

THE SOCIAL INTEGRATED APPROACH OF LEARNING AND TEACHING OF MUSIC IN THE NIGERIA CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ARTS CURRICULUM FOR JUNIOR SECONDARY

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Abstract

This paper looks closely at how Music fits into Nigeria's Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) curriculum for junior secondary schools. This curriculum started in September 2007 as part of the 9-year Universal Basic Education plan. It examines the philosophy and goals behind CCA, which include cultural preservation, aesthetic literacy, creativity, moral formation, and national identity, as described by Ekwueme (1991) and Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2004). A major focus is on the role of teachers as facilitators of the curriculum. The study points out systemic problems, such as the one-teacher-for-all model, lack of subject specialization, insufficient resource allocation, and ineffective teaching methods. These issues hinder the practical and performance-based elements of music education. Based on findings and comparison with other studies, the paper suggests that improving subject specialization, using activity-based learner-centred methods, enhancing teacher training, and increasing resources will greatly improve music education within CCA. The research claims that only well-trained specialist teachers, backed by proper institutional support, can fully unlock the transformative potential of music education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA), Music education, Teacher specialization, Curriculum implementation, Nigeria Basic Education

Introduction

The Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) combines music, arts, drama, and dance. Students should grow with the cultural heritage of their people. They need to perform naturally as they develop their cultural understanding and appreciation. As society evolves, the curriculum changes to meet its needs. These societal needs must be reflected in the educational system to remain relevant. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has created a new curriculum, approved by the National Council on Education (NCE), effective from September 2007. This curriculum includes the 9-year Universal Basic Education Curriculum and the New Senior Secondary Education. It aims to address the gaps in the old curriculum, introduce new subjects, replace outdated ones, redefine core subjects, and meet the key goals of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). These goals focus on value reorientation, poverty reduction, job creation, wealth generation, and empowering citizens through education (NERDC, 2007).

School principals and teachers play crucial roles in ensuring the new curriculum succeeds in schools across Nigeria. Teachers are vital for effectively implementing the changing curriculum as they guide students in their learning. The teacher is the main figure in teaching and learning situations, making it important for them to possess qualities that attract learners. Mafa-Theledi (2024) states that a teacher must be skilled in both content and subject teaching methods to engage students effectively. Effective learning stems from effective teaching. To achieve both, the teacher's ability is essential along with the factors that improve teacher effectiveness. Teachers must guide students through planned activities to facilitate meaningful learning. High-quality education is key for individuals to reach their full potential, and teachers are fundamental to this process.

The government is reforming the education sector to help teachers become more effective because quality education for young learners is crucial for individual growth and society's future. To succeed with the new curriculum, teachers need to study their subjects well and integrate this knowledge with the new curriculum's thematic framework (Nsikak-Abasi, 2021). The topics and content areas taught by teachers will shape the skills developed in students. The cultural and creative arts subject merges drama, dance, music, and fine arts. This approach recognizes that the new discipline will extend beyond each individual part (FME, 1988). The NERDC has identified cultural and creative arts education as one of the "core basic subjects" in the new 9-year basic education curriculum (FGN, 2007:7). It aims to help students acquire cultural knowledge, aesthetic appreciation,

artistic talents, creativity, and self-expression. The curriculum encourages interest and exploration in both the theoretical and practical dimensions, especially in teaching the arts.

Cultural and creative arts education encompasses three areas: music, fine and applied arts, and drama/theatre. While these subjects have unique characteristics and methods, creativity is central to them (Nnam&Esuola, 2022). Creativity, an inherent human trait, remains relevant in all life aspects. Drama, music, and fine arts represent aesthetics that serve as a universal language and crucial parts of human experience. They are vital cultural elements that add vibrancy and meaning to life, expressing their essence through creative thought and action (Auld, 2019).

The Nature, Philosophy, and Reason for Teaching Music as an Aspect of CCA

Music education is a powerful tool for developing skills because it offers intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits. It plays a vital role in a person's overall growth, helping them become a valuable member of their family, community, or nation. Music education encourages the growth of feelings, appreciation of music, and sensitivity, aiming to develop the whole person. Learning music is a natural behavior, similar to how a child learns language.

