

Technological Enhancement of Creative Arts Education for Creativity Skills Development in Nigeria: Issues and Way Forward

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Abstract

Creativity can be associated with arts, sciences and technology, hence Creative Arts Education have the potential of enhancing sciences, technology, general development and wellbeing of the society. This paper therefore, examines technological enhancement of Creative Arts Education for creativity skills development in Nigeria: Issues and way forward. The paper dwells on review of relevant literatures to define the concept of creativity, identify the role of Creative Arts in creativity skills development. It Presents strategies for enhancement of Creative skills such as the provision of artistic expression, focus on problem solving and promoting brainstorming questions. The paper also x rays how to improve students' creativity skills through Creative Art and the challenges of technological enhancement of Creative Arts Education in Nigeria. Hence, the paper suggests the integration of technology into Art Education curriculum and effective implementation to guarantee multiplying effects of creative art skills on other areas of knowledge and discipline.

Keywords: Creativity, Technology, Skills, Development, Creative Art

Introduction

The introduction of Cultural and Creative Art in Junior Secondary schools curriculum was aimed at enhancing skill development and maintenance of cultural values and cultural heritage in Nigeria. Mbaba (2024) posited that Creative Arts is “a practical oriented subject with contains woven around painting, drawing, graphics, sculpture and ceramics etc” (p.84). It is a subject area that instils imaginative thinking and creative development of an individual. In this direction, Opoko and Nwade (2014) stated that Creative Art can be seen as a meaningful creative expression, though it may be for aesthetics. Arts invoke meaning especially when viewed within its context of (aesthetics and beauty). Based on this assertion, Mbaba and Onwumere (2020) added that “Creative Art is studied and practiced for the satisfaction of human aesthetic values and beauty through creation and presentation of inward

imagination in form, line, sound and theater. Creative art is rooted in drawing and design based works such as painting, print making, sculpture, ceramic, textile design, music and drama”(p.74). It is worth mentioning that art indeed plays tremendous roles in human civilization and development and this cannot be over emphasized. With art, one is able to develop creative abilities that would give one uninterrupted medium of expressing ideas and imaginations outwardly. Cultural and Creative Arts is good, useful, interesting and helps in total education of an individual. It assist the development of inborn skills of creativity and power of seeing and imagination. These skills are essential ingredients for total human development (Mbaba, Owumere, 2020).

It is based on this impressive benefits of Creative Arts that the curriculum of basic education for creative art was formulated: that art education should enhance the provision of opportunities for the development of language of expressing ideas, feeling, emotions, and mood through a variety of art experiences (creative growth); opportunity for students to gain knowledge and develop intellectually, physically; provide opportunity for students to have skills and competencies for higher education and provide opportunity for students to develop interest in future vocation in art (FRN 2012). In view of this enormous opportunities in creative arts, it was said that the teaching of art unveil the potentials of kids at their early life to ensure the inborn skills and potentials are adequately acquired and developed seamlessly. The National Policy on Education (2013) explained that the goals of UBE among others shall provide students with diverse skills for entrepreneurship, wealth generation and educational advancement; develop patriotic young people equipped to contribute to social development and in performance of civic responsibility. It is in this focus that one can boldly identify the connectivity between creativity and Art education. Because it is believed that with creative art education creative skills development will be greatly enhanced.

Concept of Creative Skills

If the training of someone doesn't create room for invention and discovery then such knowledge may be useless and irrelevant. Mbaba and Atuzie (2024) posited that creativity involves thinking out something new and producing the same. It is the process of bringing something new through adequate thinking and investigation (p. 21). Purwati and Alberida (2022) argued that creative thinking skills in learning are still relatively low despite the need for empowerment of students' creative thinking skills. Therefore, one of the 21st century skills which the students need for employability is creativity. More importantly, one of the ways by which we can rethink education is to model creativity into the curriculum. The

effectiveness of the teacher and students to create strategies ultimately improve the application of knowledge in the field. Hence, learning and instructional strategies are hocked on creative ability to imagine or invent something new. Although creativity is not the ability to create out of nothing, but the ability to generate new ideas by combining, or reapplying existing ideas and that is what creative art has the potential of carrying out (Azeez, et al., 2022; Salwa, 2016).

Eleonora et al., (2014) pointed out that we have to move away from delivering of knowledge and information and concentrate on how our students can use such knowledge to solve practical problems. To ensure that knowledge is applied to task is a function of the trainer to apply adequate and appropriate strategies in the preparation of learners for a task. Some of the strategies that may foster quality productivity skills may include the use of technology in the classroom.

The Place of Art Education and Creative Skills Development

The use of artistic skills as a way of enhancing creativity has been suggested overtime for all level of students and employee. Creativity is seen as a trait that must be acquired to be relevant in the present contemporary society and creativity cannot be separated from art, having the understanding that no domain is so closely connected to human creativity like art (Zaidel, Nadal, Flexas, & Munar, 2013). It will interest one to note also that art is ubiquitously produced in human society with seamlessly endless variety of expression and a major point of inter-social comparison. Art is therefore one of the more intriguing avenues for considering the development and action underlying creativity because, art is spontaneously created by almost every individual at one point in life or another; and art is considered a window that reflect human perception and thinking (Pelowski, Leder & Tnio, n.d).

