

UTILIZING PERFORMANCE WORKSHOPS TO PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY THROUGH MUSIC: A FOCUS ON THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC AT LASUED

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Abstract

This paper investigates the effectiveness of performance workshops in promoting cultural diversity within music education in Nigeria, focusing specifically on the Department of Music at Lagos State University of Education (LASUED). As a prominent hub for music education, LASUED offers students the chance to explore a diverse range of musical genres and cultural traditions. The study assesses the role of performance workshops in fostering practical, immersive musical experiences that encourage cultural diversity and facilitate intercultural interactions among students. By engaging with various Nigerian musical traditions. Including traditional folk music, contemporary Afrobeat, highlife, and Fuji music, which enable students to participate actively in their cultural heritage. This paper provides a comprehensive evaluation of the structure and impacts of these workshops, illustrating how they allow students to appreciate Nigeria's rich cultural heritage that enhances their musical skills and promotes significant cross-cultural dialogue. Performance workshops create an interactive platform for students to engage with a variety of musical experiences, which fosters understanding, respect, and collaboration among diverse backgrounds. By examining the Department of Music at LASUED as a case study, this research highlights the potential of performance workshops as a vital instrument for enriching music education and celebrating the diversity inherent in Nigerian musical traditions. Integrating such workshops into music education programs can significantly contribute to forming a generation of musicians who are culturally aware and globally minded.

Keywords: LASUED, Performance Workshop, Cultural Diversity, Department of Music, Practical skills

Introduction

Music serves as a powerful medium for expressing cultural identity, preserving heritage, and showcasing diversity, profoundly influencing societies and promoting cross-cultural understanding (Nketia, 1990; Omojola, 2004). In Nigeria, a nation celebrated for its vast and dynamic musical landscape, music education holds a pivotal role in nurturing cultural diversity and fostering intercultural dialogue (Oyesiku, 2016). Within this framework, the Department of Music at Lagos State University of Education (LASUED) stands as a vital institution dedicated to advancing these goals. The department provides students with opportunities to explore and engage deeply with a wide array of musical genres, traditions, and cultural expressions that reflect Nigeria's multifaceted society (Ogunbiyi, 1988).

A notable initiative that underscores LASUED's commitment to cultural diversity and intercultural learning is its organisation of performance workshops. These workshops function as dynamic platforms where students gain hands-on experience, practical training, and artistic exposure to different Nigerian musical traditions. Participants immerse themselves in genres such as traditional folk music, Afrobeat, highlife, and Fuji music each representing unique cultural narratives and regional identities within the nation (Bamiro, 2017). Through guided instruction and

collaborative performances, students develop essential musical skills, including rhythm interpretation, ensemble coordination, and improvisation, while also deepening their appreciation for Nigeria's cultural plurality. Beyond technical training, these workshops serve as avenues for cultural exchange and social interaction. Students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds collaborate in performances that celebrate unity in diversity, thereby breaking down cultural barriers and encouraging mutual respect. This intercultural engagement fosters a broader worldview among participants, helping them understand and value the shared human experiences reflected in music. Such educational practices not only enrich students' artistic growth but also contribute to national cohesion by reinforcing the idea that music can serve as a bridge between different communities.

In essence, LASUED's Department of Music exemplifies how higher education institutions can employ music as a tool for promoting cultural diversity, inclusivity, and dialogue. By integrating practical experiences with cultural education, the department empowers students to become ambassadors of Nigeria's rich musical heritage. Through initiatives like performance workshops, LASUED continues to cultivate a generation of musicians who are not only technically proficient but also culturally aware, socially responsible, and committed to preserving and celebrating Nigeria's vibrant musical traditions. This paper examines how performance workshops function as a strategic tool for promoting cultural diversity within music education in Nigeria, with a focus on the Department of Music at LASUED. By analyzing the structure and impact of these workshops, the study illustrates how they provide students with the chance to expand their musical perspectives, cultivate an appreciation for diverse musical styles, and deepen their understanding of Nigeria's cultural wealth (Idris & Abdullah, 2018). By examining a thorough analysis of how performance workshops foster cultural diversity and intercultural exchange, this paper highlights the importance of practical music experiences in enriching students' cultural awareness, respect for diversity, and teamwork skills (Akpabot, 1995). Through the lens of the Department of Music at LASUED as a case study, this research aims to emphasize the transformative potential of performance workshops in cultivating a new generation of musicians who are culturally informed and globally conscious, openly embracing and celebrating the diversity embedded in Nigerian musical traditions.

Research questions

1. How do performance workshops in the Department of Music at LASUED facilitate the appreciation of diverse musical genres among students?
2. In what ways do performance workshops contribute to the intercultural dialogue among students from different backgrounds?
3. What role do performance workshops play in fostering a sense of cultural identity and heritage among music students in Nigeria?
4. How do students perceive the impact of hands-on musical experiences on their understanding of Nigeria's rich cultural diversity?
5. To what extent do performance workshops enhance students' musical skills and their capacity to collaborate in diverse musical settings?
6. What challenges and opportunities do performance workshops present in promoting cultural diversity within music education at LASUED?
7. How can the outcomes of performance workshops be measured in terms of cultural awareness and appreciation among participants?

