

5. COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME PAINTING UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIA – A CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, NIGERIA

Manasseh Emamoke Imonikebe²⁶³

Abstract: *The study compared the performance of Full-time and Part-time painting undergraduates in Nigeria with special focus on the University of Benin, Benin City Nigeria. It was designed to answer the following question: Is there a difference in performance between Full-time and Part-time painting undergraduates in Nigeria? The study was delimited to undergraduates of the University of Benin, Benin City Nigeria. As a result, one (1) Research Question and one (1) Hypothesis were formulated for the study. Data for this study were generated from official records of the department under investigation. The design of this study was ex post facto, since the research did not intend to manipulate any variables. The data were collected after events of interest have occurred (Ehiametalor and Nwadiani, 2002) and the data was analysed using the Mann-Whitney U test at the 0.05 level of significance. It was found out that, there was no significant difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting. The finding implied that the two groups performed closely. It was therefore recommended that as an eye opener to other disciplines and institutions of learning, the study should be replicated being a lofty initiative.*

Key words: *Comparing; Performance; Full-Time; Part-Time and Universities; Ex post facto*

INTRODUCTION

This study was carried out to compare the performance of Full-time and Part-time painting undergraduates in Nigeria with special focus on the University of Benin, Benin City Nigeria. Precisely, it was designed to find out if there was a difference in performance between Full-time and Part-time painting undergraduates in Nigeria?

Part-Time programmes are popular in most Nigerian universities. Some of the programmes are run as Sandwich Programmes (During long vacation), while others hold during the weekend. For the avoidance of doubt, Part-Time programmes in Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Benin, Benin City are run at the weekend, specifically Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. It is also important to add that Part-Time programmes in Nigerian Universities have received large patronage, well established and are viable. It is expected that the study will give a graphic detail of the performance of the programme in the area of painting. The review was carried out under the following sub-headings: Is the Painter Born or Made? ; Giftedness, Talent and Creativity; Overview of Painting and the Teacher Factor.

Is the Painter Born Or Made?

It is possible to assume that a group of individuals are talented, made and gifted and should be found only in Full-Time programmes. Mbahi (1992) observed that there are two views about the sources of artistic individuals, one is

²⁶³Associate Professor PhD, University of Benin, from Benin City of Nigeria, email: manassehei@yahoo.com

that artists are born and not taught while the other says artists can be taught. He also observed that there is a contemporary view, which states that “artists are born and developed” (Mbahi, 1992:28). He concluded by saying that most art educators hold the contemporary view that artists are born and made. “Artists are born with artistic capabilities which have to be developed through training, teaching and interest developed in the arts. Without adequate exposure to development opportunities, these talents could remain dormant and eventually waste away (Mbahi, 1992:28).

According to Mbahi, the contemporarists asserted that every child is naturally endowed or has an inherent creative ability, hence the claim that artists are born, a position he describes as consonant with that of Lowenfeld and Read. He noted however that the contemporarists also believed that having been naturally endowed, his ability is like a blunt edge which requires to be sharpened through training, teaching and interest development in the arts in order to develop the artistic skill. The contemporarist also argued that some people with bare minimum of natural flare for art have succeeded in the art field because they have drive. They were also unanimous on the influence and indispensable role of the environment and art education. Locke (2002), also argued that artists are both born and made; she stated that “like natural talent the vision is innate yet the way the vision comes to fruition depends upon the artists time and place, the surrounding artists tradition, training and life experience” (<http://www.rps.psu.edu/probing/artist.html>)

Giftedness, Talent and Creativity

It would be necessary to differentiate between talent, giftedness and creativity. What distinguishes talent from giftedness according to Winner (1996) in Pariser and Zimmerman (2007) is gifted is associated with the individuals and his abilities in academic and artistic fields. They cited Lubart (1999) as defining creativity as the individual’s capability to create work that is novel and appropriate. They also tried to differentiate talent from creativity by citing Csikszentmihalyi (1996) as asserting that talent focuses on one’s ability to do something while Garner (1996) explained that individuals who are talented could function within a well defined area of knowledge within a defined location.

Imonikebe (2010) has observed that the production of an artist has much do with creativity, being a vital ingredient for artistic excellence. Sullivan (2007), notes that there has been a general move by researchers from the question of what creativity is, and which is usually seen as biological construct or what he termed a desirable disposition of the mind, to question about when it becomes manifest. He claims that it is valued and somewhat rare human trait which has been a subject of debate and considerable investigation for quite some time now. Sullivan is also of the view that the process includes that of preparation, incubation, illumination or inspiration and verification or elaboration. Sullivan asserted that creativity is a highly valued human capacity and a conceptually robust construct in research.