Specifically, art domain, or elements of personality such as openness to experience have been linked to art making and art viewing. This element of personality inventory involves a willingness to search for novel encounters, and has been seen to have correlate with an individual's ability to select pictures and a number of visuals (Myszkowski et al., 2014). Art enhances openness to experience and this has to high extent predicted creative achievement in both the arts and the sciences. Art is a area which individuals, especially children, can act in a primarily creative fashion. Thus, art making is considered a particularly ecologically valid means of inducing creative action. More so, with emphasis on visual problem solving, art offers an alternative to verbal tests of creativity, which may also not always overlap. Art

involvement in training is significant in the entire creative development of the individual. This can be proven from every pieces of art work, where carefulness, systematic, brave manipulation of materials, endurance, predictions etc are employed to get a good work of art done. And all of these can be borrowed from the entire art principles for a broader application to enhanced creative thing and innovation for a transformation of the society. Hence, some research findings has proved that creative people tend to share certain characteristics, many of which have also been connected to individual skills in art (Lemons, 2011; Cassandro & Simonton, 2010).

In the recent, time some scientific evidence has proved the involvement artwork in enhancing brain functions, impact brain wave patterns, emotions, and the nervous system (Mastandrea, 2015). Other researcher also corroborate the impact of artwork on the overall academic achievements, emotional and social development of students (Allen & Heat, 2018). It is safe to say that the connection artwork to someone impact the neural system of that individual and resulting to a number of benefits ranging from developing fine motor skills to creativity and improved emotional balance and it is known fact that emotionally balanced individual can engage in creative thinking. It was argued that engagement with and in artworks stimulates brain cells cognitively (Lutfi, 2019). Studies have also proved that participating in artwork have to a high extent helped an employee to; understand perspectives, empathise with others perspectives, better communicate their ideas visually, think strategically and inspire creativity. Participating in artwork inspired the daily lives and better performance on creative tasks (Palmier, 2020). Artworks such as music, visual arts participation, expressive writing, and dance are increasingly deployed as therapies to treat and manage emotional injuries and public health matters (Opaluwa, Obakeye, etal.,n.d).

Technological Enhancement of Art Education for Creativity Development

Technological enhancement may directly be referring to the inclusiveness or integration of technology in the teaching of Creative arts in Nigeria. Mbaba and Onwemere (2020) explain that “technology integration may simply mean having and using devices and equipment in the classroom. it also mean the effective implementation of Educational Technology to accomplish intended learning outcomes” (p.75). It is no longer strange to hear someone mention the need to integrate technology in the classroom. Because the reasons are obvious to everyone. In a nutshell, the narrow idea about technological enhancement, may refer to having access to computers, computer software, and the internet mixed in classroom lesson presentation to improve the art of teaching and to enhance creativity development. What then

will be the impact of technology and media in creative art lesson and visa-vise enhancing creative skills development? And what are the ways of ensuring equity, sustainability and effectiveness of the media and technology? (Bolujide, 2016).

In view of the challenges introduced by the quest for technological enhancement of creative art, studies were carried out to ascertain the effect of such introduction and all the studies were calling for technology integration in their conclusions (Mbaba et al., 2018; Mbaba, 2024; Okwu, et al., 2023). One of the outstanding derivatives of technology is that it create retention, entertainment and arouse learners' curiosity in the lesson. Above all, it ensures lesson are not boring and record of the lesson can be kept electronically. It can be argued that better and interesting lesson of art will instill in the learners the artistic principles that enhance self-satisfaction and emotional balance that in turn enhances creativity development.

Challenges of Technological Enhancement of Creative Art in Nigeria

There are lots of challenges associated with technology integration in the curriculum of Creative Art and there are challenges that specifically hinder smooth acquisition of creativity skills. The challenges around the use of technology include the following:

1. Teachers' lack of interest and instructional strategy to accommodate technology;
2. Poor or inadequate infrastructural support for adequate use of technology;
3. The fear of technology replacing the teachers especially with the introduction of Artificial intelligence; and
4. Lack of support system such as the educational resources centres to provide support to teachers when needed. etc

Teachers' Lack of Interest and Instructional Strategy to Accommodate Technology

It is obvious knowledge that when knowledge is shared from primary source and presented in practical terms, it could be convincing and lead to innovative application (creativity) of such knowledge. Eleonora et al., (2014) pointed out that we have to move away from delivering of knowledge and information and concentrate on how our students can use knowledge to solve practical problems. To ensure that knowledge is applied to a task is a function of the trainer to apply adequate and appropriate instructional strategies that will accommodate practical experience such as can enhance Creativity skills of learners. Having the understanding that Creative skills is a function of experience,

Poor or Inadequate Infrastructural Support for Adequate Use of Technology

Nigeria is one of the countries in Africa with the challenge of poor or inadequate infrastructure for both social and educational needs. Schools were built with no provision for

electrification, where there are such provision power are not supply as when due. Ultimately, this slow down the wide use of technology in schools. Despite the fact that technology is the driver of most global activities (Newbill & Baum, 2013). There is this challenge of lack of framework to implement technology in the classroom hence it is being implemented in paces meal (Mbaba & Onwumere, 2020). But to Philip (2015) the barriers to integrating technology in the classroom has been extrinsic to teachers and include lack of access to computers and software, insufficient time to plan instruction, and inadequate technical and administrative support.

