

# **ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF FIELD TRIP AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL ON STUDENTS' CREATIVE THINKING AND PERFORMANCE IN LEARNING VISUAL ARTS**

**Emierewen Innocent, Ayelabola Blessing Afolabi**  
Department of Fine and Applied Arts  
Federal College of Education Techniocal Akoka, Lagos

## **Abstract**

This study explored the relationship between the field trips and the potential benefits of these visits to students' creativity and practices in art tasks. Three research questions and one hypothesis guided the conduct of the study. The study adopted descriptive research design. Structured questionnaire based on the specific objectives of the study was used to elicit responses from selected Visual Arts teachers and students in selected secondary schools. The study population comprised all Visual Arts teachers and students in 30 junior (public and private) secondary schools in Education District VI (This district was divided into 3 zones for administrative convenience which are Ikeja, Mushin and Oshodi/Isolo areas of Lagos State). Stratified sampling technique was adopted in selecting 10 schools in each of the three zones comprising of 5 public and 5 private secondary schools within the zones. Meanwhile, simple random sampling technique was employed to select 1 visual art teacher and 9 visual art students in each of the 30 schools to have a total of 300 respondents for the study. The analysis employed the use of mean score and standard deviation for descriptive statistics. For the inferential analysis, t-test of independent difference was adopted. The cut-off mean for agreement or disagreement was 2.5 such that all mean score of 2.5 and above were remarked as agree while all mean scores below 2.5 were remarked as disagree. The findings showed that field trip motivates the students, stimulates the interest in discovering something more about a particular subject but that lack of financial support from parents and government and lack of school administrator support for field trips are major hindrances to field trip in teaching visual art. It was suggested that field trip as a method of teaching should be made compulsory in the curriculum of visual arts at the secondary school level of education and that adequate planning and preparation should be done by the visual art teachers and the school management so that academic aim of embarking on the field trip can be achieved.

***Keywords: Field Trip, Pedagogical, Creative-Thinking, Visual Arts, Secondary Schools***

## **Introduction**

For a result-oriented teaching and learning, the pedagogical approach should be tailored towards encouraging students to learn creatively and by innovation. Hence, the visual arts curriculum should serve to enhance self-confidence and self-esteem in

the students. Visual arts education especially at the secondary school levels provides for creative and aesthetic experiences, and helps students to acquire sensitivity to the visual world. The uniqueness of Visual arts education requires that its teaching and learning must be purposeful and students centered. A number of teaching methodologies are available for making the subject purposeful and students centered. However, this study explores the impact of field trip as pedagogical tool on students' creative thinking and practices in visual arts

Field trip is an instructional trip, school excursion, or school journey embarked upon for the purpose of learning. Fries-Gaither & Lightle (2011) posit that "field trip is a school or class trip with an educational intent, in which students interact with the setting, displays, and exhibits to gain an experiential connection to the ideas, concepts, and subject matter". To Tal and Morag (2009), "field trip is a student experiences outside of the classroom at interactive locations designed for educational purposes". Ludwig, Boyle, & Lindsay (2017) describe field trip as "a didactical and pedagogical tool that in, a broad sense motivates the students, stimulates the interest in discovering something new about a particular subject and enhances the strengthening of competences related to themes already studied in classroom context". Looking at it from another perspective, Kisida, Greene & Bowen (2014) describe field trip as "a resource with a never-ending set of educational potentials, as it can happen in different places, such as museums, historical sites, exhibitions, companies, fairs, outdoor activities, among many others".

In all of the descriptions of field trip by scholars, one important thing is clear and this is the fact that students who directly participate during a field experience generate a more positive attitude about the visual arts as a subject. Field trips take students to locations that are unique and cannot be duplicated in the classroom. According to Okwelle and Dokubo (2018) field trips may be planned for five purposes namely:

- a) To provide firsthand experience
- b) To stimulate students' interest and motivation
- c) To add relevance to learning and interrelationships
- d) To strengthen observation and perception skills and
- e) To promote personal (social) development

Field trips in visual arts do not only provide students the opportunity of attending museums and theaters, but they connect students to a larger world outside that of their own schools and neighborhoods by exposing students to different forms of arts, people, places, and ideas. Such exposure may help students develop social emotional skills such as tolerance, empathy, and social perspective (Kisida, Greene & Bowen, 2014). This study thus focuses on the impacts of arts-based field trips on the teaching and learning of visual arts in selected secondary schools in Lagos state.

