

# MUSIC EDUCATION AND THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC: EFFECTS TOWARDS EXPONENTIAL CONTROL

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## **Introduction**

Music, as described in the Oxford Dictionary, is considered to be sounds combined to achieve “beauty of form, harmony and expression of emotion. Music therefore is the act of simulating some essential components such as duration, pitch, dynamics, tone, texture and structure to produce either pleasant or unpleasant sound to human ear. Grahn (2005: 99) says that since the beginning of time, music has been part of man’s everyday life in all communities and cultures. Bergethan and Boardman as cited in (Schoeman, 1993: 22) notes that “from the most primitive to the most sophisticated of cultures, music has been central to every ritual. Every significant event in man’s personal life has its accompanying musical expression. Music is an essential part of life because of the expression it allows people to have, its entertainment, and its therapeutic ways for the world. Expressing yourself without music would be nearly impossible. Music is a pastime for some, but a lifestyle for others. If music wasn’t around, musicians wouldn’t be able to write meaningful songs that showcased their emotions. Music is an outburst of the soul for musicians.

Boamah [1990] defines Music as an expert skilled creation which man purposely gathers and organises sounds of definite and indefinite pitches into specific beautiful patterns that are socially acceptable to any given culture. He adds that it is one of the fine arts which is concerned with the combination of a view to beauty of form and expression of feelings or thought [2]. Thus, as put by Effiong [2009], music is used to achieve ends which are both muscular and non-muscular. For example, nationalism/patriotism, a group solidarity and propaganda and so on [p.115].

Okafor [1992] sees Music education as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge to enable adopt him/herself successfully in the society as well as contribute meaningfully to the development of the society, Hewitt [84] describes Music education as the effective organisation of man's experiences is his tendencies and powers may develop in a manner satisfactorily to himself and to the community in which he lives by the growth of socially desirable knowledge, attitudes and skills [84].

Music education therefore equips people with the knowledge and the ability to study, analyse, criticize, compose and perform music irrespective of the cultural diversification in the world. Music education exists in both formal and informal way because it is a course that could be taught anywhere and any moment depending on the context and the content of the event. Music Education embodies a pervasive role in an individual's life. Few realize the true extent to which they are impacted by music; its applications vary from media exposure in advertisements to personal entertainment. However, these are only the most superficial uses for the subject. In fact, the nature of music has been revealed to be beneficial for various reasons in individuals. Numerous studies have unearthed a variety of connections between interesting brain activity and musical inclinations.

Considering the relevance of Music education generally to man day to day activities, Effiong (2009) opines that Music education in the twenty first century is an indispensable instrument "per excellence" for promoting national unity, enhancing practical and applied skills among students, creating a deeper awareness for character disposition and team spirit, by which music offers (114). From the above however, Music of course is an undisputable tool that can be used to curtail the rate of negative effects among infected patients of Covid 19, because it provides palliatives and healing balms without any negative sight effect. Music is curative, medicinal, palliative, therapeutic and 'a psychologically proven healing balm' to any form of global Pandemic.

### **The Face of the Pandemic:**

Nzekwe & Obi (2021) give a concise historical preview of the deadly global Pandemic called Corona Virus thus;

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of corona virus, CO stands for corona virus, "D" stands for disease. Formally, this disease was referred to as 2019 corona novel virus or, 2019-nCov. The COVID-19 virus is new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold (p.4).

Nzekwe & Obi (2021) further remarks that the Corona Virus global pandemic is a war without guns and bullets thus:

The world is currently in a state of war. A war without guns and bullets, it's a war without human soldiers. A war without borders. A war without cease-fire agreements. A war without a war room. A war without sacred zones. The army in this war is without mercy. It is without any milk of human kindness. It is indiscriminate- It has no respect for children, women, or places of worship. This army is not interested in spoils of war. It has no intention of regime change. It is not concerned about the rich mineral resources underneath the earth. It is not even interested in religious, ethnic or ideological hegemony. Its ambition has nothing to do with racial superiority. It is an invisible, fleet-footed and ruthlessly effective army... It is corona virus, also known as covid-19 (p.7).

This global war without guns has eaten deep into all fabrics of the World economy especially, education, of which Music education is a part. Attesting to this fact however, Gaknung (2021) remarks that in a short time, COVID-19 has disrupted the landscape of learning in Sub-sahara Africa by limiting how students can access effective implementation of social distancing, demanding that schools be closed for as long as each government from different countries are certain that the Pandemic has curtailed enough for the safety of learners and teachers before recommence back to the class (p.23).

