THE ART AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF BEADED GOURD RATTLE (SEKERE)

Olufemi Olalekan Okedairo
olufemi.okedairo@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng
+2348036129297

Abstract

This research work employed the use of fancy beads in the production of bead rattle to improve the aesthetic value of the product. The use of the tambourine in our churches had decreased the demand for the use of sekere in our society. People now preferred portable instruments that can be carried in their bags to church without much stress. Small gourds are made used to produce portable gourd rattles which can be carried in handbag. An experimental method was used and the procedures were taken step by step to construct some Sekere with fancy beads. Some attractive Sekere were produced and were taken to market to prove the sale.

Keywords: Sekere, Beads, aesthetic, fancy, gourd.

Introduction

Ṣẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀ is a general name used by the Yoruba people to describe the beaded gourd rattle. It comes in many shapes and sizes. Being a beaded gourd literally implies that one of the major components of Sekere is the bead which also comes in varying forms, shapes and sizes. Beads are usually substances or materials of different kinds (glass, wooden, stone, etc.) that have holes in their center which strings pass through to make them readily available as jewelry or sewn onto clothing. They are used for creating rosaries, necklaces, bracelets and an assortment of decorative gowns or attire. They can be found in a multitude of sizes (1mm – 1cm) and have adorned the human body for thousands of years as jewelry. Beads are used as clothing accessories which greatly adds to the eye-appealing attribute and the value of the clothing item. More people now use beads as materials for decorating household ornament or artworks that were formed or designed e.g. boxes, crafts, bird feeders, doorknobs, and drawers are being decorated as amateur artistry. Beads are made of a variety of natural and synthetic materials, most of which are polished and pierced to allow them to be threaded. Natural materials are occurring mineral rocks for example: bones, coral, horns, ivory, seeds, stones and metals, wood, etc. Whereas synthetic materials are made of ceramic of plastics materials like glass, alloys (combination of bronze and brass) plastic and pottery. Most modern beads are mass produced, which allows for great varieties in the shapes and size of the beads. Desired texture or color can be ascertained through dyes and molds. Polishing is done through the means of chemical or fire treatment to ensure the highest quality product. Faux beads are made to look like more expensive materials (i.e. gemstones, ivory, etc) and fuel the imitation market for bead sales.

Beads have diverse functionality and meaning in modern and historical cultures throughout the world. Beads were infamously utilized during the slave trade. African kings and merchants traded glass beads for captured slaves. Beads have often been substituted for coin currency in historical societies and continued to be in some countries in Africa. In Turkey, women wore beaded coinage on their waists to indicate their wealth and fertility. Egyptian kings were buried with their bead collections to ensure their wealth and power continued in the afterlife. Beads are often associated with religious and spiritual contexts (rosary beads or *Tesbih*) which are used for prayers by Muslims, Buddhists, Catholics, etc., holding great symbolic appeal.

Uses of Beads

Religious purpose, the use of beads for religious or ritual objects is widespread among the Catholics, Islam and Buddist, to mention a few. In Yoruba land, seed beads are use to make “0pele” (type of rosary used to consult “Ifa” Oracle).

Body adornment, Beads have been used to create jewelry and other articles of personal adornment. Beads are use as clothing accessories. Waist beads have a long history in Africa and are worn for various reasons and purposes. They are symbols of femininity, fertility, healing, spirituality, protection, seduction and wealth to mention a few.

As Curtain Materials, They can be used as curtains to demarcate the kitchen from the sitting room. Some bear parlor uses beads as curtains to demarcate between one room and the other, to allow transparency. This in addition adds beauty to the apartment depending on the types of bead used.

Musical purpose, The stony property of beads and the acoustic nature of vine gourd had made it possible to use them in making sound. Mere biting the body of a dry gourd produce sound which differ in pitches depending on the size of the gourd and the setting of the beads which will be considered in our methodology.

