**METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH IN MUSIC EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract**

The philosophy of music stipulates that man hardly completes communal life without the instrument of music which is a basic instrument of social cohesion and national development in all human endeavors. In fact, music is not an alternative to living but an enhancement of life and a valuable source of ideas and concepts. Music is the craftsmanship of an expressive thought in sound which is usually broader based. Generally, enquiries about music continually led to queries about the other arts and, link also to the ideas and beliefs that characterize human culture. Therefore, in this paper, the possible best approaches to the methodology of research in music are discussed. The concept of research – a systematic investigation designed to develop and contribute to general knowledge – is an indispensable tool to national development and especially musicology. Music research promotes growth and development in skills, competencies and attitudes; it also develops cognitive and psychomotor skills. The primary aim of an effective research in music is to provide an atmosphere where students can develop an understanding for their musical heritage and the music of other world culture.

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**Introduction**

The 21st century has witnessed a tremendous development all over the world as a result of research innovations and the application of theoretical concepts in all human endeavors. Therefore, in a comprehensive and in-depth methodology of research in music, there must be an explicit useful guide to preliminary research investigation; actual investigation and post field investigation and documentation. A work of art does not exist in pristine isolation, and there is no canonical approach to knowledge that is free of cultural experiences therefore a clear rational approach is needed to filter truth from fancy. The application of science and technology into the study of musical sound has greatly broadened the concept and scope of research in music. Music, therefore, not only covers a part of man’s physical, emotional and intellectual growth but also provides a record of how man has exacted in his struggle with the environment.

In understanding the nature and peculiarity of music research, it is expedient to note that music is not merely a matter of perceiving separate sounds. A piece of music is more than a series of symbols in a score or in oral form, but it is their special realization that is guided by traditional practices, worldviews and cultural peculiarities that facilitate and sustain aesthetic experience. Aesthetics – from Greek ‘aisthesis’: sense of perception is the study of beauty and its manifestations in the arts and the appreciation of or responsiveness to, the beauty and pleasure inherent in arts.

Music research is a complex art involving sensitivity of sound apprehension, intellect and memory, and formal relationships existing among the structural units that constitute a musical event. No doubt, a lot of musical art forms have been collected and analyzed since the time immemorial. However, the problem has been the near absence of a straight forward procedure for collection, transcription, translation, unitary field theory and analysis of music data. Usually, there is a problem of appropriate procedures and lack of entry on the methodology of research and documenting musical genre. Furthermore, lack of useful guide to preliminary investigation, absence of appropriate and adequate methods of field trip and interpretation of data and non-availability of symbolic approach to the registration of music typologies. Therefore for a research in music, which has so much potential and attachment to socio-cultural phenomenon an adequate format is necessary to guide researcher especially undergraduate and post-graduate students. This is what the rest of the paper focus on.

**Objectives**

The vision of academic institutions, especially in the developing nations, places great premium on research program, with emphasis on those that are of academic interest and those areas which are aimed at solving problems. Therefore, the objectives of this paper are to

* Explicates the various methods of research in music.
* Examines stylistic structures of research in music.
* X-ray music research designs and its conceptual framework.
* Analyze the logical and systematic collection of data.
* Pontificate the rationale behind a particular research methods.
* Explain the various theories of arts and their application in music.

**Research and Music**

Research is an organized enquiry that aims at providing information for solving identified problems. The inter-relationship of music and research is found in the composite term known as ‘musicology’. ‘Musicology’ is the study of music as a subject for research, interpretation and explanation. In other word, musicology is the scientific study of sound. Its goal is to understand music by establishing authentic text meaning and cultural contexts of musical works; by informed assessment of a work’s technical procedures and aesthetic aims; and also by appraising a work’s intrinsic merit and its importance within its output or its genre.

The term musicology was borrowed from the French **mysicologie**, based in turn on the German **musikwissenschaft**, first used by the pianist and music educator Johann Bernhard Logier in the title of his book, ‘System der Musik-wissenschaft’ (1827), which can be translated as ‘The system of musical science’. The terms ‘musicology’ and ‘musikwissenschaft’ were, indeed, inspired by the scientific movement, and the earlier practitioners did aspire to be scientific, but, as with other fields of the humanities and social sciences, the practical goal turned towards knowledge, learning, and scholarship, rather than science.

