

Effective Theatre Production Management: an indicator for Sustenance of Educational Theatre

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Abstract

Historically, theatrical production dates back to ancient Greece. It can be a performance from high school, college productions, community theatre, or commercial theatre, among others, to attract different audiences. Regular theatrical practice, however, remains an important yardstick to determine the effectiveness of theatre on the audiences, who are an indispensable component of the theatre capable of exerting considerable influence on the production. The term “educational theatre” in this study refers to the theatre, which exists as part of formal educational institutions that educate both the student participants and the audience. Educational theatrical productions educate the students by using theatre productions as one might use a classroom as a learning tool. In this case, the audience sits in the theatre auditorium to watch the students demonstrate what they have learned, noting that “if a good theatre depends on a good audience, then every audience has the theatre it deserves”. It is against this background that the paper is focused on theatrical productions of the Department of Theatre Arts, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State, from its inception in 2004-2023, to find out the effectiveness of theatre production towards the sustenance of educational theatre as indicated in the NCE minimum standard. Without gainsaying, the study revealed that Sixty-nine(69)play productions from the Department’s Annual theatrical productions tagged “Festival of Plays” and Twenty-six (26) plays staged by the graduating students titled “Final Year Productions”, which cut across diverse tribes, culture and religion significantly fulfil the purpose and values of Educational Theatre practice in Nigeria and by extension justified its existence in the curriculum.

Keywords: Educational Theatre, Management, Performance, Sustainability, Theatre Production

Introduction

The history of theatrical production goes back to ancient Greece. It can be a performance from high school, college productions, or community theatre productions, among others, to attract different audiences. Theatre, therefore, is a collaborative form of performing art that uses live performers, usually actors or actresses, to present the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in a specific place, often a stage. The performers may communicate this experience to the audience through gestures, speech, song, music and dance combinations. It is the oldest form of drama (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org>).In staging a

theatrical production, many people are working towards the show's success. Here, the producer acquires finance, hires staff and oversees everything from the beginning to the end of the show. This personnel include; the director, stage manager, costumier, theatre manager, stagehands, lighting and sound technicians, props manager, make-up artist, house staff, and box office manager, among others. A theatrical performance in schools is any theatre work, such as a staged play, musical, comedy or drama, or dance theatre produced from a written book or script. They can be used to promote different aspects of the school curriculum. Mounting plays appropriate for the educational purpose in schools; it improves the moral tone. It addresses all known social evils such as cultism, drug addiction, examination malpractices, academic indolence, bullying and aggression among students and society.

Educational Theatre: An Overview

Gerard Gould, cited in Umukoro (165), asserts that, in a school where drama plays a severe educational function, it is noticeable that the pupils become more tolerant of and towards one another, less inhibited in their attitude, more communicative and more articulate. In this vein, Clifford (8) defined *educational theatre* as part of formal educational institutions – most often high schools, colleges, and universities. Since it is produced in an educational institution, it is primarily educational in nature. In this case, its primary goal is to educate the student participants and the audience. It can best educate the students by using theatre productions, a three-dimensional audio-visual teaching device, as one might use a classroom as a learning tool. And the audience, in this case, sits in one of the "classroom final exams" to watch the students demonstrate what they have learned. The perfection of the product (performance) for the audience's benefit is not the primary criterion for evaluating the success of the theatre programme; instead, the "quantity and quality" of teaching and learning production techniques become the criteria for evaluation.

The educational goal of the theatre in terms of the audience can be accomplished by offering "classic" pieces of dramatic literature. In educational theatre, the student is always a tool, only a means to an end and not the end itself, while the public, on the other hand, is little more than a guinea pig- an excuse or tool for learning. In theatre history, the Greeks are acknowledged as the originators of the art of theatre. However, credit for training the first graduate theatre managers goes to America. Among the first to offer complete graduate programmes in theatre management and administration were the Yale School of Drama, the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Wisconsin (Awodiya, 11).

