



An Exploratory Study of Curriculum Practices for Balancing Global Artistic Trends and Indigenous Cultural Identity of Art Education in Colleges of Education in North-Central, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study investigates curriculum practices in fine and applied arts education programmes in Colleges of Education in north-central, Nigeria. The study focuses on how global artistic trends supposed to be balanced with indigenous cultural identity. Anchored in culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum hybridity theory, the study adopts a qualitative exploratory design involving curriculum document analysis, semi-structured interviews with lecturers and administrators, and focus group discussions with final-year students across selected colleges of education. Findings indicate increasing incorporation of digital media, contemporary global art movements, and interdisciplinary approaches; however, indigenous art practices are often treated as static historical content rather than dynamic, practice-based knowledge systems. Structural challenges including limited infrastructure, insufficient funding, curriculum rigidity, and inadequate documentation of local artistic traditions further complicate balance. The study concludes that sustainable art education in Nigeria requires deliberate curriculum restructuring that integrates global competencies with community engaged practice based indigenous learning models. The paper contributes to international discourse on decolonising curriculum and culturally grounded innovation in vocational teacher education.

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INTRODUCTION

Art education is a critical vehicle for fostering creativity, cultural awareness, and socio-economic development. In the context of globalisation, colleges of education in Nigeria are increasingly integrating global artistic trends into their curricula. However, this has raised concerns about the potential erosion of indigenous artistic identity (Eze, 2020; Akinsola, 2025). Oloidi (2010) opined that balancing global artistic exposure with the preservation of indigenous cultural heritage is crucial for developing culturally responsive and socially relevant in art education programmes. Art education in Nigeria is influenced by both historical and contemporary practices. Indigenous

art traditions, such as textile weaving, ceramics, and sculpture, embody the cultural knowledge, values, and identity of various ethnic groups in north-central, Nigeria. Conversely, global artistic trends introduce new techniques, materials, and conceptual frameworks that enrich students' creativity, but may inadvertently overshadow local practices (Abdullahi, 2021; Effiong, 2023; Oloidi, 2010).

In Nigeria, colleges of education serve as primary institutions responsible for training art teachers for basic and secondary education under the national teacher education mandate. Sani (2022) argued that the north-central geopolitical zone, characterised by diverse ethnic groups such

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as Yoruba, Nupe, Tiv, Gbagyi, Idoma, and Igbara to mention just a few. These ethnic groups have rich artistic traditions exist in pottery, textile weaving, wood carving, mural painting, beadwork, and metal crafts. Others are leather designs; raffia works and brass productions. These traditions represent living cultural knowledge systems embedded in community practices, symbolism, spirituality, and socio-economic life (Idogho, & Aneke, 2024).

However, globalisation driven curriculum reforms increasingly emphasis digital literacy, contemporary art discourse, and global creative industry alignment (UNESCO, 2022; Mamza, 2015). This creates a pedagogical artificial intelligent (AI) on how can art education prepare students for participation in global artistic economies while preserving and revitalising indigenous cultural identity, to address the use of AI tools, it requires rethinking curriculum practices beyond additive models toward integrative and hybrid frameworks (Nyaaba, Kyerematen, & Mensah, 2024).

This study explores how curriculum practices in colleges of education in north-central region, in Nigeria attempt to negotiate this balance and identifies structural, pedagogical, and policy related challenges that shape this process. Therefore, the study investigates how curriculum practices in selected colleges of education in north-central, Nigeria attempts to strike a balance between these global and indigenous influences in art education. The research spared across five states in the north-central of Nigeria, they are Benue, Kwara, Kogi, Nasarrawa and Niger states.

Research Problem

As globalisation continues to influence educational systems worldwide, understanding how art education programmes integrate contemporary artistic innovations with local cultural knowledge becomes increasingly important for sustaining culturally relevant educational practices. The presence of art education programmes in Nigerian colleges of education, there is limited evidence of systematic integration of indigenous cultural practices alongside global artistic trends. Prior studies have

reported curriculum gaps as inadequate teacher training, and the dominance of globalised art content, which may lead to cultural harmonisation. Therefore, the study addresses the gap by exploring curriculum practices that attempt to harmonise these two dimensions, thereby fostering culturally rooted yet globally competent art educators.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine curriculum practices that balance global artistic trends with indigenous cultural identity in fine and applied arts programmes in selected colleges of education in north-central of Nigeria. While, the specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the extent to which global artistic trends are integrated into Fine and Applied Arts curricula in selected Colleges of Education.
2. Investigate how indigenous artistic traditions are represented and taught within Fine and Applied Arts programmes.
3. Identify the teaching approaches used by lecturers to integrate global and indigenous artistic knowledge in art education.
4. Explore the challenges faced by lecturers and students in balancing global artistic innovations with indigenous artistic practices.

Research Questions

The research questions were formulated in alignment with the objectives of the study and were designed to guide the investigation:

1. To what extent are global artistic trends integrated into Fine and Applied Arts curricula in selected Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria?
2. How are indigenous artistic traditions represented and taught within Fine and Applied Arts programmes in the selected Colleges of Education?
3. What teaching approaches are used by lecturers to integrate global and



indigenous artistic knowledge in art education?

