
**Teaching Music to Exceptional Children in the Regular Classroom in Nigeria: Justification
and Tasks of the Music Teacher**

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ABSTRACT

Children have unique needs and abilities, some of which can be met through regular education and some through special education. Some children possess some abnormalities while some are normal, gifted or talented. Different categories of children are significantly different from the other and so require special or modified educational experiences and related services if they are to realize their full human potential. In Nigeria, the common practice is that, children attend classes with mates of the same age or class in a regular education setting while special programmes to cater for their unique needs are not provided. It is important that opportunities be provided for exceptional children in all disciplines to develop their talents and natural endowments/traits if they are to be relevant in the society. This study focuses on the justification for teaching music to exceptional children in the regular classroom in Nigerian schools and how music teachers can accommodate their varied and unique needs. The researcher used primary and secondary sources for data collection which include observation, library sources, government reports and related research materials as well as personal experience. The study reveals that, despite effort put in by some music teachers to accommodate exceptional children in the regular classroom, the children do not benefit maximally because they need special programmes for their education if they want to be relevant in the society. The study recommends that the Nigerian Government should coordinate special education activities to provide special programmes for exceptional children not only in Music but in all subject areas.

KEYWORDS: Exceptional Child, Special Education, Music Education, Teacher, Secondary School, Nigeria, Regular Classroom

Introduction

Some teachers believe all students should really understand, others wish them to internalize, still, others want them to comprehend, irrespective of who and what they are, what they can do and what they cannot. Some teachers fail to realize the importance of studying and knowing their children and the factors which affect their learning so that they can teach for learning to take place. In most tertiary institutions in Nigeria, Educational Psychology is taught as a major subject in teacher education programmes on the implicit assumption that knowledge of educational psychology gives insight into the problems of teaching and learning and develops other professional skills and competencies in the prospective teachers to face the classroom teaching problems confidently and intelligently.

The modern music teacher in the regular classroom, for example, has to face a number of children with varied and unique needs in the same class. He/she is always confronted with some challenges because he/she interacts with normal, exceptional, gifted and talented children. However, with the knowledge of educational psychology, the teacher should be able to adjust his/her teaching to the needs of each child and the requirements of the class (Ekpo, 2011).

Who are Exceptional Children?

The concept “exceptional children” does not appear very simple to define because the word “exceptional” carries different connotations. Based on usage, exceptional can mean excellent, brilliant, special, extraordinary, incomparable, unique, outstanding, remarkable, deficient or disabled. It can mean forming an exception; better than average; deviating from the norm; having above or below average intelligence or physically disabled. Exceptional can also refer to medical as well as psychological groupings of children. Some people may use it to mean extraordinary talents, while to others, it refers to those who are weak in academic achievement. Ekeruo, Ikediashi, Ekwe and Nwamuo (1989) say that, exceptional children belong to a special group of learners which include the mentally disordered, the gifted, the physically handicapped like the speech and visually impaired, the hard-of-hearing, and the orthopedically handicapped.

Exceptional, according can characterize children on both the extremes of achievement in intellectual work, either they are far above or below average in one or more aspects of educational accomplishments; they differ from the normal or average children and so require either a modification of school practices, special educational services or supplementary instruction in order to develop to their maximum capacity. Although one could say that, on some level, every child is exceptional, with unique abilities and needs, recent researches have revealed that, exceptional children require special education and related services if they are to realize their full human potential, and that, once they have been discovered, a more thorough diagnoses should be carried out to discover the cause of their problems. Good teaching that takes the learners through well-motivated activities to increased competence in their areas of weakness can serve as remedial instruction. Moreover, exceptional children should be made to feel important and significant but not inferior to their colleagues; they should be made to know that they are important and normal in a way.

