



Imports of hybridizing visual and performing arts pedagogies for Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Nigeria

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Abstract

Visual and performing arts are two key twigs of the humanities. This study focused on the modalities for hybridizing the pedagogies of both concepts in an entrepreneurial Early Childhood Education (ECE). The specific objectives were to determine: (i) the extent to which children in Early Childhood Education respond to laissez-faire pedagogies, (ii) the extent to which the kids might adapt to performing and visual arts-based pedagogies, and (iii), the prospects of hybridizing visual and performing arts as pedagogies for Fine Arts, Drama, and Music. The instruments for data collection and analysis were: (i) the Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Curriculum, (ii) Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Response Percentage Rating Chart,

and (iii) Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Post-Experiment Percentage Rating Chart. 122 children (61 in each of the experimental and control groups) constituted the study population. The findings show that whereas children respond minimally to laissez-faire pedagogies, they adapt positively to arts-related ones. Also, whereas visual arts-based pedagogies aligned well with the kids for learning other subjects, their combination with the performing arts proved more credible for cognitive, affective, and kinaesthetic learning.

Keywords: Hybridized Pedagogy, laissez-faire Pedagogy, Early Childhood Education, experimental intervention.

Introduction

Education encompasses diverse domains and subsets of learning. It involves the use of laid-down structures and instructional materials to facilitate purposeful interaction between learners and teachers or instructors. The concept of education, according to Peters (2010), connotes the principle that something of value is being passed on in a morally acceptable way. Chen (1982) further acknowledged that education refers to any action or experience that has a shaping effect on a person's body, mind, and personality. In the sense of expertise, Chen also stated that education is the process of intentionally passing on the cultural heritage of the previous generation and their accumulated knowledge, value, and skills to the next generation through schools, adult

education institutions, and other organized media at different levels.

Many researchers believe that there are lots of answers to the question of the definition of education, and it is difficult to have a single satisfactory definition. Suffice to say that the definition of education is diversified (Li, 2015; Li, 1998; Cheng & Yao, 2005; Gu, 2003; Xiao & Hu, 2010; Wang, 1990). Education is the development of the human intellect, body, and emotions through the acquisition of requisite knowledge. Education comprises all the experiences of an individual through which knowledge is acquired and the intellect is enlightened (Ubah, 2024).

When curriculum reforms are adequately done, they provide learners with opportunities to acquire the right type of

skills, values, attitudes, abilities, and competence which will equip them to live in society, face challenges, needs, goals, and aspirations (Alebrosu, 2005). Even when the right curricula reforms are done, the suitability of the school environment becomes another issue.

Adebayo (2015) averred that weak entrepreneurial climate has been a major constraint militating against the drive for self-reliance and economic autonomy in Nigeria. Ubah (2024), from her point of experience as a textile artist, affirmed that in most schools today, during conferences and workshops, learners are taught how to make ceramics, fabric weaving, tie-and-dye, T-shirt crestring, crochet making and hairstyling, to mention a few, for their social sustainability.

Higher education builds and consolidates on the level of competence, knowledge and skills already garnered at the secondary education level (Nweke & Nwoye, 2016). The above assertion is obtainable even at basic schooling, in line with Addison and Burgess (2007) view that art is fundamental to society, as a network of useful, pleasurable, challenging and potentially transforming practices. With a focus on developmental education, especially at the cradle where Early Childhood Education belongs, this

study showcases how the child's learning instincts can be channeled early enough, using both visual arts (tangible creativity) and performing arts (intangible creativity) as mixed pedagogy.

Theoretical Framework

Tomasello's Theory of Ontogeny

This study thrives on the theory of ontogeny, propounded by American developmental psychologist, Michael Tomasello. Tomasello's theory of ontogeny is basically about the origination and development of the human being. Ontogeny is the developmental history of a living organism, and in this case, a child. While Haeckel remains the father of ontogeny, and many theorists of ontogeny focus on evolution, this paper pivots around Tomasello's developmental theory of ontogeny, as forwarding elements of human uniqueness. Tomasello's theory of ontogeny explains how those things that make us human are characteristically built during the first years of a child's life. Tomasello believes that the skills of social recognition are connected to culture, cultural and creative learning.

