

Article

Critical Disconnects: Digital Pedagogy, Structural Inequality, and the Foreclosure of Sustainable Music Education in Post-Pandemic Nigeria

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic did not merely disrupt education – it detonated a global crisis that forced institutions into a digital arena for which they were catastrophically unprepared. At the Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education (A.I.F.C.E.), the shift to online classes thrust the institution into the internet space, creating an illusion of visibility that masked a grim reality: the teaching and learning experiences of musical arts students and lecturers were unraveling. This study confronts the urgent question of whether Sustainable Education Goal 2030 remains attainable under such conditions – a question the literature has dangerously neglected. Employing a qualitative design guided by critical theory, the study examined the entire census population of musical arts lecturers alongside a purposive sample of ten 300-level and ten 400-level students. Thematic analysis of interview data exposed a brutal chasm between institutional digital visibility and actual learning outcomes. The virtual space, far from being a liberating pedagogical frontier, became a site of compounded failure. Students were crippled by the absence of Android phones, computers, internet connectivity, and electricity – basic infrastructures treated elsewhere as givens, here as luxuries. Compounding this catastrophe, both lecturers and students were demonstrably unprepared, even incompetent, for the digital demands thrust upon them. We argue with urgency that without massive financial intervention to provide the technologies essential for digital musicianship, the Sustainable Education Goal of 2030 is not merely threatened – it is effectively doomed. We demand inclusive musical arts spaces forged through rigorous preparation of both educator and learner, laser-focused on the non-negotiable imperative of sustainable development.

Keywords: Musical arts spaces, Pandemic pedagogies, Sustainable education, Alvan Ikoku

Introduction

Sustainable Education underscores that every human being should be allowed to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. It is an inclusion of key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning. The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak brought about unprecedented changes to the education system worldwide, reshaping considerably teaching and learning practices and prompting important conceptual and epistemological shifts in music education (Camlin & Lisboa, 2021). Thorly (2023) asserted that the pandemic also ushered in changes such as the integration of technology for various modes of learning and music performance in the digital medium. The online activities of the COVID-19 pandemic evolved musical arts spaces and also heightened the visibility of the institution's understudy on internet landscape. This study contends that with the multiplication of musical arts spaces, integration of technologies, and visibility on the internet, the attainment of a sustainable future through sustainable education will be a mirage when the greater majority of the students are deprived of access to education because of the associated challenges: unpreparedness of the teachers and students, unavailability of technologies, poor funding of education, and so forth.

Musical Arts Spaces

Musical arts, in the words of Nzewi (2007), are a holistic art consisting of music and its siblings: dance, drama, theatre, and applied arts. In tradition, it is taught and practiced holistically, informally, and orally, whereas in school, it is separated, performed, and taught formally and notated. Ogunrinade et al (2012), in discussing Music Education, approached the definition from the integrative perspective when they said that it is the process by which musical knowledge and skills are developed through learning at school, college, and universities, and the informal traditional setting. Stressing further, they said it is a means societies use in order to transmit music and musical skills from one generation to the next. Music Education, in their view, involves, implicitly, ideas about what music is (and is not), where music comes from, and what is the purpose or function of music, emphasizing that the basic means of sustaining music from one generation to the next is by both informal and formal teaching and learning.

In the school system, each of the arts siblings has its own department, though housed in the same School (School of Arts), like in the institution's understudy. School Musical Arts, in the context of this study, centers on the music aspect of the musical arts. The characteristic feature of the practice/performance of the musical arts is communal, collaborative, unity in diversity, dependence in independence, and individuality in community. These and more that musical arts hold can be mirrored in an ensemble group, as in a physical classroom.

Musical arts spaces have remained developmental. The first physical musical arts space of an African child is the family, with the mother and the siblings as the first teachers. Then the community spaces before school (Olorunsogo, 2007). At school, physical classroom space is an arrangement whereby the lecturers and the students are physically present and interact face-to-face. The lecturer moves freely in order to coordinate the musical activities of the classroom. Even when the lecturer is seen as the pivot on which the wheel of the classroom activities rotates, instruction is interactive, and the lecturer is more of a facilitator. The lecturer observes the students psychologically and emotionally. The physical classroom setting affords the lecturers and students the opportunity to know themselves and share their problems. The bond that accrues from the physical classroom is very interesting because it helps the students to know each other's abilities and capabilities, which will benefit them in musical activities beyond the classroom. Techniques of sound production, as are peculiar to each instrument, are easily inculcated in the physical classroom. In the words of Ebirim et al (2013), the Nigerian educational system is crafted for the physical classroom.

