

Yoruba Indigenous Music as Alternative Tool for Child Education

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Abstract

Since music is a component of culture, it is essential to education. The importance of Yoruba traditional music in their education cannot be overstated, since the goal of education is to develop a child who is capable of being a productive member of society and who complies with social norms and customs. Given that traditional beliefs, rituals, norms, and social structures are often the foundation of musical notions and practices, the effects of Yoruba music on children become increasingly plausible. This cultural phenomenon research is necessary because of the connections between music, culture, and education. This study looks at how a Yoruba child's education was impacted by the shape, lyrics, and performing techniques of indigenous music. It will also provide a fitting explanation of the background of Yoruba music. A few chosen pieces of indigenous music were examined to establish the use of indigenous music as alternative tool historical, arithmetic, moral and health education. This study concludes that the inherent worth of indigenous music is a useful and alternative tool for teaching Yoruba children, especially in early childhood education. The study suggests that Yoruba people should value the singing of Indigenous music in their homes, community and that indigenous music should be incorporated into the curriculum and taught in elementary, secondary, and higher institutions.

Keywords: Indigenous Music, Alternative Tool, Education, Yoruba Child

Introduction

The impact of music on a child's education has drawn lots of attention in the field of education in recent years. Music and singing are significant parts of our culture. Music is a part of many events in our life, including worship, government and military ceremonies, movies, television, and theater. Our family's natural culture at home now includes music as a part of everyday life. From the moment of their birth, parents have used music to engage and connect with their children, to show them love and happiness, and to calm and comfort them. From birth, a Yoruba mother sings to her kid and introduces him to numerous facets of music. (Nketia 1974).

Because of this innate tendency, music appeals to children's minds and becomes an enticing tool that parents can use to further educate their children. It is impossible to overstate the importance or benefits of indigenous music in a child's education. Pitch and sound are the main characteristics of indigenous music; rhymes, body percussion, dance, dramatization, and games all play important roles. Native American music typically complements games since they allow for simultaneous play and education. These are the community's music, dances, and games; they are an integral element of their culture. They are a component of our Yoruba ancestry, culture, and identity. Native Yoruba music, singing, and dance are intimately linked and play a significant role in Yoruba culture's everyday activities, catering to particular age groups and occasions. Native American music is an essential component of the community's social life and is interwoven into a variety of life-cycle events, including marriages, funerals, festivals celebrating the sowing or harvest season, and rites for initiation and healing. (Akande, 2023).

Yoruba Indigenous Education in Nigeria

Yoruba In Nigeria, Indigenous education predates the introduction of western education. The conventional system combined the concepts of education and schooling. The goal and methodology of the indigenous educational system included the concepts of social and cultural norms and values, as well as acquiring skills. Even in the lack of classrooms, uniforms, and qualified instructors, education continued to take place as teaching and learning took place. In order to continuously promote human well-being, traditional education societies work to improve and conserve the information, skills, and attitudes that have been acquired within their cultural context and legacy. According to Ociti (1973), "Mastery-learning" was the primary focus of education in traditional African communities.

Indigenous education encompasses all facets of human development, not just restricted to teaching moral principles like respect, hard work,

cooperation, sharing spirit, love, and sense of humor. History, family history, mental and physical development, health education, labor dignity, moral rectitude, religion, and appropriate social interaction are all included in the curriculum. In order to restore our rich, useful, and lifelong indigenous education that has previously prevailed throughout Africa, the concepts of literacy and merely academic work are currently being questioned. (Adeyinka and Adeyemi 2002). The Yoruba have lost appreciation for the inherent values of their indigenous education as a result of civilization and the pervasive and well-established western education throughout Nigeria. It becomes necessary to change the narrative by utilizing the potency of Indigenous music in supporting learning. Western education knew the value of music by injecting it in their curriculum and making music one of the foremost subjects taught in schools as introduced by the missionaries.

