

Repositioning Ceramic Professionalism in Art Training in Nigerian Tertiary Institution

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Abstract

Unhealthy didactic atmosphere towards ceramic professionalism cannot successfully drive ceramic industry in Nigeria into sound technology. Invariably, the situation demand immediate repositioning of ceramic training in the Nigeria Art Schools to facilitate and fast track availability of high level man-power needed in the ceramic industry. For this reason, the problems of inadequate ceramic teaching and learning processes in art schools which has not been adequately attended to scholarly, was focused in this study. Significantly, this study highlights area of technical deficiencies in ceramic training with emphasis placed on Ife Art School; the school that was built on sound education philosophy, with excellent knowledge acquisition and culture for service that create platform for technological advancement and indigenization of technology for the country. The study briefly examines the state of ceramic teaching facilities in the nation's art schools historically. It further studies the situation in Ife Art School in relation to the mission objectives of the school. Further, it critically examines the situation in the ceramic teaching and learning facilities as well as progress and achievement made since inception of the department, relating it to the nation's ceramic industry relevance. The study concludes that inadequate funding, absence of further training abroad amongst others compromises teaching and learning process in Ife Art School and other Nigeria Art Schools. Hopefully, government and other stakeholders in education have been here sensitized to be alive to their constitutional duties; as this is the only way the needed technological advancement in the country may be achieved.

Keywords: Art education, art school, ceramic training, repositioning, technological advancement

1. Introduction

There has been much discussion about “technological advancement” and technological transfer” for the lifting of Nigeria depressed economy. Upon the concurrent brains storming on the way forwards on the matter by the academia, policy maker, business and professional sectors, the issue has consistently defiled all solutions. The ceramic industry like many other in the country is also gliding gradually but steadily to a precarious state. The failure in the sector rest squarely on improper implementation of policies in the propagation of indigenous industries, arising from the lip services often paid to the development of education; a major tool for the provision of high level manpower to the industries. However, if Nigeria must advance in technology, the nation must create and manage very well her own type of technology which will attend to the country's socio-economic need. The case of the Chinese, medicine and technology adapted for local use suffice as a typical example, to achieve this. The education sector must be articulated towards industrialization of the country. The process requires vision and mission, resilience, perseverance, hard work and tenacious patriotism of all the stakeholders, being the propellant. This is what the country generally has not done; the education sector is even the worse hit. Where lies the key to the nation's wealth if education sector is not developed? Perhaps the following according to Yoruba Ifa verse (*Obara meji*) could provide an answer to this problem or at least serve as an appropriate theoretical base to our discussion in this study:

*“Ise o sohun amuserere
Iya o sohun amusawada
A difa fun Eji Obara
Ti nhagbon ola
Ti gbogbo aye nrin
O hagbon ola tan
Nwon ni o gbelegede
Elegeede so rebate....
Esu ni ki o ko elegede re simu agbon
Ki o koo lo sile Alara
To fee fi elegede se oku iya re
O gbera o dile Alara...
Bee lo ta elegede kaakiri
Fun gbogbo awon oloja mereerindinlogun*

Lo ba dalaje
O dolowo rebete
Ijo ni njo
Ayo ni nyo...” (Abimbola 2006:74 -75)

Penury is not one play with
Suffering is not one joke with
It was predicted for *Eji Obara*
That is making basket of wealth
That all the world laughed
He made basket of wealth
They said he should plant *elegede* (vegetable)
He planted *elegede*
The *elegede* fruits in abundance....
Esu directed him to put his *elegede* in the basket
And take it to the house of *Alara*
Who want to use *elegede* for the burial of his mother
He went straight to the house of *Alara*...
So he sold *elegede* about
To all the sixteen *Oloja* (Provincial Kings)
And he became wealthy
He became extremely rich
He began to dance
He began to rejoice ... (Abimbola 2006:74 -75)

The above Ifa verse recalled how *Eji Obara* was planning to become rich. He consulted a *babalawo* (a diviner) who prescribed what he should do. He was derided because of his crudeness. But he followed the precept of Ifa divination on his vision and mission. He later accomplished his mission with a resounding success. He became very rich and prosperous. The Ifa verse point our attention to goal setting appropriate method, technique and required tenacity and faithfulness of arriving at target. This is the wisdom for anybody that desire success on any human endeavour. This, Nigeria should have done in education to develop human resource for her industry, for technological advancement which expectantly, would have boost the wealth of the nation. The wisdom in the *Eji Obara* cited above, as a theory for goal getting, if given serious application and appropriate support through funding and supervision in ceramic practice in the country's art schools will definitely enhance productivity and encourage stakeholders in the ceramic industry.

