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## Notational Devices for African Dance Documentation

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### Abstract

The ephemeral nature of dance makes its recreation difficult resulting in different forms of presentations of the same dance at different occasions. This does not make the dance presentation stick in the memory of the informed audience especially in the case of scholastic review. It is only fragments of the dance that could be recaptured. It is the attempt at eroding this problem that made the Westerners propose concepts of dance notation techniques which places dance movements on scales similar to musical notations to enable future retrieval and representation. African dances do not have special codes as Western dances. The dances are very energetic, though in various degrees, employing the use of all parts of the body in execution of movement. As a result, notational symbols are difficult to realise. Since most traditional dances seem to be lost for lack of documentation, the chapter attempts to build a notational technique for African dances using musical note value, dance principles and floor patterns for easy retrieval. It is against this backdrop that detailed conceptual, technical and descriptive analysis is undertaken, to foster a pragmatic and functional dance documentation device for African dances to serve as a reservoir for modern and future practitioners is undertaken.

**Keywords:** Notations, Devices, African Dance, Documentation

### Introduction

Africans have a rich artistic heritage which they experience as a communal activity. They are inseparable from their art. It is deeply engraved in the fabrics of the society. Artistic presentations are realised in three major forms of the Visual which has to do with printing, sculpture, graphics, and architecture; the literary involving oratory and written works like prose, play and poems; and performance which majorly incorporates drama, music and dance. Performance involves a meeting and mingling of two human groups, the audience and performers who are bound together in an immediate experience sharing in a sensual communion as one affects the other. Dance "is a very spectacular and prominent form of performance because it often serves as a focal point for the revelation of other forms" (Ufford-Azorbo 1). John Weaver defines dance as "an elegant and regular movement, harmoniously composed of beautiful attitudes,

and concentrated graceful posture of the body, and parts thereof" (Safrá 935). Noverre, a famous French critic and choreographer is quoted to have written in 1760 to corroborate the above claim that "Dance...is the art of composing steps with grace, precision and facility to the time and bars given in the music ..." (Camp 24). IniekeUfford (3) attributes the origin of dance to breathing which according to him is 'body movements to the rhythm of life". This view enjoys the support of Graham who identifies contraction and release as exhalation and inhalation respectively as the basis for all movement. For Holm, movement is derived from "tension and relaxation" which reiterates the breathing system as the initiating force of movement (Thomas 66). Movement, which is the agency of dance, evidently reveals different things which can be mood, personality or the surrounding of the mover (Ufford 3).

African dance is shaped through the way the African thinks, feels, believes, and reacts to the physical resources which surround the dancer and her intangible cosmos. This is corroborated by Berger who believes that "every dance tradition is related to a particular environment and historical development of one ethnic group ... or the other" (Enekwe 24) It embodies legends and myths of the people as it is a traditional source of communication. This communication takes place in two groups, between the dancers and the audience, and between the community and the supernatural world as it embodies the collective essence of the people. Idamoyibo's postulation that "dance is very essential in masking because it has a hypnotic effect on the performers and the audience" (69) corroborates this view. Ajayi (187) further posits, "that area of liminality where the ephemeral nature of dance fuses with transcendental powers.... This is possibly why some cultures regard dances as a sacred art". Dance, therefore, houses the totality of life and culture expressed in pure visible form. Green is in full support of this position as she reaffirms, quoting Keita Fodeba, that "unlike other forms of dance, African dance is not detached from the lives of the people, but is a spontaneous emanation of the people", (16).

African dance styles are diverse. They range from the very energetic in most cases, subtle and lyrical in other cases. The dance has a complete movement vocabulary as it employs the use of all parts of the body. Pearl Primus' description of African dance is a very succinct paradigm. To her,

African dance forms are strong, virile and vital with a feeling of dynamic thrust and resistance. They are exceedingly controlled, having the power to project the gentle wind or the raging storm .... African dance has urgency. The dancer has direction and purpose. The purpose is to communicate. This is why he can assume the proportions of an ant or a giant. For him and for his people, the dance is life! (5).

