

## TRADITIONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Blessing Ebere Arih, Gloria Oluchukwu Eze  
& Tobi Ebiakpo Kemewerigha

### Abstract

**T**raditional musical instrument technology is a substantial factor in the reaching and sustenance of national development. Various Nations have at various times committed substantial proportion of their resources to the development of effective musical instrument technology programme for the passion of necessary skills and knowledge which has led to their aforementioned technology and economic advancement. In Nigeria the commitment to traditional musical instrument technology and the rate of technological advancement clearly leave much to request. The focus of this paper is on the role traditional musical instrument technology education plays in the realization and sustenance of national development. It is an assessment of the present State of traditional musical instrument technology education in Nigeria and its relevance to the realization and sustenance of national development in the country.

**Keywords:** traditional, music, technology, development, instrument, Nigeria

### Introduction

The importance of musical instrument technology education in the realization and substance of national development cannot be over-emphasized. As reported by Osuala (1987) and Aboyi (1997) it is an

instrument par-excellence for effecting national development and the improvement of the life of the people. Conceptually musical instrument technology education as used here refers to well critical knowledge. Osuala (1987) puts it as all the systematic learning experiences which are designed to prepare individuals for gainful employment in recognized occupations as semi-skilled workers or music technologies or sub-professionals. The focus emphasize here is the preparation of individuals at the primary prevocational and post primary vocational levels to value the relevance of indigenous or traditional music technology in the realization of peace and unity in Nigeria. The aims and objectives of musical instrument technology education are well elaborated in the National policy on Education (National Policy on Education, 1981). Importantly, these aims and objectives have to do with the provision of man-power in applied technology at sub-professional level and the preparation of our young men and women for the understanding of the increasing complexity of technology. These aims and objectives are very much laudable as they are capable of moving the nation into a formidable state.

The present state of musical instrument technology education in Nigeria has not facilitated the realization of these aims and objectives but however the achievement of any reasonable level of real national development. In addition to other numerous constraints, the Nigerian government appears not to have placed much serious emphasis on the effective implementation of musical instrument technology education programme. Kum (2001) has observed that Nigeria can only break even with a renewed emphasis on musical instrument technology education. This is quite true on the ground that our instrument technology will become efficient under the consideration of our traditional ways of doing things. He further pointed out that if more attention is paid to musical instrument technology education, it will go a long way to solve issue of unemployment with attendant national's ills. All over the nation, the

prominence of musical instrument technology education as a factor in the realization and sustenance of national development is appreciated. But this realization will be to the maximum if these technologies are indigenous or traditional.

It is also not out of place to state that our inability to make any appreciable impact in terms of real development is largely the product of the low level of our commitment to the development of viable musical instrument technology education programs. This statement totally agrees with the observation by (Osuala, 1997) that Nigeria is abundantly rich in natural resources most of which cannot be utilized for the nations development because of lack of technology man power.

Todaro (1997) as reported by Aboyi (1997) is of the opinion that "it is the human resources of a nation and not its capital or its material resources that importantly determines the character and peace of its development put easily, human resources that constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. Any country that is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its individuals and effectively put it to use will be unable to develop anything else.

Most advanced countries of the world have at various times committed huge (heavy) resources to the provision of effective musical instrument technology education programme which has facilitated the diffusion of technology knowledge that is responsible for their industrial and military advancement today. All the advances countries of the world today are not as naturally endowed as Nigeria. Okafor (1998) has observed that the wealth and power of a nation depend on the successful education of its citizens, and in the number of highly talented men and women within the national compass a nation succeeds in providing superior and divergent education.

He further observed that among the factors necessary for the ushering in and consolidating contemporary development the factor of education stands in a class by itself, let it be observed that moreover being the central point around which factors revolve, musical instrument technology education is a major focus for the actualization of self-reliance, national development and real political and economic independence.

### **Purpose and Objective of the Study**

Culture is the way of life of people. Sometimes they are fully imbedded in the music and dance of a common people. Also music is a vital tool for unity. This is dated back to the days of our forefathers. The current state of Nigeria does not give room to the important of traditional musical instrument technology to excel in the field of music. Hardly will you find a complete documentation for the practice of the Africa traditional musical instrument technology if there are. So this study hopes to remind the Nigeria government not to forget the place of music in national development. We hope to show how relevant traditional musical instrument technology to the attainment of peace and unity. Therefore, the objective of this study is to bring back to the awareness of the masses, the possible extinction of our traditional musical instrument technology in Nigeria, if nothing positive and urgent is done.

