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**SOCIO-STRATIFICATION OF MUSIC EDUCATION; UNDERSTANDING THE  
EFFECTS ON MUSIC EDUCATORS AND STRATEGIES FOR BALANCE AT LOCAL  
EDUCATION AUTHORITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ABUJA**

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**SOCIO-STRATIFICATION OF MUSIC EDUCATION; UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS ON MUSIC EDUCATORS AND STRATEGIES FOR BALANCE AT LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ABUJA**

**OGUNLEYE, BISOLA ADUKE**

**Abstract**

Music education in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria involves various arts categories, including fine and applied arts, theatre, and music. This research sheds light on the socio-cultural dynamics of music education in Local Education Authority (LEA) Primary schools, emphasizing the interplay between educational material, teaching practices, and societal norms. In this study, researchers focused on LEA Primary schools and Government Junior in Abuja as a case study to explore the social cultural background of the pupils and students and to examine the interest and participation of pupils in the music class in comparing the social class they belong and to view the progress of the teacher being influenced by the different social class of pupils in their school with the domination of Muslim pupils in some of the LEA Primary Schools and Government Junior schools in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. This study finds the following key points; 1. Educational Material Analysis 2. Quantitative content analysis was conducted to index the educational material. 3. Qualitative critical content analysis was used to triangulate the results. The three integrated subjects in cultural and creative arts subject (fine art, theatre art, and music) were identified in the material. In the Educators' Interviews: The researcher conducted a qualitative interview survey with CCA teachers. The results corresponded to the educational material, demonstrating that socio-cultural differences influence both content and practice of music educators in the music classes in LEA Primary schools and Government Junior secondary schools in Abuja region. Music themes constituted in the Primary curriculum are practically oriented while at the junior secondary level there are theoretical pedagogies and practical. More so, with inclusion of other topics from social studies, citizenship and security education which talks about the ethics and moral that will make them fit for the community at large, cultural extensions were observed, reflecting the structure of the music education in most of the schools situated among the working class and lower middle-class categories of Nigerians in Abuja.

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**Introduction**

Music Education at the lower educational level in Nigeria is a vital aspect of a well-rounded education that cut across all other subjects. It's often subject to socio-stratification, where access and quality vary greatly depending on socio-economy status. This article explores the effects of

socio-stratification on music educators and proposes strategies to address the imbalance at the Local Education Authority Primary Schools and Junior Secondary Schools in Abuja.

### **NIGERIA SOCIO CLASSES**

Nigeria social class system can be analyzed based on consumption and lifestyle. I would say it is no different to social stratification elsewhere in the world. From a sociological perspective there are five main types of social classification.

#### **The under-class**

They are the kind of people who live in slums with very poor hygiene. They make a living through begging, trading on petty things in the market, or doing odd or menial jobs such as wheelbarrow pushing or hawking. People in this group include hawkers, small-scale traders and assistants. They do live in crowded rental apartments with poor hygiene and have consequently low consumption indices. The children attend public schools with worn out uniform, broken sandals, and little or no book with irregularity in their attendance. They have no interest or desire for education. They are largely immigrants who come from other states within Nigeria to the large cities like Lagos, Abuja or Port-Harcourt in search of greener pastures. They often do not have any level of education and hence rely on their own industry and hustle to make a better life for themselves.

Children from this set of people are not enrolled in LEA schools in Abuja.



#### **The working class**

The poor barely make enough to hire a befitting accommodation, although they might be sharing with others (often termed face-me-I-face-you). Their children attend public schools (state-owned schools) or sub-par private schools (glorified public schools). They can feed themselves 1 or 2 meals a day, although might not be very nutritious or healthy. There are no international income metrics to define this group but in Nigeria economics, these group earns from the minimum wage benchmark of NGN 30,000 (\$25) till the lower benchmark of the middle class. The group is described as people who are engaged in work but lack financial security. Most members of the working class are blue-collar workers. This group lived in small-sized rental homes, but unlike the underclass, they lived in their own apartments and have higher level of general hygiene (Metz, 1991).