The beauty of these dances is seen in facial expressions like smiles and other gestures, in body decorations and costume which are elaborate, in props, musical accompaniment and so on. Beauty in African dance is "primarily in the rhythmic action". It also embraces all elements involved in the production of the

dance. Some like the anklet-bangles, hand rattles which act with and within the rhythmic structure of the performance to confirm and enhance its dominance, the composure of the dancers, smiles where necessary, body decoration and props contribute to the overall beauty of the performance each in its own way. For Enekwe (28), beauty in Nigerian dance lies in the combination of "purposiveness and high aesthetic concern, its celebration and reflection of communal life...seeking to unite the dancer with the dance, its embodiment of collective beliefs ..." Beauty is central to the appreciation of African dance (Primus 5) as such, dance functions as an aesthetic experience for the African people. Another factor which distinguishes dance cultures is the "semiotic resources of dance gestures and styles which affect choreographic vision" (Nzewi 439).

Dance manifests in the creative use of the human body movement in accordance with rhythm in well specified timing and spatial designs for the purpose of communication and entertainment. A truly universal definition of dance must, therefore, return to the fundamental principle that dance is an art form or activity that utilises the body and the range of movement of which the body is capable for self-expression, aesthetic pleasure, and entertainment. Most times dances in their traditional or modern forms are lost or inaccessible because of their non-verbal, ephemeral and mixed nature. This nature makes retrieval of dances complex as it is an art which happens and disappears. Being an intangible art, dance exists in the bodies of the performers and dies with them. What is left is the memory of it and how long can it be retained? It is this transient nature of dance that has made its literature legendary instead of records. Camp (14) supports this view in her postulation that "... of all the arts dance has most successfully evaded extended scholarly and philosophical scrutiny by its unwillingness to stand still long enough to be examined". According to Langer (169) "No art suffers more misunderstanding, sentimental judgement, and mystical interpretation than the art of dancing". Copeland is of the same view as he quotes Deborah Jowett's confession thus "those of us who write about dance sometimes find that in our anxiety to capture and chronicle a notoriously ephemeral art we do it an inadvertent disservice: we focus so intently on it that we sever it from the culture that spawned it and which it serves" (12).

As a performing art, the survival of any dance work depends either on its being preserved through tradition or on its being written down in some form. The former option is subject to the radical changes as a result of broken tradition or encroachment by other traditional values. As such the latter option is important and more dependable in the preservation of dance. The nature of the body that is, three dimensional with its complexities in movements compounds the difficulty in recording the time and energy patterns. African dances, being mostly polyrhythmic in nature, make it even more demanding when considering scholastic criticism especially as appropriate notational device is not yet arrived at despite their pervasiveness as a cultural unifier. This chapter becomes very significant to address the problem of documentation and retrieval of these dances.

### Dance notation devices

Dance notation is a device which employs the use of symbols to represent human movements executed in dance practice. It also records the form of movement rendition. The symbols could be simulated using graphs, figures, floor patterns, numbers, alphabets, descriptive words or stylized drawings. Dance and movement scholars and practitioners have over the years devised various. Just as there has been a standardised musical score notate music pieces for easy retrieval, dance notation often presents a readable score, a written record of dance movements.

Attempts have been made on dance notation the world over. There is, nevertheless, a growing body of dance record even with their attendant problems. Safra (943 – 944) gives evidences of dance records like those of the ancient Egyptians, who used hieroglyphs to represent dance movements and the native Indians who codified dance into a series of rules determining the gestures used to depict different themes and emotions. In the Renaissance period dances were recorded through simple form of verbal abbreviation, with one letter standing for each dance step. For example, the letter R stood for reverence. This method was adequate at that time because dances of that time were simple and individual steps were well known. The 17th century witness the emergence of more complex floor patterns and movement and so track drawing was used. This system was devised by Raoul-Auger Feuillet in his *Choregraphie, ou l'art de cecrire la danse* (choreography, or the art of describing dance). It recorded foot positions and combinations of steps and floor patterns but was unable to record movements in the upper parts of the body. The French man Arthur, published *La steno-choregraphie*, in 1852 using stick figures to record movements. This could not record the timing or musical co-ordination of movements. Vladimir Stepanor in 1892 made an advancement on this by publishing *Alphabet des mouvements de corps humain* (Alphabet of movements of the human body) a system based on musical notes that would give anatomical detail and the duration of the movement. This had as its major disadvantage monotony since it strongly geared towards ballet and could not accommodate the wider range of movements being developed through modern dance techniques.

