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VISION 2030 AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION/TRANSFORMATION IN MUSICAL ARTS

Abstract

The study examines cultural preservation/transformation in musical arts against the backdrop of Vision 2030 in Nigeria. Musical arts serve as a tool for teaching and preservation of generational cultural heritage and traditions. It is an essential vehicle for valuing cultural legacy, and musical heritage which must be protected as one of the main areas of intangible cultural heritage, a reflection of cultural diversity, and a conveyor of meaning, and social, cultural, and economic values contributing to sustainable development in Nigeria. The study evaluates the perception of students studying for a degree in Music, the value, significance, and importance of the sustainability of musical cultural heritage. The design of the study is descriptive research that is based on the statistical descriptive method. The instrument for the study is a questionnaire that was designed and validated as a data collection instrument. Data analysis shows differences in the analyzed categories and points to the need to solve them. It also reveals the importance students attach to musical cultural heritage, the merit of including it in the curricula of the various educational stages, and on the need to protect it as an essential requirement for sustainable development.

Keywords: *Cultural preservation/transformation*

Introduction

Culture can be defined as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation. Culture has been called "the way of life for an entire society." As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, art. norms of behaviour, such as law and morality, and systems of belief. It also refers to an appreciation of good literature, music, art, and food. However, for anthropologists and other behavioural scientists, culture is the full range of learned human behaviour patterns.

The concept of culture has become the central focus in anthropology. The term was first used in this way by the pioneer English Anthropologist Edward B. Tylor in his book, *Primitive Culture*, published in 1871. Tylor said that culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture has been described as the totality of a people's way of life. Benedict (2014) reasons that; a culture, like an individual, is a more or less consistent pattern of thought

and action. It is this consistency in collective thought and actions of a group of people that translates into culture, however, its change is inevitable with time. It therefore brings to fore the patterns of culture which can be seen in light of values, beliefs, taboos, determination, relativism, rituals, religion among others.

The definition of culture by Baldwin et al (2015) states that culture “proliferate not only within anthropology but also across the social sciences and humanities, thus it is possible to see culture from different perspectives with a unity of concept. Jenks (2003) in Baldwin defines culture as whole way of life. Culture is a way of life of a group of people, the configuration of all the more or less stereotyped patterns which are handed from one generation to the next through the means of language and imitation. It involves the forms through which people make sense of their lives. Culture is complex whole of the system of concepts and usage, organization, skills, and instruments by means of which mankind deal with physical, biological, and human nature in satisfaction of its needs.

Benedict (2014) defined culture as a pattern of thought and action, of which the total is more than the sum of their traits. While there are several definitions of culture that cuts across disciplines, the earliest definition by Edward ‘B’ Taylor (1871) provides that; culture, or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Baldwin further notes the definition by Yamada (2017) as the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relation, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group Striving.

Baldwin et al (2015) furthermore, referred to culture as a collective (programme) of the mind. Culture is neither the act of baking a cake nor the cake itself but the recipe, the socially transmitted information that tells a person to bake a cake. Culture therefore, is ingrained in a group, even though it is susceptible to change. From the various definitions of culture presented so far, it is possible to discern the various patterns of culture as they can be peculiar to particular or different groups. Gyegwe(2014) puts it as the recipe which can be understood as those patterns upon which a culture is developed. Therefore, the pattern of culture can be enumerated to include the following; morality, values, art, motives, emotions, order, religion, custom or belief, attitude and a host of others that may be subsumed under certain headings.

Culture is a powerful human tool for survival, but it is a fragile phenomenon. It is constantly changing and easily lost because it exists only in our minds. Our written languages, governments, buildings, and other man-made things are merely the products of culture. They are not culture in themselves. For this reason, archaeologists cannot dig up culture directly in their excavations. The broken pots and other artifacts of ancient people that they uncover are only material remains that reflect cultural patterns--they are things that were made and used through cultural knowledge and skills. An understanding of culture requires an understanding not only of language differences, but also differences in knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. It is therefore pertinent to see how culture can be preserved especially music in the next generation for its perpetuation.

