



Investigating Creative Prowess of Senior High School Students in Visual Communication: Case Study of Grade 'A' Girls' School in Ghana

Dr Eric Agyarkoh^{1*}, Dr. James Ekow Appiah¹, Mr. Frederick Banfo¹

Department of Vocational and Technical education University of Cape Coast. Ghana

*Corresponding Author's Email Address: eric.agyarkoh@ucc.edu.gh

Abstract

This paper used school-based art competition to identify Senior High School Visual Art and non-Visual Art students who revived or repressed artistically in Junior High School). Artistic revival is when children who have talent and interest in drawing continue to draw and paint after age 13 and 14, while artistic repression is when children who lack special skills in drawing redraw from drawing and painting from age 13 upwards (Lowenfeld & Brittan, 1982). The paper also investigated factors that influenced the students in selecting their programmes in Senior High School. The study was rooted in the interpretivism paradigm and used qualitative research approach and case study research design. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 135 students of a grade 'A' Girls' Senior High School in the Cape Coast metropolis, Ghana to participate in the art competition. Interview guide, scoring keys and still-picture photography were used to gather qualitative data from the drawings and paintings of the participants. Aesthetic appreciation was used to analyse ten best paintings that emerged from the competition and the post-art competition interview data was analysed thematically. The findings of the analysis revealed that, all the non-Visual Art students who participated in the art competition revived in drawing in Basic School but they were compelled by their parents or guardians to offer other programmes in Senior High School other than Visual Art. Also, some of the Visual Art students who participated in the art competition repressed in drawing in basic school. The findings also indicated that, Basic and Senior High School head teachers, teachers and friends encourage students with high drawing and academic aptitudes to offer Science, Business, General Arts and other programmes instead of Visual Arts. Based on the findings, the study recommends that, basic school head teachers and teachers, high school head teachers and teachers, students and parents must be oriented about the dangers of diverting highly creative persons natural orientations into non-Creative Arts programmes and professions. Also, Ghana Education Service must identify Basic School candidates who have exceptional talents in art and place them in Senior High School Visual Art programmes, and Visual Art departments in tertiary institutions must revise their entry requirements to include students from other programmes who have special skills and interest in drawing and painting.

Keywords: Creative Art Education, Artistic Revival, Artistic Repression, Talent disorientation

INTRODUCTION

In Ghana's educational system, pre-tertiary education is segmented into four levels: Pre-school, Primary, Junior High School and Senior High School. The pre-school and primary levels use a standard-based curriculum, the Junior High School (JHS) uses a common core curriculum and the Senior High School (SHS) uses a specialized curriculum (CRDD 2010; NaCCA, 2020; NaCCA, 2019).

One of the pillars of the standard-based and common core curricula is creativity. As a result, Creative Art and Creative Art and Design are core subjects in the Standard-based and Common core curricula respectively (NaCCA, 2020). The scope of these subjects integrates some areas of Performing Arts and Visual Arts. In respect of Visual Arts, areas such as Colour work, elements and principles of design, Visual Communication, Print making, Picture making, Weaving,

Assemblage and Construction, Molding, Casting, Paper Craft and others are covered. The Performing Art components also include Music, Dance Poetry and Drama (NaCCA, 2020).

The objective of including the Visual Arts content in the curricular is to train the children to nurture and develop their latent creative and perceptual skills so that they can express their ideas and emotions logically through visual communication and assemblage and construction (NaCCA, 2020). This pre-supposes that, if the curriculum is well-implemented, children who complete Junior High School education in Ghana should be able to communicate logically through Visual Communication works such as drawing, painting, posters etc. (NaCCA, 2020).

This national aim of education for Ghanaian children is laudable because, it will help teachers and parents to identify the creative abilities of pupils and students early so that they will place them appropriately in the specialized curriculum at the Senior High School level. This objective is in line with Lowenfelds model of children's chronological artistic development which postulate that, children's artistic development starts from age two and revive or repress at age fourteen (Lowenfeld & Brittan, 1982).

The question is, do all children who revive artistically between age 13 and 14 pursue Creative Arts related programmes at the Senior High School level in Ghana? Research findings of Aidoo (2018) and Ismaila & Eshun (2018) reported that, some parents do not encourage and support their wards to pursue Visual Art but compel them to opt for science and business programmes in Senior High Schools. The findings further proved that, those programmes are preferred because, they are perceived to have high intellectual value and relevance in the Ghanaian society.