Special Education for Exceptional Education

Special education is the education of children and adults who have learning difficulties because of different sorts of handicaps such as blindness, partial sightedness, deafness, hardness of hearing, mental retardation, social maladjustment, physical handicap, etc., due to circumstances of birth, inheritance, social position, physical and mental health pattern, or accident in later life. It is also the education for the specially gifted children who are intellectually precocious and find themselves insufficiently challenged by the programme of the normal school (Ikpe 2005). Special education aims at giving concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities for all children, their physical, sensory, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities notwithstanding; providing adequate education for all people with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation. It also aims at providing opportunities for exceptional, gifted and talented children to develop their talents, natural endowments/traits in the interest of the nation’s economic and technological development.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) (2004) regards special education as a formal special educational training given to people with special needs and classifies these group of people into three categories: the disabled people with impairments, the disadvantaged and the gifted/talented. In fact, special education is quite a stimulating and interesting field for education and for those concerned with the welfare of children. It is particularly an important area of study and research for those who have accepted teaching as a profession or worthwhile business.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has directed in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2004) that all children, including the gifted, the neurologically, physically, mentally and socially disturbed and those with all forms of minor and major learning difficulties, should be provided for under the educational system. Despite the concern, the same government pays lip service and shows no special interest in special education. The trend poses serious problem to both teachers and students and so, teachers cannot to face the classroom problems confidently and intelligently and abnormal student cannot succeed maximally in their educational endeavours.

To accommodate children with special needs, the music teachers and others resort to mainstreaming and so, students with special needs are placed in general educational classes for all or part of the day. This arrangement is not adequate in the present educational system in Nigeria because, in every classroom of between 20 to 50 students, there may be students with mental retardation, specific learning disabilities that require special education, behaviour disorder (emotional disturbances), communication (speech and language) impairments and hearing impairments including deafness, visual impairments, including blindness, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury and other health impairments. Children with one or more of these impairments run a greater chance of developing a problem in their academic work.

The Nature of the Nigerian Classroom

It is a common experience in Nigerian schools of increased enrolment to find 50 to 100 or more students tumbling over one another in a small classroom managed by one teacher. In one block of a school building, one could find 5 to 6 or more classes of equal sizes in enrolment, sometime separated by hard board while some are unseparated by any means. Under such deplorable condition, effective teaching and learning can rarely be done. It is even more worrisome that, since the introduction of formal education in Nigeria, schools have integrated all children into the regular classrooms irrespective of each child's special needs. Teachers not certified in special education are mandatorily required to teach all of these children in the same class, with the same classroom condition and at the same speed This is not in line with one of the Nigeria's philosophy of education which is fostering the worth and development of the individual, for each individual's sake.

Although the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) acknowledges that the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) has the responsibility for coordinating special education activities in Nigeria in collaboration with relevant ministries, non-governmental organizations and international agencies such as United Nations Children's Fund (UNCF), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), etc., nothing has been done to actualize the noble idea. Classroom teachers resort to trying make shift strategies to see whether each child with a particular set of needs can succeed in the context of a normal classroom. Students' writing desks, class writing boards, and in some cases teachers' tables and chairs are the only things found in

the classrooms. No materials for practical demonstrations and illustrations in the class, no special education equipment and materials such as Perkins brailier, white/mobility cane, brailled text books, wheel chairs, internet facilities, etc. This makes teaching and learning in Nigerian schools to appear too mechanical.

It has been common practice that Nigerian classrooms are managed by teachers without teaching qualification or teachers who are qualified but teach subjects other than those they studied as their stress areas. One could find a music teacher teaching Social Studies, Christian Religious Knowledge, English Language and even Mathematics to Junior Secondary School (JSS) classes because the principal feel Music is only for entertainment and should not be a subject of study in school. One could also find an English teacher teaching Agricultural Science because he/she obtained an "A" grade in Agriculture in West African School Certificate Examination, etc. A solution to this trend must be sought immediately.

Exceptional Children and Specific Needs

Arguments have continued in recent times about whether exceptional children should be educated in regular classrooms or in special schools staffed and equipped to handle special problems. Historically, placing a child with special education needs in regular school classes has usually occurred in areas which must be taught by specialists. Such Areas include fine and applied arts, theatre arts, crafts and music. Chauhan (1996) believes that it is not completely out of place to place children with special needs with normal children but adds that exceptional children have some specific needs which can only be met through special education. These are explained as follows:

- (i) Special education aims maximizing, at the developmental potential of exceptional children and preparing them adequately for a satisfactory life adjustment. If they are left uneducated or under educated because of their peculiar problem, they become great problems to the society.
- (ii) Exceptional children do not benefit maximally from regular classroom teaching, for example, gifted/talented children do not get proper inspiration in regular classes and if the lessons they receive are not challenging enough, they may develop behaviour problems which, in later years, may cause harm to their personalities and to the society as well.
- (iii) If handicapped children are denied special education which would make them gain confidence and develop competencies to earn their livelihood independently, they will become liability to the society; they may develop adjustment problems which would lead to neurotic behaviour.
- (iv) Special education will give acumen into the problems of exceptional children to parents, teachers and managers of education; it will help in the process of adjustment of exceptional children in the society as well as change the society's attitude towards them.
- (v) The problems which exceptional children present in regular school programmes can be minimized through special education, for example, deaf, dumb and blind children cannot be educated with normal children because they require special school with different curriculum, methods of teaching, teaching materials, evaluation procedures, and teachers trained for their education.

