**TOWARDS MUSIC TEACHERS COMPETENCE ON STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: FRAMEWORKS FOR ASSESSING MUSIC TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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**Abstract**

In Nigeria, there is a growing interest in assessing music teacher competence. This is prompted by demand for quality assurance and for greater recognition of the music teaching profession. Various assessment instruments have been developed in the western world to assess music teachers at various stages in their professional careers in the context of selection, certification, and professional development. There is a need for a framework design of this type to assess music teaching and learning in Nigeria. This paper developed three frameworks for assessing music teaching and learning in Nigeria. It discusses advantages of these frameworks when using it to set up interpretive arguments. This design was derived from Bloom’s taxonomy of domains, Dunkin and Biddle’s theory of classroom teaching and learning and Westera’s competency model. It is fashioned for the peculiarity of music to be used as an instrument on which assessor’s judgement will be based for an improved music teachers’ performance. It gives a spread sheet of its application in practice in classroom assessment. It concludes that in developing domain of competence, the assessment content should be relevant and representative for the teaching profession. The paper recommends that music education administrators and supervisors should use these frameworks for assessing music teacher and music teaching programme periodically. It is believed that the framework will serve its purpose for valuable judgements.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Music teacher, Competence, Music teachers’ competence

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Introduction

Teacher's competence and its assessment have been of serious concern in the developed countries. This is in response to public pressure from stakeholders upon schools to better and more effectively educate students. Teacher’s competency enhances a teacher’s ability to create an environment that is fair, understanding, and accepting of diverse students, ideas, experiences, and backgrounds. Judging from the role that teacher plays in the lives of the students and the society as a whole, it is believed that if the teacher impact wrong information or knowledge to the students, it could affect generations yet unborn. Moreover, teacher’s incompetence could result in decreased enrolment and equally reduce the quality of student’s academic achievement. Hence, the need to periodically assess the competence and performance of a teacher, Music teacher competence has a lot of influence on the learner because the teacher’s competence of the subject matter is a pre-requisite for effective teaching. Sahan (2009) in his study on teacher competence and students achievement emphasized that the basic areas of teacher competenceinclude mastery of subject matter, understanding of human nature, interest in continued professional improvement and knowledge of availability to apply the principles of teaching.

In the Netherlands, as well as in other countries, teacher assessment is receiving greater attention because of the increased scope for policy-making by schools, one of the consequences of which is to make differentiation of position and pay possible (Verloop, 1999; Straetmans and Sanders, 2001). In addition, a law adopted in the Netherlands provides that professionals in education must satisfy competence requirements. The Dutch foundation for professional teaching competence (SBL, 2003) formulated requirements for seven domains of competence that are considered crucial for beginning teachers. These identified domains require periodic assessment for their relevance. The focus for developing assessment instruments is on obtaining the best possible evidence of competence of teachers. This should depend on the degree to which the complete process of competent performance is represented, i.e. teacher decisions, teacher actions and student actions. Finally, a set of tasks and task situations should be chosen which can be considered representative, both quantitatively and qualitatively for the domain of competence under study.

Following the model of competent performance, criteria should start with desirable learning activities and outcomes among students, from which acceptable teacher actions and decisions can be derived. Increasingly, domains of competence are being stated in this way, not favouring a certain line of action but describing broad categories of activities and developing desirable learning activities. In addition, to distinguish levels of desirable performance, systematic comparisons between novices and experts within a profession can be made. Several different elements of teaching and learning have been emphasised throughout the history of evaluating teachers: personality traits which help to make a successful teacher; essential knowledge elements involving subject matter content, teacher thinking within a discipline; forms of teacher behaviour which contribute to learning performance; practical knowledge and subjective theories of teachers determining teachers´ actions in specific teaching situations, and teaching as promoting powerful learning activities among learners. All separate elements of teaching cover some aspects of teacher competence, but none of them fully describe or explain the variables for assessing music teaching and learning. Based on reviews of literature there is no adequate sound and broad-based scientific framework of what constitutes assessment of competent music teaching in Nigeria. Therefore a unified comprehensive concept of music classroom teaching is needed to consider all the different elements that is required in assessing music teaching and learning towards an improved teacher competence.

