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The Pedagogy Of Creative Arts Through Appropriate Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

Art education remains an academic illusion until, the return of Onobolu in 1922 to Nigeria after his training abroad. Onobolu, a man highly respected by both his country and Europeans alike, officially introduced formal art teaching to Lagos schools.¹ He equally used his portraiture to immortalize Nigerian men, who took part in the Africa struggle.²

On invitation, Murray an artist born in 1902 in England came to Nigeria in 1927 to assist Aina Onobolu in teaching Art. It should be noted that, the invitation given to Murray was very rare more so it was a great honour for a white man to serve in any of the British colonies particularly those in Africa.³ When he arrived Lagos, he commissioned to teach art at the Kings College, Lagos. He later had the privilege to teach art at Government College, Ibadan as a pioneering staff. The activities of these prominent pioneering art teachers marked the beginning of Art education in the Nigerian Educational system. Vice versa it equally marked beginning of curriculum design based on a specific identified philosophy. While Onobolu was highly commended for launching art teaching with academic tradition, contrarily. Murray convinced his students the essence of localizing their conception, interpretation, characterization and general attitude towards Nigerian/ African concept.⁴ In his teaching, he emphasized and re-emphasized conceptual traditionalising for his students.

These two pioneering art teachers paved the way for the concept of art curriculum to be re-defined in order to achieve the set philosophy goal and objectives. Art became a subject, included in the school curricula. A curriculum of any discipline in an educational system is considered the most important thing to that discipline. This was viewed in different ways by various schools of thoughts, while, some viewed it as “What should the”, and the “course to run”. It is more or less the total embodiment of series of huddles to be crossed by prospective students before being qualified to graduate. On the other hand, it can be described as the total and successful completion of the course that “warrants a diploma or a degree certifying competence”.⁴

Instructors otherwise called teachers may be a little confused in the ever-increasing number of innovations in the methods of teaching and instructional technology. There are many methods of presentation dissemination of skills in a formal situation. Instructors are expected to be conscious of the fact that the teaching industry is recently flooded with various published teaching materials computerized learning skills, analysis, programmes and various evaluation technologies. Overall, systematic and scientific outlook on the learning process and the organization of both should take into account the wide range of objectives in technical training and the needs of individual learners.⁵

However, it should be noted that not all methods are effective in achieving each instructional goal. This makes it pertinent for the instructor or teacher to understand the parameter that would determine the choice of the appropriate teaching strategy.⁶ In the past, art teaching was observed⁶ by a few teachers

who were in a position to buy materials and who felt that they were capable of drawing with a pencil on a sheet of cartridge paper. The simple method adopted then was that the children made a copy of the teacher's own drawing without adding anything themselves. The creative tendency in the child would be suppressed and the children seldom even derived any pleasure from the lesson. Art took its legitimate place among other courses in education, in which each lesson is part of the general scheme. It takes its place, not only in graded art syllabus but also in the plan of school work as a whole.⁷

Art, with its laudable qualities suffer neglect in the Nigeria educational system as a result of poor curricula and teaching strategies. The teachers need to have at his service variety of instructions and the trainees learning process. In recent times some psychological research seems to work in the area of selecting the appropriate teaching strategy. It is not possible to draw a sharp line of distinction between some methods of instruction and modes of learning. It is in this light that this paper intends to address the problem of lack of Art education curricula and use of appropriate teaching strategies in both primary and secondary schools.

