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ART EDUCATION : A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOP) tEXT OF A GLOBAL SOCIETY

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Abstract

Art is- practiced everywhere and everyday in the global society either knowingly or unknowingly. The impact of art in sustainable development of a global society is inevitable and cannot be overemphasized. It is in this wise that this paper surveys the implication of art for sustainable development of a global society by exploring the meaning of arts and education from different perspectives. After a careful exploration, the paper highlights the importance of educating the global society, efforts in empowering individuals with creative skills that sustain societal development, creating both white collar and self-reliance jobs, serving the means of cultural identity, creating, recording and transmitting ideas and information. Art education builds and perpetuates socio-cultural activities, religious, political, industrial and economic stability of the global society; in fact, without art and art education the society would be void. Based on this, suggestions and recommendations were made such as mandatory teaching of arts in primary and secondary schools be it private or government owned, goverrtnterit should pump more funds for effective teaching and learning of art from primary school to tertiary institution, more qualifIed and hardworking man power (art teachers) should be employed with robust remuneration to fuel the man power needs of the global society, among others

KEYWORDS: Art, Art education, Catalyst, Sustainable development, Global society.

INTRODUCTION

Education in the global society is vital and has been passing through different challenges such as under funding, industrial action, political crises and instability, ethnicity unrest, terrorism, insufficient instructional materials, bad methodology, lack of qualified man power, civil war and a host of others. The global society cannot sustain its development without sound appropriate and adequate education from nursery to tertiary levels. Odumosu in Oke and Ajayi (2013, p.2) affirms that "education is a lifelong process which starts at birth and ends at death". It is the aggregate of all the means and ways by which man develops (from cradle to grave) the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive values to the community to which he belongs.

The above targets (aggregate) can only be achieved in the global society through arts education; either arts in education or education through arts. Arts in education implies the delivery of art lessons as part of general education. It is common knowledge that in Nigerian school system and some other countries in the global society, some teachers are indifferent to arts. In fact some head teachers and principals are said to be hostile to the idea of teaching arts in the school. Education through arts implies giving instruction to those who are interested and talented in arts to enable them fulfil themselves as artists (Okoli, 2007). In other words, it is the training of artists which needs not to be placed in the context of school; such instructions and experiences could be obtained from practicing artists in art schools namely, art departments in colleges of education and universities, polytechnics, trade schools and short or long term art workshops.

According to Enamhe (2013), the state of art has for many years been a source of concern due to neglect and low status. The neglect runs across primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Art organizations are not left out of it; some of the affected organizations are museums, cultural centres, national theatres, among others. Sharing in this plight Uzoagba (2000) explains that if a proper understanding of art education is made and better instructions in art education are followed in schools and colleges, much would have been done to redeem the subject from the neglect it has always suffered in society (p. 47). Yet, art mirrors the society, be it in culture, social, economic, political, religious and other aspects,

Definitions

It becomes necessary at this stage to define the key terms in this study. An has different meanings to different people depending on the person involved in it; art is a language of communication of ideas in a visual form. Such ideas or concepts mirror and educate the society, thereby sustaining the development ofthe global society.

Oloidi (2011) defines art as the deliberate or conscious employment of skill and creativity to produce visually aesthetic and other functional art images. He affirmed further that creativity is very sensitive because it is what has made art an uncommon professional phenomenon that is, ability to bring into physical reality what has not been. This definition indicates art as a divine discipline. Likewise, Oyedun (2013, p. 2), in his numerous definitions of art has this to say "art is the study and creation of new things in forms, texture, line and colour which eventually gives pleasure to the mind, soothes the soul and satisfies our sense of beauty". It is obvious that skill/creativity, visual and sense of beauty are paramount to art practices in the above definitions.

Education has been viewed by Plato and other great scholarsin the distant past to the present time as general to everybody; it can be seen as a process, a system and a goal. According to Odumosuin Oke and Ajayi (20 13), education is the total and balanced development of all abilities (mental, physical and emotional) of an individual for his functional survival and effective contribution in a constantly changing society. Globally, education is in three levels: the primary, secondary and tertiary. These levels are meant to groom individuals into realization oftheir potentials.

Art education is simply the knowledge and skills acquired through art experience. Ajayi (2010) defined art education as the process of imparting art knowledge, skills and potentials into a learner in the four walls of a classroom by a teacher (art educator/educationist) on how to express his ideas or innermost feeling through a medium or media in a beautiful form to satisfy the visual sense. The art knowledge, skills and potentials of the definition is limited to visual art in most cases. Hornby (2015) defines catalyst as a substance that makes a chemical reaction happen faster without being changed itself. It is also a person or thing that causes a change. It is something or someone that causes an important change or event to happen. In this regard, arts education causes a faster important change for sustainable development of a global society. The where, when and how of such important change is concern of this paper.