Cultural preservation refers to the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage, including tangible and intangible forms, to ensure its survival for future generations. It involves the

preservation of cultural music, cultural artefacts, traditions, languages, and practices that are considered valuable and significant. Preservation of culture is the responsibility of society to document and protect customs, rituals, artefacts, and historical events for future generations. Cultural preservation refers to the efforts made to protect and maintain the cultural heritage of a society or community. It involves the preservation of cultural artefacts, customs, rituals, and historical monuments for future generations (Pazel, 2015).

The preservation of culture is seen as an important responsibility of every society, as it represents the pillars of national culture and tradition. Cultural preservation can be achieved through various means such as researching and documenting customs and rituals of the past, collecting and preserving artefacts and pictures, and creating videos or documentaries to depict various cultures and their significance. The right to preserve culture is often invoked in normative debates, and it is argued that cultural groups have the right to enjoy the framework conditions and enact supporting political measures to ensure the authentic and continuous development of their culture. However, the normative values and justification for cultural preservation are highly contested, and it is important to clarify the underlying values and reasons for preserving culture. Additionally, the preservation of cultural heritage involves preventing deterioration and proper conservation of historical monuments, which can be influenced by environmental factors and biodeterioration.

The concept of cultural preservation is highly debated, with different perspectives on its normative value. Some argue for the intrinsic value of cultural preservation, emphasizing the importance of preserving cultural diversity and identity. Others view cultural preservation as instrumental, highlighting its role in promoting individual well-being and economic egalitarianism. Cultural preservation can be achieved through various means, such as the use of technology to document and digitize cultural heritage. It also requires addressing challenges such as lack of funding, trained manpower, and copyright issues. Overall, cultural preservation plays a crucial role in shaping a sense of identity, promoting awareness of cultural complexity, and addressing conflicts related to cultural heritage.

Cultural preservation is aimed at gathering, maintaining, and sharing culture. It focuses on keeping valuable cultural forms away from things that imperil, threaten or suffocate them. It is driven by the desire to make cultural heritage available for the use of future generations (Pramartha & Davis, 2016; Hartley & Pott, 2014; Hezel, 2005). The ideas that underpin cultural preservation are not however without criticism. Scholars hold that cultural change is happening across cultural landscapes globally. In the same way that languages change like living things, differentiated in space and time (Solé et al., 2010), so does culture, with its ever-shifting values (Nieto 2008; Mace & Holden, 2005).

Therefore, since change is a characteristic of culture, an understanding of culture as something that can be 'lost' becomes problematic, logically. Given that definitions of culture typically acknowledge the occurrence of continuous change, the narrative of loss and obliteration, which drives the discourse for preservation is problematic (Kirsch, 2001). However, we hold that culture can experience change dynamically without suffering a fracture. Where the levels of change occurring in a cultural biosphere are catastrophic, speedily ripping away the heart of an existing culture, it becomes problematic and it is then only logical to consider remedial measures. For many, the need for cultural preservation is driven by a fear of arriving in the future with nothing but the debris of their formerly viable cultures. This is the driver for several

organizations working to mitigate the imminent loss of human cultural – and environmental – diversity such as the World-Wide Fund, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), the Convention on Biological Diversity for Nature, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) amongst others (Amano et al, 2014).

Within the network of organizations engaged in the active conservation of cultural diversity, UNESCO takes the lead, leading shifts in the global agenda for the preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Their commitment is exemplified by their many conventions. Also notable are efforts by communities, smaller organizations, and individuals towards the preservation of cultural resources, ensuring that their culture with its distinctive features is not lost (Yamada, 2017; Pramatha & Davis, 2016; Coleman, 2016).

We propose that the fate of cultural forms belonging to threatened cultures should be decoupled from the fate of the cultures themselves, to increase the likelihood of the preservation of those cultural forms. For instance, culture-bound artisanal skills like carving weaving or the manufacture of specialist musical instruments could be taught by decimated members of a threatened culture to willing students from other cultures in the larger society and preserved as discrete curriculum items. Although such an initiative might be open to over-zealous accusations of ‘cultural appropriation’, it can create a larger, more viable and sustainable reservoir of threatened cultural knowledge and skills. Such a culture bank can warehouse cultural forms that might otherwise go extinct, making them available for surviving members of the donating culture to access and reintegrate into future generations.