Statement of Problem

Marketing today is competitive; a lay man might not really get attracted with the acoustic properties of Sekere at the first sight. Sometimes, it might not be the plan of somebody to buy the material, but the beauty of the product may lure them to purchase it. The use of Tambourine has reduced the demand for Sekere in the market. The problems which this research will found solutions to are: what types of beads can be used to make the product more attractive? What are the techniques of constructing the product in such a way that will attract people to buy the materials? Will the cost of the materials not influence the price of the product?

Significance of Study

Sekere is commonly used for accompaniment of songs and performances in churches and some religious centers. It is of less priority to some religious groups sometimes. Adding beauty and making it fancy will improve it demand in the market. Again, the high quality of the sound will also improve the sales of the product in the market. So, in constructing Sekere, the acoustic body and aesthetic appearance must be considered.

Objectives of Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the production processes engaged in the construction of a musical instrument with an emphasis on Sekere. However, specific objectives sought in the study are to:

1. Ascertain the quality of materials used in the construction of sekere and how it affects its acoustics and aesthetic nature
2. Observe the step-by-step construction process of Sekere

Research Hypotheses

Can the use of fancy beads improve the sale of sekere in the market? Can a beautiful sekere be used to decorate the wall in a living room? Which type of style of setting is suitable for audible sound?

Literature review

The gourd (Lageneria Siceraria)

Sekere is usually made from Vine gourd that grows on the ground called "**Lageneria Siceraria".** It is a genus of gourd bearing vines in the quash family **Cucurbitadeae.** According to Morimoto Y. et al. (2004) Lagenaria contains six species all of which are indigenous to tropical Africa. According to Titon et al. (1992), the calabash or gourd (as it's commonly known in the United States) is a functional creation of nature with a wide variety of uses and traditions in cultures around the world. A fruit of varied shape and size, it commonly grows on a vine not unlike the squash, but there are also varieties that grow on bushes and trees. In so-called "third world" countries, the calabash was historically used as a container for water, and still is an essential utensil in many parts of the world. In rural areas of the U.S., they are often used as birdhouses. Throughout Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, the Caribbean and the Americas, gourds are used as resonators for musical instruments.

According to Olatunji (1979), ẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀ is a general name used to describe the beaded gourd rattle of the Yoruba people of western Nigeria. It comes in many shapes and sizes. It is played in a variety of styles, and has many different names. In Africa it is found primarily, but not exclusively, in the countries of Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, Benin, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire (there are many parts of Africa where you will not hear this instrument). Different language groups in each country often have their own names, styles, techniques, and traditions associated with the instrument. ẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀ with its description as a beaded gourd rattle points to the fact that bead is one of the major components of its composition. The name 'sekere' cannot be given to a gourd except it is beaded. The gourd remains a gourd until beads are affixed on its body with the aid of strings (thread).

Bead: According to Roger Fund et al. (1916), the word "bead" is derived from an old Germanic word "beda" or "Gebet" which means prayer, request, supplication etc. From the Middle English "bede" (plural "bedes" or "beden"), Old English "gebed" which means prayer, petition, supplication, religious service, an ordinance. In Medieval England people use their rosaries to count "bedes" or prayers. It was because of this practice that the individual stones came to be called beads. A bead is a small, decorative object that is formed in a variety of shapes and sizes of a material such as stone, bone, animal`s shell, glass, plastic, wood or pearl and with a small hole for threading or stringing. Beads

range in size from under 1 millimeter (0.039 in) to over 1 centimeter (0.39 in) in diameter. Beadwork is the art or craft of making things with beads. Beads can be woven together with specialized thread, strung onto thread or soft, flexible wire, or adhered to a surface (e.g. fabric, clay).

According to Beck (1928), beads can be divided into several types of overlapping categories based on different criteria such as the materials from which they are made, the process used in their manufacturing, the place or period of origin, the patterns on their surface, or their general shape. In some cases, such as *millefiori* and *cloisonné* beads, multiple categories may overlap in an interdependent fashion. Beads can be made of many different materials. The earliest beads were made of a variety of **natural materials** which, after they were gathered, could be drilled and shaped. As humans became capable of obtaining and working with more difficult materials, those materials were added to the range of available substances. But nowadays **synthetic materials** were added. In modern manufacturing, the most common bead materials are wood, plastic, glass, metal, and stone, Dubin(1999).