A lot of their earnings go for transport, feeding, accommodation and have very little income for leisure. You regard them as just getting by. Usually they have very limited education, up to secondary school level. The set of children found in this category constitute the 46.8 per cent of the pupils in LEA schools in Abuja.



The middle class: - Since there is disparity between income of this categories of people at this socio class in Nigeria, they are therefore grouped into two to have a better picture of the pupils and students from the middle class of Abuja community.

### **The lower-middle class**

The lower middle class in Nigeria earns between \$0.7 (about ₦550) and \$2 (about ₦1,500) daily, according to the African Development Bank. This translates to approximately ₦16,000 monthly for the lower band and ₦45,000 for the upper band

These are set of people with lifestyle just above the working class but could have links to the working class. These are teachers, civil servant, petite-bourgeoisie (small business owners). They live in slightly bigger houses; some can afford to send their kids to slightly better private schools than the working class while some send theirs to LEA Pry schools. Their children go to university but usually Federal Government University. Few of them have a bit of money for leisure like going to cinema, eating out, and very occasionally travel abroad. 26 percent of the pupils in LEA schools in Abuja are from this socio class.

### **The upper middle-class**

The upper middle class in Nigeria earns between \$4 (about ₦5,000) and \$20 (about ₦15,000) daily, according to the African Development Bank. This translates to approximately ₦120,000 monthly for the lower band and ₦350,000 for the upper band. While the upper range of earnings may be unattainable for most people, but this analysis still represents a significant segment of the middle class set of people living in Abuja.

Upper middle-class residents in Abuja enjoy pleasant living conditions due to the good facilities available in certain residential estates. Their consumption patterns include purchasing cars, acquiring new homes, investing in appliances, taking vacations, accessing quality healthcare, and providing education for their families. The economic health of a nation is often measured by the well-being of its middle class. When the middle class thrives, it drives economic productivity. However, inadequate attention to the middle class can hinder economic planning and governance. Economic regimes that focus solely on the extremes (the rich and the poor) often neglect this critical mass.

A strong middle class contributes to stability in liberal democratic societies and fuels economic activities across various sectors.

Abuja boasts exclusive communities tailored for the upper middle class. For example, River Park offers amenities such as malls, schools, hospitals, and more, catering to residents from various African countries. The upper middle class in Abuja represents a dynamic group of individuals who contribute significantly to the economy, aspire to improve their quality of life, and seek stability



for themselves and their families. Their impact extends beyond financial transactions, shaping the fabric of society and influencing economic policies and development. The average of pupils from this socio class is just 16.6 percent. Most of them cross to LEA through transfer from private school which seems better than the public schools.

The challenge in Nigeria today is that this class of people are almost wiped out inadvertently. We now have predominantly rich and impoverished people. The rich are those taking advantage of the system. While the poor have no access to the benefits of the system.