In Nigeria, however, Educational Theatre as a discipline was first introduced into the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, and later spread to other universities and colleges of education. The department started modestly as a school of drama in 1962. This was primarily because, unlike other subjects, drama had not been envisaged as a separate discipline in the University by the founders. Thus, the construction of the Arts Theatre in 1955 was motivated only by the need to provide a venue for holding concerts and film shows. Contrary to this, in the mid-50, several theatre enthusiasts arrived on the campus. They were the teaching staff whose activities helped shape a new course of events in the department. These staff include Ulli Beier, Martin Banham and Geoffrey Axworthy (Department of Theatre Arts Prospectus, 2).

These pioneering staff began an active programme of theatre productions at the Arts Theatre, using mainly the University College Dramatic Society (a students' group) and the Arts Theatre Production Group (a staff ensemble). In addition, the University ran a series of theatre workshops for the Institute of Education as well. With the popular activities of the school, the Report of the Visitation Panel in 1961 recommends that theatre should no longer be left to "enthusiastic volunteers". However, it should be appropriately organized as an autonomous discipline. Therefore, Regular courses began in the 1963/64 session in the Arts Faculty, offering Diplomas for non-graduate and graduate levels.

At its inception, the Arts Theatre, University of Ibadan made a tremendous impact on the socio-cultural development of Nigeria, as amply demonstrated by the crop of skilful artists, playwrights, managers, directors, actors, troupes, etc., that graduated from the department. (Adedokun,19). As a medium of education, the Arts Theatre heightened students' theatrical awareness and sharpened their critical thinking. It provides a forum for general education in Theatre Arts and a sound knowledge of theatre criticism. The Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ibadan, since 1970, according to Adedeji cited in Adedokun (35), through its regular productions, provides a 'workshop' for students in which they acquire first-hand experience in every aspect of theatre practice. A variety of plays are presented in the theatre every session by professional and semi-professional groups from within the community. Since then, the Arts Theatre productions have expanded beyond the 'community' to embrace international communities and presentations.

Theatrical Performance in Educational Theatre

Studying theatre as a course in high schools, colleges, and universities prepares aspiring students to create an enabling environment for theatrical productions. Like education, the

educational theatre serves as a training ground for life and cultivating societal ideals, which involve playing out a life's situations. According to Heathcote, cited in Umukoro (164), educational theatre challenges the child's social attitude, verbal control and language ability, unselfishness, physical energy and imagination as the child lives. The school, therefore, is the microcosm of life with passing glimpses of the fundamental problems and pleasures of the larger society.

Corroborating this, Gould (15) asserts that in a school where drama plays a serious educational function, it is noticeable that pupils become more tolerant of one another, less inhibited in their attributes, more communicative and more articulate. Thus, the recognition of the primacy of theatre in society celebrates the introduction of dramatic education at all levels of learning. In Europe and other parts of the world today, drama is being taught at the tertiary level and at the pre-tertiary level.

Theatrical production management is a sub-division of stagecraft. The production management team (consisting of a production manager and any number of assistants) is responsible for realizing the vision of the producer and the director within constraints of technical possibility. This involves coordinating the operations of various production sub-disciplines of the presentation. In addition to management and financial skills, a production manager must have detailed knowledge of all production disciplines, including a thorough understanding of the interaction of these disciplines during the production process. This may involve dealing with matters ranging from the procurement of staff, materials and services, logistics, mending delay problems and house safety (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org>)

Relevance of Educational Theatre

The following are cited by Clifford (17) as purposes and values of educational theatre to society:

- Entertainment of an audience
- Persevering in living form, the great heritage of the dramatic literature of the past
- To raise the general public's level of taste, appreciation and standards for theatre
- To provide quality theatrical entertainment for academic and local communities
- To provide opportunities for interested persons to participate in artistic endeavours and
- To provide an opportunity to learn the arts and crafts of quality theatre to students interested in pursuing theatre as a profession.

Given the above importance of educational theatre, it significantly shows that educational theatre, through varieties of theatrical productions staged in high schools, universities, and

colleges, presents the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in entertainment, informative and educative form before the audience. In this manner, the participation of students in various theatrical productions provides a rewarding and meaningful learning experience. With the formal classes, students learnt the arts and crafts of directing, acting, designing, and stagecraft, among others. In return, students can apply these theories to theatrical performances and various production situations.

