

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ARTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A VALUABLE TOOL TOWARDS THE SUSTENANCE OF HUMAN DIGNITY IN NIGERIA

Hope Nkechi Okpala Ph.D.

Abstract

The level of debasement of propriety globally and in Nigeria in particular is alarming. The effects of these are manifest in the level of lawlessness in the country. The vices that are prevalent in Nigeria today are as a result of degeneration in human dignity. Any effective approach to the restoration and sustenance of human dignity should start from childhood stage of human development where they acquire their basic education. Studies have shown that values inculcated into children at this stage guide them through adulthood. This paper therefore seeks to reveal how the effective teaching and learning of cultural and creative arts in Nigerian pre-tertiary schools will aid in the restoration and sustenance of human dignity. The values and aspirations of the country embedded in this subject if properly handled are expected to be inculcated into any child who passes through this stage of education. This no doubt will go a long way to produce individuals with worthwhile behavior who will in future contribute meaningfully to the all-round development of the country. The research method adopted in this study is the survey and review of related literatures. The paper adopts the theory of transformative musicology. This research reveals that teachers of CCA are faced with the problem of proper implementation of the curriculum for the subject. It suggests that

seminars and workshops should be organized to train teachers on the subject.

Keywords: Cultural and Creative Arts, Sustenance, Human, Dignity, Education.

Introduction

A society is committed to making every individual within it a responsible member who, in turn, should be committed to the continuity and development of the society within its norms, values, and philosophy of life (Emeka, 2006:3). Studies have shown that this can only be achieved through both formal and informal education systems of the society. Education is a vehicle through which the value and aspirations of any given society is transmitted to its young ones. "It is designed to equip the individual not only to earn a living but also for life itself, through encouragement of socially desirable knowledge, attitude and skills" (Okafor 2005: 190). It is the pivot on which the developmental process of any society revolves no wonder Ojukwu and Onyiuke (2014:74) observed that "quality education for students is critical not only for individual growth but for a society's future." It is therefore pertinent for some aspects of the culture of a people to be integrated into their education system. This is done by designing the curriculum of education in a way that it effectively reflects the needs of individuals in the society as well as the society's aspirations when properly implemented. By so doing the acceptable patterns of behavior will be inculcated into members of the society right from tender age and they will grow into adulthood with those virtues to be very relevant in their societies. This no doubt must have been the reason why the Federal Government of Nigeria has been reviewing its education system and curriculum of education to a more acceptable and objective based one. As a result of this, the 6-3-3-4 system was introduced in 1982; President Olusegun Obasanjo launched the universal basic education in 1999. The 9-year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) was introduced into Nigerian primary and

junior secondary schools nation-wide in September, 2008 (Mokwunyei, 2014). All these attempts were made to provide an education system which the country will confidently rely on for its development.

Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) was introduced into the education system in order to incorporate the cultural values of the country into the basic education curriculum. 'This was done to preserve and present Nigerian music, dance and drama on film video and audio tape slide and written form etc. as stipulated in cultural policy for Nigeria.' (Agu 2006:4). This study is geared towards revealing how effective implementation of the curriculum of cultural and creative art in pre-tertiary school will foster the restoration and sustenance of human dignity in Nigeria, with particular reference to music as an aspect of CCA. The rate of inhuman act exhibited by some Nigerians is alarming. These are evident in the killings, destruction of properties and the many corruption and insecurity cases that are carried by the Nigerian network and local news almost every day. All these happen because of degradation in human dignity. Most peoples' minds have been seared by evil thoughts that they can no longer discern between evil and good. They feel very comfortable in perpetuating evil without any thought of the consequence of their actions. This is really a thing to be worried about. This paper is an attempt to proffer solutions to the chaos which are gradually eating deep into the country.

Definition of Concepts

Human Dignity

"Dignity is the right of a person to be valued and respected for their own sake and to be treated ethically" (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dignity>). Every human being is born with it. Dignity is an inherent value in every human. Anyone that has dignity is worthy of respect. Human dignity is what separates humans from animals. A person with dignity carries himself/herself well.

There are certain characters the person should not exhibit - use of abusive words, stealing, kidnapping, embezzlement of public fund, cheating, etc. anyone who indulges in any of the acts mentioned above and the likes has lost his dignity completely. On the other hand, subjecting people to inhuman treatments means depriving them of their right as human beings. Dignity also entails treating others the way you would like to be treated.

