

VOICE PERFORMANCE EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: THE CURRENT STATE

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Abstract

This article presents a critical review of the current state of Voice Performance Education in Nigerian Universities, which is a product of Voice pedagogy. Selected universities in Southern Nigeria were used as the primary focus of the paper. This followed a period of critical observation of challenges of professionalism and lack of performances or direction by voice performance graduates of departments of music of Nigerian universities. Voice Performance is an area of specialization students who have majored in voice opt for in their final year. Some Voice Performance programmes of selected universities outside Nigeria are reviewed to obtain an international perspective on Voice Performance Education. The objective is to present the current state of voice performance education in Nigerian universities with a view to presenting solutions to identified challenges. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. It employed a mixed method in the analysis of data. Relevant literature on Voice Performance Education as well as experiences gathered over the years were utilised in data gathering for this article. The paper argues that voice performance education in southern Nigeria can be improved upon if voice performance students are adequately prepared and supervised by voice specialists for their final performance. This will go a long way in producing voice performance graduates who are well grounded in the field of voice performance.

Introduction

Formal music education at the university level started in Nigeria at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1961, being the first indigenous Nigerian university. Before then, however, forms of musical performance on organ, piano and church music (choir) were given in semi-formal settings in church choirs, school choirs and also privately. These forms of semi-formal music education were concentrated in the southern part of Nigeria where there was dominance of Christian converts and the Christian religion that was newly transported to Nigeria. The rich musical culture of Nigeria was a great impetus to the fledgling of new Western music culture of formal music education. Writings on Nigerian music education (Okafor, 1992; Nzewi, 1988; Adegbite, 2001; Idolor, 2001; Onyeji and Onyeji, 2013; etc.) are replete with historical perspectives on music education in Nigeria, hence detailed discussions on it is not necessary here. From its nursery of semi-formal beginnings, formal music education has been cultivated in Nigeria and, indeed, has become a formidable component of music in Nigeria.

Since the inception of formal tertiary music education in 1961, several institutions of higher learning have embraced the study of music. At least twenty three universities and no fewer than sixteen colleges of education and one polytechnic now offer Music in their educational programmes. Of the number of universities offering music in their educational programmes, 18 have full departments of music (University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu state 1961; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun state 1976; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra state 1992; Delta State University, Abraka, Delta state 1985; University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom state 1982; University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo state 2014; University of Port-Harcourt, Port-Harcourt, Rivers state 2010; Alex Ekwueme-Federal University Ndufu Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi state 2015; University of Jos, Plateau, Plateau state 2014; University of Calabar, Cross River

state 2016; Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State 2012; University of Benin, Edo State 1978; Ignatius Ajuru University Of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State 2010; Kwara State University, Kwara State 2010; Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu State 2015; Babcock University, Ogun State 2015; Mountain Top University, Otta, Ogun State 2016 and Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education 1974, runs a music degree programme under the University of Nigeria, Nsukka) while 5 are combined with other disciplines (University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State 1982; University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos State 1975; Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos State 2001; Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State 2012 and Olabisi Onabanjo University Ago-Iwoye, Ogun state 2018). In these departments, music is combined with other disciplines such as dance and theatre arts. As such, they do not offer full music programme as in the other 18 departments. For instance, University of Ilorin, University of Lagos and Lagos State University are Departments of Performing Arts and Cultural and Creative Arts respectively. Idolor (2001:138-140) provides a fairly comprehensive list of higher institutions that offer music and their dates of establishment.

Although the programmes adopted by these institutions are bi-cultural, featuring studies in western and African music on equal footing, a constant on the study programmes is voice performance as an area of specialisation. The implication is that for more than fifty years, voice performance education has been offered in the various departments of music in Nigerian universities and colleges of education. The argument is hinged on the obvious existence of voice as a stress area in these universities. Also, the specialisation of students in voice performance as their chosen stress area affirms the possibility of the existence of voice performance education leading to the award of music degree to such students. With the various departments of music offering voice pedagogy and voice

performance education for specialisation, it becomes critical to interrogate the processes employed in achieving their set goals.

Training in voice performance in these institutions aim at equipping students on how to use, manage and develop the voice in addition to acquiring good performance skills. It also aims at empowering such students to face challenges of vocal music and voice performance in global competitive situations. Developing competitive manpower is critical in such trainings. The capacity to develop interpretive and perceptive vocal delivery is a significant component of voice performance education in such instances. The achievement of the set objectives is, therefore, critical to this study.

