

CHAPTER 25

COMPETENCE-BASED CHALLENGES OF CCA INTRODUCTION IN UBE AS IT AFFECTS MUSIC AND REMEDIAL MEASURES

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Abstract

The introduced Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) in the Basic Education system in Nigeria has presented some problems which seriously affect the teaching and learning of music in schools. Competency issues bedevil the introduction, implementation and evaluation of the amalgamated subjects in parts and whole. A review of the document study as the methodology of this write-up reveals the following as the lack and gaps created by the programme as it pertains to the study of music: lack of teaching competence, overburdening of music teachers with additional subjects, insufficient practical, poor teaching methodology, irrelevant contents in achieving objectives, scarcity of indigenous contents, insufficient musical content in syllabus among others. It was found that the amalgamation of Visual arts, Music, and Drama as one subject lacks some background considerations that call for re-visitation to arrest the competence issues discovered.

Keywords: Competence, Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA), Teaching methodology and Music teachers.

Introduction

Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) is a fusion of three subjects into one and it comprises Music, Visual Arts, Drama and Dance. Music used to be a subject study of its own and it ran from then Junior Secondary School I to Senior Secondary School III. On a general note, NCCE (2002) has observed that the 9-Year basic education teachers must be competent, highly motivated,

conscientious and efficient, to enhance the image of the teaching profession. Specifically, to music, the Federal Government of Nigeria recognizes the importance of music in National development and so listed music as one of the subjects for which specialist teachers should be provided (FRN, 2004:15). The development of the educational programme is one thing and the effective execution of same is another.

Music among other subjects is a tool to be reckoned with in bringing about cultural and socio-economic growth and development including changes. Educational programmes and curricula are formulated considering the needs of the people and the society and as such should be static. The CCA curriculum in current use in Nigeria's Basic Education which incorporated music happens to be Western in orientation, so the implementation and outcome are equally Western lacking in African stuff. The issue of having Nigerian/African children/learners taught music of the Western culture as the curriculum contents stipulated places less appreciation of our own indigenous musical culture (Ugoo-Onkonkwo et.al (2022). Nnamani (2017) observed that students are rarely taught utility songs, folktale songs, which reflect our myth and mythologies, and songs reflecting nature, morals, and values of our tradition. Furthermore, they are normally not introduced to the use of local instruments and accompaniment of choral art songs to develop their musical aesthetics. Our rich traditional musical culture, therefore, is fast dwindling within society.

Competence of Music Teachers

Teachers have the responsibility of inculcating knowledge in the learners to bring about a behaviour change. Abiodun (2017) noted that the content of the curriculum may be robust and adequately represent the aspiration of the people but it will continue to be mere paperwork until the teachers put same into operation. Through education and training, a teacher is first of all equipped with knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that will qualify him/her to effectively perform his duty of imparting knowledge in the classroom, and society.

Children's musical competence can to a reasonable extent depend on the kind of instruction they received as they are growing up. Instruction here refers to teaching and the teacher's competence in passing on knowledge to the learners. When children fail to receive adequate musical instruction, it will reflect on the kind and level of musical skill they acquire and exhibit. In concurring with the above idea, Aninwene 2009 stated:

All children should have minimum competence in music so that in future while some are good music makers, others would be producers and performers of music. The success of their musical experience largely depends on the musical nurturing they received right from their early childhood. If they do not receive the right musical education, they become deficient in that aspect, and this would affect their adulthood.

Many studies focusing on teaching and learning music in Nigeria have identified the incompetence of music teachers as one of the factors militating against effective teaching and learning of music. Adeogun (2007) in his empirical study of the qualification of available music teachers asserts that "of all problems presently besetting modern music education in Nigeria, one can say for certain that none is as chronic, requiring urgent attention as the availability of music teachers adequate in quality and quantity" (p.4). Hence, an ideal music teacher should have the necessary educational qualification together with other qualities such as classroom teaching ability, performing ability and personal ability to bear upon the study and presentation of the musical problems in the classroom. However, many music teachers at CCA are lacking in this quality.

In a study of competencies needed for effective teaching of music in secondary schools, Nwokenna (2006) submitted that "music teaching in schools cannot be effective if the teachers do not show remarkable competence on the various aspects of general music programme" (p. 49). In a similar study on the cultural and creative arts curriculum in secondary schools, Irivwieri (2009) stated:

There is at present a dearth of qualified art and music teachers in secondary schools. Most of the schools lack the professionally trained graduate art and music teachers, who are much more exposed both academically and professionally to handle the programme well at the secondary school level" (p. 351).

