

THE NEED FOR REFOCUSING MUSIC EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL IN ETSKAKO IN EDOSTATE

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Abstract

This work is on the need for music education in primary schools in Etsako of Edo State. Its aim is to highlight the meaning, form, importance and kinds and music and their importance to the child in the primary school. Music has always been part of man, because he is born, named, initiated, betrothed, married and eventually bidden farewell from the earth with musical activities. Besides spoken language, music is another vehicle of communication and expression used in human interactional situations -politics, commerce, education, information, social engagement which constitutes man's way of life.

Introduction

Music education, according to Regelski (1981), is the exploration of musical activities relevant to children's present and future lives. Music education could also be defined as the training, education, practical and aesthetic experience acquired in the field of music. It provides the child with acquisition of skills and creative ability to a reasonable and appropriate degree. It prepares the child for a lifelong occupation.

On the other hand, curriculum has been designed as the programme of the school which represent choice that has been made by the participants in educational activities in a given society. The inclusion of music education in primary school curriculum depends very much on the people's interest and knowledge of music and the good it offers to the society.

In Etsako West Local Government Area, there is need for refocusing music education in primary schools curriculum as it has objectives to train the pupils in rudiments and practice of music writing and introduce them to the music of their culture. Before the advent or coming of the colonial master, music was already in existence in Nigeria. It is our traditional music. It started along with man's existence. It started when man was involved in a number of activities like occupational songs, ceremony, marriages, initiations, new yams festivals, circumcision etc.

Whether good or bad, sad or happy people use songs in Etsako in Edo State, music for boys are performed at the end of the year after training, they are taught to sing, dance and drum, While the girls are taught occupational dance, music group and other groups both at birth, puberty and death are formed.

Music education unlike most other disciplines has two major phases: They are the theory and practical. In tradition where there is writing and printing, one finds formal education and publishing of music books which set down the theory of the subject and even guide to the practical aspects.

In Edo State of Nigeria, there exist different kinds of music in different society or communities. These kinds of music could be termed as folk music or traditional music. This kind of music has been composed orally and transmitted from generation. The music is used at different occasions. Children have been exposed to music through their mothers singing cradlesongs to clam the babies to stop crying or lullaby songs. Songs used to put babies to sleep. Children easily listen to such songs and stop crying or sleep.

The National Policy on Education (1977), included music as one of the core subjects in the primary and secondary school curriculum. This means that the nation has realized that the study of music is essential just like the study of mathematics, English and sciences. For this reason, music should be taught or learnt both as academic discipline and as art. In this view, music in theoretical and practical sense is needed for the overall development of the children in Edo State.

Ukeji (1968), recorded that music teaching came into Nigeria as far back as 1858, the first day school was opened in Edo State pupils were taught bible stories, music etc, apart from the music was taught through musical drills and singing exercise, (Taiwo, 1981). Remarkd also that the Nigeria Education System - past, present and future has already been one of the subjects included in the

school curriculum to be taught in the school. In 1842, Western Musical activities were regarded as paganism and were wiped out by such discriminations.

In 1916, the curriculum was expanded with music still given its place of importance. But in 1926, there was an educational edict passed and submitted by Phelps-Stokes' Commission which considered music as an extra-curricular activity. Presently, music has been given national recognition and has been prominent in the school curriculum. A national conference was held and produced the curriculum which balanced (the Western and African music education has emphasized equal accessibility of individuals in order to achieve self-actualization consciousness.

Hunt (1981), states that the ability to read music will be good, bad or indifference according to the time allocated to it on the time table, he further to says that the position is complicated by the demands of very many subjects for inclusion in the school timetable, music he said allocated only one period of about forty minutes per week, he suggested that there should be the need of music education to be taught or given at least four periods in a week in the primary school for music teaching and practicing from an integral part of every child's education.

Fafunwa (1974), states that primary school education in Nigeria includes music and songs and other subjects such as domestic sciences, needlework, English and cookery. Because it has been included in the curriculum, there is need for it to be studied in primary schools. Today, music has been a national recognition and has also been given prominent in school curriculum. From school to school, the time allocated to music studies varies from 25 minutes to 40 minutes.

The significance of music in the primary school child, according to Smith and Renoli (1978), the need for artistic and creativity in music education is well understood, because children learn to develop right sense to totality, they realize the need for steadfastness and regularity of beats which help to enlarge their knowledge and deepen their understanding of the art of appreciation through the knowledge of the art of singing and playing instrument to the children in their first induction to the world of music.

The induction of music in the school curriculum was supported by Edwin and David when they said that - music is part of culture which has to do with the development of appreciation of beauty. There is need for music in primary school curriculum as it helps to train the children to participate actively in traditional music as a form of school activity or community expression and helps also bridge the gap that now exists between the school child and traditional music environment. The article dealing with the aim of music published by Akpabot (1986), states that:

There is need for music education in schools as it helps the growth of both African and Western music. He also states that the learners should possess the ability to use traditional store of proverbs and norms in his society and have the ability to say the right thing at the right moment.