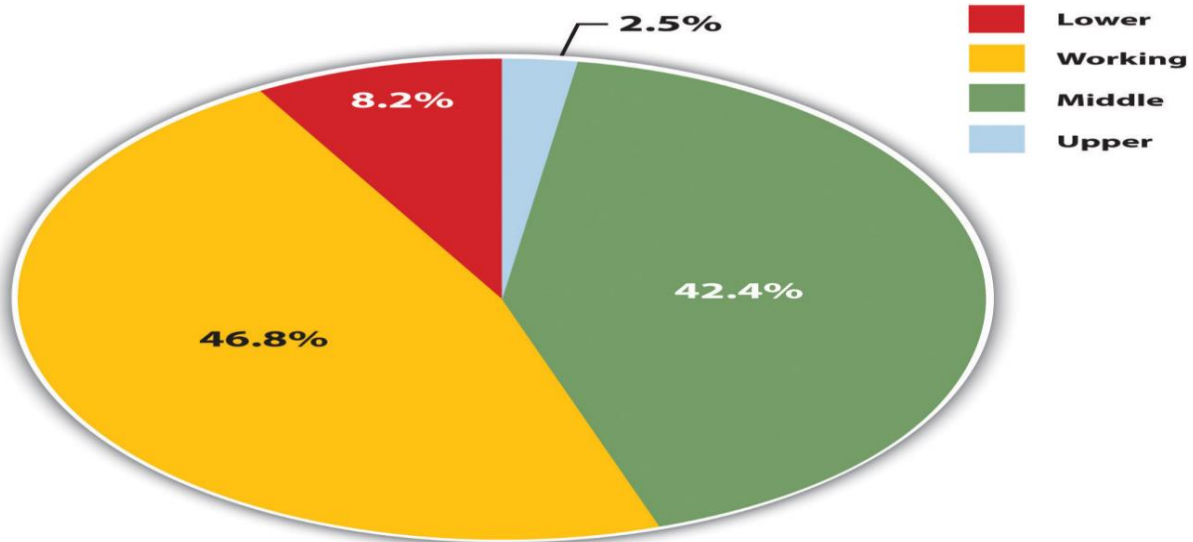
The middle class, which in other liberal democracies are the ones who drive production and consumption, they are vanishing in the social circle. A survey in 2022 by the African Development Bank shows that the middle class makes up about 23 per cent of the population in Nigeria then. As of late 2023, the record from the African Development Bank shows 17.5 percent.

The middle class in Nigeria are still earning the same income, but the purchasing power is completely gone. House rent and transportation in Abuja takes about 40% of the income of most people in this category.

### **The upper class**

This set of people are also known as the Elites, these group have attribution to money and power and zero interest in educational status. In simple terms, they are composed of individuals who are rich and powerful. In Nigeria, like other countries, this power is most certainly political affluence, and their wealth are often generational. They have luxurious lifestyles and an absurd amount of gathered wealth, their homes are often mansions. They are usually the top 1–5% of the population of a country and this is certainly true in Nigeria (Metz, 1991). Children from this category constitute 2.5 percent of the LEA Pry schools and GJS schools in Abuja. The categories are the house maid given priviledges by their employer to have little education. Some are well taking care of in terms of food and clothing while some appeared unkept.

The graph showing the percentage of pupils from the different social classification attending Local Education Authority Primary Schools and Government Junior secondary schools in Abuja.



This graph represents the ratio of pupils from different socio classes in Abuja. With a clear understanding of the place of a music art educator in the content and practice of art music in the classroom to suit the different environments.



### Socio-Stratification of Music education

Research has consistently shown that music education is inequitably distributed, favouring students from higher socio-economic backgrounds (Hillary, 2003; Robinson, 2012). This disparity is attributed to factors such as:

- Limited resources and funding in lower-income schools (Hillary, 2003)

- Lack of qualified music teachers in disadvantaged areas (Robinson, 2012)
- Cultural and socio-economic barriers to music participation (Bourdieu,1986)

### **Use of music in Social inequality**

Music, movies, and novels are powerful tools that artists use to address most of the issues affecting their societies and attract attention of policymakers. The crafted messages become new ideas for overcoming the challenges many citizens experience in their lives. The first song for this analysis is “Same Love” by Macklemore & Ryan Lewis. These two artists try to convince the global society to accept the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community by promoting equality (Darrah, 2020). They also encourage people to fight in order to promote fairness for all. The second one is a famous song called “One Love” by Bob Marley. This musician uses it to call for global unity, love, and peace (Darrah, 2020). He appears to be unhappy with all forms of inequality since they make it impossible for more individuals to pursue their economic goals in life. (Autumn 2009).

