

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to problem

Music education is a concern that all societies share since music is central to the cultural life, and monitors the mental advancement of a society from generation to generation. For instance, in the traditional Nigerian societies, music is not considered simply as a distillation of experience. It is as well strongly a proactive as well as organizational force integrated into social, political, religious and economic transactions of humanistic existence. Transmission of musical knowledge is an oral process. Thus music exists in performance as sound phenomenon as well as in its multiple societal references.

For these reasons, traditional Nigeria, before the invasion of foreign cultures had a well-rationalized system of music education that effectively sustained the transmission of age-old indigenous music knowledge, the systematized practices and creative advancement. Mass musical cognition was coerced through active participation in communal musical events and spontaneous criticism of live performances. There was also the indigenous apprenticeship in specialized music types that enabled the apprentice to acquire exceptional expertise, contextual application and performance dynamics from a master and the critical society (Nzewi, 1998:456-458). Such a learner attained community music leadership, and practiced music, as part of a multi-media experience that operated on the principle of music is life.

A number of articles have been published on aspects of traditional music education in Africa (See, Mans, 2000b; Nzewi, 1997a, 1998, 1999, 2003; Oehrle, 1991a, 1993; Okafor, 1988, 1991, 2000; Omibiyi-Obidike, 1987). Although music in African traditions implicates communion with others, it is inferable that the musician could undertake individual music making in response to personal or spiritual needs. The community regulates the public performance occasions, and

remains the ultimate custodian of quality and propriety. As such, the specialist practitioner's knowledge and practice are primarily deployed to the service of societal interests. Traditional music in the various Nigerian societies is thus communal property – a heritage from the past and a fund of knowledge bequeathed to prosperity. Furthermore, music processes and projects group identity. Hence, as endowed or specially trained individuals produce and advance musical knowledge everyone is empowered to participate through rationalized educational processes. Thus everybody benefits from the implicated health, and other human values through live music experiencing. Traditional music education is designed in principle, to produce musically capable persons generally, while experts emerge and get recognized as propagators of specialized knowledge that has preserved traditional knowledge from past generations to the next.

The traditional system of music education is still available to some degree in rural Nigerian locations. The intensity has, however, diminished due to such factors as 'Islamization, foreign missionary activities, urbanization, modern state and school systems as well as colonization' (Nzewi, 1998:457). Nevertheless, the fact that traditional music education continues to thrive in the traditional Nigerian setting till today mandates that it should strongly inform modern music education orientation and practices in the country.

The anomaly is that traditional music education has not been rationalized into the modern music education of Nigerian learners. That modern musicians in Nigeria should be mentally as well as practically equipped to demonstrate cultural identity in the context of national as well as world music discourse and creative practice is critical problem that this thesis sets out to address.

From the fourteenth century, the Islamic/Arabic influence came in the wake of Islamization of the northern and some western parts of Nigeria (Fafunwa, 2003:4) The Arabic scholars proselytized Islamic teachings in manners that made

adherents imbibe the cantillations of the *Koran* (the holy book of Islam), the call to prayers and certain other Arabic-Islamic attitudes to music. Gradually, the adherents infused the imbibed influences into the traditional African musical living. This is because the Islamic system of education somewhat corroborates the traditional Nigerian system of music education. The inculcation of mass musical knowing through active participation in Islamic social-religious events was encouraged. The adherents were still practising in the traditional music making and music-learning.

The indigenous apprenticeship system was adopted and geared toward the production of the musician who could assume Islamic music leadership. However, to remain a pious Muslim, he learnt to discern the *halal* (permitted) and the *haram* (prohibited) codes as prescribed in the *Koran*; also the *hadith* (prophetic tradition) and the *sunna* or the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) (See Halstead, 1994). For example, the Muslim musician learned that the use of drum and songs in mosques as well as the making of music associated with other religions – Christianity or Nigerian traditional religions – is *haram*. He was forbidden to participate in traditional Nigerian dances. Dancing is considered *haram* because of the erroneous presumption that it is associated with sexuality in traditional musical arts practices. The adherents also learnt that music that promotes Islamic faith is *halal*. Traditional music practices that have been influenced by Islamic system of music education are still available in parts of the country.

