

Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Design (MAIDJAD)

**Departments of Fine Arts and Industrial Design
Faculty of Environmental Studies,
University of Maiduguri
P.M.B 1069
Borno State, Nigeria.**

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MAIDJAD

Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Design is a refereed journal published bi-annually. **MAIDJAD** was founded in early 2016 in order to provide a suitable academic platform for the discussion of contemporary theories, research and practice-based activities that are broadly related to arts and design.

Our esteemed referees review each article submitted, to evaluate the quality of research and relevance to the development of academia and for accessibility of such a paper to local and international audience.

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

Submissions should be typed double-spaced, fully justified, in Times New Romans with 12 Font size on A4 paper as a Microsoft document.

ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS

All submitted papers should include an abstract of not more than 200 words and are to be accompanied with five key words to be placed immediately after the abstract section.

AUTHOR (S) IDENTIFICATION

A separate sheet indicating the title of the paper as well as the following information about the author (s) should accompany each submission: i. Full name; ii. Institutional affiliation; iii. **Active** Email address; iv. **Active** Phone number; v. Current status e.g. Professor, Dr., Senior Lecturer, etc.

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All contributions are to be submitted as e-mail attachments to maidjad2016@gmail.com maidugurijournalofartsanddesign@gmail.com. The journal secretary will write to all contributors within three days to acknowledge receipt of submissions. Articles will be given to professional assessors in the appropriate areas; thereafter, they will be sent back to contributors for corrections.

REFERENCE STYLE

MIADJAD has since its Maiden Edition adopted the documentation style of the American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition and therefore, expects all contributors to rigorously format their references using the APA style.

Foreword

Once again, Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Design is presenting a volume of researched and peer reviewed articles: Volume VII/October/November, 2023. Maidjad wishes to thank Professor M. P. Mamza of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria who is currently on sabbatical in the Department of Fine Arts here in Maiduguri.

Professor Mamza brings his knowledge, experience and expertise far beyond the pages of this journal. He has followed it up with a Lead Paper on the Application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Art Teaching in Higher Education, a topical issue in academic society and industry. The editorial board is thankful for its contributors. This volume contains more than 20 articles in various areas of the arts, design and human endeavours. They are diverse and address traditional scholarly concerns, cutting edge knowledge in engaging fields, the insight of practicing artists, innovations and novelties, assessments and appraisals of career concerns, gender issues, methodologies, studio practice, as well as professional prospects and constraints.

Most of the papers are joint efforts. They seem to buttress the wisdom in cooperation. Studio practice and field surveys bring new knowledge and insight, and show a vibrant community of seasoned scholars as well as younger colleagues, who have submitted carefully written papers. Maidjad continues to welcome diversity, openness, new learnings, innovation across cultures, nations, races, continents and creeds.

We are optimistic that given the right environment, our achievements can be consolidated, sustained and expanded. Our new readers are warmly welcome as well as our old friends and scholars beyond borders. This two-way process should elicit fraternal response and feedback in order to continue to push the boundaries of learning and knowledge sharing.

I wish to thank the editorial board for giving me the opportunity to write this forward, which is but a forward of welcome, since the articles are right ahead of us.

Ashiedu Peter Ogboli
Professor of Industrial Design
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20th December, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	i
About MAIDJAD	ii
Editorial Board Members	iii
Consulting Editors	v
Submission Guidelines	vi
Foreword	vii
Table of Contents	viii
List of Contributors	x
Abstracts	xiv
 Lead Paper	
The Application of Artificial Intelligent (AI) in Art Teaching at Higher Education Prof. Musa Palma Mamza	1
 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHING OF FINE ARTS IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGES IN ADAMAWA STATE Yahaya Muhammad Sani	 8
ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHERS IN PURSUANCE OF RESEARCH DEGREES IN ART AND DESIGN Etsename Louis Emmanuel	18
A PLASTIC REPRESENTATION OF CHILD ABUSE IN MAIDUGURI AND ENVIRONS IN PAINTING Ali Mohammed Habib	29
CONTEMPORARY ART AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES: IMPACT OF NIGERIAN FEMINIST ART EXPRESSIONS ON GENDER SENSITIVITY Otonye Bille Ayodele/Deborah E. Jonathan	39
ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF PRACTICE-LED AND PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHES FOR EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION AMONG CREATIVE DESIGN SCHOLARS Iyama Gordy/Mohammed Sani Yahaya	50
ASSESSMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY AMONGST CREATIVE DESIGN ADVERTISING PRACTITIONERS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA. Adesile Mercy Funmilayo/Etsename Louis Emmanuel	58
ACCEPTABILITY OF CRAFTED ARTICLES FOR INTERIOR DECORATION IN BADAGRY, LAGOS STATE-NIGERIA Savage Olusegun Gabriel/ Olojo-Kosoko K. Kolawole /Azeez Olayinka Rasaq/ Gadonu Sewenu Peter/ Labode, Oladoyin Jamiu / Sowemimo Bukola O.	69
SOME ASPECTS OF THE PRACTICE OF KANURI TRADITIONAL CIRCUMCISION IN MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA. Usman Ibrahim Babagana/ Christopher Y. Mtaku	75

POTENTIALS OF ART AND CRAFT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION John Zaitu/ Abba Musa Ya'u/ Ibrahim Bala	85
BEAUTY IN CONTEXT: AN EXPOSITORY STUDY OF BODY AESTHETICS AMONG AFRICANS Eyitayo Tolulope Ijisakin/ Idowu Folorunso Adeyanju	94
SEMIOTICS AND ABSTRACT REALISM IN THE PAINTINGS OF JIMMY NWANNE, HARRISON IDAHOSA AND IBE ANANABA: A SAUSSURIAN STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS Harrison Idahosa	107
INCORPORATING SHORT CLAY INTO CLAY BODY COMPOSITIONS AS ALTERNATIVE TO Grog IN ORDER TO MITIGATE DEFECTS FOR CERAMIC BEGINNERS Helga Mathias/ Abdullahi A. Umar	119
TO OWN, BENEFIT AND SUSTAIN: RETHINKING MUSEUM CONCEPT AND PRACTICE IN AFRICA Zainab Musa Shallangwa	127
EXAMINING LIFE IN MY CITY ART FESTIVAL AS A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS IN NIGERIA Chike Obeagu/ Ayo Adewunmi	137
THE SYMBOLISM OF SHOEPRINTS IN PAINTING Nadama Mustapha Garba/ Abednego Abafras Gurin	151
SYNTHESIS OF NANO SODIUM-CALCIUM SILICATE (COMBEITE) BIOACTIVE CERAMICS IN GLASSY MATRIX Gideon A. Samuel/ Abubakar G. Salisu/ Christopher H. Madugu	164
PLASTIC WASTE WEAVING AS A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION Mohammed Isiaka Adeleke	173
ADAPTING <i>DAMBE</i> AS A CREATIVE RESOURCE IN PAINTING Ali Mohammed Habib	184
EXPLORATION OF TIV CULTURAL MOTIFS AND SYMBOLS IN EXPRESSIVE CLAY FORMS Tser Helen Ngunengen/ Alkali, C. Vershima/ Eric. V. Opoku/ Lasisi, A. Lamidi	197

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ABSTRACTS

Lead Paper

THE APPLICATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENT (AI) IN ART TEACHING AT HIGHER EDUCATION

Prof. Musa Palma Mamza

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Abstract

In the current era of technology, artificial intelligence (AI) has grown rapidly in such a way that it has established its presence in all fields. The purpose of artificial intelligence is to reduce human intervention and complete tasks with an enhanced result. Despite its rapid development, the artificial intelligence (AI) has not been deeply applied in art teaching. Hence, this paper attempts to suggest strategies for applying AI in art teaching. For this purpose, the paper reviewed the current application status of AI in art teaching and summed up the problems with these applications. Next, the advantages of AI in art teaching was analyzed in detail, and three suggested strategies were made to promote AI applications in modern art teaching, namely: expand the adaptability of AI based art teaching; improve the intelligent teaching mode of art teaching; and enhance the artistic experience and atmosphere of AI-based art teaching.

The proposed strategies can quantify the application effect of AI in art teaching, and it has a good application potential.

Keywords: Art teaching; artificial intelligence (AI); tertiary institutions; technology

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHING OF FINE ARTS IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGES IN ADAMAWA STATE

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Abstract

A survey was carried out on strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State. The objectives of the paper include: establishing teaching strategies that could improve the teaching of Fine Arts, as well as, identifying the factors influencing the choice of these teaching strategies used. The hypotheses include HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers and students on the strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts. HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers and students on the factors that influence the choice of teaching strategies used. The research instrument was made up of a questionnaire which is divided into two sections with parts I to III. The Colleges studied were Federal Government College-Ganye, Federal Government Technical College- Michika and Federal Government Girls' College- Yola. Eighteen Fine Arts' teachers and ninety students were purposively sampled. Statistical mean was used to answer the research questions, while t- test was employed to test the null hypothesis. The findings revealed that, among the fifteen items on part I; the use of appropriate instructional materials while teaching; the provision of enough equipment and facilities; taking students on regular fieldtrips/ excursions to museums and galleries; relating teaching to real life situations and demonstration method for teaching practical lessons in Fine Arts, regular fieldtrips or excursions to museums and galleries, qualified Fine arts teachers with comprehensive knowledge of Art History/ Appreciation and manipulative crafts' skills required to teach the subject. All these were identified as important and necessary strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State. Based on the findings, recommendation was made for improvement: a workshop on teaching strategies should be organized for Fine

Arts teachers annually to enable them update their knowledge and skills. Qualified and competent Fine arts' teachers only should be employed to teach the subject in Federal Government Colleges. The Federal Ministry of Education should provide relevant facilities and equipment to aid Art Education in the State.

Keywords: National Policy on Education, Strategies, Fine Arts, Applied Arts, Teachers, Classroom.

ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHERS IN PURSUANCE OF RESEARCH DEGREES IN ART AND DESIGN

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Abstract

Recent studies have revealed that a lot of postgraduate students conducting research in disciplines related to the Nigerian built environment are prone to adopting positivist (quantitative) research tools in the conduct of their researches. Although, some adopt mixed-method research tools together i.e., quantitative and qualitative. However, most of such studies have not been able to make significant contributions to the built environment as they are most frequently just data generation conduits. There is an obvious deficit in the research of actually building, creating and developing things. This paper deliberates on encouraging the transition of postgraduate research conduct in the School of Environmental Technology, of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria from the perennial use of quantitative surveys tools to the adoption of qualitative, constructive and performative research tools. The author, relying on personal experience, described the problem of an over reliance by postgraduate students and their supervisors on quantitative research methods to audit almost all social science phenomena studied in the built environment. This discourse also advocates for the construction or making of prototypes, products, and models; instead of surveys, as they are supposed to be at the centre and the key means for constructing knowledge in the built environment. Hence, the paper reviews a third methodology, which findings suggest cannot merely be subsumed under the qualitative research framework, but rather has employed its own distinctive research approach with its own strategies and methods. This paper suggests that the third paradigm would be most apt for practice related studies in Art and Design and the built environment.

Keywords: Research, Practice, Built-Environment, Prototype, Reflexivity

A PLASTIC REPRESENTATION OF CHILD ABUSE IN MAIDUGURI AND ENVIRONS IN PAINTING

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Abstract

The researcher aimed at producing a painting to depict emotional and difficult state of children within Maiduguri and its surroundings. Research area, objectives of research and relevance are concentrate on Maiduguri and environment. Rights of a Child is also stated, and emphasizes the conditions of the child within their environment by observation, definition, analysis and classification. This research also presents visual analysis in pencil, water colour sketches and final Painting project work in oil on canvas. The summary and conclusion can be seen and read in the presentation.

Keywords: emotional, difficult, right of a child, analysis, oil on canvas, Maiduguri.

CONTEMPORARY ART AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES: IMPACT OF NIGERIAN FEMINIST ART EXPRESSIONS ON GENDER SENSITIVITY

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Abstract

Feminist ideas infiltrated Nigeria in the 1970s from the western world. Pre-1970 Nigerian art was male-dominated and renditions of females in artworks were mythical, archetypical, idyllic, generic and metaphorical. The realities of the times, changes in the status of women in society and their effects as well as gender issues were hardly reflected in the popular artworks. The few female artists that practiced, did not express any form of feminism until the 1980s. Since then, they have made inputs that are historical, and represent visual symbols of socio-cultural changes which evaluate the Nigerian state and point to national reformation. Gender issues and female positioning are vital aspects of society that have recently and eloquently been addressed. This paper traces the gradual growth of feminist art from the 1970s; examines comparatively the thematic differences between male and female art on gender, and how female artists distinguish their femininity. The themes, issues addressed and how they impact gender sensitivity in a socio-cultural sense make up the core of the paper. Data collected from interviews, photographs, exhibitions, internet search, and literature sources, supported the research. Twenty-two Nigerian female artists were purposively selected for this study. The results show that several impediments affect the practice of art by females in Nigeria. These include: few females in art training and practice, traditional restrictions, lack of funds, domestic encumbrances, maternity, and other social pressures. The outcome is the sporadic art practice by most Nigerian female artists. Despite these negatives, there is visual expressive trend on issues relating to Nigerian socio-political structures, social lopsidedness, crimes against women and abuses of female vulnerability. The impact of these artworks on gender sensitivity show new male and female perception of female physiology, procreation, family life, rights and privileges, and choice of vocations among others. Presently, repositioning of females in society is a conscious effort globally and Nigerian female artists are participating in articulating the trends. It is anticipated that this paper will stimulate new thoughts, scholarship and future interrogation in feminist art.

Keywords: Contemporary Art, Feminist Art, Gendered Art, Gender Sensitivity, Nigerian Art, Socio-Cultural Issues.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF PRACTICE-LED AND PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHES FOR EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION AMONG CREATIVE DESIGN SCHOLARS

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Abstract

This paper presents an assessment of the impact of practice-led and practice-based research methods among scholars in enhancing knowledge, creativity, research skill and design output. The aim of this study is to evaluate the benefits and challenges of practice-led and practice-based research methods in creative design studios. The study draws on insights and experiences from a range of design practitioners and academics, and seeks to identify benefits, opportunities and key challenges associated with these research approaches. Through critical analysis, the paper discusses ways in which combining practice-led and practice-based research methods can improve innovation, creativity and research skills in design. The paper concludes by recognizing the importance of integrating scholarly inquiry with practical application, blurring the boundaries between theory and practice.

Key Words: Knowledge, Creativity, Research Skill and Design Output.

ASSESSMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY AMONGST CREATIVE DESIGN ADVERTISING PRACTITIONERS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The creative department is the power house of any advertising agency from which effective communication materials are conceived and produced for the benefit of consumers. The aim of this paper is to demographically evaluate gender equality amongst creative design advertising practitioners. This is with the view to ascertaining the degree of gender equality within the advertising agencies' occupational structure and practice in Lagos, Nigeria. This paper examined how female creative design practitioners are under-represented and why they suffer slow career progression in the industry. The study examined how social, structural and institutional factors have influenced the level of inequality found in advertising agencies. Questionnaire and interview tools were deployed to ascertain the existing preconceptions about the creative design practitioners and practices in advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria. About forty questionnaires were administered while six interviews were conducted among the practitioners. Gender equality has been a major problem with the creative departments in advertising agencies and this research has revealed that men outnumbered women in the occupational structure and practice within the advertising agencies. The study therefore advocates the need to create a structure that supports gender equality in the creative departments whereby making it more flexible and conducive to accommodate female creative practitioners in advertising agencies.

Keywords- Creative Department, Gender Equality, Advertising, Practitioner

ACCEPTABILITY OF CRAFTED ARTICLES FOR INTERIOR DECORATION IN BADAGRY, LAGOS STATE-NIGERIA

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Abstract

Crafted articles are the result of people's desire to improve upon the world by utilizing nature's benevolence. Such articles could serve as a driving force for sustainable development and industrialization in a given economy; for there seems to be a conscious non-awareness of the value, potentials and significance in normal everyday life. This study assesses the acceptability of crafted articles for interior decoration in Badagry, Lagos State. Specifically, the study identified various types of crafted articles produced in Badagry and determined the acceptability of Badagry crafted home decoration. The study adopted a descriptive study design, from a stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 0.06% from the total population (n=120). A structured questionnaire consisting of five sections was used to collect data using statistical package 20 and was presented in percentages, standard deviation and mean. The study revealed that craft decoration is less expensive; craft decoration improves the people's culture and value. Accordingly, 50% of the respondents identified wood craft as a home decoration. Most of the respondents strongly agree that craft decoration is more natural than artificial ones. Effort should be made by the Ministry of Art and Tourism on the acceptance of crafted home decoration in Badagry and in all parts of Nigeria instead of importing home decoration.

Keywords: Crafts, Interior Decoration, Badagry, Industrial Design, Culture, Economy

SOME ASPECTS OF THE PRACTICE OF KANURI TRADITIONAL CIRCUMCISION IN MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA.

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Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast began in Maiduguri in 2009 and has lasted for over a decade. While directing the focus of government towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding over these years, the insurgency had had a massive threat on the sustainability of cultural practices. The conflict which has seen an influx of NGOs troop in to Maiduguri for humanitarian assistance also has an implication in terms of changes in the beliefs and attitudes of people towards ritual practices like traditional circumcision. This study unveils the changes in attitudes and beliefs of Kanuri people in the post-insurgency period. The methodology adopted for the study is qualitative, utilising Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews. Secondary data were also sourced from available literature. The study found that there have been certain changes in the attitudes towards the traditional circumcision due to insurgency that has displaced the people thereby, making sustainability difficult. The study also found that factors like religion and accessible modern healthcare services have impacted on the practice. On the other hand, the study also found that the wisdom behind the circumcision is that it unites and creates avenue for peaceful coexistence among families and children in the community. As a result, the study recommends that there should be synergy between the government, traditional institutions (including traditional circumcisers) and health care organisations in putting heads together in order to uphold the ideals of peaceful coexistence of the circumcision while sanitizing the surgical procedures.

Keywords: Insurgency, Circumcision, Synergy, Traditional Institutions, Sustainability

POTENTIALS OF ART AND CRAFT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Abstract

Art and craft are skillful activities that affect almost every aspect of life that influences the scientific, cultural and technological development of children. Art and craft are panacea for children's mental growth and development. They serve as foundation and spring-board for children's educational growth. This paper discusses the significance of art and craft in the total mental growth and development of children, especially their education and career. The research method adopted in this study to arrive at the findings is studio experimentation/observation. It was discovered that art and craft basically help children achieve among others: improve coordination or motor skills, communication skills, critical thinking, and socialization. Others are arithmetic/mathematical development, self-esteem, creativity, and creating opportunities. The paper recommends that the teaching of art and craft at the elementary and basic education be prioritized, and possibly be made compulsory. This could help the children to comprehend faster and better, and also excel in other subjects both at the basic and other levels of education, and even in their future careers. Furthermore, parents should encourage their children and wards by acquiring art/craft materials and teaching them how to use these at home. Government should provide adequate art/craft materials in schools for children to engage themselves with, as well as employ enough qualified art and craft teachers among others.

Keywords: Art, Craft, Children, Early childhood, Education.

BEAUTY IN CONTEXT: AN EXPOSITORY STUDY OF BODY AESTHETICS AMONG AFRICANS

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Abstract

This paper investigates beauty in the context of body aesthetics among Africans; this is with a view to understanding different meaning and purposes of body aesthetics in the African culture. It examines aesthetics as an idea of what is beautiful or artistic, the way something looks, especially when considered in terms of how pleasing it is. The paper probed into African hairdressing, tattooing, scarification, body painting, dress, clothing, and jewelries among others as the principal means of body aesthetics among Africans. Data for the study were collected through field investigation which includes participant observation and visual media sources. Data were also collected from relevant literature such as textbooks, journal articles, as well as Internet sources. Data collected were subjected to art historical analysis. The paper argued that Africans cherish the way they look; and, enhancement of beauty, identification purposes, as well as distinction of social status are among the diverse reasons that have aided the practice of body aesthetics among Africans. It concludes that the perception, adoration, appraisal, and all the principles of natural beauty depend largely upon the epoch as well as the individual culture's ability to judge aesthetically.

Keywords: African, Aesthetics, Beauty, Body Adornment, Tattooing, Scarification, Ornamentation

SEMIOTICS AND ABSTRACT REALISM IN THE PAINTINGS OF JIMMY NWANNE, HARRISON IDAHOSA AND IBE ANANABA: A SAUSSURIAN STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This paper delves into the fascinating realm where abstract and realistic elements converge in painting, with a particular focus on semiotic analysis. Through an exploration of how artists navigate the interplay between representation and abstraction, the study aims to unveil the creation of a distinctive visual language that surpasses traditional boundaries. By investigating symbols, signs, and meanings, this research sheds light on the semiotics and abstract realism and their profound implications in art as an emotive tool for expressing societal concerns. Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of the signifier and the signified provides valuable insights of how meaning is constructed through the relationship between abstraction and realism in the artworks by Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa and Ibe Ananaba. Ultimately, this study seeks to unravel the captivating fusion of abstract and realistic expressions, providing a fresh perspective on the multifaceted nature of art and its ability to communicate profound messages through a dynamic amalgamation of styles.

Keywords: Semiotics, Abstract Realism, Signifier, Signified, Symbols.

INCORPORATING SHORT CLAY INTO CLAY BODY COMPOSITIONS AS ALTERNATIVE TO GROG IN ORDER TO MITIGATE DEFECTS FOR CERAMIC BEGINNERS

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Abstract

Ceramic production often faces challenges such as warping, cracking and excessive shrinkage at drying and bisque firing state. Traditionally, grog, a filler material, is added to clay bodies to address these issues. However, beginners encounter difficulties in incorporating grog due to its demanding preparation process. This paper proposes an alternative approach to mitigate these defects among ceramic beginners by introducing short clay into clay body compositions. Shrinkage, plasticity and absorption porosity tests were conducted on various clay body composed with grog and short clay. Results indicated that 20% to 30% short clay could effectively replace the usual 10% grog content. The recommendation is to utilize 20% to 30% short clay in body compositions of ball clay and kaolin as alternative to 10% grog.

Keywords: Ceramic Body Defects, Ceramic Beginners, Grog, Short Clay

TO OWN, BENEFIT AND SUSTAIN: RETHINKING MUSEUM CONCEPT AND PRACTICE IN AFRICA

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Abstract

The development of any people or society is at the heart of the definition of the Museum as an institution. It is no news that Euro-American museums owe a large part of their reputation and successes to the large collection of tangible African cultural pieces that grace their exhibitions. On the contrary, African museums, where these important cultural pieces originate from (and where in recent times contentious issues have been raised about these artefacts), have not recorded such successes, while the societies which they serve barely remember they exist. This is mainly because the concept of the museum as an institution is to a large extent alien to the typical African who does not feel attached to this institution, hence does not benefit from the services they offer. It can be said that this disconnect between the museum institution and the typical African has contributed greatly to the extremely slow pace of growth of the institution in the continent. In this light, the major preoccupation of this paper is to identify the reason(s) behind this stunted growth, using the Museums in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria as case study. It employed qualitative research methodology using focus group discussions, interviews and review of scholarly articles/materials for data collection. Through engagement with museum professionals and some indigenes of the state, the chapter came up with a new African Museology model/concept that hinges on the concepts of community ownership, community participation, cultural vitality and cultural sustainability.

Keywords: Museum, Cultural Sustainability, Development, Community Ownership, Community Participation and Cultural Vitality

EXAMINING LIFE IN MY CITY ART FESTIVAL AS A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Since its inception in 2007, Life in My City Art Festival (LIMCAF) has continued to evolve as a major support system for emerging professional artists in Nigeria. With over 15 years of sustained yearly event, LIMCAF has become Nigeria's biggest and longest running visual art festival with special focus on young professionals. This paper examines the evolution of Life in My City Art Festival from its humble beginning in 2007, to its current unprecedented status with over N6,400,000 (Six Million, Four Hundred Thousand Naira) in prize money for diverse categories of award. To evaluate the impact of LIMCAF as a support system for emerging professional artists, the study tracks the growth of some of the prize winners and participants over the years in order to ascertain how their involvement in the annual event has transformed their practice. Findings show that, apart from the motivation of the prize money instituted by notable sponsors, mentorship, interactions, healthy competition, shared experiences, and exposure through other well-designed LIMCAF platforms have contributed immensely as support systems to the professional growth of these young contemporary Nigerian artists.

Keywords: Support System, Emerging Professionals, Mentorship, Platforms, Professional Growth

THE SYMBOLISM OF SHOEPRINTS IN PAINTING

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Abstract

Shoeprints are impressions created and left behind by shoe soles as people walk around. These impressions are impressive in their shapes and patterns, which are either organic or geometric by orientation. These aesthetic impressions are equally symbolic because they are either bold and clear prints or faint and weak prints. This article examines the symbolic content of the abundant environmental impressions called shoeprints which mimic the phenomenal existential issues connected to the attributes of human life span, such as growth, good health, strength, ill-health, weakness, and death due to the process of aging. These phenomenal existential issues have been symbolized by the shoeprint paintings in this article. The Studio-based research methodology was adopted for this paper and the study revealed that symbolism in painting remains a potent channel for representing life issues that are difficult to capture in painting since they are intangible. A symbol is something that stands for or represents another entity even if the two are not identical, but in an aspect appear to share a common characteristic. New shoe soles produce bold and clear prints, while old shoe soles generate fading and weak prints. In the same vein, young people are strong and full of energy, while old people are weak and exhibit diminishing energy. The human lifespan is mirrored by these shoeprints, and the study concluded that the human environment is full of visual statements which artists should observe and appreciate as inspiration for their creativity.

Keywords: Shoeprints, Shapes and Patterns, Symbolism

SYNTHESIS OF NANO SODIUM-CALCIUM SILICATE (COMBEITE) BIOACTIVE CERAMICS IN GLASSY MATRIX

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Abstract

This study focuses on the use of rice husk ash (RHA) silica for the production of glass ceramics. Rice husk was pre-treated, and carbonised to drive out volatile matter, and as well as ash at 700°C. The XRF result of rice husk ash shows 79.98% SiO₂, 1.80% P₂O₃, 0.42% Na₂O, 1.54% CaO, 0.05% BaO, 0.11% TiO₂. A solution of this composition prepared with Sodium hydroxide, titrated against a solution of calciumtrioxonitrate(iv) tetrahydrate and trioxonitrate (v) acid. The gel formed was dried to powder. The XRD Pattern of the product showed the presence of sodium calcium silicate phase (Na₄Ca₄SiO₆O₁₈) combeite which belong to the bioactive ceramics family. The SEM showed a circular morphology of glass ceramics in glassy matrix with Energy Dispersive X-ray analysis (EDS) elemental spectra showing Si, Ca, P and Na.

Keywords: Synthesis, Nano, Combeite, Ceramics, Matrix

PLASTIC WASTE WEAVING AS A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

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Abstract

Waste management in recent time has become burden to our society because of the increase in demand of food and beverages packs in plastic. This has resulted in excessive generation of plastic wastes which majority of it are non-biodegradable ones. These plastics has caused serious damage to the environment which in turn affects both human and non-human beings negatively. This study showed ways of curbing environmental degradation of plastic wastes and ways how plastic waste was collected and used innovatively. The objectives are to exhibit on plastic wastes, and to underscore innovation of plastic in weaving as a means of controlling waste in our environment. Findings revealed that plastic wastes effect has damaged the environment and that humanity also suffers the consequences of such wastes in health challenges. With innovation of plastic weaving, plastic wastes can be made into art creation, as well as other useful objects thereby freeing the environment from such wastes. It is therefore recommended that such novel ideas be incorporated into our educational system in order to boost waste management.

Keywords: Environmental, Management, Plastic, Weaving, Innovation.

ADAPTING *DAMBE* AS A CREATIVE RESOURCE IN PAINTING

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Abstract

The research “**Adapting *Dambe* as a creative resource in painting**” was a studio based research and experimentation carried out to make paintings using *Dambe*. As there is no painting documentation of “*Dambe*” a traditional boxing in contemporary Nigerian painting, hence the problem of this research. The study examines, through preliminary sketches the traditional boxing known as *Dambe*. While the objectives are to create paintings of traditional boxing, using expressionist painting techniques and to explore different media compositions that can address contemporary abstract expressions in studio practice. The concept used in the study is an expressionist style. Traditional boxing compositions were explored from representational, developmental and abstractions and produced in painting. The inspiration taken from *Dambe*, an aspect of Hausa culture enabled the researcher to create illusion of forms using malleable methods of painting in order to create geometry within the forms as in concepts of expressionism. Literature and works that were relevant to this study were reviewed and the methodology was the qualitative method applied in studio based practice. Data consisted of photographs and sketches which were used for exploration stages of representational developmental and abstraction. The developmental stage was furthered into abstraction as set in the research objectives. The study revealed that paintings can be created on the picture plane by the arrangement of compositional elements using *Dambe* as subject matter. It revealed that the dissolution of forms also brought about a new expression. It is recommended that more explorations can be produced from indigenous cultures; new techniques and cultural explorations in painting can be used in schools to stimulate creativity in students. The study added to gallery of Nigerian contemporary painting by producing paint explorations of *Dambe*.

Keywords: Dambe, Creative Resource, Painting, Traditional Boxing, Abstraction

EXPLORATION OF TIV CULTURAL MOTIFS AND SYMBOLS IN EXPRESSIVE CLAY FORMS

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Abstract

Contemporary ceramics artists are breaking new ground in creativity in their expanding genres. Novel forms of art have resonated as a result, of artists exploring the generally accepted norms and principles of regular, thereby breaking boundaries and resulting in new nuances in art. The exploration of Tiv cultural motifs and symbols in expressive clay forms are works inspired by the Tiv cultural heritage. The works produced are based on the philosophy of conceptual art, which places value on ideas than on the aesthetic qualities of the artworks. The works analyse is seen as a contribution to the development of Contemporary ceramics practice in Nigeria and the promotion of the Tiv cultural heritage.

Keywords: Contemporary, Motifs, Symbols, Mhii, Dynamic, Tradition

LEAD PAPER

THE APPLICATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN ART TEACHING AT HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

Over recent years, artificial intelligence creativity and generative machine learning have continued to grow and attract much attention among the art community. Generative models by Machine Learning have brought up new types of media creation including recent breakthroughs (Sukhbaatar, Usagawa, and Choimaa, 2019). Especially in the field of higher education, due to the urgent demand for professional talents, AI has been gradually applied in the teaching process of higher education, playing a role in the knowledge transfer of talents and the cultivation of their professional literacies (Zhou, 2020). Art education is a very important part of higher education. The process of art teaching involves the transmission of a good number of professional knowledge points, especially for the lecturing of skills or techniques that are highly professional. The traditional mode of art teaching cannot clearly show the key points or links in art teaching, therefore, it needs the assistance of AI for art teaching. At present, some scholars have carried out related research, such as Tang and He, (2020) conducted research on how art major in higher vocational schools carries out entrepreneurship and employment education in the era of Jin, (2018) analyzed how to apply AI in music education and its development trend. Ahmad and Ghapar, (2019) took the higher education in Malaysia as an example to analyze the impact of AI on self-exploration education and its challenges. Wan, (2020) discussed the application-oriented talent training mode of broadcasting and hosting major in the era of Li, (2019) explored the application of AI in music education. Chassignol et al. (2018) discussed the trend of AI in education. Casazza and Gioppo, (2020) discussed the role of AI in the creation of screenplay.

However, most of the existing studies focus on the implementation details of AI application in art education, or on the specific execution problems in a certain link of art teaching or creation process, while neglecting the overall systematic planning of AI application in art teaching. This meant that the research on the application effect of AI in art teaching is not comprehensive enough, thereby compromising the implementation of the holistic strategies.

To this end, this paper analyzes the application of AI in modern art education from the aspects of strategy analysis. The content of this paper includes 5 parts: the first part summarizes existing studies on the competitiveness of higher education; the second part analyzes the current status of the application of AI in art teaching; the third part analyzes the advantages of AI in art teaching; the fourth part discusses the strategies of AI application in modern art teaching; and the fifth part gives the conclusion.

The Current Status of AI Application in art teaching

a. Shortage of AI hardware facilities in art teaching

Traditional electronic equipment such as recorders and projectors are the most commonly used means in modern education; these devices are also used in domestic art education. Teachers can use pictures, videos, and other forms to make art knowledge more vivid and alive. Taking music education as an example, with the help of traditional electronic equipment, students could learn knowledge more systematically and quickly. Such education method can increase the number of learners, teach more content within a given time, and increase the efficiency of teachers. The goal of applying AI in art teaching is to present art knowledge to students in a more intuitive way, create a

better learning atmosphere, exhibit design works that combined art and technology, help students enter the creative world of the artists, make students truly immerse in the masterworks of great artists, break the limits of time and place, and enable viewers to observe the details of art works more intuitively. However, due to the shortage in AI hardware facilities in art teaching, the desired art teaching effects or teaching goals.

b. Weak support of AI software technology in art teaching

At present, the commonly-used Computer Aided Instruction (CAI) comprehensively applies computer technologies such as multimedia, hypertext, artificial intelligence, network communication, and knowledge base to overcome the shortcomings of traditional art teaching in single and one-sided teaching scenarios. It can effectively shorten the learning time of art education, improve the teaching quality and efficiency, and realize the optimal teaching goals. According to surveys, there are many cases of AI applications in education in the United States, for example: there are self-adaptive learning systems for college teachers and students; there are teaching materials that can interact with students and change the content of the course according to the students' answers in random tests; there are intelligent textbooks customized according to students' personalized requirements; and there're cases that conduct more proper designs on the interface according to image analysis to improve user experiences, etc. Although traditional CAI has improved students' learning efficiency and enthusiasm to a certain extent, it does not fully understand the students' learning situations and can't vary with each individual, and it couldn't make sure every student would participate in teaching actively. Therefore, if we want students to be more actively involved in the teaching process, and if we want to collect individual students' learning conditions and give different guidance accordingly through human-computer interaction, then it is necessary to make technical breakthroughs in AI combining multimedia technology and provide stronger technical support for modern teaching.

c. Incomplete art teaching mode based on AI

At present, AI-based art teaching mode of colleges and universities mainly teaches the art teaching content with the help of Internet technology and online platforms. In this process, various education apps and online education websites have emerged continuously, such as MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), Micro-lecture online videos (Vko.cn), flipped classroom, Rain Classroom (Yuketang.cn), PAD class (PAD stands for Presentation, Assimilation and Discussion), Tencent class (ke.qq.com), and Dingding class, etc. This teaching mode innovates the interactive cognition process of teaching, and it supports multiple functions such as play, pause, and slow play, etc., which enables students to use scattered time for learning and effectively control the learning speed; at the same time, it breaks the limit of locations, effectively solving the shortcomings of the traditional offline teaching mode, and largely increasing the utilization rate of teachers. However, this art teaching mode has ignored the sense of experience and integrity emphasized in art teaching, especially when there is a large number of students, and art teachers and students can only teach and learn the art knowledge through the one-on-one form, which can't provide an artistic teaching atmosphere for students. In addition, since the AI technology is not mature enough, the AI-based art teaching mode could not meet the intelligent teaching requirements, which has resulted in a disconnection between the modern art teaching concept and the intelligent teaching mode.

d. Immature AI application in art teaching

At current stage, the development of AI technology is not mature enough. Technologies such as student emotion perception technology, simulated art teacher technology, intelligent learning companion technology, and other technologies that people wish to achieve in the field of art teaching are still under exploration. AI can help people to some extent, but it can't replace our thoughts, which is exactly the unique value of human beings. Modern AI art education can't perfectly achieve semantic analysis, sentiment analysis and symbolic analysis. Art forms are diversified and ever changing with

the times, but the essence of art won't change. In terms of creation and appreciation, art works are generally based on subjective thinking, therefore, in terms of aesthetic appreciation, AI is deficient in the evaluation of the art works of students. The current AI-based art teaching is only a simple realization of individualized spaces, it just uses computers to achieve basic art teaching, and cannot reflect the advantages of AI application in art education. Only by breaking the bottleneck of the combination of AI and art education can we exert the great potential of AI, so as to make it better serve our art teaching and learning.

The Advantages of AI in Art Teaching

a. Improve the learning effect of art students

The application of AI in art teaching can effectively improve the teaching quality, this is because AI studies the mechanisms of human activities and how to use machines to simulate these activities, so as to provide convenience for students to understand and master the knowledge they have learned. The AI education system simulates the thinking mechanism of human experts when solving complex problems, which can improve students' ability in logical thinking, and achieve the purpose of training students' ability in thinking from multiple angles and their artistic creation level. The AI-based art teaching system can teach according to students' aptitudes. Based on the database of students' personal information, cognitive characteristics, learning records, location information, social media information, and other information, the AI program can conduct self-learning, construct models of the learners, constantly enlarge and update the datasets, and adjust and optimize the parameters of the models; according to the different needs of students, AI program can push personalized resources, learning paths and learning services to students; through various communication tools. It can also conduct effective teacher-student or human computer interactions, provide rich information sources and a good navigation structure, as well as intelligently guide students to learn, and give suggestions about their further study content. By applying AI to art education, we can release students' imagination space; AI could process, classify and organize the art knowledge, systematically divide the knowledge according to the habits of students, and help them build their own art knowledge base; it can improve students' learning efficiency, further reduce their physical labor and work tasks, enable them to have more practical experience with less time spent.

b. Enrich the teaching methods of art teachers

In the era of AI, we usually use computers as tools to master learning methods more effectively, to learn from the practice, to cultivate students' abilities in creation and problem-solving through heuristic education, and to build up collaborative learning relationships between people, and between the human and computer. Therefore, the role of art teachers would be altered as well, they are no longer the content provider, but the teaching organizer or the teaching technology engineer. Art teachers are always the core of the teaching process, they need to innovate constantly and make good use of the AI technology to further improve the teaching efficiency of teachers and the learning experience of learners. AI can act as an assistant to the teachers. With the help of AI, teachers can actively arrange teaching content according to the teaching objects, and the learners can acquire learning content that is suitable for one's own cognitive ability. When students are learning, the AI assistant would also give feedback to the teacher about the problems of each student and the learning situation of the entire class. AI assistant can also undertake tasks such as decision support, answering questions, and correcting homework, etc.; so that art teachers could be freed from the tedious teaching works and put more efforts in the design of innovative teaching activities, pay attention to students' development, and cultivate their learning ability at a higher cognitive level. In the process of cultivating students' high-level abilities, art teachers and students interact directly. Moreover, AI assistant could help teachers achieve one-on-one problem discovery and mutual improvement, so that art teachers can understand their problems in teaching, and conduct teaching research in an accurate and targeted way. AI robots can also play the role of students, help the normal school

students and the teachers with their teaching skills; when taping videos for open classes, they can make teachers adapt to the recording environment more quickly, and enrich the forms of the video.

c. Improve the art teaching environment

The environment of art teaching is complex. It is often composed of many different elements. Generally, there are two kinds of definitions for art teaching environment: the broad sense art teaching environment refers to all conditions affecting the art teaching activities in schools, such as the physical environment and psychological environment; in the narrow sense, it means all conditions within the art classes that affect art teaching, such as teacher-student relationship, class size, and class atmosphere, etc. The intelligent presentation of art teaching content mainly includes two aspects: the visual presentation and the auditory presentation. The visual aspect involves multiple factors such as definition, field of view, brightness, and angle of view. The information displayed through electronic means should be easily and clearly seen by all students in the classroom. In terms of the auditory aspect, a good listening environment can ensure smooth language communication and facilitate interaction between teachers and students. The intelligent teaching venue can not only display the content clearly, but also make the presentation method more suitable for the cognitive characteristics of learners, and enhance their understanding and processing of the learning materials. The hierarchy of the spatial layout provides a basic guarantee for personalized teaching and learning supported by the AI technology. By building up partitions to form separate spaces, diversified learning activities could be conducted at the same time, while ensuring the asynchronous activities of individuals or groups, the mutual interference could be effectively reduced, and this is especially useful since students usually need to carry out group brainstorming and other activities during art teaching. In addition, the temperature, humidity, light, color and furnishings such as tables and chairs in the teaching environment can be configured according to the needs of different students or designed according to the requirement of the interactive experience between teachers and students. The combination of AI and teaching environment would not only provide a good user experience for teachers and students, but also perceive the learning status of students and adjust the push strategy in real time. The smart teaching environment can track, record and store the interaction trajectory of any individual in the space environment in real time, and provide data support for students' self-evaluation and teachers' decision-making.

d. Improve art teaching methods

In art teaching, by combining AI with art, we can use advanced digital media for art teaching, enabling students to obtain good visual experience and deepen their understandings and memorization of the art works. In the past, people could only rely on their eyes when appreciating digital media art works, but now, with the help of science and technology, all of our senses could be mobilized to enjoy these works. As a result, the authenticity of the works is enhanced and people would have more real feelings. The AI using VR fully draws on the characteristics of VR to add more interests to people's experience, so that they could have a better understanding of the intentions of the creators and their art works. As a teaching method, VR can create more ideal conditions for the creation of digital media art creators. For example, art teachers can use VR to teach and guide students, change their cognitive behaviors, and enable them to brainstorm more pleasantly. Under different historical backgrounds, people's cognitive methods would vary a lot; driven by information technology, VR, and AI, the logical thinking and space-time concepts of art creators have undergone major changes, by introducing these technologies into teaching, students could jump out of the scope of traditional learning mode, and find new learning methods to know things.

e. Improve art teaching evaluation forms

In the context of AI, the evaluation of art teaching should focus on the influence of the disruptive innovation of AI on related factors that are beneficial to learning. The application of AI makes personalized learning evaluation possible. By using big data to record all online learning behaviors

such as interactions between teachers and students, students' answering questions, teachers' evaluations, and learning paths, etc., we can accurately analyze the students' learning performance, and thus realizing procedural and personalized evaluations of students. In addition, the main forms of student evaluation include knowledge maps, knowledge lists and other forms, they can dynamically keep records of individual students' knowledge acquisition situations, and no longer be based on a sole kind of data such as the test scores. However, focusing on procedural evaluation does not mean abandoning summative evaluation. In the context of AI, the evaluation of art teaching should be personalized, procedural, summative, two-way or even multi-directional, so that students could have a comprehensive understanding of themselves and improve their learning methods accordingly.

Strategies for the Implementation of AI in Modern Art Teaching

With the rapid development of AI, its role in college and university art teaching is becoming more and more important. As AI is being applied in art teaching, the role of art teachers should be changed accordingly as well. Art teachers could make full use of AI to track students' learning process and effect and conduct intelligent analysis, constantly adjust the curriculum design and teaching content, achieving personalized and customized teaching, and such personalization will present more objective and quantitative characteristics. AI system can also effectively filter information, dynamically generate content and strategies suitable for personalized teaching according to the basic data and information of teaching activities, and provide teachers with suggestions concerning the key points, methods, test points, and question types of art teaching. AI will reach a balance between scale and personalization, bringing a solution that is easy for students to learn and easy for art teachers to teach, and art teachers could co-exist with AI. In the future, the art knowledge transfer function of art teachers will be gradually replaced by AI, and art teachers should pay more attention to the cultivation of students' core literacy. Combining with the current development status of AI, this paper proposes to implement AI in modern art teaching from the following aspects:

1. Expand the adaptability of AI-based art teaching

Judging from the current application status of AI in art teaching, there're still problems in art teaching such as insufficient personalization. If the art teaching content is not targeted or the teaching method is not flexible enough, they can hardly meet the personalized learning requirements of art major students, which will further hinder the development of their innovative ability. With the help of AI, we can offer various procedural teaching evaluations, enrich the evaluation methods, and make the evaluation process more scientific and the evaluation results more accurate. The collaboration of the AI assistant and the intelligent evaluation system can provide art students with comprehensive learning diagnosis with timely and accurate learning intervention, so as to truly achieve the unity of scale and personalization in art teaching. We should increase the application of data-based AI learning analysis technology in art teaching. The AI learning analysis technology interprets and analyzes the massive data of students generated in the learning process to evaluate their academic progress and predict their future learning performance, thereby discovering the potential learning problems. That is, at first, it records and analyzes the learning behavior data of students generated in the learning process. Each student would have a unique "portrait" so that the art teachers and the students themselves could master their learning characteristics and laws, and thereby carrying out personalized learning; second, AI could dynamically feedback the learning performance of art students during the learning process to the teachers, and display the students' learning process in the form of visual data, so that teachers could adjust the teaching content and methods according to the results in real time. The use of AI enables teachers to teach according to students' aptitudes despite the fact that there may be many students in the class, it provides different students with targeted teaching modes, and could solve the problems encountered by students in the basic learning process of art education.

2. Improve the intelligent teaching mode of art teaching

The deep-level application of AI in the field of art education management will make management services smarter, and the information and intelligent of art education management can effectively support the separation of the supervision, execution and evaluation of art education, improve the public service level of art education, and promote the governance ability of art education and the modernization of the governance system. In terms of art education big data, AI could collect the data of art education, model the teaching process, conduct intelligent and systematic analysis, and achieve scientific decision-making of art education and accurate resource allocation. Compared with the application of AI in other fields, the amount of data generated in the field of art education is relatively small and not comprehensive enough, which would limit the further application of AI in the education field. In China, the application of AI in education started late, it hasn't established a sound and standard data perception system or data reserve base yet. In order to promote the further application of AI in art education, in future development process, it is necessary to change the pattern of single education data, and further expand the scale of art education data. The knowledge graph technology based on data samples will play an important role in further increasing the data scale, with this technology; we can discover the correlations between different art student groups, which is conducive to improving the teaching content for students and upgrading the teaching quality of art education.

3. Enhance the artistic experience and atmosphere of AI-based art teaching

AI has injected new vitality into the realization of personalized learning and the cultivation of innovative thinking. The introduction of AI will completely change the classroom form of art teaching; the teaching environment and campus environment of art classrooms will be changed profoundly. The online-offline classes are integrated, the in-class and after-class education are connected, and the highly digitalized and intelligent teaching environment will be fully popularized, which can greatly improve the personalized service level of the art teaching environment. In the new era, there are important problems in art education such as how to provide supports for the students' learning, the students' personalized development, and the cultivation of students' thinking; AI has changed the art students' learning methods, it can generate personalized and customized learning plans according to the specific learning requirements of students, and provide immersive learning experience and highly intelligent learning process tracking services. VR can play an important role in solving these problems. It is a computer simulation system that can create virtual worlds, after users wear VR glass, data glove and other special sensing devices, they can immerse in the created virtual environments; the VR system can provide users with visual, auditory and tactile information and make them have multiple perceptions, and simulated and interactive experiences. This is very meaningful for various disciplines, especially for art teaching. On the one hand, this technology can build an intelligent art learning environment that makes learners feel more engaged; one the other hand, it can greatly improve the learning enthusiasm of art students and the classroom teaching effect of art teachers.

Conclusion

The paper analyzed the application of AI in college and university art teaching, discussed its shortcomings and the advantages in college and university art teaching, and proposed several strategies for using AI to provide supports in art teaching. Considering that the promotion effect of AI on art teaching in colleges and universities is affected by many factors, in order to effectively measure the application effect of AI in art teaching, this paper suggested the application strategies of applying AI in modern art teaching, which has good values in theoretical innovation in art practice. In conclusion, if art educators want to effectively enhance student learning with new technologies, then new pedagogical understandings should be explored that are sensitive to the increasing blurring boundaries of students, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence algorithms.

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STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHING OF FINE ARTS IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGES IN ADAMAWA STATE

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Introduction

Generally, education was conceived by the National Policy on Education as an instrument of change and development, both for individuals and the nation as a whole (National Policy on Education, 2013). Changes and development can be brought about through carefully planned and well implemented curriculum for different school subjects. Thus, a National Secondary School Curriculum for Arts (Creative Arts) was developed in 1977 and reviewed in 2004.

Art is the representation of human thoughts or feeling that satisfy one's craving for the good (Talabi, 1976). He states further that, art expresses the characteristics or attitudes of the people of certain age. Mbahi (2000) says, "Art is any work of man in which skill, knowledge as well as practice are needed". However, Uzoagba (1982) in Yahaya (2012) posits that, art is not a subject with definite limits, but rather it is an aspect of mental development, which is all embracing, imaginative, creative and aesthetic. He further listed the branches of art as: Fine and Applied Arts and Dramatic Arts often referred to as Performing Arts. According to him, "it is to be noted that in the school curriculum, the concept of art is usually restricted to the Visual Arts, and those subjects which came under Dramatic arts are given separate treatment in the college curriculum".

The teaching of Fine Arts in most Federal Government Colleges has suffered considerably due to the lack of well-defined strategies for the teaching of the subject (Yahaya, 2012). Thus, the experience of the researcher as an art teacher encouraged the interest to carry out a survey to determine strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State.

Many classroom teachers still use teaching methods, which do not stimulate the interest of the students. Such teaching methods include the lecture methods (chalk- talk method), which is not activity oriented and is mainly teacher centered. This method does not motivate the students and does not contribute to the child acquiring the required skills in Fine Arts (Yahaya, 2012).

Strategies are unique to subject matter and vary from teacher to teacher. Akuezuilo (1989) in Yahaya (2012) says that teaching strategies include not only the manner of presentation that the teacher employs but everything he does in the way of arranging conditions, grouping students, guiding activities, marking assignments and providing information to aid learning. Similarly, Nwachukwu (2001) describes teaching strategies as about organizing students, materials and ideas to provide learning. That is, ways of approaching the students to get them interested and understand the subject. Thus, teachers need to vary their strategies in different classroom situation; this is also acknowledged by Etuk (2000), the use of single approach cause boredom and discipline problems in the classroom. Therefore, the use of a variety of strategies to teach a particular subject matter can help to attract and maintain the interest of the students to take active part in the subject.

In this sense, it could be a change of attitude, knowledge, idea, skill or appreciation (Paul, 1997). Thus, the desire to find effective and qualified teachers has persisted and in this persistence, this study has brought about the need for effective and qualified teachers that the quality of teachers is proportional to the quality of their pupils and students (Aina, 1990).

Teachers are the foundation of any educational programme. If teachers are poorly prepared, the educational programme no matter how well structured would collapse. Thus, according to Fafunwa

(1976) in Yahaya (2012), the most compelling and persistent educational problem in Africa is the training of a competent teacher. He observes further that, “in all social, political and economic spheres of activities, there is always the complaints of inadequate or need for trained manpower”. Thus, inadequate training cannot take place without competent teachers to handle the programme as observed by the author.

Fine Arts as a subject which involves practical activities should always be taught more practically (Yahaya, 2012). Olorunkooba (1991), Ogumor (1998), Mbahi (2000) among others, express serious consideration to the issue of practical materials and equipment for the effective teaching of the subject in secondary schools all over the country. However, the inadequate qualified arts teachers’ results to poor performance of art students in Fine Arts generally. This poor academic achievement in arts (visual arts) programme in Nigeria is unsatisfactory. Thus, many factors including the ineffective and poor teaching strategies adopted by art teachers is not worth their efforts. This can only be remedied if teachers adopt suitable methods and better approaches of teaching art. Therefore, the major concern of this paper is to establish strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in the Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of Teaching

According to Mbahi (2000), teaching is the passing on of ideas, knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and feelings to someone with the aim of bringing about particular changes in that person. The change should lead to different behaviors and subsequently be part of the person’s life. In the present-day Nigeria, many still perceive teaching in this light. The expectation is that the teacher who is more knowledgeable and experienced should pass on the knowledge already acquired to the less knowledgeable and inexperienced learners. Thus, the objectives of instruction are believed to be achieved when the learners can satisfactorily reproduce the facts as presented to them by the teacher.

However, Yahaya (2012) observes that, this conception of learning is no longer tenable among many modern educational practitioners. The modern view of teaching reflects the current perception of the learners as an active participant in the teaching-learning process. Drawing from this perspective, Encyclopedia for Educational Research (1998) in Mbahi (2000) describe teaching as an interactive session where both the teacher and learner play active role in the process of teaching and learning. The latter sees teaching as the interaction between a teacher and pupil, a triadic relationship in which the teacher, pupils and subject matter interact under the guidance of the teacher. This perspective is further strengthened by Farrant (1980) and Majasan (1995) in Yahaya (2012), the teacher interacts with the learners in such a way that not only the learners learn but the teachers also continue to learn as well. Learning is an everyday experience, thus teachers as vanguards of our educational aspirations can never be tired of learning.

According to Fafunwa (1979) in Yahaya (2012), the most compelling and persistent educational problem in Africa is the training of a competent teacher. He observed that in all social, political and economic spheres of activities there is always the complaint of inadequate or need for trained manpower. He also insists that adequate training cannot take place without competent teachers to handle the programmes. Consequently, the Federal Government has realized this fact, hence it has declared that all teachers in all educational institutions from pre- primary to the university should be professionally trained and certified (Yahaya, 2012).

Writing on the preparation of art teachers, Mbahi (2000) described the art teacher as anybody who has the knowledge of art and the methodology of teaching it. He indicated further that the basic qualifications required to become a professional teacher is through the National Certificate of Education (NCE). Other qualifications acceptable are B. Ed. and B. Sc./BA with other educational qualifications. He however elaborately analysed the processes in the preparation as thus:

On successful completion of any of these courses, a provisional registration as a teacher is made. A period of one- year probation in teaching is allowed at the end of teaching experience. Thus, together with a report from the supervisor, enables a decision to be taken on the full registration of the teacher. If satisfactory, he/ she becomes a fully registered professional teacher with effect from the day following when he/ she completes the one- year probation. If unsatisfactory, he/ she is given three months to amend and then obtain full registration thereafter.

Generally, this is a good presentation of process involved in certifying a professional trained teacher. Thus, as observed by Yahaya (2012), with all aspects strictly adhered too many of the issues arising from certification of art teachers would certainly be reduced. Similarly, he opined further that, in essence what is mostly required from the art teacher apart from his/ her skills in art is the pedagogical training and ability to possess a general knowledge of art appreciation/ history and other related disciplines.

Methodology

This paper is a survey method and data were sourced through questionnaires and interviews as major instruments employed. The latter comprised of two sections A and B. The Likert scale embracing thirty-five items starting from strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree was used. The population consisted of all the principals and vice principals who are referred to as administrative staff, the Fine Arts teachers and art students in the three Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State. Three administrative staff and Fine Arts teachers from each college were selected to give a total of eighteen; this is due to the low numbers of Fine Arts teachers in these colleges. While, the population of Fine Arts' students was ninety. The purposive sampling technique was adopted for both teachers and administrative staff due to the data required from them. The population of Fine Arts' students was thirty from each college, which formed a sub total of ninety for all colleges involved, the random sampling technique was utilized to arrive at the sample size. To answer the research questions, mean and standard deviation were used whereas; t- test was employed to test the hypotheses. The formulae for t- test is given below:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{sd^2}{n_1} + \frac{sd^2}{n_2}}}$$

Whereas,

t= t- test

\bar{x}_1 = mean for teachers

\bar{x}_2 = mean for students

SD= standard deviation

n_1 - number of sample (teachers)

n_2 - number of sample (students)

Result and Discussions

Research Question One

What are the teaching strategies that could improve the teaching of Fine Arts?

Table 1: Mean responses of Teachers and Students on Teaching Strategies for Improving teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State.

S/N	Teaching Strategies	Teachers $n_1 = 18$			Students $n_2 = 90$		
		\bar{x}_1	Sd ₁	Remark	\bar{x}_2	Sd ₂	Remark

1	Using appropriate instructional materials in teaching	3.67	0.49	A	3.86	0.35	A
2	Demonstrating with real or improvised equipment	3.44	0.51	A	3.63	0.59	A
3	Varying teaching methods	3.33	0.49	A	3.44	0.58	A
4	Giving assignments regularly	3.28	0.67	A	3.27	0.78	A
5	Grading and returning assignments regularly (reinforcement)	3.22	0.81	A	3.49	0.64	A
6	Making meaningful corrections on assignments	3.50	0.51	A	3.51	0.77	A
7	Taking students on fieldtrips or excursions to museum and art galleries	3.67	0.59	A	3.59	0.67	A
8	Use of resource persons (craftsmen)	3.33	0.49	A	3.50	0.50	A
9	Ensuring students participation in the teaching/ learning situation	3.44	0.70	A	3.45	0.58	A
10	Relating teaching to real life situations	3.67	0.49	A	3.50	0.72	A
11	Supervising students at work effectively	3.83	0.38	A	3.73	0.44	A
12	Showing concern for students' ability to learn	3.89	0.32	A	3.72	0.45	A
13	Individualizing instruction by paying special attention to each student learning	3.33	0.77	A	3.31	0.71	A
14	Demonstration method is mostly suited for teaching practical lessons in Fine Arts	3.67	0.49	A	3.44	0.62	A
15	Participation in art exhibition/ competition outside the schools/ colleges with students	3.28	0.67	A	3.56	0.70	A

X= Mean

SD= standard deviation

A= Agree

The data presented on table 1 revealed that teachers rated 'high' for the use of appropriate instructional materials in learning, that is, taking students on fieldtrip/ excursions to museums and art galleries, relating teaching to real life situations and demonstration method for teaching practical lessons in Fine Arts ($x = 3.67$; $SD = 0.49$) ($x = 3.67$; $SD = 0.59$) ($x = 3.67$; $SD = 0.49$) and ($x = 3.67$; $SD = 0.49$). On the other hand, their lowest mean score was on grading and returning assignments regularly ($x = 3.22$; $SD = 0.81$). For students, their highest mean score was on the use appropriate instructional materials in teaching ($x = 3.86$; $SD = 0.35$), while their lowest mean score was giving assignments regularly ($x = 3.27$; $SD = 0.78$).

