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DETERMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART EDUCATION AND AESTHETIC ENVIRONMENT: A CASE STUDY OF JALINGO, TARABA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This research work is meant to find out the relationship between art education and aesthetic environment. The study used Jalingo urban environment as the study area. The idea of this study is based on the premise that global concerns for environmental deterioration are on the increase; and aesthetics, which art education can contribute in helping to salvage environmental problems appears to have been neglected or at most, given a negligible attention. The world is still searching for more realistic and better scientific and technological strategies to help attend to some of the most stubborn environmental problems such as global warming, flood, erosion, extinction of biodiversity species, water and air pollution, waste disposal and a host of other natural and man-made problems. Many developed nations of the world appear to have utilized the factor of artistic and aesthetic consciousness among other factors to their benefits in attending to their environmental problems. Nigeria, however, appears to be far behind; and is yet to emphatically appreciate the role of art education in attending to her environmental problems; particularly those caused by man's activities. It is therefore the intention of this research to fill this gap and to proffer remedies by recommending some strategies that may help to improve the aesthetic quality of the environment through the use of art education. To do this, the researcher has to sample an environment that is representative enough for the sake of generalization. From the study, it is discovered that art education can be a very viable tool for the improvement, protection and sustainability of the environment. One of the findings of the research actually reveals that artists manifest a higher level of aesthetic awareness of the environment. Another finding indicates that many non-artists do not see the difference between art and aesthetics; and do not think that art as a discipline contributes more than any other disciplines to visual literacy. Based on the findings of this study, one may therefore conclude that artistic experience enables people to make better aesthetic judgement of their environment and thereby contributing to the improvement of its quality. One may also generalize that, because artists exhibit a higher

sense of aesthetic and environmental consciousness, art/aesthetic and environmental education be made compulsory in both public and private schools; and, finally, that tree planting and general landscaping, environmental standards and any other strategies that will help improve the aesthetic and healthy quality of the environment should be legislated and enforced in Nigeria.

KEY WORDS: *Art education, Aesthetic environment, Urban environment and Environmental standard.*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

We are living in a period where hardly any day passes without disturbing news about danger signals of a deteriorating environment. Often times, we hear of global warming as a result of the depletion and leaking of ozone layer, which obviously is attributed to human activities. The depletion of the ozone layer exposes the earth surface to direct radiation of the sun. Scientists have implicated man as the principal cause of this depletion of the ozone layer through his activities; especially those that contribute to air pollution.

Not too far in the past, we have witnessed several terrible natural and man-influenced disasters which not only devastated the environment but caused the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives. For example, on the 26thDecember, 2004, a terrible tsunami popularly called Boxing Day Tsunami or Asian Tsunami swept across Indonesia and many other far-East countries, leaving on its trail, destruction and death hardly heard of in man's history (Knabb, Rhome and Brown, 2005). Out of the 11 countries affected by this tsunami, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand were hardest hit. Similarly, in the following year, from 23rd- 30thAugust,2005, the United States of America witnessed yet another terrible hurricane named "Hurricane Katrina", that carved a wide swath of catastrophic damages and inflicted large loss of life, beginning from South Florida on category 1 on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane scale through Louisiana, Mississippi to the States of Georgia and Alabama on different scales. Considering the scope of its impact, Katrina was one of the most devastating natural disasters in the United States' history (Knabb, et al, 2005). Katrina was only one of the several hurricanes and tropical storms that had devastated America in recent years.

There were further cases of less significance, reported in other parts of the world such as volcanic eruptions and deadly gas emissions; which equally resulted in the loss of lives and pollution of the environment. Others include oil spillage, fire disasters, collapsed buildings and bridges, which have had their toll on the environment of recent. The list is endless; and the apprehension of further occurrences daily threatens the very existence of man and his neighbours –other living things.

Also, man's activities such as warfare, mining, farming, bush burning, deforestation, creation ofurban slums, suburban sprawl, spewing sewage pipes, refuse dumps, flaring gas and gases from factories and automobiles have greatly contributed to the pollution and defacing of the environment. Hettinger (2005:57) lists these activities and more, referring to them as "symbols of environmental degradation and paradigms of aesthetic disvalue".

