

## **MUSIC AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN NIGERIA: PROBLEM AND PROSPECTS**

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### **Abstract**

Teaching has been seen as a mere activity, occupation and career for the not well to do people in the society. This paper looks into the problems and prospects of music and the teaching profession in Nigeria. In our society today people look down on candidate wishing to study music/ music education at higher institution on the premise that musicians are the wayward type and being a teacher remains a last option when choosing a course of study. Parents and government of the day do not help the matter because of lackadaisical attitudes towards teaching profession in Nigeria. It focus on the concept of teaching and as a profession, characteristics of a profession, prospects of teaching profession in Nigeria and the prospects of music graduates in Nigeria. Bibliography and qualitative were employed as the methodology with the conceptual framework. It was discovered that, there were various problems confronting teaching profession in Nigeria which includes low wages, bad motivations, poor welfares amongst other things. The paper concludes by suggesting that full professionalization of teaching, better condition of service, special teacher's salary structure etc.

### **Introduction**

Okafor (1992) observed that, since the 1950s, the governments of the western and eastern regions of Nigeria have invested more of their revenues in education than in any other sector of development. According to the National Policy on Education:

Education in Nigeria is no more a private enterprise, but a huge government venture that has witnessed a progressive evolution of government's complete and dynamic intervention and active participation. The federal government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development.... Government has also stated that for the benefit of all citizens the country's educational goals in terms of its relevance to the needs of the individual as well as in terms of the kind of society desired in relation to the environment and the realities

of the modern world and rapid social changes should be clearly set-out. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1981, p. 5).

It went further that:

Nigeria's philosophy on education, therefore, is based on the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1981, p. 7).

Teaching in developed countries of the world has been a source of joy to the people who practiced it and the society where they belong to hold them in high esteem. Akinduyo (2014) commended that; developed countries will always trace their roots of success in all sectors to the quality of their teaching profession. The long chain of all other professions like medicine, law and engineering were product of teaching profession. People choose education as a career in developed countries. So also music as a course of study is at par with other profession unlike in Nigeria where these two professions have been relegated to the background. Not long ago in some cities in Nigeria, there was a slogan by the landlords and landladies that "House for rent, not for teachers".

### **Teaching**

Oyekan (1994) described teaching as an all-purpose profession engaged in human resource development for individual and economic growth. Olatunji (1996) defined teaching as a social function aimed at necessary growth in others. Teaching as an act of guiding and imparting knowledge in and outside the classroom, can only be done professionally by qualified and trained teachers.

According to Okafor (1988), Teacher Education can be defined as a form of education which is properly planned and systematically tailored and applied for the cultivation of those who teach or will teach particularly but not exclusively, in primary and post-primary levels of schooling. It is expected that a teacher must be able to pass or impart knowledge to his or her students and such knowledge should be able to change the learner positively.

### **Music Education in Nigeria**

Okafor (1992) expressed that music education has come a long way from the colonial times when most of the music education in an institution consisted of singing class in primary or

secondary school or the teacher training college. Now, music has become a subject, albeit not a well-ranked subject, in Nigerian educational institutions (p. 6).

Slosar (1998) added that music education not only direct the music development but also shapes the aesthetic criterions and values and the inner emotional world of pupils. He stated further that, it is important in developing the intellectual abilities and higher mental cognitive functions and has been proven that music positively affects the successfulness of pupils in schools.

Music education is that which trains the learner on the process of acquiring musical knowledge and skills with the ultimate aim of producing music educators. (Nnamani, 2003) explained further that music teaches children about their lives, stimulate creative thought, inspire them, give them a sense of belonging beauty, energy, strength and courage to enhance other aspects of everyday life. Uzoma (2001) also supported this, by saying that; Music Education has, as one of its cardinal objectives, the provision of experiences and training of learners. Such experiences, when acquired would help learners to live and contribute positively towards the progress and development of their society.

The relevance of music education therefore cannot be over looked. This was corroborated with the views of Hoffer (1985) which regard “music education as part of a subject that has power to wake in us sensation and emotions of a spiritual kind”. He further considered music education not only as an abstract art, but as a force which affects the lives of the people who acquire it.

### **Profession**

The word, profession has been defined by so many scholars in different ways. Amaele and Amaele (2003) defined a profession as a service occupation, which applies a systematic body of knowledge to problems that are of great relevance to the needs and yearnings of the society.

