

**TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS IN CREATIVE ARTS FOR ENHANCING
ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

Evolution of man in the world paved way for creativity for survival purpose, while technology is an attempt to rebrand Creative Art. Creative Art implies the product of human activity in which materials are shaped or selected to convert an idea, emotion or visual into interesting form. Art implies visual arts like painting, sculpture architecture, photography decorative arts and crafts. It also encompasses other forms of creative activity such as dance, drama and music. Technology is as old as man. The word “Technology” is derived from the Greek word “Technical and Logic”. Technical means art or skill while logic means science or study. Challenges of life for survival resulted to individual becoming technologist. Prior to the world of “science” man have learnt to use natural forces and objects to solve his daily challenges. Man first became a technologist when he learned to take advantage of materials and natural phenomenon of the physical world. Man, right from cradle has been faced with series of problems associated with the nature that would involve the application of organized knowledge and practical experiment otherwise coined as technology. Invariably, survival becomes more difficult day in day out in order to make life more meaningful, it becomes inevitable to rebrand Creative Arts with technology for developmental survival of Nigeria. This paper therefore attempts to explain the concept and conceptual meaning of Creative Art and Technology. Principles of the two concepts shall be examined. The paper examines the importance of technology to general content of Creative Arts. It finally suggests that technology should be integrated into Creative Arts as an innovative approach for developmental growth of Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Evolution of man in the world paved way for creativity for survival purpose while technology evolved from what can be described as creative art. It becomes imminent to explain the two salient points later amplified in the course of this research. Morgan (1985) views “Art” as the product of creative human activity in which materials are shaped or selected to convey an idea, emotion or visually interesting form. Art implies visual arts like painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, decorative arts and crafts. It also encompasses other forms of creative activity such as dance, drama and music.

"Technology" is as old as man. The word “technology” is derived from the Greek words “Technical” and “logic”. Technical implies an art or skill, while logic means a science or study. Life problems and challenges resulted in individuals becoming technologists. Prior to the world of “science”, man have learnt to use natural forces and objects to solve his daily challenges. Man first became a technologist when he learned to take advantage of materials and natural phenomenon of the physical world. When he discovered that a bone or stick or sharpened rock piece could be used to kill animal, hence man invent, discovered and made use of his experience to achieve his needs. This resulted in tool making, it should also be noted as the trade mark of technology. Hence this new found technologies were put to use in assisting man to meet his basic needs of food, shelter and clothing.

There is need to draw a sharp distinction between creative art and technology. Creative arts started with man’s attempt to survive their immediate challenges after creation. For instance, unpolished cave as shelter, unprocessed raw food items and leaves to cover his body against cold as a substitute to clothing. Technology is the advancement and development of the initial man’s creative art works. Elekwa (2009), views technology as a concept that is not new to man. It was described as an aspect of our daily life. For the sake of survival, man depended earlier on running streams or river as source of water supply. Nowadays, well and borehole have emerged. Two sharp stones when struck together ignites fire in the ancient days, today we have varieties of match boxes to kindle fire. Art and technology are the fundamental bedrock of humanity. All aspects of humanities are affiliated with art technology. Any human component, be it socio-cultural, political, economic or religious institutions, must have the reflection of art and technology. Creativity comes before technology because there are some aspects of creative art that are yet to reflect technological tenets. Such creative art works are disregarded at the global level. The focus of this essay is therefore on integrating creative art with technology in order to boost the economic growth in Nigeria.

Concept of Creativity and Art

Creativity can be defined as an instrument with which man have worked the resources of his environment to his utmost benefit. This is evident in the early man’s life, how he developed his natural shelters by living in caves, produced his food, settled down and protected himself from harsh weather and wild animals. Adepegba (1996), defined creativity as the ability to bring out a unique form which will be useful in solving prevailing situations while Agbaje (1996), sees it as an adaptation to a situation so as to make better use of the time and space.