Managing Theatrical Performance in the School

Theatrical performance in schools provides students with an excellent opportunity to acquire and demonstrate business management skills. The range of activities under theatre management includes planning and publicity ahead of the performance to welcoming and receiving the guests to the performance itself. Some of the activities include the making and distribution of posters and handbills, reinforced with other forms of publicity and sensitization such as the writing of previews for the notice boards, the school magazine, sending out letters of invitation to parents, guardians, friends and relatives who constitute the nucleus of the sympathetic audience needed for production among others.

On the actual day of the performance, it is the management crew, in their different capacities, ticket checkers, ushers, house managers, and so on, who welcome the guests cheerfully and politely on behalf of the department. The role of the theatre manager is susceptible, capable of making or marring the image of the department and the College at large. The fact must be constantly borne in mind that in any theatrical event, the audience is the special guests and the reason for the performance. To this end, the theatre manager and his crew must see their safety, comfort and general welfare before, during and immediately after the performance as they depart to their respective homes. After that, they embark on a stocktaking exercise to determine the comprehensive economic profile of the production and its overall impact as an important social event in the department's life.

Theatre management is a significant art of the theatre. It is one of the cornerstones of theatre practice. The term "Educational theatre management is concerned with the management of available economic resources in the planning, promoting, purveying and post-production perception of performance projects Umokoro (84). Therefore, The educational theatre manager works relentlessly for a sustainable economic profile that guarantees the theatre's ultimate survival in Colleges, Universities or High Schools. A sound program of educational theatre management is based upon sound principles about educational theatre's nature. According to Clifford (11), educational theatre management is the control, directing, and

handling of all commercial (non-artistic) aspects of an educational theatre production programme to accomplish all the purposes and values of educational theatre.

In this sense, theatre management, seen as the non-artistic aspect of a theatre production programme, shares a common aim with the artistic aspect. Management policies and decisions should not be considered separate from a theatre's artistic policies but should be developed in concert with them. In every sense, both should work together for the success and effective management of the "educational" and "theatrical" value of the institution. The commercial or non-artistic aspects of play production in the educational theatre include the activities of play selection, budget preparation and control, purchasing, advertising and publicity, ticket sales, and house management. The educational theatre must be managed and administered so that the aesthetic values of theatre as an activity directed toward the entertainment of an audience are preserved. Also, a school's educational values, directed toward students' education and learning, must be preserved.

Aims and Objectives of Educational Theatre Management

In discerning the aims and values of educational theatre, it is worth noting that theatre is, first and foremost, an art. Given this, its most significant commitment is to the audience. This is because it is the audience to whom the objective of educational theatre is directed. To this end, the following are the aims and objectives of educational theatre management observed by Clifford (19):

- To facilitate the operation of all commercial aspects of play production and handle these operations efficiently and responsibly.
- To coordinate, under a central director, all of the theatre's business, purchasing, sales, and publicity activities
- To facilitate the job of the directors, designers and technicians in the performance of their artistic production duties when those duties have commercial aspects
- To carry out theatre policy as it relates to the public performance programme
- To act as a liaison between the theatre staff and the business officer of the institution, and the general public
- To contribute as best as possible to the overall aesthetic impression of each production.

Facilitating all aspects of play productions in educational theatre is one of the practical objectives of efficient theatre management. The theatre management staff is concerned not only with the internal operations of the theatre, as they affect the theatre personnel, but also with the external operations, as they affect the general public. It is the management staff

which puts into operation all of the policies of the theatre that are related to the convenience and comfort of the theatre-goers. Educational theatre management exists for excellent production or performance before an audience. To succinctly put, effective management of educational theatre ensures that the artistic and commercial aspects of theatre productions record an outstanding success. It aimed at audience satisfaction while at the same time providing a fertile ground for students learning.