Methods of dance notation became more sophisticated through time notable among which is Labanotation introduced by Rudolf Laban in 1928. This system of notation is used and taught in the United States by Dance Notation Bureau. It has a complex series of principles for analysing the full range of human movement by recording the positions of the body, the patterns of the steps and rhythm, and the way in which movements should be executed taking into consideration its dynamics and where the accent on the movement should lie. All these are done on a staff by means of symbols. To Elizabeth Burtner, "... the only valid criticism of labanotation is that it is such a comprehensive system. Writing it is time consuming and difficult task and there are far too few professional notators at present" (127). There is yet another technique of notation created by Doris Green called Greenotation. This was inspired by her experience of Labanotation. According to Nichols et al (107), "Greenotation was

created to notate African music and dance accurately and can account for the carriage of the body reflected in African dance that differs from western dance (Zulu, 2015)". This endeavor was not holistically successful for "As with much of the African Diaspora, the communal nature of the movement in ways that a dancer responds to the drummer or audience via call and response cannot be accurately notated..." (107).

Choreology, developed by Joan and Rudolf Benesh in 1955, is another notational device based on a more clearly visual rather than symbolic form. It is written on a five-line stave, recording the dancer's position as viewed from behind. The top line shows the position of the top of the head; the second, the shoulders, the third, the waist; the fourth, the knees and the fifth, the feet. Special symbols such as lines, dots, and crosses indicate what each part of the body is doing. Other symbols show the quality or dynamics of the movement, its rhythm and accent, and the group formations of the dancers. It is particularly used in Britain by the Royal Ballet of England.

#### **Documentation of African dances**

Labanotation, Choreology and the likes though used in the documentation of dances never succeeded in the notation of African dances. This is because dances of Africa, are "characterised by multi-meter with simultaneous movements of various body parts" as such, "it is difficult to isolate individual movements or distinct segments and document as script in multi-metric African dances". Though several attempts have been made by scholars to notate African dances prominent among which is that made by Peggy Harper. This could not succeed because of the above mentioned nature of African dance. She therefore observed that "Dance notations, forms of symbolic transcription are extensively used in Europe and America to record dance. However, these transcriptions are too reliant upon personal and cultural factors to be trusted as a recording technique in Africa where a vast amount of material of great variety needs to be recorded in field conditions" (Layiwola 259). Even the music of Africa is greatly misunderstood because it is mostly played on percussion instruments. Doris Green believes that this is so misunderstood because

African music is based on the spoken language of the people, and considering the number of different languages spoken on the continent of Africa made it difficult for the people to be able to create a single written system that would incorporate all the different instruments under one alphabet wherein each student, viewer, or outsider could read the symbol and be able to produce the indicated sound each and every time. Africa had been seeking a way to write her music so it could be shared among other African peoples; but they were unsuccessful (Zulu 90).

The multiplicity of cultures in Africa does not make for a precise style of identification known solely to be African; as such there is no uniform dance style which could represent the various creations of the different ethnic groups. This truly makes the attempt at documentation through notation almost impossible as there is no “common heritage of a ‘universal’ alphabet” (Layiwola, 261). Jones therefore concludes that “while the usefulness of Labanotation for the documentation of Western theatre dance has been acknowledged its application to the documentation of African and Caribbean derived dance forms is questionable” (122).

