

# STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MUSIC EDUCATION AND NIGERIAN MUSICAL PRACTICES: A PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

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## **Introduction**

Education is the life wire of any society in that it is a process by which young people in society acquire cultural ethics, knowledge, norms and values, in fact ways of life of the people. It helps the individual to contribute meaningfully towards the growth and development of society. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000) defines education as "a process of training and instruction especially of children and young people in schools colleges etc. which is designed to give knowledge and develop skills" (p. 369). In his definition of education, Igwe (1990) says:

*The process of developing the individual physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially for his own welfare, and for the welfare of the society to which he belongs. It is the process of inculcating the cultural heritage of acquiring knowledge and ideals, of acquiring the civilization of the past so as to be able to take part in the civilization of the future. (p. 4)*

He further explains that education is not an ornament, but a functional instrument for developing the entire person to enable him live effectively and efficiently in society.

The National Policy on Education (2013) Section I; Sub Section 4 enumerates the Philosophy and Goals of Education in Nigeria as follows: This philosophy of Nigerian education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.

The five main national goals of Nigeria as stated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are the building of:

- a. A free and democratic society;
- b. A just and egalitarian society;
- c. A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- d. A great and dynamic economy; and
- e. A land full of bright opportunities for all the citizens. (NPE, 2013: 1)

Music education is the art of imparting musical knowledge to the learner through the process of education. In his definition of music education, Faseun (1993) says:

*The main purpose of the music education programme is to develop the aesthetic potential of the child to its highest possible level. The development and changes required in human habits through music education, can only take place with a realistic musical instruction (p. 285).*

Music education can be seen as a means whereby the knowledge, tradition, ideas and creative musical creations of a society are passed from generation to generation. In order to impart musical knowledge to the learner, some pedagogical strategies have to be employed to ensure effective teaching and learning. These strategies include:

### **The Lesson Plan:**

Before one can successfully embark on any meaningful project, one has to make adequate plan. The lesson plan is one of the strategies for effective teaching and learning of music. The plan of a building is an outline drawing of a building or structure showing the position and size of the various parts in relation to each other. A building plan is to a house what the lesson plan is to the process of music teaching and learning. Just as a house without a building plan is bound to have a problem so also is the process of music pedagogy (teaching and learning) without a music lesson plan. Just as a builder makes use of a building plan, so also does the teacher use his lesson plan to avoid unnecessary rigmarole in the course of his lesson.

**The lesson movement** entails the area or where the lesson should begin, the method, medium of instruction and language of instruction. Naturally, the language of instruction of the adult should differ from that of the child. The teacher has to select what should be taught to the child and the adequate language to use. In fact any lesson plan is a dependent variable because it depends on a number of other factors which the teacher has considered.

There are three things that determine learnability; these are the nature, the depth and the scope. Entering behaviour or Entry behaviour is the place where instruction should begin. Entry behaviour is the previous knowledge of the learner that is relevant to the new lesson. A lesson format/plan can only be meaningful to us when we consider the class. The class and the entry behaviour help us to judge the adequacy of the method that is employed by the teacher. What a teacher does from the beginning of the lesson to the end depends on the learner. If this is so, what is the implication for the teacher? How do these things govern his selection of content and method from objective down to evaluation?

### **A Lesson Plan on Music (Teaching Rhythm)**

**Girls' Secondary School Awka; Anambra State Nigeria.**

**Class: JSS 2**

**Time: 40 Minutes**




**Topic: Rhythm**

**Specific Objective:** By the end of the lesson, about 95% of the students should be able to:

- (a) Define rhythm
- (b) Construct rhythmic patterns in @, #, and \$ time.
- (c) Clap to some given rhythmic patterns.

