

THE IKEDI METHOD OF TEACHING MUSIC

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Prologue

“Songs intrinsically are embedded with several musical ideas and nuggets which distinguish them as pertinent aspect of music; therefore, depriving children songs is like starving them of basic nutrients for growth and survival.”....Ikedi Okeke (2026).

Abstract

This paper proposes the **Ikedi Okeke Method of Teaching Music**, which has proven to be an effective method of teaching music in primary and post-primary schools in Anambra State. This method emerged from several years of the researcher's active engagement and experience as a music teacher at various levels of education, including nursery, primary, post-primary, and presently university education. The Ikedi Method of Teaching Music is largely derived from Ivan Pavlov's experiments in Classical Conditioning, in which he demonstrated that a neutral stimulus (such as a tuning fork or bell) could induce a response similar to that produced by the primary stimulus. In his experiment, dogs salivated in response to the sound of a bell after it had repeatedly been associated with food. Similarly, Ikedi Okeke has demonstrated, through the principles of superimposition and juxtaposition, that school children can be conditioned to enjoy music lessons if a song is played on a musical instrument or sung to them before the commencement of the lesson. Playing the song after the lesson—provided the children see the instrument in the teacher's hands—has also produced similar results. Ten schools were studied over a period of twenty-two years (2004–2026), yielding commendable results that have since been replicated by several other music teachers in schools.

Keywords: Ikedi Okeke method of teaching music, classical conditioning, stimulus, response

Introduction

A serious gap has existed for centuries between music as enjoyed in the society (performance/creative art genre) and music as a subject of study in schools. Music educators have also struggled with this labyrinth, laboring to find ways out of the fix. Many in our society today still find it difficult to understand and approve of the place of music in school curricula of studies. Why study what we already know, perform, enjoy, and own? Even when we think we have surmounted the aforementioned hurdles in our societies by fixing music in the schedule of school subjects, the challenge of how to teach it as a formal subject appears. It is this peculiar challenge of how to deliver music effectively in schools that led to the development and evolution of school music methods.

Several and popular methods of teaching music have evolved over time particularly in the West such as, the Dalcroze, Suzuki, Carl-Orff, Kodaly, many more have been proposed by scholars in recent times, and many more are yet to come forth; but the issue of the method for music with high efficacy still eludes music scholars (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006). No one is searching for or could ever find the best method because that would be futile owing to the fact that several factors would militate against that. Such factors as socio-cultural, socio-political, religious, nationality issues, economic, and the musical culture of a people come into play in the discussion of the effectiveness and appropriateness of a teaching method. Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006) explained that:

Of the numerous instructional approaches used in music classes for children, some are familiar and, couched in tradition, has stood the test of time and experience. Other approaches have been developed more recently through changes in societal values, patterns of living, and technology. Some teachers hold steadfastly to a single method, while others merge techniques from many methods to convey even a single aspect of music. In the end, every teacher finds his or her own pathway to a personal teaching method that works effectively in guiding children toward the development of musical skills and understanding. This personal teaching method depends on the teacher's training and experience, the instructional goals, the classroom setting, and the musical (and extra musical) needs and interests of the children to be taught (Pp.44-45)

The point is that music educators in Nigeria, Africa have discovered to their amazement that some methods of teaching that have been celebrated in the West bear little or no results here in Africa. For instance, the celebrated Carl-Orff method of teaching music which favors the use of rudimentary musical instruments such as

the recorder, harmonica, and some percussive instruments like the metallophone has not been able to pull through because those instruments are alien to us.

Also, the renowned Suzuki method of teaching music which is a foremost violin teaching method has not succeeded yet in Nigeria for the obvious reason that no Nigerian mother is ready to abandon the pursuit of financial sustenance at the expense of sitting around to guide her 0-3yr old baby on violin basics which is a basic tenet of the Suzuki violin method.

This does not mean that the Carl-Orff and Suzuki methods are faulty because some aspects of the methods are still useful in teaching music even in Africa such as the basic engagement of 'solfege' and 'inner hearing'.

However, waiting for some great music scholars to reinvent some absolute or globally effective methods of teaching music would be futile due to the dynamic nature of music and human nature.

Some Nigerian scholars have come up with pertinent approaches and methods of effective music teaching in Nigeria and amongst them is Prof. Meki Nzewi.