Video recording is another mode of dance documentation in two dimensions which could most often be misleading. Nevertheless, it is more readily accessible than written notation, though it fails to represent the three-dimensional nature of dance and is unable to record movements in the case of one dancer being concealed behind another. This notwithstanding, it may be useful when used as a backup for some form of written notation, particularly as it can provide a record of how individual dancers interpret particular roles during the course of performance which no notational system has tried to document. Other notational techniques are in existence and there are still attempts at different measures of recording dance. But as Hall has clearly and succinctly observed, “the trouble is that the amount of information needed to give an accurate, detailed and unambiguous record, on two-dimensional paper, of the movements and salient positions of each part of the body in three dimensions of space and one of time is greater by at least two orders of magnitude than that needed to record speech” (135 – 136). This assertion proves that even the best system of notation cannot succeed completely, because it cannot alter the fundamental nature of dance. Retrieval of notational symbols of dance will only present a shadow of the presentation, a recovery of only minimal sense of the principal positions and movements of a given dance. Most of the notational systems which arose grew obsolete because they were intended to record only certain specific kinds of dance and so could not be adapted to further evolution in dance movement. Thus they failed either because of complexity or for lack of the skill necessary for a detailed documentation. Like any other performing art, dance essentially exists only at the time of its performance. It can never be properly recorded or preserved, since the way in which dancers interpret a work; their styles, technical abilities, and physical appearance always change the work each time it is performed. But some form of retrieval technique must be adopted if dance must retain its place in history because “the absence of a documented dance history which reflects the ‘movement systems’ of a society renders its dancing inaccessible to close investigation and appreciation” (Jones 122). This thus leaves us at the moment with a recapitulation or a review of African dances through video coverage, written descriptions, and appraisals of live performances which must be recurrent.

#### **Suggested devices for African dance documentation**

An equivalent of a musical score, or the like, is suggested to be used to systematically record or notate dances which could be developed and taught for

easy retrieval of created dance sequences in addition to videos, pictorial illustrations, written and verbal descriptions. These become necessary because even when words tend to be a willing tool in the circumstance for description it is worthy of note that in any performance art, especially the dance art, it is difficult to translate in totality all that happens into words because generally, the use of words is only a symbolic summation of what in actual fact goes on and so is likely only to act as an approximation of the nuances of the performance in its entirety.

Dance occurs through the creative manipulation of the human body, rhythm, movement, time, space to communicate felt messages to the audience. To actualize the objective of dance successfully, a good dancer exhibits physical skills in maintaining perfect equilibrium in the show of creativity, flexibility in all parts of the body utilized in the dance, great coordination, smooth transitions and great stamina. We, therefore have a duty to utilize the major elements of movement in our notational devices to capture the construct of the dance. These involve

**1. Spatial Design**

This takes into consideration shape, a sculptural design seen on the dancer's body or in floor patterns or pathways which can be linear, angular, curved, circular or zigzags), travelling or locomotion (where movement progresses from one place to another like walking, skipping, sliding, leaping), axial movements (organized around the body axis on the spot like bending, touching, stretching), and isolated movements (executed with one or small part of the body like rolling of the head, rotating the pelvis or shrugging of the shoulders), levels (the height in relation to the distance from the floor like high, medium, low), direction of movement (forward, backward, upwards, downwards, sideways, circular or diagonal), eye or body focus (where facial expressions, eye contact or the whole body congregates to express an intended message) and dimension (Considering the height, width and depth of a single dancer's shape in space and the outlook of the size of the total group or assemblage of dancers in the performance space).

**2. Dynamics**

This refers to the qualities of movements rendered. Here we consider the energy required for the execution of each movement. These determine if the movements have a collapsed, swinging, suspended, percussive, vibratory or sustained quality. This analysis is to ascertain the force (strong or light) and flow (even or uneven) of movement. Stillness, otherwise known as the freeze is an exciting variable in dance creation. It is the abrupt stop in the course of movement rendition. It is therefore the absence of evident movement. It is utilized in dance for emphasis and most times follows a sustained rendition. It can also be a point of rest for the dancers after a forceful sequence. This can also act as a means of transition between dance sequences. Other means of transition could be the use of smooth and even movement between segments of a composite presentation. Transitions aids the progression of a movement phrase or section from one stage to the next.

