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Art, Music, Dance, Sporting Activity and Literature in School Curriculum

Culture is the vehicle by which knowledge passes from generation to generation. It is a culture which defines people. For instance, one group of people is different from another due to the variations in cultural values. A particular community may like fishing while another may take pleasure in hunting. The patterns of behavior witnessed different groups of people in the world owe back to their specific culture. There are, however, some aspects of culture which need to pass from one generation to another. People who abandon their culture face a lot of changes in life because a lot, which aggregates to knowledge, lacks in their lives. This paper supports the proposition that art dance, music, sports, and literature should feature in school curriculum from pre- k to the 12th grade due to the following reasons:

First, art and literature help in the upbringing of children. They facilitate the development of children's consciousness and personal outlook. Teachers should teach learners as early as grade 1 how to read and evaluate stories. The reason is that stories make learners to "distinguish between good and evil," and therefore, they will be able to behave according to the expectation of their community. Early childhood literature stories include fairy tales which the teacher should either read for the learners to listen or read with the students. According to Folch, fairy tales and fantasy usually "re-enchant the world"(Folch, par. 5). Afterward, it is the responsibility of the teacher to

explain the meaning of different parts of the story and give the general moral lesson. On the side of adolescents, their literature should present some levels of complexity, which is lower than that of the college students. There are a lot of themes which touch issues in our contemporary society.

A good example is Chinua Achebe's novel, "Things Fall Apart." When students interact with such themes as male chauvinism, love, and marriage, colonialism, primitive and civilized culture, etc., they learn the history of the Igbo community and aspects of life and culture. Chinua's novel explores Igbo as a community that was "socio-politically stronger than other nations" (Prakash P. 2, Par. 4). During their reading, they will be able to relate the incidence in the book with experiences which they, their families or communities went through. Art, on the other hand, present a higher form of self-reflection. Learners will explore their lives and those of their friends and families through art. Take, for instance, a learner who learns how to draw pencil art. Usually, there is no art which comes as an inspiration. People create that which their community experiences or have, and therefore, the message in art comes out positively. Artcraft provides moral support to children and young adults. For the lower and middle classes, curriculum developers should design books which pictorially present information more than in the written words. For example, a pre-k learner will associate a female drawing with his or her mother and therefore may other live experiences attach to the image of the mother in the picture.

Secondly, art, music, dance, sport, and literature improves communication skills in learners. Speaking or expressing a message to other people is hard. Learners learn the art of communicating effectively through the mentioned educational aspects. Music and literature are very fundamental in the teaching of vocabulary, pronunciation of words, and presenting the message directly or figuratively depending on the level of the learner. For the lower and middle classes, the learner should be taught communication skill in the simplest way possible. For

example, a teacher may appoint a student to tell a story which he or she told the class some few days or months ago. Now that the learners know the storyline, they will find their words to make the story resemble the original one. By so doing the students will use the unconscious vocabulary hence become aware of their ability to use a variety of words with different level of difficulty? For the upper classes, the curriculum developers should include novels that the students will read and analyze. There is a lot of language use in the literature that students should familiarise. For instance, proverbs and wise sayings are elements of language which students should learn. A community that does not embrace the study of literature may stumble and fall because language and culture co-exist. In the teaching of drama, which should occur in the upper classes, students interact with dialogues of characters that mimic the structure of the real speech. There, learners will be able to identify the characters' feelings, thoughts, and actions through the words they use. Also, learners will know the conventions that are acceptable in conversation.

Drawings communicate a wide range of information, and therefore, learners should study art as early as pre- k level. The teacher should teach simple skills in the drawing which convey meaning. For instance, the pre- k teacher may instruct his or her students to draw a hen and eggs. What comes in the mind of the learner is that hens lay eggs which people feast and thus hens are essential birds. On the other hand, students at the adolescent stage may learn to associate a particular item with certain information. When one draws a broken heart, it is an indication of an expected breaking of friendship. If the curriculum does not include art, then students will grow up unaware of signs around them, and therefore, the community will not be rich in the communication signal. Literature makes a student aware of the "self and surroundings" (Easterlin, p. 676, par. 2). The art which the 9th – 12th grades should study is a bit sophisticated than the lower and middle classes. It should prepare them to interact with such media in the community. Also important, the

skills in the art can earn the learners good jobs. For example, in the NGOs which deal with community intervention programs like health and medical programs may employ someone with the knowledge of fine art to help the design communication posters.

Thirdly, we should have syllabi for art, music, dance, sports activities, and literature because they will facilitate the student's self-development. In short, the learner will understand his or her social, moral, and emotional development about those of others. The reason behind it is that the syllabi will ensure the interaction of the students. Art, music, and dance are performed collaboratively by all students. Developing socially will impact much on the life of the individual society. Since time immemorial members of the community uphold the virtue of oneness. Therefore, curriculum developers should ensure the curriculum includes art, music, and dance for socialization. In contemporary society, many students do not get enough time for stories with their mothers. Also, modernity brought with its individualism and thus, families do not embrace neighborhood as they did in the past. Folch holds that by learning the culture of others, "we learn about ourselves" (Folch, par. 4). Therefore, the only opportunity which students should satisfy their social nature is through participation in music and dance in school.

