PROPOSED RESEARCH

Integrating ICT into Teaching and Learning of Art in Ghanaian Senior Secondary Schools

The current state of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been the result of a great deal of research and development. According to Jones and Knezek (1993), ICT was originally intended to serve as a means of improving efficiency in the educational process. It has also been established that the use of ICT in education can help improve memory retention, increase motivation and generally deepen understanding (Dede, 1998). ICT, according to Forcheri and Molfino(2000), can also be used to promote collaborative learning, including role playing, group problem solving activities and articulated projects.

By and large, ICT is promoting new avenues to working and learning, and new ways of interacting. Many contemporary Ghanaian artists and designers now use ICT to develop and create their work, and computer technologies keep challenging artists each passing day to rethink the ways in which their skills, knowledge and understanding are applied in the creative production of works of art and design. In the areas of creativity, "the use of ICT increases the speed of the creative process, enables the creative development in the digital medium to keep pace with the thinking and process of having ideas (Arts Council England, 2003)." Better ways of teaching and learning concepts in visual art can result from the use of ICT tools, as they require learners to make connections among numerous process-based activities by which outcomes are created (Gast, 2003).

Notwithstanding the above scenario, there seem to be little progress in the integration of ICT in the Ghanaian visual art curriculum. But for the brief 'mentioning' of computer graphics in the 3 senior secondary visual art syllabus, there is nothing about ICT in the visual art syllabus in particular. This is a great contradiction to all the hype and claims around the promise of new technologies and their prospects for today's technology driven world.

It is becoming obvious that there has been little analysis of why, when and how digital media and resources should attract any serious consideration in the teaching and learning of art, in the first place, and how it can really have a positive effect in terms of creative practices and teaching and learning. This is affecting the overall progress in the full integration of ICT in the teaching and learning of visual art.

In view of this, the campaign for the introduction of ICT into Ghanaian schools arouses a number of questions about the evolving nature of pedagogy that is associated with it. Art teachers must be concerned about how ICT can be fully integrated in the teaching and learning of art. Whether or not changes in pedagogy are contingent on trends and innovations, is a moot point. Answers need to be found to questions such as:
- To what extent can ICT feature as a vital area of experience in the visual art curriculum in Ghanaian schools?
- What efforts are being put in place toward full integration of ICT into the teaching and learning of art?

- What kind of skills will teachers need to acquire in order to be effective in an ICT based art education environment?

The main objectives of this research are to:
- Raise awareness of how the ICT capability can be applied and developed in the senior secondary school art?
- Consider how ICT can add value to the teaching and learning of visual art.
- Identify areas in the senior secondary school visual art curriculum where ICT can be fully integrated
- Identify the breadth of digital content that can be fully integrated into the existing senior secondary school visual art curriculum.

References

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