Music Curriculum Development On the Future of Higher Education in Africa

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Abstract

Music education cannot take place without a carefully planned curriculum and there will be no music curriculum or programme if it cannot be interpreted and implemented by the teacher. However, curriculum process is at the heart of music education system – it provides learners with opportunities for general, specified, exploratory, and special interest education in music. It is assisted by research in constantly striving to improve existing practices. Curriculum development is concerned with sequencing activities to bring about desired learning. Thus, curriculum development is a process, while curriculum design is a product. The music curriculum works together with the music teacher education and music education research process to achieve the objectives defined by a particular philosophy of education and music education. Bearing these in mind, this article explores: Philosophy of music education; Role of philosophy in music education system; Concept of curriculum; Role of curriculum in music education system; Curriculum development in music education; Curriculum implementation; and finally, Curriculum evaluation with an approach to curriculum evaluation in higher education in Africa.

Key words:
Concept of philosophy, philosophy of education, concept of curriculum, curriculum development

1.0. Introduction

This study is organized as results of a literature review on the attributes of music education system in Africa with particular reference to the philosophy of music education and curriculum development. The study first explores Philosophy of Music Education, because it determines the specific objective of music education system, it articulates the nature and significance of music and music education, and it leads to understanding of the objective of music education and facilities of the other process in the education system. It then turns to philosophy as a process in music education system including main elements of philosophy, the role of philosophy in a music education system, philosophy and music teacher education.

The study emphasizes that philosophy plays crucial role in a music education system – it gives direction to the other processes and clarifies thinking about them. In turn, the other processes constantly challenge its validity. Specifically, philosophy of music education: -

- influences education objectives and curriculum development;
- makes music educators more effective; and
- directs research to significant problems and issues.

Although music educators may not consciously be aware of the above statements, all their actions are based on sets of assumptions. The music teaching-learning processes in a universal music education system are philosophy of music education, music curriculum and its role in music education, curriculum development, curriculum implementation and

evaluation. These aspects are discussed following sections and sub-sections of higher music education in Africa.

2.0. Philosophy of Music Education

Philosophy of education determines the general education objectives to which music education is expected to contribute. It is essential to understand different concepts of philosophy. Considering that philosophy is vast, this study presents philosophy in music education in a brief form and explores philosophy as a process in a music education system. The study then turns to curriculum section.

2.0.1. Philosophy as a Process in a Music Education System

This section presents the results of a literature review on the attributes of philosophy as a process, in a music education system and its relationship with the other processes. The section is organised in the following subsections: What is philosophy?; Main elements of philosophy; The role of philosophy in a music education system; A philosophy and music teacher education; and, Philosophy and curriculum. The role of philosophy in a music education system is determined by the meaning of the term 'philosophy' as shown below.

2.0.2. What is philosophy?

Elliott (1995:6) stated that most common notions of philosophy stem from the Greek word *philosophia* which means 'love of wisdom,' from *philo* (loving) and *Sophia* (wisdom). This means that *philosophia* etymologically connotes 'the love of exercising one's curiosity and intelligence rather than the love of wisdom'. Elliott (1995) further stated that:

> Philosophy is not simply a collection of venerable ideas and arguments. It is something that people do by means of the strategies involved in systematic doubting, logical analysis, or critical thinking. The critical thinker is the person who acts as a careful judge of reasoning and belief to separate right claims from wrong. A critical thinker is a person who has both the disposition and the ability to assess the reasons people give in support of their concepts, claims, and actions (p. 6).