### 3. Time

This is that element in dance composition which captures (a) the rhythmic structure which is the synchronization of rhythm or music with dance movements; (b) phrasing. The word 'phrase' in dance is similar to that of the written language. It is simply the linking of two or more single movements. It is a fractional dance idea composed of a series of connecting movements. A number of related phrases linked together in dance become a section of dance movements and different sections become a structure of the dance composition. (c) duration, which is the length of time a particular movement, phrase or sequence lasts, (d) speed which records the pace at which movement is executed (fast or slow) (e) tempo which is the measurement of beats and (f) accent of movement which records point of emphasis in movement rendition. It is a strong concentration of energy in a particular movement sequence. Time is derived from body rhythms like breath, heartbeats and emotions.

These elements form points of analysis for any dance phrase, sequence or composition. Being able to identify and understand these core characteristic elements will be valuable regarding one's fluency when notating or analysing a dance performance. It can also help the choreographer to get his messages across through movement. Below is an example of notational details for African dance documentation.

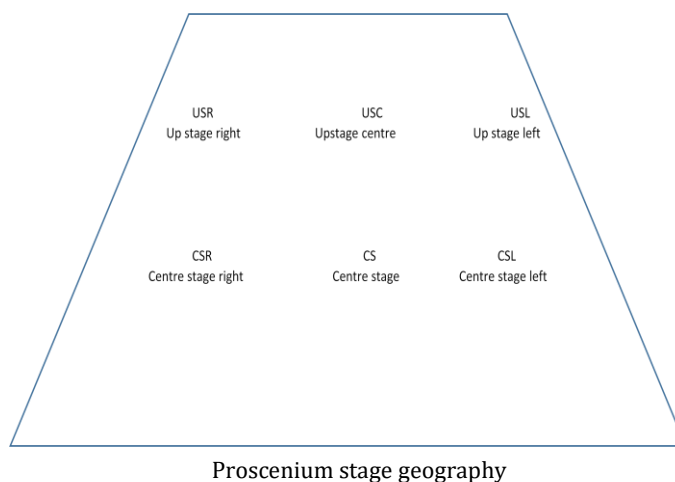
#### (a) Movement description

This is a typical Ekombi dance entry movement usually performed by the Uruan people of Akwa Ibom State and the Efik people of Cross River State of Nigeria. This example is performed on a proscenium stage. There are five dancers in all. The segment is introduced by a lead dancer. She goes into the stage through up stage right and moves through up stage centre, wriggles through up stage left then to centre stage left, to down stage left, to down stage centre to down stage right and turns to back the audience as she moves back to upstage centre in a serpentine floor pattern. She exhibits the main Ekombi movement and freely introduces variants of the basic movement. Her movements suggest the tide of the sea and give an impression of the particular condition of the sea and how suitable it is for smooth sailing. This movement displays an imitation of the graceful flow of the sea hence it involves the forward and backward movements of the mid-section of the body with the arms used for steering and balance. The movement vocabulary presents different features of the sea and its surroundings like the waves, fishes as they move in the river, mermaids and also the trees which surround the body of water as they react to the wind. She is met at up centre by the remaining four dancers who come in on stage in twos, that is, two dancers from up stage right and two from up stage left. They wear smiles on their faces as a reassurance that all is well and the river is peaceful. The two groups, from the right and left, curve out at up centre and move towards the audience leaving the leader at up centre. This transforms to two vertical lines facing the audience. This soon changes as they curve out again at down centre to the left and right respectively to meet the leader and open up to a straight horizontal line up stage. The movement which ushers in the four dancers is executed in one crotchet and two quaver counts. These are stressed with the dancers' feet. The trunk and the head are accentuated with two



