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Creative Arts and the Development of Learners: A Case of Basic Five Learners in Kparekpare Basic School

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ABSTRACT

Creative Arts teaching and learning is expected to prepare the minds of learners so as to explore their creative and innovation abilities in solving real life problems. The focus of this study is to explore the impacts the Creative Arts as an academic discipline have on the general development of learners in Kparekpare Basic School; and also to outline some of the teaching approaches that could help to arouse and sustain interest of the discipline among the learners. The study adopted a descriptive technique in presenting the findings of the study. The population of the study consisted of both Teachers and Learners in the school. The accessible population stood at 30 respondents who were drawn using purposive and random sampling methods. Mixed methods approach was adopted in collecting data which was analyzed using digital technology. The study revealed that, Creative arts manifest in the form of Visual and Performing arts which in totality help learners to build their communication skills, display their creative abilities and that the subject should be taught through series of learner – centred approaches. It was recommended that, teachers in the study area should provide enough grounds for learners to participate actively in the lesson.

INTRODUCTION

Children's Creative orientations can take the form of art, dance, theater, music, and other activities that stimulate the imagination (Sunny, 2016). Creative Arts, is a subject which leads children towards the understanding and appreciation of arts and culture. The rationale in the Creative arts curriculum states that, "Creative Arts provides opportunity for a learner to: self-explore, self-express, build mental focus, skillfully use hands to create (physical dexterity), manage and reduce stress, and achieve personal satisfaction and enjoyment." (NaCCA, 2019). This implies that, the study of Creative Arts stimulates and help learners cultivate their abilities across virtually every domain, fostering flexibility of the mind. Ghana's Creative Arts curriculum is made of two main strands: The Visual Arts strand and the Performing Arts strand. These two strands aim at developing individuals who are literates, good problem solvers, have the ability to think creatively and have both the confidence and competence to participate fully in Ghanaian society as responsible local and global citizens.

There are three domains of child's development which are the psychomotor, affective and cognitive. Whenever children are engage in activities that will make them use and coordinate the hands and body for posture and coordination; such as using crayons, markers, paintbrushes, writing in the air, involving in creative movements helps develop their fine motor skills which are needed later for writing. Affective domain of children develops when they work together in art class, they learn to share and interact, appreciate the emotions of others. These are positive and important changes for

their affective learning. Children's cognitive domain is developed when they are involved with critical thinking activities in the creative arts class. These domains offer learners with the basic knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures, strong logical competencies and range of comprehensive communication and interpersonal skills.

In this regard, the researcher undertook a descriptive research into the problem, why the teaching and learning of creative arts is not very effective in Bonkrong Basic School.

Statement of the problem

Creative arts which forms part of our daily activities is expected to be studied by all learners at the basic level in the Ghanaian educational system. In spite of this, most teachers consider Creative arts as a difficult subject to teach in schools because they do not have much knowledge in it. For this reason, they have limited themselves to the drawings alone which are just an aspect of visual arts, whilst they leave the performing arts aspect aside. It is as a result of this that this study is done to create awareness on the impact of the Creative arts as a discipline on teaching and learning on basic five learners at Kparekpare in the Oti Region of Ghana.

Research Questions

1. What are the components of the creative arts subject?
2. What is the impact of creative arts on the cognitive and psychomotor domains of development of learners of Kparekpare?
3. What are some simple approaches that can be used

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in teaching creative arts at Kparekpare?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review is done under the following sub-topics.

The Creative Arts

Arts are series of human practices of creative expressions; such as “storytelling and cultural participation” (Holden 2016). The arts are a vehicle through which human beings cultivate distinct social, cultural and individual identities, while transmitting values, impressions, judgement, ideas, vision, spiritual meaning, patterns of life and experiences across time and space”. With all these said, Creative Arts offers an avenue for the mental, spiritual, physical, psychological and aesthetic development of the pupil and provides the medium for critical and imaginative thinking, making and responding to processes. Arts are common, popular or everyday practices as well as more sophisticated and systematic or institutionalized ones. Creative Arts are activities that actively engage children’s imagination through music, visual arts, movement and dance, drama and storytelling (Shafir, *et al.*, 2020). They add that, Creative Arts engage children across all domains-cognitive, language, social, emotional and physical. The Creative Arts is described by the Creative Arts Teaching Syllabus (2007) as “a practical subject with no vocational objective but which emphasizes creativity, skillful and efficient handling of tools and materials, skills and techniques to accomplish specific tasks and responding to artworks”.