Yet, there are other forms of degradation caused by man's utter disregard and insensitivity to aesthetic value of the everyday environment, which attracted the attention of this researcher. Ityoban (2009:15) refers to this type of environment as "man's social environment" which includes the home, schools, churches or mosques, offices and hotels among other fora where man interacts in. According to her, the beauty of our towns and cities are being distorted through indiscriminate posting of bills, poor refuse and waste management system, improper urban and town planning and a host of other negative attitudes towards the environment. Also, of great concern is urban degradation at individual level which includes poor hygienic attitudes, such as indiscriminate defecating, urinating and spitting in public places, wall graffiti, posters, dirt, street littering and Bahamas grass-crossing

Area of Study

This study was conducted in Jalingo metropolis. Jalingo town is the headquarters of Taraba State in the North East region of Nigeria. Being a headquarters, it has a heterogeneous population. This comprises civil servants as well as business men representing almost all ethnic groups in Nigeria through their engagement as Federal, State and Local Government employees and/or as private businessmen or non-governmental organization agents.

Jalingo urban environment is chosen because the researcher resides there in. Also, it is chosen because of its beautiful landscape, streetscape and other features of environmental interest, which all put together satisfy the requirements of this research work.

Jalingo population is not certain, as the researcher could not lay his hands on any statistical document that spells out a precise figure. The only information that was available is the population of the entire Jalingo Local Government Area which is

139,845 inhabitants (NPC, 2007). This is of no use for this study since the focus is on Jalingo metropolis; and even within Jalingo metropolis; the researcher is only interested in a section of the population. The focus of the study is on senior civil servants, businessmen and others who are learned.

Jalingo population is predominantly civil servants and business people who both double into agricultural activities such as small scale farming, even though there are also professional farmers. Trade in foodstuff and automobile spare-parts boom in Jalingo just to mention but a few. Jalingo also boasts of four tertiary institutions such as Colleges of Education and Agriculture, a State Polytechnic and a State University. With the heterogeneous nature of this environment, the views of its sample population on this research topic should be valid.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is made of all formally trained artists, all environment-related professionals such as architects, building and civil engineers, town planners and a sample of the general public with special bias towards vocational and technical workers. These categories of people had to satisfy the conditions of being either civil servants on salary level 08 and above or retired or on their own; and must be residents of Jalingo town.

The ministries and organization where the population was drawn include the following: Ministry of Environment and Urban Development, Taraba Environmental Protection Agency (TEPA), Ministry of Works, Transport and Housing, Bureau for Land and Survey, Ministry of Education, Educational Research Centre (ERC), Post-Primary Schools Board, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Taraba State Arts Council, Taraba State Broadcasting Services, Taraba Television Corporation and other News Media, Primary Education Board/Universal Basic Education (UBE), Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Jalingo Abattoir, College of Education, College of Agriculture, State Polytechnic, Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, Federal Government Girls College, Taraba Fadama Office, Specialist Hospital, Federal Medical Centre, and Private Organizations

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

The design of this study is a sample survey type. According to Sambo (2005), a sample survey is a study in which a random sample is taken from a well defined population, data is collected from the sample, a statistic is calculated from the data, and the statistic is used to estimate the true value in the population.

A sample survey is one of the wide variety of survey designs usually used in social science and educational studies, particularly those which seek to measure and establish opinions on major burning social, political and educational issues (Ali, 2006). The sample survey type used in this study is called a Sample Survey of Intangible Subject Matter.

According to Ali (2006), in a sample survey of intangibles, an attempt is made to reach a psychological or sociological construct by deriving from the data obtained, some information about the particular psychological or sociological subject matter that is of interest to the researcher.

Psychological or sociological constructs such as political preference, buying tendencies, sex education preferences and so on are difficult constructs to attempt to survey and establish but researchers undertake them because of their immense usefulness to society.

Since this study attempts to investigate possible strategies for improving the aesthetic quality of the environment using knowledge and skills acquired through art education, the choice of this research design is not only appropriate but imperative. This design enables the researcher to use sample data collected through a well articulatedLikert-type 5-point scale questionnaire to address a psychological problem of the environment. Mean, Standard Deviation and ANOVA statistical tools were used to answer research questions and test hypotheses.

