



Review

The relevance of music education to the Ethiopian educational system

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The research paper places of interest the weight of music education to the Ethiopian educational system. It identifies the prospects, problems and proffered possible solutions to them. In achieving its objectives the study uses ethnographic and qualitative methods with simple percentages for eliciting and collation of data. The paper suggests that the society, the curriculum planners, and the government have much to do so music education is appreciated in Ethiopia. It proposes as part of its recommendations that the government provide necessary facilities and personnel for music to thrive as a vocational subject; and that parents and the larger society must become educated on the usefulness of music as a career subject worth pursuing by pupils. The reset interest of the paper is narrated about music education in Ethiopia and contributors for the development.

Key words: Music education, Ethiopia education, culture, Hagre Fiker theatre house, Ashenafi Kebede.

INTRODUCTION

Music education in Ethiopian elementary and secondary schools began with other kinds of modern education. Modern education in Ethiopian began one century before since the time of emperor Menelike II. Emperor Menelike II tried his best to bring his country the civilization of European countries which he thought was useful to his country. Menelike has done a lot to make his country stand in the raw of civilized country.

Emperor thought and plan was supported by empeor Haile Selasie I, who become an Ethiopian king after Menelike and his daughter Zewditu.

Then education was considered as the only better way to bring development and progress in one country.

That time by the willingness of empeor Haile Selasie I, many elementary and high schools were opened throughout the country and foreign Teachers from Canada, India, America and other parts of the World were taken as self helper and employee for elementary schools, secondary school, universities, colleges and other higher institutions.

Importance of the paper

The main focus of this paper is the importance of music education and contributors to the Ethiopian society. This subject cannot be adequately discussed without looking at the philosophical and sociological premise of music as an art and its relevance and implications to the society. According to Plato in his book *The Republic*, speaking of the Old Athenian education about 450 B.C. He said: Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other because rhythm and harmony find their way into the secret places of the soul, on which they might fasten imparting grace and making the soul graceful of him who is rightly educated.

THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN ETHIOPIAN EDUCATION

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The history of music education in Ethiopian elementary schools

Music education in elementary schools was begun around 1920 E.C. In every elementary school, music education curriculum was prepared from first to eight grades.

The purpose of the curriculum of music was to entertain and gave some elementary music knowledge to young students. Music lesson in the elementary schools at that time wasn't seriously given for students, because the acceptance of music education by the people was almost zero, being musician also neglected job, students result of music wasn't taken in to consideration and not added together with other subjects for average result. Generally music education was given in elementary school not as major course of students and anybody didn't give attention for the subject.

Some class in elementary school around the 1950 to the mid of 1960s E.C. were given for just the sake of the name of education not seriously as music is an art. In general music education in Elementary school of Ethiopia in the above mentioned year was given to students not seriously, but from this situation very few students came out and become amateur and professional musician and singers. Of course some music text books were published to primary schools, but application was poor because of the lack of music professionals, or teacher's professional musician and singers.

Contemporary Problems Facing Music Education in Ethiopia

The history of music education in the Ethiopian secondary school

At the end of 1940s E.C. extracurricular activities in

music in secondary school did reach at very high standard of performance in some of the Ethiopian secondary schools. However after 1966 E.C. Ethiopian revolution the activity that has been flourishing in the extracurricular activity in music of secondary school decline very greatly in the way that never revive again. The following were some of the examples of secondary schools that were in a high in musical extracurricular activity specially in march or in FarFan Bands, and gradually they decline and lastly completely dissolved the above mentioned years.