However, the problem in ceramic industry persists because ceramic education in the tertiary institutions has not been anchored properly on the self-reliability and quality service to humanity specified in the Nigeria Policy on Education to produce the desired goals for the national economy. Generally, there is no art school in the country that was given solid foundation to meet the industrial ceramic requirement in human resources. Where it was even partially done in institution like Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Yaba College of Technology, Lagos and Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi; it was not maintained, studio space for the practice of ceramic is either inappropriate in size and quality or overtaken by decay. In many cases materials and equipment were hardly provided for demonstration and students' use. Art curricula generally are scarcely revised to accommodate new development and embrace social- economy realities. All this, including inadequate support for personnel teaching ceramic courses; the apparent carelessness and neglect of the sector set the nation on the wrong side of industrial development.

Advertently, Ife Art School in the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, (OAU), Ile-Ife; the focus of this study perhaps responded to the problem by producing highly indigenized ceramic decorative wares, yet to be met in standard by any art school in Nigeria. But the strong point in ceramic of Ife Art School is better redirected toward industrialization for local use and possibly, to give way for exportation of the nation's ceramic culture for high yield income both in the local and international markets. This would have ensured standard and high student enrollment in the course with much honour.

The inherent problems in the abnormalities in the nation education, particularly in the ceramic sector are what this discussion focuses on. Although, all art schools in Nigeria are affected in one way or the other but Ife Art School, being one of the first generation universities (which also include Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, University of Nigeria (UNN), Nsukka and University of Benin (UNIBEN), Benin) has been chosen to highlight the problems because of its strategic location in Ile-Ife, being an important ancient art centre and the cradle of the Yoruba tradition (Fagg 1990:25-32). The city afford the students almost unfetter access to the

Yoruba culture that could easily promote the study of useful material culture for indigenization of ceramic industry in Nigeria.

The problems in the ceramic section of Ife Art School are identified in this study. It ranges from, poor material, and equipment supply and poor maintenance and undynamic curriculum to cater for Nigeria socio-economic need as well as poor staff support for relevant overseas' training in industrial ceramic for further acquisition of latest knowledge in the field. Significantly, this discussion document didactic problems in ceramic practice in the country's art schools with particular attention on Ife Art School. It also suggest probable ways for the education sector, policy maker and other stakeholders in the art business to develop synergies that can help build the ceramic students for industrial challenges in Nigeria.

2. Background

About two centuries ago, advanced cultures of the world started to explore and employed the capabilities of ceramic application into modern technology. Ceramic products whose capabilities are good for electrical insulator, heat resistor in automobile, air-craft and space shuttle were produced (Ojie 2000:125 and Kalilu, Akintonde and Ayodele 2006:20); while utilitarian ceramic objects which have been practiced in the great art civilizations in the ancient time were further developed for industrial mass production. Because of the advantage in industrial ceramic, studies in the art institutions of Western and some Asian countries have been properly articulated to give optimum support in modern technology.

In Nigeria, the philosophy on education has very well responded to technological advancement when it implied that academic endeavour particularly, science and allied courses be geared towards self-reliance and the development of technology for the improvement of the nation's economy, indigenization of industrial products and to enhance the country's dignity among other nations (Osokoya 1987:27). In the same vein, Osokoya emphasized that more attention would be placed on science, technology and allied courses on education and policy implementation through better funding than other academic areas (Osokoya 1987:28). But art school in Nigeria is yet to receive such laudable attention in funding; despite its relevance to science and technology. In this case, it has continued to lack in required working tools to attempt the implementation of indigenization of art industrial product. Old and badly weathered colonial art curricula are still in use with little modification. Against this backdrop, decorative art objects are often produced in all art institutions of the country. Two types of curricula were adopted by the first generation art schools. They are British and American art curricula. For instance, the British type was imposed on Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, University of Nigeria (UNN), Nsukka and University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, (OAU), Ile-Ife adopted the American type which is a blend of practical and theory in almost equal proportion unlike the British art curriculum that is more of practical.