A cursory look at the MEKI NZEWI method of teaching music

Professor Meki Nzewi, a revered and renowned music patriarch, has, among several of his musical achievements, given us his specialized method of teaching music which favors the projection of the Musical Arts of Africa. Adedeji (2011) expatiated on the Meki Nzewi Method thus:

His approaches and methods are informed by his talents, musical experience from his childhood and his personal vision. As a talented multi-instrumentalist, composer, dramatist and scholar, his method is also 'combinative, a tripartite method based on the musical arts theory, creativity theory and African indigenous knowledge systems, from which the first two emerged. The Meki Nzewi method has a great deal of advantage over others in that it 'empowers' the non-specialist' music teacher to handle the teaching and learn at the same time. This compensates for a shortage of specialist music teachers in schools (Pp.49-50).

Adedeji (2011) further explained that:

This is a method that is based on African indigenous belief and practice of music which rejects the teaching or learning of music in isolation but rather recognizes and carries along the music related arts drama, dance, folklores and the visual arts... Meki's method of teaching and learning music with elements of other arts is based on the knowledge that these arts are seldom separated in African creative thinking and performance practice. This method makes teaching, learning and musical performance skill more complete and whole. For instance, a singer or drummer also dances, acts, recites poems and makes use of costumes. Besides, although there may be specialization in any, but all of them still interact at the end (p.50).

Behaviorism in Educational Psychology

The field of education has caught the attention of several thinkers such as philosophers, scientists, biologists, naturalists, anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists. The reason for this 'gravitational pull' is that: education basically provides the key to solving man's plethora of problems in a phenomenal cosmos such as ours. Child (2004) summarized this thus:

Understanding ourselves and others has probably always been a human preoccupation. Certainly from the time when the first written record appeared it showed that we have a deep interest in human and animal behavior. Yet until relatively recently our ideas have been almost entirely unsystematic and unrepresentative. Even in daily life we casually watch others or listen with prejudiced ears to conversation and from this build up crude notions about human beings (p.3).

The argument is that the educated man should hold the key to the solution of some kind of problem. Education therefore is the equipping of human minds with relevant capabilities to engage the world intelligently. Child (2004) further expatiated that:

Traditionally, educational psychology has endeavored to apply the findings of general, social, developmental and child psychology and individual differences to assist in a better understanding of learning processes which include social and moral as well as academic learning. It seeks to discover, by studying the mental, physical, social and emotional behavior of children and adults, the factors which influence the quality and quantity of learning processes which include social and emotional behavior of children and adults, the factors which influence the quality and quantity of learning; ideally it offers to replace; common sense or trial-and-error- notions of learning and teaching with a variety of hypotheses regarding learners and learning environments. The application of psychology in education, therefore, gives us a means of appraising individual children's similarities and differences and should enable us to create more efficient learning environments for them (p.6).

Educational psychology, therefore, in its quest for the effective education of the human species has split into two schools of thought: Cognitivism and Behaviourism. Cognitivists have held that learning is a transformative

experience domiciled in the mental faculties which cannot be ascertained openly and behaviourists, conversely, have maintained that although learning is a mental thing but that it is observable through changes in the nature or behaviour of the learner. It is not the focus of this paper to resolve these conflicting schools but a quick overview on the tenets of the respective schools would suffice because the thrust of this paper is largely drawn from the experimental results of the behaviorists' school.

Cognitivists versus Behaviorists

Cognitivists have theorized that learning in man is a function of the intellect, mind, free will, and capabilities which are not easily measurable and quantifiable. But

Behaviorists, on the other hand, argue that although learning is fundamentally a disposition of the mental faculties but that any meaningful study of the human with regards to learning should focus on observable changes in behavior and not just about the introspections of the 'mind', 'purpose', 'free will', 'ability', etc.

Behaviorist perspectives have become very influential in the field of education. Observable behavior is central to the behaviorist's concern. The activities of 'out-of-sight' nervous system or feelings are not of much direct interest to the behaviorist. Cognitive perspectives, almost as a reaction to behaviourism, are specially directed to the internal processes assumed to accompany observable human behavior such as thinking, remembering, decision-making, and so on (Child, 2004).

The foregoing intermission was needful in order to form a foundation for the coming discussions.