The musical art spaces during the pandemic shifted to virtual community spaces. Virtual community spaces, according to Encarta dictionary, are a group of people communicating with each other via the internet. In the context of this work, it is teaching and learning online. The medium is mainly through the internet, computers, smartphones, and service provider networks. In the virtual community space, the lecturer lectures from the comfort of his/her home as well as the student. The lecturer and the student may agree on a set time, for example, in Google Classroom for the class. On the other hand, the lecturer may send a voice note to the students on their group platform, and individual students will respond to it at his/her own time. The functionality of these exercise depend majorly on the availability of electricity, Wi-Fi, or data. There is no physical contact between the lecturer and the students, and as such, some physical touch, for instance, in drum playing:

curving of the hand, rubbing to get certain effects, and so forth, are sacrificed. Even when these techniques can be explained its effectiveness in actual performance cannot be overemphasized.

Review of Different Pedagogy During the Pandemic

Within the context of higher education, institutions have demonstrated their capacity to offer remote and hybrid learning for the majority of academic studies during lockdown, including music-related disciplines. While music teachers have experienced the need for a “pandemic pivot” as it relates to music teaching in/through/with technology, they have also experienced the need for *access* (Bell et al. 2022). Actions have been taken to facilitate emergency remote teaching, retain students’ learning interest, prioritize the health and safety of teachers and students, and ensure the fluency of the kinds of technology used to leverage and support music learning.

While the fusion of technology and pedagogy has become integral to nurturing students’ musical creativity and engagement during lockdown, little attention has been paid to the negative consequences of these disruptions. The urgency of facilitating emergency remote teaching has overshadowed efforts to uphold universal values that are indistinct from acts of teaching and learning advocated in critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2020), such as social justice and democracy (Benedict et al., 2015; Woodford, 2005).

Literature has revealed the multidimensional effects on teachers, learners, and the broader educational environment, including the psychological impact on teachers and students (Rosset et al., 2021), pedagogical approaches and adaptations (Calderón-Garrido & Gustems-Carnicer, 2021), and revisions to both policy and practice (Shaw & Mayo, 2021). The pandemic also ushered in a series of changes ranging from the integration of technology for various modes of learning (de Bruin & Merrick, 2022; Merrick & Joseph, 2023) to music performance in the digital medium (Howard et al., 2021), all of which significantly shaped and transformed many of the conventional pre-pandemic frameworks and practices (Thorley, 2023). Some of these changes within the music education sector have persisted, even as life returns “back to normal,” resulting in the embracing of practices characterized by digital pedagogies and the shifting roles of teachers (Bozkurt et al., 2022). Technology has been integrated into various aspects of popular music education, including the use of digital musical instruments and computational devices as performance tools, music streaming, and video sharing platforms for the appreciation and understanding of a variety of popular music genres, digital audio workstations (DAWs) for recording and production, and sound synthesis to achieve timbral adjustment for specific musical goals, leading to increased student agency in learning popular music (Cremata, 2017; Powell, 2019). However, amidst the celebrations, several challenges, among them a lack of access and technological determinism, have long been present. These have been compounded by inadequate technical competence among music teachers in integrating technology into their teaching practices (Gall, 2017b) and a lack of consideration for educational affordances within the realm of music software design (Cheng & Leong, 2017).

Scholarly discussions have explored the role of technology in digital musicianship training in different learning contexts, revealing the diverse skills required in various computer-mediated environments. For example, Cheng (2019) investigated the development of digital musicianship in a laptop ensemble through a mixed-method study, uncovering

technologically oriented musical and non-musical development among participating students, while Chen (2022) used mobile devices to explore popular music education students' engagement and the collaborative processes involved in group creativity, within the context of the development of their digital musicianship. Partti (2014) conducted a case study analyzing the music-making practices of digital musicians, highlighting the emphasized aspects of musical versatility and flexibility, as well as mobility between various musical communities of practice. These scholarly attempts not only reveal how relevant knowledge and skills in digital musicianship can be fostered in various teaching and learning contexts, but also hint at the shift in music education toward more technologically oriented and digitally mediated practices (Hugill, 2018). While musicianship in conventional teaching and learning contexts concerns competencies in creating, performing, listening, and analyzing music (Willoughby, 2021), the kinds of knowledge and skills required in popular music are notable for their focus on technical ability, versatility, musical understanding, and musical creativity (Green, 2002).

