

The Use of Educational Cartoons and Comics in Enhancing Creativity in Primary School Pupils in Ile-ife, Osun State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigates the extent to which cartoons and comics can be used to enhance creativity in primary school pupils in Ile-Ife, Osun State. This study adopts the pre-test/ post-test experimental control group design. The study is designed to: (I) find out the frequency of use of creative strategies in primary schools in Osun State; (ii) examine the extent of pupils satisfaction with their teacher's teaching strategies; and (iii) investigate the effect the use of cartoons/comics coupled with creative teaching strategies have on the selected primary schools pupils in Osun State. The sample for the study consists of 420 primary school teachers and 200 pupils who are selected through systematic sampling techniques. The instrument consists of educational cartoons and comics on short dramatic story, counting, comprehension and vocabulary. The others are a check-rating schedule to collect information from the teachers on the strategies they adopt in teaching, pupils rating and satisfaction of the teaching strategies employed by their teachers and an evaluation test. The findings of the study show that: (a) Pupils in the primary schools are not satisfied with the teaching strategies $x^2_c = 19.40 > x^2_t = 10.03$. (b) Teachers in primary schools in the state use the conventional, traditional talk and chalk method, demonstration and story telling. (c) Only the use of informal, progressive and creative teaching strategies will help our pupils develop high ordered skills needed for exploratory, experimental and creative learning. (d) The pupils that are expose to problem solving approach using cartoons and comics perform significantly better than those that use the normal conventional talk and chalk method. ($T_c = 5.54$, $df = 199$, $p > 0.05$). The following conclusions are drawn from the study: -Teachers in primary schools in Ile-Ife use non-creative teaching strategies. -Pupils show dissatisfaction with the non-creative teaching strategies used by their teachers. -The use of comics and cartoons can enhance creativity in the primary pupils. -Creativity is enhanced where pupils are, allowed to ask questions, given opportunity to explore, experiment and to work in groups.

Key words:

INTRODUCTION

There are many problems associated with primary education in the country. Parts of these problems have to do with the structure, facilities, instructional materials and the teachers. Other problems have to do with over population and the methods of teaching. The current practice of stereotypical talk and chalk method of teaching in most primary schools in Nigeria is not adequate, hence the need for teachers to diversify their teaching method in order to help the pupils to grow creatively. Generally, pupils' time in school is devoted to making them conform to some socialization norms. Not only this, they are taught in conventional classroom without providing a conducive and creative environment to explore, experiment and innovate and to ask questions. However relevant literature has revealed that for pupils to develop high creative ability they must be given opportunity to explore, experiment and ask questions. They should also not be subjected to too many rules and too much restriction.

The Yoruba cultural ways of socializing children have also contributed to hindering the development of creativity in primary school pupils in Osun State. The culture does not allow children to ask many questions. The inquisitive children must not be heard. There are other Yoruba taboos and erroneous religious beliefs associated with children that are very inquisitive; however, these taboos are gradually fading out. The taboos are blocks to creativity in children. Those that are brought up under such taboos do not have enlarged knowledge base. Hence they fear making mistakes, they do not want to be criticized and are confused when left alone because they were not allowed to display initiative. In the Yoruba culture and in most schools in South Western Nigeria, teachers are destroying creativity in children rather than helping them grow creatively. There are so many subjects in the primary school curriculum that could have helped the pupils develop and grow creatively, but the necessary facilities, environment and the correct methods have not been employed.

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This study is therefore important in that it will reveal the current practices among teachers and the need to change their current practices to adopting better methods that will help our pupils to grow creatively.

What is creativity?: Several scholars have defined creativity differently. Moran, Sawyers and More^[10] describe creativity as essentially a form of problem solving where there are no easy answers to problems for which popular or conventional responses do not work. It also involves adaptability and flexibility of thoughts. Barron and Harrington^[3] define it as the interpersonal and intrapersonal process by which original, high quality and genuinely significant products are developed.