The dominance of the Western (colonial) music philosophy, content and methodology in Nigeria's modern music education practice started from the advent of Christian missionary work in the mid-nineteenth century. The first mission's church-cum-school was established in Badagry in 1842 (Adetoro, 1966:11). Thereafter, many Christian missions came into different parts of Nigeria and opened churches, schools and colleges (See Ajayi, 1965; Ayandele, 1966; Fafunwa, 1974; Taiwo, 1980) in which western philosophies of life,

thinking, modes of living and life styles were forced on converts as well as learners.

The new institutions introduced the singing of hymns and anthems, also the use of harmonium and brass choirs to accompany congregational singing. Converts were in some instances absolutely barred from participating in traditional social musical events because of the presumed association with what, in ignorance, was termed 'paganism'. The European missionaries taught Nigerian converts to value highly the imported European musical cultures, while condemning as well as denigrating traditional music practices.

Significantly, the *Saros* – liberated Yoruba slaves – trained as missionaries in Sierra Leone, returned in large numbers to the Western parts of Nigeria in the 1850s (See Omojola, 1995: 8-12). These indigenous missionaries employed as teachers in the missions schools by the European counterparts initially conformed to the cultural-mental conditioning by their mentors. They collaborated with the mentors in extolling the superiority of European mental-musical culture, while disparaging the indigenous musical practices and creative genius. However, when they became aware of the colonialist ploy of their mentors, the indigenous agents of Christian missions began to consciously accommodate the Yoruba indigenous music in school-cum-community activities, festivals and competitions. Nevertheless, music continued to be taught and practiced in the colonial schools primarily according to the religious convictions of the available teachers and the founders of the schools.

Fafunwa (1974) and Fajana (1982) have dealt exhaustively with the historical study of educational policies in Nigeria. Between 1887, when the colonial government formulated the first education ordinance for Nigeria, and 1954 when the formulation of education ordinance became regionally implemented in Nigeria, the colonial government mainly enacted ordinances. These were aimed at improving the quality of teachers, increasing as well as systematizing

instructional quality of teachers, increasing as well as systematizing instructional facilities, and adapting aspects of educational practices to suit the local conditions. But in the realm of music education, there were no tangible changes. The basis of music education remained Western in thoughts, contents, methods and professional aspiration. This means the cultivation of European music theory, musical instruments, educational philosophy and teaching methods as well as the colonization of significant portions of the Nigeria's musical landscapes.

Since 1950s, the Nigerian government has been investing heavily in education, because it is regarded as a powerful instrument of national development (See Fafunwa, 1974; Fajana, 1982). A new philosophy and content of education emphasizing nationalism gained impetus in Nigeria. This constituted on paper, a commitment to make education relevant to the needs of Nigerians. The philosophy impacted on modern music education as some Nigerian educators began urging to put in place a new music syllabus that will de-emphasize the Euro-centric bias, and that will accord due recognition to African music. Efforts in this direction culminated in the emergence of the bi-musical programs in Nigerian schools and colleges since 1963.

The problem, which is the disparity between stated goals and what obtains in practice, also the factors militating against the attainment of policy/curricula stipulations, is another critical problem that this study will address. In 1969, a National Curriculum Conference was set up. It was mandated to develop a National Policy on education based on the new philosophy of making Nigerian education culturally relevant. In 1977, the intention of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to make every child participate in meaningful programme of music education was concretized with a policy statement that emphasizes culturally oriented music education policy in Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 1981). Further in 1988, the FGN promulgated the 'Cultural Policy for Nigeria'.

The policy provides that the culture of Nigeria shall have a direct influence on, and be the basis of music education, industry and technology (FRN, 1988:6).

