Effect of Drama Instructional Strategy on Students' Achievement and Skills In Three Components of Creative and Cultural Arts in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of the Drama Instructional Strategy (DIS) on students' achievement in Creative and Cultural Arts (CCA). The DIS leverages techniques such as role-playing, improvisation, dramatization, storytelling, and simulation to create an interactive, student-centered learning environment. The study adopted the quasi-experimental research design involving the pretest-post-test control group model. A sample of 150 Junior Secondary School students from selected schools in Lagos State offering CCA was randomly assigned to Drama Instructional Strategy and the control group The instruments used are Creative and Cultural Arts Achievement Test (r=); Creative Thinking Skills Inventory (r=) and instructional guides. Data were analysed with descriptive statistics, paired sample t-tests, and Analysis of Covariance at 0.05 levelofsignificance. The findings revealed that students exposed to the Drama Instructional Strategy demonstrated significantly higher performance in CCA than their counterparts in the control group. It was recommended that teachers should adopt drama-based strategies to teach CCA in order to promote active learning and holistic development. Additionally, teacher training programmes should include modules on drama pedagogy to equip teachers with the necessary skills for its effective implementation.

Keywords: Drama Instructional Strategy, Students' Achievement, Skills, Creative and Cultural Arts Nigeria

Introduction

Creative and Cultural Arts (CCA) plays a vital role in the development of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. This subject fosters creativity, cultural awareness, critical thinking, and emotional expression (Aborisade, 2015) It is found to be crucial for holistic development of learners. It is an integral part of the school curriculum which is designed to promote the development of students' creative abilities, cultural awareness, and artistic expression (Dawson & Lee, 2016). It encompasses various art forms, including visual arts, performing arts (such as drama, music, and dance), and crafts (Wang, 2012). By implication, the subject not only nurtures aesthetic appreciation but also equips students with essential life skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication. It is discovered that achievement in CCA depicts students' ability to apply artistic knowledge, demonstrate creative thinking, and produce original works that reflect their understanding of cultural and aesthetic principles (Shomirzayev, 2020).

Empirical research focusing on CCA in Nigerian secondary schools is limited. For instance, one study examined factors affecting students' behaviour in CCA in junior secondary schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The findings suggested that home environment, school environment, instructional strategies, vocational anticipation, and socio-economic backgrounds significantly influence students' attitudes and engagement in CCA. In the same vein, in many educational settings, the subject is taught using conventional, teacher-centered methods that emphasize memorization and passive learning (Dawson & Lee, 2016). These traditional approaches often fail to stimulate students' interest, limit their creative potential, and do not provide adequate opportunities for cultural exploration. As a result, students may struggle to develop the competencies required to appreciate and contribute to the arts and their cultural heritage effectively (Cunnigham & Yamasaki, 2018). The lack of engaging, student-centered instructional strategies has led to declining interest and poor performance in CCA among many students.

This is so because teachers often rely on lectures, note-taking, and textbook-based instruction, which do not fully capture the dynamic and expressive nature of the subject (Olasoji, Adegboyega & Omoniyi 2023 and Ojukwu & Onyiuke, 2014). Furthermore, students in such environments may find it challenging to connect theoretical knowledge with real-life artistic and cultural experiences, leading to superficial learning and limited skill development. It is to be noted that students are doing well in the school subject, however, there is room for improvement. To drive this, according to Onuora-Oguno & Ezeugwu (2017) several factors have been found to influence students' achievement in various curriculum subjects including CCA. Among these factors are instructional strategies, teacher competence, students' motivation among others. It is discovered that innovative instructional strategies such as

project-based learning, experiential activities, dramatisation and the integration of technology play significant roles in improving students' academic performance. This is because it enhances students' engagement and improve learning outcomes (Onyeji, 2017).

The evolving demands of 21st-century education require innovative instructional strategies that promote creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness, particularly in subjects like Creative and Cultural Arts (CCA). Despite its importance, education evolves towards more student-centered approaches. Also, drama strategy has emerged as an innovative instructional technique that enhances students' learning outcomes across various subjects, including Creative and Cultural Arts. The traditional teaching methods, often reliant on rote memorization and passive learning, have proven insufficient in engaging students and nurturing their creative potentials (Cunnigham & Yamasaki, 2018). Drama strategy refers to the use of theatrical techniques such as role-playing, improvisation, storytelling, and dramatization to facilitate learning (Abdulrasaq & Iheanacho, 2016). It transforms the classroom into an interactive environment where students actively participate, collaborate, and explore content through creative expression (Corbisiero-Drakos, Reeder, Ricciardi, Zacharia, & Harnetth, 2021).