THE CONCEPT OF TEACHING SKILLS

An attempt to describe teaching skills becomes pertinent because it is the key determinant of the students performance. Every educational system is always accomplished with set objectives and specific goals that a nation hopes to achieve. Useful observable in behavioural terms need to be achieved. A permanent change in the learner's behavioural attitude needs to be observed before the set objective or goal can be said to have been achieved. Earnest Okoli views it as measurable attributes observable, the teacher needs good teaching strategies technically called "teaching method" before it can be achieved. Many teaching methods do not use students to their full capacity, they achieved only minimum student performance with the result that teachers contribute more and accomplish less in terms of both learning experience. Once the view has been fully understood, it is possible to discuss in terms of their success in realizing different kinds of learning objectives. The teaching skills are specific teacher's behaviour in using instrumental aids and designed to help the classroom instruction become more effective.⁹ Toby (1991), argue that teaching skill is designed to develop teachers on training ideas, teacher's classroom behaviours and specific observable demonstrable quantities known to be causally related to learners achievement. This implies that a successful creative Art class should enable the child to paint, draw, design, weave, mould and possibly perform a specific skill. Furthermore the specific skill acquired by a child should be made permanent or give room for further future improvement. With the teaching skills, the teacher can gradually acquire repertoire, becoming versatile and flexible in his teaching, since he would have more techniques and several skills at his command.¹⁰

This implies that teaching of Creative Art without the demonstration covertly or overtly of one skills or the other would appear like an illusion and not reality to the child. Teaching skills refer to a set of teaching behaviour, which are especially effective in bringing about the desired in the child's learning outcomes. The teacher who is successful in his teaching task may have been helped by the host of skills strategically combined to transmit creative substance.

CREATIVE ARTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Creative arts mean self-expression. It is a branch of art that serves no other function than the appeal it

makes to man's sense of beauty. Uzoagba 1972, at secondary school level, creative art is otherwise coined Visual Arts, mainly because to suit the set goal and objectives in the curriculum. Uzoagbe 1982, viewed visual arts as those arts addressed primarily to sense of vision. The art works we can appreciate by seeing and touching. Visual arts in the secondary school curriculum is split into three parts namely: art history and appreciation, two dimensional arts which include drawing life and still life, painting, graphics and textile, and three dimensional arts which comprises of ceramics and sculptures. It is under these groups that art curriculum is based on theory while the remaining two third entails the practical which covers greater part of the curriculum that Media art is not emphasized at all.

Visual Arts unlike some other subjects, is not for all and sundry, for the fact that it requires certain skills. To excel in art, one need to be naturally endowed and this is one of the factors that caused limitation to the number of arts students in secondary school. Equally endowed students need to be inspired, motivated and be properly taught by a teacher with a strategic method. The teacher would need to choose a strategic method out of the varieties in order to achieve the desirable goal. It should be noted that any method adopted by the teacher has a psychological effect on the learners whether good or bad. Every method of teaching is good, but the application of a particular method in a wrong situation makes it to be bad. Methods of teaching of most visual arts teachers are faulty and also lack motivational approach.

Poor teaching methods adopted by creative art teachers has discouraged and scared away many students who have interest in the subject. This particular problem has worsened the situation of visual art in secondary schools. Many art teachers have lackadaisical habits towards teaching, being a government career, they seems to handle the teaching of Art with levity in most public secondary schools. These negative attitudes on the part of the teachers at secondary school have killed the student's morale and interest. Hence, few students are found sitting for Creative Art at Secondary School Certificate Examination. Most Colleges and Universities are fully equipped, but with very poor response from the prospective students. Interested students have been discouraged their creative art teachers with money and inappropriate method of teaching.

TEACHING SKILLS: BEDROCK TO CREATIVE ART VALUES OF TEACHING SKILLS

Creative arts is a highly skilled professional subject. It is the paramount responsibility of the teacher to choose a suitable teaching strategic method. The main purpose of choosing the appropriate teaching method is to build a strong creative art teacher or manager. Hence, selection of the appropriate skill is the bedrock of creative art. In order an effective creative art teaching strategy and Teachers as well as Principals, Rectors, Provost, Chancellors must develop a plan and the process.¹³

Teaching skills are important to learner, teachers and to the instructional process. In the first instance as it has been often stressed, test skills involve the breaking down of complex teaching activities into simple and more easily taught concepts. An appropriate strategic skill makes teaching effortless and learning easy as well as interesting.¹⁴ Another importance of teaching skills is that they enable the teacher to choose appropriate instructional objectives for his lesson. Once creative art teacher is aware of requisite skills for particular lessons, he is helped in choosing or formulating appropriate instructional behavioural objectives. As this is done, they are complemented by skilful teaching to accomplish the stated objectives.

