

***THE SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN CONFLICT
RESOLUTION IN NIGERIA.***

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Abstract

The current state of insecurity in the country is a major concern to all and sundry. Hardly can there be a week without the news of kidnapping, gruesome killings/murder, rape, armed robbery, e.t.c, being reported in the Nigerian daily papers. Indeed, things are falling apart, the centre no longer holds and people are no longer at ease as far as security of lives and property is concerned. The issue of national security is multidimensional and multifaceted, hence, the need for multidisciplinary approaches. This paper therefore examines the socio-cultural impact of Music Education on conflict resolution and management in Nigeria. Songs that teach patriotism, unity, peace and progress are emphasised in this paper since music influences human behaviour in one way or the other.

Keywords: *National Security, Music Education, Conflict Resolution.*

Introduction

The issue of security is as old as the society itself, and people in different cultures of the world have always had several ways of securing their citizens from internal and external attacks at one time or the other. Security of lives and property only become a matter of concern to citizens when leaders who are supposed to provide adequate protection for their citizens refused to perform such roles as expected. As Achebe Chinua (1958 and 1960) reiterated in his books “*Things Fall Apart and No Longer at Ease*” some decades ago, the situation presented pictured the present state of insecurity in Nigeria. It is obvious therefore that things are falling apart, the centre can no longer holds, and people are no longer at ease as security of lives and property are threatened.

Over the years, musicians of different genres in Nigeria, Africa, and other European/American countries have played mediatory roles in settling disputes among people by singing songs which foster peace, unity, patriotism, freedom from oppression, good governance/trust in leadership, brotherhood/friendliness, love in the society, be it in Nigeria, Africa and all over the world. Music permeates various aspects of people’s

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lives. Whether the ones people listen to through radio both at home , offices or while driving to work, or through an MP3 player while jogging in the park, or through the speakerphones at a shopping center, or as a background score when watching a movie, hence, the significance of music in the society cannot be over emphasized. Music is virtually everywhere, surrounding us as we live our lives. It helps to set and direct our moods. Whether with words or instruments, songs accompany our human journey, capture, restate and reinforce our emotional experiences. Music gives a voice to our memories, thoughts and feelings. It allows us to relate to one another beyond our most distinct differences (Bassale, 2013:1). Throughout history, music has been used as a support to social movements, and has played significant physiological and psychological role in human development (Johnston, 2010 in Bassale 2013:11).

There are various jingles by musicians on how to curb corruption in the society, but only the selected few are heard on the Radio and Television. While this act is being appreciated (at least being heard in the first place, anyway), one is still looking forward to a time when more music which preaches good morals will be used at various occasions in Nigeria (Adeoye, 2014:123). Most times, musicians are usually blamed, ridiculed and at times arrested for singing songs of protest, bad/rough songs thereby influencing peoples' behaviours negatively. They may also be apprehended for saying bad things in their songs against the leaders in authority or bad things about the society they belong to at one time or the other, forgetting that music, just like any art form, is a reflection of the society. Though at other times, they are being applauded and given laurels for impacting positively on the society.

Music creation can be provoked by society's social, political, and economy conditions. It can be inspired by common behaviour of a society and vice versa. Societies' common behaviours include social problems, monumental events, general interests, specific orders, societies' pressures, historical events, cultural customs, societies' critiques and hopes, etc. In other words, "if we would like to see the quality of a society, observe the quality of music trend in the society "(Rachmawati, 2015:66). However, music still remains the potential tool for transforming the society as evident in the various roles it performs in the society.

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Concept of National Security

The concept of national security is multifaceted, and as such, it means different things to different people. For instance, Karim (2011:221) as cited in Omah (2013) observes that national security implies aggregates of the preservation of the legitimate interests of individuals, communities, institutions and the country, including her leadership. In the Nigerian context, Karim (2011) stresses that national security is defined in terms of strengthening the federal republic of Nigeria, advancing her interests and objectives, containment of instability, control of crime, elimination of corruption, enhancement of genuine development, progress and growth and improvement of the welfare and wellbeing and quality of life of every citizen. Not only that, Ngunan (2013) also corroborates that national security is about the confidence that the people of a state have in the leadership and national institutions that their interests can be protected against any act of adversaries. He stresses further that national security refers to the overall safety of a nation and its general citizenry.

