Solution to Diminishing Music Education Principles in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

Educational principles are fundamental truths which are stipulated to chart the course of a given educational process. These principles may take the form of theories, ideologies, concepts, laws, moral rules, and beliefs that serve as the fulcrum of education and which demand periodic reviews and investigation for relevance. Regarding music, the truly practical way to professional competence in music education is through extensive investigation and the formulation and application of specific principles such as the nature and relevance of courses that form the curriculum of studies, the course content of each course, course allocation to teachers based on specialisation and competency, studentship and student enrolment, criteria for assigning musical instruments to students, criteria for assessment, and the measurement and evaluation of the entire music education process. Unfortunately, these principles are not sustained in most Nigerian Universities and in some cases are applied haphazardly. Several Nigerian Universities were surveyed and findings show that urgent attention needs to be given to the ideals of music education principles in order to reposition music to its proper place.

1. Introduction

The effective delivery of any educational endeavour demands the proper formulation and application of principles based on empirical facts which serve as reference base to pilot the entire process. For instance, the educational principle of commencing formal education in childhood is based on the findings from the experiments of notable educational psychologists among whom was Jean Piaget (1896- 1980).

The outline of Piaget's stages of mental development in a normal human being suggests 'a critical/sensitive period or window for learning'.

Sensori-motor (0-2yrs)- learning through direct sensory experience like reflex grasping, sucking and general body movement.

Pre-operational (2-7 yrs)- learning through the manipulation of objects, noting the consequences and internalizing them for the future, thus transforming stimuli to symbols.

Concrete operations (6/7-11 yrs)- viewing objects in concrete, tangible, and systematic ways but not abstractly.

Formal operations (11yrs onwards)- learning abstractly using logic and deductive reasoning (Child, 2004).

The evidence of these developmental stages implies the existence of *sensitive or critical periods* when formal learning should duly commence. This theory is one of the ideologies behind the established principle and practice of commencing formal education from childhood. With regard to music, Leonhard and House (1972) explain this further:

> The research of Piaget and others emphasizes the soundness of the idea that the development of musicianship and aesthetic sensitivity can and must begin in early childhood. There is increasing recognition that in

> connection with many abilities there is a critical stage that occurs early in the development of a child. If education is delayed past this critical stage, the child can never fulfil his potential. There is every reason to believe that there is a critical stage in the development of musicianship and aesthetic sensitivity, which occurs early, probably before the age of nine. In view of presently available evidence, it is arrant nonsense for music educators to continue using the bulk of their financial and human resources on students in high school. A planned program of music education in nursery school, kindergarten and the primary grades, providing a rich variety of experience with music conducted by well qualified teachers, merits the highest priority in music education program planning (p.155).

So many other factors, theories and ideologies inform educational principles such as learning theories, teaching methods, gender issues, geographical and climate factors, culture, educational policies of governments of nations, funding, the nature and peculiarity of subjects/courses like mathematics, music, medicine, etc. But the fact is that neglect of these forces in formulating principles or the rejection of principles in any educational endeavour is bound to jeopardise the entire process, music being no exception.

Sometimes educational principles are based on philosophical expressions of a given educational system and these serve as a term of reference for operation. Regarding this Elemi (1967) enthused thus:

> For, like man, a group, a region, or a nation must know itself, and its environment, must know where it stands, where it is going, how to get there and what it involves, how to determine the progress being made towards its

> destination as individuals as a collectivity. Consequently, there must be a philosophy as a term of reference and on which a philosophy of education builds, adapts and works out, and these two basics become the standard guide for a philosophy of evaluation (p.15).

The point is that education must have focus and focus should be based on stipulated principles in order to have a sense of direction. Reid (1971) explained this better:

> If we must educate sensibly, we must above all things do it with a sense of direction and proportion; and to have this is to have 'philosophy'. Philosophy is love of wisdom; the philosopher is the lover of wisdom, and it is 'wisdom' that we need (p.15).

For, in practical terms, from the very nature of things, confusions and complications have always gone together. It underscores the need for a philosophy of valuing things.

With regard to a philosophy for music education principles in Nigeria, it appears there are none or the diminishing of supposedly existing ones. Adeogun (2006) lamented seriously over this in his quest for a philosophy of music education in Nigeria:

> ...there is no particular philosophy for music education in Nigeria. Consequently, Nigerian music education has lacked a sense of direction. By this we mean that priorities have not been presented quite clearly, and if they are, resources and efforts required to implement them have been directed elsewhere (p.105).