Ngozi (2020) also adds that the long periods of learning would be lost as long as the closures lasted. It can however be deduced from the above that the reopening of Nigerian schools by the government was depended on the decline of the negative effects of this dreaded pandemic of Corona virus on Nigerians. The question therefore is; When shall this dreaded pandemic be over to bring about the reopening of schools?

## **Trends of the Pandemic**

Following notification of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan, China on 31 December 2019, a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was identified as the cause by Chinese authorities on 7 January. Since then, neighbouring countries and elsewhere around the globe have heightened their surveillance to quickly diagnose potential new cases of the virus linked to this outbreak. More people infected with 2019-nCoV have since been identified in China, as well as imported cases in other countries. This is not entirely unexpected given the volume of travel between Wuhan and other countries. Based on current information, an animal source seems the most likely primary source of this outbreak, with at least some human to human transmission occurring.

Corona viruses are a large family of viruses transmitting between animals and people that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). Reports suggest that 2019-nCoV infection can cause mild to severe disease and be fatal in some. Common observed symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or severe acute respiratory syndrome, particularly in those with other chronic underlying health conditions, and even death.

## **Implication of the Pandemic to Music**

**New ways to monetize music consumption and innovative models:** Fortnight hosting of the music industry has been hit hard by Corona Virus with live performance revenue the biggest casualty. A six-month shutdown is estimated to cost the industry more than \$10bn in sponsorships, with longer delays being even more devastating. The industry is fighting back a live rap concert that attracted nearly 30 million live viewers. The crisis is likely to accelerate underlying trends in the music industry, based on the importance of streaming, which has grown from 9% to 47% of total industry revenues in just six years.

**(a)The business model of music:** The global music industry is worth over \$50 billion, with two major income streams. The first, live music makes up over 50% of total revenues and is derived mainly from sales of tickets to live performances. The second, recorded music, combines revenue from streaming, digital

downloads, physical sales and synchronization revenues (licensing of music for movies, games, TV and advertising).

(b) The industry has rallied around its community with several funding efforts available to people whose incomes have been affected by coronavirus. These include significant donations from Universal Music Group (UMG), Live Nation Entertainment, as well as streaming giants such as Spotify, Amazon Music, TIDAL, YouTube Music and countless others. China's largest music platform, Tencent Music Entertainment, is also joining efforts through its parent company. Many providers have set up mechanisms that allow consumers to donate directly to funds of their choice; other examples include interest-free advances on royalty payments for hardship cases resulting from suspensions in music and event production. The public sector is also responding. Governments around the world have developed aid packages for industries and workers affected by the crisis, collectively amounting to trillions of dollars in spending, grants and loans. These stimulus bills are not specific to the music industry, but many contain provisions for media, arts and culture businesses, as well as widening safety nets for workers affected.

### **Negative Impact of Covid-19 On Nigerian Music Education**

Nigeria, the most populated black nation in the world recorded its first case of covid-19 on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This deathly disease swept through Asia, into Europe and other parts of the world. Lagos had its first reported case, when an Italian, entering the country showed symptoms. He was immediately isolated/quarantine and treated. Since then, this pandemic kept increasing despite serious efforts to curtail its spread in Nigeria by Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), World Health Organisation (WHO), Nigerian government, through the ministry of health and other non-governmental agencies. Esomnofu (2020) describing the Nigerian effect of covid-19 says:

*However, doggedly, Nigeria have tackled the covid-19 pandemic, its toll on economic activities activity is yet felt. Globally, as the world plan to contain the virus, it has made for a lot of changes. Employees are being ask to work at home, corporation and offices are being closed, the biggest football league have suspended a considerable amount of games, oil*

*prices have gone down, and in the entertainment sector, music events and tours are being postponed.*

As regards musical tour dates and shows being postponed, Esmnofu (2020) adds that “Atlantaborn, Nigerian superstar Davido had been touring North America before the virus broke out...However, the global space as it is right now had the A good time artiste announce that the rest of his tour was postponed. On social media, Davido expressed his sadness over what had a successful tour, since he would have shared the stage with an international star, Chris Brown in Edonton. Davido regretted; “I’m saddened to halt what has been a fantastic sold-out tour so far, but postponing is the right thing to do...the health and safety of my fans and staff is most paramount ad nothing else matters. Be safe and see you all soon! God be with us all! Also, Burna Boy, who was to perform in Namibia’s capital city of Windhoek on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2020, too, postponed this tour due to covid-19 pandemic.

