

**THE USE OF LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS IN VISUAL ARTS
EDUCATION IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY IN AL-AZHARIYA SCHOOL FOR
ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY JUNIOR HIGH, KUMASI**

By

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(B.A Industrial Art-Metals option)

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MASTER OF ARTS IN ART EDUCATION

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own study towards the Master of Arts in Art Education and that, to the best of my knowledge, it bears no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, with the exception of where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this study was to identify and train Visual Arts Senior High School graduates, who were neither pursuing further education nor in employment as Learning Support Assistants, as a possible intervention in the teaching of Visual Arts at the Junior High Schools. The Learning Support Assistants (LSA) were to assist the teacher as other adults in the classroom and also to support the pupils of Al-Azhariya Junior High School to study Visual Arts. A training programme was designed to train the Learning Support Assistants (LSA) before they were introduced into the classroom to support teaching and learning. There were two groups of pupils involved in the research. The pupils were grouped into two that is the controlled group and the experimental group. The experimental group, were the class that had the privilege of being supported by the LSA, while the other group had none other support with the exception of the teacher. The Learning Support Assistants supported the teacher who was the researcher herself to organize and prepare materials for the experiment group and also support the group during teaching and learning. It was discovered that, pupils behave better when they feel loved and also get the needed attention required of their teachers in class; they learn to trust them, open up to share their problems with them and also make an effort to learn.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Mr. Andrew Appiah-Acheampong, the love of my life.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The core skill to be learned from Basic Design and Technology (BDT) subject comprises: Basic Life Skills, Drawing, Designing, Entrepreneurial Skills, Problem Identification and Solution. Each of these areas also has various topics listed under them. These form the core knowledge and skills to acquire before the completion of the Junior High School (JHS) education. BDT was introduced into the JHS curriculum because “It is recognized that the advancement of a country can only be accelerated if a large number of persons are trained in science and technology, with manufacturing as an outlet” (CRDD, September, 2007). Emphasis is being placed on developing people with creative minds and multiple skills. These form the rationale for the Junior High School course called Basic Design and Technology. (BDT syllabus, September, 2007). The idea is that a new breed of problem solvers with good thinking skills would be trained in Ghana within the Junior High School curriculum. In order for the teacher to be able to achieve these objectives, another adult is needed to assist with class management.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Education at the basic level has become free and compulsory, with much emphasis on vocational education. This has led to an increase in school enrolment and increasing the pressure on teachers, hence the need for Learning Support Assistants (LSA). It is also assumed that the literacy and numeracy level of students should be improved. If this is achieved there would be an improvement in the quality of education in Ghana (Chief Examiner’s Report on April 2006-2008 BECE results).

Monitoring, supervision and class management can be too much of a problem for one teacher to handle alone. For this reason, Learning Support Assistants are needed to support teaching and learning at this level, by supporting the work of the teachers and assisting the pupils to access the national curriculum. This would also allow pupils to get the maximum attention required of the teacher.

All these call for additional hands to help pupils in the practical work required to satisfy the curriculum demands of the Basic Design and Technology subject. This pilot project sought to identify Visual Arts graduates and train them as Learning Support Assistants (LSA), whose duty will be to help JHS teachers to manage their class and effectively teach Basic Design and Technology as well as the other subjects in the curriculum. In this project these personnel are referred to as LSA and were assigned to only one classroom (experimental group). The LSA was the special treatment that was given to the experimental group while the controlled group did not get this kind of treatment. The rationale was to assess how effective JHS teachers can teach to facilitate learning among all categories of pupils.

1.3 Objectives

This study focuses on the following objectives:

1. To assess and document the existing teaching and learning environment of Visual Arts at AL-Azhariya Junior High School.
2. To identify and train Senior High School Visual Arts School graduates as Learning Support Assistants for Junior High School education in Ghana.

3. To design a training programme and use it to train the Senior High School Visual Arts graduates as Learning Support Assistants.
4. To pre-test the programme at Al-Azhariya Junior High School for Islamic Ideology at Tafo, Kumasi and assess the results.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were asked by the researcher:

1. What are the current teaching and learning conditions of Visual Art at Al-Azhariya Junior High School?
2. Who can be trained as learning support assistants for Junior High Schools in Ghana?
3. How would the assistants be trained and what would be used in training them?
4. To what extent, can the learning support assistants help in the teaching and learning of Art in the Junior High Schools in Ghana?

1.5 Delimitation

The research is limited to training Senior High School Visual Arts graduates, who are neither pursuing higher education nor in employment as Learning Support Assistants to support the teaching and learning of the Visual Arts aspect of the Basic Design and Technology subject at Al-Azhariya Junior High School at Tafo a suburb in Kumasi.

1.6 Limitations

1. The time allocated on the school's timetable was not enough for the researcher and the LSA to exhaust all the activities scheduled for some lessons on the lesson plan. There were also interferences from other teachers who would come in while teaching was in progress to mark registers and also collect extra classes fees. Some teachers also chose to come and peep, asking questions and passing unnecessary comments to disrupt the intervention lessons.
2. Two of the LSA were not committed; their attitude was causing delays to the research work. They were laid off, new people were recruited and trained. This also caused some delays in the data collection.
3. Pupils were not regular to school; lessons taught in their absence had to be explained to those individuals whenever they turned up for school before the commencement of the day's activities.
4. Lack of adequate space, tools and materials in the classrooms were another limitation.

1.7 Definition of terms

1. Pre-test: A test conducted to evaluate the preparedness of students for further studies.
2. Post-test: A test conducted to measure the achievements and the effectiveness of a programme.
3. Jalabia: A long attire worn by Moslems
4. Ablution: An act of washing some parts of the body with water as a religious rite

1.8 Abbreviations

1. LSA: Learning Support Assistants
2. BDT: Basic Design and Technology
3. CRDD: Curriculum Research and Development Division

4. TLM: Teaching Learning Materials
5. TLA: Teacher Learner Activities
6. SEN: Special Educational Needs
7. BBC: British Broadcasting Cooperation
8. BECE: Basic Education Certificate Examination
9. ICT: Information Communication and Technology
10. WASSCE: West African Senior School Certificate Examination

1.9 Importance of the study

The importance of the study are the following:

1. The results of the study adds to the body of literature on Learning Support Assistants and also serve as a reference material to students and others who wish to research on this topic.
2. The results of the study, if taken and implemented by the Ghana Education Service, would serve as a source of livelihood to Senior High School graduates who are neither in employment nor in further education.
3. The project would throw light on some interventions that could be used in larger classrooms to assist less able pupils to study Visual Arts.
4. The results of the project would encourage teachers to explore a variety of teaching and learning strategies, coupled with interesting activities to sustain the interest of pupils throughout a lesson.
5. This project would help teachers to plan lessons for all ability groups and all types of learners to enable them to study at their own pace with the help of LSA. Learning Support Assistants

would work alongside teachers in the classroom, to help pupils to get the most out of their learning.

1.10 Library research

The following libraries were visited to collect information for the research:

- a. Main library, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.
- b. College of Art library, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.
- c. Department of Art Education library, KNUST, Kumasi.
- d. University of Education library, Kumasi Campus, Kumasi.
- e. University of Education library, Mampong Campus, Mampong.

1.11 Organization of the rest of the text

Chapter Two of the thesis is a review of related literature. Chapter Three is made up of the methodology. Chapter Four on the analysis and interpretation of results and Chapter Five outlines the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 OVERVIEW

In recent times, every child of school going age is supposed to be in school; the school feeding programme is also motivating children to stay in school. Education has become very fashionable because people are now seeing its importance to the individual, family and society. Teachers have to train pupils to develop their thinking and creative skills, hence the introduction of the Basic Design and Technology and Information Communication and Technology at the basic school level. School drop-out is also decreasing while pupil enrolment is increasing. This situation has put a lot of pressure on classroom teachers, as one class can now have more than 50 pupils. How can one teacher alone take care of the individual needs of every child in such a situation? In view of this teachers would do with a little help in the form of having Learning Support Assistants in the classroom. When Learning Support Assistants are introduced in the Basic Schools, they can help teachers attend to the educational needs of pupils, treat pupils as individuals, help every pupil to learn, control pupils with challenging behaviours and also help teachers to prepare adequately for classroom activities with every child in mind.

Mays (1948) argues that, among the basic institutions of human society one of the most significant elements is a vocation. For human societies to become more significant, it is how much training or preparation that it gives its citizens that matters most. If citizens are prepared well in the Junior High School, they can fit into their society after their education, even if they exit formal education at this level.

Anamuah (2002) states that there is limited provision of further education, skills and training facilities for the majority of the products of the JHS pupils who exit formal education. With the introduction of Basic Design and Technology, there would be some sort of vocational and technical foundation for those who exit formal education at the JHS level. There are unstructured provisions of apprenticeship training, especially within the productive private sector for the

majority of school drop-outs who have to be prepared for a lifetime's work outside the basic school. If teachers are assisted to do it right at the basic level of Ghana's educational system, the pupils would be well equipped for whichever sector they may find themselves in after the Junior High School.

Ghana now has a Community Education Teaching Assistants who operate under the Youth Employment Programme of the Ministry of Employment and Manpower who are Senior High School graduates and are teaching in areas where there are not sufficient trained teachers. This type of Teaching Assistants have been in existence since the scheme started in March 2006, according to the Youth Employment Implementation Guidelines brochure. If graduates of the Senior High Schools can handle a class on their own with little supervision, then they can adequately support teaching and learning at JHS with adequate supervision.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature reviewed for the study was organized along these sub-headings:

1. Education
2. Education in Ghana
3. Junior High School Education
 - a. Course content of Basic Design and Technology in JHS
 - b. Basic Design and Technology examinations at JHS
4. Senior High School Education
 - a. Course content for Visual Arts at SHS

c. Visual Arts examinations at SHS

5. Teaching, teaching of Art and strategies for teaching Art

6. Peer teaching and small group teaching

7. Learning, learning of Art and learning strategies for Art

8. Classroom management

9. Learning Support Assistants

10. Who is a Learning Support Assistant?

a. Different names given to the LSA by different countries

b. Who qualifies to be an LSA

c. Types of training given to LSA in different countries

d. Roles of LSA in the classroom and the guidelines for LSA

2.2.0 Education

Education is knowledge in basic skills, academics, technical, discipline, citizenship and positive democratic values. If someone is able to acquire all these knowledge the person is said to be educated. People has to be trained in order to be able to fit into their society, in terms of character, occupation that is the skills they have acquired to help in the society. Education is a process of learning and acquiring information. Therefore, before learning is achieved teaching had already taken place. Also, education is a transformative learning process that equips

students, teachers, and school systems with new knowledge and new ways of thinking (Brundtland 1992). Education has no end as it is a continuous process for life, knowledge acquired can be formal or informal. After all the education a person goes through in life and such an individual is still not able to fit in his society, then such a person was not well educated. To assist pupils to be well educated, in order for every individual to be able to use what has been learnt to help solve problems in the society, then the teacher of such pupils definitely needs help in the form of LSA to be able to teach well for the pupils to acquire skills to solve problems in their society.

2.2.1 Education in Ghana

Education in Ghana has gone through a lot of transformation since independence. Immediately after independence, the Education Act of 1961 was birthed, the Dzobo Report also gave birth to the JSS Concept in 1973, the New Structure and Content of Education was also implemented in 1974. Between 1987 and 1988, there was an Education Commission Report on Basic and Secondary Education which also birthed the Education Reform Programme of 1978/88, then also came the University Committee Report in 1988. In 1996 the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme was also introduced as documented in the 1992 Constitution. The Ghana Education Trust Fund (GET Fund Act) was also implemented in 2000 based on (Act 581). In 2001, a committee was set up by the then president of Ghana, H. E. John Agyekum Kuffour, to look into the flaws of the education system and propose a new one. In view of this on 17th January, 2002 a 29- member committee was set up with Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah, the Vice-Chancellor of University of Education, Winneba, as the chairman. The review of the committee brought about the 2007 Educational Reform which is still in use but with a slight change to that of Senior High School (Ghana Government Official Portal website,2010).

The following key points were embedded in the new Educational Reform: 2 years of Kindergarten, 6 years of Primary School and 3 years of Junior High School, making 11 years of Universal Basic Education. After JHS, the student has a chance to choose to enter a 4-year SHS, which the current government has reversed to 3 years, General Education and Technical, Vocational and Agricultural and Training (TVET) or enter apprenticeship scheme. At the Basic level emphasis is on Literacy, Numeracy, Creative Arts, ICT and Problem Solving Skills. With the exception of Kindergarten and Lower Primary where the Ghanaian Language of the school's location is used alongside English, at all other levels the medium of instruction is English. Basic Education is now fully sponsored by the government as part of FCUBE initiative but cost-sharing is done for SHS and University education.

Creative Arts for Lower Primary and Basic Design and Technology for JHS are all designed to solve problems within the community. The new Educational Reform, should attain its purpose, a lot depends on the teacher. The FCUBE and the School Feeding Programme are encouraging school enrollment to swell, bringing more pressure on the teacher. To be able to achieve the purpose of the new Educational Reform, the teacher needs assistance and the pupils also need support in the classroom. There is then the need to have a Learning Support Assistant in the classroom to assist the teacher to deliver effectively and also to support the pupils to perform well in their studies.

2.2.2 Junior High School Education

Junior High School Education is part of the Basic Education System in Ghana and it is a 3 year course, from Class 6 or Basic School 6 (B. S. 6) qualified pupils are admitted to JHS 1 after passing the Common Entrance Examination. The curriculum consists of nine subjects which are:

Mathematics, English Language, Social Studies, Integrated Science, any Ghanaian Language, Information Communication and Technology, Religious and Moral Education, French and Basic Design and Technology, candidates can choose between Pre-technical Skills, Home Economics and Visual Arts (Ghana Government Portal website, 2010). This research focuses on using Learning Support Assistants to assist pupils to study the Visual Arts aspect of Basic Design and Technology.

2.2.3 Course content of Basic Design and Technology in Junior High Schools

Basic Design and Technology is a combination of the principles and the processes of Pre-Technical Skills, Home Economics and Visual Arts combined into one subject. The general aims of Basic Design and Technology in Junior High Schools are to equip pupils with basic Life Skills and problem solving skills. Pupils are to be helped to develop creative minds which are capable of identifying and solving problems within the community, to create solutions to existing problems through their imagination, to use ICT in designing and researching, to apply knowledge acquired and to set up, manage and apply moral principles in their businesses. The subject is made up of two parts, the Core Skills and Options for pupils to choose from based on their interests and the facilities available to them in their schools. In JHS 1, pupils study the Core Skills which is a compulsory course and comprises: Basic Life Skills, Graphic Communication, Drawing, Designing, Problem Identification and Solution, and Entrepreneurial Skills for the 1st and 2nd terms of Year 1. In Year 1(JHS 1) 3rd term pupils choose any one of the three options and pursue it throughout their JHS education.