Some ceramic sections in the country's tertiary institutions were well equipped and properly staffed with qualified and experience lecturers initially. But before the ceramic school could make any appreciable impact in the industry the current economic crises and poor educational policy implementation have already crippled the effort of the art institutions. So, as the nation's economy glide down-ward, all the beautiful structures hitherto put in place in the art schools gradually decayed; incapacitating both the teachers' and the students' effort. Since, the art schools have not made the required impact in the country's industry because of the aforementioned problems, ceramic and other arts fields are hardly reckoned with as a field of academic study. The student specializing in art generally, are not even respected among their colleagues in the school and among the public; as a result, it invariably affect students' interest in the art, which in turn constitute poor student enrolment in the field.

Academic publications are numerous on traditional and contemporary Nigerian art. Various scholars have published articles on the transitory passage of the "old art" "to the new" and the responses it has generated from the audience. Forms, style, function and art technological impacts to the country's economy are the subject matter of some scholars. Some of the works are helpful in this study. For instance, Bewaji (2003:46); observed that traditional art is functional whether it is religious or not. At least art in the religion service has intrinsic value for socio-political and economic development of the traditional African society. He further noted that popular art would lack proper purchase unless employed within the strict context of social engineering and consciousness upliftment in the services of society and humanity (Bewoji 2003:52). Nwoko (1979:13-16) earlier publication seem to have corroborated Bewaji's notion. Nwoko believes that improper indigenization of contemporary art is responsible for lack of patronage in it.

Oloidi's (Oloidi 1995:67, 69) general observation and critique of Nigerian art over three decades unearthed multifarious problems which hindered the growth of the art. Among these problem is; that art of the 60s and 70s were almost devoid of intellectual aura despite the early activities of the Zaria "revivalist". For this reason," the societal verdict on the art of the period was that art is neither an academic nor intellectual profession; that it is meant for only those with below-average intelligence, people of hands and not brains."

Babalola (1994:53-62) examined the position of Nigerian art and posited that Nigerian artists must re-order their art for maximum professional and national advantage. Arthur Creech Jones quoted by Babalola also spoke in the same vein. He observes that artists have left their inherited competence of traditional carving for the making of cheap art souvenir for the expatriate just to earn a living. He however stressed further that: "No nation can be progressive without developing her art." Also in the light of Arthur Creech Jones' observation, Babalola (1994:54) calls for:

"correct type of education... amplified for not only the artist but for the public about the purpose and function of art in social commercial, religious, industrial and technological aspects of the lives of Nigeria."

Furthermore, Ojie (2000:125) discusses the opportunity in economic empowerment for poverty alleviation in Nigeria. She however, premised it on prompt government attention towards indigenization of small scale ceramic industries. All these academic contributions are valid and very vital to the development of indigenization of art for local use in the country. But much work is yet to be done on the problems of teaching and learning of art, particularly ceramic, in the Ife Art School and generally in the nation's tertiary institutions. The opinion of Babalola (1994: 55) goes towards the same direction (indigenization of art for local use) when he posited that;

"In Africa, the responsibility which rests on those in charge of education is particularly heavy, for with the decay in animistic beliefs, the heart has been taken out of the old crafts."

The above statements implied, there is an urgent need to examine the nation's art institutions; which is the primary source of the manpower required in the bid to indigenized art for industrial products in Nigeria.

3. A Brief Outlook of Ceramic Section in the Early "Art Schools"

ABU, Zaria late in the 1980s, had a standard ceramic section under industrial Arts. Equipment such as clay mixer, pug mill, kilns, kick-wheels and electric wheels were abound. Clay and glaze materials were stock-pilled for the use of the students. Students were taught how to make glaze materials, design and construction of various types of kilns, as well as other ceramic equipment by experienced teachers. There were enough studio facilities which include damp room for clay storage and preservation. All this assisted good teaching and learning experience in the 1960s up to earlier part of 1980s. The situation is however not the same today.

