

The Instructional Problems of Secondary School Music Teachers in Nsukka Urban

By

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Abstract

This study examined the instructional problems of secondary school music teachers in Nsukka urban. The approach to the research method was indepth interviews and a follow-up interviews. The study further reveal that educators must possess many skills to be successful in the classroom. A level of expertise is needed to translate subject matter into curricular goals for specific grade levels. Teachers must understand how students develop and what motivates them to learn. Teachers must also be able to implement pedagogical skills to make the subject matter applicable to all students, with the ability to assess for future learning. The teacher, as manager, must oversee the learning environment while protecting instructional time, maintaining the flow of the class, and being attentive to the needs of each student. The aim and objectives of this study was to enlighten the curriculum planners to be aware of music instructions and to enshrine it in the school curriculum and effect the change in the school time table. This study contributes to existing literature regarding the instructional problems of music and identify the problems the music teachers encounter in their subject in secondary school and solutions to the problems. It concluded that government and the educational stakeholders should fund educational workshops, conferences and seminars. The study recommended that music teachers should be encouraged by principals through nominations to participate in workshops for quality instructional delivery in schools.

Keywords: Music instruction, learning environment, music teacher and instructional problems.

Need for the Study

Music as a subject is both an art and a science. So considering whether music should be included in the school time table, one must know that it is an art and as such it has an appeal to man's spiritual nature which controls his instincts and emotions.

This subject needs knowledge of more technical element which requires a careful intellectual training and this knowledge is essential to the complete enjoyment of the art. It requires trained person not somebody who does not know anything about music.

Music also a course does not depend on or require the setting and supervision of tasks, it moves along the better educational road of the development of the complete person. Musical growth like all mental growth is a process in which essential meaning are clarified, depended and broadened. Musical growth like all mental growth is continuous.

Therefore musical activities are opportunities for teaching. They are necessary because without them teaching is almost lifeless, pointless, mechanistic and ineffective. In most secondary schools the music teacher encounter many problems either because of the background of the children or lack of teaching materials. In some secondary schools music does not exist at all due to lack of music teachers. In some schools they teach in abstract and this helps to deteriorate the mind of the pupils toward music and some will no more have interest in participating in the music lesson again and whatever effort one makes is in vain because what the pupils have planted in their mind is that whether good or bad they must drop the course after J. S. S. Exam. So this type of knowledge hinders the growth of music. Again the disregard most societies have toward music helps to increase the problems the teachers encounter because the children of these societies will now be influenced by the attitude of their parents and their interest will be reduced toward music and none of them will have the mind of offering the course after the J. S. S. examinations.

The secondary school education curriculum planners do not consider music along with other subjects, therefore majority of the secondary school do not offer music

and some that offer it only stop at the elementary level, even the teachers who teach it do not have the right approach to it so as to make the children have deep interest to study it further because of lack of manpower.

Some children that have the background knowledge of music, you find out that when they entered secondary school they will start to lose their interest either because of the way most teachers handle the subject or because of lack of materials or musical activities. But for one to develop more interest in music, the person should be engaged in one musical performance or the other – for this reason therefore there is need to introduce ensemble music such as instrumental ensemble, vocal ensemble, choral ensemble and traditional ensemble.

And so also the teachers who handle this must be knowledgeable, and this will make the children to take more active part in the subject and increase their interest toward the subject. When all these problem is solved most secondary school teachers will find it more easier to handle the course without much problems and most secondary school pupils will now offer music in their S. S. S. examination. Again you find out that the music teachers will now come out in large number because many students are now furthering in the course up to the university level. And each secondary school must have at least three (3) or four (4) music teachers. Music will now be considered along with other subjects.

The study will help to make a new developments and enlighten the society more on new ideas to apply instead of applying the old methods again. With this new ideas solution to the problems will then emerged if properly followed up by the music teachers. Though teaching as a profession is generally a difficult job therefore the society have to look at the teachers as very important people in the society because they are the people that determine the future of their children. Teachers encounter a lot of problem in their teaching because of the disregarding attitude the society conceive about them and this attitude influence the children's mind that the teachers are nothing and this help to make their job more difficult for them. Generally this happens to all the subjects they teach more especially to music teachers because music is been looked at as an abstract subjects or course in the school due to the problems the teachers encounter in teaching. Teachers teaching this subjects must know the age of the students in order to know the level

of music and the type of music the teacher can teach to them. The teacher must know what the music he is going to teach these pupil is all about and what the music portray, the aims and objectives set toward the music.

