

Assessment of Teachers' Knowledge and Use of Mastery Learning Strategy in the Implementation of Basic School Creative Arts Curriculum in Katsina State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Culture is the pride of members of every society as the cultural elements of any society portray their needs, interest, aspirations and dilemmas. It is in this context that arts and design plays a significant role in creating and preserving some of the societal cultural heritage through painting, carving, molding and building. It is therefore disheartening to note that most of the roles which art as a subject was included in school curriculum to perform have been negated as a result of the inability of the teachers to effectively use strategies like mastery learning that could motivate students' interest in the subject. The study, therefore, assessed teachers' use of mastery learning strategy in implementation of basic school art education curriculum for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population comprised of all the basic school teachers in Katsina state, Nigeria. Target population was creative art teachers in basic schools. The sample was 50 creative art teachers purposely selected from five public basic schools in Dutsinma Local Government Area (LGA), Katsina State. Questionnaire tagged: 'Assessment of Mastery Learning Strategy Questionnaire' (AMLS) was constructed, validated and trial tested on teachers in Kurfi LGA which yielded a reliability coefficient at 0.75. In an attempt to answer the questions raised, mean, percentage and standard deviation were employed to answer the research questions while chi-square test statistics were made use of in testing the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Finding of the study indicated that most teachers were uninformed of mastery learning strategy. Based on the finding, the study recommended that workshop on mastery learning should be organized to up-date teachers knowledge on mastery learning and other motivating learning strategies. The study concluded that similar studies should be carried out in related subjects to ascertain effectiveness of learning strategies used in imparting knowledge to learners.

Key words: mastery, learning, Implementation, art, curriculum.

1. Introduction

Education shapes individuals to fit into their respective societies and as a result, it is very

Creative Arts is the one of the core subject in basic schools in Nigeria. It is a broad field curriculum developed through integration of music, fine arts and drama in order to make its teaching and learning more practical, comprehensive, holistic and void of compartmentalization. Put differently, it could be viewed as a subject that create an avenue for learners participation in a range of activities that allow for creative and imaginative expression in form of music, arts, creative movement and drama which engage their minds, bodies and senses (Preschool First, Creative Arts Expression 2011). Nnamani (2014) was of the view that integration of music, arts, drama and dance could transmit learning experiences that would help the learners to grow into and imbibe the cultural heritage of his people. Consequent upon the above the learners are expected to appreciate their cultural heritage and live as product of such cultural values.

The study of creative art enriches learners mind and also enables them to approach challenges from the view point of an art educator. All the students involved are encouraged to develop their creative skills within their cultural milieu. Ogboji (2013) observed that the infusion of knowledge, skills, attitude and values in the several components of cultural and creative arts enhance entrepreneurial skill acquisition which begets good theatrical performance and art works. He further observed that these types of arts products make the learner achieve self-fulfillment and actualization. Ryan (2017) maintained that graduate Arts teachers need opportunities to keep pace with new discoveries in material and techniques, where this is lacking, knowledge become bleak and gradually stagnant.

Dobson (2013) summarized the nature of creative arts as follows: It is characterized by originality of thought, imagination or inventiveness; it is a trait

that is rare and inherent in which learners need to be given proper opportunities to practice in order to develop their creative abilities; it emphasizes the process of teaching and learners in a world that is progressively and more productive as it dwell on methods one adopts to arrive at destination rather than the destination itself. The objectives of creative arts in Nigeria basic school system are as follows:

1. Development of learner's mind set which could lead to improvement of language for expressing ideas, feelings, motion and moods through variety of art experiences;
2. Development of self-confidence which could help them helps in identification and proper use of art;
3. Recognition and adherence to values of works of art
4. Develop academically, physically, and culturally by gaining knowledge;
5. Have the necessary skills and abilities to pursue art education at a higher level;
6. Develop an interest in the arts in preparation for a future career and
7. Consider the value of art in other areas of study and in society.

The objectives are lofty and from all practical indications meant to contribute immensely towards achievement of Nigeria general Secondary School objective four (4) as contained in the nations' education national policy. The objective emphasizes the desire to make provision for cultural sustainability through creation of opportunities to develop and project Nigeria culture (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014).

However, given the background of method of teaching and learning which learners experience in the classrooms, one may be tempted to wonder whether creative arts could actually reinforce and sustain the cultures of various ethnic groups that made up the nation. Graduate arts teachers need opportunities to keep pace with new discoveries in material and techniques, where this is lacking, knowledge become bleak and gradually stagnant (Ryan, 2017).