This paper presents frameworks that can form the basis for valid assessments in music teaching and learning in Nigeria. According to Odunuga (2016), such framework can be used to set up interpretive arguments to substantiate judgements on teacher competence. Two limitations have prevented this type of research in music education from being widely conducted and accepted. These are: (1) the belief by many music educators that the most important results of music education are affective and therefore cannot be measured, and (2) the profession's fundamental lack of agreement on what should be taught. But lately, music researchers have agreed on what to teach and have also come to terms that music is not only affective, but cognitive and psychomotor driven, hence, the conduct of this research.

The first part of the paper is devoted to developing the frameworks. The second describes how the frameworks can help develop assessment domains in music: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. If assessors are able to interpret assessment results in terms of the postulated processes of the framework, the interpretive argument is supported. For example, assessors judging the quality of instruction may interpret student results in the way teachers make decisions when giving instruction, how they act, and what the consequences are for students in a specific classroom environment. An advantage of the framework is that varying or changing views on teaching do not affect its structure.

**Concept of Competence**

Concept of competence, as explained by Westera (2001), is strongly associated with the ability to master complex situations, and goes beyond the levels of knowledge and skills to include an explanation of how knowledge and skills are applied in an effective way. (Passos, 2009). There are two distinct meanings of competence in education. From a theoretical point of view, competence is understood as a cognitive structure that facilitates specified behaviors. From an operational point of view, competence seems to cover a broad range of higher- order skills and behaviors that represent the ability to deal with complex, unpredictable situations. This operational definition includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, metacognition and strategic thinking, and presupposes conscious and intentional decision making (Westera, 2001).

**Measuring Music Teachers Competencies**

Music teacher competence can be divided into various categories. They are professional, cognitive, affective, psychomotor and pedagogical. In developing music teacher assessment instruments there is a need to work towards a shared view of competent teaching and representatives of the profession. The resultant view of this interaction may be a hybrid of all kinds of views of teaching which can be adopted in the formulation of frameworks of competent performance which must apply to large groups of teachers or a specific view for organisations that work according to a specific mission. The basis of such assessment must contain an overview of aspects of competence, the situations in which they must be demonstrated, and the desired degree of mastery. In assessing music teachers, the observer or the assessor must be trained in music because music is a subject that is domiciled with three domains of learning- the cognitive, affective and the psychomotor.

Assessing the music teacher with a general measuring stick of a competent teacher may not fully capture the effectiveness and the competency level of the music teacher. The general yardstick involves a teacher using variety of methods, relating objectives to student interests and needs, the teacher structures student behavior, the teacher monitors time on-task of students, and the teacher uses pupil ideas. These competencies, when present in a music teacher, have been shown to positively change student attitude, attentiveness but not music achievement and performance. Taebel (1990) corroborated this when he states that assessing music teachers without consideration of the uniqueness of the subject is not fair. He remarks that "...it is important that music teachers be fairly evaluated in a way that is sensitive to the unique features of music teaching and learning". He argues rather convincingly that the common perspective on teaching (the explicit instruction model) relies on criteria that are improper for music teaching. He suggests the following improvements in current evaluation systems in order to make them more fair to music teachers: the classroom observation instrument should be as objective as possible, the manual for observers should include examples of music teaching, observer training should include discussion and observation of music classes, and consideration for the problems inherent in using the observation tool in a music performance class, the observation instrument should list behaviors that are important in evaluating a music teacher's classroom performance, such as demonstration, accuracy of error detection and appropriateness of the feedback.

Music performance responses should be coded separately from behavioral or verbal responses, if music teacher's scores are considerably different from the norm, then separate norms should be adopted to allow music teachers to be compared only with each other, and professional development activities specific to the teacher's needs should arise from the evaluation. Ajibulu (1999) defines a competent music teacher as being characterized by good personal qualities, musical competencies and professional qualities. She further states that music teachers must be able to perform with musical understanding and technical proficiency. Teachers must be capable of playing accompaniments, be able to sing, conduct, compose as well as supervise and evaluate the performance of others. This shows that a music teacher's competence is characterized with performance of adequate musical skills with matching pedagogical skills.