This strategy aligns with constructivist learning theories, which lay emphasis on active involvement, experiential learning, and the construction of knowledge through meaningful activities. Drama strategy provides students with opportunities to internalise concepts, develop critical thinking skills, and express their ideas in diverse, imaginative ways. In Creative and Cultural Arts, drama strategy is particularly effective because it mirrors the subject's core objectives—promoting artistic expression, cultural identity, and emotional development. Through drama activities, students engage with artistic concepts not just theoretically but experientially, allowing them to explore different cultures, historical contexts, and artistic styles (Boham, 2023). Additionally, drama fosters collaboration, empathy, and communication skills, which are essential for personal and social development. However, despite the potential benefits of drama strategy, its implementation in CCA classrooms remains limited, especially in regions where traditional methods dominate. This is because teachers often face challenges such as lack of training, inadequate resources, and rigid curricula that prioritise rote learning over creative exploration (Adams 2013). Consequently, students miss out on opportunities to develop their creative and cultural competencies fully (Onyeji, 2017).

The moderating role of gender is of paramount importance in this study. Gender differences often influence students' comfort levels with public performance and expressive activities. Studies like Abdulrasaq & Iheanacho (2016), Khurshid & Ansari (2012) and Dawson & Lee, (2016) have affirmed that female students are generally more inclined towards expressive arts and may feel more comfortable participating in drama activities that involve emotions, empathy, and communication. In contrast, male students may initially show resistance to activities perceived as emotionally vulnerable, such as role-playing or expressive storytelling, especially in cultures where traditional masculinity discourages overt emotional expression. It is discovered that drama activities require performance in front of peers can trigger varying confidence levels based on gender. Girls often excel in activities requiring verbal expression, empathy, and interpersonal communication, which are central to drama-based learning. However, boys may perform better in physical, action-oriented drama activities, such as mime, stage combat, or improvisations that involve movement and high-energy performance.

In certain cultural environment, it is also discovered that gender norms may restrict girls from participating freely in activities such as mixed-gender performances or dramatic roles that challenge traditional gender roles. This can limit their exposure to the full benefits of drama-based learning. Conversely, boys may face social pressure to avoid roles perceived as "soft" or emotionally sensitive, which could hinder their ability to develop emotional intelligence and empathy through drama. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the effect of drama strategy on students' achievement in Creative and Cultural Arts.

Statement of problem

Drama strategy involves active participation through role-playing, dramatization, and improvisation. It has shown promise in enhancing learning outcomes in various subjects. It encourages students to think critically, express themselves creatively, and engage deeply with the content. Despite its potential benefits, there is limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of drama strategy in the teaching and learning of Creative and Cultural Arts, particularly in settings where traditional teaching methods prevail. The central problem this study addresses is the gap between the intended goals of Creative and Cultural Arts education and the actual learning experiences of students due to ineffective teaching methods.

Previous studies have focused on several interventions like Jigsaw, Think Pair and Share approach, some studies have utilised seleceted variables such as geneder, home and school factors to drive students' creativity, cultural awareness, and academic performance in CCA but the problem persists. Hence this study. It specifically, the study seeks to determine whether drama strategy can improve students' achivement in CCA It is believed that by investigating this issue, the study aims to provide basis that can inform teaching practices, curriculum development, and policy decisions in arts education.

Research objectives

The objective of the study is to investigate the effect of drama instructional strategy on students' achievement and akills in three components of Creative and Cultural Arts in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools, Nigeria. Specifically, it is to

1. Investigate the effectiveness of drama instructional methods on students' achievement in each of the three component of CCA.
2. Ascertain the effectiveness of drama instructional methods on students' skill in each of the three component of CCA.

Methodology

This study adopted the pretest-posttest control group quasi-experimental research design, The participants were 150 Junior Secondary School students from six schools inLagos State. The primary instruments for data collection include Drama Method Instructional Guide, Creative and Cultural Arts Achievement Test (r=0.75); and Creative Thinking Scale(r=0.77).

Both the experimental and control groups were adminisrered with CCA Achievement Test and Creative Thinking Scale before the intervention to establish baseline data. Students in the experimental group received instruction using drama strategies such as role-playing, dramatization of cultural stories, improvisation, and performance-based activities. The intervention lasted eight weeks. Students in the control group continued with the traditional teacher-centered approach, primarily lectures, note-taking, and textbook-based instruction.

After the intervention, posttest tests of CCA Achievement Test and Creative Thinking Scale were readministered to measure growth in achievement and creative thinking skills. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics and Paired Sample t-tests.