Over the years students whose stress area is voice performance have taken to the culture of learning of voice pieces as representing voice performance education, while some students who take voice as their major instrument end up doing voice performance as their area of specialization in their final year. Many of them have not gained proficiency on the instrument to the point that one would consider them professionally trained for the challenges ahead. Some of such students who end up doing voice performance as their stress area never took voice as their major instrument and for those who were voice major students, singing ended as soon as examinations were over, while some manage to identify with church choirs where they hardly play any significant role as voice major/performance students/graduates. A simple observation shows that the few voice performance graduates that have made their marks in Nigeria (Joy Nwosu - Lo Bamijoko and Ori-Enyiri Okoro, Oguchi Egbunine and Elizabeth Onyeji). These are those that studied voice performance outside Nigeria or at least outside the department of music before their study programmes in the Universities. There seems to be a situation where voice performance students who started their singing

lessons in their various departments have not been able to excel as professional singers/art music soloists.

An earlier study (Onyeji, 2010) had focused on a comprehensive investigation of voice pedagogy in Nigeria. The study interrogated the teaching and learning processes, the available infrastructure, teaching methods, learning attitudes, teachers' vocal skills and the outcomes of the learning processes. A close observation of the outcome of voice studies, which culminate in Voice Performance in Departments of Music in Nigeria reveals a worrisome situation. The issues range from who teaches, what is taught and the methods of teaching voice performance in these departments. While many graduates of music majored in voice performance, it would be instructive to discover why many of such people are not heard of and do not perform after graduation. Little or no serious art music performances are given by such graduates, raising the question on how voice performance students are prepared for the challenges of the profession. More worrisome is the lack of capacity and low manpower development among those stressing and specialising in voice performance for their degree.

This article discusses the teaching and learning methods for voice performance education in Nigerian universities as well as the factors that contribute to perceived lack of professionalism among voice performance graduates, with a view to finding solutions. Emphasis is laid on voice performance education at the undergraduate level. Five universities in Southern Nigeria were used for the purposes of gathering data used for this article. This is because these universities have longer history in terms of music studies in Nigeria. The universities are: University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; University of Uyo, Uyo; Delta state University, Abraka and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife.

The Human Voice as a Performing Instrument

The human voice is a musical instrument just like the flute, the cello, the piano and so many other instruments. Reid (1972: 23) had earlier asserted that "the realisation that the vocal organs form an instrument having potentialities of a specific nature, like all musical instruments, removes many misconceptions regarding natural limitations..." The human voice is the only instrument capable of combining speech with music. In other words, it is only the human voice that can reach our innermost being conveying messages in words that no other instrument is capable of. It is the only natural instrument in existence; it is capable of producing sounds no other instrument can produce in addition to imitating other natural sounds. Christy (1969) describes the voice as a wind instrument, likening the vocal cords to the lips of a trumpet player. Sounds produced by the voice by means of the vocal cords are done in conjunction with other organs of the body. These organs function as:

- (a) Amplifiers: The organ responsible for the amplification of sound is known as the organ of resonance or the resonating system. The sound produced at the vibration of the vocal cords has to be "amplified" before it is sent out to the listener. This amplification is done within the body by the organs of resonance. Allied to the notion of singing on the breath is that of the correct place of resonance: A sound not sustained by the breath cannot take the proper advantage of the resonating capacities of the head and the resonance chamber of the thorax. Ekwueme (1993: 61), Wigmore (2002: 79). The sound produced is amplified and modified by the vocal tract resonators- the throat, the mouth cavity and the nasal passages.
- (b) Means of Articulation: Articulation is the way and manner we pronounce our words when singing. This has to be done in a way that the words are clearly formed and the message properly

conveyed to the listening audience. Simply put articulation is a clear way of pronouncing words. Proper articulation is achieved by the combined use of the tongue, the lips, the palate, the teeth and the lower jaw. These organs help in the articulation of words in order to convey the message of the song to the listening audience. These organs are also called the vocal tract articulators and their main function is to assist in producing recognizable words. "This sound is then amplified in the chest and head cavities of the singer and emitted through the mouth, having been shaped by the teeth tongue and lips into intelligible or unintelligible words or sounds" (Ekwueme;1993: 53). The human voice is the only musical instrument capable of doing this thereby making it superior to all other musical instruments in existence.