Okafor (Davis, 2015) said that music and education are both cultural expressions. Davis added that music is a key part of human culture. The Nigerian government recognizes that music education reflects the people's expressions, society, environment, and culture. These elements form the basis for creating the philosophy of cultural and creative arts education for primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria (Olusoji, 2013). The philosophy of music aims to clarify the goals of music education and the methods that musicians and music educators use. The success of music programs in our schools relies on how much focus we give to teaching and learning. This focus can help create a solid system of music education that preserves traditional musical knowledge, organized practices, and fosters creative development.

Modern music educators need to be both mentally and practically prepared. This preparation will help them instill cultural identity in students within the context of national and global music discussions and creative practices.

Music Education in Nigeria Curriculum

The CCA is a goal-oriented field of study. The main purpose of CCA education is to help students observe and explore their environment using their senses and practical skills. They can then apply this knowledge to real-life situations. Ekwueme (1991) outlined the aims as follows:

1. Preserve, promote, project, perpetuate, and transmit our cultural heritage.
2. Create opportunities for lasting literacy in aesthetic areas, including music, performing arts, creative arts, and visual arts.
3. Allow students to see the usefulness and connections among the subjects that make up CCA.
4. Increase awareness, interest, and sensitivity toward our culture and other cultures; provide a foundation for moral and character training and promote sound attitudes.
5. Develop basic skills in various art forms.
6. Support cultural education by giving information on building a sense of cultural and social responsibility and encouraging social participation in schools and communities (Ekwueme, 1991).

According to the Federal Government of Nigeria in its National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004), the educational goals of CCA education should include developing individuals into responsible and effective citizens. This also involves integrating individuals into the community, instilling national consciousness and unity, promoting the right values and attitudes for personal and societal survival, and acquiring skills and competencies for mental, physical, and social development. To implement the curriculum effectively, information is gathered on what to teach, why that part of the CCA curriculum is important, and how to teach it. Teachers must fully understand their role as facilitators of learning and managers of the teaching process. They also need to maintain connections between the school and the community. This requires certain skills, a solid understanding of content and teaching methods, and familiarity with the nature of music.

Theoretical Framework

1. Decolonial Epistemology and Africanization

According to Adebawale Oluranti Adeogun's critique from 2021, Nigerian music education is heavily influenced by Euro American classical traditions. A decolonial approach focuses on African, Afro Islamic, Nigerian, and indigenous music knowledge systems. It critically engages with these systems and transforms

them within the curriculum instead of just celebrating them superficially. This idea matches the calls for an Africanised music curriculum that ensures local cultural values and philosophies are central to music education.

2. Constructivist and Experiential Learning

Methods in music education, like Orff Schulwerk and the Kodály method, are based on constructivism. Students learn through active participation, improvisation, and by using folk music that is familiar to their culture. The Orff method combines music, movement, and speech to reflect a child's natural environment and encourages creativity, progressing from imitation to composition. Kodály's approach uses singing, folk songs, solfège, rhythm syllables, and hand signs to build musical literacy rooted in the learner's cultural background.

3. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Ladson Billings' concept of culturally relevant pedagogy highlights the importance of incorporating students' cultural backgrounds in teaching to promote academic success, cultural awareness, and critical thinking. This is especially important for Nigeria's CCA framework, as indigenous music and local art forms can help reinforce students' identities and enhance their engagement in learning.

Research indicates that Western classical paradigms continue to dominate Nigerian music education, highlighting the need for reform in the curriculum. The Orff Schulwerk method, with its focus on elemental music, movement, and improvisation, reflects teaching principles that are constructivist and culturally appropriate for Nigerian classrooms. Similarly, the Kodály method's emphasis on folk music and sequential learning supports a culturally relevant and learner-focused approach to musical instruction.

Curriculum Implementation

These themes break down into topics, presenting music logically from JSS one to three. Each year includes themes, topics, performance goals, content, activities for both teachers and students, materials, and an evaluation guide. Some themes repeat and build on each other. This ensures that the material becomes gradually more challenging as students advance from year one to year three. In teaching cultural and creative arts, specifically in music, teachers should gather materials that will help them teach the intended idea, topic, or skill to the students. They can also read textbooks on cultural and creative arts that cover the current topic.

Some steps that can help teachers succeed in teaching and learning:

1. Gather and thoroughly read reference materials, including the junior secondary school cultural and creative arts curriculum module, students' books on CCA, and the teacher's manual.
2. Use the suggested teaching materials, equipment, and tools in the curriculum, or make improvements to materials that serve the same purpose.
3. Make sure that you, as the teacher, can use these materials, equipment, and tools effectively before incorporating them into class activities.
4. Consider the health and safety aspects of each material and tool collected before using them in class activities.