Indigenous Music of the Yoruba People

The Yoruba people have a rich and varied musical heritage that dates back thousands of years, with numerous regional and national musical traditions across Africa. For the Yoruba people, music has a significant role in their religion. Religious ceremonies and rituals use music and songs to transmit stories from one generation to the next. In Yoruba country, indigenous music serves as a means of expressing cultural identity. It is a component of ceremonial, storytelling, joy, and grief, bringing people together to narrate stories about the past and present of indigenous peoples' lives. Music has a significant role in Yoruba culture. There are vocal and instrumental forms of Yoruba traditional music. In other words, when the Yoruba speak of music in its totality, it involves drumming, singing and dancing (Olagunju,1997). This is not to say that variety is absent in the old traditional music; the music is indeed a subtle blend of repetition and variety, sometimes a single line of varied patterns is balanced against several lines of other activities (Euba,1977). In the West, we are typically observers or listeners. In Yoruba nation, almost everyone plays an instrument or two in addition to singing. Yoruba people perform music in their homes, during social events, and in the marketplace. Furthermore, music is significant in religious, political, and ceremonial life. Music can be used for healing, during challenging times, to announce the arrival of royalty and other high-ranking individuals, as well as during weddings, funerals, and important person visits. Certain Yoruba songs are improvised and repeated. This is a key component in Yoruba music. Repetition is a highly effective stylistic strategy in pre-colonial traditional music.

The Yoruba people make a wide variety of instruments locally, categorized into membranophone, idiophone, aerophone, and chordophone, using

indigenous materials like as gourds, turtle shells, animal horns, and animal skin. These instruments are often used to accompany indigenous music. Beyond, using the instruments as accompaniment, it is important to note that the Yoruba child who is skillful in the making of musical instruments already has a means of livelihood. A child may decide to specialize in the making of instruments and repairs. According to Ajayi (1989), membrane drums also known as talking drums are the most popular musical instruments found among the Yoruba, especially in the palaces. The talking drum is often used to communicate through idiomatic expressions with moral lessons and instructions.

Yoruba Indigenous music encourages cooperation and teamwork. Collaborating on musical projects with others fosters a culture of acceptance and tolerance. Group music-making and listening teaches young people to embrace and respect variety. By requiring pupils to collaborate, it fosters social growth and sharing and listening skills. Through group music-making, children get to celebrate individual differences and develop empathy for the thoughts and perspectives of others. The abilities acquired via music are useful and essential in daily life. Through celebrating and facilitating accessibility and variety, music inspires people to collaborate and try new things with one another.

Some Selected Yoruba Indigenous Educative Songs Health Education

This Indigenous song is often used to educate and intensify the dissemination of information about healthy living. Children are taught lessons on personal hygiene, cleanliness, proper regular bath and the right feeding habit. The text of the song below emphasized the need for having a regular bath or shower which washes away every dirty thing on their bodies after a day work. Yoruba children are always known for assisting their parents in farms and domestic work. In the course of the work, their body becomes dirty and will need to clean up. The nails may also have been exposed to jams and the need to cut their nails regularly is addressed in the lyrics of the song. The need for eating to time to avoid illness like ulcer is also emphasized in the indigenous song and of course moderation in eating to avoid constipation.

Wẹ́ kí o mó, gé èékánná rẹ.

Jẹun tó dára lásikò; má jẹun jù.

Wash yourself and be clean, trim your nails.

Eat on time; do not overfeed yourself.

Score

We Ki O Mo

Subtitle

Composer

Arranger

We ki o mo ge c-kona re Jeun to da-ra la-si-ko ma jeun ju

Indigenous Historical Educative Songs

Through songs children feel more connected to the time, the people, and their struggles (Goldberg, 2001). Take for example the song, “Láyé Olúgbón” tells the story of the Gbongan people in Osun State, Nigeria. Oba Olufi Adewale Asabi was made to work on farm when he was a prince to value the dignity of labor, He ascended the throne of his father in 1926. He was able to unite people and expand his realm. He gave land to strangers freely to settle in their land. The economy of Gbongan boomed and people were able to trade with Ibadan, Oshogbo, Ede. Children that were not born then can be educated about their society. This is collaborate the view of (Euba, 1969) that “ Indigenous music, in many ways, represents continuity with the past and gives opportunity of learning, in order that the present may be better understood”. This experience of history through music sustains and passes on the memory of events.

Score

Laye Olugbon

Subtitle

Composer

Arranger

♩ = 80

La-ye o-lu-gbon Mo ge-bo-run me - je e - wa wo wa lo-ye la-ye A-re-sa

Mo ge - bo - run me - fa e - wa wo wa lo - ye

Láyé Olúgbón, mo ní'borùn méje

During the reign of Olugbon, I bought seven veils.

Láyé Arèsà, mo ní'borùn méfà

During the reign of Aresa, I bought six shawls.

Láyé Àsàbí, mo ra kókò

During the era of Asabi I bought koko(type of green cloth)

Mo ra àrán, mo ra sányán baba aṣọ

I bought velveteen, I bought Sanya
,the best cloth

Àfòlẹ̀ ló lẹ̀ ní Gbòngán ò dùn; àfòlẹ̀

Only lazy people will say Gbongan
town is not interesting
nly lazy fellows.

