

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

Children learn and develop the ability to learn language from their environment. The ability of learning in any field is not only inherited but is also product of the environment. Every child can learn music just as he or she can learn how to speak (Suzuki 1969:vi). Supporting Suzuki's idea, Kendall (1996: 43-46) notes that just as the home environment is pivotal in learning every language, a child may also be crucial to learning the music of any historical period or any cultural tradition. Byron (1995:1) introduces John Blacking's view of music as a special kind of language that is culturally rooted and socially enacted with the sole purpose of conveying meaning. Broklehurst (1971:45) asserts that the natural response to the nonverbal communicative character of music contributes to the emotional, intellectual, physical and social development of the child. Development musical skills comes from within, and the people and their musics and ways of making musics need to be listened to, heard and utilised as a basis for arts education (Oehrle & Emeka 2003: 38-51), which includes music education.

Music education in sub-Saharan African cultures starts from the home. Stressing this methodological imperative, Nketia (1974:23-24) explains that the African mother sings to her child and introduces him or her to music right from the cradle. In the rural African environment (which this research project takes into account), children participate in peer group traditional music learning. This typical African methodological approach must be exploited in the planning and delivery of school music education. The environment of communities in which children first encounter music education needs to be strategically placed in modern music education programmes such that will bridge the 'town' and 'gown' divide. Emeka (1994:104-123) notes that children in growing up and playing together generally improve their language and number skills by playing musical and rhythmic games while doing

household chores or running errands. Their knowledge of history is also enhanced by listening to and participating in the telling of folk tales and in the recitation of rhythms. These arguments reinforce the view that there is reason to re-visit African traditional paradigms to determine norms for effective childhood music education.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in its *National Policy on Education* (NPE 1981) has included music as one of the core subjects in the school curriculum. This policy was devised to cultivate and develop an interest among primary school pupils in the cultural arts embedded in performance experiences such as music, dance and drama practices. Oehrle and Emeka (2003:38-51) note that music is among the most common and most widely available cultural expressions in Africa. In fact, Meki Nzewi puts it more succinctly when he wrote:

In the African sense, learning is an interactive performance experience, while performance is never-ending learning experience. Knowledge acquisition in the musical arts is then qualitatively regenerative and quantitatively limitless for life (Nzewi 2003:14).

In its support for the development of music education in Nigeria, The *National Policy on Education* document (1981:13) highlights the following:

In order to encourage aesthetic, creative and musical activities, Government will make staff and facilities available for the teaching of creative arts and crafts and music in primary schools.

Primary education as referred to in the document is education given in an institution for children normally between the ages of 6 to ± 11 years old. Since the primary school is the foundation on which the rest of the educational system is built upon, the primary level is the key to the success or failure of the whole system. This being the case, the general objectives of primary education as noted by the Federal Republic of Nigeria in the new *National Policy on Education* (1998:13) emphasized the following:

- (a) Inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively;
- (b) lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;

- (c) Give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- (d) Mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child;
- (e) Develop in the child the ability to adapt to his changing environment;
- (f) Give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity; and
- (g) provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Although these laudable objectives are highlighted as the basis for primary school education, they are nonetheless not often implemented in the primary school classroom. A practical example is that the Government had proposed to make primary education free and universal by introducing the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme in September 1976. As it stands today however, free education is no longer an option in Nigerian primary schools.

Furthermore, in the whitepaper on education policy, the Nigerian government prescribed the following curricular activities for the primary school viz.: the inculcation of literacy and numeracy; the study of science; the study of the social norms and values of the local community; the encouragement of aesthetic, creative and musical activities; the teaching of local crafts and domestic science and agriculture (NPE 1998:13-14).

In support of the above policy statements, the National Implementation Committee on *National Policy on Education* in the *Primary School Curriculum Modules* (see Appendix I), recognises the value of the arts by incorporating music, drama (including dance) and art as a single subject, as well as *Cultural Art*. The purpose of this curriculum is to aid children to develop their cultural arts embedded in performance experiences such as music, dance/drama and fine arts. The committee apparently had good intentions but actual practices in the schools appear largely neglected.

