

CHAPTER THREE

YOUNG-SOOK ONYIUKE: THE INESTIMABLE QUALITY OF A NIGERIAN MUSIC EDUCATOR

Atinuke Adenike Layade (PhD)

Abstract

Among the 21st-century female music educators, Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke stands out as the prime example of a pianist and a violinist who ascribed a feminine ideal to the teaching of music at the Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. Female scholars in music are members of a class that definitely existed but have not been adequately defined in terms of their duties as teachers in the Nigerian Music institutions and their contributions towards the advancement of music education. Thus it poses a partial viewpoint on bibliographical documents on female scholars in Nigeria, suggesting an intense confirmation for further research. The study is laid on the narrative research design under qualitative methodology. The narrative approach was considered suitable for the study because it entails the researcher examining the contributions of this individual to scholarship. This will be done by asking Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke to provide information about her life experience as a teacher. Creswell and Creswell (2018) affirm that “data collected for construal research are often reiterated or re-storied by the investigator into a narrative sequence of events”. Hence, this study offers a descriptive perception of the person of Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke. The findings reveal that it is apparent that Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke has paid her dues as a teacher and a diligent, articulate pianist and violinist and that her scholarly works express carefully her ability and passion for teaching. The study concludes that Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke carries out her academic duties with thoroughness and amazing creativity as a lecturer and External Examiner of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Keywords: Female Music-educator, advancement, articulate-pianist

Introduction

I write to describe Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke and the characteristics of her person as a music scholar and instrumentalist. The Professor is a South Korean married to a Nigerian Prince in Nimo, Anambra State, Nigeria. She is one of the highly respected music scholars in Nigeria, accomplished musicologists and a sound music educator that is simple-minded, kind-hearted, smiling, and sufficiently discerning to know what her students need and how best to teach them. Young-Sook Onyiuke has a thorough knowledge of the essential ideologies of teaching music to tertiary institution students. This Professor is a well knowledgeable artiste, who displays an outstanding intelligence of outright precision on the violin and piano. I need to reiterate what is meant by the statement above by describing some contacts I have had with her and our interaction at ANIM conferences. I came in contact with her name ever before having the opportunity to meet her in person. When I arrived at the University of Pretoria in 2005 on a visit, I learnt that she was

there for a Doctorate degree in Music and had just graduated with an excellent grade. I was also privileged to see a copy of her thesis at the Departmental Library. There is no visibly definable difference between the diligence of this scholar and the quality of her intellectual and creative works. Her life as a teacher and her role as a talented instrumentalist seem to be uniquely and suitably connected and descriptive of her infinite contributions to the advancement of Music Education in Nigeria. Her academic works express carefully her ability and passion for teaching music. Prof. Young-SookOnyiuke belongs to a high Class of female scholars and is the fifth female Professor of Music in Nigeria. The first is Prof. Mosunmola Omibiyi-Obidike retired from the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. Others are Prof. Ngozi Mokwunyei of the University of Benin, Prof. Agatha Onwuekwe of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and Rev. Sr. Prof. Cordis Mariae Achikeh of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka respectively. Prof. YSO as she will be referred to henceforth in the course of this study is a teacher, a multi-instrumentalist, a consistent member of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists and above all a mentor to quite many scholars in Nigeria and within the Globe.

Male scholars in music studies, over the years, have pretended to have provided a holistic outline of the achievements of Nigerian musicologists but their documentation has posed a preference for male domination instead of support for the reality of female scholars' contributions to the developments of music education. Prof. YSO has written over fifty articles and chapters in books, edited about four books and has also served as an Editorial Board member to several Journals. She retired in 2022 from Babcock University, Ilesan, Ogun State, Nigeria. Bibliographic, interview and narrative methods were adopted for the study. This study depend heavily on the gathering of facts about the Professor from her students, individual consultations (face-to-face) were extended to strategic persons and her close friends. I conducted most of the chats via WhatsApp because the procedure was expedient to the respondent. Besides, the insecurity situation in Nigeria has to some extent limited interstate trips. Other informants were linked through phone calls. The consultations were divergent, extensive and instructive. The discussions were based on questions drawn for the investigation as my interview guide.

