, Okafor examined what outlets there have been, and are, for the products of Nigerian colleges of education to practise as musicians and teachers. Broadly, these include the public service (e.g. broadcast media, council of arts and culture, etc), the entertainment industry and educational institutions.

Faseun (1993) traced the historical development of academic music education in Nigeria to the introduction of western education by the missionaries. This took the form of hymn singing as a subject in the mission schools with the primary aim of developing a repertoire of songs for worship and to correct the African pattern of singing. The preference, according to Omibiyi-Obidike (1979) therefore was western classical music between 1844 and 1890. As she noted:

The main objective then, was to proselytize the muslim and pagan communities through education. Hence the missionaries in early concerts were concerned with the problem of comprehension of their musical programme by their audience (Omibiyi-Obidike, 1979:13).

It has since the years gone through various changes and modifications as reflected in the changing patterns of the Nigerian society. An unprecedented event, which had negatively reshaped the future of music education in Nigeria, was the enactment of the Education Ordinance of 1926, which excluded music from the syllabus of secondary and teacher training colleges. Another setback according to Omibiyi-Obidike (1987) came in 1948 when the content of music instruction was circumscribed to singing in the elementary schools, thus turning music to an extra-curricula activity.

Today, the structure and content of music education in Nigeria provides that music comes under the auspices of culture. The curriculum for primary education in Nigeria provides among others for eight (8) Cultural and Creative Arts subjects comprising of Drawing, Handcraft, Music and cultural activities etc. Consequently, there has been the recurrent problem of what to select as well as how to implement the pupil's choice, goals and opportunities.

In the junior secondary school (JSS), pupils are expected to have a minimum of 10 and maximum of 13 subjects. These must include 8 core subjects, 5 pre-vocational electives and 5 non-prevocational electives to make a total of 18 subjects in all. The document prescribes that only one of the non-prevocational subjects shall be offered. The possibility that the pupil would pick music, which is listed as the fourth out of the five non-prevocational electives is very remote. The senior secondary school (SSS) programme is stringently planned in such a way to have 'comprehensive core curriculum designed to broaden pupil's knowledge and out-look'. It therefore prescribes that the

student shall offer 7 core subjects provided and a minimum of one and a maximum of two of the listed 18 vocational electives (of which music is one) and 17 non-vocational electives. It further gives room for the dropping of one of the 3 elective subjects in the last year of senior secondary school course (FRN, 1998:19-21).

Statement of the Problem

Although musical arts education is meant to be a vehicle of development, there are now more lamentations and incessant cries about its worsening situation from many quarters within and outside the education system. Low enrolment in music subject by pupils right from the primary through secondary level and the consequent decline in students' choice of it as a course of study in higher institutions, poor performances of students at examinations conducted by various examination bodies, inability of graduates of music to live up to the challenges ahead are some of the reasons often been cited to buttress this assertion.

Judging from available literature, there have been persistent calls from various music scholars in the last two decades or so on problems associated with music education in Nigeria. Numerous meetings, conferences and fora under diverse music association names are conveyed from time to time to discuss the way forward. For instance, Nwadukwe (1995) mentioned family and community career preference (which influences learner interest), unsuitable music curriculum, poor physical setting, teachers' poor teaching methods, poor/wrong evaluation system, learner's limitations, inadequate textbooks and materials as well as disinterestedness of school heads as some of the problems at the junior secondary school level, where she teaches. She however did not provide any observed data to support her claims. So also, Adesokan's (1999) and Joel's (2000) submissions of the problems militating against music education in the country were not supported with empirical data. There is therefore the need to provide evidence in concrete terms to serve as a scientific baseline for further research, intervention actions and evaluation activity.