It is the assumption of this researcher that opinion poll on issues such as the aesthetic quality of the environment, the role of visual art and artists toward aesthetic improvement of the environment and so on, can be useful in predicting the attitude of Nigerians towards their environment, using a sample population from any city in Nigeria. In this case, a sample population of Jalingo residents was used.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

In this work, the researcher employed the Purposive Sampling Technique and Random Sampling to arrive at the sample population of 300 respondents. Purposive Sampling was used to reach a total of 56 artists and 85 environment-related professionals which included architects, building and civil engineers, and town planners. A total of 159 senior civil servants and private businessmen referred to in this study as the "general public" were drawn using the random sampling from 8 selected ministries, 13 Boards and Parastatals and private organizations within Jalingo metropolis and environs. These included vocational and technical workers, lecturers from the 3 tertiary institutions, teachers and private business owners who are above salary level 08 or possess a wealth of experience.

The consideration for arriving at the sample size of 159 respondents from the general public is based on the reasoning that any greater figure than this may affect or even upset the result of the study when compared with the total responses of 141 artists and

environment-related professionals (also referred to in this study as stakeholders of the environment).

This researcher used the purposive sampling method because he is guided to select typical sample elements according to his knowledge of the population and the research purpose, which provide him with the intended responses for his study (Odoala, 2008). Thus the researcher attempted to reach all the artists and stakeholders of the environment resident in Jalingo, while the others were randomly sampled from within the selected and relevant organizations earlier on mentioned.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection used in this study is called "Artists' and Public Opinion on Art Education for Creating Aesthetic Environment Questionnaire" (APOAECAEQ). It is a 68-item questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert Scale and developed by the researcher. It consists of two sections (A and B). Section A of the questionnaire is a brief Bio-data which requires the respondents' profession/qualification, area of specialization and place of work (or organization) respectively. This was meant to identify and place the various fields and interests that are involved in the study. Section B, on the other hand, contains the items to be responded to, and this in turn was subdivided into four parts according to the four purposes and research questions of the study.

The use of the 5-points Likert Scale was to determine the level of awareness of the three groups under study (the artists, stakeholders of environment and the general public) as to whether or not they agree with the four research questions. The 5-point Likert Scale was used to score the opinion of the respondents according to the following ratings:

(a)	Strongly Agree (SA)	=	5
(b)	Agree (A)	=	4
(c)	Undecided (U)	=	3
(d)	Disagree (D)	=	2
(e)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	=	1

Being an attitude scale, the Likert Scale is most appropriate for this study in that it is not only easy to develop and dispense; it can also accommodate a greater number of items and yet demands lesser effort on the part of the respondents in responding. It is also easy to compute and may not, as is the case of this study, require any rigorous parametric statistics (As seen in Appendix B).

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument of this study, which is a 68-item questionnaire based on 5-pont Likert Scale, was developed by the researcher. Three experts did content and face validation. These included a Doctor of Philosophy (art education) from A.B.U Zaria, a Professor of Art Education from University of Maiduguri and a Doctor of Philosophy in Measurement and Evaluation from Federal University of Technology, Yola. Their corrections and comments toward the clarity and appropriateness of the items were used in preparing the final draft of the questionnaire.

Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire used for this study was pilot-tested using 30 respondents from Federal College of Education, Yola, which is about 150 kilometers away from the study area. Using the SPSS 15 Evaluation Computer Programme, the data obtained were computed, and the result showed no ambiguity in the instrument. It produced a Cronbach alpha reliability co-efficient of 0.92. This is a high co-efficient and shows that the instrument is internally stable. Cronbach alpha co-efficient was used because it is more appropriate in estimating reliability when questionnaires or surveys are used (Saforit& Wood, 1995). (Refer, Appendix A for details)

Method of Data Collection

The data of this study are responses of 300 sampled respondents from Jalingo metropolis and suburb, based on 5-point Likert Attitude Scale. They were drawn from 8 Ministries, 13 Boards and Parastatals and 12 private outfits using both purposive sampling technique and simple random sampling. The researcher, having understood well the characteristics of the population, believes that the views of this sample are representative of the general views of the entire population of Jalingo town.