**Entering Behaviour:** The students have learnt musical notes and their values.

**Instructional Materials:** Some rhythmic patterns drawn on the cardboard sheet.

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	TEACHER'S ACTIVITIES	STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES	STRATEGY/ SKILL
<b>Introduction</b>	The teacher dances into the class observing some rhythmic movements. She tells the class "we can observe different patterns of movement in time in whatever we do." Just as we observe different patterns of movement in time in whatever we do, so also do we observe in music. However, in music, we call it rhythm. Our lesson today therefore is on rhythm.	The students watch	<b>Set Induction</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	<p><b>Rhythm:</b> Rhythm is defined as the pattern of movement in time.</p> <p>1. </p> <p>2. </p> <p>3. </p>	The students listen attentively.	<b>Use of Examples</b>
<b>Illustration and Further Explanation</b>	The teacher encourages the students to come up to the board and construct some rhythmic patterns based on named time signatures. The students in turns to clap the rhythmic patterns constructed. The teacher further asks the students the differences between the rhythmic patterns.	The students come to the board to construct. The students clap. The students answer	<b>Stimulus Variation</b>  <b>Planned Repetition</b>  <b>Questioning Skill; Higher Order Questions.</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define rhythm.</li> <li>2. Construct 2 rhythmic patterns each in @, #, and \$ time.</li> <li>3. What is the major difference between the rhythmic pattern in # and that in \$ time?</li> <li>4. Clap to the given rhythmic patterns.</li> </ol>	The students define. The students construct. The students say the difference. The students clap.	<b>Closure</b>

From the lesson plan on music (Teaching Rhythm), shown above we can start with the name of the school where music is taught. The class in question is JSS 2; the time is 40 minutes in the secondary school timetable. The date is indicated. The topic is also indicated.

**Specific objectives:** In the statement of the specific objectives the teacher should ensure that the stated objectives should be measurable and observable. If the student defines the rhythm the teacher should be able to ascertain whether the definition by the student is correct, and should also observe the student define the rhythm. In the case of the second specific objective stated i.e. (b) construct rhythmic patterns in @, #, and \$ time, the teacher should be able to observe the student construct the given rhythmic patterns on the board or in her exercise book and should be able to measure the correctness or otherwise of the construction of the rhythmic patterns. In the third specific objective (c) Clap to given rhythmic patterns, the teacher should observe the student clap to the given rhythmic patterns and at the same time be able to observe the correctness of the clapping. When these are all correct, the specific objectives are said to be observable and measurable. If for instance, in the first specific objective the teacher states that the student should be able to know rhythm; understand rhythmic patterns, then the statement of objective is not correct. Why? Because there is no way the teacher can measure “know”. How does he ascertain that the child knows rhythm which is not observable? Using the word “understand” in the statement of objective, is neither measurable nor observable. Since the teacher cannot measure or observe the concept “understand”.

**The entering behaviour** means having the appropriate experience to perform. It means preparedness; the entering behaviour for a new lesson. This is related to Edward Thorndike’s first law of learning, which is Law of Readiness. Readiness in relation to maturation simply means ripening or functioning properly. There are two types of readiness; one refers to maturation, while the other one refers to acquisition of the necessary experience to serve as entry behaviour to the new lesson. Entry behaviour does not necessarily mean the previous lesson as some people believe. Entry behaviour refers to the previous lesson that is relevant to the new lesson. A topic in a lesson that was taught a year ago might be relevant to the new lesson while the one taught just a week before might not be relevant. For instance, as the present lesson is on rhythm, the appropriate entry behaviour

cannot be “the student can describe intervals,” rather “the students have learnt musical notes and their values” is relevant to the teaching of rhythm.

**Instructional materials** are those materials like some rhythmic patterns drawn on the cardboard sheet that will help in the teaching/learning process. Concrete objects are the best but where they are not readily available, diagrams can be used. Instructional materials help the learner focus attention on the subject of the study.

The actual lesson has four major headings under which the teaching/learning process is carried out. These include the content development; the teacher’s activities, the pupils/student’s activities and the strategy/skill being emphasized by the teacher.

The first subheading on the lesson plan is **content development**, which is the systematic sequencing of material in the content in such a way that they have some logical order that make them have some meaning to the child/learner. In other words, it is the orderly sequencing of the material that you want to present to the child. The number of stages depends on the quantity of the content and the quality of the content depends on the class we are going to teach. Content development does not require the full text of what the students should learn, but should be detailed enough to give complete information to an observer. Concerning the major ideas the teacher wants to teach, the teacher should put them in skeletal form. The first step under content development is introduction.

**Teachers’ activities:** There is no model lesson plan or format but the important thing is that, in any of them the teacher should tell us what she/he will do and what the learner will do in order to learn effectively. The lesson plan is supposed to give us information at a glance. As regards the lesson plan in question, the teacher dances into the class, observing some rhythmic movements. The purpose of this activity by the teacher is to arouse the interests of the students in preparation for the new lesson. The teacher explains that we can observe different patterns of movement in time in whatever we do. Just as we observe different patterns of movement in time in whatever we do, so also do we observe in music. In music, we call it rhythm. The teacher announces the topic for the lesson by saying our lesson today therefore is on rhythm. In the students’

activities, the students just watch. Depending on the ingenuity of the teacher, the students can be involved in this section based on the topic for the lesson. Under this section the strategy or skill that is emphasized, is **set induction**. All the above named activities are meant to arouse the interests of the students in readiness for the new lesson.