- (vi) Exceptional children are markedly different from normal children in interest, drive and goals of life. To meet these, special methods of teaching must be adapted and, special facilities for their education must be provided.

Regardless of whether a child with special needs enters the classroom through mainstreaming, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) will have been provided. Knowledge of that information will be helpful in integrating the child successfully. The more awareness the teacher has of each child, the more effectively that teacher can tailor learning strategies to meet his/her needs.

Categories of Exceptional Children found in the Regular Music Classroom

The special category of children who are often found in the regular music classroom are the neurologically handicapped, the mentally retarded, the physically handicapped, the emotionally disturbed and, the gifted/talented.

1. The Neurologically Handicapped Child

Neurology is the scientific study of the nervous system especially in respect of its structure, functions and abnormalities. Hornby (2010) says it is the scientific study of nerves and their diseases. Neurologically handicapped children are those that behave in ways that are exaggerations of normal behaviour. It is the degree of the exaggerations that makes their behaviour other than normal thus preventing them from responding to stimuli normally, and from learning in classroom situations as other children do. Neurologically handicapped children often exhibit behavioural signs that the teacher can use to devise effective teaching strategies. On such signs is rigidity, or inability to accept things. They desire order and if things are done in an unusual way, to them, such change represents disorder. They desire reiterations of certain things in the same way and manner each time. Another behavioural sign noticed in neurologically handicapped children is hyperirritable attention which is manifested in what appears to be lack of attention, for example, some neurologically handicapped children may not be able to sort out and classify the sounds they hear, and may hear only certain sounds on recording. This may be one of the reasons when a certain note is sounded on an instrument, they cannot correctly produce the sound heard

Another behavioural sign that affects the neurologically handicapped child's response to stimuli is emotional lability. This behaviour may cause the child to act differently from other children to a particular stimulus and the inappropriate response is difficult for others to understand. Initiatory delay causes the child to respond to stimuli after an abnormally long delay. Children who exhibit this behaviour sometimes appear not to respond to certain stimuli but do so after a period of time, say, after a few seconds, minutes, hours or even days have elapsed. They also have behavioural problems of abstracting difficulties and are unable to perceive relationships and transfer knowledge to various situations. Speech, writing and musical notation are often beyond the grasp of such children due to lack of understanding of symbols like printed musical notes (*d*, *r*, *m* or *f*) which represent sounds, or terminologies like *fortissimo* (*ff*) or *pianissimo* (*pp*) which represents a command.

2. The Mentally Retarded Child

Mental retardation refers to substantial limitations in present functioning. Campbell and Scott-Kassner (2010) observes that mental retardation is characterized significantly by sub-average

intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with related limitations in two or more of the following applicable adaptive skill areas: communication, self-care, home living, social skills and community use. Others are self-direction, safety, functional academics, leisure and work.

There are many degrees of mental retardation. For educational and training purposes, three categories are put forward: educable, trainable and dependent mentally retarded, respectively. Educable mentally retarded are those capable of being educated, especially capable of some degree of learning; trainable mentally retarded are those capable of being trained, especially capable of some degree of training through exercises or drill while dependent mentally retarded are those who rely on others for support before they can function in any given situation.

Children who are classified as mentally retarded are significantly below average in general intelligence functioning (average Intelligent Quotient (IQ) is 100) which either results in or is associated with deficits in adaptive behaviour. Some children with low IQ are able to function well in school and society and would not be classified as mentally retarded. However, if a child has low IQ and does not meet age-level standards of personal independence and social responsibility, he/she will be labelled mentally retarded or developmentally delayed. He/she will always have low scores in class work.

3. The Physically Handicapped Child

Children who are physically handicapped or disabled may have an orthopedic impairment (involving the skeletal and spinal systems), a neurologic impairment (involving the nervous system), or both. The major cause of physical disability is the Cerebral Palsy (CP); another may be a whole range of accidents or diseases. Some of these result in limited physical functioning because they affect breathing (asthma) or energy (diabetes or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)).