2.0.2.1. *Defining philosophy*

The definition of philosophy has interested philosophers since ancient times. There is no universally accepted definition of philosophy. Some of current meanings of philosophy include:

  i.   Thinking about thinking" (Ted Honderich, 1995: 666);

  ii.   An activity of criticism, clarification and interpretation of life (Seetharamu, 1989: 2);

  iii. A coherent position on the nature and purpose of a professional field, providing a set of principles on which actions can be based (Reimer, 1989: 198);

  iv.   A body of inherited knowledge and, more activity, the sustained, systematic and critical examination of belief balanced with systematic understanding of that belief (Elliott, 1995: 6, 2014);

  v.   The profound sayings of the elders in traditional African society that find expression in proverbs, incantations, or oracular and prophetic sayings (Akinpelu, 1981: 2); and

  vi.   The set of beliefs, the guiding principles, values and ideas that inspire/motivate the musical art and the society in general (Onyeji, 2011: 19).

In view of the above, this study uses the term 'philosophy' to indicate both a body of knowledge and a process of thinking. Following Reimer (1991: 198) and Elliott (1995: 12), this study defines 'philosophy of music education' as: a coherent position on the nature and significance of music and music education; and the sustained, systematic and critical examination of beliefs concerning music and music education.

2.0.3. Main elements of philosophy

Philosophy as a body of knowledge consists of different elements. In *The Oxford companion to philosophy*, Ted Hondrich (1995, 666) distinguished three main elements of philosophy that are related in various ways: metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. Like other types of philosophy, a philosophy of music education deals with all three elements. Thus underlie different philosophies of music education makes it easier for music educators to choose between them.

  i.   **Metaphysics** (or theory of existence) is rationally critical thinking about the general future of the world which distinguishes between Larger-scale metaphysics as a rational and organised body of beliefs about the world as a whole; and small-scale metaphysics examines individuals and their properties, the relations between

individuals, and the relations between individuals and history (Ted Honderich, 1995, 666). It is also includes how beliefs about the world as whole affect beliefs about the place of music and the role of music education within the world.

ii. **Epistemology** (or theory of knowledge) is rationally critical thinking about the justification of belief. Honderich (1995, 82-83) defines a belief as a mental state that, together with motivational factors, directs and controls voluntary action. Because epistemology is concerned with whether one has acted responsibly or irresponsibly in forming one's beliefs, it is explicitly normative. For an example, considerations of the nature of musical knowledge, and how it might be taught and learned are from the epistemology of music education.

iii. **Ethics** (or theory of value) is rational critical thinking about the conduct of life. Honderich (1995, 669-670) indicates that ethics include moral philosophy, political philosophy and aesthetics. *Moral philosophy* deals with beliefs about the value of both the results of doing something and the actions to secure the results. *Political philosophy* deals with the moral obligation of a citizen to obey the state and its laws, and of the state to compel a citizen to obey. *Aesthetics* deals with the nature and scope of knowledge, such as the relationships between truth, belief, perception and theories of justification.

2.0.4. The role of philosophy in a music education system

In this study, music education is defined as a set of inputs, music teaching and learning processes, and out puts controlled by music educators to work together for a common objective. As a coherent position on the nature and significance of music and music education - *the role of philosophy is to define the music-specific objective of a music education system*. As the sustained, systematic and critical examination of beliefs concerning music and music education - *the role of philosophy is to sharpen ideas and lead to more widely shared understandings of the nature and functions of the different components in a music education system.* As noted earlier, philosophy plays crucial role in a music education system – it gives direction to the other processes and clarifies thinking about them. In turn, the other processes constantly change their validity.
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2.0.5. Philosophy and curriculum

Philosophy articulates the nature and significance of music and music education. Thus, it serves both as a source for and an influence on educational objectives and curriculum

development. Through clarifying meaning, philosophy also improves the quality of music educators' understanding of the values of music and music education (Reimer, 1989, 3). Reimer further states that this leads to more consistent, focused and effective choices in music education. More effective choices in turn, strengthen the music education profession and enhance its possible impact on society.

Music educators' understanding of the value of their profession inevitably also affects their understanding if the value of their personal lives. Moreover, in exposing and evaluating underlying assumptions, philosophy provides music educators with a basis for ascertaining whether their practices are consonant with their beliefs and for understanding the implications of alternative beliefs on which actions can be based.