Many music festivals in the world were either cancelled or postponed. For example, the Afro Nation festival which was to take place in San Juan, Puer to Rico from March 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>th</sup> 2020 was postponed. Many Nigerian Artistes lined up for the event includes among others, Davido, Burna Boy, Patoranking, and Teni.

The sudden emergence of COVID 19 Pandemic had it so rough in Nigeria. On March 19<sup>th</sup>2020, Nigerian Federal Government under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Education was granted an approval for the closure of all Schools in Nigeria for the period of one Month. This actually saw the light of the day but Nigerian Schools, especially the [Both Federal, State and Private] remained closed for about ten [10] Months. Pupils in Nursery/Primary Schools, Kindergartens in Crèche/Day care and Students in both Secondary schools, and institutions of Higher learning, were forced to stay at home.

Education as we all know is progressive. However, during the period of this Pandemic, absolute learning became remained, knowledge became retrogressive and most pupils and students became indolent, high way robbers, social fraudulent, unscrupulous elements, as a results of their minds, not being put into proper progressive thinking, learning and creativity, Furthermore, so many youths became indolent high way rubbers, social fraudulent, and scrupulous elements, as

a result of their minds, not being put into progressive mental thinking, learning and creativity. Furthermore, so many youths became “social media agents of darkness,” and “yahoo boys” as a result of indolence cause by covid-19. Undergraduates got themselves engaged in unwholesome activities such as social media fraudsters, prostitutions, rappers, criminals, kidnappers, abductors, among others.

It was quite amazing to discover that cases of youth’s involvements in child abuse and rapes became so alarmingly dominant during the lockdown climax year, 2020. Sometimes in October, 2020, schools were allowed to be re-opened by the Federal Ministry of Nigeria. However, the re-openings were done in stages, by states. This only affected the nursery /primary and secondary schools. However, the Nigerian Public Universities remained closed due to an on-going Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) industrial strike action and for the fact that proper measures (protocols) were not put in place to allow or propel students to resume.

Music education being part and parcel of the education system in Nigeria was equally affected. For instance, there is now a total default in school’s calendar of 2020/2021 with fresh students from Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) some higher institutions, students are currently still battling with firs semester of 2019/2020 Academic Calendar.

Sadly, fresh students that successfully passed the 2020/2021 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) are still forced to stay at home, since the lockdown students were still daggling to complete their 2019/2020 Academic Calendar. The press release of the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 provide the financial impact of covid-19 generally on the African music sector, as publish by music in Africa (2020) reports thus:

*Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2020, the music in African Foundation used online platform to reach out to music professionals and ask them to take part in a survey about their personal financial situation following the start of the pandemic. In total, 503nparticipants from 47 countries in Africa provided insights into their situation-this included 347 self-employed musicians and 70% of the organizations and businesses indicated they had no*

*alternative sources of income to music. The majority of the participants said they had already lost substantial amounts of income*

The report equally states "Musicians in Africa are facing an entirely new set of challenges during this period of extraordinary crisis. Festivals, concerts, live performance on TV shows everything that spread their music and message and secures their income and livelihood has fallen away.

Finally, from the African report in Nigeria's Afro beat, Ajayi (2020) remarks: the year 2020 will not be forgotten in a hurry. A leap year ushering in covid-19 pandemic which have claimed millions of lives globally and has left the world's economy in tatters. He further remark thus:

*If any industry is almost exempt from the decimating effect of covid-19, it will be Nigerians expanding contemporary music industry. The qualifier "almost is critical, in view of the leaps and bounds of growth that Afro-beat experienced in spite of the dive constrain of the times. Local lockdown meant restriction on movements and a crackdown on gatherings. Consequently, there was a massive reduction income for practicing musicians who rely on performing at concerts, tours and social events.*

### **Some Relevant Examples of Music to The Pandemic**

Music as a universal tool is for entertainment, adverts, worship and war. Among many others, it can be used in creating awareness to the general public. The following are some of the examples:

#### **(i) Nigeria: 'We Go Win (Corona)' by Cobhams Asuquo**

In this inspiring ballade, Asuquo implores listeners to "always do the right thing" by following public health measures and ignoring "fake news" that circulates on social media about the virus. "Wash your hands / love each other / we go win o," he croons at the piano.