To demarcate domains of competence, selecting what is characteristic of adequate professional functioning and what is critical to functioning is necessary. Starting from this framework of competence, the important questions are: What is music teachers expected to demonstrate and to what degree? What student achievement can be expected from teacher activities? Through which actions and decision-making processes might teachers be able to contribute to students’ achievements? In view of these three questions three frameworks was framed to cater for the teachers, the classroom and the entire music teaching and learning process.

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study was premised on three models that have to do with learning domains, teaching and competence. This is because the study focuses on music teacher and music student academic achievement and music as a subject involves all the domains of learning. The models are: Blooms taxonomy of learning, Mitzel’s model of teaching as presented by Dunkin and Biddle (1974), and Westera model (1975).

**Fig. 1. Music Teachers Competence Framework**

(Odunuga, 2015)

This framework presented is intended to give an understanding of the variables associated with music teachers’ competence. In measuring music teacher competences, musical cognitive competence, affective competence, psychomotor and pedagogical competence as listed in the diagram above should be the main focus. The cognitive competence involves teacher’s knowledge of music as a subject matter. This includes knowledge of music theory, music concepts like rhythm, melody, harmony and music writing. Ability to create appropriate and original music is also part of cognitive competence. The teacher should also be equipped with high level of musical understanding, analysis and interpretation of music notations. Affective competence involves right attitude and value towards music. This competence helps the teacher in music appreciation and achieving effective listening skills. It reflects in the music teachers’ motor reactions, number of recognised sound characteristics and types of recognised sound characteristics. It can also be measured through sustained musical memory, understanding and response to different period and typologies in music.

Psychomotor competence involves performing skills of the music teacher. This is divided into: Singing, dancing and playing musical instruments. Singing competence is inherent in the teachers’ display of tonal stability, expressive quality, rhythmic accuracy, melodic accuracy, good articulation and motor reaction. Competence in playing either Western or African musical instruments involves melodic accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tone clarity and expressive quality. Dancing include appropriateness of the dance, originality, good coordination, types and variety of moves.

Pedagogic competence is the ability to impart musical knowledge in an effective way on the students. These involve good teaching methods, clarity of voice, good board writing, comportment and reinforcement of students’ responses. The teacher must also be equipped with assessment techniques and general musicianship. Professional competence is the capability to perform the duties of one’s profession generally, or to perform a particular professional task, with skill of an acceptable quality. Music professional competencies are those things that are expected of a music teacher which are developmental, impermanent and context dependent. Music teacher professional competencies involve discipline, good dressing, cordial relationship with the students and being a good role model. It also include knowledge of music teaching techniques, engaging students with music in a meaningful way, implementing the music curriculum effectively, assessing students’ abilities in the various aspects of music; and explaining and demonstrating musical concepts” (Ballantyne, 2006: 41).

**Table 1 : MUSIC TEACHER COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT SHEET (MTCAS)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cognitive Competencies** | **Very Adequate (3)** | **Adequate(2)** | **Inadequate(1)** | **Very Inadequate(0)** | **Score** |
| (i) Music knowledge |  |  |  |  |  |
| (ii) Music writing |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iii) Music reading |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iv)Music creating (composition) (a)Originality |  |  |  |  |  |
| (b) Appropriateness |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Ctiv Affective Competencies** |  |  |  |  |  |
| (i) Motor reactions |  |  |  |  |  |
| (ii) Music listening |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iii) Number of recognized sound characteristics |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iv) Types of recognized sound characteristics |  |  |  |  |  |
| (v) Identification of periods and typologies in music |  |  |  |  |  |
| (vi) Musical memory |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Psychomotor Competencies** (Performing Skills) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Singing** |  |  |  |  |  |
| (i) Tonal stability |  |  |  |  |  |
| (ii) Expressive quality |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iii) Rhythm accuracy |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iv) Articulation |  |  |  |  |  |
| (v) Motor reaction |  |  |  |  |  |
| (vi) Melody accuracy |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Playing Musical Instrument** (Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, Strings) |  |  |  |  |  |
| (i) Melody accuracy |  |  |  |  |  |
| (ii) Rhythm accuracy |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iii) Clear articulation |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iv) Tone clarity |  |  |  |  |  |
| (v) Expressive quality |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Dancing** |  |  |  |  |  |
| (i) Appropriateness |  |  |  |  |  |
| (ii) Coordination |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iii) Types of moves |  |  |  |  |  |
| (iv) Coordination of moves |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Pedagogic Competence** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lesson Plan |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teaching procedures |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mastery of subject matter |  |  |  |  |  |
| Good teaching methods |  |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional materials (Variety) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Class Management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Clarity of voice |  |  |  |  |  |
| Good board writing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Students' participation and involvement |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reinforcement of students’ responses |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment techniques |  |  |  |  |  |
| General comportment |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Professional competence** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cordial relationship with staff |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cordial relationship with students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Discipline |  |  |  |  |  |
| Good dressing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Good organization |  |  |  |  |  |
| Obedience to authority |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Score** |  |  |  |  |  |