Diepeveen and Lar (1999), described originality as something new that thrills the viewers. According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia, “creativity is manifested in the production of a creative work (a scientific hypothesis or new work of art) that is both original and useful” another- assumption-breaking process implies, that when preconceived assumptions are discarded and an unthinkable method considered, new creative ideas may be generated. Some other definitions state that creativity is:

- “Producing or bringing about something partly or wholly-new
- Investing an existing object with properties or characteristics.
- Imaging new possibilities that were not conceived of before:
- Seeing or performing in a manner different from what was thought possible or normal previously”(Wikipedia)

Amabile (1996) noted that, “most people associate creativity with the fields of art and literature. In these fields, originality is considered to be a sufficient condition for creativity, unlike other fields where both originality and appropriateness are necessary”(Wikipedia). It is also the “Sensitivity to problems on the part of the creative agent, originality, ingenuity, unusualness and appropriateness in relation to the creative product and intellectual leadership on the part of the creative agent” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/creativity>).

This position was equally maintained by Cheng, Chu, and Liao (2008) when they stated that creativity is inherent in the individual with the child-hood stage as the critical period. Clark and Zimmerman (1986), support the progress of the artistically talented student through encouragement and instruction. They have observed that even today some art educators wrongly believe that artistically talented students do not require formal instruction in acquiring art techniques, studying or learning to criticize works by known artists. They asserted that the untutored self-expression does not take the learner beyond the rudimentary level of their model, and affirm that “if a society stresses art as a respected body of knowledge necessary to complete education for all students, more students will be led to Discipline-based and idiosyncratic level of art education” (Clark and Zimmerman, 1986:121) (idiosyncratic level is the highest region that can be attained in the Feldman’s Universal to Unique continuum model).

Overview of Painting

Painting is the creative application of pigments on a surface or ground (Wangboje, 1985), There are different types of surfaces that the painter can use for painting. It could be paper, hardboard, canvas or wall. The painter’s application of pigments (paint) on the surfaces is not just a mechanical process but expresses his mood, feelings and ideas about his subject matter and his environment. His colours are either opaque or transparent in nature, they are either water-based or oil-based. Water colour, poster paint (Gouache) and acrylic paints are examples of water-based pigments, while oil colours are oil-based (Wangboje, 1985), A host of other materials are needed for painting such as: linseed oil, turpentine, pastels, charcoal, varnish, brushes, palette, etc (Lewis, 1983). Equipment such as easels, donkeys etc are essential to the painter. Broad

areas of painting include: Composition (pictorial), Mixed Media, Life Painting, Materials/Methods and Visual Aesthetics. Broadly speaking, painting is one of the Fine Arts, while Fine and Applied Arts are the Visual Arts. In the same vein Visual Arts is a branch of art (Emokpae, 2001)

The Teacher

A critical look at the teacher is crucial when considering the learners' performance. Specifically the art teacher must be a man who is creative with a passion for art and ready to share the love he has for the subject with others. He is caring, patient, sympathetic, having the ability to communicate, motivate students and able to inspire trust and confidence in the students and should be equipped with the skill of understanding students' educational and emotional needs ([http://education.arts.ufl.edu/13-qualities -of- /](http://education.arts.ufl.edu/13-qualities-of-/)). There are different categories of teacher, some are trained and others untrained and can further be categorized thus: The ideal teacher; the untrained; the problem teacher. The danger associated with untrained teachers and the non-elimination of untrained/unqualified teachers had been expressed, noting that Nigeria was not making progress in this direction (Imogie, 1999; Nwagwu, 1984).

A trained teacher would be concerned with the challenge of advancing the course of education rather than be the problem. Similar view was held by the Bureau of Labour Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook (2012/2013). The problem teacher is not far from the problem child as the problem child is seen as a child who creates problems for himself and for others. He is dull, drab, uninteresting and possesses a colourless character. For the fact that this category of teachers did not receive adequate training, and lacks on-the-job training because of age and interest, he ends up pulling back the hand of the clock. Proper training would therefore sanitize the teacher and enable him to perform to expectation.

The ideal teacher is one who is trained and manifests expected desirable traits of a trained teacher. As Aigbomian and Iyamu (2001;108) put it "The primary function of the teacher is to facilitate learning by various means, that is to say, that the aim of teaching activities is to bring about learning". The trained teacher apart from being a man of integrity and character, Bell-Gam (1998) stated that he must be a master of his subject and an encyclopedia of his subject. He stressed that the teacher should master his subject beyond question.

Imonikebe (2012) has observed that at the tertiary level where much of the training of the Visual Arts teacher is done, there are no systematic theories of instruction for teaching students. Precisely, in these days of decline in students' enrolment in Art departments, there are no systematic instructional approaches for teaching students admitted without prior knowledge of Visual Arts. As a result, the introduction of new syllabi and preliminary programmes evolved to absorb these beginning students in Visuals Arts (students with no prior knowledge of Visual Arts) have only served to address the problem of course content and not how art should be taught, thus, in spite of these new syllabi and programmes, the teaching of Visual Arts has been and continues to be

problematic (Imonikebe, 2012). Despite the many advocates for providing opportunities for students to study Visual Arts, we still lack a theoretical basis of how students understand Visual Arts and what instructional methods should be used.

The indispensable role of the teacher in facilitating effective learning and manipulating the environment is of relevance (Pivac, 2013; Ojo, 2006). A trained teacher will perform effectively if provided with conducive learning environment. The art teacher should be able to inject into the school programme, viable innovations that will be capable of improving students' performance in art.

