

EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ARTS (CCA): INTEGRATED APPROACH

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Abstract

Quality education for young students is critical not only for individual growth, but also for a society's future. Considering the fact that cultural and creative arts is indispensable in the lives of the young students, paying attention to the methodology of teaching the subject is very essential. The success of cultural and creative arts programme in the pre-tertiary schools depends on how much emphasis that is laid in the teaching and learning carried out by the teachers and students of CCA. This should be geared towards achieving a well rationalized system of cultural and creative arts education that can sustain the transmission of age-old indigenous knowledge and a systemized practices and creative advancement effectively. This paper is therefore aimed at providing an integrated approach towards effective teaching of cultural and creative arts in the secondary school in which the ultimate goal is to have each student achieve his/her maximum potential both artistically and academically. The paper also discusses the obstacles to CCA teachers' performance. Survey and library method of research is employed. It concludes by recommending for constant re-training of the teachers of CCA in order to get them acquainted in the new teaching methods focused on the innovative techniques of teaching CCA.

Introduction

As society changes, so is the curriculum also changing to meet or adapt to the needs of society. The needs of society should be fully reflected in the educational system for relevance to be achieved. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has developed and published new curriculum as approved by the National Council on Education (NCE) with effect from September 2007. The curriculum comprises the new 9-year Universal Basic Education Curriculum and also the New Senior Secondary Education. The new curriculum was designed to fill the gaps in the old curriculum, introduce new subjects to replace obsolete subjects, redefine core subjects and also meet the key targets of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). These key targets are expressed as: value re-orientation; poverty eradication; job creation; wealth generation and using education to empower the citizenry (NERDC, 2007). The implication is that the school principals and the teachers are the key people, and they are the players that will ensure that the new curriculum succeeds in schools across Nigeria. For teachers to be successful in handling this new curriculum there is need for them to study effectively their subject areas and merge it with the components of the scheme of work derived from the new curriculum which has been prepared in a thematic pattern. The nature of the topics and content areas to be taught by teachers of various subjects will determine the type of skills to be developed in the students. 'Government is transforming the education sector' to make teachers more relevant in their teaching job because quality education for young students is critical not only for individual growth, but also for a society's future (<http://www.lagostelelevision.com/.../minister-states-accessed-n50b-ubec-cash-in-2011-the-nation-newspaper/-31k>).

Teachers play a vital role in the effective implementation of the changing curriculum because they are involved in very many ways in the things that learners do in school. The teacher is the principal

actor in all teaching and learning situation and as a result, much centres on him/her. A good teacher must cultivate and possess some personal qualities or characteristics that will ender him/her to the learner. According to Ikeme & Oforma in Nwokenna (2006:48) 'a teacher needs to be competent both in the content and subject pedagogy to make his teaching interesting to the learner'. Effective learning is the product of effective teaching. For both teaching and learning to be effective, much depends on the ability of the teacher who will handle the teaching and learning process and the variables that enhance teacher effectiveness. Students must be properly guided by the teachers through planned activities so that learning may be acquired. High quality education is essential if individuals are to realise their full potentials and the teacher is fundamental in that process.

The cultural and creative arts (CCA) education has been listed as one of the 'core basic subjects' by NERDC in the new 9-year basic education curriculum (FGN, 2007:7). It is aimed at developing the students' acquisition of cultural repertoire, aesthetic perception, artistic talents, creativity and expression.

It is designed to stimulate interest and inquiries into the theoretical and practical areas, particularly as they affect the teaching of the arts in school ([http://www.ncceonline.org/.../ Arts.../](http://www.ncceonline.org/.../Arts.../)). The importance of teaching CCA in schools has often been viewed as seemly less essential than other core subjects particularly by school administrators, whereas it is not supposed to be so. This may have been the reason why several previously held workshops focused predominantly on subjects such as English language, mathematics, basic science, basic technology and social studies. It should be noted that the ancient world held the arts education to a high esteem and it was included in their curriculum. Nigerian government equally recognized that arts education is the expression of the people which reflects the society, the environment and aspect of their culture. According to an internet source (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arts

integration-cashed), 'these therefore constitute the underlying principles for formulating the philosophy of cultural and creative arts education for primary/junior secondary school in Nigeria'. The integration of arts education could have been highly welcomed by the teachers of these arts subjects but it is ill-timed because the teachers were not given adequate orientation before introducing it. The teachers of cultural and creative arts must be acquainted with the existing programme of cultural and creative arts from the onset for developmentally appropriate cultural and creative arts education for young students to be provided. It is expected that the classroom teacher should provide an integrated approach in the teaching of CCA, stressing creativity, artistic expression, in its historical and cultural context. Though, the teachers are forced by circumstances to embrace CCA, most of them have come to realise the aesthetic values inherent in the subject and are now more eager to learn the best ways to handle it.