While individuals are expected to provide some forms of security needed for peaceful co-existence with fellow citizens in their communities, the leadership saddled with the overall responsibility of providing adequate security against internal and external attack of its citizens at different levels of leadership, must be abreast of security challenges that may confront its citizens at one time or the other and be ready to combat such.

Different types of security challenges exist in the society at one time or the other. Nwoli (2010:128) in Ngunan (2013) identifies sources of national insecurity to include political domination or inequality, socio-economic injustices, human rights abuses, resource management, poor leadership, military coups, extreme deprivation and marginalization, civil wars, revolution, terrorism, secession, others, all relating on bad government, and manipulation of ethnic and religious differences.

Sustainable growth and development is not in view until security challenges are adequately tackled in any given society. Failure to perform this civic responsibility as expected, usually culminates into several security crises in the society. The inclusion of music in conflict resolution is being examined here in order to enhance security in Nigeria.

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The Concept of Conflict Resolution

The concept of conflicts resolution is perceived differently by different people in the society. According to Longer (1991) as cited in Ebede (2013), Conflict resolution is a constructive approach to interpersonal and intergroup conflicts that helps people with opposing positions work together to arrive at mutually acceptable compromise solutions. The main idea about conflict resolution is to allow individuals or nations to resolve their differences peacefully in ways that allow for everyone to save face. On the other hand, Conflict Management entails the mechanisms that are put in place to prevent the outbreak of conflict; Conflict resolution seeks to identify the causal factors in a particular conflict with a view of doing away with them in an appropriate manner; while, Conflict transformation involves the processes and models of intervention that seek to bring about positive change towards peaceful or harmonious relationships after conflict has occurred (Omah, 2013). In line with Conflicts resolution in the society, Atang (2011:371) as cited in Omah (2013:11) observes that “three levels of conflict resolution activities are easily identified in Nigeria: the traditional level in its individual and group forms, the government level (local, State and federal), and non-governmental organization and all the three levels of intervention co-exist.

There will always be conflicts among people in the society for as long as human beings exist on earth because of differences in opinions, philosophies or ideology about various issues relating to the well-being of individuals in the society. While conflicts may not be totally eradicated in the society, they can be well managed through different methods and approaches from time to time.

According to the Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation (2012), five distinct modes of effecting conflict resolutions are stated: identification of the perpetrators of the conflicts; the contexts of the conflicts; the issues involved in the conflicts; the rules governing the conflicts; and the existing structures put in place to resolve the conflicts in question. In order to make conflict resolution effective and efficient, the perpetrators of the conflicts must be identified properly and given fair hearing in order to dialogue with them, with the aim of resolving the crisis. Government at all levels in Nigeria (Federal, State and Local) usually adopts this strategy in conflicts resolution. Some of the examples which readily come to mind includes different militant groups who are usually in

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conflicts with the government, such as the Boko Haram from the northern part of the country, Odua Peoples' Congress from the west, Bakasi Boys, Niger Delta militants and Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) from the eastern part of the country, just to mention a few.

The next level is to examine the context of the conflicts in details. To do this, it is needful to find out the meaning and perception of that particular conflicts, and the ways by which the act is being carried out. The third level has to do with the issues involved in the conflicts. The causes of the conflicts and reasons for embarking on conflicts must be ascertained in order to ensure peaceful resolution. The fourth level involves the assessment of the rules on which the conflicts is established while the final stage lays emphasis on the existing structures put in place to resolve the conflicts. The mechanisms to be put in place must be consistent and potent enough to tackle the re-occurrence of such conflicts.

Peaceful resolution of the conflicts is not in view until a formidable committee is set up to serve as intermediary between the groups involved in the conflicts and the government. There are various references to application of music/songs in conflicts resolution from different parts of the world. For example, among the Yoruba of southwest Nigeria, "Omo to Moyare loju, Osi ni yo ta omo naa pa" (A child who dishonours her mother will forever be poor) is an example of some song that is usually taught to children to guard against being in conflicts with their parents. "Iyaale Aladuke f' Aduke mora tori iwo nikan lagba" (Senior wife, reconcile with Aduke because you are the eldest) is another example of a song employed in resolving conflicts among co-wives in the traditional African setting among the Yoruba of south-west Nigeria. This practice is not limited to the south-west alone, it also exists among other ethnic groups in other parts of Nigeria, where songs are being used to educate people on the acceptable way of relating to one another.