Mean and Standard deviation statistical tools were used to answer the four research questions while One-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was used to test the four null hypotheses of the study.

The researcher worked with 3 assistants who were all art teachers and well conversant with the population. They helped in the distribution and collection of the questionnaire from the respondents. One took care of all the State's Secondary Schools; the second was in charge of all the Primary Schools/ Primary Education Board and the third took care of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing and all Federal Post-primary Schools selected within the study area. The researcher himself took care of all the selected State Ministries and Parastatals.

All in all, about 330 copies of the questionnaire were administered as follows: Artists - 57 copies; stakeholders of environment - 93 copies; and the general public -180 copies. It took 3 weeks altogether for the administration and retrieval of the questionnaire. Some of the respondents had to be visited at an average of 3 to 4 times before finally retrieving their completed copies. Out of the 330 copies distributed, 30 copies were either lost and/or invalidated.

To forestall the problem that may ariseas a result of non-response, the implication of the non-

response was worked out using the following formula (Sambo, 2005):

$R = 1 - \frac{n - r;}{n}$ and $NR = 1 - R$

Where R = Response Rate
n = Sample Size, and
r = Number of Responses

To find the Response Rate (R)

$$R = 1 - \frac{330 - 300}{330}$$

$$R = 1 - \frac{30}{330}$$

$$R = 0.91$$

While NR = 1 – 0.91
= 0.09

This implies that the Response Rate is 91% while the Non – Response Rate is 9%. This is negligible, and the researcher had taken care of this non-response problem by increasing the number of copies of the questionnaire that were issued out above the sample size.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected, collated and analyzed in this research are responses from 300 sampled respondents; after administering a total of 330 copies of questionnaire. These were sorted out into the three groups under study, namely the artists (56 in number), stakeholders of environment (85) and the general public (159). Their ratings were entered into the SPSS 15 software application programme, item by item, and their mean and standard deviation scores were automatically computed, that is, from items 1- 68 of the questionnaire.

Mean and standard deviation statistical tools were used to answer the four research questions. In interpreting the mean scores, the Upper Limit of "undecided" which is 3.50 was used as cut-off point. Consequently, any mean of 3.50 and above is considered as agreeing with the statement while any mean below 3.50 is regarded as disagreeing with the statement.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the four hypotheses of the study at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 15. ANOVA was preferred for this research work to other statistical tools such as t-tests and ANCOVA in view of the fact that it suitable for determining significant difference between views of three or more groupsconcurrently in a selected probability level. Secondly, it reduces the probability of a type 1 error, in that making multiple comparisons increases the likelihood of finding something by chance – that is making a type 1 error (Patten,2002) (Refer, Appendix C).

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Data and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the level of (public) awareness of the relationship between art education and aesthetic environment?

This research question was analysed by computing the mean and standard deviation scores of the responses as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Awareness of the Relationship between Art Education and Aesthetics Environment

S/№	ITEM	5 SA	4 A	3 UD	2 DA	1 SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	DECISION
1	Art education (education through art) is the foundation for the creation and appreciation of what is beautiful	145	139	11	3	2	4.41	0.675	Agree
2	Art education provides an excellent setting for aesthetic experience	117	164	13	6	0	4.31	0.649	Agree
3	Artistic experience helps to broaden aesthetic awareness	119	153	22	5	1	4.28	0.700	Agree
4	All art training processes have aesthetic aim	119	132	33	12	4	4.17	0.873	Agree
5	Art and aesthetics are closely related and overlap	119	132	34	14	1	4.18	0.835	Agree
6	Not all art works are aesthetic	79	144	42	25	10	3.86	1.010	Agree
7	Not all aesthetic things are art	66	142	36	44	12	3.69	1.092	Agree
8	It is possible to develop aesthetic sensibilities without being able to make art	72	121	57	40	10	3.68	1.080	Agree
9	Art and aesthetics complement each other in making and appreciating beauty	163	123	9	3	2	4.47	0.671	Agree
10	Competence in art education enables you to make better aesthetic judgment	158	116	14	9	3	4.39	0.796	Agree
11	Certain knowledge and experience are required to adequately appreciate art works and the aesthetic quality of the environment.	112	142	25	17	4	4.14	0.887	Agree
	Total Mean	**115.36**	**137.09**	**26.91**	**16.18**	**4.46**	**4.14**	**0.384**	**Agree**