Research Question 2

What are the factors influencing the choice of these strategies?

Teachers and students were required to respond to this question. The responses obtained are presented on table 2.

Table 2: Mean responses of teachers and students on factors influencing the choice of these strategies.

S/N	Factors influencing the choice of these strategies	Teachers $n_1 = 18$			Students $n_2 = 90$		
		x_1	Sd_1	Remark	x_2	Sd_2	Remark

16	Type of subject matter (topic) to be taught	3.98	0.15	A	3.96	0.21	A
17	Objectives of the lesson	3.94	0.23	A	3.87	0.34	A
18	The learner's abilities and attitudes	3.91	0.29	A	3.74	0.44	A
19	Availability of materials	3.94	0.23	A	3.60	0.50	A
20	Principles of learning	3.88	0.42	A	3.61	0.63	A

X = Mean

SD= Standard Deviation

A= Agree

The data presented on table 2 revealed that the teachers rated highest for the type of subject matter (topic) to be taught ($X = 3.98$, $SD = 0.21$). On the other hand, their lowest mean score was principles of learning ($X = 3.88$, $SD = 0.42$). For students, their highest mean score was the same with that of the teachers ($X = 3.96$, $SD = 0.21$), while they scored principles of learning lowest ($X = 3.61$, $SD = 0.63$).

Null Hypothesis One- H_{01}

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of teachers and students on the strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State. After testing the null hypothesis with the t- test, the results obtained are presented in table 3.

S/N	Teaching strategies	Teachers N ₁ = 18		Students N ₂ = 90		t- cal	t- crit	t- Remark
		X ₁	SD ₁	X ₂	SD ₂			
1	Using appropriate instructional materials in teaching	3.67	0.49	3.86	0.33	1.57	1.98	N.S.
2	Demonstrating with real or improvised equipment	3.44	0.51	3.63	0.39	1.40		N.S.
3	Varying teaching methods	3.33	0.49	3.44	0.58	0.84		N.S.
4	Giving assignments regularly	3.28	0.67	3.27	0.78	0.06		N.S.
5	Grading and returning assignments regularly (reinforcement)	3.22	0.81	3.49	0.64	1.33		N.S.
6	Making meaningful corrections on assignments	3.50	0.51	3.51	0.77	0.07		N.S.
7	Taking students on fieldtrips or excursions to museum and art galleries	3.67	0.59	3.59	0.67	0.51		N.S.
8	Use of resource persons (craftsmen)	3.33	0.49	3.50	0.50	1.34		N.S.
9	Ensuring students participation in the teaching/ learning situation	3.44	0.70	3.45	0.58	0.06		N.S.
10	Relating teaching to real life situations	3.67	0.49	3.50	0.72	1.48		N.S.
11	Supervising students at work effectively	3.33	0.38	3.73	0.44	1.00		N.S.
12	Showing concerns for students' ability to learn	3.89	0.32	3.72	0.45	1.91		N.S.
13	Individualizing instruction by paying special attention to each student learning	3.67	0.77	3.31	0.62	0.71		N.S.

14	Demonstration method is mostly suited for teaching practical lessons in Fine arts	3.67	0.49	3.44	0.62	1.73		N.S.
15	Participation in art exhibition/ competition outside the schools/ colleges with students	3.28	0.67	3.56	0.70	1.61		N.S.

t- tab= Table to value of 1.98 at P 0.05

t- cal= t- test calculated

N.S.= Not significant

The data analyzed in table 3 revealed that the teachers and students did not differ significantly in their mean responses on the teaching strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts. They differed in their rank of the strategies. The t- test calculated value at .06 level of significance are less than their table t- value of 1.98 for all the strategies. The Null hypothesis is therefore upheld.

Null Hypothesis Two- Ho₂

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers and students on the factors that influence the choice of teaching strategies used. After testing the null hypothesis with the t- test, the results obtained are presented in table 4.

S/N	Factors influencing the choice of these strategies used	Teachers n ₁ = 18		Students n ₂ = 90		t- cal	t- crit	t- Remark
		x ₁	SD ₁	x ₂	SD ₂			
16	Type of subject matter (topic) to be taught	3.98	0.15	3.96	0.21	0.48		N.S.
17	Objectives of the lesson	3.94	0.23	3.87	0.34	1.08		N.S.
18	The learner's abilities and attitudes	3.91	0.29	3.88	0.32	0.39	1.98	N.S.
19	Availability of materials	3.94	0.23	3.88	0.33	0.93		N.S.
20.	Principles of learning	3.88	0.42	3.86	0.35	0.19		N.S.

t- tab= Table to value of 1.98 at P 0.05

t- Cal= t- test calculated

N.S.= Not significant

The data analyzed in table 4 revealed that teachers and students did not differ significantly in their mean responses on the factors that influence the choice of teaching strategies used for improving the teaching of Fine Arts. They differed in their rank of the strategies. The t- test calculated value at .05 level of significance are less than their table t- value of 1.98 for all the factors. Null hypothesis is therefore upheld.

Findings

The following are the findings arising from the analysis of data presented in 1- 4 sequentially based on the research questions and hypotheses.

Types of Teaching Strategies for Improving Teaching of Fine Arts

Based on the mean responses of the items presented in table 1, it was found that the following teaching strategies were identified necessary for the improvement of the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State.

1. Use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching.
2. Demonstrating with real life or improvised equipment.
3. Varying teaching method.
4. Giving assignment regularly.

5. Grading and returning assignments (reinforcement).
6. Making meaningful corrections on assignment.
7. Taking students on fieldtrips or excursions to museums and art galleries.
8. Use of resource person (Craftsmen).
9. Ensuring students' performance in the teaching- learning situation.
10. Relating teaching to real life situations.
11. Supervising students at work (practical works in studio) effectively.
12. Showing concerns for students' ability to learn.
13. Individualizing instruction by paying special attention to each student learning.
14. Demonstration method is mostly suited for teaching practical lessons in art.
15. Participation in art exhibition/ competition outside the school/ college with students.

Factors influencing the Choice of these Strategies

Data presented in table 2, both teachers and students indicated that five (5) items considered as factors that influence the choice of these strategies are:

1. Type of subject matter (topic) to be taught.
2. Objectives of the lesson.
3. The learner's abilities and attitudes.
4. Availabilities of materials.
5. Principles of learning.

Discussion

Null Hypotheses

Ho₁: The t- test analysis reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the teaching strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State. Therefore, the null hypothesis is upheld (Table 1).

The findings of the study reveal that the 15 teaching strategies are important for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges, Adamawa State. It was found that using appropriate instructional materials in teaching is of the best teaching strategy that could improve the teaching of Fine Arts in schools. This finding is in line with that of Ogumor (1998) and Uzoagba (1982). The former states that the teaching of Fine Arts according to its provision and requirement places emphasis on the provision of instructional materials for smooth and successful instruction given. While, the latter says that a sound art teaching method and the selection of appropriate art materials will help the art programme meet the level of maturity of students and enrich their experience.

The study found that varying teaching methods is among the important teaching strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts in schools. This finding is consistent with that of Ekuik (2000) who states that the use of a single approach causes boredom and discipline problems in the classroom. Furthermore, Offorma (1994) maintains that teachers have to use different resources and teaching strategies to teach students of different abilities and interests. Making use of a variety of strategies to teach a particular subject matter can help to attract and maintain the interest of the students to take active part in the subject. This will make mastery of the subject easy and successful in examinations. The majority of the teachers and students agreed that the use of resource persons (craftsmen) is also an important teaching strategy for improving the teaching of Fine Art. This finding is in consonance with that of Okoro (1999), who says that the guest speaker strategy (craftsman) of teaching is useful in colleges/ secondary schools because, it provides variety to the teaching situation and stimulates the students to study hard. He maintains that students have the opportunity to interact with people who are actually engaged in various occupations.

The study also found that relating teaching to real life situations is another teaching strategy for improving the teaching of Fine Arts. This finding confirms with that of Okoro (1999) who explains that for teaching to be effective, the school/ class environment should be a replica of the work environment.

It was found that field trip/ excursion is another important teaching strategy for improving teaching of Fine Arts. Okpara and Onyemerekeya (1994) support this finding by saying that field trips afford students opportunity of seeing practical application of arts and equipment they heard about in their class. Mbahi (2000) observed that field trips to various art agencies and institutions should be organized to give students opportunity to observe and analyze practical application and utilization of art. In the same vein, Uzoagba (1992) says that field trips, like guest lectures are useful because they provide variety and relate what students learnt in school with what actually obtains in the real world. Another teaching strategy that needs maintaining is individualizing instruction in Fine Arts practical lessons. Individualized instruction is an attempt by teachers to adopt instruction to the individual needs instead of group needs. This strategy was led by good rating by the teachers and students.

However, the students rated the ensuring of student participation in the classroom as another good strategy for improving teaching in Fine Arts. This finding supports the suggestion of Hersey and Blanchard (1977) in Mbahi (2000) that in an art class, this is characterized by collaborative efforts between students and teachers in establishing objectives, deciding how objectives should be reached and determining how successful it is to be measured.

Factors Influencing the Choice of these Strategies

The findings of the study revealed the factors that influenced the choice of teaching strategies used in Federal Government Colleges. It was found that the type of subject matter (topic) to be taught is an important factor that influences any teaching strategy to be used in teaching Fine Arts. This finding corroborates that of Curzon (1976) in Apagu and John (2001), who states that when selecting the method (strategy) to use, a teacher does not select a method for a complete lesson, rather he/she selects a method which will be most effective for the various parts of the lesson. He explains further that often times, the subject matter itself may dictate the mode of teaching.

The majority of teachers agreed that the objectives of the lesson also are other factors influencing the choice of these strategies used. This finding is in consonance with that of Apagu and John (2001), who observe that in relation to the structure used by Bloom in his taxonomy lesson objectives could be taken into account when the selection of an instructional material is used.

It was further found that the learner's abilities and their attitudes are valid factors influencing the choice of these strategies. This finding is also in line with that of Kanno (1997), Apagu and John (2001), while the former agrees that teaching method (strategies) selected should be those that matched the learning abilities or level of the students. According to her, more learning takes place when students derive interest, satisfaction and joy during the process and presentation of any lesson. The latter, agree that the learner's abilities and attitudes is an important factor that determines strategies that would suit their level of maturity, age, socio- economic background, intellectual maturity, homogeneity and heterogeneity of the class.

Furthermore, availability of materials was agreed to be a factor that influence the choice of strategies used in colleges. This finding conforms with that of Kanno (1997) who states that the type of instructional resources available in the school will be to a large extent, determine the type of teaching strategy to be employed. It is a known fact that some resources require specific methods (strategies) for their utilization. The study found that principles of learning are another important factor that influence the choice of strategies used in colleges. This finding was supported by Apagu and John (2001) who observe that, there is a general consensus among psychologists that one learns by receiving stimuli through the various senses. The more senses employed the earlier and faster the

learning is. Thus, based on this principle the teacher must select and use methods (strategies), which will utilize and apply these principles to make his/her instructions more vivid and effective.

Null Hypotheses

The findings pertaining to the hypotheses revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the teaching strategies for improving teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State. The null hypothesis therefore was accepted for the following teaching strategies for improving teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges: using appropriate instructional materials, demonstrating with real or improved equipment, varying teaching methods, giving assignments regularly, grading and returning assignments regularly, making meaningful corrections on assignment, taking students on field trips or excursions to museum and galleries, use of resource persons (craftsmen), ensuring students participation in the teaching/ learning situation, relating teaching to real life situations, supervising students at work (practical work in studio) effectively, showing concerns for students ability to learn, individualizing instruction by paying special attention to each students learning, demonstration method is mostly suited for teaching practical lessons on art and participation in art exhibition/ competition outside the school/ college with students. A majority of the teachers and students agreed on these strategies for improving the teaching of Fine Arts.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of this study: the use of appropriate instructional materials in teaching Fine Arts improves teaching and ensures students' participation in the teaching and demonstration with real or improvised equipment. It would also help to retain the students' interest in Fine Arts which will result to good performance in Fine Arts examination. This is because demonstration is the most effective strategy in teaching and learning of Fine Arts. Therefore, observation and demonstration have been identified as some of the activities that enhance effective teaching of Fine Arts.

Strategies that could be adopted to improve teaching of Fine Arts are established in this study. If the teachers could make use of them and if the government and schools would provide equipment and materials for use in teaching and learning Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State, the teaching and learning would be improved.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

1. A workshop on teaching strategies should be organized for Fine Arts teachers annually in order to enable them to update their knowledge and skills.
2. Qualified and competent Fine Arts teachers should be employed to teach in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State.
3. Fine Arts teachers should place more emphasis on teaching students how to learn.
4. The Government, School and Ministries should provide facilities and equipment to aid teachers in their work.
5. Teachers should be motivated through enhanced salaries and allowances to compensate for the heavy load they carry in the colleges.
6. The strategies established in this study should be adopted in an effort to improve on the teaching of Fine Arts in Federal Government Colleges in Adamawa State.
7. There should be increased and efficient supervision of teaching in Federal Government Colleges by experts in the various subjects.

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ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHERS IN PURSUANCE OF RESEARCH DEGREES IN ART AND DESIGN

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Introduction

African traditional marriages are often colorful and rich with spontaneous cultural fanfare. However, what culminates into this fanfare will have been preamble by a lot of preliminary social investigations. Globally, the custom of parents finding suitable mates for their children goes back a long way. A classical case in question is the biblical story of Isaac's marriage. "Do not choose a wife for Isaac from the women where I'm living." (Gen. 24:3). In some African traditional marriages, it is expected that before one is contracted, both families would have investigated the other. This is to ensure their daughter/son would not be getting married into a family with a history that does not meet (their) societal expectations. Such investigations are conducted via any or all of the following: hearsay, revelation, authority, and possibly, earlier experience. These investigative tools have been used as far back as civilized humans can remember. The definition and process of research might not always be as simplistic as the above illustration portrays. However, from the above illustration one can safely infer that the human being has always been a researcher.

Research

Research is the careful and deliberate collection of information, combined with its sensible treatment and interpretation, so as to address particular questions we pose about some aspects of our lives (OECD, 2015). The following reasons have been propounded as reasons for research, that is; that research is expected to be descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory and/or applied. However, they all are geared towards solving problems. The following questions underpins why people research: What is the nature of reality? What is the relationship of the researcher to that researched? What is the role of values? What is the language of research? What is the process of research? This study attempts to start a conversation bothering on the process of conducting research in the built environment. There are two main methods known for conducting research, they are the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. The following are their key characteristics.

Key Characteristics of Quantitative Methodology

1. Numerical – Aims to discover the incidence of particular characteristics of something, and the frequencies with which they occur. The intention is to infer a relationship between these characteristics.
2. Planned – Isolates and identifies characteristics (variables) prior to data collection.
3. The instruments to be used are pre-determined and rigid.
4. Structured – Because of the rigidity of the methods used, the relationship between research and subject is made rather formal by the use of standardized procedures to ensure objectivity and consistency.
5. Objective – Analysis of the data collected relies on statistical methods for determining the probability of occurrence of the predicted relationships between variables. There is limited scope for the kind of interpretation which allows free reign to subjectivity.

Key Characteristics of Qualitative Methodology

1. Openness and Flexibility - There is no pre-determined hypothesis so there is potential for an approach that is not constrained by scope or orientation. The flexibility this permits allows

for changes to occur during execution of the research; research methods may be readily changed when deemed appropriate.

2. Communication – The communication between researcher and subject is the vehicle for the research. The relationship itself is important as it is the subject who defines the scope and flow of the research to an equal extent. The reality is constructed and interpreted within the framework of this social interaction.
3. Contextual – Communication exists within a social context that is liable to continual change. The meanings salient to communication reflect and must be understood within this context. A flexible approach to choice of research instruments is necessary.

Most researches conducted in the various Schools of Environmental Technology dotting the Nigerian higher education landscape are mostly driven by positivist methodologies. The author observes that this is not unconnected to the fact that these school's ab initio were/are populated by academics who are mainly used to positivist approaches to addressing/auditing their problems. Hence, knowledge created here were/are mainly data generating studies, devoid of praxis that should bring about tangible innovations.

Over the years, the author in the school of environmental technology has been privileged to read through a lot of Doctor of philosophy (PhD) students' research proposals; being one of the lecturers saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that PhD candidates of the school adhere to the house rules for conducting research. On some occasions the author has had to perform the role of an internal examiner, where the researcher got to discover that very few researches in the built-environment (particularly of the School of Environmental Technology) have clear cut "tangible" research intentions. The findings suggested that most research students in the built environment indulged more in "non-tangible" researches, where data gathering is their preserve, instead of building or producing things (this paper does not aver that such a phenomenon is bad, but that there is a preponderance of such is what the author finds untowardly). After so many reviews and debates with other members of the school's postgraduate advisory panel, it became pertinent to do a position paper to kick-start a discourse on what should be the likely research directions researchers in the built environment should consider adopting. This is in a bid to address the yawning purgatorial situation postgraduate students of disciplines in the built environment seem to have found themselves.

The school of Environmental Technology is one of the nine schools in the Federal University of Technology Akure. The school has eight departments, Architecture, Building Technology, Estate Management, Geo-Informatics, Industrial Design, Quantity Survey, Urban and Regional Planning, and Textile Design Technology. The departments of Building Technology and Textile Design Technology are new and are yet to start offering postgraduate programmes. Although, all these programmes have a common attribute which is that they have some form of social science connection that is; "man-made, structures and facilities viewed collectively in which people live and work". However, from the above listed programmes, only the departments of building technology, Industrial Design, Textile Design Technology and Architecture seem to have 'practice' situated at the vortex of their respective programmes. Hence, this paper intends to refer to 'them' as the Art and Design courses in the built environment. The others on the fringe of design praxis, would not be discussed directly.

	Departments in SET	
1	Department of Architecture	8
2	Department of Building Technology	0
3	Department of Estate Management	12
4	Department of Geo-Informatics	1
5	Department of Quantity Survey	4
6	Department of Industrial Design	27
7	Department of Textile Design Technology	0
8	Department of Urban and Regional Planning	5
		57

Table 1: List of departments in SET and PhD titles reviewed from the respective departments

Over time, these practitioners on the fringe of design practice have in some way influenced and determined the kind of research encouraged in these schools. The reason is not unconnected to the fact that they are older departments and have helped nurture these other departments. Hence, the influence on them. The author remembers witnessing a candidate being queried in the past for conducting a practice-based design study which involved the development of an instructional package to teach ceramic students. A Professor of Urban and Regional Planning had scathingly wondered why the industrial design department should indulge in studies that bespeak a study in the Department of Education. He had perhaps failed to appreciate that the author was conducting participatory action-based research (PAR), in which the researcher was attempting to produce an artefact meant to address a problem. The PAR suggested that some form of co-creation process occurred i.e., with other stakeholders in the study area, in this case; there were students, other lecturers, the curriculum, equipment and demonstrators. All performed as actants who socially converged to create knowledge in solving a problem experienced in a sister department.

Investigations revealed that a high percent of the PhD researches (73%) conducted used quantitative research approaches or related. Of the fifty-seven (57) odd PhD proposals perused, more than thirty-five (35) suggested an involvement or conduct of some form of survey research study (Quantitative research), with the candidates either assessing, evaluating, or examining a social phenomenon. About twenty (20) of the titles suggested that some form of creation, building or design and development was involved in the research. Additionally, the studies showed that the researchers had a preponderance for approaching hitherto socially induced phenomena from mostly positivist perspectives, (including most of the twenty). Thus positioning the respective researchers to rely on the use of mostly numerical data to record and report upon human interactions, acquisition of skill-sets, social perceptions and behaviour. Furthermore, this accounts for why most data generated, and analysis done often end up as just numbers and hardly a substantial contribution to the built environment where academics are expected to be the gate keepers. The above does not diminish the importance of survey driven researches as they also have their worth in policy development and social enlightenment. However, a developing economy would appreciate if a lot of research is directed at addressing physical (infrastructural) and technological challenges, which our kind of research direction is not addressing.

Freq	Word	Freq	Word	Freq	Word	Freq	Word	Freq	Word	Freq	Word
16	assessment	2	multifunctional	1	journals	1	grain	1	dearth	1	lease
12	development	2	natural	1	persuasive	1	particle	1	nigerian	1	map
8	production	2	dyes	1	computer-generated	1	size	1	area	1	tertiary
7	ceramic	2	methods	1	imagery	1	forming	1	kaduna	1	educational
7	evaluation	2	enhanced	1	children's	1	technique	1	companies	1	allocation
6	textile	2	photography	1	behaviour	1	porcelain	1	animation	1	public-private
5	textiles	2	case	1	designing	1	insulator	1	usage	1	partnership
5	selected	2	study	1	afrika	1	waste	1	new	1	ppp
5	property	2	firms	1	creating	1	functional	1	normal	1	procured
5	residential	2	real	1	ideographs	1	entrepreneurial	1	enhancement	1	mass
4	materials	2	estate	1	interactive	1	activities	1	campaign	1	knowledge
4	management	2	coastline	1	inspired	1	women	1	inflation	1	maturity
4	using	2	features	1	afrikan	1	cottage	1	hedging	1	quantity
4	impact	2	proximate	1	proverbs	1	sanitary	1	capability	1	surveying
4	effect	2	rental	1	multimedia	1	wares	1	investment	1	modelling
4	performance	2	appraisal	1	application	1	utilization	1	tiling	1	local
3	design	2	land	1	maternal	1	sustainable	1	institutional	1	tropospheric
3	advertising	2	housing	1	care	1	industrial	1	barriers	1	delay
3	buildings	2	factors	1	delivery	1	growth	1	operations	1	global
3	based	2	airport	1	glass	1	states	1	secondary	1	navigation
3	properties	2	projects	1	foam	1	ultraviolet	1	mortgage	1	satellite
3	value	2	model	1	wall	1	protective	1	finance	1	system
3	risk	2	climate	1	cladding	1	anti-microbial	1	interventions	1	gnss
3	analysis	2	change	1	insulation	1	antimicrobial	1	university	1	observation
2	gas	2	environmental	1	granite	1	zinc	1	cooperative	1	geodetic
2	burner	1	locally	1	dust	1	copper	1	societies	1	positioning
2	zirconia-based	1	sourced	1	organic	1	infused	1	commercial	1	cultural
2	nozzle	1	light	1	additives	1	vessels	1	investments	1	landscape
2	building	1	weight	1	corrosion	1	household	1	appropriateness	1	potentials
2	printing	1	micro-porous	1	resistant	1	point-of	1	valuation	1	low-energy
2	industry	1	bricks	1	ramming	1	use	1	used	1	strategies
2	effects	1	partitioning	1	mixes	1	water	1	art	1	offices
2	health	1	construction	1	lining	1	purification	1	works	1	adapting
2	quality	1	low-cost	1	fritting	1	yoruba	1	non-economic	1	indoor
2	contemporary	1	offset	1	furnaces	1	ceramics	1	facility	1	air
2	inter-relationship	1	lithography	1	kaolinites	1	white	1	services	1	naturally
2	gender	1	evaluating	1	characterization	1	ware	1	muritala	1	ventilated
2	stereotyping	1	praxis	1	bio	1	colour	1	muhammed	1	lecture
2	television	1	african	1	bone	1	illusoriness	1	lagos	1	theatres
2	culture	1	prints	1	substitute	1	raw	1	london	1	comparative
2	thermal	1	medical	1	uses	1	refractory	1	heathrow	1	walling
2	developing	1	electronic	1	tiles	1	composite	1	influence	1	tropical
2	towards	1	workflow	1	industries	1	practice	1	tenants	1	neighbourhood
2	eco-friendly	1	communication	1	environment	1	nigeria	1	personality	1	public
2	practices	1	academic	1	approach	1	studio	1	traits	1	space
1	city	1	security	1	infrastructure	1	supply	1	disasters	1	spaces
1	defensible	1	neighbourhoods	1	quest	1	estates	1	investigation	1	green
				1	energy	1	induced	1	challenges		

Table 2. List of words in 57 PhD titles surveyed showing their frequency of use (285 words).

The following word cloud delineates a pictorial view of the major methodological terms influencing research in the chosen case study.

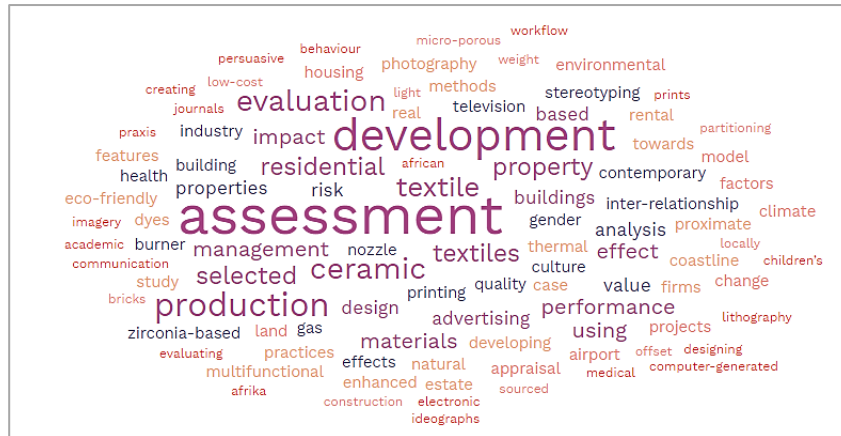


Figure. 1: Word cloud of PhD. titles generated mapping out frequency of action verbs, connoting researchers' methodological preference in study Area.

Source: <https://www.freewordcloudgenerator.com>

The action verbs in the selected titles were supposed to point to the kind of methodologies the researchers deployed, but most were not used in the context of design and development. So a cursory look at some of the titles were misleading. However, it is worthy to note here that though “development” seem a popular term highlighted in the cloud suggesting a high frequency of use, it was not mostly used in the context of practiced-led design and development. Examples are:

1. “Evaluation of Growth and Development in the ...”;
2. “Analysis of the non-economic factors in property development ...”;
3. Development of Risk Allocation Model ...” and
4. “Development of Knowledge Management Maturity Model ...”

The same goes with the term “production” which naturally should connote that some form of praxis will be a major activity during the research, but the following titles using the term production reveals otherwise:

1. “Evaluating design praxis in African prints production ...”;
2. “Assessment of the production and uses of ...”;
3. “Assessment of Eco-Friendly Textile Production Methods for Sustainable ...” and
4. “Entrepreneurial Activities of Women in Cottage Textile Production ...”

Furthermore, going through their reports revealed that a substantial number of these researches though in the Plastics Art and Design disciplines were majorly surveys relying on data from questionnaires that has no influence from practical action, observation and experience.



Figure. 2: Frequency Word cloud of preferred methodologies adopted by PhD researchers in study Area.

Source: <https://www.freewordcloudgenerator.com>

Thirty- seven out the fifty-seven (57) sampled PhD methodologies reviewed were underpinned by single research methods. Twenty-eight (28) of them were survey driven (positivist methodology). While nine (9) had a sprinkle of other methods (product-design, design-thinking, experimental, etc.). The twenty others were a medley of mixed-methods comprising of a combination of survey/experimental research, survey/product-design research, survey/design-thinking research, etc. They covered both quantitative and qualitative researches. A close look at the research studies reveals a culture of perennial use and astute knowledge of positivist research tools, but generally deficient in the epistemological (philosophical) aspects of research. In addition, majority of the researches also revealed a jaundiced knowledge of general qualitative research, particularly in the areas of methodology and axiology. Findings revealed that a lot of researchers in the Nigerian built-environmental landscape (using the sampled case study) have scant knowledge of the qualitative approaches to research, particularly the aspect of what instruments to use for data generation and analysis. Of the twenty (20) odd proposals that suggested that the researchers adopted mixed-method research approaches, eighteen (18) indicated they used the interview tool to generate data. However, none (0) showed evidence or suggested how they analysed the interviews they conducted. At the final count, about seventy-three percent (73%) of these researches were conducted predominantly with quantitative research methodologies.

Ideally, this paper should see as a welcome development the adoption of qualitative research methods in the built-environment, but that is not the case, even though global best practices have encouraged using several combinations of quantitative and qualitative methods for a while now (Creswell, 2011). However, outside advocating the adoption of qualitative methodologies for research in the built environment, there is a more involving and hands-on methodology taking the world by storm which should be of benefit to researchers who intend to do practice-based research. This third paradigm combines the attributes of both the quantitative and qualitative methods into an interesting mix (not mixed methodology) which some have christened 'Constructive' and others 'Performative' research methodologies respectively (Koskinen, Zimmerman, Binder, Redstrom, & Wensveen, 2011; Gray & Malins, 2004, 2003).

Practice-As Research

Historically, the (any) conduct of research activities overtime has been restricted to the use of quantitative research paradigms and later qualitative paradigms to create knowledge, as art and design practice areas were not considered intellectual fields that could participate in research. In other words, interested art and design practitioners who wanted to be involved in research practice were compelled to adopt the positivist or qualitative approach to reporting their findings. However, recent engagements by art and design practitioners in the academia have created a new paradigm to aid the articulation of creative art practice in a form that can be construed as research practice.

Arguing on the rationale on why there should be a separate paradigm distinctively different from the quantitative and qualitative ones we have known over time; Haseman in Barrett, & Bolt, (2011) posits that: “to understand the developments wrought by practitioner-researchers from the arts and design is to see them as part of the ongoing project to clarify the materials and methods of qualitative research.

After all, a number of qualitative researchers had made similar arguments in the past. Judy Norris acknowledges that:

“...many were drawn to qualitative research as we came to realize how much life was squeezed out of human experience when we attempted to make sense of it in a numeric, non-contextual way” (Norris 1997: 89).

Constrained by the capacity of words to capture the nuances and subtleties of human behaviour, there has been a call by some scholars and researchers for ‘texts that move beyond the purely representational and towards the presentational’ (Denzin 2003: xi). This has resulted in proposals for qualitative researchers to use symbolic forms such as poetry, fiction writing, theatre, performance, dance, music and the visual and graphic arts to represent their claims to knowledge (Barrett, & Bolt, 2011).

Practice-led and practice-based are relatively new terminologies used to define research conduct or inquiry. The type of research in question is designed to incorporate or use practical skill activities or acumen in the process of creating knowledge. The method is meant to be at par with quantitative and qualitative research; it is most widely used by the art, architecture and design disciplines. However, besides the fact that research practice in art and design is relatively new, a lot of debate on it has already populated the academia. The most popular are: issues on nomenclature, definition, scope and what is construed as practice-led. To support Haseman is the defining description of what practice-led research entails from Bruce Archer (1995) in which he succinctly delineates a rationale for and the respective ways for ‘doing’ practice-led research:

“There are circumstances where the best or only way to shed light on a proposition, a principle, a material, a process or a function is to attempt to construct something, or to enact something, calculated to explore, embody or test it”, (Rust, Mottram, & Till, 2007).

Nonetheless, Christopher Frayling’s political pamphlet seems to have set the stage, in his adaption of Herbert Read’s model of education through art; in which he described the different ways of thinking about research, remarking that research could be FOR practice, where research aims are subservient to practice aims, THROUGH practice, where the practice serves a research purpose, or INTO practice, such as observing the working processes of others (Rust, *et al.*, 2007). Nevertheless, Archer and Frayling are in accord on the position that practice can only be said to have been employed in research if the method or methodology includes an explicit understanding of how the practice contributes to the inquiry, thereby making the research distinguishable from other forms of practice by that explicit understanding. Furthermore, Candy, (2006) insists that to qualify as a practice-led research activity; the process should involve a continual reflection upon the practice and on the resulting information of the practice.

Although the terms practice-led and practice-based have been used synonymously by a lot of practitioners, Nimkulrat, (2007) avers that they do not actually have the same definition. This has been widely debated over the years by art and design scholars but no clear conclusion has been reached (Frayling, 1993; Nimkulrat, 2007; Yee, 2010; Lawson, 2012). An instance is the debate on the definitions of both practice-based and practice-led as perceived by Frayling and Coumans’ (Nimkulrat, 2007). Frayling argues that practice-based research is the advancement of knowledge partly by means of practice. This he further describes as an original/creative piece of work, distinct and significant as a researched endeavor, which must exhibit evidence of its originality, mastery and

contribution to the field that should be seen demonstrated through the original creative work. In conclusion, he reiterates that practice-based submissions must include a substantial contextualization of the creative work.

Within practice-led research it is the design process moving from problem to solution that is the point of departure for the rhetoric research direction of the thesis.

“... The research direction of an artist/designer ‘other than the art and design process’ is a transparent process in which conscious steps are taken, in which knowledge is used, or knowledge is searched for and articulated in the process... The artist/designer, therefore, must also demonstrate that he [sic] possesses sufficient knowledge to justify the choices he [sic] has made” (Coumans, 2003, 62-67).

From the above definitions, Nimkulrat revealed that there are about two significant differences between practice-based and practice-led research undertakings. The first is on the nature of art/design practice; in which she averred that practice in practice-based research can be carried out freely for its own sake in order to produce artefacts; this is the commonly understood way in art/design practice. By contrast, practice in practice-led research is a conscious exploration with the knowledge involved in the making of artefacts. Secondly, she also reflected on the difference in the roles of a practitioner and researcher. In practice-based research, the practitioner’s role may be more dominant than the researcher’s role, here the emphasis seems to be placed on practice, as the practitioner-researcher carries out her research that is solely based on her own practice. In practice-led research, the two roles appear to be equally important, because research becomes an intertwined part of practice (Nimkulrat, 2007). However, the next item in contention is what methodologies and methods underpin the conduct of research in both practice-led and practice-based research.

Practice-Led Research Methodologies and Methods

Practice-led research inquiry according to Langrish in Candy, (2006) is conducted by the process of asking questions which are concerned with things that are visual, and methods used are not specific but mixed, ranging from quantitative, empirical methods to more qualitative, social science methods, and the evidence produced in response to the research questions can vary from a traditional big-book thesis to a portfolio containing design pieces that are accompanied by a shorter thesis. Surveys show that outside the act of practice as a key element in the process of research, there is no other specific method of inquiry which can be said to be unique to practice-led research. However, a look at various practice-led research projects reveal that, their respective methods of inquiry were influenced or determined by what problems and/or type of practice the practitioner is engaged in (Barrett, & Bolt, 2011; Gray & Malins, 2004; Koskinen *et al.*, 2011). Nonetheless, what makes visual, performative, and media art-based research so distinctive are the ways in which the researchers conduct their enquiries beyond the sphere of written discourse. As earlier stated there are two competing methodologies seeking to dominate (stamp their feet on) the realm of creative practice research: that is the performative and the constructive approach respectively. While the performative by its nature champions the practice-led approach the constructive is predominantly practice-based.

In support of the argument for practice-led research; Haseman in (Barrett, & Bolt, 2011) is of the position that practice-led research cannot merely be subsumed under the qualitative research framework, but rather has its own distinctive research approach with its own strategies and methods, drawn from the long-standing and accepted working methods and practices of artists and practitioners across the arts and emerging creative disciplines. Haseman in conclusion, states that these distinctive qualities point towards an entirely new research paradigm, which he argues can be best understood as performative research. Performative research conduct has its own distinctive protocols, principles and validation procedures, which are expressed in non-numeric data, but in

forms of symbolic data other than words in discursive text. These include material forms of practice, of still and moving images, of music and sound, of live action and digital code. And its process of generating or creating knowledge is via a multi-method approach led by practice.

The term practice-based would most certainly have been influenced by Christopher Frayling's working paper (Frayling, 1993), which advocated for an empiricist and pragmatist approach to research conduct in the creative arts, advocating for the construction or making of prototypes, products, and models; to codify their own understanding of a particular situation, provide a concrete framing of the problem and a description of a proposed, preferred state. He further reiterated that designers should focus on the creation of artefacts through a process of disciplined imagination, because the artefacts they make both reveal and become embodiments of possible futures. Furthermore, that design researchers can also explore new materials and actively participate in intentionally constructing the future, in the form of disciplined imagination, instead of limiting their research to an analysis of the present and the past, (Koskinen *et al.*, 2011).

The above mandate is what has evolved into the constructive design paradigm. Although many designers are certainly constructivists in a theoretical and philosophical sense. This paradigm should not be misconstrued with constructivism in which people like Vygotsky, (1978) claim that issues such as knowledge and society are constructed rather than, say, organized functionally around certain purposes, as if in a body or in a piece of machinery. "Constructive design research," refers to design research in which construction (be it product, system, space, or media) takes centre place and becomes the key means in constructing knowledge. Typically, this "thing" in the middle is a 'prototype' (Koskinen *et al.*, 2011, 5). A prototype as defined by the Encyclopedia Britannica, is "an original or first model of something from which other forms are copied or developed" (Britannica, 1993). This prototype (constructed thing) enables stakeholders get an idea of tangible things like mechanics, behaviour, materials and colours, through which they can practically understand, touch, materials and shapes.

The Ting (prototype)

The Scandinavian concept: of a 'ting' is comparable to the 'watering hole' "an assembly". However, while the former is a place people meet to make decisions on the future of a community, the later allows all humans and nonhumans converge to share provisions, and create knowledge (learning e.g. Actor Network Theory - ANT). Furthermore, Julius Nyerere's concept of the *Ujamaa* (African Socialism) and "villagisation" would also find a place amongst the duo, especially where his ideology preached the ethos of 'work together, and help each other, which was a blue print for economic cooperation in Tanzania (Papanek, 1985; Ibhawoh, & Dibua, 2003). In an attempt to compare the above with design, Ehn in Koskinen, *et al.*, (2011) opine that, design things are like town hall meetings; they are places where people gather to decide collectively where to go, and that design things are also indispensable tools for transforming designers' intuitions, hunches, and small discoveries into something that stays, for instance, a prototype, product, or system. The fora these design 'things' create, most times become boundless avenues for data collection, which in this case will be through observation and interviews. Thus the praxis and self-reflexivity involved in the creation of the artefact (prototype) supported by the interaction/interventions amongst conveners would evolve a more broad-based knowledge creation process. Constructive Design inspired methodologies include experience prototypes, design games, and many types of traditional design tools such as collages, mood boards, storyboards, pastiche scenarios, "personas," and various types of role-plays. Other methodologies adopted are cultural probes, make tools, and action research.

Reflexivity

A major attribute of practice as research is the researcher's self-reflexivity endeavours in the process in which her/his research is conducted. Donald Schön in Koskinen, *et al.*, (2011) defines design as a reflective dialog between designers and their materials. The exploration of knowledge partly through

making artefacts according to Makela, & Nimkulrat, (2011) has brought a new dimension to design research as the practitioner researcher not only creates an artefact but also documents, contextualizes and interprets the artefacts as well as the process of making them. This way of creation allows practitioners to elicit reflection in and on their working processes which Schön (1991) suggests can be considered new knowledge gained in action. And this knowing in action, he further reiterates would ordinarily be in tacit form and implicit in our actions. Scrivener (2000) in Makela, & Nimkulrat, (2011) reflection in practice plays a crucial role as it supports the practitioner's reflections and brings greater objectivity or critical subjectivity to the whole project. In addition, praxical knowledge according to Barrett, & Bolt, (2011) involve a reflexive knowing that imbricates and follows on from handling and that reflexivity in such research involves not only a focus on the validation of data and outcomes, but also the positioning of one's self in relation to other fields in order to reveal the character and sources of one's interest. In conclusion, Gray & Malins, (2004) consider reflexivity as the act of turning back of one's experience upon oneself, which they believe creates the capacity for self-evaluation and self-improvement through rigorous and systematic research and study of one's own practice'.

Conclusion

All practice related researches have certain common denominators, which is that they are hinged on the respective praxis of the practitioners' discipline, the reflexivity brought to bear in the process of creation or service, the output of their endeavours and the community of discourse created in the process of sense making (knowledge, communication, interaction, usability, replicability, etc.) These methods would undoubtedly adhere to the iterative protocol of problem solving in design technology (Kolb, 1984), and would support research activities that bring about research collaboration, co-creation, and co-production. A cursory look suggests some members of the case study have been involved in practice related research in the past. The question however is: "Have their researches been practice-based or practice-led?" "Have they been adhering to the methodologies inherent?"

In conclusion, the author is of the opinion that both constructive and performative research paradigms will conveniently underpin researchers who adopt practice-led research projects, as such will involve the creation of things, models and or service provision. Secondly, such researches will be more concerned with activities and concepts like: "design, development, fabrication, and construction, etc." From the axiological perspective, the author believes that adherence to the adoption of more practice-based methodologies will improve practical oriented research activities amongst researchers. There will be an increase in researchers' tacit knowledge of the "doing" in practice. In addition, such projects will be more tangible output from postgraduate research projects conducted in the built environment, particularly in the selected case study.

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A PLASTIC REPRESENTATION OF CHILD ABUSE IN MAIDUGURI AND ENVIRONS IN PAINTING

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Introduction

This project is an attempt to draw the deepest interest and intention of people through paintings to the conditions of the Nigerian child, who is often deprived of his or her rights and obligations within our communities. It is in the best interest of the world today that through the prompting of the United Nations, UNICEF and other non- governmental organizations including governments and nations to endeavour to protect and provide for the immediate needs of the abused child. Some countries see children as domestic spare parts of life, a media through which the able-bodied earn a comfortable life. The child needs all the affection, love and colorfully bright emotions from people to encourage and facilitate a natural mind, free from bad memories that could inflict psychological pain, influence or intimidate the child in future. The child needs special care and treatment without discrimination and protection that would prepare him/her to live independently within the community.

This research work is aimed at producing a painting to depict the emotional and difficult state of children within Maiduguri and its surroundings. Painting as a means of communication is enhanced and effectively transmitted to the emotions through colours and shapes. Its language speaks to our different feelings and touches our deepest emotions. In the art of oil painting on canvas using lines, shapes motifs and attractive elements the sores of child abuse are captured, modified and produced as art works that best relate the child's condition, rights and attraction to his people. A child is recognized by UNICEF standard as any human below the age of eighteen (18 years). Approximately 340 million children under the age of eighteen (18 years) live in sub-Saharan Africa. What is happening to the child and his everyday life? The following preamble recalls the basic principles and policies of nations and organizations worldwide concerning the child.

UNICEF observe that in many developing countries children suffer depurations. Such a child could meet with accidents or get infected with deadly diseases considering the type of clumps around his environment. An innocent kola-nut seller you meet daily along the streets of Maiduguri is a young girl that knows nothing about sex and its several effects, but ends up sexually harassed, abused and humiliated over a token amount as profit. These children are at risk because they are deprived of education, due to the inability or unwillingness of their parents to sponsor their education. Children that do attend schools are also involved in domestic or other kinds of labour such as animal herding, farm work, hawking, babysitting, shoe mending and cart pushing.

Such are practices found within Maiduguri Metropolis and can be regarded as a microcosm of the macrocosm which is Nigeria. Instead of a playground children play on major streets around rubbish dumps and other risky areas found within their different domains.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research project are as follows: -

- i. To create a large painting based on the different themes of child abuse, child rights and their environment. The painting is supposed to educate organizations, government and the general populace on the need to have affection towards children.
- ii. To create a painting depicting actions concerning the child emanating from social

norms and values that suits his or her own interest.

- iii. To arouse attention that appeals to people emotionally. The more educated they are towards child abuse the more appreciative they would be in providing a standard living environment for them.
- iv. To also show through painting some of the difficulties experienced by the child during his/her development.

Relevance of the Study

This research project would educate communities, the government and non- governmental organizations, agencies and all human endeavour related organizations about the most desperate needs of the Nigerian child who needs love from all and by all.

Statement of the Problem

The effort of government and non-governmental organizations to alleviate the suffering of children within the Maiduguri Metropolis and Nigeria in general is one of the central issues of this project. The state of children in Maiduguri is frightful and worsening by the day. Despite all the efforts made to enhance the educational status and the health sector, the issues of child abuse, child rights violations and recently child trafficking has grown in focus. Many children suffer immensely in the society and only a few have been uplifted from their poor living conditions. Numerous programmes have been set up by government to help those who need support these turn out to be difficult tasks for the relevant organizations to accomplish. Since the task as a developed Nigeria is every Nigerian's duty we have to bear in mind that our children are the future leaders of Nigeria. So everybody is supposedly involved in this to help the child forge a better tomorrow. National plans of action for children with a set of specific, time bound and measurable targets and goals, as agreed to at the U.K. special session on children, it is expected to go a long way towards meeting the agenda of "A world fit for children" (The State of the World Children 2005: 97,98).

Scope and Limitation

This study is limited to the microcosm Maiduguri and its surroundings. Here you can find people from the neighboring states, bordering countries of Niger, Chad, Cameroon and people from other parts of the country. Child abuse is evident on the streets, motor parks, city areas, public institutions etc. The level at which these children are exposed and abused by the environment is worrisome. A gargantuan painting depicting child abuse is created with colours and images that would arouse emotions towards child affection and rights.

Review of Literature and Related Art

Revisiting the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the impact of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the status of children has been as profound as its consolidation of the rights of children. Childhood also means the time between birth and the attainment of adulthood. It refers to the state and condition of the child's life, to the quality of those years. It's the most widely endorsed Human Rights Treaty in history, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 in effect represents a global consensus on the terms of childhood. Although there is no absolute agreement on the interpretation of each and every provision of the convention, there is substantial common ground on what the standards of childhood should be (Childhood under threat. 2005, p 1).

The government should as a priority adopt socially responsible policies keeping children specifically in mind to be able to fully promote and protect Human Rights and achieve sustainable development. The terms of childhood; child's rights;

According to the convention on the rights of the child, every child has the right to:

Non-discrimination, Actions taken in their best interest, Survival and development, Right to identity, Family relation and parental guidance, Protection from illicit transfer and illegal adoption, Freedom of expression, thought and peaceful assembly, State protection of privacy, home family and correspondence, Access to appropriate information, Protection from abuse and neglect, Special care if disabled, Health and access to health care services, Benefit from social security, Decent standards of living, Education, Rest and leisure, play and recreation, culture and arts, Protection from child labour, trafficking, sexual and other forms of exploitation and drugs abuse, Protection from torture and deprivation of liberty, Dignity and worth, even if the child has infringed the law, Rights refer to article 1 to 40 of the Convention on the Rights of The Child (The State of World Children. 2005, p4).

Review of Related Art



Figure 1: Gani Odutokun, **The Orphans**, 1977

Gani Odutokun's, the Orphans 1977, is an important representation of child difficulties during the late 1970's. it was exerted with chalk pastel. The painting depicts three children probably from the same family unit who might have lost their parents and were left on their own to strive very hard to survive. The two boys and a little girl are painted in blue lines, their facial expressions very pathetic. The background characteristic of northern Nigeria, showing mud houses of the typical Hausa-Fulani's. Gani successfully portrays the sympathetic condition of these orphans. Hunger strongly glares on their faces, the boy in the middle yawns for food as his elder brother helplessly carries an empty bowl, while their sister, the youngest of the three looks up at her brothers disappointed and helpless after discovering the empty container. From the blanket or piece of cloth around her, one can almost feel the freezing dryness of Harmattan season in West Africa between November and mid-March in the atmosphere. The composition of the subject matter in this painting is balanced. Another painting that clearly shows a child depressed and probably denied of at least one of the rights of a child is by Lami Bature (1994), Nigerian artist. It is a personification of hard

work and courage. Lami Bature likes to relate colours to the moods of her subjects. Her preferred area is portraiture. Her desire to visit models at home for study in their natural settings. The result is astonishing behind the face of shyness for instance, a viewer may detect the capacity of mischief in some of the younger models.



Figure 2: Lami Bature, **Maggi**, 76 X 54cm, 1994

Lami, influenced herself by Gani, -portrays on this 76 x 54cm canvas surface a young girl wearing a yellow scarf painted in blue and green hues. One can see the innocence of the naturalistic figure represented, showing a feeling that seems to be of some one in deep thought. The little girl's portrait is limited only to her face and her right hand as if supporting the mass of the head. A position that is common with thinking or meditating for salvation from somewhere. Somebody looking at this painting will not only appreciate work of art but also feel the mood of the subject matter enhanced by selected colours. This painting clearly depicts emotions from a deprived child.



Figure 3: Samella Sanders Lewis, **Water boy**, 1944

Samella Sanders Lewis, an Afro-American female painter has a style, which ranges from a portraiture to stylized landscape with works in vast variety of media. Her inspiration of the Afro- American culture and strong ability to convey emotions with colour is consistent throughout her paintings. In this painting of the water boy, a young boy is depicted carrying a heavy pail of water. In this setting he is weary and down cast. Lewis described this as a personal piece "a self -portrait in terms of feelings" While growing up, she visited her relatives each summer in the Bayou region of Louisiana. This painting was based upon her experiences going to the country doing tasks. Her relatives carried water for their use and when visiting, she was assigned that hated chore. The house 'in the background is imaginative, but drawn from her recollection of her relative 's home. Her teacher encouraged her to put pure colours next to pure colours, so that colours became more symbolic and created an intensity of feeling (Powell and Reynolds, 1967).

Methodology

This study involves the Following:

- a) Data collection
- b) Pencil sketches
- c) Preliminary colour studies
- d) Materials
- e) Conceptualization
- f) Colour choice
- g) Artistic forms

Data Collection

Informal interviews of people around motor park areas, listening to conversations, sketching, studying and making observations were carried out by the artist. Photographs of children under risk, hardship and related labour activities were taken for study. Television documentaries and

daily news (on NTA and BRTV stations) and other visuals constituted vital resource for proper analysis, understanding situations, conditions of abuse centered around children within artist's vicinity, culture, tradition and geographic location Maiduguri and Nigeria as a nationality.

Pencil Studies

For proper visual representation of the subject matter of this research sketches were made to achieve the principles of organization. The artist employed the basic elements of design for a clear presentation and unity of figures and structural composition in the final work. Series of sketches also provided a significant amount of compositions from which the last two sketches were chosen to determine the final work.

Preliminary Colour Studies

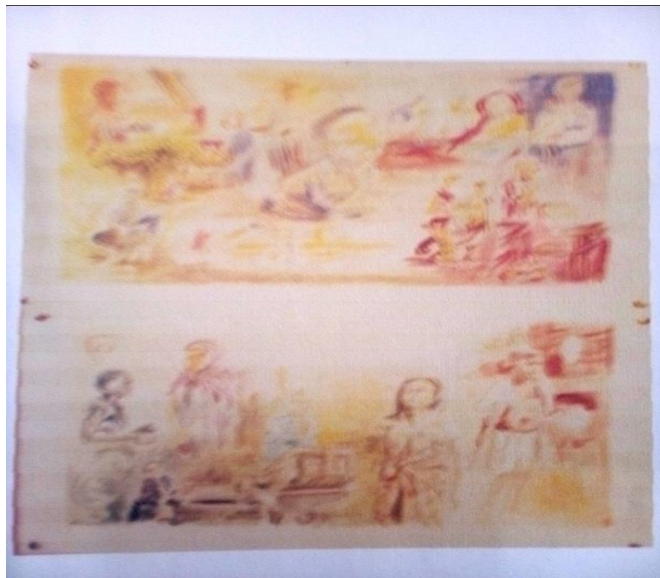


Plate 1: Preliminary Colour study

To create illusions of three dimensions on two-dimensional surface the artist organises colours according to their abilities to express and create compositional depth. As found upon the surface of canvases, colour expresses more than any other element mood or feeling even when it is not descriptive of the objects represented.

Materials

The materials involved in this research include locally sourced and imported readymade materials. Wood for stretcher is provided and prepared for suitable execution of the final project. Painting Brushes, Palette, Palette knife etc. are the conventional tools used. Priming of canvas was done by the artist with wood glue.

This research work is studio-based and necessary studio materials and equipment were in place for a successful work.

Conceptualization

The idea of the plastic use of elements to create visual illusion is partly an effort to capture emotions and conditions to educate people that appreciate and understand better through visual aesthetics. This representative artwork, the manipulative use of lines or strokes, motifs or patterns of cool and warm colours, textures etc. employed as a means to producing brilliant results

Colour Choice

Psychological application of colour for this research has shown that light and bright colours make us feel joyful and uplifted, warm colours are generally stimulating, cool colours are calming, while cool dark, somber colours are generally depressing. This artist's choice of colour is formed from the primary triads, which also produce the secondary colours needed. When all these colours are mixed together the result is gray, adding to my colour composition intensity to distinguish bright colours from dull hue of the background. The other property of colour is value; value in colours is the distinguishing factor between light and darkness of colour.

All necessary properties of colours available to artist's knowledge and experience are properly represented in this research. Colour is one very important aspect of this work.

Artist Forms

In this case naturalism and realism are both manipulated in different colour compositions. Realism is a style in art that retains the basic impression of visual actuality without going to extremes of details. It attempts to relate and interpret the universal meaning that lie beneath surface appearances (Ocvirk, Stinson, Wigg, Bone and Cayton (2004).

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

This research is a studio-based exploration. Pencil drawings and water colour studies were carried out sometimes utilizing photographs taken basically for the purpose of the study.

Analysis is based on depicting conditions and actual situations of some of the abused children as they carry out their day to day activities.

Pencil Studies



Plate 2: Pencil study

In the course of this research, inspiration was gotten about the behaviour of children around Maiduguri public areas i.e. the motor parks, streets, institutions etc. Quick pencil sketches were studied to present a clear picture of what is happening to the Nigerian child. There are three studies selected from the number of drawings made to form the basis of the final painting. Light and shade is emphasized to depict behavioural and climatic conditions. Strokes, curves, thin and thick lines of pencil are employed to show clearly represented situation as experienced firsthand. The pencil studies for the compositions are illustrated below.

Water colour Studies

The water colour studies chosen were those that would eventually make the final painting. Here colour has shown in clear contrast a visual sequence of analysis in regards to relating the painting

to its audience. Colour in psychological application relates us to familiar experience either remembered or for future referencing.

Emotions can be stimulated by colours in terms of effects created through light and shade, which could also be interpreted as it casts on the figures in this painting. The water colour studies are illustrated below.

Painting in progress



Plate 3: Painting in progress

4.3 Final painting



Plate 4: Final painting **Careless Child**, 121cm x 228cm, oil on canvas, 2005.

The technique chosen for the final painting is for the researcher's convenience the researcher employed the use of composition to balance figures enhance with fresh brush strokes and colour display to visualize the conditions as faced by some children. The colour scheme is aimed at attracting audience attention to the information it portrays. The subject matter of this painting is centered on the baby, whose childhood is threatened by activities around his community. Composed around this figure are scenes within Maiduguri township area. A figure is depicted of a child directing a blind beggar, the child holding a bowl for begging money, food, etc. This child to

the beggar is the most important help available. Such a relationship reflects on the little boy's future. Painted in warm hues are three young boys rushing for food at a restaurant.

Summary and Conclusion

Summary

This visual representation of under-privileged children, a case study of Maiduguri and its surroundings has depicted child rights and activities under social threat. With regards to visual experience, this research attempt to explain child rights and abusive condition of today.

Conclusion

Through a series of studies, the researcher was able to present the condition of children under threat in visual dramatic naturalistic and semi- realistic combination.

