

MUSIC CURRICULUM IN TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES OF ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

Nigeria is a country that is rich in culture, and MUSIC is a part of and helps to promote this culture. In various parts of the world today. Nigerian music is increasingly being played and appreciated. Echezona (1962) used a folk tune in producing a work *Egwu Igbo* (an Igbo tune) which is now being played and recorded in Pittsburgh and other parts of the United States of America. Yet many student-teachers in Nigeria's teacher training colleges (TTCS) do not find it easy to study music so as to impart it to the young, who will in future uphold and develop the musical heritage of Nigerian culture. Whatever difficulties the students are facing are long overdue for investigation. So the main purpose of this paper is to analyse the programme of music education in these colleges, and the musical backgrounds and environments of the students and their teachers. As much as the study will examine the current trend of music education in the teacher training colleges in Anambra State the study will also consider in detail the length and level of training of both teachers and students. It will also analyse the objectives, content activities, methodologies and evaluation techniques of music education in these colleges, and therefore come up with recommendations on the proper curriculum that will guide the study. The reports in this paper are based on the research findings carried out by the writer in primary teacher training colleges in Anambra State of Nigeria. The summary of the research report shows that the music programmes in the TTCs should be (a) directly related to those of the primary schools (b) modified to be of a future value to the teacher-trainees themselves, (c) help teacher trainees in the TTCs to become more discriminating consumers and good performers and teachers of music.

INTRODUCTION

After the end of the Nigerian civil war, the population of students in the TTCs in Anambra State increased and more teachers were required to handle all the courses being offered in these colleges. But in recent years from the late eighties up till now, both the Federal and State Governments have been paying less attention to the development of all the TTCs in the country. But as the TTCs are being phased out, the status of the few remaining ones are becoming so strong that its certificate is at par with the senior secondary certificate. It then becomes necessary that music educators should review the music programme in these colleges to meet the demand of this age; and that any teacher trainee who passes out from the TTC with a good score in music could look forward to getting into the university to continue with the study at a higher level. Also that on graduation student-teachers could teach music in the primary schools and in the lower classes of the secondary schools.

Music fulfils basic human desires in that it satisfies the need to comprehend the tonal beauty that man perceives. Since music does this, music education has a unique function in the general education of both the young and old alike. Besides, it is at the TTC that many of the students start to study music as a subject for the first time. Even for the United States of America, for instance Ernest (1955, p. 23) states: "that music is one of the newer subjects in the curriculum of the modern schools and its greatest period of growth has occurred within the past thirty years. It then becomes very important that the programme should be a solid one that will not put the students off their course but make them be competent trained teachers in music that could handle music for the youngsters". Accordingly the National Policy on Education (1981) states that;

Government will increase the supply of music specialists teachers and also provide adequate facilities in the teacher training colleges.

The immediate objectives and ultimate goals the TTC teachers expect to achieve by the time the student-teachers go into the field to teach are not met because music teaching and learning in our TTCs are among the most difficult tasks for both the teacher and the taught. Purpose of the Study

The study of music occupies a central place in the teacher education curriculum. The paper therefore seeks to examine the problems of music curriculum in the TTCs in Anambra State of Nigeria. Specifically the objectives are: to analyse the objectives, the contents, activities, methodology and evaluation techniques of the music education programme in the TTCs finding out its problems to make recommendations for the improvement of TTC music education programmes. Problems of the Curriculum

In 1983 the writer carried out a study and observed a number of problems in the TTC's curriculum. Another investigation undertaken a few weeks ago indicated that these problems are still acute probably due to the split of the then Anambra State and despite the fact that many of the TTCs have been closed down. Ifemesia (1983) noted that music teaching and learning in the TTCs are among the most difficult tasks for both the teacher and the taught. Why? Findings showed that most of the teachers were not trained in music for a long time, and so they do not have enough professional experience to handle the subject. For all these teachers, their lack of enough training and experience are handicaps; for as an educator because a teacher cannot teach what he does not know.

Another handicap of these teachers who had relatively effective training in music was that they were not given full opportunity to teach the subject in the TTCs. 80% of the music teachers teach other subjects like History, English Language and other subjects rather than teaching music. This was especially so in those colleges where the principal was not very interested in music. The fact that music was not a compulsory

subject in the curriculum of the TTCs was a big problem, and that was why 60% of the colleges indicated that they taught only one period of music a week in most years. A lesson taught so infrequently makes but little improvisation on students.

The teacher also experienced many cases of withdrawal of students from studying the subject. 80% of the teachers showed that not up to 2% of these students eventually offered music at the final examination. Many students interviewed supported what the teachers, said. Oimbiyi (1972) in tier study of teacher education, noted that a majority of students shied away from music as a serious and difficult course, especial!) the rudiments of music.

