

## **The challenges of Sudanese art education curriculum for basic school level in the Digital Age**

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### **Abstract**

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*The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges facing of art education curricula for basic school level in the Digital Age, and finding new approaches to the teaching of art education curricula in the Digital Age.*

*Meaning making new multimedia presents new opportunities and challenges for those working on art education curricula field. How this impacts on art education curriculum that attempts to deliver 'the basics' and to respond to new technology demands careful exploration. This study examines what we mean by digital art, how it differs from traditional art,*

*The student participants will be inducting from all University of Khartoum basic schools, which have completed the basic level. Consists of (32) participants.*

*It is possible to show a correlation in this survey research that will bolster the theory of arts education enhancing in digital age in our students thus a survey of cross-section of our basic school students will point out critical information in addressing the needs of arts education curriculum in the digital age.*

*Although there can be a correlation between the students groups before and after the digital art courses, The results showed there is a significant difference between Students of art education who participated in multiple digital art courses scored higher on technical ability test than the students who have little or no, in digital art.*

*The researcher recommends the scale up and modernizes the art education curricular in the digital age.*

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**Keywords:** Challenges, Art education curriculum, Digital Age

### **Introduction**

One of the obstacles that arts education faces is that it is often taught theoretically at the primary level, and as elective subjects in secondary schools. Artistic practices are based on children's artistic expressions, which are the foundations for creativity, problem solving and critical thinking. The challenges for implementing arts education in Asia include a lack of teacher training, resources and a solid government plan. Moreover, "western" models, which are used in most countries, do not take into consideration traditional cultures, which are not separated from everyday life, and are performed with local materials in a more playful atmosphere outside of formal educational settings, so that children can develop their skills of observation, expression and imagination

Throughout the ages, humanity has regarded fine arts as an indispensable means to develop, enrich and strengthen itself and its society and utilized arts, intentionally and unintentionally, to transmit cultural accumulation, and subsequently, arts. The history of civilizations of societies is also the history of arts. The concept of art originates to the existence of humankind and has always existed in the history of the humankind and served him as an ornament, or a medium to distribute a language or a religion, or as an investment area, or was generated for itself. As civilization developed, a new concept of education was generated: the concept of Art Education. The importance of art education stems from the element of creativity.

Creativity is explained as a type of talent that is more and more valued and sought after in life because creative behavior is directly associated with development and modernization of societies in every field and profession. Therefore, the importance of art education stems from the element of creativity.

The arts have both intrinsic and instrumental value; that is, they have worth in and of themselves and can be used to achieve a multitude of purposes (e.g., to communicate issues and ideas, to persuade, to entertain, to beautify). Beyond the intrinsic value of studying the arts, each arts discipline appeals to different senses and expresses itself through different media, adding richness and engagement to the learning environment. An education in the arts helps students learn to identify, appreciate, and participate in the traditional art forms of their own communities. As students imagine, create, and reflect, they are developing both the verbal and nonverbal abilities necessary for school success. At the same time, the intellectual demands of the arts help students develop problem-solving, critical, and creative thinking abilities. Numerous studies point toward a consistent and positive correlation between a comprehensive education in the arts and student achievement in other subjects and on standardized tests. A comprehensive, articulated arts education program engages and helps students develop the self-esteem, self-discipline, cooperative skills, and self-motivation necessary for success in life.

The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships. Unlike much of the curriculum in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail. The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer. The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world. The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the ability and a willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds. The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor number exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition. The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects. The arts traffic in subtleties. The arts teach students to think through and within a material. All art forms employ some means through which images become real. The arts help children learn to say what cannot be said. When children are invited to disclose what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job.

There are many challenges facing educators who want to bring education into the 21st century. At the same time, the explosion of technology has the potential to make education more available and influential than ever before. Education is taking place on a large stage and is not just confined to schools. We must rethink the foundations of education so it can truly benefit from new technology (Papert P. Markowsky G, 2013).

### ***Objectives of the Study***

1. To investigate of challenges facing of art education curricula in the Digital Age.
2. The development of art education curricula.
3. Finding new approaches to the teaching of art education curricula in the Digital Age.

### ***Methodology of the Study***

The descriptive analytical and experimental methods were used in this research.

### ***Hypotheses of the Study***

1. In order to focus and clarify research in the study the following hypothesis applies. Students of art education who participate in multiple digital art courses will score higher on technical ability test than those students who have little or no, in digital art.
2. The following null hypothesis was developed:
3. No significant statistical differences in the test scores between students who participated in the digital art courses and those who are not.

### ***Methods of the Study***

The proposed research study will be conducted with consenting basic school students from University of Khartoum basic schools. The eligible participants will complete a questionnaire. The eighteen items on the questionnaire will provide data about gender, class in school, score, and participation in the digital art courses at the basic school as well as before art experiences in and outside of school, socioeconomic status, opinion regarding digital art in the school curriculum, extracurricular activities.