In the 34th World Conference of the International Society for Music Education (ISME), in August 2020, there emerged emphatically “the central role of western art music (WAM) in the teaching of theoretical knowledge of music” (Wilkinson, 2020, p.624). More so, scholars have highlighted the broad reflection of music on the domestic and western music categories included in the Curriculum (Antonelli, 2020; Silva Queiroz and Medeiros de Pereira, 2020; Su and Luo, 2020), the educational material (Nugent, 2020; Ruippo and Sallinen, 2020) and the teaching practices (Oliveira, Paula, Martinez and Pederiva, 2020; McCabe, 2020). In addition, socio-cultural correlation regarding the content of school’s music lesson were underlined (Arenas and Barros, 2020; Cantero and Berrocal, 2020; Carriage, 2020; De Villiers, 2020; Kran, 2020; Lorenzo De Reizabal, 2020).

Music, Fine and Applied arts, and Drama as an integrated subject called Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) in the Nigerian educational system is a core subject in schools since its inception in 2007, and as such, compulsory for all the students from primary to junior secondary level. Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) was introduced as a subject in place of Music, Fine and Applied Arts and Drama which before now were distinct subjects studied separately in schools.

The curriculum provided give a total experience which all learners must be exposed to, the contents, performance objectives, and activities for both teachers and learners with the evaluation guide. Cultural and creative arts (CCA), being an integrated subject, its teachers need to be acquainted on how best to handle each aspect in order to enhance the students’ learning. But still



the curricular goals of the four subjects integrated (fine art, music, drama and dance) in cultural and creative arts has to be established individually and collectively. The teacher to teach cultural and creative art is expected to have basic knowledge, skills and confidence to teach music, visual arts, dance and drama, but the fact that many of teachers taking the subject (CCA) in LEA schools and Government secondary schools have not been adequately trained in any or one of these arts subjects, the aims and objectives of the integrated subjects have been forfeited since invention. The unavailability of trained teachers on the subject to drive the purpose to a designated goal has been the challenge of music scholars who are working with the local education authority. With the method of termly joint examination that is being introduced at the secondary level reveals the dexterity at which the subject is being taught in various schools across Abuja.

Ajewole's findings revealed the two points in these perspectives. Firstly, he observed that 'the human physical and material resources for CCA education were grossly inadequate' the instrumental instructions for teaching various aspect of the subject are not emphasized (Ajewole 2003). As a result, many primary schools across a variety of countries have less than adequate music and other arts instructional materials. Some of the problems identified include; teachers' perception of low confidence and competence, lack of resources, time and priority to implement an effective music and arts programs resulting in the marginalization of music education and cultural programs in schools.

### **Theoretical Framework**

According to Geertz (1973), culture is "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life." The function of culture is to impose meaning on the world and make it understandable to the learners in the teaching and learning process. This is how this theory could best contribute to the teaching and learning process. This theoretical framework enables learners to express their ability musically in an artistic symbolic form by means of which they can create, innovate, produce, and exhibit meanings through their skills and music creations, which add to the essence of the teaching and learning process.

Creativity should be a top priority in education because of its multifaceted benefits. Embracing creativity helps learners discover their unique talents, develop self-awareness, and foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Collaborative ventures foster teamwork and cultivate a

lifelong passion for learning, equipping learners for a fast-paced world. Additionally, creativity promotes empathy, cultural appreciation, and resilience, encourages involvement, and reveals hidden talents. By embracing failure as a means to learn and grow, education empowers individuals to become creative change agents in society. Ken Robinson (2015)

According to Small (1998) 'music means to participate', in any capacity, during a performance, whether or not by way of performing", which teachers could use as their main theoretical framework in the teaching of music. Small is aware of music as action, not only as an item or a thing. "Musicking" could be a communal and purposeful act. As such, it presents humans with a way to explore, affirm, and celebrate their identities, including artistic, musical, and cultural identities. Small also contends that "music" should also be a verb (which is a very effective pedagogical approach to teaching and learning of music) and not only a noun, and thus could be very relevant to the performance standards of any effective music curriculum.