Sustainable Education and the Pandemic

According to UNESCO 2014, "Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) allows every human being to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. It is an inclusion of key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. Ogunrinade (2015), discussing sustainable development, stated the obvious of major emphasis in relation to the environmental movement. He asserted that sustainability encompasses three pillars, or spheres: the ecological, the social, and the economic. A model that looks at other areas of life, the natural and the man-made, and recognizes that you cannot look at any one of these without considering the others. Sustainability and sustainable development, in his words, are about developing an ecologically aware, socially just, and economically responsible society. It requires participatory and teaching methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behaviour and take action for sustainable development. It consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios, and making decisions in a collaborative way. Pedagogical approaches in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) encourage a shift towards active, participative, and experiential learning methods that engage the learner and make a real difference to their understanding, thinking, and ability to act.

The coronavirus disease of 2019 had a global effect and its consequent innovative developments. Conspicuous among them were the school closure, physical distance, washing of hands, using sanitizer, donning a face mask, lockdown, and implementation of home-bound techniques. (Onwuhanze & Udeme, 2023; Sintema, 2020). It was revealed (UNESCO, 2020) that about 1.6 billion people were unable to attend school in 195 nations. This no doubt brought about losing educational chances. Schools have to explore different ways to provide access to education using technology like online courses, video lessons, and electronic textbooks. A variety of internet platforms were used by the governments to support educational continuity. According to a UNESCO poll from 2020, out of the 61 nations surveyed, the majority of the education systems had distance learning policies in place, as hinted by Onwuhaeze et al (2023). Consequently, the concept of e-learning was carried out remotely, and the digital platform was adopted by schools, teachers, families, and students in general.

Before the crisis, the usage of digital content in education was rather rare. Only 20% of nations used digital learning resources in the classroom. Only 10% of the world's nations have more advanced digital learning capabilities that have made some of the available educational materials available outside the classroom. No nation has a standard digital curriculum for teaching and learning (Onwuhaeze et al, 2023; World Bank, 2020). As a way of mitigating the negative impact of the pandemic, many countries have decided to switch completely to e-learning. E-learning is a teaching/learning strategy where instructional content is delivered virtually. It involves the use of technology to deliver learning/teaching, with a variety of embedded online components. Implementing e-learning has associated methodologies such as flipped learning, hybrid learning, blended learning, and distance learning.

Technology has been integrated in more detail. Use of digital musical instruments and compositional devices as performance tools, music streaming, and video sharing platforms for the appreciation and understanding. Underneath these benefits were a lack of access, technological determinism, inadequate technological competence among music teachers in integrating technology into their teaching practice (Gall, 2017b), lack of educational affordance within the realm of music software design (Cheng and Leong, 2017).

Chronicle of Alvan Ikoku University

The Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri was established in May 1963 as the Advanced Teacher Training College (ATTC), Owerri, owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria but with the responsibilities of the Federal Government of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funding and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as Executing and Participating Agency.

In 1973, by Edict No. 11 of May 31, 1973 of the East Central State of Nigeria, the Advanced Teacher Training College Owerri became the Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri. By this Edict, the College, as an autonomous Higher Education Institution, was granted the power to award the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) or any certificate or Diploma to students of the College who qualify for the award. In 1976, the ownership of the college shifted to the newly created Imo State, with its capital city located in Owerri. The College commenced the award of the Bachelor's in Education (B.Ed) degree in affiliation with the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1981. In 2007, the college was taken over by the Federal Government.

In 2012, the college equally commenced the award of the Professional Diploma in Education (PGDE) in conjunction with the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). In 2015, the Federal Government of Nigeria announced the upgrade of the College to a Federal University of Education alongside three other colleges that were later put on hold but have now been activated in 2023. This decision for the upgrade was a response to a long call by various stakeholders to reposition an institution that has a global renown with a distinctive pedigree as a Centre of excellence in Teacher Education, and was based on the strength of recommendations by various Government panels set up to assess the strength and structure of the College. Most notable among these reports was the Yabani Report (:15), which named Alvan Ikoku College of Education as one of the five Colleges of Education in the country developed as centres of excellence and "were adjudged suitable for training teachers up to the Bachelor of Education degree level..."

The Educational Reforms Committee of the Obasonjo administration equally recommended that the college be made an autonomous degree-awarding institution. The upgrade was globally commended as a welcome response.