The importance of field trip in education generally cannot be overemphasized. Hence, a number of scholars have previously conducted studies on the efficacy of field trip in improving learning and academic experiences of students at different levels of education. For instance, Rodriguez & Ravasco (2020) conducted a study on the role of field trip on academic performance of science students in a polytechnic in Portugal. The findings of the study revealed that field trip allowed students and other

participants to learn, in a practical way. Similarly, the impact of field trips on students' creative thinking and practices in arts education was conducted by Mahgoub & Alawad (2014). The study explored the relationship between the field trips and the potential benefits of these visits to students' creativity and practices in art tasks. The results of that study showed there was a significant difference between the performance of students on an art task within the experimental and control groups.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The requirements for education are becoming more diverse and complex. This is because students must learn creatively to become positively influenced in their immediate society. It is therefore necessary to follow the rapid development and teaching approaches of different fields of knowledge to create the conditions and environment for the students to acquire skills and make them to be ready for a change and for lifelong learning. Unfortunately, one of the problems bedeviling the development of education in Nigeria is poor teaching and infrastructural facilities especially in our secondary schools. Umunadi (2011) have argued that one of the challenges to effective teaching and learning is that of inadequate facilities required for skills acquisition. Visual Arts is practically oriented and as such cannot be appreciated without availability of visual resources. According to the researcher's personal observations and findings during teaching practice visitation to secondary schools in Lagos, there is obvious lack of regular field trip by students of visual arts to places of arts –related interests which have resulted into lower creative thinking among the students. It is against this backdrop that the study on exploring the impact of field trip as pedagogical tool on students' creative thinking and practices in visual arts become imperative.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Consequent upon the justification for this study, the specific objectives of the study were stated as follows;

1. To identify the impact of field trips on students' creative thinking and practices in visual arts education
2. To identify the hindrances affecting use of field trip as a method of teaching and learning visual arts in secondary schools in Lagos state
3. To find out the implementable strategies that can help to sustain field trip as pedagogical tool for teaching and learning visual arts in secondary schools in Lagos state.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the above specific objectives, the following research questions guided the conduct of the study.

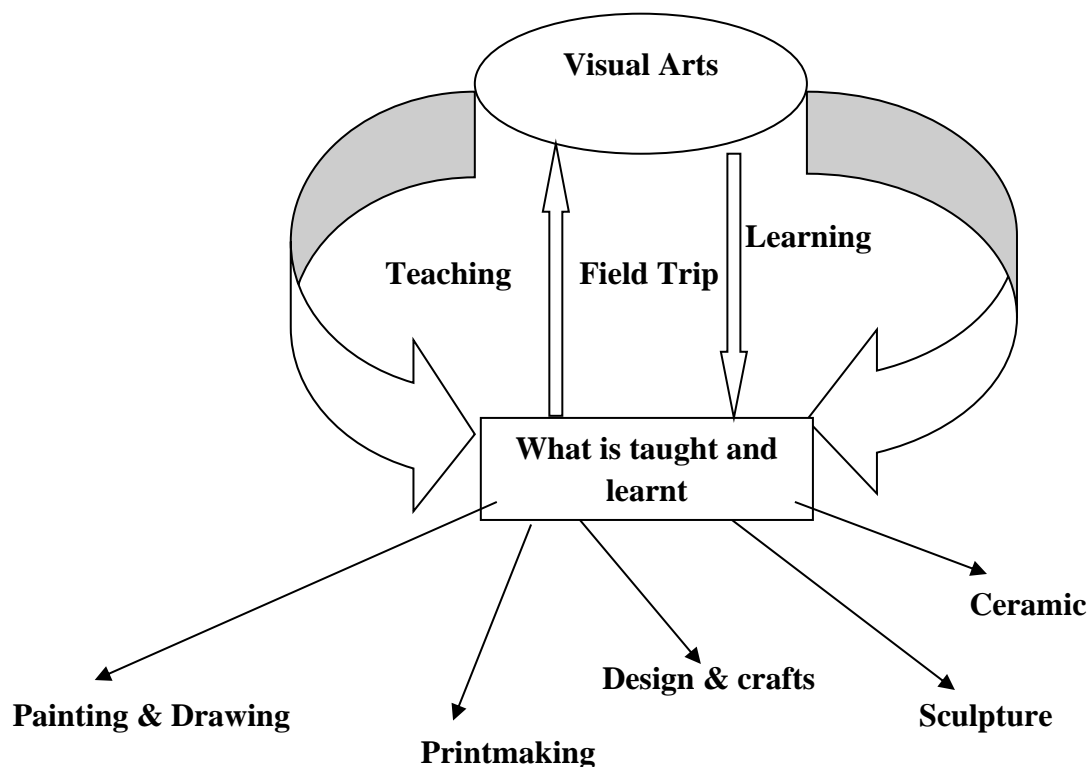
1. How does field trips impact on students' creative thinking and practices in visual art tasks?
2. What are the hindrances to effective field trip as a method of teaching and learning visual arts in secondary schools in Lagos state?
3. What are implementable strategies for sustaining field trip as pedagogical tool for teaching and learning visual arts in secondary schools in Lagos state?