These two policies tend to provide some panacea that injected cultural orientation to music education in Nigeria. The policy segments of the Federal Ministry of Education are the National teachers institute (NTI), the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), the National Universities Commission (NUC). The central examination bodies are the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National examination Council (NECO) for examinations after secondary level while Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board is for tertiary admissions. These various bodies and agencies designed and disseminated national music curricula as well as syllabi to schools and colleges all over Nigeria for implementation as from the 1990s.

Underlying the establishment of these curricula and syllabi are some considerations, not the least of which is the need to:

- ensure a positive advancement of the Nigeria's musical heritage;
- ensure qualitative and nationally meaningful music teaching nationally;
- and
- develop creative musical abilities of Nigeria children to the highest level possible in order to keep the Nigerian musical heritage abreast of contemporary human trends.

A number of articles that have been published on the history of music education in Nigeria do acknowledge the emergence of the Nigeria's national music curricula (Okafor, 1988, 1989; Omojola, 1992; Nzewi, 1983, 1997; Omibiyi-Obidike 1987). Only a few have made, albeit, cursory remarks on how far the national music curricula are truly original, and how its content is being implanted by the classroom practitioners. In fact, there has been no effort to systematically evaluate the problems and discrepancies entrenched in, or intrinsic to the policy

as well as the curricula that impedes effective implementation. The study takes this challenge.

1.2 Statement of problem

The problems that this study addresses then include principally:

- The identification of the historical, cultural, economic, social and religious factors in Nigeria that have enabled or undermined, as the case may be, environmentally viable modern music education in Nigeria today, particularly at the tertiary level of education;
- The discrepancy between policy articulation and its execution, taking into account the appropriateness of curricula provisions *vis-à-vis* the human/cultural backgrounds for effective implementation;
- The discrepancy between curricula stipulation and effective classroom experiences;
- The extent to which cultural music content and educational principles have been adequately rationalized into policy statements as well as implementation documents. This will take into account the availability or otherwise, of the material and practical provisions that should enable meaningful classroom music education that meets national philosophy as well as needs.

1.3 Need for the study

The traditional Nigerian recognizes music as well as the associated educational practices as valued human activity that mediates relationships and transacts issues of human existence. However, for reasons of colonial/religious history and modern communication pervasiveness, many modern Nigerians misunderstand the need for, and the purpose of music education, while on the other hand demonstrating great love for music. These contradictions impact on modern music education. If music must at all be studied as a subject, what music should be prioritized in modern, nationally as well as culturally relevant education.

Music education in national systems has three sub-systems: policy formulation, development and implementation. The progression from the policy formulation to implementation has remained highly problematic. Policy formulation prescribes standards and criteria for evaluating accomplishment of the enterprise. It is at the implementation subsystem that the adequacy and viability of the policy guidelines are tested and monitored.

That basic music education should be available to all is a policy that the Nigerian government has established. The implementation of such policy as well as its pragmatic transaction has generated dilemmas of human-cultural identity as well as relevance, in terms of the contemporary worldview of the average contemporary Nigeria. A written national music curriculum guides what happens in the classrooms. Of critical concern then is the extent to which the humanistic objectives, cultural music imperatives, material resources and instructional facilities of classroom music education make contemporary sense in Nigeria, and Africa in general. This is the critical issue that motivates this study, and recommends a systematic historical approach. Along the line there is need also to determine the adequacy of the present Nigeria's music curricula.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The aim of the study is to frame the state of modern music education in Nigeria in historical, cultural and developmental perspectives. In this regard the issues of the adequacy or otherwise, of the scholarship merits of the indigenous music knowledge systems in Nigeria as the primary intellectual resource base for modern music education are examined. The study takes account of the contemporary worldview of the music education policy formulated by the Nigerian state. The study in tracing the evolution of the present music curricula assesses how the stakeholders in modern music education (administrators, employers, teachers, formal music learners, graduates and audience) have responded to the quality of the modern music practitioners produced by the institutions of learning.