- (c) Means for Enhancement: These organs are also known as the air pressure system. They enhance the sound produced by providing and regulating air pressure to cause the vocal folds to vibrate. The lungs, the abdominal walls /muscles the diaphragm, the chest muscles and the ribs function together with other organs to produce quality sound. Ekwueme describes this as the abdominal press; this is a process where the muscles of the abdominal walls are used as a "support" for the breath in order to be able to sing the high note smoothly without any cracks or breaks in the voice. "This is done by "pulling in" the stomach muscles so that the singers' chest "swells", and the singer becomes shaped like a grey hound, a lion or gorilla, or like a champion weight lifter or body building fanatic". (1993: 58)

The human voice, unlike other musical instruments is under the influence and control of the singer. The psychological state of a singer can have the most profound effect on the quality of sound produced. Lo-Bamijoko, in an earlier article highlighted two major

differences between the voice and other instruments. She says "...(1) the voice is completely under the influence of the singer, other instruments are not. (2) The voice reflects the emotional and psychological state of the singer, other instruments do not". (2001: 74). Just like other instrumentalists are encouraged to take adequate care of their instruments, singers in the same vain are encouraged to care for their voices in order to avoid causing irreparable damage to their instruments. Unlike most instruments, the human voice is capable of showing how emotional the singer is by a combination of musical sounds and words, no other instrument can do this. Reid (1971) also buttresses the aforementioned by stating that "...its performance is therefore affected by such factors as the emotional, physical and even social states". Voice pedagogues must have this at the back of their minds when dealing with their voice students in order to get the best out of them.

Singing

Singing is the act of producing organized musical sounds with the voice. For this research work, singing and voice performance refers to the same thing and will be used interchangeably. Voice performance is the oldest form of performance. It is performance done by means of the human voice. The human voice is the most natural of all musical instruments and is also one of the most widely used. It interprets the meaning of words to the listeners. Through singing one can express various kinds of emotions and sentiments. All cultures of the world have some form of vocal music or the other. Voice performance is a technical engagement requiring talent, skill and techniques. Thus, voice performers require adequate preparations, training and harnessing of their talents for proper execution of their art.

Notwithstanding, there are erroneous perceptions regarding voice performance as an easy option or engagement for those who cannot do any other thing in music, especially among students of music. It is also felt by so many that anybody can sing and it does not require special training for technical knowledge for musical performance using the human voice. Evidence has however shown that poor training and inadequate knowledge or skill acquisition on the technical needs for voice performance have altogether resulted in lack of professionalism in voice performance in Nigeria, at least at the formal or art music context. A simple check reveals that while many students of music for instance, study or do voice major, not many develop the required skill and confidence to take up voice performance as their area of specialisation even after graduation. Such negative perception has weakened the outcome of voice pedagogy in Nigeria at the moment, where there are no active performers emerging from the teeming graduates of various departments that offer music.

Compounding the problem is a seeming lack of method and technique for voice performance education in Nigeria at the moment. A simple check reveals a somewhat random approach where each institution and or teacher applies his or her own method, sometimes without a formal approach. Without a laid out procedure, and or specific guide to emerging voice performers, it becomes compelling to present a perspective from a performer of a possible template that could be considered and used in routine training of voice performers.

Voice Performance Education

Voice performance education is the process by which all the activities of voice pedagogy are put into practice by means of performance using the human voice for the purposes of music education. It refers

to ways and approaches to teaching and learning of voice as an instrument of study and performance in music education contexts. Its broad goal is the training of the learner to become specialist singer and performer on different vocal musical genres and to develop the required professionalism and confidence to organize and execute group and independent vocal music performances. This is particularly in the form of solo voice performance for an organized listening audience. To achieve this, both the teacher and the learner must be aware and conversant with the technical requirements for performance voice training. The curriculum must also make relevant provisions that would properly root the learner within testable content and methodology. This is in addition to ensuring that the teacher and the learners possess required skills and flare for the creative endeavor. Elliot Eisner 2001 rightly stated that "We must not forget that to know the quality of Music Education that students have received, we need to know how they were taught", (p. 10).

Current Voice Performance Education Process

The study involved five universities in Southern Nigeria namely: University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; University of Uyo, Uyo; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife and Delta state University, Abraka. Eight randomly selected staff members who supervised voice performance and fourteen randomly selected students who opted for voice performance as their area of specialisation in their final year from the year 2016-2019 were interviewed, making it a total of 22 respondents for the interview. See Table 01 below.