Sustainable development is just qualitative/ matured increase in size that can continue or be continued for a long time without interruption, for instance

sustainable economic growth. This continuous qualitative /matured increase in size of a global society cuts across all round efficiency of such society be it education, economy, political, health, science, technology, entertainment, commerce, and industry, religion, tradition, culture, social. The global society on its own is the universe where people live and sojourn. It is a world/circular community where different ethnic people live together to share the same custom, laws, norms, traditions, constitutions and so on. It is simply international community (Hornby, 2015)

Roles ofArt Education

The significance of arts education in the sustainable development of a global society cannot be debated. We can say categorically that no art education, no sustainable global society because art makes society interestingly worth living. To avert unnecessary tautology, the sustainable developmental roles of arts education of a global society can be classified into five namely:

(a) Personal sustainable developmental roles ofart education
(b) Educational sustainable developmental roles of art education
(c) Societal developmental roles of art education
(d) Religion/Spiritual sustainable developmental roles of art education
(e) Socio-cultural sustainable developmental roles of art education

Personal/Sustainable Developmental Roles of Art Education: Art experiences are essential to the fullest development of all people at all levels of growth. They promote self-realization of the whole individual by engaging his imaginative, creative, intellectual, emotional, manual capacities, social maturity and responsibilities through cultivating a deepened understanding of problems, ideas and goals of other individuals and social groups of a global society. To the learner or whoever is involved or engaged, it develops the sense of observation, patience, endurance, tolerance, responsibility, empathy, communal friendly living, appreciation, cultural awareness , improvisation, sense of ideation and concept, manipulative skill and imaginative creative ability. From the fore going, one can see that the atomic force for sustainable development of a global society is engendered in students through art education. Majemite (1996) pointed out that there is no individual who has acquired these attitudes and potentials that will not have selfactualization as he is ably equipped to transfer this knowledge, talent and attitude to other sphere of his life.

Educational Sustainable Developmental Roles of Art Education: Art is a teacher of everybody on earth right from childhood to adolescence and adulthood when maturation has fblly evinced in the human being and he can easily differentiate right

from wrong or good from bad. Learning continues and is developed by the phases of child art development. Thus art education develops and sustains a global society through the means of literacy. This literacy is justified by the system of writing that uses figures/pictures to represent words, syllables and sounds as used in ancient Egypt script known as hieroglyphics (Ogumor, 2013). According to Ajayi (2010), the composition of lines such as straight, curve and zigzag formed the basis of alphabets and different words came into existence such as two letter words, three letter words, four letter words, etc. To this end, the 4Rs – Reading, Reciting, Recalling and Writing aided the teaching and learning being enjoyed today. This made Oloidi (201 1, p. 53) affirm that "art is the basis ofeducation".

Art also serves as the back bone of other subjects or disciplines since it cannot be isolated from the existence of the human race and is fully involved in the technological advancement ofman in all ramifications. It is the core of other subjects within and outside the school curriculum. All the alphabets, words, and
illustrations/pictures the teacher uses for instruction in other subjects make learning easier, more achievable, effective and empowers students' 3Rs – Reciting, Retention and Recalling.

Information is knowledge and knowledge is power. For one to be inform, he/she has to be informed.If one is not informed, he/she will be deformed. Information mechanism is another educational role art plays to sustain and develop the global society. This comprises the sender, message and receiver (SMR). The sender here is the artist; the information to be sent is the message: the message can be in form of picture, illustration or concept and receiver is the people in the global society. The mechanism through which such information/message is sent can be sign boards, bill boards, posters, hand bills/flyers, banners (digital and manual) and different souvenirs to create awareness to people about particular issues, trends and events which is simply the means of educating and sustaining the development of a global socIety

Societal Sustainable Developmental Roles of Art Education: The teaching and learning of art has been playing enormous roles in the educational and cultural advancement of the global society. In discussing this, two aspects really come to
mind: the traditional product and modern product, both of which mirror the society.
Communication and illustration in this 21 st century technology, has OUt'p4ced the traveller's command of language that is common on high ways today unlike the traditional means.

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Arts education also serves the means of universal language of graphics for direction all over the world. Means of entertainment in drama, music and dance (DMD) promotes diplomatic good will between the host and the guests. In a nut shell, other roles of arts education in the sustainable development of a global society can be seen in architecture and cultural identification through painting, sculpture, ceramics, textile design, graphic design and photography. Industrialization and economy buoyancy includes textile mills, fashion houses, shoe industries, and a host of others enveloped under art and its teaching (education).