According to Becker (as cited in Haupfleish, 1997), philosophy should not only guide practice – practice must also correct philosophy. Thus, practice must test the validity of philosophical ideas (p. 46). Bowman (1991, 107) states that philosophical propositions about music and music education must be derived more extensively from first-hand observation of what music is and does, than from presuppositions as to what it *should* be or do.

The position in this study is that there should be a constructive interaction between philosophy and practice**.** Philosophy should expose the assumption on which music education objectives and actions are based. In turn, music education practice must test the practicality of philosophical conclusions.

2.0.6. Philosophy and music teacher education

Studying philosophy as part of teacher education makes music educators more effective in the performance of teaching-learning process (Hauptfleish, 1997, 46). It assists them in becoming aware of the implications of various educational issues and clarifies why certain teaching practicum are followed. She further noted that most importantly, philosophy challenges educators to revise their critical thinking about education and rework their methods when change is necessary (p. 47).

Akinpelu (1981, 172-173) lists the following advantages of engaging a teacher in philosophical analysis: -

- The voice of the teacher, if carefully guided by critical analysis, can throw more light on discussions and carry great weight as that of the "expert";
- The teacher will be able to evaluate conflicting arguments, decide what is reasonable and justifiable, and lead and guide others to the most rational option; and

- The teacher will be enlightened in his/her work by his/her familiarity with thinking about music education concepts and discussing the contexts in which the concepts are used.

In summary, philosophy plays crucial role in a music education system – it gives direction to other process and clarifies thinking about them. In turn, the other processes constantly change its validity. Specially, philosophy of music education: influences education objectives and curriculum development; makes music educators more effective; and directs research to significant problems and issues. Although music educators may not consciously be aware of it, all their actions are based on sets of assumptions.

3.0. Music Education and Curriculum

Since music is distinctly different from other subjects such as science, history or mathematics education, it would be imprudent to assume from the outset that the curriculum making procedures commonly used in that subject are automatically appropriate for music education (Elliott, 1995: 241). In Elliott's view:

> Many conventional ideas about curriculum making are problematic for teaching and learning in general and music education in particular. Thus, and for the sake of music education, it is imperative that we probe curriculum doctrine and rethink the concept of curriculum development from the ground up (p. 242).

Therefore, the next sections look into the concept of curriculum, curriculum as a field of study, conventional curriculum making, and the curriculum process in a music education system.

3.0.1. The concept of curriculum

Elliott (1995, as cited in Onyiuke 2009, 2011) explains that *curriculum* derives from the Latin word *currere (*'to run'). In ancient times, curriculum meant several things, including a running, a race, a course to be followed, a race course and a career. Today, curriculum is defined in many ways, depending on which aspect of the teaching-learning process a curriculum theorist decides to emphasize.

The following excerpts from well-known text sample the range of thinking about the nature of curriculum as:

i. A plan for learning… (Taba, 1962);

ii. The planned and guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience, under the auspices of the school, for the learner's continuous and wilful growth in personal-social competence (Tanner & Tanner, 1995);

iii. A structured series of intended learning experiences. It embraces purposeful experiences provided and directed by educational institutions to achieve pre-determined goals (Onwuka, 1981);

iv. An explicitly and implicitly set of interaction designed to facilitate learning and development and to impose meaning on experience. The explicit intentions usually are expressed in the written curricula and in course of study, the implicit intentions are found in the 'hidden curriculum', by which we mean the roles and norms that interactions in the school (Miller & Seller, 1985); and

v. Behing (n. d.) refers curriculum in two meaning - a) the range of courses from which students choose what subject matters to study and b) a specific learning programme – in this case, the curriculum collectively describes the teaching, learning, and assessment materials available for a given course of study (internet source).

All the above definition of curriculum recognises the importance of learner experience. Thus, it seems that one should not necessarily arrive at a formal education of curriculum. However, because this study focuses on the aspects that music educators can influence directly, it defines curriculum for the current purpose as *the official, enacted and delivered in formal and non-formal settings.* In this study the delivered curriculum has both a product and a process connotation, depending on the philosophy of music education supported.