Home Economics is Option 1, Pre-Technical Skills is Option 2 and Visual Arts is Option 3. In Home Economics (Option 1), the following are to be learnt by pupils' following this option:

Tools and Equipments, Health and Hygiene, Food and Nutrition, Fabrics for sewing, Food Preparation, Processes in sewing, Food Commodities, Garment Construction, Meal and Menu Planning and Cloth Maintenance. Pre-Technical Skills (Option 2) also comprises: Metalwork, Brickwork, Basic Electrical and Electronic Circuits and Technical Drawing. Visual Arts (Option 3) on the other hand comprises: Visual Communication, Weaving and Stitching, Modeling, Casting and Carving, Construction and Assemblage, and Fabric and Leather Decoration. The Visual Arts aspect of the Core Skills of BDT is the focus of this research. During the final year examination, that is the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), the Core Skills of Basic Design and Technology, forms Section A (Objectives) of the paper and the three options forms the theory aspect of the paper. Pupils must pass both sections of the paper to qualify for SHS admission.

2.2.4 Senior High School Education

After writing the BECE at the JHS level, qualified students are selected to start Senior High School. Currently, there are two types of SHS education; a 4 year programme and a 3-year programme. The past government pegged it at four years in the 2007 Educational Reform but the current government reversed it to three years so as of now, both programmes are being run alongside but the four year programme is fading out. At this level, the SHS students must study both Core Subjects (compulsory) and Elective Subjects which they choose from any of the following courses: Science, Business, Agriculture, General Arts 1 or 2, Home Economics and Visual Arts. The Core Subjects includes: Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education. The Elective courses are categorized as:

1. Agriculture Programme (Chemistry, Physics, Agricultural Science, Calculus 1 and 11). Students may also choose from any of these options (Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Forestry, Crop Husbandry, Geography, French, Music and Elective Mathematics).

2. Business Programme (Accounting, Business Management, Calculus 1 and 11). Students can either choose from Accounting or Secretarial options (Financial Accounting, Principles of Cost Accounting, Typewriting (40wpm), Economics, Clerical Office Duties, Literature in English and French or Music).

3. General Arts Programme

Option 1(Economics, Calculus 1 and 11, Geography and French)

Option 2 (Literature, Trigonometry, Pre-calculus, History and French) Students can also choose from any three of these: Government, Christian Religious Studies, Islamic Religious Studies, Economics and Music or any Ghanaian Language.

4. General Science Programme (Elective Mathematics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry or Geography, French or Music)

5. Technical (Technical Drawing and students can also choose from any two or three of the following: Applied Electricity, Auto Mechanics, Building Construction, Electronics, Metalwork, Woodwork, Elective Mathematics, Physics and French)

6. Vocational Skills Programme

Option 1 Home Economics: Management-In-Living, students are also allowed to choose from any three of these groups (Clothing and Textiles/Foods and Nutrition, General Knowledge-In-Art/Textiles/French/Economics and Biology/Chemistry/Physics/French)

Option 2 Visual Arts: General Knowledge-In-Art, students are also allowed to choose from any two of these groups (Graphic Design/Picture Making and Basketry/Ceramics/Jewellery/Leatherwork/Sculpture/Textiles) any one of these could also be selected in addition Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Elective Mathematics, French, Economics and Literature-In-English.

In this research, emphasis is on the Visual Arts option of the Vocational skills Programme, as graduates from this option would be selected and trained as the LSA needed to assist JHS pupils learn the Visual Arts Syllabus.

2.2.5 Course content of Visual Arts in the SHS

The Vocational Programme at SHS has two options students can either opt to do Home Economics or Visual Arts. Students do Mathematics, English Language, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education as Core Subjects in addition to their electives. Elective Subjects are chosen based on the interest of the students and the resources available to the school. General Knowledge-In-Art is a compulsory subject but students are allowed to choose from the following: one of these Graphic Design or Picture Making, one of these Basketry, Ceramics, Jewellery, Leatherwork, Sculpture and Textiles. In addition, any one of the following may be selected: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Elective Mathematics, French, Economics and Literature-In-English.

At the end of the programme, students at SHS write WASSCE as their final examination, it is based on these results that students would be selected for programmes at the various tertiary institutions be it University, Polytechnics, College of Education among others (Government of

Ghana Portal,2010). Graduates who have completed this programme but needed to resit in some papers would later be identified and trained as LSAs in this research. The reason for choosing this category is because, they are neither in further education nor in any form of employment, this make them readily available to be used for the research.

2.3.0 Teaching

“Teaching is a complex, multifaceted activity, often requiring us as instructors to juggle multiple tasks and goals simultaneously and flexibly” (Eberly, 2009).

Teaching is not just an occupation it is a type of work which you cannot just do anyhow as it is always directed towards a learner. According to Ayers (1995),“Teaching is an intellectual and ethical work” (p.60). It requires the full attention of a caring and a thoughtful person, who would be able to think on his or her feet and at the same time being fair and firm. Farrant (1980) talks of teaching and learning as the opposite sides of the same coin; lessons are not taught until pupils have learned what has been taught. Teaching can, therefore, be thought of as a process that facilitates learning.

Teaching and learning go together but if you teach and pupils are not able to assimilate what has been taught, then it means no learning has occurred. What a teacher teaches should be understood by his or her students, if they do not, then it means something is wrong with the strategies used. One teacher, teaching a class of fifty plus pupils, cannot do much about this situation. He or she would only concentrate on the average pupils, ignoring the needs of the gifted and learning disabled. If good teaching could be achieved then every pupil should be given the needed attention for him or her to succeed in every learning process.

Amenuke (1995) has explained that Ghana's philosophy for education sets out to provide the type of education which trains its citizens to be self-reliant; this forms the core of education. Further to say this, he says that every Ghanaian has a right to education. That is to say, every individual should be able to read, write and become useful in his or her society. Ghana as a nation should benefit from every individual citizen of the land. Therefore, the use of LSA would help every individual to become an asset and not a liability to the nation because the pupils would be getting the needed attention required of teachers in the classroom.

2.3.1 Teaching of Art

An Art teacher is a person who can yield amazing results out of the techniques and styles used with his pupils by assisting them to represent their beliefs and ideas on an art medium in the classroom (Ketteringham, 2007). In Ghana, the classroom is made up of all the ability groups since we practice the all-inclusive method of teaching. In view of this, pupils come to the classroom with a whole range of skills and experiences and it is up to the teacher to train them to make good use of their abilities as individuals. The Art teacher must always give out the maximum best to their students; this can be achieved with the LSA who are trained to assist the teacher to give out himself/herself as humanly possible to his/her students. The teacher should be approachable, confident and also try to share some of the secrets of her success to the pupils to instill a can-do attitude in them (Stanfield, 2009). The Art teacher should be open to all possibilities by allowing students to use their creativity skills as this can help students to be comfortable and settle in the classroom. Stanfield says the teacher should be open in his/her proposals and encourage skill-building in every individual as this can help create a variety in the art works produced by students in the end. The Art teacher cannot achieve everything single handedly therefore there is the need for an LSA to assist the teacher in the classroom.

2.3.2 Strategies for teaching Art

Dickinson (2000) defines differentiation as a process whereby pupils across the whole range of ability can have access to and benefit from the curriculum. “Differentiating instruction means changing the pace, level, or kind of instruction you provide to individual learners’ needs, styles or interests” (Heacox, 2002). Differentiation should be employed when it comes to teaching in Ghana since all the ability groups are put in one classroom. Strategies used in such a class should benefit all learners and therefore extra care should be taken when planning art lessons. When LSAs are introduced into the education system, the teacher would have more time to plan for the various lessons to suit all the ability groups especially in relation to Art. Reasons for differentiation are individual differences, learning styles, learning ability, interest, needs, personality and attitude, gender, race, aptitude, prior learning experiences and home background. All these come into play in choosing strategies for teaching an Art class. Differentiation could be done by outcome, ability, pace and sequence, teaching strategies, task, content, degree of support, methods of assessment, ethos, environment and class.

Michael (1983) identifies Authoritarian – Dictatorial method and Facilitator Guide methods of teaching Art. These are explained as follows:

a. Authoritarian – Dictatorial method: This type of teacher dictates exactly what to do in a step-by-step manner and offers much direction at each step. They explain art concepts and principles, for instance art history chronologically with slides and reproductions, concern for skill and craftsmanship, student ability to follow directions and be responsible. The teacher offers himself or herself as a model of master artist and art authority. Students rated as low in art ability tend to

learn about art via this method. If one teacher is supposed to direct each step of a child's work, with about fifty or more pupils in one class, how can this be achieved alone? It means those who cannot work faster cannot be seen by the teacher or the teacher will choose to go by the rules and not finish with his/her course outline.

b. Facilitator Guide: The teacher uses individual or group work. Students decide with teacher upon art experiences and interests based on student-teacher conferences. This method works with students who are self-motivated students choose their own topic, art media, and plan their study with the help of a teacher. Good teachers use dramatic body movements, variations in voice, eye contact, emotive face expressions, and lively expression of ideas, project their voices, enthusiastic and are professionally dressed. A lot of planning has to go into this type of teaching strategy before it can be used in a classroom. As a teacher the strategies you employ in the classroom goes a long way to influence the performance of your students and also arouse and sustain their interest throughout the lesson. Therefore, for a student to have confidence in you as a teacher, it is always good to start off by inviting positive and safe learning environment to help students to relax and study. Assessments and instructions have to vary according to the types of students you have in your classroom and also collaborate with other teachers to find out what works for them in their classrooms. With the help of the Learning Support Assistants, these methods could be adequately planned and used effectively in the classroom.

2.3.3 Peer teaching

Peer teaching is a practice in which students take on a teaching role in a school setting in order to share their knowledge with other students, students help each other and also learn by teaching others. In certain situations, students learn best when they are taught by their peers because, they

feel more relaxed and comfortable as the rigid classroom situations and barriers are removed. Peer teaching is a process where pupils teach and learn from each other by sharing ideas, knowledge and their experiences on the subject matter at hand; more emphasis is placed on the learning process, support and encouragement are given by their peers in the group as discussed by Boud, et al (2001).

Peer teaching is the act of linking high achieving students with low achieving students in the classroom to help each other (Rohrbeck et al, 2003). Brighter students mentor their peers under the supervision of a teacher to help the weaker students. An example is where a brighter student helps a weaker student to sharpen a pencil properly or use the correct way to hold a pencil when drawing for the lesson of the day begins with the teacher. Under the supervision of both the teacher and the LSA, all the mentors and their mentees would be well supervised during peer teaching. Peer teaching is an effective educational strategy for classrooms of diverse learners like that of Ghana because it promotes academic gains as well as social enhancement. Pupils teaching their peers also need supervision from their teacher; as many groups could spring up in large classrooms, things could also get out of hand. In order for things to be supervised, controlled and directed, the teacher would need another adult to help in such situations, hence the need for the LSA. There are different types of peer teaching activities that the group could choose from: pupil-led workshops, formal class presentations, seminar presentations, work-in-progress reports and debriefing sessions. The teacher and the groups come together to discuss and choose from the list that best suits the groups.

2.3.4 Small group teaching

A small group teaching is a situation where the teacher plays the role of a facilitator, this type of teaching is student centered and it helps in developing the students' communication skills. Bass (1998) argues that there are teachers who do not listen and students who do not talk. The small group teaching encourages the teacher to listen to each and every individual member of the group speak whiles the students also develop their speaking and listening skills. Gelula (1997) used a table to explain the goals of a small group teaching as represented in Table 1.

Table 1 Small group teaching

Thinking	Reasoning, speculating, evaluating, decision-making, and problem-solving
Sharing	Observations, experiences, and feelings

To achieve these higher-order thinking and learning activities promoted by small group teaching (Table 1), it is helpful for the pupil to engage in meaningful communication directed towards a set of goals. All groups should have the same ground rules guiding them. The teacher should use these guidelines to enable him to support the pupils to achieve the set goals.

- a. Keep the learning process moving by encouraging pupils to reason and apply what has been learnt.
- b. Probe pupil's knowledge on the subject matter by asking open ended questions.
- c. Avoid commenting on the quality of contributions made and do not spoon feed the pupils let them fish for their own information.
- d. Make sure that all pupils make an effort to contribute by preventing the leader from dominating.

- e. Discussions should benefit all the ability groups.
- f. Identify problems of the group and solve individual problems as well.

Supposing there are more than two groups, which is very likely to occur in large classes, how can the teacher alone handle the situation more effectively? The teacher might need some help in handling the groups hence the need of the LSA Gross (1993).

“Students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats.” The idea is that, Pupils who work in groups tend to understand the subject matter more and their interest could be sustained throughout the lesson. Groups could be formed as informal, formal or study groups depending on what the teacher is hoping to achieve. Pupils should however, be informed on what would be expected of them as individuals of a group, so that each pupil participates in tasks given. Group progress is monitored at each stage and marks are awarded accordingly. The teacher alone cannot handle such situations effectively; an LSA could help the teacher and also support the pupils in their groups, while the teacher is attending to other pupils or group members.

Jaques (2004) identifies the benefits of learning in small groups as follows:

1. It allows students to discover and engage themselves with a range of ideas which is based on their backgrounds.
2. It provides students with the opportunity to be more active in class.
3. It assists students to clarify their attitudes and ideas about the subject matter, as they test their own ideas and attitudes against those of others.
4. It helps students develop a sense of academic rigour and a willingness to share ideas.

5. It provides opportunities for students to receive more information and immediate feedback on their learning.
6. It encourages students towards self-directed and independent learning.
7. It provides more opportunities for peer learning and sharing responsibility for learning.
8. It provide opportunities for students to easily gain more awareness of their emotional reactions when criticized.
9. It provides opportunities for students to learn and develop cooperative behaviour including critical thinking and the process of group problem solving.
10. It assist students to easily establish rapport between the teacher and group members.
11. It provides more opportunities to develop skills in communication and interpersonal relations.

For the teacher to effectively supervise and listen to every member within the groups, he would need the support of the LSA to be able to do so.

2.4.0 Learning

Learning is acquiring new knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, ideas and different types of information. From an educator's perspective, learning involves helping people along the learning process, and learning includes all of the things that we do to make learning happen. There are different definitions for learning but one thing runs through, that is, imparting knowledge and skills.

- a. Webster's Dictionary defines learning as "the act or experience of one that learns; knowledge of skill acquired by instruction or study; modification of a behavioral tendency by experience."

b. Birkenholz (1999) defines learning as a change in behavior which is demonstrated by pupils' implementation of the knowledge, skills, or practices derived from education.

