AFRICA SENSED MUSIC EDUCATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: THE CASE OF JOS, PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA.

Prince K. Effiong

Abstract

Africans generally and Nigerians specifically have an overwhelming indigenous perception in reasoning, judging, comparing and performing their traditional music. Every special activity to an Africa man is always being accompanied by special indigenous music, made sorely for such an event. When the performance is carried out, there are joint collaborative efforts by all and Sunday. This brings about social cohesion, togetherness, resolution of conflict, and enactment of peace and promotion of brotherliness amidst tribal sentiment, and religious bigotries. This paper seeks to project the indigenous sense that is inherent in Africans, in using Africans indigenous music in resolving conflict and maintaining amble symbiotic relationship among themselves. The paper also focuses on the sense by Africans to use indigenous music in the preservation, promotion and transmission of her long lasting/cherished cultural values, norms and excellent morality among themselves and to generation yet unborn. The research employs the historical and personal observation as methods in determining the validity and reliability of the research. The paper however recommends that Africans/Nigerians should not allow the current westernization and technologies to make them lose their inherent moral values. Indigenous music should be encouraged for the maintenance of peace, resolve conflicts and uphold symbiotic relationship.

Introduction

Africa is one of the seventh (7^{th}) continents of the world. It is the most world's second largest and second most populous continent, being behind Asia in both categories. It has about 30.3 million km^2 including adjacent islands and it covers 6% of earth's total surface area and 20% of its land area (Wikipedia). Africa has the population of 1,225,080,500 people (2016) and has a land mass of 30,370,000km^2 or 11,730, 000 Sq. Meter. There are 54 countries in Africa, and Nigeria is one. The system of education in Nigeria could be informal or informal. In the formal and informal training of a Nigerian child, music is pivotal as the societal medium of instruction. A Nigerian child in particular is born and nurtured in music. He lives to experience virtually all the societal activities being accompanied by music. In the society where he lives, grows and learns with music, and with time, he will eventually take his exist from the world with music. Nigerians are lovers of traditional or indigenous music. The performance of this music is more real, factual and understood by them. The traditional norms, values, morals and customs are better interpreted, known, accepted and understood in an indigenous way. Onwuegbuna (2006) informs on how musical performance generally has to do with the creative art of integrating knowledge in to an applied sense thus:

> *Musical performance therefore is the integration of knowledge (literacy) and experience (skills) to arrive at creative solution to musical problem of organization, production and presentation in order to meet the expectation levels of appreciation (educational, professionals, economic and social) of the consumers of the musical performance (p.3)*

From the above however, it is an undebatable fact that no aspect of art is known to command such unprecedented influence over human race at present than music.

The Concept of Music

Music is an aspect of education which is directed towards training a holistic being. Music as a profession is multi-facetted. Apart from it being theoretical, it is also artistic, scientific, technological and vocational in its outlook. Glennon (1980:2) sees music as 'an expression of thoughts and feelings in an aesthetic way'. Ifemesia (1987:144) sees music as 'a medium of communication and social unity of recording and documentation, meditation and worship, healing and socialization, recreation and celebration'. Okafor (2005) calls music, the oxygen of demonstration. Effiong (2012:3) analyses the characteristic features of music thus: "music characteristically move along with rhythm, melody, harmony, pitch, counter- point, timbre and forms to become pleasant, delightful and pleasurable to listen to and enjoy".

Music Education in Nigeria

Music education is fundamental to global, Africa's and Nigeria's lifelong educational system. It is pivotal and indispensable to the educational advancement and development of any nation. As indicated by Effiong (2013:327), 'Whether in the informal or formal system, music education stands as the panacea for life, and as an unavoidable weapon 'per excellence' in enhancing facilitating, and boosting the educational standard of any nation'.

The formal system of education is more organized and structured, modeled and administered in accordance with lay down rules and norms, with clear objectives and a curriculum with contents and methodology. It is the system connecting the educational process that involves the teacher, a classroom for students as well as an institution with certificates issued at the end of study.