The Concept of Cultural and Creative Arts

Cultural and creative arts education is the umbrella term which brings together the three arts subject areas; music, fine and applied arts and drama/theatre. Though, these three subject areas 'have their own discrete characteristics which largely inform their particular and varied ways of working but within that work model arguably the creative aspect is fundamental' (<http://www.reading.acuk/a-z>). Cultural and creative arts have been introduced as holistic and integrated subject. The integration of the three major arts subjects has been achieved in some countries of the Western world as arts education and had been in existence in different forms during the 19th century. Arts education gained popularity as part of John Dewey's 'Progressive Education Theory. In the later part of 20th century, 'arts education's role in public schools ebbed and flowed with the country's

political leanings and financial well-being' (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arts_integration-cashed). These three major arts subject areas that are integrated into one subject is an expression of the people, it reflects the society and the environment and it is the aspects of the people's culture. This is in accordance with what constitute the arts in traditional culture as 'music, dance, drama, et cetera are usually integrated and often are performed and presented together at appropriate occasions, in order to promote the cultural heritage'([http://www.ncceonline.org/ .../Arts.../](http://www.ncceonline.org/.../Arts.../)).

Integrated Approach to the Teaching of CCA

Teaching and learning like any other activity in life has been undergoing changes. What the society regarded as teaching two decades ago is no longer what it is today. For the purpose of this paper, teaching is defined as a process of manipulation of the environment to bring about learning while learning is a deliberate change in behaviour of learner(s) through activities, experiences leading to permanent improvement in knowledge, skills, attitudes and modes of adjustment of learners (NTI, 2011). Alla-Boison in NTI (2011:141) classified teaching into formal and informal teaching. Formal teaching is teacher centred because the teacher does all the talking with minimum involvement of the learner while in informal teaching a teacher facilitates learning by taking into cognizance and use of learner needs, thus it is termed 'learner-centred', 'learned - focused', 'learner-friendly'. A teacher who is worth his/her onus employs appropriate methods (strategies and techniques) that are learner centred to bring about permanent learning. Teaching should be more of activities and the learner should be at the centre of learning. Nye & Nye (1970:78) asserted that 'children learn best when they see meaning and have a part in establishing their purposes'.

The goal of integration of *CCA* is to increase knowledge of the subject area while concurrently fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the three major art areas. Fundamental to the philosophy of education is the precept that children learn by doing and performing

(mckinley.pasadenausd.org/modules/cms/pages.phtml?...cached). *CCA* exposes students to both theory and practical in various areas of *CCA*. The integrated nature of the practice of *CCA* necessitates the use of specialised teaching strategies by the teacher. The initial artistic quality in the life of the students should be discovered and the teachers' needs as they respond to and participate in cultural and creative arts practices. Many methods/techniques of teaching abound, such as discussion, lecture, demonstration, project, field trip, discovery, questioning, brainstorming, et cetera. Each of these methods/techniques can be made to be learner-centred if properly managed. *CCA* teacher needs to employ methods and techniques that will bring about permanent learning which is also learner centred, learner focused, learner-driven and learner friendly. *CCA* teacher is morally and professionally bound to carry out the teaching as an active performer.

Adequate care must be taking in planning *CCA* lessons to ensure effective teaching and learning. Adequate lesson plan is a building block for effective teaching at the level of students. Teachers should have a firm grip of the fundamentals of the lesson plan and their import in purposeful teaching. Without adequate lesson plan, the teacher finds it difficult to maintain a focus and may end up teaching much but imparting little knowledge. Maduewesi (1999:18) asserted that it is 'the teacher's responsibility to create or influence desirable changes in behaviour or in tendencies towards behaviour in his students'.

For effective teaching of the content areas in the *CCA* curriculum, teachers need to be knowledgeable and skilful in

construction of the teaching objectives and using learner-friendly methods and techniques of teaching. The objective of a lesson determines how much a teacher wants to achieve in his/her lesson. It is a teacher's guide throughout the period of the lesson. Teachers should aim at achieving performance based objective that is the result of a student's action which is observable and can be measured at the end of a lesson. 'A lesson without performance objective is like a missionary without a mission' (NTI, 2001:138). Performance objectives are stated using measurable verbs that is, verb that describes an action. Examples of measurable verbs for stating performance objectives are: to list, to describe, to state, to mention to demonstrate to interpret, to draw, to cut, to sketch, to apply, to carry out, to diagnose, to construct, to dismantle, to assembly, et cetera (NTI, 2011).

Teaching a CCA class especially at this period poses several challenges. Therefore, it is the duty of a competent teacher to plan for the effective management of such challenges since the assessment of the CCA programme will be based on the following:

- Whether the teachers of cultural and creative arts conduct instructions based on learning outcomes.
- The extent to which teachers of cultural and creative arts specify objectives when teaching to cover the three domains of education.
- Whether the curriculum of cultural and creative arts was viewed as short term planning rather than a planned series of sequential activities designed for the development of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills with definable goals and outcomes.
- The extent to which the instructional materials and other equipment are provided for the proper teaching and learning of cultural and creative arts.
- Whether the teachers adopt activity-based teaching by involving lots of activities in their teaching.

- The kind of topics that best provide opportunities for the students to explore their nature and develop their creativity.
- Whether the teachers of cultural and creative arts emphasize the learner centeredness in their approach to teaching.
- Whether the teachers of CCA are using appropriate teaching aids which will include the following: video tape recorder, pictorial reproduction, photographs, slides, film stripes, charts, sound-producing objects, improvised sound-producing objects, arts materials, musical instruments, et cetera (<http://www.ncceonline.org>).