In determining the management and effectiveness of educational theatre towards its sustainability in any high school, College, or University, play production/performance remains an important yardstick. This also helps determine the effectiveness of the curriculum designed to discover and promote talents among the teeming and energetic youths. To this end, in assessing the sustainability and pedagogical relevance of educational theatre practice in Nigeria today, the Department of Theatre Arts, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State, remains significant to the study. Sixty-Four (64) plays productions from its Annual theatrical productions tagged "Festival of Plays", Twenty-Three (23) plays staged by the graduating students titled "Final Year Productions", and sixteen (16) theatrical dance presentations across the geo-political zones of the country from the from its inception till date significantly shows the active engagement of students and staff towards the sustainability of educational theatre practice in the College and to the society at large.

Against this background, the paper examines the frequency of play productions and other theatrical activities in the Department of Theatre Arts, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State.

Department of Theatre Arts, FCE, Abeokuta, Ogun State, in View

The Department of Theatre Arts, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State, was established in January 2004. Since then, the department has been having a tremendous impact on the social and academic life of the community. The department commenced its activities with fifty students, with Wikina, B.L., as the pioneering Head of the Department/Founder. The department started with three lecturers handling all the courses. In line with its establishment, the department's vision is to provide robust training for trainee teachers in Drama in Education (D.I.E) and the Arts of the Theatre. With this in view, the department immediately started its practical/rehearsals on drama and dance. At its inception, the initial theatre building occupied by the department had an elevated seat with 125 seating capacity, two dressing rooms, four conveniences, a front of the house and a box office. The department had its maiden performance on the 4th day of June 2004, with the production of Stella

Oyedepo's *The Greatest Gift* and a choreographed dance titled *The Hunter's Dance*. For lighting of its shows, the department improvised with the used white basins connected with wires and lamp holders while the publicity was done through rallies and handwritten cardboard sheets.

Based on the tremendous success recorded at her maiden production, the department had its full accreditation status two years later.

Over the years, the department has consistently designed and executed annual artistic productions. These productions include the annual "Festival of Plays", where plays and choreographed dances were mounted for public entertainment; the "Final Year Productions" by graduating students; various "Community Theatre" projects in surrounding villages and students' hostels, cum various practical projects on media (films, television and radio presentations). Besides functioning as an educational theatre, the department also features in various ceremonies organized by the College, staging various plays at College's Convocation, Matriculation, and Orientation programs. The department also staged plays in College Award ceremonies and ceremonial performances to welcome special college guests. The below table, however, shows the list of theatrical productions from the inception of the department till date titled "Festival of Plays."

Table 1: Departmental Festival of Plays Productions From 2005 till Date

S/N	TITLE OF THE PLAY	DATE OF PRODUCTION	DIRECTOR	AUTHOR
1.	Greatest Gift	28 th March, 2005	Basil Wikina	Stella Oyedepo
2.	Fire Burns and Die Hard	29 th March, 2005	Tomori Oluwunmi	Femi Osofisan
3.	Otaelo	30 th March, 2005	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
4.	Wedlock of The Gods	31 st March, 2005	Basil L. Wikina	Zulu Sofola
5.	The Sick People	14 th March, 2006	Tomori Oluwunmi	Ahmed Yerima
6.	Rogbodiyan	15 th March, 2006	Sam Amoo	Ojo Rasaki
7.	Family Secret (GSE text)	16 th March, 2006	Chris Omotosho	Nike Akinjobi
8.	The Reign of Wazobia	17 th July, 2007	Basil L. Wikina	Stella Oyejobi
9.	The King of One Time	18 th July, 2007	Tomori Oluwunmi	Idowu Amope
10.	Echoes of Hard Times	19 th July, 2007	Chris Omotosho	Felicia Onyewadume