Natural materials

Beads are still made from many naturally occurring materials, both organic (i.e., of animal or plant-based origin) and inorganic (purely mineral origin). However, some of these materials do undergo some extra processing beyond mere shaping and drilling such as color enhancement via dyes or irradiation. The natural organics include bone, coral, horn, ivory, cowries, seeds, animal shell, and wood. For most of human history, **pearls** were the ultimate precious beads of natural origin because of their rarity; the modern pearl-culturing process has made them far more common. Amber and Jet are also of natural organic origin although both are the result of partial fossilization. The natural inorganic substances include various types of stones, ranging from gemstones to common minerals, and metals. Of the latter, only a few precious metals occur in pure forms, but other purified base metals may as well be placed in this category along with certain naturally occurring alloys such as electrum.

Synthetic Materials

The oldest-surviving synthetic materials used for bead-making have generally been ceramics, pottery and glass. Beads were also made from ancient alloys such as bronze and brass, but as those were more vulnerable to oxidation they have generally been less well-preserved at archaeological sites.

Types of Bead



Figure 1.1 Swarovski crystal beads

Seed Beads

These are tiny round shaped beads that are made of glass. They come in a wide variety of colors, clear iridescent or silver lined. They are regularly used for making jewelry, bead weaving and also for needle work.



Figure 1.2 Seed beads

Lamp-work Beads

Lamp-work beads are handcrafted glass beads that are exquisitely beautiful. They are made by melting glass with a torch. The process of making the lamp-work beads is very laborious; different colors of glass are melted together to form the patterns visible on the surface of the beads.



Figure 1.2 Lamp-work beads

Glass crackled Beads

Glass beads with a crackle effect. The light reflecting from the internal cracks create a very interesting effect.

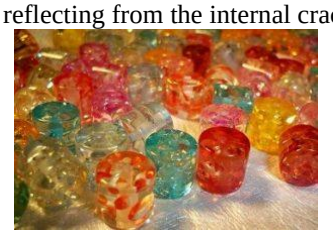


Figure 1.3 Glass crackled beads

Pony Beads

Pony beads are inexpensive slightly oval shaped beads mostly made of plastic. They are generally used in craft projects and for kids to make jewelry. These beads are available in a single color or in a mixed set. These beads are sometimes called "E" beads; Most are sized about 3-1/2 to 4mm.



Figure1.4 **Pony beads**

Sugar beads

These are very small, sugar granule sized beads which has better aesthetic value because of their pureness.



Figure 1.5 Sugar beads

Acrylic fancy beads

These are plastic beads available in many shapes and colors round, flat, oval, tube. They are lightweight. These beads also become electroplated metallic silver, copper or gunmetal colors



Figure 1.6 Acrylic fancy beads

Ceramic Beads

These are beads made of clay.



Figure 1.7 Ceramic beads

Semi precious beads /Precious Gemstones

Precious stones are rare and costly gems like diamonds, rubies etc. Semi precious stones are not as expensive or rare as precious stones. Beads can be made of organic materials (Amber, Pearls). If you want beige and white stones you have Picture Jasper, Leopard skin Jasper, Howlite; If you want red and brown stones you have Tiger Eye, Poppy Jasper, Garnet, Goldstone; If you want blue and green stones you have Sodalite, Blue Howlite, Lilac Howlite, Grape Fossil bead, Malachite, Unakite, Labradorite; If you want black stones you can get Hematite, Black onyx, Snowflake and obsidian.



Figure 1.8 Precious gemstones

Cultured pearls

These are fine quality pearls harvested from farmed mussels. Cultured pearls may be bred freshwater or saltwater. The term covers all pearls on the market today like Akoya, South Sea, Tahitian, and freshwater pearls. Pearls cultured in saltwater are more valued than freshwater pearls. But freshwater pearls are moderately priced and hence much in demand



Figure 1.9 Cultured pearl

Metal Beads

Out of all metal beads, silver is very popular. If you want pure silver beads you will have to look for beads marked as Sterling silver – the purity of silver can be tested with an ammonia test. Usually metal beads are used along with glass beads as spacer beads.