3.0.2. Curriculum as a field of study

The meaning of curriculum as a field of study has a very wide scope. The curriculum field considers questions ranging from the nature of knowledge on the one hand to suitable activities for particular learners on the other.

The beginning of curriculum as a recognisable field of study is usually identified with the scientific curriculum movement of the 1920s. Yet, Wing (as cited in Hauptfleish, 1997, 76) indicates that national and international journals dedicated to curriculum only appeared in

the late 1960s. Hauptfleish further noted that Wing identified six curriculum lessons learned over time:

i. The critical importance of good questions to guide curriculum work and study;

ii. The need for a thorough understanding and consideration of the complexity of the curriculum enterprise;

iii. The role of values;

iv. The need for adequate conceptions of assessment;

v. The role and influence of teachers; and

vi. The rich repertory of aids available for the creation and study of curriculum.

This study emphasizes the importance of the curriculum lessons listed above. Bearing them in mind, this study contributes curriculum as a plan for education and a field of study.

3.0.3. The Curriculum process in a music education system

The curriculum process works together with the music teacher education and music education research process to achieve the objectives defined by a particular philosophy of education and music education:

i. *as a plan for education* - curriculum provides learners with educative music experiences in formal and non-formal setting; and

ii. *as a field of study* - curriculum guides the teaching and learning of music by asking critical questions on curriculum work and improving the understanding of the complexity of curriculum. In this, it is aided by philosophy.

The curriculum process uses different ways of providing learners with educative music experiences. Tanner & Tanner (as cited in Onyiuke, 2011) distinguish between five comprehensive and complementary functions of curriculum as a plan for education:

i. *General Education* provides for a common universe of discourse, understanding and competence;

ii. *Specialized Education* presents the learner's major field or pre-professional, professional, prevocational and vocational experience;

iii. *Exploratory Education* enables the learner to investigate and extend inquiries into area the learner might consider fields for specialization or career preparation;

iv. *Enrichment Education* supplements, broadens and deepens the learner's educative experience; and

v. *Special-interest* education enables the learner to investigate specific areas of interest.

Thus, the role of curriculum in a music education system is to provide learners with opportunities for general, specialised, exploratory, enrichment and special interest music education. In the view of Haupfleish (1997, 77), the curriculum process fulfils this role through four subsystems: General music education that is compulsory for all learners; Elective music education taking place alongside general music education, especially in secondary school; Music tuition taking place alongside general and elective music education, especially in non-formal setting; and Music teacher education taking place especially at tertiary educational institutions.

In summary, the curriculum plan/process is at the heart of a music education system – it provides learners with opportunities for general, specialized, exploratory, enrichment and special interest-education in music. It is assisted by research in constantly striving to improve existing practice.

4.0. Curriculum Development

Curriculum development is the organized preparation of whatever is going to be taught in schools as a given time in a given year. They are made into official documents, as guides to teachers, and made obligatory by provincial and territorial departments (internet source).

Teachers use curricula when trying to see what to teach to students and when, as well as what the rubrics should be, **what** kind of worksheets and teacher worksheets they should make, among other things. It is actually up to the teachers themselves how these rubrics should be made, **how** these worksheets should be made and taught; it is all up to the teachers. In a practical understanding, though, there is no concrete way to say what methodology is right to use. But it is also true that the way in which a certain topic is taught habitually resolves what is actually taught. This is why it is required to make a distinction between the official or planned curriculum and *de facto* curriculum; the one that is formal and the one that is actually taught in schools. It is obvious that teachers need to establish very clearly what they are trying to achieve with their learners.

There are several approaches to curriculum developments. This study discusses Nicholls & Nicholls and Tyler's approaches to curriculum development. Nicholls & Nicholls's approach to curriculum development emphasizes with an explicit cyclical process which is widely used in African countries while Tyler's approach in the western world today.

This section also presents the perspectives on the practical music curriculum making by David Elliott.

