

INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL METHODS OF TEACHING INTO MODERN MUSIC EDUCATION PRACTICES; SUGGESTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This paper examines how traditional methods of teaching can be fused with modern educational practices in the teaching of music education in Nigerian schools. From a contemporary context, traditional education has nearly been completely expunged in music education as a result of the incorporation of technological advancement in modern teaching methods thereby inhibiting the full development of effective individual potentialities and knowledge domains in the learner. This paper takes a position that a re-evaluation of traditional teaching methods such as direct instruction, listening, observation, direct acquisition, music collective class and its integration with modern music education practices and teaching methods such as the Kodaly, Suzuki and Dalcroze methods will enhance reflexive practical learning, lead to the production of effective individual and social potentialities in the learner which can fit with current national developments and exigencies; and additionally help learners become aware of value formation and cultural identity so as not to be disconnected from their cultural referential. The paper proposes a successful integration of traditional methods with modern educational practices so as to enhance effectiveness and functionality in the 21st-century music classroom and lead to an all-encompassing method of teaching that can make learning more relevant, exciting and meaningful for the learner.

Keywords: traditional education, music education, music instruction, methods

Education has been an inevitable and integral part of human life. It has shaped so many generations for thousands of years and remains so until present. These days however, technology has changed so many things as well as the manner we disseminate information. Digital tools, such as computers, audio, and visual tools are incorporated into modern teaching methods/strategies and slowly replacing traditional teaching methods. Traditional teaching methods involve imparting knowledge to children through face-to-face interaction on a daily basis between teacher and the learner. The instructors or teachers who apply these methods are referred to as Traditional educationists. Students are taught the same subject at the same time and a grading system is devised to assess students' Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and if they achieve good grades, they are promoted to the next level which is often referred to as the next grade. Methods used for traditional education ranges from teaching and Direct Instruction which is conducted by the teacher. This is a teacher-centered method and emphasizes learning through the teacher's guidance at all times. Listening and

~~Observation and imitation~~ part of the methods used in traditional education, and they lay emphasis on the learners watching the actions of the instructor and derive lifelong learning in the process.

Music Education like other aspects of education constitute a fundamental component of basic education, whose primary purpose is to develop the three knowledge domains (affective, psychomotor and cognitive), foster cultural literacy, and provide the opportunity to develop social, intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual potential necessary to perpetuate and improve society. Music Education importantly stresses the comprehension and value of the quality of life and its aesthetic aspects, thereby enriching and enhancing the lives of all. Since the major focus of music education is the enhancement of life in all ramifications, then the process of delivery of instruction within the classroom must be one which is structurally and functionally versatile at all times and might involve innovativeness being injected into music education practices within the classroom. Traditional educational methods can be used with modern methods in the teaching of music to children in schools. From an African perspective, such can lead to the development of a complete individual culturally, socially, morally and intellectually.

Traditional Education in Nigeria

Education serves as a tool for developing an individual. Education as a system is not new in Nigeria, and before the introduction of Islamic and western education in the country, there was a traditional system of education. This system of education prevailed in Nigeria before the arrival of the Portuguese traders, scholars, the English speaking Christian Missionaries. The Nigerian society at this time was not literate based on European formal parameters as the education given did not involve reading and writing, but served the very cultural and societal purpose of transmission of knowledge. The education was informal, every adult was a teacher there were no school buildings, no fixed hours within which instruction must take place and no specially trained teachers which needed to be paid for teaching children. It was an educational system that gave children roots in their culture and also gave them the skills which enabled them to live functionally and productively. This type of early education is still relevant and practiced widely in the society. The philosophy of this early education was based on the way people think, beliefs, feelings and the way of doing things. The elders of a certain tribe or clan were given the jobs of instilling certain knowledge and practices to the young and old in the society, though parents also played a big part.

In what makes up the present day Nigeria, there existed concrete city-states that had unique types of traditional education, like the Nok people with their individual culture in the present plateau area of Northern Nigeria, the old city-states of the Benin and Kanuri empires, the Bonny and Itsekiri Kingdoms and many others. Each one of the mentioned Kingdoms and empires had their own way of doing things and shaping their individuals which were done using education. Traditional education in Nigeria has certain aims and responsibilities which include; the preservation of culture, starting from the smallest unit which is the family, followed by the clan and finally the tribe, to make members adapt to their environment in order to make them aware of their jobs and roles in the society, to make young individuals understand that the future of the society solely depends on the laws, values, and language that they inherit from the past. The education also majorly played a big part in giving individuals a sense of belonging. Traditional education follows a system whereby infants are taught by the mother, father, and the immediate family. The childhood stage follows and it involves children of age six to twelve. In this case, the child moves into another new world away from his family already endowed with its mother tongue, which enables the child for communication, playing,

The traditional education system in all was functionally versatile and its focus was on serving the society. It aimed at fostering cohesion and awareness, the safeguarding of a child's heritage and the development of the three domains in education (cognitive, affective and psychomotor).