From the different definitions, there seems to be some agreement. In developing creativity in young children, emphasis should be on the process rather than product. Guilford^[6] further lays credence to this; he states that in order to encourage creativity in children, divergent thoughts should be used. Divergent thoughts to him require the problem-solver to generate many solutions, few of which must be novel, of high quality, workable and creative.

Preprimary and Primary Education in Nigeria: Pre-primary education according to the National Policy on Education (NPE) Section 2 referred to the education given in any educational institution to children between ages 3 and 5 plus before entering the primary school. The purpose of which included:

- Effecting a smooth transition from the home to schools.
- Preparing the child for primary level of education
- Providing adequate care and supervision for the children which their parents are at work;
- Inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through exploration of nature and the local environment, playing with toys, artistic and musical activities, etc;
- Teaching cooperation and team spirit;
- Teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colour, shapes forms etc through play and
- Teaching good habits, especially good health habits (p.13)

In order to achieve the above stated objectives the government of Nigeria is suppose to do the following:

- Encourage private efforts in the provision of pre - primary education;
- Make provision in Teacher Training Institutions for students teachers who want to specialize in pre-primary

Primary Education: This referred to the education given in any institution for children between ages 5 to 11 plus, it is the foundation upon which other system is built upon, It is also regarded as the key to the success or failure of the whole system.

Objectives of Primary Education: According to the National Policy on Education (NPE) the general objectives include;

- The inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively;
- Laying of a sound basis for scientific and effective thinking;
- Citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- Character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes;
- Developing in the child the ability to adapt to his changing environment;
- Giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity;
- Providing basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality (NPE p. 16)

In order to achieve these stated objectives, the Federal Government according to the National Policy will bear in mind the teacher – pupil ratio of 1 to 20 for pre-primary and 1 to 30 for primary schools for future. While according to them, during the period of transition a ratio of 1: 40 in the primary school will be accepted.

It was also clearly stated on paper that the Federal Government will provide junior library for primary school children and that they will also make available materials and manpower for the teaching of science. They are also to establish counseling services, health scheme and provision of audio-visual aid development centre.

Appraisal of the National Policy of Education and Pre-primary of Primary Education: Good as this white paper on pre-primary and primary education is, there are serious problems with its implementation. They are just mere document without financial backing and political wheel from the Government. As at today, most of our primary schools are without facilities. The teacher- pupil ration of 1: 30 is yet to be achieved. The said junior library that was to be provided is yet to be provided. The studies of science, the provision of modern technology and tools for developing manipulative skills is yet to be

Table 1: Amount Withheld by the Government

Headings	Total Amount Due to all universities	Total Released To all Universities	Balance as at 31/12/1992 to all Universities.
Research Grants	49,301,496	17,472,932	31,828,525
Teaching/ Research Equipment	45,364,585.75	11,226,740.40	34,138.118.25
Capital Grant	101,804,929	74,230,675	27,574,254

Source NUC Annual Report, 1992

Table 2: The Quantum of Fund Required to fund the Universities in Nigeria

Year	Sub-Head Expenditure Recurrent	Amount specified in the 2001 Agreement	Amount Disbursed (D) to/Approved (A) for Universities by Government	Balance
2001	„	N60bn	N28.743bn (D)	N31.257bn
2002	„	N66bn	N30.645bn (D)	N35.355bn
2003	„	N138bn	(N34.757bn)? (A)	N103.243bn
		Subtotal		N169.855bn
Capital Expenditure				
2001	„	N20bn	N5.880bn (D)	N14.12bn
2002	„	N22bn	N2.050bn (D)	N19.95bn
2003	„	24bn	(N7.5bn)? (A)	N16.5bn
		Subtotal		N50.57bn
Restoration Fund				
2001	„	N18.6bn	-	N18.6bn
2002	„	N22.17bn	-	N22.17bn
2003	„	N24.4bn	-	N24.4bn
		Subtotal		N65.17bn
Stabilization Fund				
2001	„	N6bn	-	N6bn
2002	„	N6bn	-	N6bn
2003	„	N6bn	-	N6bn
		Subtotal		N18bn
			GRAND TOTAL	N303.595b

Source: ASUU (1) Document Presented to the Technical Team

provided for. Today, there is high incidence of dropout at the primary level of education. The high incidence of drop out rate can be attributed to the method of teaching and the general nature of the school system.