Besides, writing narrative histories and nature of music known as ethnomusicology or the study of music in culture, musicologists have recovered the music of the past – its sound and its cultural context. This has meant finding, dating, and authenticating old music and making reliable modern editions so that the music can be performed and studied. The scripts and symbols must be notated and transcribed into modern musical notation for easy performance. Because music is not composed in a vacuum, musicologists have sought to reconstruct and study the environment in which the music was created or music natural settings, and to understand what it meant to its creators. The primary role of musicologists has been to theorize about what constitutes appropriate and authentic performance of music of earlier times on the basic of theoretical and practical performance and their historical contexts. It is inevitable that scholars to research and possess music of the past and engaged in a dialog with it for aesthetic – authentic and performance.

**Musicological Research Design**

The study of ‘sound’ is at the centre of all activity of musicological endeavors. This paper does not recognize any superiority of name, either in musicology, ethno-musicology, anthropology, ethnology, comparative musicology and or exotic music. The emphasis is on the research strategies of musical sound whatever society the researcher may belong whether the so-called primitive and the so-called complex society. The paper embraced interwoven systematic research methodology against the drawing of a strict line demarcation. Therefore, all distinguishable music areas such as: theory, performance, organology, history, education, composition, therapy, production, academic, computer and technology, are placed under the interwoven systematic research methodology, (ISRM). In sum, there is no single research method that can adequately provide all the necessary musicological data. This chapter is organized and discussed under the following headings:

* Pre-field investigation design
* Actual-field investigation design
* Organization framework design
* Post-field investigation design and
* Documentation and Music Research report

**Pre-field investigation design**

The essence of a pre-field investigation in music research is to develop and acquire broad-based information. This aspect includes selection of area of study, archival and library search plan; acquire equipment and consideration of financial and security issues. The concept of ‘research-field’ in this study connote research environment which could be anywhere the researcher could collect data. One of the important aspects of pre-field investigation is the conception stage. At this stage, the researcher conceptualizes or forms an idea about his research interest in any chosen field of music specialization. Having acquaint himself with the topic and define the problem of the research, the researcher should engaged in a critical broad based study of books, journals, articles, magazines, and thesis for the purpose of illuminating the perspective of the study area and provides advance information.

In addition, the music researcher must find out, during his pre-field investigation, the specific period of the festival, music performance or when the music event is showcase. This is to ensure that the researcher proceeds to the field with a background knowledge of the culture of the people, rudiments knowledge of their language and a good idea of the art form he wants to collect. The researcher makes sure that he has procured the equipment and materials necessary for the study such as cassette/CD recorder, camera, generating set, mosquito net, tape, batteries, biro, pencil and a big note. Ajuwon (1982: VIII) emphasized this need drawing from his personal experience:

Since most iremoje performances are performed in rural, un-electrified places, I made dirge-recordings with a battery-powered cassette recorder and supplemented them with pictures taken with a simple camera.

Furthermore, the researcher should also consider the issue of security for himself and his research assistants. In an area with security challenges such as insurgency, life-threatening virus or pestilence, and war should be avoided. In fact, the issue of security also includes the field weather or environmental condition and the temperature may be very cold or too hot at a particular period of the year. For better preparation and efficiency, research programming is also necessary. Such programming would spell out the how, what, when and the period, date, and time scheduled is an excellent way to organize and prepare for a field research in musicology.

However, for emphasis, there is not any aspect of music discipline that elude from pre-field investigation design. Consider the case of a researcher in performance study, festival and or oral arts. Before the actual performance is recorded, it is important for such a performer – researcher to acquaint himself with thorough facts about the performance. If the performance is on Nigerian or foreign musical instrument or dance, the researcher must have familiarized himself with the historical background of the instrument and the technological facts must be known as well. Pre-field investigation is also necessary for a music theorist, music analysist, and music technologists. It is at this stage that the rudiments of the research field would be study and necessary elementary and fundamental information are discovered.