Non-formal system of education on the other hand is simply the system that lacks a well-defined set of features; such as an adopted strategy, students' attendance, decreasing in contacts between the teacher and students and sometimes, activities take place outside the

establishment of some organized phenomena. In non-formal system of education, there are no curricula and time lapse for study; as students are never going to be certified at the end of study. Therefore, Okafor and Maison (1992) reveal that music education is geared towards helping man to be able to express himself deeply. Effiong (2009:115) adds that music education prepares an individual not just to earn a living, but also for life itself. He defines music education as an aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as the basic scientific knowledge to enable one adapt successfully in society as well as contribute immensely to the development of his/her society.

Traditional Education in Nigeria before Westernisation

Okafor (2005) asserts thus:

> *Trado-musical practices in Nigeria are concerned with the way people practice music in their traditional setting and what methods they use for the transmission of musical knowledge from those who know to those who do not, from the old to the young (p.191).*

From the above, it could be ascertained that learning in the traditional system of education before westernization was mainly by imitation and practice; a situation where an individual learns from another; doing exactly what he sees him do.

Oral transmission and apprenticeship equally served as ways of transmitting knowledge in African traditional system of education. This was undoubtingly the footing to the basic foundation of learning in childhood because of their non- writing, learner involvement, and reputational procedures. The systems are widely accepted to be the most accepted to be the most effective patterns of learning in childhood that lead to modern civilization and development. Civilization and development can only be achieved through education. Thus, one will not be far off the beam to say that the ground work to the present day education originated from Africa. In the old Africa, it is

the right of every child to be educated. Thus, making education part of life and essential to human existence just like the air we breathe and the water we drink (Vanga, 1995). Furthermore, in the old Africa, right from the womb to birth, children are exposed to lullabies by their biological mothers who serve as the child's first teachers, nannies and guardians as well. Self-discipline is influence in folklores by their child's peers, the aged and all adults in the community as the child grows to maturity. He/She is exposed to domestic works especially to the female folks, while the male children are exposed to agriculture and games. The use of words, gestures, symbols and motif are used in communication to convey messages, give instructions when necessary (Vanga, 1995: Emeagwale, 2006).

To buttress further on the traditional African system of education before westernization, Olutayo (1999) freely adds thus: the African traditional system of education has been proven to be the most productive educational practice of all the time. This is evidently clear in the product that has been produced. For example, the Igbo traditional system of apprenticeship in terms of human resourcefulness is by far the most effective, productive and societal driven than the western system of education has produced. Traditional music education in Nigeria has continued to survive despite the westernization and technological advancement being experienced.

The Present State of Nigeria

Nigeria today is infiltrated with all manners of inter- religious conflicts socio –political upheavals and communal differences. It has come to the stage that Nigeria do not trust each other again. Anyone could be a security risk to the other. Well, the state of the nation, Nigeria calls for urgent surgery. The government, stakeholders and all Nigerians have serious part to play to revive again "the Nigeria of our dream". The trend of violence, crimes and wars in Nigeria has been so alarming, disheartening and dehumanizing; beginning from the devastating political civil war of the 1967 - 1970, to the 1980 maintainer uprising in Kano, then the crisis of 2000 and the 2001

religious crisis in Jos. What more can be said of the life/modakeke crises, Shagamu Hausea Yoruba crisis in 2000, the Ogoni Ekpedo crisis in 2003 (Ogidi, 2004).

As regards religious conflict, right to life and freedom of worship, the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), section 33, sub- section 1 and 3 clearly states:

> *Every person has right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution in the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offense of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria… every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, consciences and religion to change this religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with other and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or believe in worship, teaching, practice or observance.*

Dambo (2005) reacting to the so called claim of man's right to life and in security says thus: "For a man to remain in silence in an ideological issue involving the survival of a man on earth is irrational", Dambo also quotes Usman (2007) and argues thus with regards to the violent attacks in Kaduna State:

> *Violent attacks have been launched against life, property and places of worship in most major cities and towns in Kaduna State. Churches and mosques, hotels and cinemas, business and vehicles private homes and persons have been attacked, smashed up and systematically set on fire in an unprecedented campaign of violence…*

The state of Nigeria today is pitiable. Recently there have been cases of socio-politico-religious crisis in Benue State, Nasarrawa State, Taraba State, Zamfara State, Plateau State and all sorts of killings, kidnapping, abduction and destruction of properties worth billions of Nigeria by the Islamic sect called "Boko Haram". Even with the

abundance of good resources and governance, the few "bad eggs" are making life "seemingly unbearable" (Effiong, 2012).