This assessment sheet is a list of observable and measurable expected competencies expected of a music teacher. It is designed as an instrument for periodic assessment of music teaching for serving teachers in the basic classes. It is meant to assess the teachers quantitatively for professional development biennially. The forty-four (44) item instrument gives a total of one hundred and thirty-two (132) mark score of which a competent teacher can conveniently score one hundred marks (100). An average score that is lower than sixty (60) means that such a music teacher lacks adequate competence. This can be remedied by an in-service training. These competencies can be assessed using three basic tools; observation techniques, interview techniques which gather evaluations of the music program from students and classroom teachers, and in-depth conferencing with the music teacher.

**Music Teachers’ Competence and Students’ Achievement**

Music teaching and learning has suffered unfortunate situations in Nigerian basic schools for decades. The reason for this according to Ekwueme (2009) is the scarcity of candidates for music teaching profession due to poor regard and poor attitude toward music in the society. Much more is the inadequate periodic assessment of music teachers due to lack of relevant assessment instruments. Nwakego (2006) in her study of competencies needed for effective teaching of music in the basic schools identified thirty six (36) items of competencies and divided them into seven clusters considered to be crucial for effective music teaching. These clusters include teachers’ personality, knowledge of subject matter, teaching approach, special skills, class management, resources management and evaluation technique. The result of the study showed that the music teachers who made up the sample for this study considered understanding the subject matter and using method dependent on enjoyment as highest important competence for effective teaching of music. Effective music teaching therefore can be attained by matching musical opportunities and challenges to the developing competencies of the teachers in a way that keep the students engaged.

The competence of teachers is manifested in what teachers and students do in the classroom. These depend to some extent on the competencies they bring to the teaching and learning process. In Huitt's (1995) model, these are labeled Input variables. The subcategory of teacher characteristics includes specific competencies which include such variables as cognitive, affective, psychomotor and pedagogical. These are further broken down to knowledge and understanding of music, attitude and interest in music, ability to play musical instrument and ability to teach music. Others are values and beliefs; knowledge of students and the teaching/learning process; thinking, communication and performance skills; and personality. If a teacher is competent to the extent that he can impart knowledge or skills, then that teacher is more likely to use the knowledge and skills he has and the students are more likely to learn.

A second subcategory of input is student characteristics. This includes all of the descriptions of students that might have an influence on the teaching/learning process and student outcome. Study habits, learning style, age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, motivation and moral, socio-emotional, cognitive, and character development, all become important in the relationship of classroom processes and behavior and school achievement. Though we do not initially modify the student characteristics that each student brings to the classroom, the teacher can arrange the teaching and learning process and modify each student's experience. This results in different outcomes, which in turn becomes the input for the next learning cycle.

The second framework for assessing music teaching and learning through the listed variables reflects these. This framework states that music teaching competence is reflected in the consequences of teachers’ actions, the most important being students’ learning activities and academic achievement. The component ‘actions’ refer to professional activities that foster student learning or other consequences.