In most cases the music teacher is responsible for both vocal and instrumental instruction, sometimes another subject is added to his schedule English or mathematics for example, this situation, may put the teacher in a state of dismay and bewilderment. In order words the music teacher should be a fine person, intelligent, healthy in both mind and body steady and dependable, friendly well adjusted, enthusiastic over both music and teaching. So the man or woman who is to teach music to adolescents in secondary schools must in the first place be an excellent all round musician who is trained in the best materials and methods of the particular phases of music teaching for which he is preparing himself and in the second place, be a well adjusted person who knows at least a few other subjects in addition to music, who understands the relationship between music and other subjects this will help the teacher to relate the music teaching to the related environment.

As I have said that the society look down on the teachers without knowing that the teachers are the brain work behind the young people's future life because they encounter much problem while bringing them to the level of the education which they need. As I have also said before that the age matters in any subject the teacher is teaching them, the type of music been taught must be to his or her knowledge, the type of music which the student are familiar with at their particular age at that period. If the children are under age to learn the type of music which the teacher is teaching at that particular time the objectives and aims will not be achieved because the teacher did not study the age of the children. The teacher must know the background of the children to know whether the inability to understand music is due to lack of interest or is from the parents or from the external influence when found out. Then the teacher will now know how to plan his or her teaching so that the children will understand and the same time enjoying the music which they are singing along with the teacher while he is teaching.

Uneducated parents creates a lot of problem to the teachers by not giving their children background of education and also pamper them so much in that most of

the children do not pay attention in the class and music is not the mental subject you can teach in isolation of the children's attention. Some parents even take teachers to the court or give them a note of warning simple because they discipline their students for not paying attention in the class. But before one can enjoy music his or her must pay proper attention and know what the music is all about.

During vacation children who hails from remote areas where there are no facilities for studies except in the schools tends to forget what they have learnt in the school during vacation due to lack of facilities for revision at home. So when they come back to school the teacher instead of going to a new lesson will now spend most of the time to recall what they learnt before going on vacation. Things like practicals applied music needs constant revision both in school and at home. Music teachers suffer a lot in handling students from poor environment (poor families) in their applied music because they cannot own any instruments for constant rehearsals at home and this creates problems to the music teachers.

Too many pupils or students in a class, because everybody wants to be educated the classes are very much crowded with students. Instead of the normal classes of forty students, we now have more students to be handled by a single teacher. The teacher can no longer give assignments to the students as often as he wants it, because when he thinks of the time he will spend in marking them he releases there by helping to make the students become lazy.

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In the art of teaching music, students are supposed to be less in number so that the teachers would have enough time to meet the demands of the students in each music class. The more the students are in the class, the more problems the teacher will encounter for instance in the teaching of aural perception, the teacher needs to be very much closer to the individual students so as to enable him impart the knowledge of aural perception to them but when the students are too many for the teacher, he finds it difficult to go round the whole students and therefore, less attention is being given to them. Music is not like other subjects which can be

taught to the large number of students without personal attention or aurally and give note to copy but in the case of music you cannot read the music and understand it without critical attention to it. Music does not have much notes to copy, is mostly practicals. So the teachers really have a lot of problems while teaching a quite large number of students.

Cultural problem is another effective problem that hinder musical setting and it son much put the teachers off, in that they find it difficult to achieve their objectives for example there are different cultural settings in our society. And as we know that the culture of a people in one way or the other reflects how that society reacts to things that goes on around them. In educationally system too, the culture of an individual affects his way of thinking. Music teacher faces the problem of dealing with students who are not culturally brought up in the style of western music from their very youthful age. Also music teachers who have not had the opportunity of pure western education finds it difficult to teach such instruments like the piano. The cultural setting of some people in our society make it impossible for non indigenous to serve in the areas they posted as well for example the Yoruba's enjoys only the music of their people, a music teacher who goes into a class of Yoruba students will find it difficult to teach or draw his musical examples from any other culture because the students will not follow up immediately e.g. Dr. Fiagbesi.