A study conducted by Fusheini (2020) on the choice of Visual Arts option: Perceptions of Newly Admitted JHS1 Students at Bagabaga College of Education Model School, Tamale-Ghana, also revealed that, most Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) candidates who score low aggregates are often placed in the Visual Art programmes in Senior High Schools. These findings are also buttressed by many authors. (Evans-Solomon, 2004; Quayson, 2006; Asihene, 2009; Siaw, 2009; Adinyira, 2012; Evans-Solomon & Opoku-Asare, 2011). Findings of Fusheini (2020) Further indicated that, some basic school students also have the perception that professions such as medicine, nursing and banking are lucrative than that of a roadside artist.

Findings of the above research works really confirm the researchers' suspicion that some parents, teachers and friends discourage some basic school leavers who have revived artistically from offering Visual Art or Creative Arts programmes at the Senior High School level. Rather, they encourage them to select non-Creative Art programmes such as Science, General Arts, Business and others. This form of diversion creates serious academic and career disorientation in the students which has serious negative consequences on their academic scholarship and future career development.

It is based on the above problem that motivated the researchers to use qualitative research approach to investigate the drawing and painting skills of students from different programmes in a grade A girl's public Senior High School in the Cape Coast metropolis in the central region of Ghana. The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To identify artistic abilities of students undertaking non-Visual Art programmes in the Senior high school.
- To determine the level of artistic revival or repression of Visual Art and non-Visual art students in the Senior High School.
- To examine factors that influenced the participants to select their programmes in the Senior High School.



THEORETICAL BASES OF THE STUDY

In order to link the study to relevant theories, the researchers reviewed some child art development models and aesthetic appreciation and criticism models.

Child Art Development Models

Different child art development theories have been developed over the years to explain the psychology of children's development through art. Kellogg (1969, 1973a, 1973b) for instance in three different books presents the concept of child arts development as the creative expression that follows a predictable sequence, shifting and changing as children grow and develop. However, these developments are fluid, implying that children may move back and forth between stages. The author further indicated that, children's artistic development is also individualised. Thus, children develop at their own pace. Craig (2006) also states that children's art develops through four stages: Scribbling stage, pre-symbolic stage, symbolic stage and realism stage.

Another renowned art educator Viktor Lowenfeld who is accredited as the father of art education, developed a model for stages of child art development. Globally, Viktor Lowenfeld model of stages of child art development has been recognised as one of the pioneers in child art literature. According to Lowenfeld's model, children's artistic development take place in five chronological stages: Scribbling, Pre-schematic, Schematic, Dawning Realism, and Pseudo-Naturalistic (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982).

Scribbling is the first step. It normally starts at age two and lasts until age four. The child's first chance to sketch and work with art supplies is now. The young artist starts off by making haphazard strokes, which gradually develop into deliberate scribbles. Pre-schematic is the second stage. this often falls between the ages of four and seven. Children start drawing people and objects from their surroundings at this age. Youngsters can talk to adults about their artwork and are willing to describe it without feeling awkward (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982).

Schematic is the third stage, which lasts from roughly age seven to age nine. Children start to portray elements of their surroundings in their drawings at this age; these representations are typically repeated with little modifications. In order to create attractive art, young learners in this artistic stage arrange things in a straight line across the bottom of the page, known as a baseline. By the time a youngster is nine years old, peers start to matter to them. The fourth stage, known as Dawning Realism or the Gang stage, officially begins at this point. It continues till the age of twelve or so. The child gets more self-aware throughout this stage, and their drawings reflect this. The drawing is smaller and has more details at this time. The youngster is no longer enthusiastic (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982).

Pseudo-naturalistic, the last stage, starts at age eleven or twelve. Reasoning and self-criticism are traits of this stage. As the youngster gets older, he or she starts to concern about depth and proportion in drawings and becomes more conscious of their natural environment. There is clear evidence of the human figure's intricate detail, a heightened awareness of sexual features, and a heightened awareness of colour and tone gradations. At the end of this stage, children whose drawings continue to show realism are praised by their peers and this motivate them to develop strong interest in drawing and continue to draw. On the other hand, children whose drawings lack realism are often mocked by their peers and this discourage them to redraw from drawing. These stages of children's artistic developments respectively are described by Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982 as *artistic revival and artistic repression*.