The Components of the Creative Arts Subject

The Creative Arts subject, according to the 2019 creative arts curriculum, is of two components: the visual arts and the performing arts.

The visual arts component consists of modelling, drawing, weaving, carving, sewing and casting. artifacts such as baskets and carvings can also be used in drama and dance performances. All these items are found in the visual arts component of the Creative Arts.

The performing arts component of the Creative Arts also consists of music, dance and drama / theatre. Performing arts include a range of disciplines which are performed in front of live audience, including theatre, music and dance. The performing arts range from vocal and instrumental music, dance and theatre to pantomime, sung verse and beyond. They include numerous cultural orientations that reflect human creativity and that are also found, to some extent, in many other intangible cultural assets domains (Pinto, 2025). With the new Creative Arts curriculum, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), was in charge of the design and the education of how to implement the new Basic School curriculum in Ghana. In the new curriculum, the Syllabus is called curriculum. Sections or units as they pertain to the old syllabus are known in the new syllabus as Strands, and topics are sub-strands. Learners/learners in the new curriculum are learners. Scheme of work is the scheme of learning and teachers are facilitators. The new Creative

Arts curriculum has two Strands: The Visual Arts Strand and the Performing Arts Strand. Both strands have four interrelated sub-strands which are:

1. Thinking and exploring ideas
2. Planning, making and composing
3. Displaying and sharing through exhibition and performance
4. Appreciating and appraising. (NaCCA, 2019)

Impact of Creative Arts on the Cognitive and Psychomotor Domains of Development

The cognitive domain and the psychomotor domain are two of the domains of development in learners (Hoque 2016). According to him, the cognitive domain is associated to brain power, that is, the ability to use the brain in thinking, reasoning and understanding concepts. Through creative arts activities, young children can learn the names of colors and forms. Kids learn what occurs when two primary colors are combined to create a secondary color. To assist older learners, develop the observational skills necessary for science, take them outside to carefully inspect a tree, feel its bark, and analyze the shape and color of its leaves before asking them to draw or paint the tree themselves (Katz- Buonincontro & Ross 2020). This implies that, activities that are performed during creative arts lessons help learners to think and understand concepts about nature and that may stick in their minds for a very long time. The psychomotor domain is also associated with the motor skills, that is, the fine and gross motor skills. “The motor skills are essential for many activities including writing letters and words. Playing an instrument, using a paint brush or shaping modelling clay develop gross and fine motor dexterity and control” (Newell 2020). When children are offered arts activities, it helps in the development of their large and small muscles, as well as their eye-hand coordination. Using crayons, markers paint brushes help children practice the fine control they will need for writing later on. Playing of piano requires the use of both hands and feet for the pedals which helps in developing the motor skills. “Varying types of creative arts activities help children build up their abilities in both categories of motion. For example, when a child grips and uses paintbrush, or glues buttons and yarn to paper, he or she is engaging and advancing his or her fine motor skills. However, when he dances, skips, claps or jump in time to the music, he stimulates the part of the brain that controls the gross motor skills” (Sunny, 2016). The varying ideas from these authors give the impression that, creative arts activities that are performed during creative arts lessons help to improve learners’ motor skills. Without doubt, activities that are performed in creative arts helps to develop the psychomotor domain of learners.

Approaches to Teaching Creative Arts

Teaching is a complex form of public service that requires high levels of formal knowledge for successful performance. Smith (2018) defines teaching as “the process of attending to people’s needs, experiences and

feelings, and intervening so that they learn particular things, and go beyond given". This means that teachers need to possess and exhibit certain qualities. For teaching and learning to be effective according to Smith, there are some qualities that teacher must possess and some behaviors learners should exhibit. Some qualities teachers should possess include:

- The teacher should be knowledgeable or well-grounded in the subject matter.
- The teacher should be able to utilize varied methods, techniques and strategies of teaching during lesson delivery.
- The teacher should continuously evaluate their teaching in totality. This implies that they should be reflective to assess the teaching process to know their strengths and weakness. This provides them with an opportunity to make amendments.
- The teacher should uphold the principle of education as lifelong processes and therefore endeavor to deliver what is quality to learners than quantity.