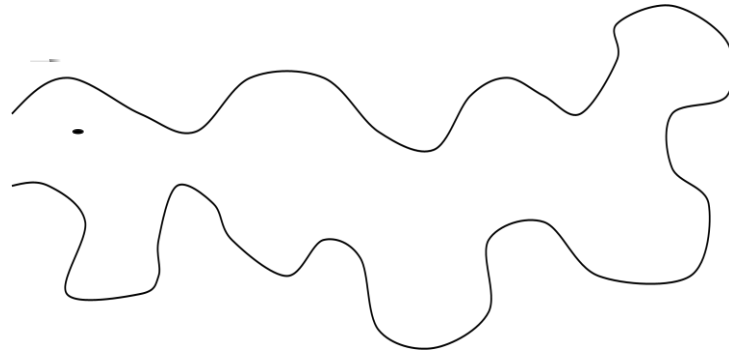
crotchet beats first to the left, then right. It goes like this: left right –right; left right -right while the trunk and the head go left-right. The left foot is stepped forward on the first count, the right meets the left on the second count, and then slides to the right side on the third count. At the first foot count, the two arms meet once at the centre and on the second and third count, they spread out to their sides only to return to the same movement phrase. These are coordinated to take the same duration as the two crotchet beats which are four quaver counts of the phrase. The whole trunk is involved in the enactment as it exhibits a two count movement to the left and then to the right. The whole body is slightly tilted forward in a somewhat three quarter manner playing around the medium level. The movement sequence is exhibited twice to the left, twice to the front and twice to the right to complete the dance structure. This is therefore repeated till the floor pattern is completely realized. At the horizontal line, they all take the main Ekombi movement to the front, turn anticlockwise and move back to centre stage. Here it looks like the dance is lifted to the front, turned round and returned to base. The four dancers then break off to their sides of left and right turn inwards with a curve and straighten out to diagonal lines with the lead dancer at the centre. In changing floor patterns, the dance employ the use of a transitional movement taking single crotchet beats of head, arms, trunk and feet to the left and then to the right. All these happen in the entry movement sequence. This particular movement segment can be seen as a greeting from the dancers to the audience (Ufford-Azorbo 125-126). The dance piece described above are represented in the diagrams and symbols below.

**(b) Stage geography**



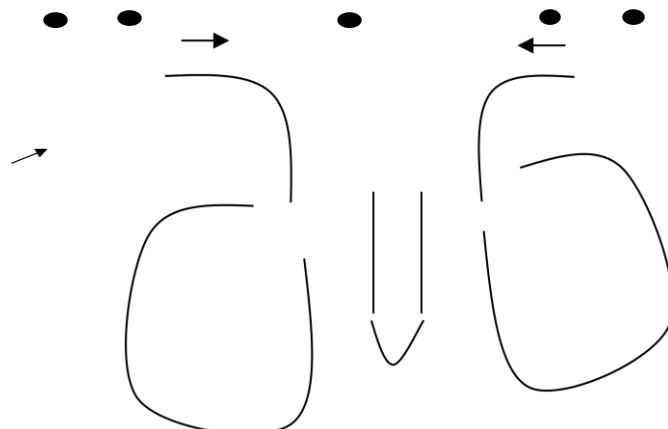
**(c) Floor Patterns**

(1)



This captures the serpentine and curves which are executed in both body and floor patterns exhibited by the lead dancer.

(2)



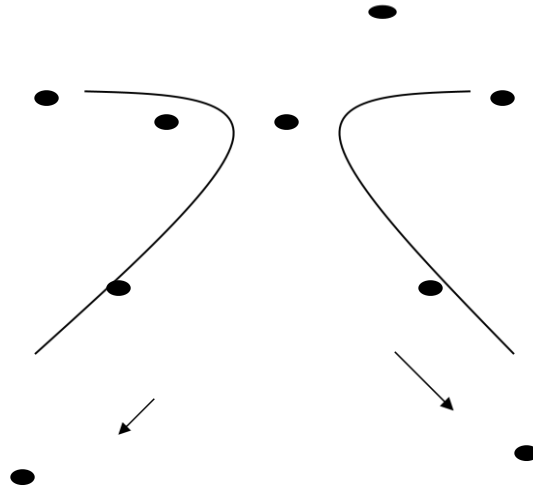
Straight lines to curves

(3)



Straight line

(4)























Transition from straight line to diagonals




(d) Time Value Notation

Beats	1 ♪	2 ♪	3 ♪	4 ♪
Feet	L ♪	RR ♪	L ♪	RR ♪
Arms	R ♪	L ♪	R ♪	♪
Head	L ♪	R ♪	L ♪	R ♪
Trunk	L ♪	R ♪	L ♪	R ♪

