

THE ROLES OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The importance of electronic media in art education as a channel of effective instruction at all levels of Nigeria's educational system can not be overemphasized. This paper is therefore examining the roles of electronic media in the development of art education in Nigeria, defining and stating the need and effectiveness of the electronic media in Nigerian art education. Factors affecting the use of electronic media in art education are examined and suggested solutions for a way forward proffered.

Introduction

Electronic media are reputed channels of communication that can reach a wide range of audience within or outside the target audience. Schramm (1964: 127) stressed that (the media)... "can take a man up to a hill higher than any we can see on the horizon and let him look beyond". Today, the electronic media have affected many lives in various ways by bringing events around the world to their doorsteps and living rooms. It is capable of focusing on who and what is important and interesting to the society, thereby raising aspirations, whetting appetite of the people towards national development. Interestingly, the modern treatment of information has readily changed the world today through the transmission of data, information, ideas and pictures at high speed over a great distance to billions of people. Thus, electronic media have become an informative tool in all aspects of life, such as Art, Science and Technology.

The electronic media is an effective tool that can enhance art education in our various educational institutions in Nigeria. According to Olugbile (1996), electronic media in education are means or channels that can be used for effective instruction at all levels of education. For example, in formal instruction in art, such as microteaching, the electronic media can be used to create varieties of visual concepts or experiences that can aid the teaching and learning process. It will also enable the would be teacher to do better. Ogunmilade (1984), stated that the electronic media in education is a form of communication through which teaching and learning can take place. Electronic media refers to communication instruments, such as televisions, radios, computers, sound films, transparencies etc. They function with current, either electricity or battery. Art can be simply defined as a means of self-expression in visual form. In this context, art education is teachings students the theories (history, appreciation and criticism) and practice of art. It also includes the techniques of production and aesthetic performance.

Brief Historical Background of Electronic Media in Nigeria's Educational System

The history of electronic media in the Nigerian educational system is incomplete without mentioning the involvement of agencies like United States Information Service (USIS) and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In the early post colonial educational system, the British Council audio-visual aids were loaned out to schools on short term basis. This gesture was extended to all parts of the country through the state capitals. They stocked teaching aids in varieties and provided technical services, seminars and workshops on how to improve teaching effectiveness.

In 1960, programmed learning curriculum packages were introduced into educational learning system. This marked the entrance of television, radio, tape recorder, computer and satellites into educational system. Prior to this development, the Federal government set up a commission in 1955 (Akintade, et al 1996). The recommendations of this commission are as follows:

1. Primary schools broadcasting units should be set up based on requirer. Each requirer is to conduct its own examination in its local language in teaching.
2. Post primary schools broadcasting services should be on national basis.

The commission's recommendation prompted the Western, Eastern and Northern Regional Governments to establish a school-broadcasting unit within their ministries of education in 1957. The Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation started national network transmission of educational programmes in 1958, this transmission died prematurely due to poor transmission reception. A year after the collapse of the national transmission, the western region took a bold step towards establishing their own television transmission. Other regions like North and East emulated the West initiative in 1962. Apparently the three regions were using both radio and television for educational programmes. The creation of more states in 1967 stimulated the emergence of more state ministries of education with audio-visual sections.

The application of audio-visual aids was a laudable innovation introduced into the National Policy on Education document of 1977; hence the government encouraged the use of audio-visual aids in schools.

The Roles of Electronic Media in Art Education

The electronic media is inevitable in bringing about effectiveness in the teaching and learning experience in art as earlier mentioned. It is a device for programmed instruction that would enable the would be art teacher to do better. For example, the video recorder can help indirectly to change strongly held attitudes or valued practice through the use of television. Creative theory and practice can spread to a large class audience within a short time, but the teacher's assistance is needed to make it work; hence, it brings about change in teaching pattern and learning behaviour of learners. Most art teachers in the pre-primary and primary schools are not adequately trained in the subjects. In such cases, the electronic media could serve as a resource tool for effective teaching. Students can be guided on step-by-step procedure and techniques of carrying out the task of producing a piece of art or design. Other roles of electronic media as stressed by Ogunmilade (1984) are:

1. Instruction for specific learning - programmed learning, all identified and tested. ENample ol programmed learning is the Keller plan to personalized system developed by professor Keller that enables each student to work through the course of study at his own pace.
2. Dramatization: Include films, video tape recorder, (VTR) literacy production, and phenomena behavior of animals, experiments, scientific and so on. The film production of "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe is an example.
3. Documentation: Recording of events and storing of information etc.
4. Performance analysis: Teaching teacher training, speech, dance, sports and medicine.
5. Situation of external situation, driving, mock-ups. role-playing, management technique and the likes.
6. Sources of pupil involvement: Motivation, expression, and participation.