Fox and Schirmacher, (2015) combined different stages of artistic development suggested by Kellogg (1969), Lowenfeld and Brittain (1982) and other theories, into one workable general sequence. The overlapping and approximate sequence is as follows: The model consists of the following stages: (a) manipulation of media- This involves sketching and

marking marks (b) creating personal meaning- at this stage the child begins to draw recognised shape, symbols and outline drawings; (c) at the third stage, the child begins to create beautiful art that is recognised by others; and (d) the last stage which starts span from age five to eight. At this stage, the child's drawings are more realistic.

Examination of the above models of children's artistic development reveal to the current researchers that, children's drawings are integral part of their chronological development which evolve intrinsically without effort. Also, the differences in perceptual abilities of children indicate that, all human beings have abilities that define the uniqueness of their personality. If the individual is allowed to nurture and develop such abilities properly, it can have positive impact on his or her future career or academic pursuits. It is therefore inappropriate to compel people to divert from their talents.

Edmund Burke Feldman's Art Criticism Model

Different art appreciation and criticism models have been developed by different authors, but the most renowned one is the Edmund Burke Feldman's Art Criticism Model. Edmund Burke Feldman developed the model in the late 1960s. He viewed art appreciation and criticism from four important perspectives. Description, analysis, interpretation and judgement (studylib.net, 2023).

Edmund opines that, the first stage of appreciating and critiquing an artwork is describing the work. He explained description as making a list of the visual qualities of the work that are obvious and immediately perceived. He further explained that, this stage includes identifying the subject matter or theme of the work. The second stage is to analyse the formal elements used in producing the work which include commenting on how elements and principles of design have been applied in the work. It also includes analysing the technical qualities of the work such as methods or styles of rendition, colour application and others.

The third stage also deals with rational interpretation of the work. At this stage, the appreciator makes subjective interpretations of the work based on the evidence that emerged from the description and analysis of the work. Such interpretations can be informed by emotions, feelings and intentions inherent in the work. The final stage passes judgement on the work by discussing the good and bad elements in the work and drawing subjective conclusions whether the work is good or bad depending on evidences adduced in the analysis and interpretations of the work. This element of the model was also buttressed on (Fineartdrawinglca, 2023). This model is applicable in this study because, the researchers used it to do aesthetic appreciation of the final artworks.

METHODOLOGY

The study was underpinned by interpretivism paradigm. The interpretivism paradigm beliefs that truth is subjective and that truth can be established through subjective epistemology (Henneh, 2012). Based on the underpinning philosophy, qualitative research approach and a case study research design were used. The qualitative research approach was used because, the nature of the research required the researchers to use flexible and subjective methods to gather and analyse data (Merriam, 1998 & Kincheoloe, 1991). The case study design was also used because, the study was delimited to a reputable grade 'A' public Girls Senior High School in the Cape Coast metropolis. The school has collection of students of varying intelligence across its programmes.

Population

Though there are three forms in the school, the target population was limited to all form one and form three students in all their academic programmes. The form two students were excluded from the study because, at the time of the study,

they were on vacation. To obtain the sample population for the study, the researchers tasked the Visual Art teachers of the school to conduct a preliminary investigation in all the classes to purposively select three students from each class who would represent the class in the art competition. The class representatives were selected by the classes based on their knowledge of the class about the artistic abilities of the students through their individual creative art activities in the school. A total of 135 students representing 45 classes took part in the art competition. Table 1 provides details of the sample distribution of students who participated in the art competition:

Table1: Sample distribution of the study (Source: Fieldwork, 2023)

No.	Classes	Number Selected
1	1 Science 1-15	$3 \times 15 = 45$
2	1 General Arts 1-9	$3 \times 9 = 27$
3	1 Visual Art 1	3
4	1 Business 1	3
5	1 Home Economics 1	3
6	3 Science 1-9	$3 \times 9 = 27$
7	3 General Arts 1-6	$3 \times 6 = 18$
8	3 Visual Arts 1	3
9	3 Home Economics 1	3
10	3 Business 1	3
Total Sample		135

Table one indicates the number of classes in forms 1 and 3 that were used for the study. 1 Science 1 for instance, consisted of 15 classes. 1 General Art 1 consisted of 9 classes in that order. Three students were selected from each class to represent the class. So, in 1 Science 1, 15 sets of representatives consisting of a total of 45 students were selected to represent the form. Following the same formula, a total of 135 students were selected to take part in the art competition.