The constructivist learning theory is one that is believed to be worthwhile, and states the fact that students can construct their own learning in the classroom (Ketteringham, 2007). This means all students are capable of learning and all students have something to contribute to the classroom environment.

2.4.1 Learning strategies for Art

Mnemonics is the use of different techniques to learn new concepts, whereas pupils with learning difficulties are less likely to apply these types of techniques without encouragement and direction as discussed by Johnson (1993). Mnemonic strategies include:

Acronyms: Use a word to stand for a list the child needs to remember with each letter representing a word.

Acrostic: This is a chunking strategy such as using a fun sentence with each letter starting with the same letter as the words in the list the child needs to remember or create a rhyme using all of the words you need to remember. Example Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, could get the acrostic as My Very Eyes May Just See Under Nine Planets.

Loci Method: Picture a list of items in a room familiar to you, for example donkey jumping through your bedroom window, monkey hanging from the light, etc. This method can help you to remember large lists of items. With the constant direction and encouragement of the teacher and the LSAs they can be motivated to try and use mnemonics.

Schragg (1993) states that an inclusive practice is giving equal amount of appropriate assistance to each child in her class because every pupil matters in such a classroom. The teacher should include children with learning disabilities in all areas of the class curriculum. With the help of the LSAs, inclusive practice could be done with a less struggle. Teachers can also set up peer tutoring groups where one student who is familiar with a topic assists another student. This is valuable for both students as the process of teaching a concept helps to ensure that is understood thoroughly, and the student having trouble gets one on one attention to learn a concept.

2.4.2 Learning Disabilities

Ghana practices the kind of educational system which has all the ability groups in one classroom. An inclusive classroom is a type of classroom where pupils with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, and mild or moderate disabilities are successfully engaged in the classroom community and in learning. Pupils with learning disabilities are more likely than the general student population to have a low self image. To address low self-image or low self-esteem of students with learning disabilities a teacher may focus on the students' self image or their academic achievement. There are a range of techniques that can be used to effectively teach a child with a learning disability. Any techniques that will assist a child with learning difficulties should be planned in such a way that they are also effective for the general classroom population.

Learning styles of pupils should also be considered in an inclusive classroom and lessons planned to suit all the learning styles in such an environment. Audio learners, Visual learners, Kinesthetic learners and those who use a combination of all three learning styles as discussed by Dickinson (2000). When learning styles are addressed properly in an inclusive classroom and

with the help of the LSAs, the teaching and learning experience would be enjoyable. Gardner (1983) discusses multiple intelligences from a different perspective, rather than looking at it as being smart in respect of scoring a high mark in a standardized test. According to Gardner,

- a. a person's ability to solve problems that he or she encounters in his or her daily life situations.
- b. a person's ability to generate new problems from existing ones and making an effort or planning to solve.
- c. a person's ability to produce something or offer a valued service within one's culture.

Gardner (1983) further identifies eight intelligences as Linguistic intelligence, Logical-mathematical intelligence, Spatial intelligence, Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, Musical intelligence, Interpersonal intelligence, Intrapersonal intelligence and Naturalist intelligence.

These are explained as follows:

- a. Linguistic intelligence is the ability to think in words as exhibited by poets, journalists, speakers and newscasters.
- b. Logical-mathematical intelligence makes it possible to calculate by carrying out complex mathematical operations among others as demonstrated by scientists, accountants, engineers and computer programmers.
- c. Spatial intelligence is the capacity to think in three-dimension by transforming and modifying images as demonstrated by pilots, sculptors, sailors and architects.
- d. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is an individual's ability to manipulate objects and exhibit high physical skills as evident in athletes, dancers, craftspeople and surgeons.
- e. Musical intelligence is the ability of an individual to possess pitch, melody, tonal and rhythmic sensitivity as done by composers, musicians, critics, instrument makers and sensitive listeners.

f. Interpersonal intelligence is one's ability to identify who he or she is and use that knowledge to plan and direct his or her life. Such people end up being theologians, psychologists and philosophers.

g. Naturalist intelligence is a person's ability to observe, understand, classify and identify natural and man-made systems. Such naturalists include: farmers, botanists, hunters, ecologists and landscapers.

All of these intelligences and learning styles have to be considered in planning teaching and learning activities for an inclusive classroom. The teacher would need an assistant who would help him or her in planning and delivering the subject matter in such an environment. The activities planned for the pupils should be able to train them to be self-reliant and determined in life. Training at this level is the link between the now and the future. Multiple goals should be set for the class while having every child in mind. Multilevel assignment should be set for the class, which also requires of the teacher to use multilevel assessment accordingly.

Moastropieri and Scruggs (2000) indicates that in inclusive classrooms, pupils have to be empowered in order to be able to support their peers in the learning process so that instead of ridiculing, they would encourage their peers. The pupils also have to be involved in the planning of activities for lessons, such as the collection of materials for making teaching and learning materials (TLM). When they are able to do this, their efforts have to be recognized and rewarded in return. In an inclusive classroom, worksheets for the less able pupils should neither be too simple nor with too many things on one page, short sentences should be used; simple words and familiar language are to be used. The last one is to break down all tasks into small steps. With respect to this study, it is assumed that the teacher will be able to achieve these targets by

working with the LSA. By working together as a team, it would be easier for them to help all the pupils than the teacher working alone.

2.5.0 Classroom management

Good classroom behaviour management is essential for lessons to run smoothly. Anticipation and effective management of problems will ensure that any disruption is minimised, allowing pupils to spend the maximum time on tasks set. To be able to plan effectively for an all inclusive classroom teaching and also to manage it well, the following could be done by getting the basics right, plan lessons for individual pupils and also use positive reinforcement by focusing on achievements, increasing classroom participation and using inclusive practices.

Goor and Shwenn (1996) explain that, a teacher can further increase teaching time by implementing levels of acceptable behaviour from the beginning of the school year. Acceptable classroom behaviours would be laid down by the teacher with the consent of the pupils and when this is done, the rules would be typed with their penalties stated against them and pasted on the side of the chalkboard. When a pupil breaks a rule, the pupils and the teacher would help the offenders to remember the rules by reading it to them; penalties would be awarded accordingly. If the teacher should get the basics right, establish routines should be followed without any room for manipulations. A routine start time and end time should be set and strictly followed. This would require the direct supervision of both the teacher and the Learning Support Assistant to be able to monitor the routines.

McPhillimy (1996) identifies that by increasing classroom participation, a successful teacher can use the child's strengths to gain their interest. A pupil with an interest in art can be given written instructions to follow when attempting art. The pupil could also be asked to give written

instructions for other students to follow in order for other pupils to experience similar success in art. Instead of focusing on the weaknesses, set the child up as an expert in their field by assisting them to share their knowledge and experiences. Such peer teaching activities could be done in groups and supervised by two adults in the classroom without lessons being interrupted. Thus, instead of pupils waiting for their turns, which can waste part of the instructional time, the groups can be supervised and directed at the same time with the help of the LSA.

Posner (1982) identified that a well organized classroom would facilitate good management. In a classroom, which is well structured, behaviour of pupils is well controlled and works of pupils are also well monitored. These would help to create a good learning environment for pupils, and also help them to absorb quickly whatever is taught in the classroom. With the help of the Learning Support Assistants, pupils will know that they are being monitored from across the classroom. This will make them try to behave well, no matter where they would be in the classroom.

Posner went further to say that pupils in the adolescent stage portray a lot of unacceptable behaviours, ranging from bullying to truancy. Pupils who are handicapped are the group that suffers the most, because they are more vulnerable in such situations. The teacher cannot single-handedly manage such situations alone; such behaviours might even go unnoticed. In order to be able to promptly make out such situations and act on them accordingly, extra help is needed to be able to do it more efficiently with 50 plus pupils under one roof. Bullying goes on in and out of the classroom, especially during lunchtimes. The victims do not always complain and this might go on for a long time and affect the pupil's interest and confidence. Pupils need adequate supervision during lunchtimes and playtimes to prevent bullying. This kind of supervision cannot be done by the teacher alone. Additional help is required and the LSA would be the best asset to

use in and out of the classroom, helping the teacher in times like this. Pupils with emotional problems also would be helped to build up their confidence, with the help of an assistant. They LSA would not only help the teacher in the classroom alone, but would support the teacher every time that a pupil needs special care to be able to make it in his or her academic, emotional, physical and social environment during the school term.

2.5.1 Lesson Plan

A Lesson Forecast is a framework of the term's activities prepared by the teacher for guidance in the preparation of a Lesson Plan. It is based on the Forecast, that a teacher can effectively plan his/her lessons. If a forecast is well organized, so will a lesson plan. A Lesson Forecast is done on every subject at the beginning of each term. A lesson plan on the other hand is a framework and a road map, which each teacher will create using an individual style. Farrant (1996) states that a good lesson cannot be taught without lesson preparation. According to Airasian, teachers plan and prepare for their lessons so that they will be able to modify the curriculum to fit the unique characteristics of their particular class. According to Wikipedia a lesson plan is a detailed description of the course of instruction for particular lesson. A lesson plan has the following features: Day, Time, Duration, Topic, Sub-Topic, Objectives, Teaching Learning Materials, Teaching and Learning Activities, Core Points and Evaluation.

2.6.0 Learning Support Assistants

Learning Support Assistants work alongside teachers in the classroom, to help pupils to get the most out of their learning. In this report, LSA refers to the young people who would be assigned to one classroom to assist the teacher manage teaching and learning.

Debenham (2010) states that in the United Kingdom, LSA are used in primary, secondary or special schools, either in a general role or they may have responsibilities for a particular child. The key role of an LSA is to help raise educational standards in the classroom, by providing support for the pupils, the teacher and the school.

Different names are given to the LSA in various countries. In the United States of America, they are referred to as Teacher Aides. Debenham went further to say that, the duties of an LSA could determine his/her name at that particular time. It ranges from Childminder, Cover Supervisor, Nursery Nurse, Playworker, Lunch Time Supervisor to Youth and Community Workers. In some situations a parent can even volunteer in her child's school in order to help her child settle in the school's environment. In Ghana, they are called Teaching Assistants but they only exist in the Universities and they are made to handle tutorial sessions. Under the Youth Employment Policy, another kind of Teaching Assistants also function in the rural schools where there are few or no qualified teachers (NYEP Guidelines brochure,2006). The LSA would be the special treatment that would be given to the experimental group but the controlled group would not get such kind of treatment.

Brown (2007) states that, a pupil with special educational needs has to be included in various classroom activities by assisting them to access the national curriculum, is a Learning Support Assistant.

As stated by Baker (2001), a BBC Education Correspondent explains, in the United Kingdom, stake holders of education believe in the importance of classroom assistants who would be another adult in the classroom, who supports the teaching and learning activities as well as act as supervisors when the teacher's back, is turned attending to other pupils' needs. A child with a learning difficulty is one whose learning difficulties are not as a result of an intellectual disability

such as significant hearing or vision impairment, nor are they emotionally disturbed. Chapman and Tunmer (2000) argues that with a little support and assistance, such children would be able to succeed. According to Elbaum and Vaughan, (1999) Children with learning disabilities have a lower self-image than the general student population. To address low self-image or low self-esteem of students with learning disabilities a teacher may focus on the pupils' self-image or their academic achievement. With the help of Learning Support Assistants, they can work more on this group of pupils by concentrating on both their self-esteem and academic achievements.

In Ghana there are pupils with learning difficulties, who need a little support from the teacher to make it in the classroom environment. Learning Support Assistants can be of help to the teacher in this regard.

2.6.1 Roles of the Learning Support Assistants in the classroom

Laws (2002) cited that LSAs supporting special needs in the classroom would be faced with a variety of challenges. The children's challenges may be in the form of learning difficulties, communication problems, behavioural difficulties, visual or hearing impairment or physical disabilities. In relation to the work, it is only the teacher who would be faced with the above challenges in the classroom. If there is an assistant in a class of fifty plus pupils, the problems in the class would be divided among two adults. The pressure on the teacher would be reduced and the teacher can attend to most of these challenges before the day ends. The teacher can monitor the activities of the students, identify most of the pupils with educational needs and support them to access the national curriculum. As again contended by Laws (2002), the Learning Support Assistant can offer support to Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils and the teacher in the classroom in a variety of ways including the following:

- a. Develop knowledge of a range of learning support needs and the specific needs of the children who need support.
- b. Aid the children in learning as effectively as possible both in class and independently via the use of evidence-based practices.
- c. Establish a warm and supportive relationship with the children to be supported.
- d. Encourage and facilitate acceptance and inclusion of children with special needs.
- e. Encourage the development of a strong sense of self and love of learning in children.
- f. Consistently monitor and review student progress in conjunction with the class teacher.
- g. Develop knowledge of the curriculum and understanding its implications for the students who will require additional support to be successful.
- h. Develop skills in the adaptation and modification of classroom activities to meet the needs of all children.
- i. Be aware of school policies and procedures
- j. Be aware of the need for sensitivity and the maintenance of confidentiality when discussing the needs of children with special needs.

The LSA can help in the preparation of materials to be used by the pupils, to enable them to access the national curriculum. These roles could be performed by the LSAs: Helping pupils to understand what is required of them in a lesson, assisting pupils with reading questions asked by the teacher, helping pupils to understand texts and assisting pupils with the taking of notes during a lesson.

LSA could also help pupils to discuss, organize their work and also stay on task during a lesson. When a pupil finds it difficult to communicate, the LSA would help to talk through their problems and sometimes acts as a link between the pupils and the teacher. They can also

supervise pupils during group work, on school trips, lunch and play time. LSAs are to develop knowledge of a range of learning support needs and the specific needs of the children to be supported. They can also aid the children in learning as effectively as possible in class and also encouraging them to work independently.

School enrolment would continue to swell; especially now that there is a Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE) and a School Feeding Programme. For teachers to be able to perform effectively and make a remarkable contribution to education in Ghana, Learning Support Assistants should to be introduced at the basic level of education to help the teaching and learning processes. The teacher would be free to attend to the special needs of pupils in the class, have ample time to plan varying activities for lessons, create room for motivation and also remove the stress (tension) from the classroom and make the learning process more relaxing and enjoyable.

Agyeman and Baku (1983) states that basic education involves a set of learning experiences which helps an individual to function in his/her social and physical environment. These early experiences also lay the foundation for continuation of lifelong learning process. If the Learning Support Assistants come in, it will help teachers to lay a solid foundation for the structures of education to be boldly built, no matter how uncertain the future might seem, pupils can still strive on during their adult lives, whether in further education or in a vocation.