### **Status of Traditional Musical Instrument Technology Education in Nigeria**

As observed by Okobia (1999) the educational objectives provided by the Nigerian constitution include the promotion of science and technology education. This is within the aim of leading the country into industrial development. As a demonstration of this emphasis on science and technology education the admission policy in our higher institutions is on a ratio of sixty (60) to forty (40) in favor of science and technology education against Arts and social sciences

respectively. In addition, the federal and state governments have all pledged robust financial commitment to technology education programme. The aims and objectives of technology education as contained in the National Policy on Education (NPE) Art articulate and laudable. Moreover, the present state of technology education in the country does not reflect the pledges to traditional musical instrument technology. It is all westerner with little or no prominence to our traditional music instrument.

### **Challenges of Traditional Musical Instrument Technology in Nigeria**

Even the implementation of technology education programme is sorrowed with many problems, which have made the realization of the programme a phenomenon mirage. These problems range from human and material shortages to outright lack of harmony between policy and practice in the implementation of technology education programme. One of the major problems that hinder the success of Nigeria technology education programme is shortage of man power (technology education teachers) while it has remained relatively easy to employ teachers in other fields, it has become a heavy challenges to employ traditional technology education teachers. There is also the attitude of the generality of Nigerians, which tends to regard traditional music technology education as somewhat inferior to other types of technology education. This attitude has some colonial origin.

As Fafunwa (1997) noted, colonial masters stressed literal tradition and made university degrees remove indelible symbols of reputation in Nigeria. This was to the damage of technology, agricultural, and other problems include poor funding, shortage of important facilities and lack of the political interest to implement a useful and set upon a technology education programme in the nation. Kum (2001) noted that Nigeria has not been too shy to redirect technology and scientific education. As a result of this, it has not been possible for her to

realize the full benefits of technology education in the enhancement of national development.

He moreover concluded that nation's technological development was low because "the nation man-power from all discovers has been dependably designed to meet the immediate and not the future needs. The situation presented above shows clearly that all is not in order with traditional musical instrument technology education in Nigeria. This situation has serious implications for our goals to achieve a sustainable national development.

### **Relevance of Musical Instrument Technology Education to National Development**

Relevance means purpose, usefulness, importance or relatedness. When relevance of musical instrument technology education to national development is being discussed, one is talking about the usefulness of musical instrument technology education towards the development of a nation such Nigeria. Music in various ethnic cultures contributes immensely to the integration of the Nigerian societies. Music in Nigerian culture is not only a social phenomenon but also plays vital cultural and religious roles. According to Nzewi (1980), the musical tradition of the Nigerian culture is something that has latent psychological, psychical and spiritualizing essence in all its elements and applications.

Upholding Nzewi's view, Agu (1992) wrote that 'the musical culture of the Nigerian tribes is quite rich and varied and it is associated directly with the socio-cultural, religious and political systems and preserved by tradition' (p.8). Nigerians create and perform music to enrich every activity, ranging from birth to death. All musical creations serve specific purposes and all performances are carefully chosen to suit specified functions and activities appropriately and

inclusively the technology behind it. In this regard, (Agu, 2000) inferred that;

*Music making is not simply an exercise in the organization of sound. It is symbolic expression of social and cultural organization, which reflects the values, and the past and present ways of life of the human being who creates it (p.79).*

Musical instrument technology education ought to be a viable part of the school curriculum and should be designed to meet the needs of the students and the society in particular and it should be traditionally based. For it to achieve this objective, musical instrument technology education must combine traditional skills with modern technologies. Most of the instructional aides used in the teaching and learning of music emanates from the technological innovations. Technology has been part of music education, and for a long time, it has been an important aid in the teaching and learning of music. The musical instruments both local and Western and other musical equipment indicate that music education is not a stranger to technology.