### **Research Hypotheses**

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the perception of art teachers/students in public and private secondary schools on impact of field trip on students' creative thinking and practices in visual arts education

### **Conceptual Framework Connecting Visual Art and Field Trip**

The researcher used a self-developed framework to conceptualize the study of visual arts. This is shown in Fig.1 below. Conceptualizing the teaching and learning of visual art as shown in Fig. 1 showed that students who directly participate during a field experience generate a more positive attitude about the visual arts as a subject and can learn better the concepts of ceramics, drawing, painting printmaking, design, crafts, photography, video and architecture. The diagram also showed that visual art teachers give instruction better through allowing the students to have field trip experiences in art related places.



**Fig 1: Diagram illustrating a Conceptual Framework Connecting Visual Art and Field Trip.**

### **Research Methodology**

This research adopted descriptive research design using structured questionnaire to elicit responses from selected senior secondary school art teachers and students in Education district VI, Lagos State. The study population comprised of all Visual Arts teachers and students in 30 senior (public and private) secondary schools in the education district. A stratified sampling technique was adopted in selecting 30 junior

secondary schools comprising 15 public and 15 private schools. Meanwhile, simple random sampling technique was employed to select 1 visual art teacher and 9 visual art students in each of the 30 schools to have 30 teachers and 270 students totaling 300 as respondents for the study. The structured questionnaire used in data collection was tagged “Impact of field trip on student’s creative thinking and academic performance in visual arts” All the questionnaire items had four likert scale options of strongly agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was validated by experts while the reliability was conducted using test-retest method and Pearson’s Correlation coefficient statistics. The value of reliability coefficient (r) was found to be 0.91. The analysis employed the use of mean score and standard deviation for descriptive statistics. For the inferential analysis, t-text of independent difference was adopted. The cut-off mean for agreement or disagreement was 2.5 such that all mean score of 2.5 and above were remarked as agree while all mean scores below 2.5 were remarked as disagree.

## **Results and Discussion of Findings**

### **Analysis of Research Questions**

#### **Research Question 1**

*Can field trips impacts on students’ creative thinking and practices in visual art tasks?*

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation showing the Impact of Field Trip on Students Creative Thinking in Visual Art Tasks**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Students develop a positive attitude for learning, motivating them to develop connections between the theoretical concepts in the classroom and what has been experienced	300	3.43	.767	Agreed
2	Field trip motivates the students, stimulates the interest in discovering something more about a particular subject	300	3.27	.698	Agreed
3	Field trip enhances the strengthening of competences related to themes already studied in classroom context	300	3.25	.664	Agreed
4	Field trips take students to locations that are unique and cannot be duplicated in the classroom	300	3.38	.612	Agreed
5	A field trip with a single focus will provide a potential impact to students’ cognitive skills, knowledge, interests, and future career	300	3.36	.569	Agreed
6	Field trips offer a unique opportunity for students to create connections, which will help them gain	300	3.39	.600	Agreed

	understanding and develop an enjoyment of learning				
7	Students on field trips sharpen their skills of observation and perception by utilizing all their senses	300	3.55	.564	Agreed
8.	Field trip enables the visual art teachers to coordinate their teaching in the sole interest of the students.	300	3.38	.612	Agreed

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

The data presented in Table 1 shows the perceptions of art teachers and students in secondary school on the impact of field trip in improving the creative thinking of students in visual art tasks. The respondents rated item 1 to 8 as agreed with a mean rating ranging from 3.25 to 3.55 while the standard deviation also ranges from .569 to .767. With these results, the teachers and students agreed that field trip as a method of teaching visual art impact positively on the academic performance of students.