Nicholls & Nicholls (1980) give a view of curriculum development as "the planning of learning opportunities intended to bring out certain changes in learners and the assessment of the extent to which these changes have taken place" (p. 14). They presented for an example, a School's Council Working Paper, with the curriculum development as involving four stages:

i. The careful examination, drawing on all available sources of knowledge and informed judgement, of the *objectives* of teaching, whether in particular subject courses or over the curriculum as a whole;

ii. The development of those *methods and materials*, which are judged most likely to achieve the objectives which teachers agree upon;

iii. The *assessment* of the extent to which the development work has in fact achieved its objectives. This part of the process may also be expected to provoke new thought about the objectives themselves; and

iv. The final element is therefore *feedback* of all the experience gained, to provide a starting-point for further study.

This last point suggests that curriculum development is a *cyclical process.*

The Tyler approach is probably the most widely used approach in the western world. His *Basic principles of curriculum and instruction* were published for the first time in 1949 and have remained in print since then. Although various authors have proposed modifications to the Tyler's model, his explication of the curriculum paradigm has remained fundamentally unchanged. The basic principles have been used widely in and discussed extensively in curriculum literature. The *Basic principles* enjoy a second reputation as one of the most influential and seminal works in the field of programme evaluation.

Tyler (1981, 18) used the term "approach" to include the assumptions, purposes, criteria, procedures and participants in curriculum development projects. He identified four fundamental questions that must be answered in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction:

i. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?

ii. What educational experiences can be provided that is likely to attain this purpose?

iii. How can these educational experiences be organised effectively?; and

iv. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

When psychological behaviourism became the main force in education, curriculum theorists restated Tyler's procedure in behaviourist terms. Elliott (1995, 244) reports that music education theorists also produced and widely adopted behavioural versions of the Tyler approach.

Tanner & Tanner (1995, 241) indicate that possibly the most common criticism of Tyler's model is its treatment of curriculum development as though it were a linear and almost technological production process. Yet, Tyler himself (1981, 24) states that a curriculum developer can undertake any of the four major tasks first. In his opinion, curriculum developers will often move backwards and forwards repeatedly between the tasks as they check and recheck ideas among ideas the several components of the curriculum.

This study does not support *linear approach* (which is widely use in western world) to curriculum development in African schools, *because the setting of objective should not be separated from the provision of learning experiences, especially not in view of the prominent role of procedural knowledge in music education.* This study supports *cyclical approach.*

On the Western model of music education in Africa, Nzewi (2009) states that:

> Primary music education in Africa had intentionally perpetuated the Western model of music education in terms of methodology, philosophy, psychology, outcome and content. Cognizance had not been taken of what is crucially different about human, cultural, cognitive and cogitation background as well as environment of the African learners. After all, the meaning and experiencing music in Africa are different from what obtains in the west. The resources for effective and necessary music education as well as practices are also different. The African learners' experiencing of music in school is different from what obtain in the West more so in the rural environments of Africa (p. 8).

David Elliott's practical music curriculum making opposes curriculum doctrine by placing the teacher-as-reflective-practitioner at the centre of curriculum development. The procedure proposed by Elliott (1995, 254-289) involves moving from general curricular decisions to specific decision-in-action (and back again) in a four stage process: -

i. **Orientation** to the music teaching-learning situation. The development of critically reasoned perspectives on each of seven curriculum commonplaces and their interrelations – aims, knowledge, learners, teaching-learning processes, teacher(s), evaluation and learning context. The result of this orientation stage is curriculum-as-praxis;

ii. **Preparation and planning** of music teaching and learning based on the orientation and related to individual teaching situations. The use of a seven-point approach to preparing and planning the music curriculum-as-practicum – decide on: The kinds of music making that learners will pursue; a) Musical practices and b) the Musical challenges; The components of musicianship that learners will require; Teaching-learning goals; Alternative teaching-learning strategies; Alternative sequences; and decide how to Assess and evaluate learners' developing musicianship;

iii. **Teaching** by thinking-in-action in relation to the orientation, preparation, planning and the contextual demands of the own teaching situation. Music educator acts as a musical mentor who inducts learners into cultures by example. Central to the success of the musical practicum is the music educator's own commitment to acting as a musical mentor. This is the most important stage of the curriculum-making process; and finally,

iv. **Evaluating** the first three stages of curriculum making.