Table 01: Number of Staff and Students Interviewed for the Study.

S / N	Name of Institution	No. of staff interviewed	No of students interviewed			Total
			2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	
1	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	2	2	4	3	11
2	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	-	-	-	-	-
3	University of Uyo, Uyo	2	1	1	1	5
4	Delta state University, Abraka	2	-	1	-	3
5	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife	2	-	1	-	3
Total		8	3	7	4	22

The study employed two questionnaires to solicit feedback from both students and lecturers who supervise voice performance. Questionnaires were distributed to 18 staff members who supervise voice performance and 37 students who opted for voice performance in their final years between the years 2016 to 2019 giving rise to a total number of 55 questionnaires for both staff and students. This is shown in tables 02 and 03 below.

TABLE 02: Number of questionnaires distributed to students who specialized on voice performance.

S / N	Name of Institution	No. of Students specializing in voice performance			No. of Questionnaires administered		
		2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
1	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	3	4	6	3	4	6
2	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	University of Uyo, Uyo	2	9	4	2	9	4
4	Delta state University, Abraka	2	3	0	2	3	0
5	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	2	2	0	2	2	0
Total		37			37		

TABLE 03: Number of questionnaires distributed to Lecturers who supervise voice performance.

S/N	Name of Institution	No. of Staff supervising voice performance students	No. of Questionnaires administered
1	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	4	4
2	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	-	-
3	University of Uyo, Uyo	8	8
4	Delta state University, Abraka	4	4
5	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	2	2
Total		18	18

Data collected using questionnaires, participant observation and interview methods revealed critical information on the current process for voice performance education. The data was analysed using mean and standard deviation. A mean of 2.50 and above was adopted.

Research Question 1. What are the areas of specialisation of lecturers that are involved in voice performance education in departments of music in universities in southern Nigeria?

Table 04: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Students on the Area of Specialisation of Lecturers who Supervise them on Voice Performance.

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
My voice performance lecturer is a recognized soloist in the Department and beyond.	2.08	.92	Disagree
My voice performance lecturer specialises in other aspect of music other than voice performance.	3.40	.76	Agree

Table 04 above shows the mean and standard deviation of the area of specialisation of lecturers who supervise voice performance. It shows the mean of lecturers whose area of specialisation is voice performance at 2.08 with a standard deviation of .92 and lecturers who specialise in other aspects of music other than voice performance at 3.40 with a standard deviation of .76. From the table above, it can be seen that lecturers who supervise voice performance are not voice performance specialists.

Table 05: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Lecturers on the Area of Specialisation of Lecturers who Supervise Voice Performance.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
My area of specialization is voice performance	1.4118	.61835	Disagree
I am involved in the teaching of voice performance as a departmental need.	3.5556	.61570	Agree

Table 05 above shows the mean and standard deviation scores for items 1 and 2 of the lecturers' questionnaire. The mean score for item 1 is 1.4118 with a standard deviation of .61835. These score indicates that the lecturers who supervise voice performance students are not voice performance specialists. The mean score for item 2 is 3.5556 with a standard deviation of .61570 indicating that they are involved in the teaching of voice performance as a departmental need not because they are qualified to do so.

Research Question 2. What are the methods used for the teaching and learning of voice performance education in departments of music in universities in southern Nigeria?

Table 06: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Students on the Methods used for the Teaching and Learning of Voice Performance.

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
I did not learn the vocal apparatus and techniques of singing while preparing for my performance stress examination.	2.8108	.93802	Agree
My voice performance lecturer demonstrates the performance requirements for each song before assigning them to me.	1.6486	.63317	Disagree
I study my pieces on my own without the assistance of my voice performance lecturer.	3.3243	.74737	Agree
My Lecturer is always present at every rehearsal to guide me.	1.6757	.66892	Disagree

Table 06 above shows the mean and standard deviation of the teaching and learning methods for voice performance. The first item on the table shows the mean score of students who did not learn the vocal apparatus and techniques of singing while preparing for their performance stress examination at 2.8108 with a standard deviation of .93802. The second item shows the mean score of students whose lecturers demonstrates the performance requirements for each song before assigning the songs to them at 1.6486 with a standard deviation of .63317. The third item shows the mean score of students who study the pieces on their own without the supervision/ assistance of their lecturers at 3.3243 with a standard deviation of .74737 and the last item on the table shows the mean score of students whose lecturers are always present during rehearsals at 1.6757 with a standard deviation of .66892. This indicates that lecturers who supervise voice performance students use varying methods for voice performance supervision as there seems not to be specific methods for handling voice performance in the departments.