### **Research Question 2**

*What are the hindrances to effective field trip as a method of teaching and learning visual arts in secondary schools in Lagos state?*

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation showing hindrances to effective use of Field Trip as Method of Teaching Visual Art**

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Lack of financial support from parents and government	300	3.51	.660	Agreed
2	Lack of school administrator support for field trips	300	3.35	.735	Agreed
3	Poor student behavior and attitudes during the journey	300	3.55	.654	Agreed
4	Transportation problems such as vehicle break down or unwanted technical fault which could make the journey stressful.	300	3.06	.882	Agreed
5	Teacher training and experience can determine to a larger extent how easy or difficult the field trip experience could be	300	3.23	.758	Agreed
6	The time issues such as school schedule and teacher's ability to prepare adequately for the academic journey could signal the success or failure of the trip	300	3.33	.615	Agreed
7	Lack of venue options on the part of the teacher	300	3.40	.661	Agreed
8.	Poor organization of visual art curriculum	300	3.19	.742	Agreed

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

The Table 2 in research question 2, depicts the various hindrances affecting effective use of field trip as pedagogical tool for enhancing better understanding of visual arts by students in secondary schools. The respondents rated item 1 to 8 as agreed with a mean rating ranging from 3.19 to 3.55 while the standard deviation also ranges from .615 to .882. The mean scores show that the respondents (art teachers and students) obliged to lack of financial support from parents and government, lack of school administrator support for field trips, transportation problems such as vehicle break down or unwanted technical fault which could make the journey stressful and poor student behavior and attitudes during the journey as major hindrances to field trip in teaching visual art.

### **Research Question 3**

*What are implementable strategies for sustaining field trip as pedagogical tool for teaching and learning visual arts in secondary schools in Lagos state?*

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation showing Implementable Strategies for sustaining Field Trip as Pedagogical tool for Teaching and Learning Visual Arts**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Teachers should expose students to practical works through field trip as a method of teaching which will promote and encourage social interaction, active engagement in learning, self-motivation, discovery learning, learning by doing and learning by experience.	300	3.65	.660	Agreed
2	Field trip as a method of teaching should be made compulsory in the curriculum of visual arts at the secondary school level of education	300	3.28	.735	Agreed
3	The secondary school management should make field trip fee a compulsory part of school fees to encourage yearly culture of field trip to all visual art students	300	3.23	.654	Agreed
4	Student's personal report of field trip experiences should be evaluated and scored as part of examination score in visual art. This will help to encourage students active participation	300	3.24	.882	Agreed
5	Adequate planning and preparation should be done by the visual art teachers and the school management so that the academic aim of embarking on the trip can be achieved.	300	3.60	.758	Agreed

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

The data analysis in Table 3 showed the implementable strategies which the respondents belief can help to improve use of field trip as pedagogical tool for

enhancing teaching and learning of visual arts in secondary schools. The respondents rated item 1 to 5 as agreed with a mean rating ranging from 3.23 to 3.65 while the standard deviation also ranges from .592 to .779. These results showed that the respondents accepted that field trip as a method of teaching should be made compulsory in the curriculum of visual arts at the secondary school level of education and that adequate planning and preparation should be done by the visual art teachers and the school management so that the academic aim of embarking on the trip can be achieved.

### **Hypothesis**

*There is no significant difference in the perception of art teachers in public and private secondary school on impact of field trip on students' creative thinking and practices in visual arts education*

**Table 4: T-test of difference between Respondents in Public and Private School on impact of Field Trip in Visual Arts**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{x}$	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>T-cal.</b>	<b>T-Crit.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Public Schools	30	3.23	.774	28	2.228	2.048	Rejected
Private Schools		3.65	.592				

**Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed) (Reject Hypothesis) SD: Standard deviation**

Table 4 reveals that the T- calculated is 2.228 at 0.05 level of significance and 28 degree of freedom while the T-critical is 2.048. Based on this result, the T-calculated is greater than T- critical. Hence, hypothesis is rejected implying that there is a significant difference in the mean score of both teachers in public and private school with teachers in private school having higher mean than their counterpart in public school.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Research question one findings shows the perceptions of art teachers and students in secondary school on the impact of field trip in improving the creative thinking of students in visual art tasks. The respondents generally agreed that students develop a positive attitude for learning, motivating them to develop connections between the theoretical concepts in the classroom and what has been experienced and that field trip motivates the students, stimulates the interest in discovering something more about a particular subject. The respondents also agreed that field trip enables the visual art teachers to coordinate their teaching in the sole interest of the students. These findings corroborate the findings of Okwelle and Dokubo (2018) who believe that field trip are usually planned to provide firsthand experience, to stimulate students interest and motivation, to add relevance to learning and interrelationships, to



strengthen observation and perception skills and to promote personal (social) development

The findings of research question two indicated that the respondents obliged to lack of financial support from parents and government, lack of school administrator support for field trips, transportation problems such as vehicle break down or unwanted technical fault which could make the journey stressful and poor student behavior and attitudes during the journey as major hindrances to field trip in teaching visual art. These findings are in line with assertion of Rennie (2007) and Hudak (2009) who identified six barriers to successful field trips as problems of transportation, lack of adequate teachers training and experience, lack of school administrator support for field trips, curriculum inflexibility, poor student behavior and attitudes during the journey and lack of venue options.

