

# MUSIC AND DANCE A VERITABLE TOOL FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SELF PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA

By

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## **Abstract**

*This paper takes a look at the importance of music and dance as a means of creating wealth and self sustenance with an attendant contribution to the national development of Nigeria. One of the fundamentals of our corporate human existence is built around the tenets of music and dance as a means of divine and self appreciation and it's holistic evaluation as a medium of self employment and productivity. It is important to point out that if the concepts of music and dance are developed by the Government. It will be another money spinning avenue that will contribute greatly to our national economy.*

According to Olateju (2006), many Nigerian youths are involved in cultism, armed robbery, drug abuse, rape and a host of other evils as being perpetrated by them. The problem of youth unemployment in Nigeria stemmed from the fact that they lack relevant saleable skills for self-reliance in a growing economy like Nigeria. According to Okogie (2003) cited by Olateju (2006), the following are the causes of unemployment in Nigeria; (a) Rapid population growth (b) Lack of expansion of local industries (c) Rapid rural-urban migration (d) Inappropriate school curricular and poor education that is largely irrelevant to the needs of the labour market. Some of such graduates lack employable skills to set up their own small-scale enterprises. Music and dance, becomes a credible alternative employment for self productivity.

## **Concept of Music**

Music is not only an organized sound but an inspired sound. According to the new “Grolier Webster International Dictionary, music is the art of organizing sound or arranging sound into meaningful patterns usually involving pitch, rhythm and sometimes harmony”. Some early philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras and Confucius saw music as “a department of ethics with ten through six emotions-sorrow, joy, anger, satisfaction, pity and love”. Blacking (1973) viewed music as more than just the art of combining or organizing sound for pleasurable purpose. He explained further.

*Music is a synthesis of cognitive process which is present in culture and in human body; the form it takes and effect it has on people are generated by the social experiences of human bodies and different cultural environment. Because music is humanly organized it expresses aspect of the existence of individual in the society.*

## *Pristine*

From the above definition music is not only an organized sound but a language of emotions which aims at communicating meanings as well as allowing individuals or groups to have spirit of oneness and cooperation in order to work together as a group and perform in unity.

### **Concept of Dance**

Dance is the art of moving the body in a rhythmical way, usually to music to express an emotion or idea, to narrate a story or simply to take delight in movement itself. According to Anoke (2004) dance is an “expression in rhythmic movement of an inner perception that stimulates both mind and body”. It is an act distinct from a natural activity and can be traced from the moment when it was harnessed to a rhythm, probably stamping the feet and clapping of hands. It is however an intangible art existing in the bodies of the performers and dying with them Peggy (1986) in describing the rhythm of dance stated that “the rhythmic pattern of Nigerian traditional dance consciously expresses the social identity of the performers and implicitly reflects the physical conditions in which they live, the nature of the country, the climate, the work that people do, the design of their daily movements, which become heightened and intensified into the rhythmic movement of their dances.”

However, dance movement is derived from the everyday movement of the people either at work or in other circumstances for instance, in the dance of hunters, scene from the hunt are depicted and in the case of farmers, movements that originate from common place farming activities such as cutting, hoeing and sowing may be illustrated. It is certain that dance is considered an essential element in the creation of an ideal sound mind. Dance is considered an art of nobility, harmonious and graceful attitude.

### **Music and Dance through Formal and Informal Training**

Music and dance through formal and informal training education is that which trains the learner on the process of acquiring knowledge and skills with the ultimate aim of producing music and dance directors. It teaches the learner how to use music and dance to improve the quality of their lives, stimulate creative thought, inspire them, and give them a sense of belonging, beauty, energy, strength and courage to enhance other aspects of everyday life. According to Uzoma (2001)- “Music education has as one of its cardinal objectives, the provision of experiences and training of learner, such experiences, when acquired would help learners to live and contribute positively towards the progress and development of the society”.

Music and dance through training has the objectives of stimulating the learners creative and skill acquisition. In view of this, Besson (1980) stated that:

Music education must adhere to the philosophy that our foremost purpose is to foster an understanding of music that leads to lasting appreciation of and participation in

music creativities that through aesthetic experiences life is enriched and its beauty is intensified.