Creative Art is a subject that its lessons have to appeal to the intellectual, emotional and skill manipulation of the learner hence, not all teaching and learning methods could be effectively used in the lesson. Despite this, most teachers employ lecture method in the Creative Art lessons. It would be pertinent to mention here that some learners usually become disinterested in the subject owing to the mode of teaching and learning strategies that are being used in the class. Considering the high level of lack of interest shown by learners, it is usually the first program to cut when funds are inadequate (Chen, 2016). Learning can therefore make more meaning if such learners are exposed to unit of instructions that could allow them to master particular concepts theoretically and practically before moving on to difficult ones.

Based on the foregoing, Mastery Learning Strategy may seem to be more appropriate in such lessons. Mastery Learning Strategy occurs in a situation where students have to achieve at least 85%- 90% level of mastery in prerequisite learning experience before moving forward to learn requisite experiences that are more tasking than the previous one, provided they are given enough time to understand what they are exposed to (Wiggins, 2013). Mastery learning strategy initiative according to Benjamin Bloom is that there are variation in learners learning styles as such teachers should varied in their

instructional approaches especially the ones that would give the learners time to masters a unit of instruction before proceeding to the next more challenging one (Kampen, 2019). This could be achieved when individual differences among them are well understood.

Consequently, Amer (2015) observed that if learners are provided uniform instructions in terms of quality and learning time, the achievement level would be normally distributed. Iserameiya and Ibeneme (2018) are of the view that learners differ in amount of learning time they need and that all students are potential academic achievers if given appropriate time and instructional opportunities that suit their learning style. To Ojukwu and Esimone (2014) school administrators, classroom teachers and others involved in decision making and implementation of Mastery Learning Strategy have to keep the research findings in mind while developing plans in the school system to meet the changes.

The paper is therefore an attempt to investigate Creative Arts teachers' knowledge and use of mastery learning strategy in implementation of basic school curriculum in Nigeria.

1.1 Hypotheses

HO1: There is no relationship between classroom teachers' qualification and their knowledge of mastery learning in the implementation of creative arts curriculum for reinforcing cultural sustainability in Nigeria.

HO2: There is no significant relationship between classroom teachers' experiences and their application of mastery learning strategy in teaching of creative arts for cultural sustainability in Nigeria.

HO3: There is no significant difference in the classroom teachers' use of mastery learning strategy in implementation of creative curriculum

for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria based on school type.

HO4: Gender has no significant difference on the knowledge of classroom teachers and their use of mastery learning strategy for implementation of creative curriculum for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria.

2. Method

The study employed descriptive survey design to assess teachers' use of Mastery Learning Strategy in the implementation of basic school Creative Arts curriculum in Dutsin-Ma, Katsina state, Nigeria. The population of the study composed of all the teachers teaching in secondary schools in Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria. The target population was teachers teaching in the basic section of the schools. A purposive sampling technique used to select 50 teachers teaching basic subjects in the secondary schools as all the teachers teaching basic school classes were involved in the study. A researcher designed questionnaire titled: 'Questionnaire on Assessment of Mastery Learning Strategy (AMLS)' was used for data collection.

It was validated by experts in test and measurement at Faculty of Education Federal University Dutsin-Ma. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by administering it on basic school teachers at Kurfi who are outside the study population but have similar characteristics. The instrument was administering twice at the interval of two weeks. The results obtained at the two administrations were correlated using Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient. A co-efficient of 0.75 was obtained which showed that the instrument was reliable. The same statistical tool was used to analyze research hypotheses one and two, while t-test was used to analyze research hypotheses three and four all at $P < 0.05$ level of significance.

3. Results

The results of this study were analyzed and presented descriptively and inferentially in Table 1-5.

Table 1. The demographic information of the participants

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Valid percent
1.	Gender		
	a. Male	38	75.30
	a. Female	12	24.70
	Total	50	100.00
2.	Experience		
	a. Less experience	17	35.10
	a. High experience	33	64.90
	Total	50	100.00
3.	Educational qualification		
	a. NCE holders	20	41.20
	a. Degree holders	30	58.80
	Total	50	100.00
4.	School type		
	a. Mixed	26	52.58
	a. Single	24	47.42
	Total	50	100.00

Table 2. Summary of correlation analyses of relationship between classroom teacher's qualification and their knowledge of mastery learning strategy when it comes to implementing a creative arts curriculum for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria.