From the result in Table 2, a total mean score of 4.14 was recorded. This shows that the respondents generally agree that there is a relationship between art education and aesthetic quality of the environment. The high point of the mean scores was seen in items 1, 9 and 10, with mean scores of 4.41, 4.47 and 4.39 respectively. These items not only establish art education as part and parcel of the aesthetic venture; they also prove that art education is the basis for aesthetic experience. To this, majority (84.2%) of the respondents agree. On the other hand, the least mean scores were recorded in items 6, 7 and 8 with 3.86, 3.69 and 3.68 mean scores respectively. This indicates that even though 84.2% of the respondents agree, quite a number of them (15.8%) are not aware of the fact that art and aesthetics, even though related, is not the same thing.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the result of data analyses on the responses of the respondents, the following findings are made:

1. There is a relationship between art education and the aesthetic quality of the environment.
2. Art education is not only part and parcel of the aesthetic venture; it is the basis for jaesthetic experience.
3. Quite a number of the sample (15.8%) is not aware of the fact that art and aesthetics is not one and the same thing.
4. Art/aesthetics is relevant in the process of improving the quality of the social environment.
5. Aesthetics is part and parcel of the environment from man's existence.
6. Aesthetic values play an important role in environmental protection, improvement and sustainability.
7. The lack of aesthetic environment in Jalingo town is caused principally by man rather than by natural phenomena.
8. Art training has an impact upon individuals that are exposed to it and to the quality of their environment.
9. Aesthetic education enables one to create and/or perceive aesthetic things.
10. Art/aesthetic education equips one with the ability to make sound aesthetic judgement about the environment.

Plate 1: Landscaping III: (by Drainages & Tar): A Roundabout in Taraba State University (Temporary Site), Jalingo

Plate 2: Jalingo I: A School Wall Defaced: Art Education will help to rid the Society of negative attitudes towards the Environment such as this

Plate 3: Jalingo II: Indiscriminate Posting of Bills: Beauty of monuments such as this are often defaced by politicians & other visual illiterates

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study made use of questionnaire which was responded to by three groups of persons namely, the artists, environment-related professionals such as the architects, building engineers, civil engineers, town planners among others; and finally a sample of the general public within the study area.

Based on the findings of this study with reference to research question one as depicted in Table 2, majority of the respondents (84.2%) indicated they understood the meaning of art education and aesthetic environment and also agreed that there is a relationship between art education (which is understood here to mean education through art) and aesthetic environment. This is in line with Uzoagba (1991) and Mbahi (2008) when they both agree that art education is the foundation for the creation and experience of what is beautiful; and that aesthetics on the other hand, is the branch of philosophy that deals directly with the nature of beauty and art. Art education, according to Mbahiopens minds of people to appreciate works of art and nature. By this, it suggests that art education is not only part of the aesthetic venture; it is the basis for aesthetic experience.

However, from the findings of this study, quite a sizeable number of respondents (15.8%) are not aware of the fact that art and aesthetics even though related, is not the same thing. In other words, many people see beautiful natural things as art; and art as aesthetics. This, critically speaking, may not the case. Mbahi (2008) corroborates this point when he points out that art and aesthetics are different, but have overlapping concepts with many ideas in common. For example, the concept of "beauty" cuts across both of them. The arts in the history of culture, he further points out, cover a much wider area than aesthetics. They are impinged upon by religious, magical, didactic and social views, while, aesthetics has relevance to areas far outside the arts. Anything therefore which is aesthetically enjoyed is an aesthetic object. The aesthetic object may be an art object or it may not.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions can be made concerning art education, aesthetics, environment and strategies for quality improvement.