Ceramic section in the University of Benin was averagely equipped as at 1984, the section was equipped with two functioning electric wheels, one kick-wheel, a newly bought clay mixer machine and an average size kiln. All these equipment were working in full capacity. The two fairly large studios in the ceramic section were also adequate to accommodate the number of ceramic students in the then Faculty of Creative Arts. Laye, a Ghanaian born ceramics lecturer; who studied ceramic and glass technology in London, moved the section to an enviable height before he withdrew his service from the institution. However, there are little equipment left as at 2008 and they were not even performing optimally. The two kick-wheels produced by students were inadequate in studio use. Glaze and glazing were hardly explored. Students are now only simulating glazing effects with acrylic paints on ceramic wares.

The Nigeria civil war actually disturbed the development of art generally in Nsukka. It should be noted that no sooner than the university was established in 1962 than the civil unrest of early sixties broke-out and it was closely followed by the civil war. Until the early seventies when reconciliation and reconstruction of the battered socio-economy structures of the country were undertaken, the art department could hardly make a meaningful impact. Up till now, ceramic in the institution is yet to be developed to the required industrial need of the nation.

Certain Polytechnic institutions in Nigeria were also renowned for good art training. Among these institutions are Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, the earliest art school in the country and Auchu Polytechnic where Ceramics was relatively well developed in terms of equipment and funding. Auchu Polytechnic had been a vibrant art institution since 1980. Firstly, because the school was established in Benin precinct where art and tradition thrives greatly, right from the ancient time, the awareness was good enough to stimulate students to high creativity. And secondly, because the owner of the institution, the old Bendel State, was also highly interested in art development, huge funds were released to the art department from time to time. When Federal Government took over the ownership, adequate funding of the school was ensured. Ceramic section benefited immensely from such gesture. Besides that, according to Adejumo in an interview with the writer in 2005, funds were coming from Korea, Hungary and UNESCO to the institution for education development. Expatriates were also sent to the art department to compliment the effort of experienced staff on ground. All this contributed to a good ceramic teaching and learning standard. Today, art training could hardly be compared to what it was in the 1980s because fund is no longer coming from the Federal Government.

In the case of ceramic training in Yaba College of Technology, the non-availability of some vital equipment necessary for ceramic development did not actually allow the section to blossom as painting and sculpture.

Although the section had about fifteen kick wheels in 1984, works were left unfired due to non-availability of electric kiln. The situation however has not changed, and can hardly allow any serious and critical ceramic process to develop.

The new generation art schools are also witnessing the same problem experienced by the old art schools. Ceramic training in the schools is yet to develop in high standard to make an impact in the industry. From the fore-going, much is required to really redirect ceramic training in the nation arts school generally towards industrialization of the sector.

4. Brief History of Department of Fine Arts of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife

Ife Art School, her Ceramic unit, which is the focus of this study is here put in art historical context *vis-a-vis* the development of the Ceramic unit in the quest to provide man power to the nation's ceramic industry. The Department of Fine Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife is one of the early art institutions established in Nigeria. It started offering service courses in 1969. By 1973/74 session, it has commenced full degree programme under the art section of former Institute of African Studies. In 1976, it developed to a substantive department under the Faculty of Art. The department offers courses in ceramic, graphics, painting, sculpture, print making and illustration, textile, drawing and Art history. Elective courses are compulsorily taken from humanities from hundred levels up to three hundred for sound footing in concept development. At three hundred level, students specializes in their chosen art fields. Post graduate programme in the department did not commence until 1985/86 session.

The objectives of the department were started by Babatunde Lawal, one time Head of Department of "Ife Art School" as follows:

"To produce the students with strong practical training in Fine Arts while at the same time giving him broad back-ground in the humanities. The ultimate goal is to stimulate in him the spirit of individual creativity and underscore its relevance to the social, cultural and industrial development of our society." (Lawal 1984:8).