There is need for modern educators in the cultural and creative arts to be mentally and practically equipped. Performance of students in cultural and creative arts can improve if teachers possess certain competences in handling the subject. This will enable the teachers inculcate in the students their cultural identity and creative practices.

Obstacles to Teachers' Performance in Cultural and Creative Art

The policy provides that the curriculum for universal basic education in the primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria should include cultural and creative arts. The integration is done without putting the teachers into consideration or at least give them enough orientation on how to go about it. According to Okafor & Okafor (2009:34) 'there is no guide as regards selection, variation, implementation, goals and opportunities for this provision'. It should be realised that these teachers who are specialists in their different subject areas are pushed to teach two other subjects merged with their specialty.

Due to the nature of cultural and creative arts education and the government inability to organize workshops or retraining exercise for the teachers of cultural and creative arts, most of the teachers lack ideas and confidence in handling the subject. Is it not proper for the authorities concerned to organize workshops to retrain the

teachers of creative arts to get them abreast with the new development before enforcing such curriculum on them?

The National Policy on Education laid down certain expectation as to the quality of educational outcome. However, a number of difficulties in the operating environment inhibited the full attainment of these outcomes particularly in the quality of education. Most teachers do not handle the lessons adequately as it should be. This situation is not quite because of lack of knowledge and teaching approach but because of certain factors. The schools are congested. The Policy specified a maximum of forty (40) students per class in the secondary schools. Experience today shows that in urban schools, classes have grown so large that there are secondary schools with over fifty (50) students in a class built for forty students. The large number of students has not been matched with a corresponding increase in educational facilities and infrastructure. Classrooms, teachers, instructional materials and equipment are inadequate and the students are the ones affected on the long run. Evidently, little meaningful teaching and learning can take place in such congested classes.

Due to inadequate funding, classrooms are insufficient and teachers are in short supply. Over populated classrooms, inadequate periods in the school timetable and jam packed scheme of work has resulted in the teachers of cultural and creative arts relying more heavily on conventional methods of teaching such as lecture method, dictation and note taking among others which are not interactive in order to meet up with the demands of their job.

Recommendations

Secondary school represents a critical stage in the educational system of any nation. It provides further educational and vocational opportunity for completers of primary school as well as lays the foundation for academic pursuit at the tertiary level. For education

presently in Nigeria to achieve functional curriculum implementation in the area of *CCA*, the following are recommended:

- In other to develop a high quality cultural and creative arts curriculum, it is necessary that the government should identify the difficulties that current teachers of cultural and creative arts face when teaching the students;
- There is need for constant re-training of the teachers of *CCA* in order to get them acquainted in the new teaching methods. The retraining workshops should focus on the innovative techniques of teaching *CCA* because according to an internet source, (<http://portal.unesco.org/education/es/files>) retraining may take place when the teachers job imposes new and emerging demands driven by curriculum change and pedagogy that require regular re-training of teachers to upgrade their knowledge and in order to meet new standards of education that are geared towards the improvement of the entire education system.
- More varied and applicable procedures should be adopted in handling the cultural and creative arts as a course of study. Teachers of cultural and creative arts should take up remedial courses in the other two subject areas that are not his/her specialty in other to be equipped and possess sufficient in-depth knowledge of the methodology and skills required for handling all aspects of cultural and creative arts;
- It is my candid opinion that Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) should be based on area of student's specialty as is obtainable in certain subjects like business studies where students are allowed to choose their special areas. This will enable the students choose the areas their teachers taught best;

- Achieving quality assurance and capacity building in education should also include sending the teachers on in-service training such as study leave with pay to enable them further their education, sponsoring them in seminars and conferences and other new developments and trends in education;
- Computer technology and other internet facilities should be incorporated in the secondary schools and should be maximally utilized by the teachers to complement the traditional pedagogical and didactic approaches. This will help to improve the teachers' competencies and they also will be mandated to learn from their colleagues from other parts of the world from the internet and that teachers will also 'be able to raise their heads high among their counterparts in the developed countries' (Olorunsogo, 2008:34)
- Teachers are advised to make efforts to provide their own instructional materials from local sources, involving the principles guiding the teaching of large classes and emphasizing learner centeredness.

Conclusion

A student begins to learn when he becomes deeply involved in the learning situation. The vehicle for transfer of learning is the method a teacher employed in teaching or presenting the lesson. This suggests that substantial attention should be given to mode of teaching and learning of cultural and creative arts to ensure that each student achieves his/her maximum potential both artistically and academically in the Nigerian educational system. This paper aimed at suggesting an integrated approach in the teaching and learning of cultural and creative arts in Nigeria. It has several implications for both the teachers and students of cultural and creative arts. It also provides valuable information to policy makers in education to develop a useful

cultural and creative arts curriculum as well as in-service or retraining exercises for professional development of the teachers. There is no doubt whatsoever that the performance of students in cultural and creative arts can improve if teachers possess certain competences in handling the subject.

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