Figure 1.1.0 Metal Beads

According to Beck (1928), modern beads are generally shaped by carving or casting, depending on the material and desired effect. In some cases, more specialized metalwork or glass working techniques may be employed, or a combination of multiple techniques and materials may be used such as in cloisonné.

The oldest-surviving synthetic materials used for bead making have generally been ceramics, pottery and glass. Beads were also made from ancient alloys such as bronze and brass, but as those were more vulnerable to oxidation they have generally been less well-preserved at archaeological sites.

Research Method

This research work used experimental method and the procedure stated was followed one after the other. Materials used are: gourd (**Lageneria siceraria**), string (twine or nylon which must be thin for easy passage), beads (you can also use seeds, shells, buttons, or anything to create a rattling sound), Varnish paint/ Wood polish, Maker.

Tools: abrasive scrubber and detergent**,** hacksaw, coat hanger or a long stick, lighter or candle**,** oil or polyurethane shellac (if a protective finish is desired)**,** Brush, Scissors/Blade.

Processing the Gourd

To construct "Sekere", you may which to buy or decide to plant the gourd by yourself. Whichever, you have to make the gourd available. After getting the gourd, its body must be washed with a sponge to remove the stains and provide the body aesthetic. Its mouth needs to be trimmed in such a way that it would have a neck to handle it or tie a rope on it for hanging. After washing, it must be hung to make it dry, then wood polish can be applied to prevent it from been attack by the weevils and beetles**.**

Procedure involved in construction.

After the gourd has been polished, allow it to dry in the sun to enhance aesthetic look of the gourd and prevent it from being damaged by weevils and beetles.

Step 1: Hang the gourd with a rope and sustain it to your eyes level, where you can seat comfortably to construct your work. Cut the thread into measure of 100cm long. Weave the thread to form a chain and set it round the neck of the gourd.

Step 2: Cut more of the thread 100cm long and fold them into two, the curve edge is tied to the chain round the neck of the gourd. Each thread is tied 1cm apart from each other depending on the length of the beads. Make sure the folded threads are arranged round the neck of the gourd in such a way that they are 1cm apart from each other. Light a candle and use it to burn the mouth of the threads to enable easy penetration of the threads into the beads.

Step 3: NETTING: The folded thread will form two threads, that is, set of two threads arranged at a centimeter apart to each other, one at the left, the other at the right. Pick a thread from the right side of one and pick a thread from the left side of the next set. Tie the two together at the length of 1cm or one and half centimeters, depending on the length of the beads. Continue the process round the gourd. After the first round, attempt the second, third and fourth rounds respectively.

Step 4: BEAD SETTING: Depending on the size of the beads, pick a thread from left side and insert a bead, then, pick a thread from the right side of the next one and insert a bead. Then, hold the two threads with the beads and tie a knot. Continue the process by selecting the left thread from this side and the right thread from the next, insert a bead on each one and tie a knot. After the completion of first role, start the second role, then the third, fourth, fifth to the twelfth roles, depending on the length of the gourd.

Setting styles

Close range setting: this involved the use of small size beads on both sides of the strings and the knot is tied tightly close to the beads as in the diagram below.



Figure 2.1 close setting style

Loose range setting: the size of the beads is a little bit bigger than that of the close range and the setting is a single bead on a string and the second string is left without a bead, the knot will be tight but not close to the bead as in the diagram below

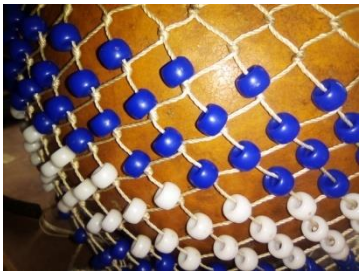


Figure 2.2 Loose setting style

Step 5: Netting: Using the same strategy, select a thread from the left side and another thread from right side. This time around beads are not set along with the thread, but knots are made round the gourd in roles, says about three or four roles. After which another chain-thread is made and is used to close the mouth of the netting. At this end, the remnant threads may be cut using candle light or left to dangle.