11.	Palm wine Drinkard	20 th July, 2007	Sam Amoo	Kola Ogunmola
12.	Idemili	29 th January, 2008	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
13.	Blood on Freedom Street	27 th May, 2008	Basil L. Wikina	Olatunji Agboola
14.	The Silent Gods	28 th May, 2008	Tomori Oluwunmi	Ahmed Yerima
15.	Aetu	29 th May, 2008	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
16.	Obakoso	30 th May, 2008	Sam Amoo	Duro Ladipo
17.	Play Mates	31 st March, 2009	Kunle Adeniyi	Pat Ayebola
18.	Sacrifice The King	1 st April, 2009	Sam Amoo	Leke Ogunyemi
19.	Beyond Nightmare	2 nd April, 2009	Tomori Oluwunmi	Ben Binebai
20.	Mojagbe	3 rd April, 2009	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
21.	Obaluaye	27 th April, 2010	Sam Amoo	Wale Ogunyemi
22.	Akuabata	29 th April, 2010	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
23.	The Slave Wife	30 th April, 2010	Tomori Oluwunmi	Sam Ukala
24.	The Corpse's Comedy	28 th March, 2011	Kunle Adeniyi	Kweku Wartemberg
25.	Ajagunmale	29 th March, 2011	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
26.	Resurrection of The Dead	30 th March, 2011	Basil L. Wikina	Basil L. Wikina
27.	Ekuase	31 st March, 2011	Sam Amoo	Esosa Egbon
28.	The Sweet Trap	1 st April, 2011	Tomori Oluwunmi	Zulu Sofola
29.	The Ugly Ones	16 th April, 2012	Tomori Oluwunmi	Alex Ronomoni
30.	We The Beast	17 th April, 2012	Basil L. Wikina	Chukwuma Okoye
31.	Never and Never	18 th April, 2012	Kunle Adeniyi	Felix Akinsipe
32.	Olubu	19 th April, 2012	Sam Amoo	Isiaka Aliagan
33.	No Pennies For Mama	20 th April, 2012	Chris Omotosho	Ahmed Yerima
34.	The Black Hermit	21 st May, 2013	Chris Omotosho	Ngugi Wa Thiong'o
35.	The War General	22 nd May, 2013	Tomori Oluwunmi	Ola Ajibola
36.	Peace by Pieces	23 rd May, 2013	Kunle Adeniyi	Sola Owonubi
37.	Even Kings Are Guilty	24 th May, 2013	Sam Amoo	Keye Abiona

38.	Shadows on Arrival	24 th September, 2014	Sam Amoo	Osita Ezenwanebe
39.	Hangmen Also Die	25 th September, 2014	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	EsiabaIrobi
40.	Esu And Vagabond Minstrels	13 th July, 2015	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	Femi Osofisan
41.	The Gods Are Not To Blame	14 th July, 2015	kunle Adeniyi	Ola Rotimi
42.	Obakoso	15 th July, 2015	Sam Amoo	Duro Ladipo
43.	The Marriage of Anansewa	14 th June, 2016	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	Efua Sutherland
44.	Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again	15 th June, 2016	Kunle Adeniyi	Ola Rotimi
45.	Orisa Ibeji	16 th June, 2016	Sam Amoo	Ahmed Yerima
46.	The Trials of Brother Jero	20 th June, 2017	Kunle Adeniyi	Wole Soyinka
47.	Once Upon A Tower	21 st June, 2017	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	Bakare Ojo Rasaki
48.	The Broken Necklace	22 nd June, 2017	Sam Amoo	Sam Amoo
49.	Fiddlers on A Midnight Lark	12 th June, 2018	Kunle Adeniyi	Femi Osofisan
50.	Kiriji War	13 th June, 2018	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	Wale Ogunyemi
51.	Abobaku	14 th June, 2018	Bamidele Olusola	Ahmed Yerima
52.	Drums of War	18 th June, 2019	Odunyan Nifemi	Bakare Ojo Rasaki
53.	Lanpapa	19 th June, 2019	Kunle Adeniyi	Ahmed Yerima
54.	Hard Choice	20 th June, 2019	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	Sunny Ododo
55.	Kunrunmi	22 nd December, 2020	Kunle Adeniyi	Ola Rotimi
56.	Orisa Ibeji	11 th October, 2021	Toyin Ogunkunbi	Ahmed Yerima
57.	Babel of Voices	12 th October, 2021	Kunle Adeniyi	Charles Okwelum
58.	Mami Water Wedding	13 th October, 2021	Believe and Esther	
59.	Sacrilege	14 th October, 2021	Oluwaseun Fabusuyi	Elly Wafula
60.	Aetu	25 th July, 2022	Opa Sunday	Ahmed Yerima