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CONTEMPORARY ART AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES: IMPACT OF NIGERIAN FEMINIST ART EXPRESSIONS ON GENDER SENSITIVITY

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Introduction

In recording contemporary art history, socio-cultural and gender issues cannot be ignored. Chadwick (1996, pp. 1-30) believes that gender differences are often inscribed within both the art objects of the historians' enquiry and the conditions in which the artworks are interpreted and analyzed. Gender, a word coined from Middle English of the French era in its simplest meaning refers to "kind, type or sort", which definition is already obsolete in relations to contemporary application and use. The etymological historical meaning for gender differentiates between male and female entities without considering the biological or sociological traits (McGill, 2023). However, in recent times, there is a clear distinction between biological sex and gender as a role socially, or in cultural functions. Gender roles vary from identity to social constructions, whether real or perceived. These also include cultural expectations. Schultz and Lavenda (1998, p. 447), confirm that anthropologists have tried to distinguish gender from sex by referring to gender as the cultural construction of beliefs and behaviours considered appropriate for each sex. In line with this, Oladeji (2005, p. 126) explains that the gender pattern in Nigeria (pre-colonial, post-colonial, and contemporary), trains and views the male as the head and superior to the female. These cultural values have predisposed females to limited participation in labour, power-sharing, education, and skill-acquisition, economic and professional practices. It is no wonder that due to the subordinate positioning of females, the "gender" condition of being male and female has sympathetically shifted over time to focus on the feminine. Gender sensitivity has been sentimentally redefined to feminist appeal: the assumption of giving equal rights, privileges and opportunities to females who are in this context, vulnerable. This paper is about the female gender in art, the impact of art produced by female artists that advocate for females (feminist art), and the brief history of feminist art in Nigeria.

Aronson (1991, pp. 550-574) and Cowen (1996, p. 1) are feminist art historians (those who record feminist artworks) who believe that art historians had chosen to ignore or undermine most artworks done by women artists in the past. Studies by Aronson (1991, pp. 550-574) show that gender issues in the production and meaning of African art have only recently been addressed from the 1980 when scholars started to pay attention to the role of African women artists and the significance of their spheres of artistic production within society as a whole. These include the relationship to men's art, domestics, economics, design and techniques. Cowen (1996, p. 1) establishes the fact that differential gender achievements appear in the visual arts and most renowned artists have been men. This differential according to Cowen (1996, p. 6), is not due to cognitive or creative inferiority of the female artists but to social and cultural norms. In Nigeria women artists constitute a cherished part of a proud legacy of creative people: sculptors, painters, ceramists, textile artists and other forms of art expressions. They have skillfully contributed through personal works and family fraternities and lineages. External barriers and social discrimination according to Germain (1979, p. 5) are responsible for holding women artists traditionally from achievements, and they have faced lower

returns from investing their energies into art. For this reasons, art history needs to pay attention to the recording of female art positively and correlating with measures of available opportunities. For instance, educational opportunities, skill-acquisition privileges, encouragements from family, funding, availability of studio and tools, cultural non-inhibitions and sexual non-discrimination are some aids to the few female artists who have made achievements in their chosen creative endeavors. Until the nineteenth century, Cowen (1996, p. 12) notes that nearly all female artists came from homes where art was already practiced and generally, most women did not have the opportunity to develop or even become aware of their artistic talents. According to Chadwick (1996), many male artists at the mention of “feminist art” are repulsed. They assume that feminist art themes centre mostly on revolution, rebellion against male domination, restoration of the dignity of womanhood and family values and others that connect to the joys or pangs of womanhood. Much as this may be true, such assumption limits and narrows the social functionality and impact of many feminist arts. The feminist artworks considered in this paper exceed such limitations. Wider issues such as the state of the nation, nationalism, ethnicity, politics, economy, terrorism and other life-threatening crimes, poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS and gender sensitivity, are themes that have created impact and changes. The paper attempts to trace the historical efforts of Nigerian female artists since the 1970’s, their themes, their feminism, the issues they address and how gender sensitivity has been affected, both on the art scene and other areas of Nigerian life.

Impediments to a history of feminist art in Nigeria are numerous. First, there is little devotion to the study of female art and artists. Historically, few Nigerian women have been sufficiently recorded as artists. By the 1980s the few women artists recorded were Clara Ugbodaga, Afi Ekong, Ladi Kwali, Theresa Luck-Akinwale, Elizabeth Olowu, Nike Davies, Sokari Douglas-Camp and Colette Omogbai. Most often, literature on other practicing female artists have been merely a scanty mention. Nigerian art history has been based more on chronology and training, and classifications have been based on style and the type of arts produced by artists generally (Fosu, 1986; Kelly, 1993; Akinwande, 2015). This probably could be attributed to the number of female artists available for review and their previous low impact on art practice locally. Frankenthaler (1987, pp. 1-5) discusses the rareness of female artists. She considers the historical disadvantaged position of women within society as one of the probable reasons for this. It may also be that women artists were often deliberately omitted from the historical recording. Berns (1993, pp. 129-148) records that even when women dominated the clay arts and crafts such as pottery in West Africa, they were not considered as the likely creators of excavated figurative ceramic sculptures recovered by archeologists across the savanna. She attributes this non-reference to the gender biases that privilege men’s ‘high’ art over women’s ‘low’ craft. Rosen (1989, 7) mentions the exclusion of African-American women from the centre of the activities in the contemporary art world inspite of the impact few of them such as Harriet Powers (1837-1910) made in the late 19th century. LaDuke, (1991, p. 13) who studied twelve female artists from Africa emphasizes outstanding artistic achievements of these artists inspite of several challenges they have had to surmount. Women were restricted by cultural and traditional settings from venturing into certain arts that were seen as male vocations. These restrictions were testified to by the likes of Elizabeth Olowu (Obododinma, 2003, p. 14) and Sokari Douglas-Camp. Filani (2004) argues that it is an erroneous assumption to state that men have been dominant in African art practice. He believes that this stems from a Eurocentric definition of art. He mentions the fact that traditionally in Africa, creative works such as pottery, weaving, body decoration, embroidery, wall painting and coiffure have been exclusive to women only. However, Filani (2004, p. 150) himself admits that even traditionally, women were not known or permitted to create arts such as sculpture whether in wood, terracotta, metal or stone. This practice in itself is a discriminating stance. He also admits that there is a dearth of female presence in contemporary Nigerian art.

Female participation in active art practice still needs more social support, funding and sponsorship. Presently in Nigeria, there is no museum or gallery that is put in place both by government or privately owned, solely devoted to works and achievements of female artists. The National Gallery of

Art, a federal government parastatal, despite its efforts at promoting visual art in Nigeria has organized and funded only few art exhibitions solely for female art. In the forty years under study, less than ten art exhibitions have been devoted to female artists by the National Gallery. This is only a drop in the ocean comparative to the number of similar art exhibitions sponsored by the same gallery which is often dominated by male artists. Women artists personally struggle to achieve artistic identity as the odds against them are high. It is by personal efforts that they acquire private sponsors for solo or group exhibitions. Other factors affecting the low turnout of female arts include matrimony and the demand of maternal responsibilities. Marriage is culturally so important in Nigeria that most women sacrifice anything including their careers in order to keep home and make their marriages work. This attitude sometimes creates domestic and social encumbrances and physical limitations for female artists. Child bearing and rearing takes a great toll on the practice of most female artists. Many female artists practice intermittently. They only produce art towards upcoming exhibitions. They do not maintain regular studio practice and are often engaged in other non-artistic employment to support their families. These leave them very little time for studio work. Some males have criticized female excuses for not practicing. Oshinowo (2004) thinks female artists avoid the stress, strain, wear and tear of studio work. He believes that any artist, male or female, must be ready to face the hard work that studio practice demands. He however admits that social and cultural pressures could cause lack of concentration and focus in female artists. Ikwuemesi (2004) thinks that Nigerian female artists are marginalized by themselves in the sense that the art training they received is not gender-specific, but the women are in conflict created by the dichotomy of traditional and contemporary roles. Non-feminist initiatives by males in the critique of female art have also doused female enthusiasm. On the international scene, Nzegwu (2000) arguably blames a Euro-American gender-stereotyping of African female artists, for their non-extended participation in international art exhibitions outside their home countries. She thinks that there is a gender misrepresentation by male dominated curatorship and critique.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This paper is basically art-historical even though it is also sociological and anthropological. A qualitative method was considered most appropriate for the research. The methodology therefore collected primary data from field investigation comprising of observations at female art exhibitions and art galleries and studios that curated and housed artworks of female Nigerian artists. Other sources of data were interviews conducted with some purposively selected female artists working in different specializations and mediums of art; recording and collection of photographs of the relevant artworks and review of relevant literature. Internet search engines were employed in the process of gathering historical information and other archival records. This research is hung on the theories of social change, feminism and aesthetics. In the application of the theory of social change, Karl Marx (1818-1883) is the foremost proponent of the theory of social change, even though several other philosophers expanded and applied it. According to this theory, a society evolves into higher levels or a more complex society through external influences or by generating change within itself. The processes of change can be (a) evolutionary (b) cyclical (c) economic (d) functionalist or (e) conflict. The application of the theory of social change in this paper shows that the external influences on Nigerian female artists through education and travel have affected their responses to issues of feminism and feminist concerns; and they exhibit these in their arts. The theory of feminism by Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) which advocates for the vindication of the rights of women was used to extract women's social roles and lived experiences and how they affect the arts of female artists. According to Arinder (2020), the core concepts of feminist theory are sex, gender, race, discrimination, equality, difference and choice. These helped in the recognition and analysis of the themes of the works in this study. The aesthetic theory by James Joyce (1882-1914) which states that all art, be it comic or tragic is the apprehension of beauty, was applicable in the analysis of the formal and thematic aspects of the artworks in this study by extricating the message from the visual representations.

Discussion

Nigerian Feminist Art: 1970s to the Present

Oyelola (1981) records that in the pre-colonial era (pre-1900), women in the geographical entity known as Nigeria today, excelled in various traditional arts. Most of their arts were utilitarian and were connected to the dignity and well-being of the human persons. These arts included body decorations, coiffure, mat-making, wall-painting, calabash-decoration, pottery and textile arts. Angelou (1990, p. 7) describes these arts as arts that delighted the eye, consoled the troubled mind, appeased the highest authority and educated children in the way of the world. The aims according to her, whether or not articulated were meant to influence and sustain the family in an appreciation for life and the expectation of beauty. These goals seem to define even contemporary feminist art. Many women artists today produce art about women and their world, even when they unconsciously or unintentionally do so. In this respect, the functions could be regarded as feminist even when these women only followed instinctive creativity. Apart from these artists producing arts for local appreciation and uses, women such as Azume (d. 1950), Felicia Adepelu (b. 1932), Ladi Kwali (d. 1984) were accomplished potters who were highly talented and achieved exceptional success in form, style and function of pottery. In textiles, hand-woven cloths and pattern-dyed indigo cloth (Adire), were areas where many women excelled in skills, particularly in their various communities.

Madam Samuroh (d. 1970) was a well-known Adire textile designer whose cloth can be found in museums in Britain and America. Post-colonial 1960s and pre-1970s saw few pioneering female artists who were academically trained. Very few women had access to tertiary education; therefore, in the 1960s very few women had any formal training in arts. Such few graduates included, Afi Ekong (b. 1930), Clara Etso Ugbodaga (later Ugbodaga-Ngu) (b. 1921), Theresa Luck-Akinwale (b.1930), A. Akindeinde, Ego Uche-Okeke (b. 1943), C.I. Adun, Onyebuchi Okadigwe and Agboola Oshinowo. From the famous art workshop at Osogbo in the 1960s by Ulli Beier, emerged Senabu Olayede and Kikelomo Oladepo (b. 1951), who were prominent pioneers in decorative indigo batik. Presently the most prominent practitioner of Adire and Batik is Nike Davis-Okundaye, also an offshoot of the Osogbo workshop. These were the women who practiced and exhibited also in the early 1970s. In the 1960s, some non-Nigerian females encouraged women in the arts by actively producing art and exhibiting. The most outstanding ones were Eve de Negri, an Italian, Georgina Beier, a German and Susanne Wenger, an Austrian who stayed on in Nigeria on active practice until her death in 2008. Probably because they were very few and more concerned with sustaining an enduring art practice in a male dominating terrain, and had many factors militating against them, they did not champion nor even express any form of feminism in their works. Many of them embraced painting and textile design and decoration. Only about three of them were sculptors. Their works were stereotypical and thematically not different from their male counterparts. Today, in the 2020s, the choice of practice for women in the arts follow this order: textile design, painting, ceramics, graphic design, digital arts, and sculpture. The 1980s were more dynamic for Nigerian female arts and artists. The number of females who trained as artists increased sharply. More art schools had emerged and art promotional activities such as exhibitions, seminars, conferences, workshops and lectures increased. These helped female participation in art, yet minimally when compared to the performance of male artists. The National Gallery of Art (N.G.A) and the Society of Nigerian Artists (S.N.A), the national association housing Nigerian visual artists, have topped the list of sponsors and organizers who encouraged many female solo and group exhibitions. Others include The Goethe Institute (German Embassy), Italian Cultural Institute, Alliance Francais (French Embassy), British Council, Soviet Cultural Centre and the National Museum. Despite the tempo of art exhibitions, the percentage of females participating was still very low. According to Dele Jegede, a popular Nigerian artist and art historian, in 1988, "those of us with feminist sympathies (I belong to that group) cannot but note the very lame impression which is made by our womenfolk... the lameness of their impression is of course not in the quality of their works". In the particular exhibition Jegede was commenting on, only two females participated out of forty-five artists featured on the show. By the end of the 1980s only about twenty

females were actively practicing and exhibiting nationally. In the 1990s more patronages and heightened cultural activities from financial corporations like banks enabled more female participation in art exhibitions and a few more female artists appeared on the art scene. Altogether there were about ten solo exhibitions by women during the 1990s and many more group exhibitions. In spite of this however, Oshinowo, (2004, p. 147) records that out of twenty group exhibitions recorded and sponsored by the National Gallery of Art within this period, only forty-seven women participated alongside a total of three thousand, two hundred and fifty-six male artists. Since the 2000s there has been an increasingly conducive atmosphere for female artists. Discrimination against women has been decreasing which has brought an explosion in the arts for women in Nigeria.

From the archives of the defunct Bendel Arts Council (1986), the first ever all-female art exhibition was in 1986 titled "All Women Art Exhibition". It was organized and sponsored by the Bendel Arts Council, Benin City. This arts council was a Bendel state parastatal. The aims of the exhibition were to focus attention on female art and artists from the Bendel state (now Edo and Delta state); also to stimulate, encourage budding female artists and to inform the general public about the various art forms existing in the state. In 1987, "Nigerian Women in the Art" exhibition was organized by the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS). "Better Life for Rural Women" a non-governmental group led by the then president's wife, late Mrs. Mariam Babangida, organized another all-female art exhibition in 1988. In the same year during an International Conference on women in Africa and the African diaspora titled "Bridges Across Activism and the Academy", an art exhibition of seven female artists from Nsukka (eastern Nigeria) was mounted. This perhaps, is the first exhibition with a tone of feminism. The same year, 1988, a group of female artists emerged from Zaria (northern Nigeria). The group was called "Kinesis". The initiator and leader was Adele Garkida. According to Garkida (2001), the Kinesis was an outcome of the participation of some of its members in an earlier exhibition organized by "Catalyst Women Art and Sciences", an international organization based in England. Kinesis put up three successful all-female art exhibitions in 1999, 2000 and 2001, all in Nigeria. The 2001 exhibition was supported by the National Gallery of Art and Abuja Council of Art and Culture. Prior to this year, the group struggled for about ten years on self-sponsorship, to organize regional conferences and exhibitions. In 1990, the National Council of Women Societies again sponsored "Women Now" in Lagos, featuring about ten popular female artists, among who were Felicia Adepelu, Afi Ekong, Oyewumi Fagbenro, Kaltume Gana, Lara Ige, Ladi Kwali, Sonia Omoighe and Mariam Oyewoye. The council (1990) stated that in this particular exhibition it aimed at providing awareness and also to give visibility to women. In the same year 1990, the Soviet Cultural Centre in Lagos exhibited works of three female painters from northern Nigeria. In June 2000, a four-member female group, all painters, exhibited at the Goethe Institute, Lagos. The exhibition was one of early and outstanding ones that focused and addressed issues on feminism such as inequality, abuse, male dominance and dehumanization of women. The four female artists were Juliet Ezenwa Nge, Ebele Okoye, Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo and Angela Japhet. In 2000 and 2001, another four-member female group namely Ndidi Dike, Marcia Kure, Sokari Douglas-Camp and Atilier Iyabo Abiola, exhibited their artworks at Indiana State University, the Table Arts Centre, Eastern Illinois, University of Chicago and at the Hearst Art Gallery, Moraga, C.A. The exhibition was curated by a male Nigerian artist, Dele Jegede. The exhibition was also pioneering in the female artist's elocution on matters regarding social, political and economic changes in Africa particularly Nigeria, from a feminist angle. The big step in Nigerian feminist art was the formation of a national association as an umbrella for all Nigerian female artists. The group, presently known as Female Artists Association of Nigeria (F.A.A.N), was called National Association of Female Artists (N.A.F.A) at inception. It was formed on 20th September 2001 and formally launched on 28th February 2002. It was in collaboration with the National Gallery of Art in Abuja, Nigeria. Its first leader, Prof. Bridget Nwanze, clearly states its aims as: organizing art exhibitions regularly to encourage female art practice, to expose the creativeness, innovativeness, and multi-talentedness of female artist members and to eventually build a comprehensive compendium of Nigerian female visual artists. Art

for the female artists from this point started to look inwards, towards feminism and the plight of women. The first exhibition by N.A.F.A was in 2002 tagged "Creative Femininity". Forty-eight female artists exhibited. According to Dike (2002, p. 5), "Creative Femininity" is a story of feminine endeavors, of women whose aspirations are propelled by an ideology of national development and regeneration.

The intellectual dimension of female visual art was dynamically expressed in the exhibition by several women who have pursued and achieved higher degrees in art. These female artists are mostly those who have formal training in art from either university or other colleges such as polytechnics or colleges of education. They are also either in paid employment or practice a financially rewarding profession as studio artists. These engagements provide basic funds required for purchase of materials and tools necessary for their art. They also have opportunities of exposure to other art styles through travels, wide scope of patrons, media publicity and sponsors. F.A.A.N has had many successful outings in the past nine years. In 2007 exhibition titled "Echoes of Experience" fifty-two female artists exhibited one hundred and thirty-six works. Nwanze (2002, pp. 6-7) says that female artists themselves have greatly contributed to this trend. She commends the efforts of the contemporary Nigerian female artists for their tremendous efforts, to reduce the imbalance between male and female artists through the production of quality arts and exhibitions. Much as it is difficult to attain popularity, many contemporary female artists are actually making spirited efforts at attaining it. By 2010, new names have emerged and have been exhibiting and can be considered as new breed but have made their marks on the Nigerian art scene. These include, Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo, Olufunke Ifeta, Bridget Nwanze, Titi Omoighe, Chinwe Uwatse, Peju Layiwola, Nike Adenaike, Ndidi Dike, Sade Thompsom, Yemi Oye, Odun Orimolade, Folu Folorunso, Patience Anthony-Euba, Otonye Bille Ayodele, Gbemisola Momoh, Gbemisola Areo, Hilda Woods, Chinyere Ndubuisi, Victoria Ukpera, Stella Awoh, Veronica Otigbo and Ronke Adesanya. The list is more expansive. These are the new crop of female artists that show a successful grasp of modern and post-modern art trends in Nigeria and are also well informed about their society. From 2002, female art exhibition turned in a new direction. Female artists now exhibit from a feminist perspective. The exhibitions specifically cater for women and gender relations. Examples of such exhibitions include "Women about Women" held at Goethe Institute, Lagos, where the likes of Angela Isiuwe and Nkechi Nwosu exhibited; "Identities and Labels" which exhibited the works of Lara Ige-Jacks, Chinwe Uwatse, Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo, Titi Omoighe, Peju Layiwola; "Bronze and Prints" by Elizabeth Olowu and Peju Layiwola. "Echoes of Experience" and "Female Artists in the Academia" organized by FAAN, exhibited works by a very large number of female artists. These exhibitions are innovative in feminist art and have opened opportunities for female artists to be expressive.

Feminist Art Expressions: Style, Theme and Content

The female artists and their artworks under discussion in this paper, are products of various art schools in Nigeria and the peculiarities of their schools are revealed in their works. For instance, Zaria Art (Ahmadu Bello University Zaria) is characterized by cultural assertion, the Nsukka School is recognized by Ulism (an adaptation of Igbo linear art), Ife School is dominated by Onaism (the inculcation of Yoruba motifs) and Auchu School is characterized by color particularization or synthesis as a design ideology. The newer schools affiliate their ideas to any of the older schools. There are however also cases of cross-fertilization, adoptions and adaptations evidenced in their works. Apart from the artists producing arts with diversified styles, their works are also influenced by individual peculiarities. These range from the artists' personality, exposure, location, contacts and challenges. Their themes and the content of their works are developed from their immediate environment, social events and their travels. They pick symbols and objects from around them such as architecture, people, landscape and the social conditions like economic effects, vices, crime and such likes. These are the items that form the content of their expressions. All these are portrayed with feminist sentiments.

Early rendition of women in the artworks of male pioneers of Nigerian art belonged to the traditional genre. In such artworks, the woman was depicted as a mere object of artistic interest. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the woman was depicted as a mythic person. The paintings were innovated by Ben Enwonwu (a member of the Negritude Movement), and adapted from African/Nigerian mythology. This theme was later picked up by other artists, often showing the woman as archetype of motherhood, symbol of fertility and as a domestic object. These and stock images of women were common in the 1960s and 1970s. Examples showed women dancing, milkmaids, and fashion images and such likes. According to Oguibe (1989), such works lacked depth in reflecting any knowledge of womanhood, did not reveal the realities of the changing roles of women and the impact of socio-political changes or religion on the feminine society. Often the traditional woman depicted was idyllic and generic. Oyelola (1989, pp. 100-114) notes that the thematic categories and artistic choices were cultural and gives reasons for the idealized and stylized representations, as intentions to reflect certain values of respect, duty, hospitality and fecundity. Male artists leaned towards this cultural mindset.

Oguibe (1989, pp. 52-60) notes that the movement of Negritude led by Ben Enwonwu in the 1970s, which borrowed European imagery, only presented romanticized women. The content did not change the status quo. It only used woman metaphorically for the social conditions and changes that were evidenced in the country just coming out of a civil war. This metaphorical woman dominated the 1970s. Themes such as “Lone Woman”, “Beggar Woman”, “Aged Woman”, “Poor Woman” were common. Few isolated artworks from male artists tended towards gender relationship, such as the works of a neo-traditional contemporary artist, Lamidi Fakeye. In his wood carvings, by using the traditional themes identifying the male as *esu* (darkness) and female as *Sango*, (light) he was able to express the moral tussle of male dominance and socio-economic inequality among the genders. Fakeye’s themes, according to Lawuyi (1988), show the male moral enterprise as the protection of its status while that of the female, the resistance of domination. Another work is “Queen Amina of Zaria”, by Ben Ekanem, in the early 1980s. The work is a public sculpture in front of the National Theatre in Lagos and has inspired many women. It shows a militant and warrior woman; legendary of a queen in the northern Nigeria where women were believed to be repressed. During the 1970s Nigerian female artists did not show any feminism in their works. It was only in the 1980s that some samples of feminist art emerged from female artists, particularly Sokari Douglas-Camp, who reflected individuality in her Kalabari identity. This could probably be due to her sojourn in Europe. Presently many female artists focus on women, even when they do not “intentionally” want to be feminist in their art. The examples discussed here are grouped thematically as follows:

(I) Femininity and Feminism: Oguibe (2004) accuses Nigerian female artists of showing little or nothing of feminism in their works by not addressing the patriarchal system around them. Probably as typical African women, they communicate their feminism less confrontationally. However, recent works show many themes that portray the state of the Nigerian women, in-between modern allowances and traditional restrictions. It appears every female artist, at one time or the other, is compelled morally to express the maternal instincts within her. Exhibitions by females are often dominated by the maternal theme. “The Burden We Bear” by Chyzoba Nwaozuru, (Plate 1) “Fertility” by Madumere Iheoma, (Plate 2) Fourth Month by Peju Layiwola, “Zero Hour I” by Princess Elizabeth Olowu, (Plate 3) “Mother and Child” by Chinyere Ndubusi, “Grandmother” by Vera Ekpei, “Exclusive Breast Feeding” by Stella Idiong (Plate 4), are a few examples. Other works not specifically maternal show deep patriotism for women and feminine causes. “Beauty in Feminism” by Betty Bassey (Plate 5), elevates womanhood. “Man and Woman” by Titi Omoighe and “Gender Wars” by Chinwe Uwatse, “Bridge” by Maureen Ekpeni (Plate 6) and “Arewa (Elegance)” by Matan Dare (Plate 7) are paintings that emphasize the different roles, peculiarities and expectations of the sexes. This realization can improve the compatibility of the sexes for better cohabitation. “Too soon to Be Seen” by Sade Thompson (Plate 8) is a monoprint depicting the emerging woman on the Nigerian social and political scene. Its message according to Sade, is to warn the society that the few women in public

view should not be used to judge the potentials of other Nigerian women who are still emerging, while “Girls Fight” by Angela Isiuwe advocates women integration and unity. “Keeping up Appearances” by Sade Thompson is a print which according to her, reveals the challenging status quo of women all over Africa, where women are expected to hide their agonies under make-up and attractive dressing. In the same vein, two works by Nkechi Nwosu – Igbo, “Beyond Silence” (Plate 9) is about female rape victims and survivors who are often stigmatized, abused and left to suffer in silence, and “Cry Me a River” (Plate 10) shows a murder scene depicting female-gender-based-violence, that she claims may be overlooked or never be solved, like many other such murders in Nigeria. “Polygyny” (Plate 11) and “Arugbo” are sculptures by Peju Layiwola, which she says, hinge on the challenges posed by polygamy and an exposition on the poor maternal care pregnant women receive in a poor healthcare system. “Arugba Osun” by Nike Davies Okundaye is a batik print revealing the overwhelming social burden on the woman which often receives no sympathetic gesture from society.

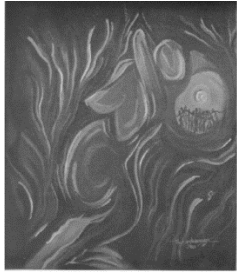


PLATE 1 Chyzoba Nwaozuzu. *This Burden We Bear*. Oil on Canvas 4' x 3' (2002) Source: National Gallery of Art

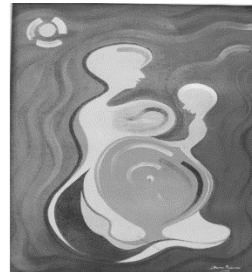


Plate2 Iheoma Madumere. *Fertility*. Oil on Canvas 3'x4' (2001) Source: National Gallery of Art



Plate3 Princess Elizabeth Olowu, *Zero Hour I*. Bronze 4'x3' (1984) Source: National Gallery of Art



Plate4 Stella Idiong. *Breastfeeding* source: National Gallery of Art Print 3'x4' (2001)



Plate5 Betty Bassey. *Beauty in Feminism*. Pastel on Paper. 5'x4' (2001) Source: National Gallery of Art



PLATE 6 Maureen Ekpeni, *Bridge*. Oil on Board. 3' x 4' (1998) Source: National Gallery of Art

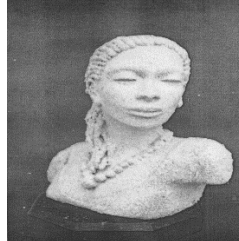


Plate 7 Matan Dare, *Arewa (Elegant body)*. Glass Fibre. 4'x4' Source: National Gallery of Art



Plate 8 Sade Thompson, *too soon to be seen*. Monoprint. 68x49cm (2004) Source: National Gallery of Art

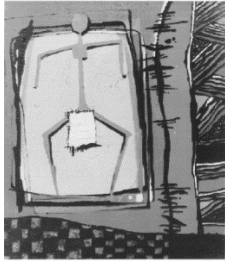


PLATE 9 Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo.
Beyond Silence.
Acrylic and Wood Dust on Canvas
60"x 72" (2001) Source: FAAN

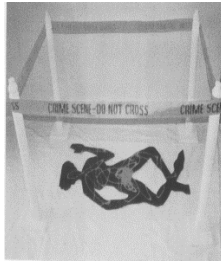


Plate 10 Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo.
Cry Me a River. Mixed Media
3'x3' (2001)
source: National Gallery of Art



Plate 11 Peju Layiwola. *Polygyny.*
Brass. 20'x10' (2002)
Source: National Gallery of Art

(II) Women Economic Empowerment

The economic empowerment of women had been seen as one of the foundations of feministic agenda. Women struggles to be economically independent had also been the theme of many female Nigerian artists. "Let Good Work Pay" by Sade Thompson (Plate 12), is a monoprint that is sympathetic with the labor unions' demands for better remunerations for workers which include a small percentage of women. Otonye Ayodele's "Valiants" (Plate 13) is a sculpture that reveals the inherent strength and survival spirit of Nigerian women to overcome depressive environmental calamities. Titi Omoighe's "We Plough the Land" and "The Hunter" reveal the input of physical labor by the female gender in the Nigerian economy and the little recognition she receives, despite all her efforts. Titi Omoighe's "Hard Times" and Chinwe Uwatse's "Bowl is Empty" (Plate 14) are the outcome of the female helplessness and vulnerability in her society despite her large contribution to the national economy.



PLATE 12 Sade Thompson
Let Good Work Pay Monoprint.
68" x 49" (2004). Source: FAAN



Plate 13 Otonye Ayodele.
Valiants Granite Stone.
H.20' (1980)
Source: National Gallery of Art

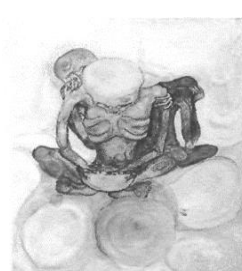


Plate 14 Chinwe Uwatse's
Bowl is Empty. Water Color 34'x50
(1998). Source: National Gallery of Art

These art works by Nigerian female artists are not only subjected to natural gender attributes or endowments that characterize womanhood, they are also considered as imports of the whole art and which make them worthwhile artistic experiments. In this close examination of these selected works, some common characteristics have been observed about the works. They are informative, socio-cultural, stylistic, and persuasive. The works always attempt to inform the observer by bringing out salient issues. Images, colours and general layout are all geared towards a deliberate message. This is a form of communication in which sometimes the expression of forms can be observed in the severity or mildness of the objects or mediums used. Culturally, the works identify artists of a particular geographical location and in some cases, ethnic affiliation and the popular culture. The uniqueness of the Nigerian culture is often displayed in many of the works using local or traditional motifs in the works. Where females are depicted, they are often attired in Nigerian cultural dressing and grooming. This creates national sentiments and can arouse a sense of belonging. The effectiveness of this kind of art cannot be relegated. The art works portray a stylishness that tends towards elitism. The art works show treatments and garnishing that symbolize good breeding of the artists. The techniques and finishing of the works reflect a purposeful intention to produce good art that is universally acceptable and not substandard. This is a good lesson from the women to

manufacturers of products in Nigeria, who can do the same. The works are persuasive by appealing to sentiments either subtly or vigorously. The imports of the themes are based on psychological premises that draw any observer to such arts. Artistically, the forms are strong, the colours extravagant and the messages often obvious.

Impact of Feminist Art on Gender Sensitivity

In present-day Nigeria, the female artist's prospects are very bright due to new educational policies, professional liberation, erasure of sanctions and minimization of taboos. The first impact is on the female artists themselves. More females are venturing into art as a part-time vocation and even fulltime career. A specialization such as sculpture is witnessing more female practice. Some materials and tools females previously avoided in the production of art, are being used by them now. Female participation is more encouraged by males. More males show affirmative speech and action towards women empowerment, gender equality and enablement, which encourages female redefinition of their roles in the society. This breeds female radical entry and integration into every fabric of Nigerian society. Among artists, the Society Nigerian Artists (S.N.A) the only national body of Nigerian artists was led by a female artist, Dr. Olufunke Ifeta. She was a successful president for five years (1996-2001). This unusual opportunity given to her boosted the morale of female artists and due to her very successful performance male artists have come to appreciate and accept the qualitative position and partnership of female artists. Women artists consciously expect and sell their art to get profitable returns from their practice just as their male counterparts. This feat, though still toddling, removes the women from being economic parasites. Procreation, female dignity, rights and privileges, status, equality and physiology are new stimuli noticeable in the themes of Nigerian male artists. This is a new direction and is affecting the female perception of her positively. Visual impact is in most cases more lasting and with the frequency of exhibitions by female artists, more publicity and sponsorship; the public is increasingly being sensitized on female repositioning in all facets of Nigerian society. The formations of female oriented non – governmental organizations (NGO) are on the increase. Peju Layiwola said she started Women and Youth Art (WY Art) as a non-governmental project to further the interests of women in art production.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the efforts of female artists are being rewarded but much more is still desired to be seen. The ratio of female involvement to male is still comparatively low. Female artists need to take advantage of modern facilities; equipment and machines that will help create time for their studio practice. By so doing, quantity and quality of female art will improve. Up till now, the recording or documenting of female artists is below expectation. This is a challenge for female art historians and critics. Women should applaud women. It is easier for a female to appreciate the commitment, hard work and sacrifices female artists put into achieving their career goals. These should not be ignored. Sponsors and numerous art connoisseurs are required to promote female art and artists. Perhaps Nigerian feminist artists can consider the ideas of Carden (1974:2) that implies that, feminism should not be only about eliminating gender differences and achieving equal opportunities for the sexes, but also about the ability to create socio- cultural changes in the larger social order by first identifying their individual selves. Hence this goal can redefine the future direction of feminine art in Nigeria.

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ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF PRACTICE-LED AND PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHES FOR EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION AMONG CREATIVE DESIGN SCHOLARS

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Introduction

The field of research has witnessed a remarkable shift in recent years, with an increasing emphasis on practice-led and practice-based research (Biljon, 2016). This model recognizes the research methods as feasible, quantifiable and verifiable. The evolving landscape of academia has highlighted the need for research that not only contributes to the existing knowledge base, but also engages with real-world challenges, leading to effective and sustainable solutions (Smith, 2010). It is an approach where practice itself is the primary mode of inquiry, generating new knowledge, insights, and methodologies (Schuler & Namioka, (1993). Practice-based research, on the other hand, involves the systematic study of practice, aiming to develop a deeper understanding of a specific domain and informing future practice (Zimmerman, Forlizzi, & Evenson, 2007). They maintained that the integration of practice-led and practice-based research holds immense potential to bridge the gap between academia and professional practice. Zimmerman et al. (2007) argue that this integration facilitates the exchange of ideas, experiences, and expertise, enriching both realms and fostering a dynamic and collaborative research environment. They concluded that scholars engaged in practice-led and practice-based research are uniquely positioned to explore complex problems, test innovative solutions, and generate practical outcomes that have a direct impact on their respective fields.

Practice-led research is an approach to research that places emphasis on creative and artistic practice as a means of generating new knowledge and understanding. (Smith, 2010). Smith asserts that it involves practitioners engaging intuitive and creative activities and reflecting on their experiences to generate insights and contribute to the broader field of study. Schuler & Namioka, (1993) posit that, there is a moment in the creation process; when a new insight, an understanding of how to achieve the desired end, a satisfying arrangement of elements, is gained: if remembered and recorded, that moment of knowing begins the process to becoming collective knowledge. That study suggests that new knowledge found through exploration is embedded in the creative practice and that information about this knowledge can be found in the people creating it, the materials used, the processes involved and the designs produced; but cannot be found in only one of these alone. Schuler & Namioka emphasize also that paying attention to these aspects of the practice and context can lead to insight and further understanding.

According to Frascara (2002), research can be seen as a form of exploration, in which designers engage in a process of discovery through the creation of new artifacts or knowledge. Practice-led research methods allow designers to explore new ideas and concepts through the process of design, and to generate new insights and understandings that can inform their practice. Practice-based research refers to a form of research that centers on the exploration and investigation of professional practices, often within disciplines such as education, healthcare, social work, and organizational management (Billett, 2011). Billett emphasizes the need for scholars to engage with the practice contexts of their students and create opportunities for active inquiry and learning. Practice-based

research aims to generate knowledge that is informed by, and directly applicable to, real-world professional contexts. This approach involves practitioners actively participating in the research process, reflecting on their experiences, and using their insights to inform theory, policy, and practice (Schön, 1983). Both of these approaches share a common goal of using design practice as a means of generating new knowledge and insights, and are particularly suited to the field of design, where creative exploration and experimentation are central to the design process, like architecture, engineering and creative arts. The major difference is the intuitive and formal processes involved in the research methods. These methods are becoming increasingly popular in design research as they allow for a more iterative and reflective approach to research, and can result in more innovative and impactful outcomes (Obafemi, 2014).

Design research refers to a systematic and iterative process of investigation and inquiry that aims to generate new knowledge, insights, and understanding in the field of design. It involves applying research methods and principles to explore design problems, develop innovative solutions, and inform the practice of design (Cross, 2001). The author further emphasizes the importance of research in design practice and explores the distinctive characteristics and challenges of conducting research in the design field. Design research seeks to understand the ways in which design can contribute to society and improve people's lives. One of the key challenges for designers and researchers is to develop new methods and approaches that can help to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Koskinen, Zimmerman, *et al*, 2011). Design research is an interdisciplinary field that draws on methods and techniques from a variety of fields, including design, engineering, psychology, and anthropology. It is evident that intuitiveness would not suffice in researches that are not practical in nature.

One key aspect of design research is the use of repetitive design processes, in which designers create prototypes of products or services and then test them with users in order to gather feedback and refine the design (Barrett, 2007). This approach allows designers to quickly identify and address usability problems, and to make sure that the final product or service meets the needs of its intended users. Both practice-led and practice-based research methods have gained prominence as means of conducting research through the practice of design and of informing research through the practices of design (Koskinen *et al*, 2011). These methods offer a more iterative and reflective approach to research, and can result in more innovative and impactful outcomes (Cross, 2006). This study aims to evaluate and adopt the individual strengths of both practice-led and practice-based research methods in four key areas;

- i. Learning and skill development
- ii. Collaborative practices
- iii. Enhancing of creativity and
- iv. Application of knowledge gained

The resulting excerpts will result to an improved approach to research design.

Literature Review

In reviewing the existing research methods, it appears that while practice-led and practice-based research methods offer many benefits, they also present a number of challenges for designers and researchers. One of the main challenges of the practice-led is the lack of a clear methodology for conducting research through practicality in design (Lawson, 2006)). Lawson noted that designers often rely on intuition and tacit knowledge to guide their work, which can make it difficult to articulate a clear research methodology. The author listed another challenge as the difficulty of measuring the impact of practice-led research method. According to Oxman (2004), traditional research methods are often based on quantitative measures of success, such as the number of publications or citations. However, practice-led research method may not produce such tangible output, which can make it difficult to assess their impact. Practice-led research often focuses on

specific creative practices and process, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or disciplines (Haseman, & Mafe, 2018). The authors opined that this usually hinders the intuitive researcher from recognition, and this appears unproductive. They emphasized that practice-led research involves subjective interpretation and analysis of creative processes and outcomes and that this subjectivity can make it challenging to establish consensus in processes, results or replicate findings. The paper asserts that practice-led research emphasizes the exploration of processes and outcomes, sometimes lacking a strong theoretical foundation. This can make it challenging to situate the research within broader intellectual frameworks. Borgdorff, (2012) declared that assessing the quality and impact of artistic outputs can be subjective and challenging, making it difficult to establish rigorous evaluation criteria. For instance, a graphic designer conducts a practice-led research project exploring a new computer painting technique. While the research produces interesting and innovative artwork, it may be challenging to translate the findings into broader principles or theories applicable to other designers or disciplines. According to Gray & Malins (2004), due to the diverse nature of artistic practices, there is often a lack of standardized methodologies or frameworks for practice-led research. This can make it difficult to associate with or build upon an existing research method. The authors stressed that communicating practice-led research outcomes to wider audiences, especially those outside the creative community, can be challenging. Similarly, traditional research dissemination channels may not effectively capture the experiential or embodied aspects of inventive practice. As stated by Sullivan, 2010 practice-led research often requires alternative forms of assessment and validation compared to traditional research methods. This can present challenges when seeking recognition or evaluation within academic institutions or funding agencies that may prioritize more conventional research outputs. Haseman, (2006) asserts that the diversity of creative practices and perspectives can lead to a lack of consensus or agreement within the field regarding the value, rigor, or methodologies of practice-led research. This can make it challenging to establish a unified approach or set of standards.

On the other hand, practice-based research often takes place within real-world settings, where various external factors can influence the outcomes (Smith & Dean, 2009). This lack of control over variables makes it challenging to establish causality or isolate specific factors that contribute to the results. Secondly, practice-based research may require extensive time and resources to implement, as it involves actively engaging with practitioners and conducting fieldwork or observation (Gray & Malins, 2013). Furthermore, finding suitable methods and tools for documenting and representing the nuances of practice-based research can have impact on the integrity and comprehensibility of the research outcomes (Smith & Dean, 2009). For instance, a researcher investigates the effectiveness of a new teaching method in a lecture-room setting. While the research provides valuable insights into the practical application of the teaching method, external factors such as student motivation or administrative changes in the school may muddle the results. Similarly, capturing and documenting the ephemeral or experiential aspects of creative practice can be challenging.

Despite these challenges, there is growing interest in the integration of practice-led and practice-based research methods in design education and practice Koskinen et al. (2011). The authors argue that these methods can help to bridge the gap between theory and practice in design, and can provide a more meaningful and engaging learning experience for scholars. The study suggested that one approach to integrating practice-led and practice-based research methods in design practice and education is through the use of design studios. Design studios provide a space for students to engage in a process of exploration and experimentation, and to collaborate with others to develop and refine their work (Frascara, 2002). By incorporating practice-led and practice-based research methods into design studios, scholars can help students to develop a deeper understanding of the role of design in society, and to develop more innovative and impactful approaches to their work.

Methodology

To achieve the objectives of this research, a quantitative survey approach was employed. The data collection was by administering a structured survey questionnaire to a range of professionals in the academia. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of practice-led and practice-based researches for effective integration among scholars. The survey questionnaire was designed to capture demographic information, learning and skill development, collaborative practice, creativity, relevance and applicability of knowledge gained as they relate to the research methods in professional practices. Likert-scale were utilized to measure the above variables. Thematic analysis was employed to identify key themes and patterns in the qualitative data received from participants' responses, which revealed the following key themes:

SN	Thematic Area	% Score
1	Enhanced Learning and Skill Development	78
2	Bridging Theory and Practice	83
3	Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Engagement	92
4	Innovation and Creativity	79
5	Relevance and Applicability	87

Table 1: Participant's responses based on thematic areas

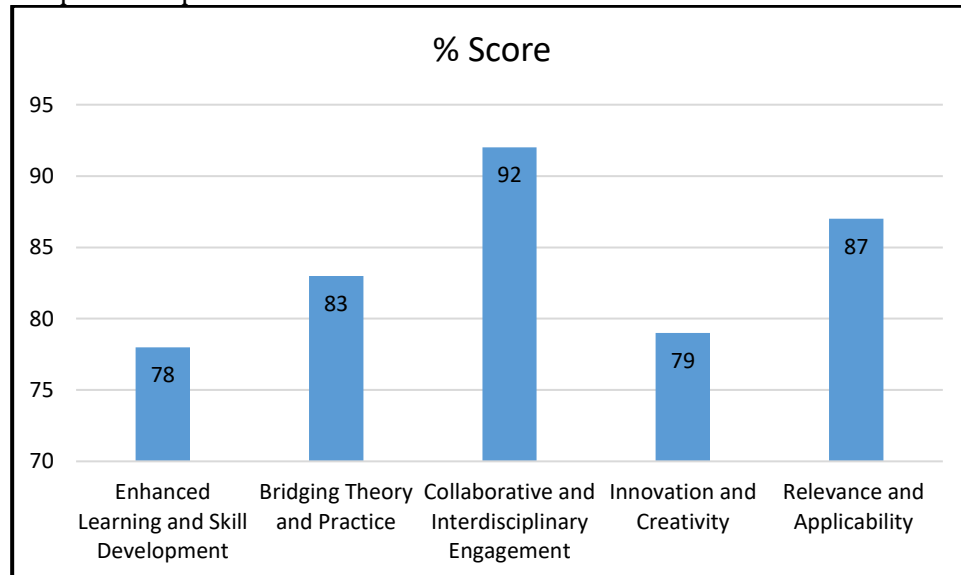


Fig. 1.

Enhanced Learning and Skill Development: 78% of participants emphasized that practice-led and practice-based research methods provided them with valuable hands-on experience, enhancing their learning, practical skills, and critical thinking abilities.

Bridging Theory and Practice: 83% of participants recognized that practice-led and practice-based research methods effectively bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, allowing them to apply and test theoretical concepts, frameworks, and models in practical settings.

Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Engagement: 92% of participants highlighted the collaborative nature of practice-led and practice-based research methods. They expressed that engaging with peers, industry professionals, and experts from various disciplines fostered rich discussions, diverse perspectives, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Innovation and Creativity: 79% of participants valued the freedom and flexibility provided by practice-led and practice-based research methods, which encouraged experimentation, innovation, and creative problem-solving.

Relevance and Applicability: 87% of participants consistently emphasized the practical relevance and applicability of practice-led and practice-based research methods. They noted that these methods were more meaningful and applicable to real-world contexts, enabling them to address practical challenges and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their field.

These percentages represent the proportion of participants who mentioned each key theme in their qualitative responses, providing an overview of the prevalent perspectives among the participants.

Findings

Notable gaps in these research methods include the nature of the research contributions, collaboration and interdisciplinary. Practice-led research aims to make broader contributions to the field of study, advancing knowledge, theories, or methodologies. The outcomes may have implications beyond the immediate practice context. Practice-based research, on the other hand, typically focuses on enhancing the practice itself, aiming to improve professional skills, develop innovative approaches, or address specific challenges within the field. Both practice-led and practice-based research can involve collaboration and interdisciplinary. The contributions often have a direct and immediate impact on the practitioner community. However, practice-led research appears to be more inclined to engage with other disciplines and fields of study. It seeks to integrate diverse perspectives and methods to enrich the research inquiry and generate cross-disciplinary insights. Practice-based research, while open to collaboration, often centers on the specific practice domain and may primarily draw on disciplinary expertise within that context. Another benefit of practice-led and practice-based research methods is their ability to foster a culture of experimentation, collaboration, and critical reflection. Design studios provide a space for designers to experiment with new ideas and approaches, and to collaborate with others to develop and refine their work. Through the process of critical reflection, designers can gain a deeper understanding of their own practice, and of the role of design in society.

Discussion on Findings

One of the main benefits of practice-led and practice-based research methods is their ability to generate new knowledge through the process of design. Integrating practice-led and practice-based research methods can lead to a more creative and effective research approach that combines the strengths of both approaches for more effective outcome. Such engagements are in the form of the following:

- i. Reoccurring cycles of practice and reflection: Engage in a cyclical process of practice and reflection, where creative practice informs the research process and vice versa. Allowing for feedback loops between the creative practice and research inquiry while constantly refining and developing both aspects. Example: A graphic designer/researcher develops a series of artworks as part of the practice-led research. After creating each artwork, he/she reflects on the process, documenting their observations, insights, and challenges. These reflections then inform the subsequent iterations of their artistic practice, leading to further inquiry and exploration.
- ii. Theoretical framing of practice: Situate the creative practice within a theoretical framework, drawing on relevant concepts, theories, or literature. This provides a deeper understanding and context for the practice-led research. Example: A fashion designer engages in practice-led research to explore sustainable materials for fashion. They incorporate theories of sustainability, ecological design, and circular economy principles to guide their material

- selection and design process. The research outcomes contribute not only to the artistic practice but also to the theoretical discourse on sustainable fashion.
- iii. Dissemination and knowledge exchange: Adopt diverse modes of dissemination to effectively communicate the research findings to both artistic and academic communities. Utilize visual documentation, exhibitions, performances, publications, and conferences to share the outcomes of the research. Example: An artist-researcher conducts a practice-based research project exploring the relationship between sound and sculpture. He creates a multimedia installation that combines sculptural forms with sound compositions and the installation is exhibited in galleries, accompanied by artist talks, performances, and a research publication that documents the artistic process and theoretical underpinnings.
 - iv. Reflexivity and self-awareness: Emphasize reflexivity throughout the research process. Encourage researchers to critically reflect on their own biases, assumptions, and subjectivities that may influence both their practice and research outcomes. Example: A theater director-researcher investigating immersive performance techniques maintains a reflective journal, documenting their own subjective experiences, biases, and moments of self-awareness during rehearsals and performances. This reflexivity enriches the research insights and enhances the transparency of the research process.
 - v. Mixed-methods approach: Combine qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Supplement artistic practice and qualitative observations with quantitative data collection and analysis when applicable. Example: A researcher exploring the impact of art therapy on mental health combines qualitative interviews with participants and observations of their artistic processes with pre- and post-intervention standardized psychological assessments to measure changes in well-being.

Conclusion

Practice-led and practice-based research methods can emerge as valuable approaches that bridge the gap between theory and practice, fostering effective integration among scholars. Through the integration of creative exploration and empirical investigation, these research methods can demonstrate their potential to generate new knowledge, drive innovation, and address real-world challenges across various disciplines.

The examples presented in this article highlighted the possible successful integration of practice-led and practice-based research methods in different domains, such as architecture, healthcare, and graphic design. In these fields, practitioners and researchers have leveraged practice-led approaches to explore new ideas, experiment with innovative solutions, and generate practical outcomes.

Furthermore, the integration of practice-led and practice-based research methods can foster collaboration and interdisciplinary exchange. This collaborative environment has enriched research outcomes, stimulated creativity, and ensured the relevance and applicability of findings in real-world contexts.

Moreover, practice-led and practice-based research methods can cultivate critical thinking skills among scholars. By engaging in reflective and iterative processes, researchers can be able to challenge existing theories, question assumptions, and develop innovative approaches to complex problems. This approach promotes a deeper understanding of the subject matter and encourages continuous learning and improvement.

Institutions, funding agencies, and researchers themselves should continue to support and invest in these approaches. Ongoing collaboration and knowledge exchange between academia and professional practice are crucial to harnessing the full potential of practice-led and practice-based research methods.

In conclusion, practice-led and practice-based research methods offer a promising pathway for effective integration among scholars, promoting creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and knowledge advancement. By embracing these approaches, researchers can make significant contributions to their respective fields, address complex challenges, and shape a better future through the meaningful integration of theory and practice.

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ASSESSMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY AMONGST CREATIVE DESIGN ADVERTISING PRACTITIONERS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA.

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Introduction

The creative department serves as the life blood or nucleus in disseminating effective communication to consumers, and is also essential to where ideas behind a campaign are born (Paul, 2012). Salz (1994), explains that a creative department's business is to create, produce advertising and other communications such as sales literatures, promotion, direct response and public relations. This department in the advertising agency oversees all forms and means of advertising from print to digital media. The members of the creative department consist of the creative directors, copywriters, art directors, designers and production artists. The advertising process involves a team of creative professionals who specialize in specific aspects of the advertising process which enables the smooth running of an agency. The input of an individual is never enough to get a copy to the desired destination. The professionals involved in the advertising process include graphic designers, public relations experts, marketing executives, illustrators, engineers, copywriters, artists, layout designers, among others. The advert copy begins from the minds of the advertisers through the office of the advertising agency for a distinct peculiarity on product and the prospective consumers (Agbana, 2013).

The world of advertising is a particularly insightful industry through which contemporary issues of gender, power, work and space come to play. It reveals with great acuity how media representations of increasingly empowered women in advertising are profoundly at odds with the occupational composition of the advertising industry's workforce (Sleinmen & Gurley, 2012). Female representation in creative practice in the advertising agencies have been a mainstream topic in historical accounts of advertising throughout the twenty-first (21st) century, but academic researchers have not given comparable attention to the subject (Mallia, 2006). However, a study conducted in 2003 showed that only 3% of the creative directors globally were women, signifying a severe lack of female leadership and representation in advertising creative departments (Windels, 2008). This number as reported at the Female Designer Movement Summit increased to about eleven percent (11%) in 2015 and fifteen percent (15%) in 2018 respectively. This indicator shows a good progress, but women are still under represented. Not only is this an issue from a gender equality standpoint, but also from a business perspective (Banwo, 2018). This global phenomenon also mirrors local conditions, when extrapolated to the Nigerian situation, this is what study intends to establish.

Although the fact has been established in literature that female advertising practitioners are much fewer as compared to their male counterparts in the agencies, this situation should not obtain in a progressive and liberal industry like advertising. Natalia (2010), suggests that there is a trend of vertical and horizontal segregation in the occupational structure of the advertising industry. An article titled 'Babes in boy land' appeared about the creative world and the question asked was why were there so few women in the advertising agency's workforce (Sheri & Jean, 2008). This brings up the big question of what reasons accounts for the lopsided ratio of more successful and eminent men to women in advertising agencies particularly in Lagos, Nigeria, which these researchers have

selected as case study. It is for these reasons that this study was conducted to ascertain the degree of gender equality within the advertising agencies' occupational structure and practice in Lagos, Nigeria.

Although females have demonstrated a productive attitude towards production efficiency, the female gender is still always affected by the societal structure of advertising, media and marketing (Olatunji & Ayodele, 2010; Hanan, 2016).

1. This study as the inequalities found in the creative departments of advertising agencies, which may have reduced the population, efficiency and skills of females in the agency.

Statement of the Problem

Female representation in creative departments in Nigerian advertising agencies has been limited (Aurora & Teresa, 2011). However, it has also been observed that there exists a gap in feminist literature with regards to gender equality in the Nigerian advertising professional work space, which the authors believe has adversely affected the output of most advertising agencies. Hence, it can be said that gender inequality in advertising agencies has far deeper economic and social repercussions. 2. Than what existing literature on gender divisions of labour acknowledge. This study intends to assess the inequalities found in the creative departments in advertising agencies, which may have reduced the population, efficiency and skills of females in the industry. The researcher noted that there is little academic research on Nigerian human resource demographics and structure. Hence, it was therefore necessary to carry out a study on the advertising practice, particularly the creative aspect from a gender perspective.

This study at assessing gender equality amongst creative design advertising practitioners, with the view to ascertaining the degree of gender equality within the advertising agencies' occupational structure and practice in Lagos, Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. determine the proportion of female to male creative design practitioners practicing in advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria;
2. ascertain the conditions influencing female career choices amongst creative design practitioners;
3. examine factors that affect the job performances in advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria; and
4. assess female creative design practitioners' perception on working conditions as different to their male counterparts in the advertising agencies.

To aid this study, the following questions were raised to assess gender equality in creative design practice in advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria.

1. What is the proportion of female to male creative design practitioners at all levels of the advertising agencies' workforce in Lagos, Nigeria?
2. Is there any condition(s) influencing female career choices amongst creative design practitioners in Lagos, Nigeria?
3. Is there any factor(s) that affects job performances in advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria?
4. Is the female creative design practitioners' perception on working conditions different from their male counterparts in the advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria?

This study is limited to the assessment of gender equality amongst creative design advertising practitioners in Lagos, Nigeria, with emphasis on a comparative study on gender demographics (male, female), challenges and satisfaction practitioners get from their work environment in Lagos, Nigeria. The pilot study revealed that as at November 2019, eighty-five (85) agencies were registered and issued licenses by the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN). Using a purposive sampling method, practitioners from six of the 85 agencies were interviewed. The interviews conducted served as follow-up to responses received from the questionnaires the researcher had

earlier administered. In this case, only interested respondents were interviewed. The interviewees were from the following advertising agencies: DKK & Associates, Adeptus Comms. Ltd., Explicit Comms. Ltd., Big & Bold Comms. Ltd., Brande Aristotle Ltd and 1201 Brandway Limited. This study was conducted in Lagos, Nigeria, which is the commercial and industrial capital of Nigeria.

Literature Review

Relevant literatures were reviewed in subject areas covering gender relations, gender inequality, profile of Nigerian women, advertising, portrayal of women and other related areas, themes and relevant subjects.

Concept of Gender Inequality

Gender is a socially constructed identity that rests on a binary constituting of both men and women. It describes not only the socially constructed differences between men and women, but also the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity (Dominelli, 2007). In almost all societies, women and men differ in their activities and undertakings, regarding access to, and control over resources, and participating in decision-making. Riley (2007) identified gender as a social institution, a cultural construct and power tool within a family, while men perform the role of bread earners, women function as homemakers. This difference between the man and woman generates common gender role stereotypes (Eagly & Wood, 2009).