Educators improve and renew the teaching-learning process by taking all the curriculum commonplaces into consideration. According to Haupfleish (1997, 93), Elliott's approach seems appropriate for micro-level curriculum development in individual situations. However, curriculum developers must also consider meso-level curriculum development (at the level of provinces) and macro-level curriculum development (at national level). To enable practical curriculum making at micro level, curriculum developers at the meso and macro levels must provide for teacher involvement in their work.

4.0.1. Teachers' involvement in curriculum development

As I have mentioned earlier, it is obvious that teachers need to establish very clearly what they are trying to achieve with their learners. The role of teachers in curriculum development seems to be a continuous one. Arguments in favour of teacher involvement reflect the notion that the success of the curriculum in any school depends heavily on the teachers' curriculum implementation strategies.

In view of the inevitability of teacher involvement in curriculum development, Bayona, Carte & Punch (1990, 13-14) assert that: -

i. Teachers' *de facto* role should be acknowledged explicitly Teacher commitment – to a curriculum is a function of their involvement in developing it;

ii.   The knowledge explosion – because of the wide range of choices in curriculum materials, theories and methodologies, teachers are in the best position to select the most relevant curriculum materials;

iii. Teachers' professional autonomy – teachers make autonomous judgement about learners and classroom situations to accommodate learners' individual differences and needs and their own values and preferences; and

iv.   Teachers' detailed knowledge of local contexts - teachers are better placed and perhaps more qualified to devise the most relevant curriculum in terms of local needs and aspirations.

Tanner & Tanner (1995, 628) suggest three levels of teacher involvement:

- Level I – imitative-maintenance (maintaining the curriculum and status quo);
- Level II – mediative (refining established practice); and
- Level III – generative-creative (diagnosing problems and attempting to improve established practice).

They analysed that thus three levels do not constitute a sequence. All teachers as professionals should be at Level III. However, most teachers worldwide in general and African schools in particular are probably at Levels I and II.

Bayona, Carter & Punch (1990, 15-18) identify three common objections to teacher involvement in curriculum development:

- Lack of teacher knowledge and skills in curriculum field;
- Resource and organisational constraints; and
- Problem associated with curriculum diversity.

They conclude that the weight of argument in the literature supports a view of curriculum development in a democratic framework as a multi-site and multi-level partnership representing multiple interests.

In the view of Connelly & Ben-Peretz (as cited in Haupfleish, 1997, 94), researchers, curriculum developers and teachers may best be seen as supporting one another in curriculum development by virtue of their different but related roles. This relationship decisively shifts the teacher's role from implementer to decision maker and independent developer.

This study acknowledges the need for teachers to play a generative-creative role in curriculum development. As Kushner (1994) states, "Ownership of the curriculum is a prerequisite to understanding" (P. 39). The study also supports the involvement of learners in curriculum development as discussed in the next section.

4.0.2. Involvement of learners in curriculum development

In view of Marsh (1992, 2), learner participation in curriculum development can be conceptualized at two levels: -

- individual classroom level; and
- total school level.

Marsh gives us a good reason on his view: It could lead to more informed decisions; Learners should be perceived as clients in the education situation; Some learners have already developed effective leadership and communication skills and have the potential to be effective participants in curriculum-planning activities; Learners have legal rights covering various aspects of schooling, including curriculum decision making; and Collegial relationships between teachers and learners can be enhanced considerably.

He further gives following reasons against enlisting learner participation: Decision making should be left to professionals; Learner participation could break down all the established norms and codes of behaviour essential for class discipline and a positive class tone; and Essential constraints give little scope for teachers to deviate from established and relatively narrow academic syllabuses.