Music Education

The fact that knowledge is conveyed through skills; skill acquisition and utilization is very important because it underlines the practical component of music education. Music education focuses on teaching and learning of music making and listening as well as knowledge components of music. Elliott's (1997) assertion is based on his paraxial philosophy of music. This gives the learner the opportunity to study the facts before they are applied. It enables learners to develop their teaching and learning skills. This encourages learners to become performers, composers or music teachers.

The aim and objective of an effective and relevant school music programme should provide for an atmosphere where pupils can develop an understanding of their musical cultural heritage. Music in the school curriculum provides learning experience that will promote growth and development in music skills, competencies and attitudes; develop cognitive and psychomotor skills; encourage social and emotional maturity; build positive self concepts; build cultural ties; develop the ability to perceive the relationship of music and other disciplines; establish high standards and quality music literacy and develop aesthetic sensitivity to the expressive element of music. (Ajayi, Ajibade & Aniemeka 1999).

Methods of Teaching Music

A number of methods are employed by educators in the teaching of music. The driving principle behind every of the method is how best to build upon the innate abilities of the learner and teach the learner the best way possible. Similarly, the methods irrespective of their variation also have underlying philosophies and are used all over the world by music teachers in the delivery of music education content. All educators can incorporate the basic techniques used in these methods as they offer creative, arts-driven curricula through which to teach. The most popular of these are the Orff, Kodaly, Suzuki, and Dalcroze methods.

The Orff is a method of teaching music that places emphasis on mind engagement. Here, learners are trained to engage their minds and body through a mixture of singing, dancing, acting and the use of percussion instruments. The presentation of lessons under this method is carried with the intent of helping the child learn at his own pace and level of understanding through a natural progression while emphasizing the integration of arts with stories, poetry, dance, movement and drama (Cary, 2012).

The Kodaly method of teaching music is guided by a philosophy which supports the role of music in the intellectual, physical, social, emotional and spiritual development of the child. Emphasis is placed on singing as Kodaly (1974) asserts that singing provides the best way to start music education, as even the most talented artist can never overcome the disadvantages of an education without singing. The method also emphasizes mastery learning and stunt learning as a function of a child's aptitude and seeks to motivate a child based on the amount and quality of instruction so that with time the inclination to learn will be fitted to the child's need and capability, enhancing the capacity of mastering a wide range of music subject matter (Cary, 2012).

Agatha Ngosi Abdullahi method is modeled based on the fundamental principles of language acquisition in a child. Such basic principles include listening, repetition, and memorization and building vocabulary. This method is important in teaching the learner how to play instruments and notate music where the child learns to play an instrument first by imitating recorded pieces which he listens to many times each day. He then internalizes each piece and then is shown how to recreate it on the instrument. He masters many of the instruments technical difficulties and learns to communicate through it before he learns note-reading (notation), just as he learns to speak before he reads and writes from the printed page (Barber 1991).

The Dalcroze method, also known as Dalcroze Eurhythmics, is another method employed by educators in the teaching of music. It is particularly used in the teaching of musical concepts such as rhythm, structure and musical expressions. The method places emphasis on music teaching through improvisation and starts with ear training from where the child's spontaneous reaction to music is sharpened. The philosophy behind the Dalcroze philosophy is that people learn best when learning through multiple senses, hence music should be taught through concrete, kinesthetic, auditory and visual senses (Wang, 2008).

The above enumerated methods are very effective in the delivery of music instruction within the classroom; however, the 21st century educational paradigms have undergone crucial changes in the face of increasing complexity and specific knowledge needs. What this portends is that teaching methods in every field needs a significant revitalization that will bring about the full cognitive, affective and psychomotor effective domains of the learners while significantly accentuating other parameters that will lead significantly to the development of effective individual potentialities in the learner, for example initiative, responsibility, creativity; development of positive attitudes and values towards work, local cultural traditions, and the development of a healthy balance of learning that will suit individual interests and future needs in order to achieve quality and relevance within the socio-cultural and global context.