Teaching skills enable the learners to understand and digest the concepts, ideas, facts and generalizations taught by the teacher. One may however analyse this point into the football team whose membership goals and teachers who applies skills in his teaching. Another point a Creative Art teacher must bear in mind is the versatile demonstration of such skills during the teaching and learning exercise tend to remove monotony and boredom from the art studio. This is because of the fact that variety of skills will be employed from time to time, classroom activities become challenging and worthy experience to learners. The lesson becomes unique, interesting and intelligible. Appropriate teaching skills are also important and enhance pupil centred instruction rather than the common talk chalk method. Such teachers are thus very easily able to infuse pupils behaviour and are better able to manage their classes for a lot of rewarding experiences.

CHALLENGE OF CHOICE AND APPLICATION OF TEACHING METHODS

Creative Art teachers today are being challenged with the choice and application of teaching methods. Having been surrounded by complex educational resources, choosing the most illuminating and appropriate method becomes a challenge. Teaching skills that can be applied to the instructional process involving school's subject have been identified, isolated, collected and classified from a range of sources; researchers, students, classroom interaction, analysis, observations and theoretical postulates have helped in identifying these array of skills for example Austrian Advisory Committee on Research and Development in Education indicated about one hundred and forty teaching skills.¹⁵ (Awoyemi 1991).

For clarification purpose and easy selection for the creative Art teacher, Allen (1998) indicated some common teaching skills to include the following:

The Lecturer	Stimulator
Participative learning	Instructional Insist
Mutual Lecture	Aids as method
Lesson	Teacher trainees
Project method	Modules Training
Assignment and Discussion	Demonstration
Group discussion	Record instruction
Syndicate Discussion	Teaching Machines
Tutorial period	Faultfindings
Brain task	

Having identified the few existing common methods above, one needs to be convinced that if a Creative Art teacher is not fully equipped, he or she may become confused at the crossroad of choice. Therefore, it becomes pertinent to discuss the appropriate teaching methods for the teaching of

Creative Art. All aspects of creative arts like Painting Drawing, Design and Graphics just to mention a few, are all skill oriented. These following relevant methods shall be reviewed; Demonstration Method, Participate Learning and Lecture Method. Each method listed above can be adopted by a Creative Art teacher to facilitate teaching and learning.

DEMONSTRATION METHOD

This method is very significant with Creative Art teaching. It is the intermediary between theory and practical. The interest of even large classes can be aroused and held by a good demonstration. A good demonstration requires a great deal of time and trouble for proper preparation.

There is always a danger that a demonstration will display several features simultaneously and a person can watch only a thing at a time. Some demonstrations suffer from two rapid sequences of events so that something new happens before the proceeding point is assimilated. Davies 1973, argues that only lower order affective objectives are mostly likely to be realized by demonstration method, although both lower and middle order cognitive objectives can be achieved in skilled hands. The major advantage of demonstration as a teaching strategy however is found in the support it gives a teacher, since the successive phases and sub-phases of lesson development are neatly laid in basic textbooks, supplying a model of what is expected of him as a creative art teacher.

PROJECT METHOD

It is one of the most effective ways of arousing interest. It is a reaction against the rigid and artificial division of knowledge and shows that a practical job or problems in real life demands a blending of several subjects. Painting, compositions and object drawing are common example under creative art.

Project undertaken by one, two or more involving the study of drawings, careful measurement, the use of tools and the assessment of qualities of timber screen, screen canvas etc. Project should be a creative and useful experience for the students and a good instructor will be able to devise them either for individual or joint effort by a group. A training project should make a particular contribution to the class, the country or organization in form of report of piece of equipment. Projects can be very rewarding in terms of achieving behavioural objectives, as they demand knowledge, understanding, discussion, co-operation, analysis, synthesis, experiment and evaluation. Project work has a strong element of discovery training of discovery training in it and learning by discovery is one of the most effective and valuable ways of motivating trainees who will enjoy finding things out for themselves. Project method is an appropriate teaching skill for teaching creative arts.