Greenberg (1979:3-10) opines that music contributes in no small way to the development of the child. This can only be achieved through effective music teaching and learning, adopting the use of audio-visual learning aids and practical

strategies. The vision of nurturing a Nigerian child who will have full appreciation and enjoyment of music will remain a mirage if there are no adequate materials and application of appropriate methodology.

Leonhard and House (1972:91-93) argue that music educators have been persuaded that the development of musicianship and aesthetic experience should begin early in children while music provision should receive the highest priority accordingly in the nursery school, kindergarten and primary school. This opinion, of course, derives from modern realities in which the home has become disadvantaged as a primary location for experiencing music practically. However, the Nigerian child shares musical experiences with his/her mother when as a child, strapped behind his/her mother's back, they have actively participated in social gatherings, festivals and ceremonies.

Through out the course of history, human beings have always utilized music as a medium to comment upon life experiences. Great epic stories such as Homer's Iliad and Odyssey have been transmitted down to us through songs. Children are no exception and they can learn and adopt this in their normal process of development. Unfortunately modern educational planning that is supposed to be sensitive to proper child upbringing has not strategized systematic music instruction in schools. As in Nigerian schools, there seems to be a general apathy towards music education in planning as well as curriculum delivery.

According to Omibiyi-Obidike (1987:10), music continues to be a mere postscript to the total educational programme. In a national seminar and workshop organized for Federal and State inspectors and teachers, Nwuba (1988:13) notes that music lesson in most primary schools begins and ends with half-hearted singing of age-old lyrics, and some teachers shy away from even singing.

Onwuekwe (1998:81) notes that Nigerian schools that offer music are few and far between. Learners that are naturally talented in music are subsequently denied the opportunity to develop their talents, and so cannot contribute effectively to the musical growth of the nation. The music component has been relegated to the background to such an extent that it has become a mere classroom singing and/or

dancing. In the few schools where the musical arts are taught, the teachers are most often inadequately prepared due to lack of the necessary materials. In addition, contents and methodologies adopted are not culture-sensitive. The children are often packed together in one classroom during the last period under the custody of a teacher whose area of discipline may likely not be music. This type of teacher has no interest in partaking in the music education of the children. I observed that music is regarded as class singing done in the afternoon when the children are already exhausted from the day's activities. Many teachers as well as parents and pupils see little relevance for music in the school curriculum beyond viewing it as a pure recreational activity. This is a disturbing departure from the practice in traditional society that regards music as central and even inseparable from life.

As has been observed, nature and humans provide the different sounds, musical and non-musical, inherent in the environment into which a child is born. These sounds condition the child's reflexes, and persist as the child grows and begins to discriminate between the sounds. The wind whistling through trees, sounds of birds, animals, humans or man-made objects all affect the child's consciousness. The childhood stage of life is mostly that of passive listening and absorption of sounds that constitute the music of the child's environment. Through this natural process of growth and development of musical consciousness, the child's emotional and physical stability are reinforced and secured. More structured musical sounds induce bodily movement, rhythmic movement and singing in children. The child learns to respond, even if unsteadily, by way of bodily movement to music.

As humanly organized sound (Blacking 1973:12), music is a deliberate presentation of opportunities for listening, creative singing, rhythmic responses and playing instruments. Through these activities, the child experiences pleasure, joy and creative expression. He or she develops listening skills and auditory discrimination. She also gains in psychophysical development, artistic use of the body as well as an increase in the range and flexibility of the voice. Participation engenders cognitive appreciation which remains a critical goal of music education.

The child grows in appreciation of music, and can learn to be discriminating in aesthetic choices.