Table 07: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Lecturers on the Methods used for the Teaching and Learning of Voice Performance.

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
I give vocal exercises and drills on vocal techniques during lessons.	2.9412	.82694	Agree
I give lecture notes on voice performance to my students.	2.2222	.87820	Disagree
There is no time for note taking during lectures because voice performance classes are not scheduled on the time table.	2.6667	1.08465	Agree
I use varying evaluation techniques for my students.	3.1667	.51450	Agree

Table 07 above shows the mean score of lecturers' responses to research questions 2. The first item on table 07 has a mean score of

2.9412 with a standard deviation of .82694, this implies that the lecturers who supervise voice performance give vocal exercises and drills on vocal techniques during lessons. The second item has a mean score of 2.2222 with a standard deviation of .87820 which translates to the lecturers not giving lecture notes on voice performance to their students. The 3rd item has a mean score of 2.6667 with a standard deviation of 1.08465 indicating that majority of the respondents agree that there is no time for note taking during lectures because voice performance classes are not scheduled on the time table. The last item has a mean score of 3.1667 with a standard deviation of .51450 indicating that the lecturers use varying evaluation techniques for my students.

Research Question 3. How adequate is the curriculum content for Voice Performance Education and its implementation in the Departments of Music in Southern Nigeria?

Table 08: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Students on the Curriculum Content and Implementation for Voice Performance.

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
My voice lecturer teaches from a scheme of work given to me at the beginning of the semester.	1.8919	.73725	Disagree
My voice performance lecturer does not teach from a scheme of work, I am only given my performance pieces and told to start rehearsals with my accompanists.	3.2162	.75038	Agree
The curriculum is silent on how voice performance should be handled.	2.9189	.86212	Agree

From table 08 above, the first item shows the mean score of students' responses at 1.8919 with a standard deviation of .73725

indicating that lecturers do not teach from a scheme of work given to the student at the beginning of the semester, the second item shows the mean score of students responses at 3.2162 with the standard deviation of .75038 while the last item shows the students' response at a mean of 2.9189 with a standard deviation of .86212. This implies that there is no curriculum content for voice performance.

Table 09: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Lecturers on the Curriculum Content and Implementation for Voice Performance.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
I approach the teaching of voice performance following the provisions of the curriculum.	2.3750	1.02470	Disagree
I teach from experience as there are no curriculum provisions for teaching voice performance.	2.8333	.92355	Agree
There are no curriculum provisions on how to handle voice performance.	2.8889	.90025	Agree

The analysis of table 09 above shows the mean score of lecturers who approach the teaching of voice performance following the provisions of the curriculum at 2.3750 with a standard deviation of 1.02470, this implies that lecturers do not approach the teaching of voice performance following the provisions of the curriculum, lecturers teach from experience as shown in the next item. The mean score of lecturers who teach from experience is 2.8333 with a standard deviation of .92355 and the mean score of the last item stating that there are no curriculum provisions on how to handle voice performance is 2.8889 with a standard deviation of .90025.

Research Question 4. What are the problems that militate against voice performance education in the departments of music in universities in southern Nigeria?

Table 10: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of Students on the Problems that Militate against Voice Performance Education in the Departments of Music in Universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
There is no time allotted for voice performance lessons on the time table.	2.8108	1.02301	Agree
There are no departmental pianists who can assist with preparation for voice performance. Student pianists sometimes do disappoint as they are also busy with their lectures.	2.6216	.79412	Agree
The department lack good functional pianos.	3.1351	.78748	Agree
There is need for a recital hall suitable for voice performance.	3.6667	.47809	Agree

From the analysis of the items on Table 10 above, the first item has a mean of 2.8108 with a standard deviation of 1.02301 indicating that there is no time allotted for voice performance on the timetable. The second item 58 shows a mean score of 2.6216 with a standard deviation of .79412 indicating that there are no departmental pianists to assist with voice performance. The 3rd item has a mean score of 3.1351 with a standard deviation of .78748 while the last item has a mean score of 3.6667 with a standard deviation of .47809. This implies that in addition to not having good recital halls, the departments lack good functional pianos.