The second step under content development is the presentation stage. During this stage the word rhythm is defined followed by the presentation of the rhythmic patterns. The rhythmic patterns are presented on the cardboard sheet to the students and the teacher explains them. The pupils listen attentively. The strategy emphasized here is **use of examples**.

Further down under the section on presentation we have illustration and further explanation. Under this section, the teacher encourages the students to come up to the board to build some rhythmic patterns based on named time signatures in accordance with what the teacher had taught them. The students come up to the board to construct the rhythmic patterns as specified by the teacher. The strategy emphasized in this section is **stimulus variation**, since activities vary from the teacher to the students.

The teacher calls on the students to clap to the rhythmic patterns constructed by the students. The students clap in turns as directed by the teacher. The strategy/skill emphasized here is **planned repetition**. Different ways of repeating the activities are introduced by the teacher and they are geared towards mastery of the subject matter.

The teacher further asks the students the difference between one rhythmic pattern and the other constructed by the teacher on the cardboard sheet or the ones constructed by the students in the classroom when the lesson was going on. This type of question calls for critical thinking on the part of the students and the skill or strategy emphasized is questioning skill – **higher order question**. If the question involves simple answers like what is the time signature of the first rhythmic pattern? It is @ time and does not require critical thinking. It is a **lower order question**, and the skill or strategy emphasized is still questioning skill and involves just the mentioning of the time signature already indicated as the beginning of the music as @, #, and \$ time.

**Evaluation** is the last step under the content development. At this stage, the teacher evaluates the students to find out how much of the lesson has been learnt. Here the teacher has to go back to the specific objectives stated at the preliminary stage of the lesson. This is to ensure that the questions asked during the evaluation stage are in line with the stated objectives.

In the statement of the specific objectives, it was clearly stated that by the end of the lesson about 95% of the students should be able to:

- a. Define rhythm
- b. Construct rhythmic patterns in @, #, and \$ time.
- c. Clap to given rhythmic patterns.

Under the last step of content development which is evaluation; the following questions were asked:

- (i) Define rhythm
- (ii) Construct two rhythmic patterns each in @, #, and \$ time
- (iii) What is the major difference between the rhythmic patterns in #, and \$ time?
- (iv) Clap to the given rhythmic patterns.

A closer look at the specific objectives and the evaluation reveal that the specific objectives are taken care of in the section on evaluation. The specific objectives were stated in measurable and observable terms and in the evaluation, all the stated specific objectives are evaluated. The students carried out the activities as directed by the teacher and the skill/strategy employed is **closure**.

### **Motivation as Instructional Strategy in Music Education**

Motivation is a very important phenomenon in the teaching/learning process. Motivation according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is "to be the reason for somebody's action; to cause somebody to act in a particular way." Writing on the meaning and importance of motivation Ebenebe and Unachukwu (1995) ask some pertinent questions; Why do some students work hard to make grades, some other work to please their teachers, and still some others work hard out of interest in the material they are learning? Why do some students achieve far more than would be predicted on the basis of their ability and some far less? On the whole, what do we mean by motivation? (p.108). In their definition of motivation, Ebenebe and Unachukwu (1995) say:



*Motivation embodies all those factors, which increase and decrease the vigour of an individual's activity – what teachers often refer to as effort. The willingness to put effort into learning is a product of many factors ranging from the student's personality and abilities to characteristics of particular learning tasks, incentives for learning and settings (p.108).*

They went on to explain the fact that motivation may vary in both intensity and in direction. Two students may be motivated to play the keyboard, but one of them may be more strongly motivated. A student may be motivated to play the trumpet while another student is also motivated to play the alto saxophone. From the foregoing therefore, it is clear that motivation is one of the most important prerequisites for learning.