The curriculum is a structured programme, devised by the school for the learning experience of the pupils (Stephens 1995:1-8). Stephens observes that this is not a matter of chance encounter, but rather a planned and considered path towards the achievement of skills, knowledge and understanding. The development of musical perception and skills is dependent upon the quality and appropriateness of the materials and methodology as they are provided within and outside the school. Improved materials and methodology as noted by Stephens (1995:3) when applied to the study of music as a foundation subject provides for the progressive, development of the following:

- Awareness and appreciation of organized sound patterns in children;
- Skills in movement (such as motor co-ordination and dexterity), vocal skills and skills of aural imagery (imagining and internalizing sounds), acquired through exploring and organizing sound;
- Sensitive, analytical and critical responses to music;
- The capacity to express ideas, thoughts and feelings through music;
- Awareness and understanding of traditions, idioms and musical styles from a variety of cultures, times and places; and
- The experience of fulfilment, which derives from striving for the highest possible artistic and technical standards.

This study seeks to bring into perspective the basic principles in primary music education. It also seeks to highlight how primary music education can play a pivotal role in the development of a child and in this context the Nigerian child.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As already pointed out, despite the laudable proclamations of principles in the *National Policy on Education* (1981 & 1998), there is still a general apathy towards music education in Nigerian schools. This is evidenced by the fact that in primary schools in Nigeria, music is seldom taken as a serious subject in the school curriculum. The situation is further exacerbated by the quality and workload of both qualified and non-qualified music teachers in the primary schools who teach several other subjects besides music - a clear misuse or waste of work force. The

delivery of adequate musical knowledge aimed at developing aesthetic sensitivity, creative ability and appreciation as far as early childhood music education is concerned in Nigeria appears to be doubtful. Teaching focuses on the cognitive level without appropriate measure of the affective and psychomotor domains. In some cases, inadequacy of teachers in the system has paralyzed the implementation of the programme. In some schools visited, the researcher observed a lack of facilities, instructional materials, as well as musical instruments.

Although the Federal Government has incorporated music study as one of the core subjects to be learnt in the primary schools to enhance the creative ability, musical activity and aesthetic development of the individual, the various methods used in teaching music have made the study of the subject unpopular. In most schools in Nigeria, and in Anambra State for example, music lessons have been reduced to class singing and pupils are not exposed to basic musical skills such as singing games, playing instruments, singing and dancing. And, even when music is taught, the content is heavily Western whereas the local environment bubbles with musical practices that roll singing, playing of musical instruments, dancing and the mimetic arts into an integral whole.

The curriculum planners have also contributed to the problem in the sense that academically qualified musicians are hardly involved in primary school's music curriculum planning. Research carried out by Ifemesia (1988:98) to determine the adequacy of the music programme revealed that 75% of the teachers interviewed in Anambra State were of the opinion that the programme requires complete overhauling. It is unfortunate that the average Nigerian citizen looks down on formal music education and yet, encounters music in everyday activities of life ranging from morning and evening devotions to daily activities.

The musical achievements of pupils and their motivation to engage in activities in music lessons are significantly influenced by the materials, methodology and strategies that teachers adopt in the classroom. There will be occasions when the teacher directs and leads. At other times, the teachers should focus upon motivating, giving advice and facilitating as, for example, when pupils are developing their own ideas in musical creativity and performance. The most

effective materials and methodology that will be best suited to the task or activity being undertaken is a key problem in administering classroom music education in Nigeria. Effective materials and methodology that relate to the levels of maturity, skills and experience of the pupils are also problems. Materials designed to involve pupils progressively in planning, presenting and evaluating, guiding them to the point where they can express independent preference based on a broad experience and understanding of the subject are needed.

The critical problem then centres on the materials, methodology and curriculum that should be employed to help develop the child's interest in the cultural arts embedded in performance experience such as music, dance and drama practices in childhood music education in Nigeria.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to:

- Explore music teaching and learning in primary schools in Nigeria with a view to finding out the relevance of the school music curriculum to the all round development of the Nigerian child socially, morally, religiously, emotionally, psychologically and mentally.
- Determine the availability of materials that will facilitate the achievement of musical skills, knowledge and understanding in the pupils.
- Determine the adequacy of teaching methods employed by the music teachers.
- Assess and evaluate the materials and methodology for early childhood music education in Nigeria.