**Actual field investigation design**

The actual or major field investigation activities may involve; familiarization visit and introduction, performance setting and arrangement; recording and filming/ photograph of performance; object investigation and jottings; and informal interview session and departure. Pogoson (1999) opined that: what is to be achieved in the field is dependent on the researcher’s ability to be innovative and creative …. What is most important is that he is willing to spend time to find field creative solutions to hitches and blocks that he will definitely come across in the field. Above all, he must remain focused on his goal.

In the view of the above submissions, research is about rigor, innovation and creativity which inevitably lead to finding solution to an identified problem. However, the primary aim of any research study is for the benefits of mankind either in form of the purpose of a higher degree or for grant or advancement of humanity in general.

The first necessary stage, at this juncture, is to establish good rapport and cordial relationship with informants. Research engagement is a leveler that makes the researcher and the informant to be equal regardless of age, education, social status, and or exposure. An arrogant and a pompous individual, no matter how brilliant, may not be successful in carrying out music research. Music, dance, instrumentation and other paraphernalia of festival are considered sacred in African. Therefore, to be a successful researcher in African or Nigerian music, one must take into cognizance the community leaders, chiefs and groups or age grades for permission. The consent given by the community is an assurance of a successful research and a sure guarantor of the safety of the researcher, his assistants and equipments. Moreso, the researcher can join the enactment of the songs and actively participate in some funny dance-steps to the amusement of the informants. This will help to establish friendship and love between the researcher and the ever suspicious performers and informants. Thus, in participating in the performance, even if it is on the elementary level, the researcher is enlisted as a person who identifies with the significant elements in the people’s aesthetics rather than someone prying into the secret of the people. However, the researcher’s participatory role should not distract him from the significant investigative duty of attentive observation. Ajuwon (1982), for instance, has explained the strategy of combining participatory-observatory roles thus:

I not only watched and collected funeral dirges of the hunters, but also I participated in their song-refrains, to the delight of the chanters … as a participant-observer-collector, I paid attention to the form and procedures of the ceremony, the innovative mode of chanting, the role of the drummers, and the audience’s response to the chanter’s artistry. These observations proved valuable to me in the formulation of my interview questions (viii).

The principal investigator observes and records the songs; he also takes photographs of the costumes used in the performance. Besides, difficulty may arise in photographing some used materials such as in Ifa divinatory poetry. This is highlighted by Abimbola’s reference in collecting Ifa and Iwi verses: Unless a man is … initiated into the secret that possess these forms of literature, it may be difficult or even impossible for him to collect anything. A researcher who encountered the above challenge is advice not to be discouraged and spare no effort in trying to do everything possible within his power to collect the data. Furthermore, he should proceed to the interview stage after proper documentation of data.

A research interview is a method of gathering information through oral question and answer method and involving personal contact between the interviewer (researcher) and the interviewee (the person that supplies the information). Interviews may be structured or unstructured. The structured interview has predetermined content (questions) and standard procedure very similar to objective tests. The unstructured interview is similar to the free response questionnaire except that the interview allows opportunity for the interviewer to ask questions to further probe given responses.

It is important for the collector to conduct the interview in the local or familiar language of the people in case of a field research. The use of very good interpreter is recommended in case the researcher does not understand the local language of the informants. In conducting an oral interview, the following should be taken into consideration, in the selection of the informants; the age, experience of the informant, title, knowledgeable persons, and the role of participatory informant. For good results in music research, interviews should not be arranged as a fixed questionnaire; rather, they should be arranged in such a manner as to allow the informants to have the freedom to elaborate aspects of special interest within the context of oral performance. Specifically, the special area of interview interest in musicology are for instance, the preparation, the nature and background history of the music festival, masks and costumes, dance steps and performers hierarchical status.