Entry Movement for The Four Dancers

Beats	1 	2 	3 	4 
Feet	L 	R 	L 	R 
Arms	LU 	RU 	L U 	RU 
Head	L 	R 	L 	R 
Trunk	L 	R 	L 	R 

Transition

<u>Symbols</u>		<u>Translations</u>
	—	Dancers
	—	Direction of movement
L	—	Left
R	—	Right
PU	—	Pack up
SS	—	Spread to sides
LU	—	Left up
RU	—	Right UP
	—	Crotchet
	—	Two quaver beats

### Conclusion

This chapter contains implications for African dance practice and documentation. The use of notation supports the performance of dances. Taking these devices into consideration will advance the art of dance and will make it possible for the dances to be reenacted severally such that it would outlive the artist and stay on for posterity.

African dance has been shaped by changing trends over the years from the core traditional to the contemporary. These trends are subject to the interplay of immense forces which fundamentally alter the artistic landscape of dance. These forces include education, economy, cultural infrastructure, demographic change, societal values, growth of the arts and political environment. It is observable that the dance in a holistic way stays relevant at all times. It

functions in the past, present and future of a people as part of their social, ceremonial and aesthetic experience. It also enriches the society in which it is practiced by teaching them about themselves, their lives and those of other societies and peoples. In the course of achieving these, dance records the heritage of these people for generations to come. This is one major art form which operationally avails the people with a better understanding of the attitudes, beliefs, feelings and yearnings of people in different cultures and at different times as it reflects the generality of life. This in effect is a summation of the total function of dance as exemplified in this work.

Some artistic practices of Africans are found to have value as entertainment, some have political or ideological significance, some are instrumental in a ritual context while some have aesthetic value in them. More often than not, a work of art from this region combines several or all of these elements. Most times, the various art forms are integrated into a festival form celebrated in seasons like the dry season fishing festival and the masquerade festival. Dance is a major feature in these festivals and often serves as a focal point for the revelation of other elements.

In conclusion, therefore, the discovery of oneself and values of one's past is the starting point for the creation of a special identity in the arts. It serves as a springboard for the creative and stylistic presentations which continuously appeal to the set and targeted audience. This is the essence of life, culture, progress and development. The suggestion to African dance documentation is indeed an attestation to the fact that dance is an art worthy of sincere study and practice. In this wise, it is necessary to document these values for easy retrieval.

### **Recommendations**

Traditional dance forms are reservoir for contemporary and future practitioners and serve as tourist attraction and foreign exchange earner. Their sanctity and unique character are ready materials for inclusion in the international dance repertory. In order to improve on the operations and documentation of dance in Africa, it is pertinent to make the following practical suggestions and recommendations to reposition, re-engineer and reinvigorate dance scholarship and practice for operational excellence.

1. Essential to future studies is an examination of the art of dance in its cultural context. Though the core presentation in their cultural state may be seen as that which does not give room for creative expressiveness, they serve as a launch pad for creative manipulation which in turn enhances the form and enlarges the content value of the presentation.
2. The recognition of dance as an expressive art will foster scholarly discourses that will result to learning, analysis and preservation of dance movements. These will facilitate intercontinental comparisons.

3. Relevant ministries and parastatals should institute a cultural dance revival with notational devices set in place to capture the dance culture of the African people to properly document same for posterity. This is because knowing oneself and origin promotes understanding, appreciation, expression and preservation of the cherished cultural values and a good appraisal of borrowed cultures which influence the host, for the betterment of the subsequent output in terms of performance. The new, useful and functional influences should be well harnessed and integrated into that which is culturally familiar to make for an exciting and continuously interesting variant. For as Lasky puts it, "in the world of culture, we are all builders, all borrowers and lenders" (62).
4. Westernisation has adversely encroached on some very vital and functional roles that dance played in the traditional African societies by the bastardisation of societal values and ethics through misplaced values. There is need for the government to stimulate, undertake and sponsor research in various aspects of the people's traditional culture with emphasis on the traditional dance practice to encourage public interest and awareness of valuable cultural practices, dances and promote cultural creativity for proper positioning and identity of the people.
5. It is true that in an attempt to revive culture, government over the years, has pumped lots of money into many state and national festivals but at the end of it, most of the traditional practices are often forgotten after the festival only to re-emerge when there is another festival. This is because there is no follow up and feedback by way of appropriate documentation and use of the proceeds of such festivals to affect the lives of the people from the grassroot to the urban areas. This situation should be looked into and solutions arrived at.
6. The main repositories of the lores and traditions who are mainly the uneducated men and women in the villages are often not given proper attention. The organisation and documentation of yearly dance festivals to bring these relatively unknown traditional authorities into focus will rectify these faults and enhance a speedy re-emergence of the most cherished cultural heritage. This is necessary because there will be room for a proper study of the form and content of these cultural practices in order to show their relevance in the identification of the people.
7. An interchange between the town and gown should be encouraged through curriculum design to get scholars to intermingle with the larger society for research purposes.