The assertion by Fler and Veresov (2018) on the studies of Michael Tomasello having a linkage to the theories of Lev

Vigotsky and Jerome Bruner, about early childhood education and sharing some semblances consolidates the argument that opportunities for kids to relate with adults in their upbringing must be taken into consideration. In essence, what a child sees daily in his immediate environment determines what he does growing up. Fler & Veresov (2018) affirm that in Tomasello's research he connects to the existing theories of social cognition and develops them further "towards a neo-Vygotskyan approach". They further adduced that he describes human development as a close interplay between evolutionary and cultural dynamics of development. The dialectical logic is a basic element of socio-cultural theories.

By all appearances, the cognitive skills of human beings are very different from those of other animal species, including our nearest primate relatives. Human beings and only human beings cognize the world in ways leading to the creation and use of natural languages, complex tools and technologies, mathematical symbols, graphic symbols from map to art, and complicated social institutions, such as government and religions (Tomasello & Rakoczy 2003).

And so, if we imagine a human child born in a desert island, who somehow magically survives until adulthood, it is possible that this adult's cognitive skills would not differ very much – perhaps a little, but not very much from those of other great apes. This person would certainly not invent by him or herself a natural language or calculus or science or government (Tomasello & Rakoczy, 2003). Human children and their nearest primate relatives share many processes of social learning. For example, human infants and the infants of both chimpanzees and rhesus monkeys mimic the mouth movements of a demonstrator from soon after birth. In addition, slightly older human infants and the infants of other primate species engage in so-called emulation learning in which the infant sees a physical transformation in the environment caused by the action of another (Tomasello, 2015).

Overview of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

In describing education as a process of how to change a child's life to be better, Septianti et al. (2021) did not foreclose its long-run benefits. In their words: "the quality or not, of a person's life in the future is determined by early education as the foundational education." To understand the meaning of early

childhood education, one must first know what early childhood encompasses. This period generally refers to the time from birth to around eight years old. It's a critical stage in human development where rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth occurs. Early childhood is when children begin to develop foundational skills and build the framework for future learning (University of North Dakota, 2024). Early Childhood Education, (ECE) means education for a child in the pre-schooling age category. It has been discovered that children learn even much earlier than we think, by engaging their immediate environments.

Early childhood institutions date back to the late 18th century (Willekens & Scheiwe, 2020). In the eyes of many cultural institutions and traditions, across many centuries and societies, children's sixth or seventh birthday heralds their entry into the 'age of reason'. This shift – still culturally effective today by starting school and formal learning – not only decouples early childhood from other educational institutions but also works in favour of a differentiated understanding of education and profession (Tomasello, 2019). Effectiveness studies such as the *Perry preschool* or the *Abecedarian project*, among others, have shown – over a period of 40-50 years – how sustainable

high-quality childhood education can be for the whole lifespan. At the international level, early childhood education has also become increasingly significant in the context of the demand "education for all" (UNICEF Inter-Agency Commission, 1990).

In early childhood education the preponderance of play methods of teaching easily finds fortress in the visual and performing arts domain. As acknowledged by Sari et al. (2020) that art education is not carried out so that children would become artists, but to instill art-like characteristics in them, duly responds to this assertion.

Early Childhood Education (ECE), Early Childhood Development (ECD), Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC): Variations and Connections

Nobel laureate and frontline Economist, James J. Heckman was reported by UND (2024) as having highlighted the importance of early investments in Early Childhood Development, ECD. Heckman argued that the earliest rate of return in early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible. Starting at age 3 or 4 is a little too late. The University of North Dakota buttressed further that Heckman's research

prescribed that the most effective and efficient interventions occur from birth to age 5, setting the stage for better outcomes, later in life.

There are interesting variations in the spectrum of childcare and education whose interconnectedness are necessary to be highlighted in the current study. Early Childhood Education (ECE) was defined by UND (2024) as a field of study focused on the care, development, and learning of young children during the early childhood period. The aim is to prepare children for formal schooling and support their overall development in terms of their cognitive, social, and motor skills through play-based and experiential learning.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's vision for Early Childhood Development acknowledges the centrality of adequate policies, programmes and practices in protecting and fulfilling the survival, growth and development rights of all children in early life. The policy defines the programming principles to be applied in all our work; "A menu of multi-sectoral actions across a range of UNICEF programme areas- nutrition, health, education and adolescent development, water and sanitation, child protection

and social policy; and a set of implementation strategies, which are tailored to each country's context (UNICEF, 2023). The above remark, by Catherine Russell, Executive Director, UNICEF, in her Preface, written on the published *UNICEF 2023 ECD, UNICEF vision for every child* (2023) aptly framed the meaning of ECD in a nutshell.