Aig-Imoukhuede (1984:5-6) also echoed the working principle in the school when he stated that:

"The school has three distinct characters: a re-orientation in art education towards functionalism; the adaptation of indigenous design resources to the needs and requirement of modern times; and the evolution of Nigerian identity for contemporary Nigeria art."

The objectives are laudable and it is capable of impacting knowledge and skill in art, strong enough to create positive impact on the society. The vision of the government of Western Nigeria, the founder of the university, to establish a university which would be of the highest standard was actually anchored in the objectives. The objectives also, were based on Philosophy of Nigerian Education that advocate for a united strong and self-reliant nation; and a great and dynamic economy. A score sheet of the assessment of the school reveals high level mark in all the art fields except for some set back occasioned by lack of necessary art working tools for the success of indigenization of industrial products through art. In realizing the objectives the industrial arts sections, viz: textile, ceramic and graphic were equipped minimally with the hope of building on it as time progresses.

The quality of the pioneer teaching staff in the department is one of the best in the Nigerian art schools. It is unique in character and effective in teaching and learning process as Aig-Imoukhuede (1984) observes. These lecturers represent different art institutions and art developmental stages in Nigeria. Ben Enwonwu one of the pioneer lecturers represent pre-independence or Murray art school; Solomon Irein Wangboje (another pioneer lecturer) brings his Zarian experience into fruition in the department while the Nsukka art ideology used by Lawal fused very well with others ideas to produce a vibrant art school.

The department benefited immensely in creative engagement from the extant rich tradition of Ile-Ife and her ancient art on display at National Commission for Museum and Monument and the Pottery Museum, all located in Ile-Ife. The University Museum of Antiquities located in the Institute of African Studies also helped in the same direction. Beside this, Ori Olokun workshop which Wangboje established in the town also provided interacting opportunity for the student learning experience from the local artists.

In pottery section, a traditional potter, Felicia Adepelu from Igbara Odo was employed on the technical advice of Raphael Ige Ibigbami by the department to demonstrate the traditional pottery making technique to the students for better understanding of the art. The department has seven big studios and a printing section. Two fairly large studios were allocated to ceramic section; one equipment room and a store were also given to the section. Basic ceramic equipment such as: test kiln, a large electric kiln, two clay grinding machines and a stone crusher were provided for the section. Other equipment in the section include two kick wheels one electric throwing wheel and a few other. Glaze and other ceramic materials were given freely to the students until 1980 when fund was no longer available to the department. However, clay is still given free of charge to the students now.

In Ceramic section, Raphael Ige Ibigbami who later became an Associate Professor, was the only lecturer handling all the ceramic practical and theory courses in the department until 1989 when Tunde Nasiru a product of Ife Art School and a postgraduate student in the department was employed. Other sections have erudite scholars in the likes of Prof. Babtunde Lawal and Prof. Jacob Olapade who jointly manned Graphic section. Prof. Abiodun Rowland and Prof. J. R. O. Ojo later co-lectured Painting with Moyo Okediji and Bolaji Campbel when they were employed. Stephen Folaranmi was also later employed to teach painting. Prof. P. S. O. Aremu lectures Textile up till date. Prof. Agbo Folarin, Asaku Gypon, Lamidi Fakeye were the Sculpture lecturers. Munio Maquichi was in charge of Printmaking before he left for Japan his country. Dr. Eben Sheba, a Graphic lecturer was added to the list of staff of the department in the early 1990s. Wole Famule, Dupe Bejide, Theasy Ogunsiakin and Jide Makinde were also employed to lecture Ceramics, Graphics and Textile respectively. Nana Aisha, Segun Ajiboye and Ijisakin were also employed in 2003 to lecture Ceramics, Graphics and Sculpture respectively. Dr. Babasehinde Ademuleya was later employed to teach sculpture. Moyo Okediji, Dr. Eben Sheba, Bolaji Campbel, Tunde Nasiru, Ogunsiakan, Stephen Folaranmi, Wole Famule, Dupe Bejide and Segun Adejuyigbe, the young generation lecturers in the department are the graduates of the same department who excel in their various fields.