On the part of learners, they have to:

- Show readiness to learn.
- Abide by rules and regulations set by the teacher.
- Engage themselves in activities in the lesson.
- Assist each other in achieving a set goal.
- Show comportment and commitment during lessons.

Approaches in Teaching

Activity Method

According to (Fizza 2019), activity method is a method of teaching where learners are engaged in activities during the lesson. He maintains that this method appeals to many of the child's senses. On the approach to the use of the activity method, he cautions the need for outlining definite goals that should be purposeful and the use of effective teaching and learning aids combined with desirable class activities. He also describes activity method as the method of teaching in which the child is placed at the center of the teaching and learning process. In such situations, all learners in the class are made to interact with materials provided either by the teacher or by the learners to discover concepts and facts unaided or with teacher's minimum interference. The learning outcomes of an effective use of this method include: it is difficult for children to forget what they have been taught; Learning become more pleasurable and not boring; and the method fosters cooperation among learners.

Experiential Approach

"Experiential learning is a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and clarify values" (Burch *et al.*, 2019). In this approach, learners learn by doing and by reflecting on the experience. By engaging learners in hands-on experiences and reflection, they are better able to connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations.

Discovery Learning

Discovery learning was introduced by Jerome Bruner and it is a method of inquiry-based instruction. This popular theory encourages learners to build on past experiences and knowledge, use of intuition, imagination and creativity, and search for new information to discover facts, correlations and new truths. (Nurdin *et al.*, 2019). Advantages of this method are as follows:

- It gives opportunity to learners to search for knowledge.
- It enables learners to explore and search for materials and know their environment.
- As the teacher does not answer for the student, it teaches them a style of problem solving.
- Retention is better as learners discover knowledge themselves.
- Learners acquire positive learning attitudes.
- It also helps learners to learn to make personal decisions and become less dependent on others.
- It promotes creativity in learners as they are able to think critically.
- It also helps learners to be able to reason and develop mental and physical coordination.

Demonstration

"Demonstration method in teaching can be defined as giving demo or performing a specific activity or concept. In other words, the demonstration method is a teaching-learning process carried out in a systematic manner. Demonstration often occurs when learners have a difficult time connecting theories to actual practice or when learners are unable to understand the application of theories" (Adhikari,2024). According to him, the procedures involved are as follows:

- Teacher explains the purpose of the demonstration.
- Teacher demonstrates procedure or new behavior.
- Learners ask questions and engage in discussion.
- Learners then practice the behavior.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

This study employed a descriptive survey design. The descriptive design involves the description of the present status of event or phenomenon under investigation (Hall *et al.*, 2024). Descriptive survey was used to gather information on the impact of teaching and learning of creative art on Basic five learners' development in Bonkrong Basic School. Descriptive survey research design was preferred because information was readily obtainable from learners and teachers in their natural environment, concerning their attitudes or beliefs on certain issues of the study.

In the case of this study, descriptive survey design was deemed appropriate because, the cost for the survey was low and also the survey studies provided all participants with a standardized stimulus. Despite the advantages of this design, inappropriate wording and placement of questions within a questionnaire can bias the results.

Sample and sampling procedure

The population for this study included all the basic five learners and all Primary teachers of Kparekpare Basic School in the Krachi East District of the Oti Region in Ghana. The sample size for this study involved 24 learners and 6 teachers totaling 30 from Kparekpare Basic School. The sampling technique which was used for this study was stratified random sampling for the 24 learners and purposive sampling for the teachers. With this method of sampling, the researcher selected the respondents to be included on the basis of the researcher's judgement of how knowledgeable they are about the issue under study. Also, the researcher chose the respondents who in his opinion are thought to be of more relevance to obtaining key information on the research topic. In all, 24 learners of which 12 were males and 12 were females and 6 teachers were selected totaling 30 subjects representing the total population for the study.

Research Instrument

The data collection instruments for the study were interview, questionnaire as well as observations. Interviews were done because they offered the chance to the respondents to add detail explanations to their responses to support the study. Questionnaire equally helped by reaching to many respondents as fast as possible in a convenient manner. The items on the questionnaires were made up of both closed and open ended types.