Questionnaires for data collection in musicological research are like interviews except that respondents are contacted through written questions. A questionnaire consists of a lot of questions based on the intended answers. Questionnaire technique enables a researcher to gain an insight into what is inside a person’s mind and thus equips the researcher to measure what a respondent knows about the research topic: The use of questionnaires for data collection in musicology are very useful in such aspects as music education, history of music, performance studies, music technology and music sociology. Narrating her research experience, Omibiyi-Obidike (1999) advised that

data on vocal, instrumental and other folkloric activities intimately associated with music should be collected. Under vocal music, different song types and their lyrics should be collected and classified. The socio-cultural and cosmological values attached to them, theoretical elements, styles of performance and their instrumental accompaniments should be examined and analyzed. Information on musical instruments, their distribution, design and construction, classification, technique of playing, types of ensemble performance norm and so forth should be collected.

The foregoing has further clarified and succinctly captured an authentic musicological research method.

**Organizational Framework**

Research, generally, is meant to generate data for analysis and this resulted in a large volume of information which is mostly in its raw stage. In order to use the data for the objectives of research, the data must be reduced to manageable dimensions hence the necessity of organization framework of data. In musicology, it is advisable to adopt a qualitative research methodology. The qualitative data must be processed and edited in the following basic steps: reading, grouping, interpretation, editing, analysis and documentation.

**Methods of Data Presentation and Analysis**

There are basically three methods of conducting research in education. They are qualitative, quantitative and descriptive. However, in musicological research, qualitative method which uses theoretical means is usually and mostly adopted. Analysis of data requires that the researcher must systematically examine data in order to understand patterns and context (psychological, social, political, world-view and circumstances) in which research questions are situated. In musicological study, methods of data presentation and analysis should be situated as follows: adoption of qualitative research design; contextual and structural analysis; internal and external validation of data, cross examination and criticism of data. The following five principles have been identified to guide qualitative research analysis. According to Jegede (2006) in Ulin et al (2002: 138) thus

1. Individual Differences: People differ in their experiences and understanding of realities. The researcher’s assumptions may not be similar to how participants define a situation. It is therefore important for researchers to take note and account for the cultural lens through which they view research population.

2. Context of Meaning: A social phenomenon cannot be understood outside its own context … context does not only mean physical setting in which behavior or attitude takes place, but also the historical, social and political climates … that influence the phenomenon.

3. Theory Building: Theory does not only guide qualitative research but also that qualitative data may lead to theory.

4. Findings leading to further study: In some cases unique findings may be an eye opener to lead to study or investigation.

5. Procession understanding of Human Behavior: Human behavior cannot be understood linearly but slowly. Since human behavior is dynamic, it therefore, requires a flexible and integrated approach to understand complex issues from the perspectives of participants.

**Qualitative Research Methodology in Music**

The most reliable and standard procedures in musicological research is qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research methods are designed to understand the context such as social, political, psychological, world-view, philosophy and aesthetic issues in the society. Multiple research methods of data collection techniques in musicology are such as interview, observation, participation, case studies or combinations of aforementioned methods. Qualitative research method uses theoretical means to carry out its investigation and most art subjects research fall under this category. Qualitative data may be generated through both primary and secondary sources. However, both sources can be in the form of personal contact: eye witness, key actor, observer, village historian, chiefs and heads as well as remains of artifacts such as relics, historical materials, tools, graves, building and domestic materials. The researcher is expected to list his types of data gathered from each of the sources he listed. Documents are to be investigated, named, and described how they were found and the source with the list of how each artifact was discovered, where, when and by whom all have to be stated, just like who was interviewed and or questionnaire and the rationale for the choice of persons for that purpose.

The presentation and analysis of music data are always in two parts; contextual analysis and structural analysis. The contextual analysis of music data clarified the social factors, cultural practices, language, background history, mode, philosophy and worldviews. For example among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria, the contextual practice of Iyere ifa chant is associated with the cultural practices surrounding the worship of Orunmila, the Ifa-oracle, *efe* around *gelede* and that of *ijala* centres around Ogun, Igbin drum around Obatala, rara exists in social setting, Iwi exists in ritual and an entreaty to the spirits, ghosts or phantoms of departed ancestors and *ogede, ofo, ayayo* for prayer and supplication.