While ECE and ECD are distinct, they are deeply interconnected. ECD focuses broadly on a child's physical, emotional, and psychological growth, while ECE emphasizes structured educational approaches to support that development. Essentially, ECE provides the educational framework that complements ECD so that children receive both the care and the learning opportunities they need to reach their fullest potential. Both work hand in hand, as high-quality early education supports all aspects of a child's development (UND, 2024). Given the above expatiations, it is also good to highlight the third category, which is Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). ECCE is often used interchangeably with ECE. However, ECCE is more comprehensive because it not only covers child education but combines health, nutrition, security and other important aspects of a child's

development. In other words, ECCE stands for a combination of ECE and ECD.

Aside the above concepts, there is yet another category, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), which is a variant of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). The ECEC acronym as projected by some scholars, like Guevara (2022), Kagan (2020), Kagan (2018) and Urban et al. (2012) might be interpreted with slight variations in contexts, but it is generally understood to represent the same as ECCE. This is evidenced in this expatiation by Guevara (2022): "Early childhood services not only include ECEC provision but also family leave, parenting programmes, income transfers, and healthcare". "Systemic approaches", by the reckonings of Kagan (2020), Urban et al. (2012), and Kagan (2018) acknowledge that ECEC does not exist in a vacuum, but rather in a system that connects policy, practice, and research across different actors and actants.

Early Childhood Education (ECE): The global perspective

As stipulated in the Convention on the Right of the Child (United Nations, 1989) children's right to education is undeniable and its importance, well documented by international policy makers. Also, in the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the United Nations (2015) set a benchmark for all countries to ensure access to high-quality pre-primary education with a minimum of one year before compulsory school by the year 2030. UNICEF (2019, 4) reported that "Only half of the world's pre-school-age children receive this early benefit. 175 million boys and girls are not enrolled in pre-primary education during these vital years of their lives. In low-income countries, nearly 8 in 10 children – 78 percent – are missing out on this opportunity.

The above submissions represent the precariousness of the situation as a global emergency. However, in the words of Karlsson (2017), "ensuring quality education is not about investing in education, it is about the conceptualization and construction of high-quality education. Equally regretting the current trend, Brown (2015), stated that the focus on top-down standardization of de-contextualized measurable goals are learning outcomes that contrast with the Early Childhood Education tradition. The tradition, according to Sims (2017) and Moss (2019), bears a pedagogy of a holistic, integrated perspective on play,

care, and learning, and a focus on children's strengths and potentials.

There must be a clear commitment to aligning benchmarks into actual education systems and ensuring access for all children to high-quality early childhood education (UNESCO, 2022). The United Nations concept of "aligning benchmarks into actual education systems" is in tandem with the assertion of Karlsson (2017); "conceptualizing and constructing" of the same.

Interestingly, findings from research indicate that ECE teachers find ways of resisting top-down policies 'revealing educators' complex, nuanced and subversive responses to discursive policy manoeuvres' to ensure a child-centred pedagogy (Archer, 2022, p. 431). Top-down policies mentioned above are policies that consider the higher echelons of education before the lower ones.

Arts-based and *laisser-faire* pedagogies in ECE

To capture the plurality of art, and thereby avoid extensional worries, definitions often become dangerously complex, borderline arbitrary, or circular. Although there may not be a universally accepted definition of art, any attempt to define the concept must take some

critical issues into account (Udhir & Magnus, 2011). This assertion also applies to teaching methods that could be definitely termed arts-based. However, if art is involved in teaching, then, learning becomes arts-based. For pre-literate children (Wright, 2007) the visual arts are a primary means through which they can explore and share their perceptions of the world. The visual arts can help children to communicate ideas that cannot be expressed verbally, which is particularly important for children with English as a second language. Sari, Ardipal and Wirman (2020) affirmed that art education allows students to engage in various application experiences as well as creative experiences "to produce a product in the form of real objects that benefit students directly".

Contrary to the cognitively involving nature of art-oriented learning, *laisser-faire* pedagogies are too play-like and so extremely casual that their chances of acquiring intended results are usually too narrow. While it is understandable that pre-primary schooling is play-oriented, it does not translate to uncontrolled leisure, neither should it be so informal to the point where the teacher loses control and target while guiding the kids. *Laisser-faire* is not exactly the same as having to do with performing arts or poetry. From

pedagogical perspectives, performing art is more serious than *laissez-faire* learning while visual art is more tangible than performing art. Craft, McCannon and Matthews (2012) acknowledge that the visual arts invite experimentation and exploration, and as such, support the development of creativity and what has been described as 'possibility thinking'.