In more advanced nations like Europe and America, computer technology is inevitable in their music education because of its powers of efficiency in music teaching and music making. In Nigeria, the use of computer in music education has not developed to a reasonable level. This is due to, as Olorunsogo (2008) wrote 'wide gap on educational plans and socio economic development plans' (p.33). Since this is the case, Nigerian music education cannot depend so much on computer assisted learning. We should also look inwards. The stance of this paper is that musical instrument technology education should not be restricted only to the use of computer and other electronic devices but attention should also be drawn to the local musical instrument technology. This will go a long way in enhancing the

entire system of music education for better and more productive teaching and learning experience. Nigeria is blessed with varied vegetation zones which help them to create the varying instruments used by different tribes and culture and can effectively in making and teaching instrument technology in schools. Agu (2000) stressed on the importance of Nigerian local musical instrument technology and noted:

*Nigerians are great lovers of music. As they create and perform music, so do they manufacture musical instruments. The production of the variety of musical instruments by Nigeria was made possible by ability to harness their environment as much as possible, making effective use of local materials around them with good results. (p.89)*

Immense benefits can be derived from utilizing the materials within our environment technologically in music education which will in turn bring about National development. Taylor (1980) believed in the philosophy of learning by doing as found in the theories of Dewey, Montessori, and Piaget that children learn by doing and by thinking about what they do. Exposing our music students to Nigerian local musical instrument technology will not only broaden their experience in musical knowledge but will also enhance the development of Nigerian musical instrument technology. Music is about the technology that is involved. The following are the benefits as outlined in Ojukwu, and Ibekwe (2015):

- With the involvement of traditional musical instrument technology in music education, students' concentration, cooperative learning and level of creative thinking is enhanced especially when they perform as a group; It will go a long way in sustaining the interest of music students thereby improving their concentration level, changing their general attitude to learning;

- Students' level of comprehension of musical concepts is enhanced owing to the involvement of students in the instrumental production and performance; and

Advancement of the standard of Nigerian music education technology will not only be beneficial to 'Nigerian composers but also to music students, music teachers and performers at various levels' Nwamara, (2007). In addition, it will also prevent traditional musical instrument technology from extinction thereby enhancing the value cultural heritage.

### **Factors Affecting Traditional Musical Instrument Technology Education**

Music education is one way of achieving educational goals; but it appears that it has been relegated to the background in our schools especially in primary and secondary schools. One hardly found music as a subject in our primary and secondary schools. As a result students who are naturally gifted in music are denied the opportunity to develop their talents and as a result cannot contribute effectively to the musical growth of the nation and in turn hindering national development. Many problems militate against musical instrument technology education for national development.

The music curriculum is expected to, at the end, to produce people who are musically literate and competent both in theory and practice. Unfortunately, this goal seems to be a herculean task. Music is taught at various levels of educational ladder not with a view to encourage independent reflection, creativity and innovativeness among students. According to Nnonyelu (2000) observed "no attempt is made to invent or improve on our local products to satisfy our basic needs" (p.123). In Nigerian school curriculum, most of the programme is Western oriented which does not give the Nigerian student access to music that is indigenous to contribute to formal music education and

thereby encourage creativity along the desired need of the student's community. As a result teaching technology becomes effective. This is another way to say the Nigeria musical instrument technology education is decolonized by our own people. This is the act of throwing our culture away for the Whiteman's culture.

Okafor (2005) regretted that "the focus of the music education itself appears to be on Western music transplanted or introduced into the culture" (p.124). Most Nigerians look at teaching and learning of music from a negative perspective. There is a lot of misconception about music as a subject of study. Nzebuio (1993) observed that people who are ignorant of what music entails often react negatively towards anybody offering music as a course and can go to any length to discourage their wards from studying music (p.37). The government also contributed to a large extent to this problem because they have not given enough attention to the subject in the area of work force and instructional materials. Most of the schools are not adequately staffed for traditional musical studies.

Speaking on the government's neglect, Onwuka (1997) noted that the government is not willing to employ enough qualified music personnel that should match the existing workload. Musical studies in particular are very poorly handled in terms of course content. The teachers and the taught are greatly dampened by such factors ... lack of motivation and the insufficiencies of traditional instructional material (p.87). The fact is that the government is not willing to employ local traditional musical icon to teach in our schools, simply because of the Whiteman paper called certificate. An eye witnesses reported that he witness in higher place of learning, to be specific a university program, where the traditional rulers who were among the attendees were neglected simply because of the word, tradition. Poor funding resulting to dearth of traditional musical instruments and other facilities also militate against music education. Music by its very

nature as a theoretical as well as a performing art involves a broad scope of educational resources. A school that has music in its programme finds that the subject is more demanding of fund than some other subjects. The government and school authorities find it difficult to meet up with the educational cost; they prefer purchasing equipment in other subjects that cost lesser than music or spend money on those subjects they felt that have more prospects to the nation more than music. This resulted in many schools being in serious shortage of musical instruments and other instructional materials for music teaching and learning.