Gender roles are attitudes and activities that a culture links to each sex. This is an active expression of gender identity which reflects one's gender. The first question people usually ask about a new born child in Nigeria is: "Is it a boy or a girl?" Such a question carries a great deal of significance for the child's entire life (Otitie, 2006). In global perspective, the preference for boys is more pronounced in Africa and most Asian countries, hence discrimination against females is common in these countries as well (Olaewaju, Kona & Dickson, 2015).

Gender Inequality in Nigeria

Gender inequality is influenced by the different culture and beliefs in Nigeria which cut across all political, economic, social, religious, cultural, industrial and financial spheres under which the overwhelming number of upper positions in society are either occupied or controlled by men (Okpe, 2005). In most parts of Nigeria, women are considered subordinate to their male counterparts, most especially in Northern Nigeria (Babalola, 2014). Feminism appeared in Nigeria roughly forty years ago when women freedom was a top issue. It is slowly having a larger impact in the Nigerian government.

Iloegbunam (2006) said one of the ironies of history is the fact that despite the role women play both at home and in the society, they have remained unnoticed and even belittled. This is borne out of the notion that women's function of being homemakers and caring for children is not important. Women, therefore, are to be seen and not heard. The patriarchal nature is a major feature of a traditional society in Nigeria and has made women to be at a disadvantage in the world of work. Unemployment was especially high among African women at 5.8% as estimated by International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2009). In the 2015 Nigerian election, women represented 35.8% of parliament (Adamu, 2016). In the Education Sector in 2015, the net female enrolment in Primary Education was 58.1%, 71.6% Secondary Education and 8.3% in Tertiary Education. Job disparities for women are improving, but still unequal. This occupational segregation is particularly problematic, given that recruitment into the advertising sector is equitable by gender. In Human Resources and secretarial roles, women account for 85.4% and 94.3% of the advertising workforce respectively (Institute for the Practitioners in Advertising IPA, 2016). It is only as people move up the occupational hierarchy that the percentage of women declines (Magee, 2016).

Industries and organizations such as Campaign and Institute for the Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) are calling for specific targets in relations to female employment, aiming for forty (40%) of the most senior employment roles to be held by women, arguing that “it is striking that as the roles become more senior, the gender split becomes considerably less balanced. While women account for 56.1% of the junior agency roles, this drops to 39.2% at the head of department level and 30.5% in leadership positions” (Magee, 2016). These figures illustrate an uncomfortable truth that currently prevails within certain agencies. There is a strong pattern of vertical and horizontal occupational segregation within advertising industry: whilst women account for 50.8% of employees, they account for only 27.3% of senior positions (Institute for the Practitioners in Advertising IPA, 2016). Even with what is widely considered to be one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, gender inequality is still prevalent in Nigeria.

Birth of Advertising Practice in Nigeria

Advertising in Nigeria has grown from its earliest beginning of using town criers to announce availability of goods and services, to becoming a big industry in Nigeria. Advertising is now very important in the economy of the nation, considering the fact that it serves as a source of information about goods and services, and also persuades consumers to patronize the advertised goods and services (Arens, 1999).

According to Bel-Molokwu (2000), advertising is as old as man. The word comes from the Latin word ‘advertere’, meaning ‘to draw attention to’. He further posits that in Nigeria, the earliest recorded activities that could be described as advertising in its crudest form include the town criers using early morning gong signals that alerted the village dwellers of an impending announcement. Town crying was also frequently employed to carry out advertisements or information about inter-tribal wars, disasters, important ceremonies including marriages, births, deaths, products, services, ideas, personalities and bargains. Ogbodoh (1990) went further to state that hawking and displays were the other known methods of advertising in Nigeria in the earliest times. Hawkers advertised their wares by calling out the wares they had, and asking people to buy them by extolling the quality and quantity of such goods.

The advent of the printing press in 1450 affected advertising a great deal. In Nigeria, the first printing press was established in Calabar by the Presbyterian Church in 1846. The establishment of the first Nigerian newspaper by Reverend Henry Townsend, by the Christian Missionary Society (C.M.S.), Abeokuta in December 1859, changed the face of advertising in Nigeria. Furthermore, Bel-Molokwu (2000) propounds that the first formal media advertisement ever carried in Nigeria was in *Iwe Irohin*, and was in form of information on shipping movement and cargo. It was a classified category advertisement.

From then on, other sorts of advertisements began to appear in the newspapers, while the growth of printing saw the emergence of well-printed black-and-white posters which led to the birth of organized outdoor advertising as we know it today (APCON, 2005).

Consequently, other advertisements like obituary, social activities, like christenings and ballroom dances began to appear in the newspapers. The latter part of the 19th century witnessed the establishment of many more newspapers. Most of these early newspapers were short-lived because they did not develop the flair for attracting advertising support. The early part of the twentieth century saw an upsurge in business activities in Nigeria.

In 1928 the Royal Niger Company established the West African Publicity Limited (WAP), the first ever advertising agency in Nigeria. It did not only service the publicity needs of her parent company but grew to become the father of organized advertising in Nigeria (APCON, 2005). The advent of radio and television broadcasting added flair to advertising. Radio was established in 1932 in Nigeria through the advent of the British Empire Service. The first Radio Distribution Service (Re-diffusion),

was established in Lagos in 1936 (Osunbiyi, 1999). However, radio advertisement started in Nigeria in 1955, with the birth of Western Nigerian Broadcasting Service (WNBS). Television broadcasting started in Nigeria in 1959, with Western Nigerian Television (WNTV). The first Television advertisement in Nigeria was for Star Beer and Krola Soft Drink (Bardi, 2010). With the oil boom in the early 1970s, there was an upsurge in business activities and turnover. This led to the need for more advertisements by these companies. also led to the formation of more advertising agencies. Today in Nigeria, advertising is a big business.

Theoretical Framework

This research adopted the African feminist theory, serving as the underpin for viewing the position of women in creative design practice in Nigeria. The theory provides the lens for the study of women's experiences in advertising agencies. African Feminist theory in this research serves as a social movement and ideology that fights for political, economic and social rights for African women (Oyewumi, 2003). Gender and design in creative practice are themes that have helped to shape feminist perspectives of social responsibility. A closer look at the occupational distribution of men and women in the creative departments of advertising agencies reveals that there is inequality on certain business categories (Lezzi, 2005). Despite high feminization of advertising courses, female creatives in the agencies are few (Grow & Broyles, 2011). The boys' club culture, institutionalized in the industry by pervasive masculine norms, dominates the advertising workforce and may serve as a key barrier to acceptance of women and their progress in job hierarchy.

Over the years, gender disparity has been attributed to males' physical structure, making them more productive and deserving of more earnings than females. Furthermore, Walker states that even in jobs that do not require physical strength or physical differences, women are not considered, as males still dominate, leaving females to be excluded from many job opportunities (Walker, 1872). This has forced female labour into other available occupations, and because of their large numbers, wages are forced down. Walker suggests that a widening of the range of occupations open to women will bring about equal wages. "Feminism in Creative Design Practice" focuses on the position of a woman in the design workplace. President Sheila Wellington notes that at the end of the day, many men head for drinks, women head for the dry cleaners (Windels & Yeh, 2010). Men pick up career tips, women pick up laundry, kids, dinner and the house. Arguments about pay disparities, differences in education by gender, the relationship between family responsibilities and wages and crowding of women into particular occupations have been hinged on this theory. Hence, the research tried to examine that the positions and powers of men and women are different too in design practice in advertising agencies and has led to the issue of gender inequality (Basharat & Amir, 2012).

Methodology

To gain further understanding and insights regarding the research, a mixed method of both quantitative and qualitative approaches were deployed to elicit responses on the assessment of gender inequality in creative design practice in advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria. The sampling method was based on non-probability sampling (based on convenience) and criterion sampling. The research data for analysis were obtained in two phases. The First Phase was based on a survey where a questionnaire was administered, while the Second Phase was based on the interview of purposively selected persons. Six interviews were conducted for this research. The second phase of the research was the gathering of data through interviews. The criterion sample method was used to select the sample group (Patton, 2001), the respondents selected were those who had shown an interest in the previous survey. They are persons who had agreed that they could be contacted if the need arose to seek their opinions again.

Table 1: Respondents demographic Characteristics

	Interviewee A	Interviewee B	Interviewee C
Gender	Female	Male	Male
Age	33	25	29
Agency	DKK & Associates	Adeptus Comms. Ltd.	Explicit Comms. Ltd.
Qualification	BTECH	B.ART	BTECH
Employment Status	Full Time	Full Time	Full Time
Specialization	Copywriter	Editor	Art Director
	Interviewee D	Interviewee E	Interviewee F
Gender	Female	Female	Male
Age	30	28	33
Agency	Big & Bold Comms. Ltd.	Brande Aristotle Ltd.	1201 Brandway Ltd.
Qualification	HND	BTECH	BTECH
Employment Status	Full Time	Full Time	Full Time
Specialization	Editor	Copywriter	Graphic Designer

Data Generation and Presentation of Results

Data was gotten through both quantitative and qualitative means. The quantitative survey involved the use of structured questionnaires and was administered and results collected with the use of SurveyMonkey, a research instrument for data collection. Forty (40) questionnaires were administered for the research. As for the qualitative data generation, this was done through interviews. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees and was transcribed into a computer. The responses were transcribed and organized into themes through coding using Quirkos Software Version 2.4.1. The interviews conducted among the six design practitioners' explored variables that include: exposure, dreams, passion, skills, memories and teamwork.

Gender Inequality in Workplace

The data presented in Table 2 from the questionnaire administered to forty (40) respondents in the research, indicate that there is a workplace gender inequality in advertising agencies in the study area. The table shows that 2.5% strongly agreed that there is gender inequality, while 47.5% agreed, 12.5% are undecided, and 5% strongly disagreed.

Table 2: Gender Inequality in Workplace.

Answer Choices	Responses Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Agree	5	12.5%
Agreed	19	47.5%
Neither agreed nor disagreed	5	12.5%
Disagreed	9	22.5%
Strongly Disagreed	2	5%
Total	40	100%

The above data suggests that women are less likely to be hired into staff positions and have less access to line experience, which is often a stepping stone to higher-level management positions. Women tend to report that their initial job assignments are less challenging than men's assignments. In addition, unlike jobs that tend to be held by women, jobs held by men tend to exist in job ladders that lead to positions of greater power and influence. Osunde's (2015) study confirms the above

assertion, that the labour market for male and female workers are disparate and that the labour market demand for both genders are in differs, and in favor of the male.

Sex Discrimination in Hiring

The researcher visited agencies registered with the Association of Advertising Agencies in Nigeria (AAAN). A total of six participants were interviewed. Table 1. Delineates the demographic background of the interviewees: age, gender, agency, Qualification obtained, employment status and field of specialization.

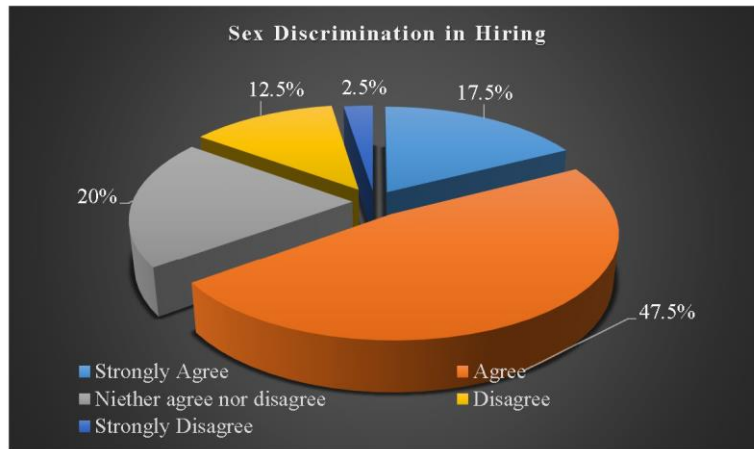


Figure 1: Sex discrimination in hiring

The data presented in Figure 1, shows the response to the statement that sex discrimination exist in hiring creative practitioners in creative advertising agencies. The data in the table shows that 17.5% strongly agreed to the fact that hiring in creative practitioners varies by gender in the creative department, 47.5% agreed, 20% neither agreed nor disagreed, 12.5% disagreed and 2.5% strongly disagreed. An interview was conducted with some agencies about company policies on the hiring of female practitioners. Responses received suggest that some females may be facing discrimination because of their inability to combine the profession with their parental roles.

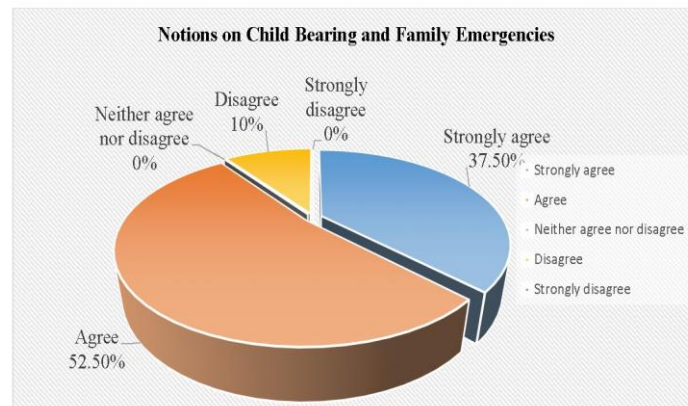


Figure 2: Notion of child-bearing and family emergencies in shortened careers of female practitioners

The data presented in Figure 2, shows the response to the statement on the notion of childbearing and family emergencies which have contributed immensely to the shortened careers of female practitioners in the advertising agencies. The data in the table shows that 37.5% strongly agreed to the fact that socialization experiences on individual's view on gender has great effect in career choices, 52.5% agreed, 0% neither agreed nor disagreed, 10% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed.

On the ratio of men to women in advertising agencies in Lagos as discussed among the interviewees suggests that the ratio of male in the agencies is way more populated than the female in the creative department of the agencies. This finding was consistent with the assertions of Hill & Johnson, (2003), that women are underrepresented in many fields of applied creative services.

Other supporting quotes from the interviews were:

Interviewee E: "presently at Brande Aristotle Limited, we currently have 4 males and 1 female."

Interviewee F: "At 1201 Brandway Limited, we have 4 males and no females in our creative department so far."

Interviewee A: "presently at DKK & Associate, our female staffs out weight the male, about 13 females and 9 males, but in the creative department we have about 60% male and 40% female that's about 3:2" (sic).

The respondents indicate that occupational segregation in creative departments of advertising agencies in Lagos has affected the female employees' job performance. Windels (2008), in his work titled Proportional representation and regulatory focus: the case for cohorts among female creative', states that it appears that the representation in communication arts of advertising is overwhelmingly male. According to the interviewees, sex discrimination and biological factors among the female has limited their growth in the creative department. The interviewees cited that:

Interviewer C: "factors that affects female efficiency can be categorized under cultural view of gender such as societal views, biological factors."

Interviewee A: "the factors that affect women and they include the following; Team failure, Personal distress, Pressure from the opposite sex, Managerial policies, Domestic issues, Technical fault, Lack of skills" (sic).

Research Findings

At the end of this research, the following findings were made:

1. The research findings show suggest that males in advertising agencies in the study area outnumber the female practitioners;
2. The findings show that certain conditions have influenced female career choices which include: design abilities, childhood experiences, parental influences and practical exposure have determined/influenced female practitioners' career choices;
3. The factors affecting job performance denoted from the findings include; self-efficacy, leadership style and organizational commitment; and
4. The study also suggested that certain perceptions, such as: biological factors, motherhood, notions of child bearing, family emergencies and family structure have most times affected career decision-making by female creative design practitioners as compared to their male counterparts which has led mostly to the shortened career trajectory of female practitioners in the agencies.

Based on these findings, the interviews provided a general understanding to the topic, assessing gender equality amongst creative department advertising agencies using Lagos as a case study. New and rich insights emerged directly from the studied population sample in their natural settings. The interviews aided the researchers to attain authentic personal experiences, views, and explanations regarding the assessment of gender equality in the creative departments of advertising agencies in Lagos. The data collection enabled the researchers to interpret the respondents' behaviours through their own individual lens of perception, enclosed within subjective judgments and prior academic references.

Discussion

Gender inequality is said to be an unequal treatment or perception of individuals based on their sex; this arises from the differences placed on them by their social environment as well as their biological forms. The study assessed gender equality amongst creative department advertising agencies using Lagos state as a case study. Concerns about the gender configuration and makeup of advertising agencies undoubtedly have become a mainstream issue. Past studies on gender representation in advertising agencies were mostly based in Europe, United States and Asia which findings cannot be generalized to developing climes like Nigeria.

The underrepresentation of women in the creative department of the advertising agency has led to a streamlined gender inclusiveness where masculine ideologies infiltrate feminine assignments.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the research recommends the following:

1. More females should be recruited within the creative agencies.
2. Females should be given opportunity to pursue their career and not be limited or judged by cultural or societal views.
3. Advertising agencies should give all staff equal opportunity to serve regardless of gender.
4. Any form of discrimination or favoritism should be avoided.
5. Advertising agencies should make favourable office policies that will enhance job performance for both gender, and also look into ways of improving workers job performance. This will in turn lead to growth, overall improvement in work output and general work conduciveness.

Conclusion

The results of this study reaffirm some of the findings noted in the contemporary research associated with gender and gender studies within the advertising agencies. Findings in this study indicate the need of gender equality. Therefore, based on this research, it can be stated categorically that men outnumber women in the creative department of the advertising agencies in Lagos and as such, more awareness should be done to encourage more female participation and inclusion. Moreover, equality structure on gender view should be put in place in the creative departments whereby making it more flexible and conducive to accommodate female creative in advertising agencies.

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ACCEPTABILITY OF CRAFTED ARTICLES FOR INTERIOR DECORATION IN BADAGRY, LAGOS STATE-NIGERIA

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Introduction

Industrial design is viewed as a synergy between applied art and science aiming at creating and developing aesthetic, ergonomic and functional values in produced artefacts. In the evolution of visual designs in Nigeria, a craft-based design practice has been most prominently featured with the culture acting as a motivating factor. The craft designs in traditional Nigerian settings consist of three dimensional elements such as the object form and the two dimensional features such as patterns, lines and colours. The visual designs on material artefacts have consistently infused culture-oriented aesthetics, thus adding to their local identity and commercial value for increase marketability.

Background of the Study

Crafted Articles are the result of people's desire to improve upon the world by utilizing nature's benevolence. Nature has made everything tangible and intangible available for the use of human beings. The tangible things include: trees, grasses, gravel, granite, etc. While the intangible is the idea. As such, crafted articles could serve as a driving force for sustainable development and industrialization in a given economy; for there seems to be a conscious non-awareness of the value, potentials and significance in normal everyday life. This is evidenced from people's purchase pattern and positive attitude towards crafted articles in spite of their high standard of workmanship and their durability. Interior design is a multifaceted profession that includes conceptual development, space planning, site inspections, programming, and research, communicating with the stakeholders of a project, construction management, and execution of the design (Gloser 2005).

In professional interior decoration a growing number of stakeholders consider research to be a critical factor that will lead to an expanded and specialized body of knowledge, Professional recognition, disciplinary status and legitimization and sustainability of the profession. Attaining these goals would mark the evolution of interiors design from its current position as an art based profession to the more highly valued position of research- evidenced based profession (International Interior Design Association 2003). A growing number of stakeholders also believe that graduate

education will play an important role in this evolution (Dickson and White 2004; Guern *et al.*, 2012; Thompson and Green 2002). Handicraft is defined as craft governed by the will of the artist, and a form of production in which the material used is an essential point of departure for the whole of the creative process; in which practical function plays an important part. "Design" includes things traditionally made by hand, but are now produced more rapidly and efficiently with the aid of machine and industrial organization.

According to Jowitt (2007), some Nigerians learn to look down upon Crafted Article which they erroneously despise as belonging to a past which they are too anxious to disown. His contemporary Ruskin, was of the view that the Crafted Articles if taken in the right spirit would improve mankind and he emphasized that if Crafted Art is practiced for the sole purpose of increasing profits, it would have a contrary effect and based his methods on examination of nature or study of those parts of nature which lend themselves to this process. John Kenneth Galbraith, a one-time president of the American Academy of Arts and letters, as reported by Aig-Imoukhuede (1988) declared that "... let no one minimize the service that the arts render to established industry. In the years since the world war, there has been no economic miracle quite like that of Italy ..." The trans-Saharan and trans-Atlantic trades depended largely on crafts exports which 'represented the highest level of existing technology of the time and after agriculture, contributed not less than forty percent of the economy. Viewing at the numerous prospects that craft can do to interior design, Aig-Imoukhuede, (1988), writes that, there should be no one minimizing the service that the craftsmen render to the creative art and interior decoration, therefore, it becomes imperative to make discovery analysis of the acceptability of crafted article as an asset for interior decoration making Badagry craft village as a case study. In fact, a 2017 survey conducted by the American Society of Interior Designers reports that there are 69,222 practicing interior designers. Of those, only 25% of interior designers work in the residential sector of design (ASID, 2019). When a designer is involved in the construction process, the role and scope of responsibility is vast; spanning the entire project from conception to post-occupancy, and is rooted in a leadership role amongst other team members.

The inception of the modern day form of design has probably caused a traditional form of art and craft design culture and thus reduces the rate of acceptability of crafted article as an asset for interior decoration. Furthermore, from the research's perspective on viewing all that is to be about crafted article design, it was discovered that no serious effort has been made by scholars and researchers to study and document craftwork. Inclusion of an interior designer in single-family residential home construction increased, overall in the United States, by 8% between 2017 and 2018 according to ASID (ASID, 2019). However, at present, design value is measured by intangible and intrinsic variables which is problematic. Without a direct link connecting design with extrinsic home value, the contribution design practitioners make is being overlooked in the home value equation. Thus it becomes imperative to do a discovery analysis of the acceptability of crafted articles as an asset for interior decoration making Badagry Craft Village as a case study.

Broad Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to assess the acceptability of crafted articles for interior decoration in Badagry, Lagos state.

Specific Objective of the Study

- i. The specific objectives of the study are to:
- ii. identify various crafted articles produced for home decoration in Badagry.
- iii. assess the attitude of people toward the production and appreciation of crafted article.
- iv. assess the preference for crafted articles for interior decoration in Badagry.

Significance of the Study

This study assesses the acceptability of crafted articles in Badagry local government. This study also identified the crafted articles produced in Badagry. It looks into the cultural attachment and interior articles evolution and change in design over the years. It also gives a general over view of crafted articles in the Badagry local government area, and also highlights the fact that crafts articles serve as a social and cultural exposure that promote cultural practices. The study creates awareness between the craftsmen and the general public of the values, and attitudes embodied in the decorative aspect of people in Badagry. Crafted articles serve as a of the major means of sustenance for the inhabitants of Badagry. Craft practice in Badagry serves as one of good source of sustainability in the area of craft and arts that express the individual intent expressed. It can be an enriching ground for government to explore in the area of craft development and economic empowerment.

Craft and Design

For the purpose of this paper, visual and materials culture is viewed as a direct application of Industrial Design with relevance to the productions of indigenous artefacts which are accomplished with technical expertise and covering wide areas of applied art and design, such as Jewellery, interior design, ceramics, household wares, architecture, textile design, leisure goods and woodwork.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the identified crafted home decoration.

Craft decorative designs	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Basket weaving	82	68.3
Metal work	79	65.8
Handloom carpet	69	57.5
Pottery and glass craft	109	90.8
Wood craft	120	100
Paper craft	59	49.2

Table above is a list of identified crafted home design by the respondents showing that all 120(100.0%) of the respondents identified with wood craft while majority 109 (90.8%) identified with pottery and glass craft, 82(68.3%) identifies with basket weaving and 79(65.8%) with metal work among the home decoration in the study area. Furthermore, above half 69(57.5%) of the respondents identified with handloom carpet and almost half 59(49.2%) identified with paper work for home decoration in the study area. The importance of designing interiors helps the person to learn a lot about the space, and how people feel comfortable while being at a specific place and using its facilities. Designing interiors makes people look at things around them in an open minded view. Designers see things from different perspectives due to their studies and work atmosphere (Long 2000). Crafted article changes an area into a beautiful, pleasant and friendly design environment and further involves choosing colour schemes, floor coverings, furniture, artwork, and accessories that could attract anyone. Most of the studies identified herein focused on multi-family, urban complexes due to the ability to exact specific variables consistently across the board. A question posed by Leung, Ma and Zhang asks, "How much do the market values of housing reflect its interior design? Does the interior design interact with other housing attributes?" (Leung, *et al.*, 2013)

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of respondent's attitude of people towards the production and appreciation of crafted article.

Assessment	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Rank	Total
Craft practice is a vocation	54.0	28.0	15.0	3.0	2.8	1	100
Craft practice is a profitable vocation	38.0	30.0	20.0	12.0	2.2	2	100
There is high demand in craft work	30.0	35.0	10.0	25.0	2.0	3	100

Marketers have no problem in selling craft work	25.0	35.0	15.0	25.0	1.8	4	100
The price of craft work doesn't seem expensive to afford	30.0	30.0	25.0	15.0	2.0	3	100
Total	177	158	85	80			500
Percentage Total	35.4	31.6	17	16			100

Result in Table 2 above shows that above half (54.0% and 28.0%) agreed that craft practice is a vocation with the mean value of 2.8 and ranked first based on the attitude of people towards the production and appreciation of crafted article, while 38.0% and 30.0% of the respondents agreed that craft practice is a profitable vocation with the mean value of 2.2 and 30.0% and 35.0% of them agreed that there is high demand in craft work with the mean value of 2.0 in the study area. The result shows that based on the assessment of identifying craft practice by the home decorators, it is a vocation practice that is profitable and has high demand for beautification for home decoration in the study area. According to Labode (2009), design is a plan or convention of construction of an object. Poire (2004) opined that craft and design of African indigenous decorative items are versed and can be mass produced to meet international standards if the crafts are properly packaged during production process and could attract more patronage for the decorative items. Interior design is the art and science of enhancing the interior of a building to achieve a healthier and more aesthetically pleasing environment for the people using the space (Pegler 2012)".

Summary of Findings

The study finds that:

1. Craft decoration is less expensive; craft decoration improves our culture values and Craft design makes homes more beautiful and natural and regarded as significant as the preference of people over crafted decoration.
2. Macramé, handloom carpets, painting on paper and weaving have high acceptability level,
3. Basket weaving metal work, tapestry, macramé, models and miniatures, pottery and glass craft and wood craft have medium acceptability level
4. 4.Mosaic work, paper sculpture and plaques have low acceptability level
5. Giving low preference to crafted work, patronizing of imported crafted work over homemade craft work, Negative attitude towards craft men, giving low publicity to craft work and Bad negative attitude to craft man are regarded as significant as the negative attitude of people to the production of crafted article
6. Giving public to patronize product is regarded as significant as the act of encouraging vocational crafted work.
7. Craft practice is a vocation, Craft practice is a profitable vocation, there is high demand in
8. Craft work and the price of craft work doesn't seem expensive to afford are regarded significant as the assessment in identifying vocation in craft practice.

Conclusions

The paper has been able to discover that some found objects and traditional materials can be used in fascinating work to produce a good art work for interior art. The past studies have been able to discover that some found objects and traditional materials can be used in fascinating work to produce a good art work for interior art. Innovations are necessary to boost economic returns, and this project has satisfied this need. It could be seen from the projects carried out by the researcher that, practically, in all occupation interior decoration techniques have created a new relationship between man and his work. For effective entrepreneurship and participation, appropriate design techniques are required to boost economic returns. The design techniques must be appropriately applied. The interior decorators attempt to recognize the potential of particular interior designs and try to help their development in a gradual way.

There is a great potential and viable market for interior decoration. Interior designers, entrepreneurs and manufactures are therefore encouraged to wake up to the challenges of research, experimentations and exploration in the system to bring the needed innovation to contemporary crafted article for interior decoration designs to be elevated Global level.

Recommendations

Based on the results in the research finding it is recommended that:

1. Craftsmen should make use of all marketing techniques available to create awareness on their products.
2. Craftsmen should work more on their communication with customers, involve customers in the design process and give them updates as frequently as possible.
3. The government should promote locally made craft articles.

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SOME ASPECTS OF THE PRACTICE OF KANURI TRADITIONAL CIRCUMCISION IN MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA.

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Introduction

The destruction of lives and property caused by the Boko Haram insurgency from its onset in 2009 is often mentioned amongst scholars. On the other hand, the destruction of intangible cultural heritage and practices have received far less attention. It is only recently that studies such as Shallangwa (2021) began to document the effects of the insurgency on indigenous cultural practices by persons in their communities and those residing in the Internally Displaced Persons Camps (IDPs) in Maiduguri. Male traditional circumcision rituals in the Kanuri society serve as an indigenous cultural practice with several philosophies and wisdom behind its sustenance. It is usually done at certain occasions and ceremonies within the life cycle such as naming ceremonies, circumcision and marriage (Geider & Vogels, 1996). It is practised primarily as an initiation ritual into adulthood, that involves the cutting or removal of the foreskin of the male organ by *wanzamaa* (traditional circumcisers), *wanzama* being the singular. The practice is conducted under non-clinical settings and overseen by *wanzamaa*, hence it is distinct from medical/clinical circumcision. Although it can be medically recommended in a few cases, it is regarded as cultural and religious in Kanuri culture (El-Yakub, 2009). While the ritual has undergone certain changes over the years, traditional male circumcision among the Kanuri is associated with factors such as masculinity, social cohesion with boys of the same age group, who become circumcised at the same time, self-identity and spirituality (Cohen, 1967).

Similarly, El-Yakub (ibid) noted that the Kanuri society is a dynamic one, and has experienced elements of social transformation with respect to cultural traditions caused by education, population growth, technological changes, modern health care, and the effects of mass media. Furthermore, the sustainability of this cultural practice in the last decade has witnessed a significant change as a result of the insurgency that displaced people from their original settings as well as the activities of NGOs. Since the focus of government at all levels is tilted towards peace and stability, very little or no effort seem to be made to revive dying indigenous cultural practices. Therefore, this study assessed the changes recorded in the belief and attitudes towards the Kanuri traditional circumcision in the context of the Boko Haram insurgency over the last decade.

Study Area

Shehuri is the principal hub for the practice and sustenance of the Kanuri culture in Borno State because it is home to the Shehu's palace. The palace has Kanuri style elements in it, in terms of its central location and neighbourhood arrangement patterns around it. The palace is also traditionally bounded by the courtier's residences, including the; Waziri, Shettimari, Abbari, Limanti, Kalari, Talbari, Yerimari, Kaigamari Moramti and Galtimari among others, with the Shehu's palace standing at the centre (Abubakar, 2017). The research is situated specifically in Shehuri because it is the principal hub where cultural activities including rituals of the Kanuri circumcision formally takes place.

Research Design

The study employed qualitative research methodology utilising data collected from primary and secondary sources. Firstly, the researcher familiarized with the respondents through several visits in order to gain their acceptance, trust, and cooperation. These brought ease, added value and gave a stable direction to the research. The researcher participated by observing the Kanuri traditional circumcision in Shehuri where rituals and music performance by the circumcisers were showcased publicly in the presence of the Shehu of Borno and other local traditional rulers in attendance. This enabled the researcher gain first-hand knowledge and experience about the cultural practices surrounding the circumcision.

Furthermore, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focused Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted with relevant stakeholders including (but not limited to) head of traditional circumcisers (Zannah Dambusuma), traditional circumcisers (Wanzamaa), academics from the University of Maiduguri with Kanuri background in Linguistics and English department and parents of circumcised boys. Two (2) research assistants were trained and utilized by the researcher while conducting interviews and FGDs. Additionally, desk review of relevant literature was conducted to complement the findings of the research.

Rites of Passage

The origin of rites in the religious scenario of Africa is unclear. However, Eliade (1959) shared same view and noted that “these rites are re-enactments of the paradigmatic model set by the divine beings” (p. 185), while Kristiansen (1960) later confirmed that “Rites of passage are the actualization of divine order which have been recognized and apprehended” (p.306).

It has been elaborately established in practice and theory that Africans are deeply or often religious. Religion colours all aspects of African life from the cradle to the grave (Mbiti, 1970). This is made manifest in her concept of the universe as a unified reality which is further explained in her view of the community and her sense of preservation and enhancement of human life. In Africa, nothing is an accident; things cannot happen without a cause. Thus, changes in one’s life, biological or socio-economic status or movements from and to different phases of life are appreciated as the work of the benevolent God or gods, and must be ritually celebrated. In other words, as one moves along the passage of life; from birth to the grave, there are major developmental stages of life that one stops to ritually celebrate which are referred to as rites of passage. Series of rites and rituals are imbedded in each stage which appreciates the super sensible being(s) and further prepares one for the life in the next stage (Ezenweke, 2012).

The various stages of human development starting from birth, puberty, marriage and death are all very important and need to be celebrated. They involved crossing from one stage of life to another. Ray (1999) noted that in this phase, people are metaphysically and sociologically remade into new beings with new social roles. New-born infants are made into human person, children are made into adults, men and women are made into husbands and wives, deceased people are made into ancestors, princes are made into kings and so on. This remaking of a human being involves the symbolic destruction of the old and the creation of the new.

In another study on the initiation rites (Irua) of Agikuyu of Kenya, it was found that male and female initiation rites such as circumcision play a central social role in the society. Although boys and girls are taken to separate locations for the rituals, those circumcised at the same time are considered age-mates, and those circumcised during the same season are regarded as age-sets (Hinga, 1988). This corroborates with the social function of the Kanuri circumcision as noted by Cohen who states that the circumcision ceremony has to do with the strengthening of community connection. Cohen remarks, “The important thing is not the readiness of the boy for initiation. Rather it is the auspiciousness of the occasion in terms of the occasion in terms of the family’s relationship to the rest of the community”. Cohen (1960) further asserts that the Kanuri circumcision ritual like other

rituals marks publicly the opening of the gates on the road to manhood for the young man but much more importantly, it validates, strengthens, and dramatizes the relational network of ties that the family and the household maintains and attempts to promote in the society.

Ritual Processes of Male Circumcision

Rituals in Africa, just as in other parts of the world, utilize symbols to express and convey meanings, verbally and nonverbally. In traditional African societies, a firm stress is placed on the performance of rituals as customary, standardized, and symbolic social communication that is repeatable according to fixed patterns. All African societies have different age-linked rituals, and mark the passage from one to another, but not all have the same rituals, either in number or in kind. The following are typical: prenatal rituals (e.g., rituals to confirm pregnancy, for fetal growth, and for safe delivery); naming rituals; pre-pubertal and pubertal initiation rituals for the entrance into adulthood; betrothal and marriage; initiation into prestige-bestowing adult associations; rituals elevating individuals to high office or to priestly functions; and funeral (Turner, 1985).

African rituals thus can be analysed helpfully under the category "life cycle rituals," or what has been called "rites of passage" since the publication of the book of the same title in 1908 by Arnold van Gennep and expanded later by the British Anthropologist Victor Turner. Van Gennep identified three phases in such rituals: rites of separation, which provide a socially accepted way to move away from a prior status; rites of transition, which safeguard participants during the dangerous liminal, or "in-between," period; and rites of incorporation, which ensure that the participants have been reinstated properly into society and legitimated by the community in their new roles. Turner argued that the entire ritual process, from separation through transition to incorporation, can be understood as liminal because each phase occurs in a time between times and in a space that is set apart from other places.

Kanuri Traditional Circumcision

Cohen in his book the 'Kanuri of Borno' in 1967 discussed the Kanuri male circumcision as an important aspect of puberty that marks transition from childhood to adulthood. He states that the event is fundamentally a ceremonial occasion and is thus related only in a rough general way to the actual onset of puberty for each boy. Generally, boys are cut in groups, although in rural areas it is not uncommon to see a family performing the ceremony for just one boy in the household. On the other hand, circumcision among the high-ranking people such as village heads, district heads, members of the royal family, or rich traders in the city attracts many other families who try to have their own children cut at the same time to participate in the large festivities. Usually, the higher the rank of the leading families involved in the circumcision the greater the number of boys who are likely to be cut at the same time. Cohen further states that the most important thing is not the readiness of the boy. Rather it is the auspiciousness of the occasion in terms of the family's relationship to the rest of the community. In other words, what determines the circumcision ceremony is the calibre and status of the family organising the ceremony. The organising family's status in the community will influence the number of boys, the timing of the ceremony as well as determining the major functions of the event. Certainly, it's marks publicly the opening of the gates on the road to manhood for the young boy but much more importantly, it validates, strengthens and dramatizes the relational network of ties that the family and the household maintain and attempt to promote in the society.

Another significant point worthy of note in the circumcision ceremony as stated by Cohen is that, it gives room for small groups of converts from other places who want to partake in the ceremony. This further gives them opportunities to gain more acceptance in the Kanuri community and in some cases marry Kanuri women. After the boys have come out of confinement during which the cut heals, they are given whips which they brandish while chasing and threatening to flog young girls. The girls must "buy off" such treatment by giving the young boys a few pennies, otherwise they will be lashed.

Another study conducted by Mustaffa (2019) on the Kanuri circumcision ceremony concurs with that of Cohen in some of its findings. However, while Cohen looks at it from a holistic point of view Mustaffa goes into details on the circumcision ceremony itself. Mustaffa starts by explaining the special hut called "*Ngushi*" which is purposely built for the circumcision ceremony. Furthermore, he explains that the night before the circumcision ceremony takes place, all those who are to be circumcised are gathered together in the "*Ngushi*", while women folk sing songs of praise, while at the same time encouraging the boys to face the ordeal boldly. As the women are singing the '*Wanzama*' (traditional barber and circumciser) blows his horn playing different tunes praising those to be circumcised and their families. The following morning before the ceremony is performed, the boys are all bathed thoroughly. The ceremony is usually attended by a big crowd from different parts of Borno State. Mustaffa further explains that as soon as the ceremony is performed, the *Wanzama* will blow his *magnum* (horn) in a way that those outside the *Ngushi* will know that the boys have undergone the ordeal and the ceremony is successfully completed. When the family's tune is blown from the *mangum*, the women and girls outside will begin to sing and rejoice. This is because the initiates who have spent two weeks inside the *Ngushi* are not allowed to go out and see girls or women. Therefore, the horn blowing at the end of the two weeks which signifies that the girls can now see them instils a feeling of strong masculinity and an upgrade of their status. As stated by Mustaffa, it is believed by the Kanuri that when the girls see the boys during confinement the wound (on the male organ) won't heal on time. Also, there is an extension (up to a month) of the two weeks before the final ceremony if some of the newly circumcised don't heal within the usual period of two weeks. This indicates a kind of social cohesion and bond among the initiates, giving them a feeling of togetherness.

The boys are usually fed with warm gruel, meat and onions. During the two weeks' period of confinement in the *Ngushi*, the *Wanzama* nurses the boys closely day and night. On the day of the outing ceremony the boys are usually given new gowns. Girls offer them gifts such as beads made of date and sweets which is worn around the neck. The boys sit on a large mat in front of the house while the *Wanzama* blows his horn notifying those around that the whole circumcision ceremony is over and the boys are now 'out'. The parents of the new, circumcise boys receive gifts from well-wishers on behalf of their son(s). The boys are given whips with which they will flog/strike those who stand in their way as they are walking. The elderly men and women present during the circumcision place their hands on the heads of the boys as a sign of blessing.

In all of the findings of the above studies, none has focused on the changes in the belief and attitudes of the people on the ritual process of the circumcision. As a result of the identified gap the study therefore focused on the changing trends in the attitudes and beliefs on the Kanuri traditional male circumcision ritual.

The Role of Music Performance in Kanuri Traditional Circumcision

The study found that organized social and religious ceremonies or rites that bring the members of the Kanuri community together provide an important means of encouraging involvement in collective behaviour, a means of strengthening the social bonds that bind them and the values that inspire their corporate life. The performance of music in such contexts, therefore assumes a multiple role in relation to the community as it provides at once an opportunity for sharing in creative experience, for participating in music as a form of community experience.

One of the respondents who is a traditional title holder explained that:

"the music performances in the Kanuri circumcision ceremonies depends on the status of the person that is sponsoring it. In some of the circumcision ceremony, the Ganga Kura music is played on the eve of the circumcision ceremony as well as on the circumcision ceremony day."

“Young girls and women, apart from the role of cooking and preparing the children, also sing songs during the circumcision ceremony however, the songs that are in form of prayers are not only peculiar to the circumcision ceremony as they are also performed in marriage ceremonies as well as child naming ceremonies in order to ward off evil eyes so that the child can succeed in life.”

The lyrics go thus;

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1- Laulande karama | 1- divine intervention against the witch |
| 2- klanumgare karama | 2- eat yourself, witch |
| 3- kauchi din tai karama | 3- catch the stone, witch |

(Repeat)

“I blow the *Mangum* to make musical sounds on the day of the circumcision ceremony as a form of prayer for the boys as well as entertainment for the guests that are present in the occasion”
- Zanna Dambusuma.

The music is made of sounds produced by the Zanna Dambusuma while blowing 1. The *Mangum*. In other words, the music is without written lyrics.

“The music is a form of prayer for the boys on the day of the circumcision, there are no written lyrics”- Zanna Dambusuma.

Observations in the field on the day of the circumcision ceremony (reintegration phase), the music sound was responded to by few who responded by saying 'Amen' while the Zanna Dambusuma blows 1. The *Mangum* as seen in the figure below. Prior to the day of the circumcision, the Zanna Dambusuma blows the *mangum* making musical sounds to invite community members including children to attend the auspicious ceremony. The sound could be transcribed thus;

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1- Yawatadayeso arowo | 1- mothers of children come |
| 2- Ina tadayeso arowo | 2- maternal aunts of children come |
| 3- Rawatadayeso arowo | 3- maternal uncles of children come |
| 4- Bawatadayeso arowo | 4- paternal uncles of children come |
| 5- Ngrma biyanowo | 5- pay the race horse |
| 6- Ngrma winowo | 6- untie the race horse |
| 7- Nduli kura kuraso arowo | 7- grown up children, come |
| 8- Nduli sinanaso arowo | 8- younger children, come |
| 9- Nduliso arowo | 9- children, come |

(Repeat)



Fig 1. Zanna Dambusuma blowing the *Mangum* to make musical sound at the Circumcision ceremony in Shehuri
Source: field work (2022)

The Kanuri traditional circumcision music original content has not been documented in written form. However, the performance of the music by the Zannah Dambusuma has been ongoing in every circumcision ceremony for the past 12 years in Shehuri. This study attempted to collect some of the lyrics for documentation purposes. The music performance serves as a form of divine intervention in the lives of the boys as well as to entertain people that graced the ceremony.

Discussion

The study found certain factors have been responsible for the changes towards the sustainability of Kanuri traditional circumcision since the beginning of the insurgency. With the coming of NGOs, there have been an overwhelming campaign on peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution in Maiduguri. These activities have not been exclusive as there are often healthcare support for people especially those in displaced settings. In the words of the respondents;

“my last child was born and circumcised in the hospital because of the free support by an NGO and I think it is easier and better to do it at infancy because they said its better than the traditional method.”

Another respondent stated that,

“the insurgency has forced us away from our communities where we find it easier to practice the traditional circumcision. But it has also provided opportunity for us to get it done medically with the help of NGOs. This is because not all of us find it convenient to take our children for the group circumcision in Shehuri. Sometimes we don’t even get to know of the date for the group circumcision.”

Apart from the influence of NGOs, other factors that have influenced the attitudes of Kanuri people towards the sustainability of this practice includes more religious awareness and education that have crept in and have influenced the people's behaviour towards the practice of the traditional circumcision. This religious awareness has manifested over the years as Islamic religious scholars through their teachings have demonstrated that the circumcision is a religious obligation which does not necessarily involve traditional rituals. The observation in the field also showed that religious clerics of Kanuri ethnic group are usually invited to give a short sermon on the importance of the

circumcision from the religious angle, and how it is important in the maintenance of identity as Muslims. Also, in-depth knowledge and religious awareness has also shown that the rituals that accompany the Kanuri traditional circumcision may not be compulsory. These rituals have however continued to thrive with certain changes chiefly due to admiration of the practice as an event, the maintenance of social cohesion and life time bond for groups of boys who undergo the procedure together as stated by some respondents:

“Expansion in knowledge of the religion has influenced the circumcision practice in a greater way. Our people, will continue to observe some of the rituals as a way of displaying their cultural admiration and identity”.

The study also found that despite the influences from the modern medical circumcision, the people have a strong admiration for the culture of traditional circumcision as it is held with high esteem and seen as an integral part of the Kanuri identity which enforces social cohesion and a lifetime bond among children.

Some of the *wanzamaa* also noted that people are gradually shifting to individual traditional circumcisions for their children. The family *wanzamaa* is sometimes invited to come and perform the operation privately in contrast to the group circumcision. One of the respondents stated;

“...even when we go out to circumcise in the hospitals, we still invite the family’s *wanzama* so as to pay them their due as if they were the ones that circumcised the boy(s)”.

The family *wanzama* (similar to family doctor) performs not only circumcision procedures but a range of other functions like shaving the hair of infants, uvulectomy, blood cupping, and so on. Furthermore, in terms of the socio-cultural significance, the respondents stated unanimously that the group circumcision builds a lifetime relationship amongst the boys and therefore enhances communal life where everyone is a brother’s keeper. This social function of the Kanuri circumcision corroborates with Cohen (1960) who noted that the Kanuri circumcision ceremony has to do with the strengthening of community connection.

The finding above demonstrates that there are certain wisdom and philosophies relating to peaceful coexistence in the sustainability of the Kanuri traditional circumcision. The belief is that a long-lasting bond and brotherhood will be generated from a younger age when young people are jointly circumcised.

The finding is also in consonance with Nakou et al. (2012) who studied the Fulani of Benin Republic ‘flogging’ test initiation rite through which adolescents are granted full rights and social duties. More than a rite of social integration in which aggression occurs and develops a logical exchange of lashes, the Godja (flogging test) turns to be a practice that helps to maintain and affirm a social identity around cultural references. Muguna (2014) also found that those that are circumcised at the same time had respect for one another and a common name among them.

Furthermore, respondents stated that in the Kanuri society, maternal uncles play a significant role in the life of the circumcised boy. He is responsible for bringing the child to the circumcision venue and the *ngushi*. He holds the boy when getting cut and buys a lot of gifts for him. He shows maximum concern over the boy. The reason for this as explained by one of the respondents is that, the boys cannot inherit directly from their maternal uncles in their demise and as such the only time they could benefit from them is when they are alive. The gifts that are received by the boys is believed to mark a new phase of success in their future exploits.

“In the early 60s when I was circumcised, I was gifted with a goat which my mom kept for me until I came off age. I sold the goat and invested with the money which yielded more profits and marked a turning point in my business exploit”.

Secondly, observation from the field shows the Shehu of Borno and other elders dipping hands in a bowl of 'kaulu' (sesame leaf) and touching the head of all the boys as a form of blessing.



Fig 2: Shehu of Borno conferring his blessings on an initiate
Source: field work (2022)

This was explained to mean unending success in the life of the boys. This is one aspect of the rites that even those who didn't circumcise in the traditional way bring their children to perform. The belief on the traditional circumcision as stated by respondents in both FGD and KII is that it makes a child more sexually active than those circumcised in the hospitals. This belief seems to be a myth according to some other respondents who are mostly from the academic environment.



Fig 4.3: Initiates heading to the Shehu's palace on the day of circumcision ceremony
Source: field work (2022)

An elderly respondent noted that it is not a religious injunction to perform the rituals as it is being done in the Kanuri tradition, but the way it is being practiced in the Kanuri culture is good, because it doesn't contradict the Islamic religion and it enforces social cohesion among people.

Conclusion and Recommendation

From the foregoing, it can be seen that insurgency has impacted the change in attitudes and sustainability of the Kanuri traditional circumcision. On the other hand, we can equally infer that the wisdom and philosophical assumption surrounding the Kanuri traditional circumcision is that it promotes peace among children and families in the long run through the social cohesion and unity which the group circumcision is believed to reinforce. On the other hand, it can also be seen that the belief and attitudes of the Kanuri people pertaining the sustainability of the traditional circumcision has taken a new dimension due to the insurgency as well as other factors such as health care services and awareness activities of NGOs in the area. As a result, the study therefore recommends that the government and other relevant healthcare organisations in Maiduguri work in synergy with traditional circumcisers to further understand and guide traditional surgical procedures.

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POTENTIALS OF ART AND CRAFT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Introduction

The total educational development of the child cannot be neglected if society must move forward. Arts and crafts are vital to such development, (Banjoko, 2010). He asserts that art and craft are at the centre in the mental, psychological and physical growth of a child, adding that children learn better and faster through the play methods; through what they see and touch. They learn through scribbling, (drawing), painting, and constructing images (both recognizable and unrecognizable), Children also learn through singing, dancing and watching. Art and craft are the skills of making things by using hands. Children need art and craft in their growing stages to ensure the development of their brains. Through this, they can express themselves in different ways. Engaging children in creative activities help them develop skills and ingenuity.

Onibukun, (2017) said that from the time a child is conceived in the mother's womb, the starts growing and developing. He added that what starts as just a cell, blossoms into a beautiful and unique human being. But the growth doesn't stop once the infant has exited the womb. Children continue to grow all the way until they have fully matured and reached adulthood. During this time of their growth, the things parents incorporate into their lives are vital to what they become in future.

As the child grows, their brain also grows and develops mathematical and language skills and creativity. Also, their personality, likes and dislikes, and much more. There are several external factors that play major roles in the child's development. One of those being the active participation of arts and crafts, and basically because they are learned by children the play-way. Sure, arts and crafts can be messy, but children of all ages love them and they are actually good for them. (Sinclair et al, 2017).

Literature Review

The Concept of Art and Craft

Art and craft are a wide range of skillful activities involving some that are imaginative, creative and aesthetic in nature, (Furst, 2020). The word art is derived from the Latin word 'ars' which mean 'skill'. Craft comes from the middle English word for 'strength' or 'skill' derived from the old English word *craeft* which comes from old high German word *kraft*, for strength and means 'skill' in planning, making, executing and by extension an occupation or trade, (Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary, (2020). The birth of the Art and Craft Movement dated back to the late 19th century in Britain. It was characterized by a style of fashion and decoration, which marked the beginning of a change in the value society placed on how things were made. (Mary, 2020). To be deduced from these is the fact

that artists/craftsmen are skilled individuals with the creative ability to express themselves in diverse ways.

Art is an expression and application of imagination and creative skill. Arts are traditionally seen as drawing, painting, and sculpture. Craft on the other hand is traditionally seen as a hobby or an occupation that requires skilled workers to produce an item. Crafts can include weaving, carving, pottery, embroidery, beading, sewing, quilting, etc. Craft may also be referred to as "handicraft," with their hand-made nature distinguishing them from other machine-based, (mass-made) products.

Art is defined as the product of creative human activity in which materials are shaped or selected to convey ideas, emotions, or visually interesting forms. The person that produces art works is called an artist. Arts can be referred to visual/performing arts, including drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, music, drama and dance. (Adewuya, 2009). Craft is the skillfulness needed in a particular handy profession. Craft on the other hand can be referred to handy works like jewelries, cutleries, furniture, decoration and fashion, (Ajayi, 2015).

Defining art/craft may seem abstract to those who expect them to be limited to familiar categories such as drawing, painting sculpture, weaving, pottery, brick-making and the likes. In today's modern world, art has moved away from being purely aesthetically pleasing to creating works with emotional impact that express their vision, ideas, or feelings and also utilitarian value.

Art and craft have always been closely linked and intertwined. We often speak of 'arts and crafts' as one discipline or activity, but however they are viewed, they both are forms of creativities that are often overlapping and placed side by side for contrast and comparison. However, many people do not perceive a difference between art and craft, since they are both creative and skillful activities aiming at what they perceive as same objectives. One unique thing about art and craft is that they affect almost every aspect of human's life. No wonder, Bernard, (2023) opined that art and craft are the general name to all skillful activities, therefore, all skillful activities are the offshoots of art and craft. For example, Ajayi, (2015) said an engineer, a medical doctor or a lawyer must be creative in the way they dispense or administer their works, adding that any professional that is not creative is doomed. Nzuaghah, (2010) stresses that both art and craft signify a doing, a making, a fashioning or putting together, and they usually imply that the thing is accomplished through the skills used, and also must create pleasing forms and sounds which satisfy the human sense of beauty and functionality.

The Child

Onibokun, (2017) author of "Child Protection Measures in Nigeria" stated that "Childhood could be defined in a cultural and socio-economic term, even though chronological age is the more popular indicator". According to the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (2008) dealing with children and young person's states that "a child means a person under the age of fourteen (14.)" A young person is one who is above 14 years of age but under seventeen. The 2019 National Child Welfare Policy defined a child as anybody who is twelve years or below. However, in line with the UN Convention (1990) the new Decree on the Rights of the Child in Nigeria (2016) adopts a person below eighteen (18) years as the age of the child.

The UN Convention (2010) defines a child as any human being below the age of eighteen (18), unless under the law applicable to his state, there is a different definition. It is well established that in traditional societies in West Africa in general, and in Nigeria in particular the span of childhood is much narrower than what is obtained at present in developed societies which until recently had a narrower span of childhood themselves. Oluka (2017), author of "Protection and Violation of Child Rights in Nigeria: An Overview" states that "Independent assessments of the threshold of age demarcation in different West African countries have identified 12 years as the upper limit of childhood in ethnic groups in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and The Gambia (Callawa, 2016, Bartels,

2015, Ford, 2015) "The age of twelve represents the period when children were perceived as having attained mental and social adaptation to their environment to be able to solve the various problems which may confront them when they are not directly supervised by adults" (Oluka 2017).

How Children Learn

Young children are not capable of mental activity or thinking in the same way as adults. Children learn through real action. When it is said that children are "active" learners, this must be taken in a literal sense. It is the reason, for example that Montessori, Slavin (2022), said that "play is the child's work". In play, the child is practicing the various actions that will eventually be internalized as thorough. Accordingly, however, convenient it may be for grownups to think of children as learning while they are sitting still, what they learn in this way is likely to be learnt by rote and to have little lasting value. In contrast, what children acquire through active manipulation of the environment is nothing less than the ability to think. According to Elbert, (2020) "One of the most serious and pernicious misunderstandings about young children is that they are most like adults in their thinking and least like adults in their feelings.

The young Child's inability to learn externally imposed rules that have special implications for the educational programmes to which he or she is subjected. It has already been noted that kids learn best through playing with and manipulating materials in their environment. Certainly, children can be accelerated in particular skills if they are taught long and hard enough. But the price may be too steep in regard to what the child missed or the emotional problems that ensued in the process. In general, a child who elaborates the skills he does have, such as the ability to order materials, is likely to be better prepared for future learning than a child who has learnt a great deal in a short time but who has not really had the opportunity to assimilate and practice what he or she has learnt.

Early Childhood Education: Concept and Development

Early childhood has been defined as a period of life between 3 to 8 years of age. This is the period of greatest growth and development, when the brain develops most rapidly, almost at its fullest, (Evans, 2002). It is a period when walking, talking, self-esteem, vision of the world and moral foundations are established.

It is generally believed that the child's early years constitute the period of most rapid and permanent learning. By age four, about 50% of intellectual development potential of the child is already in place, (Onwuegbu, 2019). Enhancing the quality of young children's lives is now a national and international priority, expressed through research and policy initiatives, programme development and advocacy. This therefore may explain the increasing global attention being given to early childhood education. According to the national policy on education given to a child in an educational institution prior to his entering primary school. This level includes the crèche, the nursery, and the kindergarten. This can also be called pre-primary education programme. Brabre (2003) stated that the years between birth and age five are the foundation upon which successful (or otherwise) lives are built. Ajayi (2008) affirms that the first five years is critical for a child's overall development and later life chances. Odiagbe (2015) asserted that ECE is the term commonly used to describe the formal teaching and care of young children by people other than their families or in settings outside of the home. Early childhood and care education span the human life from birth to age eight. However, early childhood and care education covers the period from birth to when a child starts school. Early Childhood Education, according to Brabre (2003), is actually the first part of basic education and must be given priority and accorded appropriate workforce for effective service delivery. Mishra (2008) posits that Early Childhood Education (ECE) refers to a wide range of programmes, all aimed at the physical, cognitive and social development of children before they enter primary school theoretically from birth to age 7 or 8 years. Ibiam and Ugwu (2009) defined early childhood education as that which is designed to develop the habits, attitudes and skills needed

for primary education, while Harkonen (2004), maintains that the concept of early childhood education only covers the practice of early childhood education and learning of the child. Similarly, Hujala (2002) posits that early childhood education in Finland deals with the process of Care, Education and Teaching of the child to ensure that he or she effectively acquires basic skills to cope with the primary stage of schooling. UNESCO and UNICEF (2012), further define the term early childhood education (ECE) as a range of processes and mechanisms that sustain, support and aid the holistic development of children, from birth to age 8. Woodhead (2006) affirms that the early years are formative of children's long-term prospects. According to Shonkoff and Phillips (2000), scientific arguments for recognizing the early years as a sensitive period (developmental '*prime-time*') have received tantalizing endorsement in recent decades through advances in neuroscience. (Rutter & Rutter, 1993). The earliest months of life are also the period of most rapid synapse formation constructing the dense networks of neural connectivity on which cortical activity depends. Synaptic density which is assumed to be an indicator of intelligence, increases most between birth to 2 years of age i.e. (when it is 50% higher than for more mature adults). Densities decline gradually over the period from 2 to 16 years of age. Early Childhood Education summarily is seen as the first formal form of education given to children between the ages of 1 to 6 years and learning is usually through play by the use of toys, games and so on.

