
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC TOWARDS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Culture is essential to the growth of any nation. A nation is classified as developed depending on the qualitative life of her citizenry, and people cannot develop outside culture, as it is a culture that moulds the people's way of life. Since the beginning of the pre-colonial era, Nigerians have been battling with westernization. The rich cultural heritage has been abandoned by many, and indigenous music happens to be a part of this cultural heritage. The focus is shifting from traditional music in developing the nation and preserving cultural heritage, and more attention is being given to borrowed culture. However, this study has made known the role of indigenous music in contributing to national development. This study has also tried to explain the fact that national development does not only occur through developing economies but by developing all areas of life.

Keywords: Indigenous music, National development, Culture and Nigeria

Introduction

According to Bikeway (2009), the growth and development of any nation depend to a large extent on the ability of its citizens to harness its naturally imbued resources as well as putting into good use other man-made features, skills, and talents. Music in Africa is a natural phenomenon. It is an essential expression of life beginning with gentle lullabies heard in infancy and continuing with the games of childhood and the songs associated with adult responsibilities. Music, however, has proved to be one of the indispensable arts cultivated by man for growth, nurture and transfer of his institution and value to future generations. The concept of indigenous music is based on societal facts and values through musical arts in Nigeria. In Nigeria, indigenous music is a complete institution, which is based on the societal phenomenon of the people it represents. Omojola (2002) has it that indigenous music in Nigeria has its origin and identity before the pre-colonial and Islamic era. Since then, it has been regularly practised and nutrition to sustain the value of society. As a result of this, loss of indigenous music of society will have a negative effect on the cultural identity and the future wellbeing of such society, which may lead to the extinction of the society's culture. Having stated the above, it is quite known that indigenous music is of great importance to national development in Nigeria. A nation that has lost her indigenous music practice has surely lost hope of building a well-developed future because to a large extent indigenous music instils good morals on individuals. An individual can also be exposed to many other positive acts in society through music, which automatically prepares such an individual to be an instrument for national development. The thrust of this paper, therefore, is to examine the values of indigenous music, factors affecting national development. The study also will look into how indigenous music can contribute to national development.

Operational Definitions

Indigenous Music

The term indigenous music is a term for the music of an original ethnic group that inhabits any geographic region along with side more recent immigrants who may be greater in number. Indigenous music is often used interchangeably with traditional music because the two words carry the same philosophies, ideas and expression. Next to the local language, traditional music is the most widely used medium of expression for all manners of occasion and at all times and period of life. For Okafor & Emeka (2005), the national music of any people is a replying point, a marshalling point for the expression of solidarity. The music of Nigerians includes many kinds of folk and popular music, some of which are known worldwide.

National Development

Naomi (1995) believes that development is usually taken to involve not only economic growth but also some notion of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other essential services all to improve the individual and collective quality of life. National development, therefore, is the change in growth and development, which includes social, cultural, religious, political and economic growth. A country can improve the social welfare of the people.

Factors Affecting National Development

Despite a series of developmental strategies put in place in Nigeria, and sometimes with good intentions, all attempts to generate meaningful development has proved futile. A lot of factors have combined to fetter the nation's development, these include:

Lack of good governance

Lack of good governance militates against national development. Where there is no good governance, development becomes a mirage. This is as a result of bad leadership in the country. Most of the leaders in the country have no sense of commitment to development. No nation's development is complete if the welfare of the inhabitants is neglected.

High level of illiteracy

Education is regarded as the key to nation-building, but as it stands in Nigeria today, education is not receiving the expected attention most especially in the areas of performing and creative arts which music is among. For the proper implementation of the education policy, no aspect of its objective should be neglected.

Cultural decadence

Culture constitutes the totality of customs, rituals, norms, and values that regulate people's pattern of life. Any nation that respects her culture normally preserves, promotes and keeps it alive through social activities. When there is cultural decadence there would be disarray in the society. This can also affect national development.

Corruption and indiscipline

This is another barrier to national development. Mimiko (1997) is of the view that the Nigeria state is corrupt, managed by corrupt leaders who have made the state an instrument of capital accumulation, rather than using it to protect the interest of the citizenry. A good plan supervised by a thoroughly corrupt state can hardly yield a fruitful result.

Values of Indigenous Music

According to Dejo & Illori (2003), the study of indigenous music would allow for cultural continuity and alignment in an individual. An individual is what he is but the virtue of his or her background (culture). The values of indigenous music can be summarized below:

- The study of African music will make students have proper orientation and perspective to the overall culture of their land since it is an emblem and carrier of their cultural practices.
- Indigenous music helps cultivate and understand the music of the land thereby propagates it in its original form.
- It develops traditional music to the standard of the music of other civilized and developed societies.
- It enables other cultures of the world to know and appreciate the beauty of Nigerian music in all its ramifications.
- It shows that black people are naturally endowed with very rich musical tradition and also enable the future generation of the Nigerian society to continue with good legacies of oral inheritance.

Indigenous Music and National Development

According to Oluge (1987), the need to integrate cultural activities and values in all spheres of life has been very visible in the post-independence development of Nigeria. However, the clash between westernization and traditional values was unavoidable. The traditional cultures have been avoided and left to the local initiatives. In the cause of revolutionary changes, western cultures have inherited the status of traditional practices. Indigenous music has very much influenced development by enabling fast communication and creation of interval (literature, music, etc.) markets. Indigenous music has also created the affirmation of Nigerian ethnic cultural identity. On the political sphere, many political aspirants have found it important to use indigenous music as the medium for carrying their slogan and communicate to the entire nation. The lyric carries the particular message of common Nigeria, as well as the politicians by which the electorate would know what their candidate would offer before casting their vote. Indigenous music is said to be the only avenue to reach everybody both in rural and urban areas. Music is one of the basic social services that need adequate consideration. No nation's social life is worth living without music. It sensitizes, entertains, communicates, criticizes, moulds character, heals, and others.

Music is also an ardent social mobilizer. It awakens the society on the goings of the event in the country. Okafor (2005) states that social mobilization program has several dimensions-political dimension, social dimension, and economic dimension. Music especially

indigenous music has an answer to whichever direction the mobilization takes in Nigeria; little or no attention has been given to Nigeria's indigenous music. Even at the various academic institution levels, the emphasis is always given to western world cultural music and that of indigenous Africa (Nigeria) music is often left un-emphasized.

Conclusion

Music promotes culture. Music performed by every society carries the socio-cultural nuances and message of society. It is said that development is a function of culture because people cannot be developed outside their experiences and cultural ethics. Through cultural exhibitions which music is part of, the nation achieves economic and social growth. This encourages tourism, inter-ethnic relationship and provides an avenue for foreign exchange. Any nation that turns her back on the indigenous music of her people is jeopardizing her economy. It implies that the destruction of culture means retardation and threat to the nation's growth.

Recommendation

1. The federal government needs to be aware that it is not only through developing economies that development could come to Nigeria and that Nigeria could be fast grown if there is a critical intervention in traditional cultural identity (music).
2. Nigerian language should not be discouraged in teaching indigenous music especially in the primary and secondary level of education.
3. The government should supply adequate facilities, and involve sports in various technical areas who would undertake the training of music students in school.

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