Until his retirement in 2003 Prof. J. R. O. Ojo taught art history, and art appreciation courses in the department. Dr Ademola Adejumo, and Wole Famule later taught art history with J. R. O. Ojo when they were appointed. Adejumo who also lectures painting with Stephen Folaranmi and Segun Adejuyigbe are lecturers in Art History section now that Famule and J. R. O. Ojo have left the department.

5. Factor Affecting Teaching and Learning of Ceramic at “Ife Art School”

Generally, Department of Fine Arts of Obafemi Awolowo University possesses a strong will to invigorate students’ skill successfully towards the challenges of indigenization of the Nigeria ceramic industries. However, the initial problem in the art curriculum which is yet to be addressed properly and the recent crises in art education in the country emanating from socio-political and economic decay, hampered the department’s mission.

The major problem in the ceramic section is the teaching and learning environment which has deteriorated as a result of neglect. This is one of the crisis points in the nation’s education sector that continually denied students’ acquisition of required skill in industrial ceramics. This understandably forced the session to concentrate more on the development of ceramic skill in hand built pottery which did not require large equipment and huge sum of money for material procurement; apart from the laudable interest in traditional identity. This advantage was better utilized in the section to stretch students’ creativity in pottery making almost to the brim. However, if creativity in traditional motif for cultural identity and technical skill in industrial ceramic were properly combined, it would have created in the students, super creative tendencies in ceramic industry that could probably be matched by the highly developed Chinese and Islamic ceramic cultures.

Apart from basic knowledge given to the students in thrown pottery, very little attention is given to ceramic product design, mould making, slip casting for mass production and other ceramic processes. In some cases, some ceramic practical glazes courses were taught almost in theory. Given this circumstance, the writer, a student specializing in Ceramics had to spend five weeks in University of Benin ceramic practical classes in order to study glazes in 1984. This problem has not allowed the students to utilize their latent talent in ceramic properly. The gap in the ceramic skill acquisition invariably pushed many products of the school to seek employment in teaching or administrative work, when they should have been engaged in building cottage ceramic industries. Obah Paul appears to be the only ceramic product of Ife Art School employed in ceramic Industry. He was employed as a ceramist at Oceans Five Ceramic Industry, Ogunmakin via Ibadan. He performed creditably well in the industry. He eventually withdrew his services from the Industry because of poor conditions of service he complained about to the writer in 1990. Apart from the general problem mentioned here, others which are specifically detrimental to the development of ceramic in the Ife Art School are stated in the following section.

Lack of Equipment and Tools

Equipment and tools are not regularly bought for the section. For instance, apart from a kick-wheel and one electric wheel which have been in use about the time the department was established, no new one has been added. Those on ground were not even maintained. By 1984 the kick-wheel had been over-used and it was no longer effective for throwing exercise. In addition, students were not allowed to use the electric wheel for extensive work to save it from further damage. Another equipment in the ceramic session is a test-kiln which is too small for any meaningful teaching and learning experience. There are two average size kilns in the kiln room which are no longer working for poor handling in 1979. In 1994, Bada a lecturer at Adeyemi College of Education claimed that an attempt made to repair the kilns was without much success.

Apart from those equipment and tools, there is one clay grinding machine which its engine broke-down around 1977. The engine has never been repaired since then. The ceramic section, also have a Hammer Mill Machine popularly called Jaw Breaker. Usually, it was employed to crush feldspar for glaze preparation. The machine broke-down completely after a long time of epileptic performance in 1981. Up till now it has neither been repaired nor replaced. Except the low temperature open fire kiln (locally constructed) that functions at all time, no equipment in the section gives optimum service.

Although students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels of the ceramic section in the department were encouraged to work on equipment designs and fabrication, they were not provided with technical and financial assistance which could inspire and motivate their creative ingenuity. For this reason, some kick-wheels fabricated by students were not properly made, to be effective. They do not have capacity for long use. According to Bada, a “kerosene kiln” design and constructed by Aremu, a ceramic postgraduate student in 1997 functioned well. It however, could not be put into use beyond the short period of testing because the burners which were used for operational test were borrowed and they have been returned to the owner before the death of Aremu. Since then, the department has not been able to find specified burners for the kiln.