**Sample of the Study**

The student participants will be inducting from all University of Khartoum basic schools, which have completed the basic level. Consists of (32) participants.

**Digital age**

The digital age, also called the information age, is defined as the time period starting in the 1970s with the introduction of the personal computer with subsequent technology introduced providing the ability to transfer information freely and quickly.

The Internet and related technologies have sparked the information age, in which the power of computing, digital storage, and communication have been increasing exponentially so as to allow an ever-growing amount of information to be distributed quickly and widely. How can we make sense of this flood of information and use it to enhance our lives rather than overwhelm them? John Seely Brown, chief scientist of Xerox Corporation, describes the tunnel vision that so often limits our view of a technological future by overlooking the social periphery of information— that is, the communities, organizations, and institutions that frame human activity. This social context helps us to better understand both information and how society might move forward with it into an age of knowledge.

Email exchange, discussion boards, and blogs do not depend on co-presence. However, other kinds of digital communication do. Various forms of online chat, instant-messaging and virtual world play fall into this category, often referred to as synchronous communication. Up until relatively recently, synchronous communication has been limited to face-to-face interaction, the use of telephones and video-conferencing. The increased speed and availability of broadband connectivity has led to a proliferation of synchronous communication, most of which is transacted through writing, rather than the spoken word. In the past synchronous communication through writing was relatively rare (the passing of notes in class being a notable exception); now instant-messaging, chatrooms and virtual world play attract large numbers. My own study of teenagers' use of synchronous chat shows how actual and virtual friendships are sustained and new relationships negotiated through these onscreen communicative practices. I observed that when teenagers are online they deploy a whole range of new literacy skills (including the use of symbols, hyperlinks and abbreviations), but it is worth reiterating that these are mediated through rapid typing, motivated by a drive to maintain pace, relationship and the conversational flow of synchronous interaction (Merchant, 2001).

An important ingredient of a good literacy education is to learn about the power, responsibilities and ethical considerations that come into play in communicative settings. And so it could be argued that it is important to examine and critique discourses that relate to wider social issues, power relationships, prejudices or inequities, and indeed that it is part of the function of educational institutions to engage in this sort of work.

In debates over the place of popular culture in school curricula, similar positions have been explored. Whilst the benefits of using popular culture in school settings has been clearly articulated (Marsh, 2005) there is a powerful argument to suggest that an education system has a responsibility to provide the young with the tools and understandings necessary for interpreting the constructed nature of popular culture, and to provide a critical view. Developing the idea of what critical digital literacy might look like may be important here, in following the ideas of Giroux:

'Central to the notion of critical pedagogy is the need to rewrite the dynamics of cultural and pedagogical production as part of a broader vision that extends the principles and practices of human dignity, liberty and social justice' (Giroux, 1994:63).

In educational establishments new tools for writing and reading continue to have a profound impact on the physical geography of classrooms. Computer labs often break with the long tradition of requiring pupils to 'face the front' and, like internet cafes, adopt the idea of the private booths which draw the learner's gaze to the screen rather than into eye contact with the teacher, the board or the text flat on a desk (Holloway and Valentine, 2002).

**Digital Art**

Digital Art can be defined as any art that is made with the help of a computer. Drawings made on paper that are scanned in and changed in any way on the computer, photographs that are modified, 3D characters created using a computer are all examples of digital art.

Art that was created using digital technology in the process of its creation would also be digital art. Obvious examples include computer-generated animation, synthesized music, and computer-designed sculpture. While these works might be presented in traditional media (e.g. film, audio tape and marble), their production was facilitated by the use of digital technology.

Digital art is like any other art. It just is created using different tools than the more traditional arts. Art is not about the tools used to create it. It is about the vision, message, or emotion of the artist. Photography is a medium through which artist's may create art. Likewise, a computer is just a medium or tool through which an artist can express his/her vision of line, form, color, composition and rhythm.

An artist chooses the medium (oils, watercolors, or pixels) she wants to use. When the digital artist, has mastery over the tools and technologies [software, equipment, etc.], she can go beyond "taking a digital picture" or "applying an effect" and create art – an individual expression of her vision.

Digital Art falls into three basic categories: digital painting, digital photography & darkroom, and fractals. There are several subcategories and, of course, the artist can combine any and all to create their own unique vision. Below are descriptions from the Digital Fine Arts Society of New Mexico which accurately describes the various types of Digital Fine Art. Digital Photography, Photo painting, and Integrated Digital Art which characterize my work are, of course, discussed first.