The broad objective of this research is to provide a thorough investigation, a holistic outline of the scholar's roles and the contributions of Prof. Young-SookOnyiuke, as a music educator. The theory serving as reinforcement in this study is interculturalism that was proposed by Akin Euba (in 1996) is the collaboration of persons or elements with two or more cultures. This theory constructs a multicultural discourse from the perspective of building and distinctiveness (identity). The theory was applied to create a new form of teaching methodology from the viewpoint of two traditions through collaborative ideas that are useful to consumers of both cultures. The concept creates an international link when the person is bonded to both cultures.

The following research questions will guide the investigation:

1. Who is Young-SookOnyiuke?
2. What are the connections, distinctiveness, and variances between the person of YSO, and her teaching Methods?
3. How does the scholar use the teaching of piano and violin to define herself?
4. Which institution benefitted from her investments as a teacher?
5. When did she join the association of Nigerian Musicologists and what are her contributions?

Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke's Music Teaching Methods

Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke is distinguished by her well-tempered teaching strategies from the

traditional and modern perspectives. She attempts several alternative ways, including interdisciplinary methodologies (especially in the teaching of music education courses, piano and violin). Her perception about this is that the idea of teaching music by rigid procedure, within a school setting may have little influence on the conception of music by students, how it is taught and its reproduction after graduation. She begins her applied lectures by teaching music pieces either conversant to her students or effortlessly available to them, by so doing; she shapes up their self-confidence in their skill to play foreign instruments. After which they are introduced to the classical piece for the day. Her attitude to teaching suggests important inventive instinct into the tough challenges facing music students, hence reaching out to her students in various ways becomes a duty. La Rue (1981:40) stresses that: “Music students (musicians) intuitively perceive much more than---they may realize. For example, experience students can almost infallibly recognize their favourite songs, yet only rarely can they say precisely which characteristics enable them to make this identification”.

YSO believes that teachers who pay attention to little things in teaching will always get students to understand complex issues surrounding them. Recognizing music is not sufficient for music students, being able to describe its features that facilitate the identification, is more important. La Rue (1981) states further that:

Teachers should provide a comprehensive framework that may link students to musical observation and storage categories for conclusions in their memories. By reference to a consistent framework for all their musical thinking, we can re-organize previous knowledge--- in new conceptual patterns that may increase their ability to communicate music.

The statement above is a confirmation of the teaching patterns of YSO that rearranges earlier knowledge of students in a perceptible form that interrelate with new ideas thereby preparing them effectively for the new lesson. Prof. YSO has trust in the what, why, where, when and how questions as prescribed by Agawu, (2016:2):

Questions must be asked on the issues relating to the music process for example:

What is the nature of the sound resource and the range of sounds available on a given instrument? Which sounds are admitted as music and which are not? How do cultural insiders articulate a distinction between sound and music? When does sound become potential music? Where is sound punctuated and how stable over time is a given sound idea? Agawu, (2016:2)

YSO is students' friendly. Her persistence subjects her students' works to constructive criticism. Young-Sook Oyiuke believes that some students have been disadvantaged as a result of the poor channel of the relationship between staff and students and that this unwarranted development of the Department of Music where such teachers are also in a certain sense impoverished as a result of this same lack. The purpose of this article is to draw on the intellectual foundation laid by this diligent teacher in her years of meritorious, impartation of knowledge at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, in Anambra and the Babcock University, Ilesan-Remo, in Ogun State.

Idamoyibo (2016) affirms that lecture notes are enough reorientation on how music should be

taught. YSO always thought of providing the broad basis required for methodical teaching. This scholar believes that any contradiction to systematic teaching of music to students will be of enormous consequence. The students according to YSO (oral interview) are the probable victim of the teachers' negligence. Idamoyibo (2019) asserts that the manners in which the subject will be perceived depend greatly on the conviction of the teacher to persuasive teaching. She is also of the opinion that folk music should constitute a percentage of repertoire teaching is that the students are already used to songs taken directly from their culture. Importing music as teaching material may not pose any threat to the teacher's authority in class but it does affect the students' relationship with the lesson. Her teaching notes prove the need for the development of unique musical preparation by every teacher before venturing into the classroom. Assuming that once a lesson is taught, and assignments are done and submitted then every attendee in the classroom have grabbed the content, is the mistake that most music teachers make. Idamoyibo (2003) confirm that discursive lecture, where lecturers interact with their students not only on the present lesson but also on the previous ones that determine their grasping ability is important in teaching. YSO exercises direct and active control over her lectures, favouring traditional procedures to strict western approaches, which to her seems more realistic and results-oriented.