The visual arts also support children to communicate with each other, particularly when teachers create opportunities for them to work on shared projects or to explore common interests together (Christensen & Kirkland, 2009). While *laissez-faire* teaching could easily come to mind in ECE, teachers should understand that demonstrative pedagogies, such as visual and performing arts, are best for kids because they like to copy what they see. Imaginative skills cannot be developed only by freelance play and uncontrolled interaction. Makarau et al. (2022) affirmed that imagination, skills, speech, activity and fostering a sense of fun are part of early childhood creativity. Inomjonovna and Qizi (2022) refer to artistic activities that involve children at an early age, usually between the ages 3 and 8, as forms of performances on stage. These performing arts involve various forms, such as drama, music, dance,

puppet theatre and circus arts which are adapted to the abilities and interests of children at an early age.

Like the visual arts, the performing arts are very receptive for children's education. It is important for educators and parents to support children's participation in the performing arts and provide a supportive environment for the development of their artistic potential (Møller-Skau & Lindstøl, 2022). It is safe to say that both visual and performing arts help in developing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills of a growing child. This is why learning at early childhood is essentially 'musicalized', 'dramatized' and 'aestheticized' in sharp contrast with the extremely poem-singing and recitation-oriented approach. Sari, Ardipal and Wirman (2020) affirm that Art Education allows a child or learner to give birth to their imagination, pour out their hearts, or express in an aesthetic context, whether it be through the activities of Dance Arts, Music Arts, Performing Arts, or Fine Arts.

Statement of the problem

Early childhood education is a starting point for a child's development and the key foundation of the Nigerian Educational System. This type of

education is recognized by the Nigeria National Policy on Education (FRN, 2012). As an educational level for a child, it provides for the physical, psychomotor, health, nutritional, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional and social development of the pre-school child. If child education can provide these vital developments which are fundamental in human life, it is not, therefore, unlikely to have an important and strong relationship with the pupils' performance at the primary school level and perhaps at the secondary and tertiary levels (Nakpodia, 2003). Early Childhood Education experiences have so far proved to be useful in providing children with high sense of security, welfare and physical love while their parents are at work. Such parents no doubt, have peace of mind each time they remember that their children are in safe hands (Amadi, 2013).

Irrespective of the above known facts, there exist pedagogical lacunae largely stemming from the management structure of the pre-primary school system in Nigeria, which unfortunately, is dominated by private sector educationists. According to Lawal (2006) nursery education in Nigeria is purely and entirely informal and is left to private operators, parents and the local community. Amadi (2013) posited that

Early Childhood Care Education with a duration of 3 years requires that children, like very tender growing plants, are carefully nurtured into stable personalities. This again, demands that requisite facilities and materials be made available for the full and proper development of the potential of young children.

Early schooling in most parts of Nigeria is presumed to be faulty because of the strict responsorial approaches used by most teachers to match the writing and reading methods. It is common knowledge that most times, the crèche, nursery, or kindergarten kids do more of call-and-response learning than manipulative and kinesthetically involving learning. Plato advocated that at the primary school stage, for children seven to ten years old, the curriculum should include games, gymnastics and sports, music, arts and crafts, story-telling for moral and spiritual development (Nakpodia & Achugbue, 2020). But unfortunately, the efforts of the early schools run by private educationists in Nigeria seem to be revolving more, around poem singing and responsorial learning. Given the fact that the little kids are made to respond to the prompting of a teacher, in oral and written education, for the greater part of

the schooling hours, educators in the creative art sector remain suspicious of the kind of development experienced by kids developing only oral and written educational foundations, without the kinesthetic or psychomotor aspects.

Apart from very narrow spaces that serve as classrooms in most of the pre-schooling centres, there is insignificant provision for instructional materials in the schools, most of which are privately owned. Though reading and writing are usually explored in pre-schooling, the blending of visual art with the performing art strategies has yet to be significant across major crèches, nursery or kindergarten schools. The benefits of combining visual and performing art methods in teaching the little kids are yet to be fully tapped into. The matter is worsened by the insufficiency of trained teachers in the core visual and performing arts-related subjects, such as; Fine Arts, Music and Drama. The age bracket of the kids involved in pre-schooling naturally fancies kinesthetic and aesthetic engagements a lot. It is regrettable that there is yet very minimal use of arts-based approaches in pre-schooling in Nigeria.