Albert (1994, 1996, 2004), Fenton (1992) and Ogidi (2004) have severally written on the threatening violence and conflicts that have erupted Nigeria over the years and suggested peace as a vital tool in resolving conflicts and in the promotion of human right. Effiong (2012) analyses the effects of the reoccurring crisis in Nigeria on humans thus:

> *This dehumanizing trend has made Nigerians "prisoners in their homes". Nigerians to some extent are no longer free to move and settle in any area of their choice, for fear of being butchered, killed, or murdered. Infact, in some states, there are places designated for the Christians, and some for the Muslims. As a result, religious bigotry, distrust of one another, segregation, vengeful mindsets, unforgiving spirit, hypocritical love and false display of peace, have become the order of the day.*

The state of Nigeria today as far as security is concerned, needs urgent attention. Nigeria is "somehow sitting on a time bomb", ready to explode. The menace is eroding and spreading wild like cancer. It is therefore hoped that all hands must be on desk to forestall peace amidst warring parties.

State of Crisis in Jos (Plateau State) and its Environs

For The past decade (2008 - 2018) and beyond, there have been cases of ethnic, political, religious and socio- cultural crisis in Jos and its environs. The devastation caused by the incessant crisis has been worrisome, alarming and heart – blooming. Kwaja (2011) resorts that 'these clashes have claimed thousands of lives, displaced hundreds of thousands of others, and fostered a climate of instability throughout the surrounding regions (p.1). Effiong (2018) adds that 'these anomalies have led to the breakdown of law and order, death of thousands of innocent citizens, destruction of properties worth

billions naira, displacement of citizens in internally displaced camps and have posed serious security threats both to the inhabitants of the land and other non–indigenes.

Effiong (2012) egually adds thus: "over the years, they have been international and unduly murder of innocent Jos residents by militants, "Boko Haram set", robbers, kidnappers, and other unscrupulous elements; and these have brought untold hardships, panics, pains, bereavements, insecurity and distrust among Jos residents. Plateau State generally and Jos specifically witnessed various degrees of violence and these have dreaded on plateau indigenes mere existence, tampered on plateau security and constituted social imbalance, instability and injustice. For instance, from 2016 – 2019, there have been serious silent and open killings of residents by Hausa/ Fulani herdsmen in farmlands, homes, places of worship, and social gatherings among others.

Music in Conflict Resolution

Ritchie (2013) asserts the following concerning the need for music in conflict resolution: 'Music takes many forms and for a majority of listeners, the highest level of emotional satisfaction from music is derived from the organic relationship between dissonances (harmonic tension, disruption or conflict) and consonance (harmonic resolution). Music is basic impulse which precedes the formation of words. Where words often fail, music can be instrumental in successful communication between divided individuals or communities. Music can help to treat the traumas and mend the scars of war. Music can serve as a powerful tool in promoting natural security, enhancing social stability and preventing conflict in Jos and its environs.

Akponome A.O., Johnson, H., Nwosu, and Effiong, P.K. (2007) assert: 'Music art in various religious circles provide a rallying point where members of a nation gather to engage in activities which provides the co-operation of the groups. Music art helps to reconcile and settle

disputes among quarrelling parties; it draws people together by way of singing and dancing' (p. 211).