The forgoing makes it imperative that there is need for transformation of musical arts. This can be the next agenda of the stakeholders and government to ensure that there is transformation of musical art as vision 2030.

Transformation in Musical Arts

The term art has a broad sense that may sometimes be confusing as it embraces so many areas of human endeavour. A common cliché of people about art is that; “Art is life”. This implies that art is in everything. For instance, art is seen in the way people eat, dance, dress, cultivate and learn. It is indeed difficult to separate art from culture as they conflate. The anthropologist sees art as, human endeavour and includes music dance, sculpture, painting, drawing, stitchery, weaving, poetry, wood carving, and others. a medium of expression where the individual and culture came together. In general understanding, the artist would define art as the expression of his feelings, emotions, through the use of an artistic medium which may be paint, clay, pencil, dance, music and drama.

The two perspectives of definitions above, share an affinity. The meaning of art is the product of creative human activity in which materials are shaped or selected to convey an idea, emotion or visually interesting form. The word art can refer to the visual arts, including painting, sculpture architecture, photography, decorative arts, crafts and other visual works that combine materials or forms. The definition of art by Barnes (2014) further includes art like dance, music and drama. While art has been defined to mean a range of human activities meant for emotional expression, or aesthetic satisfaction, culture on the other hand is the generality of a people’s way of life which makes art inseparable from culture. In a sense, it is art that becomes the medium through which culture is expressed. The role art plays in traditional cultural pattern can be seen in the

following; communication, religion and worship, teaching of morals, historical record or documentation, maintenance of law and order, royalty, economics, among others.

Another role of art can be seen in body enhancement. Art promotes beauty of individual in the society, during marriage ceremonies; women decorate their body with local dyes or colours. The hands and feet especially are absolutely decorated with appealing patterns. The designs are usually applied on the bride and friends and well-wishers. The place of beauty in the society cannot be wished away as many young girls have attracted their husbands through appealing and attractive body make-up and other body enhancements. Furthermore, the desire of man to connect with his creator is activated and mediated through sculptural objects. Religion and worship thus open another avenue through which art plays a role in traditional cultural patterns. Eyo (2007) notes that through carved images, the African appease malevolent spirits. Similarly, in the modern churches especially in the Catholic and other orthodox churches there is an attempt to mix Christianity with the host culture. Music or hymns are expressed through drums and other musical instruments which are products of the artist. Moreover, a people's cultural heritage is preserved by art.

Art plays this important role through the various art objects that represents the value of such a culture. An example is the traditional music and dances that are performed, such dances like the swange or ikyo dance among the Tiv ethnic group make use of the 'angeer' as the traditional costume. As a result, the 'angeer' is promoted as a cultural artifact which promotes the Tiv group. The black and white striped 'angeer' textile costume also re-echoes history as Gyegwe (2011) related the stripes to the mythological green snake that rescued the Tiv and his sons from their enemies. Art also plays an important role in agriculture. The farm implements like hoe, cutlasses, and baskets among others are carved by the blacksmith and weaver respectively which aid in the cultivation of crops.

Transformation is a complete change in the appearance or character of something or someone, especially so that that thing or person is improved: Local people have mixed feelings about the planned transformation of their town into a regional capital. In music, a transformation consists of any operation or process that may apply to a musical variable or rhythm in composition, performance, or analysis. The transformation of themes in music was developed in the Baroque period. However, the use of thematic transformation by French composer Hector Berlioz, a Romantic-era composer, and his *idée fixe* (fixed idea) in the 1830 *Symphonie Fantastique*, used a recurring, persistent theme across its five movements and is recorded as an early, major use of transformation of themes in this way.

Other notable names in the development of thematic transformation are Johann Sebastian Bach, Franz Liszt, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Franz Schubert. Thematic transformation in music does commonly occur, but it is not itself a musical theme (or any other kind of theme). Transformation alone is also not a form of thematic transformation or thematic development, but an umbrella term for many different kinds of transformations and developments of themes.