2. Divergent Views on Music Education Principles

Music education as an educational process requires established principles to survive. But there are divergent views from music scholars on who should formulate the principles and how they

should be applied. According to Leonhard and House (1972), 'the wise music educator, therefore, does not seek to develop a bag of tricks but to create his own solidly based pattern of instruction'. They tried to buttress this opinion by suggesting different approaches that different music teachers might adopt in dealing with a given scenario thus:

> Each person, however, has a somewhat unique background and motives, and therefore evolves his own set of principles. A certain band director, for example, might dismiss a member of his band for rowdy conduct, on the principle that rehearsals should be concentrated, undistracted learning sessions. He would base this conclusion on his experience in bands and upon the fact that attention and purpose are necessary in the learning process. A different teacher, cognizant of the factors of interest span, motivation, and individual differences and operating on the principle that rehearsals should be conducted in a relaxed and flexible fashion, might never be faced with an intrusive discipline problem(pp. 34-35).

The position above tends to create some problems. The suggestion that each music educator should formulate his principles for teaching music negates the constructive ideology that music educators should pool ideas together in formulating general principles which should serve as a reference point for music education. The opinion of Leonhard and House on formulating music education principles is strongly rejected in this paper because that is the root of the problems besieging music education in Nigerian Universities which this paper endeavours to address. Usually practical/performance exams in music tagged 'Individual performance Studies Examinations (IPS) are always conducted as panel examinations based on the defined principle that a panel of

two or more examiners would yield a fair assessment of the student. Any examiner, who rejects this principle based on whatever personal convictions he may hold, invalidates the principle of equity and fairness in judging practical examinations in music.

3. Some Established Principles in Music Education

Several principles have been adopted in music and they are reviewed separately as they relate to the major facets of musicology.

3.1 Principles applied in Instrumental Music Pedagogy

Instrumental music pedagogy is the branch of music which deals with methods of teaching musical instruments. This aspect of musicology exists because of the demand for students to be accomplished in playing various musical instruments. Another reason for interests in instrumental music is the challenge and fulfilment it grants students. This point is re-echoed by Kohut (1973):

> One of the major reasons why instrumental music has flourished in the schools is the challenge it provides for students. No matter how well one learns to perform, there is always room for further improvement. The demands in mental and physical coordination in manipulating an instrument and reading music- sightreading in particular- are also undeniably great. A good performing group strives for A+ performance at all times. Also, consider the intense concentration and flawless accuracy demanded of the first chair player in a major symphony orchestra. Few professions require this type and level of excellence (p.5).

The justification for instrumental music in the educational system is clear but there are principles which guide its delivery and which should never be ignored unless one hopes for a futile endeavour. The basic principle in instrumental pedagogy is the principle of approving musical instruments for students based on physiological adaptability. This principle is based on the realization of the fact that, musical instruments by virtue of their nature, place peculiar physiological constraints on learners which require that the potential learners meet. For instance, a musical instrument like the trumpet demands steady air pressure for intonation and therefore requires students with healthy lungs to learn. Students with shallow breaths are usually advised against the trumpet and other brasses and wood-wind instruments like the trombone, French horn, saxophone, etc. This principle is well rehearsed by Hoffer (1991):

> Only general guides can be offered regarding what instruments should be assigned to individual students. If a youngster faces a lengthy session with braces on his or her teeth or has an underbite (lower teeth in front of upper) or crooked teeth, the student should be guided away from brasses. Generally, small students should not try large instruments. Boys who have thick fingers should be encouraged to try instruments other than the violin, because notes in the higher positions are too close together to allow for thick fingers without some kind of compensatory movement, which is difficult. Students whose pitch sense is below average should especially avoid strings, French horn, and trombone (p.240).

In assigning and teaching musical instruments to students, another problem also comes up: the issue of gender bias to some musical instruments. Female students avoid such instruments as the trumpet, saxophone, trombone, French-Horn, tuba, and the string

bass tagging them 'heavy', 'masculine', and 'difficult' instruments to learn. They easily embrace the violin as a suitable instrument for the 'ladies'. The implication of this bias is that in an ensemble group of thirty (30) female students and thirty (30) male students there would be thirty violins pitted against other instruments and this creates imbalance in the orchestra.