Effiong (2018) posits the relevance of music in conflict resolution thus:

> *Music is a powerful tool and a redeemable medium in settling crisis. It has the divine potency to heal broken hearts, encourage the discouraged, calm the troubled souls, strengthen the weak, resolve long standing cases of acrimony and and bring to normalcy any form of upheaval. Where dialogues and words may fail, music can be instrumental in successful communication between aggrieved parties, individuals and communities (p. 8).*

Oyovwe (2014) agrees to the above and comments thus:

> *Music is a powerful tool; it is one of the channels to the most hardened heart because everybody loves music. Music is a powerful tool that God has given to mankind to use as a tool to bring peace and joy into the hearts.*

Africans Exploring their Musical Senses in Crisis Settlement

There are several ways that Africans use their God- given sense to resolve conflicts. In Plateau State for example, there are several ways that the inhabitants explore the use of music in settling crisis. The following are some of the ways:

<u>Folk songs/tunes</u>

Folk songs renditions are very dominant practices in Plateau State. They are rendered mostly during festivals, ceremonies like marriages, coronations, naming among others. In Jos for example, during the Nzem Berom annual festival, folk songs are used to unite and integrate various families, parties, religious, dwellers, communities and villages together. Talking on the use of the Mwaghavul folk songs in Puuskat Festival, Effiong (2009) comments:

> *The purpose of the celebration is to bring together their sons and daughters that are at home and in the diaspora to inter-relate, dance, sing eat, play and discuss salient*

> *issues together… Thus, the performance of the Mwaghavul folk music on any social occasion adds colour and beauty to the celebration, assists in maintaining and preserving the cultural heritage of the Mwaghavul people, serves as a reservoir of knowledge for the younger generations and spectators alike; and, assists in rebranding the Nigerian nation at large (pp.1-2).*

It could however be deduced from the above that, folk songs, being common, generally acceptable and known to the members of any community (from the grassroots) can be a powerful tool in the resolution of conflicts among warring parties, groups, religious and communities. What this mean is that members of the communities, families etc normally come together in Unison to sing folk songs during festivals, marriage ceremonies and send off parties. Through this, peace is sustained and aggrieved hearts experience oneness.

The Making and Use of Traditional Musical Instruments

Nigerians generally and Jos residents specifically, love to use their ingenuity, skills, creativities, prowess and talents in the making and display of traditional musical instruments during occasions, ceremonies, festivals and services. Musical instruments in Nigeria are mainly made from the sources of materials found within the local environment. These materials are all around the Nigerian child where he/she resides. Having mastered his environment well, the Nigerian child uses materials like gourd, animal horns, local trees, clays, animals' membranes (skins), gun stones, iron bamboos, hides of animals, and woods among others, to make music instruments.

This is Africa-sensed! Okafor (2004) supports the above assertion thus:

> *The Instrument maker thus takes materials from his environment and turns them into musical instruments that will sound in a certain way to achieve a certain result or create a desired effect. In a way then, every Nigerian*

> *musical instrument is a talking instrument… talks the language, mood idiosyncrasy and ideas of a locality' (p.180).*

Most of the traditional musical instruments on the plateau (Plateau State) are made by the local, primitive, indigenous, and traditional plateau citizens. These people are illiterates; and yet, through their conceived, gifted, talented and God-given sense, they are able to construct traditional musical instruments with exact tuning patterns, tonality, inter-rhythmic structures, melodic contours and tonal patterns. For example, the traditional Kundung (xylophone) musical instrument, made by a typical traditional and illiterate technologist either in Pankshin, Quanpan, Kanke or Riyom, will eventually sound alike with the same tonal pattern. This is actually a mystery!

Relating the sense in the use of traditional musical instruments in Jos, Plateau State, a single drummer could be playing the drum and singing along (most times) during either the funeral dirges or the celebration of the Nzem Berom and the Mandieng festivals. Various traditional instruments could be playing together, each bringing out his rhythmic essence. But there is always the master instrumentalist, who directs and controls others, and they obey and adhere to his stylistic cues.

Traditional Dance

Africans, Nigerians and Jos residents are blessed by God with unique complexities in inter-rhythmic patterns in dance. Nketia (1975) sees dance as 'a social medium of communication, which can convey thoughts or matter of personal or social importance through the choice of movement, posture and facial expressions' (p.207). In traditional African societies, dancing is a group affair. Villagers often gather at the village squares, market square, football field, villages square or any chosen place to dance, sing and play traditional musical instruments together. This could be done at moon light or during any major or minor community celebration like festivals, coronation, traditional marriages, and sendoff prayers among others. Through this

joint collaborative and cooperative media of dance, strong affinity, oneness, bond of friendship, brotherliness, social cohesion, togetherness and symbiotic relationships are strengthened. Strifes, dissonances, complaints, malice hatreds bitterness and all forms of seeming or intending conflicts are settled. Thus, peace and warm relationships are enhanced and promoted amidst communities and families.