Methods

To examine the effectiveness of performance workshops in promoting cultural diversity through music education at the Department of Music at Lagos State University of Education (LASUED), a mixed-methods approach will be adopted. This approach combines quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of these workshops. The following methods will be utilized:

Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted with selected students, especially the group leaders, Delight, Deborah, Anointing, and Dada, workshop facilitators, and College members in the Department of Music, Dr. Sam, and Mr. Popoola, just to mention a few. These interviews explored personal experiences, the perceived benefits of the workshops, and insights into how these workshops foster cultural identity and heritage. Interviews were semi-structured to allow for flexibility in responses and deeper exploration of themes.

Focus Groups: Focus group discussions were organized with students from diverse backgrounds who have participated in the workshops, for instance, the Juju group, the Fuji group and the Apala group. This method facilitated dialogue among participants and gathered collective insights on how the workshops contribute to intercultural exchange and collaboration. The discussions will be guided by a facilitator and recorded for analysis.

Observational Studies: Researchers observed several performance workshops to document interactions, engagement levels, and collaborative practices among students groups, Ogu group, Bata Group and . Observations were focused on the dynamics of group activities, participation in musical ensembles, and any cultural exchanges that occur during these workshops.

Archival Research: An examination of existing literature from the University library LASUED and recorded workshop performances, and historical documents related to music education in ECCE during Legacy College (AOCOED) and cultural practices at LASUED provided context and background for the research. This helped in understanding the evolution of music education and its role in promoting cultural diversity.

By employing these methods, the study aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of how performance workshops in the Department of Music at LASUED contribute to cultural diversity in music education, enhancing students' musical skills and fostering intercultural dialogue. The integration of qualitative data allowed for a richer, more nuanced understanding of the impact of these educational practices.

Findings

The research into the impact of performance workshops on promoting cultural diversity in music education at the Department of Music at LASUED yielded several skills. Moral, cultural, and educational findings, as derived from surveys, interviews, focus groups, observational studies, and analyses of student work. These findings illustrate the effectiveness and significance of performance workshops in nurturing cultural awareness and musical skills among students. The survey data showed that over 80% of students who participated in performance workshops felt more appreciative of diverse musical genres. The Baba group made us to know that all of these are not only from Yoruba. Some of them are Igbo, Ijaw etc. The Ogu group reported that their engagement with traditional, contemporary, and fusion styles of music expanded their understanding of Nigeria's rich cultural experiences.

Focus group discussions highlighted that students from different backgrounds developed friendships and collaborative relationships through the workshops. Especially, the Juju and Fuji Groups confirmed that the workshop created unity and they were able to make friends. Participants shared experiences of exchanging cultural

insights, with many noting that these interactions contributed to stronger bonds and enhanced teamwork during performances. All groups suggested that the workshop is an avenue to learn other people's culture and they will be able to influence the society positively. Interviews revealed that students found fulfillment in reconnecting with their cultural roots through music. Approximately 85% of the participants expressed that performing traditional music provided them with a sense of pride in their heritage, positively influencing their overall self-identity. With these experience in performance workshop, group like Atiloguwe group thought the performance needed extral power from Traditional shrine. Especially those students that don't have opportunity of going out at home. These made them to recognise their cultural aesthetics as a result of their experiences through this performance workshop.

Observational data indicated significant improvements in students' musical abilities, particularly in areas such as ensemble playing, improvisation, and understanding of various rhythmic patterns. Many students reported feeling more confident in their performance skills, with 70% indicating that participation in workshops had a direct impact on their overall musical competence. The Bata and Dundun groups affirmed that playing together during performance has helped them to acquire significant skills in drumming and singing. The workshops created an inclusive and collaborative learning environment where students could share ideas and learn from each other. This collaborative spirit was emphasized in both observational studies and interviews, with many students stating that group activities facilitated better learning outcomes and a deeper understanding of musical concepts. Performance workshop in Lasued department of music has helped so many students from Isolating themselves. All the groups see performance workshop as a source and avenue for collaboration and make friends.

Students overwhelmingly supported the notion that hands-on experiences were essential for meaningful learning. Feedback from the workshops indicated that immersive activities were vital in bridging theoretical knowledge and practical application, thereby enhancing students' engagement and enthusiasm for learning. Dada in Sango group has seen Performance workshop as a vocational subject, in which each student can start using their experiences to become a performer. This can serve as a tool of earning daily means. Dada has created a sango group that goes around to make money at different occasions. While many positive outcomes were noted, students also reported challenges such as logistical issues including scheduling conflicts and limited access to instruments and rehearsal spaces. About 60% of students mentioned that these challenges affected their willingness to participate consistently in workshops. At the beginning, Ogu, Bata and Atilogwu complained that it was so stressful. Also, that it consumed money, and also, they don't have time to read at home again. But we made them to realize that there is nothing that is easy on Earth, everything requires a risk. The incorporation of local musicians and cultural practitioners into workshop activities was found to greatly enhance the educational experience. Students indicated that learning from experienced musicians helped them connect classroom concepts with real-world applications, making their learning more relevant and exciting. When it is time for this workshop examination, we always ask the students to invite their parents and friends, so that if they see them performing in the community then it will not be strange to them. In summary, the findings underscore the importance of performance workshops at LASUED as crucial tools for promoting cultural diversity and enriching music education. The workshops foster not only musical skills and intercultural understanding but also significantly contribute to students' personal and cultural development. Given the positive outcomes, continued investment in and expansion of these workshops will be essential for nurturing culturally responsive musicians ready to engage with a diverse global music community.

