

Implication of Engaging Visual Art in the Development of the Acoustically Handicapped Children

Peters Edem Etim*

Department of Fine Arts & Design, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

***Corresponding Author:** Peters Edem Etim, Department of Fine Arts & Design, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

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Introduction

There is significant gap between the learning impaired and normal children. This study considers the engagement of visual art in the development deaf children to adequately reduce the gaps. Deaf children are physically challenged in hearing but the visual ability of such persons are alert and functional. This hearing disability affects hearing of language and communication generally. The deaf may be disabled in auditory ability but not in sight; therefore developments of skills in areas that require sight will lighten the burden of their handicaps. The major mental abilities underlying intellectual tasks are reasoning ability to visualize partial relationships, word fluency, numerical ability and perceptual speed. The deaf have sound visual acuity and intellectual abilities. Engaging visual considered as an aspect which could advance the communication ability of deaf children and minimize the effect of their disability.

Normal children are able to use their auditory modality to build up an early mastery of the sound, shop and sense of their language. The deaf Children acquisition of language may depend primarily on vision. Visual art is directly related to vision in its two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms, and also has various positive functions in the area of training and development of individuals including deaf children.

Visual art also engages in the expressive and creative processes to enhance psychosocial, physiological emotional social and spiritual well-being in people of all ages. According to Ahessy (2022) observes that "the outs com help us to "Understand, communicate and cope with various experiences of lemon illness and incorporating them in our health care strategies improves the well-being and experience of both the patient and physician". The exploration of engaging visual arts in the study helps to increase awareness out reinforce the use of art from early childhood, particularly for the acoustically challenges.

Acoustically Handicapped Children and Learning

The barrier in learning between the deaf and normal hearing individuals is enormous. This barrier needs to be significantly and adequately reflexed to bridge the gap between the physically challenged and the normal individuals in their ability to learn. Efforts have been made in various ways to assist the deaf to learn as well as learns to communicate Kirk (1987) observes that: "the specialized techniques that have been developed for teaching the deaf are many and varied, including - lip-reading, out mong variations of these". "The use of sign through hand gesture as non-verbal signs, head-nod, facial expressions, gazing/looking, posture, body contact, prosceniums, orientation, appearance, and I paralinguistic devices of speech for Communication are very popular among the hearing impaired.

The use of these enumerated signs appears to be insufficient in our era of explosion of knowledge that has more demand on learning abilities of individuals.

Impact of Engaging Visual Art on Deaf Learners

The application of visual art activities in teaching and learning programmes appears to have fundamental impact on the deaf population when properly utilized. According to Greene and hearing impaired subject whose Hasselbring (1979), the highest success rate was achieved by a language/communication environment had been highly visual and closely related with spoken English." Even though other non-verbal signs such as hand gestures, head-nods and facial expressions have been used to properly assist the deaf, the application of art activities such as modified illustrations, captions, drawings, and modelling in three-dimensions etc. will likely have more benefits for them. In the light of this, Murphy-Berman and Whobrey (1983) state that,

'Hearing-impaired students have little access to materials that expose them to the emotional and social experiences of others and allow them to express their own feelings and options. They argue that if captioned programmes were to be used in the classroom, along with more traditional materials designed to augment discussion and self-expression of emotional and social experiences, they would widen this access'.

It has been realized that providing caption for deaf viewers addresses the issue of conveying explicit information concerning programme content, the feeling and motivation of programme characters. Furthermore, when appropriate captioned programmes are used outside the classroom by the deaf, it would conceivably cement the social skills acquired in the classroom. This could make them become less isolated from the learning world as they mature. It is well documented that the deaf child needs caption to enhance his or her understanding of a programme's informational and effective content (Murphy-Berman and Whobrey 1983). The use of visual art for the development of the deaf, by helping to understand information more, and their involvement through the process of making art has immense impact. This art experience serves as a catalyst for the creative thinking process. Greene and Hasselbring (1979) recount that teaching tacked concepts through art activities combined with visual tactile and linguistic modes would result in greater concept attainment compared to teaching similar concepts without art activities. Involving the deaf in art activities is very vital in their development. Further contribution in this from Sokoliansky (2004) specifics that, the only reliable method is to teach the child to make models (in clay or plasticine) of everything that he is able to investigate with his hands. He argues that the presence of such number of vivid and live images in the normal child's brain possesses almost unrestrained possibility of expressing his inner world by means of modelling.

Visual art activities appear to be unique in the education of the deaf and other disabled children. Apart from aiding the deaf to understand the world, they further give them the opportunity to express themselves. Wangboje (1989) realizes the enormous functions of art when he states that, "Art is probably the subject that finds practical use in other subject areas". The impact of art on the acoustically disabled appears to be highly activities outstanding.

Simpson (1998:211) state that "90% of all communication goes through the eyes". They explain further that communicating to oneself and others in a personal or public way through using artistic strategies is commonplace in our lives, but often it is not recognized as significant. Some may express concepts and feelings that have a universal history, such as energy which is represented by radiating lines, whereas peacefulness is represented by horizontal lines. Some marks are interpreted only as personal iconography. While developmentally artistic learning involves recognizing, creating and communicating meaning through symbols, it defines drawing as an act of translation requiring transference from perception through a meaningful graphic language of symbols. Identifying their own graphic symbols maybe the relevant and best approach for beginning readers.