Usually, this problem is ameliorated with the principle that every student is encouraged to play any musical instrument irrespective of gender. Okeke (2015) enlightened us on this:

> The finding that some Western orchestral musical instruments generate some gender bias places the responsibility on the instrumental teachers to disabuse the minds of the students from such notions as 'feminine' or 'masculine' instruments. However, the teacher should also be sensitive to the choices of his/her students regarding western orchestral instruments before assigning any to the students (p.197).

The issue of teacher-competency and specialization also affects instrumental pedagogy. Although all music teachers are required to specialize in one area of musicology (composing, pedagogy, ethnomusicology etc.) and also on one musical instrument (trumpet, guitar, violin, saxophone, etc) so that they could competently engage students assigned to them on the basics and mastery of the given instrument. But the teaching of every musical instrument by any teacher or lecturer clearly invalidates the principle behind specialization and competency in instrumental music pedagogy. Okeke (2015) clarified this issue in his well-researched work thus:

> The problem here is that not all the instructors who handle these highly specialized areas have the competence and the required knowledge for them. For example, popular

> opinion from the study is that each orchestral instrument should be taught by a lecturer who specialized in them with the requisite skill. But the available manpower within the Department does not guarantee that, rather what obtains is that where there is no specialist for a given instrument, the instrument is usually handled by any other teacher who has some knowledge about the instrument. This improvisation approach creates serious limitation to teaching and learning of Western orchestral instruments owing to the sophistication of the instruments and the special skills required in teaching them (p.195).

He stressed further that:

> The presumption that any lecturer can teach any orchestral musical instrument provided the instrument belongs to the family of his specialized instrument seems to be a wrong one. The argument is straight: if the trumpet teacher can teach trombone or tuba and the violin teacher can also teach viola, cello or string bass, what then is the essence of specialization. If there is no adequate number of specialized lecturers for the various instruments, it then becomes a challenge which requires urgent solution. Teaching western orchestral musical instruments in the university comes with peculiar challenges particularly where most of the students who find themselves in the Department of music have had little or no background in instrumental music in their formative years in school (nursery/primary/secondary) (pp.195-196).

The argument is this: the teaching of musical instruments requires demonstrative teaching, that is, teaching with the demonstration on the given instrument and therefore requires a teacher who is

competent on the instrument so that the students can learn by imitation.

There are so many other general principles underlying instrumental music pedagogy such as those relating to the teaching of rhythmic reading, methods of sight-singing, musical acoustics, bowing and articulation, ensemble groups and rehearsal procedures, but the scope of this writing may not afford ample space for their exhaustive analysis.

3.2 Principles Applied in Vocal/Choral Music

One basic principle in teaching choral music and organizing choral groups is that prospective members are auditioned for qualification into any of the four basic voice parts: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass (SATB) even though there is the possibility of more divisions into mezzo-soprano, contralto, and baritone. This procedure is beneficial to the entire choral program as the members know their respective roles in the choir from the onset. If this principle is neglected, the entire choir becomes a cacophonic bunch.

The university setting approaches vocal musicology not only as a group endeavour (choir) but also as an individualistic practice. Every student is expected to practice under the tutelage of an experienced lecturer who assigns pieces to the student and monitors his/her progress through scheduled meetings. This culminates into performance examinations where each student is required to display his/her singing capabilities before a panel of adjudicators.

This practice is based on the principle that every student of music is required to graduate with vocal competence. Even when a student is piano major, or trumpet major, he/she still has to sing through the years of study (year I to year IV).

3.3 Course Allocation

Courses are allocated to prospective lecturers based on the principle of specialization, experience, and competency, but rarely on students' request even though this is not out of place. The three aforementioned basic principles are established to deal with such idiosyncrasies among teachers like superiority complex, impersonation, incompetence, and laziness. It is natural that teachers should take up subject areas in tandem with their area of specialization as learners benefit more with this principle.

Sometimes, freshmen courses are allocated to the senior colleagues based on the principle of experience or sometimes the professors are shifted to more advanced courses so that the younger colleagues can also have a feel of the rudimentary courses. All these are still based on the same principle of experience. Sometimes one comes across a teacher who specializes in a given field, with several years of experience but lacks competence in delivering the subject matter. Competence in teaching appears to be the basic and most rewarding principle in the allocation of subjects to teachers in any given educational system.