1.5 Research questions

This thesis specifically addresses the following questions:

- What are the social, cultural, historical, economic, religious and political factors informing the orientation and content of the present music curricula in Nigeria?
- Are the philosophical, structural and formal contents as well as performance dynamics of Nigeria's indigenous music heritage appropriate for producing qualitative musicians that will demonstrate cultural identity and original creative/interpretative integrity in both national and world music forum?
- How appropriate, accessible and functional are the instructional facilities requisite for the effective realization of the music education policy as well as curricula?
- What methodological strategies are appropriate for effective music education in the contemporary African setting?
- How qualitative is the training of the music teachers that implement policy as well as curricula provision at every level of music education?
- How do the Nigerian stakeholders (policy makers, administrators, employers, teachers, music learners, music graduates and audience) interactively evaluate the orientation and content of Nigeria's music curricula?

1.6 Methodology

The study adopts both historical and empirical methods. The historical method involving primary and secondary sources is used. The historical period is divided into three parts:

- Pre-colonial, before the nineteenth century;
- Pre-independence, 1842 – 1960; and
- Post-independence, 1960 – 2001.

Since the bulk of the section is qualitative in approach, it relies on content analysis. This will be used to summarize music policy statements, curricula

goals, content and instructional procedures in music education in Nigeria. Archive records and official documents, also the historical development of curricula will be the primary sources of data collection.

In chapter three, the subjects for the section on indigenous African musical arts practices consisted of twelve Nigerians (6 men and 6 women) who have been immersed in indigenous African music education system for an average of forty years. The subjects were asked to narrate their teaching/learning experiences of indigenous children, apprentices and indigenous music. The chapter, therefore, presents a qualitative analysis based on veteran music teachers/learners' narratives about their teaching and learning of indigenous African music. The reflections this chapter presents are results from these narratives, which were outcome of interviews that the researcher conducted between March 2003 and February 2005 in Yoruba and Igbo communities.

The research participants for data presented in chapter four consisted of eight Muslims all of whom have had rich experiences in Afro-Islamic music education systems. The research participants were interviewed to narrate their experiences of Afro-Islamic music education. Their narratives provide the researcher with a picture of Afro-Islamic music education systems in Nigeria. Between January and August 2004 the researcher visited eight *Koranic* schools: two (2) in Kaduna, two (2) in Enugu and four (4) in Ibadan. Altogether, the researcher visited and participated in twenty five *Koranic* school classes, came in contact with nearly thirty *Koranic* teachers and observed approximately 350 students. The researcher attended four *iwaasu* sessions, two weeding, three *wolimat*, eight naming, two "house warming", and two burial ceremonies conducted in the Afro-Islamic ways. The researcher participated in over ten rehearsal sessions of two popular Alasalaatu (Islamic oriented music ensemble) in Ibadan. The narratives of the Afro-Islamic music practitioners offered guides this thesis in the enunciation of Islamic music education based on the researcher's observations, impressions and interactions with Islamic music educators and students. The

names of research participants in chapters three and four have been amended for reasons of confidentiality. The use of inverted commas are minimized in the narratives in chapters three and four for the discourse to flow.

The statistical method of data collection and analysis is used for the empirical section. Chapter seven uses questionnaire surveys, interviews and observation as tools to capture data on views of about 600 Nigerians – administrators, teachers, students, and employers in the Nigerian music education. The instrument is Likert-type attitude questionnaires that are personally administered on the respondents drawn from various sectors of the Nigerian life. The questionnaire is both close and open ended. This interview schedule is flexible, allowing for follow up question and answer interaction. The present state of research in Nigeria is not bounded by institutionalized ethical reservation. But the researcher respects arisen matters of confidentiality. Direct follow up study involves further interviews, employer survey and institutional self study in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the current music institutional programmes.

1.7 Focus of study

Music education in modern Nigeria is now a national concern. It is guided by national policies (FGN, 1981, 1988), aiming to effect positive redirection or advancement of Nigerian musical arts practices to reflect nationhood aspirations. The study documents and critically reviews the social as well as political realities of the Nigerian experience in music education from historical, cultural and professional practice perspectives.

There are currently six national music curricula approved for music education at the three levels of education in Nigeria: one for primary, two for secondary and three for tertiary levels. The study targets, primarily, the tertiary level that provides leadership personnel in modern Nigerian music education at both policy and execution levels.