In all its years of existence thus far, the College has navigated the entire landscape of teacher education and has produced top-level manpower for the Nigerian economy, not only in the educational sector, but equally in the political, administrative, and institutional sectors of the nation's economy. The College has also remained a Centre of Excellence in the production of effective teachers with an enviable academic record unsurpassed by any institution of comparable status in Africa.

Academic Staff disposition: as at 22nd April, 2022, the college boasts of over 225 Ph.D holders, 357 Master's degree holders, and 125 Bachelors' degree holders, making up to a total of 742 academic staff. Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education (A.I.F.C.E.), Owerri currently has the highest number of Ph.D holders among the colleges of Education in Nigeria. This adds to 11 non-academic staff with Ph. D.s, highlighting the value placed on intellectual development by the College. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund intervention has been highly utilized in the College.

One of the landmark achievements of the College was the online teaching and learning initiative put in place to tide the college through its academic activities during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ajileye, 2022), which occasioned a lockdown of social and person-to-person activities around the world. The serving Nigerian Minister of Education, Mallam Adamu Adamu, on 2nd April 2020, convened an online teleconference with heads of all tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The main agenda of the meeting was on keeping up academic activities in the nation's tertiary institutions while the pandemic lasted. The then Provost, Dr. D.C. Anyanwu, was probably one of the very few heads of institutions who, rather than dwell on the foreseeable challenges of the novel idea, immediately took the Federal Government's initiative as an authentication of the vision and plans of the College towards a sustainable platform for engaging the students as long as the lockdown lasted. The College embraced the education-friendly Google Classroom in order to provide the opportunity for lecturers to continue communication and engagement during the unprecedented global COVID-19 lockdown.

The College deployed the Google Classroom application and organized online orientation activities on its operations for Deans, Heads of Departments, lecturers, and students in the College in less than a week after the Honorable Minister's directives, while actually teaching and learning commenced 11 days later. The online teaching and learning experience in the College stood the College out as a pioneer among its peers. By this giant stride, the College not only asserted its position as the *first among equals*, but equally launched itself into another pioneering innovation. The College effectively concluded teaching and learning for the first semester of the 2019/2020 academic year, and also started and concluded teaching and learning for the second semester of the same academic session. The initiative was so successful in the College that a few institutions around the country consulted the College for advice. The initiative was one crucial factor that helped the college catch up with its academic calendar without any major loss of time to the students during the global COVID-19 lockdown period.

History was made in 2021 when the Webmotric ranking of the tertiary institutions was released, with A.I.F.C.E, Owerri, emerging as the best-ranked college of Education in

Nigeria. This emerged from the giant stride in ensuring that the Learn-at-Home Programme initiated by the Federal Ministry of Education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic was given serious effect in the college. The eLearning platforms utilized by the College during the period greatly increased the visibility of the College in the internet space, and served as a critical indicator towards the apex ranking of the College.

It is commendable though that A.I.F.C.E. Owerri emerged the best ranked college of Education in Nigeria and other notable achievements made by the institution before and during the COVID 19 pandemic; however, of critical importance to this study is an investigation into how the evolving musical arts space of shifting from physical classroom to virtual community space and the digital pedagogy at the COVID '19 pandemic will help in achieving the sustainable education goal by 2030 hence the lacuna this study intends to fill. The aim of the study specifically will entail: (1) ascertaining the benefits accrued from the shift from classroom to virtual space; (2) understanding the perception of the students and lecturers on how the shift hampered teaching and learning during COVID-19; and (3) finding out how the shift will help in achieving Education sustainable goal by 2030.

Theoretical Underpin

The critical theory in education is a philosophy that inquires about societal beliefs, specifically around privileges. Its goal is to offer education to all, as well as to emphasize inequality in the educational system. This philosophy also considers the various perspectives of the advantaged groups of society. This theory questions how our educational system can best offer education to all people. It offers opportunities and understanding. The theory focuses on overcoming social constructs that oppress people in society. It argues that social constructs can benefit certain people at the expense of others. Max Horkheimer (born February 14, 1895, Stuttgart, Germany – died July 7, 1973, Nuremberg) was a German philosopher who, as director of Social Research, developed an original interdisciplinary movement known as critical theory that combined Marxist-oriented political philosophy with social and cultural analysis informed by empirical research. In a broader sense, many different strands of critical theory have emerged as forms of reflective engagement with the emancipatory goals of various social and political movements, such as feminist theory, critical race theory, queer theory, and postcolonial/decolonial theory.