### **Music and Dance as Means of Employment and Self Productivity**

The role of music and dance cannot be overemphasized. Both have played considerable roles in the economic development of the country Adeleke (2001) stated that music is an integral part of African society and that nothing has succeeded in separating it from the Nigerian society. Thus, music plays a vital role in the economic, social religious and political activities of the country. It equally enhances the continuity and stability of a particular culture. Music and dance have not only demonstrated that it is not only a means of entertainment but a cultural and economic avenue of employment and self productivity. Outside the state council of Arts and culture, which is under the funding of Government, other entertainment groups with the P-square, Dbanj, Tuface, Fela of blessed memory, Femi-Fela's son and a host of others have used the instrument ability of music and dance as a veritable tool for self realization of their God's given talents. These talented body or group of musicians have used music and dance in the holistic development of their personality. They have created job opportunities not only for themselves but equally to others in the areas of singing, playing of musical instruments, dancing, marketing production of musical and dance plates, the composers and choreographers. Resent statistic released by the national bureau of statistics -2005-2010, says that about 65% of the total population of the country are living below poverty belt of one dollar per day, this translates to about 107,870,000 million Nigerians.

Turino (1999) stated that people in many societies intuitively recognized the emotional power of music in their personal family and community life. If ethnomusicologists have come to agree on anything over the last decade, it is that music is a key resource for realizing personal and collective identities which in turn are crucial for social, political and economic participation.

Nnamani (2001), observed that Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON) has been in the vanguard for the promotion of young talented musicians in the country. This is done through the organization of concerts, music festivals and competitions. During one of the concerts organized and performed at AGIP Recital Hall in April 1999 Adeniji (1999) cited in Nnamani (2001) stated "that the interesting thing about to night's show is that most of the artists though already known faces are young talents who will bring to bear their energy, creativity and zeal of the youth."

### **Breakdown of Some of the Beneficiaries of the Music and Dance Industry are As Follows.**

1. Choreographers
2. Dances
3. Composers
4. Composers/performers

## *Pristine*

**Choreographer** The choreographer is the arranger of dances either for a soloist or a group. He is the most important figure in dance history. He is the creative mind that invents the order and combination of steps, the patterns of group dances, the communication of narrative through dance and the extension of dance techniques by using familiar actions in new and more complex ways.

A choreographer, given trained bodies, can set dancers in motion in an almost unlimited number of ways. Dance can be highly stylized or simple almost naturalistic. Choreographers draw inspiration from many kinds of dancing and each kind influences the others. Some of these choreographers are:- Mr. Ikike Ufford from University of Uyo in the department of Theatre Art in Akwa Ibom State, Dr. Mrs. Ifure Ufford Azorbo, Mr. Arnold Udoka, Dr. Chukwuma Okoye, Prof. Ojo Bakare, Prof. Chris Ogolo, Miss Esther Moses etc. These people have enriched themselves through this means and have created employment opportunities for others.

**Dancers:** It is through the body of the dancer that the art of dancing is portrayed, and the physical, emotional and national characteristics of the dancer determine the quality and the nature of the dance. For example women tend to be more flexible than men, but they do not usually have equal strength and stamina. The way in which dancers perform depends greatly on the land of their origin; the dance styles, the national dress, even the climate. Dance styles throughout the world are different for men and women. In most national dances the men demonstrate their strength and virility, the women their charm and femininity.

This aspect also has made some people what they are in the society which ordinarily they could not have attained.

**Composer** Music begins with an idea in the mind of a person called a composer. The idea maybe a melody, a rhythmic motif or a distractive tone color. The composer must have the ability and skill to organize these musical ideas in a logical and meaningful fashion which can be perceived and understood by the listener. All composers who have created lasting works of art have been able to achieve a high level of imagination and sensitivity in their works.

### **Composer/Performer**

In many music's, such as the oral traditions of Africa and India, as well as American jazz, the performer is often the composer. In such traditions, the musician creates or composes at the instant of performance. Thus, the role of composer now appears in the improvisations by the performer. These improvisations while appearing to be spontaneous, are most often based on a catalogue of musical ideas which have been stored in the musician's mind over a period of time. During performances, the musician must organize both stored and newly created sound materials in logical and imaginative ways. Examples of composers are - For academic composers - Prof. Laz Edward Ekwueme, Later William Wilberforce C. Echezona, Prof. Richard C Okafor, Prof. Dan C.C Agu, Dr. Chukwuemeka Nzewi to mention but few. For popular composers – Late Stephen Osita Osadebe, Late Sunny Okosun, Victor Uwaifor, Sunny Ade, Don Jazzy,

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Dbanj, P-Square, Tuface Idibia etc. For traditional composers; Mike Nwachukwu Ejeagha, Akunwafor Ezigbo Obilikgbo, Okechukwu Nwatu, Moroco Mmaduka etc. This area of professionalism has created a lot of job opportunities and has trained so many people to be self reliant/self productive in Nigeria.

**Conclusion**

From the above discussions, one can observe that there are a lot of employment opportunities for those who had acquired the correct skill during the process of training. It further buttresses the fact that those that had acquired knowledge and skills do not lack employment as they are self-reliant.

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