Beautification and decoration, both interior and exterior of the environment is the heart beat of every goyernance nowadays. Arts education also boosts social stratification, no matter the class be it upper, middle or lower class. In arts, there is a befitting chair for the rich, the poor or the middle man. The same is true of a king, reverend, an imam, the Ifa priest or the adherents of other faiths (Majemite, 1996). Some other roles of art education in the society include means of livelihood, boost of agricultural practices, storage mechanism and keeping of records and historical facts. Most ancient items and antiquities now regarded as a great legacy by many nations are works of art and its teaching.

Religion/Spiritual Sustainable Developmental Roles of Art Education: Art is religious no doubt. All the three major religions (traditional/paganism, Christianity and Islam) and others in the global society are spiritual. Traditionally, arts education plays a significant role bV serving various functions; there are art works designated for divination, for health and for every societal moral value. For better understanding, let us identify these traditional sustainable developmental roles of art
education one after the other

The means of religion and ritual performance justify that every religion has its own symbolic ways of ritual performance either at the shrine or the three junctions (ikorita meta) forthe traditional religion practitioner, church auditorium for Christians or mosque premises for Muslims. Shaw in Maj emite (1996) observes that African culture is highly symbolic and ritualized hence the root of ancestral worship of a host of deities of land, sea, air, fire, sky and others. This is not limited to Africa alone; the Chinese, Korean, Indian and other continents of the globe also perform rituals in their religion. The Almighty God is approached through lesser gods (ogun, osun, oya, sango, obatala) as intermediaries. In effect they are approached concretely and not just through abstract imagination. Hence, in all these worships, art symbols and images form the vehicle to transport the messages and bridge between the living and the spiritual to make contact. Besides, all the festivals associated with these gods are heavily dependent on art education products. Even gods themselves are arts, the

shrines themselves are arts, the utensils are arts, the worshipers are all decked in an and their dances, songs and ritual dramas are arts, Theo (1980) affirms that art is one of the essences of a people's culture and is important because it draws on vital aspects of history, beliefs and life patterns.

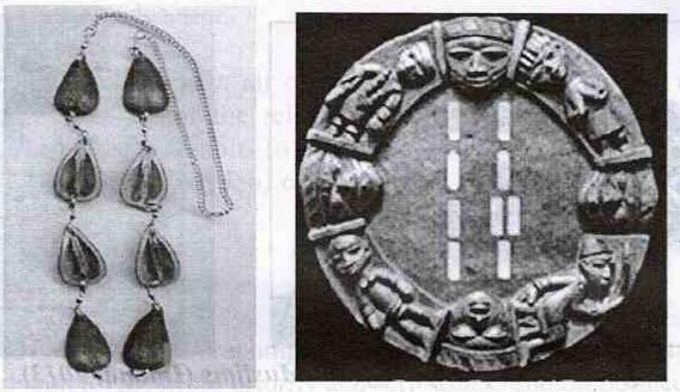

Fig. 1: 1fa Oracle and Board for Divination (Fategbd, 201 S).

In Christendom, emblems and objects like cross of various sizes, bells, candle stands, gong, drums and stand and rosary are found in church auditoriums used for prayers and miracles do happen; this is their spiritual rituals. Even the doors and windows of church buildings at times are evidence of wood carvings and glass work, especially common among the orthodox churches. Images and pictures of different prophets, apostles, disciples and Jesus Christ Himself are always carved on doors and windows to give life to the activities usually read abstractly from the Holy Bible.

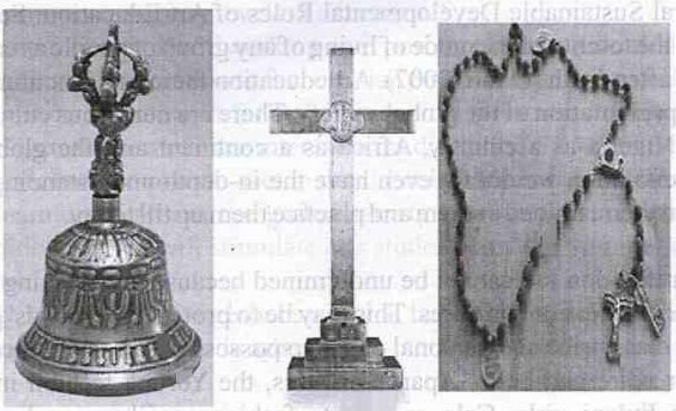

Fig. 2: Worship Objects of the Christians (Melissa, 2013).