There are twenty-four departments of music in Nigeria's tertiary education institutions: sixteen in colleges of education, one in a polytechnic and seven in universities. The tertiary music departments operate the nationally 'Approved Minimum Academic Standard in Music' (See appendix V). The study, with necessary examination of what obtains at the lower levels of musical arts education, evaluates the tertiary music policy objective *vis-à-vis* instructional content provision. The tertiary music education is evaluated in terms of effectiveness and contemporary relevance in producing music professionals that can demonstrate national identity, cultural and creative integrity as well as professional competence in the context of the nation and the world.

1.8 Value of the study

This study provides an historical perspective to music education in Nigeria that highlights its strengths and weaknesses. The result of the study could enable national re-thinking and re-orientation as need be. The thesis argues directions for the review of the worldview and content of music education in terms of Nigeria's overall cultural policy and national identity as a multi-cultural nation of some two hundred and fifty distinctive ethnic identities. In the world context, Nigeria stakes abundance and variety of still vibrant original music resources as well as viable indigenous music education models. A research such as this is of essential guidance to policy makers, music education administrators, music teachers, music students, international music scholars and music practitioners interested in culturally meaningful contemporary music education as well as practice in Nigeria and beyond.

1.9 Preview of chapters

The thesis is in seven chapters. Chapter one discusses the nature of the historical pathway through which Nigeria's educational systems has gone through. The chapter points out how the dynamics of the historical process is influencing the nature and content of music education in the country. It proposes

that the disparity that has existed between the conception and implementation of educational policies in Nigeria should be understood against the background of the social dislocation that marked the discussed historical process. The chapter presents the adopted methodological approaches, which are quantitative and qualitative in nature and include the use of questionnaire surveys, interviews and observation as tools to capture data on views of students, lecturers, administrators and employers in the field of Nigerian music education.

Chapter two uses opinions of African/Africanist scholars in presenting the culture of education in Africa to assert the reality of viable and enduring indigenous musical arts policies and life systems that predates Islamic and European incursions. It discusses the nature of, need as well as paradigms for evaluating the education programme and curricula appertaining.

Chapter three highlights the educational significance of indigenous in Nigeria deriving from literary sources. It discusses the indigenous African music education philosophy under the themes of meaningful existence, consciousness of the spiritual factor, cyclic framework, communalism, holism, functionalism, perennialism and African music practice.

Chapter four traces the origin of Islam in some of the Nigeria provinces, draws attention to the musical value of Islamic chants, highlights the importance of *Koranic* schools where Muslims imbibe the Islamic doctrine, and discusses the emergence of Afro-Islamic music traditions in Nigeria. It argues that the introduction of Islam has been a conflicting system with indigenous musical arts system, and a debilitating factor within the larger framework of music education in Nigeria.

Chapter five traces the introduction of modern music education in Nigeria and argues how the collaboration of the missions and the colonial government served to regulate the imported music education system. It analyses the policy issues,

orientation and implementation in three phases: Phase I (1842 – 1882) was dominated by the educational activities of the Christian missions. Phase II (1882 – 1925) was characterized by the participation of colonial government alongside the expansion of the role of missions in the entrenchment of westernization of music education in Nigeria. It examines the emergence of popular music and the commercialization of African music in Nigeria. Phase III (1925 – 1959) was marked by cultural nationalism in Nigeria. The chapter concludes by listing the factors that retarded the pace of development of music education in Nigeria.

Chapter six discusses the Nigerian government efforts to expand and reform the Western-derived educational system as practiced in Nigeria. The chapter is in two phases: Phase I (1960 -1969) tells how the Ashby Commission provide the framework for the development of tertiary education in Nigeria and describes how University of Nigeria, Nsukka became the first tertiary institution to set up a full-fledged music department in 1961 with bi-cultural programme in European classical and Africa music studies. Phase II (1969 – 2001) discusses Federal and State government involvement in providing the establishment of twenty-four tertiary institutions to cater for providing the nation with the required music manpower.