LECTURE METHOD

Lecture method is the traditional method of teaching. It is essentially autocratic in form and style. On the surface it might seem that a lecture method is the easiest teaching strategy to describe and define since the lecture role is apparently to transmit information. Typically, the student has few opportunities to make overt responses. Responses, questions and comments are occasionally invited during the lectures but are more usually encouraged at the end of the presentation.¹⁷

Lectures have several advantages, which include one instructor can handle a large class of hundred or more. He can cover great deal of ground in his own way, no equipment needed to be used and a

lecture well prepared can be repeated without any great effort on the part of the lecturer by way of further preparation.

The main disadvantage is that knowledge gained by passive listening to factual of lecture without some participation by the class, is not the most suitable method for the practically based aspects of Creative Art like Sculpture, Painting, Graphic, Music and Drawing. However, aspect can be taught with lecture method.

PARTICIPATE LEARNING OR PARTICIPANT LEARNER

Participation and involvement of the learner is an essential part of any learning method but this can take a great variety of form. For example, there can be some participation in a teacher centred situation in which trainees are allowed or encouraged to ask questions from the Creative Art tutor and thus make a little contribution and participation. This is like the lecture method but slightly modified to help the learner to grasp a little more. The teacher asks questions to help in getting feedback on past training. However, it is not the best method when impacting skill-oriented knowledge on the learners.

PROGRAMME LEARNING AND COMPUTER ASSISTED METHOD

Programme learning is based upon the behavioural control model, while computer assisted instruction is derived from the Discovery Learning Model, which emphasize in self-directed activities of the learner. Although, programme learning takes many forms and many involve the use of teaching machine or even a computer, all forms have a common characteristics. The development of this technique has also had a considerable impact upon vocational education, instruction and tertiary practices. Indeed, it has given birth to under concept of educational technology. This technique has many advantages but among the most important is the active student's response, immediate knowledge. A relevant example is Graphic Arts.

While the Creative Art teacher is being saddled with the choice of appropriate teaching method, it is observed that the curricula being used by Nigeria Creative art teachers has not been reviewed in recent times. Therefore, an attempt was made by this study to take a closer look at the Art Education curricula. Periodically review of Art Education has not been done, as it ought to be. The use of computers under technological advancement is now in vogue. Most Graphics aspect of creative arts has been computerized. Nigeria is a macro dynamic society and not static. Creative Art serves as the beginning and the end of every society. It is the bedrock of every egalitarian society like Nigeria. For this purpose, there is a strong need for the curricula to be updated in order to meet up with the challenges attached to Creative Art.

Creative art teachers should be highly skilled and have the basic teaching skills, which would facilitate teaching and learning process. Parents at home can be inspired by the creative output of the creative art teacher. Hence, the parents would stop discouraging their children from offering Creative Art or Visual Art at General Certificate of Education Level or Senior Secondary School Level.

Every illuminating teaching strategic method chosen by the Creative Art teacher would need the backing of the Government. It becomes pertinent for the Government to supply materials and studio in order to facilitate teaching and learning process both at primary and secondary levels. Regular and close monitoring by the Ministry of Education is essential in order to ensure the implementation of the

appropriate teaching method by the teacher.

The poor foundation and shabby image accorded to Art Education end up building lack of confidence in the student and so Fine and Applied Arts turns out not to be one of the subjects chosen at G.C.E. and S.S.C.E. levels. Hence, Nigerian Universities all witness very low enrolment in the Creative Arts department. In a similar manner student's enrolment for Creative Art through Joint Admissions Examination Board declined. Various alternative modes of admission have been adopted by affected tertiary institutions. These include Pre N.C.E., Pre Degree and Diploma programmes.

CONCLUSION

Creative arts at both primary and secondary school levels have been suffering from inappropriate curricula and teaching methodology. Illuminating and appropriate methods of teaching need to be adopted in order to develop the student's talents and creative skills. If properly taught, it will enhance the prospective recipient's self-reliance. In order to achieve this, the teacher have greater role to play in designing an appropriate curricula and adopt relevant teaching strategies. Such illuminating strategies should enlist the interest of the children as well as motivate them. The positive creative output of the teacher would serve as an inspirational drive for both the parents and government and other educational stakeholders.

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