Reviewing literature on Learning Support Assistants, teaching and learning strategies for Art and teaching in an inclusive classroom allowed the researcher to gain a clearer sense of direction as to how to go about this project. Chapter three is made up of the methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This study is an action research under the qualitative research methodology. Descriptive and quasi-experimental methodologies were also employed in this study. This chapter focuses on the research design, sampling and the sample technique, the primary and secondary data, data collection instrument, validation and administration of instrument and data analysis plan.

3.1.0 Research design

Different approaches are used by researchers when they decide to embark on a research. Basically, there are two ways that a researcher can approach a research, the researcher can either choose a qualitative or a quantitative research approach depending on what a researcher hopes to achieve in the end. This study employed the qualitative research design approach. Qualitative research has several approaches to it, some of the approaches are quite different from others but they all have two things in common: (a) they all deal with situations that occur in a natural setting and (b) they study these situations with a complex approach.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) have described qualitative research as a study that deals with one or more of these: description, interpretation, verification and evaluation to serve a particular purpose. Qualitative research does not allow the researcher to identify absolute cause-effect relationships to answer questions and it also tells the situation from multiple points of views.

Under the qualitative research design, descriptive, action research and quasi-experimental research methodologies were employed.

Mays (1948:p.40) relates that an action research is the study and enhancement of one's own practice. In action research, the teacher researches into the teaching and learning strategies and tries to find new approaches. The findings would help the teacher to enhance the existing methods in order to help students give out their best. In this study, the researcher was focusing on phenomena that were occurring in a natural setting and also studied the research in its complexity, hence the decision to use qualitative research approach. The teacher is the researcher, who is trying to find a solution to a problem in a classroom setting.

Quasi-experimental research is an educational research in which two or more intact groups are compared after one (or more) has been given a specified treatment as discussed by Fraenkel and Wallen (1994). The setting in this case was Al-Azhariya school for Islamic Ideology Junior High. The researcher studied of two variables: assessment of pupil learning as a dependent variable and the use of LSA as an independent variable. A pre-test and a post-test of the pupils' drawing skills were conducted in both the experimental and the controlled groups of pupils to assess how the use of LSA in one classroom had helped to improve the drawing skills and behaviour of pupils in the experimental group are the independent variable.

The descriptive and quasi-experimental methodologies best suited the researcher's tasks of:

a. Documenting existing teaching and learning conditions of Visual Art at AL-Azhariya Junior High School in Kumasi.

b. Experimenting and documenting the effectiveness of the Learning Support Assistants as a positive intervention in the experiment group, as compared to results in the controlled group, where no intervention will occur.

Profile of the Sampled School

Al-Azhariya School for Islamic Ideology is located within the Zongo community at Tafo Mile 4, a suburb of Kumasi. The proprietor is the Imam of this community. The school has both Muslim and Christian teachers working together but only attended by Muslim pupils. Although this is a private school, the teachers are appointed by the Ghana Education Service. The school has classes for the Kindergarten, Primary Junior High Schools. The primary school is divided into boys' and girls' streams of the same school with two different headteachers. At the Junior High School, boys and girls study in different classrooms within the same year group; a similar thing happens in the Senior High School. The Senior High School is a community-based private school. In this school, the boys and girls do not sit in the same classroom because, the Islamic beliefs and religion does not permit this. For their school uniform, the boys wear white Jalabia (a traditional long outfit worn by male Muslims) while the girls wear long blue dresses with white veils and scarves. The school uniform is designed based on the Islamic religion. At the Kindergarten level, boys and girls study in the same classroom but they do not sit together. Their pupils' desks are arranged along the walls of the classroom structure, that is to the left and right side of the classroom, with boys to the left and the girls to the right; separated by a wide gap in the middle of the same classroom. The pupils are very disciplined and cultured. Respect for the opposite sex is ensured and norms and traditions are well observed. The community in which the school is situated also helps in the upbringing of the pupils. Members of the community constantly drag pupils who are seen loitering about in their schools' uniform to the school to be

punished by teachers. Arabic religious sessions are held early morning on weekdays and weekends. Formal school session starts from 9:30am and ends at about 4:00pm from Monday to Thursday. On Fridays, lessons begin at 9:30am and ends at 12:30pm, to make way for the Fridays prayers. The community joins the pupils for the Friday prayers in the Mosque cited on the school's compound; this is a typical Islamic school. Plate 1 shows a part of the school.

Plate 1



Classroom Block of Al-Azhariya JHS

3.2.0 Physical structures in the school

Anyone entering the school will first come across a football pitch and a canteen, the Mosque (where prayers are held) and the Senior High School. A bathhouse that is used for performing “ablution” (the act of cleaning specific parts of the human body with water before prayers) is adjacent to the Mosque. The school is walled with wire mesh. Primary A which is the boys’ stream of the primary school is in the middle of the school compound and sandwiched by Primary B (girls’ stream) on the left and the Junior High School on the right.

3.2.1 Population and sampling

Fraenkel and Wallen (1994) explain that, a target population (ideal choice) is the actual population which the researcher would use the findings to generalize and the accessible population (researcher's own realistic choice) as the population to whom the researcher is entitled to generalize the research findings. In this study, the target population consisted of all pupils in Junior High Schools within the Tafo-Pankrono Sub-Metropolitan Assembly in Kumasi and all Senior High School Visual Arts graduates from T. I. Ahamdiyya and Anglican Senior High Schools in Kumasi as Learning Support Assistants.

From this heterogeneous population, the accessible population consisted of first year Junior High School pupils within the Tafo-Pankrono Sub-Metropolitan Assembly in Kumasi and eight Senior High School graduates who offered Visual Arts, and were neither in employment nor in higher education to represent the population of Learning Support Assistants, who became the independent variables. However, for the purpose of this study, two female first year classes of Al-Azhariya Junior High School where the researcher was a former teacher was purposefully selected to provide a base for the research. This was very convenient for the purpose.

Sample and Sampling

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the population of the LSA. The researcher needed only those with experience in Visual Arts at both Junior High and Senior High Schools. In the case of the headteachers and the teachers who teach Basic Design and Technology (BDT) in the JHS, the Convenience sampling technique was employed to select those who could provide the needed data. The same technique was also used to select the pupils for the project.

Sample

A Convenient sample of two first year female classes in Al-Azhariya School were chosen with one group representing the experimental group, which got a preferential treatment (Learning Support Assistants were used) with the second group being used as the controlled group (no Learning Support Assistants were used). Both classes were taught by the same teacher (the researcher). A pre-test and a post-test were conducted in both the experimental and the controlled classrooms to measure mastery of content. In this regard, the assessment was the dependent variable and the LSA used in the experimental group was the independent variable. To identify and train Senior High School Visual Arts graduates as Learning Support Assistants for the Junior High Schools to satisfy objective two, the researcher visited Kumasi Anglican SHS and T.I Ahmadiya SHS in Kumasi and interacted with students who were re-sitting their WASSCE examinations. The reason was that SHS Visual Arts school graduates who were neither in employment nor further education were needed to be trained as LSAs for the project. The idea was that these students had finished with their final examinations and were waiting for their results and could be engaged for this research. Eight (four males and four females), interested students volunteered to train as LSA. A relative of the researcher volunteered to assist her by performing the duties of a research assistant.

Table 2 shows the sample size used for the study.

Table 2 Sample size

Participants	Males	Females	Ages	Experience
Head teachers	5	5	40+	10years +
Teachers	8	4	30+	8years +
LSAs	4	4	25+	0

Pupils	0	100	15+	0
Research Assistant	0	1	23	0
Total	17	114		

In all 131 participants were used for the study. The sample included 10 Headteachers, 12 BDT teachers, 8 LSAs, 100 pupils with (50 girls in each class) and 1 research assistant.

3.3 Data collection instruments

Observation and interview were the data collection instruments adopted for the study.

Observation:

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), observation in qualitative research is unstructured and flexible. The researcher can shift focus from one thing to another as the need arises. The researcher can choose either to observe or participate in the activities taking place (Fraenkael and Wallen, 1994). In this study, the researcher chose the role of a participant-as-observer, serving as a participant when teaching and as an observer when the Learning Support Assistants were assisting the pupils to learn Visual Arts. A digital camera, audiotape, field notes and the research assistant were the data recording devices adopted for the study.

Observation check list

This is a set of questions or guidelines that the researcher writes down to guide him or her on what to look for during the observation process. The researcher checks his or her observations against the checklist to prevent him or her from observing things which would not be relevant for the project. The observation check list was used to guide the researcher on what to look out for

when observing participants (Frankael and Wallen 1994). An observation check list was also used as a guide for the researcher to follow to observe specific traits of both pupils and the LSA during the intervention lessons. This was to assist the researcher observe the behavior, activities, movements and relationships of pupils in both groups and the LSA during lessons.

Interview:

Interviewing as explained by Frankael and Wallen (1994), is a careful way of asking relevant questions to get information from the responses given by the interviewees. The researcher used interviews to get a great yield of meaningful information, which were useful for the data collected. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to get information from headteachers as well as the Basic Design and Technology teachers.

Interview schedule

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1994), interview schedule is similar to a questionnaire; both are a set of questions to be answered by participants of a study but with an interview schedule; the questions are administered by the researcher and information gathered are taped or recorded. The researcher wrote down a set of questions and used them to as a guide to obtain information from all participants.

Validation of the selected data collection instruments

This was done through assisted vetting of the questions by the researcher, friends and the research supervisor. The interview schedule was also piloted with friends to help make the questions error-free.

3.4 Data collection procedures

The metropolitan director of education organized a workshop for teachers to discuss the results of the 2009 BECE examinations on sub-metropolitan circuit basis. This gave me the opportunity to interview some headteachers and teachers of BDT within the Asokore-Mampong sub-metropolitan circuit, where the researcher was teaching at the time, were conveniently available for the interview. This made it possible for the researcher to compare data on the teaching and learning conditions of BDT (Visual Arts option) in other schools to that of her project site. One on one interview was organized to collect information from the headmaster and the BDT teachers of AL-Azhariya JHS. The reason was to assess and document the existing teaching and learning conditions of Visual Arts in the School, to satisfy objective one of this study.

According to the Webster's dictionary (1985), a focus group is a small group of people whose response to something is studied to determine the response that can be expected from a larger population. Focus group interviews were conducted with the pupils while face-to-face interviews were conducted with the headteachers and the Basic Design and Technology teachers. The researcher asked the questions and the respondents provided answers. The interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed. Copies of responses gathered were later sent to the interviewees for them to verify the data gathered from them.

Observation was also carried out to gather more information on the teaching of Visual Arts from teachers and headteachers from different schools. This made the researcher sit in meetings and workshops conducted by circuit supervisors (Tafo-Pankrono and Asokore-Mampong) and the Kumasi Metropolitan Director of Education for direct information on relevant issues.

3.5 Training programme for the Learning Support Assistants

Training the LSA

The eight Senior High School Visual Arts graduates who were selected from T. I. Ahmadiya and Anglican Senior High Schools in Kumasi were trained to serve as Learning Support Assistants (LSA). This was based on the need to create jobs for this category of students when the project is finally adopted by the Ghana Education Service. After the SHS graduates have finished with their WASSCE examinations and are waiting for their results, they could be engaged in profitable research work to make them useful to the society. Those who volunteered to be trained as the LSA had some of their art works looked at and they were also asked to talk about their works. The researcher did that to know how well they could express themselves artistically and verbally.

Eight LSA were trained mainly to make sure that there was always four LSA working in the classroom even when some were not present in a day. As a female researcher working with two groups of female classes in a mixed school, it was decided not to make this an all-female affair. For gender sensitivity, the researcher decided to include two males for the project. Having four LSA any time was important to ensure support for each other and also ensure that there was always at least two of them to assist with the teaching schedules.

Plate 2 shows some of the LSA who participated in the training.

Plate 2



Learning Support Assistants

The LSA were trained in the Al-Azhariya Junior High School staff common room so that they would be used to the school environment. The training took place on three Saturdays in August 2009. Because, the training was designed to prepare them for real classroom teaching situations, the volunteers were trained to understand the roles of the teacher in the classroom, how they would support the pupils and not take the place of the teacher, while only acting as another adult who is there to support teaching and learning. This was to satisfy objective four of the study, which focused on the designing of a training programme and use it to train the Learning Support Assistants.

The steps adopted for training the LSA focused on the following themes:

1. What is teaching?
2. Qualities and Roles of an LSA
3. What is learning?
4. Learning Ability groups

5. Learning Disabilities

6. Multiple Intelligences

7. Topics to be treated with Pupils (Drawing, Elements and Principles of Design, and Colourwork)

8. Teaching/Learning Materials

9. Teaching and Learning materials (TLM) to be used in teaching the pupils.

10. The making of TLM.

As previously stated, the aims of the training of the LSA for the project centered on making the volunteer Senior High School Visual Arts graduates who are neither in employment nor in further studies competent as LSA in supporting JHS teachers to teach effectively and manage their pupils for effective learning. The focus was:

1. To expose them to the roles expected of them in the visual art classroom.
2. To train the LSA to handle learners with different ability groups as individuals.
3. To guide the LSA to prepare TLM and use them in their small groups.

Data Analysis Plan

Data collected on the LSA training and classroom work were assembled, described, analyzed and interpreted in narrative form and where applicable, pictures were used to give more detail to the discussion provided in Chapter Four of this report.

KNUST



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF MAIN FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the procedure for analyzing data gathered through participants, observation and interviews; data collected on the LSA before, during and after the intervention as well as the pupils' works that were gathered from the pre-test and post-test drawing exercises.

4.1 Data collected through interview

Interview with the headteacher of Al-Azhariya Junior High School, Kumasi

During the interview, the headmaster of the school revealed that the school does not have a qualified teacher for Visual Arts and because of that, the Technical Drawing teacher teaches the Visual Arts alongside Technical Drawing. The school has temporary workshops, tools and materials for Home Economics and Technical Drawing but cannot afford another one for Visual Arts. Apart from not having a qualified teacher for Visual Arts, the pupils themselves are not interested in the course because they think it is too expensive (in terms of tools and materials to be purchased as compared to Home Economics and Technical Drawing). The boys do not like the course because they think Home Economics and Visual Arts are subjects relevant for girls to study, while Technical Drawing is for boys. It also came out that if there were qualified teachers for Visual Arts and the pupils also showed interest in the subject, the headteacher would be very happy with that. He believed that Visual Arts would have laid a foundation for pupils who do not make it to Senior High School to get some kind of employment while others could also go to the wayside graphic designers to build or improve on what they learnt in school as a career.