Research objectives

The study sought to examine the benefits of a systematically combined visual and performing arts pedagogy for early childhood learners in an off-school, non-formal setting, which could be replicated in schools and at homes. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the extent to which early childhood learners respond to *laissez-faire* instructional approach.
2. Examine the degree to which the learners adapt to visual and performing arts pedagogies.
3. Evaluate the pedagogical prospects of hybridizing visual and performing arts methodologies for teaching Fine art, Drama and Music as independent subjects for early childhood learners.

Research questions

Accordingly, the following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do early childhood learners respond to *laissez-faire* instructional approach?
2. To what degree do the learners adapt to visual and performing arts pedagogies?

3. What are the possible pedagogical prospects of hybridizing visual and performing arts methodologies for teaching Fine art, Drama, and Music as independent subjects for early childhood learners?

Scope of the study

The focus of this study was on the use of visual and performing arts-related pedagogies, which involves all the approaches that translate to exposing early childhood learners to: illustrative, assemblage, musical, dance, choreographic, and poetic learning. Only learners who passed the eligibility criteria tests were allowed to participate in the exercise. The study was hosted in a private auditorium at Ikenegbu, in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria, during the September 2023 long vacation.

Methods and Materials

Research design

The experimental design was adopted for this study. Anastas (1999) averred that experimental research attempts to establish a cause-and-effect relationship in a situation or

phenomenon. It is a casual research design type where the researcher tries to observe the impact of a variable on a

dependent one. In doing so, the researcher attempts to determine or predict what may occur based on experimental models.

Experimental research involves the use of control groups, randomization and standard procedures to ensure the reliability of results. One or more independent variables are manipulated and applied to one or more dependent variables to measure their effects on the dependent variables. The effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables are recorded over a period, to help the researcher in drawing conclusions or making predictions about the relationship between the two sets of variables.

In the case of this study, the experimental group was subjected to hybridized visual and performing arts pedagogy while the control group was not. Data elicited were both quantitative and qualitative, meaning that the study is a mixed-methods experimental research.

Participants and sampling

Following online and physical appeals made to their parents, 300 kids were initially sought to join the experiment but 150 were brought for sampling on a specified date. Stratified random

sampling was conducted using the participant eligibility criteria adopted: (i) Age: 1-5 years, (ii) Residence: Owerri municipal and (iii) Mental state: typical. Out of the 150, some of whom are siblings, 20 were over 5 years old and were dropped. Out of the remaining 130

(80 boys and 50 girls), 8 were holidaying in Owerri Municipal and not residents, and so were also dropped. The remaining 122 that passed the eligibility and sampling were split into experimental and control groups equally; 61 kids in each group as seen in Table 1.

Table 1: *Participation Eligibility and Sampling*

	Invitation	Age bracket (1-5 yrs)	Gender	Residence	Mental state	Final participant
1	Initial: 300	Above 5 years: 20	Boys: 80	Owerri Municipal: 122	Typical: 122	Experimental group: 61
2	Arrived and screened: 150	Within 5 years: 130	Girls: 50	Outside Owerri: 8	Atypical: 0	Control group: 61
3	150 cancelled	20 dropped	130 crossed	8 dropped	122 crossed	Total: 122
Note. Culled from Ogu et al (2024)						

Study instruments

The first instrument was the researcher-designed Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Curriculum (H-VISPERF-APC), which was specifically, the syllabus for the subjects of intervention. For 2 weeks (6 days; 3 days per week and 2 hours per day) the H-VISPERF-APC was employed thus: Mondays- English, Tuesdays -

Mathematics, and Fridays - a combination of the Visual and Performing Arts subjects including Art, Music and Drama. The target of this experiment was the development of children's cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills. On the other hand, visual and performing arts pedagogies were applied thus: Mondays and Tuesdays- English and Mathematics,

Fridays– Art, Music and Drama, combined as subjects on their own (See Appendix 1).

The second instrument, Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Response Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-APRPRC), was also designed by the researcher for gathering observation-based scores and percentage conversion. The H-VISPERF-APRPRC was deployed in both weeks of the experiment, for comparative result and discussion purposes. English, Mathematics and Physics, on Mondays and Tuesdays, respectively, were conventional subjects used to test visual and performing arts pedagogies, then Art, Music and Drama, on Fridays, were presented as combined subjects of study in mixed pedagogy. Response rating was, first of all, on an individual scale of 1–10, then afterwards, on a 5-group scale of: 0–39 (Fail); 40–49 (Poor); 50–59 (Good); 60–69 (Very good); 70–100 (Excellent). The number of kids that scored points (1–10) was placed within their group categories for final grading. The results of the second week were compared with those of the first week, per subject and pedagogy, for progress rating. The final results were converted into percentages for discussion (see Appendix 2).