Effective teaching and learning of music can involve the following instructional materials: those suggested in the curriculum module, local musical instruments, available Western musical instruments, videotape recorders, pictorial reproductions, photographs, slides, film strips, charts, flashcards, pictures, sound-producing objects, improvised sound-producing objects, musical scores, music manuscripts, sofa modulators, and ICT facilities (FME, 2007). Additionally, the teacher, students, parents, and community members can be valuable resources. Teachers should continuously engage with these resources in music teaching.

Many teaching methods and techniques exist, such as discussion, lecture, demonstration, project, field trip, discovery, process-based learning, questioning, active learning, scaffolding, brainstorming, computer-assisted learning, and cooperative learning. These methods can be conventional or non-conventional. Each method or technique can become learner-centered if managed well. CCA teachers need to use approaches that support permanent learning while being centered around the learner's needs. They are expected to perform actively in their teaching roles.

Music Education at Junior Secondary School Level

1. Music education at the basic educational level is a cultural mechanism designed to educate the young learners about music and to be able to understand the place of music in the society.
2. Music education is necessary to life because it educates in a broader sense and empowers the learners to explore the wider world beyond themselves.
3. Music education serves as a vital element of the cultural process helping us and our cultures to become renewed and transformed.

4. Music education serves the purpose of the preservation of the musical heritage of the people and the transformation of that heritage. Music is an aesthetic art of combining sound that is pleasant to the ear. - Music is a diverse human practice of constructing aural temporal patterns for primary values of enjoyment, self-growth and self-knowledge. Music is the living analogy of human knowing, feeling, sensibility, emotions, intellectual, modus operandi and all other life-giving forces which affect human behaviour and knowing.

The curriculum of CCA is arranged from year one to year three of the junior secondary school (JSS). The music aspect is organized around four major themes: Music in Society, Effective Musical Practice, Musical Literacy, and Effective Music Practice.

Teaching Method and techniques

In the teacher's choice of instructional method, the following should be taken into consideration:

1. The music concept to be taught
2. Available instructional materials
3. Class size
4. Duration of the lesson and
5. Prior Knowledge.

Adequate care must be taken in planning CCA lessons to ensure effective teaching and learning. Adequate lesson plan is a building block for effective teaching at the level of students. Teachers should have a firm grip on the fundamentals of the lesson plan and their importance in purposeful teaching. Without an adequate lesson plan, the teacher finds it difficult to maintain a focus and may end up teaching much but imparting little knowledge. Kahveci (2023) asserted that it is the teachers' responsibility to create or influence desirable changes in behaviour or tendencies towards behaviour in their students. For effective teaching of the content areas in the CCA curriculum, teachers need to be knowledgeable and skilful in the construction of the teaching objectives using learner-friendly methods and techniques of teaching. The objective of a lesson determines how much a teacher wants to achieve in his/her lesson. It is a teacher's guide throughout the lesson. Teachers should aim at achieving a performance-based objective that is the result of a student's action which is observable and can be measured at the end of a lesson. A lesson without a performance objective is like a missionary without a mission (NTI, 2011:138). Performance objectives are stated using measurable verbs that is, a verb that describes an action. Examples of measurable verbs for stating performance objectives include: to list, to describe, to state, to mention, to demonstrate, to interpret, to draw, to cut, to sketch, to apply, to carry out, to diagnose, to construct, to dismantle, to assemble, to distinguish, et cetera (NTI, 2011)

Problems Hindering Effective Teaching of CCA as an Integrated Subject

The failure of NERDC to recognize that teachers have specific areas of subject expertise before combining CCA into a single subject is the main issue preventing effective teaching and learning of CCA in schools today. This has led to numerous other challenges within CCA. For a teacher to help students develop lasting skills and a critical mindset that encourages active learning, they must possess extensive knowledge of the subject. This knowledge is essential for creating an environment that supports active learning. Accordingly, Ugoo-Onkonkwo, (2014) asserts that: 'The lumping together of three different subjects into one, obviously creates problems in the teaching and learning process. Music, Fine and Applied Arts, and Drama are three different subjects that require three different teachers in the upper basic education for the objectives to be realized' (p.208).

Music, drama, and fine arts are important aspects of culture that enrich life. Their significance comes through creative thinking and action. Although the creative nature of these subjects justifies their integration into one subject, it is important to understand that each subject has its unique traits and different methods of working.