He also pointed out that the population of students the music teachers serve is too many which reduces efficiency.

Ekwueme (2009) researched competency-based teacher education in the music aspect of cultural and creative arts for the Universal Basic Education programme. She pointed out that many students who could not gain admission into their areas of primary choice of study would get into the college by enrolling on a music programme even without any previous knowledge or skill in music and so she proposes a shift in the teacher training strategy to produce competency-based teachers for the Basic Education Programme. (Ekwueme, 2009:33). Aninwene (2004) pointed out that "our music teachers (most of them) lack in-depth knowledge of the broad spectrum of music as well as methodology. He also pointed out that our junior and senior secondary schools grossly lack a sufficient number of music teachers thereby turning music education into an educational gimmickry" (p.50). Other related studies including Onyiuke (2001), Ojukwu (2011), Akinbami & Ekwueme (1994), and Aninwene reported that music incompetence and dearth of music teachers contribute to the problems of teaching and learning music in secondary schools.

From the Universal scene, Lee (2009) asserted “The classroom teacher has primary responsibility for leading the music experience in the school teaching and learning” (p. 357). Emphasizing the place of music teachers in music instruction, Lundquist (1998) writes:

Teachers are first of all learners. They also play some roles in the course of instruction. They align content and contexts. Through interpersonal rapport, instructional organization, simulation and engagement, and two-way interaction with students, they connect themselves and the subject matter with their students. They act as co-players with a student, as a practice partner, facilitator and a demanding transmitters of knowledge and skills (p. 39).

From the foregoing reports, it can be inferred that the competency and adequacy of music education are lacking in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Teachers are one of the major determinants of quality in any educational system since no education can rise above the quality of its teachers. Their mastery of subject matter is an important issue that affects music teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. On a general note, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (2002) has observed that the 9-Year basic education teachers must be competent, highly motivated, conscientious and efficient, to enhance the image of the teaching profession. Specifically, to music, the Federal Government of Nigeria recognizes the importance of music in National development and so lists music as one of the subjects for which specialist teachers should be provided (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004:15).

A teacher should be knowledgeable in his subject, like it, continue to learn it, be able to communicate well with the learner and understand the learning processes of the subject. A teacher should be a model for the learner to imitate. Therefore the teachers of CCA should be competent enough to bring about the achievement of the qualities and skills intended for the learners. A competence-based CCA teacher can combine theoretical knowledge with a practical demonstration of the skills involved.

Methodology of Teaching Music

It is important to note that poor method of teaching by music teachers to a great extent, affects students' level of interest and brings about low musical learning. It should be borne in mind that instructions are justified and or viewed as effective only to the extent that they facilitate, support, and improve educational goals. Highlighting a study on music learning principles of individual performance studies, Mbanugo (2006) stated that “most Nigerian music teachers appear..., complacent and readily settle for the old traditional method of teaching key signature, clef, note values, lines and spaces, without practical musical application. This category of teachers resists change and self-development” (p. 43). He went further to state that the music teacher should

'cultivate and sustain the learner's interest by being proactive rather than reactive and also being able to change the learner's musical behaviour positively (Mbanugo, 2006:42).

Music must be taught using a good teaching method. Supporting this, Ajewole (2001) carrying out a study on the scientific approach to the teaching of music in Nigerian schools stated that "music as a specialized area of discipline has to be learnt and understood properly and this can only be achieved through good and appropriate teaching method" (p. 36). Ekwueme (2009) in her study pointed out that "teaching is largely based on lecture method. Lectures are usually theory-based without practical. No practical and no significant integration of subjects. This is not what CCA was originally conceived to be" (p. 41).

In his study of effective teaching of music in secondary schools, Nwokenna (2006) identified the highest important competencies needed by a music teacher and his result shows that the music teacher who:

Knows the subject matter and uses methods dependent on enjoyment as the highest important competence for effective teaching of music. This implies that the music teachers in Anambra State Secondary School understand and recognize the importance of knowledge of the subject matter and keeping students motivated and enthusiastic by making music learning enjoyable in the effective teaching of music. (p. 58)