Table 11: Mean and standard Deviation of the Responses of Lecturers on the Problems that Militate against Voice Performance Education in the Departments of Music in Universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
There is not enough time to teach my voice performance students effectively as there is no time allotted for it on the time table.	3.0000	.97014	Agree

Lectures and rehearsals sometimes clash with other lectures.	2.8889	.67640	Agree
The department does not have good pianos for rehearsals or a recital hall for performances.	3.0556	.93760	Agree

The analysis of data in table 11 shows that the mean score for the first item- There is not enough time to teach my voice performance students effectively as there is no time allotted for it on the time table is 3.0000 with a standard deviation of .97014 indicating that there is not enough time to teach voice performance students effectively. The second item has a mean score of 2.8889 with a standard deviation of .67640 meaning that lectures and rehearsals sometimes clash with other lectures. The mean score of the last item on this table is 3.0556 with a standard deviation of .93760 indicating that the departments do not have good pianos for rehearsals or a recital hall for performances.

Research Question 5. What are the possible solutions to the problems that militate against voice performance education in the departments of music in universities in southern Nigeria?

Table 12: The Mean and Standard Deviation of the Students' Response to the Possible Solutions to the Problems that Militate against Voice Performance Education in the Departments of Music in Universities in Southern Nigerian.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Lecturers who supervise voice performance should undergo training on voice performance practices.	3.6486	.48398	Agree
Specialists on voice performance should be brought in to help tackle the problems of voice performance	3.7297	.45023	Agree

Those for voice performance option should be made to start from 3 rd year to prepare for their final examination.	3.2703	.83827	Agree
Only voice major Students should be allowed to do voice performance.	3.4324	.72803	Agree
Voice major students should be encouraged to give bi-weekly recitals to prepare them for the task ahead.	3.6757	.52989	Agree
Adequate time should be allotted for voice performance on the time table.	3.6486	.48398	Agree
The curriculum should be specific on how to handle voice performance education.	3.5405	.50523	Agree
There should be a reorientation on how some staff and students perceive voice performance students.	3.7297	.45023	Agree

The analysis of data in table 12 is as follows: The first item has a mean score of 3.6486 with a standard deviation of .48398 indicating that Lecturers who supervise voice performance should undergo training on voice performance practices in order to effectively discharge their duties. The second item has a mean score of 3.7297 with a standard deviation of .45023, this means that majority of the respondents agree that specialists on Voice performance should be brought in to help tackle the problems of voice performance. The third item has a mean score of 3.2703 with a standard deviation of .83827. The implication of this is that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that those opting for voice performance option should be made to start from 3rd year to prepare for their final examination. The fourth item has a mean score of 3.4324 with a standard deviation of .72808. This shows that majority of the

respondents agree that only voice major students should be allowed to do voice performance. The fifth Item has a mean score of 3.6757 with a standard deviation of .52989 implying that Voice major students should be encouraged to give bi-weekly recitals to prepare them for the task ahead. The sixth item has a mean score of 3.6486 with a standard deviation of .48398. This means that most of the respondents agree that adequate time should be allotted for voice performance on the time table. The seventh Item has a mean score of 3.5405 with a standard deviation of .50523 indicating that the curriculum should be specific on how to handle voice performance education. The last item has a mean score of 3.7297 with a standard deviation of .45023, this implies that there should be a reorientation on how some staff and students perceive voice performance students

Table 13: The mean and Standard Deviation of the Lecturers' Response on the Possible Solutions to the Problems that Militate against Voice Performance Education in the Departments of Music in Universities in Southern Nigerian.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
I think there should be a reorientation for lecturers and students on the perception of voice performance as an easy option.	3.5556	.61570	Agree
Only lecturers who specialize on voice performance should be given the task of supervising voice performance students.	3.1111	.90025	Agree
Students who are interested in voice performance should be encouraged to begin early to prepare for it.	3.5556	.51131	Agree
Lecturers of voice performance should be involved in mentoring the upcoming ones	3.6111	.50163	Agree
Adequate time should be allotted for voice performance on the timetable.	3.6667	.48507	Agree
The curriculum should be specific on how to handle voice performance on the time table.	3.6667	.48507	Agree
Specialists on voice performance should be brought in from time to time to help out.	3.4444	.70479	Agree
Voice performance lecturers should give master	3.6111	.60768	Agree

