

The Role Of Art In Sustaining Technical And Vocational Education In Nigeria

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Abstract- Art is a discipline that plays a vibrant role in practical skills for educational development to enhance national economic empowerment and development. It is thus a panacea for sustaining technical and vocational education. This paper reviews some basic definitions in order to clarify some concepts. The history of art education and its possessions to sustain technical and vocational education in Nigeria was delved into. It also explains the diverse skill, in art for manpower development, and how art education can be given top primacy in formal and non-formal educational structure for sustainable development through technical and vocational education expansion

Index Terms- Art, Education, Sustainability, Vocational, Skills, Development

I. INTRODUCTION

The role of art education

Education in Nigeria is dynamic and has been passing through challenges which made its survival and services to the country a fantasy, consequently education remains the major concern of every stakeholder. In view of this, Enamhe (2013) observe that education is a comprehensive of ideals, approaches, organizations, services and people aimed and organized by the society to impart its members with the knowledge of adapting to various situations of life on how to achieve set goals for better life. Furthermore, Enamhe (2013) state that Arts in education alters the ideas of educational system into conviction for example to introduce a subject in school may not necessarily be its successful implementation. The state of art has many years been a source of concern due to negligence. This runs across primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Art organizations are not left out especially, Museums, traditional centers, social centres, Art theaters and Galleries of Art amongst others.

Oloidi et al (2011) observe that if a good consideration of art education is made and improved guidelines on art are also made in schools and colleges, it will go a long way to improve and redeem the negative impression suffered by art in our society. Consequently art is a significant aspect of tradition, social, economic, political and other features of the society. Art education allows learners to become creative art practitioners. Learners learn to improve the essential artistic, scholarly, imaginary and practical

skills to train them for persistent personal development and proficiency.

Art informs and provides visual, tactile and more practical learning environments. Teaching art as a subject in primary and secondary schools is to enhance the overall development of a child. Drawing and painting illustrations leave lasting impressions on child psychology. The importance of art in the development of the child cannot be undermined. Through art, the children comprehend faster and clearer. Therefore in teaching other subjects for better understanding of concepts visual art is required as painting and illustrations back up the processes of teaching and learning. To support the importance of learning through visual art, a study has been carried out by some researchers on the significance of visual Arts in primary and secondary schools across the country and it is established that students performed better using paintings and illustrations than those that learn without painting and illustration. Therefore the outcome of some of these researches shows that, teaching and learning is a difficult process that can be strengthened with learning and teaching aids or instructional materials which are capable of stimulating and motivating learner's interest. According to Enamhe (2003), visual art stimulates children interest in learning and allow the pupils to pay attention during teaching and learning which makes them remember what they are been thought in the class as it also encourages active participation in class. Visual arts also assist the learner to understand easily during teaching of practical in some subjects, just as illustrations and experiments are used for clarity. In view of the above Uzoagba, (1982) state several impacts of art to the society such as promoting our traditional custom and creates distinctiveness. Similarly the Nigeria cultures of Nok, Ife, Benin, Igbo Ukwu, Owo, Esie, and Tsoede. These cultures are well documented which made it possible for its survival for the test of time and has been one of the recorded oldest history of art.

Uzoagba(1982) further confirm that certain eras in the traditional evolution of Nigeria culture have a global recognition on art work created by Nigerians artists in the past which are defined in every encyclopedia of world art.

Art is valuable to us in our everyday life which indeed so much lives with us. For over sometime there is an increase in social activities in Nigeria cultural values for example, the Argungu fishing festivals in Kebbi state is restructured to exhibit some sort of modern ideas and realisms unlike when in the past

when Nigeria economy was centered on oil for export. Consequently to overcome the problem of unemployment in the country, there is a need for the diversification of the economy in order to meet up with the demands of arts and culture sector. Especially in tourism which is capable of boosting the foreign exchange earnings. Therefore this sector is one of the major employers of labour in Nigeria today for income distribution and a panacea for sustainable rural development and poverty alleviation. Most importantly, contemporary works of arts are significant to the possibilities of arts and culture for export trade and promotion mainly, as they have begun to adore global patronage.

Omuaru and Nyah (2014) considered art as an educational initiative and a dedicated training which when anticipated willfully within the tenant work of national development schemes will project a potential for the artists, thereby boosts social and economic improvement. In view of that Martins (2003) sees art as an instrument for industrial development which many countries benefited from it contributions to human and capital development, and therefore cannot be underestimated as a key mechanism for every aspect of human development, consequently no nation can exist without art.

The development of Art education in Nigeria

The colonial government needed artisan to meet up with lower level of manpower in other to meet up with the demands of their industries and therefore the colonial government embarked on building few secondary schools and technical schools where artisans will be trained. Prior to that few Nigerians like Chief Aina Onabolu, Akinola Lasekan and Ben Enwogu had travelled abroad to acquire diploma in art in which Chukueggu (2010) affirm that the return of those who travelled abroad to acquired higher education in art from various European schools coincided with the campaign for independence which became crystal clear that the colonial government was building tertiary institutions in the country as they have limited time to continue governing the country. With this development the British government set up a commission in 1943 to look into the creation and siting of tertiary institution in Nigeria as a plea to carter for the much required middle level manpower of the colonial administration, By 1952, Nigeria College of arts science and technology was set up with two campuses referred to as the Ibadan and Zaria branches. Three years later the college introduced science courses with a provisional diploma in fine art at the Ibadan branch. In 1955/56 academic session another campus was established in Enugu to accomplish the agitation of the eastern region led by Dr. Okpara. Architecture and fine Arts divisions that were formally running in Ibadan were later moved to Zaria, and that was the beginning of Zaria art school which instigated art education among other higher institutions in Nigeria. Prominent among the early eight students admitted to read fine arts were Solomon, I. Wangboje (1932-1998) and Simon, Okeke (1937-1969) who later became the first President of the Zaria art society in 1959.

