

DOCUMENTATION OF APEPE MUSIC PERFORMANCE FOR SOCIAL EVENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OGUN EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT FOR ARCHIVAL PURPOSE

BY

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Abstract

Performance of music is essential in any social event in Nigerian society, as music is a natural phenomenon that cuts across human life from cradle to grave, thereby being inevitable in naming, wedding, house warming ceremonies just to mention but a few. Its performance in any given society, apparently displays the culture, values, ethics, goals, norms, believe of the society. It is in this vein, the researcher considers school as a society where performance of music can not be undermined, notwithstanding it is offered as an academic subject or not. The aim is to examine the functionality and performance practice of Apepe music in Ogun State Secondary Schools during social events that periodically, seasonally or occasionally happen in schools. To ascertain what are the social events celebrated in secondary schools? who does the performance? who are the instructors and what are the available musical instruments? This study adopted observation method and structured interview to collect the primary data from the eastern senatorial district of Ogun state. Secondary data was also collated through library, journals, printed texts and the internet. The research findings exhumed the importance and values of cultural heritage students imbibe through performance of their traditional music during schools' social events. Students gain musical experience through performance practice. Selected Apepe music are notated for archival purposes. In conclusion, the study revealed musical aesthetic values in secondary school students, which could launch them into professionalism in traditional art of singing. The study thereby recommends that educational stake-holders should see to implementing the policy on Cultural and Creative Arts to buttress and instill musical art tendencies in Nigerian students.

Key words: Apepe Cultural Music, Performance, Secondary School, Ogun State

Introduction

In Africa, traditional music in community life is a way of maintaining the identity of a particular music to a particular community. Such music is always not performed in isolation but as a communal responsibility, the members of the community thereby work together to a common goal, part of which is to preserve their heritage. Blacking (1976) also buttresses the fact that music is not one man affair "but a product of human groups whether formal or informal, so the people are so devoted to every type of music associated to their society appreciating numerous functions to which every music is attributed to. Generally, music serves informative, educative, entertainment, religious and cultural purposes, out of these, traditional or cultural music is notable for its cultural features which includes its musical instruments, language, call and response form, repetitive structure, dancing steps, costume and these make it identified with a particular society or the other. Moreover these notable characteristics of cultural identity calls for preservation, knowing fully-well that traditional music is orally transmitted to younger generation and may gradually go into extinction if educational archival system is not considered unto our indigenous music. Hornbostel in Nketia (2016) buttressed the tremendous changes in contemporary contexts which generally affects social and cultural life, but "indigenous African traditional music has not completely fallen apart in the traditional or pre-colonial contexts in which it is cultivated, because of its integration with social and cultural life, even though the threat continues to loom large as rural communities open to urban pressures and challenges." This study therefore surveys the Apepe music of the Ijebus in Yoruba tribe, discuss the performance practice in Nigerian Secondary Schools, and notate the selected songs for documentation and archival purposes. Ascertaining Nketia's (2016) opinion while he suggested reinstating traditional music in contemporary contexts through policy initiatives as well as other means and measures now available to us in academia and

elsewhere can sustainability and growth. Generally, there are different occasions that are celebrated in schools as part of extra-curricular activities. Curricular activities in schools involve classroom teaching and learning, involving specific classroom activities with specific objectives to impact knowledge into students. Extra-curricular activities are also important as the objective is to impact out-side classroom knowledge. One of these activities is the Cultural Musical Group among others like

(i)Boys' Scout (ii)Literary & Debate Society (iii)Girls' Guild (iv)Sports Club (v)Red Cross (vi)Jet club Cultural Musical Group in schools is one of the numerous avenues through which African musical heritage can be preserved and guarded by the way of students participating in traditional music performance as extra-curricular activity and in essence utilize them for entertainment purpose during school social events

Theoretical Framework

Bruno Nettl, (1966) an Ethnomusicologist described music from the cultural and social prospect of the people who perform it. The people in their way of life are engaged in music for all ethnical occasions. Nettl explains ethnomusicology to "encompass theoretical and methodological approaches that emphasize culture, social, cognitive, biological and other dimensions or context of musical behaviour." He comparatively explains the study of musicology and ethnomusicology to be primarily primitive. Ethnomusicology considered as non-western music but for several decades it has included the study of all the world, even Western art music, popular music and cultural music of any world...not only the sound component but all other elements that portray the culture, values and way of life of the people Merriam (109-110) also buttressed the essence of ethnomusicological methods in research as he listed main areas to give attention when assessing the musical culture of any society such as:

1. Instruments
2. Words of songs
3. Native typology and classification of music

4. Role and status of musicians
5. Function of music in relation to other aspects of the culture
6. Music as creative activity

Blacking Jonh D. (1976) was also an ethnomusicologist who realized that everyone in Africa could or expected to perform music as no one is excluded. This is contrary to Western classical music where very few regarded as professional concert musicians are honored and called "the talented" by many. He realized it is western values or myths that create hierarchies of talents and ability which thereby subjugate many people discouraging them from pursuing their possible areas of potential. In the light of this, he explained that every African child is musical and could be guided to appreciate, propagate and preserve his musical heritage.