3.4 Principles Regarding Classroom Music Teaching Procedure

So many methods and approaches to teaching exist but not all of them are favourable to music. Music teaching employs certain teaching methods based on the principle of effectiveness. For example, rote teaching, demonstration, motivation, computer application, reinforcement, etc. There are also established approaches in teaching music drawn from the empirical researches of scholars and music educators over the years. Some of them are: Dalcroze, Kodaly, Orff, Suzuki, etc. The Dalcroze approach,

named after the proponent (Emile Jacques Dalcroze), is based on the ideology of 'movement with a mission'. The Dalcroze approach is three-pronged, including not only a unique form of rhythmic movement called eurhythmics but also ear training (solfege and solfege-rhythmique) and improvisation. The key qualities that link accomplishment in each of these elements are imagination, a keen listening sense, and an immediacy of response to the musical stimulus. The Kodaly approach is based on 'inner hearing and music literacy'; Orff is based on 'expression through musical experience'; Suzuki is based on 'demonstration and immitation' (Campbell and Scott-kassner, 2010). Several other approaches and methods of teaching music exist but it is not the focus of this work to expound on them all but to establish that music education has traversed proved paths and thus every music teacher should be acquainted with these approaches before venturing into the classroom.

3.5 Teaching Challenged and Exceptional Students

Education has always grappled with this problem. How can 'brilliant' students be educated without demeaning the others and how can 'challenged' students be encouraged without boring the others in a classroom context? The case of music appears more troubling. How do you teach a year one undergraduate class when about eighty percent of the class has had no rudimentary knowledge of music? How do you coordinate an orchestra when several of the instrumentalists are still grappling with the basics of intonation on their instruments? So many people are partially 'tone deaf' and they still find their ways into departments of music to study. The usual practice toward these pertinent issues is to 'bundle' all learners together with the hope that there would be some 'rubbing off' from the 'gifted' students and a 'rubbing on' on

the 'challenged' ones. This principle has not shown any success despite claims by some modern educational psychologists about its therapeutics.

Another approach which appears to be gaining some grounds is based on the principle of separation even though it is fraught with some problems. This approach favours separate education for 'challenged learners' and separate education for 'exceptional learners' and the tag is 'special education'. This ideology has also inspired the principle of stratification in education where we have such learning strata as basic, intermediate, and advanced and were learners are motivated to climb the ladder sequentially by meeting up with the requirements of a lower stratum.

This principle has been employed in teaching instrumental music where there exist literatures for various levels for a given instrument. For example, 'beginner/elementary piano course book', 'intermediate piano course book', 'advanced/master piano course book' etc. Or *Hours with the Masters I, II, and III.*

3.6 Students' Assessment and Grading

There are criteria for assessing students in education and in a subject like music; there are established criteria for assessing instrumental, vocal, and group performances. There are also criteria for assessing written and aural music examinations. For instance, in assessing students on their musical instruments, such criteria as: intonation, embouchure, bowing, articulation of notes, fingering on the instrument, phrasing etc are applicable. Assessing students in music without these established criteria and reference to them would yield a lopsided result and would disrupt the entire evaluative process.

This same principle applies to grading students. Students are graded irrespective of the examiner's subjective opinion of the student. Such frivolous judgements about race, height, weight, sex, sexuality, complexion, or any form of relationship with the examiner are never brought into play.

3.7 Evaluation

Educational evaluation has been described by Elemi (1990:10) as 'a systematic process of determining the extent to which educational objectives are achieved by pupils'. This definition appears to ignore the teachers in the evaluation process but not, because the picture of teachers in the process is strongly implied if we take a deeper look at the definition. One cannot properly appraise the 'educational objectives achieved by pupils' without recourse to the teaching process which inadvertently involves such factors as teacher-competency, teaching methods, subject curriculum/scheme, and the teaching-learning environment. The indispensability of measurement and evaluation in education has been captured appropriately in the submission of Aggarwal (1967):

> It is now agreed that evaluation is a continuous process, forms an integral part of the total system of education, and is ultimately related to educational objectives. It exercises a great influence on the pupil's study habits and the teacher's methods of instruction and thus helps not only to measure educational achievement but also to improve it (pp.131-132).

Evaluation as an educational principle relies on 'measurement' to succeed. Measurement as an aspect and precursor to evaluation employs quantitative tools in garnering data for evaluation. This is more lucid in the explanation of Leonhard and House (1972):

> Measurement refers to the use of evaluative tools the results of which are precise, objective, and quantitative. The data from measurement tools are stated in terms of amount, number, and so on, and lend themselves to statistical treatment. Thus measurement represents a means of gathering data and is frequently used in accomplishing the second step in evaluative process (p.391).