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Music Education is a discipline that helps in the preparation of personnel that are technically competent in music-making and pedagogically sound in manipulating the interaction between man, music and society. Uzoma (2001) as cited in Nwoyeh (2016) corroborates that music education has as one of its cardinal objectives, the provision of

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experience and training of the learners. Such experiences, when acquired would help learners to live and contribute positively towards the progress and development of their society. Music is an integral part of culture in many societies as evident in the daily activities of people over the years. Music always accompanies the various activities of individuals from birth to grave.

For instance, in African society just like in every other societies of the world, music/songs usually accompany the birth of a new born baby, the naming ceremony, lullabies, dancing, puberty, greetings, work, games, storytelling, recreation, teaching and learning of social norms and values, love and marriage/wedding, preparation for war, settling of disputes, chieftaincy and coronation, healing, funeral, etc. Furthermore, music is very often used in order to promote peaceful solutions and to simply connect people. In the conflict transformation, music can sometimes be that highly needed bridge between a shared past and reconciliation. It brings people together allowing them to understand their own view of reality as well as the experiences of other group (Mozara, 2015).

Omojola (1992) had earlier observed that in this regard, music constitutes an important educational forum through which members of the traditional Nigerian societies learn to live together as well as cope with the ever-changing challenges of life. The educational significance of musical performances in traditional Nigerian societies can therefore not be over emphasized, since “education is the vehicle by means of which the cultural heritage of a given society is transmitted to the younger generation (Fafunwa, 1983:48) and this helps to “produce an individual who is co-operative and conforming to the social order of the day” (Fafunwa, 1983:48).

In Nigeria, musicians like Sunny Okosun in “Africa Must Unite”, Onyeka Onwenu in “Let there be peace in our Country”, Funmi Adams in “Nigeria My Beloved Country”, Ebenezer Obey Fabiyi in “Pray for Nigeria”, Ben Odiase in Nigerian National Anthem, etc, used music to advocate for peaceful co-existence, patriotism and brotherhood in the society.

Not only that, like in any other country for that matter, “music played an enormously important role in Yugoslavia. Its potential to foster a common identity was recognized and various music programs were organized all over Yugoslavia. Music teachers got the

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opportunity to do "professional exchange" in other parts of the country, folklore groups were encouraged to include songs from all parts of Yugoslavia in their programs and music was in general engaged to raise feeling of brotherhood and unity. Some musicians were the first ones to foresee coming war events and endeavored to use music to prevent the disaster Mozara (2015), citing Pettan (2010).

Conclusion

As emphasised in this paper, the issue of security in any given society is a shared responsibility between the leaders and the citizens. While individuals are expected to provide some forms of security needed for peaceful co-existence with fellow citizens in their communities, the leadership saddled with the overall responsibility of providing adequate security against internal and external attack of its citizens at different levels of leadership, must be abreast of security challenges that may confront its citizens at one time or the other and be ready to combat such.

It has also been argued in this paper that the issue of national security is multidimensional and multifaceted, hence, the need for multidisciplinary approach since according to the ethos theory of music, different kinds of music have different ethical qualities and can, in some way or the other create those qualities in the listeners..... (thereby making people) to love (what is good) or hate things (that are bad or evil) Brullmann (2013). Therefore, music that teaches patriotism, unity, peace and progress should be encouraged in order to sustain peaceful co-existence in the society.

Recommendations

Having discussed the concept of national security, conflict resolution and socio-cultural impact of music education in Nigeria, the following recommendations are hereby made:

The issue of security is a shared-responsibility between the government (at all levels) and the governed at any given time, therefore, each party should be alert to security responsibilities as occasion may demand.

- To err is human and to forgive is divine, therefore, we should always forgive erring members of the society whether or not they show remorse and avoid anything that has to do with retaliation, so much so because Conflict resolution is not in view until offence is eradicated.

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- Musical concerts can also be organized to centre on the role of music in peace building, conflict resolution and nationalism.

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