Motivation can take two forms; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation occurs when some learning content are so fascinating and useful to students that they are willing to do the work required with no incentive other than the interest they have in the material itself. For these students their favourite topic or subjects have enough intrinsic incentive value to motivate them to learn. In a saxophone class, a student was so intrinsically motivated, that he used his school fees and made money from another source to buy an E flat Alto Saxophone. This type of student does not need to be motivated to learn. Some other category of students might want to learn, but they need little encouragement to do the work necessary to become knowledgeable in learning any musical instrument.

Upholding the above view, Ebenebe and Unachukwu (1995) opine:

*The greater majority of what is learnt in schools is not inherently interesting or useful to most students at the material time of their being studied. Therefore, intrinsic motivation alone will not keep them working enthusiastically day in and day out on them. For this reason, schools should apply a variety of extrinsic incentives for learning that have not inherent intrinsic incentives in them. An incentive is any reinforcer that people can expect to receive if they perform a specific behaviour. Extrinsic reinforcers may range from prizes to grades, recognition, praises or other rewards. (p. 127)*

In their contribution on motivation, an internet source opines:

*Intrinsic motivation comes from within the student or from factors inherent in the task being performed. For example, students who love to read are intrinsically motivated to read - there is something about reading that they enjoy and that makes them want to do it even if there is no "reward" for it...*

*...Extrinsic motivation comes from sources external to the student and the task. It can come through praise, recognition, or a system of rewards. For example, for students who do not enjoy reading, a token economy involving stickers or a class store may prompt them to read more often. (n. p)*

The internet source went further to advise that as teachers, we hope to promote intrinsic motivation in our students as it encourages life-long learning. It is difficult to encourage intrinsic motivation all of the time, however, especially because we spend over 900 hours per year in the classroom. Some strategies for promoting intrinsic motivation include arousing interest in the subject matter, maintaining curiosity, using a variety of interesting presentation modes, and helping students set their own goals. A number of other strategies such as student choice, demonstrating the relevance or usefulness of content, and collaboration can also help encourage intrinsic motivation.

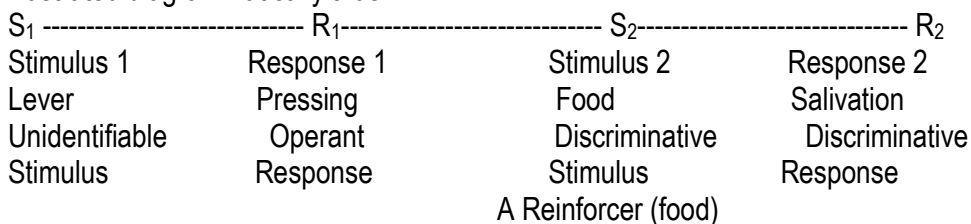
We will sometimes need to use extrinsic motivators, as well. Be sure to use them only when the task is uninteresting to students, and make sure that the motivators are contingent on performance and recognize competence. Extrinsic motivators can also help to develop intrinsic motivation.

### **Reinforcement as Instructional Strategy in Music Education**

Operant conditioning learning theory was propounded by Dr. B. F. Skinner around 1904. It was Skinner's aim to discover how reinforcement can enhance learning. In other words, this operant conditioning learning theory is centred on reinforcement. It was designed to illustrate the shaping of habits and how reinforcement could be used in classroom to ensure effective learning. The operant conditioning or instrumental conditioning which is related to Skinner's programmed instruction had some experimental or teaching aids namely:

- i. The Skinner box;
- ii. Rats and pigeons;
- iii. Food and flour or pellets of food and
- iv. Lever or bar.

The organism in the experiment was hungry. In order to satisfy the drive, he started operating upon its environment hence the title Operant Conditioning – Operation. Skinner hid a pellet of food below a lever which was a part of the environment. When the rat was operating upon its environment, it pressed on the lever. The pressing led to the appearance of food. Skinner’s experiment can be illustrated diagrammatically thus:



Why discriminative stimulus and response? The actual stimulus must be the right thing or a specific thing. The discriminating thing or object is the food. The learner, the learning process and situation is the learner’s environment. Because of the stimulating and challenging environment the pressing occurred. The lever challenged him and there was a response by the pressing of the lever. The appearance of the food was reinforcement. The only stimulus that will satisfy the need for pressing was the food and that is why it is called a discriminative stimulus.