The headteacher said he was also working hard to get a qualified teacher to teach the subject, if he gets a teacher for it, then he would get funds to get the relevant tools and materials as he does

not see Visual Arts as an expensive subject. He was willing to encourage the pupils to opt for Visual Arts as it has many career prospects and he would let them hold school based exhibitions at the end of every academic year to motivate other pupils to opt for it. The headteacher said he distributes funds among all the departments but most of the funds go to the Basic Design and Technology department. The Visual Arts department could be used as a sector for the making of teaching and learning materials for the school, with the help of the Learning Support Assistants.

Interview with the Technical drawing teacher (who also handles the Visual Arts)

The Technical Drawing teacher also teaches Visual Arts. He tries to do his best to handle both subjects and he explained that because there were no Visual Arts teachers, he is the only one helping the pupils to study the core skills of the Basic Design and Technology subject. With respect to qualified teachers, the right structures and equipment, the teacher said the school is not prepared for Visual Arts. Although he said he does his best in teaching the subject, the pupils end up not choosing to study it. The Technical Drawing teacher said he tries to teach both subjects with equal dedication most of the time but there are clashes on the timetable for the Visual Arts and Technical Drawing. When this happens he opts for the Technical Drawing class at the expense of the Visual Arts. From his point of view, the materials that are not available could be improvised and pupils could also be motivated to opt for the Visual Arts. The pupils in the school are restricted in their studies for the reason that they only have two programme options to choose from while their counterparts in other schools have all the three subjects to choose from. It was realized that there is also not enough space in the classroom to enable the teacher to move round to supervise the works and activities of pupils. The time allocated on the timetable is also not enough for practical lessons to be exhausted on time. This Technical Drawing teacher sees the Visual Arts option as interesting and as such he thinks something should be done to help it to

be taught in the school. He added that from the little that he had been able to do with the pupils, he has seen that the girls are more interested in the Visual Arts than the boys and as such it reflects on their class performance.

Interview with the pupils

An interview was conducted in both classrooms with groups of four pupils from both the controlled and the experimental groups to find out the teaching and learning conditions of Visual Arts at Al-Ahariya JHS. The pupils explained that they would have liked to explore all the three programme options and make their own choices but since they have only two choices, most girls opt for Home Economics. Those who cannot afford the expensive practical aspect of Home Economics opt for Technical Drawing, where they only buy papers, drawing boards, pencils and mathematical sets. Some said that from the onset, they were told there are no teachers for Visual Arts so their choices became limited. The pupils stated that those aspects of Visual Arts that are in line with Technical Drawing are taught well by the Technical Drawing teacher. They also asked the researcher whether there are teachers for Visual Arts as most of their friends from other schools are also facing a similar problem. They also said periods for Creative Arts classes at the Primary school are often used for doing corrections in class exercises done in other subjects and at other times, some teachers use the period to teach other subjects that were not completed during their allocated times on the timetable. This means that Creative Arts are not regarded as they ought to be in this school.

The pupils also said that clashes on the timetable sometimes makes the Technical Drawing teacher leave some of the Year One classes to attend to the senior classes because, the senior classes would be writing their final examinations earlier than the junior classes and as such they

need to be prepared well. The pupils said the headteacher had assured them that he is trying to get them a Visual Arts teacher. When the researcher told the pupils of the Learning Support Assistants she would bring into the school to help them in Visual Arts, the pupils got excited about the idea and asked how soon that would be. They also asked to be given more time to turn in their assignments as it would enable them bring good works to school on the due dates. Some of the pupils also said that no matter the length of time given to the pupils they would still not turn in their assignments on time. The pupils suggested that more time should be given to them when it comes to practical lessons as this would enable them exhaust all the topics.

4.2.0 Pre – test conducted before the research intervention

Pupils of the experimental and the controlled groups were given the same task to perform. They were asked to draw anything of their choice; the same type and size of paper was given to them and they were allowed to use any medium of their choice. The aim of the exercise was to get to know the pupils she was to deal with, their creative skills, the types of drawing tools available to them and how well their first Visual Arts topic (Exploration of tools) taught by their Technical Drawing teacher was well assimilated. Some of the pupils from both classrooms did the work and coloured them anyhow but others did their drawings without colouring them. This could be the result of the pupils being informed that the work was not going to be graded. The pre-test was done during the researcher's second meeting with both classes when the LSA had not been introduced. On the third meeting with the pupils they were briefed on some of the duties of the LSA before they were introduced to the experimental group.

4.2.1 Pre-test results

Plates 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 below are sample drawings from the pre-test which were gathered from the pupils. The illustration shows that the pupils' drawings were done in simple shapes like square, circle and rectangle.

Plate 3

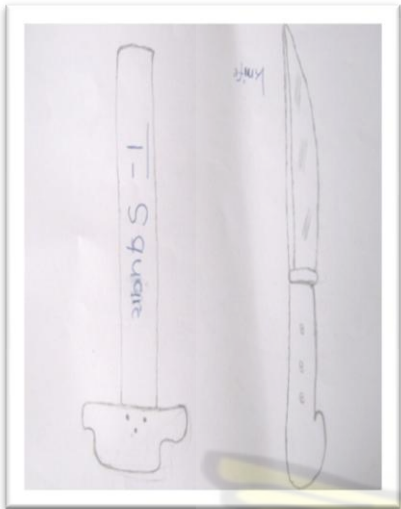


Plate 4



A drawing of a knife and a T-Square

A drawing of an orange

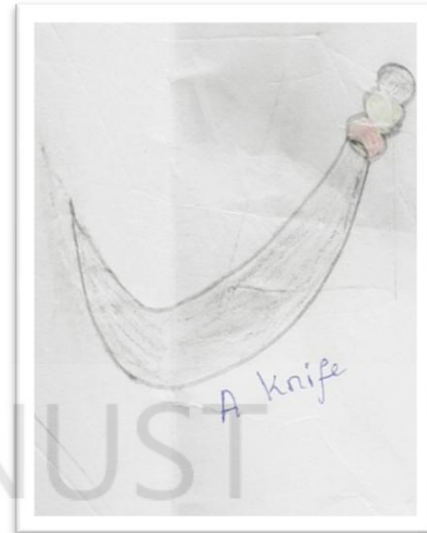
Plate 5

Plate 6



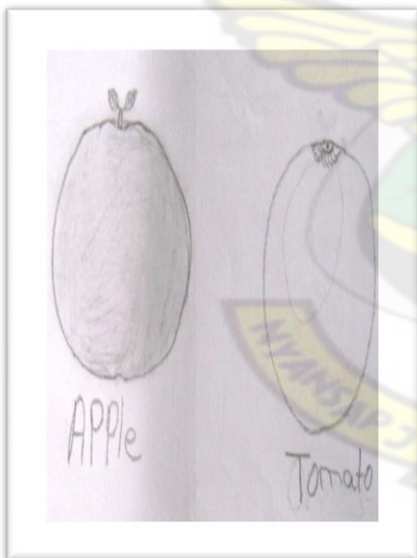
A drawing of a mug

Plate 7

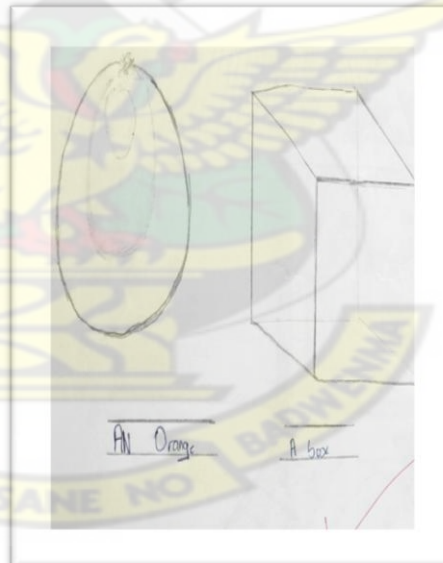


A drawing of a Knife

Plate 8



A drawing of an apple and tomato



A drawing of an orange and a box

4.3.0 Lessons Taught

Wikipedia (2006) explains a lesson as a structured period of time where learning is intended to occur. The topics treated with pupils in both the controlled and experimental groups during the research at Al-Azhariya JHS in Kumasi focused on the following as obtained from the syllabus:

- i. Drawing: Outline drawing (types of shading and tones)
- ii. Pictorial drawing (isometric, oblique and perspective)
- iii. Designing; elements and principles of design
- iv. Colourwork (basic concepts and importance of colour, colour symbolism, sources and extraction of colour)
- v. Application of colour

Lesson taught were planned and written out by the researcher based on the BDT syllabus. All the knowledge and skills portrayed in lessons learned by the pupils were expected to be displayed in the post-test drawing exercise that would be conducted later to assess the impact of the LSA concept. The researcher wanted to see an improvement on the pre-test stage at the post-test stage.

4.3.1 Lesson forecast

A Lesson Forecast is a framework of the term's activities prepared by the teacher for guidance in the preparation of a Lesson Plan. According to Wikipedia (2006) a lesson plan is a detailed description of the course of instruction for particular lesson. Based on a good lesson forecast, a useful lesson plan could be prepared. Table 3 below is the lesson forecast prepared and used for the teaching of both the controlled and experimental groups.

Table 3 Lesson forecast that guided the study

Week	Topic	TLMs prepared by Teacher & LSAs	Tasks
Week 1	Drawing (outline drawing)	Collection of objects (natural and man-made) and make an outline drawing	Pupils to draw the outline of selected objects
Week 2 &3	Drawing (shading)	Prepare shaded drawings	Pupils to identify tones and draw objects in three tones
Week 4 & 5	Elements and principles of design	Collection of natural and man-made elements, prepare TLM on principles of design.	Pupils to identify and list the elements of design in their environment
Week 6& 7	Colourwork (colour symbolism)	Type a page on Ghanaian colour symbolism and print out 100copies	Pupils in groups to find out more information about colours and report to class.
Week 8 & 9	Colourwork Primary/secondary colours	Prepare a drawing on colour	Pupils to create and form three and six-point colour wheel.
Week 10 &11	Colour application	Prepare a painted drawing	Pupils to draw and apply colour to satisfy a need.

The lesson plan that was designed had the following features:

i. Day of the lesson

- ii. Time of the lesson
- iii. Duration of the lesson
- iv. Topic of the lesson
- v. Sub-Topic of the lesson
- vi. Objectives to achieve at end of the lesson
- vii. Teaching and Learning Activities for the teacher and pupils during the lesson
- viii. Core Points of the lesson
- ix. Evaluation exercise given to pupils at the end of the lesson

Tables 4 and 5 below are sample lesson plans used to teach Colourwork in the controlled and experimental groups respectively.

4.4.0 Table 4 Sample lesson plan used with the controlled group

T/L would be teaching and learning activities and Tr would be teacher in this context.

DAY/DURATION	TOPIC/ SUB-TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	TLM, T/L ACTIVITIES	CORE POINTS	EVALUATION
Monday 04-09-09 9:30-10:50 80mins	COLOURWORK Primary and Secondary colours	Pupils should be able to: a. identify the characteristics of primary and secondary colours. b. Mix the primary and secondary	TLMs:Painted picture, poster colours, brushes, etc. a. Tr. guide pupils to identify, discuss and state these colours.	Displaying and discussions on TLM. a.Characteristics and significance of primary and secondary colours in groups.	Pupils to create colours to form a six-point colour wheel individually.

		colours.	b. Pupils to identify, discuss and state these colours.	b. Identification and discussion of primary and secondary colours in groups.	
		c. Use the mixed colours to paint the six-point colour wheel.	c. Tr. Assist pupils to mix primary and secondary colours.	c. Mixing of primary and secondary colours in groups.	
			d. Pupils to mix primary and secondary colours.	Using mixed colours to paint a six-point colour wheel in groups.	
			e. Tr. Assist pupils to use the mixed colours to paint a six-point colour wheel.		
			f. Pupils to display their works for whole class discussion.		

Source: Ghana Education Service Teacher's lesson notebook, 2010

Table 4 is a traditional lesson plan with only the activities of the teacher and the pupils clearly outlined, which makes it different from that of Table 5 which shows all the activities of the LSA and pupils to be supported clearly stated in the lesson plan.

4.4.1 Table 5 Sample lesson plan used with the experimental group

Teacher: Charlotte Agyenim-Boateng		Date/period: 04-09-09 / 2 nd period	
Room: Experimental class	Department: BDT		Scheme of work: Colour work, Primary and secondary colours
Learning objectives: a. identify the characteristics of primary & secondary colours. b. Mix the primary and secondary colours. c. Use the mixed colours to paint the six-point colour wheel.			
To support the less able: Encourage, praise and motivate them.		Key words: Colours, primary, secondary, colour wheel, poster colours, brushes, painting, pallete, pallete knife.	
Time 10:50- 12:20	Phase 1: Starter Tr., Pupils and LSA to discuss the TLM		

	<p>Phase 2/3: Main session</p> <p>Teaching activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Guide pupils to identify, discuss and state these colours. b. Assist pupils to mix primary and secondary colours. c. Assist pupils to use the mixed colours to paint a six-point colour wheel. 	<p>Learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pupils to identify, discuss and state these primary and secondary colours. b. Pupils to mix primary and mix primary colours to obtain secondary colours. c. Pupils to display their works for whole class discussion.
	<p>LSA activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preparation of TLMs and set them up. b. Assist pupils to make their tools & materials ready for the class. c. Support and encourage less able pupils to understand tasks and instructions. d. Organization of tools, equipments and materials for the class. e. Supervise pupils to perform tasks given by the Teacher. f. Assist less able pupils to complete tasks assigned by the Teacher. 	

Phase 4: Plenary		
Pupils to mix and obtain colours and use them to create colours to form a six-point colour wheel individually.		
Homework (indicate whether compulsory or extension and give due date)		
Gifted/average pupils: Mix colours and use it to create a six-point colour wheel and present it tomorrow 05-09-09. Less able pupils: Mix colours and use to create a six-point colour wheel and present it next week on 10-09-2009.		
Pupils to be supported: Aisha Ibrahim, Meimunatu Adams, Aminatu Ridwan, Khadijatu Iddris and any pupil who calls for help.		
Learning styles addressed:	Visual	Auditory Kineasthetic

Source:
www
.lesso
nplan
et.co.
uk

4.4.2

Teaching

Strategy adopted:

The researcher organized pupils in the experimental group into three: according to ability into above average, average and below average groups to enable her give specific tasks to each of the groups based on their ability level. The reason for this was to enable her spend more time with the less able pupils in the classroom. As the researcher and the LSA worked along, it was noticed that some of the pupils were working faster and could finish their tasks with ease while others worked slowly and were behind the fast group. The slow pupils were given more time to turn in their assignments while the smarter ones were engaged by some of the LSA to prevent them from disturbing the class after they had finished their tasks. To make this possible, the

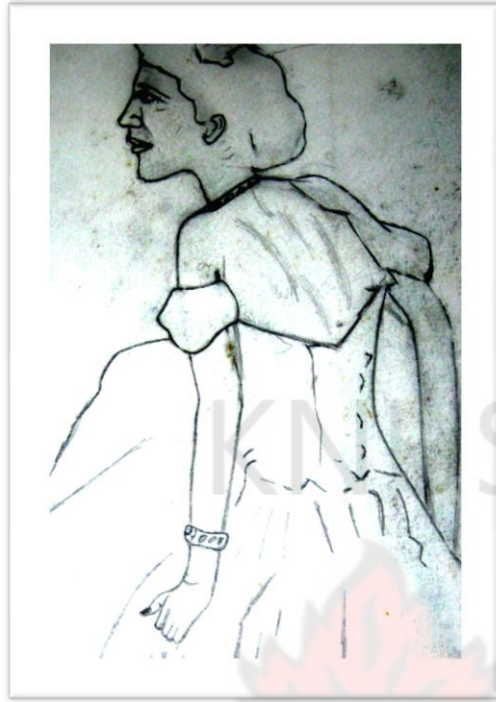
‘Differentiation method’ (Dickinson, 2000) was employed, based on the different learning styles and learning abilities of the pupils as they had been grouped in the task groups. The reason for this strategy was to meet each group at its level of understanding, abilities and also to sustain the pupils’ interest throughout the teaching and learning process. Both the researcher and the LSA had difficulties attending to the individual needs of pupils so the above strategy was the only way out.