The physically handicapped children also include those who are completely or partially blind (vision-impaired), or deaf (hearing-impaired), and who cannot function normally because of certain physical impairments. The disabilities can be mild, moderate or severe. Those with mild disabilities are usually able to improve motor and perceptual functioning with intervention and, are able to keep up with peers in academic work; those with moderate and severe disabilities may have some academic delays as well as motor-coordination problems that keep them from achieving age-level expectations. Notwithstanding the severity of the handicaps of some physically disabled children, classroom (music) teachers find easier to work with them than with disturbed or retarded children and their problems are easy to identify or diagnose.

5. The Gifted Child

The term “gifted” has been viewed from the perspective of someone having a lot of natural ability or intelligence. Some psychologists emphasize the importance of superior endowment while others focus on exceptional performance of the individual in different areas of endeavour. All the explanations can be broadly classified into three classes on the basis of IQ, social potentiality and in statistical terms. Let us consider the three classifications as they relate to the meaning of gifted, thus:

- (i) **Definition in terms of Intelligence Quotient (IQ):** Gifted can be considered in terms of IQ of the child. Different psychologists set different range of IQ for gifted children, for

example, Chauhan (1996) whom, in his famous study of gifted children, set IQ 140 as the lower limit of giftedness. Other authorities in psychology, according to Chauhan, set the lower limit of IQ from 110 to 140 and upwards.

- (ii) **Definition in terms of Social Potentiality:** Gifted can be viewed in relation to social potentiality of the child, for example, Chauhan (1996) sees gifted children as “those whose performance is consistently remarkable in music, art, social leadership and other forms of expression. The gifted child is he who is exceptional in the amount of his production, rate and quality of his production.
- (iii) **Definition in Terms of Statistical Ability:** This class is related to the concept of percentage. Some educators say that gifted children are those who fall in the top 2 to 4 per cent of intelligence. L. X. Magnifice, in Chauhan (1996) categorized gifted children into two classes: (a) A child whose ability as indicated by an intelligence test is within the range of the upper 2 per cent to 3 per cent of the population. (b) A child having outstanding ability in a specific area of knowledge as art and science.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) recognizes gifted children as those who have or possess very high intelligent quotient and are naturally endowed with special traits (in arts, creativity, music, leadership, intellectual precocity, etc.) and therefore find themselves insufficiently challenged by the regular school/college/university programmes. They show consistently remarkable performance in any worthwhile area of endeavour. They are not only intellectually gifted but also show promise in music, the graphic art, creative writing, dramatics, mechanical skills and social leadership. When compared to average children, they receive higher grades, have more positive attitudes and reading ability, participate more in curricular activities, and are more concerned with abstract ideas and more successful in sports. Also, they are well-adjusted, have better relations with peers, are more confident, possess greater ego-strength and individual difference and are more mature in their relation to external world. Aside the positive characteristics enumerated above, gifted children have some negative characteristics. They are frequently restless, disturbing, inattentive, careless in writing, indifferent in class work and outspoken critically.

Justification for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in the Regular Music Classroom

In the teaching and learning of music, however, the decision to include children with special needs in the regular music classroom may be justified for a number of reasons that relate to the nature of music and music learning. Some of such reasons are as follows:

- (i) Music is multimodal in nature, that is, having or involving several modes, modalities, or maxima - stimulating the eyes (seeing), the ears (hearing) and the muscles (physique) along with the mind (emotions). Children with incapacity in one sensory area can participate actively in music via other senses, for example, a child who cannot play musical instruments like the piano, trumpet, violin, guitar, recorder, clarinet, etc., because he/she has some missing fingers, can be a very good singer, dancer or both; a child who cannot read music scores because he/she has sight problems, can improvise good instrumental accompaniment to musical works, etc.
- (ii) Both vocal and instrumental music can be performed at very sophisticated level by rote. This implies that, one does not necessarily need to be able to read or write music as a prerequisite for good performance.