It may be concluded that there exist an important cause-effect relationship between art education and aesthetic environment. This is based on the findings of this study and the assumption that art education broadens aesthetic experience. As one goes through art training, his aesthetic consciousness is sharpened through drills in careful observation and perception. This aesthetic awareness, according to Ityoban (2009), if properly harnessed, can affect one's taste and style of living and the environment in which he lives. This may be seen in his attitude toward the improvement and protection of the environment by demonstrating the right attitude toward refuse disposal, posting of bills, quality of house one wants to live in, and a host of other positive attitudes.

One may also conclude that even though majority of the respondents claim to have understood the meaning of art education and aesthetics, many of them are still confused as to what really differentiates art from aesthetics. Left to many people, all art works are aesthetics; and all aesthetic objects are art. With such confusion, it is no surprise that people manifest ignorance towards appreciation of their environment. For without understanding, they cannot judge a good environment from a bad one; and even if they do, many care less.

Based on the findings of the study, art education and aesthetic education are relevant to the improvement of the quality of the environment, especially the social environment. The study found out that aesthetics, which has been part and parcel of the environment from man's early existence, can still play an important role in environmental improvement, protection and sustainability. Hettinger (2005)supports this view when he points out that despite its central role; aesthetic aspect has not been accorded its rightful place in environmental protection.

This study also discovered that man is the principal cause of lack of aesthetic environment, particularly in Jalingo, the study area.Ditwiler (1973) agrees with this notion and identifies economic development as the cause for the significant change in man's relationship to his environment; far removed from his initial relationship which was mainly concerned with the basic needs of life. Today, he says, a new class of more complex demands is being placed on the environment, some of which are the causes of man's irrational and ad hoc or piecemeal approach to environmental problems. It is assumed here therefore that if man is the principal cause for environmental degradation; it is an easier problem to attend to, since man can be educated. With proper education, which art education can provide, man may behave more positively to his environment. This is the reason why this study may confidently conclude that art training among other environment-related education can positively impact on the lives of recipients and on the aesthetic quality of the environment.

Based on this study, it will appear that many people are not aware of the fact that art contributes to visual literacy more than other disciplines do. Arheim (1969) writing on "Vision in Education" opines that once it is recognized that productive thinking in any area of cognition is perceptual thinking, the central function of art in general education will become evident, because the most effective training of perceptual thinking can be offered in the art studio.

Arheim's position here concerning perceptual thinking and its function in general education places art in the centre of visual literacy. Visual literacy is as important in general education as verbal literacy and numeracy; but how many people know about this?

This study also discovers that the 3 most effective strategies for improving the aesthetic quality of the environment include planting of trees, flowers and lawns, landscaping and creating recreational centres; enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, standards and policies; and an aggressive educational programme/public awareness campaign with emphasis on art and environmental education. Also, result of the study reveals that government, NGOs and private organizations need to do more than what they are doing presently if they want their programmes/projects toward improvement of the environment to make any impact and remain relevant among the populace of this country.

Finally, this study concludes that even though artists, stakeholders of the environment and the general public share similar opinions regarding the relevance of art/aesthetic education to the improvement of the environment and the most effective strategies for same purpose; there is a significant difference in the level of awareness of the artists and that of the other two groups under study concerning the relationship between art education and aesthetic environment; and the impact of art training upon individuals and the environment. Artists exhibited a higher level of awareness than the other two under study over the impact of art/aesthetics towards the environment.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study indicate that art education is a viable strategy in the improvement of the aesthetic quality of the environment. Therefore there is need to encourage and/or enforce the teaching of art in both public and private institutions in Nigeria; with the view to inculcate and/or increase environmental consciousness. This is based on the conclusion that proper education which art education may provide can lead to the right attitudes towards the environment.

Another implication of this study is that, if man is the principal cause of environmental degradation or lack of aesthetic environment in the study area, it would therefore be an easier task to attend to than if it were a natural phenomenon; for man can be educated or at least teachable. It will appear therefore that art education is such type of education that is needed to positively impact upon the lives of individual recipients.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the results of this study.