There is also general imbalance between the south and the north with regards to the availability of educational facilities, the number of pupils receiving formal education and girls' education. One of the greatest problems that have been plaguing education over the last decade is that of finance. The whole educational sector are under funded, the total allocation to education including primary, secondary, colleges, polytechnics and universities is less than 9%. No wonder the constant strike action by the Academic staff Union of Universities (ASSU). In most educational institution, Infrastructural development is slow, static and deteriorating because the funding has been dwindling. While the demand is student enrolment are in creasing. Find below the allocations for research, teaching, capital project and research equipment

The implication of the above on the system is that quality, research, staff development, training and

academic programmes had to suffer. To worsen the situation further is the economic policy reform of the present Government. There are high unemployment rate among the youths, an average Nigerian is living below 1 dollar. It is therefore not a surprise to see teachers in schools hawking at the expense of the pupils they are suppose to teach. The fear of retirement and non-payment of their retirement benefits have also had an untold hardship on the quality of education and teaching. The results are that both teachers and learners are less interested in schooling.

Creativity in Children: There is a lot of literature on creativity in children. Groves, Sawyers and Moran^[5] opine that for a child to grow creatively, he/she must be provided with creative materials. They also state that, for one to motivate and stimulate creativity in children, they must be involved in imaginative play and motivated by internal factors rather than external factors.

In Nigeria, the notion of creativity is conceived wrongly. Some equate creativity with intelligence. There

is therefore need to describe what creativity actually means. Creativity as used in this study is different from cognitive abilities and broader in scope than intelligence.

Wallach^[17], Ward^[18] Moran, Milgram, Sawyer and Victoria^[11] have shown the distinction between creativity and intelligence. Moran, Sawyer and Moore^[10] also gave an insight into what one should look for when measuring creativity among children. According to them, in the young children the measure of creativity should centre on ability to generate ideas. They therefore advise teachers to help young children develop ideation fluency and self-evaluation.

How can teachers encourage creativity in the pupils?:

There are so many ways through which pupils can be helped to develop creativity. Though the National Policy on Education^[12] has problems with implementation, there are whole sections of the National Policy on Education^[12] on creativity. The problem with this policy is with implementation, finance, competent and qualified teachers. Merilyn^[9] says one of the best ways to help to nurture and stimulate creativity in children is to provide them with creative materials. To Merilyn, the materials include creative games, continuing stories, dramatic plays, puppets and creative movements. While identify things that can destroy creativity among young children. identifies things that may help children develop creativity such as:

- Providing an environment that allows the child to explore and play without restraints,
- Using creative problem-solving in all parts of the curriculum and problems that occur in everyday life,
- Emphasizing process rather than product,
- Allowing time for the children to explore all possibilities, moving from popular to more original idea.

Merilyn's^[9] suggestion becomes more relevant here because of the importance of instructional materials in fostering creativity. The use of appropriate and relevant instructional material and the correct teaching methods may be the panacea to helping children nurture creativity. In most primary schools, facilities for teaching are not in place; school buildings are in deplorable condition and teachers' morale is low due to some societal problems that have ways of affecting them. Non-payment of gratuity of retiring teachers and other factors, have greatly affected the attitude of teachers in the country. In spite of the present situation, the creativity and intelligence of primary school pupils in Nigerians could be enhanced by concerted efforts of teachers and researchers. A step in the right direction centers round the use of low-cost instructional materials.

There are many instructional materials that are low-cost. Not only this, we are in the age of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). One of the creative materials that children are exposed to is cartoon and comic. Cartoons and comics are not only creative in nature, they also provide the enabling environment that allows children to explore and play without restraint. They further encourage imaginative thinking and at times a reflection of what occurs in everyday life. They encourage creative exploration, experimentation, discovery and innovation. Cartoons and comics can be used to tell a story and to stimulate creative thinking. The questions we need to ask are: What are educational cartoons and comics? If cartoons and comics are so important, how can a resourceful teacher get these creative materials?