The Traditional Educationists and Effective Music Education

The policy in the traditional African society is communally formed and established. The education begins with the father, mother, lineage system, age group organizations, the apprenticeship system, festivals, and ceremonies. These are the main procedures for traditional music learning. The traditional music teaching is based on the students learning through imitation, observation, and repetition. In this method, the teacher or expert instructs the learners to learn through memorization and recitation techniques.

From time immemorial, indigenous Nigerian communities have had a highly structured traditional music education system which was very effective in ensuring the continuity of their age-old musical traditions and culture. At its core are “the apprenticeship systems, initiation schools, and music borrowing practices” aimed at producing dutiful master-musician teachers who are not to instruct, teach, or inspire themselves alone; they must musically educate others, maintain and extend the community’s musical standards and repertory too.

Apprenticeship is a system for imparting expert knowledge from one generation to another or from the expert who teaches those who wish to learn or those who want to improve their skills on a particular musical instrument (Okafor, 2005). The expert is seen as the teacher or master. The expert may be in the family where music-making is part of the family tradition or may be an expert in the society. In the apprenticeship system, knowledge is imparted through performance and exposure.

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Apprenticeship Learning usually takes 10 to 15 years. A child who wishes to become an expert in any musical instrument enrolls under an expert who trains the child to become a full expert in the particular choice of musical instrument. This type of learning also involves learning through memorization, observation, and repetition. The teacher here apart from the teaching and learning experience expects high moral standards from his apprentice.

Direct acquisition according to Adeogun (2006) is another method of imparting knowledge in the traditional society. As children attend music performances they observe the costuming, how musical events are organized and gain the awareness that both the music makers and the audience/society judge the performance immediately. As soon as children attain the ages of five and six, they form their own music groups drawing their members from those of the lineage or children living in the same homestead. The moonlight nights are chosen for the rehearsal within the compounds. During this moonlight nights, children are taught how to sing and dance, which sticks to the child's memory and he or she never forgets what he learns.

Aside from the moonlight night avenue for learning and teaching of songs and dances, adults who are dance or singing experts organize and fix days for learning which is usually practiced for several hours and this produces desirable and positive outcomes from the learners who within a short period become expert dancers and singers. Though it should be noted here that these children who graduate to become expert dancers and singers are not able to learn how to read and write music. They are regarded as being musically illiterate.

Music collective class is another traditional way of teaching music. However, the weakness of collective class is that teachers cannot understand the students more fully, and the guidance of students is limited to the general problems of most students. In the traditional class teaching, the unity of the progress is emphasized in the content, which is contradictory with the individual ability, personality, and temperament of the students. Music group teaching is aimed at dividing students with similar levels into groups. This traditional form of teaching when combined with the content of teaching and interspersed with group activities becomes a guided form of teaching. Under the system, teachers and students jointly find effective solutions to the difficulties in traditional music teaching; however, teachers communicate and interact less with students. Consequently, students blindly imitate and learn and this might result in the students lacking in their own understanding and sentiment.

Overall, most of the methods used in traditional education are structurally and functionally versatile; although the methods might have their inadequacies, the focus of teaching music under traditional methods of education was service to the society and the molding of a complete individual culturally, socially and intellectually. Similarly, traditional methods of teaching use methods and familiar materials from the learner's immediate environment, and such methods are closely related to the culture and traditions of the learner.

Fusion of Traditional and Modern Method of Music Teaching

Despite the way traditional methods of teaching are abandoned and criticized nowadays due to the incorporation of technological advancement in modern teaching methods, traditional methods of teaching and learning music should not be completely removed if we want to achieve an effective education. Unlike modern methods of teaching, traditional education methods are collective and functional since they mostly incorporate the input of all learners within a learning cycle or set up (Adeogun, 2012); it tends to prepare the individual learner with the wherewithal for full participation

in the society and all round development. Traditional education emphasizes critical thinking, physical and mental wellness which can be injected into the overall education process (Adeogun, 2012).

Integration of traditional teaching with modern methods will improve the pedagogies in music education; however, this move has largely been abandoned, hence the need to address the question; "Should traditional music be borrowed into the classroom?" For effective teaching and learning of music, there should be a fusion of both traditional and modern methods of teaching. Students and teachers would benefit more if both traditional and modern methods are fused together and would also help create a more effective, fun and interactive learning experience. Though each of the methods (traditional and modern) has its advantages and inadequacies it would, however, be perfect if they are merged to produce better learning outcomes.

