



Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies in Art Education: Through the use of Innovative Painting

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ABSTRACT: Art education for many years had been a source of concern in Nigeria due to neglect. This neglect runs across the entire educational sector in the nation. "If a proper understanding of art education has been made and better instructions on art followed in our schools and colleges much would have been done to redeem the subject from the neglect it has always suffered in our society. Art is an important aspect of culture, social, economic, political and other aspects of society. Art students learn to develop the necessary imaginative, intellectual, theoretical and practical skills to equip them for continuing personal development and professionalism. Art program which includes intensified student motivation to learn, better school attendance, increased transition rates, improved multicultural understanding and the development of advanced order thinking skills, creativity, and problem solving abilities. Some of the contemporary challenges of art education in Nigeria include Art Curriculum Design and Implementations; Availability of Resource Persons; and Infrastructural facilities. Some recommendations are made The federal ministry of education should liaise with NDRC to develop Art Curriculum Design and Implementations that in-turned with the 21st century needs of the nation that will encourage more enrolment in art education. The government at all level of education should ensure that qualified arts resource persons are employed and retain to teach art education in the nation.

Keywords: Effective Teaching, Learning Strategies, Art Education Innovative Painting.

INTRODUCTION

The Arts education translates the ideas of educational system into reality. However, it is a subject to be introducing in school, and to be successfully implemented. The state of art education has for many years been a source of concern in Nigeria due to neglect. This neglect runs across the entire educational sector in the nation. Art education organizations are not left out of it; some of these impacted organizations are museums, cultural Centres, National Theatres etc. Sharing in this plight, Akpan, et. al (2002) the situation, "if a proper understanding of art education has been made and better instructions on art followed in our

schools and colleges much would have been done to redeem the subject from the neglect it has always suffered in our society. Art is an important aspect of culture, social, economic, political and other aspects of society. Art Education enables students to become creative arts practitioners Fiske, (2001). Students learn to develop the necessary imaginative, intellectual, theoretical and practical skills to equip them for continuing personal development and professionalism, Nwoko, D. (2005) Fine Art informs and provides visual, tactile and more practical learning environments. In the primary and secondary level of education, art teaching is in the service of general development of the pupils, which actually starts with drawing and illustrations in demonstrations of events which are supposed to be read out. But, instead of reading out, the illustrations speak on their own and leave lasting impressions in the pupils.

A student with creative expression is more than just Art, which has been the leading theme of art education for much of the twentieth century. Expression is significant, connections between learning in the fine arts and the attainment of knowledge and skills in other areas. The benefits of Arts Education Partnership Working Group study have a strong art program which includes intensified student motivation to learn, better school attendance, increased transition rates, improved multicultural understanding and the development of advanced order thinking skills, creativity, and problem solving abilities.

However, Okonofua, (2009) observed that the interactive approach to teaching and learning is considered to be a social process that takes place through interaction between teachers and students, and between the students themselves. This approach is also considered to be more process oriented Beal, C., and Mason, C. (1999), and student-centered (Shreeve, Sims, & Trowler, 2010). Teachers use various teaching strategies to involve students in cognitive and practical activities throughout the entire teaching process. The reaction of the students to the teaching activities is the most important element of the quality of teaching Okonofua, (2009) and the type and quality of established interaction in the classroom is directly linked to instructional outcomes Bisong, A. E. (2012). The aim of an interactive approach to learning and teaching in visual arts education is to transfer activities from teachers to students so



as to achieve more active verbal/cognitive, experiential/affective and physical/motor involvement in the teaching process.

Therefore, innovative painting plays a significance role in bringing the world of art and the world of innovation together. The chance and challenge are to raise the awareness of art and science synergy's influence on shaping the culture of today and the future. Art and Innovation events deal with the spirit of our times; with questions and challenges it rises. Meanwhile, the paper looked at the effective teaching and learning strategies in art education through the use of innovative painting.