Indigenous Moral Educative Songs

According to Nzewi (1991) ‘music accompanies the life of a Black man from the womb to the tomb, being featured at celebrations; to announce the birth of a baby, at children’s games, at peer group functions, at work and leisure, in religion and death. Musical activities go a long way in helping a child to understand his roles in society and learn about his culture and immediate surroundings, thereby preparing him for an effectively independent adolescence. A Yoruba child learns how respect, honesty and how to be a good citizen. Every child is also made to know the consequence of every misconduct or abnormal behavior.

According to “Omo to Moya re Loju”, Every Yoruba child is made to understand the role of the parents and how much they suffer to raise a child. A Yoruba child learns that there should never be a situation that will make him or her dishonor his parents.

Ọmọ tó mọ̀ 'ya rẹ̀ lójú o

A child that is not respectful.

Ọ̀sì ní ó ta ọmọ náà pa 2ce

Will live in advent poverty.

Ìyá tó jìyà nítorí rẹ̀

A mother who suffers for you.

Ọmọ tó mọ̀ 'ya rẹ̀ lójú o

A child that is not respectful.

Ọ̀sì ní ó ta ọmọ náà pa 2ce

Will live in advent poverty.

Ìyá tó jìyà nítorí rẹ̀

A mother who suffers for you.

Score

Omo to Mo 'Yare Loju

Subtitle

Composer

Arranger

♩ = 80

Omo to Mo 'yare lo - ju o osi ni o ta 'mo na pa Iya to ji - ya ni

to ri re Omo to mo 'yare lo - ju o osi nio ta 'mo na pa

Learning Arithmetic through Yoruba Indigenous Music

Music is seen as a viable tool for teaching and learning Arithmetic. There is a correlation with music and mathematics. They are closely related when they use identical concepts and skills. For example, patterns are found in music, such as in demonstrations of beat or rhythm. It is also found in mathematics when learning about number systems. There is a high correlation between learning music and spatial temporal reasoning, which is primarily used for math skills (Church, 2000). Through the melody of the song “Ení bí Ení”, a Yoruba child gets to learn counting in from one through ten. The lyrics used in the song are also familiar events or activities that takes place in a typical Yoruba environment. The availability of things a child can relate to within the environment also facilitate quick learning.

Eni bi eni ,eji bi eji ,eta ta gba

Ení bí ení l'omódé kawó

The young ones count money one by one

Èjì bí èjì, iyeṅ l'àgbà n ka ayò

The elders count the pebbles of the Ayo game two by two

Èta bí èta, e jé ká t'ara wa l'óre

Three by three, let us give one another gifts

Èrin bí èrin, ení rín ni là n rín

Four by four, you laugh with those who laugh with you

Àrún bí àrún, Oba má se wá l'árungún

Five by five, may God not allow us to become destroyer of our inheritance

Èfa bí èfà, e jé ká fara wa móra

Six by six, let us draw nearer to one another

Èje bí èje, Olúgbón s'orò, ó k'ìje

Seven by seven, Olugbon performs certain rites on the Seventh day

Èjọ bí èjọ, eni bí'ni làá jọ

Eight by eight, one must take after one's parents

Èsán bí èsán, Oba j'álé ó san wá

Nine by nine, God let our old age be a blessed one

Èwá bí èwá, t'owó t'omọ kó wa wa wálé

Ten by ten, may riches and children follow us home.

Conclusion

The lack of Indigenous education of which indigenous music is paramount, emphasized a representative of Yoruba indigenous child, would continue to deprive a Yoruba child from the rich education benefits inherent in their culture. Stressing that educational instruction take place in indigenous music through the lyrics embedded in Yoruba language. The impact of indigenous

music on a Yoruba child becomes more realistic as musical concepts and practices are usually based on the traditional beliefs, customs, norms and system of a community. Music cannot be separated from the culture of the Yoruba people.

This paper concludes that the intrinsic value of Indigenous Music is a viable tool for educating a Yoruba child. It recommends that Indigenous music should be taught in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria, specifically in Yoruba speaking states and appreciated in every home. The inclusion of the indigenous music in pedagogical approaches in the school curriculum would greatly enhance quality delivery of education. Music helps develop cognitive skills like memory, language, reasoning, logic, and arithmetic; music creates important contexts for life skills like cooperating, collaboration, and group effort; music develops rudiments of an aesthetic sense; and that music contributes to school readiness (Holland, 2011).

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