Nigerian-born Tommy Kuti raps about Covid-19 from Italy. Rapper Tommy Kuti is using his time in lockdown to write music with an important message. Born in Nigeria, he lives in Italy, where more than 21,000 people have died from



coronavirus. Worried for his family back in Nigeria, he's using rap to urge his fellow Africans to stay safe by staying home.

**(ii) Uganda: 'Coronavirus Alert,' by Bobi Wine**

In this reggae-inspired song, Wine opens with the bad news that "everyone is a potential victim" of the virus, but also a potential solution. Wine manages to weave every COVID-19 symptom into his upbeat song, and calls it "patriotic" to social distance and isolate if sick with possible virus symptoms.

**(iii) Ghana: 'Corona Virus,' by Cryme Officer**

Relatively new on the music scene, Cryme Officer drops this fresh beat emphasizing all the usual coronavirus prevention protocols while also calling on God to protect Ghana, because there is no current cure. In the video, the young musician with swagger holds up signs that say "Do the do's" and "Do not stigmatize."

**(iv) Democratic Republic of Congo: 'Coronavirus Assassin,' by Koffi Olomide**

The legendary singer Koffi Olomide takes a totally different approach, singing that the anger of God is what caused the coronavirus.

**The Effects of Coronavirus on the Music Industry**

**1. Sales and streaming:** In the wake of the pandemic, physical sales, which represent a quarter of recorded music revenues, are down by about one-third – unsurprising given the closure of retail stores – while digital sales have fallen around 11%. This aligns with general falls in discretionary spending. Evidence also shows that the way people listen to music is changing in light of coronavirus. In China, Tencent Music Entertainment (TME) reported changes to listening behaviour during the pandemic, with more consumers using home applications on TVs and smart devices. "While there was some impact on our social entertainment services, we have started to see a moderate recovery recently. In the first quarter of 2020, online music subscription revenues increased by 70.0% year-over-year.

Spotify, which also added subscribers during the first quarter of this year, has likewise noted the change in consumers' routines, saying that daily habits are now reflective of weekend consumption, as well as relaxing genres rising in popularity. In terms of the amount of music consumed, initial data showed a reduction in

streaming of 7-9% in some markets – though this appears to have recovered. At the same time, on-demand music video streams have increased. The reasons are linked to a change in behaviours: the pandemic has intensified peoples' focus on news media (especially TV), while fewer commuting journeys and the gym closures have shifted listening to different parts of the day.

**2. Advertising spend:** The music industry is also subject to reductions in advertising spending that are happening worldwide. A survey by the Interactive Advertising Bureau shows that around a quarter of media buyers and brands have paused all advertising for the first half of 2020, and a further 46% have reduced spending. This, combined with an approximate one-third reduction in digital ad spending, will affect ad-supported music channels – and therefore both total industry revenue and individual income for artists.

**3. Distribution:** On the distribution side, there is a growing list of artists delaying releases to later in the year. In part this is due to the inability to use tours to promote new albums, and live music in general has been dramatically affected. As long as bans on large gatherings continue, live performance revenue is almost zero—effectively cutting the industry's total revenue in half. Ticket and merchandise sales aside, a six-month shutdown is estimated to cost the industry more than \$10bn in sponsorships, with longer delays being even more devastating.

In addition, the post-pandemic outlook appears challenging and growth forecasts for live music are expected to be revised significantly. Rebuilding consumer confidence in the sector will be difficult: one survey shows that, without a proven vaccine, less than half of US consumers plan to go to concerts, movies, sports events and amusement parks when they reopen. This will affect artists hugely – they generate around 75% of their income from live shows, even as data shows that a growing share of live music revenue goes to the top 1% of performers (60% in 2019, versus 26% in 1982).

The indebt effect of the pandemic in Nigeria remains factual and cannot be over emphasize of its implicative voyage; therefore, the challenges of Nigerian contemporary art music include the following:

1. Performances shifted from full orchestra to chamber music where few instrumentalists were picked representing each family of instruments.
2. Many musicologists pay more attention to other music genres like Jazz, pop, highlife, rock, and reggae to improve their chances of getting shows.

### **Impact of Music Education to Society**

Music and its influence it is no doubt that music has played a vital role in our society. Everything from loud, head-banging concerts to religious ceremonies has utilized the medium of music because of its awe-inspiring qualities. Music is basically the control of sound. We can control this sound by varying the pitch, tempo, octaves, and dynamics and so on. There are thousands of ways that we can use music to shape what and how we want to hear it. But how much has music influenced the way we think today.