4.3.0 Teaching and learning materials used for the research

Plates 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are some of the TLM prepared by the LSA and with the help of the researcher using. The TLMs were used in both the controlled and experimental classrooms. To achieve Objective 4 of the study, the researcher and the LSA together prepared the TLM to be used in the classrooms. The TLM were prepared based on the topics to be treated with the pupils as outlined in the lesson forecast (Table 3). The LSA also suggested various forms and ideas to be used to make the lessons interesting.

Plate 9 was made in pencil on cartridge paper, it was drawn from a discarded book which was picked up from the Painting Section at KNUST and was used to guide the teaching of outline drawing. Pupils were taught how to draw the outline of objects correctly before trying to do a detailed work of Art. They were supported by the LSA on how to hold drawing materials correctly and also how they could look at objects and try to draw just what they could see and not from their imagination.

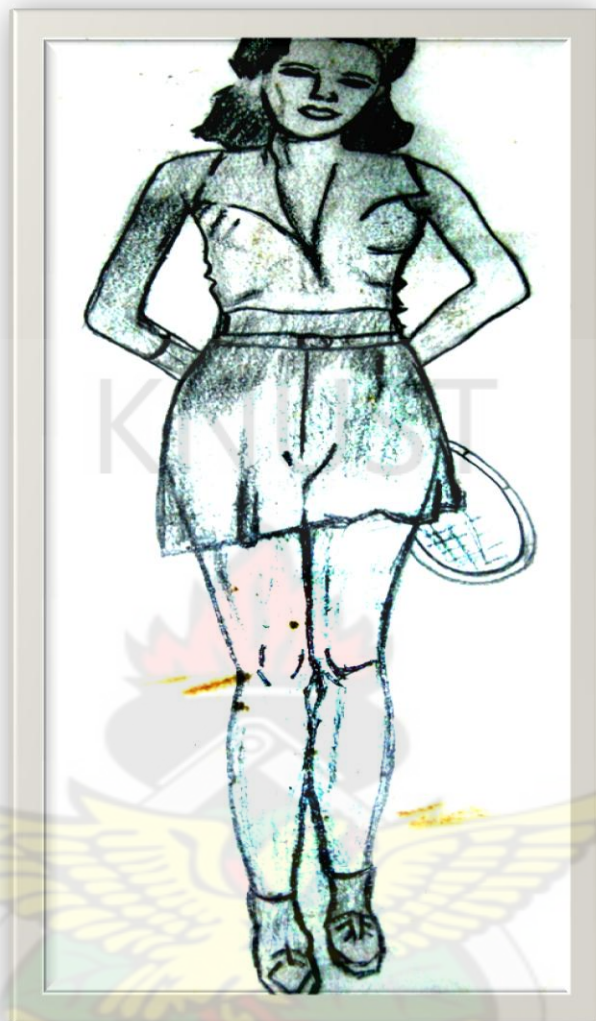
Plate 9



An outline drawing of a female (Source: Painting Section, KNUST)

Plates 10, 11 and 12 were TLM used to teach Drawing and Types of Shading. What was to be achieved was to help the pupils to give tones to their drawings and enable them to add forms to their drawings. The pupils were helped by the LSA to identify the light source and use it as their guide. The drawings that were made by the LSA were drawn on white paper in HB pencil and shaded with 6B, 4B, 3B and 2B pencils.

Plate 10



A drawing of a female tennis player (Source: Painting Section KNUST)

Plate 11



Drawn objects (Flask, an orange, tennis ball, empty boxes, tin of milk and kiwi)

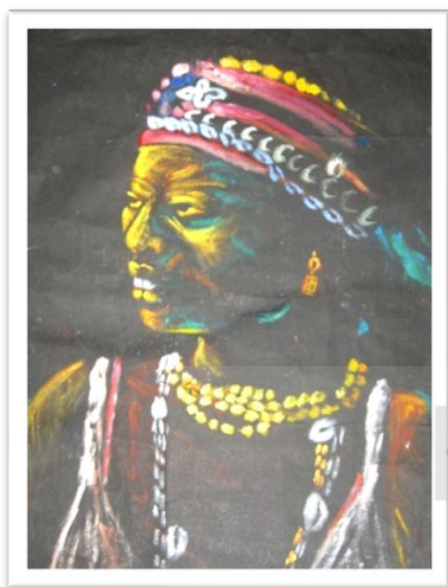
Plate 12



A Drawing of Tennis racket, tennis ball and towel

Plate 13

Plate 14



A drawing of an African lady



A drawing of a Bed side lamp

Plates 13 (Source: Painting Section, KNUST) and 14 were used as TLMs to explain to the pupils that they could shade their works in tones using various media aside pencils, by using the basic guidelines of shading from light to darker tones. Plates 13 and 14 above were made by two of the LSA with the help of the researcher. They were drawn on cartridge paper in poster colours and bristle brushes. The background was painted black, allowed to dry and the sketch was made on the paper. Poster colours were applied to the drawing with hard bristle brushes.

Plate 15 is an abstract drawing on white paper, drawn in pencil and painted in poster colours with sable brushes. The drawing was made by the researcher and the LSA to help teach primary colours and application of colour. The reason for using the picture was to move away from the use of the colourwheel and to sustain the interest of the pupils throughout the lesson. The pupils talked about the TLM in their groups with the help of the LSA, under the supervision of the researcher with the experimental group.

Plate 15



A Colourful abstract drawing

4.3.1 Activities of the LSA and the Researcher in the experimental classroom during lessons

The LSA performed a host of activities in the experimental classroom; they performed general activities and specific activities which were mainly on topics to be treated with pupils. The following were the general activities performed by the LSA:

- a. Clarifying and explaining instructions.
- b. Providing sufficient structure to individuals to enhance classroom participation and foster independence.
- c. Ensuring that the child is able to use equipment and materials provided.
- d. Motivating and encouraging the child as needed.

e. Assisting in areas of weakness e.g. drawing, language, behaviour, reading, spelling and handwriting, etc.

f. Assisting students with task completion (Laws, 2002).

Both the experimental and the controlled groups constituted a typical situation of an inclusive classroom therefore methods and strategies used should suit such environment. The only difference between the two classrooms was the use of the LSA. Peer teaching and small group teaching were used to increase classroom participation. Differentiation by pupils' learning pace, degree of support, tasks given to pupils and methods of assessment were also used to make the classroom environment more relaxed to enable the pupils to be more confident in what they were able to achieve in the teaching and learning processes. The specific activities the LSA performed for the various topics in the experimental classroom are described as follows:

Activity 1 **Drawing (outline drawing)**

In this lesson, pupils were expected to look at objects and their outlines without only. The reason was to assist pupils to observe and draw the outlines of objects on papers provided. The LSAactivities were:

- a. They organized the TLM on Teacher's table before lessons.
- b. They supervised pupils to sit in groups of four.
- c. They assisted pupils to get their tools and materials ready for the lesson to begin.
- d. They guided group leaders to pick objects to be drawn for their groups.

- e. They encouraged pupils in their groups to follow the steps and instructions given by the Teacher.
- f. They supported individual pupils with difficulties to be on task.
- g. They supervised pupils to move back to their original seating positions for individual work.

Activity 2 **Drawing (shading in tones)**

In this lesson pupils were tasked to draw and shade objects in tones by identifying the light source and using it as their guide. The LSA activities were:

- a. They mounted TLM on the chalkboard.
- b. They organized pupils to sit in groups for literacy and numeracy lessons.
- c. They supervised the pupils to make their drawing tools and materials ready for the lesson.
- d. They selected and arranged the objects to be drawn for the group.
- e. They assisted the pupils to draw the outline of the objects they would be shading correctly.
- f. They guided the pupils to shade in three tones.
- g. They assisted the weaker pupils to go through the drawing and shading tasks correctly.

Activity 3 **Elements and Principles of design**

In this lesson the pupils were tasked to identify, group and discuss the elements and principles of design under natural and man-made objects. The LSA activities were:

- a. They assigned the pupils in their groups on natural and man-made objects to be brought to school.
- b. They collected objects from group members.

- c. They arranged the objects on Teacher's table and grouped them into **natural** and **man-made** objects.
- d. They supervised group discussions on the description of the principles of design.
- e. They guided the pupils to organize the elements according to the principles of design.
- f. They assisted the weaker pupils to complete tasks given by the teacher.

Activity 4 **Colourwork (colour symbolism, primary and secondary colours and application of colour)**

In this lesson the pupils were tasked to identify colours and their meanings as used in the community. They were also to group the colours under primary and secondary colours and use these colours in their drawings. The LSA activities were:

- a. They Prepared the TLM to use for the lesson.
- b. They organized the tools, equipments and materials to use during the lesson.
- c. They mounted the TLM on the chalkboard.
- d. They supervised the pupils to perform tasks given by the Teacher.
- e. They assisted the less able pupils to complete tasks assigned by the Teacher.

The researcher performed the normal duties of a class teacher. She delivered the curriculum topics, planned lessons and activities for pupils and LSA. She also taught the class, assessed and graded pupils' works, reported on pupils' progress to the LSA for discussions.

4.4 Post – test conducted after the research intervention

A post-test was conducted in both the controlled and experimental classrooms. Pupils were asked to draw anything of their choice; the same papers were given to all the classes. The same duration and instructions were also given. The same test was conducted at the pre-test stage. The

reason for this was to find out if pupils could present something different from what was produced at the pre-test stage. Pupils had gone through a series of practice exercises for both classes and at this stage work done was expected to be different and better than that of the beginning. Pupils in both groups were expected to bring in their experiences, new ideas and techniques acquired in the past eleven weeks.

During the post-test the LSA were absent just as the pre-test. The researcher wanted the post- test to be conducted in the same situation as that of the pre-test. There were improvements in the drawings of both groups. Works presented by the two groups differed although both classes were taught by the researcher, some of the works the pupils did were also similar even though they sat in two different classrooms. The drawing of houses by both groups looked different in composition and in finishing as in Plates 16 and 17. At this stage the pupils in both groups had graduated from drawing simple shapes and objects to the drawing of more complicated objects.

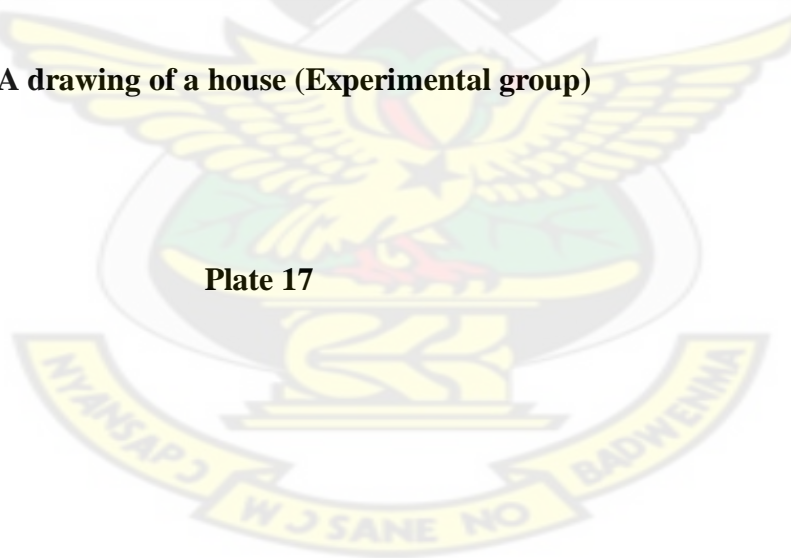
Plate 16 is a drawing from the experimental classroom. The pupil filled the whole paper with the drawing; because it was overworked, the pupil ended up crumpling the paper. Although the pupil tried to present a detailed work, the work looked worn-out in the end. On the other hand in Plate 17 the house was simple as compared to the Plate 16. The pupil tried to put a human being at the entrance of the house and also tried to show some items inside the house, like the ceiling fan and light. The drawing in Plate 17 turned out to be simpler and neater than that of Plate 16.