- (iii) Music taps into nonverbal ways of knowing and allows children to express ideas irrespective of verbal abilities, for example, a child who is deficient in verbal communication can communicate freely through gesticulations or with talking drums during performances.
- (iv) Regular singing and listening to others sing can aid the development of vocabulary and understanding of language.
- (v) Music making is generally a collective effort, usually made and learned in groups, not alone. During group performance, handicapped and gifted children can gain a sense of belonging and commitment to a group, which is important to social and mental development.
- (vi) Music, as a performing art, allows for the expression of a wide range of feelings, sentiments, reactions, passions, excitements or sensations and can communicate on very profound levels without using words.
- (vii) Music, as a temporal art, challenges the mind to recognize patterns across time, a skill that often needs to be developed in children with patterning and memory deficits.
- (viii) A single activity in the music classroom can be adapted to a wide range of ability levels. The teacher can develop strategies for teaching rhythms to every student irrespective of his/her degree of capability, for example, rhythmic arrangements can be taught through singing, clapping of hands, jumping around the class, dancing in a circle, walking up and down the class, tapping on hard surfaces, playing of rhythmic instruments, etc.

The Music Teachers' Task

Despite the possible benefits of including music students with special needs in the regular music classroom, such decisions need to be assessed carefully for each child in terms of his/her unique needs and abilities and the demands of the music classroom. The music teachers should note that, part of their school's goal is to place children in a least restricted environment where they can attain their all-out growth, that is, in a situation in which they can succeed and grow but not where they will be ignored or fail. Music teachers in the regular classroom can help the exceptional students to make remarkable progress in the subject as follows:

- **Helping the Neurologically Handicapped**

All the behaviours of the neurologically handicapped children present challenges to the music teacher, who must not only teach musical concepts, but must often try to discover how to help them overcome their challenges and improve their behaviours. The task may not be easy because the degree of the behaviour may vary or may be quite intense at one time and seems to disappear in a matter of seconds or minutes. Such behaviour is similar to normal patterns, but to an exaggerated degree. Campbell and Scott-Kassner (2010) points out that, to most music teachers, the slow learners are a complete enigma; one day they learn certain music concepts to perfection, the next day, they seem to have forgotten every bit of it. Also, in one activity, they excel over others in practical music whilst in the next, they perform like underage children. Their behaviour is unpredictable and almost violent in its intensity. Too often, these aberrant performances are attributed to willful misbehavior, stupidity, or simply, lack of interest. The teacher should know that, in many cases, the children's problems are not their fault. The central nervous system is treating these items in a different way. The teacher of slow learners needs two basic

competencies: a rationale which permits consistent interpretation of the children's learning behaviour and a repertory of techniques by which information can be presented in myriad ways.

The neurologically handicapped children may not have normal intelligence but may be of all intelligence level. They may have other physical handicaps, emotional impairments and may be gifted as well. What makes this complicated is that, the music teacher is always faced with handicapped children of different learning abilities. Obviously the teacher must analyze the place of every child in the class and devise unique remedial and learning activities for each. The teacher must not depend on one method of teaching at all times, rather, he/she must apply varying methods that could address each child's needs as needs arise. He/she must always have an option of using different methods of teaching different music concepts. Such methods are: learning by rote, discussion, memorization, assignment, project, questioning, activity, demonstration and places of interest methods. Also, the music teacher must always consider the ability or intelligence level of each and every child and group them to reflect this when need arises, for example, students with the same ability or intelligence level should be grouped together during discussion or practical lessons, etc.

Like normal children, the neurologically handicapped children usually respond well kinesthetically to music. Some can respond only on this level, while others are capable of all the activities in which other children participate. Kinesthetic response strongly suggests a heavy reliance on rhythm for music activities. Rhythm seems to be perceivable by all children. It is a part of common body movement and functions (walking, running, hopping, dancing, jumping, speech), and it is used to diagnose and remedy problems. The music teacher can help children who cannot move gracefully with the use of rhythm activities. Rhythmic speech helps them to memorize materials that make no impression if presented un-rhythmically. The activity can lead to poetry which opens many new possibilities for mental and physical development, and which can be used effectively with music by most children. Also, neurologically handicapped children with learning problems are able to analyze rhythm and understand the relationship between beat, meter and tempo after developing kinesthetic abilities in response to music. Melody, timbre and dynamics are often most successfully presented in combination or in response to rhythm.