Data collection procedure

The researcher modified the questionnaire before it was finalized and distributed to the respondents. The data was collected within 2 weeks. The respondents were given 3-5 days to complete the questionnaire and the researcher went for them for data analysis. After 2 weeks, the entire completed filled-up questionnaire were gathered and collected for further data analysis by the researcher to get the output and findings for the research.

Data Analysis

The analysis was by simple descriptive method. Data collected was coded, captured and analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The results were presented with simple frequency tables which includes figures and percentages to summarize the raw data collected on the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 1 presents description of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents as below:

The table above shows the demographic data of the respondents to proof a point that, they are stakeholders in teaching and learning process and for that matter could make meaningful judgment on the subject matter under study.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (Learners)		
9 – 12	18	60
		20
(Teachers)		
30 – 44	5	16.7
5 – 59	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0
Gender (Learners)		
Male	12	40
Female	12	40
(Teachers)		
Male	3	10
Female	3	10
Total	30	100.0

The Components of the Creative Arts Subject is taught

Table 2: Views of respondents on how the creative arts

Table 2: The components of the creative arts subject

Component	Agree	Disagreed	Undecided	Total
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
Visual arts	24(80%)	4(13.3%)	2(6.7%)	30(100%)
Performing arts	6(20%)	20(66.7%)	4(13.3%)	30(100%)

Table 2 above shows how the two components of the Creative Arts subject are taught. It can be seen from the table that, 24 of the respondents representing 80% agreed to the teaching of visual arts, 4(13.3%) disagreed to it. An insignificant number of 2 representing 6.7% were undecided on the issue. Also, of the 30 respondents, 6(20%) agreed to the teaching of the performing arts, 20(66.7%) disagreed to the teaching of performing arts and 4(13.3%) were undecided on the issue. It could

therefore be inferred from the data that; the performing arts is not really taught at the study area but the teaching of the Visual arts dominates.

The Impact of Creative Arts on the Cognitive and Psychomotor Domains

Table 3 represents the impact of the Creative Arts subject on the cognitive and psychomotor domains of the learners from the respondents

Table 3: The impact of creative arts on the cognitive and psychomotor domains

Domain(skill)	Agree	Disagreed	Undecided	Total
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
Cognitive skill				
Perception	15(50%)	10(33.3%)	5(16.7%)	30(100%)
Attention	17(56.7%)	8(26.6%)	5(16.7%)	30(100%)
Learning	20(66.7%)	4(13.3%)	6(20%)	30(100%)
Decision making	20(66.7%)	6(20%)	4(13.3%)	30(100%)
Language	18(60%)	6(20%)	6(20%)	30(100%)
Psychomotor skill				
Movement	20(66.7%)	4(13.3%)	6(20%)	30(100%)
Coordination	22(73.3%)	6(20%)	2(6.7%)	30(100%)
Manipulation	17(56.7%)	5(16.7%)	8(26.6%)	30(100%)
Strength	20(66.7%)	4(13.3%)	6(20%)	30(100%)
Speed	22(73.3%)	6(20%)	2(6.7%)	30(100%)

Table 3 represents the impact of creative arts on some cognitive and psychomotor skills of development. From the table above, 15(50%) agreed to development of perception, 10(33.3%) disagreed and 5(16.7%) were undecided. 17(56.7%) agreed to the improvement of attentions, 8(26.6%) were in disagreement and 5(16.7%) were undecided. 20(66.7%) agreed to improving their learning skills, 4(13.3%) disagreed and 6(20%) were undecided. 20(66.7%) agreed to improvement in decision making, 6(20%) disagreed to it and 4(13.3%) were undecided on the issue. 18(60%) agreed to the development of their language skills, 6(20%) disagreed and 6(20%) were undecided. 20(66.7%) agreed to the development of their movement skills, 4(13.3%) disagreed and 6(20%) were undecided. 22(73.3%)

agreed to developing coordination, 6(20%) disagreed and 2(6.7%) were undecided. 17(56.7%) agreed to improving manipulation skills, 5(16.7%) did not agree and 8(26.6%) were undecided. 20(66.7%) agreed to improving their strength, 4(13.3%) disagreed and 6(20%) were undecided. 22(73.3%) agreed to increasing their speed, 6(20%) did not agreed and 2(6.7%) were undecided on the issue. From the results, in can be inferred that, the teaching and learning of creative arts have impacts on both the cognitive and psychomotor domains of development.