61.	Yemoja	26 th July, 2022	Adesina Toyosi	Ahmed Yerima
62.	EfunsetanAniwura	27 th July, 2022	ShotikareTomisisn	Akinwuni Ishola
63.	Moremi: The Courageous Queen	28 th July, 2022	Oyekunle Kayode	Segun Thomas
64	Olubu	29 th July, 2020	Atiba Tosin	Isiaka Aliagan
65	Death and King's Horseman	24 th July, 2023	Shiita Abdul Qudus	Wole Soyinka
66	The gods are not to blame	25 th July, 2023	Sodipo Olamilekan	Ola Rotimi
67	Akuabata	26 th July, 2023	Zachariah Joseph	Ahmed Yerima
68	Otaelo	27 th July, 2023	Rafiu Mahmud	Ahmed Yerima
69	Women of Owu	28 th July, 2023	Salisu Kaosarat	Femi Osofisan

The above table shows the total number of plays presented by the Department from its inception (2004-2023). The table revealed the date, month and the year the plays were staged, the directors which are lectures of the department and the playwrights. The table however shows that a total of Sixty-nine play have been produced so far.

Table 2: FINAL YEAR PRODUCTIONS

S/N	TITLE OF THE PLAY	DATE OF PRODUCTION	DIRECTOR
1.	A Chance to Survive	27 th August, 2008	Salaudeen Habeeb
2.	Oforiofo	29 th July, 2009	Kenechukwu Igweon
3.	King Emene	30 th July, 2009	Zulu Sofola
4.	Rituals of Life	17 th August, 2010	Chris Ugolo
5.	Even Kings are Guilty	18 th August, 2010	Keye Abiona
6.	We Tie	4 th June, 2013	Sule
7.	Ameh Oboni, The Great	5 th June, 2013	Ahmed Yerima
8.	EfunsetanAniwura	6 th June, 2013	Afolabi Olabintan
9.	Dry Leaves on Ukan Trees	18 th November, 2014	Ahmed Yerima
10.	Harvest of Corruption	19 th November, 2014	Frank Ogodo
11.	Akpaka Land	22 nd July, 2015	Sam Ukala

12.	Weso Hamlet	23 rd July, 2015	Femi Osofisan
13.	The First Fight	21 st June, 2016	Bashiru Lasisi
14.	Arrow of Vengeance	22 nd June, 2016	Charles Okwelume
15.	The Gods and The Scavengers	28 th June, 2017	Ojo Rasaki Bakare
16.	Otaelo	29 th June, 2017	Ahmed Yerima
17.	Eniyan	20 th June, 2018	Wale Ogunyemi
18.	Once Upon Four Lovers	21 st June, 2018	Femi Osofisan
19.	Even Doctors Die	23 rd July, 2019	Basil L. Wikina
20.	Obanla	24 th July, 2019	Abiodun Macaulay
21.	The Twist	25 th July, 2019	Chris Omotosho
22.	Shadows on Arrival	24 th November, 2021	Osita Ezenwanbe
23.	Many Colours Make The Thunder King	25 th November, 2021	Femi Osofisan
24.	Farewell to A Cannibal Rage	15 th August, 2023	Femi Osofisan
25.	Hangmen Also Die	16 th August, 2023	EsiabaIrobi
26.	Never and Never	17 th August, 2023	Felix Akinsipe

Similarly, table 2 shows the list of theatrical productions staged by the department's graduate students titled "Final Year Production". These productions serve as a practical course in the department. The essence is to examine and evaluate what students have learnt in theory and practice within the three (3) years of their studentship in the college. In this case, the students choose the play they can conveniently manage and direct without the lecturers' intervention. The lectures only served as examiners on the production dates to see the quality of the performance. The students choose their director, assistant director, stage manager, theatre manager, cast, and crew members, draw the timetable for rehearsals, carry out publicity, ensure effective box-office and house management and finally pick a date for the production. The above table 2, however, shows a total number of Twenty-six (26) plays performed by the graduating students of the department (2004-2023). The table also includes the title of the plays, date of productions, month, year of presentations and the playwrights. Beyond play

productions, the department has also featured many dances in its theatrical presentations to showcase its educational and entertainment value to the college community.