Child (2004) also makes a distinction between 'assessment' and 'evaluation'. He reasoned that:

> A distinction needs to be drawn between the terms 'assessment' and 'evaluation'. They are often used interchangeably, but this is not an accurate or useful way of applying the terms. 'assessment is an omnibus term which includes all the processes and products which describes the nature and extent of children's learning, its degree of correspondence with the aims and objectives of teaching and its relationship with the environments which are designed to facilitate learning. 'Evaluation is what follows once assessment has been made. It involves judgements about the effectiveness and worth of something for which the assessment has already been made- usually the teaching objective. One would assess the level of performance of a child in a given topic, but these results would be used to examine the suitability of the material for that child- that is evaluation (p.361).

The distinction by Child (2004) above is acceptable and forms the basis for the arguments in favour of evaluation as the prime principle in education. Most educators and teachers have erroneously adopted evaluation as the assessment of learners via tests, quiz, and examinations without recourse to the evaluation of

the teacher and his teaching methods and objectives. This point is evident in Child's (2004) further submission:

> It is part of the process of curriculum design for teachers to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of their methods and the suitability of the content. Care is clearly needed in making these judgements because so many variables, apart from considerations of the teacher's competence, impinge on pupil performance. Nevertheless, the methods of presentation and communication, the suitability and level of content, in fact all the learning experiences offered by the teacher will be reflected to some extent in the results of any evaluative programme (p.366).

With regard to evaluation as a principle in music education, Leonhard and House (1972) expound that: 'Evaluation has a number of important uses in the music education program. They include the appraisal of progress, pupil guidance, motivation, the improvement of instruction, the maintenance of standards, and research' (pp.391-392).

Campbell and Scott-Kassner (2010) also suggest that:

> Evaluation should be a part of every music program and should be built from the start of the program, not added afterward. It is best done if the goals of the program have been clearly stated from the beginning. Music teachers who anticipate a formal (summative) evaluation of their program and teaching need to be proactive in communicating their vision and clear goals to their administrator early in the school year. The administrator would then conduct 'formative evaluation', which is a kind of ongoing series of interactions with the teacher about the program, including their teaching to help them progress.

> Ultimately, the best evaluation is 'constructive', helping the learner, administrator, teacher, or program grow (p.328).

Generally evaluation as a principle in music education investigates the appropriateness of:

- all teaching methods employed by music educators,
- the curriculum of study
- the teaching-learning environment
- the teaching-learning materials
- students' learning attitudes and habits

4. The Situation in Some Nigerian Universities Regarding Music Education Principles

Several Nigerian Universities were surveyed in the course of this research regarding music education principles and the findings are analyzed below:

4.1 Principles Applied in Instrumental Music Pedagogy

Some Departments of Music in tertiary institutions in Nigeria were found to assign musical instruments to students without recourse to any criteria or established principle. When musical instruments are assigned to students without any physiological check and adaptability test, serious difficulties arise both for the learner and the teacher. The teacher struggles to teach the given instrument to the students who also struggle with their musical instrument all through their university years.

Many university lecturers were also found to be incompetent with regard to their handling of musical instruments, and many do not even play any instruments at all, yet they have students assigned to them. There is a breach in the educational contract when lecturers issue pieces to students and instruct them to work the pieces out on their musical instruments with the

warning that the pieces should be well interpreted in the next class. This practice negates the principle of demonstrative teaching which is a standard principle in teaching musical instruments.

4.2 Principles applied in vocal/choral music

Many universities do not give voice auditioning to their students before admitting them to the choir or any vocal ensemble. Some lecturers were also found not to sing well or sing at all yet they are voice instructors to students assigned to them. Voice auditioning serves to separate all voices into respective categories of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass and when this principle is neglected; there is practically no choir. This practice is streamed as part of the orientation and induction of the first years into Departments of music so that they know their natural vocal placements right from the start. Although many students have some experience in singing by virtue of their experience in their church or secondary school choir, the university should serve as an authority in clarifying and solidifying those experiences.