The Mass Media and Music

The mass media primarily consists of newspapers, radios and televisions. In a democratic society where the media is instrumental to the public, Okafor (2002) calls it the "the Oxygen of democracy" and further asserts; 'it communicates sharper than mere words and permeates through the barriers of prejudice, enmity and religious bigotry' (p.22). Today on the Plateau, popular artistes, gospel artistes, and other practitioners have continued to sing and perform on radios, and televisions on the need to promote peace, and avoid crimes, killings, fighting and other forms of violence. Examples of such songs are "Zaman lafiya" by Evang. David Lucky. "We need peace" by Chuang Sati Davou, "Beautiful Plateau" by Peter Maurice and "Mutanen Plateau", by Aaron Damap, among several others. Effiong (2012) adds thus concerning the positive effects of music in the mass media:

> *In Plateau State, "peace songs" are always being presented on the redios and televisions stations to promote peace, unity, love, friendliness, and brotherly affection. The 90.5 FM is even called "Peace FM". To a greater extent, through the musical jingles, promotions, adverts and rhymes peace have come to stay in Plateau State. For example, some popular songs always rendered (on a daily basis) on Plateau Radio Television Corporation (PRTV) Such as "Zaman lafiya" "God bless Plateau State" among others, have promoted a peaceful co-existence among various tribes, ages religions, sex and nations (p.18).*

Religious Songs

Religious songs are sacred, pure, and pius songs often sung in praise of God or, to a supreme deity. In the Christian perspective, religious song could be seen as Christian songs, Church songs and gospel songs, rendered by Christians in the worship the Almighty God. The Christians worship God with songs of praise, hymns, solos and dances, using various musical instruments. The Almighty God deserves our praises. He made us sorely for this purpose (1st peter 2:9, Hebrew 13:15). Music, performed in the Church brings people together from various backgrounds, tightens relationships, foster peaceful coexistence and creates friendliness and oneness.

Sofala (1984) adds that music acts as a stimulant or tranquilizer for a people to harness their potential towards a collective social development. Akponome, A. O., Johnson, H. A., and Effiong, P. K. (2007) comments that;

> *musical art in various religions circle provides a rallying point where members of a nation gather to engage in activities which requires the co-operation of the group. Music arts help to reconcile and settle disputes among quarrelling parties. It draws people together by way of singing and dancing (p.211).*

Thus, the performance of music in the church, either as praise, worship, dance, instrumentals, solos, hymns among others, has the divine potency to bring peace, foster unity, settle disputes and bring total peaceful resolution, harmony, joyful co-existence and progressive habitual/symbiotic relationship among warring parties.

Conclusion

Music is a powerful and undisputable tool for integration, peaceful co-existence and national security. Music brings people together from various backgrounds, tribes, religions sex, and ages, which thereafter, helps to tighten relationship, friendliness and oneness. Oikelome (2010) posits that music as a tranquilizer can function to bring about

peace and calm in conflicts. He stated an example of its function on the "Rwandan ballet isonga", where songs and dances were employed to mediate in the conflict between the major ethnic groups. The performance of traditional folk songs, dance, musical instruments using the Africa sensed ingenuity, creativity, skill, innovativeness and resourcefulness at our disposal, can be used to bring about mediation, reconciliation, negotiation for peace and peaceful resolution of conflict in African communities. The desired end result of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism is a sensed of harmony, consonance, integration, and solidarity; and shared dialogues among warring/ onflicting parties. Thus, music education, displayed in traditional ways at the grassroots (communities) can be employed and used to foster unity, create symbiotic relationship, unite warring folks, integrate love, promote consensus, melt aggrieved / offended hearts and bring out amiable resolution of socio-politico- religious crisis in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Having seen Africa-sensed in music education vis-à-vis conflict resolution in Jos, Plateau State, the author recommends among other things that the performance of traditional folk music/songs should be encouraged, upheld and continuous. Since folk song are mostly used as cultural preservatives, it continuous performance should be better harnessed especially by the youths who constitutes about 70% of the residents in Jos. Folk songs promotes, preserves and transmits cultural heritages. Most of the songs which are proverbial in nature should be presented in festivals, marriage ceremonies, and send-off parties and during coronation ceremonies in Plateau State. Through it constant renditions, the resolution of conflict among warring parties shall be made possible.