In terms of moral support, students will learn from each other since they interact in various activities of art, music, and dance. Students who lack moral support grow up dull and naughty, and later in a lifetime he or she becomes a social misfit. The society needs members who value support each other in life. Thus, the best way to mold society is through feeding the students with the correct knowledge. Imagine a situation where students concentrate on mathematics and science. They will never know simple lifestyle strategies that people adopt when misfortune befalls them or when there is a big problem involving individual, families, and the community. A good example is the current reported cases of suicide among contemporary youth. The big question that

facilitates death is lack of problem-solving skills which people learn through interaction. It is the society which teaches people values and out of the values a person devises his or her values. According to Ray, the ancient American disliked women who acted as “objects of lust. (p. 2, par. 3) Interactions, for instance, will teach the students kindness, generosity, trustworthy, among other social values. Personal values will help each student to maintain moral standards since they will not want to go against what their society. Always, moral values will dictate the way student talk to and treat one another.

Fourthly, learning is effective in situations which involve laughing and getting excited. In short, entertainment is fundamental in learning because learners, especially those lower and the middle classes learn better through humorous activities which strike at their curiosity and expectation. A good teacher will turn the morning greetings into a short chorus which is easily memorable for the Pre- k learners to grasp. In a classroom teaching-learning process where the teacher narrates stories between the lessons, learners stay alert. They get entertained, and by so doing the teacher drives a point. However, the upper classes may not require much of stories like they do the lower levels. What the curriculum should provide are interesting books in which the authors’ language appeal to the sense of aesthetic. The aesthetic is the “special form of the impulse shaping culture” (Easterlin, p. 663, par. 1). The beauty of language also appeals to the aesthetic need of the students. They will laugh in one incidence and get serious in another. A novel by Frenz Kafkaz, *Metamorphosis*, presents a story which is “simply unrealistic” (Kim, P. 1, par. 3). The fantasy part of the story is where the main character, Gregor, changes to an insect. The rest of the incidences, though fictions mimic reality. Through this, the student’s imaginative nature develops when they fantasize on a kind of life where some members of society transform into alien insects. *Metamorphosis* and other fantasy works make the learners ask philosophical questions about all

creations. For instance, from Kafkaz work, a student may want to know the language that insects use to communicate.

Music and dance appeal to the culture of the society, and therefore, students get the right opportunity to interact with the very culture which mothered their ancestors, grandparents, and parents. Every culture is superior in its rights. For that reason, schools need to teach cultural elements like music, dance, and language (in literature form) to enable students to connect to the root of their community's political, social, and economic life. Ray holds that filmmakers correct "socially unjust laws" (Ray, p. 3, par. 3). When students sing and dance, they get entertained. Curriculum developers should understand the importance of entertainment. In the ancient times when the native communities used to tell night stories; conducted challenge in riddles and tongue twisters; expressed messages through proverbs and wise sayings and sang and danced themselves all the night, the community was healthy and lively. However, modernity brought with it individualism, which affected the social nature of people hence killing the value of entertainment. The many cases of ill- health associated with stress and depression emanate from living "serious" lives. Dance and music help to "Confront stressors" (Hanna, p. 3, par 2). If society can embrace music, dance, art, and sports like wrestling, etc., then its members will live happy lives. In a nutshell, the articles of entertainment cause the following: it brings people together; aims at educating the members of the society; ridicules human folly. Create awareness of ourselves and the immediate environment and caution members of the community against specific actions which maim the very nerve of morality.

Finally, art, music, dance, and literature helps the students to get the true pleasure. When students read through beautiful literature work, enjoy art and dance and sing, there is a great pleasure that he or she gets from the articles. The items bring joy to the people and minimize the

chance of getting bored with life. School life may be the worst patterns of human life if the curriculum fails to incorporate art, music, sports, and literature. Students get used to waking up, walking to school, learning dull subjects, and coming home with full minds. The pattern repeats itself again and again. They need to experience something new in their lives: something which can bring joy and enlighten the darkening corners of their lives. Also, art brings a lot of “pleasure and emotions” (Tiihonen, et al. p. 1, par. 2). When students learn how to weave baskets, make household decorations, and other creative works, they experience joy. Self- fulfillment happens a lot with drawings. A student may draw the image of his or her favorite teacher, parents, neighbors, or any object. Therefore, art should help the students achieve joy regardless of the situations they experience in life. The curriculum developers should, therefore, consider presenting a curriculum which helps students to live joyful lives.

In conclusion, art, music, sport, and literature facilitate learner’s self- reflection. They learn their ability and their incapability. Also, learners will develop language skills in their interaction with poetic language in art, music, and literature. It makes the learners conscious of their level of vocabulary use hence effective writing and speaking skills. Language and culture co-exist, and therefore, the school should strive to incorporate literature in the curriculum. Art, music, and dance help the society to embrace the beauty in their immediate environment and therefore, all the aspects of culture should be taught in class for the learners to become socially fit and bright.

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