Data Collection Instruments

The researchers used interviews (Focused group discussions) and still-picture photography to gather data. Two different types of interview guides were used: the scoring guide and semi-structure interview guide. The scoring guide was used to score the works and interview the class representatives (artists) when they were producing the artworks, and the semi-structured interview guide was used to interview the class representatives whose artworks were judged to be the best after the competition.

The scoring guide was prepared by the researchers in collaboration with the Visual Art tutors of the school and two non-Visual Art tutors of the school who were part of the judges. The variables scored in the scoring guide included concept (35%), organization (20%), presentation (10%) and creativity (35%). The concept and creativity variables in the scoring guide were weighted high over organisation and presentation variables because, the main aim of the competition was to investigate the level of creativity of Visual Art students and non-Visual Art students in the school. Also, the variables; organisation and presentation were weighted low because, they can best be measured artistically with formalism principles which will be unfair to use as a yardstick to evaluate an artwork produced by a non-Visual Art student. A sample of the scoring guide is provided in appendix one.

The questions of the semi-structured interview guide were focused on the biodata of the team members (Class

representatives for the art competition) and other information relevant to the objectives of the study. A copy of the semi-structured interview guide has been provided at appendix 3. An android phone was used to take pictures of the final paintings of each class.

Data Collection Procedure

The researchers did not formally write to seek permission to conduct the study in the school because, the idea of the art competition was muted by the Visual Art tutors of the school who decided to collaborate with the Fine Art Education and Communication Design Education units of the Department of Vocational and Technical Education (VOTEC) of University of Cape Coast. All the letters of permission were written by the Visual Art department of the Senior High School and the school management granted us the permission to organise the competition. The Headmistress permitted the Head of Visual Art Department to brief the staff about the intended art competition and sought for their cooperation. Subsequently, the Head of Department of Visual Art informed the entire school at a general assemble about the art competition and entreated all the classes to plan towards it.

Two types of interviews were conducted. The first interview sessions (focused group discussions) were conducted by the five judges using the scoring guide when the competition was in progress at the school compound. The judges included the researchers who are Communication Design, Sculpture and Painting lecturers of University of Cape Coast respectively, and two non-Visual Art tutors of the Senior High School. The two non-Visual Art tutors of the school were used because; the competition involved all the departments in the school so it was important to give a representation to the other departments to avoid bias.

Each judge visited the stand of the artists (Class representatives) during the competition to have a casual conversation with them about their work. The interview questions were centred on the concept behind the work, and how and why the elements or objects in the work had been organised in a particular style. The responses of the team (The 3 artists who represented the class) were further probed for deeper explanations and better understanding. After thorough questioning, the judges decided on the level of creativity the teams had applied in their works and scored for concept, organization and creativity. A total of 45 artworks were produced and the judges used the average scores of each of the classes to select the first ten best artworks. The average scores of the ten best artworks are arranged in order of positions and provided in appendix two.

The second interview sessions (focused group discussions) were conducted by the researchers. The interviews were conducted at the school a week after the competition. The participants included the class representatives of the 10 best artworks that were selected after the initial scoring by all the five judges. Ten different focus group discussions were conducted and each session consisted of the three team members that represented their class. The responses of the participants were recorded electronically by the interviewers.

Methods of Data Analysis

Two different methods were used to analyse the data: Aesthetic Appreciation and Thematic Analysis. The aesthetic appreciation was used to analyse the best 10 artworks selected from the art competition after scoring. The aesthetic appreciation was informed by Edmund Burke Feldman's Art Criticism Model and the jury was guided by the following elements of the model: Description, Analysis, Interpretation and Judgement. During the jury, all the researchers used their knowledge and experience in drawing and painting to do visual and logical examination of the qualities of the artworks in reference to the criteria in table 2. Figures 1-10 are the 10 best paintings that were appreciated by the researchers. The final scores of the aesthetic appreciation have also been provided in table 3.