Structural analysis of music data concerns the analysis of components or the way in which the parts are connected together, arranged or organized together. Music is a complex weaving together of elements like harmony/counterpoint, interval, texture, rhythm, scale, form, meter, tone quality, and cadential points. The question, ‘does the work hang or go together?’ was always answered through the structural analysis of data. Structural analysis of music also deals with the form or plan of the music. Akporobaro (2006:3) says that the identity of African oral literary form is shaped by a number of factors which represent the creative matrix of the forms. Hence, Idolo (2002:4) remarked that ‘structurally’, the cultural elements can be identified in tonality of music…themes; repetitions…text, texture, rhythms are all represented of culture.

In musicology, data must be validated to account for the accuracy and truth of the data and findings that are documented. There are two basic types of validity in musicology, which are internal validity and external validity of data. Internal validity refers to the extent to which changes in the dependent variables can be attributed to the independent variable. The status of the respondents in the society, age, experience and the post or traditional title serves as internal validity. Some historical facts found in one type of legend that recurred in another; overlapping of names, events, and legend; through the traditional title, because it is expected that a man of integrity and honour may not falsify data and professional traditional historians assisted in data validation. Besides, the musicologist researcher must be very alert to detect whether the respondents have any motives, biases or limitations which could have led to misrepresented of sociological facts of the people.

On the other hand, external validity refers to the degree to which the result of research are validated to other research findings, in musicology, external validity help to ascertain whether the report or relic actually belong to the people. In this regard already existing submissions of scholars’ work related to the new findings must be cited, such as published and unpublished findings, public documents, constitution, law, government order, reports of panels and conferences, University handbooks and official document may also be cited to validate the data. Both primary and secondary data must be cross-examined and data must be subjected to both internal and external criticisms which must be brought to bear on the interpretation of the data.

**Theoretical Framework in Musicology**

Theory is an explanation based on thought, observation and deeper reasoning which has been tested and confirmed as a statement of facts about a discipline. While framework is skeletal guide and a structural mould of ideas that link various concepts that is used as the basis for making judgments and decisions. Therefore, theoretical framework is a guided reasoning, set of ideas or molded facts that explains a particular phenomenon. It is an insight into the subject matter of a research. In musicology, just like any other academic engagement, theories are adopted to explain and link the various musicological concepts with a deeper explanation. A substantial amount of theorizing about the arts involves conceptual and linguistic analysis.

Etymologically, the word art is derived from the Latin ‘ars’, which roughly translates to ‘skill’ or ‘craft’. There are a variety of arts, including visual arts and design, decorative arts, plastic arts, and the performing arts. From one perspective, art is a generic term for any product of the creature impulse. Though to the artists themselves, the impulse to create is undeniable, music is a member of creative arts. The creative arts are a collection of disciplines whose principal purpose is in the output of materials that is compelled by a personal drive and echoes or reflect a message, mood, and symbolism for the viewer to interpret. As such, the term art may be taken to include forms as diverse as prose writing, music, poetry, dance, acting, sculpture and painting. Musicological thesis may adopt such theoretical framework as; expressive theories, formalist theories, processional theories, aestheticism, mimesis, semiotic and the likes.