Good pedagogy must involve presenting the child with situations in which he himself experiments in the broadest sense of that term: trying things out to see what happens, manipulating things; manipulating symbols; posing questions and seeking his own answers; reconciling what he finds at one time with what he finds at other times; comparing his findings with those of other children. This will enhance memory processing and further increase intellectual potency generally.

In teaching and learning, the textbook is one of the principal means of spreading knowledge or acquiring information. Eso (1980) found that students from schools with well-equipped textbook libraries performed better than students from schools with ill-equipped libraries. In addition to textbooks, audio-visual materials, filmstrips, and other teaching aids are necessary for complete visual art knowledge. Udousoro (2000) identifies that instructional materials enable the teacher to teach well and the students to learn better and effectively too. Deaf children who are given opportunity to learn with appropriate visual art activities and materials are likely to perform academically better than those who do not have such opportunity.

Enhancing Communication of the Hearing Impaired

One of the major problems of the acoustically disabled is communication. Kemp (1980) sees communication as a “process of information exchange in various forms between two or more individuals to persuade or change the behaviour either positively or negatively of the other”. Verbal communication is the commonest and most effective way of information exchange, which the deaf is deprived of since his hearing device is not functioning. Onoh (1987) views communication as “the process of sharing of information, ideas, thoughts and emotions between a source and receiver”. This aspect of communication is also similar to art as communication, which goes out beyond verbal communication.

May (1976) considers that “the creative activities which art provides will help the handicapped child to develop his communication skills more easily”. In view of the fact that other senses of the acoustically disabled are intact, visual art stands out as a suitable form of communication to reduce the problem of general communication. This opinion is important and very relevant in solving the deaf’s communication needs, and even amongst normal students as they express themselves better through drawings, paintings and modelling among others. Visual Art activities appear to provide an easy channel of communication among the acoustically disabled. Wangboje (1989) sees “art as language of communication through which a person can express himself to others, talk about himself and about life”. Since verbal communication is impossible for the deaf, visual art is then likely to become the most suitable means of communication for them.

Some special educators like Ogbue (1975), Ikpaye (1987) and Oyebola (1997) in their research studies observed that acoustically handicapped students make more use of sign language to communicate, while visual art activities which are easier and more understood globally are not adequately used. Visual art activities appear to assist the acoustically disabled to express themselves better intellectually and physically to become more useful to themselves and the society generally. The problem of supply and quality of teachers is a vicious circle. It results in poor teaching and learning at the primary school level, hence poor performance of students at tertiary level. Majority of pupils enter the secondary school with very poor background in visual arts from the primary school or the home, while others do not have any background at the Lowenfeld (1960) believes that early stimulation of children’s sensory mechanisms is essential to enhance their creative powers. He states “We cannot start early enough in life. There are limitations. Expose the baby to the lulling noise of a brook; make and touch whatever the opportunity offers. the birds, the lusting of the wind through the trees. Make him aware him curious of it by saying: ‘listen’. Let him listen to the singing of the brittle sounds of the fall foliage under your feet. Let him hold.

Open his eyes to the use of his eyes, ears, fingers and entire body will increase his whatever you can do to encourage your child in his sensitivity and reservoir of experience and this helps in his art”. The attitude of visual art by their children. The positive attitude of parents helps parents and guardians sometimes possess obstacles to the study of the children to develop interest in the subject, while the negative attitude of parents and guardians kills the interest of their children in the subject. Nwosu (1982:16) points out that interest in the subject is a motivating factor that forces, guides and directs students’ attention, devotion and concentration toward academic success.

Some parents and guardians may deny certain children, particularly handicapped children, the opportunity of going to school and also the encouragement to choose visual art as one of the subjects to study in school, if they have the opportunity to be in school. This

may be due to ignorance or maybe they consider it a waste of time and energy educating the handicapped. Visual art with its creative activities appears to adequately assist the handicapped physical abilities and imagination. to develop his perceptive manner of expression, communication.

May (1976) notes that “the physically handicapped child may have problems in learning: the deaf child cannot hear sound and the blind cannot see”. According to him, while these children may have weaknesses in one or more sensory abilities, most of them may have other senses intact which could be strengthened. The acoustically disabled who is deaf but has eyes to see and hands to work with needs to be encouraged and made to have confidence in his abilities. This can be made possible through art activities and should be started at an early stage through encouragement by the parents and guardians.

Summary and Conclusion

The application of visual art in the education of deaf children cannot create a new sense of any deprived organ in them, but it can develop creativity in them, boost the power to explore, organize, feel in-charge and make them more productive, self-reliant and independent. Through the use of visual art, deaf learners have the opportunity to be exposed to more language concepts and skills within the process of making objects and also acquiring other skills to earn a more useful living.

The application of visual art in the education of deaf children has also shown the importance of creativity which facilitates learning and it is also relevant to other disciplines. It motivates the deaf learner’s interest and further enhances his grasping of the content of lessons taught irrespective of the discipline.

Development of creativity through the application of visual art in the educational training of the hearing impaired child boosts general learning, perceptive abilities, communication, and entrepreneurial skills. The gap between deaf learners and normal hearing learners is bound to be significantly reduced with the application of visual art in the education of acoustically impaired learners.

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