He also established that a true creative activity will fulfill these conditions; a response which is original to the individual who is evoking the response and must serve to solve a problem, an action that evaluates, elaborates, sustains and develops the original thought to the full. He concludes that a creative person would be one who engages in activities that are original and adaptive and that the activities must be seen in his behaviour and performance through endurance, persistence and spontaneity as well as novel creative personality. Thustone (1990), argues that training of a highly creative individual requires an ability to communicate easily with less conscious levels of his mind. Conclusively, creativity is an act of fast reasoning and divergent thoughts towards solving a prevailing problem in a unique way.

Morgan (1985), defined Art is a record of human beings of a particular time and space produced and that occupies a place in culture to influence the present and future generation. Onajobi (2003), views art as individual representation which involves human sympathy and understanding as nature reborn which can be expressed through the use of line, shapes, values and colour. It is a natural process of representing beauty by the use of forms through cultural knowledge and appreciation of the old.

Akolo (2012), opines that all artists are involved in looking for order in nature which is not to neglect actions like chosen arrangement in wardrobe, re-arranging objects, bookshelves, sitting room chairs, drawing, writing or scribbling. It is also defined as an expression of one's innermost feelings to others through artistic means. It is the basic truth which is expressed through painting, sculpture, ceramics, etc. Art is the basic weapon through which emotion and feelings are channelled to others, this might be cultural or extra-ordinary. It is a way of making beauty perceived through the senses, creations and expression of beautiful things; the visual representation of human thought and feelings that satisfies one's craving for goods, the product of deliberate and accidental creation, human activity capable of stimulating thought, emotion or inspiration in those who come in contact with it. Interpretations of our inner emotions or ideas which are later translated into action through practice. Art can be defined as that weapon through which ideas are expressed either in visual or none-visual form, having its base in the concept of beauty.

Ngumah (2004), views art as the expression of activities and discoveries while toiling his immediate environment and re-adjustment to the possession of changing facts. Such toiling and searching, made by man cut across all aspects of human activities. Art implies creation or expression of what is beautiful, especially in visual form. It is something in which imagination and personal task are more important than exact measurement and calculation (Vadik, 2004).

Obizue (2013), views art as a process as well as a product. The process involves the producing of art object. "Product" implies the finished work of art such as painting or sculpture. Art is a broad expression that encompasses visual art, drama and music. Visual arts include drawing and Painting. Sculpture graphics textiles and ceramics works. Drama is associated with the art. Music encompasses organized sound backed with relevant musical instrument.

For the purpose of this study, there is a need to integrate the above mentioned varieties of art works with technology, for global acceptance and also to boost the economy of Nigeria. All art works are in crude form.

The Concept of Technology

Technology is an inevitable tool for national development as well as an instrument for empowering youths to face unemployment challenges and boost the economy of Nigeria. There is mass mobilization of Nigeria to other foreign countries for job seeking. Instead of travelling to foreign countries to seek job, there are veritable tools for national development in Nigeria, if they are technological equipped.

Elekwa (2007), observes that “Technology” as a concept may sound new but it is not new at all as it affects and reflects in our daily life. It revolves around us every day, even though we may be ignorant of it. An example are rural dwellers depending on running streams or river for their source of drinking water. Today they depended on water supply from deep-well, pumped out with pumping machine. Photograph capturing with Kodak camera years back were produced in black and white, technological advancement brought digital cameras that operate without film and producing coloured photographs with the aid of computer printers. Technology implies processes and products that make life easy and stress-free.

Akorede (1997), defines technology as the act of developing and using various methods to provide for man’s needs. In order to make life more comfortable, man’s needs include food, shelter and clothing. Far beyond these three basic needs, are others that are very crucial to man, they include transportation, communication, security, good health, advancement of knowledge and skills. There is the fact that technology is very important to us at this crucial time of the national development.

There are two basic types of technologies namely, developed technology which involves the use of mechanized process, making use of machines and today’s computer system to solve problems. While under-developed technology involves use of manual process like Hoe, Trekking Town Crier, Bow etc. A method of technology was developed and used by early man unconsciously, basically when one perceives a need, there is a problem, in order to solve the problem effectively, one should think of several solutions and later pick the best.

Encanta Microsoft Dictionary (2009), describes “technology” as a purposeful human activity which involves design and making products and devices like clothing food machines, structures, electronic devices and computer systems. Technology is the modification usage aid knowledge of tools, machines, technique crafts, systems, and method of organization, in order to solve a problem or improve a pre-existing solution.