- **Helping the Mentally Retarded**

The promotion of social development and the development of the ability to communicate, especially by speech, are two important goals for which teachers of the mentally retarded children should accomplish. This category of children has the same social needs as normal children but have difficulty relating to people. Behaviour modification has been successfully applied in teaching the mentally retarded. Behaviour shaping, modelling, ignoring, punishment, and verbal reprimands are normally manipulated (Ekeruo, Ikediashi, Ekwe & Nwamuo (1989). It may not sound good to say that most schools in Nigeria lack the necessary staff trained in behaviour modification but children with mental disability are found in great number in educational institutions in the country. Despite this, teachers are mandated to teach for positive results.

Musical activities allow mentally disordered to be contributing group members in an enjoyable experience. Musical games and other activities are especially important to them because play which is an integral part of all children's lives is a major vehicle for learning. Rhythm and movement games that require these children to follow instructions are likely to be more

successful than drill and exercises which are of little benefit to most retarded children. Mentally retarded children are usually not very imaginative and have difficulty dealing with the abstract. These can be improved if the teachers are cognizant of their needs and are willing to promote activities that will stimulate them. Music teachers should note that: games involving dance, music and other arts especially drama, can help improve their mental problem; rhythm and movement games can help develop their large muscles and motivate them to be imaginative; melodic activities encourage socialization and the use of imagination as well as musical growth; music experiences that introduce concepts and vocabulary can help them communicate more effectively and become more aware of their environment.

Music and speech are inseparable and properly guided music activities help prepare mentally retarded children for the abstract symbolism of language. In some cases, it is even possible to place educable mentally retarded children to perform as well as normal children on musical instruments, but many have developed sufficient skill to participate. Unfortunately, their participation sometimes lowers the performance standards of the group. This is a serious problem for those performance groups that are strongly oriented towards performance. Teachers and students must evaluate the purpose of the group in making decisions about accepting special students who cannot meet the established standards of the group. Moreover, mentally disturbed children who are given opportunity to join normal children in a music class often experience personal growth, which adds much pleasure to their lives and help them to function more effectively.

- **Helping the Physically Handicapped**

Despite the severity of the handicaps of some physically handicapped children, music teachers will find easier to work with them than with disturbed or retarded children. Their problems are easy to identify, and decisions concerning the best place for them to be educated may have been specified by experts before they enter school. Generally, handicapped children often enjoy music and gain much from participating in it. Music offers them experiences that are not only aesthetic but often satisfying as well.

It is important that the music teachers know the specific needs of the physically disabled children in order to adapt instruction to meet their needs. Music teachers should therefore note that the goal for all physically handicapped children include physical independence, participation and control. Children with mild physical disabilities are usually able to improve motor and perceptual functioning with intervention and are able to keep up with peers in academic work if properly guided. Children with moderate and severe physical disabilities may have some academic delays as well as motor-coordination problems that keep them from achieving age-level expectations; physical and occupational therapists can help music teachers understand how to best assist them.

Physical disabilities can affect student's free movement in the class. In tackling the problem of movement, the Music teachers should create space for activities and sight lines that will be accessible for those with wheelchairs or clutches; they must not isolate non-ambulatory children in the back of the music classroom or concert hall. Furthermore, during creative movement activities, physically disabled children should be encouraged to move parts of their bodies that they can move. They should be guided to click rhythm patterns with the tongue or open and close their mouths to the beat. If their legs or hands can move, they should move up and down or from left to right and vice versa, to demonstrate the beat of music. Moreover, Music teachers should

introduce standing table or walker for support. They should introduce patterned dance in a space large and open enough that non-ambulatory children can dance in their chairs and using music with manageable tempo. The music teacher assigns a sensitive ambulatory student to dance with a non-ambulatory partner.

Manipulating musical instruments and materials can be very difficult to the physically handicapped children. Solutions can be proffered to some or all of such problems by: providing mallets, strikers or small handles through a foam ball or small rubber ball for easy gripping; attaching small instruments or hammers to gloves or hands with Velcro; re-stringing of string instruments like guitar, viola, violin, cello, and double bass, if possible, for them to strum with the left hand and chord with the right; locking some holes on flutes or recorders with tape to allow children with missing fingers to play with the remaining holes. Moreover, teachers should fasten small instruments to writing desk or music stand for them to be able to strike with ease; use paper tape to attach lightweight instruments like the wood block, gongs and clapper to surfaces; make an abled child to hold an instrument while the physically handicapped with limited mobility strikes it; clip or tape music manuscript paper or other writing materials to a clipboard for easier writing, etc.