Buttressing on this issue, Mbanugo (1991) asserted: 'In the face of rising costs and dwindling educational fund, music education in Nigerian secondary schools has become very badly hit' (p.105). This also includes traditional musical instrument technology. Shortage of instructional materials to a large extent hinders the effective teaching and learning of music. Okafor (2009) also agreed with the aforementioned and wrote 'the apparatus for teaching is either in short supply or decrepit' (p.18). Music is basic to education and investment on the instructional materials (especially traditional musical instrument) for proper teaching and learning ought to be the concern of the government.

Poor curriculum has also been partly responsible for a chain of problems in the sector. For instance on the new 9-year basic education cultural and creative arts curriculum, music is seriously marginalized. It is discovered that most of the themes in the curriculum are dramatic arts, fine and applied arts with little traditional music. Today music is not being taught in our primary and secondary schools (Ojukwu, and Ibekwe, 2015).

## **Consequences of the Neglect of Traditional Musical Instrument Technology Education**

Okafor (1988) has observed that when education is neglected, the national soul is negated. When education is boosted, the national spirit is boosted. This statement is true of education in general. For Nigeria and indeed every nation of the world, there can be no real development without great tangible things being placed on technology education which is based on the ethnicity of the people. This is because language is a tool of unity and oneness. Our ability to equip and develop the musical instrument technology education programme has serious consequence for the goal and sustainable national development. Over and above every other thing, it has made it impossible for us to develop anything. Nigeria is one of the few countries richly blessed with natural resources yet we are rated among the poorest countries in the world today. This is due to our inability to fully utilize these resources for sustainable national development, the main reason being the failure of our technology education programme, traditional music education inclusively.

A simple categorization of the implications of the failure of musical instrument technology education programme for sustainable national development in Nigeria include the following

- ✓ Political and Economic instability
- ✓ Poverty and Ignorance
- ✓ Over dependence on foreign nations for materials and human resources.
- ✓ Total lack of technological advancement.

The above mention which is very true of Nigeria today is a proof of under development. Traditional musical instrument technology education is a major factor in the accumulation of human capital

which is vital for sustainable national development. That is not able to make meaningful impact is a clear prove of under development and dependence.

### **Recommendations**

The purpose of music education programme of any country should be to develop the aesthetic potentials of its citizens to its highest level. In the light of the above discussions, the following recommendations are made for effective use of traditional technology in enhancing music education for upward national development in Nigeria in agreement with Ojukwu, and Ibekwe (2015. p.192).

Reassessment of the present cultural and creative arts curriculum with an attempt to bridge the imbalance in the curriculum in the area of music and bring it to bear with the needs of Nigerians at the present in order that music education will be a means of transmitting musical knowledge for achieving functional and utilitarian music in Nigeria;

First, a review of the present music curriculum in Nigeria in order to incorporate innovations in the area of technology, such as incorporating master of traditional music into the musical academia, as earlier done, to enable students gain from their expertise and become more proficient in the area of traditional music technology. Attention of the students should be drawn to our traditional musical instrument technology in other to engage them in the production of simple local musical instruments.

Secondly, the government should take up the full responsibility of funding traditional music programme in the school system to ensure availability of traditional musical instruments and other music facilities. Workshops and seminars should be organized for music teachers and music educators from time to time to get them abreast

with the latest development in traditional music. Furthermore, there should be proper maintenance of traditional musical instruments, equipment and other music facilities regularly in Nigerian schools.

## **Conclusion**

There is a strong relationship between education and sustainable national development. According to Kum (2001), technology and education (particularly technology education) are the main agents of man's transition from stone Age to nuclear, space and computer/internet levels that make life more convenient. Our inability to redirect technology education has made it difficult for us to fully benefit from this transition. Nigeria present state of poverty, instability, ignorance and dependence must not be allowed to continue.

To overcome this, the following suggestions need to be considered:

1. More efforts should be focus on traditional musical instrument technology education through the provision of more funds for its implementation and the right attitude towards traditional musical instrument technology. The ideal of looking down on traditional musicologists simply because they don't have a certified paper to prove their talents should be highly disregarded. In fact a museum should be created in all tertiary schools to celebrate these icons and their exploit. This will facilitate the Africa musical value among the youth.
2. Traditional musical instrument technology and indeed scientific education should be made integral parts of Universal Basic Education Programme and pursued with equal strength by the relevant government agencies. That is every primary and secondary schools school should have a curriculum that appreciate culture and values. This will in turn inculcate some morals in the student thereby promoting peace and unity for

national development. This is because the Africa music is composed mostly for brave warriors.

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