Imperative of Effective Theatre Productions Management

Justifying the importance of theatre productions towards the sustenance of educational theatre in Nigeria, the Department of Theatre Arts, Federal College Education Abeokuta remains significant to the study. This can be deduced from the active engagement of students and staff in theatrical presentations, which are in tandem with the purpose and value of educational theatre in Nigeria. With the total number of Ninety-five (95) theatrical productions by the department, which span the Nineteen (19) years of its existence (2004-2023) from departmental the annual theatrical productions tagged “Festival of Plays” and the “Final Year Productions” with numerous dances as proof shows the significance of the department in Nigeria Educational system in the bid to educate, inform and entertain the audience and the college at large.

The achievement recorded by the department concerning play productions so far is mainly due to the effective management of the educational theatre to ensure its sustainability. This also involves the careful organization and coordination of various people (Staff and students) working together in groups to achieve these goals and objectives. The ultimate goal of educational theatre as a discipline is to create an ideal condition or life-like situation in which the play productions meet the yearning and aspirations of the audience. The implication is to ensure that the esthetic values of theatre as an activity are directed towards discovering and promoting talents among the department’s students.

Summary

Without saying, theatre productions in high schools, colleges and universities require effective theatre management practices to ensure sustainability. For the purpose and values of educational theatre to be achieved requires a person(s) who is knowledgeable in the art which is concerned, an impresario, publicity and public relation expert, skilled businessman and a continuing student of the art. The management of educational theatre productions provides students with an excellent opportunity to acquire and demonstrate their organizational ability and business management skills. The range of activities under theatre management includes; play selection, budget preparation and control, publicity, effective “House management”, and outstanding box-office records. The fact must be constantly borne in mind that the audience is the special guests of the theatre and college management. To this end, the department must

see their safety, comfort and general welfare before, during and immediately after the performance as they depart to their respective homes.

Conclusion

The management and sustainability of educational theatre through effective theatre production remain an oyster of cultural activities in the college. The department is one of the places where creative talents are discovered and honed. Without being whimsical, educational theatre remains one of the most vibrant and surviving theatre outlets in Nigeria today, with active engagement of students in play productions and consistent audience patronage during the shows. A well-planned theatre curriculum guarantees good and sound professional products in future. This is because educational theatre allows students to pursue careers in a wide variety of fields, including film, broadcasting, public relations, journalism, management, the garments and fashion industry, and theatre event planning, among others. Undoubtedly, theatre as an educational course or discipline has come to stay in college and society. For its sustainability, the school management and the government are encouraged to provide basic facilities to teach and train students.

Recommendations

It should be noted that the departmental productions are not a commercial venture but an avenue to provide educational benefits to all students with socioeconomic potential. The ultimate goal of educational theatre productions is to provide an adequate training ground for students in theory and practice. To this end, the paper recommends that;

- The Head of the Department, the Theatre manager and the entire staff to refrain from resting on their oars in satisfying the quest of their audience with quality theatrical productions. In this vein, the theatre managers are advised to be more concerned with the theatre's management and ensure adequate planning and promotion of theatrical activities in the college.
- Since theatre as a practice requires skills, training and an understanding of the arts of theatre, it is recommended that relevant theatre textbooks and plays texts should be published by renowned and upcoming writers for the educational value of the audience and the students at large.
- Also, the school management/authorities are encouraged to provide an enabling environment for the study and practice of the theatre. To this end, adequate funds and infrastructural facilities should be provided for the department to meet the production

challenges vis-à-vis regular maintenance. Also, the department is encouraged to explore all avenues to publicize and market their shows.

- Finally, adequate security measures should be put in place for the safety and comfort of the audience. Like any other educational project, individuals and groups. Philanthropic bodies, non-governmental organizations parents, and old students' associations are should be major player of support for the activities and programs of the department.

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