School As a Society

School being a society where different people (both teachers and students) from different biological or family, social, cultural and educational background associate together to achieving a common goal of laying good foundation and exhibiting different musical groups during school social events. These groups are not only groomed or nurtured either within curricular activities but also during extra-curricular activities.

Extra-curricular activities and Social Events in this study are interwoven, the former take place outside a typical pen and pencil classroom experience which gives students an opportunity to develop particular skills and exhibit their non-academic ability, while the later are functions that call for celebration within a school calendar year where in experiences learnt in extra-curricular classes are appropriate and utilized especially that of Cultural Musical Group as this case may be. They are inevitably discussed as indigenous musical practices reflect in our

social events. Nettl C opines that music is integrated to our social life in any society, Nettl (1998) also buttressed the fact that some knowledge of cultural and social background of any music enhances its understanding. The school events are hereby discussed as the school cultural group is appropriate in entertaining during such events.

(i) End-of-the-year-party: This is an annual social event organized by schools around the month of December when the year is running to an end, this happens to be the end of first term of every session. During this season music is regarded as the best means for students and teachers to express the yuletide emotions while the school authority too seizes this opportunity to appreciate all the teachers for their efforts towards the development of the school in the out-going year. Different musical groups perform during this event, out of which is school cultural group.

(ii) Literary and Debating Society:

The mission of literary and debating society is to nurture every student-member to be an eloquent speaker and creative writer. Participants are carefully selected through an interview and aptitude test. Students who show potentials for skill communication and love for literary arts are selected to join school debate club in their formative years which could groom students to be orators of such comperes. "Typically in a debate two teams are presented a topic they will debate, and each team is given a set period of time to prepare an argument one team will argue for (pro) and the other will argue in opposition (con)" [https://](https://passnownow.com)

passnownow.com. There will be a panel of judges who assigns points based on the merits of the argument, and thereby declares winning team who thereafter advance to a new round.

Other activities involved in literary and debating day include quiz competitions, miming and expression, poem recitation. Choreography, cultural dance, contemporary dance are never left out as they bridge entertaining gap of the order of the day. Students are always enthusiastic to exhibit musical potentials.

(iii) Send-Off Ceremony: This occasion is organized by the school authority to celebrate member(s) of staff that are posted to other schools or "pull-out" ceremonies for staff at

retirement. Usually the ceremony is organized to appreciate and celebrate them for their meritorious service. Brigade/school band, school choir, recorder choir, chorography and cultural groups perform during this occasion.

(iv) Prize-Giving/Valedictory Service: is always organized by schools to celebrate the intellectual academic, moral achievements of the student with the aim to motivate the students to strive more for the best in subsequent times. "Rewarding students for their hard work has been described as an important aspect in increasing a competitive spirit among students. (www.dailynews.gov.bw) Schools also reward teachers and other members of staff during this ceremony, so as to motivate them to strive for more excellence.

(v) Cultural Day: is annually celebrated to inculcate the spirit of appreciating indigenous heritage in students especially that of the host community. African's rich cultural heritage intertwined with music is being showcased on cultural day such as singing traditional songs, dancing local steps, dance drama with various native attires while native delicacies such as Ojojo, Ebiripo, Ikokore are generously provided. Cultural songs and dances in Ijebu as Apepe, Apala, while the local musical instruments like Apepe, Sekere, Agogo, Bamboo sticks (Apepe), Sakara, Bata, Omele, Gangan and others accompanying the songs.

(vi) Founders' Day Celebration: Schools Founders day celebration is an annual occasion that marks the establishment of a school. There are always series of activities as programmed to mark the founders' day. Several infrastructural projects instituted and completed are commissioned by the old-students associations to show patriotism to their alma mater. Schools celebrate founder's day in an elaborate way that includes varieties of events like delivering founder's day lecture, annual general meeting, commissioning of projects, sports carnival, dinner, special jumat service and thanks-giving most times as grand finale in mission-founded schools. The founder's day always span some days or a week at most in which the old students association tries to stress their belief of "strength in unity" and discuss issues that will improve the educational standard of the school and thereby sustain a merit driven society. (<https://www.sunnewsonline.com>>Kings). School Band, Classical Group, Cultural Ensemble, Contemporary Group, and host of others entertain during the founders' day.