1.5 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The relevance of any study is judged on its ability to extend the frontiers of available knowledge. This study should be beneficial to the music teachers, music educators, curriculum planners and the government for the following reasons:

- To the music teachers and educators, the study will stimulate the use of appropriate methodology suitable to available materials, and widen their perception of ways of improving the teaching of music.
- This study is relevant in the sense that the findings there-from will contribute significantly to improving the general standard of music teaching in Nigerian primary schools.
- The study will serve as a pointer to music curriculum planning in Nigeria. It will help the government to develop positive attitudes towards music. A positive attitude towards music on the part of the government sectors will then lead to appropriate placing of music in the curriculum of primary schools in Nigeria, and the posting of sufficient qualified music teachers to primary schools.
- Finally, the study will serve as a base for further research in the area under study.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following five research questions were formulated to guide the researcher through the study:

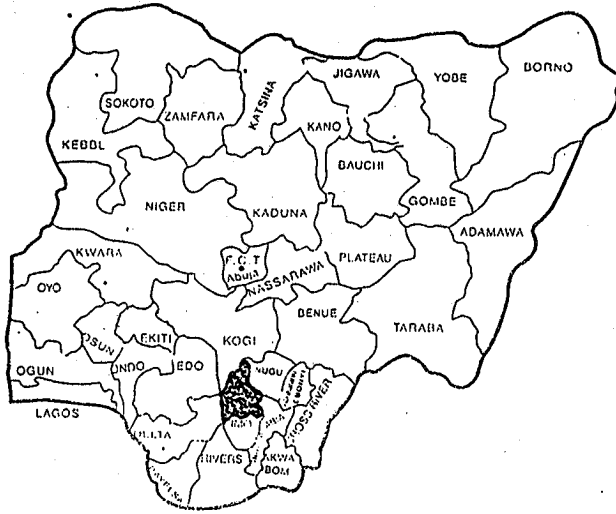
- To what extent do the teaching facilities, materials and learning environment for early child education in music currently available in schools in Nigeria enable adequate acquisition of musical skills, knowledge and understanding? For example learning texts, music room, performance opportunities, performance space or hall, technical support, and musical instruments.
- What teaching methods are employed for music lessons by the music teachers? For example: teacher centre method, student centre method and laissez-faire method.

- What learning strategies can best be utilized to ensure the fruitful and effective acquisition of music knowledge by pupils in Nigeria? For example: discussion, survey, observation, demonstration, use of live and recorded examples, rote and play-way methods among others.
- How adequate is the delivery of the music staff of music education in primary schools in Nigeria?
- What are the problems militating against effective teaching and learning of music in Nigerian primary schools?

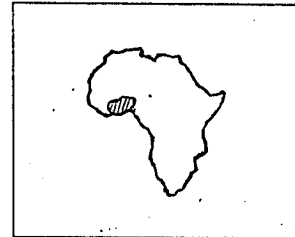
1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Every survey must be carried out in a particular area from which generalization should be made. The researcher is residing in Anambra State, and because of financial constraints and other logistic problems, decided to use Anambra State as the area of study from which inference can be made to the entire nation.

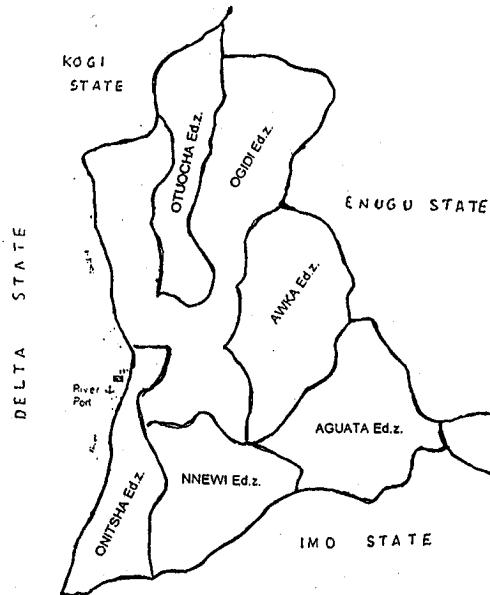
This study is therefore, delimited to the pupils in primary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria (see map I). Nigeria is divided into 37 states (see map II) and Anambra State is situated in the south-eastern part of Nigeria with Kogi State in the north, Imo State in the south, Enugu State in the east and Delta State in the west. Anambra State is divided into 26 Local Government Areas (L.G.A.). The State consists of 6 Educational zones (see map III); 965 State Pre-primary and Primary Schools, and 300 Private Primary Schools.