The scientific study of the child's intellectual growth rate.

The world beams its searchlight on the scientific study of the child. The United Nations General Assembly declared 1979 as the International year of the child (IYC), and that drew world's attention to the present condition and to the future of the with special attention to the general well-being and development of the child. The study also reveals that children learn faster as they grow at the tender age. A careful study of an average child in the home has revealed that childhood art can be divided into certain growth stages, which enables the understanding of the developmental stages of children in relation to their dexterity and creative expressions. Piaget, for instance, spent many years studying children's intellectual development, and became convinced that children undergo a series of developmental stages from birth to age eighteen (Onwueghu, 2019). Based on findings, this paper hereby makes a proposal for classification of the child art into four intellectual growth stages, namely: the stage of linear amusement, the stage of media acquaintance, the stage of imaginative skills and the stage of realistic circumstances as recorded during simple observations. Based on precedents, this section therefore draws energy from the intellectual works of some progenitors of child intellectual study, like Piaget and Lowenfield to make the following proposals.

Research Design

The research instrument adopted in this study is studio experimentation/observation. This is an experimental study which was conducted in two arts and crafts studios of the NVRI Staff (primary and nursery) School Vom, and Arise and Shine Private School, Bukuru, all of Jos-LGA, Plateau State Nigeria. It employed observation methods to record the performances of the different ages of pupils concerning the use of the 3Hs (hand head and heart) to achieve good craftsmanship education. The observational tests were recorded pictorially and discussed theoretically.

Findings

Nursery: The stage of linear art (Age 1 – 3 years)



Plates 1 and 2: Showing kindergarten children displaying their art of scribbling



Plates 3, 4, 5 and 6: Showing nursery pupils displaying their art of colouring, craft of paper construction and craft of moulding clay.

Observations

1. The child, scribbles unknowingly on the sand as the he or she crawls from one end to the other. their movements create all manner of lines in an unconscious, and non-representational manner (using his fingers, knees and toes) but are expressive of his crawling movement.
2. The child scribbles non-representational lines or drawings on paper or any flat surface when he or she starts handling writing materials such as pencil, crayon chalk etc. An adult artist can however make some sense out of such non-representational impressions.
3. As the child advances the age of three he or she can interact consciously with any available mark-rendering media like pencil, pen, crayon, chalk, charcoal, as well as other materials like paper, and clay and can be skillfully taught to make representational impressions (marks, lines, textures, and images). From close observations, healthy and playful children have pleasure in holding writing medium (pencil or crayon) to roll impressions in a garbled, no directional, freehand manner. This can be referred to as random scribbling (plates 1 and 2). Before children master the art of writing and spelling, they first engage in rendering random scribbling in disorganized concentric circles, running rigidly over and under sometimes with intuitions. This can be considered to be the first attempt of the child so ever to show drawing skill and a predictably sure foundation for being an artist/craftsman or any other creatively-rendering profession. Looking at the child scribbles and its personality and psychology, one cannot but say that it represents the emotion of the child's personal

and free-and-easy character. The results of handling mark-rendering media or any designing material could seem meaningless to an adult or even to the child itself, but it is expressive of the child's subconscious mind.

Primary: The stage of media acquaintance (Age 5 - 8)



Plates 7, 8, 9 and 10: Showing primary pupils displaying their craft of paper Mache, clay work, mat making and the art of drawing.

Observations

1. This is the stage that the child is more media-friendly. He or she can distinguish between the mark-rendering media like pencil, biro, crayon, chalk and charcoal as well as clay, paper, cartons etc. A little more consciously than the previous (linear amusement) stage.
 2. The child is able to cherish writing, drawing, and moulding materials and handle them with some level of appreciation.
 3. Children of this level claim all things within their reach to themselves saying "my own;" "my own". This trait in children is helpful to them in media acquaintance and design appreciation.
 4. At this stage also, the child can watch the adult moulding objects like pot, house, plate and other simple household things with mediums like clay or paper, and can be handled by the child more expressively than in the previous stages. No doubt, the child is confronted with tasks and realistic circumstances. He or she becomes a little more matured with developed sensual perception which is needed to render creativity to impress the beholder of his or her work.
 5. The child expresses its unsolicited skills in a self-pleasing way. The artist/craftsman in the child begins to show up as previous experience crops into the new challenges.
- Children in Nursery and Primary Schools in Nigeria are delighted in creating moving and animated forms. These occupy their time, keen interest and also their concept of material possession. They are guided in doing this in the school and they continue the art/craft at home in a playful way.

Importance of Arts and Crafts to The Child's Educational Development

Based on the findings above, the following assertion can be said to be the potentials or importance of arts and crafts to the child's educational development.

- i. **Improving Coordination or Motto skills:** Simple activities like using scissors, brushes, spatulas and so on can help improve a child's ability to do things like tying/polishing shoes, knotting tie, sewing with thread and needle, bead works, molding objects with clay, folding cards to create objects like kites, fans caps and so on. Kohl (2015), opines that when kids use their hands to do art/craft, they improve their fine motor skills.
- ii. **Communication Skill:** When children make art or craft projects, they are undoubtedly proud of it. In fact, they will probably tell the story all about the project. That is how they conceive

the ideas, and the processes they embark from the beginning to completion of their crafty creations, (Ke, 2023).

iii. Critical Thinking: In making art and crafts, children can make choices depending on what they want. For example, a child painting a picture or making a truck can choose the colour (s) and size (s) of the painting or the truck. After the final product, it is easy for him or her to know whether their decision was right or wrong based on his or her ability to critically think.

iv. Self-Esteem: Art and craft activities give kids a sense of achievement and allow them to take pride in their work which builds confidence. Making art and craft is a great and safe way for children to discover that it is very normal to make mistakes and that getting things 'wrong' at the beginning can lead to a whole new idea and Self-esteem.

v. Arithmetic/Mathematical Development: When children engage in practicing arts and crafts, they get to learn about and recognize different shapes and sizes of objects and materials.

vi. Creativity: A child who engages in arts and crafts can come up with new ideas from it. It also fosters mental growth in children by providing opportunities for trying out new ideas, new ways of thinking and problem-solving.

vii. Open to opportunities: Art and craft has a crucial role at the centre of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics; moving STEM into STEAM fosters creativity, innovation, and economic growth. Ball, (2008). Art, craft and design support and service other subjects, industries and sectors. They provide an introduction to potential skills and careers in other life endeavours; in other words, springboards to learning other subjects and professions.

Discussions

It is truly observed, as noted in Mishra, (2008) that some of the most available and cheapest materials a child could use for creative expression are paper, colour (crayon) and clay. Observations proved that clay and paper moulding assignments given to the pupil under study were exciting to them presumably because of the 'play ways' methods of handling the simple materials - clay and paper. This went in line with the position of (Ke, 2023). That things that appear to children as playthings is always interesting to them. The methodology of the teachers was very useful in the teaching of skills of dexterity. It was also discovered that the fun in the art of moulding with the hand as shown in plates 4, 5 and 6 really kept the pupils' hand, head and heart busy and concentrated.

The projects the pupils were exposed to further stimulated their creative potentials as suggested in Kohl (2015). Specifically, the child should be involved in traditional artistic/craftsmanship serving as a basis in the first instance, as a cultural order for organizing a physical pattern, preparatory for a future world of work, and lifelong education. It is noteworthy to state that compositional adventures of art and craft and their modifications to suit modern society can only be fruitful when classroom orientations are accentuated by homework. In order to bring a renewed vigor into the aspect of creativity of the child that suggests constructions, formal lessons in basic design is also expedient to bridge some docile gaps between the home and the classroom.

Nevertheless, the approach to creative craftsmanship skill that would instigate a new appearance of formative and formulative principles in the child is envisaged by group activities. In these lie the interactive and 'intra-relative romance of design decisions with results, commitment to collective responsibility, and providing prototypes of collective oriented goals (Fatuyi, 2016). Craftsmanship training of the child through group activities engenders collective methods of character education and the zeal to forge solutions to common problems under strict adult supervision. These interactions are combined with opportunities created so that the youth could also reciprocate it through the younger children and their parents as to continue to have an opportunity to express their interpretations to, and relationships with works of art (Sims, 2012). The continuing, physical, emotional and psychological involvement of peer-groups in art and craft training programmes could assist to provide a new discovery.

Conclusion

Increased emphasis on child development through art and craft, using the principle of “catching them young” is of the essence. It would ignite considerable foundational interest and development of the child’s creative instinct and abilities. Children are not afraid to grab any medium at their disposal in order to express themselves in any manner. Home-given education is pre-primarily important and helpful in discovering the child and determining which other schools or career education the child should pursue.

The identified ways that art and craft help to prepare or develop children to face challenges in life as they grow are critical and will help a great deal in determining their future. That is to say what their future careers or professions will look like, and how they will be useful to the society or the environment they found themselves later in life largely depends on the training they get or skills were imparted in them as children. Life itself is a teacher, and what an individual learn from his/her childhood has a great influence on what becomes of them years later. Therefore, art/craft is a sure way in shaping the child’s future, helping them to be useful to himself, family, their immediate community and the larger society.

Recommendations

The following recommendations may help in the educational development of children from the perspective of art and craft:

1. Teachers should engage children with talks about arts and craft. This will improve their communication skills, even in other areas. During the talk, they can also pick up vocabulary from the conversation. This will also make their parents better understand their feelings, as expressed through their arts and crafts.
2. Parents should encourage their children and wards in art and craft by buying them materials such as marking pencils, poster-colours, ball-pens, brushes, colouring books, clay, spatulas, cardboards, gums, and other fun and engaging items. Naturally, parents first teachers of children at home, though they may not necessarily have deep pedagogical skills, but they must devise a means of inculcating art/craft education in their wards. This will go a long way towards ensuring the overall good development of their children. If they spot design gift, no matter how little in their children, they should make bold to encourage it without prejudice. Children should be encouraged to think and talk about what they see and feel as well as record them expressively in methods and materials, which correspond with their age and experiential abilities.
3. Government should ensure that they encourage pupils towards art and craft by providing adequate children-instructional materials in preprimary and primary schools, adequate learning environment for children, employing enough qualified (skillful) teachers.

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BEAUTY IN CONTEXT: AN EXPOSITORY STUDY OF BODY AESTHETICS AMONG AFRICANS

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Introduction

The word “Aesthetics” can be used to describe appreciation of something beautiful, especially in the arts; it is the way something looks, when it is considered in terms of how pleasing it is. Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy that aims at establishing the general principles of art and beauty, whereas the perception of beauty always gives pleasure to the perceiver, it delights the senses and exalts the mind. According to Lawal (1974), Aesthetics deals with the philosophy of the beautiful as well as with the standards of value in judging art and aspects of human life and culture. Shelley (2022) argues that the term “aesthetic” can be used to describe many things such as a kind of object, a kind of judgment, a particular attitude, experience, or value.

Aesthetic values have implications on the visible features of, and practices related to the body, while aesthetic judgment informs all sorts of embellishment people put on, do with bodies, and the experience of having a body (Martin-Seaver 2019). Some of these embellishments include clothing, makeup, hair, jewelries, and tattoos. The practice of body aesthetics has to do with understanding and being able to express one’s self. It has been observed that the true self-apprehension is visible in the active language of cultural expression (Soyinka 1976). The practice of body aesthetics expresses not only “one’s evaluative feelings regarding oneself and what would make one pretty, handsome, sexy . . .” but one’s cultural context and relationship to that context (Eaton, 2016). While expatiating on body aesthetics among black women and how they navigate racialized standards of beauty, Tate (2009) argues that the “question of bodily practices such as those of beauty are always discursive and subject to the gaze of the other.”

Among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria, the beautiful is considered to have *Ẹwà* which implies “well-finished”; it has *Ìfanimóra*, attractiveness, pleasing to behold or experience. Ornamentation, adornment, decoration, beautification, and embellishment are words that are closely related to, or interwoven within the concept of body aesthetics. There have been widespread endeavours at harmonizing and emphasizing natural beauty either by working directly on the body, or, by producing aesthetical accompaniments for the human body.

This paper is concerned with why African people adorn their bodies with tattoos, scars, jewelries, hairstyles, clothing and other body art; and why they may also reshape their noses, earlobes or lips. Beyond serving as an expression of beauty, jewelries have been worn as an object of magic to ward off evil and also bring good luck (Ijisakin 2012). Bead as a form of body adornment has also served as an indication of a person’s social status, or age (Ijisakin 2004, and 2020). In addition, Balogun (2023) argues that the practices of body aesthetics among Africans provide a useful understanding of socio-cultural structures as beauty often reflects social values, power differentials, and personal agency.

This paper therefore investigates beauty in the context of body aesthetics among Africans. It specifically focuses on hairdressing, tattooing, scarification, body painting, dresses, and jewelries. This is to enable a more useful understanding of different means and purposes of body aesthetics in the African culture, and how these serve as a true medium of cultural expression. Data for the study

were collected through field investigation which includes participant observation and visual media sources. Data were also collected from relevant literature such as textbooks, journal articles, as well as Internet sources. Data collected were subjected to art historical analysis. The primary concern of art historical analysis is to understand and give meaning to works of art by description of formal characteristics, examination of content or subject matter, and placing works of art in their historical context. According to Britannica (2023), art historical research seeks to discover who made a particular art object, why, and in what socio-cultural context was it made? It also seeks to understand the stylistic and formal development of artistic traditions on a large scale and within a broad historical perspective.

Hairdressing as a form of body aesthetics

African hair is among the body parts that receive the greatest attention and care as the people rarely leave their hair in its simple and natural state. The art of hairdressing among Africans is practiced almost exclusively by women, although male hairdressers can be found in some areas especially in recent times. The artistry which has been handed over from generation to generation involves manual dexterity and patience; it is time consuming and serves as a medium for creative self-expression. Niangi (2000) argues that the earliest European travelers and explorers were greatly amazed by diversified creativity of African hairstyles; while the coiffures on artworks also inspires admirations as well as questions about their nature, use, as well as function.

The hair has become a cultural element of social communication and an expression of cultural identity. Hair is styled practically to enhance beauty, especially among the Yoruba of southwest Nigeria; to indicate social status, as well as commemorate special occasions. According to Sieber (2000) hairstyle has served to identify ethnic origin, gender, phase of the life, status, as well as personal taste. The processes of hairdressing involve cutting, coiling, braiding, bleaching, dyeing, oiling, powdering or adding wig or other ornaments such as beads.

Further, Lawal (2000) observed that a majority of Yoruba women fashion their hair into assorted crown-like designs and sometimes adorned with colourful beads, both to honour their *Ori inu* (inner head or destiny) and also in keeping the popular maxim *irun l'ewa obirin* (the hair adds to a woman's beauty). Daramola and Jeje (2005) identified various Yoruba hairstyles such as *Patewo* (clap), *Suku* (knotted hair), *Kolese* (without legs), *Ipako Elede* (pig's occiput), *Panumo* (close your mouth), *Oko nlo*, *Oko nbo* (the hoe goes forth and back), *Ojo ma peti* (rain should not fall on the ears), as well as *Koroba* (bucket). Among the Yoruba, spinsters wear simple styles such as *Ojo ma peti*, *Ipako Elede*, or *Koroba*; brides and housewives wear exquisite hair styles like *Panumo* and *Suku*; while wives of the nobles and Kings usually distinguish themselves with more intricate and elaborate version of the *Suku* style. Widows are usually required to undo their hair throughout the mourning period, after which they shave it clean as a symbolic separation from the deceased husband and to return to the usual life.

The itinerant nature of the Bororo Fulani people makes body decoration a travelling art; both men and women elaborately decorate their hair by coaxing and teasing the hair into excellent shapes. The hair could also be plaited, padded or decorated with other assorted materials such as beads (Plates 1a & b). In the Fulani culture a woman who has given birth to her first child has two strands of hair over her cheeks and fixed under her chin with a white bead; on the nape of the neck the hair is arranged in folds and decorated with white stones: the hairstyle is meant to portray a new mother's calm and wisdom (Brain 1980). The Masai, like the Fulani people of West Africa are a nomadic people whose society is very much enthusiastic about personal adornment. In some African cultures, women rely on their exquisite hairstyles to draw attention of men; this practice was very popular in the erstwhile Malagasy Republic, now Madagascar.



Plates 1a & b: Fulani women showing decorated hairdo
Brain, Robert (1980): *Art and Society in Africa*,

Tattooing, Scarification and Body Painting

Tattooing is a method of decorating the skin by inserting coloured substances under the surface having punctured the skin with a sharp instrument. Archaeological and anthropological evidence suggest that early people may have decorated their bodies with paint, tattoos, and other types of ornamentation even before the wearing of cloth. Scarification like tattooing is the practice of cutting the skin and introducing irritants into the wound to produce a permanent scar. Although rarely practiced today, scarification has a long tradition in many African cultures, and these traditional markings continue to appear on carved statues and pottery figures (Chanda 2006). Most scars were made on the face, back, chest, or around the navel. Scarification could express social status or ethnic affiliation; it could also offer protection against harmful spirits.

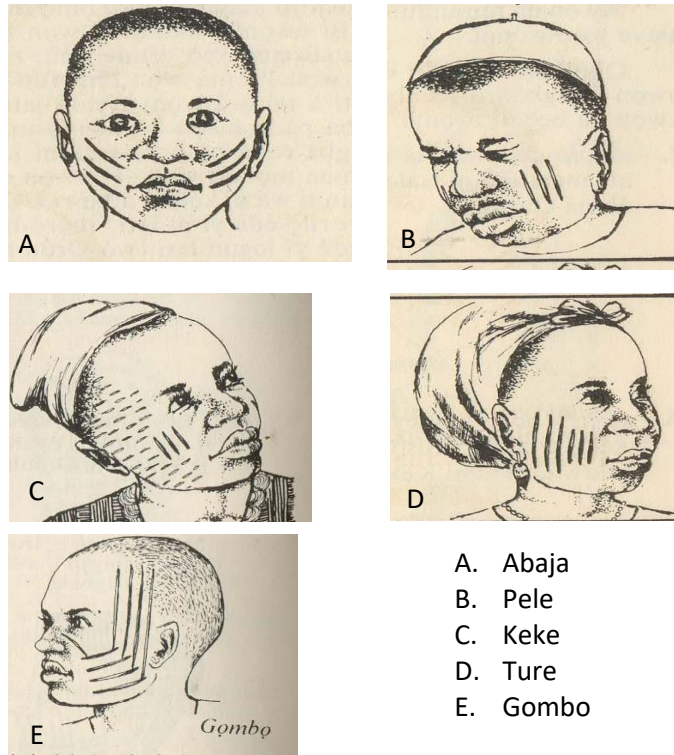
Among the Yoruba, scarification indicates lineage affiliation. The body is scarified for the aesthetic value of the patterns among the Tiv of Nigeria. Among the Somba people of Benin and Togo, in Western Africa, scarification indicated a person's stage in life. An individual received his or her first marks at the age of fourteen, signifying the transition from childhood to adulthood. The Bangwa of Cameroon, according to Brain (1980), cicatrize their women in the abdomen (Plate 2) with complex patterns to celebrate the birth of a first child. Scarification among the Nuba women in the Sudan also signify a mark of physiological status: patterns which indicate such stages as the onset of puberty and the birth of the first child (the Encyclopedia Britannica 2008). Among the Nuer of Sudan, six cuts which remain for life as scars, are often made across the forehead of boys during initiation rites (the Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia 1989).

The use of line to accentuate facial features is essentially for enhancement of the natural beauty, although some are meant to stimulate terror especially among the warriors while subsequent Alaafin's (Kings) and their *Aare ona kakanfos* (Generalissimos) were expanding the Old Oyo kingdom to as far as Dahomey. Ewuare the great in the 15th century led a series of military campaigns to expand the boundaries of Benin kingdom. Also, Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye left no stone unturned for the stability and expansion of Ashanti kingdom. Uthman Dan Fodio later came with his Fulani Jihad of 1804. This was a time when there were wars and rumors of wars in most parts of West African states. People were being captured and many were sold into slavery, especially during the Atlantic Slave Trade, it was this time that the practice of facial marks gained ground among the Yoruba. The facial marks were meant for easy identification, in order to know from which town and from what family an individual comes as this often helps the individual to regain his or her freedom. Apart from easy identification, the Yoruba also make facial marks to enhance their natural beauty; this is evident in their popular adage: "*Omo lo dara bi eyi ti ko r'owo ko'la*" (the beauty would have been enhanced, if the child had facial marks). Yoruba facial marks (Plates 3a-e) include *Abaja*, *Pele*, *Ture*, *Gombo*, and *Keke*. According to Bewaji (2003), the old art of tattooing and various forms of body adornment have been rediscovered in the West, especially in the United states of America; it has now assumed a plastic art status being performed by "highly skilled" surgeons for a huge sum of money.

In a related development, some young Nuba men celebrate their youthful vigor in extensive body painting (Plate 4). One of the most striking examples of body decoration is that of the pastoral Fulani of Nigeria which reaches its peak in the annual *gerewol*, a beauty competition between men whose faces are painted and wear bead necklaces, metal bracelets, and head ornaments, reminiscing the Makeo warrior of the Southeast of New Guinea (Plate 5).



Plate 2: Bangwa woman of Cameroon showing cicatrized abdomen
Brain, Robert (1980): *Art and Society in Africa*, p. 226



Plates 3a-e: Various types of Yoruba facial marks, Daramola, Olu & Jeje, Adebayo (2005): *Awon Asa ati Orisa Ile Yoruba*; pp.78-80



Plate 4: A Young Nuba man with extensive body painting, Encyclopedia Britannica (2008)



Plate 5: Body painting of a Makeo warrior, Leakey, Richard & Lewin, Roger (1977): *Origins*; E. P. Dutton, New York, p.246

Body painting may also indicate the particular social role one is playing at a given time. It also expresses social and religious values. Many African cultures have employed the use of body painting to denote the warriors and the chiefs, with each rank having its individual pattern. Body painting has also been used to show one's affiliation (Plate 6) with his area of interest, or heritage, and for advertising purposes (Plate 7). The Ngere girls of Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire also paint their body for initiation rites (Plate 8). Among the ancient Egyptians, Henna was used to dye the fingernails, the palms of the hands as well as the soles of the feet; similitude of the *Osun* among the Yoruba, and *Laali* among the Hausa and Fulani of Nigeria.



Plate 6: Body painting showing affiliation with Nigeria, MTN Recharge Card www.mtnonline.com

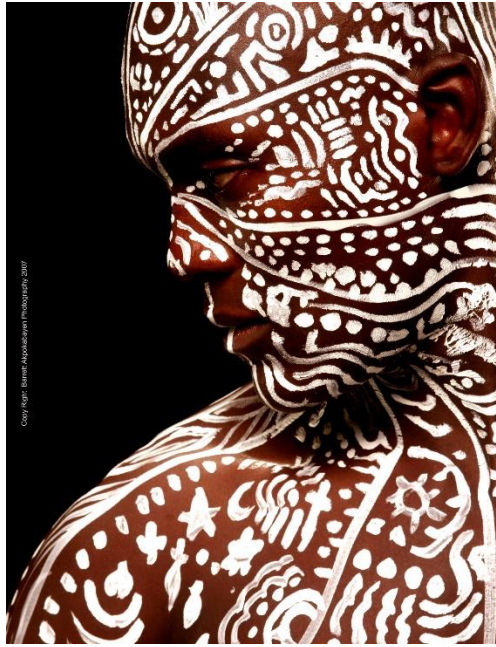


Plate 7: Body painting used for advertising purposes, Akpokabayen, Barret (2008)



Plate 8: Body painting of an Ngeri Girl, Willet, Frank (1971): *African Art: An Introduction*, Thames & Hudson, London, p.174

Dresses/Clothing in body aesthetics

The variety of dress found throughout the continent are matters of aesthetic concern irrespective of other social purposes they may also serve. Clothing has served as a symbol of identity and a means of nonverbal communication in many African cultures. Steele (2006) argues that clothing functions almost as a language that can indicate a person's age, gender, marital status, place of origin, religion, social status, or occupation. Both men and women participate in cloth making processes such as dyeing, stamping, or weaving designs into textiles. Among the Yoruba, weaving of cloth is majorly done by the women; Iseyin is a Yoruba town famous for her dexterity in the weaving of *Aso-Ofi*

otherwise known as *Aso-Oke*. Other types of Yoruba clothes include *Etu*, *Sanyan*, *Kijipa*, and *Adire*. Abeokuta is another Yoruba town where women are specialists in dyeing of cloth, unlike in Kano, northern part of Nigeria, where men are the exclusive cloth dyers; this perhaps is as a result of Islam which inhibits women from being seen outside.

Nowadays, people have more freedom on selecting their clothing in order to convey their respective messages. However, clothing still provides significant information about the wearer, such as individual personality, economic status, as well as the nature of occasions being attended by the wearer. Plate 9 shows Oba Akenzua II of Benin in full regalia; just as the Yoruba Obas (Kings) when dressed in their full regalia convey a personality of authority, power, wealth, beauty, and majesty. In the opinion of Blier (1998), the tall conical shapes of the royal beaded crowns give visual prominence to the head, in accordance with the central place of the head in Yoruba philosophy about *Ori* (destiny), *ase* (spiritual power), *iwa* (character) and *ewa* (beauty). Among the Akan of Western Africa, Kente a Ghanaian textile is historically worn in a toga-like fashion by people with royal status. The earliest surviving examples of Kente cloth date from the 16th century; they consist of woven strips of blue and white silk sewn together. Anquandah and Kankpeyeng (2014) have also observed that Kente are usually made of handwoven cloth, strips of silk and cotton. The Kente cloth signified the wearer's status, its patterns might also allude to a proverb or a historic event. However, the use of Kente in contemporary times is no longer exclusive to royalty such that it is highly sought-after and used in important occasions across West Africa and beyond. Chanda (2006) has also observed that a more brightly coloured version of Kente cloth has become more popular among all social classes.

The traditional mode of dressing among the Itshekiri in Nigeria is quite commendable, according to Negri (1968), the Itshekiri men wrap themselves in yards of cloth which is passed around the hips and pleated from the centre to the left side, folded into draperies and left to hang free; the waist edge is then rolled over into a fat bundle which holds the pleats in place and also gives a little swing to them. A long shirt is usually worn on top of the skirt-cloth, this is complemented by a form of European-style hat known as *Ekor*, while noble men also carry large fan, with a long gold chain and pendant. Plate 10 shows the Samburu people wearing traditional clothing. The men wear solid bright red fabrics, while the women have vivid designs on their clothing, with collars made of roped beads. Headdresses come in various forms for different people. The Yoruba headdresses for men are known as *fila* (cap). They are beautifully designed and some are embellished with tiny beads. The headdresses for women are known as *gele*. This could be tied in different styles; while some styles could be curious, others could be highly imaginative. It is pertinent to note that there is creativity in the tying of *gele* to the extent that experts now do it for a fee.

Among the Ndebele peoples of present-day South Africa and Zimbabwe, beadwork serve as means of marking different cultural stages of a woman's life; typical examples are the girl's apron known as *lighabi*, and married women's' apron known as *ijogolo*. Beadwork has also been used to express African cultural identity through bold geometric designs that made potent political statements especially during the apartheid era (Green 2018). For instance, Nelson Mandela made a very strong political statement when he dressed in the costume of a Thembu King, which included leopard skin and a beaded collar (*ingqosha*) to his trial in 1962 (Barnard 2014); the beaded collar (*ingqosha*) is similar to the one shown in Plate 11.

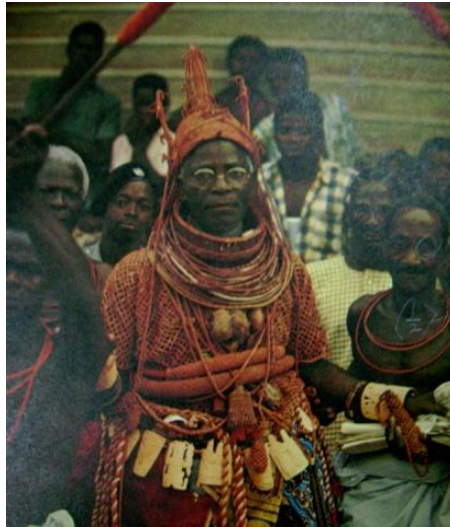


Plate 9: Oba Akenzua II of Benin in full regalia, Davidson, Basil (1966): *Africa: History of a Continent*, Springs Books, London, p.191



Plate 10: Samburu people of Kenya wearing traditional clothing, Microsoft® Encarta® (2006)



Plate 11: Collar (*ingqosha*), 19th-20th Century. Beads, Fibre, Buttons, Leather. South Africa: Xhosa, Mfengu, or Nguni peoples. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Jewelries as a form of body aesthetics

Beads rank among the most universal form of personal adornment, and it is an important means of expressing humanity's most basic cultural and spiritual aspirations. The quest for personal adornment has led to the creation of a variety of jewelries made of beads. A great variety of shells

have also been used in making jewelries. Other materials used include coral, amber, bone, wood, ivory, brass, leather, as well as faience, glass, clay, plastic, paper, and gold. All materials that have been used over the years have gone through certain mechanical, physical, or chemical treatment in order to transform their raw forms into shapes that are not only functional, but are also aesthetically pleasing. Beaded jewelry is prominent among the clothing of Samburu people of Kenya (Van Bavel, 2022); while Plate 12 shows a Fulani woman with gold earrings.

Beads are significant in shaping the identity of the people who use them. A Yoruba adage states that: *eni ti o so ileke, lo pari oso* (one who adorns with beads has done the ultimate in body adornment). Ijisakin (2004) has observed among the Yoruba that status and ranks are acknowledged by wearing of beads, *ade ori l'a fi n mo oba, ileke orun ni ti awon ijoye* (the king can be distinguished by his beaded crown; while the chief is identified by the strings of beads he puts on). Ijisakin further argues that women waist beads (jewelries) known as *bebe* and *lagidigba* are explicitly erotic and possess the power to attract and evoke deep emotional responses. In the opinion of Drewal (1998), the people of Owo and Benin enjoyed an extensive beading tradition with many elements similar to those at Ife, while heavy multistrands jewelries embellish their figures. There is also a preponderance of beaded jewelries in the soapstone sculptures found at Esie in Northern Yorubaland (Drewal and Pemberton 1989).

Among the Masai, a nomadic people of Eastern Africa, belts, beaded earrings, necklaces, and ostrich feathers indicate the stage a man has reached in life (Chanda 2006); a young Masai woman from Kenya (Plate 13) wears an elaborate collection of bead collars, an ornament for which her tribe is noted. In the submission of Jefferson (1974), the Masai massive earrings proclaim: "I am a married woman"; in fact, the Masai wife would not want her husband to see her without her huge ornaments. The Ndebele women of South Africa also adorn themselves with numerous necklaces, ankle and wrist bracelets as shown in Plate 14. A Samburu woman from the northern area of Kenya is also shown in Plate 15 with jewelries made of beads and leatherworks. The foregoing is a testament to the use of necklaces, earrings, pendants, rings, belts, armlets, and bracelets and other forms of jewelries as a form of body adornment among Africans.

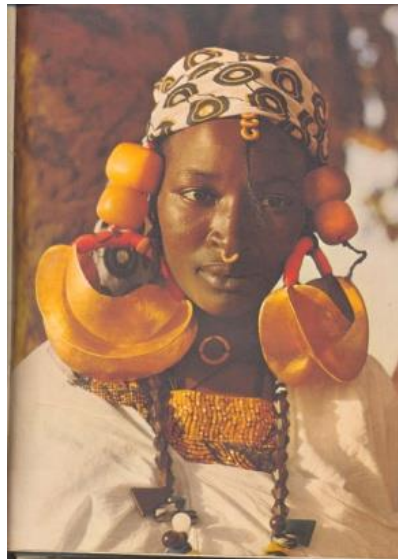


Plate 12: A Fulani woman wearing gold earrings, Davidson, Basil (1966): *Africa: History of a Continent*, Springs Books, London, p.247

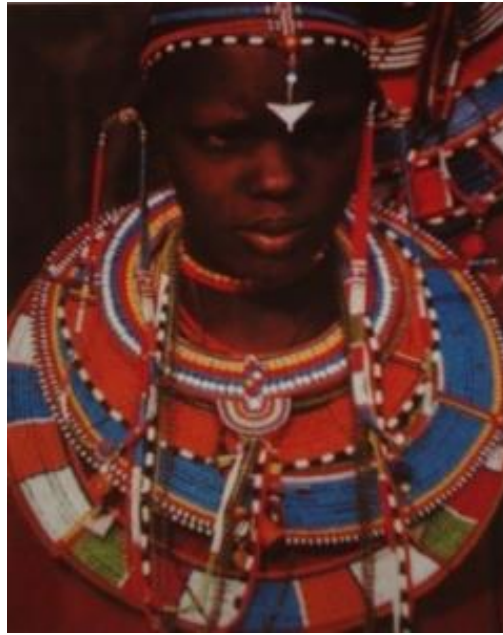


Plate 13: A young Masai woman wearing an elaborate collection of bead collars. *Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia*, (1989): Lexicon Publications Inc. New York, Vol. 3, p.138



Plate 14: A Samburu with jewelries made of beads and leatherworks, Leakey, Richard and Lewin, Roger (1977): *Origins*; E. P. Dutton, New York, p. 138

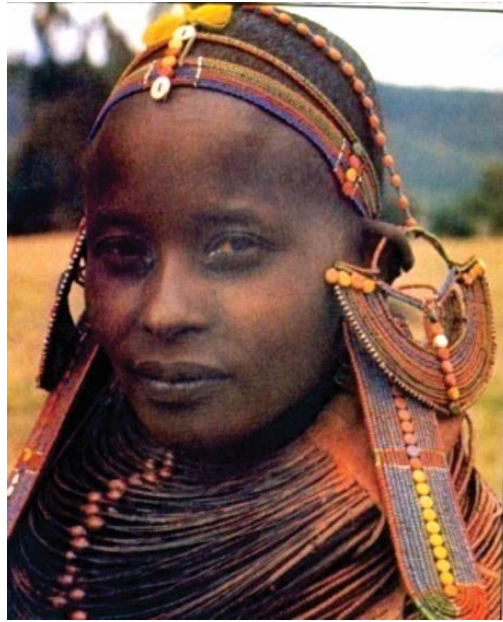


Plate 15: Ndebele woman adorning herself with numerous jewelries, Microsoft ® Encarta ® (2006)

Conclusion

With the foregoing it is evident that enhancement of beauty for identification purposes, as well as distinction of social status are among the diverse reasons that have aided the practice of body aesthetics among Africans. Body aesthetics have also been applied to terrify the enemy and also serve as a form of charm or ritual to ward off evil and avert danger. At times, body decorations are done in some African cultures to test one's ability for endurance, especially during initiation into age grades or puberty rites. The essence of African aesthetics is the quest for pleasure, satisfaction, and happiness; in this, body aesthetics have been able to achieve a lot.

Appearance is a vital element in African aesthetics; beauty in appearance is not only about cleanliness but also neatness, hence, "*irinisi ni isenilojo*" the way you are dressed, so you are addressed. In Yoruba concept of beauty, cleanliness is highly cherished while dirtiness is abhorred "*obun sio sio ni yio ru eru afinju*" the filthy ones shall bear the burdens of the hygienic and beautiful ones. Finally, it is pertinent to note that hairdressing, clothing, tattooing, scarification, body painting, and jewelries which aimed at enhancing one's natural beauty can also detract; hence, "*gele ko dun bi i ka mo o we, ka mo o we ko dabi i ko yeni*" which means having a headgear is not as good as knowing how to tie it; tying it is not as beautiful as when it fits. In conclusion, the perception, adoration, appraisal, and all the principles of natural beauty depend largely upon the epoch as well as the individual culture's ability to judge aesthetically.

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SEMIOTICS AND ABSTRACT REALISM IN THE PAINTINGS OF JIMMY NWANNE, HARRISON IDAHOSA AND IBE ANANABA: A SAUSSURIAN STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

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Introduction

Art has long served as a canvas for human expression, encapsulating diverse facets of our complex world. A reconnoiter of semiotics and abstract realism offers a compelling lens through which artists communicate profound messages while engaging with the abstract and the representational. In this vein, the works of Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa, and Ibe Ananaba emerge as captivating explorations that beckon us to decipher the intricate tapestries they have woven. This study embarks on a journey to decode the semiotic layers and abstract realism inherent in the artworks of these three talented artists. However, our quest is not undertaken in isolation but rather within the framework and theories of Ferdinand de Saussure's structural linguistics. Saussure's pioneering work in semiotics provides a structured lens through which we can analyze the intricate interplay of signs and symbols within the realm of art. Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa, and Ibe Ananaba, each hailing from unique artistic backgrounds, have contributed significantly to the discourse surrounding semiotics and abstract realism. Their works, while distinct in style and subject matter, share a common thread of utilizing semiotic elements to convey powerful messages.

The use of semiotics as an analytical framework in visual arts has gained prominence in recent decades. Semiotics in painting involves the use of visual elements as carriers of meaning, conveying both explicit and implicit messages. The concept of semiotics or semiology is central to the study of an artwork as an embodiment of sign, a theory grounded in the works of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914). In painting, symbols and motifs are employed to communicate social, religious, and cultural significance, allowing artists to engage in visual storytelling. The human body, plants, objects, colours, lines, alphabets and shapes can express innumerable amount of symbolic referents which are added to the many other roles they play in the world. Throughout history, painters and other visual artists have explored myriad ways of presenting symbolic narrative to their fellow humans. Ocvirk, Stinson, Wigg, Bone, Cayton, (2006) state that all art is illusionary to some extent, and that some artworks are more successful than others at drawing us out of the ordinary existence into heightened state of awareness. The quality of the subject depicted may provide information as to what degree of involvement the artist has had with it. Symbolic images can express ideas and crystallize understanding in more dramatic ways than words. Additionally, their educative power broadens the imagination and elevates the thought of an individual.

The idea of synthesizing abstract elements with realistic forms could be seen in the works of some contemporary Nigerian painters like Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa and Ibe Ananaba, who have imbibed the principles of abstract realism in their paintings. According to Ikpakroyi (2008), the development of synthesis in modern Nigerian art began with the adventures of Aina Onabolu and his contemporaries in the early 20th century, when they broke away from traditional Nigerian art forms. These artists sought to sharpen their skills and technique through formal training. Their goal was to destroy the myths by some Europeans that African artists were incapable of producing realistic art.

To fully appreciate the convergence of semiotics and abstract realism in the artworks of Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa, and Ibe Ananaba, it is imperative to contextualize their creations within the broader historical and socio-cultural backdrop of Nigeria. The latter half of the 20th century and

the early 21st century have witnessed profound changes in Nigeria, a nation known for its rich cultural diversity, complex history, and vibrant artistic traditions. Emerging from a colonial past, Nigeria gained independence in 1960 and embarked on a journey of nation-building amidst numerous challenges. During this period, Nigerian artists began to explore new forms of artistic expression, incorporating both local and global influences. The 1960s and 1970s marked a vibrant era for Nigerian art, with artists like Ben Enwonwu who began to introduce various forms of stylization and abstraction into his works and the likes of Uche Okeke, Demas Nwoko and Bruce Onobrakpeya who pioneered the "Natural Synthesis" movement, which sought to bridge traditional African art forms with contemporary practices.

As Nigeria transitioned from colonial rule to independence and navigated through periods of military rule and civilian governance, the country's artists continued to evolve their artistic expressions. This dynamic backdrop provided a fertile ground for artistic experimentation, including the fusion of abstract and realism. However, Nigeria also grappled with political instability, economic fluctuations, and social changes. These tumultuous times often found their reflection in the works of artists, who used their canvases to comment on societal issues, advocate for change, and delve into the complexities of Nigerian identity as well stories derived from personal experiences. Against this historical tapestry, Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa, and Ibe Ananaba emerged as significant voices in Nigerian contemporary art. Their works not only reflect personal experiences and socio-political concerns in Nigeria but also contribute to a global dialogue on the intersection of art, symbolism, and meaning. The use of semiotics as an analytical framework in visual arts has gained prominence in recent decades. Through this exploration, we seek to unearth the nuanced semiotic structures embedded in their creations. This study serves not only as a testament to the artists' profound talents but also as an invitation to delve into the depths of their visual narratives. The study also traverses the realms of abstract and realism, signs and symbols, and the intricate dance between artistic expression and semiotic interpretation through the lens of Saussure's structural model. The paper aims to unravel the hidden meanings within the works of these artists and gain a deeper understanding of the semiotic underpinnings imbued in their artistic visions.

Semiotics in Painting

Symbolism is associated with the theory of the work of art as sign, where semiotics or semiology functions. Initiated by Ferdinand de Saussure ((1857-1913) and Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914). Hence, Semiotics applies to the study of art as an embodiment of signs. This then implies that the work of art is beyond its referent. Saussure, a Swiss linguist and Pierce, an American philosopher, both made equally significant contributions to the theory of semiotics. Saussure's model was hinged on two elements; he believed that a sign must have a signifier and the signified. The signifier in this context, would refer to anything that is perceived, visualized or depicted, while the signified refers to the meaning or concept implied thereof. Chandler (2020) opines that, Pierce proposes a triadic model- The Represent; the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material); An Interpretant; not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign; An Object; to which the sign refers. According to Chandler, an auxiliary categorization of the semiotic sign is the iconic, symbolic and indexical signs. The iconic refers to a sign that is interpreted by its literal representation. The indexical sign stands for the causal effect or relationship between the signifier and the signified. While the symbol implies or conveys a meaning or a concept beyond the literal representation of the sign.

In these frames, it is clear that the sign or symbol at times may not convey directly its referent. In essence, symbols are characterized by a subjective application and interpretation. Paintings provide diverse valid views regarding a symbol, where proper hermeneutic approach is adopted. Artists invest a lot of faith in the use of symbols as it is becoming increasingly imperative for art to assume a more responsive role in every sphere of modern life. In paintings, the symbols are at times vague. A symbol may possess the ability to signify more than one thing. The human mind cannot expend the plenitude of meanings that an artwork connotes. This is why the sign or symbol is said to be polysemic or polysemous.

Some objects derive their meaning when they are harmoniously associated with other forms or elements. The relationship between these objects or elements makes it easy for one to draw up a theme. For example, Colour is a very important symbolic element of abstract realism. And painters assign very significant role to its application. The colours we see when we look at things get us thinking, they evoke emotions and reflect concepts such as memory, hope, passion and other transcendent ideas. Colours do have very deep effects on the minds of humans due to cultural influences or personal experiences, but they can assume a different connotation when associated with other objects; red may be viewed by some to connote danger, yet a red fruit would symbolize concepts such as passion or pleasure by the same group. It is because the human mind is wont to symbolic interpretations of images and signs.

Saussure's Theory of the Signifier and the Signified

In the realm of semiotics, Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of the signifier and the signified provides a fundamental understanding of how meaning is constructed through the relationship between these two components. This concept can be applied to various forms of visual communication, including painting, which has proven to be a powerful tool for advocacy and communication. A visual artwork, much like a linguistic sign, consists of two essential components: the signifier and the signified. The signifier in painting is the visual representation captured by the artist, composed of various elements such as the subject, lines, textures and colours. The signified, on the other hand, refers to the message, emotion, or concept that the painting conveys to its viewers.

Abstract Realism, with its fusion of abstract elements and the representational, serves as a vivid illustration of Saussure's theory of the arbitrariness of signs in action. Just as Saussure's theory encourages a critical exploration of the relationship between language and reality, painting as a form of visual language, through the lens of semiotic interpretation reconstructs realities that have the power to convey narratives and impact the mind. Nigerians are more likely to be viewers than readers; this therefore, makes our society an increasingly visually oriented society. Aboderin (2017) avers that paintings portray various symbolic images with diverse meanings for the appreciation of a perceiving audience. According to Aboderin, how effective these symbolic images in painting are able to communicate depends on how well the technical and semantic challenges are resolved by the artist. The obvious representations (the realistic part) of an abstract realistic work would often make it easy for the viewer to identify and interpret shared meanings. Ross, (2015) states that "the vocabulary of fine arts is realistic images which we see everywhere throughout our lives, and the grammar are the rules and skills needed to successfully and believably render the images."

According to Duniya (2019), Nigerian artists have against the odds continuously keyed into opportunities provided by society to advance their relevance, and fulfill practical roles in contemporary society. By carefully selecting signifiers, painters can direct viewers' attention to specific issues, prompting them to engage with the underlying signified message. The power of the signifier lies in its ability to encapsulate a particular moment, emotion, or scene. This is where abstract realistic paintings intersect with Saussure's theory. The choice of signifiers, such as subjects, objects, and symbols within a work, can greatly influence the signified message. For instance, an image of a child dressed in white can symbolize innocence, while an image of tree felling can evoke concern about environmental degradation. The interplay between signifiers and the signified in painting allows for nuanced storytelling. Different signifiers can be used to convey various aspects of the same signified message, catering to diverse views and perspectives.

Abstract Realism

The celebrated arts and media has become one of fastest growing industries in Nigeria, the need for craft and creativity is so crucial if the nation must favorably compete in the global arena. The study of how visual elements are rendered and organized so that they can pull the viewer to contemplate on their deeper significance is a worth-while venture. According to McGraw (2013), the proponents

of abstract realism teach a strong technical foundation which leads to highly rendered paintings, simultaneously, adopting a philosophy of synthesis of abstract beauty which is used to lead the viewer's eye through the painting and become a visual hint that subtly captivates the observer. Abstract realists are primarily motivated to create visual impact and promote an idea by employing the symbolic aspects of light, colour, lines and spaces to augment realistic representations of their subject. Hence, the subject matter becomes a vehicle and not the reason for painting. The goal of the abstract realist was to evoke emotions and inspire other visual vocabularies. Wanless (2007) states that all drawings and paintings involve the process of abstraction to a greater or lesser degree as a result of the inner distillation process that is at work in everyone, whether he or she is aware of it or not. Mize (2019) defines abstract as taking from or to separate from something else, and it can also mean to summarize or minimalize. Mize states that in truth we abstract each time we capture an image, whether or not we intend to leave something out or simply change or exaggerate its characteristics.

Contemporary Nigerian artists who have a knack for accurate representation of their subject matter are challenged not to only concern themselves with the aesthetic predilection that their works provide, but use them as tools for communicating deeper meanings. Therefore, Abstract Realism as an art style lends itself as a constructive tool for new assumptions. The 20th century was packed with a myriad of concepts within the arts due to the search for new artistic vocabulary by various artists. According to Mize, abstraction was the guiding force in most art schools. Consequently, good drawing skills and observational techniques were seldom taught, and the focus was rather on how to extract design and patterns within images, thereby creating artworks without any recognizable object.

It is difficult to classify Abstract Realism as an art movement, because it permeates various art movements. Various methods and approaches are employed in the creation of abstract realistic artworks, offering valuable insights to identify Abstract Realism. York (2020) opines that there exists a threefold approach to producing and appreciating Abstract Realistic paintings. Firstly, a subject is figuratively depicted, whether through photography or personal experience. Secondly, non-figurative design elements are infused into the composition. Thirdly, a remarkable indescribable experience emerges from the harmonious interplay between these figurative and non-figurative elements. By synthesizing abstraction and realism in painting, artists gain complete freedom and endless creative possibilities. In abstract realism, the presence of obvious representations. According to York, the realism part acts as a guiding anchor for viewers, even when the abstract part may be avant-garde or experimental. Gradually, the abstract aspects of the artwork work their captivating magic on the engaged viewer.

As emotive tools, abstract realistic artworks have the potential to evoke empathy, compassion, and a sense of urgency in addressing human concerns. The interplay of abstraction and realism allows artists to convey both the tangible realities and the intangible emotions associated with contemporary social dilemmas. Semiotics and Abstract Realism converge to create a powerful platform for artists to express and communicate profound human concerns through art. Hence, these artworks invite viewers to engage on an emotional and intellectual level, fostering a deeper connection with the issues at hand. By harnessing the evocative potential of abstract realism, artists contribute to shaping a more empathetic and conscious society, initiating conversations, and inspiring positive responses.

Jimmy Nwanne

Born in Kaduna, Nigeria, in the year 1989, Jimmy Nwanne embarked on his artistic journey by studying Fine Arts at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, Nigeria, with a specialization in painting. Presently, he resides and creates art in Kaiserslautern, Germany. Nwanne's artistic endeavors have taken him beyond borders, showcasing his works in exhibitions held in Denmark, Germany, and his home country, Nigeria. Nwanne's art, whether in the form of portraiture or

composition, delves into the intricate relationship between life, identity, and migration. He explores the concept of freedom in crafting compositions and portraits by rearranging the natural placement of elements to convey profound ideas and meanings. His work seamlessly blends various subjects and objects, employing them as symbolic motifs to represent concepts, invoking associations with different facets of life. The interplay between these elements often suggests a sense of overlap or a metaphorical "cut and paste." The essence of Nwanne's art lies in how all these diverse elements harmoniously come together to establish a dialogue and evoke emotions within the viewer. His work serves as a captivating exploration of abstract elements and realistic rendering of subjects to portray various aspects of life, and they are skillfully composed to resonate with those who encounter it.

In Nwanne's abstract realistic painting titled "Bond," the signifier is the visual representation of a mother holding her child, while the signified is the concept of maternal love and support. The unraveling wrapper symbolizes the impermanence of material aid, contrasting with the enduring nature of a mother's bond. This artwork exemplifies Saussure's structural semiotics by juxtaposing abstract elements like color patches, collage, and texture with the realistic depiction of the mother and child (signifier) to reflect or convey the idea that beyond material support, the true essence lies in the emotional and physical connection between parent and child (signified).

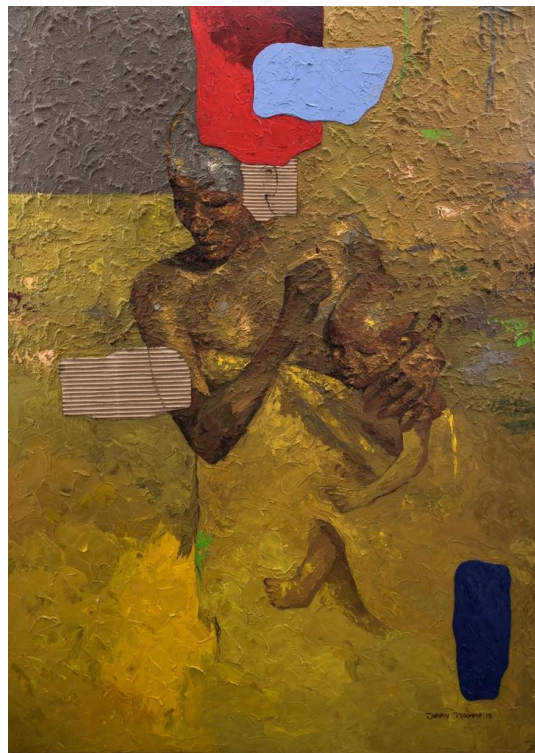


Plate 1. Jimmy Nwanne, Bond, 140 x 100cm, mixed media on canvas, 2015
www.mutualart.com



Plate 2. Jimmy Nwanne, *Trending*, Mixed Media on Canvas, 140cm x 100cm, 2016
Arthouse modern and contemporary art catalogue.

In the captivating painting titled "Trending" by Jimmy Nwanne, the artist's profound exploration of abstract realism comes to life. In this artwork, Nwanne masterfully creates a signifier by amalgamating color, texture and collage that amplifies the painting's impact. The focal point of the composition is a realistic portrayal of an unclad female figure, seemingly engrossed in capturing a "selfie" with a mobile phone. To convey this poignant symbolism, Nwanne ingeniously introduces an overlay of ultramarine blue at the top part of the painting, imbuing the artwork with an enigmatic aura. The evocative choice of color accentuates the subject's act of self-capturing, symbolizing a quest for self-identity and validation amidst a rapidly changing world. This portrayal signifies an uncanny trend prevalent among young females today, perceived as a "cool thing" in contemporary culture. In "Trending," Nwanne skillfully amalgamates abstract and realistic elements within a structural semiotics framework. The artwork serves as a reflective exploration of contemporary society's complexities, encouraging viewers to question and introspect in the face of modern existence's ever-shifting dynamics.

Harrison Idahosa

Harrison Idahosa is a Nigerian born artist. He studied painting at the University of Maiduguri and graduated with a first class degree. In 2001 he exhibited his paintings and photographs at the National Conference for HIV/AIDS and also participated in the "Nigeria at 50" cultural and historical exhibition in 2010, and many other art exhibitions. The artist has also earned a number of portrait commissions from notable personalities and some government agencies such as the Federal Judicial Service Commission, National Judicial Commission and The Supreme Court of Nigeria. In 2013, he won the grand prize of the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library National Arts Competition and in 2021, he was awarded a certificate for artistic achievements by the Luxembourg Museum of Art. The artist began to delve into thematic studies in order to develop richer and deeper works that could address key societal issues. Idahosa is devoted to the use of symbolic referents derived from personal experiences, and believes it is imperative for art to assume a more responsive role in every sphere

of modern life. He is an ardent advocate for the pursuit of technical mastery and for developing an authentic voice that could inspire younger artists as well as presenting others with the opportunity of having a fresh view point, deepening their experience of the visual world in order to enhance their enjoyment of art. Visual art is one way through which the artist's voice is heard and the heart beat felt. Currently, he lectures at the Department of Fine Arts, University of Maiduguri. Harrison is also a multimedia artist and a musician.



**Plate 3. Harrison Idahosa, *Tatafo*, Mixed media, 30 x 30cm, 2019.
Artists collection.**



**Plate 4. Harrison Idahosa, *You be Queen* 2019
Artists collection.**

In "You Be Queen," Harrison Idahosa employs structural semiotics to convey a powerful message about the importance of dignifying and empowering Nigerian girl children while drawing attention to the challenges they face and the potential for transformation and greatness within them. The

primary signifier in the painting is the visual representation of a girl child putting on the Nigerian flag. The red abstracted background serves as another signifier, representing the pain and trauma inflicted on many girls who have suffered abuse and indignity. This background symbolizes the harsh realities faced by some girls. The crown drawn on a piece of wood above the girl's head acts as a powerful signifier. It serves as a metaphor for triumph and transformation. The axiom, "every mess could be turned into a message and every pain transformed into power," is represented by the idea that rough wood can be transformed into valuable furniture, tools, or art pieces. The crown also symbolizes the inherent royalty and greatness within every girl child, regardless of her background. The painting is inspired by real-life events, including the plight of Leah Sharibu and the other Chibok girls, as well as the broader issue of abducted and molested children in Nigerian. The style of the artwork involves a subtle engagement of abstraction in the background and the prominent representation of the crown. This stylistic choice adds depth to the semiotic elements within the painting, emphasizing the contrast between the harsh background and the transformative potential symbolized by the crown.

"Tatafo" presents a rich tapestry of abstract realism, delving into various layers of meaning and symbolism. The primary signifier in the painting is the realistic representation of a tin-can telephone, evoking memories of childhood play and communication. This visual element signifies both the innocence of youth and the simplicity of communication. Intertwined with this realistic portrayal are abstract motifs inspired by the artist's childhood game marks (chinkus) and child-like graffiti. These abstract elements serve as additional signifiers, representing the creative and imaginative aspects of childhood. The word "Tatafo" itself acts as a signifier, connoting various meanings such as a telephone, excessive talk, and gossip. This word adds layers of meaning to the artwork, encompassing both childhood playfulness and the complexities of communication. The painting becomes a representation of interactions among children, where storytelling often involves exaggerations to make tales more captivating. The grid lines (chinkus) in the painting signify the interplay of relationships and communal dynamics.