Ogun East Senatorial District/Ijebu Ethnicity

This study emphatically investigate into performance practice of Apepe music which is one or major cultural dance of the indigenes of Ogun Senatorial Districts which are tribalistic Ijebus/Remos". Ogun state in southern part of Nigeria, was created in February 3rd 1976. It borders Lagos state to the north, Ondo to the east, and Republic of Benin to the west. Ogun is also appelled 'Gateway State'. This geographical area is one of the Yoruba-speaking states and her ethnic groups include Egba, Yewa, Awori, Ijebu and Remo, each of these groups speaks distinct dialect of same Yoruba language, but political distribution categorized them into three geo-political zones: Ogun Central, Ogun West and Ogun East.

Ogun Central–Egbas

Ogun West— Yewa/Egbado

Ogun East—Ijebu/Remo

Historically, Apepe music originated amongst the Ikenne Remo people. Ikenne is a town under Ikenne Local Government (via Ilishan and Shagamu), rich in Rubber and other agriculture plantations. "Ikenne is one of the prominent Ijebu tribes..." Ademola (2014). Ikenne is one of the prominent Ijebu tribes that take Apepe Music as its major and most rich cultural music. Eleyele (2009) briefly narrated that "there were always shortage of musical instruments during any ritual or festival in Ikenne then, as the result of this, some creative instrumentalists gathered and innovated the idea of using surrounding prune dried bamboo trunks cut in different shapes and sizes called Ape or Apepe as ensemble to compliments the available musical instruments like Shekere and drums in order to have a standard ensemble for the subsequent activities".

The Performance Practice of Apepe Music

Apepe music is performed with Ijebu dialect accompanied with bamboo trunks of different shapes (about 45cm long) as musical instruments and others like Sekere,

Akuba drums. Ikenne people usually appreciate the performance of Apepe Music during festivals and even in ceremonial parties/functions. Apepe music is mostly used for entertainment during social events, re-creation or relaxation, mainly for entertainment during coronation and thereby regarded as secular music and not necessarily attached to any ritual rites. Two schools were observed, one from Ijebu zone and the other from Remo zone: Ansar-deen Grammar School, Ijebu-Ode and Ode Remo High School, Ode-Remo.



Plate:1 Ode-Remo High School Students at Rehearsal

Apepe music performance is always in an ensemble forms and the Ape(s) or Apepe(s), that is bamboo sticks are always in sizes and shapes according to the role each plays in the ensemble. Apepe music is not a one-man affair or played in isolation. Therefore, it is played in communal responsibility. Indigenous music is cultural and fundamental and this makes Blackings theory appropriate to this study in that students in Ansar-deen Grammar School are excited to play and sing the Ape music at pull-out/send-off occasion of a retired principal, even without a music teacher but an English teacher as the instructor. There are different rhythms for different shapes or sizes, as played by the students, complimenting one another. The master Ape player plays the biggest and longest Ape in order to achieve a loud and deep sound production which will enhance a proper co-ordination of other instrumentalists" Ademola (2014).

This asserts that there is always a lead instrumentalist and lead vocalist in Apepe music performance as well as dancers.



Plates:2&3 Ansar-deen Grammar School Students at Send-off Party of a Retired Principal

Most of the time, the bamboo players are sitting down singing and playing the Apepe while some others will be singing and dancing to the music. The playing of the Apepe is always in cool and moderate tempo at the beginning (depending on the situation), but can be heightened when the performance gets to the peak. the dancing steps naturally follows the music beat. Just as Younger (2007) describes dance as "patterned and rhythmic body movements usually performed to music that serves as a form of communication.



plates:4Ansar-deenGrammarSchoolstudents Plate: 5Ansardeen Grammar School Teachers

This study focused on the performance of Apepe Music in school setting. One would wonder how cultural behaviour(s) penetrate into school settings? Yes, it is possible

because school is an integral part of a society and the culture of any society is easily perceived as it can always crave an acceptability by neighboring society.