R. I. Ibigbami was the only ceramic lecturer in the department from 1973 until 1989 when Tunde Nasiru, was employed to assist him. The two lecturers in the section whose styles are basically traditional in conceptualization, pictorial and graphical rendering of forms have introduced almost the same teaching styles with slight variations which also inspire and improve students’ creativity and skill acquisition. The economic situation in the country has even forced Tunde Nasiru, and Wole Famule (another lecturer in Ceramic section) to look for greener pasture in America. For a long time, the ceramic section was practically paralyzed. The situation became worse after the retirement of Ibigbami until Segun Adejuyigbe was recently employed to co-teach Ceramic courses with Nana Aisha in the section. The exit of experienced lecturers like; Babatunde Lawal, Rowland Abiodun, Moyo Okediji Bolaji Campbel and Tunde Nasiru from the department almost simultaneously generally created a high vacuum in academic leadership, yet to be filled in the department.

Poor Funding of Art School

Generally, the attitude of government to education funding is not impressive. The situation is so poor that art service, which should be harnessed to assist industrial development in Nigeria, has almost been neglected. Attention is generally given to science and engineering sectors. Ironically, art provides inter disciplinary assistance to the development of science and technology. For instance, some ceramic materials such as electrical insulator and refractory materials are used in electrical and electronic devices.

Despite the good objectives of Nigeria Government on art in the National Philosophy on Education; which aimed at art functionalism, entrenched in traditional aesthetic; to promote local industry, the policy still remain mere paper work without physical action to back it up. Funds were not released for both capital and light projects to make art, particularly ceramic, interesting for both lecturers and students didactic experience. The Government of Osun State whose territory the institution was located, organization and philanthropist have not at any time funded Department of Fine Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University. Research grants are rarely given to the lecturers. According to Adejumo, the last one granted to the department was in 1997. It was not given to Ceramic section. The grant was given to Adejumo in Paining section by the university. Ceramic section hardly benefited from the previous grants released to the department.

Clay, the cheapest material for ceramics is seldom provided for the students’ use. Glaze materials were no longer given to student since 1979. Provision of fund for symposium, seminar, workshop, exhibition and excursion to ceramic industries are left on the department and Fine Art Student Association of the department whose meager income cannot be sufficient for such programmes. For example, only once, was the department able to organize a touring exhibition for the students’ works in three centres concurrently. The exhibition titled “ The Ife Art School (1974 - 1984) were held in National Council for Arts and Culture, Lagos; Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan and Concord Hotel, Owerri. During the period of the exhibition – April 27 – August 25, 1984, students were inspired and encouraged by the positive comments from the audience which helped to improve their skill. It also made them fulfilled in their career. Many of the students had a rare opportunity to meet with great artists such as: Dele Jegede, Isiaka Kayode Osunde and many renowned artists who graced the occasion. This opportunity is certainly missed in the department now.

Scholarship Award

A look through scholarship awards list of Obafemi Awolowo University revealed that no special scholarship award was made available to art students by companies, organizations, and philanthropists apart from the meager state and local government bursary awards that are generally given to students. In the same vein, art prize, particularly in ceramics, have not been given to exemplary students in the section and other areas in the department. It is not that students have not performed excellently in this field as others in sciences and engineering where scholarship, various prize and awards are abound for brilliant students; but the problem is that the general public has not really felt the impact of the discipline in the nation building. This problem has not

helped the students to be fulfilled in their discipline neither has it encouraged many art inclined students to pursue academic carrier in the field.

Low Student Enrolment in Ceramic Art Programme

The low number of students who specialize in ceramic every session might have affected challenges and healthy competition among the students of the Ceramic section. This in-turn may make lecturing and learning exercise in the art less inspiring. For instance, hardly could the section boast of two students at specialization level in the previous sessions as against, Textile, Graphics, Painting and Sculpture sections. From 1974 to 1984 nine students specialized in ceramic out of about one hundred and fifty students who have graduated from the department. And from about one thousand eight hundred that have so far graduated in the art department as at 2009, the Ceramic section only produced fifty graduates!