Concept of Fine Arts: Bassey, (2009) opined that Fine Arts is traceable to the prehistoric era, where the Stone Age men initiated record on the walls of the caves their encounters with the wild creatures during their hunting expeditions. The cavemen prudently illustrated their activities during the day, on the walls of the caves. This marks the beginning of drawing and illustrations which are the core of Fine Arts. As their activities progress, there came the unconscious discovery of implements and weaponry through the shaping of stones, woods, animal bones, etc. which brought to bear the activities of craft-men which is an aspect of Applied Arts. A work of art is simply a creation made by human hands, not by nature (Okonofua, 2009). It is part of man's inner nature to make, to communicate to use symbols and to seek approval for these activities while first satisfying the inner necessity to "make" something out of inanimate materials. Fine and Applied Arts encompasses all forms of creative endeavors in visual forms which give utilitarian and aesthetic functions, these include drawing, painting, sculpture, graphic designs, ceramics, textile designs, architecture, furniture making, welding, decorative arts, printmaking, glassblowing, etc. Goshi (2014) observed that Fine Arts education is an aspect among other areas introduced by the Federal Government of Nigeria to attain its numerous goals in Education. He added, among the beliefs of the National Policy on Education is revealing the students to the trade which will provide the skills that can make them highly productive, competent and therefore become employable themselves or by others. Findings reported in Champion of Change as cited by Fiske (2004) that the impacts of the arts on learning worthy of note are:

1. Arts teach students not normally reached in ways and methods not normally used;
2. It changes the learning environment to one of discovery;
3. Students connect with each other better;
4. The arts provide challenges to students of all levels;
5. Student learns to become a sustained and self-directed learner; and
6. The study of arts positively impacts the learning of students of lower socioeconomic status as much or more than those of a higher socioeconomic status.

The Benefits of Studying Fine Arts Education

The Fine Arts is beneficial not just to the artists, but to other spheres of endeavors. As noted by Encyclopedia of Education (2002), drawing persistent to be a basic component of the core curriculum throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when educators saw drawing as significant in teaching handwork, nature study, geography and other subjects. Arts education later expanded to include painting, design, graphic arts (literature and arts/art and architecture, art general/graphic arts) as well as sculpture and ceramics; although art continued to be seen primarily as useful. Also, National Art Education Association (NAEA, 1999), stipulated that the standard for specialist Art teacher preparation at the beginning of the twenty-first century includes, changes of approaches to determining the art content (Art History criticism activities and production, and pedagogical knowledge-base for teachers) the administration of programme of teacher preparation and conceptions of quality in teacher education in the fine arts. The changes of approaches to determine the contents of the arts may include the integrations of Fine Arts in the College of Education in Nigeria. The state of the art in the teaching of Fine Arts is in similarity with the flipped classroom situation which demands art teachers and instructors who are equipped and willing to take advantage of the devices available in electronic technology for their teaching processes. The use of electronic technology in the education system is trending, therefore Fine Arts cannot be exclusion.

Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies in Art Education

In fine arts education, teachers should use teaching strategies that enable a problem-solving approach to learning by way of examples, incentives,



research questions, analogies and the use of acquired fine arts knowledge (Ilsiaka, B. 2007). Appropriate interaction in fine arts classes encourages brainstorming, analogical thinking, transformational thinking, visualization, association and code switching Jenkins, H. (2007). Effective teaching strategies used in interactive teaching and learning include problem-based learning, cooperative learning, experiential learning, active learning, investigative learning and learning through play. A flexible, transformational and interactive approach to learning and teaching also requires a broader and more diverse approach to the use of teaching methods and their combination. Teaching methods used in fine arts classes should include a combination of general and subject specific methods. Specific (fine arts) methods are modes arising from the specificities of the various artistic fields, their features and issues. Their use encourages students to think about the visual stimulus and arrive at unusual ways of observation, providing new insights and a deeper individual experience of visual and aesthetic components. These methods encourage the development of skills for solving fine arts problems or for critical and divergent thinking, as well as the ability to connect insights in order to create applicable knowledge in the field of the fine arts Lehman, P. (2001). The use of specific (fine arts) methods includes: aesthetic communication between teachers, students and artworks; perception and understanding of fine arts phenomena and patterns, as well as their connection with everyday life; and the independent and creative use of fine arts materials. Specific teaching methods can be used in different ways: through the observation of artworks followed by an interactive discussion between the teacher and students, through creative didactic play, and through students' own artistic expression. Aesthetic communication between the teacher and students can proceed on the basis of the reception of artworks, referring to discussion of visual elements and their relationships, and of the use of art techniques. In this way, students become sensitized to the existence of artistic values and develop the ability to verbalize their experiences in the area of the fine arts. Derived from problem-based tasks, creative play in visual arts classes is a teaching strategy that brings the learning content to students in a creative, problem-solving and interesting way through experiential learning. Specific teaching methods are an inseparable part of interactive teaching in fine arts classes, as their application is not possible without

interaction with the students, who become aware of the elements of the fine arts and their relationships by observing artworks and through conversation with the teacher, thus developing artistic and aesthetic sensibility. The application of specific teaching methods in visual arts classes therefore requires artistic and didactic expertise on the part of the teachers.