Map II: Map of Nigeria showing 36 state and the Anambra State, the study area.



Map I: Map of Africa showing Nigeria



Map III: Map of Anambra State showing six(6) Educational Zones

Table 1 below is the educational zones and the number of the State primary schools and Private primary schools in existence in Anambra State of Nigeria. The list of these schools are attached in appendices VII and VIII

Table 1: Educational Zones and the Number of the State and Private Primary Schools in Anambra State

S/ N	Educational zone	Local Government Area	Number of State Primary schools	Number of Private Primary Schools	Total number of State Primary Schools in educational zone	Total number of private primary Schools in educational zone
1.	Awka	Anaocha Awka North Awka South Njikoka Dunukofia	46 40 42 37 22	5 3 22 10 2	187	42
2.	Onitsha	Ogbaru Onitsha South Onitsha North Onitsha (Town)	51 36 27 13	38 22 21 4	127	81
3.	Ogidi	Idemili North Idemili South Oyi Anambra East Dunukofia Idemili	50 23 24 18 20 18	21 3 3 2 3 44	153	76
4.	Aguata	Aguata Orumba North Orumba South	78 51 40	22 8 7	169	37
5.	Nnewi	Ihiala Nnewi South Nnewi North Ekwusigo Nnewi (Town)	50 51 45 35 37	9 8 32 10 5	181	64

S/ N	Educational zone	Local Government Area	Number of State Primary schools	Number of Private Primary Schools	Total number of State Primary Schools in educational zone	Total number of private primary Schools in educational zone
6.	Otuocha	Anambra East Ayamelum Anambra West	50 50 47	-	148	-
Total number of schools					965	300
					1265	

Source: Anambra State primary Education Board Authority

1.8 ORGANIZING THE STUDY

This section comprises survey research design and target population.

1.8.1 Survey Research Design

The survey research is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu 1991:54). In other words, it is only a part of the population that has been studied, and findings from this are expected to be generalized to the entire population. This study follows Nworgu's opinion, in seeking opinions, perceptions and attitudes on some activities, situations and conditions of childhood music education in Nigeria from the sample.

The researcher studied part of the population which includes six state primary schools and five private primary schools in Anambra State (see chapter 3), and findings from them were generalized to the entire population.

1.8.2 Target Population

The study was carried out in six state primary schools and five private primary schools in Anambra State with the music teachers and music educators as the

target population. In this research, the differences between music teachers and music educators were distinguished as:

- music teachers – who are teaching in primary schools, both qualified and non-qualified; and
- music educators – who are teaching music in tertiary institutions, typically musicologists, or music education researchers.

The music teachers and music educators are used as the target population for the study because they constitute the *dramatis-personae* responsible for routine teaching of music in the primary schools. Some of these teachers have had long years of experience as far as music teaching and learning are concerned. The music teachers are the implementers of the music curriculum. They teach the pupils, and play active roles in the teaching and learning process while some of the music educators are the planners of the music curriculum. The government selects curriculum planners and reviewers from the ranks of music educators. Therefore, these two groups of people are in the best position to furnish the researcher with the necessary information needed to do justice to the topic under study.

1.9 HYPOTHESES

Nworgu (1991: 44) defines a hypothesis as a conjectural proposition, an informed, intelligent guess about the solution to a problem. It is an assumption or proposition whose veracity and validity are to be established. Formulation and testing of hypotheses are essential steps in any scientific research. A hypothesis provides the researcher with the necessary guide or direction in searching for the solution to the problem under investigation. Hypotheses could be classified in several ways. One way of classifying hypotheses is as either research hypotheses or statistical hypotheses.