The birth of technology changed man to a problem solving animal who deliberately brought about change problem solving animal who deliberately brought about change. Problem solving becomes a distinct feature of a man and his discovered tools helped him in solving problem that comes his way. In view of the above stated reasons, it became inevitable for man to learn the principles of technology so that he will be able to solve nearly all problems that come his way while in the society. Through introductory technology man can have required qualitative education of our educational system. A child should be exposed to rich technology so that he does not become helpless in future. Introductory technology gives the fundamental knowledge needed by a child in order to have better understanding of

creative art through which he can be fixed into the society and contribute towards societal development.

Creative Art and Technology Towards Nigerian Economic Growth.

Under-developed and developing countries of the world appreciate and perceive technology in terms of the by-products of technological innovations. Africa is dominated by developing nations like Nigeria which is a consumer or user of a scientific finished products. Creative art is taught without the application of technology. Nigerians believe in nature and lack of confidence in whatever is produced in Nigeria. The governments' efforts on the welfare of Nigerians citizenry have no effect because virtually every house-hold item in Nigeria is imported. The nation's power, prestige and respect in the comity of nations are relegated accordingly. The hope of a nation depends on its technological inventions. The bedrock of technology is Creative Art.

No Creative Art, no technology. Technology is the application of knowledge for practical purpose (Nihi 1995). African countries, like Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroun, Togo and Liberia just to mention a few can only develop when they can solve their problems through technological innovations of Creative Art. Technology does not exist in isolation. Technology through Creative Art. Is integrated into humanities. One of the problems in Nigeria is investment of a huge amount on imported products that could be produced locally.

For instance, Nigeria has produced cardboard blade fans, propelled with dry cell batteries for the rural areas. Weaved cane sticks have been crafted into furniture of high aesthetic level. Every nation wants advancement and becomes underdeveloped when it lacks technological base. Kalu (2000), observes that the option left for Nigeria in particular for technological growth is to follow the footsteps of Taiwan, Japan, Southern Korea and Hong Kong by adapting Creative Art with technology. One cannot rule out copying and imitation of the existing technologically based products. The locally produced items and the imported may be contrasted in production prices.

The locally produced hand fan craft may appear crude and unpolished initially but could be perfected and polished if given necessary encouragement. Aesthetic interior decoration curtain, cane furniture upholstery, flower vase, home tiles and hand built Kiln for firing are made with creative art technological application that enhance Nigerian economic advancement. They add more to the beauty of homes, if well maintained.

It becomes impossible to divorce creative art technology from the society. Products from technological creative arts are used and appreciated, adding modernity to its outlook. Products of art and technology have the value as an investment or for its historical importance. They also add pleasure or stimulation to life as distinctively rendered by African music, poem and drummer. Art and technology add to societal advancement in varied directions. Existence becomes difficult without technological development. This means growth in a positive manner. Political, socio-cultural and economic enhancement becomes impossible without art and technology.

In order to have an in-depth discourse, it becomes imminent to examine the reflection of technology in creative art and economic development in Nigeria. Art and

technology have implications in all aspects of Creative Arts and tends towards economic advancement. Visuals art such as graphics, textiles, painting sculptures and ceramics are all technology-based.

Technology and Graphics

Graphic Art is an integral aspect of art and technology. It has to do with advertisement and creating awareness in the public. It is an aspect of marketing mix postulated by experts as an instrument of social change. The essence of advertisement is to convince people through persuading messages, constructed to make consumers buy products or services. Advertisement gives public information about merit claimed. It is connected with the issue of creating truthful and deceptive message constructed for both print and electronic media. Dual responsibilities of the advertiser, the message producer, and the consumer are exposed.

In the past, the artist explored the local sources like sign-posts while traditional Nigerian societies depend on the town crier and gong. Technology enhanced the graphic artist's responsibilities with the use of computer in all forms to advertise. As a matter of fact information technology, market and mass culture consistently demand fresh ideas, utilizing impulses and equipment functionally to enhance image presentation. Graphic Art has been technologically rebranded in the actual sense, as it serves as the most scientific way of positioning persuasive messages in advertising. Modern graphic Art with technological base is an absolute cultural mirror of society through scientific expression, arts like music, photography and crystal clear inscriptions.