Fig.1:1S1



Fig. 2: 3A2



Fig. 3: 3S3

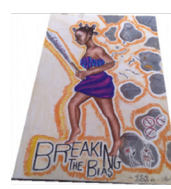


Fig 4: 1S2



Fig 5: 3A1



Fig 6: 3S4



Fig 7: 3A4



Fig 8:3H1

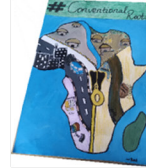


Fig 9: 3B1



Fig 10: 3V1

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Figures1-10 are the 10 best paintings selected from the art competition after the initial scoring of the paintings of all the classes. They are arranged in order of position in the competition. The artists have granted the researchers permission to include the paintings in the study.

Table 2: Criteria for Aesthetic Appreciation (Source: Fieldwork, 2023)

SN.	Class	Scoring of Variables	Total
1	1 S 1	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F-
2	3 A2	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F-

SN.	Class	Scoring of Variables	Total
3	3S3	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	C- B- C- D- E- F- =
4	1S2	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F- =
5	3A1	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F- =
6	3S4	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F- =
7	3A4	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F- =

SN.	Class	Scoring of Variables	Total
8	3H1	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F-
9	3B1	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F-
10	3V1	A. Concept/idea/theme conveyed by the work (Clear-3 Moderately clear-2 Not clear-1) B. Relevance of the concept in society (Very relevant- 3 Moderately relevant- 2 Not relevant-1) C. Relevance of items or elements to the concept or theme (Relevant-3 Not relevant-2) D. Quality of drawing (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) E. Quality of painting (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1) F. Quality of composition (High-3 Average-2 Below Average-1)	A- B- C- D- E- F-

Key: 1S1(1 Science 1), 3A2(3 Arts 2), 3S3(3 Science 3), 1S2(1 science 2), 3A1(3 Arts 1), 3S4(3 Science 4), 3A4(3 Arts 4), 3H1(3 Home Economics 1), 3B1(3 Business 1) and 3V1(3 Visual Art 1).

Table 3: Marks distribution from aesthetic appreciation (Source: Fieldwork, 2023)

SN	Class	Total mark	Position
1	3 General Arts 1	47	1st
2	1 Science 1	46	2nd
3	3 Visual Arts 1	42	3rd
4	3General Arts 2	40	4th
5	3 Science 4	41	5th
6	3 Business 1	41	5th
7	3 Science 3	37	6th
8	1 Science 1	37	6th
9	3 Home Economics. 1	36	7th
10	3 Visual Art 1	34	8th

The thematic analysis was done by the researchers. They played the audio recording of the second interview responses severally and transcribed the content manually. After transcription, the text was read severally for better understanding and identified relevant codes that pointed to major and subordinate themes. The themes that emerged from the analysis

were organised according to the objectives of the study.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study were discussed based on the results of aesthetic appreciation of the 10 best selected artworks and analysis of the interview responses of the artists who represented the 10 classes whose artworks were judged as best. Most of the responses were paraphrased in the discussions. The discussions were done according to the objectives of the study.

Study Object 1: Identification of Artistic Abilities of Students Offering Non-Visual Art Programmes in the Senior High School.

The findings revealed that, majority of the non-Visual Art students who took part in the art competition could compose elements to produce drawings and paintings that portrayed topical issues in society. The concepts behind the paintings of the non-Visual Art students also depicted higher level of creativity than some students who offer Visual Arts. Again, the drawings and paintings of some non-Visual Arts students depicted fine details than some Visual Art students. Example, drawing to depict realism of objects, figures and scenes. The findings further revealed that, some of the non-Visual Art students could select better colour schemes and blend them to achieve good harmony compared to the paintings of the Visual Art students. These findings indicate that, ability to draw or paint is not a preserve of only students who have studied Visual Art in Senior High Schools since such abilities are sometimes dependent on individuals' innate perceptual ability. This position is also emphasised by Lowenfeld and Brittan (1982) and Kellogg (1969).