**Fig. 3. Music Classroom Teaching and Learning Framework**

**Classroom context**

*Learning environment (Music Studio)*

*Listening room*

*Availability of musical Instrument*

*(Western /African)*

*Availability of musical equipments*

**Learner Musical Properties**

*Musical Background of Learners*

*Membership of Musical Groups*

*Possession of Musical Instruments*

**Learner Social Status**

*Family Background*

*Type of Parenthood*

*Religion*

*Age*

*Sex*

**Teachers’ Musical Properties**

*Teachers Qualification*

*Appropriateness of Music Training*

*Music Cognitive Teaching Behaviors*

*Music Affective Teaching Behaviors*

*Music Psychomotor Teaching Behaviors*

*Membership of Musical Groups*

*Music Teaching Experience*

*Possession of Musical Instruments*

**Music Teacher Social Status**

*Religion*

*Sex*

*Age*

*Marital Status*

**Classroom Behavior**

*Pedagogical Skills*

*Musical Performance*

*Listening Techniques*

Learners Musical Behavior

*Musical Reception*

*Musical Attitude*

**Knowledge Gained**

*Mastery of music skills*

*Change of attitudes*

*Music appreciation*

*Change of musical aptitudes*

*Post-Secondary Music Study*

*Music Performance*

The context of this music teaching and learning framework involves obtaining information about the existing learning situation to decide on music educational needs and to establish music programme objectives. Indicators of this are the learning environment (school, community, studio, listening rooms and classroom contexts), the availability of musical learning equipment (tape recorder, video machines, microphones, music stand, mutes etc) and musical instruments (piano, electronic keyboard, brass, woodwind, strings and percussion, idiophones, aerophones, chordophones and membranophones), background of learners (family, types of parenthood, religion, nationality and so on…), their previous knowledge and skills in the subject, their interest and attitudes towards learning and their participation in school and music activities. The inputfocuses on the teachers’ contributions to the learning process. This includes information on the teacher’s teaching qualification, appropriateness of music training, membership of musical groups, teaching experience, and music teachers’ cognitive, affectiveand psychomotorteaching behaviors, possession of musical instruments. It also includes the music teacher social status which are religion, sex, age and marital status.

Process is on the relationship of the teacher and the students as it affects learning and students’ academic achievement. Process describes the interaction between the teacher and the learner in the teaching – learning process. This involves the teachers’ classroom behavior which includes competence in pedagogical skills, musical performance, listening techniques and learners’ musical behavior which includes learners’ musical reception and musical attitude. It also includes using appropriate methods of teaching. Outputstudies the effect of the programme on the learner. This includes the knowledge and skills gained and the change of attitudes as a result of teaching and learning. It also involves the learner’s growth and long term learner effects. These will be measured by advancement in music knowledge, mastery of musical skills, practices, change of attitudes, music appreciation, as well as high course grades and number of students who continue the study of the subject at the senior secondary school level.

The essence of this research is to give a comprehensive outlook of music teaching and learning and the variables that are germane to its development. It is expected that if the variables are kept functional and serviced, there will be a notable progress and advancement in the teacher competence and student academic music achievement and musicianship.

**Conclusion**

In the literature, different elements of teacher competence have been emphasised throughout the history of assessing teachers. For each of these conceptions of good teaching, specific assessment instruments were used. In developing a domain of competence, the assessment content should be relevant and representative for the teaching profession. Content reviews are used to set the boundaries within which inferences about teachers’ competence are made. Various empirical analyses of how teachers function, empirical re-search on variables which contribute to higher learning performance and the mix of scientific and practical perspectives contributes to the acceptance and practical usability of instruments (Beijaard and Verloop, 1996; Duke and Stiggins, 1990; Uhlenbeck, 2002). Using these variables of music teacher competence as an interpretive framework for assessment, and considering criteria for construct validity, consequences for the construction of a content domain and procedures for collecting evidence of competence can be described. In this context, three things deserves closer attention: these are content, theory and process.

The frameworks presented in this research looked at the classroom as the context of learning, teacher and students’ characteristics, their social status as the input, teacher- student relationship as the process and the knowledge gained as the output. It also states that music teaching competence is reflected in the consequences of teachers’ actions, the most important being students’ learning activities. The component actions refer to professional activities that foster student learning or other consequences. Finally, it looked at the three domains of competence and three components of music (singing, playing musical instrument and dancing) to be equally assessed towards an improved music teachers competence.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations were given from the findings of this research work. They are: Education administrator and supervisor should use these frameworks for assessing music teacher and music teaching programme periodically. The assessors should interpret assessment results in terms of the postulated processes of the framework. If this is done, the interpretive argument will have a basis for its goal. Teachers are expected to draw from a professional knowledge base and from some personal characteristics when making decisions and performing activities in the classroom.

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