Innovative Painting

It is important to bring the world of art and the world of innovation together. The chance and challenge are to raise the awareness of art and science synergy's influence on shaping the culture of today and the future. Art & Innovation events deal with the spirit of our times; with questions and challenges it rises. One of these challenges lays in communication between various milieus. It constitutes the base for interdisciplinary knowledge exchange and development of the society of knowledge. The process of communication has a value being a shared experience. Knowledge exchange introduces various points of view and opens new perspectives. Art plays a specific role in it underlines the importance of diversity, individual expression and creative powers of each human being www.johoffmann.com.

Challenges of Art in Education

Art in the past was not recognized as an important subject in schools Jensen, E. (2001) Parents continue to discourage their wards from studying art insinuating that art is for lazy people and for those who cannot do well in life. This continues to affect the number of students who are offered the subject in the three levels of education in Nigeria. Statistics from a study carried out by Lawson and Ajibade shows that out of the 2,866 school graduates in a selected group of secondary schools between 1998–2002 only 219 students took art as a subject (2003). This is a clear indication of the dearth of artists in the labor market. Also in tertiary institutes some research on the population of art students in tertiary institutes also reveals a dearth of students, for example at the Bachelor of Arts program of the Department of Visual Arts and Technology, Calabar, Nigeria (Ajibade, Enamhe and Oloidi, 2011). Long term experience shows that students fear the subject because of drawing classes, which is a major course in the Art Department. Another related



study affirms the fact that the drawing aspect of art programs in many institutions of higher learning nationwide remains an area of academic phobia for some students (Enamhe and Echeta, 2010). Art is not just drawing, drawing is an aspect of it and it can be learned and understood like English language. Silent problems faced by many students are the fact that art materials are expensive so they cannot afford to buy them. It is a practical subject which also requires materials to work with and from. Students of Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, and fine Arts Department demonstrated recently for at least a week leaving the Department locked up in protest as they demanded arts materials. Students were scheduled to start examinations on the 4th of June 2012 for the first semester of the session, but they refused to do the examinations because of poor facilities (accommodation space) and lack of art materials. For students and instructors the lack of facilities, i.e. a conducive environment, such as a studio with good lighting, water, and all material requirements in an art studio is viewed as necessary for effective learning. The students demonstrated and they expected the school authority to respond. The school authority responded by making promises of providing materials and space. With this, the students returned back to school and did their examinations. However, this is recorded as a drawback to both the students and the authority. Explaining further is the aspect of timing. Hours and days were wasted which affected the academic calendar for the semester. The students were advised to have a proper channel of communication which will have positive results for subsequent issues.

Contemporary Issues Facing Fine and Art Education in Nigeria

Numerous issues appear to be facing fine art education in Nigeria. These issues which have also become dominant and cut across all facets of education in Nigeria are identified from numerous angles which include: i) Art Curriculum Design and Implementations ii) Availability of Resource Persons iii) Admission Requirement/Certification iv) Admission Procedure v) Extra curricula activities and vi) Infrastructural facilities vii) Availability of Instructional Media (materials, tools and equipment) x) Accessibility of Instructional Media xi) Power Supply (National Policy on Education, Nigeria, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Art in Education is very significant part of our educational system. Consequently, it should be given sufficient consideration. This should start from the very beginning that is, the primary schools. In fine arts education, teachers should use teaching strategies that enable a problem solving approach to learning by way of examples, incentives, research questions, analogies and the use of acquired fine arts knowledge. Effective teaching strategies used in interactive teaching and learning include problem based learning, cooperative learning, experiential learning, active learning, investigative learning and learning through play.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper recommends the following:

1. The federal ministry of education should liaise with NDRC to develop Art Curriculum Design and Implementations that in-turned with the 21st century needs of the nation that will encourage more enrolment in art education.
2. The government at all level of education should ensure that qualified arts resource persons are employed and retain to teach art education in the nation.
3. Stakeholder at all level of education should provide suitable infrastructural facilities to enable the arts student practical so that to become skilled oriented students.
4. Government and school administrators should ensure the availability of instructional media such as materials, tools and equipment to the art education students in the nation for them be innovative in painting work.

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