In a second context, the artwork opens the door to an examination of communication within the larger context of Nigeria's insurgency crises. The tin-can telephones at the center of the canvas represent the holders of information and key players in crisis management, who may disseminate false figures or hoard crucial details. The grid symbolizes the diverse aspects, states, and sentiments of the nation, reflecting the multifaceted nature of communication in times of turmoil. Through "Tatafo," Idahosa navigates the realms of structural semiotics and Abstract Realism, unveiling a mesmerizing interplay of emotions and societal complexities. The painting resonates on multiple levels, inviting viewers to reflect on their own childhood memories, the importance of transparent communication, and the ever-changing fabric of societal interactions. In this captivating fusion of artistic styles, "Tatafo" stands as a timeless testament to the power of artistic expression in capturing the essence of symbolism and meaning.

Ibe Ananaba

Born in Belgium and raised in Aba, Nigeria, Ibe Ananaba discovered his passion for art at an early age, influenced by his talented older brother, also an artist. He pursued his love for the art by earning a Distinction in Painting while studying Fine and Applied Arts at the Institute of Management and Technology in Enugu, Nigeria, graduating in 1999. For fifteen years, Ananaba worked as an Art Director in the advertising industry before dedicating himself to full-time studio practice. Known for his eagerness to push creative boundaries, he employs an interdisciplinary approach to his art, encompassing roles as a painter, fashion illustrator, art director, calligraphist, designer, and muralist. Ananaba's artistic journey has taken him to various international destinations, where he has participated in both group exhibitions and solo shows in countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, the United States, the UK, Israel, and Canada. In 2019, he achieved First Prize in the Art Masters Contest at Art Vancouver. His artistry extends beyond the canvas, as he shares his expertise through

workshops and seminars on topics like 'Harnessing Your Artistic Potential.' Additionally, Ananaba is actively involved as the Chief Art Consultant and Coordinator of studio programs for the Girl Child Art Foundation, a non-governmental organization dedicated to using art for advocacy among adolescent girls. One notable project by Ananaba is "Follow the Journey," a captivating mural project at the Seven-Up Bottling Company headquarters in Lagos, illustrating the company's historical timeline in Nigeria from its inception in 1960 to the present day. In 2016, he led the African Child Advocacy Wall Mural Campaign in collaboration with the Canadian High Commission in Abuja, Nigeria. Ananaba's remarkable work has gained recognition in international publications, including "Fashion: A Second Language" (Shoko Press, London, 2020), "Watercolor Artists Magazine" (2019), "Masters of Watercolors" (Planeta Muzyki Publishers, Finland, 2018), "The Villager" (Tracey McDonald Publishers, South Africa, 2018), "Fashion Illustration Africa" (Shoko Press, London, 2016), and "Artists of Nigeria" (5 Continents Edition, Italy, 2012). Notably, his work is part of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries Collection. Currently based in Lagos, Ananaba continues to create and innovate within the vibrant landscape of the art world.



Plate 5. Ibe Ananaba, Give us this day our daily fuel #1, 101.6 x 127 cm, 2018.
artforum.com



**Plate 6. Ibe Ananaba, Who Goes First? #2, Oil on Canvas, 76.2 x76.2cm, 2018
Instagram @ibeananaba**

Ibe Ananaba's "Give Us Our Daily Fuel #1" is an evocative painting; a mesmerizing blend of abstract realism unfolds, showcasing the artist's exceptional talent for visual activism and societal commentary. Ananaba's enthusiasm for thought-provoking artworks takes center stage in this captivating creation. The artwork serves as a powerful visual metaphor, signifying the pressing need for good governance in Nigeria, a country blessed with abundant crude oil resources. Despite this wealth, the nation continues to suffer from the scarcity of its refined product due to poor governance and resource mismanagement. With expressive application of colors and strokes, Ananaba represents the mounting anger and frustration through splashes of intense orange, red, and purple on the human figures. These colors signify the fiery emotions of the Nigerian people in the face of fuel scarcity and highlight the urgency for change.

Throughout the composition, jerry cans feature as recurring motifs or signifiers, representing the familiar accessories required to endure fuel scarcity. These motifs serve as potent symbols of resilience and the people's tenacity in navigating challenging circumstances. Ananaba's artistic finesse seamlessly combines accurate rendering and proportions with abstract qualities of spontaneous colors and textures. By obscuring some details of reality, the artist invites viewers to actively engage with the painting, encouraging personal interpretation and emotional connection. The artwork resonates with a profound sense of collective longing for transparency, fairness, and accountability in governance. Through the amalgamation of abstract and realistic elements, Ananaba's "Give Us Our Daily Fuel" serves as a compelling testament to the power of art in conveying societal concerns. Ibe Ananaba ignites a conversation about social change and the collective yearning for a brighter future. "Give Us Our Daily Fuel" stands as a potent reminder of art's ability to evoke emotions, spark dialogue, and inspire positive transformation within society.

In "Who goes first #2" by Ibe Ananaba, the primary signifier in the painting is the representation of three boys, positioned with their backs to the viewer as if engaged in a childhood game, possibly related to passing urine. These boys signify the artist's boyhood memories and evoke a sense of nostalgia. The background of the painting, transitioning from dark cool grey colors to lighter warm

hues at the foreground, serves as another signifier. This gradient signifies a sense of depth and perspective within the artwork, drawing the viewer's attention to the central figures. The bold and spontaneous pallet knife strokes represent another set of signifiers. These strokes symbolize the artist's passionate and expressive approach to the painting, adding texture and energy to the artwork. The rich and vibrant colors used for the subjects further contribute to the overall visual impact of the painting. These colors signify the artist's intention to convey interest and emotional connection to his boyhood memories. The composition of the boys engaged in a childhood game, the gradient background, and the energetic brushwork collectively symbolize the artist's attempt to capture and convey the essence of his nostalgic recollections. In this structural analysis, the different signifiers are dissected within the artwork and how they interrelate to create a cohesive representation of the artist's boyhood memories. The painting serves as a visual narrative of the artist's personal experiences, evoking emotions and inviting viewers to connect with their own childhood reminiscences.

Conclusion

The use of semiotics as an analytical framework in visual arts has gained prominence in recent decades. This study delves into the profound value of art, transcending its mere representation, and focuses specifically on the significance of semiotics and abstract realism in painting as a means of edification. The fusion of semiotics and abstract realism in the works of Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa, and Ibe Ananaba demonstrates the potent synergy between artistic expression and meaning-making. Through their canvases, these artists navigate complex socio-cultural landscapes, offering viewers a window into their personal experiences, societal critiques, and imaginative interpretations. Saussurian structural analysis helped to unveil the semiotic layers embedded within their artistry, emphasizing the role of signs and symbols in conveying profound messages. Nwanne's visual juxtapositions, Idahosa's thought-provoking commentaries, and Ananaba's evocative narratives invite viewers to engage actively, to interpret, and to reflect upon the intricate tapestries they have woven.

The broader implications of this exploration underscore the resilience of Nigerian contemporary art in negotiating diverse influences while maintaining authenticity. These artists contribute not only to the discourse surrounding Nigerian art but also to the global conversation on the intersection of semiotics and visual storytelling. In the dynamic realm of contemporary art, the amalgamation of semiotics and Abstract Realism serves as a testament to the enduring power of artistic expression. Jimmy Nwanne, Harrison Idahosa, and Ibe Ananaba stand as exemplars of this fusion, offering viewers an opportunity to transcend the visual and delve into the profound world of symbols, signs, and the boundless potential of human creativity. Through their artworks, they beckon us to embrace the complexities of meaning and embark on a journey of artistic discovery.

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INCORPORATING SHORT CLAY INTO CLAY BODY COMPOSITIONS AS ALTERNATIVE TO GROG IN ORDER TO MITIGATE DEFECTS FOR CERAMIC BEGINNERS

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Introduction

Clay is an essential material in ceramic. Its selection and composition determine products got from it. It is important for ceramic beginners to understand the importance of incorporating different clays into the clay body in order to ensure successful drying and firing of a finished piece. Ceramic beginners are often challenged by the defects of warping, cracking, and excessive shrinkage at drying and bisque firing state. Non-plastic clay such as grog is used in clay body to mitigate these defects at green, dried and fired state. The use of 10% grog has become a useful addition to clay body composition. However, due to the strenuous preparation of grog it is sometimes difficult for beginners to incorporate it into their clay body compositions. When this is not done, deformation and distortion of wares during drying and bisque firing occur. As it is reported in Dinsdale (1986) no magic about having a successful sundry and fired ware without a well-balanced clay body. These include essential components such as flux easy melting material like feldspar, refractory such as kaolin, and filler materials for example, grog. Highly plastic clays composed mainly of ball clay and kaolin for throwing or hand built with little or no filler when exposed to rapid drying will definitely crack or warp, and at the same time, experience excessive shrinkage. Ceramic beginners; those who are new in the art of ceramic production sometime find it difficult to go through grog preparation process and prefer to use highly plastic clay because it is easier to prepare and throw with. Preparation of grog requires a lot of time and effort. This paper offers an alternative to grog for beginners by incorporating short clay into clay body compositions. It focuses on investigating grog and short clay compositions and their effects on ball clay and kaolin base-clay bodies. The goal is to identify the optimal percentage of short clay for beginner's clay body compositions.

Clay and Clay Body

Clay consists of fine-grained natural soil material primarily composed of hydrated aluminum silicate. Clay body is the mixture of different clays and materials used to create ceramic pieces. The selection and composition of the clay body significantly impact the final result, affecting strength, and durability of the ceramic piece. Therefore, it is important to select the right clay for the right combination that will provide the desired result. Dinsdale (1986) reiterated that clay body is formed from a very wide range of inorganic materials, but the practical choice is severely restricted by the special properties needed in the manufacture of those wares. For instance, clay body needed for the production of earthenware is not the same with the stoneware and porcelain body. The reason for this selection of materials is to identify those characteristics that are of crucial importance, and the possession of them makes the material fit the purpose desired.

As for the ceramic beginner it is important to study any given clay or clay body in order to determine their plasticity, shrinkage and absorption porosity rates when creating ceramic pieces. These ensure that the finished product has the desired size and shape. Mathias (2023) observed that ceramics

made out of highly plastic clay or base-clay comprise of ball clay and kaolin alone experience excessive shrinkage, warping and cracking at drying and firing state. It is imperative and pertinent to pay attention to clay body composition formula as wrong composition can lead to distortion of finished products. Al-Habib et al (2020) proof the use of non-plastic clay, said it helps to maintain the pieces' shape and size, no matter how it is dried, making it a vital part of any beginners' clay body. As a result, beginners can ensure that their piece will not crack, warp or shrink excessively when dried, allowing for more accurate result.

Effect of Grog in Clay Body

Grog is a fired clay pounded into small pieces which are convenient and admitted as common filler incorporated into clay bodies by ceramic professionals to open up the clay body. Kenny (1976) asserted that addition of 10% grog to clay body provides openings through which moisture can escape so that thick pieces will not crack during drying and firing and also prevents thin pieces from warping. Incorporating grog into clay body reduces shrinkage and adds strength to the clay during firing. However, there are some negative side effects of using grog in clay body composition that are not favoring the ceramic beginners. Apart from difficulty in pounding, it can be hard to work with, as it requires more water and tends to be more difficult to shape and form when it is not proportional. When the content is higher than the expected amount it can be more susceptible to cracking due to its low or zero plasticity, and can be more difficult to fire and glaze due to high level of porosity. That is why Casson (1977) asserted that not only grog can open a clay body, said there are many number of things a ceramist can do to improve an ultra-smooth or highly plastic clay body. One of them is the addition of 8% to 10% of fine clean silica sand which provides opening and equally reduces the rate of warping and cracking of wares by providing an adequate expansion and contraction coefficient of body during drying and firing. Therefore, due to the aforementioned disadvantages of using grog, the study seeks to introduce the use of short clay which is not totally or zero plasticity and it is easier to prepare for inclusion into clay body by beginners.

Short Clay (non-plastic clay)

Short clay is also called lean clay or non-plastic clay or more correctly, clays of low-plasticity. Clays with large particles are naturally low in plasticity and require treatment to improve it. Short clays have no strength in the forming process and usually little at green state and dry state (Hamer, 1975). It is this character of short clay that allows many traditional potters to use it for earthenware production, for it is less likely to crack and deform during drying and firing, and is more stable at dried state. The porous nature of the clay body allows the moisture to escape freely during expansion and contraction of the piece in the fire. There are many types of short clays such as late rite, which builders use for bricks, traditional potters coarse clay, among others. This research is utilizing the short clay traditional potters used in Dzumah community, Hong LGA Adamawa State, in fashioning their earthenware pots. The clay does not require many additives. Sometimes with little addition of plastic clay the wares dried and fired to bisque successful in an open fire method.

Materials and Methods

Materials

The materials of this research are the short clay traditional potters in Dzumah use for the production of their earthenware pots, ceramic studio ball clay, kaolin and grog from recycled fired damaged studio wares.

Methods

The short clay was dug from the traditional potter's pit. This short clay was compounded with the studio ball clay and kaolin. Grog was obtained by recycling and pounding the ceramic studio damaged wares into powder and included into a clay body composed of ball clay and kaolin. Tests of plasticity, shrinkage and absorption porosity rates were conducted on the various bodies composed.

Recommendations were made based on the character exhibited by the formulated bodies and the optimal percentage of short clay to be added to kaolin and ball clay for the beginners. Wares were produced from both short clay and grogged bodies for observation. Below are the detail explanations of the plasticity, shrinkage and absorption tests conducted on the bodies of short clay and grog.

The Plasticity Test

Plasticity is simply defined as the ability of clay to respond to pressure with continuous and permanent change of shape in any direction without breaking apart. Clay is unique in its degree of plasticity. Non-plastic clay will not bend well, but tends to break instead of forming, even when appropriate water is added. Umar (2000) observed that relationship between water and clay is important in any industrial application of clay. The procedure of testing plasticity as recommended in the American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM) Standards and modified by Gukas and Datiri (2002) that a lump of clay could be rolled to pencil size and try rolling it round the finger next to the thumb. The plastic clay maintains its shape or endures the stresses, while non-plastic or fairly plastic will show signs of cracks.

The Shrinkage Test

Shrinkage refers to the loss of size that occurs throughout the total drying and firing process. Considerable shrinking occurs as water evaporates from the wet green ware stage to the bone-dry green ware stage Secondly, during bisque firing, and finally at glaze firing, but this research is limited to bisque firing stage only. The method for testing shrinkage value as modified by Umar (2000) who explained that 12cm bars in length will be produced from the sample clay; the bars will be marked 10cm within the length and dried. The wet to dry shrinking will be recorded. The bars will then be fired to bisque temperature, and the wet to fire will be recorded. Datiri (2012) recommended the measurement to be done only after the specimens have been further dried in an oven between 100°C to 110°C for 24hours. Likewise, the calculation for fired shrinkage is done only after bisque firing. The percentage is calculated as follows:

$$DS = \frac{PL-DL}{PL} \times \frac{100}{1} \text{-----Equation 1}$$

$$FS = \frac{PL-FS}{PL} \times \frac{100}{1} \text{-----Equation 2}$$

Note: DS = Dry Shrinkage
 PL = Plastic Length
 DL = Dry Length
 And
 FS = Fired Shrinkage
 PL = Plastic Length
 FL = Fired Length

The Absorption Porosity Test

Absorption porosity refers to a material's ability to absorb moisture or water after the bisque firing. A pore is a tiny space surrounded by particles of clay. According to Gukas and Datiri (2002) that porosity can easily be measured by weighing a matured bisque fired piece of clay or clay body, then placing the sample in a pan of water, letting it get saturated overnight. Then blot off the excess water and weigh again. The percentage increase in weight represents the porosity of the clay. Yohanna (2014) noted the important thing to keep in mind about porosity that is closely linked with firing, said the higher the firing temperature the lowers the porosity of the body. In another perspective adding lower melting ingredients such as feldspar lower the maturation temperature of the body and consequently, decreases the potential for water absorption in the fired ware. The percentage is determined as follows:

$$A = \frac{SW-FW}{FW} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Note A = Absorption
 SW = Saturated Weight
 FW = Fired Weight

Result/Discussion

Selection and Sourcing of the Short Clay

The sample short clay was sourced in the traditional potters' pit in Dzumah. Its selection was based on some characters exhibited during traditional potter's production process. The researcher observed that after production the wares were directly exposed under the sun to dry and were not showing any signs of crack or warping and possible little shrinkage rate. Below is the sampled clay unprocessed and processed.



Plate 1: Unprocessed Dzumah Short Clay



Plate 2: Processed Dzumah Short Clay

Formulation of Ceramic Bodies from the Blends of Grog, Short Clay, Kaolin and Ball clay

Sample 1: Grogged bodies; comprised of grog, kaolin and ball clay

a) Grog-----10% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay----50%	b) Grog-----20% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----40%	c) Grog-----30% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----30%
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Sample 2: Short clay bodies; comprised of short clay, kaolin and ball clay

a) Short clay-----10% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----50%	b) Short clay-----20% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----40%	c) Short clay-----30% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----30%
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The Results of the Shrinkage Test

Sample 1: Grogged bodies result

Sample 1:	PL cm	DL cm	Result %	FL cm	Result%	Total shrinkage %
a)	10	9.6	4	9.4	6	10
b)	10	9.8	2	9.6	4	6
c)	10	9.9	1	9.9	1	2

Sample 2: Short clay bodies result

Sample 2:	PL cm	DL cm	Result %	FL cm	Result%	Total shrinkage %
a)	10	9.6	4	9.4	6	10

b)	10	9.7	3	9.6	4	7
c)	10	9.8	2	9.9	1	3

$$\text{Equation 1: DS} = \frac{PL-DL}{PL} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

$$\text{Equation 2: FS} = \frac{PL-FL}{PL} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Example:**Sample 1 (a) of the grogged bodies:**

$$DS = \frac{10-9.6}{10} \times \frac{100}{1} = 4\% \quad FS = \frac{10-9.4}{10} \times \frac{100}{1} = 6\%$$

Therefore: 4% + 6% = 10% is the total linear shrinkage of sample 1(a) of the grogged clay body. The shrinkage test is done to ascertain the level at which the materials decrease in size both after drying and firing. The same processes were conducted on the remaining sample materials; four bars of 12cm length were made from each material. A line of 10cm within was drowned at the center when the clay bars were still wet as suggested by (Umar, 2000). The measurements were also taken after the sampled materials were well dried and fired at bisque temperature between 900°C- 1000°C. The result of the linear shrinkage rates of the grogged clay body (a), (b), and (c) are 10, 6 and 2 percent respectively, which shows that the body's shrinkage level decreased as more grog is added. Likewise, the short clay bodies (a), (b), and (c) total linear shrinkage rates are 10, 7, and 3 percent respectively. This indicates that the shrinkage value of grogged and short clay bodies are similar; only that as grog advances in percentage the more the body loses plasticity. However, up to 30% of short clay in the composition makes it more stable and strong enough for production. Therefore, the optimal percentage of short clay as alternative to grog in body compositions for beginners' ranges from 20% to 30%, allows the bodies to shrink moderately.

The Plasticity Test Results**Sample 1: Grogged bodies result**

		Performance	Remarks
a)	Grog-----10% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----50%	Plastic	Good for throwing
b)	Grog-----20% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----40%	Low-plasticity	Not suitable for throwing
c)	Grog-----30% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----30%	Very low-plasticity	Not suitable for throwing

Sample 2: Short clay bodies result

		Performance	Remarks
a)	Short clay-----10% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----50%	highly Plastic	Good for throwing
b)	Short clay-----20% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----40%	Plastic	Suitable for throwing
c)	Short clay-----30% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay-----30%	Plastic	Suitable for throwing

The simple plasticity test conducted on the clay bodies is to ascertain the level of plasticity the body possessed. Sample 1(a) of the grogged body which is 10% grog in the composition is suitable for production as noted by Umar (2000) that addition of 10% of non-plastic clay such as fire clay can

make the body's plasticity moderate and shrink within the acceptable range of 10% to 15%. While (b), and (c) with 20% and 30% grog respectively are not suitable for production due to their coarse nature, difficulty in moulding, but endured the stress of expansion and contraction with no trace of warping and crack during sundry and bisque firing.

Sample 2 (a) which is 10% short clay is good for throwing, but is a bit high in plasticity which caused their little noticeable warping and shrinkage. Sample (b) and (c) of short clay of 20% and 30% respectively are suitable for production with no trace of warping, cracking and moderate shrinkage rate. These bodies have been found to be the suitable clay bodies that replace the acceptable 10% of grog in ceramic body composition.

The Absorption Porosity Test Results

Sample 1: Grogged bodies result

	Fired Weight (gr)	Saturated Weight (gr)	Absorption %
a) Grog----10% Kaolin---40% Ball clay-50%	61.63	64.39	4.5
b) Grog-----20% Kaolin----40% Ball clay--40%	61.48	64.39	4.7
c) Grog-----30% Kaolin----40% Ball clay---30%	57.96	60.87	5.0

Sample 2: Short clay bodies result

	Fired Weight (gr)	Saturated Weight (gr)	Absorption %
a) Short clay--10% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay---50%	59.64	62.39	4.6
b) Short clay--20% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay--40%	61.17	63.75	4.3
c) Short clay--30% Kaolin-----40% Ball clay---30%	61.78	64.30	4.1

$$A = \frac{SW - FW}{FW} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Example 1 (a) of 10% grog, 40% kaolin and 50% ball clay

Fired weight -----61.63

Saturated weight-----64.39

Absorption rate-----4.5

$$A = \frac{64.39 - 61.63}{61.63} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Absorption = 4.5% is the porosity rate of the 10% grog in the composition

The porosity test conducted on the body compositions revealed the capacity of the fired piece in sipping water or liquid. Sample 1 (a) with 10% grog in the body is 4.5% it shows that the body's capacity to sip water or liquid is within the acceptable range. Then bodies (b) and (c) with 20% and 30% grog respectively exhibited high level of porosity rates of 5% each. It is an indication that they cannot be a suitable body for production, because they would be too porous for glaze to adhere properly.

Sample Wares Produced with the 20% and 30% of the Recommended Short clay in a Composition and Fired to Bisque

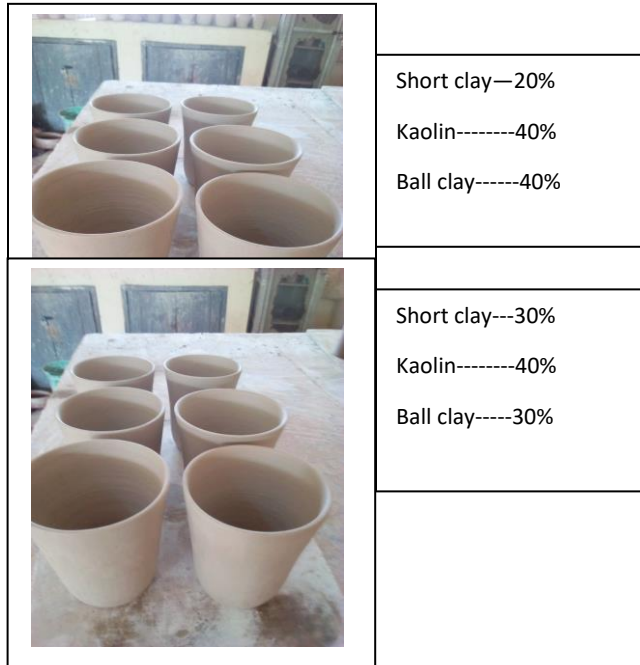


Plate 3a and 3b

Conclusion

The research has investigated the qualities of short clay and its effects on the composition of clay bodies made from ball clay and kaolin. It concludes that incorporating 20% to 30% of short clay into such clay bodies can open up the material, reducing the risk of excessive shrinkage, warping and cracking during production process.

Recommendation

This research recommends the use of short clay, especially the traditional potters own, which requires minimal additions of plastic and refractory clay for wheel throwing. Additionally, it can be employed for hand-building techniques, making it ideal for ceramic beginners. The approach ensures end-products that are free from defects.

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TO OWN, BENEFIT AND SUSTAIN: RETHINKING MUSEUM CONCEPT AND PRACTICE IN AFRICA

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Introduction

In Africa, the museum concept both in terms of its philosophy and its building is a colonial construct. The museum concept was introduced to Africa by the colonial masters as Eyo (1994) mentions. Although scholars like Ivan Emeka Okonkwo argue that the concept of museum existed in Africa before the arrival of foreign religions and the colonial masters, the name and the mode of operation were completely different. Okwonkwo (2016) writes that in Pre-Arab and European times specifically in Nigeria, the museum concept existed in the form of temples, traditional palaces and shrines where various materials of cultural, religious and political importance were housed and displayed nonetheless, they were not called 'museums'. Okonkwo (2016) further explains that the cultural materials were catered for by heads of households, priests of shrines and kings and chiefs.

From the above, one can say it is the western conventional museum idea and concept that requires that these objects assume a secondary function for entertainment and education, are moved and housed in a building now called a 'museum' and are displayed in show glasses or on plinths and cases that is alien to Africans. Production of artefacts for religious, utilitarian and decorative purposes is an integral part of the African cultural heritage. Till date, these artefacts constitute a large part of the traditional African tangible heritage. Africans lived with these artefacts, used them and worshipped them as the case may be. However, the advent of the colonial masters and the infiltration of foreign religions (Christianity and Islam) brought about a significant paradigm shift in the production and relationship between the artefacts and the African people, especially the religious ones as both Christianity and Islam abhor idol worship. It is important to mention at this point that Islam and Christianity reached the Western part of the African continent before the arrival of the colonial masters who introduced the idea of the conventional museum to Africa (Eyo, 1994). As a result, the African became confused in the sense that the same artefacts he/she was asked to denounce are now dignified, housed and cared for in a place called the "museum" (Eyo, 1994).

The contradiction mentioned above is arguably the foundation of the challenges the museum as an institution is facing on the African continent. Although development is at the heart of the entire museum philosophy, it cannot be said that West African museums have succeeded in making this a reality in societies where they are located. Perhaps, this can be relied on by the fact that the introduction of the museum concept in Africa by the colonial masters could be an example of a "top-bottom-approach" to development. While the top-bottom-approach has a number of advantages, its glaring criticism is that it starts from the perspectives of central decision makers and thus tends to neglect other actors (Isidiho, 2016). Shallangwa and Saliba (2019) opine that for development to be sustainable, it should be informed by the people's needs and aspirations, grounded on their cultural orientation or background otherwise known as the bottom-top-approach. The bottom-top-approach is an approach that allows the local community and local players to express their views, and to help define the development course for their area in line with their own views, expectations and plans (European Union, 2019). This implies that local people need to be involved and carried along in the plan, design and implementation, as well as management of any developmental project targeted at them. It is in this light that using the Borno State Museum as case study, this paper draws attention

to the reason(s) behind the stunted growth which most African museums suffer that puts their sustainability at stake. It will also identify the factors impeding them from largely contributing to the development of their societies as enshrined in the very definition of the museum and lastly, develop a new African museum concept and practice model.

Methodology

The paper employed a qualitative research approach. The qualitative method focuses on “exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2014:4). Basically, in this approach “the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particular to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2014:4). Primary data was obtained through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with museum staff and interviews with some Borno indigenes. A total of 2 FGD sessions were conducted with the museum staff with 8 persons per session and 8 interviews with Borno indigenes. A recruitment criterion for interview participants was at least one museum visit. Each FGD group had a mixed composition of 4 males and 4 females. Genders were mixed as they were recruited on the basis of being museum staff. All Participants gave their consent to participate in the study. However, they chose anonymity. FGDs and interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, themes generated and data is presented in a descriptive and narrative format.

Museums and Cultural Sustainability

Museums as custodians of the cultural heritage of the communities they serve are inarguably important institutions and their value cannot be overemphasized. There are several definitions of the museum. However, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) adopted a definition which holds that:

“A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.” (ICOM, 2019).

It is implicit from the above that the museum exists primarily in the interest of the community it is located; hence, its success can be accessed by the way members of that community where the museum is located interact with it. The fact that the conventional museum concept in Africa was built on European ideals perhaps accounts for the reason why the museum concept appears not to make sense to the typical African. African museums were not developed to serve the local Africans but to satisfy the curiosities of the elite citizenry. This totally excluded the local people who produced the cultural materials (Makuvaza, 2002). Makuvaza further adds that museums in Africa have remained insensitive to the interests of the communities they purport to serve, since the static nature of their displays and collections are more elitist and exotic than African. Eyo (1994) mentions that, the coming of independence brought a new light to African museums. African nationalists looked on to it as the mirror of their new status; a cultural institution, which was required to buttress political independence. Eyo’s claim further buttresses Makuvaza’s assertion that African locals who produced the materials were excluded from enjoying the benefits the museum offers as only local elites saw the glory and value in the museums even at that, the glory was short lived and within a short time, the glory was lost. Therefore, if indeed the success of museums is largely dependent on the way the locals interact with it, then majority of African museums are not successful and their sustainability in the context of the future appears bleak.

The World Commission on Culture and Development defines cultural sustainability as inter- and intra-generational access to cultural resources (WCCD, 1995). Cultural Sustainability entails and requires that development takes place in a manner that respects the cultural capital and values of

society (Mpofu, 2012). Cultural sustainability is based on the principle that the current generation can use and adapt cultural heritage only to the extent that future generations will not be affected in terms of their ability to understand and live their multiple values and meanings (Pereira, 2007). Hence, cultural sustainability is primarily concerned with ensuring the continuity of cultural values that link the past, present, and future (Al-Hagla, 2005).

In light of the above, the museum and cultural sustainability are inseparable. According to Stylianou-Lambert, Boukas, and Bounia (2015), the relationship between the museum and cultural sustainability is in both narrow and broad terms. The narrow term refers to the traditional roles of museums that are clearly spelt out in the definition provided by ICOM and cannot be contested. They are: acquiring, conserving, researching, communicating and exhibiting both tangible and intangible heritage of humanity for the purpose of education, study and enjoyment. These are core museum activities that ensures that cultural resources are available in the context of the future and at the same time ensures the link between the past, present and future. In broad terms on the other hand, the relationship between the museum and cultural sustainability goes beyond the traditional roles of museums to include the use of heritage to create certain set of values, attitudes and behaviours among individuals which results in cultural vitality. Cultural vitality is the evidence of creating, disseminating, validating and supporting arts and culture as a dimension of everyday life in communities (Jackson, Kwabwasa-Green & Herranz, 2006). Jackson et al definition of cultural vitality identifies arts and culture as capitals that emanate from communities, not borrowed from outside and therefore, should not be preserved or kept for special occasions or events. They are integral parts of human day-to-day life. In the case of African museums, the collections are from the local communities while the museum concept is a borrowed one.

The relationship with the museum and cultural sustainability in the narrow term exists in most African museums however, it is abstract. Instead of tapping into the myriad of benefits and value the museum institution offers, it is viewed as that extraordinary building where special objects are kept. In most cases, locals only make reference to the museum without necessarily visiting. The typical African in most cases has still not understood the relationship between him/herself and the conventional museum institution. It is the broader relationship that results in cultural vitality (making the museum an integral part of the day-to-day life of locals) that is missing in African museums which is what this chapter advocates for through rethinking the museum concept and practice in Africa.

Rethinking Museum Concept and Practice in Africa

The introduction of the Conventional museums in African societies spans several decades. Yet, the members of the communities where they are located barely remember that they exist. While a significant number of Euro-American museums owe their reputation to the large collections looted from Africa, African museums, where these important cultural pieces originate from have not recorded such successes. There have been series of ongoing discussions on the reparation and repatriation of cultural artefacts that were looted from the continent that grace the exhibitions of Euro-American museums. This is a laudable effort that requires optimal support. However, there is an urgent need to decolonize African museums towards better interaction with the public they serve. This will contribute to the sustainability of the museum institution as well as make cultural vitality possible. The first step to achieving this begins with identifying the issues with the current museum concept and practice and proffering possible solutions to the challenges. During a Focus Group Discussion with staff of the Borno State Museum in Maiduguri and interviews with some indigenes of Borno State, the following were identified as barriers between the locals and the museum: location, accessibility, Eurocentric curatorial practices and displays, as well as poor funding.

Location

The Borno State Museum is located in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, at the city centre which is also the central business area of the State's capital city and not so much a residential area. Whilst this is a central area, it is not the main domain of the majority of the locals who are mostly resident in suburbs of the city. The participants of the aforementioned FGD agreed that the location of the museum is a challenge that has distanced the locals from the museum because they do not feel a sense of belonging within the setting. They have to make extra effort and commitment to visit. A participant said:

The location of the museum matters a lot. It is located in the heart of the city a bit far from residential areas where most locals reside. This has created a barrier between the locals and the museum. They will have to pay transport fare to visit the museum. Paying transport fare to visit the museum is the least of their worries. Local patronage will have increased if the museum is located in locals' residential areas like Shehuri or Old Maiduguri. As it is, the locals do not feel a sense of belonging here (Male FGD participant, November 2020, Maiduguri).

The museum staff mentioned that location of the Borno State museum is an indicator that indeed African museums are prototypes of European museums which are mostly located in city centers. They agreed that such a location is problematic for African museums.

Accessibility

The museum is an institution that is open to the public and exists in the interest of the public however, it can only be accessed at a fee known as the gate fee both to locals and outsiders. Payment of gate fees was identified as a barrier between the locals and the museum. Generally, Africans have a communal culture. They owe each other a sense of responsibility hence, can have access (to some extent) over each other's property. The idea of having to pay gate fees in museums is in sharp contrast with the African communal culture since one has to pay to enjoy that which is produced by one of them. Although gate fees are significant and channeled into good use such as the maintenance of museum collections, the typical African sees no sense in having to pay for what belongs to him/her. Hence, it has become problematic. A participant stated that:

The issue of gate fee is a major challenge to museum practice here. The locals find it strange that they have to pay fees to be allowed into the museum. This is more of a cultural issue because in Africa, we have a strong communal spirit. To be honest, sometimes, the few locals that come around bargain gate fees. They ask to be allowed free access or discounts and when denied, they get offended. I am speaking both as a local and a museum professional. While the gate fee is important, the locals do not understand why they are asked to pay so it appears strange to them. The issue of gate fee has discouraged a lot of locals from visiting the museum (Female FGD participant, November 2020, Maiduguri).

Museum Organisation and Presentation Style

The European style and pattern in which African museums are organized and collections are presented was also identified as a barrier between African museums and the locals. Borno State museum staff that participated in this study highlighted the point that their texts and labels are not translated into local languages which they pointed as a major indication that the museum was not established for locals hence, they feel no sense of belonging and ownership there. The manner of display was observed to be permanent and exotic which is problematic in terms of maintenance. Perhaps, something African would have been easier to maintain while making locals feel more at home. In the words of a participant:

There is a conflict in our displays. Our collections are African but displayed in European manner. All texts and labels are written in English without translation in any local language. How can the locals feel welcomed here? The showcases are not well maintained and dust has settled on the collections. The entire nature of the exhibition makes maintenance difficult. African display techniques would have been easier for maintenance (Male FGD participant, November, 2020, Maiduguri).

Funding

Inadequate funding of the museum sector by the government was also identified as a barrier between the museum and the locals. This is because the most innovative and creative museum staff can do almost nothing without money which has ended up in making the museum very boring and unattractive to one who is already familiar with these collections. Perhaps, again, the Eurocentric idea of income generation through gate fees is not working for African museums. There is need to review income generation methods in African museums. However, it is important to mention that museums are non-profit making institutions.

The challenges mentioned above were identified as barriers between the museum and Borno locals that have resulted in a disconnect between the people and museum. There is need to rethink the entire African museum concept and practice for the sustainability of the museum and the African culture as a whole. Using the aforementioned challenges, the next session will elucidate the trajectory of the proposed new African museum concept and practice. This is done along the three domains of cultural vitality as outlined by Jackson et al (2006) which are: presence of opportunities for cultural participation, and support for cultural participation. The presence of opportunities for cultural vitality domain entails that venues for participation in arts and cultural activities are made available for locals. Although Jackson et al (2006) consider the museum among what they call “conventional cultural venues” alongside theatres, libraries, concert halls, etc. on the basis that such institutions by nature allow for community participation. It can be argued that this does not apply to most African museums based on the fact that locals’ participation is relatively low as compared to western ones. This domain advocates that a mix of non-profit, commercial, public and informal venues and opportunities for cultural engagement is essential to create the variety of participation that enables robust arts practice and consumption both amateur and professional.

The participation in arts and cultural activities domain necessitates that cultural participation goes beyond viewing and purchasing art and cultural products (Jackson et al., 2006). They went on to add that people participate in arts and cultural activities in myriad of ways and at different levels either as practitioners, teachers, students, critics, supporters and consumers. People also engage individually and collectively, sporadically and on a regular basis. It is therefore important to view participation in a broad sense and to consider the diverse ways of participating in arts and cultural activities when creating opportunities for cultural participation. Jackson et al (2006) mention that participation in arts and cultural activities include but are not limited to membership in arts association or unions, art making, audience participation, engagement in public discourses and participating in activities such as dance.

The support for arts and cultural activities domain opines that arts and cultural activities should not totally rely on government subventions, other sources of funding should be explored.

The Proposed African Museum Concept and Practice

The African museum concept and practice proposed in this study is not a complete break away from the conventional museum concept and practice. However, certain aspects will be modified as well as a few introductions added. It is important to mention that the proposal emanated from the FGDs and interviews with the participants of this study.

Location

Buildings are immovable. However, museum location was identified as one of the factors distancing the locals from the museum. The proposed African museum concept advocates for bringing the locals to the museum since the building is immovable. This will be done by bringing in the locals to the museum through arts and crafts. Participants agreed that the Borno State museum needs to incorporate arts and crafts as a core component of the museum. Here, local arts and crafts men will be given spaces within the museum premises to produce and sell their products. This will attract both locals and non-locals to purchase crafts and at the same time drawing the attention of the people to the existence and importance of the museum collection. A participant said:

Bringing local arts and crafts people such as cap makers, textile and raffia products makers will attract more locals to the museum. The local craftsmen can be provided shed's within the museum premises and while people come to transact with them, attention will be drawn to the museum collections, their importance and their value. The locals will feel a sense of belonging in the museum activities. As it is, there is no form of attraction at all (interview with male Borno local, November 2020, Maiduguri).

With the rise in the number of internally displaced persons from the local government areas of Borno State, a vibrant local cap market has emerged. These caps are neatly hand sewn and have recently become popular and a major symbol of Borno's cultural identity. The caps are well patronized by politicians and important dignitaries and are often times given out as souvenir from the State. Hence, there is high demand for them. A market such as the cap market described above can be moved to the museum so that through it, the locals can have a sense of belonging in what the museum stands for, while at the same time enjoying the benefits it offers.

In addition to bringing in the local artists and craftsmen to the museum, the new museum concept and practice proposes that the Borno State museum collaborates with the Ministry of Arts and Culture to organise traditional dance and games from time to time. This will also increase patronage by locals and will draw them closer to the museum institution. This collaboration should not be difficult as the Borno State museum shares the same complex with the Borno State cultural troupe. As a matter of fact, they are managed by the same ministry. Borno State is made up of diverse ethnic groups hence, the traditional dance and games will be organized such that each ethnic group is accorded a day. This ensures that cultural diversity is captured while everyone is carried along as a participant suggested:

Another way to increase local patronage is through traditional activities like dance and games that locals can relate to. The museum can organise traditional dance and games from time to time with the diverse ethnic groups of the state represented. Such activities will attract locals thereby making the museum vibrant (interview with female Borno local, November 2020, Maiduguri).

Such a development has numerous benefits. Among them are the sustainability both of the Borno rich crafts culture and traditional music culture as well as the Borno State museum as an institution. It also contributes to community participation and engagement in the activities of the museum. This idea falls within the presence of opportunities for cultural vitality domain as well as the participation in arts and cultural activities domain as it creates room for both opportunities to participate as well as the participation itself.

Accessibility

In line with the support for arts and cultural activities, the new museum concept and practice proposes that gate fees be lifted for locals in the Borno State Museum. This can be replaced with shed rent from local artists and craftsmen who produce their works solely for profit. These proceeds will be diverted to collection's care and management as the proposed African museum concept and practice retains the non-profit making status of museums. The idea here is to make the museum more accessible to locals who will in turn create the sense of ownership of the collections which the museum holds in trust for them and at the same time serve as a channel of income generation for local artists. A participant said:

Like earlier mentioned, the issue of gate fee is a barrier to local's patronage in Borno Museum so instead of charging gate fees for locals, I suggest we charge shed rent from local craftsmen and use the income generated for collections management. Doing this helps the museum retain its non-profit status. We must not follow the European museological standard completely. We can modify certain aspects to suit our context (Male FGD participant, November, 2020, Maiduguri).

Museum Organisation and Presentation Style

The new concept and practice proposes that the Borno State museum breaks away from conventional curatorial practices. Participants agreed that local guides should be employed to carry out non-technical responsibilities such as tour guides to visitors especially locals in local languages while the professional museum staff attend to non-locals for ease of communication. The new concept also proposes that texts and labels are translated in local languages to give the locals a sense of belonging in the museum and its activities. This will also ensure the sustainability of Borno local languages (an aspect of intangible culture).

The new museum concept and practice advocated in this chapter proposes that the museum staff organise temporary exhibitions from time to time either on topical issues or on the culture of the diverse ethnic groups of the Borno region. This will increase the feeling of the sense of belonging among locals and increase community participation in the museum's activities. The display of these collections will also reflect African sense of display away from glass cases and panels. This idea falls in line with the presence of opportunity domain of cultural vitality.

Funding

The museum like other government agencies relies on the government for funding through subventions. For some time, the participants of the FGD conducted for this study revealed that the subventions they receive from the government has reduced drastically and a possible justification for this drop could be the fact that the museum institution is a non-profit making one hence, the government does not generate much revenue from it. This implies that revenue generating organizations receive more funding from the government. In light of this, the new African museum concept and practice proposes that revenue generation from the museum sector is an indirect one in the sense that the museum itself may not generate revenue. However, other agencies can draw their own revenue through them such as the transportation industry, hospitality and accommodation industry as well as commerce. In view of the above, the Borno State government should look at the museum in a new light and reconsider the amount it receives as subvention as the museum has high potential of generating revenue although, indirectly.

Furthermore, participants suggested that if locals are carried along in museum's activities and they begin to enjoy the benefits the institution offers, they can offer free volunteer services. Philanthropists, commercial, non-governmental organizations, clubs and unions will see the need to

support the museum as well, in line with the support for arts and cultural activities domain of cultural vitality.

Having outlined the aspects of modification in the museum concept and practice, the new African museum concept and practice model will be discussed below.

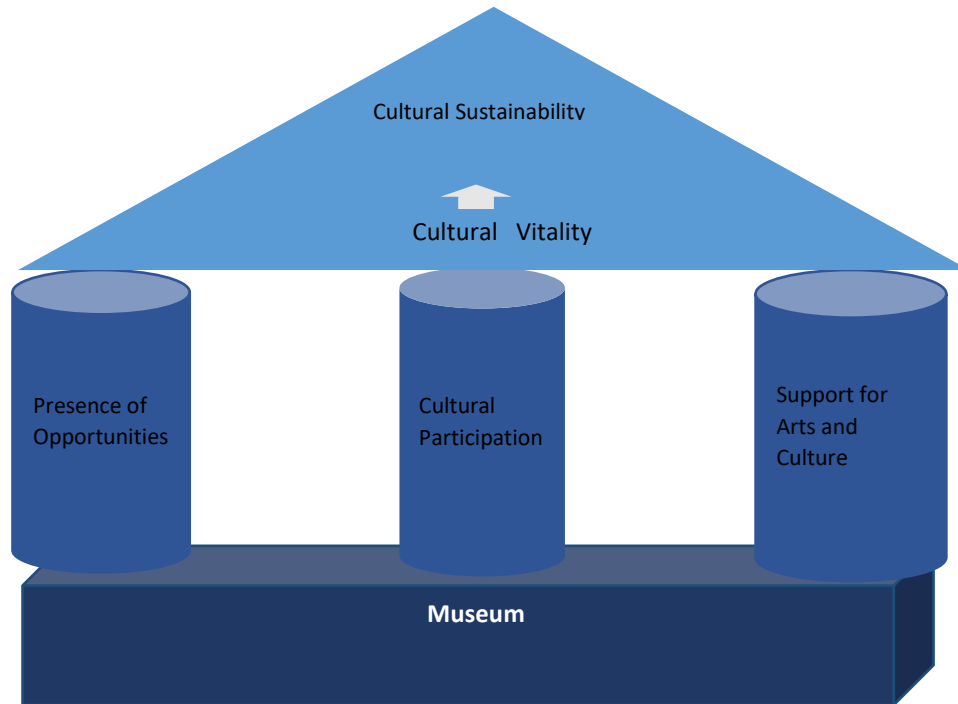


Fig.1 Proposed African Museum Concept and Practice Model

The new African museum concept and practice model is in form of a house which has the museum at its foundation with three domains of cultural vitality namely: opportunities for participation, cultural participation and support for the arts and culture as pillars holding the structure in place. The first pillar provides the opportunities for locals to get closer and interact more closely with the museum institution which will consequently create the feeling of belonging and ownership in locals. This study identified incorporating the production of arts and crafts, traditional games and dance in Borno State's museum activities as viable and potential avenues or opportunities that locals can participate in. Having created the opportunity for local participation, the second pillar allows for the participation of locals in these activities at different levels and ways. The third and last pillar allows for support and funding for the museum from diverse means not only on government subventions. This support is not limited to finance but includes services from individuals, public, private, commercial and non-profit sectors.

With the three pillars in place, the roof of the house contains cultural vitality which is the aim of the museum using the three pillars. Cultural vitality results in cultural sustainability which is the core benefit of the new African museum concept. With all these in place, the sustainability of the museum institution in Africa is to a large extent secure while locals enjoy the benefits it offers.

Conclusion

The conventional museum concept is purely a colonial construct in Africa. While it holds a lot of promise for the communities where they are located, typical Africans are yet to fully enjoy this promise as a result of some conflicting issues which this paper has made effort to identify and to

proffer solutions to by coming up with a new museum concept and practice model for the African continent. While this was prepared with the Borno State museum in mind, it can be adopted in similar climes. This new concept advocates for a breakaway from certain aspects of the Eurocentric conventional museum, modification of some aspects while it retains others such as buildings since this is immovable. It advocates for strong community participation by the locals for cultural vitality and the sustainability of the museum institution as a whole on the African continent.

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EXAMINING LIFE IN MY CITY ART FESTIVAL AS A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

Having a support system is one of the very key ingredients to the establishment of emerging professional artists as seasoned professionals. Art practice is financially demanding and requires multi-faceted support structures that enable emerging professionals to find their footing in the art world. Sometimes, it takes more than financial support to elevate up-coming artists to a comfortable status where they can manage their affairs and sustain their practice. Unfortunately, the support structures to help artists, especially the young and up-coming artists in Nigeria, are grossly inadequate. Ikwuemesi (2007) notes that the art ecology in Nigeria is not necessarily a poor one, but the enabling factors, including art patronage and art consecrating agencies and institutions, including government, have not performed most creditably in Nigeria.

For a sector that represents one of the few essential vehicles of national development, government has not lived up to expectations in their support for the arts and artists. Most government funding and scholarship incentives favour the sciences more than the arts. Buhari (2016) observes that whenever there was a cut in national budgets, it was always the culture and especially the visual arts sector that suffers, irrespective of whether one was dealing with a developed country or an emerging one. This has led to what Adewunmi (2018) described as, placing the onus on the professionals and other stakeholders in support of the development of this sector. It is also worrisome that, notwithstanding the potentials of art to yield economic gains and transform the society through the agency of its reflective evaluations and human capital development, most investors still do not find it worthy or profitable to invest in the arts and artists. Such investors tend to invest in reality tv programmes, that will yield easy and quick money, for example Big Brother Nigeria (a reality television show of youths living as housemates in a designated house over a period of time), not minding its moral burden on the society.

Despite the challenges of support faced by the visual arts sector which has impacted negatively on the development of the sector in Nigeria, a few interventions have been made to fill the gap created by the little, or not-adequate sponsorship in the art sector by the government. One of the very few structures that have advanced the growth and development of the arts in Nigeria, especially in the area of providing the much-needed support for emerging professional artists, is Life in My City Art Festival (LIMCAF). This paper examines the impact of LIMCAF as a support system for emerging professional artists in Nigeria.

Chronicle of Life in My City Art Festival

Life in My City Art Festival (LIMCAF) is a not-for-profit yearly competition in visual arts that was created in order to encourage and empower young Nigerian artists under the age of 35. It was envisioned and founded in 2007 by Chief Robert Onwuamaegbu Oji, founder and CEO of Rocana Nigeria Limited with the support of Alliance Française, Enugu, the French Embassy in Nigeria, and the Pan African Circle of Artists (PACA). Adewunmi (2018) notes that:

The maiden edition of Life in My City Art Festival (LIMCAF) was held in 2007, with the objective being to “Reposition the arts for social development”. The aims included 1., To encourage artistic creativity and awareness of environmental issues. 2., To provide space through art for young people to make meaningful statements about their environment in Nigeria. 3., To encourage and empower young artists throughout Nigeria by promoting and commercializing their creative endeavours on a national and international platform.

It is clear, from its aim and objectives, that LIMCAF from inception set out the goal of providing support base for emerging professionals to thrive on. The maiden edition witnessed a submission of nearly 200 works of art from artists across Nigeria. After the first phase of exhibition which also served as one of a three-stage judging process, the works were pruned to 40 which was also trimmed to 14 at the second stage and finally, the award winning 3 at the final stage. These tripartite stages have been sustained ever since, evolving into regional selection exhibitions, because of the increasing number of entries from different zones of the country, and the steady growth of LIMCAF over time. Obeagu (2018) observed that:

The rigorous well detailed process through which the final works were selected has become a recognized part of transparent sifting by the organizers of LIMCAF which is without controversy or debate. The well-structured tripartite stages proceed on a terrain that is quite orderly, engages well situated experts in the field, operates by clear rules and borders, and is characterized by excellent planning, coordination, and execution.

Over the years, the number of participants and submissions have grown tremendously with regional collation centers in Abuja, Enugu, Port-Harcourt, Owerri, Auchi, Ibadan, Kaduna, Lagos, Zaria, and Uyo, covering the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The approval rating of LIMCAF has also grown over time. This is evident in the increasing number of public and private partnerships, and sponsorships that LIMCAF has attracted within the period of its sustained growth. This is made possible with the support of LIMCAF’s distinguished patrons, His Majesty, Igwe Nnaemeka Achebe CFR, Obi of Onitsha and, Emeritus Professor El Anatsui who according to Kalu (2022), among other things, opened the way to corporate sponsorship for LIMCAF. Today, LIMCAF boasts of sponsorships and partnerships that number over 30 including Ford Foundation, First Bank Holdings, and MTN Foundation. This is a very important achievement, because, according to Buhari (2016), private institutions are not sentimental about where they put their money. Worthy of note also is the support by Enugu State Government under the leadership of His Excellency Rt. Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, the Executive Governor of Enugu State (2015-2023).

With the help of these private and public partnerships and sponsorships, LIMCAF has been able to increase the number of artists fully sponsored to attend the grand finale event at Enugu from zero at inception to top 25 artists in 2017, top 50 in 2018, top 100 in 2019, top 50 in 2021 (the reduction of sponsorship from 100 to 50 finalists in 2021 was due to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on the economy in the year 2020 which reduced the sponsorship fund from donor partners). From 2022 to the latest edition in 2023, LIMCAF has sustained its all expense paid sponsorship of 100 finalists to the grand finale. This is greatly commendable as all the artist that made it to the last 100 are fully provided with transportation, accommodation, feeding and tour of interesting sites within Enugu during the period of the grand finale. Despite the challenges faced by LIMCAF during its formative years, the story is different today with a lot of successes recorded, and many more projected for the future.



Plate 1: Set-up Exhibition Space for 2022 LIMCAF Grand Finale, International Conference Centre, Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu



Plate 2: Top 100 Artist fully sponsored to attend the LIMCAF Grand Finale Exhibition at the International Conference Centre, Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu, in 2022

Methodology

This paper focuses on Life in My City Art Festival as a support system for emerging professional artists in Nigeria. The paper relied on primary and secondary data, assembled through past LIMCAF exhibition catalogues from inception in 2007 to 2022, review articles on LIMCAF, and interview with past winners. Questionnaires and video interviews were deployed to collate information from the primary sources, who are past LIMCAF prize winners. The wealth of information available to the researchers as key players in LIMCAF from its inception till date was also a huge database that was

drawn from. Ayo Adewunmi played a key role in the formation of LIMCAF and has been the Art Director of the event from its inception till date, while Chike Obeagu was a pioneer participant in the LIMCAF 2007, a regional juror (Abuja Zone) for the 2016 edition, and three-time curator of LIMCAF in 2018, 2019, and 2022 respectively. The outcomes of the desk studies, the interviews and the experiential knowledge of LIMCAF was synthesized into a qualitative analysis to support the position of LIMCAF as a significant support system for emerging professional artists in Nigeria.

Multi-faceted Systems of Support

Though the prize money easily takes the front seat in the consciousness of the young emerging professionals that take part in the yearly LIMCAF competition, the systems of support provided by the yearly event are multi-faceted. Obeagu (2016) notes that beyond the prize money, LIMCAF has been able to support emerging professionals in the areas of Artistic Cognition and Creativity, Economic and Social Empowerment, Providing Platform for Inspiration, Interaction and Growth.



**Plate 3: Happy moments at the 2018 Edition of LIMCAF Grand Finale
International Conference Centre, Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu**

From 2007, financial rewards have been distributed in a way that many of the participating artists go home with something. The number of awards and the quality of prizes have also increased steadily over the years. According to Adewunmi (2018), at the formative stage, precisely during the first two years, 2007 -2009, the funding of the project was primarily shouldered by Rocana Nigeria Ltd and the French Embassy, with the Pan African Circle of Artists (PACA) providing logistics and strategic support. Today the story is different. From the initial grand prize of N200,000, 1st and 2nd runners up of N150,000 and N100,000 respectively, and 10 consolation prizes of N10,000 won during the inaugural edition in 2007, the 2023 edition which will be the 16th successive edition, apart from the interruption in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is packed with a lot of upgraded prizes. For instance, the overall prize winner will go home with N1,000,000 (One Million Naira), while Best Painting/Mixed Media/ Drawing, Best Sculpture/Installation Art, Best Ceramics, Best Graphic/Digital Art, Photography/Video, and Best Textile Art/Fashion, will be rewarded with N500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Naira) each, while 14 contestants will get the consolation prize of N50,000 (Fifty Thousand Naira).

Endowed prizes are; Justice Aniagolu Prize for Originality N300,000, Awarded to an artwork with distinctive level of originality, Dr. Pius Okigbo Prize for Technical Proficiency N200,000, awarded to an artwork with high level of technical proficiency and craftsmanship, Mfon Usoro Prize for Best

Entry from Uyo-Calabar Region N200,000, Vin Martin Ilo Prize for Best Entry from Enugu Region, N200,000, and Lawrence Agada Prize for Most Promising Young Artist N200,000. New categories are; Most Creative Female Artist N300,000, Life in My City Foundation Award for Selected Physically Challenged Artist N300,000, Fedelia Okoroafor Prize for Most Promising Female Artist N200,000 and 14 consolation prizes. These make up a total prize money of over N6,000,000 (Six Million Naira). This is in addition to El Anatsui's Prize of all expense paid international travel and exhibition opportunity for top 6 winners to the 2024 Dak'Art Biennial, in Dakar Senegal.



Plate 4: Emeritus Professor El Anatsui chatting with the 2018 winners of his LIMCAF all-expense Paid trip to Dak'Art Biennale, in Dakar, Senegal

From the surplus number of prizes distributed into different categories, many artists gain financial support to improve their practice. Because of the magnitude of the event, which has also become an annual gathering of stakeholders and art aficionados in the visual arts, LIMCAF also provides opportunities for sales of work by a lot of artists who are not lucky to win any of the designated prizes. The positive effect is that many artists who take part in the event go home financially improved. Some also make connections that yield commissions and further patronage thereafter.