Art and technology have really expanded the scope of graphics in terms of screen and lithographic printings. Vests, pens, plastics, wall clocks are now customized. Companies now advertise their products through customized calendars, and posters which add value to their products and enhance Nigerian economy.

Creative Arts and Textiles

Traditional societies in Nigeria recorded the use of leaves and barks to cover their nudity as there was no naked Island in Nigeria. Animal skin was later introduced in form of clothing for humanity. Modern textile technology is no longer new in Africa. For instance, ancient civilization is known to have practiced tie dye as far back as 2500 B.C. According to Bayo (2001), Art of tie and dye gradually spread worldwide reaching Nigeria in the 13th Century.

Tie-dye origin is illusive. It has been in existence in China during the tang Dynasty, 617-906. The tradition was believed to have originated in Java and Island in Indonesia. Persians and Egyptians used similar techniques in ancient times. The Hindus who settled in Indonesia in the first and second centuries A.D developed the art. It also flourished under the East Dava Kings 13th and 16th Centuries. Today, with the aid of technology in Art, textile industries in Nigeria have gone beyond Tie Dye. Popular Ankara, Brocade and Kente

are products from Ghana, Sierra-leone, Nigeria, Lome and South Africa all have different textile showcasing their cultural identities.

Industrial loom has been technological built to surpass the hand built traditional looms. Different textile designs with aesthetic reflection are now in vogue through the aid of technology. The essence is to add technology to the existing traditional textile industries in order to enhance Africa's economy. Customized fabrics have been designed for major occasions and ceremonies. End of the year parties has been celebrated by different social clubs with textile design specially made for the occasion. All these technological blending with art promotes the African culture and economy.

Art Technology and Performing Arts

Performing arts activities include music and drama. Both are self-expressed in totality of the individual's expressing and appreciating, their inner urge through sound and instruments (music) and recitation, mining and gestures when staging plays. The theatre is often defined as what takes place between those who perform that is dancers, singers, players and actors and those who watch the audience. The spot or place on which the act takes place is called the stage. The stage may be a level ground, a raised platform, on the water or in the air. It may also be the village square, the courtyard of a king's palace, fenced enclosure or a clearing in the forest.

According to Ogunbiyi (1982), theatre takes place when there is a performance by performers to an audience. It is obligatory for the actor presenting images to impersonate or get into a character before an audience. What he does can be qualified as theatre. Technology, has actually, transformed theatre and music today. Locally produced musical instrument were used by the Nigeria musician in the past. Similarly, locally produced costumes were used by the actors and actresses. Costume, stage light, Prop and host of others. Theatre equipment has been technologically transformed.

Nigeria witnessed collapsible, travelling theatre group in the ancient day but today, recorded films on DVD could be watched privately at home. Technological innovation has been introduced into music in order to enable local Nigeria music to meet up with the global standard. Keyboard, Piano, musical string instrument, Saxophone, trumpet just to mention a few are now in vogue. Stereophonic equalizer and sound mixer are now put in place by the musicians for their public performances.

Music is no longer recorded on breakable discs but unbreakable MP3 players, iPhones, web streaming, and stereophonic loud speakers with modern electronic and computerized digital technologies are currently used in the world of music. It is impossible for Nigeria to meet up absolutely with the technological standard recently discovered in both music and theatre art. All these innovative technological approaches are meant to elevate music and theatre art in Nigeria. In return, if Nigeria is able to meet up with the global technological standard in Music, this will enhance Nigeria economic development.

Art, Technology and Ceramics

Ceramics evolved from the old pottery practices as a result of technology. It is the oldest and most popular surviving craft which have been practiced from pre-historical time to the present. Adepegba (1995), observed that pottery is the oldest art and craft in Nigeria. It

can be traced to Nok terracotta. A hand-built technique which was applied by women as a viable occupation basically for domestic, ceremonial, religious and ritual purposes. Pottery is of fundamental importance in the interpretation and reconstruction of a people's cultural history, and serves as a means of cultural identity for the people's cultural history and serves as a means of cultural identity for the group of people that made and use them in Nigeria.