4. What challenges do lecturers and students face in balancing global artistic innovations with indigenous artistic practices?

Significance of the Study

The study is significant in diverse ways first; for lecturers, and administrators in fine and applied arts programmes. By examining existing teaching practices and institutional challenges, the research offers insights that can help educators adopt more culturally responsive pedagogical approaches in line with the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy, widely associated with the works of indigenous artists. Secondly, the study benefits students and future art educators by advocating for a curriculum that integrates both global artistic competencies and indigenous cultural knowledge. Finally, it enhances students' creative capacities, strengthen cultural identity, and improve their ability to engage with both local and international artistic environments.

Scope of the Study

The study primarily examined curriculum practices, teaching approaches, and institutional factors influencing the integration of global artistic trends and indigenous cultural knowledge, in some selected colleges of education in the north-central region of Nigeria. The research focused specifically on institutions offering programmes in fine and applied arts at Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) level. The geographical scope of the study covered five states in the north-central of Nigeria; Niger State, Kwara State, Benue State, Nasarawa State, and Kogi State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature includes works from scholars such as Smith (2012); UNESCO (2022); (Idogho, and Aneke, 2024); (Nyaaba, Kyerematen, and Mensah, 2024), (Sani and Umaru, 2022). The study examines individual and group works in the following sub-headings such as globalisation artistic in art education,

indigenous cultural identity in art education, balancing global and indigenous practices, to mention just a few.

Global Artistic Trends in Art Education

Global artistic trends introduce contemporary techniques, digital media, and cross-cultural artistic paradigms into art education (Smith & Chang, 2019). These trends expand students' creativity, enabling them to produce art that resonates with global audiences. Studies indicate that exposure to international art practices enhances students' employability in creative industries (Eze, 2020; Musa & Bello, 2022).

Indigenous Cultural Identity in Art Education

Indigenous art forms preserve cultural memory, values, and identity. Nigerian indigenous arts include textile designs (Adire, Aso-Oke), pottery, brass casting, sculpture, and mural arts (Abdullahi, 2021). Art education that neglects these traditions risks cultural erosion and diminishes students' appreciation for local heritage (Okonkwo, 2019).

Balancing Global and Indigenous Practices

Curriculum integration strategies such as project-based learning, workshops, and community engagements have been suggested as methods to balance global trends with local art traditions (Adamu, 2021; Okafor, 2020). However, empirical evidence from North-Central Nigeria remains limited, warranting further exploration. And also the research identifies some gaps in the literature concerning of this study.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted Decolonial Art Education Theory (Mignolo in Sani and Umaru, 2022), which advocates for the recognition and incorporation of local knowledge systems while engaging with global educational standards. The framework supports curriculum practices that respect indigenous artistic traditions, foster cultural identity, and develop globally competent graduates. Many scholars have used this theory successfully in their various research works, such as, Akinsola, 2025; Mamza, 2015; Idogho and



Aneke, 2024; Nyaaba, Kyerematen, and Mensah, 2024 and host of other researchers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

A qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this study, as propounded by Sullivan (2010), Osuala (2002), and Sambo (2012). The study sought to obtain in-depth insights into curriculum implementation, pedagogical practices, and institutional perspectives that shape art education within the selected institutions. Qualitative research allows for the exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of curriculum practices within their natural educational settings. The approach enabled the researchers to gather rich descriptive data and identify patterns relating to curriculum structure, teaching methods, and institutional challenges affecting art education programmes.

Study Areas:

The study was conducted in some selected colleges of education across five states in the north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The institutions selected for the study include: Umaru Sanda Ahmadu College of Education, Minna, Niger State; College of Education, Ilorin, Kwara State; College of Education, Katsina-Ala, Benue State; College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State; and Federal College of Education, Okene, Kogi State. These institutions were purposively selected because they offer relevant art education programmes at the NCE level and function as major hubs for preparing art educators in the region and Nigeria at large.

Population of the Study:

The population of the study comprised academic staff, curriculum administrators, and final-year students involved in fine and applied arts education programmes. These groups were considered relevant because they are directly involved in curriculum development, teaching, and learning processes within art education programmes.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size:

Purposive sampling was used to select participants who possessed relevant knowledge and experience regarding curriculum implementation in fine and applied arts programmes. A total of twenty (20) participants were selected from each institution, making a ground total of one hundred questionnaires. The sample consisted of Heads of Departments, studio lecturers, curriculum officers, and final-year students. Researchers like Effiong, (2023), Osuala, E.C. (2002), Sambo, (2012) have used this method successfully.

Purposive sampling:

Ensured that participants were selected based on their direct involvement in art education curriculum delivery and their capacity to provide informed perspectives on the integration of global artistic trends and indigenous artistic traditions within the curriculum.

Data Collection Methods:

Data for the study were collected through three main qualitative methods: semi-structured interviews, curriculum document analysis, and classroom observations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Heads of Departments, lecturers, and curriculum officers to obtain detailed information on curriculum design, teaching practices, and institutional challenges affecting art education programmes. The interview format allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives while providing flexibility for the researchers to explore emerging issues.