LIMCAF's El Anatsui's prize of all expense paid international travel and exhibition opportunity for top winners to the Dak'Art Biennial is no doubt a huge expositive support that provides publicity, visibility, international exposure, global art awareness, networking opportunities and great moral boost to the benefiting artists. Adewunmi (2022) aptly notes, regarding the all-expense paid international travel, that the mission of LIMCAF as advised by the sponsor of the prize, Emeritus Professor El Anatsui, is to expose the LIMCAF winners to the next level of art practice, beyond winning in Nigeria. Part of the deal is to give them the opportunity to attend an international exhibition where they can see what is happening at the continental level, and interact with participating artists. The package is also to offer them the privilege of showcasing their artworks in an international event which will help them connect with museums, art lovers, critics, galleries, and curators from all over the world.

From the diverse accounts of the beneficiaries, one could rightly state that the retinue of supports this experience provides for emerging professional artists cannot be quantified financially. For the beneficiaries, the encounter with some of the world acclaimed artists in the continent, including some established artists from Nigeria, and their works has opened their eyes and minds to the bigger picture of what contemporary

art should be, and also exposed them to new mediumistic possibilities. It brought about the rediscovery of self, a boost of their self-confidence, and the courage to dare to play at the international level. It was an opportunity to network and make acquaintances for possible connections and collaborations in the future. In art practice, there is something that exposure of this magnitude does to the mind of the artist. It places the artist on a higher pedestal, motivates them to think big, and creates a burning desire to aspire to reach for greater heights.



Plate 5: El Anatsui's travel award recipients after the opening ceremony of Dak'Art 2018 with Smooth-Ugochukwu Nzewi, Curator, Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) New York

Another area that LIMCAF has provided grassroots support to the arts is through its school children and teachers workshop as well as LIMCAF lectures organized within the period of the grand finale event. The 3-day workshop, for secondary school students and art teachers of selected secondary schools within Enugu urban area is part of LIMCAF's strategy to rekindle the dampening interest in art at that pivotal level. By their involvement in LIMCAF events, school proprietors, teachers, students, and parents are exposed to the possibilities that art offer, which according to the Executive Director of LIMCAF, Mr. Kevin Ejiofor, a key aim of the workshop is to encourage understanding of art as a socially and economically viable profession. Art is a profession in which students can be proud and contribute in a recognizable manner to the development of themselves, their families and society at large. This enlightenment is very important, especially in a clime like Nigeria, where most parents restrict their ward from studying art as a profession because of their uninformed notion that art is not as status and economically viable as law, medicine, and other professions that are considered to be of more importance.



Plate 6: A facilitator addressing some students during the 2022 LIMCAF Three-day workshop for students and art teachers, to stimulate and deepen interest in art



Plate 7: Cross-section of students taking part in the workshop for students and teachers of selected secondary schools in Enugu urban



Plate 8: Cross-section of students taking part in one of the workshop sessions for students and teachers of selected secondary schools in Enugu urban

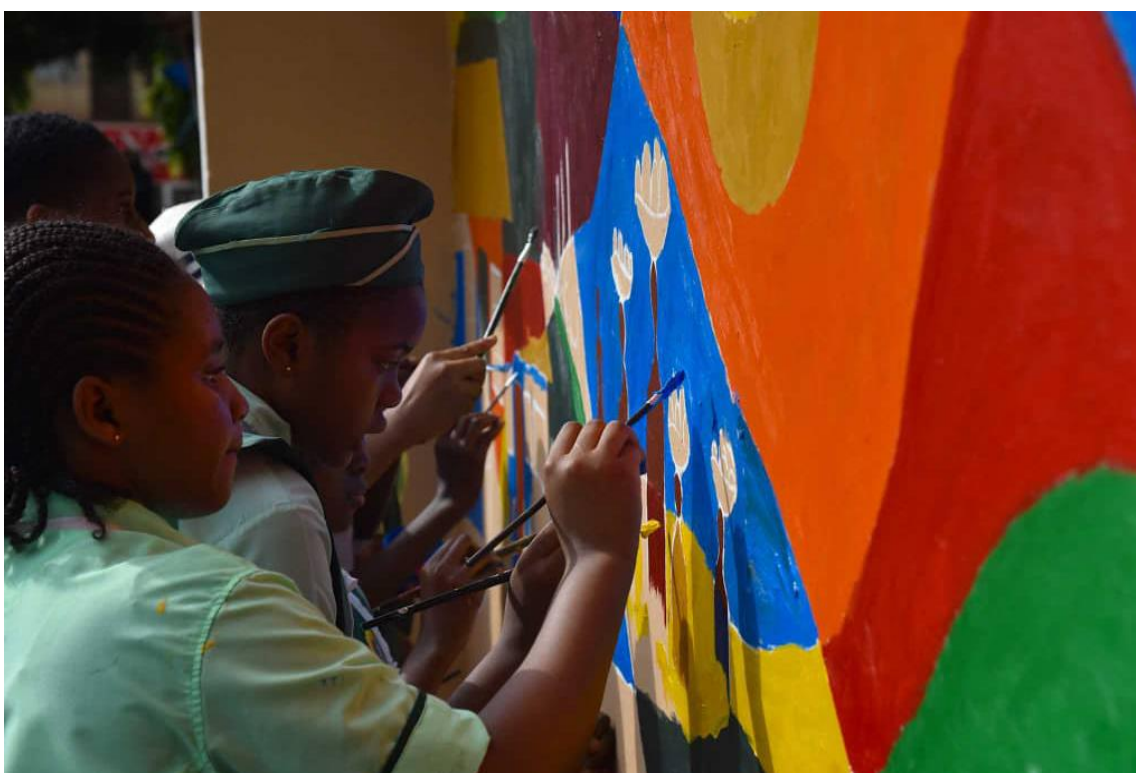


Plate 9: Some students creating a mural painting during the three-day workshop



Plate 10: Some of the Top LIMCAF Winners and recipients of El Anatsui's travel award at the opening ceremony of Dak'Art 2022



Plate 11: 18 Top LIMCAF winners (2018-2021) and recipients of El Anatsui's all-expense paid trip to Dak'Art

Biennale with two LIMCAF officials, Dr. Ayo Adewunmi and Dr. Ngozi Agujobi Odoh, at Daniel SORANO National Theatre, Dakar Senegal, The Exhibition Venue for LIMCAF/PACA Dak'Art, 2022

Progression Survey of 7 past winners

To point-up the impact of Life in My City Art Festival as a support system for emerging professional artists, it is pertinent to examine the progression of some of the past winners as a yardstick to ascertain the influence of LIMCAF experience in their practice. For this purpose, the study examined the professional evolution of 7 past winners, namely; Olumide Oresegun (1st Prize Winner, Maiden Edition, 2007), Klaranze Okhide (2nd Prize Winner, 2008), Badru Taofeek Abiodun (Winner, Best Textile 2015 and 2016), Sor Sen (3rd Prize Winner, 2011), Ngozi Omeje Ezema (1st Prize Winner, 2014), Eze Mariagoretti Chinenye (1st Prize Winner 2012), Muoneme Izuchukwu (Winner, Best Painting/ Mixed Media/ Drawing 2015, and Vin Martin Ilo's Prize for Best Enugu Entry, 2013). This section is majorly drawn from a survey titled "Where are they now? The Story of Past Top Prize Winners Since 2007 As Told by Themselves, which was first conducted in 2016 by Dr, Ayo Adewunmi the Art Director of Life in My City Art festival, and updated in 2023 for the purpose of this research.

1. **Olumide Oresegun**, won the first prize of LIMCAF's Maiden edition in 2007, then as a student of Yaba College of Technology. Olumide has had a steady growth in his artistic career since winning the prize in 2007. Today, he is well known as a forerunner of hyper-realistic art in Nigeria. He has gained international prominence with a recent CNN article that lauded his hyper-realism art. In 2016, Olumide became an internet sensation, gaining international media attention, for his hyper-realism technique with over 3.2 million views on YouTube and over 73,000 followers on Instagram. He was one of the jury members for the LIMCAF Grand Finale in 2022.



Plate 11: Olumide Oresegun. Photo Credit: lifeinmycityartfestival.org

Recounting his experience with LIMCAF, Olumide stated;

"My participation in LIMCAF really made me believe in myself. I had that strong belief after winning the first prize that year that no matter the challenge I face; I will achieve my set goals. To add to it, the money I was given helped me a lot to get some desired materials for my work."



Plate 12: Olumide Oresegun, Haircare, Hyper-realistic Oil on Canvas, 129 x 89cm 2011. Photo Credit: Invaluable.com

2. Ngozi Omeje Ezema, won the 1st prize in the 2014 LIMCAF edition. Before then, she had won the category prize (2nd runner-up and the best entry from Enugu zone) in 2011. Since her participation in LIMCAF, her career in art has blossomed. Ngozi has gone ahead to win the Outstanding Concept Award in the National Art Competition in Lagos, Nigeria, in 2015. She has taken part in major exhibitions within and outside Nigeria including the First International Biennale in Central China and Le Pineceau De L'integration in Senegal, during the Dakar Biennale in 2016. She won the High Excellence Award at the Cheongju International Craft Biennale in South Korea and 60th Faenza Biennale Prize, Italy, 2018 and was selected as one of the artists exhibited in the main exhibition of Dak'Art Biennale 2022. She has also taken part in artist's residencies at the Centre for Contemporary Art/ Triangle Trust (Lagos), Goethe-Institute Nigeria (Nsukka), Sevshoon Art Centre (Seattle, USA), Goethe Institute Ghana (Kumasi), and many more. She was part of the Grand Finale jury in the year 2018.

For her LIMCAF experience, Ngozi has this to say:

"LIMCAF gave me the courage to apply for other competitions within and outside the country and to keep trying even when I was not selected. The best chance could be the next trial."

3. Badru Taofeek Abiodun, won the Best Textile in 2015 as a student. He also won the Best Textile Art in 2016. He participated in LIMCAF five times in 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2018 respectively. In 2018, in addition to winning the best entry in textile, he won the Alliance Francoise Young Talent

Award which enabled him to have a successful solo exhibition at Alliance Française Lagos. Regarding his experience as a LIMCAF participant, Badru narrates thus;

"My participation in LIMCAF and winning has really helped me professionally. It gives me courage never to give up. Every year, I always look forward to the theme of the competition; the theme stretches my thinking faculty and makes me want to participate and win".

4. Klaranze Okhide, won the 3rd prize in 2009 as a studio artist and part-time art teacher at St Therese Catholic School Bwari, Abuja. She presently teaches art in a government secondary school, Abuja. She is one of the founding members of Female Artists Association of Nigeria (FEAAN), and Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA) Abuja. Her works have been featured in exhibitions within and outside Nigeria including Kunstort Eleven Artspace, Starzach, Germany, 2018, United Nations Women International Women's Day Celebration, Abuja, 2018, Women in Visual Art Exhibition, National Gallery of Art, Abuja, 2019. She was also a member of LIMCAF Grand Jury in 2019. About her experience in LIMCAF, Klaranze wrote;

"Participating in LIMCAF 2008 was an unforgettable experience for me. I had never been involved in any competition prior to that time ... I can still remember vividly the call I got to inform me that out of 400 entries, my painting "Kasuwan Diko" came 2nd. Quite unforgettable! The experience gave me the much-needed morale boost to face the challenge of being a mother and a practicing artist. I came to the realization that I count for something in the world. My voice (work) counts, and that made me a better teacher to my students. The realization that one can be heard from the most remote part of our country Nigeria. I thank LIMCAF for that".

5. Eze Mariagoretti Chinenye, won the overall prize in 2012 with a mixed media photography work titled "Rejuvenation" when she was a final year student of graphic section, Department of Fine Art, Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu. She currently lives in Abuja where she works as a production assistant. She participated in LIMCAF twice, in 2011 and 2012 respectively. In 2016, she won the 1st prize of the 11th edition of Visual Arts Competition organized by the embassy of Spain in Abuja.

For her experience in LIMCAF, Chinenye has this to say;

"My participation in LIMCAF gave me the opportunity to identify myself and the courage to know that my works are deserving of wider recognition. The experience has helped me to build confidence in myself and has continuously inspired me to improve in my works. In a nutshell, LIMCAF has made me more curious, more aware, more exposed, and more engaging in the creative world".

Chinenye also noted that winning the prize money enabled her to buy her first DSLR Camera, which pushed out the latent desire of her becoming a story teller. It was one of the pictures she took with this camera that won her the 1st prize in the Spanish art competition. She was part of the LIMCAF Grand Jury in 2022.

6. Sor Sen, won the third price in 2011 as an MFA painting candidate at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Presently, he is a full-time studio artist resident in Abuja. He participated in LIMCAF five times. Aside winning the LIMCAF third prize, he has also won; second position, National Visual Art Competition, professional category, organized by National Gallery of Art, Nigeria in 2012, Special recognition, Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library National Art Competition(OOPL), Ogun State in 2013, Second position, Visual Art Competition organized by the Embassy of Spain in Abuja, in 2023,

Fourth prize winner, Experience Nigeria Art Show, organized by Embassy of Spain, Abuja in 2015, (Honorary), Leonardo Da Vinci International prize Florence, Italy in 2016, 3rd prize, Visual Arts Competition, organized by Embassy of Spain in Abuja in 2016. Sor was selected as part of the LIMCAF Grand Finale jury in 2021

For his experience in LIMCAF, Sor Sen explained that;

“Since winning the third prize of 2011 LIMCAF, it has reinforced my confidence in art practice, supported me economically, and for me, it was a springboard to move on and win other prizes on different platforms. Also, it increased my visibility and relevance in the visual art scene. Winning the prize gave me the platform to kick-start my career. It was a spring board for me to show the world what I had that was hidden then, that talent that I’ve always had that was unknown and unseen before then”.

7. Muoneme Izuchukwu, won LIMCAF 2015 Best Painting/Mixed Media /Drawing and Vin Martin Ilo’s Prize for Best Enugu entry in 2013. He is a curatorial staff of National Gallery of Art (NGA), Enugu. He has participated in LIMCAF 4 consecutive times, in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. Through the encouragement of LIMCAF, he has had a two-man exhibition titled “Folkloric expressions” at the National Gallery of Art, Enugu, in November 2015. In response to his LIMCAF Experience, Izuchukwu wrote:

“LIMCAF has helped me to broaden my professional practice in terms of the quality of works I produce. This is from the nature of works I see from other artists during LIMCAF”.

Conclusion

From this exposition, it is obvious that Life in My City Art Festival plays a pivotal role as a support system for emerging professional artists in Nigeria. The shared experiences of past winners as recounted by them, substantiates the submission of this paper that LIMCAF provides diverse support systems in areas of economic and social empowerment for artists. Being part of Life in My City Art Festival has amplified their artistic cognition and creativity through thought-provoking themes. It exposed them to larger art platforms that increased their inspiration, interaction, visibility, growth, self-discovery, moral boost to persevere, irrespective of challenges, confidence to dare for more, courage never to give up, equipping to give back, and the determination to be better artists. In Nigeria, there are very few platforms that provide support for emerging professionals robustly like Life in My City Art Festival. For increased growth and profitability in the visual arts sector, it is recommended that government should go beyond paying lip service and take the front seat in providing support for the visual arts and artists. More platforms like LIMCAF should be encouraged to thrive. They should be strengthened by both the private and public sectors in order to provide more support systems for the vast number of young professional artists within the country. With the current clamour for contemporary African art and artists on the global stage, this is the best time to invest in the future that could yield great dividend for all stakeholders.

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THE SYMBOLISM OF SHOEPRINTS IN PAINTING

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Introduction

Shoeprints are the common impressions left behind by shoe soles as people walk about. They are the marks created by shoe soles. These so-called mere impressions are nonetheless iconic and symbolic. Wordnik (2023) describes shoeprint as the impression left by a shoe. The Free Dictionary (2023) further describes shoeprint as an indentation or outline of the foot of a person or animal on a surface (in a general sense). A mark of a foot or shoe on a surface, Shoeprints are common impressions in our environment and are sometimes passed unnoticed. Most people rarely give them attention and do not seem to realize that they are aesthetic and symbolic. On the other hand, forensic scientists have studied and classified shoeprints into three: patent shoeprints occur when a shoe picks up oil, paint or blood leaving behind impressions. Plastic shoeprints are created whenever a shoe sinks into the mud, while latent shoeprints occur on hard surfaces like glass or cement which may not be visible (Encyclopdeia.com, 2019). This study is geared towards extracting the symbolism of these shoeprints in painting. This is because the shoeprints found in our environment are either bold and clear or faint and weak. The attributes of these shoeprints in terms of whether they are bold and clear or faint and weak share a similitude to the existential experience of humans (the periods of strength and weakness or decline in human lifespan). The bold and clear shoeprint is compared to the period of youth, strength, and agility in human life, while the faint and worn-out shoeprint is in tandem with the period of old age and weakness.

The objectives of this paper are to explore the shapes and patterns of shoeprints for the creation of symbolic paintings. This exploration was carried out in stages that synchronized with the stages of growth and decline in humans. Jaffe in Jung (1989) observed that anything can assume symbolic significance: natural objects like stones, plants, animals, men, mountains and valleys, sun and moon, wind, water, and fire, or man-made things like houses, boats, pots or even abstract forms like numbers, triangles, squares, and circles. Human Beings according to Jaffe, with their symbols-making propensity transforms objects or forms into symbols, thereby endowing them with great psychological importance. Meyer (2022) opined that artists who use symbolism convey concepts through symbols and stress the significance underlying the shapes, lines, patterns and tones. This type of visual expression employs abstracts techniques to portray cognitive truth and the belief that there is a spiritual existence beyond the physical world. Meyer concludes that many symbolist art examples contain personal information and communicate their philosophies, notably the artist's confidence to expose the truth. The supernatural, the macabre, the realm of dreams, sadness, wickedness, and mortality are common themes among artists who use symbolism.

Symbolism in painting is an invaluable channel for conveying and revealing aspects of life (human existence) that are difficult to show in painting using familiar objects such as have been demonstrated by this study. Some of the existential issues this study has tackled that are difficult to show in the painting are strength, weakness, health, responsibility, and pressure of life among others. To corroborate the fact that ordinary objects or impressions in the environment could be harnessed to express these difficult concepts and the fact that such existential phenomena could be symbolized in painting. Olumide, Bako and Kolawole (2021) affirmed that some symbols relate to childhood and

the transition to adolescence, others to maturity, and others again to the experience of old age when a person is preparing for their inevitable death.

In visual metaphors or symbolism, the various objects and their properties are often combined in unexpected ways, to create a new meaning. Although humans and shoeprints are different subjects, they are projected by this study to share common properties as a form of visual metaphor. The state of a shoeprint as explained earlier tends to mirror or reflect the strength or weakness of humans as the aging process sets in. This is a psychological projection within the connotative space of reality. The key ideas employed for this study are discussed in the following subheads below.

The Concept of Symbolism

Any symbolic artwork expresses the idea or the belief shared by the artist and the viewer. According to Ogumor (2007), symbolism is the representation of a material object by not merely showing its beauty but also an expression of an abstract idea. Symbolism has been explained by different individuals as the act of imbuing objects with deep-seated meanings and interpretations. Most objects tend to represent something in the human experience. Our surroundings are full of visual symbols and statements which only the keen observer can detect. And it is these hidden meanings and messages that symbolists desire to share with their audience. According to Petrenko and Korotchenko (2019), the function of metaphor or symbolism is to transform the sense of the image from a psychological point of view. The authors stressed that “we start interpreting hidden emblems and symbols in every daily life”. Furthermore, they opined that artists have to consistently invent new ways of conveying their perception, interpretation and understanding of the world. Graham (2005) explained that what is distinctive about great art is the challenge it presents to the viewer to discern a meaning within it. This is not a meaning that can be conceptualized or exploited in language but is rather symbolic. Akprara (2015) insists that humans are capable of perceiving and making sense of both familiar and unfamiliar things in the environment. The object in the environment, whether familiar or unfamiliar must be perceived symbolically. Interestingly, Awogbade and Ibenero (2010) remark that, all over Africa, visual images and ordinary objects are used symbolically to communicate knowledge, feelings, and values. This is because symbols are believed to play an important role in the African conception of reality. This explains Frutiger’s (1989) submission that, while looking at pictures, sculptures, architecture, and all kinds of ornamentation, including objects of daily use, from whatever period, individuals are constantly faced with the question: that does it mean? What is hidden in this thing? These objects according to Frutiger are seldom unequivocal in their visual statements. The viewer then infers an underlying meaning and looks for an interpretation. This undeniable capacity of a representation to make a statement is also denoted by the term “Symbolic content”. The symbolic element in pictures is an implied value. Objects (shoeprints inclusive) landscapes, elements of nature, and everyday objects seldom have an independent symbolic content. Frutiger argues that object symbols are provided by items connected with outstanding events of life such as birth, marriage, and death.

Ali (1999) observes and strengthens the argument for symbolism by stating that, symbols are created to unravel the mysteries of life. They are used to educate the people about the nature of the forces around them. Therefore, traits and attributes of forms within human’s environment have been formulated and confided into symbols. Ali defines symbol as the representation of an idea or concrete object by shapes incorporated in the design or painting, it can also mean something that stands for, represents, or denotes something else (not by exact resemblance, but by suggestion or some accidental or conventional relation). An object is termed to be symbolic once its quality is considered valuable and important for indispensable human existence in both physical and spiritual realism. Their essence is in their ability to communicate specific meanings. Symbols represent abstract ideas, visually or verbally, involving the use of imagery. They reveal essence instead of outward appearances. Symbols thus, represent the concepts of the mind rather than the concept of the eyes.

Historically, Davis (2021) contends that a symbol is usually a solid, recognizable thing, an animal, a plant, or an object that stands for something that would be difficult to show in a painting or a sculpture, a force of nature, for example, or an idea. A symbol is one of the most important elements in giving depth to an artwork. Symbols can be very broad, like a storm that symbolizes danger, or a crow that symbolizes death. Ochigbo (2006) and Scott (2019) narrate that a symbol is a form or image implying or representing something beyond its obvious and immediate meaning, and that symbolism was a late 19th-century movement whose artists communicated ideas through symbols instead of depicting reality. It was a reaction to art movements like Impressionism, Realism, and Naturalism. According to the narration, Jean Moreas in 1886 published his famous Symbolist Manifesto. That every person, natural element, and object should be used to represent a symbol of a deeper idea or emotion. Moreas believed that rather than replicating reality, artists should suggest it with symbols. Emphasis was laid on imagination and emotions.

Semiotics

Semiotics is a specialized branch of knowledge in which signs and symbols are studied. The need for studying and understanding signs and symbols in the human environment is vital to our survival. We live in a world that is full of symbols, and hidden meanings. Sporre (2006) corroborates this assertion by stating that, the fundamental characteristic that makes us human is our ability to intuit and symbolize things. These according to Sporre are necessary because people examine, communicate, and respond to the world around them. Understanding signs and symbols in our environment will enhance our chances of survival. Almost everything around humans is coded, therefore, people must decode those varied objects or items. In lending their voice to this important subject, Adewumi and Samuel (2017) stress that the use of signs and symbols is inevitable in human existence, because all objects, images, and gestures (even human behaviours) have connotative essence, no matter how relatively trivial (shoeprints inclusive) they may seem. Anything that represents another thing by virtue of customary association due to conceptual connection or perceived resemblance. According to Okachi (2015), semiotics is the theory of the production of interpretation and meaning. Meaning is said to be made by the development of acts and objects which function as “signs” about other signs. Semiotics is not only concerned with communication but also with ascription of significance to anything in the world. Okachi notes that Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 - 1913) and Charles Sander Pierce (1839 - 1914) are among the pathfinders in the field of semiotics. These pioneers among others were engaged in a search for deep structures underlying the surface features of semiotics. Whilst for Saussure, ‘semiology’ was a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life, for Pierce, ‘semiotics’ was the formal doctrine of signs which was closely related to logic. For him ‘a sign’ is something which stands for somebody or something in some respect or capacity.

Examples of Symbolic Paintings

Many symbolic paintings are coded expressions of the artist’s, idea, feeling or emotion. What is shown usually conceals the actual meaning and interpretation of the artwork. Symbolism has to do with how objects are perceived to be the representation or illustration of certain events, situations, and experiences in a very personal or general way. It is thus, not difficult to establish that a particular object could be associated with some other object or event of life. This has to do with the training

and ability to see that a particular object represents another phenomenon based on certain identifiable characteristics, even if the two are not identical.



**Fig.1 The Scream, Edvard Munch, Oil, Tempera, and Pastel on board 91 x 74cm, 1893.
Courtesy, Munch Museum, National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design Oslo**

Symbols are important features of art and have been used by artists to express themselves across the centuries. Sporre (2006) speculates that the major concerns of artists are creativity, aesthetic communication, and symbols. Among artists who have used symbols to communicate through their paintings are Edvard Munch (1863 - 1944), James Ensor (1860 - 1949), Paul Gauguin (1848 - 1903), Erchabor Ogieva Emokpae (1934 - 1984). For example, Suzzane Gibbs reckons at a point in time that, she was taking time to reflect, analyse and focus on the psychological, emotional, and mental health of individuals with her painting. Her interest lies in capturing the fear, vulnerability, and confusion of the sick. Gibbs produced a portrait of her sister undergoing chemotherapy for cancer. Her paintings focused on exploring the psychological more than the physical state of the human condition. Gibbs aims to create a body of works that engages the viewer to question, consider and empathize. This is similar to the symbolic painting by Edvard Munch, titled, *The Scream* (1893) Fig.1. This painting of a lone grotesque-looking figure standing on a bridge while holding his extra-large head and screaming depicts the state of human despair, fear, and love, disease, jealousy, and death. Munch used his pictures as a vehicle to express the inner anguish of humankind, which is not obvious in the painting unless the viewer gives serious thought to the image and imagery in the painting.

James Ensor produced a symbolic painting which he titled "*The Intrigue* (1980)". This painting is expressive as well as symbolic in its pictorial language, referring beyond the figurative to mystical, religious, and psychological contexts of meaning. Ensor created an absurd, alienated world in his bizarre pictures of people by strange, masked creatures. Mask and human merge into one, leaving the viewer in doubt about the correct interpretation of this metamorphosis because it is impossible to tell whether a real face is turning into a mask, or a mask is turning into a real face. Beyond what is seen in this painting (the human figures and the masks), Ensor's primary concerns symbolically are the issues of human existence, of death, but also that of religion, painters of symbolism give concrete form to their feelings, states of mind, subjective fears, fantasies, and dreams. Symbolists can use anything to convey their feelings as well as make social and political comments.

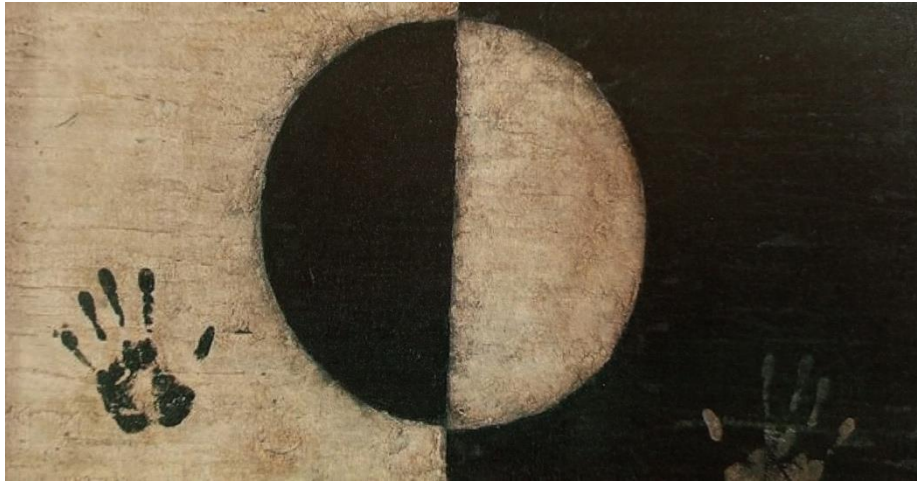


Fig. 2: Struggle between Life and Death, (1963), Erhabor Ogiewa Emokpae, oil on canvas, 61x121cm, Source:<https://guardian.ng/art/erhabor-ogiewa-emokpae-unforgettable-master-of-african-art/>. The Guardian. Retrieved February 18, 2023.

Another artist who has expressed himself in the realm of symbolism is Erhabor Emokpae. Erhabor's painting titled "Struggle Between Life and Death" (1963) Fig.2, shows a canvas divided into two sections of black and white squares. A circle in the middle is also divided into equal halves to reveal arch shapes of opposing black and white. Erhabor imprinted his left palm in black on the white square to the left, while his right palm is imprinted in white on the right black square. On the surface, a viewer sees only black and white circles and handprints only. However, going beyond what is projected to the viewer is a hidden meaning that is coded. The opposing black and white used in the painting coupled with the handprints symbolize the struggle between life and death which is an existential phenomenon.

Why Shoeprints Symbolism

Having examined a few symbolist artworks, this article is geared towards unlocking the hidden symbols in shoeprints. As established from the statements of the authors quoted in this article, the human environment is saturated with a variety of visual statements which can be detected only by the keen and inquisitive observer. It is such that, impressions and objects which appear ordinary in our environment are probed and deconstructed by the inquisitive minds, and their hidden meanings are deciphered. To buttress this assertion, Nadama (2019) confirms that, the creative mind of an artist is conscious and thoughtful of its environment, and that appreciation of nature extends to the mundane things that non-artists consider rubbish. In the same light, there appears to be a dearth of records on the symbolism of shoeprints by painters. Not much attention is paid to shoeprints by painters. This article is, therefore, oriented towards drawing out the symbolism in bold and clear shoeprints that are created by brand-new shoe soles. This article also focuses on exploring the symbolism of weak and fading shoeprints created by old, weak, and worn shoe soles. Shoeprints are impressions that are abundant in our environment. These impressions are explored in this painting series symbolically. The impressions shadow every step people take. The shoeprints created are in varying degrees of degeneration (either bold and clear or faint and weak), depending on several factors among which is the age of the shoe sole. New shoe sole produces bold and clear impressions, while old and worn shoe sole produces fading and weak impressions. These impressions reflect the transition of life, how individuals grow, become strong, and eventually become old.



Fig. 3, Childhood, Abafras Abednego, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 100 x 66cm

Childhood is a painting executed with acrylic colours on canvas. The shoeprints shown in Fig. 3 are those of a toddler, they reveal bold and clear organic shapes and patterns which mimic the leaf motif. Usually, a toddler doesn't have enough weight to cause the shoe sole to suffer wear and tear, nor do toddlers use a particular pair of shoes long enough for the pair to experience any depreciation that could lead to the generation of fading and distorted impressions. In most cases, their shoes are either changed or outgrown, without suffering any exaction of the pressure that will warrant immediate intervention. This composition is symbolic in its colours. The dominant cerulean blue background colour of the canvas shows through the shoeprints like the network of veins found in a leaf. The imprints are bold, and visible, revealing the track and trajectory of a child. Aesthetic shapes and patterns run the full length of the canvas, from the lower left corner through the centre (middle) to the topmost portion. The symbolism in this composition tends toward revealing the life and vibrancy of a little child. The background blue colour suggests the baby's comfort zone (affection and pampering).

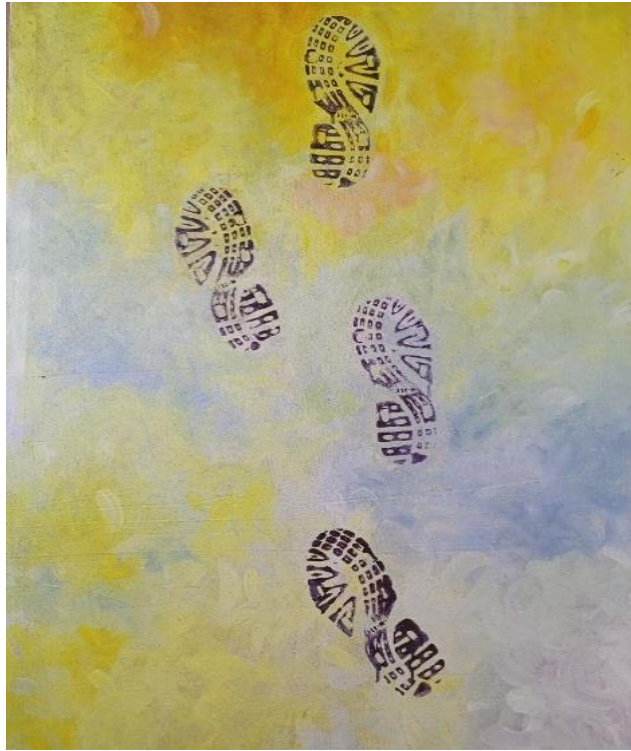


Fig. 4, Adolescence, Abafras Abednego, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 111 X 80cm

Fig.4, Adolescence is a painting composition executed with the shoe soles of a youth. The shoeprints are bold and clear geometric shapes and patterns, comprising triangles, squares, rectangles, and little circles. These are patent, considering the boldness and clarity of the prints. The shapes and patterns are sharp and distinct. The intricate geometric shapes and patterns are twisted, giving the appearance of figure eight (8). Four shoeprints appear in a manner that suggests movement. The imprints are sharp, and the colour is French ultramarine blue; while the background colours of yellow and blue tend to harmonize and symbolize the temperamental nature of adolescents. The boldness and sharpness of the prints mimic the animated state of the life of adolescents which is full of energy and dreams. The colours in this composition symbolize hope and seemingly bright prospects with little or no struggle. The shoeprints are not faded, indicating confidence and little or no pressure on the adolescents.

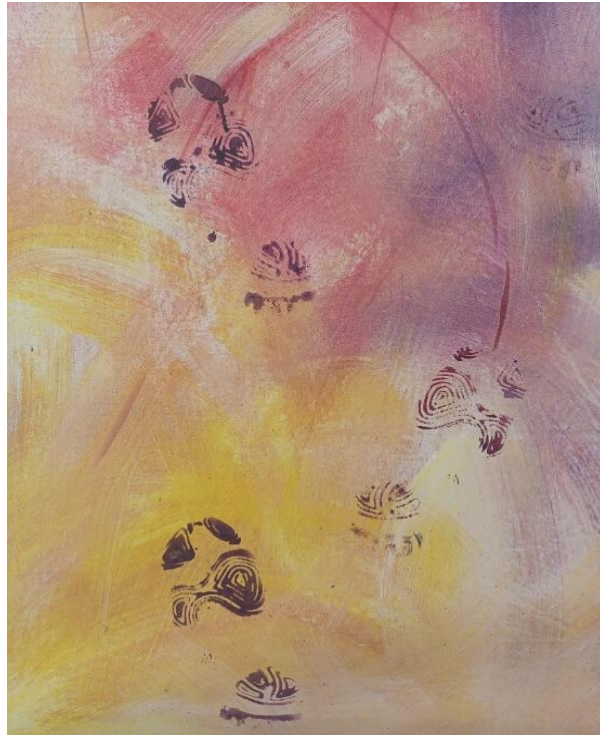


Fig. 5, Early Adulthood, Abafras Abednego, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 180 x 100cm

“Early Adulthood” displayed in Fig.5 is a symbolic shoeprint painting which reveals organic shapes and patterns of shoeprints that are faint. The shoeprints are butterfly-like organic shapes and patterns of loops and swirls. Each unit of the design in the shoeprints appears not to be connected to the others. The lines range from bold to weak, thick, and thin and they recoil and twist in loops. The shoeprints are bold at the bottom or lower portion of the painting, but gradually fade away towards the topmost corner of the canvas (from patent to latent prints). A scrutiny of the background colours shows a range of yellow, red, and pink. Treatment of the ground or surface upon which the shoeprints float and drowns. This was achieved with dry sweeping brush stroke effects to simulate the natural floor on which latent shoeprints are stamped. The shoeprints appear faint and weak because, in adulthood, energy levels tend to drop as people get older and weaker under the vicissitudes of life. This represents the age of full responsibility in carrying family burdens which tend to weigh people down.



Fig. 6, Adulthood, Abafras Abednego, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 150 x 120cm

Adulthood in Fig. 6 signifies the deterioration that is experienced when people advance in age. In this painting composition, old and worn-out shoe soles were employed to create shoeprints. The shoeprints which are geometric in shapes and patterns expose outlines or the outer fringes of the worn-out shoe soles. They appear as traces of long and short rectangles which at some points metamorphosed into squares because of the wear and tear. The shoeprints are executed in red colour, denoting that they have become endangered elements. The worn shapes and patterns appear to be imprisoned in a web of delicate lines of dripped colours crisscrossing the surface of the canvas. The drip technique was exploited to achieve this effect. A variety of squares and rectangles were created around the shoeprints to mimic and reminiscence of the original rectangles of the shoe soles before they became worn. Red and yellow colours dominate the composition. Generally, these worn shapes and patterns of shoeprints remind humanity of the transiency of life and the pitiable state of old age. This is usually characterized by diminishing strength, deteriorating health, neglect, and poor welfare conditions.



Fig. 7, Old Age, Abafras Abednego, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 180 x 100cm

Fig. 7, Old Age, is another symbolic and conceptual expression of shoeprints painting. The worn shoeprints used in the painting titled “Adulthood” Fig.4 were explored within this symbolic painting composition. In this painting, the worn organic shoeprints appear vague; and the shapes and patterns gravitate towards what appears like amorphous shapes in varying hues of red-brown, grey and a blue spot at the centre of the painting. The weak and faint shoeprints get absolved in the convolution of coiling, twisting, and winding mysterious-looking shapes and forms. Deliberate scrutiny is required to identify the apparently digested shoeprints. The allegory of these fading prints can be connected to the understanding that human body parts exist in the form of simple repeat patterns: eyes, ears, hands, set of teeth, nostrils, legs, breasts, buttocks, and fingers to mention a few. The motifs which are repeated in the design of shoe soles and prints remind people that humans exist in the vehicle of anatomical shapes and patterns. This is a divine design concept that should be aesthetically appreciated. It is however true, that the time comes when people begin to lose their beauty, shape, and energy. People do remember fondly, how young, strong, beautiful, or handsome; and how youthful and shapely they used to be (like the bold and clear shoeprints of a new shoe); and how presently they are rapidly degenerating toward meeting the ultimate end. This trend in human transition is the same as moving from realism to abstraction in the visual arts. One takes wobbling steps as a result of diminishing energy; once radiant and glowing skin gets covered with wrinkles; one then sprouts strands of white hair; cheeks sink in, and succulent lips get sucked and tucked in; eyebrows droop and sights begin to fail; darkness and gloom swallow the individual, and one arrives at the stage where one no longer enjoys life or derives pleasure (like the fading and weak prints of an old and worn shoe).



Fig. 8, Advanced Old Age, Abafras Abednego, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 120 x 66cm

Advanced Old Age compliments 'Old Age' in Fig.7, being a continuation of the aesthetic symbolic shoeprint series. The painting is an advanced version of the exploration of the worn shoeprints, possessing distorted shapes and patterns of rectangles which lean towards abstraction. In this painting, it becomes a bit difficult to identify the worn shoeprints as the background colours of red, grey, brown, and pink with traces of yellow and white appear to further subdue the vaguely revealed distorted shapes and patterns of rectangles. The grey-coloured shapes and patterns of shoeprints orient themselves toward what looks like concentric rings with a blob of white at the centre. It will take a keen observer to recognize the bleary distorted shapes. This again indicates the stage when an individual in advanced old age is completely drained of strength and deflated. It represents the point at which people take their exit. Any shoe with worn and broken soles like this is usually discarded. The red, grey and dark colours used in this composition symbolize death and decay.

Findings, Summary and Conclusion

No aspect of human life is not adequately expressed in the visual arts. Artists have and will continue to use painting to express different concepts. Symbolism in painting remains a potent channel for representing phenomena of life that are not easy to capture in painting. It gives a great depth of meaning to issues that are conceptual and psychological in nature.

This study revealed that any object can be used to symbolize an abstract idea or that which is not physical, as it has been demonstrated by this exploration in which shoeprints in different stages of degeneration have been used to symbolize the stages of growth and decline (transition) in human life span. Jerome in Adewumi and Samuel (2017) argued that symbolism is about the deliberate effort of the artist to pass a coded message to all intended audiences. All props, motifs and forms are signifiers of deeper, and sometimes, greater entities. In conclusion, Destras (2013) stated that "we are ephemeral and like the articles of nature, our life is all about change". This exploration illustrates the fact that the fading of shoeprints is a mimicry of the diminishing strength in humans, in addition to perceiving them as designs. According to Barrett (2003), Donald Kuspit, a contemporary art critic and aesthetician submits that "artist is not exempt from life. There is no way out from seeing art as a

reflection or meditation or a comment on life". The art he stresses reflects life issues or existential issues with which we are all involved.

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SYNTHESIS OF NANO SODIUM-CALCIUM SILICATE (COMBEITE) BIOACTIVE CERAMICS IN GLASSY MATRIX

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Introduction

Rice husk (RH) is one of the by-products obtained during milling of rice. It is reported that approximately 0.23 tonnes of rice husk are formed from every tonne of rice produced (Jain *et al.*, 1996). The husk in turn contains between 15 and 20% of mineral matter the majority of which is amorphous silica (Groszek and Laughin, 2015).

After rice grain milling, rice husks remain as an agricultural waste material. Many people have tried to use this waste to produce useful materials such as silica, silicon carbide, silicon nitride or silicon for solar cells (Yalcin and Sevinc, 2001). Rice husk is one of the largest readily available but most unutilized biomass resources and has long been an ideal fuel for electricity generation (Kumar and Venugopal, 2013). Burning rice husk as fuel to generate energy, results in the waste product, rice husk ash (RHA). RHA is rich in silica (about 60%) and can be an economically viable raw material for production of silica gels and powders (Chakraverty and Kaleemullah, 1991; Kamath and Proctor, 1998). RHA has been evaluated and used as an adsorbent of minor vegetable oil components (Proctor *et al.*, 1995, Proctor and Palaniappan, 1990). Although various uses for rice husk and RHA have been suggested in literatures, Refractory brick manufacturing, lightweight building materials, and flame retardants are just a few of the industrial applications where rice husk has shown its potential (Obakin, 2020; Ajoke, 2021), their disposal or utilization remains a major concern. Soluble silicates produced from silica are widely used in glass, ceramics, cement as a major component, in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and detergents industries as a bonding and adhesive agent. (Laxamana, 1982, Anon., 1997).

One of the most recent products of glass is the glass ceramics. Glass ceramics are fine-grained polycrystalline materials formed when glasses of suitable compositions are heat treated and thus undergo controlled crystallisation to the lower energy, crystalline state (McMillan, 1979; Hölland and Beall, 2002). The concern of the glass and glass ceramics industries is the availability of raw materials at an affordable price and the production of glass and glass ceramics by low energy consumption production processes. Numerous silicate based wastes, such as coal ash, slag from steel production, fly ash and filter dusts from waste incinerators, mud from metal hydrometallurgy, different types of sludge as well as glass cullet or mixtures of them have been considered for the production of glass ceramics (Rawlings *et al.*, 2009). As the demand for sustainable and renewable resources continues to grow, research on the industrial applications of rice husk in Nigeria has become an area of interest. Rice husk, which is a byproduct of rice milling, is rich in lignocellulose constituents and silica, making it a valuable biomass material (Ikpe *et al.*, 2019). Various studies have explored the potential uses of rice husk in different industries. It has been used as a raw material for making compounds such as silica silicon compounds and activated carbon. Additionally, rice husk has found applications as an industrial fuel, fertilizer substrate, pet food fiber, and substrate for silica silicon compounds (Elijah *et al.*, 2020; Osasona & Kanuhor, 2021). The industrial applications of rice

husk in Nigeria have been the subject of extensive research and experimentation. One such study focused on the use of rice husk as a filler in natural composites, with cashew nut shell resin as the matrix (Temitope *et al.*, 2015). The study aimed to investigate the mechanical properties of the resulting composites at different filler content. This research found that rice husk proved to be an effective filler, enhancing the mechanical properties of the composites. These findings open up new possibilities for utilizing rice husk in industries such as construction, automotive, and packaging (Temitope *et al.*, 2015).

The objective of this study is to synthesize Nano sodium-calcium silicate (combeite) ceramics in glassy matrix from rice husk ash. This work was carried out to mitigate the environmental effects of rice hush, and ash that lead to the release of methane gas, ash dust from burning activities, cost of producing glass and ceramics from analytical grade chemicals. Rice husk ash has a high content of silica, the cost of starting material for glass and ceramics synthesis by sol gel method and being readily available, with an estimated 3.4 million tons of rice produced yearly in Nigeria (Adesina, 2014), used as a substitute for the relatively expensive raw material employed in glass manufacturing without compromising the quality.

Materials and Method

The materials used for this work include (Rice Husk) sourced from Kujama (Chikun Local Government Kaduna State), Trioxonitrate(v)acid HNO_3 (Conc.), Sodium hydroxide (NaOH)(S), Calciumtrioxonitrate(iv)tetrahydrate $[\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}]$ (aq) and Hydrochloric acid (HCl) (conc.).

Preparation of Silica from Rice Husk

Rice husk (RH) was collected from Kujama Rice Mill, Chikun Local Government, Kaduna State. The RH was separated from the remaining rice grain and unwanted materials washed with tap water several times till all the impurities that float on the water were completely removed. It was then dried at 110°C for 2 hours in an electric furnace (Gemco Son-Holland Type CFR 40/90/40, power 20KW, volt 4153 Ph, NR 91.442, frequency 50Hz). It was then combusted in a perforated metal container in the open air to burn out volatile materials before the residue ash at 700°C for 2h.

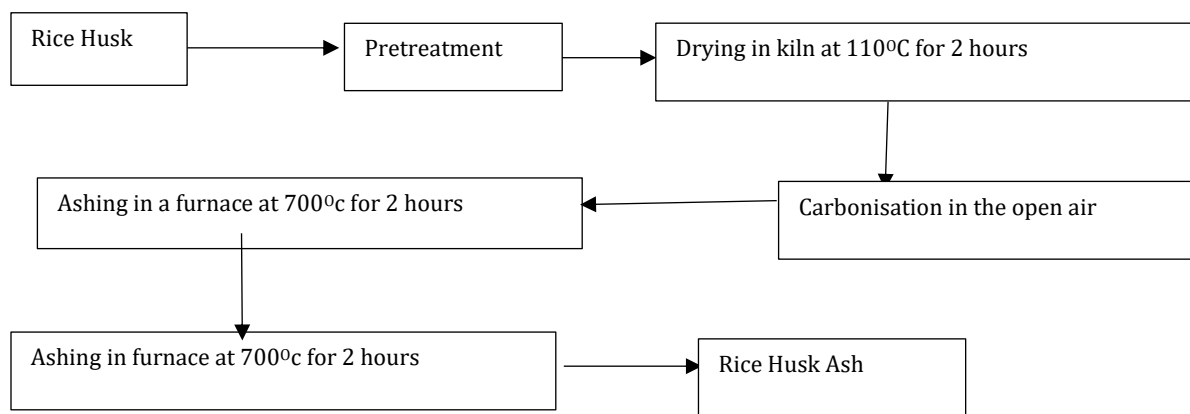


Fig.1 shows the flow chart for the preparation of the rice husk ash.

Characterisation of Rice Husk Ash

Chemical Analysis

Elemental content of RHA, were determined by X-ray fluorescence (EDXRF, Midi pal 4). The sample excited by X-rays emits a short wavelength radiation (fluorescence), characteristic of each alloying element. A parallel beam of the secondary radiation is directed by means of a collimator onto the analysing crystal; it is separated according to wavelengths and then reflected into a radiation

detector mounted on a high precision goniometer. The angular position of crystal and goniometer is a function of the wavelength and allows the identification of the element in the matrix.

Phase Analysis

RHA powder was analysed for crystalline phase contents by X-ray powder diffraction performed with a Pananalytical Diffractometer (Model: Empyrean). Powder sample was pack on a sample stage so that it could be irradiated by the X-ray. To detect the diffracted X-rays, an electronic detector was placed on the other side of the sample from the X-ray tube and rotated through different Bragg's angles. The goniometer kept track of the angle (θ), and the detector records the detected X-rays in units of counts/sec and sends this information to the computer. The operating parameters were:

- i. 40kV and 35mA with the Cu target, a step size of 0.02 (degree) with continuous scanning.
- ii. X-ray intensity (counts/sec) was plotted against the angle two-theta (2θ).
- iii. The angle (2θ) for each diffraction peak was then converted to d-spacing, using the Bragg equation. Both the XRF and XRD were carried out at the Nigerian Geological Survey Agency; National Geosciences Research Laboratory (NGRL), Kaduna.

Preparation of Glass Gel Powder

Synthesis of Silica from Rice Husk Ash (RHA) RHA - 40g, $\text{NaOH}_{(s)}$ - 16.68g, $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}_{(aq)}$ - 49.2g, HNO_3 (conc.) - 600 ml. Initially, 40g of RHA were taken and corresponding amount of $\text{NaOH}_{(s)}$ and $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}_{(aq)}$ were obtained. $\text{NaOH}_{(s)}$ and $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}_{(aq)}$ were dissolved in 200 ml and 10 ml of distilled water in different beaker which formed clear solutions. NaOH solution was warmed to temperature of 30°C , RHA was added into it in warm condition and volume was made 400 ml by adding water. The boiling was continued for 1 hr while volume was maintained up to 400 ml mark of beaker regularly at around time interval of 5 minutes. After 1 hour of boiling, RHA was dissolved in the solution of $\text{NaOH}_{(aq)}$, then the solution was filtered and 300 ml of sodium silicate solution ($\text{Na}_2\text{SiO}_3_{(aq)}$) was obtained according to Nayak, (2010) $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$ solution was prepared by dissolving it in 10 ml of distilled water. Then 600 ml of HNO_3 (conc.) was added in $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$ a solution was prepared, then titration of sodium silicate solution dropwise very slowly into the calcium trioxonitrate(iv)tetrahydrate and trioxonitrate (V) acid. Immediately, turbidity appeared in the solution. The titration was stopped and kept within 40 min gel was formed which has the solute glass phase and the liquid solvent phase. The gel formed was left for 3 days at room temperature for proper network formation. Then it was dried on a hotplate by evaporation to obtain xerogel powder. The synthesis of silica from RHA, preparation of solution, gel and drying to powder were carried out at the Centre for Energy Research and Training, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Compaction

The powder was then compacted at 150 Psi forming the green body in (30×10×5) mm mould according to (Reed, 1989). The green glass powder after compaction was measuring (28×9×5) mm then, fired at 700°C in an electric furnace. The compaction was conducted at the Metallurgical Engineering Department Laboratory of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Sintering

The samples were heated in a closed electrical furnace (Gemco Son-Holland) to a temperature of 700°C for densification and sinter crystallisation of the glass compact this is as reported (Reed, 1989) that glass particle sinter at or below the transition temperature of the glass depending on the composition in this case Soda lime silicate glass. The sample was then allowed to cool to room temperature in the furnace before removal.

Microstructure and EDS Analysis

Microstructure of the Glass Ceramics specimen was analysed by a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM, Model: Phenom prox manufactured by Phenom World, Eindhoven Ltd., Holland). Elemental analysis was carried out by Energy Dispersive X-ray spectroscopy analysis; (EDAX or EDS, Phenom Prox Instrument). In SEM, a hot tungsten filament electron gun under vacuum emits electrons which pass through a series of electromagnetic lenses. The sample is then bombarded with a fine beam of electrons having acceleration potentials range from 1-40 KV. A part of the beam is reflected as back scattered electrons (BSE) along with low energy secondary electron emission (SE), cathode luminescence, X-ray excitation and electron transmission also took place. Images formed from the (SE) beam were studied in the extrinsic mode of SEM. The emitted secondary electrons are detected and displayed on a scanning TV display. EDS technique was used to identify the elemental composition of the specimen. The EDS analysis system works as an integrated feature of an electron microscope.

During SEM scanning, the specimen is bombarded with an electron beam. The bombarding electrons collide with the electrons of the specimen atoms, knocking some of them off, thus, transferring some of its energy by emitting an X-ray. By measuring the amounts of energy present in the X-rays being released by a specimen, the identity of the atom from which the X-ray is emitted can be established. The output EDS spectrum normally displays peaks corresponding to the energy levels for which the most X-rays had been received. Each of these peaks is unique to an atom, and therefore corresponds to an individual element. The concentration of the element in the specimen is indicated by the high intensity of the peak in a spectrum. The scanning Electron Microscopy was carried out at the Chemical Engineering Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Results and Discussion

The brown ash colour was prepared by burning rice husk at 700°C for 2 hours after pre-treatment, carbonisation and ash, this silica precursor was characterised by XRF analysis and XRDS analysis as shown in table 1 and figure 1.

Table 1: Showing Result of XRF of RHA

OXIDES OF ELEMENTS PRESENT	PERCENTAGE CONTENT
SiO ₂	79.98
P ₂ O ₅	1.80
SO ₃	0.26
Na ₂ O	0.42
K ₂ O	0.302
CaO	1.54
MgO	0.74
TiO ₂	0.11
V ₂ O ₅	0.01
Cr ₂ O ₃	0.014
MnO	0.17
Fe ₂ O	4.43
ZnO	9.85
CuO	0.017
BaO	0.05
EU ₂ O ₃	0.089

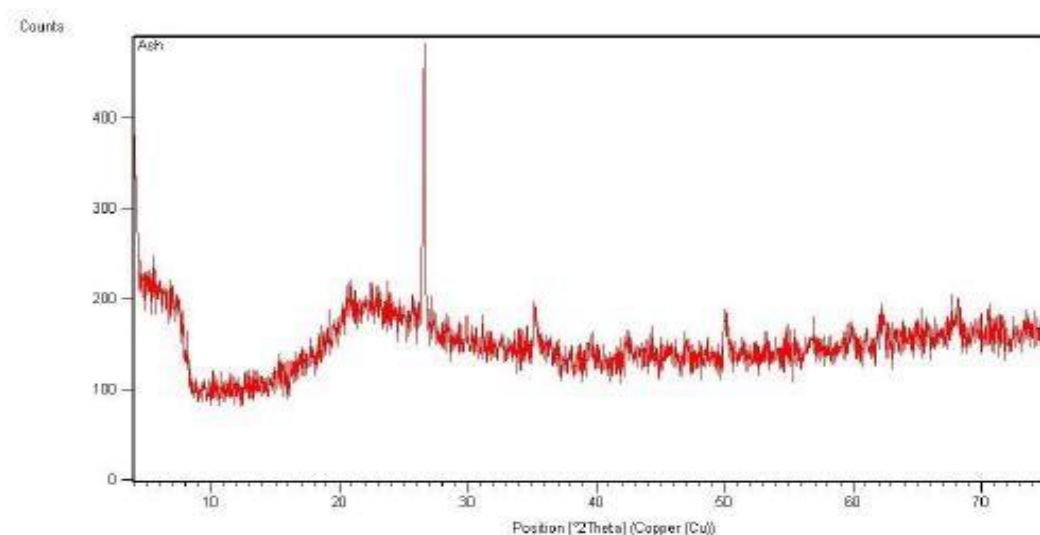


Figure 1: Result from XRD pattern of Rice Husk Ash, Source: Gideon, (2015)

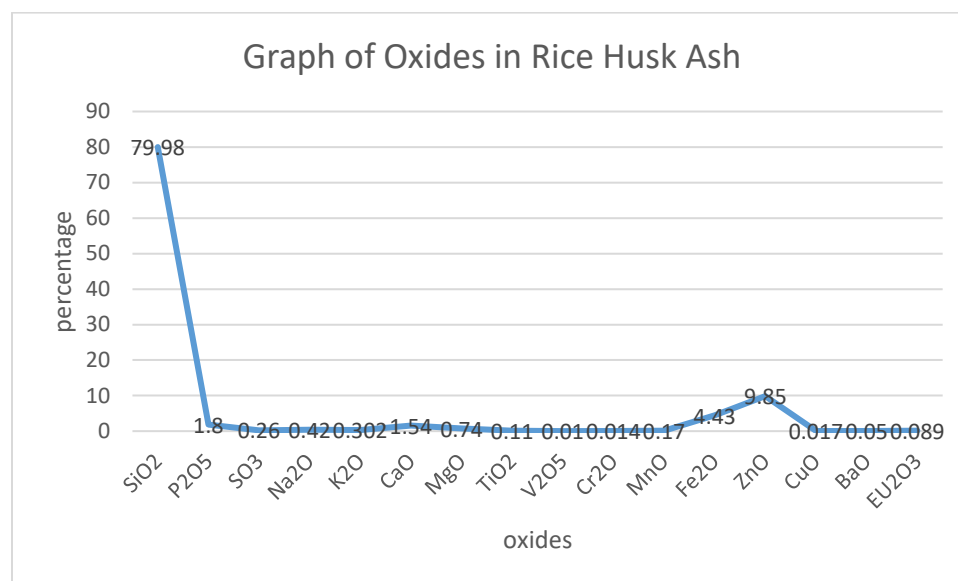


Fig. 2 Graph showing percentage of oxides, Source: Gideon, (2015)

The chemical analysis XRF of the RHA contains 79.98% SiO₂ and the rest 20.02% in which 1.80% P₂O₅, 0.42% Na₂O, 1.54% CaO, 0.05% BaO, 0.11% TiO₂ which are major and minor glass formers. In Figure 1 that shows the X-ray diffraction patterns of RHA, a broad peak zone centred near 2θ=22° signifying the amorphous nature of silica-based materials. A sharp crystalline peak in raw husks at 2θ=26.86° was due to the presence of impurities sand particles as the peak was identified to match with quartz or due to the transformation of the silica to any of its crystalline phase tridymite or cristobalite.