Young-Sook Onyiuke Method of Teaching Applied Music

YSO teaches her students piano and violin fascinatingly. She does not base her teaching on the assumption that every student in her class is thoroughly grounded in rudiments and theory of music. Rhythm according to Professor is the bedrock of music that defines the musicality of music students. Lessons from her years of teaching have proven that students assume they are grounded in rhythm but fail in its interpretation. She teaches the entirety of rhythm in form of the rhythmic interval, its occurrence, predictability and irregularity of sound. She finds it pleasurable to test her students on metrical patterns (simple and compound), dynamics (underlying forces) and tempo (speed) as musical expressions all serve as the foundation for her teaching of piano and violin. According to YSO, it is easy to fall into the error of the misconception of distance in applied music. She sets a procedure for teaching violin by playing out a mimicked sound that guides her students in their comprehension of time.

The second stage of her teaching includes the teaching of the property of sound, where she introduces pitch about the vibration of the strings of the violin when bowed. This is always taught in relation to duration and volume, thereby relating length to the degree of force. She prefers pictorial teaching methods where students are made to see the different positions of how the violin is held by different violinists and how students playing the violin are expected to hold them.

Her Membership of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists and her Contributions to its Growth

Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke is one of the first generation foundation members of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists (ANIM). She joined the association years ago and she was consistent not only as a member but also as a paper presenter and one of the associate editors. I still remember vividly my encounter with her At the ANIM Conference in Uyo and the College of Education, Otto/Ijanikin, her sweet frankness endeared me to her. I quickly recognized her as a woman of resourcefulness discretion, the strength of character, and, as proven, of immeasurable broad-mindedness. Many of the qualities that classify great women unmistakable characterized her. Her plenary leadership is always so memorable, her corrections are constructive and she also encourages beneficial exchange between the paper presenter and the plenary members of her group. But rather disapproves the possibilities of ranges of opinion that are extreme and unproductive; she offers helpful suggestions and sometimes gives a list of related literature that

may improve the quality of the paper in an unusually friendly manner. She opposes criticism that may lead to loss of confidence that generates a circle of emotions on the part of the presenter. Her honest hard-working spirit always aims to enhance the quality of every paper presented in her group. Most of the papers presented in her group are most often published.

YSO Contributions to External Examinations in DELSU and University of Lagos

Professor Young-Sook Onyiuke was the External Examiner at Delta State University, Abraka, for four consecutive years. There she undertook with diligence and extraordinary resourcefulness the external examination of undergraduate and postgraduate students. She was also the External Examiner of PhD thesis at the University of Lagos. An oral interview with Dr Bayo Ogunyemi (2022) at the Mountain Top University, affirms that YSO is proficient in improving a project, dissertation or thesis that will still comprise the innovative ideas or the notion of detail as conceived by the researcher. According to him, the Professor is very thorough in her supervision of students and very positive. He confirms her comments on his PhD thesis, though very elaborate, but he was cheered by the advice and proffered suggestions that eventually improve the quality of the thesis. Her contributions to the students' oral defence are always infallible as she works out a dialogue that relaxes the students making them calmer and well-coordinated. Her flexibility and perseverance has been very helpful to the students

