

Music Responsiveness and Cultural Practice: Tarok Ethnic Group of Plateau State in Focus

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Abstract : Music is emotional in the sense that it controls people's feelings. The way and manner people react to music at a point in time depend on the type of music that is playing. Music can make someone to march or dance, to cry or laugh, to be happy or sad, to fight or make peace and so on. It therefore makes someone to exhibit some kind of behaviours, either positive or negative. Even dangerous animals have been found to be controlled by music. In the psychiatric homes, mad people are always found to be dancing to music. During funeral ceremony, music singing and dancing are sources of comfort to the bereaved. As a background to the study, Tarok ethnic group in Plateau State was used. The Tarok comprise of Langtang North and South Local Government Areas. The ethnic group of Tarok integrates music in almost all the activities of their lives. A total of six (6) types of folk songs were identified. These songs range from marriages, funeral, royalty, togetherness, war, rituals, festivals, and farming. This paper points out the significance of basic responsiveness of the Tarok people towards the folk songs, their reaction generally whether positive or negative. The methods of data collection employed in this work include oral interview approach, recording of various types of Tarok folk songs, consulting of journals, magazines and textbooks. The researcher used oral interview as her primary source of information which is found to be the most effective procedure in carrying out this task. The songs were textually analyzed with a view to unveiling their meanings, thought processes, and conveying their direction and functions within the context of their rendition. The major findings of the study are that music in Tarok culture covers the physical, mental, emotional and social experiences. The physical aspect is the motor skills, which include dancing and demonstration of the songs. The mental experiences are intellectual levels which include construction and manufacturing of musical instruments, composing songs, teaching and learning etc. Furthermore, this research provided in addition to musical activities, the literature, history and culture of the Tarok communities.

Keywords : cultural, music, practice, responsiveness

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