Nano Synthesis of Sodium-Calcium Silicate (Combeite)

RHA mixed with NaOH_(s) solution giving a solution of sodium silicate. The solution of sodium silicate was titre against calcium trioxonitrate (iv) tetrahydrate and trioxonitrate (v) acid, turbidity appeared and then gel within 40 min. The gel was left for three days to age; white shinny speck powder was obtained (xerogel) from the process of drying. Then, compacted into the green bodies using mould and sintered to glass ceramics, grey colour piece and whitish colouration after cooling.

Phase Analysis of Glass Ceramics

Figure 3 shows XRD patterns of 700°C sintered glass powder compact, shows the presence of sodium calcium silicate phase ($\text{Na}_4\text{Ca}_4\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}$) combeite at $2\theta = 33.5\text{--}34.1$ being the highest peaks a bioactive ceramics glass family as reported by Warji (2010).

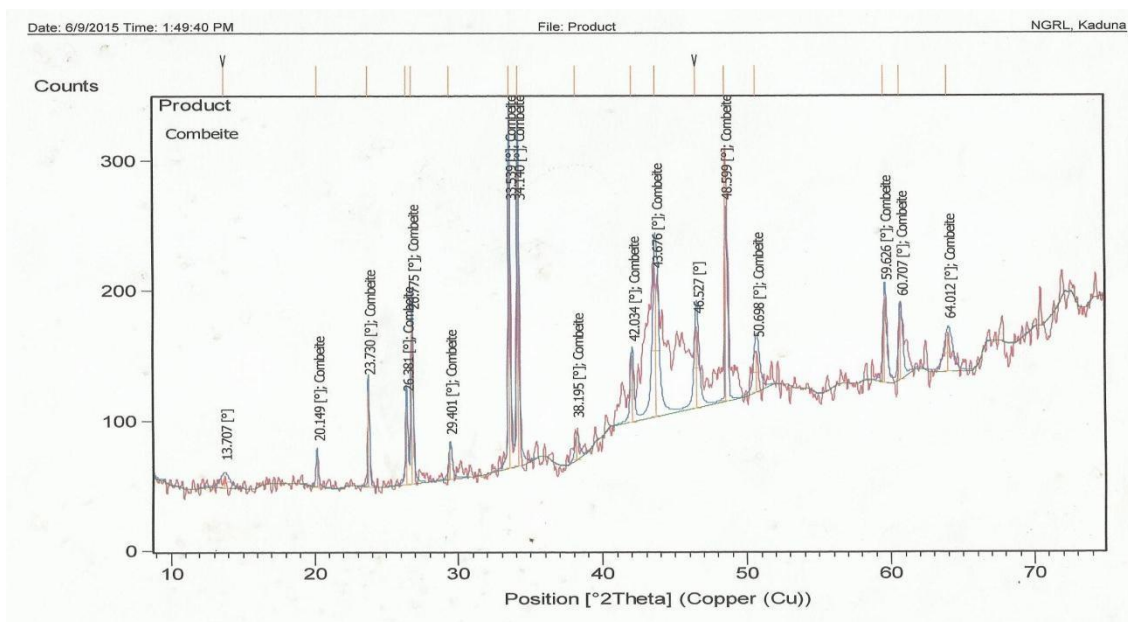


Figure 3: XRD Pattern of Sintered Glass Powder Forming the Product, Source: Gideon, (2015)

Scanning Electron Microscopy of Glass Ceramics

Figure 3 shows a circular morphology of glass ceramics is due to the precipitation of ceramics in glassy matrix. So, the grains and clusters shown by this surface are attributed to the formation of phosphate phases. Similar changes in apatite morphologies have been reported for nano (sol-gel) derived glasses and glass ceramics (Nayak, 2010). The glass ceramics specimen with a circular structured morphology with EDS elemental spectra showing Si, Ca, P and Na in plate I.

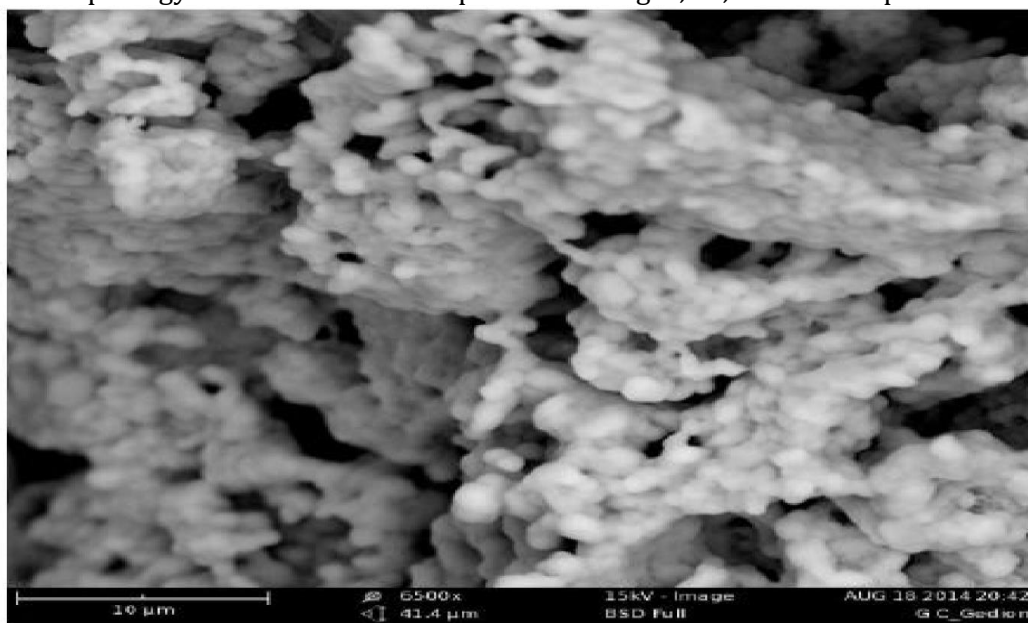


Plate I: SEM of the Sintered Glass Product Magnified at 6500×, Source: Gideon, (2015)

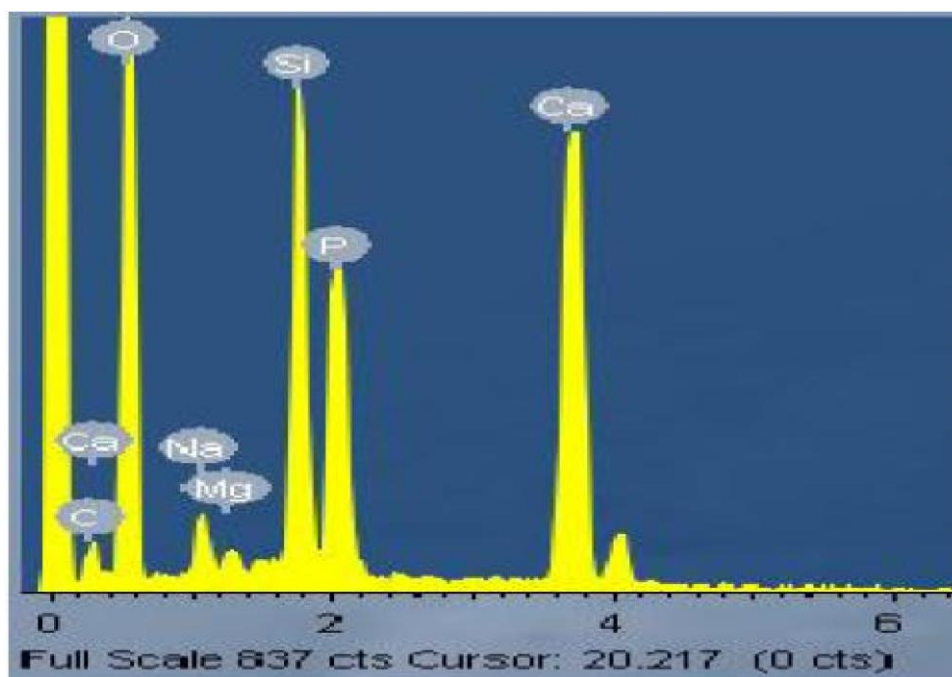


Plate II: EDS of the Sintered Glass Product, Source: Gideon, (2015)

Conclusion

From the results and discussion of the study, the following conclusion can be drawn:

1. By analyzing the RHA it was found that it contains compounds such as 79.98% SiO_2 and the rest 20.02% which includes 1.80% P_2O_3 , 0.42% Na_2O , 1.54% CaO , 0.05% BaO , 0.11% TiO_2 that can be used for glass and glass ceramics formulation and production.
2. It was also found that a solution can be prepared with the ash, gel the same solution with a solution of Calcium trioxonitrate (iv) tetrahydrate and trioxonitrate (v) acid.
3. The sinter crystallisation of the powder obtained from drying of the gel was also possible, specimens were sintered at a temperature of 700°C .
4. The sintered powder mainly contains combeite ($\text{Na}_6\text{Ca}_3\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}$) crystalline phase dispersed in amorphous glass matrix from the result of its characterisation by XRD and Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM).
5. The presence of crystalline phases confirmed by XRD and the morphology shown by SEM confirm both crystalline and amorphous phases as seen in the microscopy identify the material as that of glass ceramics.
6. The outcome has been found to be good energy and time saving methods of glass ceramics production. This method has no regards to the composition of the starting raw materials, with a promising future in Nigeria, especially with respect to agricultural waste materials in glass ceramics production with advantage of promoting safe environment. This has shown that the un-utilized abundant and growing biomass RHA that is an environmental problem in terms of pollution and disposal can be used to produce glass ceramics. This research will contribute to other research to be carried out on glass ceramics. It also increased the knowledge of the advantage of using local agricultural waste raw materials rather than imported ones. It also has advantage of using a low energy consuming process.

Finally, it can be concluded that rice husk ash may be a low-cost raw material for the preparation of glass ceramics materials through simple sol-gel route.

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PLASTIC WASTE WEAVING AS A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

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Introduction

Innovation in any aspect of art and technology has been of concern especially in weaving art research practice in Nigeria. This has continually opened new grounds in textiles and weaving derivation. Plastics has been mainly utilized in Nigeria, especially for beverages and drinks storage, and commercial purposes. Innovative use of waste plastics for weaving images and objects are nascent. Attention to the systematic use of plastics weaving art and formation of images are also important in the study of textile weaving and its practices in Nigeria. This study examined the use of wastes especially wastes from plastic drinks bottles and its screw caps. The study was conducted with the aim of determining techniques and methods of plastic weaving, with a view to providing a scientific model of operation. There are documents concerning weaving arts and its techniques, but there is scanty of literature on plastic weaving as a solution to environmental pollution in Nigeria and since Nigeria is battling with plastic environmental degradation, therefore this study is appropriate at this time.

Bernard (1989) states that the arts of weaving are ancient and so important that every culture involve in the weaving art with use of animal Fibre yarns and vegetable source. Ogunduyile (2005) states that the composition of vertical and horizontal looms with threads interlace to weave. Danto (2006) noted the innovations in weaving from manual techniques waving to mechanized woven techniques. Danto pays attention to equipment and operations as they concern interpretation of motifs and meanings in weaving with use of machine. Baregheh *et. al* (2009) conducted a comprehensive research on the definitions of innovation and they reported over (60) sixty different definitions of innovations. In summary of their definitions; Innovation is a system of introducing novel ideas for the benefit of society from waste resources.

Springman, (2011) stressed that creating something new is the goal of most innovation and initiatives which solve certain problem. Screw cap plastic weaving and wastes for plastic weaving art has evolved to solve problems of environmental degradation since the plastic wastes has now been used for weaving of various objects and utilities.

Ndon, (2013) reports that, wastes are discarded, unwanted and thrown away items. Recently, most wastes materials (Plastics, Fabrics, Woods, Papers, Nylons) and others were usually combusted and puts the environment in danger. Khan and Malik, (2013) maintained that, carbons evaporation from the wastes items make human and non-human being cells to malfunction and cause allergies to human body and non-human body. Their document calls for urgent measures to control waste items to save lives.

Kalilu (2013) argued that innovation irrespective of scholarship definitions and interpretations given to it, innovation must rescue the society from hardship and therefore canvases for innovations in all spheres of arts and technology, which this study addresses.

Paul (2018) affirmed that technology and methods in weaving keep that to time and traditional weaving art in Nigeria is an old art which dates to thousands of years with various yarns. The upcycling and recycling of plastic wastes into weaving is a novel idea which this study attempted in other to solve the challenges of environmental pollution.

Al-Hayat (2018) sees hand woven arts as a craftsmanship in nature and materials adapted from region to region, group to group, and that the art can be done with thousands of materials. This is applicable to the plastic arts weaving in Ogbomoso and Oyo towns.

Seyi – Gbagbayau and Ajayi, (2019) maintain that waste items whether papers, plastics, woods and other source of wastes are referred to as junk or garbage that emanate from factories, offices, homes and other places where human beings reside.

Berruezo *et al* (2020) studied the weaving art pattern on micro plastic from fabric. The trio was aimed to determine the influenced of some parameters related to design of fabric and relationship between micro plastic items of weaving arts, and submitted that plastic weaving needs to be introduced into institution of learning. Obede and Adamu (2020) posed that plastic wastes in Nigeria is now one of the biggest environmental challenges of this present generation, and submitted that discarded plastic holds on in our environment for long period of years than other forms of waste which causes natural disaster plus hormonal distortion.

Babangida *et.al* (2022) identify plastic pollution in Nigeria as a cankerworm that needs urgent attention and submitted that every profession must come out to find a lasting solution to plastic pollution in Nigeria. This is another angle of justification for this study. Ajuzie, (2023) study was on waste repurposing for other useful materials for textiles. Though, Ajuzie study was on waste textile materials not plastics wastes, but Ajuzie's document reiterate that waste items could be used to create new things for the use of human beings and of course control environmental degradation that our nation is seriously facing today.

Methods and Sites

The consumption of drinks and beverages stored in plastics has been on the rise in Nigeria and Ogbomoso and Oyo towns are not left out. The population of Ogbomoso according to 2023 UN World Urbanization Projection (UWUP) was estimated at 628,682 while Oyo town is estimated to 471,000 (www.worldpopulationreview.com). Ogbomoso and Oyo townships are situated in the vegetation transitional belt between the forest and the savannah areas of Nigeria. Both towns are significant in events which usually calls for drinks packed in plastic bottles, which are later discarded after use. The age bracket of the plastic wastes weavers ranges between 7years to 15years. They used the plastic screw rings and plastic screw caps made bottles between 750mle and 350mle (Plates 1 - 2) Other materials adopted by the plastic weavers are: hand needles, scissors, cap nail (*Eso Alade*) rubber band, twine, and razor blades. The weavers remove the screw rings, and plastic caps gently and manually, to avoid damage to the weaver's body (Plate 1 and 2) and washes the screw caps and rings (Plates 3, 4, 5 and 6). The washed plastics were then separated for weaving arts. Plates 7 and 8.



Plate 1: Discarded plastic bottles. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 2: Discarded plastic bottles packed. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 3: Discarded plastic bottle covers. *Photograph from field research*

Interviews and observations are primary techniques used for data collection and it was in form of structured and unstructured questionnaires for a census of creative activities using purposive sampling techniques were used. The research questions were adopted to test the research aim. Qualitative approach was used as a tool of investigation in order to establish the relationship between traditional weaving and plastic weaving. Interviews were conducted to establish cultural, social ecological and aesthetic value.



Plate 4: Discarded plastic ring cover removed. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 5: Discarded plastic bottle covers emulsified. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 6: Discarded plastic bottle ring covers emulsified. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 7: Discarded plastic covers finished emulsified. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 8: Discarded plastic rings finished emulsified. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 9: young boy posed with discarded weaving plastic cross bag. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 10: A boy posed with discarded plastic rings weaving in progress. sandals. *Photograph from*



Plate 11: Discarded plastic rings woven slippers. Photograph from field research



Plate 12: Discarded plastic bottle yarns woven. Photograph from field study.



Plate 13: Discarded plastic key holders woven. *Photograph from internet.*



Plate 14: Discarded plastic covers woven bag. *Photograph from internet.*



Plate 15: Discarded plastic weaver in action. *Photograph from field research.*



Plate 16: Discarded plastic weaver in action with woven skipping rope. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 17: A lady posed with discarded plastic woven bag and pouch. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 18: A boy posed with discarded plastic woven bag. *Photograph from field research*



Plate 19: Sample of Discarded plastic bottle.
Photograph from field study



Plate 20: Splitting of the sample bottle to form an object. *Photograph from field study*

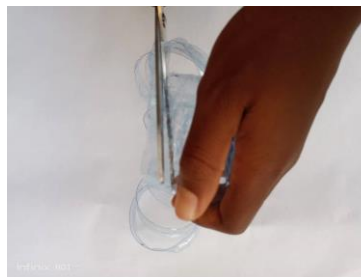
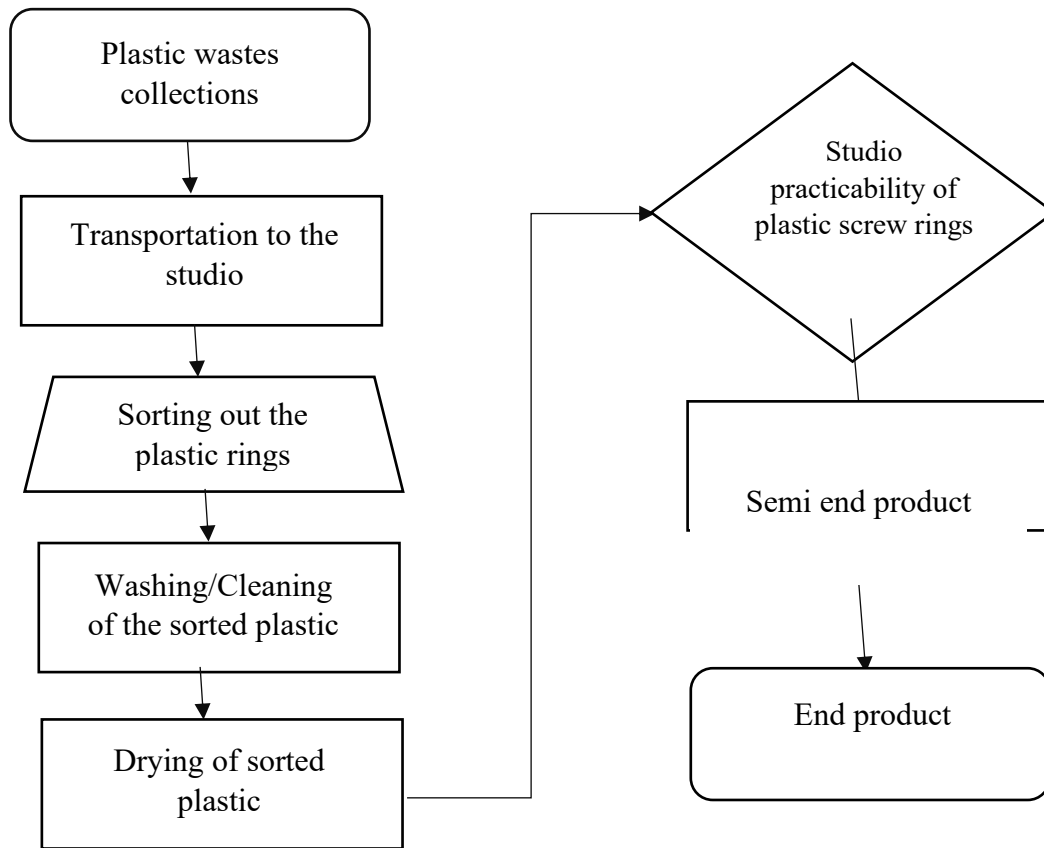


Plate 21: Cutting of the discarded empty bottle for weaving. *Photograph from field study.*

The plastic wastes weaving studio techniques used by the weavers for this study were illustrated in flow chart in Figure 1



Plastic Arts Weaving Techniques

The plastic waste arts involved plaiting and assemblage techniques. Plaiting is a technique adopted in twisting the plastic caps to shape, while assemblages is a method to bend the assembled plastic screw rings and covers to form images (Plates 12, 15 and 20). The artist, as a creator, produces works not only for aesthetics purpose but also and primarily to express his feeling virtually. Crown nail (*Eso Alade*) is usually used for the two techniques, while scissors were used to cut the wastes drink bottles into yarns for weaving: Plates 19 and 21. Thus, there has always been a search for newness in this direction. Also, the screw rings were used to create belts of various sizes for males and females, sandals, bags, pouches, slippers, skipping ropes, flower and lamp holders, (Plates 9,10,11,16,17 and 18). Plastic bottles caps were upcycling and reassembling to form bags (Plate 14). Pouches, bags of diversity size, were also produced from waste screw ring plastic bottles. Waste management through art is germane to control environmental degradation. Plastic wastes generally has potential uses in sculpture, ceramic and all aspect of arts. The study revealed eight processes as follows: searching for discarded plastic, transportation, sorting of the plastic into groups (covers, rings, and bodies), cleaning, drying, weaving (studio practicability), semifinal products and final productions as illustrated in chart 1. The tension of the plastic plaiting is usually checked after plastic thread is placed in the hand of weavers. Then using the surplus warp plastic as weft, the weaver weaves several centimeters to test the weave. The final weave of plastic was at-times closed with burning of the edges in a light manner.

Colour Determination

The weavers of plastic in this study has little control of colours determination because the weavers depend on the wastes plastic colours already coloured by the producers of the plastic. The most prominent colours in the woven objects with wastes plastic are all the classes of colours identified in plates 10, 11, and 14. White and black colours are scanty in most of the products and when white or black colour lids and rings were used it serves as barricades for other colour as it was observed by Joan and Laura (1995) that colours were at times used by the artist to serve a boundary for other colours. Plastic weavers value plastic for being easy to secure, inexpensive, and needed no additional colours to perfect their woven objects. It does not shrink with moisture and pliable enough to weave.

Conclusion

Waste is everywhere. Waste items must not be solved with burning off alone. Carbon resulted from burning is harmful to humans. The recycling of plastic waste for weaving art require global understanding from developing nations. This study recommends that adequate publicity should be given to the arts, and that young plastic weavers should be encouraged to further their studies in line of recycling technology. Plastic waste today forms a great proportion of solid waste that is giving the government concern. Therefore, there must be a solution on how to manage the plastic waste. Innovation in plastic weaving helps. This can be incorporated into school system from primary level to tertiary level and the end products needed to be patronized by the citizenry because it would have a better finishing if not the best. These would ultimately sanitize and enhance our environment as plastic waste would greatly reduce, if not totally controlled.

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List of Plastic Weavers Interviewed

- Alamu Sunday Atolagbe. Age: 12 years Sex: Male Qualification: J.S.S. 2 Location: Iseke Area of Oyo Town Oyo State 22/10/2022
- Samuel Adeola Age: 10 years Sex: Female Qualification: J.S.S. 1 Location: Elewura, Apake Ogbomoso. 22/01/2022
- Adigun Sulaiman Age: 10 years Sex: Male Qualification: J.S.S. 2 Location: Location Oniyo Akata Daodu Area, Ogbomoso 10/10/2022
- Ramota Lateef Adeola Age: 12 years Sex: Female Qualification: J.S.S. 3 Location: Ajalaruru Compound, Isale-Oyo, Oyo State 22/02/2022
- Omo Aje Samuel Age: 15 years Sex: Male Qualification: J.S.S. 3 Location: Bolodeoku, Oja-Jagun, Ogbomoso 20/01/2023
- Areo Lateefat Age: 17 years Sex: Female Qualification: S.S. 1 Location: Oke-Agbede, Ogbomoso, Oyo State. 10/10/2023
- Kehinde Johnson Isola Age: 15 years Sex: Male Qualification: S.S. 2 Location: Olounfemonle Area, Oyo, Oyo State. 12/05/2023
- Aderenle Taofik Age: 12 years Sex: Male Qualification: J.S.S. 3 Location: Iyaji Akesan area Oyo, Oyo State. 12/04/2023
- Saka Wakeelu Age: 10 years Sex: Male Qualification: J.S.S. 1 Location: Aremole Compound, Saja Area, Ogbomoso 13/2/2023
- Jafaru Ibraheem Age: 10 years Sex: Male Qualification: J.S.S. 2 Location: Olode Ijeru, Ogbomoso, 13/4/2023

ADAPTING *DAMBE* AS A CREATIVE RESOURCE IN PAINTING

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Introduction

Background of the Study

This painting research draws from the artist's cultural background leading to a focus on one of the many cultural activities that is popular in northern Nigeria, commonly called "*Dambe*". *Dambe* is a traditional form of boxing and a source of entertainment within communities that practice it Green (2005). It can also be a means of testing virility and strength amongst youth of such a community and in some cases as a suitable and less bloody means of settling a dispute or in acceptance of a challenge. *Dambe* can be between members of the same community, amongst neighboring communities, or even between rival peer groups. The movements observed in the muscles of the human form are artistically fascinating to the creatively intuitive mind. Such intricate actions between two human figures advance considerable images and forms for a suitable amount of creative work to be produced for research purposes in painting. The study also takes into consideration the unique nature of the subject matter to its surrounding and participating communities as well as its importance to existing cultures. All works created are directed towards self-expression, the challenging of one's emotions; by laying emphasis on the function of art as a tool for effective communication that in turn enhances understanding and heightens society's capacity for art appreciation.

Documented explorations in the arts have succeeded in bringing about modern movements that are founded on articulated manifestoes and agendas. Such movements began with the renaissance where the said "rebirth" of art as is currently known began. Other movements overtime include Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Pop Art, Modernism, Realism, Romanticism, Art Nouveau, Contemporary Art, Surrealism, Fauvism, Dadaism and a host of others. One thing that remains apparent and consistent is the continuous emergence of newer movements that transcend cultures globally; which arises either as a result of a merger or as a result of dissatisfaction with its present status quo.

Therefore, the brand of artistic foundation conceived for this research shares its interest closely with the painting exploration of the human body, its environment, identity, complexity, city life and beliefs all tangled in culture which is deeply rooted in expressionism. Significant to the artistic movements that flourished during the 1900s until early post world war it period around 1950s captured essentially various cultural transformations. Figura (2011) indicates that Expressionism, gathered momentum in the year 1910 in Berlin before the first world war which resulted in the collapse of the art market as a result of its transition into modernity. The way and manner bodily gestures, postures, and facial expressions were exaggerated could communicate essential states of being. Somehow, the collective effort of the Expressionist employed print-making technology amongst other conventions, possibly to disseminate their messages faster and stronger. Stressing their points in bold aggressive colors, dark tones and tints using woodcuts, lithographs, etching, and dry point; they also achieved aesthetics in water colour, oil paint, acrylics and charcoal.

On depicting actions, moods and emotions of their subjects in daily life scenes, the embodiment of the imagined the ideal of a simple life which were structured around the rhythms of nature were central themes found on their paintings. To fortify themselves in these struggles, the

Expressionists turned to action and conceptual performance in painting. In Nigeria, Aina Onabolu (1882-1963) a nationalist who was to change the face of Art in Nigeria through the appropriation of forms found in western culture. Who was an agent of change identified “European academism” and also the visual agitator of African post-colonial identity.

Reverse appropriation to Onabolu as observed by Emeni (2015), was to “hack into the exclusive space in order to possess the contested terrain of modern art in *Africa* through understanding the forms and techniques of western artistic expression”. Ben Enwonwu (1918-1994) enabled through his practice; an analysis of the constitution of artistic identity by contemporary African artists who locate their practice in the spaces of culture engendered by Africa’s colonial encounter (Agulu, 2015). The practice of using indigenous aspects of culture and traditions succeeds in immortalizing such aspects of culture thus, projecting the essential life-styles of a people: like the trends in modern societies. The period of restrictions encouraging only some selected media specification and a strict attainment of mastery in technical or natural skills to convey information are not just sufficient anymore. Contemporary artists in Nigeria today, adopt a hybrid of artistic disciplines with newer media and forms of expressions, “one where the conceptual threads of their message are articulated, debated, and made paramount Eze, Francis, et al.

Statement of Research Problem

As there seem to be no painterly documentation of “*Dambe*” in contemporary Nigerian painting, the problem of this research, is therefore, to create exploratory paintings of *Dambe*: a traditional mode of boxing using expressionist styles and techniques. This research makes use of the expressionist techniques of painting to visually preserve an aspect of tradition/culture that is synonymous to the northern region of Nigeria. It is a way for modern Nigerian society to benefit from their culture through visual artworks which in turn enhance the education and enrichment of the conscience and well-being of the society. Odufu (2012) confirms this through his statement, “the ultimate goal of education offered through arts is cultural identity”.

Justification of the Study

Modern painting is geared towards inspiring young artists and students to explore their culture using the elements of arts and that are available in techniques and styles of expression. This study is therefore justified in its exploration of an aspect of traditional culture using modern styles and techniques to manipulate *Dambe* in painting.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study is to:

1. Examines through preliminary sketches and drawings the inherent dynamic forms of *Dambe* for exploration in naturalistic representation in painting.
2. Explores the elements of colour, form and space in developmental state as they relate to the human form in *Dambe*.
3. Disperses the human forms into positive and negative spaces using the emotive role of colour as it relates to space and form.

Scope of the Study

The study is concerned with the use of certain elements of art such as form, shape, space and colour to create paintings of traditional boxing also known as *Dambe*. Compositions will be made from studies of traditional boxers and boxing scenes captured at Zaria/Sabo fight club and on a two dimensional surface.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research is founded upon the fundamental characteristics of Expressionism. The Oxford Illustrated Dictionary (1976, Ed.) explains Expressionism, “as a broad artistic style in which the artist seeks to depict not objective reality but rather the subjective emotions and responses that objects and events arouse within such a person”. The artist accomplishes this aim most effectively through distortion, exaggeration, primitivism, and fantasy through vivid, jarring, violent, or dynamic/ malleable application of formal elements of art such as line, shapes, colour, form, space and texture. For the purpose of this research, the elements of Expressionism such as its style of figurative exploration in a somewhat abstract state is adopted and emphasized by modifications in palette and the use of elements. Abstractions of the figures in accordance with the method of modernist artists like Vasily Kandinsky (Date) among other Expressionist painters whose exploits are important and innovative approach for creating expressionist abstract paintings. The expressionists’ main subject of interest was the human figure either in singular formations or in compositions. They mostly represented human activities such as dances, bar scenes, swimming or bathing scenes etc. Their creative drive seemed to be rooted in personal feelings and individualized visual reportage of what they felt, experienced or participated in as individual artists.

The paintings are created solely on the grounds of the researcher’s physical understanding and awareness of the subject matter as well as on the experiences and interactions had in and around the *Dambe* arena.

Expressionism

It’s typical traits were to present the world solely from a subjective perspective, distorting it radically for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or ideas (Tejera, 1966). Thompson (2010) reviews the term as being “suggestive of angst”. However, in its general sense, expressionism lays more emphasis on individual perspectives as it is characterized as a reaction to positivism and other artistic styles such as Naturalism and impressionism.. The expressionists according to Matejcek (1910), sought only to express inner life, often via the painting of harsh and realistic subject matter. What is crucial to this research however is that, the groups focus on depicting raw emotion through the representation of provocative imaging of the modern world? Expressionists depicted scenes of city dwellers and dancers in the city’s streets and nightclubs, this presenting to the viewer the “decadent underbelly of German society”.

Dambe

Dambe is traditionally practiced as a way for men to get ready for war. Many of its techniques and terminologies allude to warfare. Today, companies of boxers’ travel, performing outdoor matches accompanied by much pump and ceremony which include rhythmic drumming throughout traditional homelands of northern Nigeria, southern Niger and southwestern Chad (Walker and Afolabi, 2008).

The compendium of Hausa/English words explains that the word “*Dambe*” derives from the Hausa word for “box”, and appears in languages such as Bole as “*Dembe*”. Participating boxers are called by the Hausa word “*daaemaaenga*”. Although there no specific definitions to the sizes as in modern styles of boxing and wrestling, *Dambe* fighters/competitors are fairly matched in

size. Matches mainly last for three rounds with no definite time limit for each of the rounds. A round ends when one or two of the following happens:

1. There is no activity;
 2. One of the participants or an official calls a halt to the round or;
 3. A participant's hand or knee or body touches the ground "killing the opponent"
- The primary weapon in the fight is the strong side fist. The *strong-side* fist, also known as the "spear" is usually wrapped in a piece of cloth and tightly knotted cords.

Nakasissa (2006) indicates that, traditionally contests take place between men in the butcher's guild, who also challenge men from their communities, forming boxing teams from their ranks called "armies". Their bouts takes place at festivals marking the end of the harvest seasons, as clans of butchers would travel to slaughter animals for farming communities. Harvest also mark a time when rural communities are flush with money; so gambling on feats of strength became closely associated with these celebrations.

The Pakistani Daily Times (2002) reports that, today's participants of *Dambe* are often urban youths who train in local gyms or backyards, competing all year round for cash prizes. While no longer the sole practice of the Hausa speaking people of West Africa, and the preserve of the butcher caste, the confraternity aspect of *Dambe* as a sport still exists as youths who join the professional ranks also become members of the professional community which travel to perform such bouts at carnivals and festivals all over the country. Side betting amongst the spectators and prize money for the competitors is very common and remains an important aspect of the event (Simpson, 2008: VOA).

The entertaining nature of the sport has made it famous. This has earned some interest and its promotions through organizations such as Kogi State Traditional Wrestling *association* (Akinemi, 2008).

Related Artworks

This section reviews art that appear related in one way or the other with the works created in this research.

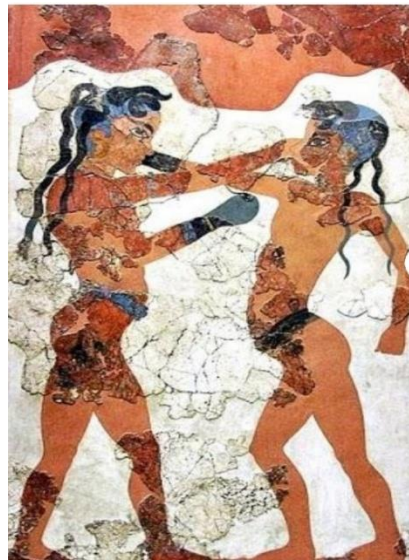


Figure 4. "The Boxing Boys", fresco from Thera (modern-day Santorini, Greece), 1600 B.C.E. Source: The Thera Foundation at [www.therafoundation.org/akrotiri/building beta/boxing boys room beta1 south wall/view "Boxing Boys"](http://www.therafoundation.org/akrotiri/building%20beta/boxing%20boys%20room%20beta1%20south%20wall/view%20Boxing%20Boys).

Figure 4 two boys are shown boxing. Interestingly, both are wearing only one glove on the right hand. There is no way of knowing if the glove had open fingers, as one gloved hand is too damaged (but a small section of the fresco suggests that the glove may have been enclosed), and the other one seems to be blowing opponents head (Ross, 2010). The fresco however establishes that stances and single wrapped fist of Hausa boxers bear visual resemblance to illustrations of Ancient Egyptian, Minoans, and Hellenistic boxers. This has caused speculations that Hausa boxing is directly related to Ancient Egyptian boxing (Edward, 1994). The boxers are rendered in a simplistic style reminiscent of ancient Egyptian art and hieroglyphics. The dominant colour is earth toned brown or red, hints of blue are seen in the loin cloth of the boxer on the left and in areas of both boxers' hairstyles. The boxers both are depicted with long black locks of hair tied in sections with one boxer having more locks than the other. Both figures are depicted in a standing position what is referred to in *Dambe* as the "strike Pose".



Figure 5, "Wrestling", Tomb Painting in tomb 15 of Benxi Hassan, Egypt CA. 20th century BC, Wikimedia commons, I.A. Jennings

In the "Wrestling" image in figure 5, a tomb painting/fresco depicting sequential or a step by step visual documentation of the art of wrestling. The sequences bear a strong resemblance to those practiced by the Hausa people in their own variation of the sport called *Kokuwa* and *Dambe*. The fresco appears to be a guide for the novice on the styles and techniques to be employed in gaining victory over one's opponent. The works in figure 4 and 5 appear more to be illustrations meant for the purposes of training, guidance, or as instructional materials used by coaches or for other purposes.



Figure 6. "Boxer Vase" from Hagia Triada and drawing, Greece c. 1500 B.C.E. Source: Flickr at www.flickr.com/photos/pankration/: Pankration Research Institutes photo stream.

The Minoans seem to be amongst the first civilizations to employ the use of boxing gloves. The relief on what appears to be a drinking vessel called the "Boxer Vase" from Hagia Triada, c. 1500 B.C.E.,

depicts several scenes of combative or ceremonial activities (Figure 6). The conical *rhyton*, made of black soapstone, is decorated with four sections of reliefs. The artist's depiction of the boxers wearing helmets and arm guards speaks to the potential brutality of the activity being portrayed, and it reinforces the idea that these boxing "gloves" are primarily an offensive weapon designed to inflict physical damage through blunt force, as there is no sign that a sharpened edge is being employed (Frost, 1906). There is no evident means of knowing the rules of this activity, and it cannot be definitively determined if these men are fighting *mano a mano* or on teams. Nevertheless, it is clear that these men are engaged in some kind of contest or ceremony.



Figure 7. **"Dancing Around the Golden Calf"**, Emil Nolde, 1910, 68 X101 cm, Oil on Canvas, Taatsgalerie Moderner Kunst, Munich, Germany

Dance around the Golden Calf is one of the most important religious works of the German expressionist painter Emil Nolde. Expressionist accent is put on the feelings of the human, beings presented in the painting therefore we can easily spot another characteristic of the expressionist trend the exaggeration of the feelings and facial expression. Consequently, to that, the general atmosphere is dominated, by a general state of joy and, somehow madness provoked, by the loss of the real faith.



Figure 8, **"Composition VI"**, Vasily Kandinsky 1913. Oil on canvas 76.8 x 118.1' (195.0 300cm) Saint Petersburg, Russia. Hermitage Museum

Kandinsky took abstraction to another level or a step further than his counterparts. While artists like Constable, Renoir and Boccioni used recognizable figures and scenes, but with new and often

abstract techniques to express perception, feelings and ideas; Kandinsky took it to the next level, dropping recognizable things/objects completely and trying to express his ideas and feelings entirely through pure colors, shapes, lines, marks within a single spatial composition. Not only did he want to express his ideas in non-representational art, he felt that was the only way to do it. Kandinsky felt colors and other qualities not only affected the emotions and aesthetic experience but resonated with the soul. He aspired to have a communion between art, artist and audience, and the act of painting was an emotional and spiritual experience for him.



Figure 9, "Dynamic Suprematism", Kazimir Malevich, 1915/16 730x723 Oil on canvas, Tate Gallery

Dynamic Suprematism is an abstract oil painting, square in its proportions, by the Russian artist Kazimir Malevich. Pictured against an off-white background, the canvas features at its centre a large pale blue triangle that is tilted at a slight angle towards the left of the composition. Painted on top of the central triangle and congregated around its three points is a sequence of geometric forms in a range of colours that are positioned at varying angles. Particularly prominent are a small triangle in deep blue towards the top of the work, a bright yellow rectangle to the right of centre and a larger cream rectangle just below it (see R Alley, *Catalogue of the Tate Gallery „s Collection of Modern Art Other than Works by British Artists*, London 1981, p.471). The above review has looked at some selected works that fall within different periods of artistic developments. It has looked at the historical elements of *Dambe* as a traditional boxing sport. *Dambe* origin, styles, techniques and development into an urban sport had been reviewed whilst retaining its traditional elements. Discussing the impact of expressionism as an art movement and how it has helped in guiding and shaping the painting explorations of this study. Artworks reviewed consisted of works that depicted variations of boxing and wrestling throughout time. Others were reviewed in tandem with the principles and concepts of expressionism that encouraged the loss of recognizable forms and the dependence on art elements such as colour, shape, line, form, texture and space as effective tools for communication between art work, artist and audience.

Methodology

The outlay of this study is based on the creation of paintings of traditional boxing scenes using expressionist modalities.

Instruments and tools

The instruments for collecting data for the purpose of study were as follows:

- I. **Camera:** a digital camera and a phone camera were used in collecting views and poses of the boxers before, during and after fights. Other aspects of interest to the artist included the

spectators, architecture and vegetation's surrounding the arenas used for the *Dambe* matches.

- II. **Sketch pads, papers, pencils and ink and pen:** papers of different sizes used as visual note collecting tools. This provided suitable surfaces for the artist to record instantly the formations and scenes of the subject that proved captivating for further explorations in the studio. These were selected for their portability in transport and storage. Visual notes were collected either using any variations of B pencils, pens and ink pens available.
- III. **Archived Photos:** constituted a significant part of collecting information and as visual aid during studio practice.

Data collection

Data was collected through two main sources: the primary and secondary sources.

Primary Source: pictures that were taken and collected from the archives of *Dambe* enthusiast and photo studios which still had uncollected pictures printed out constituted the primary data for this study. This approach used other aspects of the primary data including the sketches created during on site exploration of the *Dambe* are within Zaria metropolis. Such sketches served to familiarize the artist with the physical formations and proportions of the environment and human figures while in action.

Archived Photographs, Primary and Secondary Data Sources

Photographs constitute samples of archived data collected from photo studios in Zaria. These form a significant aspect of the primary data used for the studio exploration in this research. Secondary Data: these included Internet materials, books, newspapers, texts and journals.

Stages of paintings produced

Works produced highlight a dependence on the emotive functions of colour, form, shape and texture. The artist relies on the visual images of the actual boxers whilst giving a subjective interpretation of his observation in painting; hence completed images begin as representational figures and gradually dissolve into shapes that bear figurative formations and end as large blotches of colour with a rhythmic flow.

Data analysis

The paintings are categorized into the representational, developmental and abstraction seeking to examine the followings objectives, producing paintings and drawings using the man body, traditional boxing, the environments with jitters from the crowd and the arena depicting players in action. This study has successfully established *Dambe* paintings and its aesthetic representation on the Map of contemporary Nigeria painting. The results proved to be a worthy contribution to contemporary Nigerian painting.

Analysis of Painting Representational Stage



Plate XV; *Damben Hausa*, 254x304.8 cm, Oil paint on canvas, Ali Mohammed Habib, 2017

The scene is depicted naturalism representing a section of the boxing arena. At the centre, in action are two boxers and a referee, the spectators, the fence of the arena, further in the background are neighboring structures visible are roofing tops. Amidst all these elements are specks of tree foliage which appear to fade into the dark grey sky. The crowd is depicted using broken and muddled brush works with significant difference, the lack of detail especially around the spectators' indicative that the artist worked from a relative distance to the fight arena. From the roofs of the compounds beside the arena enthusiastic and excited youngsters watch the *Dambe*. The artist depicted reality in tonal values, effects assured that background figures are within the laws of perspective.

Developmental Stage



Plate XVI; Defeated, 254x254 cm, Acrylics on canvas, Ali Mohammed Habib, 2017

This painting is a systematic arrangement of two different fights scenes. The painting introduces the developing stages of the study. It shows the artist reluctance to lose the details of the subjects judging the near accuracy in portraying the combatant's physique. Attention is given to muscle, building and stance of the figures. The spectators are completely eliminated from this study and replaced by the freaky brush strokes that dissolve all notions of force, amid and on the background colours that used to blend into each other making distinct identification difficult. This is meant to induce the feeling of frantic action within the picture space. The absence of limbs on all figures indicates the contemplation of the artist as to ways of dispersing the recognizable human forms into pure abstract elements.

Abstraction



Plate XX; *Dambe Geometric Project*, Digital media and ballpoint on paper, Ali Mohammed Habib, 2016

This painting is a complete abstract composition. Depicting parts of the human figure as relegated and transformed into shapes of triangles, cycles and hatches of brushes. Using digital tools and paint in gradation achieved with an aesthetic appeal. This composition is titled “Dambe Geometric project”.

Summary

In an attempt to create painting explorations of using the expressionist techniques, the researcher selected out of (36) works produced during studio explorations twenty seven (27) paintings were selected for this study. Eight (8) at the first stage which is the representational stage; depicting in real situations, human body, environment the crowd, the arena, colour and the use of space were articulated on canvas. At the developmental stage a gradual loss of forms led to the dispersal and aesthetic arrangements of forms in transformation. Further explorations dissolved the natural and developmental forms into a total abstract state producing eight (8) works at the final stage.

Findings

The study provided the artist through the series of illustrations produced a contemporary painting inspiration derived from Dambe traditional boxing are found suitable for contemporary studio exploration and can provide the painter with a systematic and creative means of levitating the artist mind towards producing conceptual paintings structured around the combat game of Dambe. At the end of this research, artist found that it is expensive to preserve works done as it is also time consuming. Therefore captured works using camera provided an alternative through printing subsequent copies for mass reproduction, exhibition and easily disseminated. Expressionism is seen as an alternative concept for exploration in contemporary, Nigerian painting, especially in studio explorations starting from the representational stage, developmental stage into abstract stage.

Contributions

1. Discovering dynamic forms of traditional boxing () as occupied by this research has found an essential place in contemporary painting which is exclusively contested. The development of modern/contemporary painting analysis of *dambe* through subjective visual interpretation was explored as it relates to the artistic identity of human forms, .which also covers up for its absence in modern painting. 2. Constituting a visual means of promoting cultural forms, *Dambe* unique characteristics can be explored into positive aesthetic spaces within

contemporary painting. Works can be produced and extended through studio practice “European academic” or pure African concepts in craft development to using new media that can enable creativity through cultural and artistic identity.

Conclusion

Expressionist styles of painting has influenced the production of paintings on *Dambe*, unique to this research is its breaking down of form into the exploratory stages of representational, developmental and abstraction. Inspirations drawn from this study of *Dambe* a traditional sport can be further explored to reveal its ability to resource meaningful ideas, up hold and preserve cultural history, entertaining and visually document art and culture of the Nigerian people as it is presently challenged by environmental constrain, limitations and change.

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EXPLORATION OF TIV CULTURAL MOTIFS AND SYMBOLS IN EXPRESSIVE CLAY FORMS

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Introduction

Art practice in the postmodern era questioned the characteristics of art that are based on aesthetics. Conceptual art and other forms of art have been adopted as the post-modernist mode of expression and are seen as a creative experience with emphasis on an idea as a work of art that exists without any visual object other than words. The aesthetics of objects are thus eliminated leaving only the idea or information as conceptual art as opined by (Eze and Ugochukwu, 2014).

Conceptual art is based on the idea behind a particular work and the means of producing it, which is more important than the finished work. Some ceramic artists, who have created works in conceptualized forms, include Jesse Wine (1983), Ron Nagle 21st February 1939, Aaron Arthur Angel born on 7th January 1895 and died on 12th November 1972, Shigekazu Nagae was born in 1953, Abbas Ahuwan was born on 1st December 1947, and Onuzulike Ozoma was born on 17th February 1972. They are among the leading ceramists who brought a rebirth in ceramics by producing conceptual works.

Conceptual Nigerian ceramists such as Yohanna Datiri was born on 1st November 1961 and died on 22nd May 2020, Abbas Ahuwan was born on 1st December 1947, and Onuzulike Ozoma was born on 17th February 1972 have made a considerable impact in the area of ceramics art design on the African continent. The richness of motifs, and symbols available in the Nigerian Culture, and tradition as noted by Kuso (2018) could be a motivating factor for Nigerian ceramist designers to exploit. Despite the developments in ceramic arts, and the attempts made to produce various clay forms, there is still much to be done especially in the adaptation of Tiv cultural motifs, and symbols into ceramic production. The trend of research into clay forms today is assuming a dynamic pace. This has never been so in the past and it is believed that if this trend continues, it may soon be heading for a ceramic pottery revolution considering the abundant natural clay resources available all over the country. According to Ahuwan (1999), there is a constant search for new subject matters and relevant materials that could transformed into tangible products, thus the need to take up research on the abundant locally available raw materials for the production of clay forms.

Conceptualizing Tiv cultural motifs, and symbols in clay forms which is the focus of this study is a process that involves coming up with new ideas. This research is intended to fill the gap in conceptual ceramics in Tivland. Conceptualism is a style of art that places more value on the artist's idea rather than the visual aesthetics of an artwork. Janson and Janson (2006) affirm that conceptualists are more concerned with the concept or idea behind an artwork rather than its visual aesthetics. Yadawei (2016) states that Conceptual art consists of rethinking and researching the history of art, aesthetics, sociology of art, psychology of art, philosophy of art, ontology of art and criticism of art. All these can also be inspired by the individual character, sensibility and thoughts of an artist visualized in the form of an art object.

A Brief Historical Background of the Tiv People

Mhii u Tiv (The Origin of Tiv)

The Tiv people believe that they are the descendants of a man by the name of Tiv, who is their ancestor. Oral tradition states that the man Tiv in the company of his wife Aliwe and two sons Ipusu and Ichongo, left his relations and settled at Swem; a mountainous terrain of the central section of the Nigeria and Cameroun border. The Swem serves as the ancestral homeland of the Tiv people some scholars like Alkali, (2009) and Ndera (2013) are of the view that the place where Swem could be located cannot be revealed or visited by any person because it is a sacred place for selected reputable elders. It is affirmed by tradition that Tiv migrated from Swem to their present abode in the Benue Valley. Oral tradition recorded that at the time Tiv, his wife and two sons were on their way to the present abode of the Tiv people, they came across a river and were assisted by a big snake called (Ikarem) to crossover to continue with their journey. Chia (2008) asserts that the snake became the Tiv's friend and as such it was never killed by the Tiv.

Available literature relating to the development, that saw the appointment of a Tiv paramount ruler is linked to the visit embarked upon to Gboko in 1944, by Sir Arthur Richards, the then Governor General of Nigeria. It was at the time of the visit that, Sir Arthur Richards was confronted with the request by the established patriarchs and clan heads to be appointed as Beagh u Tiv, to which he agreed on the condition that the person selected would be acceptable to all the Tiv people. The Beagh u Tiv, as noted by Ndera (2013) is the chief of all the Tiv people irrespective of where they reside in any part of the world. He lives in Gboko which is the traditional headquarters and is the chief custodian of Tiv cultural heritage. The Beagh u Tiv, is also answerable to the Governor of Benue State on all matters relating to traditional laws and customs in Tiv land.

The costume worn by the Beagh u Tiv is Anger a traditionally hand-woven cloth, using black and white yarns derived from cotton wool. The black and white colours utilized create beautiful features that make the cloth appear like zebra skin. It is linked with a cultural source as Anger u Tiv. Traditionally, Anger is normally used in the decoration of illustrious Sons and Daughters of the Tiv. It is also worn by Tiv elders or Chiefs during traditional council meetings usually held in Gboko, Benue State, Nigeria. Attached to the Beagh u Tiv attire is an image of a carved Tiger head that symbolized authority, and peace.

Production of Works

The production methods utilized for the execution of Conceptual Ceramic Works are the Pinching Method, Throwing Method, Coiling Method and Slab Method as shown in Plates I to VII:



Plate I: Pinching Method in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2022,
Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022



Plate II: Scooping of Works in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
2022, Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022



Plate III: Centering Clay on the Wheel in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2022, Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022



Plate IV: Pulling Clay on the Wheel in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2022, Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022



Plate V: Throwing Method in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2022, Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022



Plate VI: Coiling Method in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2022, Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022



Plate VII: Slab Method in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2022, Photograph by Oluokun Seun Samson 2022

Analysis of Selected Artworks

A survey into contemporary ceramic practices in Nigeria revealed that the art of ceramics has delved into installation art, as exhibited in the works of artists like Chris Echeta titled "Sacking of a General" a terra cotta work with enrobe designs, metal/wire and plastic. The metaphorical images draw attention to the artist and his works as well as the social relevance of his works. Onuzilike's works also in this direction are produced in the use of mixed media and interrogate issues of armed conflicts, political violence and human vulnerability. He is seen as an artist that fails to fizzle out, rather, he continues to search for new idioms dialoguing with life. The artist's philosophy as asserted by Okpe (2001) is the dehumanization of the human being through global events of armed conflict, genocide, natural disasters and so on.

The ceramic works produced to an extent are influenced by the environment. As such, the artistic expressions are direct reflections of the researchers' environmental experiences. Also, the ceramics works produced under cultural themes that, seek to directly or indirectly address contemporary issues that have cultural relevance. For example, the use of reptiles and amphibians in the pot series are works that depict the intricate relationships between human beings and their decision-making

process. The ceramics work produced is classified under four groups as follows; 1. Works created on pot surfaces; 2. The tree back motif design, 3. The Tiv masks and 4, the installations.

Mhii u Tiv (The Origin of Tiv)

The composition titled Mhii u Tiv (The Origin of Tiv) in Plate VIII IX to X portrays Tiv, his wife Aliwe and two sons Ipusu, Ichongo on the back of a snake Ikarem crossing the big river Swem. The river flow is achieved in this particular composition through the use of moving lines.



Plate VIII: Mhii u Tiv (The Origin of Tiv) Front view Height (29x25cm)
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate IX: Mhii u Tiv (The Origin of Tiv) Back view Height (29x25cm)
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate X: Mhii u Tiv (The Origin of Tiv) Sides view Height (29x25cm)
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023

Beagh u Tiv (The Symbol of His Royal Highness)

Beagh u Tiv (The Symbol of His Royal Highness) is represented using three things that make up the surface quality of the work. These are pictorial design, motif design and symbol. The surface pot is adorned with the image of the head of a Tiger that, symbolizes the Beagh u Tiv as shown in Plates XI to XIII.



Plate XI: Beagh u Tiv (The Symbol of His Royal Highness) Front view, Height (37x30cm)
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate XII: Beagh u Tiv (The Symbol of His Royal Highness) Back view
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate XIII: Beagh u Tiv (The Symbol of His Royal Highness) Sides view
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023

Ya u Tiv (The Tiv Settlement)

Ya u Tiv (The Tiv Settlement) is made up of a limited number of huts. The huts include sleeping huts, ate, kitchen, and storing the scratched surface motifs design is utilized on the roof surface by scratching the entire surface as shown in the works Plates XIV to XVI.



Plate XIV: Ya u Tiv (Symbol of the Tiv Settlement) Front view
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate XV: Ya u Tiv (Symbol of the Tiv Settlement) Back view
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate XVI: Ya u Tiv (Symbol of the Tiv Settlement sides view)
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023

Kem u Kwase u Tiv (Symbol of Tiv Marriage)

Marriage among the Tiv people is by exchange. The method involved in getting a wife is by giving one's sister to the girl's brother. The snail is embellished with a lizard motif, suggesting the challenges that are faced by couples, see Plates XVI to XIX.



Plate XVII: Kem u Kwase u Tiv (Symbol of Tiv Marriage) Front view, Height (50x30cm) 2023
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate XVIII: Kem u Kwase u Tiv (Symbol of Tiv Marriage) back view in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria height (50x30cm) 2023
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023



Plate XIX: Kem u Kwase u Tiv (Symbol of Tiv Marriage) sides view in the Ceramic Section, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria height (50x30cm) 2023
Photograph by Helen Tser 2023

Conclusion

This mode of ceramic practice from exponents of conceptual ceramics helped in developing art practice to a large extent in Nigeria, by establishing a unique way of developing conceptual ceramics. This development introduced a high level of intellectual content in the artists' works. Conceptual ceramics are seen as works that bear subject matters that can spur discussions or investigation and can be a pedagogical tool that can promote learning in some related fields.

It is observed that such works are rich with intellectual content and are not simply commercial ceramics for utilitarian use. Ceramics should not just be a mere household item, rather, through conceptualizing ceramics; ceramics itself will become a vehicle for learning and studying man and

his environment. It is an educational asset that can provide clues to fields such as Anthropology, Archaeology and Politic, and has become a means of expression and communication.

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