In support of the above assertion, Hiner (2016) reiterates that the traditional approach which is neglected is stronger than the innovative one. Majority of those who learned music traditionally outside the classroom do not have difficulty in mastering the music taught due to the number of hours spent in the teaching. Barber (1991) stressing on the importance of traditional methods reported that it is only because of the tremendous impact that Suzuki's instruction has on string education that we have even added the term "traditional teaching" to our string vocabulary.

Music educators should emulate Suzuki's instruction which teaches children to play and learn musical instruments before introducing note reading. Dr. Suzuki calls his plan the "mother tongue approach" since it follows the same procedure by which children learn to speak their native language through exposure, imitation, encouragement, repetition, addition, and refinement. The students learn to play by imitating the recorded pieces he listens to many times each day. He internalizes each piece first and then is shown how to recreate it on the instrument. He masters many of the instruments technical difficulties and learns to communicate through it before he learns note- reading, just as he learns to speak before he reads and writes from the printed page. (Barber 1991).

Suzuki's learning and teaching approach encourage that songs, dance, learning of musical instruments should be taught first by observation, repetition, and memorization just like the traditional method before introducing note reading of printed music. Successful teaching in music history results in stylistic understanding and comprehension of a broad sweep of stylistic development and only a successful integration of traditional methods of teaching with modern methods can fully accentuate this.

It must be emphasized at this juncture that though the policies of curriculum development and enhancement of teaching methodologies in particular context might be complex especially in the Nigerian situation, we cannot shy away from addressing the adoption of some of the elements of traditional education into modern educational practices as a stratagem for improving and enhancing quality such an adoption should, however, be tackled in a creative manner (Omolewa, 2007).

Traditional methods of teaching are critical to the realization of music education objectives in the 21st century for pundits have asserted and described that an integration of traditional methods of music with modern methods are essential for learners who are expected to be well rooted in the knowledge of concepts being taught and should be able to retain and transform it to visible behavioural characteristics which will eventually culminate into socially responsible and active citizens.

Although the inherent characteristics of both the traditional and modern methods involved in teaching music are known, and have been effective over time, the 21st century classroom however opens up possibilities for dialogue between these set of methods, a form of dialogue that will bring

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about a successful integration leading to reflexive practical learning, meaningful and contextualized
~~the 21st Century Classroom~~ knowledge of life and its ensuing parameters; how to deal with socio-cultural context and how best
learners can become aware of value formation and cultural identity so as not to be disconnected from
their cultural referential.

Overall, since the philosophy of music education focuses on attitudinal changes such as inculcation of democratic values, amelioration of social vices and displays of acceptable norms, demonstration of the traits of good citizenship and patriotism that can help learners contribute positively towards the progress and development of their society, there is the need to further accentuate this in the present day through effective instructional delivery of music education content in schools in Nigeria. Such a move calls for a capable integration of traditional teaching methods with modern educational practices. Such integration will likely create a balance that will make music educational delivery within the classroom more meaningful, purposeful and productive in terms of functionality. In essence, a successful integration of traditional methods of education with modern music educational practices will not only exert positive influence on the delivery mode of instruction, it can also inspire achievement of knowledge domain; the stimulation of positive attitudes towards learning and enhance the possession of intrinsic capacities in learners in music and other fields of endeavour.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is important to note that the twenty-first century is the era of knowledge innovation. As a music educator, the traditional music teaching mode and repetitive skills training can meet the needs of social development if it is merged with the modern teaching methods. There is need to update the traditional music education philosophy, reform the teaching behaviour and transform the role of teachers, so as to construct a student-centered teaching philosophy and not the other way round. This idea advocates independent learning ability, thinking ability and creativity. It emphasizes the student's dominant position. This can get rid of the negative influence of the traditional educational thoughts, arouse the students' interest and enthusiasm, and cultivate the students' more comprehensive musical ability, so as to meet the demand of modern society for musical talents. Therefore, the specific implementation process needs to combine the actual situation of the school and the music teaching. Teaching is a systematic work, and the realization of effective teaching is not accomplished overnight.

The traditional educationist to an extent achieved effective music education; however, the traditional methods of teaching music has some drawbacks and hence for us to borrow or adopt any part of it as there must be a modification. This is because teaching goal is not only the starting point of teaching activities but also the result. There is need for the combination of the traditional and modern methods of teaching and learning of music because the 21st century music education pupil or student needs to develop effective individual and social potentialities, for example initiative, responsibility, creativity; development of positive attitudes and values towards work, local cultural traditions, and the development of a healthy balance of learning that will suit individual interests and future needs in order to achieve quality and relevance within the socio-cultural and global context. Only a successful integration of traditional education methods with modern educational practices can fully accentuate this.

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