Plateau indigenes and non-indigenes should actively participate in dancing, singing and playing of traditional musical instruments. Singing traditional folk songs together, unites and build brotherliness, since the songs are generally known, accepted and performed by them, and

contains the indigenes dwellers, the cultural norms, values ethics and moralities of such community.

And finally the Federal and State Government should empower the media, for example, radio and television station (FM.90.5) with enough infrastructural facilities, traditional musicians to compose songs with good lyrics that talk about peace and how to stay together in harmony. These songs should be played daily on the Plateau Radio Television network stations for all to keep hearing them. Through these, there shall be total resolution of conflicts and amiable working relationship across parties, tribes, religions sex, and families.

References

Akponome, A. O., Johnson, H. A., & Effiong, P. K. (2007). Music arts and national development. In Adeniji, L. A. A. (ed). *Peace, security and national development.* Ibadan: Ramao Ind Printers.

Dambo, R. G. (2005). Social vices in Nigerian society: threat to unity and democracy. In Adeniji, L. A. A. (ed). Peace, *security and national development-in Nigeria, 21st century: issues, challeges and way foreward.* Ibadan: Jilat publishing company.

Effiong, P. K. (2009). The role of music in the promotion of a healthy family Life in contemporary Nigeria society. In Ndazhaga, J. (ed). *The family and contemporary challenges in Nigeria.* Jos: Akins Press and Services.

Effiong, P. K. (2012). *Music and mass media in the promotion of national security, social stability and conflict prevention in Nigeria.* Unpublished national conference paper of the school of Arts and Social Science Education and Language. Federal college of Education, Pankshin.

Effiong, P. K. (2013). *Trends in Contemporary gospel music in Pentecostal denominations in Jos, Plateau State.* Unpublished Master's Degree Thesis, presented to the department of music, university of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Lagos:* Federal Government Press.

Fenton H. (1992). *Justice without Violence*. London: Lynne Rienne Public Publishers.

Johnson – Egemba, H. A., Akponome, A. O., Nwosu, U. M. U., Boyi, J. E., Olisaeke, F., Effiong, P. K. (2007). *Basic issues in music for schools and colleges.* Jos: Akins Press & Services.

Kwaja, C. A. (2011). Nigeria's pernicious drivers of ethno-religious conflicts. *In Africa Security Brief*, no. 14.

Ogidi, D. P. (2004). *Youths and peace building for sustainable development in Nigeria.* Minna: Peak Press.

Oikelome, A. O. (2010). Music as a tool for peaceful resolution in Niger Delta. *In Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts, 7* (pp.83-101). Awka: Rex Charles and Patrick limited.

Okafor, R. C. (2002). An historical over view of education and socio-political issues in Nigeria. *In Journal of Nigeria Music Education,* 3 (pp. 22-40).

Okafor, R. C. (2005). *Music in Nigeria Society.* Enugu: New Generation Books.

Okafor, R. C. & Maison, J. S. (1992). Basic methods of teaching music in Post Primary Institution. (*A mimeograph*).

Onwuegbunna, I. E. (2006). *Literacy and musical performance: challenges of the Nigerian Pop musician.* Unpublished M.A. Seminar Paper presented in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the course, Mus. 500/501, Department of Music, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Oyovwe, E. (2014). *Music, strong tool for promoting peace, unity.* Retrieved from https://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/07/music

Ritchie, I. (2013). *Music and conflict resolution*. Retrieved from https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures/events