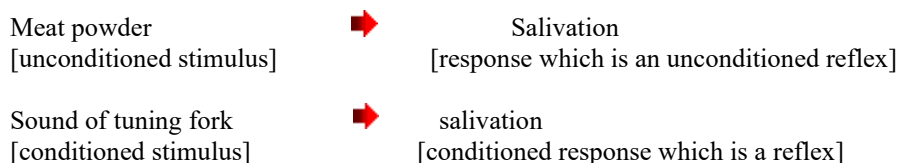
The Experimentation of Ivan Pavlov (Classical Conditioning)

Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936), experimenting on **connectionism**- the direct or remote relationships between a stimulus and the response to it- discovered that his dogs could be conditioned to salivate at the sound of a tuning fork or bell if food is provided after the sound of the bell. Child (2004) highlighted that:

...he viewed behavior as responses initiated by stimuli- a reactivist...his interests were strictly to do with physiological reflex actions, in particular the salivation of dogs. Quite by accident he discovered that dogs would salivate when some other previously neutral stimulus, besides food, was present, provided that on some previous occasions the stimulus had appeared at or just before the presentation of food. From this finding he set about intentionally teaching dogs to associate salivation with neutral stimuli, a process known as **classical conditioning**. In one such experiment, a hungry dog was placed in a harness in a soundproof room and a tuning fork was sounded. Very soon after, meat powder was presented, causing the dog to salivate. Observe that learning has already taken place, because the reflex action of salivation normally occurs initially in response to food in the mouth and not from the sight of food. However, the dog soon learns to anticipate food in its mouth and experiences anticipatory salivation from the signs (sight, smell) of the food. Pairings of the tuning fork and the presentation of meat powder ultimately led to the dog salivating at the sound of the tuning fork in the absence of the meat powder (p.125).

Pavlov clinically demonstrated that a **conditioned stimulus (CS- tuning fork)** can trigger or initiate **salivation (unconditioned response-UR)** in dogs when it is paced prior to the meat powder which is an **unconditioned stimulus (US -meat powder)**. Salivation is a natural and an innate reflex action and innately governed when food is presented but here we see that it has become a conditioned reflex by the instrumentality of the tuning fork sounded before the food.

The diagram below captures the connectionism properly:



Pavlov's discovery can be induced in teaching to draw the interest of learners to a seemingly 'difficult' or 'abstract' subject by placing a desirable activity (unconditioned response) before or after the 'abstract' or 'difficult' subject (conditioned stimulus) by the simple principle of juxtaposition or superimposition. For instance, telling young pupils short interesting stories about animals (conditioned stimulus) before commencing mathematics lessons (capable of inducing unconditioned response of **apathy** or **disinterest**) has proven to help pupils in relaxing for math lessons in the classroom provided the teacher sustains the practice as the pupils naturally connect the math lesson with the short interesting stories.

***Ikedi Okeke* method of teaching music drawn from Pavlov's Classical conditioning**

Ikedi okeke(the researcher) has demonstrated, drawing from Pavlov's experiment, and through his experience and experimentations in music teaching in schools spanning over twenty years, from 2004 to 2026, that young children can be drawn to music by giving them songs before each lesson or thereafter.

Music as a subject has been struggling to gain a place in the curriculum of studies and in the classrooms of Nigerian schools for quite a long time. Even when a school agrees to host music, the subject matter of music becomes elusive to the teachers as a result of incompetency and the complex nature of music. These problems and several others have made the subject matter of music, particularly the theoretical course work and topics very uninteresting and abstract to children. Such topics as musical alphabets, the staff, solfege, melody, rhythm, time signature and key signature, melodic dictation, rudiments of music, harmony, modulation, keyboard studies and so on, are not quite easy to teach young learners who understand music as just singing songs and dancing to random tunes.

The Teaching Modules of the *Ikedi* Method

The *Ikedi okeke mehod* comes with three –pronged modules that are somewhat related but serve different purposes. They are:

- A. **Module A-** where only class song is presented and emphasized for a season with the idea of 'watering the ground'. This module is required in an environment where music has not featured at all as a school subject or where music is still struggling to take root.
- B. **Module B-** module B presents class song followed by music lesson. This module is very effective in an environment that has been receiving a little 'musical watering' earlier, that is, when module A has taken its effect.
- C. **Module C-** module C is the reverse of B, where music lesson is presented first followed by class song provided there is a musical instrument with the music teacher and readiness for a class song to assure them of a song after the music lesson. Module C actually operates when the pupils have gained the trust of the musical teacher that a class song will surely come after the lesson.

These are all diverse and feasible forms of **conditioning** in the classroom drawn from Pavlov's experiment which the competent music teacher can exploit for effective music teaching.