Results

RQ 1: How effective is the adoption of the drama instructional method in terms of post-test means scores of students in the three component of CCA in achievement?

Table 1: Effectiveness of Drama Instructional Method In Terms of Post- Achievement Test Mean Scores of Students in the Three Component of Cultural and Creative Arts

Three Components	N	Mean		Mean Difference	Standard Deviation		St.D Difference
		Posttest	Pretest		Posttest	Pretest	
Performing Arts & Entertainment	59	10.25	5.44	4.81	1.99	1.59	0.4
Crafts	59	2.25	1.86	0.39	.632	.973	-0.341
Custom and Value	59	4.39	1.00	3.39	.788	.788	0.000

Table 4.1 shows that there was a difference in the achievement mean scores of Performing Arts & Entertainment, Crafts and Custom and Value taught using drama method. The post-test mean score of the Performing Arts & Entertainment ($\bar{x}$ = 10.25), Crafts ($\bar{x}$ = 2.25) and Custom and Value ($\bar{x}$ = 4.39) while the pretest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 5.44), ($\bar{x}$ = 1.86) and ($\bar{x}$ = 1.00) scores were respectively. The mean differences are ($\bar{x}$ = 4.81), ($\bar{x}$ = 0.39), and ($\bar{x}$ = 3.39). By implication, the increase in mean scores suggests that the intervention applied helped to improve students' learning outcomes in Cultural and Creative Arts. Furthermore, it is given that a lower post-test standard deviation implies that participants' scores became more similar after the intervention. This indicates that the intervention had a unifying effect, bringing participants closer to a similar level of performance or understanding.

RQ 2: How effective is the drama instructional method in in enhancing creative thinking in CCA ?

Table 2: Effectiveness of Drama Instructional Method In Terms of Post -Skill Mean Scores of Students in the Three Component of Cultural and Creative Arts

Three Components	N	Mean		Mean Difference	Standard Deviation		St.D Difference
		Posttest	Pretest		Posttest	Pretest	
Performing Arts & Entertainment	59	8.64	2.66	5.98	1.323	1.688	-0.366
Crafts	59	2.75	1.32	1.43	.439	.681	-0.242
Custom and Value	59	3.56	1.44	2.12	.566	.595	-0.029

Table 4.1 shows that there is a difference in the skill mean scores of Performing Arts & Entertainment, Crafts and Custom and Value taught using drama method. The post-test mean score of the Performing Arts & Entertainment (x = 8.64), Crafts (x = 2.75) and Custom and Value (x = 3.56) while the pretest mean (x = 2.66), (x = 1.32) and (x = 1.44) scores were respectively. The mean differences are (x = 5.98), (x = 1.43), and (x = 2.12). If the post-test mean score is greater than the pre-test mean score, this generally indicates improvement in the measured outcomes following the treatment applied.

Discussion

Effectiveness of Drama Instructional Method on Achievement in Cultural and Creative Arts

The result revealed that there was positive effectiveness of drama instructional method in terms of post-achievement mean scores of students in the three component of cultural and creative arts. This implies that drama method improved students achievement in performing arts and entertainment Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA). The result was in line with the works of Mohammed & Alnour (2021), Ajitoni and Omoniyi (2017), Njoku & Igwe (2019), Ogunbiyi (2014), Okonkwo (2009) and Olukoju (2019). One of the most remarkable findings of this study is the integrative effect of drama methods across performing arts, arts and crafts, and customs and values. This is because drama, by its very nature, intertwines these components, providing a holistic learning experience. For instance, a single dramatic performance might involve acting (performing arts), creating costumes and props (arts and crafts), and depicting cultural stories (customs and values). This integration ensures that students develop a comprehensive skill set while appreciating the interconnectedness of various cultural and creative domains.

From another persective, drama method prepares them for real-world applications, where the ability to synthesize diverse skills and knowledge is invaluable. The findings of this study is in line witrh the works of Boham (2023), Omoniyi (2020) and Olusola (2021). This is because drama method has significant implications for the teaching and learning of Cultural and Creative Arts. Firstly, the authors emphasize the need for teachers to adopt drama methods as a core pedagogical strategy. This method not only makes learning more engaging and enjoyable but also ensures that students acquire practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge. Secondly, the study explains the importance of providing adequate resources and training for teachers to effectively implement drama methods. This includes access to materials for arts and crafts, spaces for performances, and professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' expertise in drama-based pedagogy. This was supported by the works of Dawson & Lee (2016) and Cunnigham & Yamasaki (2018).