Growing Students' Interest in Music

Enjoyment of course is likely to result in a lifelong attachment to music. In support of this, Elliot in Nwokenna (2006) has observed that "to arouse the interest of the students in music, the students first need to develop a sound implicit knowledge of music, a process surely dependent on motivation and enjoyment" (p. 58). Similarly, Green (2001) has discovered that keeping students motivated and enthusiastic by making learning enjoyable is an important factor in improving the teaching and learning of music. Beyond these, the workload for music teachers is quite much. Okonkwo (2009) observed from a report from Anambra State Education Commission that "the average music teacher number in these schools range from one to two. Yet these secondary school teachers cope with extensive class streams from JSS 1 – 3. Hence, the reality of teaching these subjects efficiently is much related to making any lasting impact." (p. 55). Appropriate teaching methodology should be adopted in teaching CCA for the musical aspect of the subject to elicit interest among the students. Students' interest in music is linked to what affects the teachers and their teaching strategies: lack of infrastructure and music materials, lack of incentives, lack of adequate preparation, lack of job satisfaction, lack of motivation, poor teaching methodology etc.

These in turn contribute to a lack of seriousness on the part of the students in developing their musical creativity, ability and skills; the overall society is adversely affected too.

Improving Music Teachers' Effectiveness

It is obvious that to improve music education in our upper basic education, a competent music teacher is required. This can only be achieved if the pre-service and in-service training of music teachers are carried out properly. This is because teachers are exposed to new trends and ideas in the teaching profession in these forums. Ekwueme (2009) supports the above by saying that “the vehicle for preparing teachers to perform their job, upgrade, and update their competencies is pre-service and in-service education” (p. 34). In the same vein, Oehrie in Okonkwo (2009) reflects to note that “the training of music teachers themselves is poor and little. In other words, they receive inadequate training in both pre and in-service training. It is a case of poorly trained teachers reproducing and perpetuating their kind of mediocrity” (p. 55); a teacher who neglects the above according to Ezeani (1999) “remains ignorant in his field of study and as such continued with outdated knowledge and skills” (p. 159). With an air of finality, Adeogun (2007) asserted that “without these, our dreams to produce teachers who are capable of cultivating in themselves and their students the mastery of musical thinking and making would remain a mirage, a whim and a fantasy” (p. 13).

Beyond the issue of competency, a shortage of manpower hampers effectiveness in the teaching of music in our schools. Therefore, reducing the workload of music teachers to a manageable size is also necessary. Iriwieri (2009) lamenting the above said that “there should be a state policy of posting at least three Art/Music teachers to every secondary school and be provided with adequate instructional materials” (353). Therefore, more music teachers should be trained and an orientation programme should be held for teachers to acquaint them with and prepare them for the effective use of this curriculum, before being sent out to schools.

Improving the Attention of School Administrators

It is often said that if you fail to impact society, society will not recognize your existence. Hence, the CCA teachers of which music is a part should try to let their impact be felt in their schools. This surely will help in improving the attention of the school administrators to give the subject the attention it deserves. Iriwieri (2009) recommended ways of doing so by:

Adapting the Creative Arts programme to the need of the community, and the schools, such as labelling all the school buildings, major paths and offices, and classrooms in the school, marking posts and painting the tract fields during inter-house sports competitions, organizing music fiesta, Music orchestra, Music entertainment for August Visitor to the school, Carol Nights, Art Exhibitions, and Mini Art Festivals. (p. 352)

Besides, there is a need for the Inspectors of Education and relevant supervisory bodies in the recent educational system to pay regular visits to schools to ensure the proper implementation of the Creative Arts programme. Attention is also needed in the area of time allocation to the subject. Ekwueme (2009) pointed out that "CCA as a subject is practical or skill-oriented. There should be time allocated for practicals, but unfortunately no time is allocated for music practicals" (p. 41). It is interesting to note that the inadequacy of time in the timetable for practical and lack of adequate support is not only peculiar to Nigerian secondary schools, In a study of secondary school music education in Australia, Smith in Crawford (2009) submitted that

Other subjects tend to be given precedence over music. Other subjects have specific timetabled classes in the computer rooms. I can request a period in the computer room for my classes, but the chances are I would end up in a room... where you won't be able to hear anything (p. 480).

This calls for more serious efforts in reversing this ugly trend by informing the school authorities, discussing it in music education conferences and following the appropriate channels to redress the situation.

Use of Appropriate Teaching Method

The use of appropriate teaching methods is very important. The choice of teaching method depends on a lot of variables. Considering the various factors that influence the teaching method, Leonhard and House, (1972) stated that:

The basis of teaching methods includes the nature of the subject matter, the objectives of instruction, the nature of the learning process, the maturation level, the experiential background and present need of the students, teachers' competencies and such physical conditions as materials available, time available and class size (p. 280).