The Fear of Technology Replacing the Teachers Especially with the Introduction of Artificial Intelligence

The fear that technology is coming to replace the teacher rather than to complement the work of the teacher is still growing and occasion with the introduction of artificial intelligence (Mbaba & Onwumere, 2020). It is also of great interest to note that this fear has no bearing on the global scene, this is because there are no threat to the teacher with all manner of innovations. Take a look at the invention of digital graphics, the idea was derived from the analogue graphics, as it stands now, digital graphics have gone a long way far from what the artist can do with drawing and paint using brushes. What is needed today for teachers is to go digital and don't neglect analogue because it may be needed in specific situations. When students are exposed to these skills it enhances their creative skills better.

Lack of Support System Such as the Educational Resources Centres to Provide Support to Teachers When Needed.

One of the major challenges of teachers in this direction is the absence of support system such as the provision of Educational Resources centres around for routine training and offering seminars and workshops for teachers to upgrade when there are innovations. Such facility provides a kind of succor to the teachers, despite its provisions in the National Policy of Education (FRN, 2013) most teachers do not have access to such facility.

Creativity Skills Development in Creative Arts Education

Creativity connotes the ability to think out something about a task in an innovative way, it is the ability to use imagination to generate new ideas. Creativity enable people to solve complex problems or find interesting ways to approach task. Oke and Olatilu (2018) posited that creativity is the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context (p.229a). There are numerous examples of creative skills required for

different purposes. For example, creative skills needed at work place may include; ability to connect between ideas, ask genre questions that will give conviction to accept or reject an idea, using the tool of observation to discover new things or ideas, testing knowledge by way of experiment to be certain of what it is. For industries, the creative skills requirement may sometime be mixed with what is generally known as employability skills. These skills cannot be devoid from the creative skills in Creative Art Education hence the need to embrace creative art as a tool for enhancing creativity among students who eventually return to the society for further contribution in work places etc. Students who are not equipped to be creative in school may not be able to develop such talent without training. Thus, to improve creativity skills the following should be done.

1. Use sketchpad to document your imagination, drawing or writing down ideas help one process information. When one is inspired with an idea, the best thing that record an idea is drawing. It will keep the shape of what was imagine and every other information for further development. It is good to note that the art of drawing or sketching is art and
2. Listening to music have been found to be of great impact on creative development. Music move one on the emotional level and change the focus and mode of the individual. When you need to think creatively or brainstorm, the creative art such as music gives inspirations. Other ways to improve creativity are asking questions about ideas by integrating other people's ideas for improvement, change process, choose diversity, find motivation elsewhere, write regularly and read regularly etc. all the above approach cannot be separated from creative art activities thus, the need to integrate technology to enhance the teaching of art and to digitalized the approach to be relevant in the presents globalization (Omenka, nd).

How to Improve Students Creativity through Creative Arts

There are numerous ways to use creative art in improving the creativity of students, some of the approaches include the following:

1. Teachers should adopt problem solving approach in the lessons development and delivery. This is to create curiosity in knowledge acquisition and there by enhance thinking capability of students;
2. Problem solving approach will also give room for brainstorming, communication among students, networking and cooperation, these will yield a greater results of creativity and innovations;

3. If ideas are not contested and thoroughly investigated with due diligence then it will fail, so experimenting an idea is important to ascertain the viability;
4. Thinking of creativity as a skill to enhance creativity among students, When educators think and believe creativity to be a skill, then the job of educators will be on how to encourage its usage and break it down into smaller skill sets. Moreso, creating programs to develop creative skills will go along way need to help to develop the skill, by bringing together students from around the world to design creative solutions to a particular problem and help them to compete with each other (Oke &Olatilu, 2018).

Suggestions/ way forward

In view of the above, the paper suggest the following as a way forward:

1. The integration of technology into Art Education curriculum and effective implantation to guarantee multiplying effect of creative art skills on other areas of knowledge and discipline.
2. Adoption of problem solving approach for teaching of creative Art to enhance creativity activities such as cooperation and effective communication;
3. The provision of infrastructures in schools and the provision of Educational Resources centre to give support system to the teachers
4. Incorporating the teaching of creative skills into the objectives of each topic to be taught in schools as a way of making emphasis on its relevance in the development of the society.

Conclusion

Creativity is a body of knowledge that is taught out from activities, discussions and practical assessment of event based on needs. Creative Art Education was also observed to have possess relevant tools to enhance creativity ability in children. From the various contributions, the paper actually identifies the place of art in creativity education. Strategies and how it can be nurse out were all outlined.

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