#### Sudanese art education curriculum

In the Republic of the Sudan, the Government has recognized the importance of arts education and the consequential need for policy support and implementation. This recognition provided the foundations of an announcement by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education to promote a comprehensive initiative to facilitate arts education. Over the last two years, the Ministries have planned and implemented various policies to promote arts education across the country. The enactment of The Arts Education Support Law is underway to provide further institutional support.

Two fields within society are positively affected by arts education. Firstly, it creates a demand for professionals in the arts with an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. Secondly, it supports the programs and activities that are needed to establish respect for each other's diversity of historical experience and culture.

The Arts in the republic of the Sudan (Ministry of Education, 2003) The Curriculum describes four strands each with eight levels of achievement objectives. The four strands include: Developing Practical Knowledge in The Visual Arts, Developing Ideas in The Visual Arts, Communicating and Interpreting in The Visual Arts and Understanding the Visual Arts in Context. A range of resources support teachers in interpreting the achievement objectives and implementing the curriculum. These resources include the Arts Curriculum Exemplars (Ministry of Education, 2003b) and a matrix that identifies progress indicators at each level. The matrix describes broad levels of progress that cover up to two to three years of learning, with wording of some indicators remaining constant across two to three levels, in accordance with the achievement objectives. Teachers require further support and guidance to identify indicators of shift in student learning within these levels.

#### **Results**

1. Students of art education who participated in multiple digital art courses scored higher on technical ability test than the students who have little or no, in digital art.

#### **Discussion of the Results**

##### **Statistical analysis:**

T test for independent data will be run to verify the equivalence of experimental and control groups after applying the test of ability and before the implementation of the program.

After the application of the program, the collected data will be analyzed by the statistical program (STATISTICAL PACKAG SOCIAL SEIENCE) (SPSS) using the appropriate statistical treatments.

**Table 1:**

Paired Samples Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	The control group	32	18.9375	1 0.28090	.178
	Experimental group	32	15.4375	2 0.93081	.141

**Table 2:** Pearson correlation

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Aesthetic values before & after	32	.753	.003

Table (2) shows the Pearson correlation. As indicated by the coefficient, both instruments are reliable since the values are above the satisfactory level of (.753)

**Table 3:**

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	The two groups before & after	-1.383-	.775	.147	-1.411-	-.754-	-6.300-	31	.000

Since the potential value = (0.000) is less than (0.05), it means there is significant differences between the students grades before and after the test.

Through the above tables (1-2) are there is a significant differences between the performance of the experimental group before and after the implementation of the program through the arithmetic mean value, which is amounted to (18.9375) that is greater than the arithmetic mean value before implementing the program, amounting to (15.4375).

**Discussions**

Data scheduled and analyzed to view correlations statistics and scores. The information provided in this survey compiled and analyzed using a statistical database. The statistics and percentages compared to the hypothesis to validate or disprove the literature and scholarly writings reviewed for this study. Significance of the data will conclude that there is an indication that the null hypothesis is true or false. Concentrations of the size of the differences in or correlations found will be analyzed through a multiple analysis of the variants in each of the categories of the survey sample.

Through the results, the researcher noted that the performance of students as a whole after the development of performance points to enable them to master digital art skills have been shown to the researcher a large proportion of students are using digital aids and have appeared through the prior-test.

Some key priorities for curriculum experts. A discussion of the significant changes in materiality and textual form is followed by an exploration of the concept of digital art. The paper concludes with an overview of future trends in digital curriculum which will continue to be important and that digital art will continue to develop distinct registers.

### **Conclusions**

It is possible to show a correlation in this survey research that will bolster the theory of arts education enhancing in digital age in our students thus a survey of cross-section of our basic school students will point out critical information in addressing the needs of arts education curriculum in the digital age.

Although there can be a correlation between the students groups before and after the digital art courses, The results showed there is a significant difference between Student groups of art education who participated in multiple digital art courses scored higher on technical ability test than those students who have little or no, in digital art.

The following null hypothesis was developed. No significant statistical differences will be found in the standard test scores between students who are participating in digital.

Why do we need to make art an important part of our lives? It has been an intrinsic part of our society and culture for thousands of years. Art provides our society with the means to articulate our values and ideals as we communicate with aesthetic expression. Art making gives us as humans the basic tools for problem solving and the foundations for critical and analytical thinking. It is the hope that state and federal officials will see the need for sustaining or even improving arts funding. Additionally state officials will see the benefits that a quality arts education can make in our student's lives beyond basic education level.

### **Recommendation**

1. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education be encouraged to develop school learning and teaching plans to increase their capacity to:
2. To scale up and modernizes the art education curricular in the digital age.
3. Support students' learning of 21st century skills
4. Providing learning opportunities for community members in the use of digital resources.
5. Information, programs and support for parents to gain digital skills to better assist their children's education.

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