Despite the cultural values attached to pottery, the practice remained unpopular until it technologically developed to ceramics. It becomes wider in scope. Mechanized equipment like Throwing Wheel and Electric Kiln, have been introduced into ceramics industries in Nigeria. In this regard, ceramics industries widened its scope of production, in addition to the production of water pots and cooking pot, ceramic industries added aesthetic to Nigeria aesthetics through technological productions of tiles, flower vases, trays, electrical appliances, plumbing kits and P.O.P ceilings, just to mention a few; these are recent ceramics products in Nigeria. Nigeria economy shall be fully developed if this aspect of ceramics is further explored.

Creative Arts, Technology AND Painting

Painting can be described as imaginative compositions with variety of colours, it is an aspect of Creative arts that develops sense of creative imagination in the individual. Talabi (1997), explained the essence of studying art as the ability to be original, self-reliant, creative in thinking and expression. Hence, a subject like imaginative composition provides an individual with the scope for exercising one's freedom of the thought and action. His mind is actively engaged with the creation of arts works.

Uzama (1989), averred that compositions like the human skeleton serves as the framework that supports all other vital organs in the body. It is the basic structure that holds firmly all other components of the pictorial works in painting, photography and graphic design.

Literarily, composition in the world of 2 dimensional artists means the skill of designing, organizing and structuring a picture. It requires the organization or arrangement of its various segments in a skilful manner to arrive at some kind of order and unity. Composition transmits messages like stability, beauty, violence, ugliness or sympathy. It can arouse, intensify or calm emotional reactions.

Traditionally, locally improvised colours and materials were used for the production of painting. These materials include easel, brushes, pallete, kerosene and water just to mention a few. Technology, actually transformed all the materials mentioned above and added new materials as well for positive improvement. Use of oil colours, replaced water and poster colour. Technologically, new easel has been invented to make painting easier. Series of sophisticated brushes and pallete knives have been invented.

Technologically, digital camera and computer have been devised to reproduce the original works of an artist. This enables an artist to retain the original masterpiece and create room for mass production of his works. Live seed oil and fixative are products of chemical substance, technologically produced to add more aesthetics and durability to the works of Art. Beads and other materials were recently adopted to add more value to the works of painting.

It should be noted that all these efforts are possible as a result of the integration of technology into art. The purpose of the addition of modern technology is to promote the existing conventional standard of painting and possibly to launch Nigeria painting to global acceptance.

Creative Arts and Drawing

Drawing is an integral aspect of creative Arts that cut across all other branches of Art. Drawing is more or less the bedrock of other aspects of Art. Painting, sculpture, architecture, graphics and ceramics all need drawing at the early stage of its production. Sketches in form of drawing are the framework that determines the final output of an Art work. Pencils, pastel, charcoal and pen were the conventional media of drawing. These media have their shortcomings in terms of global acceptance. Technologically, Computer Aided Drawing has been introduced to enhance the standard of drawings produced in Africa at the global level. The Computer Aided Drawings assist mass production of interesting drawings. Mass production of drawing through computer may enhance Nigeria's economic advancement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having discussed the integration of technology and creative art in-depth, it becomes inevitable to equip individual learners with the knowledge of introductory Technology in order to assist them to manipulate related technological equipment such as the computer system. There must be a well-equipped technological workshop and studio that would promote teaching of technology based creative arts as a subject. This would enlist the interests of the students and possibly enhance the proper comprehension and performance of students, as well students that have developed keen interest in the subject. Such students should be encouraged by providing them with incentives like scholarship awards.

CONCLUSION

A country that refuses to integrate technology into her production unit may be suffering from economic set back. This paper has been able to trace the concept of technology as an innovation to enhance the quality of Creative Arts in order to improve economic growth in Nigeria. The sharp distinction, a noticeable gap between poor/developing and advanced/developed country lies in the level and degree of technological acquisition, as no developed nation or country will like to transfer its developed technology to a poor country but rather to enslave the under-developed country. Definitely incorporation of technology into Creative arts would take Nigeria to a greater height at the global level.

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