Economic problem, because of the economic situation of the secondary school teachers in the country, music teachers don't have the money to buy records of established composers for the listening pleasure of their students. Music is a practical subject and when it is not taught practically students loose their interest in the subject.

Basic Methods of Teaching Music in Post Primary

Mostly in the practical terms, pictures and symbols often tell more than verbal delineation as they provides valuable supplements to oral instruction. Visual supports therefore improve the efficiency with which musical concepts are developed for example the notation should be provided constantly to focus student's hearing. Students of all ages is supposed to be provided with scores while their teachers write on the chalkboard but neither the school have money to

provide the materials nor their parents should have money for the materials too. Teaching find it difficult again to communicate with the students but due to lack of this teaching aids like excellent movies and film strips for various phases of music. Movies are especially effective in establishing motivation and good attitudes.

Film strips have value in teaching good position of playing instruments, conducting watching choral and orchestral performance, etc. Audio visual aids which are now placing an increasing emphasis on listeners viewer participation, can make an important contributions to the development of listening skills but they are not available in the secondary schools. Though all these mentioned equipment are necessary but the teacher should bear in mind however that films and film strips are not substitutes for the teacher, they should only be used when they might have done their work that is when they fulfil a clear – cut purpose of which the teacher himself and the pupils are aware. These methods and their applications are the only suggestions that will solve the problems of music teaching in post primary school. Each teaching situation dictates the most appropriates methods to be used, and all methods of teaching or variations and combinations of methods may be used at different times.

With all these mentioned above, you can see that the a study of music, especially in Nigerian educational institutions has been plagued by a number of factors; notably, but if all these materials are provided and music is made compulsory subject in the curriculum and qualified professional music teachers as I have said before are employed, most of the secondary schools will regard music as a subjects worth studying.

If music in post-primary institutions should be regularized in the curriculum as is the case in several western countries, staffed and equipped with western and traditional musical instrument as it is been done in other subjects, most of the teachers will not find it difficult. Again if folk music making which forms an integral part of Nigerian communities should be introduced in our school and capitalized upon to make music teaching a living subject, this will also help to eliminate a lot of problems the music teacher encounter and an indigenous master musicians and instrumentalist should be employed, even on part-time basis, to

give accurate instructions in traditional music in secondary schools and talented musicians should be motivated by award of scholarships into institutions of higher learning in Nigeria and abroad.

Lack of all these things are the effective factors for problems of music teachers in the secondary schools. This study will help to regularize music in the curriculum and make it one of the compulsory subjects. It will also give variations of solution to the problems. And it will motivate students to offer music in higher level. To the best of my knowledge this very topic has not been researched on.

Location and Material

My research is located at Nsukka. The population comprises ten music teachers in ten secondary schools located in the Urban area of the researcher's choice in Nsukka. The boundary of the studies is in secondary school within Nsukka urban material is restricted in all aspect of music taught in the secondary schools.

The place was chosen because of the nearness to the researcher, and financial considerations. The researcher chose the topic because to the best of the researcher's knowledge this particular topic has not been researched.

Aim and Objectives

The researchers aim and objectives is to document it for general readers and more especially for the specialist reader for application. And also for the curriculum planners to take note and bear it in their mind when planning the curriculum change will be made even in the school time table too.

To identify and describe the problems the music teachers encounter in their subject in secondary school and solutions to the problems.

Methods of Research

The approach to the research method should be in depth interviews and a follow-up interviews. Review of documents if possible. The scope of interview will cover methods, materials, activities, contents, time allocation if it is not conclusive for learning at that particular time. Sequence that is how is been presented, interest and motivation assignment and evaluation.

Literature Review

The approach to the literature review should be as follows:

The researcher, intend to visit the library to read up published and unpublished books written about music reaching. Journals, newspapers, any write up about music teaching. The researcher will use but due to the closure of the important section in the library because of the strike, the researcher was able to lay hand on any useful books from the library.