Variables	Educational qualification	Knowledge
Educational qualification	1	.047
Pearson correlation		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.647
N	50	97
	Educational qualification	Use
Use		
Pearson correlation	.123	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.229	
N	50	97

Table 2 showed that the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05 established for this study. The hypotheses which stated that qualifications of classroom teachers have no

significant relationship between classroom teachers' knowledge of mastery learning and their teaching of creative Arts for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria is accepted. Hence qualifications of classroom teachers have no significant relationship on classroom teachers' knowledge of mastery learning and their teaching of creative Arts for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria at $p > 0.05$. The correlation is not different from zero (0).

Table 3. The summary of correlation analysis on significant relationship between classroom teachers' experiences and their application of mastery learning strategy in creative arts lessons.

Variables	Experience	Use
experience Pearson Correlation	1	-.080
Sig. (2-tailed)		.435
N	50	97

Table 3 showed that the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05 set for this study. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between classroom teachers' experiences and their application of mastery learning strategy in teaching of creative arts for cultural sustainability in Nigeria is accepted. Hence there is no significant relationship between classroom teachers' experiences and their application of mastery learning strategy in teaching of creative arts for cultural sustainability in Nigeria ($p > 0.05$). Also, the correlation is not different from zero (0).

Table 4. Summary of t-Test on difference in the classroom teachers' use of mastery learning strategy based on school type

Schl type	N	x	SD	t	Df	p-value
Mixed	52	22.33	2.618	.363	95	.337
Single	45	22.84	2.654	.396		
Total	97					

Table 4 shows that the mean value of the mixed schools is less than the mean value of the single schools irrespective of the mixed schools' high frequency ($22.33 < 22.84$). It also shows that the p-value is greater than the alpha level of 0.05 set for this study. Thus, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the classroom teachers' use of mastery learning strategy in implementation of creative curriculum for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria based on school type is retained. Hence, there is no significant difference in the classroom teachers' use of mastery learning strategy in implementation of creative curriculum for reinforcement of cultural sustainability in Nigeria based on school type is retained ($p > 0.05$).

4. Discussion and Findings

The result of this study revealed that Mastery Learning Strategy is an effective learning Strategy that leads to high performance and greater academic achievement level of learners who are exposed to it. This finding corroborates that of Amer (2015), who observed that if learners are provided uniform instruction in terms of quality and learning time, the achievement level would be normally distributed. Iserameiya and Ibeneme (2018) credence to this finding as they maintain that learners differ in amount of learning time they need and that all students are potential academic achievers if given appropriate time and instructional opportunities that suit

their learning style. By implication it is an instructional strategy which is based on the premise that student would achieve a high level of understanding in a given domain if they are given time.

The findings of the study also showed that there was no significant between qualification of classroom teachers and their knowledge of Mastery Learning Strategy on teaching of creative art for cultural sustainability in Nigeria. This finding is sustained as it goes in line with Ryan (2017) who maintained that graduate arts teachers need opportunities to keep pace with new discoveries in material and techniques, where this is lacking, knowledge become bleak and gradually stagnant.

The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant relationship between classroom teachers' experiences and their applications of Mastery Learning Strategy in school system. This finding corroborates that of Ojukwu and Esimone (2014) which maintained that school administrators, classroom teachers and others involved in decision making and implementation of Mastery Learning Strategy have to keep the research findings in mind while developing plans in school system to meet the changes.

It was also found that significant relationship does not exist between classroom teachers use of Mastery Learning Strategy based on school type. This finding could be retained as classroom teachers in both schools seem to have similar characteristics as such much difference may not occur in their use of Mastery Teaching Strategy.

5. Conclusion

The investigation of teachers' knowledge and use of Mastery Learning Strategy reveals that teachers lack knowledge and necessary skills to apply the instructional method in a classroom.

There was evidence which indicated that the teachers had interest in the use of the learning approach; however, its use become challenging due to lack of the necessary skills required for its application. It therefore becomes imperative to come out with approaches that could enhance teacher's knowledge and skill for effective application of the strategy in the school system. If proper strategies are put in place there is tendency that teachers' interest would be enhanced and this would lead to improvement in learners' level of assimilation particularly among cultural and Creative Arts students.

6. Recommendations

Base on the findings from the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Teachers should be encouraged to apply Mastery Learning Strategy in the school system to enhance high academic achievement by students.
- Teachers should be trained in workshops and conferences on Mastery Learning Strategy to equip and update their knowledge on the learning approach.
- Instructional materials should be sufficiently made available to teachers for effective application of mastery learning strategy in the schools.
- Learners should be made to understand the essence of ensuring that they master a particular unit of instruction before proceeding to the next higher challenging one.

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