However, music has also been a universal tool used in sensitizing the general public on the trending Pandemic regardless of religion, tribe and region. Some of the adverts were even accompanied by African indigenous music to ensure proper communication particularly the illiterates. Music, an extremely broad concept, is playing an increasingly vital role in the modern society, and most people today are experiencing music subconsciously. For instance, when walking in the street, not only will we see people listening to their music through all kinds of portable music players, but also hear people humming their favourite songs. When nightfall comes, young people usually go to concerts, whereas middle-aged people tend to choose symphony and opera. Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other because rhythm and harmony finds their way into the secret places of the soul, on which they might fasten imparting grace and making the soul graceful of him who is rightly educated. Music plays a vital role in almost all cultures and societies. Through a wide exposure to music from both local and global cultures from a young age, students will be able to gain insights to other cultures and be open to the different types of music available. They will have an understanding of the different roles musicians play in society as well as the role of music in different cultures.

Music has also been relevant to the society as it has the capability to draw the attention of people from the following ways:

**Sonic Material:** Each music played has the kind of mood it depicts as different music has different kind of instrument used; how it is used, when to be use and the reason behind the composition.

**Text:** Musical text attaches meaning to the sound. The use of language in African traditional music also helps to convey or read spiritual meanings and interpretation of some ritualistic norms that are perform and preserve for generational use. The integrity of language to culture entirely, starts when a child learns how to speak in his/her early stage before interpreting anything around him. Language communicate to the performer and the listener, that expression and mood appropriate for every piece of music as it synthesize both the sonic materials and the lyrics produced by the composer for consumption. This paper suggests that African sense music education in Nigeria can be promoted if only some of our contemporary art composers will imbibe the habit of language reference and interference in their works to maintain that indigenous language integrity in our music.

### **Possible Remedies and Recommendations**

The following are the possible solutions suggested by the researcher; which can help improve music in Nigeria and beyond during and after the up surging pandemic:

(i). There is the need for cross-industry partnerships to engage users and promote artists in a new way. It is likely that rights owners and distributors will continue to adopt similar approaches going forward. Furthermore, it suggests that the industry is thinking about ways to do this without relying entirely on streaming and physical performances. Streaming may be highly effective in reaching consumers, but it leaves rights holders more reliant on third-party platforms, but a quirk in the streaming business model showcases how the relationship with these providers may change in the future. In general, platforms pay rights holders a minimum proportion of revenue from subscriptions. For example, gaming and TV integrate songs, compositions and musical scores into their content – but these synchronization revenues currently account for only 2% of recorded music revenue. The business frameworks for synchronization deals are currently underdeveloped, so there is an opportunity for growth – even if it is a long way from reaching a comparable share of revenue to streaming.

(ii) Musicologist should ensure they follow strictly, government stipulated guide lines on covid-19 in order to disengage any act that will attract the law. This is because the society entirely has an existing impression that sees the musician or the musicologists with low esteem.

(iii). Performance activities in the academic system should be recorded and disseminated through social media to avoid overcrowding in their various concert halls. However, this can also help in preventing or protecting the performer from the deathly pandemic.

(iv). Musicologists must put in their best in composing rhymes or songs that could help create awareness to the general public about the pandemic. This has over the years be a serious issue whereas musicologists are mostly carried away by the academic activities leaving the so call street musician to produce songs over trending matters thereby creating a bad impression on the musicologists.

(v). Digital studios should be made available for music students in all Nigerian Universities and colleges that offer music so as to expose the students into practical recording; as this will also give them the chance for creativity, that which can mark a difference between Musicologists and the so call street Musicians.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

This paper seeks to find out some of the exponential effects of the pandemic on music education as well as the functionality; music would have created to help curtail the spread of the virus towards lasting solution. The researcher begins with a little introduction where music was conceptualising with relevant reference and a brief history of the pandemic, the content of the pandemic as well as its effects on the society particular music. The impact of music education to the society was also considered which has been a tool used for awareness over the current situation; taking Nigeria as a case study. Going a little further, the researcher outlined some remedies that will improve music education and music/media industry during and after the pandemic.

Finally, the researcher wishes to conclude by saying musicologists should always exercise enthusiasm over their work so as to take both music education and the producing industries along. This is because; only this will culminate and attach prestige to the course.

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