Furthermore Chukueggu (2010) affirm that the Fine Art Department in College of Arts, Science and Technology, Zaria was linked to Slade school of Art and the Goldsmith school of Art in Britain which were parts of the University of London. Nonetheless, the diploma programme in Fine Arts runs for four academic years, which the management of the College of Arts

Science and Technology refused to transform into a degree status despite its affiliation to the University of London. Consequently that action led to the formation of Zaria Art society in 1958 which was later known as Zaria rebels. The name of the college changed in 1962 to Ahmadu Bello University when the Federal Government of Nigeria converted it to a University, then the Fine Arts Department began to award degrees instead of diploma in Fine Arts. The Zaria Art School has produced many world-class artists, academic and administrators, who later introduced art in many of the Nigeria Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and vocational centres. From the records available there were over twenty five Polytechnics and colleges that offer Art, at different levels and areas of specialization.

Caleb (2006) unveils that the Zaria Art graduates have made substantial impact and influences not only in the Arts but in all domains of the Nigerian economy. The artistic rendition of the works of art of these graduates either in style, techniques, design and experiments confirm to teaching and learning particularly, the liberty of expression given to them during their days as students. The new generation artists and art movements gained inspiration from the practices of the graduates of Zaria art school. Most of the Zaria art graduates have better-quality, expanded and use eccentric, inexpensive and obtainable materials to put in place new styles of art that recently emerged in art practice.

Sustaining Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria through Art

Sustaining technical and vocational education through art cannot be undermined as art plays a key role in the process of teaching and learning. Enamhe (2013) posit that art involves a system of values and techniques engaged in the presentation of conventional events such as music, dance, drama and visual arts. Enamhe, (2013) further state that art education is a candid and very important piece of our education and should not be undermined, but prioritized like other subjects in the school curriculum. Art thus should be taught as an essential subject at all school levels.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization(1984) state that Vocational Education compacts with the features of the educational practice involving general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, considerate and knowledge involving career in different sectors of the economic and social life worldwide. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP, 2008) further proved that vocational education is the education and teaching aimed at equipping learners with the knowledge, know-how, skills and aptitudes essential in a specific career or largely in a labour market. The Financial Monitoring Group, David, F. and Mourougane, A.(2009) views vocational education as teaching and learning activities containing practical skills, designed, usually leading to a specific type of work. Vocational education is viewed as a post – compulsory education and teaching without degree and higher level programmes provided by additional learning organizations, which offers people with job-related or work related acquaintance and skills. VET also includes programmes which offer the foundation for subsequent vocational programmes. Other relations used globally comprise technical and vocational education and training (VTET) vocational and technical education (TVE), vocational and technical education

(VTE) further education and training (FET), and career and technical education (CTE).

The European Union (2016) avers that vocational education and training, abbreviated as VET, sometimes basically called vocational training, is the training in skills and teaching of knowledge linked to a precise occupation, career or vocation in which the learner or worker desires to partake. Vocational education should be assumed at a learning organization, as part of secondary or higher education, or may be part of early training in occupation. This paper found out that from the different perceptions or meanings of Vocational Education, it all encompasses training in skill acquisition and learning about a particular skill, job or aptitude. The goal and objective of art is to make provision for teaching an individual or group of people skills and learning to get familiar to a particular skill, career or vocation in visual arts, performing arts, and amongst other professions. Therefore Art is a tool that can be used in promoting and sustaining Vocational and Technical Education.

Nkom (2007) unveil that when children are taught art they develop skills in the use and handling of materials with which they articulates themselves in visual form thereby building in them the ability to draw accurately in science and social sciences which they do better than expressing themselves verbally or in words. Thus art is a language of communication that enables people to express themselves as the artist uses elements of art to make communication effectively. Art can be used to communicate to other people regardless of their origin or ethnic group. Such dialogue is achieved during art exhibitions even if the artist is not physically present the work speaks for itself and the message is passed. In the same vein Boomer (1999) opines that art offers a chance to individuals or people to develop the ability in solving problems or to be actively involved in current issues in the society. Therefore Art have a distinctive link with teaching and learning and can be used as an tool to learn about other subjects which involves the teaching of practical that enable learners to interrogate experiment, create, evaluate and review in other to discover various significance of artwork.

Sani and Aliyu (2007) opine that art is a vibrant and uniting action with possibility of playing a significant role in teaching and learning. While the exercise of drawing and painting is a complex task which the child put together all experiences to accomplish the task. Therefore the future of any society depends on the type of education children are offered. For any nation to be successful there must be a need to embark on art education so that children can have brighter future. Perhaps, art education represents all the potentials of life and it can offer the prospect for increasing the capability for action, know-how, redefinition, and permanence that is required in a society packed with modifications and hesitations. Therefore without art education it will be impossible for children to comprehend effectively. This suggests that education prepares one for life, and the knowledge of art is certainly in every human being. One cannot deny the fact that art is a significance feature of education in school, as such teaching and learning in primary school facilitates the ability to respect, maintain values, attitude and sense of responsibility in children from one generation to another. It is crystal clear that the nature of art is to improve character, uniqueness, people or individuals and organizations through collective consideration of symbols.

II. CONCLUSION

Art plays a significant role in the development of the Polytechnic curriculum to confirm the effective execution of technical and vocational education for the essential manpower development for industrial development and human capacity building, and also to promote sustainability and self-reliance. Therefore, there is a need to brook art in the curriculum as an essential subject to facilitate the development of knowledge in other disciplines by students and to also open up new ways of thinking as this will also sustain the development of profound knowledge within a discipline, which offers a basis for inter-disciplinary approaches to advance and intricate problem-solving.

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