- **Helping the Emotionally Disordered**

The range and variety of behaviours in emotionally disordered children is so broad and possibly displeasing such that it is essential for the music teachers to communicate with the school psychologists and teachers in the special education unit to know how best to adapt their teaching for successful mainstreaming. Undoubtedly, most schools, if not all, lack special education teachers and so, assistance must be sought from qualified special education experts elsewhere. Luckily, most emotionally disturbed children have normal intelligence and can be guided to gain needed social skills in the regular music classroom and even at home. Communication with special education experts must be done ahead of time because the emotionally disordered children anticipate consistency in expectations and clarity in the communication of those expectations. They also envisage options, alternatives or choices instead of dictates. They need adequate provision for practice of new skills. The music teachers, therefore, must anticipate areas in their lessons that might be difficult for emotional disordered children and implement procedures that will result in appropriate actions.

- **Helping the Gifted**

The most difficult problem before music teachers is how to make provision for the education of gifted children in the normal music class. The teaching of the gifted raises many vital questions as: What methods are most effective for gifted children? What would be the nature of their course content? What special characteristics are expected of teachers? What evaluation techniques are best suited for them?

Music teachers, like others, are interested in what, how and where to teach gifted children and why? Educators agree that, whether a gifted child is taught in a regular classroom or a special class, he/she needs a significantly enriched curriculum. The enrichment must be both quantitative and qualitative (Gibson, 1976). Qualitative in the sense that, gifted children have greater opportunity than average children to delve more richly into the subtle and abstract aspects of any given topic; they evaluate facts and argument critically to create new ideas and originate new

line of thought. Quantitative in the sense that, their breath of work is enlarged; they are given additional units of work or topic; they participate in activities such as creating or composing music, writing and performing dramatized music or operatic works, performing items other than those in the regular music curriculum or those assigned to all the students in the class. These are necessary to enable those who are capable, do more work and acquire more gainful experiences.

Generally, the process of enrichment may take the form of providing individually prescribed music instruction, special music group or class instruction, music seminars and other music activities geared towards the needs of the learners. With these, brighter students can be given opportunities to pursue more interesting topics beyond the limits of class work; they could explore the limits of their own capacities, for example, when others study scales on the piano, the brighter or gifted students are made to play some tunes or compose songs on the scales studied by others. These additional activities will motivate them to do more. In a bid to satisfy the uniqueness of gifted children, music teachers must have emotional maturity and a healthy self-concept so that they may not regard gifted children as a threat to their position as music educators. They must be superior in intelligence and have broad background of knowledge. They must also be cooperative, sincerer and dedicated in their duties.

Summary and Conclusion

Exceptional children need special attention from teachers trained in special education. These children have the same needs for love, respect, encouragement and friendship as do normal children; they need all necessary facilities that would ensure easy access to education. Teachers must have knowledge of the learners, how they behave and why they behave in certain ways. They must be conversant with the approach best suited for teaching certain categories of children. If they know nothing about science of behaviour, they cannot perform magic to bring about the change each child desires. The music teacher should understand that, to be a successful teacher, he/she must have the required professional knowledge and skills as well as the knowledge about the nature or science of behavior of the children whom he/she wants to teach. The teacher who does not recognize each child's unique nature but emphasizes only his/her condition, denies him/her the recognition of what he/she is.

Every subject teacher must be aware of each child's developmental characteristics, differences, intelligence, personality and mental health, psychology of learning, motivational process, factors affecting learning and learning problems and evaluation techniques which involve use of statistical methods in education and conducting research on educational problems. In other words, for the music teacher to be effective in the regular classroom, he/she must understand the problems of children, their developmental characteristics, and the nature of classroom learning, individual differences in children, effective teaching methods and evaluation procedures.

Contributions to Knowledge

Music and other subject teachers who read this work will find it a useful guide for the inclusion and teaching of all categories of children in the regular classroom until functional special education programmes are provided.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

1. the Federal Ministry of Education in collaboration with States and other appropriate bodies, should provide and coordinate special educational services to exceptional children in all disciplines if they are to develop to their maximum capacity;
2. all necessary facilities that would ensure easy access to education by exceptional children should be provided;
3. architectural designs of school buildings should take into account special needs of the handicapped;
4. training and re-training of personnel in special education should be on the priority list of governments at all levels.

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