It should also be observed without any equivocation that **MODULE A** can sufficiently serve and suffice as a complete music class session if the competent music teacher can explore the subtle intricacies involved. The point is that, the window of teaching some lessons with the musical ideas present in the given class song is a bonus. For instance, the teacher could pause and draw the attention of the pupils to the melody, rhythm, tempo, meter, or even the modulation in the song.

It is very interesting to know that songs intrinsically have various musical ideas and lessons embedded in them and this is the ideology that inspires the kernel of the *Ikedi method*. Depriving children of songs is like starving them of basic nutrients for growth and survival.

Module A

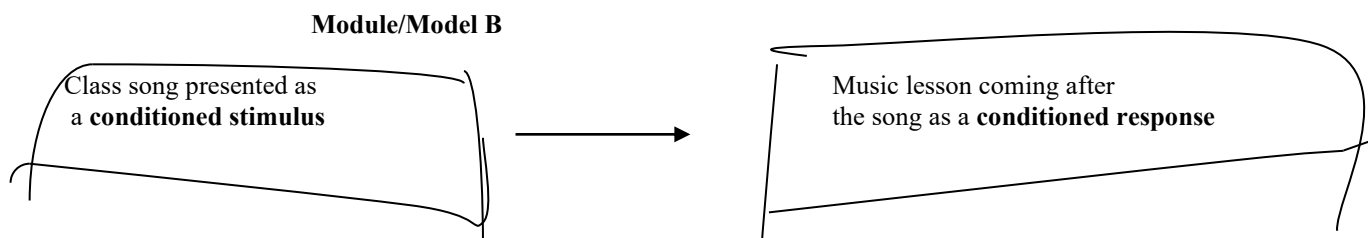
Only Class song presented over a period of time in order to 'water the ground for music'

Module (A) above has been found very effective in 'musically untaught schools' and some schools in remote areas where formal music teaching has never existed. This is also a form of conditioning. The image below typifies and captures the idea of 'watering the ground for music' in a remote school using module A:



Image 1. Ikedi Okeke with pupils of United Primary School, Nkpor in 2011.

Although the interaction with the pupils took place at the school field during school break because there was no classroom to contain them for music, but their enthusiasm for music was very clear just at the sight of a music teacher with some musical instruments ready to render some songs for them.



Here we observe that class song is presented to the class before the actual music lesson which is a type of conditioning based on Pavlov's classical conditioning.

The class songs can come in diverse forms and from various genres of music provided it stimulates the interest of the children. For example, the music teacher can decide to work with:

- i. Clapping songs
- ii. Feet stamping songs
- iii. Head shaking songs
- iv. Folksongs
- v. Hymns
- vi. Didactic songs
- vii. Rhymes
- viii. Play songs etc.

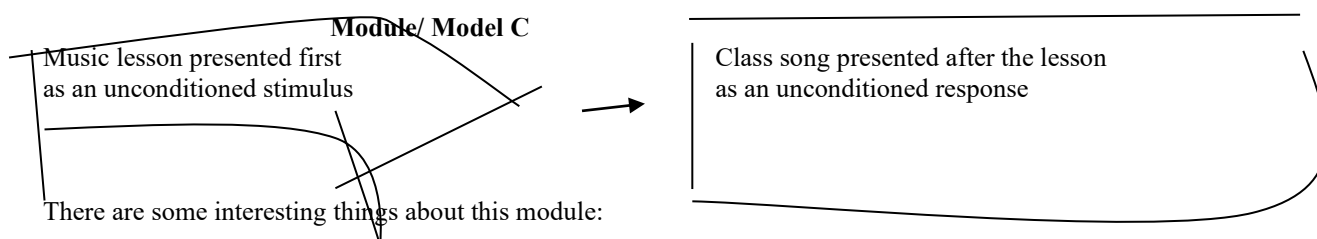
These songs could just be sung unaccompanied or accompanied by peculiar musical instruments that interest children such as: recorder, vibraphone, xylophone, guitar, keyboard, harmonica, *ubo aka*(thumb piano), violin, *ichaka*, *ogene*, *oja*, etc.

When the songs are accompanied by a musical instrument the effect is usually dynamic and scintillating because the harmonization of the undulating melodies move the pupils to joy. The onus lies on the music teacher therefore to provide fresh songs on each class in order to sustain the interest already sparked.

The image below captures the researcher, Ikedi Okeke, teaching a song (*The Happy Wanderer*) first to the class before the actual music lesson for the day at Supreme Knowledge Comprehensive Schools Nkpor in 2010, typical of **Module B**



Image 2. Ikedi Okeke demonstrating Module B in a School at Nkpor in 2010.