It is very appalling that in Nigeria today most people no longer have respect for human dignity; people are being humiliated, treated like slaves in their own country. People are being killed for no reason on daily basis. Right to dignity of human persons as contained in chapter 4, section 34 of the Nigerian constitution have been greatly violated and the defaulters most times do not face any penalty for their crime. The constitution states that:

Every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person and accordingly - a) no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment. b) no person shall be held in slavery or servitude and no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour (<https://Nigerian-constitution.com/chapter-4-cession-34-right-to-dignity-of-human-person>).

The question is, how far has this section of the Nigerian constitution been observed by the citizens?

Teaching

Teaching has been defined in various ways by different scholars. National Teachers Institute NTI in Ojukwu and Onyiuke (2014) defines it as a process of manipulation of environment to bring about learning. Pring in Akudolu (1994: 133) views it as engaging in certain activities which you have grounds to believe will be instrumental in

bringing about, in another the learning of something that can be characterized or specified. The definitions above did not view teaching from educational point of view. They made no reference to the quality of the content to be taught or learned. Akudolu (1994: 134) gave a more concised definition of teaching as a "systematic activity deliberately engaged in by somebody to facilitate the learning of the intended worthwhile knowledge, skills and value by another person and getting the necessary feedback."

This definition presents teaching as having a set of activities which when carried out will enable another person to learn what will improve the person's knowledge, value, attitudes and skills. In other words, teaching is expected to bring about positive and permanent change in the learner.

Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA)

Cultural and creative art is the amalgamation of music, drama and fine art. Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has included cultural and creative arts as one of the core basic subjects in the 9 year basic education curriculum. The three components of CCA are studied in Nigerian tertiary institutions as separate areas of study. Affirming this, Ojukwu and Onyiuke (2014: 77) write, "though these three subject area has their own discrete characteristics which largely inform their particular and varied ways of working but within that work model arguably creative aspect is fundamental". That is to say that creativity is one unique aspect which is shared by the three subjects. The integration of these three major arts subjects as one subject was necessitated by the quest of the Nigerian Government to integrate some aspect of its culture into its education system. This was done to change the Western culture which dominated the Nigerian education curriculum. Aninwene in Okeke (2014) rightly observes the effort of the Nigerian

Government to introduce an education system that will reflect the needs and aspirations of the people as he writes:

Attempts were however made in 1969 by national curricular conference to change the British colonial heritage on education in Nigeria, in order to make it more responsive to the needs and aspiration of Nigeria and the Nigerian child alike. The conference sought to emphasize Nigerian culture including Nigeria music, folklore and literature in the education system with emphasis on acquisition of practical skills, from primary to tertiary level. (p. 24).

The cultural and creative arts education is expected to educate the pupils and students about the culture of their people and inculcate discipline in them. "It is aimed at developing the students' acquisition of cultural repertoire, aesthetic perception, artistic talent, creativity and expression" (Ojukwu and Onyiuke 2014: 76). The three subjects in CCA have great impact in the life of any child that passes through the basic education program. Music in particular has tremendous influence in the all-round development of a child. A Nigerian child and the Igbo child in particular is introduced to music while still in the womb. It is believed that the rhythmic movements made by the mother while going about her house chores have remarkable effect on the unborn baby. The early exposure of the Nigerian child to music has proven to have a positive influence in his life. Every culture in Nigerian has provided musical activities for their children which, help in inculcating their values and aspirations into them. Okpala (2016) opines that:

Early exposure of children to music is very important in the development of a child in terms of perception skills which enhances literary abilities and language. It helps in imbibing the necessary attitudes and values into

them, which if upheld guide and lead them throughout their life time (p.7).

Aninwene, (2006:7) also has this to say about Yoruba culture, "in Yoruba land, for example, a child is right from his youth incorporated into the musical tradition of the land. He is allowed as part of training, to take part in various socio-musical activities which range from non- ritual to rites of passage." Every attribute which a child needs to acquire to be relevant in his society is embedded into the music of that particular culture area.