1.9.1 Research Hypotheses

These are postulations about relationships between two or more variables that are of critical interest in finding solutions to the research problem. The research

hypothesis does not express the variables in measurable terms, and hence it is not directly testable statistically.

1.9.2 Statistical Hypotheses

A statistical hypothesis is a proposition about statistical problems which is to be verified on the basis of data (or information) collected from a sample of that population. The statistical hypothesis could be formulated in two forms: null hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. This study employed the statistical hypothesis, which is formulated in a null hypothesis form.

- **Null hypothesis**

This is a hypothesis which states that 'no difference' or 'no relationship' exists between two or more variables. It is a hypothesis of 'no effect' or 'no difference' (Nworgu 1991:46).

1.10 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The study is guided by the following research hypotheses stated in null form and to be tested at a 0.05 level of significance (see chapter 3 and Appendix IV):

- There is no significant difference between the opinions of music teachers and music educators on the availability of teaching materials, physical facilities, and learning environments for early childhood music education in Nigeria.
- The perceptions of music teachers and music educators on the extent to which the available materials are relevant to the pupils' level of maturity, skills and cultural experiences do not differ significantly.
- There is no significant difference between the perceptions of music teachers and music educators on the methodology that can be best utilized to ensure a fruitful and effective impact of musical knowledge in the pupils at primary school level of education in Nigeria.

- The opinion of the music teachers and music educators on the delivery of the music staff for childhood music education in Nigeria does not differ significantly.
- The opinions of the music teachers and music educators on the perceived problems militating against effective teaching and learning in primary schools in Nigeria do not differ significantly.

1.11 SUMMARY

A literature study was made through books, reviews, encyclopaedias, journals as well as reports of previous research projects, internet sources and periodicals on childhood music education and other relevant topics were reviewed. Furthermore, government documents on primary education in Nigeria, curriculum modules and dissertations on music education were studied.

1.12 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Laissez-faire method:** French term laissez-faire, meaning “allow to do” (The new Encyclopædia Britannica 1974:995), or “leave alone to do” (The Cambridge Encyclopedia 1990:678). Laissez-faire method is essentially non-directive and open-ended. This method recognizes the need for participation but not provide direction or a framework for constructive participation (Mothata 2000:94).

In this study the term implies that method of instruction in which the teacher dictates what he/she does during the teaching/learning process. The teacher is not confined by any laid down rules, for example he /she ignore the contents of the syllabus/scheme of work and rather maps down his/her own topics for the subject under study.

- **Teacher centred methods:** Teacher usually begins by introducing a generalization and then illustrates it with various examples. It is also known as lecture method (Garretson 1976:8).
- **Socratic or Inductive method:** This is a method of teaching from the specific to the general. In this method, the students are guided from the known to the unknown through a series of questions and experiences designed to lead them to determine for themselves the new concept or fact being taught (Garretson 1976:8).
- **Student centred method:** This method is based on the fact that students bring a great deal of life experience to a learning situation. Learning is based on the student's strengths rather than on deficits. The student and teacher create the curriculum together depending on what it is the student wants to learn.
- **Early childhood education:** Usually begins at age of 3, 4 or 5 (sometimes earlier) and lasts from 1 to 3 years, when it is provided. In Nigeria this level includes nursery and kindergarten.
- **Play way method:** This simply implies the teaching method whereby the teacher incorporates what is to be taught into play form for easy understanding by the pupils. This method relies on a lot of pupil-teacher interaction.
- **Group method:** It is a teaching/learning method whereby the teacher groups the students and assigns a given task to them. That is, the students are grouped in each learning situation and usually each group is comprised of dull and intelligent pupils to enable each child benefit from each instruction.

- **Project method:** A general term for a task or activity undertaken by a learner or suggested by a teacher, centered on a particular problem or issue (Mothata 2000:131). It is one of the standard teaching methods and generally considered a means by which students can develop independence and responsibility; and practice social and democratic modes of behaviour.