A music teacher should understand and appreciate individual differences in their students and employ appropriate methods or methods that will accommodate these differences. On this Ojukwu (2011) stated that "in music teaching and learning, individual differences must be taken care of to adapt the teaching according to the requirements of the students by using different methods" (p. 53). Concerning contents, as it affects the method of teaching, Onwuka (1997) asserted that "the methodology competence has to do with the management of lesson contents and the teacher's ability to project plans and proceedings over a period of time" (p. 81).

Concerning the experiential background, the teacher should select methods for effective teaching and learning that are based on the context of the socio-cultural background of the learner. Hence, certain methodological principles in traditional musical arts education and practice can be

inculcated in the teaching of music in our schools. Explaining the learning system in our indigenous society of Africa, Nzewi (2003) wrote:

Learning invariably commands practical participation and exploration, in addition, verbal discourse and instruction often support heuristic learning in Africa. The use, for example of mnemonics such as drum syllables to encode and facilitate instrumental music education, is fairly common. Critical language can be verbal or 'performed' (practical gestures), and like spontaneous response and post-performance analysis. Theoretical knowledge experiences in practice and not in passive reflection of contents (p.14).

It must be noted that no one method can be said to be the best. In trying to understand the futility of trying to get the best method, Mkpa (1987) affirmed that “the nature of the subject matter dictates the methods of instruction, and the search for a method of instruction applicable to all kinds of teaching is a doomed failure” (p. 58). Therefore, a method of teaching can be considered successful only in so far as it results in progress towards achieving the best objective.

Coping with Additional Subjects

It has been identified equally that music teachers are being overburdened with teaching additional subjects to make up for the CCA that has been shared. This is a new dimension to the findings of previous studies in this area. In schools where more than one teacher teaches CCA, (mostly Visual Arts and Music teachers), they are being overburdened with teaching additional subjects to make up for the CCA that has been shared. This is because the teachers are seen as being redundant and not having much to do if left to teach only CCA.

This new development is tantamount to incompetency because subjects in schools should be handled by qualified teachers in different disciplines and not the other way around. It is like having an English language teacher teach either the French language or the Igbo language. Even though they are language subjects, they are all distinct in their capacities. If they are not, then there would not have been the need to separate them as individual disciplines with separate Departments in Institutions of higher learning.

Besides, there are cases from this study where Music teachers of CCA are also teaching other subjects like Christian Religious Studies (CRS), Igbo Language, or Social Studies. This is creating education problems both for the teachers and the students in the sense that the schools in question may never be keen again about employing competent hands to handle those other subjects.

Remedial Measures

Having considered the competence-based challenges of CCA with regard to music, some remedial factors are put across as suggestions that can positively affect the teaching and learning of music in Basic education:

- a. There should be the availability of qualified, prepared and competent teachers
- b. Adequate provision of infrastructure needed for CCA subjects.
- c. There should be proper funding from the government.
- d. School management and authorities should show more interest in the study of music in schools.
- e. Provision should be made in the curriculum, scheme of work, and school Time table for music practicals.
- f. Amendment of CCA curriculum to include African cultural heritage and practices, traditional norms and values.
- g. There should be adequate provision of musical instruments as instructional materials
- h. Above all, there should be the disintegration of CCA subjects to stand on their own so that music will regain its position as a prominent subject of study.

Conclusion

Integration of subjects with closely-related background elements is the adopted style in curriculum development in Basic Education in Nigeria. The progenitors of this development would have found out from implementation that integrating many subjects into one presented many problems which were not foreseen. Music as part of the integrated subjects of CCA (Cultural and Creative Arts) is a speciality course and discipline and as such demands competence and skill both in acquisition and teaching. Teachers of CCA in schools are not all Music scholars: some study Visual Arts, Some Theatre Arts and Drama, Sociology, Christian Religious Studies etc. With the above scenario from the CCA teacher's qualifications, competence-based challenges from the onset bedevil the teaching and learning of music in Basic Education of learning.

It is expected that children should possess minimum competencies in music so that in future they would become good makers, producers and performers of music. But the success of their musical experience and performance to a great extent depends on the musical nurturing and exposure they received while growing up. A system that does not present students with competent and adequate musical learning experiences will produce learners and adults who are deficient in musical practices in one way or the other.

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