The foregoing discussion brings intuitive clarity to our meaning of 'music transformation'. However, for music correctness regarding the result of a transformation is in many ways a subjective judgment. But, by defining a few terms the study can bring a little more concreteness to defining what a music transformation is, while at the same time couching the discussion in familiar territory defined in the study. For these purposes, 'music fragments' is defined as a combination of some number (typically small) of music measures for some voice, along with

their corresponding harmonic contexts. In terms of the software representation, a music fragment is provided by a Line and its harmony defined by a Harmonic Context Track composed of Harmonic Contexts.

A music fragment can be qualified with a temporal extent, for instance, given by beginning and ending whole times, which defines the precise portion of a line and harmony track to which a music transformation could be applied. The term music feature refers to some significant aspect of a music fragment, such as the notes in the melody - their pitch values, durations, and offsets, more precisely. It also refers to the key and tempo of the music. And it refers to the chords, their chord types, roots, inversions, and durations. By musical cohesion, the researcher means that for a given music fragment, its music features conform to some music practice that in some way, even subjectively, makes musical sense. In common vernacular, “the music sounds right” or “as the composer intended”.

Music cohesion can implicitly imply an understood music style or genre, or other criteria that are considered ‘proper’ for the music under consideration as the source and/or target of a transformation. A music transformation or music transform maps a music fragment into another in such a way that some music features are preserved while others are changed to meet user-provided criteria, while at the same time preserving musical cohesion. While this definition grounds further what the researcher means by music transformation, there is still much open to interpretation. Suppose, for example, one wants ‘melodic preservation’ in using a transform. The meaning would vary over circumstances. In one interpretation, ‘melodic preservation’ might mean ‘the melodic notes remain the same, identical in pitch, duration, and offset’. That kind of identity transformation is generally too restrictive to be meaningful. However, in a key shift in the same modality, the notes’ pitches are changed, but otherwise the melodies are isomorphic (identical) regarding durations, relative note offsets, pitch, and overall shape. If the modality is changed though and possibly as well as the tonal root, we want the melodic shape or contour to be less isomorphic but rather homeomorphically preserved even though the resulting pitches may vary significantly in pitch from the original. The foregoing is not speaking of a strict isomorphic relationship.

The differences in the required interpretation of transformation are fine, as long as they are consistent with the meaning of “musical cohesion” imposed on the transformation under consideration. The interpretation of transform derives from the change in harmony, and an acknowledgement that the musical cohesion remains intact. The general idea of transformation is so defined with much latitude on intention. Clearly, due to a variety of circumstances and contexts, a transformation must be defined individually to include all required nuances. However, when musical coherence is sufficiently subjective that its objective rules cannot be easily specified, the transform is approximate at best and may produce a set of proposed solutions which only then can be judged and ranked later.

The music transforms presented in this study mainly focus on adaptive pitch adjustment on a given music fragment subject to harmonic change and/or varieties of constraint specification. That is, there is no focus on rhythmic or otherwise substantive note changes in the melody itself. Nor is there any focus on generative or constructive music. This approach constitutes no meaningful restriction on discussing music transformations. Music transformation is a deep and

rich topic, and the purpose of the study is to introduce the topic in a meaningful somewhat introductory manner. With that, the researcher begins by introducing a constraint engine that enforces constraints on how pitches relate to each other. The engine itself constitutes a simple heuristic enumerative approach to searching what can be a relatively large search space. The focus of the engine's search is to satisfy all the pitch constraints related to transform changes to a given melodic fragment. Constraint engines constitute a complex and rich research topic. It is not the intention of the author to provide a comprehensive, efficient, state-of-the-art constraint engine technology, but rather an engine sufficient to demonstrate the music transformations presented, which is the focus of this study. This constraint engine, besides offering a kind of music transformation utility in itself, is used several times in transformations presented later in the text.