A major initiative in this regard by the executive officers of the Pan African Society for Musical Arts Education (Pasmae) was a call on interested music educators from different parts of Africa living in contiguous zone/area to organize into Musical Arts Education Action Teams (MAT) cells, where they could meet regularly as the grassroots educators' voices to interrogate, identify, discuss and document the real problems in classroom locations as well as any far fetched solutions/ideas with local classroom/community experiences and possibilities. This recognizes the fact that investigative framework of the musical arts education problems must be specific to the local context, and indeed be truly African. In line with this, Nzewi (2003) suggested and rightly too that the solutions to African musical arts education require true African sensitive approach.

Objectives and Methodology

The objective of this paper is to highlight some of the problems militating against musical arts education in Nigeria and some efforts taken so far in addressing them through a presentation of the findings of Oyo MAT cell. The intent also include to reinforce the clarion call to fellow African scholars who are tired of going round in circles and who long for the end of the era of paying lip service to issues negatively touching on our noble profession. The time has come for all to wake up to our responsibility, promote well-cultured and true research oriented approach to the problems of musical arts education in Africa as a whole.

Following the invitation from PASMAE to form Musical Arts Education Action Teams (MAT), a MAT cell was formed in Oyo town, Oyo State of Nigeria on the 4th of July, 2002. Membership was drawn from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in and around Oyo town, representing the three levels of academic education in Nigeria. Working with the MAT Project manuscript containing guidelines, which PASMAE prepared and supplied, the group met as a Focus Group to discuss strategies to facilitate thorough data collection on situation and problems encountered in modern music education in Oyo locality and its environs. Each member of the MAT cell thereafter went out to observe and conduct personal interviews with stakeholders in schools/institutions offering music, which they were assigned to. The findings were then discussed extensively as members of the group thoroughly assessed the situation at our subsequent meetings. All these were documented and forwarded to the MAT cell coordinator with a number of proffered workable solutions, which were further discussed at PASMAE biennial regional conference held at Maseno University, Kisumu in July 2003.

Results and Discussion:

Issues observed, discussed and documented in Oyo MAT cell, which was forwarded to PASMAE MAT cell coordinator covered all the levels of education. However, a brief summary of what obtained in the secondary level is presented in this paper. The findings are presented under the following subheadings: (i) School particulars, (ii) Factors that encourage and discourage music instruction/activities in the secondary schools (iii) Society's perception of the profession/ administrators' insincerity, (iv) Assessment of available facilities and resources

School Particulars: Table 1: Type of schools and location, Personnel:

Name and Location of School	Type of School	School Population (JSS 1 – 3)	Enrollment for Music	Number of Music	Qualifications of Music Personnel Personnel
Nesto College, Oyo	Private	393	174	1	NCE (Music)
SPED, International Secondary School, Oyo	Private	815	284	1	NCE (Music), B.Ed. Nur., & Primary Education
St. Andrew's Model High School, Oyo	Private	806	422	2	NCE (Music) NCE (Music)
Olivet Baptist High School, Oyo	Govt.	2153	691	3	B.Ed (Music), NCE (Music), NCE (Music)
International School, Ibadan	Govt.	1750	626		NCE (Music), B.Ed. (Music), B.A. (Music) & M.A. African Studies

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2003.

As it is presently, only the International School, Ibadan continues music beyond the junior secondary school level. This is because music as a subject becomes optional after this level and most students would have lost interest in it at this stage. Another pathetic picture that also emerged from the above table is the teacher: student ratio. The implication therefore is no amount or the level of motivation; there is little the teacher (who is faced with such Herculean task) could achieve especially under the heavy workload burden.

Factors that Encourage and Discourage Music Instruction/Activities in the Secondary Schools:

Some of the factors mentioned as encouraging music instruction and activities in the schools studied include: very few enlightened and interested parents who are willing to buy personal musical instruments for their wards' private practice, occasional special school programmes such as valedictory services, annual Christmas carol programmes and donations of some musical equipment by musically inclined and interested parents. On the other hand, factors, which discourage music instruction and activities both within school environment and as extra curricular activities far out number the encouragement mentioned earlier. They include inadequate time allocation to the teaching of an interesting and a living art as music in all the schools. Consequently, most ill equipped teachers struggle to teach the theoretical aspects, with its attendant Western orientation. Coupled

with these is the undue emphasis on instrumental tuitions that have little or no relevance to pupils' natural experience. All these, among others were identified as 'killing the system'. The hard position of the government of Nigeria, which lays great emphasis on Science and Technology and consequent restriction on the candidates' choice of number of subjects to enter for at both junior and senior secondary school examination is a factor worsening the matter. Music teachers' inventiveness at organizing music clubs to provide awareness among the student populace as well as their efforts at inviting local master musicians as facilitators/instructors on traditional musical instruments to stimulate learning have become 'mountains to the promised land'.

Society's perception of the profession/ administrators' insincerity:

Another factor found discouraging music activities is society's perception of the profession, parental disapproval as well as administrators' insincerity. It emerged from our findings that many parents would never approve of their ward's choice of music as a subject to be studied. This is sometimes based on religious ground. Parents' intolerant attitude against the teaching of music in Nigerian institutions has rubbed off the pupils themselves with many dubbing an acronym for music as **Most Useless Subject In Class**. Some of them also raised the fears that musicians in the society are 'never do wells', while most of the principals of schools covered in this study did not show enough sincerity in terms of support and provision of facilities to effectively run the programme.

Problem of Facilities and Resources:

Lack of facilities and resources remained a major bane of effective musical arts education as observed in these schools. The table below further exemplifies the point:

There is a general inadequacy of audio and audiovisual equipment for learning. In all the secondary schools situated in Oyo, these are virtually non-existent. The music teachers once in a while bring along their personal property to help the students as a strategy to get around the problem. There are no music studio or practising rooms and in most cases, lessons take place in the general classrooms. Most secondary schools do not even have a single Keyboard in any form as music teachers are required to adhere strictly to the contents of the curriculum, with few more demands and inputs to carry out musical renditions during special programmes.

Both African traditional and Western musical instruments are grossly inadequate in all schools. This is not unconnected with poor attitude of the government to funding of education at all levels. As a result, music in schools (which is capital intensive in nature), is badly hit. Ekwueme (2000) sees this as a sign of government's negative regard for the music profession. She further identified lack of policy statement by the government, which would have assisted in determining the philosophy, goals, standards and quality of

Table 2: Inventory of Available Facilities and Resources:

School	Audio and audiovisual equipment for Learning	Western Musical Instruments	African Traditional Musical Instruments	Physical Space & Facilities
Nesto College, Oyo	Nil	1 Upright Piano, 1 Acoustic Guitar, 2 Trumpets, Some Recorders Harmonium and a set of drum.	<i>Sekere</i> (Rattle) <i>Agogo</i> (Bell)	Chalkboard, a partly furnished small room designated as music room
SPED, Int'l Sec School, Oyo	Nil	Nil	<i>Sekere</i> (Rattle)	Regular classroom
St. Andrew's M.H Schl Oyo	Nil	Recorders	Nil	Regular classroom
O.B.H. School Oyo	Nil	Nil	Nil	Regular classroom
International School, Ibadan	Yes	3 Pianos, 1 Electronic Keyboard 2 Trumpets, Tuba, French horns Guitars, amplifiers and loud speakers for Pop Band music.	<i>Ekwe</i> (wooden slit drum), <i>Dundun</i> & <i>Kanango</i> (hourglass drums), <i>Ogene</i> (big metal gong) <i>Agidigbo</i> , <i>Sekere</i>	Well-furnished & conducive Dept. of Music.

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2003.

music at every level of education. Private individuals' complimentary efforts at providing qualitative education have not yielded much positive result as seen in the table above.