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Beads Making: Various types of beads can be derived from synthetic materials like plastic, glass, alloy, pottery etc. and natural materials like bones, coral, horns, seeds, stones, metals, wood etc. It has been discovered that some natural materials like cowries can be used to construct "Sekere" while some are mostly used to make jewelries like pendants, necklaces, wrist ware, waist-band etc. The use of cowries for the construction of Sekere is symbolic, and it is attached to the "Aje" deity in Yoruba land. Some cowries can be artificial, made with plastic, they can only be used for fashion like plaiting of hairs, curtains etc. but cannot be used for "Sekere" and "opele" which are symbolic and have spiritual implications.

Fancy beads like pearls, diamonds, are costly and cannot be used for the construction of Sekere because the marketing would not yield good results. It is preferable to use such cost materials for body attires and shoe decoration. Stones like diamond can e asily brake and cause injury during performance because of the glassy texture. So, it is preferable to be used as ear-ring, finger-ring, shoes-stones etc.

Synthetic beads like pony beads are more preferable for the construction of Sekere because of the following factors:

(a) They are made of plastic and durable, which cannot got broken easily and cause injury.
(b) The cost of their production is avoidable and can yield good result during marketing.
(c) They came in different colors and can be designed to attract beauty.

Designs and patterns of construction of Sekere have been the major factors influencing the marketing of sekere in the market. Few people that have the knowledge of music are the one considering the acoustic body of sekere before purchasing. Majority of our buyers are church goers preferring to carry potable and fancy materials to church to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. It is advisable to put these into consideration when constructing Sekere for entrepreneurship and musicianship

Gourd Cultivation: The gourd is a **vine** grown for its fruit. It can be either harvested young to be consumed as a **vegetable,** or harvested mature to be dried and used as a utensil, container, or a musical instrument. When it is fresh, the fruit has a light green smooth skin and white flesh as in the diagram below.



Lageneria Siceraria pod

Bottle gourds are grown by direct sowing of seeds or transplanting 15- to 20-day-old seedlings. The plant prefers moist, organic rich soil. It requires plenty of moisture in the growing season and a warm sunny position, sheltered from the wind. It can be cultivated in gardens or small places such as in a pot, and allowed to spread on a trellis or roof. In rural areas, many houses with thatched roofs are covered with the gourd vines.

In hi-tech horticulture, plant 15 days old healthy seedlings raised in shade net houses. Raise the seedlings in portrays having 98 cells or in polythene bags. Transplant about 15 days old seedlings in the main field.



Lageneria Siceraria seeds

Bottle gourds grow very rapidly and their stems can reach a length of 9meters in the summer, so they need a solid support along the stem if they are to climb a pole or trellis. If planted under a tall tree, the vine may grow up to the top of the tree. To obtain more fruit, farmers sometimes cut off the tip of the vine when it has grown to 6–8 feet in length. This forces the plant to produce side branches that will bear flowers and yield more fruit.

The plant produces night blooming white flowers. The male flowers have long peduncles and the females have short ones with an ovary in the shape of the fruit. Sometimes the female flowers drop off without growing into a gourd due to the failure of pollination if there is no night pollinator (probably a kind of moth) in the garden. Hand pollination can be used to solve the problem. Pollen size is 60microns.

First crop is ready for harvest within two months; first flowers open in about 45days from sowing. Each plant can yield 1 fruit per day for the next 45days if enough nutrients are available. Yield ranges from 15-20tons per hectare, per season of 3months cycle.



Lageneria Siceraria pods

Soil

Sandy and loamy soils rich in organic matter with good drainage and the pH ranges from 6.5 to 7.5 are mostly suited for bottle gourd cultivation. This crop requires a moderate warm temperature.