Statement of Problem

Part-Time programmes are popular in most Nigerian universities. Apart from serving as an alternative to Full-Time programmes for prospective graduates, our tertiary institutions have embraced the programme as one of the primary sources for internally generated revenue (IGR). As a result, it was found necessary to investigate the performance of its products. The problem of this study therefore is: Is there a difference in performance between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in Nigeria? Precisely, do the Full-Time painting students perform better than the Part-Time painting students in the University?

Research Questions

1. Is there a difference in performance between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in Nigeria?

Hypothesis

Ho1 There is no significant difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting.

Research Design

The design of this study was ex post facto, since the research did not intend to manipulate any variables. The data were collected after events of interest have occurred (Ehiamentor and Nwadiani, 2002) and the data was analysed using the Mann-Whitney U test at the 0.05 level of significance.

Instruments

The instrument for this study is data generated from official records of the department of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Benin, Benin City Nigeria.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting. Students' paintings were scored and analysed for their performance in painting. This was an attempt to answer

the research question which asked if there was a difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting. Results in Table 1 show a difference between Full-Time students (Mean Rank = 12) and Part-Time painting undergraduates (Mean Rank = 9) in their performance in painting. To test if the difference is significant the null hypothesis of no significant difference, which states that there is no significant difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting was tested using Mann-Whitney U-test. A summary of the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mann-Whitney U-Test Summary of Comparison of Performance of Full-Time and Part-Time Painting Undergraduates

Groups	Variable	N	Mean Ranks	SD	Calc. Mann-Whitney U	Table Value	Sign
Full-Time	Performance in Painting	3	12	0.014	3	0	0.05
Part-Time	Performance in Painting	3	9	0.250			

$P > 0.05$

Results in Table 1 show that the calculated U value is 3 with a table value of 0. Consequently, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting is retained. The implication is that, the difference observed in the performance in painting amongst Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates is not significant. Although, the Mean Rank of the Full-Time painting undergraduates was higher, it was not found to be significant (The Mean Ranks of Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates were 12 and 9 respectively). In other words, the performance of Full-Time painting undergraduates was not different from that of Part-Time painting undergraduates after they had been taught with the same approach. The test of the Hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in their performance in painting. The finding implied that the two groups performed closely. However, considering the fact that undergraduates in the Part-Time programme performed comparably to Full-Time programme, the result suggested that the instruction offered undergraduates was effective and non-discriminatory.

This finding was expected for a number of reasons. The place of training in the successful maneuvering of the creative rungs of the artistic ladder has severally been stressed in the literature. The contemporarists according to Lowenfeld and Read as reported by Mbahi (1992) have argued in favour of formal training irrespective of natural endowment of the learner. They view the natural endowment as a blunt edge which requires to be sharpened by “training, teaching and interest development”. The contemporarists went on to point out

that “a bare minimum natural flare” has often been successful as a result of drive and training. University of Benin has a tradition of subjecting painting undergraduates to the excruciating process of colour drills which has distinguished her graduates in national painting competitions. Most of the drills build up around tonal values which corroborates the claims of Blackman (2007) that tonal value is what makes a painting ‘talk’, not the colour and that no matter how much colour the painter puts in his painting, it will not work except the values are correct. He went further to state that a painting will only be as good as the tonal values.

The finding is also a product of effective instruction as a good art teacher must be one who is able to creatively manipulate the appearance of colour (Badmus and Omoifo, 1998; Kleiner 2010; Price, 1987). Painting departments indeed require a calibre of teachers who have formal training in the art of teaching as only such teachers will be able to manipulate the learning environment, motivate the learner through creative methodology, expertise and hard work. Thus the findings generated are not unconnected with the expertise and thoroughness with which the painting lecturers prosecuted their student-friendly instructional approaches. Indeed the painting lecturers brought to bear their longstanding experience as highly talented art teachers and artist in delivering the goods. Appropriate materials required for the execution of their programme were provided for both groups to ensure equal participation. There is every reason therefore to accept the results.

Summary

This study compared the performance of Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in Nigeria with special focus on the University of Benin, Benin City Nigeria. Precisely the study aimed to find out if there was a difference in performance between Full-Time and Part-Time painting undergraduates in Nigeria. As a result, one (1) Research Question and one (1) Hypothesis were formulated for the study. Data for this study were generated from official records of the department under investigation. The design of this study was ex post facto, since the research did not intend to manipulate any variables. The data were collected after events of interest have occurred (Ehiamentalor and Nwadiani, 2002) and the data was analysed using the Mann-Whitney U test at the 0.05 level of significance.

Implication of Findings

Based on the conclusions drawn in this study, instruction in the painting unit of the University of Benin provides a level playing field for all categories of students who would find their way into the study of painting. Thus, instruction in painting has by this study proved effective in allaying the fears raised on the quality of Part-Time undergraduate programme. This further shows that the study has by this finding defied the manmade dichotomy. No doubt, the conclusions made in the study have given hope to Part-Time undergraduates and a host of other interested learners of painting irrespective of their antecedents

and backgrounds. It was therefore recommended that as an eye opener to other disciplines and institutions of learning, the study should be replicated being a lofty initiative.

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