4.3 Course Allocation

Problems do arise when courses are allocated to lecturers based on their familiarity with the head of the Department or some presumed expertise. Similar problems arise when a caucus allocates courses without recourse to the departmental board and established principles. Course allocation should be done at the instance of the departmental board and on the criteria of teacher specialization and competency. Obvious problems that emanate from the neglect of this principle are:

- The ‘grabbing syndrome’: some lecturers grab as many courses as they desire for cheap popularity with the

university management or the students, hoping for special allowances as a result.

- The 'overloading syndrome': some lecturers bear the burden of teaching more courses than required because some others have taken some 'choice' courses and abandoned the rest.
- The 'nonchalance syndrome': some lecturers abandon or avoid teaching completely in reaction to the unfair allocation of courses.
- Incompetence: courses are taken by lecturers who are not competent enough to handle them.

These imbroglios regarding course allocation make the entire process unproductive.

4.4 Teaching Challenged and Exceptional Students

There is no measure yet designed to solve the discrepancy emanating from the merging of exceptional and non-exceptional music students in our universities. They both exist as members of a given class in the department even when we are aware of the glaring margin between the two categories of learners. We work with the assumption that the principle behind the merger is to facilitate a 'rubbing off and on' from the exceptional ones to the challenged ones but the problem persists. Few students are advancing in their learning and the rest are struggling with theirs.

4.5 Students' Assessment and Grading

The survey from the research shows that there are no standard and stipulated criteria for judging students particularly in practical music. When there are no established criteria and principles in assessing students' performance among music educators across our universities, so many problems arise. The universal nature of

Western orchestral musical instruments demands that students playing a particular instrument should be judged with the same criteria across every other university. Trumpeters, for instance, should be judged using such measures as: embouchure, tonguing, fingering, intonation, articulation of notes, etc. This uniformity in assessment is of great value in the overall music education process particularly in the evaluation of music education in the nation.
With regard to grading, it is unprofessional to grade students based on the subjective feelings of the lecturers or their relationship with the examiners.

Some also erroneously succumb to the pressure of degrading students to lower grades with the argument that ‘’too many ‘As’ in a given result sheet spoil the result’’. This is glaringly unprofessional and is not based on any convincing principle. There is also the prevalent scare in almost all departments of music across the nation that ‘no department of music should produce first class grade students every year’. They have hinged this funny argument on the premise that music as a course of study is too demanding to yield first class grade students. Some, out of prejudice, have also argued that a department decides who to award a first class provided the individual is found worthy in character and in learning irrespective of the person’s academic excellence. This sounds true to some extent but most times this principle is applied with some undertones of bias particularly when a student is not in ‘favour’ with a lecturer or some other lecturers. All these are signs of diminishing principles in music education

4.6 Evaluation

It is shocking that music educators in Nigerian universities do not properly engage in the evaluation of the entire music education programme across the universities. Evaluation in music education

serves to appraise the status of the entire teaching /learning process in a given context. It asks pertinent questions regarding the teachers and their methods of teaching, the learners and the learning environment, the curriculum of study, etc and all these questions are geared towards the improvement of the entire music education programme. Professional educational bodies exist to review theses issues but most professional music bodies and fellowships in Nigeria are always preoccupied with various kinds of politicking and popularity contest. Even when there is a nation – wide appraisal cum accreditation exercise of all departments in the universities across the nation, the exercise is usually marred with prejudice and the evaluators seeking for some kind of 'appreciation' and 'settlement' from universities and departments under their supervision.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered as solution to diminishing and vanishing music education principles in the universities:

- Nigerian music educators should meet as a professional body to formulate principles that should drive music education across the nation.
- Departments of music throughout all universities in the nation should work towards the establishment, proper interpretation, and application of those principles highlighted in this paper
- The university management of every university should demand and monitor the application of principles, not only in music education but, in all departments and faculties of learning.

- Students should be assessed and graded based on established criteria and principles and not on any unfounded notions by the examiners.
- Students should also be informed on the tenets of all principles in music education
- All departments of music across the universities should subject to periodic evaluation of their entire music programme .
- National educational bodies like the NUC (National Universities' Commission), ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities), Federal Ministry of Education etc, should ensure that the national accreditation exercise, which comes up every five years, serves the purpose for which it is created.

6. Conclusion

This paper has examined the diminishing music education principles pervading almost all universities across the nation and the dangers they portend. When principles are not established to guide education, when principles are established and are not applied, and when established principles are applied recklessly; the given educational process is bound to fail. It is hoped that the careful application of the recommendations of this work would positively reposition music education in Nigerian Universities.

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