* **Expressionism theories:** art viewed as a representation or manifestation of the inner state of the artist. Music expresses feelings, emotions, moods, their conflicts, triumphs and defeats.
* **Formalist theories:** The work of art viewed as an organic unit; i.e. a self-contained, self-justifying entity.
* **Professionalisms theories:** The making of works of art because the creative process is an inherently self-contained, self-justifying process.
* **Aestheticism:** Late 19th century European movement based on the idea that art exists for the sake of its beauty alone.
* **Organic Unity:** The principle calls for internally consistent thematic and arts development, analogous to biological growth. The theory also argued that art is a window upon the world: it is on the artwork itself that appreciable attention must be primarily be focused, particularly on its distinctive structure, its design, unity and form.
* **Pragmatic theories or Pragmatism:** Art exists to serve a function and is conceptualized in terms of its effects on its audience, and in term of the purposes it is design to accomplish such as the creation of specific shared experiences such as a means of enhancing experience and thought, escape from, or consolation for reality, as instructive, didactic, or propagandistic and as therapeutic; i.e. as healing or purgative.
* **Semiotic theory:** The semiotic operates in two ways: first, the semiotic involves a process in which the subject fills the sign with meaning. Second, the semiotic modality is related to experiences of immediate, direct meaning. The semiotic modality is in the foreground in musical interplay and musical performances. Musical elements such as timbre, dynamics, rhythm, and intonation articulate the semiotic.
* **Representation theory:** By “the representation theory” is meant have a historically persistent complex of views which see the chief, essential, and role of the arts as imitating, or displaying or setting forth aspects of reality in the widest sense. A typical representational account sees art as portraying the visible forms of nature; a representational artist may seek faithfulness to how things are.
* **Imitation theories:** According to this theory, art imitates physical things hence an artist, by skillfully seek to ‘imitate’ the action of life. Imitation is the primary method of learning and that it is natural for humans to take delight in works of imitation.
* **Constructivism theory:** This is a theory of knowledge used to explain how we knew what we know. This theory states that learning is an active process of creating meaning from different experiences. Constructivist learning in music encourages and promotes the learning of music for relevance and attainment of self-reliance.
* **Structuralism theory:** The idea of an arrangement of entities which embodies; the idea of wholeness, the idea of transformation and the idea of self-regulation.

**Ethical Issues in Musicological Research**

Musicological research is always situated within the interaction of socio-human and environmental circumstances. Therefore, ethical issues are intended to guide the interaction between the researchers and the various social phenomenons’ of the research situations. The following are the fundamental ethics principles in musicological research:

Informed Consent: Most indigenous music that warrants research naturally belongs to a particular tribe or community. Therefore, the researcher is under obligation to seek an informed and well-articulated consent with the original owners of the music or performance. Informed consent is a mechanism for ensuring that people understand the intension of the researcher to record and photograph their music. They can then decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate and release data in the research.

Respect for Persons and Concept: The dignity of all research participants must be respected whether literate or non-literate. The musicologists should not exploit the positive or negative circumstances of the owners of the data. The communities’ values and interests must be regarded and protected. The researcher must not use abusive words or terminologies in the description of the community, their music, language, or their paraphernalia of performance such as musical instruments and costume.

Flexibility of Religion: Musicologists researcher should avoid religion polarization of the community. Religious evangelism and research should not be mixed together. Most indigenous music that requires in-depth research is attached to one religion, deity or some believe systems. Therefore, a musicologist must be objective and avoid religious sentiments. His main focus should be an interrupted data gathering and proper documentation.

**Conclusion**

Obviously, the mass of writing on the research methodology in music is so vast and in depth. Because, it is evident that listening to music is a complex art involving sensitivity of apprehension, intellect and memory, and many of the implications of an event are missed on first hearing. Besides, to comprehend the implications of a musical event fully, it is necessary to understand the event itself clearly and to remember it accurately. Musicological research methodology involves findings, collecting evidence or data about music which for the most part have not been experienced by the researcher himself.

Generally, result of a research findings must be well documented, therefore the following hints may help in the documentation: a clear communication in the use of standard expressions, avoid undue use of qualifiers, do not over-stress or overstate your point, avoid foreign terms, sparingly use figures of speech, write in a way that comes naturally, and place yourself in the background. The habit of good writing comes as a result of exposure to good literature, however, self-criticism and revision and rewrite should be cultivated.

This article adequately covers the methodologies of research in music and provides a good coverage of the general structures and research theories of arts. It should be noted that the field of musicological research has grown and is still growing at a moderate rate. In the last decades, a lot of advances have been made in the field. There is no doubt that these advances have resulted to enhanced, more efficacious and efficient practices in the field of musicology, therefore, increasing emphasis is being placed on musicological research as a means of improving musicological practices.

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