Yahayah (2004) described a profession as an occupation which has its basis on specialized and organized skills, knowledge and intellectual competence. He further stated that profession derives its raw materials to achieve set and desired objectives. Oyekan (2004) said viable professions are so much appreciated for their crucial and distinct rides from their repertoire of cherished knowledge, practical skills and intellectual competence. Among them are teaching, journalism, engineering, medicine, law, accountancy etc. these occupations render professional activities for certain fees by their clients. Akinduyo (2014) observed that a profession is therefore an occupation which renders services useful for the survival of individuals and the society, these valuable services are vital to survival and it is knowledge based, problem-solving, rare, managerial and full of expertise.

### **Features/Characteristics of a Profession**

A profession can be judged using many attributes and these attributes are very based on the perception of different scholars. Garrison and Norreen (2003) highlighted four major characteristics of a profession which included maintenance of personal integrity and objectivity in all disclosures and treating sensitive matter with confidentiality.

Nwachi (1991) listed six criteria as hallmark of a functioning profession. On his own, Richey (1979) recorded eight criteria which were listed as crucial features of any profession. These features include; knowledge, professional code of conduct or ethics, professional organization, legal recognition, freedom to practice, controlled entrance into the profession and services to members of the larger society.

### **Problems of Teaching Profession in Nigeria**

Akinduyo (2014) highlighted some of the problems confronting teaching profession in Nigeria. They include;

- Low wages, bad motivation and poor welfares
- Irregular self esteem in the society
- Absence of education professional academy
- Lack of professional and in service trainings
- Short period of internship
- High teacher-pupil ratio
- Politicizing education
- Lack of autonomy by Nigeria union of Teachers (NUT)
- Unwarranted Governments' intervention
- Poor budgetary allocation to teaching profession
- Poor work environment
- Government inability to register NUT as a professional organization
- Massive unqualified teacher
- Porous entry qualification

The above listed problems and among others made teachers' body to demand for better conditions of service. Various scholars also supported the agitation for the upliftment of teaching professions; among them is Oyekan (2004) who said the situation was worsened by the lingering social, economic and political crisis in Nigeria. Hence, the teachers were compelled to demand for:

- Full professionalization of teaching
- Better condition of service
- Prompt payment of their gratuities and pensions on retirement
- Adequate public recognition for teachers that nurture all to become productive citizens of the society
- Special teacher's salary structure (TSS)

### **Nigeria Music Teacher Education**

Music education occupies a vital position in a nation that is preparing g for a self-reliant attainment. Making one to be self-reliant means to be self employed and even employ others. One of the objectives of music education as it is contained in the National policy on Education (1981) stated: The acquisition of appropriate skills abilities and competence both mental and physical, are appropriate for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society. Omibiyi-Obidike supported the above statement when she described music education as “a comprehensive education system geared towards a functional and artistic career in the society”. So a functional teacher has ability of making a learner to be self reliant after completion of its study.

### **The Role of Music Education in Combating Unemployment**

Music education plays a major role in combating or reducing unemployment rate in Nigeria. Anuforum (1984) observed that music education has one of its objectives “the development of the child's talent, physical skills as well as the acquisition of specific vocational training that could enable one develop healthy attitude towards honest labour”. Nnamani (2000), also confirmed that the acquisition of these skills are essential ingredients for the building of a self-reliant individual capable of employing himself.

There are many ways through which music education can make one self-reliant thereby minimizing the problem of unemployment in Nigeria as rightly enumerated by Nnamani (2003). These include;

- The establishment of personal music studio for music productions. By this the graduates become producers, arrangers, sound engineers or music directors
- He can also establish a music band, thereby engaging in musical performances to earn a living. Many renowned musicians within and outside Nigeria such as king sunny Ade, late Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Psquare, Sunny Okosun etc. have succeeded in life through private ownership of bands

- One can become self-employed by engaging in the coaching and grooming of church choirs and orchestra.
- Unemployment can be curbed through the establishment of private school of music.

In addition, one can become church organist or pianist, music consultant, publisher etc.

### **Conclusion**

With the above discussions, if necessary steps are taken with the professionalism of teaching career, the extent to which all the challenges facing it are solved will determine the prospects of teaching as a profession in Nigeria as well as one rightly agreed that there are lots of job opportunities for a music student graduate who had acquired the correct and right skills at school.

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