The analysis of the items on table 13 above are all in the positive as almost all the respondents gave the same answer to the questions. The first item has a mean score of 3.5556 with a standard deviation of .61570 indicating that there should be a reorientation for lecturers and students on the perception of voice performance as an easy option. The second item has a mean score of 3.1111 with a standard deviation of .90025 indicating that only lecturers who specialize on voice performance should be given the task of supervising voice performance students. The third item has a mean score of 3.5556 with a standard deviation of .51131 indicating that students who are interested in voice performance should be encouraged to begin early to prepare for it. The fourth item has a mean score of 3.6111 with a standard deviation of .50163 indicating that lecturers of voice performance should be involved in mentoring the upcoming ones. The fifth item has a mean score of 3.6667 with a standard deviation of .48507, this shows that majority of the respondents agree that adequate time should be allotted for voice performance on the timetable. The sixth item has a mean score of 3.6667 with a standard deviation of .48507, this reveals that the curriculum is not specific on how to handle voice performance on the time table. The seventh Item has a mean score of 3.4444 with a standard deviation of .70479 indicating that most of the respondents agree that specialists on voice performance should be brought in from time to time to help out. The last item has a mean score of 3.6111 with a standard deviation of .60768, this shows that majority of the respondents agree that voice performance lecturers should give master classes at least once in a semester. Below are the summary of the findings.

1. In the course of this study, it was discovered that majority of the lecturers who supervise voice performance do not specialise on

voice performance. They specialise in other aspects of music other than voice performance. This was clearly shown in tables 04 and 05 above. Some of these lecturers are not even singers yet they are saddled with the responsibility of supervising students on voice performance. The result of this is that the students are ill prepared for their performances and end up not getting the needed guidance necessary for a good performance.

2. Lecturers use varying methods in the teaching of voice performance as there is no laid down procedure for voice performance at the institutions visited during the course of this study. This results in the lack of uniformity in the teaching and learning outcomes. Most often voice performance students are given voice pieces to learn on their own or even told to find their performance pieces.

3. There is not much impact on the students as they are mostly left to handle voice performance on their own with little or no assistance from their lecturers.

4. The curriculum content for voice performance is not adequate as it does not stipulate how voice performance is to be handled at the various departments visited in the course of this study. Some lecturers devise ways of handling the students while some leave the students to their devices. Some of these students sometimes seek out older students or other lecturers whom they think are knowledgeable on voice performances practices to assist them with the preparation for their performances. The curriculum only describes the course content but does not say how it should be handled.

5. The prospects of voice performance will take a positive dimension if students are properly prepared by those who specialise

on voice performance rather than rely on lecturers who do not specialise on voice performers. Also, voice performance will take a very positive turn if lecturers who prepare the students for voice performance go for some training on voice performance. This will enable them discharge their duties effectively. This will also motivate the students to take voice performance more seriously and pursue a career in it.

6. The problem of voice performance in the institutions visited ranges from the qualification of those who supervise voice performance to the lack of uniformity in the teaching methods. This results in lack of professionalism amongst the students who specialise in voice performance. Also, there are no departmental pianists to help with rehearsals and students pianists do not always have time to practice with the students who opt for voice performance as they are also busy with their own lectures. Most importantly, there is no time allotted for voice performance on the time table, this makes it difficult for students to factor in their rehearsals with their pianists.

Discussions

Lecturers who supervise voice performance are not voice specialists. Some of them are not even singers yet they are saddled with the responsibility of grooming and presenting students for their final defence on voice performance. It was discovered that apart from the fact that some of the lecturers who handle voice performance are specialists in other areas other than voice performance they are also not recognised soloists (voice) within and outside their institutions. They also do not possess the required skills needed to handle voice performance.

Voice performance, being a practical skill, requires some demonstrations by the teacher but this is sometimes lacking as the

teacher who is not an expert on voice will not be able to function effectively in this regard. This leads to poor quality of performances by the students and sometimes students are made to re-sit their performance exams because of this. This would have been avoided if specialists are available in the field of voice performance to handle the students. The same way it is disastrous for someone who is not a composer to compose a piece of music so also it is in the field of voice performance. This brings us to the issue of specialisation. If these lecturers do not have the requisite knowledge to pass on to their students, how can they give what they do not have? Holcomb (1999) advises young students searching for a voice teacher to select the teacher whose aim is to take the voice, guide and develop it towards total vocal freedom. This can only be achieved in a situation where the lecturer is an expert in the area of voice performance. The teacher can make or mar a student's voice if he/she is incompetent.