The performance of Apepe music and dance is just a replica of what happens in the indigenous society. The students are found and happy to declare their "state of origin" and the sense of belonging anytime they have the opportunity to perform. They appear in uniforms as the case may demand, sometimes, the costume is the native Agbada, Sapara, (Boubou for the male) Buba and Iro (top and wrapper for the female), Ileke (Beads). The male students are always playing the apepe, while the female students are singing and dancing. The lead Singer maybe a boy or girl and many a times different students may lead one after the other. The singing of Apepe music in school setting is always of educational purpose or phenomenon buttressing the cultural heritage of the students.



Apepe music is performed as cultural dance in schools and presented during end-of-

year party, send-off or retirement party of the teachers, or any other event that call for celebration. It is also performed for cultural events where dialectical singing is tenable.

SELECTED APEPE MUSIC

Some selected Apepe music out of hosts of others are notated for archival purpose.

AWON WE O

Unknown

7 A-won we o a-won we o a-won we o A - won we o a-won we

12 o a - won we o a - won we ma ma bu - lu je re ni

o ba - ba o - ni - lu gbe 'gba o - ko e - mu.

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Yoruba English

Awon we o, Awon we o, Awon we o This people, This people, This people

Awon we ma ma bu'lu je re ni o This people don't destroy our tradition

Baba onilu gbe 'gba oko emu That our drummer becomes palm wine tapper

d:-:r:-:m:-:-:

Unknown

9 d r m s f m d r m s f m

16 d t l s d t l s i-lu'o-yin-bo ni mo ba won re ke de

23 mi la se a-mi nlo k'o - ba A-me-ri - ka, o-da - ra ye ye, e-de'o-yin-bo ni-won de mi

nfo won de ke bi-si - mi-la - hi gbo-gbo won n-fo gi-ra - ma e - si wen se__

Fine

D.C al fine

Yoruba English

d:m:s:-s:f:m:-d:m:s:-s:f:m:-d:t:l:s (FINE) d:m:s:-s:f:m:-d:m:s:-s:f:m:-d:t:l:s:- (FINE)

Ilu Oyinbo re mo ba won re! Kede mi lase?I went with them to America! For what purpose?

Ami lo k'Oba Amerika! O dara yeye To pay homage to the queen! quite interesting

Ede 'yinbo re won de mi fo Everybody speaks English language

Won de r'eni ke bisimilahi! Nobody to speak Arabic language

Dede won mi fo girama! E si we ise? (D.C.) All of them speak good English! How about that?

(D.C)

Remo Song

= 120

MAESTRO

Acoustic Grand Piano

Run a mu se ni Sa ra reo ... Run a mu se ni sa

Acoustic Grand Piano

fa reo a ran mo lo I le I we I yen se ko ko

Acoustic Grand Piano

a ran mo lo I le I we O mo wa so ri i re

mu a mu se ni sa ra reo ...

Yoruba English

'Run a mu se ni Remo re oo(2ce) This is what we do in Remo (2ce)

A ran mo lo ile iwe iyen se koko We send our wards to school: very important

A ran mo lo ile iwe omo wa soriire We send our wards to school: they all succeed

'Run a mu se ni Remo re oo This is what we do in Remo

ODE ERE LA MI RE

♩ = 120 Unknown

Acoustic Grand Piano



O de re ra mi re

O de ere ra mi re E le da a

Wa ko so wa oo e ka wa ma si

Se ka ma fe se ko o pe pe ye i

ku ku o do so n fo mi mi se re

Yoruba

English

Ode ere ra mi re (oya)

We are going to playground (lets go)

Ode ere ra mi re (oya)

We are going to playground (lets go)

Eleda awa ko so wa o e

Our creator, He should protect us

Kawa ma si se ka ma f'ese ko

We should not err and not go astray

Pepeye i ku 'ku odo

A duck does not drown

Son fo mi mi sere

It only plays with water.

Conclusion

This study confirms that the indigenous musical practices are strong phenomena through which the cultural heritage of any society could be preserved. School is an academic environment, but it helps to protect and preserve Nigerian heritage like that of Apepe music and Dance, so that Nigerian students home and abroad can be proud of their national art heri thereby reveals that traditional music of any society of the world is worthy of high esteem to attract a reasonable level of value which will call for sense of preservation that is even high-rated than that of pop-music. This may be easily achieved through grassroots implementation through school

children. Firstly by encouraging them to experience their cultural music through performance during school events, secondly music scholars inculcating in students that every member of an African community is indispensable as everyone is capable to participate in his cultural music performance, thirdly such traditional music should be documented through staff notation, transcription and translation for easy use of both music and non-music scholars to train students, and lastly making such music available to younger generations even outside school settings through technological recordings such as media houses can broadcast on radio and the like.

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