8. Theoretical and practical literature on the African traditional dances remains scanty and underdeveloped. For these conditions to be corrected, dance should be taken as a serious academic discipline from the elementary levels through to the universities. Dance artists should be employed mostly at the college and university levels to create a better understanding and acceptance of dance development in the contemporary setting to reflect the thoughts and beliefs of the present. They should also be encouraged to undertake studies in the documentation of traditional dances and to teach their students in order to be culturally relevant and to keep these forms alive. This is necessary because the theatre arts departments of Nigerian universities need more dedicated competent and innovative danced teachers and choreographers who would not only develop a technique for teaching African traditional dances but also forge a style of notational documentation.
9. There should be put in place workable guilds and associations empowered by government and manned by professionals in the field to cater for the welfare of dance artistes. These associations must be encouraged to take decisions and make appropriate suggestions on matters affecting their discipline.
10. Dance artists in our culture are noted to be non-verbal about their creations. This is understandable because, in dance one is dealing with a non-verbal medium. As such, the processes set in motion, the actual creation and execution, conceptually and technically are very difficult to translate into words. This is in total agreement with Dark's notion that "the use of words generally is only a summation, or symbolic summation, of what in actual fact goes on and is likely only to approximate to the nuances of all that goes into the activity of artistic creation" (40). This notwithstanding, for their works not to remain forgotten or worse still unknown, dance teachers and instructors should be encouraged to put their talents and experiences into writing, in order to make new compositions available for the benefit of students, interested practitioners, locally and internationally, and the public. They should be sponsored on studies and workshops at home and abroad to broaden their horizon regarding the new trends in dance art the world over. They should be able to research and come up with their individual, objective and unbiased interpretation of forms for optimal transfer of knowledge. They should, also, be made part of every attempt at documenting, developing and updating the traditional dances.
11. The universities must arrive at an appropriate structuring of curricular on the subject matter of dance with a wider use of good dance films and written teacher's guide to aid dance education and practice. Instructional materials must be provided with emphasis on the ethnic dance traditions as a starting point, similar ones in

surrounding cultures and subsequently, those the world over because African dancers are members of the world community which is fast becoming a global village This will introduce learners first to their own dances before others as an imperative for the understanding, appreciation and practice of ethnic dances.

12. Dance teachers and practitioners should carry out thorough studies of the nature, form and aesthetics of the traditional dances to update their internal creative dynamics that will help to improve on the traditional standards of dance. This will effectively ward off negative influences which look down on African dances as less than arts.
13. The problem which is very common to dance practitioners is lack of education. While the professional dancers until very recently, were illiterates and semi-literates, dance theatre practitioners who are well grounded in the general theoretical system lack equal grounding in the dances of their roots as many traditional dances are large part unstudied in a scholarly manner. But it is a truism that "the relationship between studying performance and doing performance is integral (Schechner 1). This is possibly why Udoka bursts out and calls them predators. To him, "In spite of the knowledge and authority that each group possesses...there is no correlation between their efforts...each only takes from the dances that belong to society without giving anything back to the society in a manner that would situate the function of the art form as a strategic medium in shaping the realities of the nation" (22). In correcting this error as recorded in Udoka's postulation, the dance art will enjoy greater patronage as the forms of dance related to their content will properly situate the society in its rightful position for the identification of the people and for the benefit of the society as a whole.

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