Discussion

The findings from the study on performance workshops at the Department of Music at LASUED reveal significant insights into the role these workshops play in promoting cultural diversity and enhancing music education. The discussions stem from the research questions outlined earlier and analyze the implications of the results. The survey results indicate that students who participate in performance workshops have a heightened appreciation for various musical genres. Many students reported that exposure to different styles, such as traditional juju music, Afrobeat, and highlife, broadened their musical horizons. This aligns with previous research emphasizing that direct

engagement with diverse musical forms fosters a deeper understanding and respect for cultural differences. The interactive nature of workshops allows students to experience music not just as listeners but as active participants, contributing to a more profound appreciation of cultural heritage. Focus group discussions showcased how performance workshops serve as platforms for intercultural dialogue among students from differing backgrounds. Participants shared personal stories related to their cultural identities and how interacting with peers facilitated mutual understanding. The collaborative environment encouraged by workshops promotes open communication, allowing students to share their cultural perspectives. This dialogue fosters respect and empathy, essential traits for cultivating a harmonious multicultural society.

Interviews with students and faculty revealed that hands-on musical experiences support the reinforcement of cultural identity among music students. The ability to participate in and perform traditional Nigerian music helps students connect with their heritage, instilling pride in their cultural backgrounds. Such identity formation is critical, particularly in a multicultural nation like Nigeria, where numerous ethnic groups coexist. Students expressed that through these workshops, they not only learn music but also the historical context and significance behind various cultural practices, thus strengthening their sense of belonging. Analysis of observational data illustrated that students who engage in performance workshops exhibit improved musical skills and confidence in collaborative settings. The practical nature of these workshops enables students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts, leading to skill enhancement. Many students noted increased comfort in performing with peers, regardless of background, indicating that these experiences promote teamwork and collaboration. This aligns with the view that active engagement in music education cultivates not only technical skill but also social competencies. Despite the positive outcomes associated with performance workshops, the study also identified challenges such as resource limitations and varying levels of student commitment. Some participants reported difficulties in scheduling and a lack of access to instruments or materials necessary for comprehensive training. Addressing these challenges is crucial for maximizing the impact of performance workshops. Future initiatives could include securing funding or partnerships to enhance resource availability and ensure all students have the opportunity to participate fully.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study highlights the vital role performance workshops play in promoting cultural diversity within the music education landscape at the Department of Music at Lagos State University of Education (LASUED). Through a combination of hands-on experiences, intercultural exchanges, and collaborative learning, these workshops have successfully enhanced students' appreciation for diverse musical genres, fostered a sense of cultural identity, and developed essential musical skills. The findings illustrate that these workshops not only serve as a significant pedagogical tool for enriching students' musical education but also contribute to the broader goal of cultural understanding and respect among Nigeria's diverse population. Despite the positive impacts, challenges such as resource limitations and varying levels of student participation were identified. Addressing these barriers is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of the workshops and ensuring that all students can benefit from these enriching experiences. Overall, the research underscores the transformative potential of performance workshops as a means to shape culturally informed, skilled musicians who can navigate and celebrate Nigeria's rich musical heritage.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of performance workshops at LASUED:

1. **Expand Workshop Varieties:** Introduce a wider variety of performance workshops that cover more musical genres and cultural traditions. Inclusion of guest artists from various musical backgrounds can diversify the learning experience and expose students to a broader range of practices.

2. Increase Resource Availability: Develop strategies to secure funding and resources to enhance access to instruments and rehearsal spaces. Consider forming partnerships with local music organizations and sponsors to provide necessary support.
3. Improve Scheduling and Accessibility: Create flexible scheduling options for workshops to accommodate students' various commitments. Online or hybrid workshop formats can also be considered to enhance participation.
4. Engage Local Music Communities: - Foster partnerships with local musicians and cultural practitioners to serve as facilitators or guest instructors in workshops. Direct engagement with the community can provide students with practical insights and enrich their learning experience.
5. Conduct Regular Assessments: Implement ongoing evaluations of the workshops to assess effectiveness and gather feedback from students. This can help in making informed adjustments to the workshop structure and content based on participant experiences.
6. Enhance Promotion and Visibility: Improve the marketing of performance workshops within the university to raise awareness and encourage participation. Utilizing social media, posters, and word-of-mouth can help highlight the benefits of engaging in these workshops.
7. Develop Leadership Opportunities: Encourage student leadership within workshops by allowing advanced students to take on roles as workshop leaders or mentors. This can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, further enhancing collaboration and learning.

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