Chapter six identifies the production of the *National Policy on Education* (1977) as a guiding framework for streamlining and coordinating the content and quality of education in Nigeria; the production of the *Cultural Policy for Nigeria* (1988) which gives direction for governments' participation in national cultural programmes as well as cultural education. The chapter critiques the two policy documents with respect to vision, mission and national relevance and concludes that the implementation of the two policy documents have been haphazard in ensuring meaningful cultural arts education research and practices in official sites. It discusses the cultural orientation, vision, curricula content, quality of instruction/lecturers and overall administration of tertiary music education in Nigeria and sees a lack of research and practical orientation as foundations for

quality music education constraining factors of quality in modern music education in Nigeria.

Chapter seven provides a data grounded evaluation of the state of music education at all levels of education basic to governmental policies and administrative as well as funding interventions. It presents a quantitative study in which views of students, lecturers, administrators and employers were explored in evaluating current tertiary music education in Nigeria. It identifies the overall lack of original research disposition among both lecturers and learners due to various factors such as deplorable infrastructural basics, funding, professional disposition and the preparation of students for professional practice. The chapter argues for re-visiting, re-conceptualizing and re-orienting music curricula for tertiary music education in Nigeria

1.10 Terminology

It is a truism that all traditional African societies have had systems for instructing themselves in the socio-musical knowledge, skill and values for those societies to have had widely recognized, revered and surviving musical heritages. However, the term “traditional African” as used in this thesis must not be taken to an extent of becoming a racist-cultural icon. Africa is not a cultural island. Many of the qualities that are discussed here are also found in other traditional societies around the world. Nevertheless, the particular mix of qualities discussed in this thesis is unique to Africa.

That the term ‘African’ itself is surrounded by definitional controversies is by now a well-known fact. Amin Samir for example argues that ‘there is no single African culture. There are African cultures’ (Samir, 1990:45). Gerhard Kubik in the same manner asserts that ‘there is African music. There are African musics’ This has made Agawu (2003:1) to express the need for African music scholars to ‘problematise the designation ‘African’’. But, whatever may be the nature of the definitional controversies one thing is clear. It is that, for any definition of the

African to be considered adequate, it has to be one that enables us to discern between what is African and what is not. A failure to meet this requirement would remain an attempt to give inadequate definition of the term 'African'.

But lumping African societies together may suggest it as one unified cultural area. This is less so. Variations exist in musical manifestations in African culture. There are many music genres, styles, and types, amid ethnic communities in Africa. There was no one type of traditional music education system. This situation has worried many African scholars. Recently, however, some common factors have emerged for establishing some criteria for a musical pan-africanity. Lomax (1970) and Merriam (1959), for example, use the influence of Arabic musical tradition to distinguish the North African musical styles from that of the Africa south of the Sahara.

Donatus Nwoga too has advanced a more illuminating argument when he argues that in spite of the different experiences in history in different periods of time, which different parts of Africa have gone through:

it is possible, however, to consider Africa in terms of a centre and periphery theory in which certain phenomena, certain aspects of culture can be seen to be of firmer and deeper and more expansive hold in particular parts of Africa and to be of less effect in the surrounding areas (Nwoga, 1988: 11).

Likewise, Meki Nzewi has spoken of African music in the singular. As he writes, 'there is an African (south of the Sahara) field of musical sound' (Nzewi, 1997:31). Basing his idea on the term, "field", Nzewi argues that it is possible to proceed from the global to the local in the investigation of African music. He also argues that 'African musical intellection is guided by principles and standards of form and structure, some of which are common across vast ethnic, sub-ethnic, down to community sounds' (Nzewi, 1997:31). 'In Africa,' Drewal (1992:2), states that: 'performance is a primary site for the production of knowledge' about African culture. Indigenous African societies pass on their collective music knowledge

and skills through performance. From this perspective, it is more profitable to talk about what is peculiar to African music education rather than what is exclusive to it. The peculiarities themselves are not to be seen from a static point of view but in terms of dynamic progression of African music educational enterprise.