However, music education as the researcher has found out helps to understand the various ways schools, political ideology or organization, different dominations, individual and group of individuals and occupation affect the society. During festivals, inter-house sport, ceremonies and different activities in primary school. Children learn to sing to suit the particular occasion, for example, during a governor's visit to a school, pupils sing welcome songs, using the name of the governor and highlight some of his achievements in the state so far. Also, during festivals, children sing song to abuse those who have violated the law of the land. So it is in various occasion in the society.

Roberts music is very functional everywhere throughout the world and has its aesthetic value for leisure, transmission of culture for artistic ingenuity to encourage people.

Hunt (1957), states that: There is need for music as it helps to foster the ability to enjoy or get the best out music. Music education in primary school curriculum helps to increase the child's wisdom, idea and knowledge. Music improves child's behaviour because most of them contain proverbs that can help to encourage or discourage a child to do well in the well community. There is need for music because it embraces those activities capable of propagation and promoting the academic experience of the pupil. As a result, music education is more meaningful and purposeful when it starts from primary school curriculum as it well help to remove that prejudice and societal opinion developed about those studying music.

Moreover, music education should be introduced as a deliberate systematic and planned by this government to change the behaviour of the society towards the study of music. This means that if

music is given equal and fair treatment like other subjects, people will no longer regard it as a subject for non-intelligent and irresponsible set of people.

Consequently, there is need for music to be encouraged. The pupils should learn the subject and future life career. Music education provides useful information about our culture that is our way of life, efficiency and effectiveness of the child's right from primary school. Music education right from primary school measures the competence or capability of pupils in terms of whether or not they have realized the agreed objectives to take music as a future career.

Hunt (1980), claimed that Music encourages satisfactory reaction or response to music stimuli. It helps the acquisition or formation of music taste, ability to discriminate between good and bad music. Music provides social needs like: love, moral, peace, order and good government. It preaches against social vices like crime of different kinds, juvenile delinquency, poverty and hunger etc.

"The National Policy on Education (2004), has it that music education with given the child opportunity for development manipulation skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limit of this capacity. This is to say that music education helps the child to attain self development both physically and intellectually, music education equally gives room for self-actualization and aiming at the time of consciousness through the organization for dancing group any festival or ceremony.

It provides basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for future advancement. This means that there is need for music education in primary school as it will enable the government to plan the scheme of work which will lead to improvement of music education for further studies. Music can do so many things in the life of a child and for that matter it has so many desirable results, Akpabot, in his publication Sunday Time April 18th (1984).

Music can also stimulate the child's mind. Music in primary school most especially, the singing and dancing aspects stimulates the child to love the subject the more. In this case, he tries to pick interest in other aspect of music training. The development of interest in music helps them to enlarge their knowledge and deepen their understanding of the arts in preparation for further studies.

Hunt (1980), also states that music promotes good neighbourliness which means that music encourage team spirit, working together through music ensemble. Primary school children, learn better when they work harmoniously in groups. They learn to respect the opinion, views and expression of others and learn compromise that helps in communication and transmission of meaning to others. In this regard, music education right from primary school enables the pupils to understand themselves and their want as members of society.

Recommendations

What is stated in the curriculum concerning aspect of music education "creative arts and culture" should be actualized on the timetable and be made- examinable at the first leaving school certificate examination probably under general papers. This could help to shape and sharpen the child's interest in music and determine the future career prospect of the child.

Also, the three tiers of government that administer the education sector (Primary schools, Secondary schools, Tertiary Institutions/Colleges of Education) in Nigeria that is, local government, state government and both state and federal government are not left out in this matter - those in authority should encourage music education programme by providing necessary facilities to facilitate the smooth running of the NCE programme. Mention must be made here that these bodies have tried in no small measure to create music department in some of the colleges of education in Nigeria but these are not really enough to cater for need of the growing population educationally.

Conclusion

Conclusively to the greater majority of men and women, music education means something and to many, it means a great deal. For this simple reason, there is need for refocusing music education in the primary school curriculum of Estako in Edo State of Nigeria because the knowledge music and the cultivation of a love of music have an essential and universal part in education.

It has also been observed that music education in Estako has not been given a strong attention in primary schools due to; Parental attitude towards the subject (music) that it is not a curricular

subject There are not qualified music teachers in our schools to handle the teaching of the subject. Lack of teaching aid to teach the subject. Such as piano, guitar, recorder, drums sets, even African traditional music instrument as the playing of these could attract the children interest in the subject.

Finally, I feel that the Ministry of Education and the Local Education Authority in Estako should re-emphasizes music education in primary school curriculum. Government, head of schools and teachers should organize musical competitions and seminars among school where the importance of music would be made known.

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