Some Published Works of Professor Young-Sook Onyiuke

Here are the lists of some of her creative works both single and co-authored

- I. Childhood Music Education in Nigeria, Unpublished D.MUS Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2007
- AI. Motivation as a Valued Factor in Nigerian Primary School Music Education, Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts, 2003
- BI. Intellectual Property Rights and its Enforcement in Nigeria: A Prop for the Music Industry, E. V. Ojukwu, Y. S. Oyiuke & C. C. Esimone, US-China Education Review, 55:6, 373-381
- IV. Effective Teaching of Cultural/Creative Arts (CCA) Integrated Approach, E. V. Ojukwu, Y. S. Oyiuke, 2004, Vol. 10, 74-86
- V. Music Education, Music Curriculum and National Development, Y. S. Onyiuke, 2011, Vol. 8, 101-114
- VI. Special effects of Globalization on Music Learning of the Nigerian Child, Journal of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists, Vol. 3, 99-108, 2009
- VII. Nigerian Youths in a Global World: Active Music Education as a Paradigm, A New Journal of African Music, Vol. 3, 15:1, 227-244, 2019
- VIII. Junior Primary Music Teaching in Nigeria, US-China Education Review 6:4, 257-267, 2016
- IX. Music Program of Study Development on the Prospect of Higher Education in Africa
- X. Nigerian Indigenous Music Education in the Framework of Universal Education Task, African Research Review, Y. S. Onyiuke & E. C. Umezinwa, 6:2, 79-89, 2012
- XI. Transformative instructional methodology for sustainable music education in Nigerian tertiary institutions, Awka Journal of Research in Music and Arts (AJRMA), E. V. Ojukwu, Y. S. Onyiuke, 14, 1-13, 2021
- XII. Music Education in Nigeria: The Universal Remedy of Disabling Budgetary Straits, US-China Education Review, 7:12, 561-568, 2017, E. V. Ojukwu, Y. S. Onyiuke,
- XIII. Mekism and Knowledge Sharing of the Musical Arts of Africa: A Book of General Reading in Honour of Professor Meki- Nzewi, Eds. Y. S. Onyiuke, O. I. Idamoyibo, D. C. C. Agu, Ghana: Rex Charles, 2011
- XIV. Music as a Foundation of Aesthetic Education: Inference for Nigeria, Y. S. Onyiuke,

- Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities, Vol.2, 40, 2000
- XV. The Purpose of Music in Religion, Culture and its Reconciliatory Nature in Nigeria, *Bulletin of African Religion and Culture*, 5:1, 1999
- XVI. Literature, Linguistic and Music Education in the Child
- XVII. The Organizing of an African Burial Music: A Study of Asia Music in Ezira Village, Nim XVIII. Childhood Music Pedagogics and Social Obligation in Nigeria, Y. S. Onyiuke
- XIX. Part a Global Ethics, Science and Technological Advances and the Future of Higher Learning in Africa

Conclusion

The study has been a stimulating, reasonably puzzling, and indeed a new educational preparatory ground for result-oriented teaching in secondary and tertiary institutions. The contributions of this Professor on Music Education established the data from which definite representations that precede the analysis was derived. It will also interlink a bit with her interaction with the Association of Nigerian Musicologists.

It is revealed that Prof. Young-Sook Onyiuke carries out her academic duties with thoroughness and amazing creativity as a lecturer and External Examiner of undergraduate and postgraduate students. She has paid her dues as a teacher and a diligent, articulate pianist and violinist and her scholarly works express carefully her ability and passion for teaching. The study concludes that this scholar is a valuable factor in the Nigerian music educational systems

References

- Agawu, K. (2016). *The African imagination in music*, New York: Oxford University Press
- Agyekum, E. B., Amjad, F., Mohsin M. & Ansah, M.I.S. (2020). A bird's eye view of Ghana's renewable energy sector environment: A multi-criteria decision-making approach, *Utilities Politics*, 70, June 2021
- Idamoyibo A. A. & Achieng, E. A. (2019). Systematic instruction for musical arts education: Towards skill development and cultural growth. *Music Education in Africa*. London: 249-261
- Idamoyibo A. A. (2017). Impact of dun drummers on the development of traditional music in South-West Nigeria.
- Idamoyibo A. A. (2016). Indigenous music in new role. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 25 (3), 20-30
- Idamoyibo A. A. (2013). The systematic development of Ijala genre: The significance of its function and substance in contemporary Usage. Barcelona: Ceiba Ediciones Caentros Cultures, Espanoles De Guinea Ecuatorial
- Idamoyibo. A. A. (2003). Dynamics of African dance, *Humanities Review-Journal*, 67-73
- Idamoyibo A. A. (2003). Musicological view of an artiste in Africa. *Nigerian Music Review*, 4, La Rue, (1981). *The rhythm of music*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company
- Onyiuke, Y.S. and Umezina, E. C. (2012). Nigerian indigenous music education in the framework of universal education task. *African Research Review*, 6(2), 79-89.
- Ojukwu, E. V. & Onyiuke, Y. S. (2017). Music Education in Nigeria: The Panacea of Overcoming Economic Straits. *US-China Education Review B, Education on Theory*, 7(12), 561-568. www.davidpublisher.com
- Ojukwu, E. V. & Onyiuke, Y. S. (2021). Transformative instructional methodology for sustainable music education in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *Awka Journal of Research in Music and Arts (AJRMA)*, 14, 1-23.
- Yong-Sook Oyinuke (2003). Motivation as a Valued Factor in Nigerian Primary School Music Education, *Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts* 2, 45-53