- i. It is introduced after modules **A** and **B** have taken their effect, that is, after securing the interest of the pupils towards music.
- ii. It somewhat restores the place of music in the curriculum of studies as it is no longer presented with any conditioned stimulus provided there is a musical instrument at hand and in view of the entire class to accompany the class song after the lesson.
- iii. Module **C** should not be introduced without clear evidence of modules **A** and **B** thoroughly activated over a period of time, if not, it would be reverting to the status quo where the subject of music struggles to gain interest in the hearts of school pupils.
- iv. Any teacher who has advanced up to module **C** successfully has demonstrated some level of success with music in the classroom.

The image below demonstrates the Module C of the *Ikedi method* where music lesson is first presented before class song but with some musical instruments kept handy for the class song thereafter:

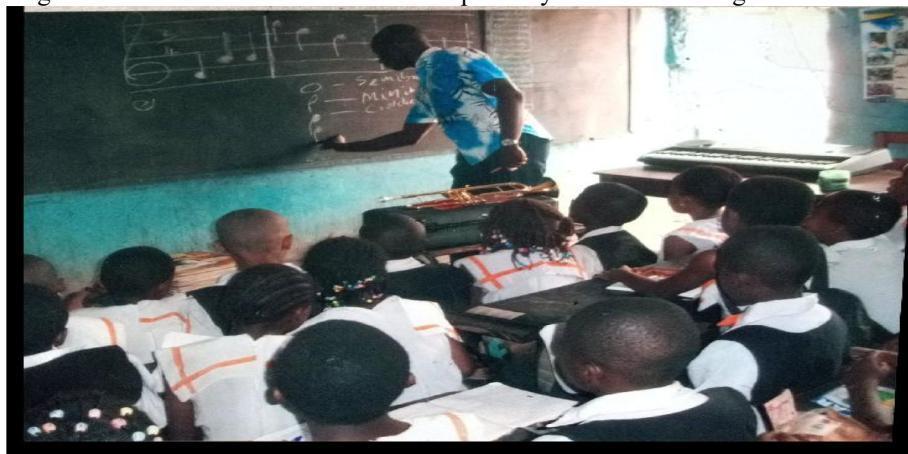


Image 3. Ikedi okeke Demonstrating Module C of the Ikedi Method at Helen Winners Int'l School, Nkpor in 2011.

Merits of the *Ikedi Method* of Teaching Music

The success of the objectives of any music method is measured largely by the level of music appreciation, understanding, music competency, musical skills, centrality of music listening, perceptive listening, musicianship and so on that it has delivered to the learners. Amongst other proven merits, this method has shown improved participation of pupils and students in various aspects of music across several schools in Anambra state, Nigeria. Leonhard & House (1972) on the objectives for music education explained that:

Among the outcomes of any musical activity should be **knowledge** of terminology, facts, beliefs, trends, and categories. For example, the musically educated person (1) is acquainted with a variety of musical compositions, (2) recognizes basic musical patterns and usages, and (3) recalls essential facts in music's development as an art. **Understanding:** the student's comprehension and application of facts is a higher form of behavior, and goals in this area merit careful consideration. Understanding implies the ability to analyze and to generalize. For instance, we should expect from the musically educated person (1) perception of the technical problems of performance, (2) insight into the elements of musical interpretation, and (3) comprehension of the structural factors in a musical composition. **Skills:** the need for basic musical skills is quite clear. These will include (1) factors of aural awareness and discrimination and (2) the ability to solve technical problems associated musical performance and composition. Illustrative of these skills would be (1) the ability to perceive and follow a melody, (2) the ability to perform with good intonation, and (3) the ability to produce a pleasing tone. **Attitudes:** it is definitely important that the student develop positive attitudes, such as (1) respect for the musical preferences of other people, (2) recognition of the musical efforts of his associates, and (3) desire to improve his musical competence.

Appreciations: the perception of music's aesthetic content is often thought to be an incidental outcome of instruction. The teacher too easily assumes that more acquaintance with music should result in appreciation of it. Instead, experiences must serve to highlight the differences in musical content and devise. Criteria for judging musical quality need to be establishes. Such instruction tends to produce a student who (1) responds to the expressive quality in music, (2) differentiates among musical styles and idioms, and (3) judges the degree of skill and taste exhibited in musical performance. **Initiatives:** a number of desirable musical initiatives instantly come to mind. For example, the musically educated person (1) seeks to play and sing with others, (2) supports school and community musical activities, and (3) listens selectively to radio and TV broadcast (pp.187-188).