Tanner & Tanner (1995) indicate that "elementary school teachers have long been vigorous proponents of learner participation in planning" (p. 636). In their view, learners can participate in goal setting even when curriculum content is prescribed and courses required. The practice of learners and their teacher co-operatively formulating problem areas to be studied during a semester or school year is deeply rooted in philosophy of progressivism. Progressives stress that learning is most effective when learners are interested in what they are doing and when they understand the significance of what they are supposed to be learning. Moreover, learners concerns offer enormous opportunities for curriculum integration.

This study supports a moderate progressive philosophy of education. Therefore, this study agrees that learners should be invited in curriculum development so that their understanding of the significance of their learning is enhanced.

Each of the models for curriculum development discussed above has advantages and disadvantages. The usefulness of the linear models of Tyler seems to be limited in view of their prescriptiveness and strong connection with the scientific curriculum movement. Yet, Tyler's model is the most established curriculum model still in the western world. This study acknowledges the cyclical, dynamic and iterative nature of curriculum development. In my

view, as long as curriculum development demonstrates these characteristics, involves teachers and learners in process, and is aligned with societal and subject values, the specific model adhered to is relatively less important.

5.0. Curriculum Implementation

As definition of implementation – putting into effect, fulfilment - the term refers to what a curriculum/syllabus consists of in practice to fulfil its aim. As I have mentioned earlier, all curriculum planning is to provide opportunities for an individual or group to benefit maximally from participation in selected learning activities (Onyiuke, 2011, 107). This participation of learners and teachers is known as instruction. Instruction is thus the implementation of curriculum plan. The curriculum plan suggests or specifies activities to be carried out by learners as well as materials to be used. Teachers who implement this plan also carry out a pre-instructional plan, which includes *selection of teaching materials and activities.*

Marsh (as cited Onyiuke, 2009, 2011) identifies two extreme views about curriculum implementation that often appear in academic writing and the media, but which rarely, if ever, occur in practice. One view is that:

- Teachers have absolute powers over what will or will not be implemented in their classrooms. The other view is that:

- An external authority exercises complete prescription over what teachers do in their respective classrooms, and directs teachers in selecting and using particular topics or units in specified ways.

A realistic view of curriculum implementation lies between these two extremes. Marsh indicates that "the fidelity perspective of implementation emphasises the importance of the curriculum innovation itself" (1992, 184). In this perspective, a structured approach to implementation is recommended where by teachers are given explicit instructions on how to teach a unit or course. Marsh (1992) further states that:

> The alternative perspective to implementation is termed variously 'adaptation', 'process' and 'mutual adaptation'. Adherents of this approach maintain that differing organisational contexts and teacher needs will require on-site modifications. The term mutual adaption describes the process whereby adjustments are made both to the innovation itself and to the institutional setting. Mutual adaption has been reified in the literature as the desirable consensual modification between developers and users, and

possibly the most effective way of ensuring successful implementation (p. 185).

This study supports mutual adaption, as indicated in the literature for higher education in African schools. Curriculum development and implementation must be evaluated to determine curriculum efficacy. The next section deals with this final area (evaluation) in the curriculum domain.

6.0. Curriculum Evaluation

There is widespread agreement among evaluation theorists on the role of evaluation in informing action at discrete decision points. However, different definition of evaluation abound. Kemimis (as cited in Onyiuke, 2011) defines:

- Evaluation as the process of marshalling information and arguments that enables interested individuals and groups to participate in the critical debate about a specific programme. Similarly, Wing (1992) indicates that:
- Evaluation generally is considered to be the collecting and analysing of information in order to make decisions or judgements about the merit of something (p.199). In the view of Colwell (1991):
- A major issue in evaluation is whether to focus on the education/achievement of the individual or to measure the school's success by its attainment of social goals (p. 250).