The third instrument was the Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Post-Experiment Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-AP-P-EPRC) used to record comparative results between the experimental group and the control group during the post-experiment exercises in the third week. The essence of the post-experiment exercise was to ascertain the levels of difference between the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills acquired by members of the experimental group, compared to the control group that was not treated to the experiment. To attain this, the normal subjects: English and Mathematics were used while Art, Music and Drama were dropped. The rating scales were the same as those used during the experiments (see Appendix 3).

Validation of instruments

After major adjustments and pilot-testing, the instruments designed by the researcher were validated by two experts in Visual Art Education from the Department of Fine and Industrial Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, and 2 experts in performing arts from the department of Theatre and Film Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Procedure for Data Analysis

Data were analyzed based on each kid's initial score per subject, as ordinary point, on a scale of 1–10. Scoring was based on direct observation. Afterwards, all the kids whose scores per subject fell within the first cluster of 0–39 (Fail); the second cluster of 40–49 (Poor); the third, 50–59 (Good); the fourth, 60–69 (Very Good) and the fifth 70–100 (Excellent) were put in their appropriate clusters. The total scores per subject, in a day, must add up to 61, being the working population. Likewise, the total of each cluster's percentage conversions must add up to 100%. The same approach was used to aggregate and discuss data gathered from the post-experimental stage of the study, in the third week. Generally, each research question was responded to, by data gathered per day, in ascending order. This means that data for Week 1 reflected responses to the three research Questions: RQ1 (Monday), RQ2 (Tuesday), RQ3 (Friday). A similar discussion was generated for the second week, to ascertain the level of progress or change attained per subject. The analyses were done comparatively.

Findings

The findings of the study were first captured on the Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Response Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-APRPRC) designed to elicit responses on the 3 research questions guiding the study at a glance (see Table 1). The second segment of the findings was based on the post-experiment tests, as contained in Table 2.

Table 2 contains the distribution and percentage rating of participants' responses on the three research questions, thus:

1. **(English)** the extent to which childhood learners respond to *laissez-faire* teaching.
2. **(Mathematics)** the extent to which the kids adapt to visual and performing arts pedagogies.
3. **(Art, Music & Drama)** prospects of hybridizing visual and performing art pedagogies for teaching Fine art, Drama and Music as independent subjects for early childhood learners($n=61$).

Table 2: *Distribution and Percentage Rating of the Data*

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Response Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-APRPRC)												
Week 1	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	Very good (%)	Excellent (%)	Week 2	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	Very good (%)	Excellent (%)	Remarks
Mon [English] Laissez-faire teaching	-	22	39	-	-	Mon [English] Laissez-faire teaching	6	15	40	-	-	Very Low Extent
	-	36.06%	63.93%	-	-		9.84%	24.59%	65.57%	-	-	
Tues [Maths] Adaptation to V-P/Art pedagogy	-	-	3	3	55	Tues [Maths] Adaptation to P/Art pedagogy	-	-	-	9	52	Very High Extent
	-	-	4.92%	4.92%	90.16%		-	-	-	14.75%	85.25%	
Fri [Art, Music & Drama] Hybridizing V/P/Arts	-	-	-	5	56	Fri [Art, Music & Drama] Hybridizing V/P/Arts	-	-	-	1	60	Very high prospects
	-	-	-	8.2%	91.8%		-	-	-	1.64%	98.36%	
Key: Individual rating;1-10 Group rating; 0-39(fail); 40-49 (Poor); 50-59 (Good); 60-69 (Very good); 70-100(Excellent) Note. Authors' compilation												

The result above shows that teaching English with the *laissez-faire* methods as done on Monday of the first week was counter-productive. This is because 22 (36.06%) of the kids made poor grades and 39(63.93%) were merely rated 'good'; none was rated 'very good' and none was rated as 'Excellent'. On Monday of the second week, 6 (9.84%) failed, 15 (24.59%) polled poor ratings and 40 (65.57%) fell within the 'good' scores category. Again, none was neither 'very good' nor 'Excellent' in the rating. This implies that non-methodical teaching has a negative impact on the understanding and psyche of the kids.