It was needful to capture the objectives of music education as posited by Leonhard & House above in order to serve as reference point in examining the degree of success of the *Ikedi Music teaching method* as projected in this paper. No music teaching method is absolute in solving all the problems relating to music education in schools but any method that covers some significant problematic areas is deemed effective. The *Ikedi method* has proven successful in drawing the attention of pupils to music particularly in our clime where music has been struggling for relevance in schools for a quite a long time. Engaging school children in class singing, which is the major thrust of this method, also administers musical knowledge, musical skills, musical attitudes, and music appreciation concurrently to them. We shall revert to this fact in detail later in this paper.

The *Ikedi method* also has justified Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of **Educational Objectives** who posited that an effective education program should properly address the three domains of learning which are: the **cognitive, psycho-motor and affective** domains. Guiding children in class songs helps in their mental/cognitive development as they memorize the lyrics, melody, meter and dynamics of each song. The stimulation of the lungs in supplying air flow to the vocal chords as they articulate the notes of the melody of every song and also the movement of their lips and hands in response to the songs all improve greatly on their psycho-motor faculties. Children find songs irresistible and this can be seen from their excitement as songs are rendered, their demand for encore, their playfulness, expression of joy and happiness in the course of class songs. These are all attestations to the improvement of their affective domains through songs.

Between 2004 and 2026, Dr. Ikedi Okeke (the researcher) has successfully taught and directed music programs in more than ten schools in Anambra state, Nigeria using this method. The schools are:

1. Irene Menakaya School, Onitsha
2. Supreme Knowledge Comprehensive Schools, Nkpor
3. Supreme knowledge Comprehensive Schools, Bida, Onitsha
4. Helen-Winners International School, Nkpor
5. Mount Olive School, Onitsha
6. Springfield Academy, Onitsha
7. British Spring College, Onitsha
8. Daystar International school, Onitsha
9. Zest International School, Onitsha
10. Prosperity Schools, Nkpor
11. Bluepoint Schools, Awka
12. Unizik Primary School, Awka

'Class song' as the Kernel of the *Ikedi Method of Teaching Music*

Every teaching method in music comes with a major thrust among other details and components of the method. For example, Carl Orff method is based on active on listening and active participation among other things; Suzuki employs movies, tapes, descriptions and explanations in teaching and learning the strings; Zoltan Kodaly makes use of singing method with Curwen hand signals; Jacques-Dalcroze method is a system of eurhythmics used for the development of sensitivity to rhythm through the natural rhythms of human movements; Martenot method based on modern educational methods advocates for early music education, beginning with natural and single rhythmic activities followed by graduated musical activities; Meki Nzewi method captures the synergy and symbiosis of the musical arts of drama, dance, and music (Adedeji, 2011).

By engaging school pupils in various and diverse class songs in the classroom in the *Ikedi Method*, so many musical objectives are highlighted, sensitized, and actualized such as:

1. Pupils gradually learn different songs and their titles.
2. Melodies of different songs are internalized because melody is a major element of music
3. Rhythm is also taught and learnt through the songs
4. Keys are learnt
5. Rudiments of music are gradually absorbed
6. Various signatures are also learnt as songs come in varying meters
7. Musical dynamics and expressions such as crescendo, andante, moderato, fermata, repeat, etc are also learnt as the songs are taught.
8. Musical ornamentation is also internalized by pupils in the course of class singing such as legato, staccato, trill, melisma, etc.
9. Harmony in music is learnt as some songs are sung in parts and some songs also sung as **round**.
10. Various kinds of scales and musical notes are also encountered such as the diatonic scale, chromatic scale, pentatonic scale, embellished notes, decorative notes etc.
11. Various languages are internalized because songs come in different languages

12. Musical idioms, idiomatic expressions, poetic devices, literary expressions such as imagery, symbolism, onomatopoeia, word painting, pun, rhyming and rhyme schemes, etc are gradually learned from songs.
13. Conducting can also be introduced by the music teacher in very simple class songs as children are guided in simple timed songs in 2-4 time; 3-4 time; 4-4 time; 6-8; etc
14. Modulation is easily learned with class songs
15. Children can also learn how to dramatize songs through melo-dramas.
16. Children can also learn how to accompany songs using simple musical instruments such as clappers, marimba, xylophone, guitar, autoharp, drums, etc.