6.0.1. An approach to curriculum evaluating in higher music education system

Although there are several approaches to curriculum evaluation, the critical or qualitative approach advocated by theorists such as Eliot Eisner (1979) and J.S. Mann (1969) seems most in tune with the nature of reflective practicum. Eisner (as cited Elliott, 1995, 290) holds that the curriculum process is highly contextual and depends on gathering a wide range of data in relation to the multi-layered and interactive nature of teaching-learning situations. It cannot be reduced to simpleminded tests of teacher input and student output. On the view of Eisner and Mann, Elliott (1995) further states that:

> Critical curriculum evaluation involves interpreting collected data
> with a blend of qualitative judgements and concrete assessments.
> Of course, the effectiveness of this approach depends on evaluators
> who are highly critical (in the positive sense of being highly

informed) about what is musically and educationally significant in
the curricular context (p. 290).

Although there is no one set way for teachers or external evaluators to conduct critical evaluations of music curricula, Elliott (1995, 290-291) lists three steps: -

- The first step is *descriptive*. The evaluator (or evaluation team) develops descriptions (including verbal, video, and audio descriptions) of musical performance over a reasonable period. In addition to observing the quality of students' music making, data gathering also includes descriptions of students' enthusiasm and enjoyment (or lack thereof). A curriculum description should convey both facts and the feelings of daily life in the curriculum-as-practicum;

- The second step is *interpretive*. Evaluators develop analysis of and explanations, for the actions and interactions described in step 1. The prime function of curriculum criticism is the disclosure of meanings. Just as an artistic music maker can draw our attention to the subtle features of a performance, the critical evaluator highlights the strengths and weaknesses of a music education curriculum; and

- The third step is *evaluative.* Curriculum critics make judgements and recommendations on the basis of the results of the first two steps.

Judgements and recommendations will of course vary according to the personal abilities and interests of the evaluators but advocates of this approach view the likelihood of contrasting evaluations as one of its strengths; as well as providing educational decision makers with alternative ideas for improvement, the critical approach guards against over-simplified evaluations based on one set of criteria.

In these ways, critical curriculum evaluations are more likely to reflect the complex realities of music teaching situations in higher music education system. For many teachers and higher education systems, curriculum evaluation is a desirable but difficult task. Elliott (1995) further notes that:

There is often a shortage of people with knowledge to evaluate music programmes critically. Still, the results are often worth the effort, especially in political terms. If provisions for curriculum evaluation are built into the curriculum-making process and if the results can be accumulated and related to follow-up studies of student graduates, many music educators will gain exactly what they need, in fact, enabling children to achieve self-growth, self-knowledge, and enjoyment, three of the most important life values human beings can attain (p. 291).

Curriculum evaluation in music supports the principle that evaluation should be an integral part of every music programme and that every new programme should provide for critical evaluation from the earliest planning stages. However, evaluation must not be restricted to learners and, but extended to include issues such as teachers, resources and community pressures. One of the community pressures world-wide is the demand for equal education for all learners.

7.0. Conclusion

Curriculum development is not an activity which is undertaken once in a school and then is finished. Rather, it is a continuous process, and this process is at the heart of a music education system – it provides learners with opportunities for general, specialised, exploratory, enrichment and special interest education in music. As Nicholls & Nicholls (1980) suggested, with knowledge and insights derived from assessment being fed back and providing a fresh starting point for further development which is the cyclical process.

The curriculum itself should be regarded as dynamic rather than static and one of the most important roles of the teacher is to make decisions about a whole range of factors such as pupils, pupils' homes and background, the educational institutions, its staff, facilities and equipment. Furthermore the music educator acts as a musical mentor who implements the curriculum and inducts learners into cultures by example.

It is important to mention here that the situation in Nigeria on curriculum development has been problematic because a new curriculum has been developed, without implementing the old one, due to non-training of teachers. Central to the success of musical practicum is the music educator's own commitment to acting as a musical mentor. This is the most important stage of the curriculum-making process as well as curriculum development in higher education system.

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