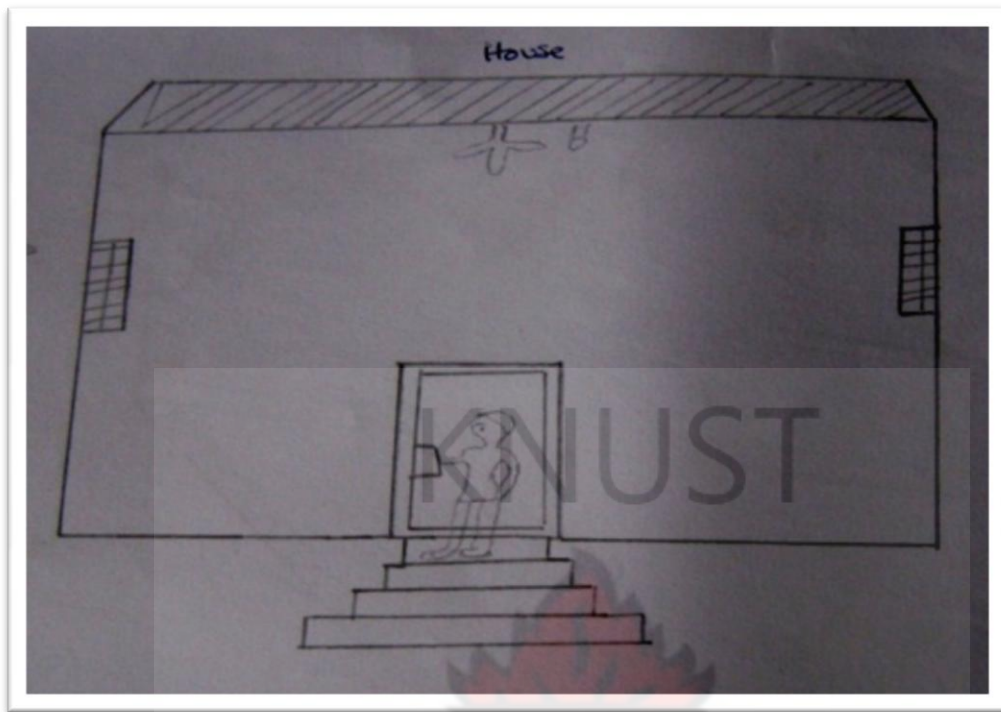
Plate 16



A drawing of a house (Experimental group)

Plate 17





A drawing of a house (Controlled group)

Plate 18 is a drawing from the experimental group and Plate 19 is a drawing from the controlled group, both pupils used the same concept and theme. Both works were done by two different pupils, seated in different classrooms and doing the test at the same time. One work looked like the a reflection of the other in a mirror. Both pupils put in details like folds in the clothes, pockets and belts. In Plate 18, the boy in the drawing is left handed and he is dropping rubbish into a bin and Plate in 19 the boy is right handed and he is dropping something into a bin. Both drawings were done in pencil and no colour was applied to any of them.

Plate 18



A drawing of a Human being (Experimental group)

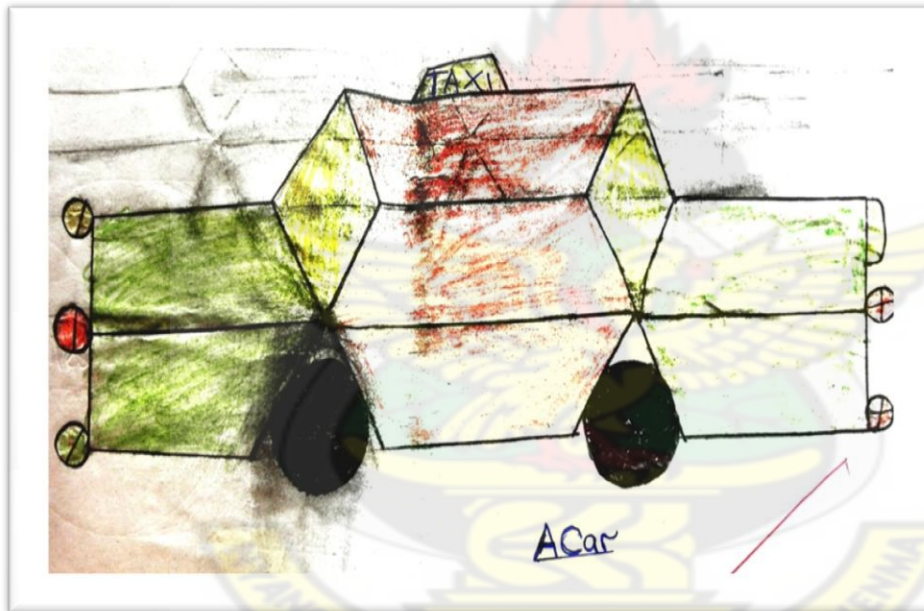
Plate 19



A drawing of a Human being (Controlled group)

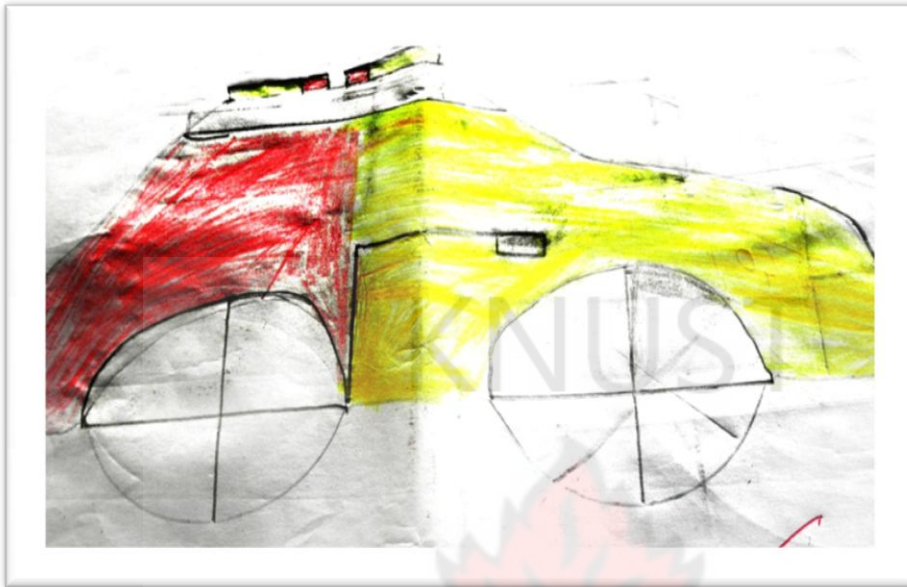
Pupils from both classrooms were creative and also applied what had been taught them as they showed that they understood what was taught. This means teaching and learning were effective and lessons learnt would be applied in similar situations. Pupils in both groups applied colour to their works in some situations; other pupils did not apply colour but shaded their works with pencil instead as shown in Plates 20, 21, 22 and 23.

Plate 20



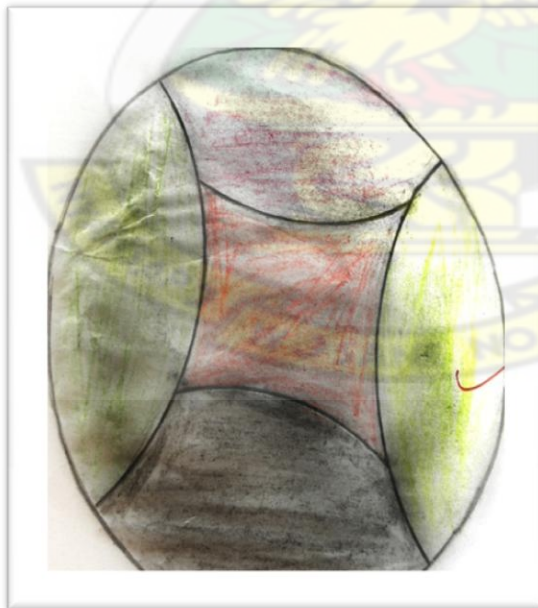
A drawing of a car (Experimental group)

Plate 21



A drawing of a car (Controlled group)

Plate 22



A drawing of a ball (Experimental group)

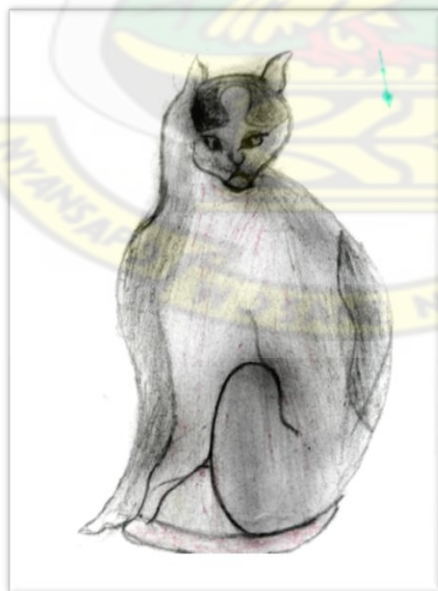
Plate 23



A drawing of a fish (Controlled group)

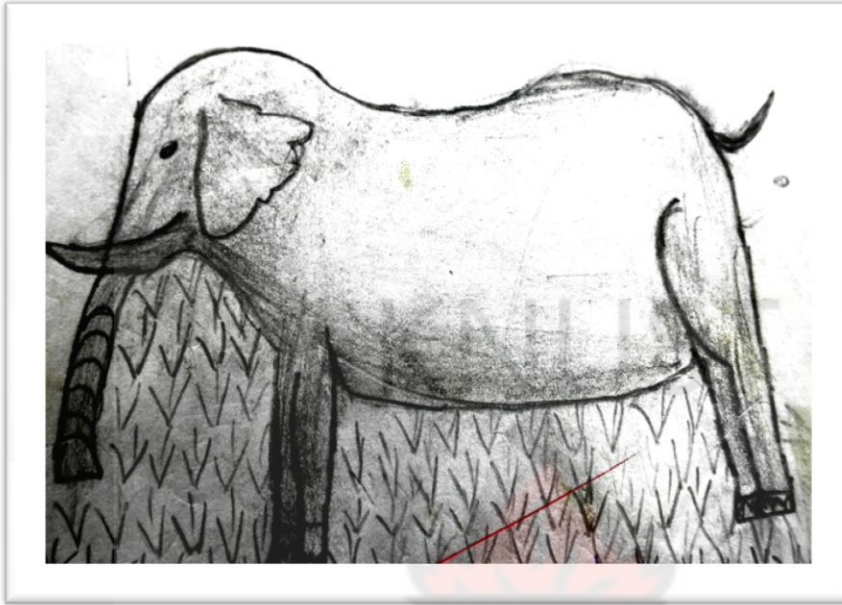
The pupils whose works are in Plates 24 and 25, used only pencils and no colours; but their works still came out nicely, in place of colour they used tones.

Plate 24



A drawing of a cat (Experimental group)

Plate 25



A drawing of an elephant (Controlled group)

The pupils used pencils, coloured pencils, crayons, among others to put details in their works in both the experimental and the controlled groups. The researcher wanted to see which class had a lot of its pupils doing better at the post- test stage, after going through various topics her. The topics that the pupils were taken through before the post-test was conducted were: Drawing (outline drawing, types of shading/tones), elements and principles of design, Colourwork (basic concepts and importance of colour, colour symbolism, mixing and using colour) and application of colour. These topics were supposed to reflect on the works presented at the post-test stage; most pupils in both groups found it difficult to paint with the colours they mixed, especially with an artist brush. Plates 26 and 27 below both pupils drawn with pencil and coloured with crayons.

Plate 26

Plate 27



A drawing of a leaf

(Controlled group)



A drawing of an orange

(Experimental group)

Pupils in both groups were not comfortable with the use of the poster colours and brush, so they chose to use crayons and coloured pencils. After going through colour mixing and the use of the artist brush with them, most pupils still decided not to touch the poster colours after using it for the colour wheel.

4.5 Observation 1 (Controlled group – without the LSA)

Plate 28



The researcher in a group picture with the controlled group

Pupils in the controlled group were most of the time disruptive; when the researcher's back was turned to the class it was worse, they tried to misbehave; there was a lot of movement in the classroom during practical lessons. When questioned about the movements the pupils explained they were collecting materials to work with. The classwork given was always marked after the class because pupils were late in turning in their assignments. Instructions given had to be repeated several times and still some pupils could not understand instructions given and such pupils did the work the way they understood the instructions given. Pupils asked questions seldom even when they were persuaded to do so. Some pupils kept quiet throughout the lessons without contributing to the lesson; when they were not being watched they turned to talk to their peers.

4.6 Observation 2 of the Experimental group – with the LSA

Plate 29



The LSA in a group picture with the Experimental group

The experimental group (Plate 29) was divided into four groups and one of the LSA was assigned to each group. With the help of the LSA, class control in the experimental classroom was not much of a problem; the groups were more organized and the LSA organized the TLM before lessons begun. The pupils sat in their groups and with the help of the LSA, pupils revised the previous lessons before the work of the day started. The researcher wrote core points on the chalkboard and as this went on, the LSA kept pupils busy to prevent them from misbehaving.

Plate 30



Pupils in the experimental group at work

The pupils of the experimental class were more relaxed during lessons; most pupils paid attention during lessons and some pupils constantly turned to the LSA for assistance when work was in progress. Class exercises were done promptly and submitted on time with the help of the LSA. There was competition between the groups within the class; this was fostered by the LSA. The LSA worked as cheer leaders of their groups. Rewards in the form of toffees and praises were given to pupils for good behaviour. Pupils' progress were reported to the teacher by the LSA. The pupils in this group asked questions and competed among themselves trying to answer other pupils' questions directed to the teacher or the LSA. Most of the time, the pupils were lively and eager for lessons to begin and some pupils voluntarily helped the LSA to put up the TLM before lessons begun.

4.7 Comparison of works of the control and the experimental groups

Pupils in the controlled and experimental groups were tasked to draw these objects as seen in Plate 31 which are shown in Plates 32 and 33 as pupils' drawings.

Plate 31



Composition of object

Plate 32



**Composition drawing of objects
drawn by the Controlled group**

Plate 33

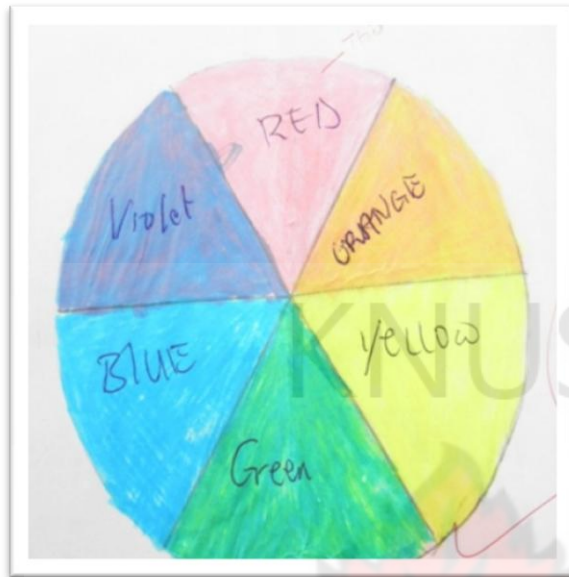


**Composition drawing of objects
drawn by the Experimental group**

Plates 32 and 33 are how some pupils from both groups represented the composition on paper. Most pupils from the controlled group saw the composition as separate units and represented it as such. As the work was being done the researcher went round assisting the pupils to do the right thing finally, some tried to do the right thing while the majority of them represented it as what could be seen in Plate 32. Some of the pupils from the experimental group, with the help of the LSA, made the composition with details and also tried to represent what was there as shown in Plate 33. But a few still represented their works as seen in Plate 32.

