NIGERIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



Nigerian musical instruments can be grouped or classified into four:

i. Aerophones

ii. Chordophones

iii. Idiophones

iv. Membranophones

Aerophones

This is a class of musical instruments that produce sounds by blowing air into them. Examples of such Nigerian musical instruments include: *Kakaki*, *Oja*, Horn/*Odu*, Elephant tusks, etc.

Kakaki is a peculiar instrument made of metal. It is mostly common among the Hausas.

Chordophones

This class of musical instruments produce sounds by blowing or plucking the strings. The instrument may be made of metal or guts of animals. It may have one string (*Une* of Igbo), two string (*Goje* of the Hausa); three strings (*Molo*), four strings (*Taburu*) and many strings (Raft zithers).

Goje is a two-string musical instrument. It is made up of a gourd bowl and the skin of animals like snake or lizard. The gourd bowl is covered with the snakeskin and attached with 2 horsehairs. The horsehair is the string. The *Goje* is played with a bowstring.

Raft zither is an African instrument. It is made by tying bamboo canes of equal length together with a string. It produces sound when the string is struck against the cane.

Idiophones

This class of musical instruments produce sound when their bodies are beaten or struck with objects. Some are being shaken. They are often used to keep rhythm. Examples are *Ekwe*, Agog, Rattles, *Thumbpiano*, *Sekere* and the local xylophone.

Sekere is a traditional Yoruba instrument. It is made with cowries or beads. The beads are woven around a gourd and shaken at intervals to produce melodic rhythm.

Pot drum is peculiar to the Igbo society. The drum is usually used to produce the bass sound. The sound is made after considerable quantity of water is poured into the drum. It is then placed in-between the legs to produce a sound; the more the water, the more the sound.

Membranophones

Musical instruments in this family produce sounds by beating the vellums with the human hands (in the *Akuba*) and with specially designed sticks for that purpose (as in the *Dundun*). They are made of skins or vellums and wood or metal. The musical instruments may be made of one end covered with vellum (*Akuba*) while some may be made of two ends covered with vellums (*Dundun*). Other examples are *Gbedu* and Bata drums.