The findings explain the value of integrating cultural education into the curriculum. This submission was supported by empirical research by Brookfield (2017) and Cham (2014). By using drama to teach customs and values, teachers can help students develop a strong sense of cultural identity and social responsibility. This is particularly important in a globalised world, where preserving and promoting cultural heritage is a vital challenge. The study demonstrates the positive improvement and effectiveness of drama methods in enhancing students' skills in performing arts and entertainment, arts and crafts, and customs and values. Drama provides an engaging, interactive, and integrative approach to learning, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. By adopting drama methods, teachers can ensure that students not only excel in Cultural and Creative Arts but also develop the holistic skills and values needed to thrive in a diverse and dynamic world.

Effectiveness of Drama Instructional Method Creative Thinking Skill in CCA

The result revealed that there was positive effectiveness of drama instructional method in terms of post-skill mean scores of students in the three component of cultural and creative arts. The

study revealed a positive improvement in students' skills in performing arts and entertainment through the use of drama methods. This is in line with the works of Okafor & Ikeche (2017), Cunnigham & Yamasaki (2018), Abdulrasaq & Iheanacho (2016), Akinyemi (2021), Okechukwu & Onuora-Oguno (2022) and Brookfield (2017) whose submission establish the pedagogical strength of drama in fostering creativity, self-expression, and communication. It is to be noted that drama methods is characterised by role-play, improvisation, and interactive storytelling, actively engage students which also allows them to explore and develop their abilities in areas such as acting, music, and dance. The interactive nature of drama provides a platform for students to practice and refine their performance skills. The result is also affirms the finding of Ajitoni and Omoniyi (2017) and Ajayi (2018) and the tenets of social learning theory, which emphasizes learning through observation, imitation, and active participation.

In terms of arts and crafts, the study also identified a significant improvement in students' skills in arts and crafts due to the implementation of drama methods. This is in line with the wrks of Nwankwo (2020), whose submission explains the interdisciplinary potential of drama in linking artistic creativity with cultural education. Arts and crafts activities, such as drawing, painting, sculpting, and designing, benefit from the imaginative and exploratory nature of drama-based pedagogy. This corroborates te result of Adewale, Adisa, Ndububa, Olawoyin & Adedokun (2019) who reported that drama methods encourage students to think outside the box and view artistic tasks from new perspectives. Additionally, drama activities often involve storytelling, which provides a rich context for arts and crafts. This aligns with the works of Anyanwu (2019).

For the component of custom and value in CCA, the study also found that drama methods were highly effective in enhancing students' understanding and application of customs and values. The result was corroborated by the works of Gallagher (2000), whose finidngs affirmed that drama serves as a powerful medium for exploring and internalising cultural norms, traditions, and moral principles. This is because through role-playing and dramatization, students gain firsthand experience in acting out cultural practices and reflecting on their significance. For example, enacting traditional ceremonies or cultural stories allows students to immerse themselves in the values embedded in these practices. This experiential learning approach deepens their understanding and ensures that the lessons learned are more impactful and enduring than those gained through passive instruction. In the same vein, drama methods also promote critical thinking about customs and values. This is by stepping into the roles of different characters, students are encouraged to view situations from multiple perspectives.

The communal and participatory nature of drama-based instructional strategy further reinforces the transmission of customs and values. Hence, when students perform cultural dramas for their peers or community members, they become active agents in cultural preservation and dissemination. This process instills a sense of pride and responsibility in upholding and promoting their cultural identity.

Conclusion

This study examined the effect of drama instructional strategy on students' achievement in three Components of Creative and Cultural Arts in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools, Nigeria. The components include students' achievement in performing arts and entertainment, arts and crafts, and customs and values. The findings revealed significant effectiveness of drama strategy on students' achievement and skills in the three components. It can be concluded that drama methods have the potentials of nurturing students' artistic talents, cultural understanding, and creative thinking.

Recommendations

The following recommnedtaions are made

1. Teachers of CCA should formally adopt Drama-based instructional strategy which combines the engaging elements of drama, the innovative power of technology, and the hands-on experience of workshops to create an interactive learning environment that enhances both creative expression and academic achievement.
2. Schools should organize regular art workshops, seminars, and creative boot camps facilitated by experts in drama, technology, and various art forms. These workshops encourage peer collaboration, hands-on learning, and the practical application of skills, leading to improved creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities.
3. Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria should incorporated the implementation of drama-based instructional techniques such as role-playing, improvisation, and storytelling in Teachers' Continuous Professional Develoment Programmes.

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