Educational Cartoons and Comics: Educational comics are forms of cartoons in which a cast of characters present an educational story in a sequence of closely related drawings designed to entertain and educate the readers. They can also take the form of pictorial presentation and the use of stair caricature or exaggeration to tell a story of person, group, situation or scenery. They convey subtle message of persuasion, expresses power that captures attention and influences attitudes and behaviour. An educational cartoon on the other hand is a pictorial representation or a caricature of a person, an idea or a situation designed to influence public opinion. Cartoons and comics have some similar characteristics but different origin.

Sources: Today, comics and cartoons are not only available in book form but also on television and on the Internet where there are many of them. They are read daily by millions of people of all ages. They appeal to the young and adult alike because there are different varieties. The Freeman comics for example have appeal for children, while the peanut strip is for adults because of its "whimsical" but incisive human characterization.

Cartoons and Comics on the Internet: Comic strips and comic super heroes' appearance on the Internet have been criticized by some scholars, psychologists and instructional designers. Their concern has been on the content and its effects on the attitude, values and behaviour of the readers. However, Nicholas^[13] identifies the reasons why cartoons and comics should be on the Internet. The reasons include;

- They add clever, interested puzzles and activities to our daily on-line activities,
- The puzzles include interesting word games and specially designed hilarious manager version of the same game for intellectual and creative development,
- simple convenience.

According to Nicholas^[13] many people have no time to read before leaving for work in the morning, now it is possible to find information on the Internet in the form of comic strips and cartoons. Once you locate them, you can begin to read daily without feeling exhausted. On the less intellectual side, there is the Ranchy reach site which begins with an automated opening that shows Ranchy holding up design and co-editing for the strip author, followed by his daily risqué statements on questions and animated circles. From here you can review the strip. There is also the Cyber-Chicken website that offers a much richer locale with animated images. It is fortified with series of additional parts that allow users to hear Cyber Chicken sing and ask for his advice and buy his products.

Also shows that there is a weekly comic presentation that turns pages for the users and pops in words as well as offer rich automatic page turn. Another highly interesting and developed comic site of all is the Duckman site. It is currently available on the Microsoft Network. It features varieties of interesting creative games and spectacular streaming audio.

To an educational technologist, the concern about comics and cartoons is how it can be used to enhance creativity among the primarily school pupils in Nigeria. Cartoons and comics, whether from books, television or Internet, no doubt have some potential to develop and enhance creativity in pupils. Balogun^[2] on cartoons and comics states:

Another medium that deserves very critical consideration is the cartoons and comic that is sold to our children. Moral concern should be extended into this area. We must know who is talking to our children since it is a powerful instructional material.

Other concern is how teachers can utilize Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to engage and prepare children to face the challenges of future, social citizenship and education. In this regards, scholars have advocated for a broader view of literacy than the traditional language-based approaches. In this wise, they suggested the use of multi-literacy approaches to pedagogy. There are several studies on multimedia literacy. Not only this, there are other suggestions about the need to blend media-cultural studies with the new information technologies. The significant contributions of these studies point to the fact that they overcome the limitations of traditional approaches and inject new life into literacy. It also ensures the blending of media cultural studies with ICT there by enhancing active and creative learning environment.

Studies on Multi Media, Multi-Literacy and Popular Culture:

Although the focus of the present study is not on culture and multi literacy purpose but it will be worthwhile to review relevant literatures on multi literacy and multi media. The issue of culture cannot be divulged from media literacy. This is why argues that media studies, cultural studies, computer and technology studies can no longer be taught in isolation. It was also an opinion that the rate at which computer education was embraced, coupled with the incursions of media and cultural studies, suggest that they be blended. Based on the above, the concerns of scholars and the data gathering procedure employed in the present study that has to do with reading and comprehension, there may be the need to see what literatures have said about multi media, multi literacy and popular culture.