Approaches to Teaching Creative Arts

Table 4 represents respondents' reply to some approaches to the teaching of creative arts

Table 4: Approaches to teaching Creative Arts

Approaches	Agree	Disagreed	Undecided	Total
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
Activity	15(50%)	10(33.3%)	5(16.7%)	30(100%)
Experiential	12(40%)	10(33.3%)	8(26.7%)	30(100%)
Discovery learning	8(26.7%)	14(46.6%)	8(26.7%)	30(100%)
Demonstration	18(60%)	6(20%)	6(20%)	30(100%)

Table 4 shows some approaches used by teachers in the school in teaching of creative arts. It can be seen from the table that, 15 of the respondents (50%) agreed to the use of activity method, 10(33.3%) disagreed and 5(16.7%) were undecided on the issue. 12(40%) agreed to the use of experiential approach, 10(33.3%) did not agree and 8(26.7%) did not decide. Only 8(26.7%) agreed to the use of discovery learning approach, 14(46.6%) disagreed and 8(26.7%) also did not decide. 18(60%) of the respondents agreed to the use of demonstration method, 6(20%) of them disagreed while the remaining 6(20%) did not decide. From these results, it can be inferred that teachers do not use discovery learning approach quite well in the teaching of creative arts.

The study therefore revealed the following:

Objective One

From the facts and figures discussed above, the study revealed that performing arts among the people of Kparekpare community manifest in a form of music, dance, drama and poetry. The study further shared that the arts discipline forms integral part of the people including students. It adds that, in the new curriculum, the Visual arts is labeled strand one and strand two goes for the performing arts. This revelation confirms the assertion of (NACCA 2019).

Objective Two

It came out that the performing arts during teaching and learning help to build the language or the communicative skills of the learners in a sense that the songs that are sung made use of language in a form of proverbs, and idiomatic expressions which the learners need to communicate in their environment and beyond. In addition, the appellations that are played on drums as well as poetry recitals, equip all the learners with a better use of language.

The study equally discussed that the performing arts help to equip the learners on how to socialize with each other. In otherwise these arts guide learners to live in harmony with other people and work together.

The performing arts as well help learners to remember easily what is taught in class. It came out during the study for example that a simple poem / song such as

This is how we brush our teeth

We brush our teeth, we brush our teeth

This is how we brush our teeth

Early in the morning

Would forever inculcate in learners how to observe good oral hygiene in the young stage as well as when they grow they would not depart from it simple because they recite and sing the song always in class for that matter, they would remember to keep to the good oral hygiene.

The study revealed also that the creative arts serve as an avenue for the learners to display their creativity; especially when during teaching and learning, they have to improvise either on singing, dancing or drama.

It came out as well that creative art in teaching and

learning helps to relate abstract concepts to reality through the performances that accompany the teaching and learning.

The creative arts also help the learners to showcase their culture. This is because in many of their performance the themes are from the Kparekpare community.

The study in addition revealed that when the arts are used in the teaching and learning, they offer confidence to the learners so that when they appear in public, they would be able to perform without fear or stage fright.

Objective Three

The study identified that:

Lessons should be prepared in a way that would enable audio-visual in them; so that lessons will be delivered practically so that it would involve all learners.

In addition, the study made it clear that, exhibitions should be periodically organized on class basis so that works of students could always be put on display this way, their interest would be aroused and sustained.

In addition, practical assignments should be adopted as one of the teaching strategies given so that once they work on them their interest would be aroused towards the arts.

The use of teaching and learning resources in teaching should be strengthen so that it would save teaching time but internalize understanding of concepts among learners.

CONCLUSION

In line with the findings obtained and the ensuing discussion, the following conclusions can be made:

Creative arts consist of Visual and Performing arts Creative Arts as a subject has great impact on the development of the cognitive and psychomotor domains of learners.

The study showed that, creative arts lessons would best aroused and sustained the interest of the learners when they are taught adopting learner involvement approaches.

Recommendations

The study recommends that,

1. Teachers at the study area must be committed to provide the most opportunity to learners to engage themselves in creative arts lessons in order to better appreciate the roles of Creative arts.

2. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Krachi – East District Assembly, and other charitable organizations should help provide Creative arts resources to the school.

3. Supervision of creative arts teachers in the study area should be taken seriously to ensure they meet time table requirements for creative arts in the school.

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