As a philosophy of education developed from critical theory, critical pedagogy views teaching as a political act that involves the politics of power relations and agency both within and beyond the classroom boundaries (Freire, 1970). In times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, critical pedagogy has seen difficulties and tensions that have moved away from democratizing the learning spaces (Gentles, 2021), further emphasizing the market-driven approaches and encouraging neoliberal practices in education (Teräs, 2020).

Methodology

Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with the lecturers and students. All the lecturers in the department of music formed the population. Twenty musical arts students were purposively sampled from the final year degree students and the penultimate class. This is because these were the sets that experienced the COVID-19 lockdown and the resultant shift to virtual classroom instruction. Participant observation fieldwork was carried out during the period. Data were analyzed thematically.

Results

Question 1: What are the benefits of shifting the school musical arts from the physical classroom to virtual spaces during the pandemic?

An interview with Dr. Nwaoha on 18th May, 2023, revealed thus: “the birth of online teaching and learning in the college as a result of the pandemic has elevated the institution to a high height in the internet space”. An interlocutor, Dr Akor (23rd May, 2023), stated that the greatest positive effect of the pandemic was on the strengthening of online instruction that has come to stay in this post-pandemic era. Dr. Ekezie also concurred, thus “the pandemic has brought online instruction to the limelight as you can see all the workshops that are being organized to enhance its effectiveness”. Ogechukwu, 300 level student (12th May, 2023) responded thus: the birth of online teaching in the college was due to the pandemic, and it is a good one”.

An interviewee, Dr. Egwu Kalu, on 18th May, said that “shifting to virtual community during the pandemic gave rise to various technologies for instruction. It also pushed the lecturers to develop themselves to meet the challenge. In his statement, before the lockdown, the Goggle classroom has not used in the college as it is now, as the management has made it compulsory. Anukuru Chizaram, 300 level student (12 May, 2023) opined on the shift thus: “a positive impact was the exposure of the students to different platforms for their learning, like WhatsApp, Zoom, Telegram, Snapchat, etc. A student freely expresses him/herself interacting with his/her gadget: laptop or phone alone in the comfort of his/her home.”

Question 2: How did the shift to virtual space hamper teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?

According to an interlocutor, Dr Nwosu (12th May, 2023), “online teaching is better by text. The practicality of music requires more innovative measures to handle. Music practical is seriously hampered either with synchronous or non-synchronous teaching because some curves or strokes has to be practiced physically before the student can get it right”. Dr. Egwu-Kalu, the Band Master (12th May, 2023) lend his voice thus: “there was inactivity for the band because the system was not prepared for it”. He further stated that even when life streaming could have been of immense help yet the practical or physical aspect of the instruction was still lacking. Dr Egwu continued, “I downloaded some software on violin, viola, saxophone, guitar, and so forth, and found out that I do not know their playing techniques. I couldn’t understand the instructions from the software. I still needed a guide. Life streaming would be wonderful for performers but not for novices”. Mr Obiesie, the Chorale Director (24th May, 2023) observed thus: I was able to teach my theoretical classes like History of Western Music, but there was no ensemble activity”. Mr Emeka, an interviewee (12th May, 2023) stated thus: “Some musical instruments are so expensive that individual students may not be able to afford their own”. He stated an instance where a lecturer may play a piano excerpt and upload it for the students to study and play. It becomes impossible in his words for the student who does not have the instrument to follow the instruction or participate.

Anukurum Chizaram (12th May, 2023), responding to the impact of shifting the musical arts to virtual community during the pandemic, averred thus: “the negative impact of the shift of the musical arts to virtual classroom on students’ learning is the sacrifice of critical thinking or brainstorming”. She aired that some students only learn to pass the exam,

hence when they are given a test or an assignment, they will just go to the internet and copy and paste for the lecturer. This view agrees with Dr. Nwosu's observation that Artificial Intelligence benefits lazy students. He lamented that some software has so much watered-down learning that students don't give themselves to the rigors of study that birth innovation. Dr Lewis (23rd May, 2023), reacted thus: "Yes, we taught during the lockdown, but how many students participated? A greater number of students were not coming online because of their lazy attitude toward their studies.

Chukwukere Solomon, a final year degree student (12th May, 2023), highlighted that the main problem he encountered during the lockdown was a lack of data and erratic electricity that seriously affected the online learning. In an interview with Dr Egwu-Kalu (12th May, 2023), he lamented thus: "No electricity, some students don't have smartphones, while others who might have don't have money to buy data, and there is no wifi". Emmanuellar, a third-year degree student (12th May, 2023), stated thus: "Finance was a crucial issue, network failure, erratic electricity, and a whole lot, and worst still, these students were in their villages and towns where the needed facilities were not available. In an interview with Dr. Ekezie (12th May, 2023), he stated thus: quite several lecturers did not lecture during the pandemic because they did not have laptops and no money to buy.