Season

March to July is suitable for sowing because during these times, there is adequate rainfall which is mostly needed to make the soil moisturized and good enough for planting.

Sowing

The seeds are sown at three seeds per pit and thin the seedlings to two per pit after 15 days

Application of fertilizers

Apply 10kg of FYM (20tons per hectare), 100grams of NPK 6:12:12 mixture per pit as basal and 10grams of N/pit 30days after sowing. Apply *Azospirillum* and *Phosphobacteria* 2kg/ha and *Pseudomonas* 2.5kg/ha along with FYM 50kg and neem cake at 100kg before last ploughing.

Weeding

Weeding can be done by hoeing as and when necessary. Fruit rot during rainy season can be checked by training or hanging the plants over the bamboo stick or dried branches.

Harvest

Fruits are harvested at tender stage and before 100 % matured. The best way to tell if a gourd is ready for harvest is by look and feel. The vine will begin to die back and the skin of the gourd will be hard and pale. An immature gourd feels fleshy and is bright green. These gourds are ready to be harvest when the stems begin to dry and turn brown, or when the leaves start to die.

Gourd Processing

Before gourds can be used, they must be properly harvested and dried. Hence, the processing of gourds is as follows: Harvest gourds when the stem attached to the fruit begins to dry and turn brown. Since the rind or skin is susceptible to bruising or scratching, handle the gourds carefully. Cut the gourds from the vines with a hand shears, leaving a few inches of the stem attached to the fruit. After harvesting, gently wash the gourds in warm, soapy water to remove any dirt. Then wipe the gourds with a soft cloth dampened in a household disinfectant. The disinfectant should destroy decay organisms which could lead to fruit rot. Finally, dry each gourd with a soft cloth. Dry or cure the gourds by placing them in a warm, dry, well-ventilated location, such as a garage or shed. Place the gourds in a single layer on clean newspapers or shelves. Space them so they don't touch one another. Turn the gourds frequently and promptly remove any which show signs of decay. Large gourds can also be dried by hanging them from beams or rafters. Drying or curing will take several weeks. Approximately one to two weeks will be required for the outer skin to dry and harden. Internal drying will take several additional weeks. The gourds have been adequately dried when the seeds rattle inside.

Once cured, the small ornamental gourds can be used as they are. They can also be waxed, shellacked, or painted. Once completely dry, the large gourds can be smoothed and polished with steel wool or fine sandpaper. The smooth, hard surface can then be painted, stained, or waxed. Having gone through these processes, the gourd is now ready for any function for which it is sourced.

Acoustics consideration of the Sekere

This is to examine the science behind the production of sound in Sekere. Amongst the different functions that the gourd performs, one of it is being used as a musical instrument in music. Analyzing the component parts of Sekere and how they aid sound production in Sekere is the acoustic consideration of the sekere.

Gourd

Size of the gourd: This is a major factor that affects the sound produced. The bigger the gourd the thicker or lower the sound while the smaller the gourd the lighter or higher the sound. A big-bellied gourd allows for an in-depth resonance which in turns yield a very low sound and vice versa. **The size of the bead**: On the size of the bead, big beads are more likely to produce a more harsh/sharp sound than the small beads which usually exhibit soft/mild sound when used for sekere production. **Type of the bead**: On the type of beads, we have diverse types in stock.

Plastic beads, ceramic beads, button beads, glass beads, wooden beads, then tree seeds are usually used for beading the sekere too. All these types of beads have unique and distinctive sound and tone quality. More importantly, it is imperative to note that as much as the type of bead affects the sound produced, it also serves aesthetic function. The type of bead knitted around the gourd makes it more or less beautiful. **Weight of the bead**: On the weight of the beads, more weight interprets to more harsh/sharp sound (one quality big beads usually have), while on the other hand, less weight of beads translate to a more subtle and soft sound produced.

Natural String: this is gotten from natural resources e.g. trees, which after going through some processes of extraction becomes suitable to hold beads together on the body of the gourd.