Bean, Shannon and Kristen (1999) suggest the need to expand our views of literacy in the content areas and how we can re-conceptualize it in the classroom. O' Rourke^[15] examines how students can be engaged through ICT using the multi literacy approach. One of the findings that raises implications for this study is how to engage the children technically, practically and critically to read and develop their understanding so as to communicate effectively.

Nixon and Comber^[14] discuss how film and video can be used to bridge popular and classroom culture. In the study, they suggest the need to supplement the reading of print fiction with viewing of films and video. They also suggest the use of popular cultural texts and the new technologies.

Unsworth^[16] discusses the importance of a functional, meaning-based meta language that describe knowledge about language, visual and digital meaning that are needed for the comprehension and composition of any traditional text materials or computer-based text material. Merchant^[8], also worked on a project involving primary aged children in the United Kingdom. The author suggests a new approach for the teachers. The new approach should involve building pupils experiences of digital literacy in popular culture and encouraging them to make inference between everyday meaning and the school curriculum. The present study is therefore similar to Merchant in that it involves the use of digital media in building pupil everyday experiences in stories, comprehension and vocabulary within the pupils popular culture. The ultimate objective of which is to be able to tap into and extend the interest of the pupils by building their literacy understanding in a creative way.

Purpose of the study: This study is therefore designed to:

- Find out the frequency of use of creative instructional strategies in primary schools,
- Determine the extent of pupils satisfaction with the teaching strategies,

- Find out the effect educational cartoons and comics have on pupils' creativity.

Delimitation: This study is concerned with pupils in the primary schools in Ile-Ife, Osun State of Nigeria. It is limited to children below the age of 10 years. The content of the cartoons and comics used deal with short dramatic story, counting, comprehension and vocabulary.

Population and Sample: The population for the study consists of all the teachers and pupils in the public and private primary schools in Ife Central Local Government. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the schools for the study and a systematic sampling technique was used to select the required sample that is made up of four hundred and twenty teachers and two hundred pupils.

Instrumentation: The instruments used for this study consist of television cartoons and comics on short dramatic story, counting, comprehension and vocabulary. It deals with day-to-day activities of the pupils. The other one is a check-rating schedule. It was designed in sections. The first section is designed to collect information from the teachers on the frequency of use of creative teaching strategies. The other part deals with pupils satisfaction with the teaching strategies used in school. The last section is an evaluation question on the effect of cartoons on the pupils. The content of section III has to do with creativity. Precisely, pupils were provided with problems from the cartoons they had been exposed to, they were later asked to provide the probable solutions to the problems. The method adopted was the problem solving approach. The instruments were pilot tested for content and construct validity using twenty participants who were not part of the study sample.

Data Gathering Procedure: The pupils were divided into two groups i.e. the experimental and the control groups. The pupils in the experimental group were exposed to educational cartoons and comics while those in the control group were taught using the normal classroom method. At the end of the teaching, pupils in both groups were given the same problems to solve based on the content taught. The following areas were examined: originality, idea, vocabulary, ability to compose and comprehend, picture reading and lastly problem solving.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The result of the data analyzed in respect of the frequency of the type of teaching strategies used by the teachers is shown in table 3.

From Table 3, demonstration method is the most frequently used method of teaching. 57% of the primary school teachers claimed they use it very often, 33% fairly

often and 9% not too often. The least used method includes the problem solving, dramatization and games. While 9% of the respondents indicated dramatization, followed by small game group 10% and problem solving 13%.

On pupils' satisfaction with the instructional strategies used by their teachers, the data obtained is shown in table 4.

$$X_c^2 = 19.40$$

$$X_t^2 = 10.03$$

$$X_c^2 = 19.40 > X_t^2 = 10.03$$

NU = Nursery Classes

LP = Lower Primary (Pry 1-3)

Up = Upper Primary (Pr. 4-6)

The data obtained show that 65% of the pupils are dissatisfied with the way they are taught in the schools. This data was further subjected to chi-square statistical analysis; the result obtained show that the chi-square calculated value is 19.40. When this was compared with the table value, the chi-square table value obtained is 10.03 which is less than the X_c^2 of 19.40. It therefore implies that the difference is significant.