Curriculum document analysis involved reviewing official curriculum guidelines, course outlines, and institutional documents related to fine and applied arts programmes. This enabled the researchers to examine the formal representation of indigenous and global artistic content within the curriculum structure. Classroom observations were also conducted to examine teaching methods, studio practices, and the practical integration of artistic techniques and cultural content during instruction. Observations provided direct insights into how curriculum

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practices were implemented in real classroom situation.

Data Analysis:

The data collected from interviews, document analysis, and observations were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involved organizing the data into categories and identifying recurring themes related to curriculum structure, teaching strategies, institutional constraints, and the representation of indigenous artistic knowledge within art education programme.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study reveal a transitional curriculum landscape in fine and applied arts programme within colleges of education in north-central, Nigeria. This landscape is shaped by the dual pressures of globalisation and the need for cultural preservation. While the integration of global artistic trends enhances students' technological competence and employability, their dominance risks marginalising indigenous epistemologies when not critically contextualised. The study therefore identifies the need to move beyond the additive inclusion of indigenous content toward integrative curriculum models in which local knowledge systems actively inform contemporary artistic practice. The emerging hybrid pedagogies, combining digital tools with indigenous aesthetics, present viable pathways for achieving this balance. Also the findings are organised into the following thematic areas:

1. Integration of Global Artistic Trends:

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should make sure that digital art, graphic design software, multimedia production, and contemporary conceptual practices are fully in the NCE curricula. In addition, students will be exposed and improved in global art discourse through online platforms and social media. However, access to digital infrastructure remains uneven across institutions, limiting the full realisation of these innovations.

2. Indigenous Content as Historical Rather than Experiential:

Although indigenous artistic traditions are represented in curriculum documents, their implementation is largely theoretical. Teaching approaches tend to emphasize historical and descriptive knowledge rather than practice-based learning, such as studio apprenticeship or community immersion. Consequently, indigenous art forms are often presented as static cultural heritage instead of dynamic and evolving systems capable of contemporary application.

3. Hybrid Studio Practices:

Evidence from the study indicates that some lecturers adopt innovative teaching strategies by combining indigenous motifs, symbols, and materials with modern digital tools. These hybrid studio practices encourage reinterpretation rather than replication of traditional forms and demonstrate promising models for integrating global and local artistic knowledge within art education.

4. Structural and Policy Constraints:

The study identifies several institutional challenges affecting curriculum implementation across the five states. These include inadequate studio facilities and digital infrastructure, limited funding for fieldwork and community engagement, rigid and examination-oriented curriculum structures, and insufficient documentation of indigenous artistic practices. These constraints significantly hinder the effective integration of global and indigenous artistic knowledge systems.

The discussions also engaged on the strengthening art education, as follows:

1. National curriculum bodies should allow greater flexibility for context-specific adaptation at institutional levels. All



colleges of education should institutionalise community-based apprenticeship and experiential learning models.

2. There is a need to prioritise the digital documentation and archiving of indigenous artistic traditions.
3. Continuous professional development programmes should equip lecturers with both digital and indigenous pedagogical competencies. Finally, funding frameworks should support culturally grounded innovation and infrastructure development in art education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations are proposed to strengthen the balance between global artistic developments and indigenous cultural identity.

1. Curriculum Restructuring and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge: Curriculum developers and educational authorities should undertake a systematic review of curricula in colleges of education to ensure that indigenous artistic traditions are fully integrated as core components rather than treated as supplementary content.
2. Capacity Building for Art Educators: Professional development programmes should be organised for lecturers and art instructors to enhance their competence in teaching indigenous artistic practices alongside contemporary global art forms.
3. Strengthening Institutional Resources and Infrastructure: Colleges of Education should receive improved institutional support through increased funding, upgraded studio facilities, and access to modern digital tools for art production and research.
4. Integration of Digital Technologies with Indigenous Content: Students should be encouraged to explore how modern technologies can be used to document,

reinterpret, and promote traditional artistic expressions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study highlights the need for deliberate curriculum restructuring that recognise indigenous artistic traditions as dynamic knowledge systems capable of informing contemporary artistic practice and pedagogy. Integrating local artistic forms, symbols, materials, and community-based practices into formal art education can enrich students' creative capacities while strengthening their cultural awareness and identity. In addition, institutional support through improved infrastructure, adequate funding, and professional development for lecturers is essential to facilitate the effective implementation of culturally inclusive curricula.

Furthermore, the Ultimately, strengthening the integration of global and indigenous artistic knowledge within teacher education programmes will not only contribute to the preservation of Nigeria's rich artistic traditions but also prepare graduates to participate effectively in both local and international creative industries. The colleges of education can play a pivotal role in nurturing art educators who are culturally conscious, creatively innovative, and globally competent.

Contributions to Knowledge

The research study contributes to international discourse on the decolonisation of art education by demonstrating how vocational teacher-training institutions in postcolonial contexts negotiate the rigidities between global influences and local cultural identity.

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