The Nature of Songs required in the *Ikedi Method*

Experience and experiments with this method has shown that not everything qualifies for a class song. Based on this method, effective class songs are selected based on these criteria: *simplicity, tunefulness, variety, didactic, diversity, folkloristic, adaptability, and poetic.*

- **Simplicity**

Class songs for children should have simple tune, melody, rhythm, key, meter, dynamics, and lyrics for easy memorization and learning. It also helps the teacher to save time with the basics, bearing in mind that he would still switch to the normal class lesson after the song.

- **Tunefulness**

A tuneful melody is one which children find very interesting and enjoyable and which they usually recall at their leisure time.

- **Variety**

Varieties of songs abound which can serve for class songs. There are play songs, work songs, rounds, sing-songs, seasonal songs, Christmas songs, etc.

- **Didactic**

A kiddies' class song should be imbued with several lessons about life, nature, wisdom, respect, love, peace and unity, human relationship, discipline, godliness, etc.

- **Diversity**

Class songs should be diverse in nature. Songs from diverse cultures and languages should be featured so that children can also learn across cultures and geographical boundaries.

- **Folkloristic**

Children should always be fed and nourished musically with the folksongs of their indigenous community so that they begin early to internalize the cultural expressions of their people through folk idioms.

- **Adaptability**

Class songs should be easily adaptable for other purposes within and outside the school such as assembly, match past, graduation ceremonies, competitions, festivals, concerts, etc. The import of this is that the school music teacher should gear towards preparing the pupils for school events whenever it is called for and this is built gradually in the class with class songs.

- **Poetic**

A good class should capture some poetic and literary elements such as rhythm, rhyme scheme, accent, imagery, onomatopoeia, metaphor, similitude, symbolism, meter, etc. the reason is that a song is actually a poem set to music and therefore, these literary devices should be gradually assimilated by children in the course of their class singing.

Some song samples as suitable examples



Song Sample (a) *what a Mighty God we serve*. Culled from *Wee Sing More Bible Songs* (p.12)

Omalugo

Voice & Uboaka Okpalaoka Jennifer Ezichi

© Jennifer Ezichi

This song is a familiar Christian Praise Song which readily captures the interest of pupils. Beyond the religious flavor of the song are also some musical ideas that can be gleaned from it such as:

- (i) The key signature of D major;
- (ii) Time signature which is in cut time;
- (iii) The peculiar rhythmic flow of the song with some long duration notes that gave the song an easy and moderate flow.
- (iv) If we look deeper, we notice that there are lead sheet symbols or chord symbols placed above the measures of the staff indicating the chord progressions of the song supposing it were to be accompanied by a guitar, autoharp, or a keyboard.
- (v) There are also some demonstrable actions suggested at the bottom of the piece to guide the pupils in psycho-motor development.

Song (b) A Clapping Game song with a German folk flavor. Culled from *Singing Every Day*
Clapping Game

L. B. P. German Folk Tune

do fa re ti so mi do

All to - geth - er here we go, Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap!

fa re ti re do

Heads a - nod - ding, nod - ding so, Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap!

slower faster

All stand up and turn a - round, Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap!

slower faster

Turn a - gain and then sit down, Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap!

Play this on melody instruments.

The song is very rhythmic, playful, and gives pupils a glimpse of how tunes from other cultures sound.

Song (c) *Omalugo*: A popular and didactic Igbo folksong

Omalugo is the story of a young girl whose mother advised to first roast yam before the snail but she did the opposite and encountered problems thereafter. The excerpt above is just the instrumental version for Ubo-aka (thumb piano) to guide the teacher in accompanying the song. The rest of the lyrics is readily available in most Igbo folksongs books and archives and also online.

The song *Omalugo* is very melodious, rhythmic, didactic and irresistible to children.

Song (d) *Pass the Ball* culled from *Wee sing: Games, Games, Games*

PASS THE BALL (Tune: "Sur le Pont")

Words: Susan Nipp Music: Traditional

1. Pass the ball to the beat, Till you hear the tam-bou-rine, Pass the ball the oth-er way, Lis - ten close - ly while you play.

2. Faster, faster, move the ball, Careful that it does not fall, Faster, faster, on we go, Where it stops, we do not know.

3. Slowly, slowly, move the ball, Careful that it does not fall, Slowly, slowly, on we go, Where it stops, we do not know.

(Repeat verse one)

Formation:
 Ten or fewer children sit in a circle. One child holds a ball. (For a larger group, use two balls.)