### **Music in cultural and creative arts curriculum**

Music plays a significant role in cultural and creative music arts education and it's essence in the integrated courses can be seen in different ways:

**1. Cultural Understanding and Appreciation:** Music exists distinctively in every culture and serves as a basic expression of human experience. By incorporating music into the curriculum, learners can gain a deeper understanding of other times, places, cultures, and contexts.

Music exposes the pupils to various musical traditions and styles that allow them to appreciate cultural diversity and recognize the significance of music as a universal language.

**2. Holistic Development:** The Music and Arts curriculum contributes to learners' complete development. It allows them to learn about different cultures and express their creativity while contributing to their holistic growth. It is the basics to creative and artistic expression that provides valuable opportunities for skill development, enjoyment, and emotional expression. Integrating music and art allows these disciplines to support each other, fostering critical thinking, visual communication, and an understanding of colors, shapes, and sounds.

**3. Arts Integration Benefits:** The arts-integrated teaching taps into children's natural desire for active learning through the senses. By singing, dancing, imagining, and connecting their bodies and minds, children learn more deeply and meaningfully, especially in subjects like reading, math, and science. The arts foster the ability to recognized the significance of culture. When actively

participating in an integrated arts program it's provides lifelong benefits for learners, emphasizing hands-on experiences and meaningful engagement with the material.

Music in cultural and creative arts education enhances learners' ability to communicate, fosters multicultural literacy, and contributes to their overall development. By integrating music into the curriculum, educators create a richer and more engaging learning experience for pupils at all levels. Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) curriculum provides learners with a sound and relevant education in the arts and music that enables learners to appreciate their identity as Nigerian individuals and navigate the complexities of the 21st century through creative expressions and critical perception. With music in CCA, it helps learners to develop important skills that are transferable to other areas of their lives, such as solving problems, collaborating, and communicating, thus, providing learners with opportunities to explore their creativity and artistry and expressing themselves in new ways. The curriculum is designed with a range of activities that helps learners develop their skills in various areas of the arts, drama and music. It also exposes learners to different cultures and works from different time periods and geographic regions, which can help them develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. More, so, music arts education can help learners develop empathy and understanding for others who have different backgrounds or experiences.

Moreover, CCA curriculum promote lifelong learning and engagement by providing learners with a foundation of explorative learning of creative interests throughout their lives. This can lead to a greater appreciation of the arts that builds personal fulfillment for individuals engaging with the arts over time.

### **Strategies for balance at the Local Education Authority Primary Schools and Junior Secondary Schools in Abuja.**

To address the imbalance, and couching the effects on the music educators in these schools, this study considered the following strategies;

- Teachers training and support programs focusing on culturally responsive teaching and diverse music pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995) The Local Education Authority Board and Universal Basic Education Board to organized and sponsor the training. And this could be an annual event to reduce the effects on the music educators in their schools across Abuja.

- Community partnerships and outreach initiatives to engage underrepresented students (Hillary, 2003) Getting the Parent, Teachers Association (PTA) of the schools involved in the orientation of the benefits of music education to disabuse their wrong on the study of music as most of them have been misled through religious belief.
- Inclusive music curriculum development, incorporating diverse musical styles and cultures (Bourdieu, 1986) With the different ethnics' groups and culture that reside in Abuja, the inclusion of most of the musical styles of the different tribes of Abuja into the curriculum for all the music educators will drastically reduced the socio stratification of pupils and student participation in the music classroom.

### **Conclusion**

When the integrate arts subject (Fine art, drama and music) becomes effective across the curriculum, children tends to learn the fundamentals of math, language arts, and science courses that will prepare them for success in their academics, and as well for a life of engagement in the arts and every other related course. Socio-stratification of music education has a significant effect on the music educators and pupils of LEA Pry schools and students of JSS in Abuja.

By understanding these effects and implementing the above-mentioned strategies for balance, we can work towards having most equitable music education for all

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