On the adaptation of visual and performing arts-related pedagogies for teaching mathematics, the result shows that on Tuesday of the first week, the 'good' and 'very good' score categories has 3 (4.92%) each, while 55 (90.16%) kids scored 'Excellent' within 70-100% rating. On Tuesday of the second week, 9 (14.75%) kids polled within the 'very good' score range and 52 (85.25%) fell within 'Excellent'.

On Friday of the first week, on using visual and performing arts pedagogies to teach same subjects, 5 (8.2 %) of the kids scored within the range of 'very good' while 56 (91.8%) fell within the 'Excellent' score category, none was in the non-affirmative range. On the second Friday, the high performance was consolidated when only 1 (1.64%) scored within the 'very good' range while an outstanding number of 60 (98.36 %) scored within the 'Excellent' category. This proves that visual and performing arts pedagogies are good for teaching other subjects, as well as Fine Arts, Drama or Music as independent subjects

After the experiments, both groups were taken on a joint normal pedagogy – post-experiment class, with the conventional subjects: English and Mathematics for a comparative test on the manifestation of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills. The visual and performing arts subjects (Art, Drama and Music) were excluded, to ensure neutrality. Table 3 presents the findings of the post-experiment class.

Table 3: Distribution and Percentage Rating of Data on the Post-Experiment Classes for both Groups (n=61)

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Post-Experiment Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-AP-P-EPRC)												
Experimental Grp	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	Very good (%)	Excl (%)	Control Grp	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	Very good (%)	Excl (%)	Remarks
Wk 3 Mon English	-	-	-	22	39	Wk 3 Mon English	15	25	21	-	-	Exp group prevailed
	-	-	-	36.07%	63.91%		24.59%	40.98%	34.43%	-	-	
Wk 3 Tues Math	-	-	9	21	31	Wk 3 Tues Math	-	35	16	10	-	Exp group prevailed
	-	-	14.75%	34.43%	50.82%		-	57.38%	26.23%	16.39%	-	
Key: Individual rating;1-10 Group rating; 0-39(fail); 40-49 (Poor); 50-59 (Good); 60-69 (Very good); 70-100(Excellent) Note. Authors' compilation												

Table 3 shows findings for the post-experiment joint class in the third week. During English normal pedagogy lessons, 22 (36.07%) of the experimental group scored within the 'very good', the rest of 39 (63.91%) polled 'Excellent' and none was in the poorer categories. For the control group 15 (24.59%) failed, 25 (40.98%) had 'poor' scores, only 21 (34.43%) managed to score 'good'. For mathematics, the experimental group members distinguished themselves, with only 9 (14.75%) falling within the 'good'

score range, 21 (34.43%) were in the 'very good' score range, 31 (50.82%) polled 'Excellent' and none was in the negative range of 'fail' and 'poor'. For the control group members 35 (57.38%) of the kids made poor scores, 16 (26.23%) fell within the 'good' score range, only 10 (16.39%) made the 'very good' score bar; though none failed, none was able to get within the 'Excellent' score range.

Discussion

The holiday experiment showed clearly why it is needful for visual and

performing arts to be introduced as a joint pedagogy into pre-primary schooling in Nigeria. Evidences from the findings on Mondays of the first two weeks shows that the children in Owerri municipal, during classes on English, responded to a very minimal extent, to *laissez-faire* pedagogies because of their non-guided and carefree nature. The responses could also not be rated very highly because *laissez-faire* teaching methods mostly yield results by chance. The rate of redundancy bred by such methods is usually unbearable. It also means that result-minded teaching does not encourage *laissez-faire* thinking.

The next experiment on Tuesdays of the first two weeks of the total experiments show repeated affirmative results, proving that to a very high extent, kids in Owerri municipal adapt more to performing art-related pedagogies (drama, poetry, choreography, and musical approaches) for mathematics classes.

Further, experiments conducted on Fridays of the first two experimental weeks revealed that visual and performing arts-based subjects are credible as independent pedagogies for teaching other subjects. There are also very high prospects for using them to

teach either of Fine arts, Drama or Music, as independent subjects. Apart from the issues revealed above, the post-experiment week, being the third week of the study, proved further that though the experimental group was exposed to *laissez-faire* pedagogy on the Mondays of the first and second weeks, for a test, exposure to other arts-based pedagogies on Tuesday and Friday of the previous two weeks were essential as the experimental group advanced beyond the control group cognitively, affectively and psychomotor-wise.

On normal mathematics lessons, during the post-experiment, the contrast in the score ranges shows that the experimental group members were already ahead of the control group, because of their exposure to the visual and performing arts pedagogies in the previous weeks. The visual art and illustrative learning pedagogies gave members of the experimental group wide intellectual edges above their mates in the control group.