The low enrolment in the section could be blamed on the lack of awareness of the students and parents on the prospect in Ceramics. In 2001 the Government of Osun State terminated the appointment of about ninety percent of Osun State secondary school Fine Art and many humanities teachers. This was done presumptuously to re-direct Osun education towards science and technology. This single act by the government could made parents of prospective art students to ask their wards to veer into highly rated fields of Medicine and Engineering for fear of unemployment and lack of respect for the discipline generally.

Moribund Curriculum

It is imperative for art school to engage in curriculum reviewing and curriculum development from time to time to meet the modern challenges. But this is seldom done in art schools. The old fashioned Euro-America curriculum of the department need complete over-hauling and channeled towards the country's need to stimulate good learning experience in the students.

6. Effect of the Problems on the Neighbouring Art Institutions

A major problem that is noticed in the influence of Ife Art School is the transposition of ideas of ceramic teaching methods to many of the tertiary institutions located in the southwest of the country. This is possible because OAU produced the largest number of art lecturers who lecture ceramic in the institutions. For instance, Amos Areo and Moses Akintonde were the two ceramic lecturers who taught in the Department of Fine Arts, Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun between 1985 and 1994. The department does not have any ceramic lecturer presently. Ogunkunle, a product of OAU is a graphic artist who now lectures ceramic at the NCE and Degree levels of the institution.

In Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Moses Akintonde lectures the course in the Department of Fine and Applied Arts. Amos Areo also taught the course in St. Andrew College of Education (now Emmanuel Alayande College of Education), Oyo. Opeyemi Arije has been lecturing the course since 1981 in Ikere-Ekiti College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti. Dagold who is also a product of Ife taught ceramic for about two decades at the Eruwa Campus of The Polytechnic, Ibadan before his retirement. All these Ceramic lecturers keep faith with the Ife style and the import of its manifested in the institutions where Ife Art School products dominate and teaching students to make traditional pottery adaptable for modern use because of the poor funding and teaching facilities also experienced by schools.

7. Conclusion

Ceramic section of Department of Fine Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University has contributed immensely in the Nigeria education sector since the establishment of the institution. The department has produced many graduates; some who are now ceramic lecturers in some art schools in Nigeria. But the department is yet to make appreciable impact in generating necessary manpower for industrial development in ceramic. This problem has almost relegated the function of ceramists to producer of mere decorative art objects in the country. In fact, because the students lack the required equipment and tools, material and incentives the teaching and learning processes of the course becomes problematic. As a result of this, prospective students were not encouraged to specialize in it, Ife Art School being one of the first generation universities has always attracted candidate for university admission. The institution therefore is a major stakeholder in the provision of manpower to the Nigerian economy. If the institution and government did not quickly attend to the poor situation in the department it will not help to abate the country's problem in bid to industrialized. Obviously, the country will continue to depend on importation of ceramic wares and allied services.

In order to improve the situation, the following recommendations should be helpful. Firstly, it is imperative that government should create a workable atmosphere for the realization of functional and overheated goals it has set in education consistently. Government and all stakeholders in education sector should therefore pursue the objectives of the indigenization of industrial product through art in the use of local materials with vigour it deserves. In line with this, Government as a matter of urgency should provide funds and necessary support for the development of institutions, particularly Ceramic section of art schools. More qualified and experienced

lecturers should be employed to teach Ceramics courses. Lecturers should also be given research grants and encouraged for further training in industrial ceramic where such good training is available abroad. Studio facilities should be improved upon to facilitate effective lecturing, learning and research process in the nation's art schools generally. Equipment and materials should be made available, both for demonstration and for students' use.

Curriculum on Fine Arts generally should be revisited regularly according to the Nigerian University Commission (NUC) regulation to be able to attend to socio-economic realities of the country. Lastly, seminars, symposia, workshops, exhibitions as well as excursions on ceramic matters and for other art fields should be organized from time to time, to enlighten and encourage the students towards industrial art development.

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