### **Educational Implications of the Operant Conditioning**

Generally, the learner must do or operate in order to learn. In a music classroom situation for instance, the learner must actually play the keyboard in order to learn. A trumpeter who is learning must handle the trumpet; a clarinetist must play the clarinet; a saxophonist must play the saxophone in order to learn. In the same vain, a dancer must dance, a singer must sing in order to learn. When the learner performs appropriately, she will be rewarded or reinforced positively; but if the learner behaves inappropriately, it will be reinforced negatively. In Skinner’s experiment, the concept of reinforcement is illustrated and emphasized. It is also noteworthy that reinforcement depends upon the activity or the response

of the learner. This can psychologically be said that Reinforcement is contingent upon response.” (Ezeanolue, 1983). In other words, reward depends upon the learner’s activity or participation.

### **The Mastery Learning Strategy**

In contemporary pedagogical circles, mastery learning is a relatively new thinking in education which asserts that “given enough time and opportunity, every student is a potential achiever.” It should be noted that the emphasis here is on enough time and not equal time as some people misunderstand. A time that is enough for a student to learn in a class lesson might not be enough for the other student, as a result of individual differences in children.

In his paper on the ethics of formative evaluation for Mastery Learning, Eze (1981) asserts that “formative evaluation is one of the surest baits for mastery learning, and therefore highly recommends its practice as part of instructional procedure; any logistical problems notwithstanding.” Eze (1981) further opines that one problem and perhaps the only one that may surface is providing for the extra time and extra teaching but these are subsumed in professional ethics and sacrifice to ensure that not even one student falls off the class fold to which he intellectually and gregariously belongs.

Explaining the parable of the lost sheep, McKenzie, (1968) in Eze (1981) says; “Sheep are gregarious and do not readily scatter. But the one that strayed may have fallen and must be sought out.” The parable does not suggest that one sheep is equal in value to one hundred, but that the shepherd must not let one go because it is only one. It is the will of the father that not even one sheep should perish. Interpreting this into pedagogy, Rainfield (1969) in Eze (1981) emphasized that the skill most needed by all teachers is that of seeing and seizing opportunities for progress of their pupils towards goals . . . decide how to exploit the opportunity – how much supervision a pupil needs in the course of the activity. If for instance, 99 out of 100 students you have taught have attained the goal and passed the examination you have set for them, you have done very well except that their success means nothing to the one student who failed. You still owe him ‘his pass,’ through spending extra time with him for extra teaching. Professional ethics and accountability demands this of you.

## **Problems Militating against Effective Application of the Strategies to Classroom Situation**

Many problems militate against effective application of the strategies to classroom situation.

- One of the problems stems from the fact that not all the music teachers went through Teacher Training Colleges and Colleges of Education where methods of teaching and learning are acquired. Obviously one cannot possibly give what one does not have.
- Some of the teachers who went through these institutions where pedagogical strategies are acquired do not have patience to sit down and plan their lessons.
- In some of the institutions, well-qualified and trained music teachers may be available but they lack adequate facilities to do their work effectively.
- Lack of incentives from the government also impedes the application of these strategies. These problems and many more militate against effective implementation of these laudable strategies to the classroom situation.

## **Recommendations**

In the light of the above problems, the following recommendations are made.

- The government and other institutions of higher learning should from time to time organize seminars and workshops to take care of the teaching staff that did not have the opportunity to go through training in music pedagogy.
- They should also try to review the music programmes from time to time. In her write up on the review of music education programmes in Nigeria Omibiyi-Obidike (2001) suggests:

*Using Nigeria as a case study, a review of music education programmes in Nigeria since 1960 to the present time reveals reorganization of the music curricular for all educational ladder at the Federal level. For both the elementary level and secondary levels, new syllabi, intercultural in content, were designed. At the elementary level, music is integrated with Art, Dance and Drama under Cultural and Creative Arts while at the secondary level, the*

*two syllabi designed for both the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools though titled Creative Arts, contain separate syllabi for Fine Art, Music and Drama. (p. 152)*

- Music teachers who are the implementers of the curriculum should sit up and catch the bull by the horn with regards to making adequate preparation for their lessons using the lesson plan. They should realize that preparation is a very important aspect of any human endeavour.
- They should as much as possible apply the music education strategies like motivation and reinforcement as discussed in the study to classroom situation. When these are done, it is then possible for Nigeria through the instrumentality of the teachers to attain the five main national goals of Nigeria as stated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which are the building of:
  - a. A free and democratic society;
  - b. A just and egalitarian society;
  - c. A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
  - d. A great and dynamic economy; and
  - e. A land full of bright opportunities for all the citizens.

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