International School, Ibadan happens to be the only school that tries to keep its head above the water. This is explicable in the light that its department of music is the examination centre for the Music Society of Nigeria (MUSON) for candidates in and around Oyo/Ibadan area. It is also on record that the school frequently enrolls and presents some of its pupils especially those that show considerable sign of seriousness to both MUSON's theory and practical graded examinations, which is very similar to ABRSM, London.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is the need to overhaul the entire Nigerian educational system, which has hitherto been unfairly tilted in favour of Science and Technology and reposition it for the challenges of now and the future. The International Society for Music Education (ISME), the International Music Council in conjunction with the UNESCO is hereby enjoined to take major stride in ensuring that the Nigerian government implements the Cultural Policy for Nigeria of 1988. This would no doubt be the bedrock of redressing the unjustifiable imbalance against the cultural and creative arts.

Another foremost step in curtailing one of the problems identified in this paper, which is bad curricula is the immediate review of the entire curriculum on which Nigerian music education is built. It is no longer pardonable to retain the content of music (as contained in different levels of academic education in Nigeria), which is been studied by the young and upcoming ones with its lopsided nature in favour of Western oriented values and to the detriment of the African traditional ideals. We wish to ask further is it not an irony that the consultant developers and planners of the music curriculum are our well known learned and respected Nigerian musicologists and music educationists? We wish to state unequivocally that it is time to evolve a more African sensitive and oriented programme in view of the challenges before us all. Another opportunity would soon present itself (since these curricula are periodically reviewed). When it does, it is our expectations that colleagues would courageously rise up to the occasion by ensuring that right from the primary school curriculum, the Nigerian child is introduced to music education early enough in order to inculcate musical virtues/values into them.

Traditionally, the enculturative role of parents in setting a child on the right musical strand in Africa is never in doubt. We hereby make a call on all parents/guardians to 'Return to the root', For the home is the foundation agent of education and as the cradle of all developmental processes, which take place in the life of a child before he gets to school. Conducive environment must therefore be provided by the home through the parents to encourage the growth and development of children's musicianship. One major way parents could realize this objective is to provide musical toys such as local materials with which children could make music. This is not to exclude toy piano and guitars, recorders and the likes for the use and practice of the child. That way, his innate musical potential would be cultivated and sustained for further development especially when he gets to school.

With regards to funding, it is hereby suggested that various music departments need a re-engineered approach in getting funds to run their programmes especially the provision of musical instruments etc. One positive way is for the departments to raise funds through musical concerts regularly organized in their various communities with the available facilities. Invitations should be extended to genuinely interested philanthropic individuals, bodies and organizations. They could also explore the possibilities of writing

well focused proposals to funding bodies to solicit for assistance as well as mounting pressure on their various institutional management teams to ensure allocation of resources both human and materials to all the various music departments. Traditional professional music artistes in particular should be appointed in the schools to teach those aspects that would ensure pupils and students acquire the desired skills and are also well grounded in practical African musical knowledge.

At the meetings of the MAT cell leaders in Kisumu, five major areas of concern were identified and mapped for action one of which includes the need to be more aggressive in developing appropriate music technology. The time has come for various music departments to enter into collaborative researches with the Departments of Music Technology such as The Polytechnic, Ibadan and the College of Education in Eha Amufu with a view to constructing locally made musical instruments as ready alternatives would also be a positive way in ameliorating this perennial problem of facilities. One is pleased to note here that positive action on this has since commenced with some schools in Oyo. We further wish to advocate for the development of organized assessment/analytical framework and possibly an adoption or contextual adaptation of the MAT cell guidelines, which having experimented with, we are convinced is geared towards providing insight into the state of musical arts education in Africa as well as proffering far reaching and workable solutions to our multifarious problems. The premise is that correct and organized assessment is a right step in the direction of effective and purposeful well-targeted intervention activities. Another advantage of such a framework is its usefulness for evaluation of intervention based on the concept of Triple A cycle: Assessment, Analysis, Action.

CONCLUSION

As many committed African scholars living in contiguous area take up the challenge provided by this Pasmae initiative, we are strongly convinced that no one would be able to underscore the value of information derivable from reports of numerous MAT cells spread all over Africa in providing the much-needed databank which would assist in adopting a more holistic and appropriate approach towards finding solutions to the multifaceted problems confronting musical arts education in Africa as a whole.

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