1. The Federal government should make the teaching of art compulsory in both public and private schools in Nigeria; that is, from pre-nursery to secondary levels and as an elective in tertiary schools particularly for all environment-related disciplines such as architecture, building and civil engineering, town planning, survey and estate management.
2. The art curricula at tertiary level of education should be expanded to include environmental education; and at pre-primary to secondary levels, environmental education should be introduced as a new compulsory subject. This will go a long way to helping the populace realize the importance of the environment and thereby cultivating the love for the environment.
3. At tertiary level, the art curriculum should have a compulsory unit on environmental art with emphasis, for instance, on installation art, mosaic and other artistic constructions such as kinetic art. Students should be encouraged to experiment with a variety of materials, particularly waste materials in order to prove to the society that, with artistic creativity, nothing is a waste.
4. The National Environmental Standards, Regulation and Enforcement Agency (NESREA) and all other federal government agencies concerned with environmental protection, improvement and sustainability should include aesthetics as an aspect of their campaign programmes to create environmental consciousness.
5. All levels of government (federal, state and local) should embark on mass public awareness campaigns and also through the electronic media in order to sensitize the citizenry about the need to create and maintain not only a clean and healthy environment but a beautiful one with little or no cost.
6. Tree planting, raising and keeping of flowers, lawns, gardens and general landscaping should be encouraged by government and every city council in all residential and public places in Nigeria; particularly in the northern part. The one-man one-tree campaign begun in Nigeria some years back should be revived and re-invigorated by the Ministry of Environment and Urban Development; not just because of desert encroachment and erosion prevention but also for their aesthetic purposes (As shown in Plates 16, 28 & 38).
7. Drainages, and general landscaping of urban environment in the country. This will help to bring all these experts and professionals to share ideas and work together as an entity and thereby encouraging mutual respect among these disciplines.

8. Governments, NGOs and spirited private individuals should encourage and sponsor installation of artistic monuments/art works of cultural, historical and social significance at strategic locations in our towns and cities not only to give these towns and cities aesthetic face-lifts but to also tell the world our own story.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to find out what art strategies can be used to improve the aesthetic quality of the environment using Jalingo, the headquarters of Taraba State, as a study area. The variables considered as important in the study included art education strategy, which is the independent variable, and aesthetic quality of the environment, which is the dependable variable.Four research questions were raised to guide the research, while equally four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

A sample survey type of design, specifically a Sample Survey of Intangible Subject Matter, was used for the study. The population comprised of 300 senior civil servants and businessmen resident in Jalingo, the headquarters of Taraba State. Purposive sampling technique was used to reach a total of 56 formally trained artists and 85 environment-related professionals; while random sampling was employed to reach 159 senior civil servants and private businessmen, known in the study as the general public. Data on level of awareness of the relationship between art education and aesthetic environment; level of awareness of the relevance of art/aesthetics towards the improvement of the quality of the environment; opinion on the impact of art training on individuals and aesthetic environment; and opinion about the most effective art strategies for improving the aesthetic quality of the environment were scored with a 5-point Likert scale, collected and collated. This 68-item questionnaire was developed by the researcher and submitted to experts for validation.

Cronbach Alpha method was used to achieve the reliability of the instrument; and reliability co-efficient of 0.92 was obtained. This indicates that the instrument is internally stable. The researcher was assisted by three artists who covered the 8 ministries, 13 boards and parastatals, and 12 private outfits within the study area. Mean and standard deviation statistical tools were used to analyze the scores; while analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses. All these were calculated using the SPSS 15 software application programme.

The outcome of the study revealed that a cause-effect relationship exists between art education and aesthetic environment, that is, art education can be used to affect aesthetic quality of the environment; that many people still do not know the difference between art and aesthetics; a lot more do not know that art as a discipline contributes more than other disciplines to visual literacy; that the strategy of tree planting, keeping of flowers and general landscaping is the best strategy for improving the aesthetic quality of the environment; and that artists and the stakeholders of the environment manifest a higher level of aesthetic consciousness of the environment than the general public.

Based on the above findings, the researcher therefore recommended that there should be more aggressive educational programmes and public awareness campaigns with emphasis on art and aesthetic education in order to improve, protect and sustain the quality of the environment; that environmental education should be introduced into the school system and made mandatory for all primary to secondary levels, and as elective for the tertiary level; that, in tertiary art programmes, emphasis should placed on environmental or installation art; and that to ensure a more aggressive drive towards the improvement of the environment, task force committees or commissions be established by the government.

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