Christy (1969), states that selection of a teacher should be done as carefully as for a Doctor. This is a pointer to the fact that voice experts are as crucial to the development of voice performance as a doctor is to our health. According to Adedeji and Ajewole (2008), "the voice as a practical subject in Nigerian tertiary institutions is shortage of voice experts", they went on to list the number of voice teachers (not necessary experts in voice) and voice specialists in Nigerian universities (p.102-103)

Lecturers use varying evaluation techniques for their students as there seems not to be any laid down specifications as to how voice performance education should be handled. Most times students are left to their own devices when it comes to the selection of pieces for their performances, they sometimes end up choosing inappropriate pieces for their voice types. This can lead to strain on the voice and even damage. "Music which imposes strenuous demands at the

extreme of the vocal range is not recommended and, if used, may do harm to the voice of individuals" (Sur 1966: 103).

Durrant, 2003 asserts that "the quality of the singing experience in school, or anywhere for that matter, is dependent on the skills and knowledge of the conductor or teacher who leads it". (P. 176). In agreement to the above, Adeogun (2007) also says that "No nation can preserve and transform its musical heritage above the quality of its music teachers. This is because the advancement of any musical tradition rests in the hands of its teachers". (p. 4). This is why it is very important that only voice specialist should be given the task of handling voice performance students. Adedeji and Ajewole (2008) assert that most lecturers teach voice even though they are not voice specialists. No one has any business teaching voice performance if they cannot guide, advice and teach their students in their chosen area of specialisation.

In addition, the curriculum content for voice performance is adequate or inexistent in many of the institutions as it does not stipulate how voice performance is to be handled in the course of this study. Some lecturers devise ways of handling the students while some leave the students to their devises. Adedeji et al (Ibid), conclude that curriculum on voice pedagogy is not explicit enough thereby leading to disparities in the teaching of voice and of course the learning outcomes.

Recommendations

Some of the possible solutions to the problems of the study are: Students who intend to do voice performance should begin from their 3rd year to prepare for it. Only voice major students should be encouraged to do voice performance in their final year. This will enable them to have proper understanding of

what they are doing. Voice performance students should be encouraged to give bi-weekly recitals. This will help them get use to the stage. The curriculum should be specific on how voice performance should be handled. This will enable the lecturers to tackle voice performance uniformly. Lecturers who supervise voice performance should be voice performers themselves so as to be able to give the students proper guidelines on how to handle voice performance. It is generally observed that voice performance will take a positive turn if students are properly groomed by those who specialise on voice performance rather than rely on lecturers who are not voice experts. The summary of the recommendations is as follows:

- Voice specialists should be given the responsibility of handling voice performance students in terms of teaching and preparing them for their final year performance stress examinations.
- In the absence of voice specialists, lecturers who supervise voice performance should undergo some specialists training on voice pedagogy and performance practice in order for them to effectively carry out their duties.
- The curriculum should be reviewed to reflect the aspect of voice performance to be taught at certain terms.
- Adequate literature on voice studies should be acquired to enhance the teaching and learning process.
- Students should be encouraged to begin early to specialise on voice performance so as to gain enough knowledge to enable them become professionals in their chosen field of study.
- Institutions who offer voice performance should acquire suitable recital halls for both dress rehearsals and performance proper. This will ensure that the students get the required exposure before graduation.

- Lecturers who supervise voice performance should be involved in mentorship to encourage the students.
- Voice specialists should be brought in from time to time to give master classes on voice performance etiquettes.
- Lecturers who supervise voice performance should also be encouraged to give performances and master classes in order to motivate their students.

Conclusion

This article summarises the current state of voice performance education in Nigerian universities which reveals weak outcomes at the moment in professionalism and performance presence of graduates specialising in voice performance. Evidence of the study reveals a complex of challenges and issues associated with the qualification of voice teachers, methods of study delivery, choice of works performed and curriculum stipulations. The study brought to the fore the need to professionalize the study programme for enhanced output. It also revealed the lack of attention and focus on voice performance education as a critical part of music studies in Nigerian universities. The article also argued that significant progress would be made in the professionalization of voice performance in Nigeria if the education process is handled by properly trained voice experts who are guided by a well-planned curriculum with the provision of required teaching facilities.

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