Synthetic (Artificial) String: This is the combination of some elements which may ultimately affect the quality of sound produced when used in the construction of sekere.

Summary

This study examines the quality of materials used in the construction of Sekere. This research also observes the step-by-step construction and production processes engaged in the construction of a musical instrument with an emphasis on Sekere. It also surveys the significance and imperativeness of Sekere in the art of music production. This study further relates other usefulness of Sekere in art and at large.

Besides, this study gives answers to several questions like: how is the gourd sourced and prepared for construction? What are the step-by-step construction processes? Can the use of fancy beads improve the sale of sekere in the market? Can a beautiful sekere be used to decorate the wall in a living room? Which type of style of setting is suitable for audible sound? Can non-compliance with the construction process affect Sekere? What are the technological contributions during construction? What are the functions of Sekere?

Having harvested the gourd, it is then taken to the workshop for further processing. The gourd must be washed, cleaned and polished to remove the stains and prevents insect attacks which affect its aesthetic value. Moreover, the mouth of the gourd must be trimmed to make it of an equal circumference.

Chain weaving is the next step to follow after the preparation of the gourd. The chain is made from string and knitted around the neck of the gourd. After the chain is weaved, the belly of the gourd must be measured to know the number of strings to be used around the chain.

Thereafter, basketing or (netting) is being done. Basketing is the tying of knots using the strings hanged on the chain. After knitting two to three rows of net, then bead setting can start. Bead setting in its real sense depends on the size of the beads; when the bead is small, beads are inserted into the strings on the left and right; but when the bead is big, a bead is inserted into one of the strings (either on the left or right).

Subsequently, after several rows on which the beads are set, the next thing to be done is netting. After which another chain-thread is made and is used to close the mouth of the netting. The remnant thread (string) may be cut using candlelight.

Finally, to add more on the aesthetic value of the gourd, polishing, paintings, and drawings can be done on the gourd to make it more beautiful and fit for aesthetic purposes.

Conclusion

It is clearly evident from this study, that as age advances and technology increases, the availability of the gourd is relatively inadequate, owing to the fact that gourd planting is peculiar to an old time due to its utilitarian purpose. But, now it is going to extinction, because much importance is not attached to it, thereby making the gourd a scarce commodity.

As a result of this study, it is proven that there are processes to study which pertain to the construction of Sekere. Moreover, these processes and steps must be carefully considered and followed to achieve a proficient result. Underestimating any step in the construction process of Sekere will bring about a defect in the entire formation of Sekere.

Due to the advent of technology, there are tools, device and machine employed in the construction process of Sekere. These tools and machines are used for cleaning, cutting, gripping, smoothening, etc the gourd until its construction process is completed.

From this research, it is evident that there are several purposes for which Sekere can be used. And this varies from musical instrument, to traditional medicine, to household utensils, to sacred purposes, ornamental functions amongst others.

Based on the findings of the researcher, it is observed that the relevance of Sekere in the art of music production and its significance and peculiarity to the African culture and world music at large cannot be overemphasised. In spite of the arduous processes to be observed in the construction of Sekere, it is of equilibrium when compared with its significance, most especially when Sekere is perfectly constructed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, I therefore recommend the following:

- That, agriculture should be encouraged amongst individuals and the cultivation of gourd should be highly encouraged among farmers so as to reduce the very high rate of its scarcity and to make it relatively available to all and sundry for whatever purpose it is to be used for.
- That, proper treatment and care should be given to *Lageneria Siceraria* seedlings from planting till maturity so as to keep the potential values of the gourd intact for use after harvest.
- That, horticulturists should allow the bottle gourd to mature well before it is being harvested because a premature gourd can affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the desired purpose.
- That, users and consumers of Sekere should ensure that proper and adequate care is taken during the construction process so as to observe the step-by-step process in order to fully actualize the benefits of Sekere when it is being used for any purpose.
- That, Sekere players (performers) should use Sekere appropriately and efficiently to make the most of it especially during performance because a poor handling or performance technique can reduce the quality of the musical instrument (Sekere).

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