Effective Teaching and Learning of Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA)

Teaching has been defined earlier in this paper as a systematic activity deliberately engaged in by somebody to facilitate the learning of intended worthwhile knowledge, skills and values by another person and getting the necessary feedback. Cultural and creative art is a performance oriented subject, so any teacher that will teach it effectively must be very competent and also very good in performance and practical activities. For instance, the teacher may lead the students in acting some drama pieces that portray the reward for good deeds and consequences of ill behaviors. The primary aim of the teacher will be to effectively pass on the knowledge that he/she has acquired into the students by employing adequate teaching methods. In consonance with this, Ojukwu and Onyiuke 2014 state that "a teacher which is worth his or her onus employs adequate methods (strategies and techniques)that are learner centered to bring about permanent learning (p. 78). They further opine that teaching should be more of activity and learner should be at the center of learning. The teacher of CCA should make teaching and learning very enjoyable to arouse the interests of the students. Adequate instructional material should be provided. The fine art teacher could lead the students to display the effect of some ill

behaviours through drawing and painting. The music teacher on the other hand could also achieve the same objective of directing the students or pupils towards the acceptable patterns of behaviour through songs, most especially, through folk songs. The use of indigenous materials as instructional material should be encouraged as much as possible. Agu in Okpala (2017:437) affirmed this by saying that "since music is strongly attached to culture, the application of indigenous knowledge system in music education provides a strong cultural orientation for the Nigerian child." He went further to say that in order to provide the Nigerian child with adequate musical knowledge that will expose and provide him with appropriate socio-cultural and environmental background, the application of indigenous knowledge system is the only solution. Indigenous music has many traits that will guide the Nigerian child throughout his developmental stages of life. Agu (2011) submits that:

Music is the pivot on which education of the Igbo child rotates. The established musical tradition enhances acquisition of musical skills and competence. In addition, the child learns about everything around him including the culture, literature, history, religion and moral instructions.

The discussion so far has revealed that amongst other teaching strategies, that the use of indigenous knowledge system will go a long way in actualizing effective learning. No wonder Emeka in Agu (2011) states that:

Igbo traditional music education greatly emphasizes on character formation and starts early to inculcate the young into those values, behavior attitudes speech actions and traditions that are considered necessary for the making of a person in giving environment (p. 11)

Emeka's assertion above holds for every other culture in Nigeria. This implies that for effective teaching of CCA in Nigerian pre-tertiary schools, appropriate indigenous instructional materials should be employed by the teachers of the subject.

For effective teaching of CCA there are pertinent questions which the teacher has to provide answers to in the teaching process starting from planning to teach, to evaluation. These questions by Child were observed in Onuora-Oguno and Okpala (2015) thus:

What are the content of any teaching section? A- what am I expected to teach and in what order(content)? B- what educational purpose is my teaching expected to serve (Aims)? C- what teaching methods are known to achieve these purposes (methods)? D- what standard of achievement am I expected to aim at (objectives)? E- how will I discover whether the course I've been teaching has been successful or not (evaluation)? (p. 9).

The ability of the teacher to provide adequate answers to the above questions will enable him to plan and execute his teaching adequately. There is no doubt that the outcome of such teaching will be very rewarding because effective learning is the product of effective teaching (Ojukwu and Onyiuke, 2014:76).

Factors that Hinder the Effective Teaching and Learning of Cultural and Creative Arts

The introduction of CCA into Nigerian education curriculum is a welcomed development to achieve the desires and aspirations of Nigerians. But there are some challenges in the implementation stage. Some of these challenges has been highlighted by some scholars like Ugoo-Okonkwo (2014), Okeke (2014), Ojukwu and Onyiuke (2014), Onuorah-Oguno and Okpala (2015). They were unanimously concerned about the incompetence of CCA teachers at this level to teach the subject effectively. Most schools do not have teachers who are

specialists in the three subject areas of the CCA. The implication is that a teacher who specializes in drama will also have to teach music and fine art. Definitely, the outcome of such will not be desirable at all. Even where there are music teachers, the question is how competent is the teacher? Music is a creative subject and studies have shown that most of the music teachers at the pre-primary and post primary levels are not creative or performance oriented. "Teachers are merely content with teaching lines and spaces and go home leaving a yawning gap in the creativity aspect of music" Onuora-Oguno and Okpala (2015:4). A music teacher who is not creative will never make effective use of folk music in the teaching of music as folk music is all about performance.

Inadequate Time Allocation: Interview carried out by the researcher in the course of this study and her personal experience as a onetime teacher in the primary and post-primary schools showed that a maximum of 30-45 minutes per period were allocated for classes . The teacher has 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to cover what he/she has in the scheme of work for the week. The scheme of work for the JSS classes drawn from the new curriculum was always over loaded with several topics which are expected to be covered in one week. "Lesson topics are so jam-packed in the new scheme of work" (Ugoo-Okonkwo, 2014). She goes further to observe that for the topics to be covered by the teacher, he/she must have to superficially teach them that even the students will not comprehend what is being taught. Time factor coupled with over loading of weekly lesson periods with topics make it difficult for the teacher to do justice to his/her teaching.