Question 3: What are the chances that shifting to virtual space will help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal by 2030?

An interviewee, Dr. Akor (24th May, 2023) stated thus: In 2015, when the Sustainable Development Goal for 2030 was predicted, the shift to virtual teaching and learning as a result of COVID was not envisaged, hence the interception will no doubt hamper the intended achievement. With observable facts such as the incompetence of some lecturers, non-availability of online infrastructure, and poor education funding, it is doubtful if the Educational Sustainable goal will be achieved as intended in 2030. Dr Lewis (23rd May, 2023), reacted thus: "Yes, we taught during the lockdown, but how many students participated? A greater number of students were not coming online, some because of their lazy attitude to their studies, some because of a lack of an Android phone, while some because of lack of power supply, and a host of other things. Now that blended learning is advocated for without addressing these divides, achieving the Sustainable Education Goal by 2030 will sink like other goals." Mr Obiesie, another interlocutor, responded thus: "Is Nigeria part of those for which the goal is set? It is not achievable when more students are dropping out of school because of poverty. The government has no plans for education at all".

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed a mismatch between the visibility of the institution and the invisibility of the teaching/learning experience of the lecturers and students. A major finding of the shift of musical arts education to virtual community space as aired by most interlocutors is the birth or advancement of online instruction and an expansion range of technologies which concurs with Kovaleva, Bosten, Brandão, and Forgacs (2020), that the future of universities in a digitalized world generates availability of information in its various forms: text, audio, video, which reduces cope of search for relevant and interesting content, increases rate of its processing; digitalization expands the range of technologies mastered by students, including mobile learning, and increase in availability of online courses makes it possible to learn at any suitable time. Our thesis from the theory that

guided the study, the digital pedagogy of the pandemic period benefited certain people at the expense of others. This gap between the political power and the poor majority will make it impossible to achieve sustainable education that seeks equality for all students.

Nikulina and Starichenko (2018), working on the Pedagogical Education in Russia, found that the new generation can hardly formulate issues and find solutions. The same issue was discovered in the study where Nwosu highlighted that some software makes students lazy. Kovaleva et al. also mentioned that their analysis of students' opinions reveals that a drawback of digital education is the lack of required material resources for students from low-income families. This observation concurs with this study on the lack of funds and materials. The urgency of facilitating emergency remote teaching has overshadowed efforts to uphold universal values that are indistinct from acts of teaching and learning advocated in critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2020), such as social justice and democracy (Benedict et al., 2015; Woodford, 2005).

Krainov and Izvestiya (2019) stated that to advance online instruction is a necessity to absorb a lot of information. They emphasize that the most important property of a person adequate to the digital economy is that this person knows digital technologies and applies them in professional activity. This becomes a crucial issue for musical education, where technology is not all-encompassing towards practical music teaching and learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the shift of the school musical art to the virtual community during the COVID-19 pandemic had both positive and negative outcomes. The institution, like other studies (Pereverzeva et al, 2020; Kovaleva et al., 2020; Ajileya, 2022), revealed that online instruction brings institutions to the limelight. This lofty height is not experienced in the classroom, as revealed through this study, that music practicality was seriously hampered during the pandemic, as both Band and Chorale masters opined inactivity for the ensemble. It was revealed that the greater majority of the students did not participate because of a lack of crucial facilities and a lack of funds. The lecturers, on the other hand, were poorly equipped for online teaching, as some of them denied owning a laptop.

Musical arts education at the virtual community space during the COVID-19 pandemic had a serious negative impact on the teaching and learning of musical arts, hence an advocate for complementary measures. Online instruction has come to stay at the post-pandemic era but crucial to musical arts lecturers is the need to always complement their instruction with physical classroom instruction because of the practical nature of the arts. Our argument towards enhancing musical arts education at the post-pandemic is inclusivity of instruction, which involves physical and virtual spaces. Critically important is a strive towards attaining the sustainable educational goal of 2030, which will need the government to fund education and alleviate the poverty level of the nation, as many students are dropping out of school. There is no curriculum on ESD; hence, the creativity of the lecturer towards inculcating sustainability: the ecological, the social, and the economic; in his/her instruction cannot be overemphasized.

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