In devising strategies for transforming the hostile attitudes of some students to music lessons and for reactivating the whole concept of music in secondary education Jones (1972) maintains that a music teacher's time is better spent with musically able youngsters than with ail children in a school, many of whom rate music as useless and boring. But Leonhard and House in Nye and Nye (1970, p. 4) had a different approach to the solution of this problem and so asserted that music is not a specialty reserved for the talented. That it is universally important lo every human being and his culture.

On the other hand, it was encouraging to note that the few students who managed to keep on to music till the final year came out in flying colours. Evidence showed that in over 700 students in the final year, in the TTC, Nsukka only sixteen registered for music in 1980 and fourteen of them passed. Also in 1981 out of over 800 final-year students, only twenty students registered, and all of them passed This was virtually the same in all the colleges in Auambra State.

, Findings that there were enough music teachers in these colleges as four qualified music teachers were needed in each of the thirteen colleges. The other teachers of music found in the colleges had no qualifications in music ;it all, but they helped in practical music like choir practice and cultural dances. Belford (1970) made a similar study, and found that junior college music departments in Iowa, U.S.A. were all under stalled, because at least the music teachers were needed in each class,

Analysis indicated that no music staff member had ever received any extra remuneration, any form of incentive or compensation for extra-curricula activities such as choir practice, dance rehearsals and extra piano lessons m the evenings. 85% of the teachers fell that there was a general apathy towards the music course from non-music students, fellow members of staff and some principals.

One of the objectives of the music programme in Anambra Stale TTCs is to enable students to produce some local musical instruments with the help of their teachers, for the purpose of facilitating music leaching. Although these instruments were seen, they were very difficult lo preserve, especially when they are subjected to heavy use: the effect of harmattan season could cause instruments like the wooden gong to be split into pieces, the membrane drums could get damp during the rainy season. There was no instrument of the string or brass family in any of the colleges because they could not afford 10 buy any.

70% of the student complained that teachers should use methods that will indeed bring music lessons home lo them. Relating music lo life in the community so that through this approach African music could be made real was another method the teachers did not use in these TTCs. This is one of the best methods of letting students know that music is part of the society, and this agrees with Lehman's (1973) idea that music should be utilized by human beings in the real world they belong to and not just as an academic exercise. Habits of listening to and viewing musical programmes on radio and television were also highlighted by die music teachers.

Teachers adopted these evaluation methods for the purpose of grading their students, like invigilated examination, grading of assignments, playing of instruments and oral answers to musical questions.

90% of the teachers felt that the music programme was not adequate for the TTCs because of so many reasons. They fell that it was not relevant to the needs of the society most especially the primary schools. They complained that the programme did not provided enough room for the practical work \\hich would be very important in the professional life of the students, especially when they went out to the primary schools to teach. Teachers also maintained that these student-teachers should be well grounded in activities like cultural dances and singing", in order to be able to cope with the future requirements of their children. To this non-relevance must be partly ascribed (lie lack of interest of students, and the difficulty of bringing students to offer the subject.

Many teachers also criticised the near-monopoly apparently enjoyed by the rudiments and theory of western music in the programme. They fell that the emphasis on them should be diminished and attention paid more to African musical literature. Teachers saw the programme as too western -oriented: they said that three quarters of what the students learnt was western music and that even African music itself had to be studied in the western style and with a western orientation. The teachers also complained that the programme did not provide enough room for practical work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If the TTCs in Anambra Slate will continue to exist, the State Education Commission and music educators will have to look into the music curriculum seriously so as lo restore the dignity of Nigerian and African music.

The first and foremost thing is that the objectives of music education in the TTCs in Anambra Slate should have to be close lo the objectives of music education in the primary schools, because the student-teacher after training goes on to practise all he has learnt in the primary' school. But the problems as of now is that there is no serious music programme in the primary school outside singing.

To improve the entire programme, emphasis should be shifted in a number of directions. Nigerian or local music of the people should be made to dominate the curriculum, especially in the first year of the course, so that the students will not be scared by the subject, but will rather easily find their roots in music as in other subject areas.

A lot of incentives and motivations should be given to student-teachers by music to enable them look forward to music lesson periods in order to enjoy the course. As Adebile (1992) pointed out a music teacher can create any kind of atmosphere in a classroom. This shows that a music teacher's attitude in the classroom is very very important.

Teachers of music in both TTCs and other tertiary institutions should be compensated for extra curricula activities and music seminars, conferences and workshops should be organised **for** music teachers and students-teachers of music on a regular basis.

CONCLUSION

Music holds a most important position in the education of any human being, in that it makes one have an all-round education. Therefore in view of all that this paper has enumerated, it becomes necessary that the music curriculum in the TTCs in Anambra State need to be reviewed, so that the programme should be more useful to the people for whom it is made. It has been noted that the programme should be directly related to those in the primary schools, the junior secondary and institutions of higher learning.

The close attention of all those who are somehow or other concerned with music education is earnestly invited to all the suggestions and recommendations in this paper, so that a beginning will be made in reviewing and improving the degree and quality of music taught in the state TTCs.

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