Research question three involved finding out the implementable strategies which the respondent's belief can help to improve use of field trip as pedagogical tool for enhancing teaching and learning of visual arts in secondary schools. The findings showed that the respondents accepted that field trip as a method of teaching should be made compulsory in the curriculum of visual arts at the secondary school level of education and that adequate planning and preparation should be done by the visual art teachers and the school management so that the academic aim of embarking on the trip can be achieved. Umunadi (2011) have argued that one of the challenges to effective teaching and learning is that of inadequate facilities required for skills acquisition and that since visual arts is practically oriented, field trip should be a strategy for enhancing effective teaching and learning of skills by the students. According to the researcher's knowledge, there is obvious lack of regular field trip by students of visual arts to places of arts –related interests which have resulted into lower creative thinking among the students.

### **Conclusion**

Visual arts activities enable the students to communicate in a unique way and to organize experiences, ideas, feelings and imaginations in a visible and tangible way. Through drawing, painting, constructing and inventing, the student is able to assimilate, respond to, and make sense of, his/her experience of the world. Through its emphasis on the individuality and creativity of each student's work, the visual arts curriculum serves to enhance self-confidence and self-esteem in the students. Hence, Visual arts education especially at the secondary school levels provides for creative and aesthetic experiences, and helps students to acquire sensitivity to the visual world. The uniqueness of Visual arts education requires that its teaching and learning must be purposeful and students centered. A number of teaching methodologies are available for making the subject purposeful and students centered. However, this study explores the impact of field trip as didactical and pedagogical tool on students' creative thinking and practices in visual arts

### **Recommendations**

Based on the summary of study and the conclusion drawn, the researcher suggested the following recommendations for effective teaching and learning of visual art in secondary school

1. Teachers should expose students to practical works through field trip as a method of teaching which will promote and encourage social interaction, active engagement in learning, self-motivation, discovery learning, learning by doing and learning by experience.
2. Field trip as a method of teaching should be made compulsory in the curriculum of visual arts at the secondary school level of education
3. The secondary school management should make field trip fee a compulsory part of school fees to encourage yearly culture of field trip to all visual art students
4. Student's personal report of field trip experiences should be evaluated and scored as part of examination score in visual art. This will help to encourage students active participation
5. Adequate planning and preparation should be done by the visual art teachers and the school management so that academic aim of embarking on the field trip can be achieved.

### **References**

- Fries-Gaither, J., & Lightle, K. (2011). Penguins and polar bears integrate science and literacy. *Science*, 331(6016), 413.
- Kisida, B, Bowen, D. & Greene, J., (2014). Learning to think critically: A visual art experiment. *Educational Researcher*, 43(1), 37-44.
- Ludwig, M.J, Boyle, A and Lindsay, J (2017). Review of Evidence: Arts Integration Research through the Lens of the Every Student Succeeds Act. *American Institute for Research*. Washington, DC 20007-3835202, 403, 5000
- Mahgoub, Y.M & Alawad, A.A (2014). The Impact of Field Trips on Students' Creative Thinking and Practices in *Arts Education*. *Journal of American Science*. 10(1): 46-50
- Okwelle, P.C & Dokubo, C.I (2018). Constraints on the Utilization of Field Trips in Technology Education Instruction Delivery in Universities in South- South Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Social Sciences & Humanities Research*. 6 (1): 80-89.
- Rodriguez, F & Ravasco, C (2020). "The Role of Field Trips." In 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies. IATED, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21125/edulearn.2020.0682>
- Tal, T., & Morag, O. (2009). Reflective Practice as a Means for Preparing to Teach Outdoors in an Ecological Garden. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 20(3), 245-262.
- Umunadi, E.K (2011). Provision of Equipment and Facilities in Vocational and Technical Education for Improving Carrying capacity of Nigeria's Tertiary Institution. Paper Presented at the 1st International Technology, Education and Environment Conference, 2011.