All these functions can be achieved with the use of programmed electronic media in relation to art education.

Need for Electronic Media in Art Education

With the rising needs for manpower and educational advancement especially in the field of art and the alarming increase in art teacher attrition in the country, it is pertinent to address the issue of electronic media in the Nigerian educational system. The use of which one hopes would help individuals, corporate development, educational advancement and self reliance in our forward march towards the magic year 2010.

With the projected population of 161.9 million Nigerians by the year 2010. increased school enrolment, increased teacher attrition (Guardian 10th September, 1996), the role of electronic media in art curriculum instruction in the country can never be over emphasized. This is very important because:

Teachers can no longer be the sole information giver or producer in the classes due to large class as is common in most of our primary, junior, senior secondary schools as well as the tertiary institutions (Olugbile, 1992:3).

The following are some of the advantages of electronic media in art education:

- i. To enhance the standard of art education and supplement the efforts of the unqualified art teachers in teaching process.
- ii. To serve as reference reservoir in the theory and practice of art, thus, providing concrete forms, abstract concepts and making it possible to see them within a short time the history and facture of various creative experiences.

- , iii. Help to create awareness of materials, which the school cannot provide for the teaching and learning process. To achieve this by supplementing rather than replacing the teachers (Halloram, 1970).
- iv. Help to improve individual creative skills through programmed instruction. The observation of steps in proper order in programmed demonstration on television, films, transparencies videos make learning easy. The programmed instruction can be replayed or steps recalled to solve learning problem.
- v. To improve observational skills and comprehension of creative procedures, hence developing attitudes and values.
- vi. Information and documentation via satellite helps art students to be well informed and to align with contemporary art issues around the world.

Factors Affecting the Effective Use of Electronic Media in Art Education

In the present dispensation, the federal government of Nigeria has no clear-cut art education programmes on the electronic media. The art education programmes being run currently by the National Television Authority (NTA) and other private broadcasting stations are skeletal, unplanned, and irregular without focus. For example, the “Art House” on Channels Television is undecided whether to focus on visual art or theatre art. It is still operating a mix-grill of the arts. It is observed that there is no seasonal sequential continuity of art education programmes featuring on either the radio or television for two consecutive seasons or quarters.

The non-availability of audio-visual aids in most schools especially the public schools run by the governments. Where they are available they are either obsolete or not functioning. It is pathetic to know that there are no technicians and audio-visual producers and experts to handle audio materials in primary and secondary schools.

This project is cost intensive and the government are unable to fund it alone. Lack of fund has hindered the provision of conducive environment and infrastructural facilities for the effectiveness of its use. Lack of constant electricity supply to operate teaching materials is a factor militating against the effective use of electronic media in art education. More so, the programme is not receiving adequate support from the government education administrators and heads of schools.

Recommendations

1. The Federal Ministry of Education should restructure (if any) or establish audio-visual section to meet with the demand of the programme. In the new arrangement, the Federal Ministry of Education should collaborate with Nigerian Television Authority and the private radio and television-broadcasting stations in the production and transmission of art education programmes.
2. The State Ministry of Education should be zoned and headed by a director of art education programmes. One priority is to ensure the continuity of art education programmes in their zone. The television authority in each zone should comprise of experienced and eminent art educationists and art curriculum developers. Their duty is to ensure proper planning and implementation of the art curriculum as stated in the National Policy on Education for educational programmes through the electronic media. Community centers should be established and equipped with computers, television and radio sets for schools in the rural areas. Generators should be provided to power them.
3. As a matter of utmost importance separate educational channels should be created to transmit instructional art programmes for a least one hour a day within the school hours. What programmes to be transmitted, when and to who should be provided in the television guide and made available to schools and the newsvendors’ stands.
4. Institutions should be encouraged to purchase video recorders, and tapes to record programmes for playback to allow for detailed discussion when, and as needed. The ministries of education could assist the schools by supplying the recorders and television monitors to schools at reduced prices. The audio-visual aids sections of each zone should act as resource centers for each of the institutions under their control.
5. Agencies and corporate bodies should be encouraged to assist the government in sponsoring art education programmes. Giving them tax rebate can do this or waiver for

certain specified periods.

Conclusion

In tracing the journey so far in the use of electronic media in developing art education some emerging problems have been identified. Looking at the problems and prospects more work needs to be done to enhance its effectiveness at all levels of our educational systems. To this effect some solutions has been proffered which is hoped will provide the tonic needed for a vibrant growth and development of art education.

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