The name of the school and trainers were:-

1. Addis Ababa

1.1. Menelik II secondary school march band and orchestra.

Trainers: - 1. Ato Bekele W/Giorgise /Ethio/

2. Ato Meherate W/Tsadik/Ethio/

1.2. Haile Selassie I day school-march band and orchestra.

Trainers: - 1. Mr. Hunsen /Canadian/

2. Ato Mamo Demisse /Ethiopian/

3. Ato Getaneh Tadesse /Ethiopian/

2. Harege Province

2.1. Harar Medhanielem secondary school march band and orchestra.

Trainers: - 1. Ato Tesfay Tadesse /Ethiopian/

2.2. Harar teacher training school /HTTS/

Trainers:- American piece corps

3. Wolo province

3.1. Woyzero sighen secondary school march band and orchestra

/competent to the military band/

Trainers :- 1. Mr. Vega /American/

2. Ato Lema Feysa /Ethiopian/

3. Ato Bisrat Tamene /Ethiopian/

4. Arussi province

4.1. Ras Darge high school march band and orchestra

Trainers:- Ato Zewdu and Ato Fantahun Antealehen

5. Shewa province /Nazareth city/

5.1. Atse Gelawdiwas secondary school march band and orchestra.

Trainers:- Ato Bisrat Tamene

All the above names of bands and orchestras are written by their former names. This all bands were under the ministry of education and fine arts then the objective of music extracurricular activity in the secondary school of Ethiopia then was as follows.



To entertain the community of the society



To perform March music for the celebration of the king's coronation and birth day and other occasion.



To accompany the students marchers with March music in the celebration of people's holiday, Independence Day school day and other occasion.

At the beginning of the revolution yaer all the music broadcast through the radio and television and stage performance were reflecting only revolutionary concepts. This and other reasons affected the normal growth of extracurricular activity of music in the secondary school, and as a whole creativity of music came to decline in certain amount of degree and people were fed up with listening to only such kind of propaganda music and found an alternative. Many professionals and amateurs musicians singers composers even from the governmental institution of theater houses military bands etc. participated and how still participating in this activities

Findings

Findings from the study were that:

Prof, Ashenafi Kebede is one of Ethiopian greatest cultural treasure and composer, conductor ethnomusicologist, historical musicologist, music educator, novelist and poet. From the above explanation about prof. Ashenafi kebede we can understand about his personality mean while prof. Ashenafi Kebede was ageat and multi dimensional Ethiopian musician who was accepted not only by Ethiopian but also other countries of the world and we Ethiopians should respect him with his generous works.

Prof. Ashenafi Kebede was founded the National Saint Yared School of Music in Ethiopia, serving as its first director (1963–1968). when he was served as the director of yared music school he was perform different activities in relation with the development of music in our country Ethiopia. He was admired by the Ethiopian leader kings like Emperor Haile Selassie I

He was designated a National Composer by Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I, in 1967. Shortly after that he began his graduate studies in the United States, and earned the first Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University.

Ashenafi was a prolific writer. His works include a novel, *Confession* (1964), articles in ethnomusicology journals, the book *Roots of Black Music*, and numerous articles in *The Chronicler*, the magazine of the Center for African-American Culture.

In his own compositions he combined Ethiopian and Japanese musical ideas. "Koturasia" is one such piece, written for flute, clarinet, violin, and Japanese koto. Among his other musical compositions were "Peace unto Ethiopia" and "The Life of Our Nation". His best-known composition, though rarely heard outside Ethiopia, was "The Shepherds Flute", performed in 1968 with the Bulgarian Symphonic orchestra.

In the United States, he was director of the internationally known Ethiopian Research Council, consisting of a group of Ethiopian and American scholars and professionals. At the time of his death he was director of the Center of African-American Culture at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida. So he has a great

contribution for Ethiopian music development related with education.

Recommendations

In this paper, we have looked at the problems confronting music education in Ethiopia. We found out about problems of supporting music education. Some ways these problems can be adequately tackled are by the tripartite parties of parents-society-government. We recommended that parents should be properly enlightened about the usefulness of music education and should allow gifted pupils to pursue a career in music. We also propose that the mass media should do more to promote music education by offering programs that will show the ideals of music education. Likewise, guidance counselors must double their efforts in giving proper advice to pupils and parents on career choice and paths. The society should be educated on the usefulness of music education and its benefits to the society. Finally, government should not neglect the arts and should do more to fund it for "art they say is life." The curriculum planner should also look at the contents of music curriculum and include local content that would make music education more relevant and meaningful to the society. we should respect the contributors for the developments of music education in Ethiopia.

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