The result of the data analyzed with respect to pupils' performance in creative problem solving is presented in Table 5.

***Significant at 0.05:** In order to show that there is not much difference in the entry behaviour of the pupils, the mean scores of the participants were compared at pre-test. From table 3, the pupils in the experimental group have a mean score of 14.34 while those in the control group have 13.42. When this was subjected to a t-test to test the significance, the t-test revealed that there is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups at the pre-test, $t_c = 1.42$, $df = 199$, $p > .05$.

However after exposing the participants in the experimental group to educational cartoons/comic, their mean scores at post – test is 18.19 while the control group have a mean score of 15.59. After subjecting the scores to t-test for the level of significance, it is observed that at the post-test, the t-test obtained is significant at 0.05 i.e., $t_c = 5.54$, $df = 199$, $P < 0.05$, hence one can conclude that the use of educational cartoons and comics have significantly enhance the creativity of the pupils when compare to those that did not use the creative teaching strategies. It therefore implies that teachers teaching strategies can affect pupils' creativity.

Implication of the findings: The findings of the study show that drastic actions must be taken to address the situation in our primary schools. Primary school is the foundation upon which all other educational level will be built. It is a known fact in the construction industry that,

Table 3: Instructional Strategies and Frequency

Instructional strategies	Very often (f%)	Fairly often (f%)	Not often (f%)	Not at all often (f%)	EF	X _w
Dramatization	34 (9.0)	102 (25.3)	128 (34)	114 (28)	378	2.15
Problem solving	52 (13)	35 (9)	163 (49)	148 (41)	398	2.58
Demonstration	236 (57)	138 (33)	36 (9)	4 (1)	414	3.34
Traditional chalk						
And talk method	114 (28)	107 (26)	84 (21)	100 (25)	405	2.52
Small Group Game	38 (10)	113 (26)	136 (36)	92 (24)	379	2.26
Story telling	214 (55)	119 (30)	41 (11)	18 (5)	392	3.20
Group project	40 (10)	47 (12)	140 (37)	155(46)	382	2.45

Table 4: Pupils Satisfaction with the Instructional Strategies.

Response	NU	Lp	Up	Row Total
Disagree	55	42	53	150
Agreed	2	21	26	50
Column Total	57	63	80	

Table 5: Performance of the Pupils in Problem Solving.

TEST	GROUP	X	SD	n	df	tc	p
PRE-TEST	Experimental	14.34	4.03	100	199	1.42	<0.05
PRE-TEST	Control	13.42	5.12	100			
POST –TEST	Experimental	18.19	4.59	100		*	
POST – TEST	Control	15.59	5.08	100	199	5.54	

the foundation of any building or structure should be solid and strong in order to be able to carry the structure that will be placed upon it. In the case of our children at their tender age, their foundations are very weak. The results obtained also show that pupils are discontented about schooling. Not only this, they are also dissatisfied with their teachers' teaching strategies. The implication of this finding on primary education is that our pupils may not grow up creatively and may not have balanced education. Teachers may feel what they are operating is the norm, but this negative attitude must be discouraged. One cannot afford to toy with the future of these young ones. Primary education is basic; it must be sound and thorough. This study becomes more relevant in the light of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme of the Federal Government. Though International Organizations have given a lot of financial assistance, for UBE to be successful, serious consideration should be given to some of the issues raised in this study.

Conclusion: This study reveals that pupils are not satisfied with the instructional strategies used by their teachers. The teachers sampled use majorly the conventional i.e., the traditional talk and chalk method, demonstration, story telling. However, pupils that are taught using the creative teaching strategy perform significantly better than those that use the conventional,

non-creative teaching strategy. The study also revealed that the use of creative teaching strategies coupled with a creative environment can enhance progressive and creative growth in our pupils without which Nigerian children in the primary schools will not be able to face the challenges of the future. Teachers should therefore desist from destroying the lives of young children. Teachers should use the informal, progressive and creative teaching strategies that will develop in our pupils high ordered skills needed for exploratory, experimental and creative learning

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