Impact of the Socio-Integration on Teachers

Every teacher is trained to have a specialty. Therefore, we should consider each teacher's area of expertise, as no one can give what they don't have. It's hard to imagine teachers having to teach subjects they don't understand. The level of creativity and practice that students experience depends on what their teachers know. If a teacher lacks a deep understanding of their subject, it can lead to several issues, including: not being able to interpret performance objectives effectively, skipping unfamiliar content areas, struggling to organize activities for students, failing to find teaching aids, lacking communication skills, being unable to assess students properly, and having inadequate or unqualified teachers.

It is concerning that years after combining CCA into a single subject, many CCA teachers still lack awareness and knowledge of CCA. Most teachers do not express enthusiasm for the subject. Many voices their frustration and make negative comments about its seriousness and implementation, which raises doubts about achieving effective learning and fostering creativity. Olohundare (2020) pointed out the question of teachers' dedication and commitment to updating their knowledge and finding teaching materials. We can't fully blame the teachers

for their lack of enthusiasm, as they have not received in-service training or workshops to help them improve their teaching and communication skills.

According to Obeng and Osei-Senayah (2018), almost all teachers complain that they did not receive sufficient orientation on the subject requirements through workshops before the program began. It was confirmed that they never received orientation on implementing CCA. Many CCA teachers, especially those who are not music specialists, find it very challenging to teach the music component. Research conducted by the authors found that there have been no training sessions or workshops for CCA teachers in primary schools and junior secondary schools recently across the nation. This situation now requires urgent action to address the decline that is hindering the progress and goals of NERDC. We need to establish a strong foundation at this basic level, rather than jeopardizing the future of the children and the nation with a curriculum that lacks the necessary support to achieve its goals. We must hit the nail on the head by noting that the present issue of one teacher teaching CCA subjects in many schools is because many schools cannot afford employing more than one teacher to handle CCA and this affects the competency of CCA teaching (Ugoo-Okonkwo, 2014).

Conclusions

The focus of this study is to review how CCA fits into the Nigerian curriculum and suggest ways to improve the program. It also aims to help curriculum planners see the importance of organizing regular workshops and retraining sessions for CCA teachers. This is crucial now, as the discipline needs dedicated, enthusiastic, and innovative teachers. These teachers should develop effective techniques for teaching CCA as an integrated subject with fewer challenges, while also helping to elevate CCA's status in the Nigerian curriculum.

However, the authors believe that, for now, CCA should be taught as separate subjects until CCA departments are established in Nigerian colleges of education and other institutions that train teachers for primary education. This will prepare teachers from their training programs to face upcoming challenges. They will gain the necessary skills to guide students and encourage them to express their creativity through Cultural and Creative Arts education.

Recommendations

This paper argues that NERDC should reconsider combining music, drama, and fine art into a single subject for now. Teachers should not be forced to teach what they are unfamiliar with. Their area of expertise should be taken into account. At this education level, students are active, creative, and curious, learning best through hands-on activities. Teachers need to use more engaging, exploratory, and practical methods to involve students in learning. This can only happen if the teachers have a deep understanding of the subject areas. Curriculum reviews often take time, and since the system must continue until then, this paper also suggests the following:

1. The government should organize regular workshops and seminars for CCA teachers to help them understand the subject matter better. This will increase teachers' confidence in teaching CCA and boost their enthusiasm for their work.
2. The Music Theme in the curriculum should be reviewed to provide guidance on integrated arts subjects. CCA as a subject is practical and skill-oriented.
3. Time should be set aside for practical work. Cultural and creative arts encompass all art forms in their aesthetic, communicative, and visual aspects.
4. Teachers can focus on preserving aspects of society's fading culture during classroom interactions with students to share knowledge about our existing culture.
5. A competent teacher, even if not a music specialist, should spend time reading and searching the internet for relevant materials for music teaching and learning. They should utilize available technology to gather information online.
6. Teachers should be motivated to gather more instructional materials, such as audio/visual aids, pictures, musical instruments, and other equipment.
7. Students should also be encouraged to use multimedia tools, like CD drives, to listen to music and watch educational films, projectors, computers, DVDs, laser discs, video compact discs, and MIDI keyboards (Okonkwo, 2009).
8. Teachers should seek help from more experienced colleagues and gather information about resources for teaching music.
9. Teachers should study the new 9-year curriculum on creative arts and review music textbooks regularly to become familiar with the content and how to teach it.

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