Theoretical framework

The study is anchored by culture theory by Olivier Serrat (2008). Serrat propounded that culture, in its broadest sense, is the totality of a society's distinctive ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge. It exhibits the ways humans interpret their environments. Culture theory is a branch of anthropology, semiotics, and other related social science disciplines such as political economy, in particular, but also sociology and communication (to name a few). It seeks to define heuristic concepts of culture. Hence, cultural studies often concentrate on how a particular phenomenon relates to matters of ideology, nationality, ethnicity, social class, and gender. The potential for application is correspondingly vast it follows that practitioners of culture theory draw from a diverse array of theories and associated practices and encompass many different approaches, methods, and academic perspectives. And so, it remains relatively unstructured as an academic field that needs to move from 'Let's' to 'How'. Taking culture into account should mean understanding how cultural dimensions enter utility and production functions of various kinds. In the case of development agencies and their partner countries, new processes of policy analysis and participatory management should surely be devised so that non-economic social sciences become full partners in the decision-making concerning the policy and investment decisions that guide business processes. Much remains to be done.

Methodology

The methodology involved a qualitative approach. Data was mostly gathered through secondary sources of books, and the internet and primary sources of paintings or artworks that expressed cultural pattern. A subjective approach to analysis was borrowed in the analysis of gathered data, as supported by Sambo (2008).

The purpose of the study, therefore, is to evaluate the perception of students studying for a degree in Music, the value, significance, and importance of the sustainability of musical cultural heritage. The design of the study is descriptive research that is based on the statistical descriptive method. The instrument for the study is a questionnaire that was designed and validated as a data collection instrument. The data analysis shows differences in the analyzed categories and points to the need to take action to solve them.

Discussion and Conclusions

People around the world have established diverse patterns of social organizations, beliefs, customs, values and forms of expression that are unique to them, leading to the existence of

linguistic and cultural diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas, et al; 2003). Significantly, global cultural diversity is threatened with endangerment and extinction. In this paper, an overview of the aspects of cultural extinction was provided and conceptualizing. Drawing from the review, cultural extinctions was defined as the demise of an entire culture or its forms by single or multiple factors originating from within the in-group or externally. We noted that the global focus on language extinction eclipses the reality of extinction happening or threatened in other cultural forms. There are considerable scholarly resources focused on language extinction but a dearth of comprehensive materials that discuss cultural extinction as a concept exists.

While available scholarship on causality commonly presents external forces that are exterior to the cultural group as responsible for triggering or enforcing their cultural loss, there is a need to expand research into the role of the cultural groups themselves as well as their beliefs and practices which are or can be instrumental to the extinction of their tangible and intangible cultural heritage. We recommend that scholarly works could for example look at the information management systems being utilized among indigenous cultures. It is evident that in this age of technology, cultural knowledge held in largely tacit forms has high prospects of extinction (Pramartha & Davis, 2016; Coleman, 2016). While language as a form of culture has many standardized tools for assessing its status, the comparative lack of such tools for identifying the status of other cultural forms is observed.

To address this, we suggest the adaptation of existing language tools and, the development of hybrid tools that for example could explore the scaling of factors such as the ascribed value, the domain of use, its preservation and dissemination systems, and the trends of transmission among others. A stocktaking to first establish the cultural capital available within a cultural biosphere is important, to inform an effective assessment (Throsby, 2005). But more important is the need to ensure that such assessment materials must be developed collectively with the participation of groups who claim ownership of the culture, to encourage inclusion. In suggesting this, we acknowledge some of the inherent difficulties, bearing in mind the diversity of culture.

By providing an overview of the definitions of cultural extinction, its interdisciplinary uses and causes, as well as the interventions to stem the tide of extinction, the paper contributes towards the strengthening of the tenuous discourse on the concept of cultural extinction. We recommend the need for more scholarship to advance the understanding of cultural extinction as the existing literature is grossly inadequate. The study suggests that future scholarship addressing the phenomena of cultural extinction could explore other cultural forms to support robust discourse on the realities of cultural extinction. More importantly, discourse on cultural extinction needs to be expanded beyond the narratives of endangerment and loss to embrace remedial actions and plans (Yamada, 2017) that build into a sustainable global diversity. It is hoped that there must transformation of musical art should be one of the agendas of vision 2030.

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