Study Objective 2: To Determine the Level of Artistic Revival or Repression of Visual Art and Non-Visual Art Students in the Senior High School

The findings revealed that, all the non-Visual Art students who took part in the drawing and painting competition had revived artistically. On the other hand, some of the Visual Art students who took part in the art competition repressed artistically at the basic school level. These determinations were made by benchmarking the quality of their drawings and paintings with Lowenfeld and Brittan (1982) model of children's chronological artistic development. Lowenfeld and Brittan (1982) model states that, the following drawing and painting abilities must determine a child's artistic revival: Ideally, children between the age range of 10-14 should be able to depict the following competencies in their drawings and paintings:

- Ability to depict linear and aerial perspectives (Distance) in their drawings and painting
- Ability to draw an object to depict resemblance
- Ability to shade or paint objects to depict tonal value
- Ability to compose elements to depict good application of principles of design
- Ability to depict shadows in their drawings and paintings

The aesthetic appreciation of all the 10 best paintings provided evidence of all the above requirements in most of the drawings and paintings of the students. It is also obvious that the high level of drawing and painting skills exhibited by the non-Visual Art students in comparison with the Visual Art students also confirms that, such students revived artistically at the basic school level and can excel better in the senior high school Visual Art programme than some of the students currently offering Visual in the School.

Study Objective 3: Factors that Influenced the Students to Select their Programmes at the Senior High School Level.

The findings revealed that, most of the students who participated in the art competition claimed they started drawing from primary school. Most of them indicated that, they were identified by their teachers and parents as good artist from childhood. Most of the Non-Visual Art students however, stressed that, their Junior High School teachers, friends and parents discouraged them from offering Visual Arts in senior high school due to the following reasons:

- They were too intelligent to offer visual arts because, Visual Art must be offered by dull students
- They will not get a good job in future
- Visual Art was must be offered by lazy students
- Visual Artists are not respected in society

The negative influence of teachers, friends and parents toward selection of Visual Art programmes at the senior high school level in Ghana has been hinted by Fusheini (2020), Evans-Solomon, and Opoku-Asare (2011) and Adinyira (2012). Some of the participants also claimed that, their parents wanted them to pursue law, architecture, medicine aerospace engineering, accounting, mechanical engineering, petrochemical engineering, and pharmacy. They claimed that, their parents insisted if they offer Visual Art at senior high school, they will not be admitted into those programmes in the university. Again, the findings revealed that, most of the participants (Visual Art students) indicated that, they did not want to offer Visual Art but the aggregate they had at Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) was low that is why they were admitted into the Visual Art programme.

It is obvious that such Visual Art students did not fully revive artistically at the basic school level, so they did not have the inherent motivation to pursue Visual Art to the highest level but they were conscripted into the programme due to their poor performance in BECE. Only two Visual Art students among the participants said they opted to offer Visual Art at SHS when they were selecting programmes in Junior High School. Responding to the question whether they would pursue Visual Art programmes at the tertiary level, only one Visual Art student said she will pursue Fine Art at the tertiary level. The rest of the Visual Art students said they will pursue law or Architecture Design at the university.

The responses given by the respondents' proof that, negative public perception towards Visual Arts education in Ghana based on ignorance, peer ridicule, negative advice given by parents, guardians and teachers are some of the major factors that influence placement, selection or rejection of BECE candidates into Visual Art programmes in Senior High Schools in Ghana. Apparently, these factors might compel children who display natural flair in drawing at the basic school level to shun Visual Art at secondary and tertiary levels and rather pursue programmes and professions that do not align with their innate intelligence. All these factors and others have been reported by Aidoo (2018) and Ismaila and Eshun (2018).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings that emerged from the analysis of the data and discussion of the findings, the researchers could infer that, most SHS Visual Arts students do not perform well in the programme because they did not revive artistically in JHS but were admitted into the programme because of their low grades at BECE. Again, most BECE candidates who revived artistically at the basic school level are either discouraged by their peers and teachers or disallowed by their parents from pursuing Visual Arts at SHS and tertiary levels of education due to their negative perception towards Visual Arts education based on ignorance.