Recommendations and conclusion

Whereas administrators and proprietors of most basic schools, especially the privately-owned ones, commonly called private schools in Nigeria, try to equip the schools, to the best of their ability,

the subsisting attention appears too science- based, that arts-based instructional media and pedagogies have not been given adequate consideration. In fact, the general public's idea of an equipped school in Nigeria is a school with few computers, attractive uniforms, school bus, factory-made chairs and desks. But in actual sense, to equip a modern school is beyond that. Factors like: learning spaces, multi-stage instructional media, trained and professional teachers for specific subjects, illustrative and entrepreneurial pedagogies are also essential.

The theoretical foundation of the current study, (Tomasello's theory of Ontogeny), is aptly fitting, given its socio-cultural bearings. In other words, whatever you make a culture becomes your human culture, arts-based learning inclusive. The results of this study also find explanation in the assertion of Fleer and Veresov (2018) linking the studies of Michael Tomasello to the theories of Lev Vigotsky and Jerome Bruner, about early childhood education, and also, showing some semblances and consolidating the fact that opportunities for kids to relate with adults in their upbringing must be taken into consideration. A good blending of visual and performing arts pedagogies would incorporate nearly all that

curriculum implementers at the pre-schooling and primary education level need, to be able to make better use of instructional media and kinesthetic learning possibilities. Tomasello (2016) stated that "From very early in ontogeny human infants and young children do not just learn useful things from others; they conform to others in order to affiliate with them and to identify with the cultural group".

Ethical considerations

The parents of the children were informed by writing, e-mailing, telephone communication, and personal communication, before they granted their permissions, mostly on the grounds that security and welfare of the children must be provided adequately. Some of the kids were accompanied by mature family members who eventually joined the research assistants where the need arose. The resource persons who approved the research instruments were officially informed and their consents obtained, likewise all other authorities that needed to be formally involved.

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Conflict of interests

No conflicts of interest arose throughout the stages of this research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Curriculum (H-VISPERF-APC)

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Curriculum (H-VISPERF-APC)

	Wks 1 & 2 – Monday	Wks 1 & 2 -Tuesday	Wks 1 & 2 – Friday
1 Duration	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
2 H-VISPERF-APC subjects	English	Mathematics	Art, Music and Drama
3 Pedagogies	Drawing, modeling, music, drama	Drawing, modeling, music	Drawing, singing, acting, dance, choreography
4 Learning outcomes	Development of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills	Development of cognitive skills	Development of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills
5 Materials	Pencils, papers, crayons, text books, chalks, board markers, white boards, dummies, teddies, etc.	Papers, pens, chalks, pencils, dummies, white boards, board markers, teddies, etc.	Papers, pens, chalks, pencils, dummies, white boards, board markers, teddies, drums, metal gongs, rattle calabash, costumes, etc.

Source: Jovita C. Ogu et al (Research 2024)

Appendix 2

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Response Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-APRPRC)

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Response Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-APRPRC)

Week 1	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	V. gd (%)	Excl (%)	Week 2	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	V. gd (%)	Excl (%)	Remarks
Mon [English] Laisser-faire teaching						Mon [English] Laisser-faire teaching						
Tues [Maths] Adaptation to P/Art pedagogy						Tues [Maths] Adaptation to P/Art pedagogy						
Fri [Art, Music & Drama] Hybridizing V/P/Arts						Fri [Art, Music & Drama] Hybridizing V/P/Arts						

Key: Individual rating;1-10

Group rating;0-39(*fail*); 40-49 (*Poor*); 50-59 (*Good*); 60-69 (*Very good*); 70-100(*Excellent*)

Source: Jovita C. Ogu et al (Research 2024)

Appendix 3

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Post-Experiment Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-AP-P-EPRC)

Hybridized Visual and Performing Arts Pedagogies Post-Experiment Percentage Rating Chart (H-VISPERF-AP-P-EPRC)												
Experimental Grp	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	V. gd (%)	Excl (%)	Control Grp	Fail (%)	Poor (%)	Good (%)	V. gd (%)	Excl (%)	Remarks
Wk 3 Mon English						Wk 3 Mon English						
Wk 3 Tues Maths						Wk 3 Tues Maths						
Key: Individual rating;1-10 Group rating;0-39(fail); 40-49 (Poor); 50-59 (Good); 60-69 (Very good); 70-100(Excellent) Source: Jovita C. Ogu et al (Research 2024)												