Likewise, in the Islamic religion, objects and emblems like star, moon, Wallaah (Arabic Writing Board) Kalam, and tesbir (Islamic rosary) are found in the Mosque and serve as religious emblems used for prayers. In some cases, the picture of Prophet Muhammed is carved on the door or painted on the glass ofthe window.

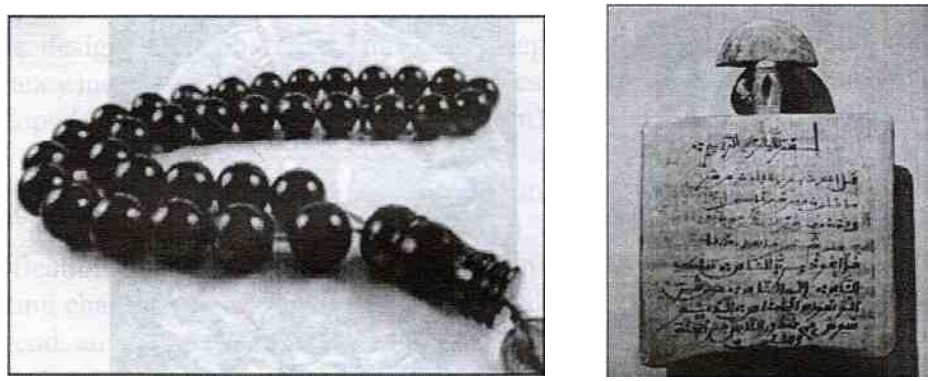

Fig. 3: Worship Objects form Muslims (1)alma, 2013).

Moreover, arts education also sustains and develops the global society as a means of healing which is therapeutic in nature. Some selected artistic works and objects could relax the nerves of a disturbed person. For example, a good music, well planned drama, a rich colourful painting or good sculpture could make a person recover at a faster rate or pace. Spiritual growth mechanism is not left out since mats from straws, elephant grass, raffia front, and hyacinth provide comfort for traditional religion worship, Islamic prayer session at the praying ground and Christian open CIUsade or mountain prayer.

Socio-Cultural Sustainable Developmental Roles of Art Education: Socio-cultural here refers to the totality of the mode of living of any group ofpeople as encompassed from birth to after death (Okoli, 2007). Art education therefore functions as cultural and heritage presentation of the global society. There are numerous cultural heritage practices in Nigeria as a country, Africa as a continent and the global world at large,whose evolution we do not even have the in-depth understanding of yet; we were born into them, trained in them and practice them up till today.

eultural identificati6n too cannot be undermined because the teaching of some art works is for identification purposes. This may be to protect individuals' group status or to identify class-, tribe and'personal or .group ppssessions. For instance, Abeokuta' is fam'ous for adire and batik. Apart Rpm this, the Yoruba fashion in aso-oke 'is distinct from Fulani girls; Calabar akwete fashion or Ghanaian kente 'fashion. Indians are also noted for their fashion style, the Korean and the Chinese too, Arts education also sustains and develops politics especially during party rally and

election campaign; uniformity is the order of the day during such occasior5 = colourful flags, T-shirts, face caps, ankara fabrics, pin ups, posters, banners. bannerettes, calendars and many more are printed based on the logo, emblem and colour of the political party. Even the mace in the national assembly is an art work that emanated from art education.

Moreover, festival celebrations all over the world involve fashion display and identification irrespective of the religion involved - Osun-Osogbo, Christmas/ Easter, Eid-el-fitri or Eid-el-kabir. To this end, we can see clearly that the teaching and learning of art (arts education) cuts across all human race, development and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Art is as old as man and so its teaching and learning in the global society should not be considered with levity. More priority and seriousness should be accorded to arts irrespective of religious practices; we must not use religion to stunt the growth and propagation of art because art itself is religious. Art is life and a reflection of cultural backgrounds; it should therefore, not be separated from Africans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made:

1, Art should be taught in every primary and secondary school of the global society be it private or government owned.
2. Government should pump more funds into the teaching and learning of art from primary to tertiary levels of education.
3. More qualified and hardworking man power (teachers) should be employed with robust remuneration to fuel the manpower needs of the global society
4. Admission requirements for art in tertiary institutions shouldbe reconsidered to motivate those who have interest in the discipline.
5. Government and private sector should collaborate to promote the teaching and learning of arts in the global society by organizing competitions and exhibitions which will stimulate arts students and the younger ones coming behind

6. Lastly, parents and the global society at large should support their wards by encouraging them to study arts

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