Action:

- Children pass the ball around the circle to the beat until the shaking sound of the tambourine is heard.
- The ball is passed in the opposite direction until the tambourine is heard again.
- Children reverse directions each time they hear the tambourine.

Use any beat for passing the ball and a different sound for changing directions (e.g., clapping and shouting "Change," or tapping a tambourine and then shaking).

This song is a very interesting game song which besides having a melodious flow, guides children through some rhythmic basics of football playing as captured in the lyrics: *faster, faster, move the ball and slowly, slowly move the ball*.

It also suggests at the bottom of the song certain formations and actions required of kids to engage in the game properly and effectively.

Some Demerits of the *Ikedi Okeke* Method of Teaching Music

Some demerits have been discovered to be associated with the *Ikedi Method* although they are few and surmountable vis –a-vis the several interesting merits of the method. Such demerits are:

1. The presumption that music education is all about singing.
2. When so much emphasis is laid on class singing it tends to trivialize the subject matter of music by making pupils too playful in class.
3. The method is disruptive of other classes in school since class singing easily generates uncontrollable noise within the school and during general class hours.
4. The method is time consuming. Blending class singing with music lesson together within a short time or even no time allotted to music in schools is quite a burden to the school and a heavy task for the music teacher.
5. It has been presumed that songs appeal to every young learner, but some children have been found to find class singing uninteresting.
6. The method puts the music teacher under heavy pressure of getting fresh songs across diverse cultures and genres for every class.
7. The method requires certain musical instruments such as guitar, keyboard, oja, and xylophone etc for the song accompaniment which are quite costly to acquire.
8. Several pupils have been discovered to lose interest completely in other subjects and always drawn to music.
9. The method also puts additional pressure on the musical teacher who must be versatile in various musical instruments to accompany the diverse songs to capture the ‘variety of species’ embedded in the method.
10. The method requires a special and spacious music room that can accommodate the pupils of a given class and also the musical instruments with the required acoustics involved
11. Not every school can afford the method going by the basic requirements of space, musical instruments, and a competent music teacher.

Summary

The Ikedi Method of Teaching Music was developed out of the quest for a viable method of teaching music, particularly in Anambra State, where music education has continued to struggle for survival and relevance in schools. The method emerged from several years of teaching and research in the primary and post-primary school systems of Anambra State, spanning more than twenty years and involving over ten schools within the state.

The central thrust of the method is the superimposition or juxtaposition of class songs with conventional music lessons in order to divert the pupils’ attention momentarily from the abstract nature of the lesson and subsequently return to it after the excitement of learning a new song.

The method is largely derived from Ivan Pavlov’s experiments on conditioning, in which his dogs gradually associated the sound of a tuning fork with food after repeated exposure to the sound before the presentation of meat powder. Drawing from the principle of superimposition or juxtaposition, the Ikedi Method demonstrates that children can be attracted to music lessons by first introducing a class song and subsequently guiding them through the formal music lesson.

The procedure may also be varied or reversed over time by presenting the formal lesson first and concluding with a class song, provided the pupils can see a musical instrument in the teacher’s possession as an indication that they will later participate in an engaging musical activity. Several musical objectives have been associated with this method, including musical understanding, musical skills, and musical initiative. Although some limitations have also been identified—such as the assumption that music education is primarily centred on class singing, as well as constraints relating to time, space, resources, and manpower—the method has nevertheless proven effective when these challenges are carefully managed.

Recommendations

It is recommended that policy makers in education, schools, and music teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria and even beyond adopt this method of teaching music due to its numerous proven merits. Some of the challenges mitigating against the method such as the demand for ample space, time, resources, and competent manpower can be easily resolved through dialogue, planning, adequate funding, and training of competent music teachers.

Conclusion

There is a need to save music education from the mounting existential threat of suppression, relegation, and possible extinction currently confronting it in schools before it becomes too late. Several policies, approaches, and methods have been adopted in the past with limited positive results. Popular methods such as those of Zoltán Kodály, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, Shinichi Suzuki, and Carl Orff have all been experimented with; however, they have not completely resolved the problem because they are largely Western-oriented in approach. The Ikedi Method is advanced in this paper because of its unique ability to stimulate children's interest in music and its capacity to address several musical objectives using class songs.

There is no need to continue lamenting the condition of music education in our schools when there is a proven teaching method capable of attracting young learners to music and repositioning music education in its rightful place within the school system.

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