Lack of Provision of Adequate Instructional Materials: Most post primary schools do not have basic instructional materials that will aid the teacher in the teaching of CCA. Such materials as keyboard instruments and other local musical instruments, the use of some

electronic gadgets that are necessary for effective teaching and learning are lacking in most schools.

Improper Teaching Methods: A good teacher must cultivate and possess some personal qualities or characteristics that will endear him/her to the learner (Ojukwu and Onyiuke 2014:76). One very important character the teacher of CCA must possess is humility. He must humble himself to sing, dance and play musical instruments with the students irrespective of his/her social status in the society or rank in the school. The researcher's interaction with some students on students-teacher relationship disclosed that most students are afraid of their teachers. Some teachers use abusive words on the students, calling them names because they failed to answer questions correctly in the class. For effective teaching, the teacher must maintain friendly relationship with the students. It is also surprising to note that some teachers just give notes to students to copy with little or no explanations.

The CCA teacher should employ all the necessary instructional materials available to make sure that he/she achieves his objectives. He/she must not look up to the school authority to provide him with everything needed for effective teaching; he must be ready to sacrifice his time and money.

Music being a performance oriented subject requires active participation of the students during the teaching and learning period. The teacher must show a high level of competency in administering his lessons. The students must be actively involved. For instance, In teaching of 'Rhythm' the teacher will provide few rhythmic instruments and lead the students to play the rhythmic patterns he/she wants them to master. The students are also expected to represent the rhythm by clapping or dancing as lead by the teacher. Knowledge acquired through this method is not easily forgotten.

Ugoo-Okonkwo (2014) in her discussion on "Implementation Strategies Employed by Teachers for CCA Curriculum and its Implications to Music Education" cited a Chinese proverb which states: "Tell me, I will forget, show me, I might remember, involve me and I will learn" (p.223). The teacher of CCA should adopt a teaching method that will encourage active participation of the students. "Students must be properly guided by the teachers through planned activities so that learning may be acquired" (Ojukwu and Onyiuke, 2014:76).

Summary and Conclusion

It is very obvious that there has been great degradation of human dignity in Nigeria and this has hindered the developmental progress of the country. It has resulted in many vices in various parts of the country. People are deprived of their rights to dignity. This study has portrayed education as an indispensable factor in the development of any society as the desirable values, norms and philosophy of life are integrated into the education system. Education has also been viewed as a powerful tool for enhancement of the restoration and sustenance of human dignity.

Cultural and creative art which is one of the core subjects at the basic education level in Nigeria is an important aid towards character formation if well implemented. The CCA teachers at this stage of child development should explore all necessary methods of teaching to make sure that his teaching is objective based. They should be aware that any mistake made at this level will be detrimental to the future generation. Appropriate instructional materials should be employed to make sure that the intended worthwhile behaviors are inculcated into the students. This will go a long way in molding the character of the students to conform to the patterns of life expected of them.

Many scholars have made some useful recommendations as regards the integration of the three basic art subjects as CCA and its implementation. Ugoo-Okonkwo (2014) is of the opinion that the curriculum be reviewed in line with the challenges currently faced at the implementation stage. She added that the required personnel should be involved in the review. Okeke, (2014) is of the opinion that 'parallel approach' which allows the teaching of the respective subjects as separate disciplines with the proper incorporation of African values in each.

This paper agrees with the recommendations above and also adds that while waiting for the review of the curriculum, the Nigerian government through the appropriate bodies should organize workshops and seminars to train teachers of CCA on how to handle the subject. This approach was adopted by Ford Foundation in America in 1962 by the request of the Music Education National Conference (MENC) and it yielded positive result. Mark (1986) discussing the curricular foundation of music education wrote:

One of the first activities of contemporary music project was the establishment of sixteen workshops and seminars, held at various colleges throughout the country, to help teachers better understand the contemporary music through the analysis, performance and pedagogy (p. 37).

It also recommends that rather than study the three courses lumped up as CCA as separate courses in tertiary institutions, School of Arts Education should be established. The school should offer these three courses and other related arts courses; the students will have a specialized area of study and still take relevant courses from other areas of study. This will produce teachers that will be competent in teaching the CCA.

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