Based on the findings that emerged from the analysis of the data, discussion of findings and the conclusions drawn, the researchers recommended the following:

- a. Visual Art departments in tertiary institutions must not restrict intake into their programmes to only students who offered Visual Arts at SHS. They must review their departmental entry requirements to include SHS candidates who did not offer Visual Arts since some of them might have revived artistically. However, they can organise drawing test for such students to identify those who have revived artistically and admit them.
- b. Ghana Art Teachers Association must periodically organise workshops for JHS and SHS tutors on benefits of Creative Arts education. This will re-orient their negative perceptions towards Creative Arts programmes and professions.
- c. Ghana Art Teachers Association must organise workshops on child art psychology for Basic School Teachers to educate them on the importance of artistic expressions on the holistic development of a child and its subsequent impact on people's performance and excellence in their academic and future professions.
- d. Ghana Education Service must not place BECE candidates into Visual Art programmes at SHS because of their low aggregate; rather, they must place candidates with high grades into the Visual Art programme because, students require higher cognitive, affective and psychomotor intelligence to excel in Creative Arts programmes at senior secondary and tertiary levels.
- e. National Commission for Civic Education must educate the public through the mass media on the negative effects of diverting children's creative talents into other unrelated professions. They must also educate the public about the scope, careers and benefits of Creative Arts professions in national development. This will help re-orient people's negative perceptions towards Creative Arts programmes and professions.

REFERENCES

- Aidoo, K. B. J. (2018). Challenges Facing Visual Arts Programme of Senior High Schools in Ghana. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education*. 5(3):136-142.
- Adinyira, S. K. (2012). Perceptions and attitudes about the senior high schools' visual arts programme and their influence on the students in the Kumasi Metropolis. Master's Thesis. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.
- Asihene, G. (2009). The role of core subject teachers in the academic performance of visual arts students in Ghanaian Senior High School. Master's Thesis. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.
- Craig R. (2023, September 25). young in Art a developmental look at child art. <https://docplayer.net/18693054-Young-in-art-a-developmental-look-at-child-art-craig-roland-1990-2006-www-artjunction-org.html>
- CRDD, (2010). Teaching Syllabus for Senior High School Graphic Design. Ministry of Education.
- CRDD, (2010). Creative Art and design Common Core Curriculum for Basic 7-10 Design. Ministry of Education.
- Evans-Solomon, F. and Opoku-Asare, N. A. (2011). Girls' motivation, participation and preference for visual arts subjects in four senior high schools in Central Region, Ghana. *Journal of Science and Technology*. Vol. 31, No. 3 pp. 118-128.
- Evans-Solomon, F. (2004). Girl-child education in the visual arts; opportunities and challenges. Master's Thesis. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.
- Fineartdrawinglca (2023, September 24). Feldman's Model of Art Criticism. <http://fineartdrawinglca.blogspot>.



com/2023/01/feldmans-model-of-art-criticism.html.

Fox, J. E., and Schirmacher, R. (2015). Arts and creative development for young children (8th ed.). Stamford, CT, Cengage Learning.

Fusheini, M. Z. (2020). The choice of Visual Arts Option: Perceptions of Newly Admitted JHS1 Students at Bagabaga College of Education Model School, Tamale-Ghana. *ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Ghana: Vol. 17, No.7 (5): 65-85.

Henneh, K. (2012). Doing qualitative research, a guide for researchers. Emmpong Press.

Ismaila, M. and Eshun, F. E. (2018). Senior High Schoolers' Attitudes toward Visual Art Education in Ghanaian Secondary Schools. *International Journal of Innovation Research and Development*. 7(8): 119-124.

Kellogg, R. (1969). Analyzing children's art. Mayfield Publishing.

Kellogg, R. (1973). Stages of development in preschool art. The beginnings of self-affirmation. Diablo Press.

Kellogg, R. (1973b). Misunderstanding child art. *Art Education*, 26(6), 7-9.

Kincheoloe, J. L. (1991). Teachers as researchers: Qualitative inquiry as the part to empowerment. Falmer.

Lowenfeld, V., and Brittan, L. (1982). Creative and mental growth (7th ed.). Macmillan.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. Jossey-Bass.

NaCCA, (2019). Creative Arts Curriculum for Primary Schools. Ministry of Education.

Quayson, S. K. (2006). Evaluation of the visual art programme in the Western Region of Ghana. Master's Thesis. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

Siaw, A.O. (2009). Comparative study of teaching and learning processes of the visual arts in selected senior high schools in urban and rural settings in Ashanti Region, Ghana. Master's Thesis. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

studylib.net (2023, October 10). Feldman's Model of Art Criticism. <https://studylib.net/doc/8404088/feldman-s-model-of-art-criticism>