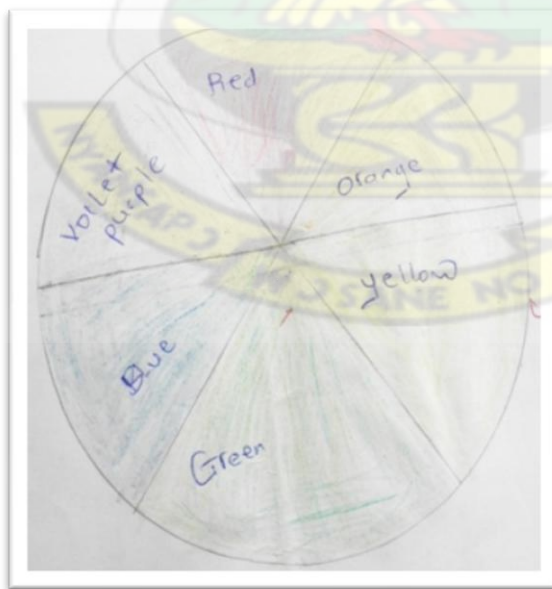
Plates 34 and 35 show a six-point colour wheel presented by pupils of both groups. Poster colours, palettes and brushes were provided by the researcher in teaching the pupils in both classrooms how to mix colours. It seems after going through the colour mixing with the pupils in both groups, majority of them were not comfortable using the poster colours with brushes. After learning to mix colours the pupils refused to touch the poster colours and brushes no matter how they were persuaded to do so.

Plate 34



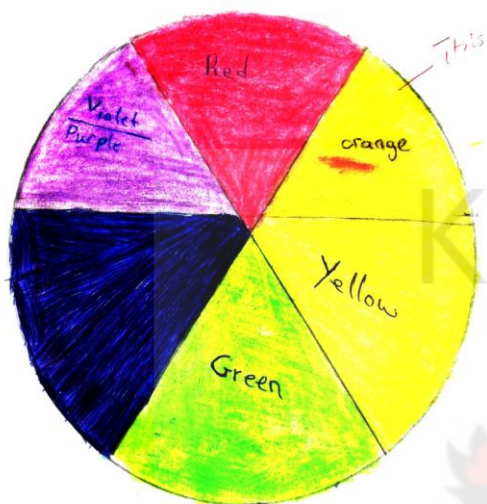
The Six-point colour wheel painted by the Experimental group

Plate 35



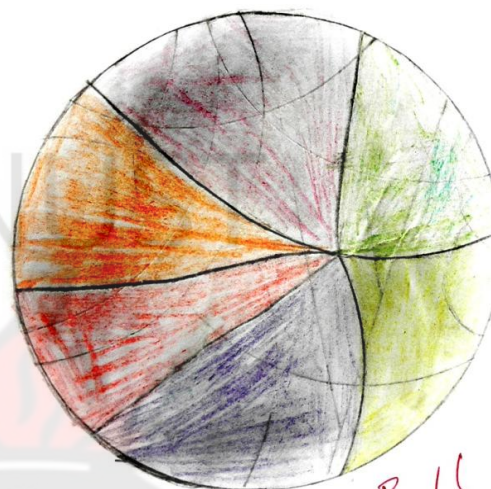
The Six-point colour wheel painted by the Controlled group

Plate 36



**A six-point colour wheel painted
by the Experimental group**

Plate 37



**A six-point colour wheel painted
by the Controlled group**

Plates 38 and 39 show how the pupils were mixing colours in both groups. With the experimental group they were willing to use the brush only under the supervision and persuasion of the LSA. Some of the pupils said that using the brush was time wasting as compared to the use of crayons and coloured pencils, among others. They also explained that one had to be extra careful; others said their classmates made fun of them when they made a mistake in the process of using the poster colours and the brush.

Plate 38

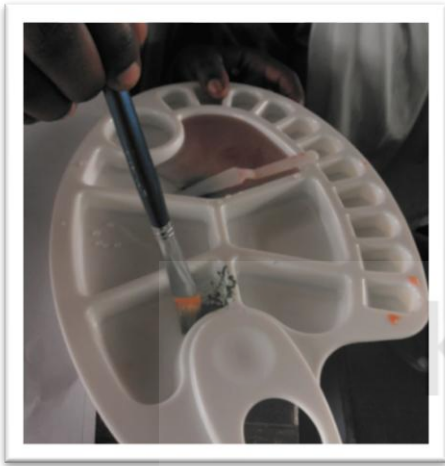


Plate 39



Mixing colours with the Experimental group

Mixing colours with the Controlled group

Plate 38 is a work done by a pupil in the experimental group while Plate 39 is a work done by a pupil in the control group. Plates 40 and 41 are pictures of some pupils in the Experimental group being helped by the LSA to mix and use colours in making the six-point colour wheel. With some of the pupils the LSA had to hold their hands before they could hold the brush to paint.

Plate 40

Plate 41



LSA assisting pupils in the Experimental group to make the Six-point colour wheel

Plate 42

Plate 43



**Six-point colour wheel in poster
colour in the Experimental groups**

**Six-point colour wheel in poster
colour in the Controlled group**

Mixing colours was alright for the pupils in both groups as far as they were not asked to paint with brushes. On this topic the LSA and the researcher did their best but the pupils could not improve in this area. Most works from both groups bled and their classrooms became messy with water and colours. When the six-point colour wheels were done in coloured pencil, it turned out better than the poster coloured ones.

4.8 Discussion of Main Findings

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the current teaching and learning conditions of Visual Arts at Al-Azhariya Junior High School?
2. Who can be trained as Learning Support Assistant for Junior High Schools in Ghana?
3. How would the assistants be trained and what would be used in training them?
4. To what extent, can the Learning Support Assistants help in the teaching and learning of Art in the Junior High Schools in Ghana?

1. Assessing the teaching and learning conditions of Visual Arts Education at Al-Azhariya JHS, Kumasi

Basic Design and Technology was introduced into the JHS curriculum because, “It is recognized that the advancement of a country can only be accelerated if a large number of persons are trained in science and technology, with manufacturing as an outlet” (CRDD, September, 2007). The Basic Design and Technology subject has three options: Home Economics, Technical

Drawing and Visual Arts. In assessing the teaching and learning conditions of the study of Visual Arts at Al-Azhariya Junior High School, it was realized that; the study of the Visual Arts subject in the school ends in the 2nd Term of JHS 1. The reason was that during the 1st and 2nd term of JHS 1, pupils study only the Core Skills aspect of the Basic Design and Technology subject. The pupils are allowed to explore all the options of the BDT subject for two terms, which enables them to make a decision on which option to pursue at the end of the 2nd Term of JHS 1. In the 3rd Term of JHS1, the pupils decide on what option of the BDT subject to select for study from the 3rd Term of JHS 1 to JHS 3.

In view of this at the Junior High School, at least three teachers are assigned to teach Basic Design and Technology. Teachers are assigned to teach one subject each under BDT; Home Economics, Technical Drawing or Visual Arts based on their qualification. In Al-Azhariya JHS the condition there was different, they had two teachers for Technical Drawing and two teachers for Home Economics but they did not have a qualified teacher for Visual Arts. One of the Technical Drawing teachers had volunteered and was assisting the pupils to learn Visual Arts. The pupils' choices were limited when the time comes for them to choose the options. They pupils of Al-Azhariya JHS have only two options to choose from (Home Economics and Technical Drawing), while their peers in other schools had three options to choose from. Therefore, the researcher and the Learning Support Assistants came as a relief to the Technical Drawing teacher and the school.

2. Selection of the Learning Support Assistants

Eight Senior High School Visual Arts graduates were selected from T. I. Ahmadyya and Anglican Senior High Schools in Kumasi. These graduates were to be trained as Learning Support Assistants to help teach JHS pupils to learn Visual Arts. Training workshops were organized at Al-Azhariya Junior High School's staff common room to train the SHS graduates as Learning Support Assistants. The reason was to expose them to their roles as Learning Support Assistants. Senior High School Visual Arts graduates were selected because, the researcher wanted them to use their experience in Visual Arts to support teaching and learning of Visual Arts in Junior High Schools. Pupils were supported by the LSA in the experimental group to study Visual Arts.

3. Training the Learning Support Assistants

The Senior High School graduates were trained in August, 2009 at the Al-Azhariya Junior High School's staff common room. The aims of the training were:

- a. To expose the Learning Support Assistants to the roles expected of them in the Visual Arts classroom.
- b. To train the Learning Support Assistants to handle learners with different ability groups as individuals.
- c. To guide the Learning Support Assistants to prepare Teaching and Learning Materials and use them in their small groups.

The LSA were introduced to the following: teaching, learning, learning ability groups, learning disabilities, multiple intelligences, good qualities and roles of a LSA and teaching/ learning materials. The training prepared the LSA for the teaching and learning environment.

4. LSA assisting pupils of Al-Azhariya JHS to learn Visual Arts

The Learning Support Assistants were restricted to the Experimental group; the researcher wanted to see how the LSA could influence the teaching and learning of Visual Arts at Al-Azhariya JHS. The researcher hoped to see a clear distinction between works from both the experimental and controlled group; though both groups improved in their works, there was no clear cut improvement between the two groups. Pupils in the experimental group improved more on their behaviour as compared to that of the controlled group. The reason for the behavior change were influenced by the presence of the LSA. Some pupils in the experimental groups gained confidence in themselves to talk in their groups. They asked questions and contributed to discussions in their smaller groups. Some of the aggressive pupils, who bullied others and fought indiscriminately stopped as they realized that the teacher and LSA were watching every move of theirs. Other pupils also opened up and shared their problems with the researcher and most of the time they approached the LSA. Pupils comported themselves in the classroom when they felt loved and protected. With the help of the Learning Support Assistants, controlling the pupils in the Experimental group was not difficult in spite of the class size. Group and peer teachings were effectively used to engage pupils in the teaching and learning process.

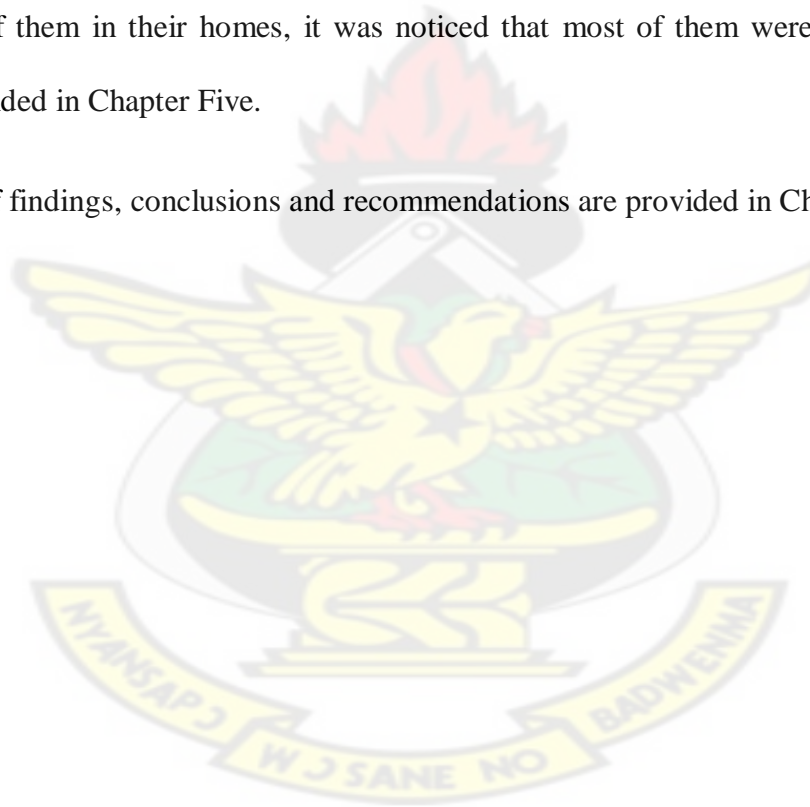
During the research intervention, it was realized that some of the pupils in both groups could not read simple sentences. This made it difficult for such pupils to understand simple instructions given in the classroom. One of the LSA could speak Hausa (one of the native languages of the pupils), she served as a translator on some occasions. In view of this, a reading club was formed by the LSA under the supervision of the researcher: this was used to help the pupils to read and construct simple sentences.

Truancy was a problem identified in both the controlled and the experimental groups. The pupils in this category exhibited these traits:

- a. They were not performing well academically.
- b. They were the bullies in the classroom.
- c. They were aggressive, quarrelsome and impatient with their peers.

The researcher and the LSA decided to find out why they were behaving in that manner. After visiting some of them in their homes, it was noticed that most of them were house helps and orphans as provided in Chapter Five.

The summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations are provided in Chapter five.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This chapter provides the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the research undertaken. The objectives of the study were:

- 1.To assess and document the existing teaching and learning environment of Visual Arts at AL-Azhariya Junior High School.
- 2.To identify and train Senior High School Visual Arts School graduates as Learning Support Assistants for Junior High School education in Ghana.
- 3.To design a training programme and use it to train the Senior High School Visual Arts graduates as Learning Support Assistants.
- 4.To pre-test the programme at Al-Azhariya Junior High School for Islamic Ideology at Tafo, Kumasi and assess the results.

The following research questions were asked by the researcher:

1. What are the current teaching and learning conditions of Visual Art at Al-Azhariya Junior High School?
2. Who can be trained as learning support assistants for Junior High Schools in Ghana?
3. How would the assistants be trained and what would be used in training them?
4. To what extent, can the learning support assistants help in the teaching and learning of Visual Arts in the Junior High Schools in Ghana?

The focus of the study was to train and use LSAs as a possible intervention to help teach Visual Arts in Junior High Schools. The researcher used quasi-experimental and descriptive research methodologies with interviews and observation as the main instruments for data collection. The convenience and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the school, pupils and LSA.

The researcher made use of two variables; a dependent variable (assessment) and an independent variable (LSA). Pre-tests and post-tests were conducted in both the experimental and the controlled groups. Lessons were taught by the researcher in both the experimental group (LSA were used) and the controlled group (where there was no intervention). Peer, group and various teaching strategies for Art were used in helping pupils in the learning processes. Data gathered were assembled, analyzed and interpreted.

5.2 Summary of findings

At end of the study, the following findings were made:

1. Tools, materials, equipment and facilities needed to run the BDT course were not available in the school. To enable the pupils at this basic education level attain the set of learning experiences which are expected to help an individual to function in his/her social and physical environment Agyeman and Baku (1983). These early experiences also lay the foundation for continuation of lifelong learning process. If the facilities needed to run the BDT programme are not available, a good foundation cannot be laid for the pupils to build upon.
2. Truancy was noticed in the study school, sometimes as a result of pupils who feel they were not liked or accepted by teachers and peers. Truant pupils were found to be those who were having problems at home and also at school. According to Elbaum and Vaughan, (1999) children

with learning disabilities have a low self-image than the general student population. To address low self-image or low self-esteem of students with learning disabilities a teacher may focus on the pupils' self-image or their academic achievement. Such pupils were aggressive, quarrelsome, bullies, abusive and they were also not performing well academically. This behaviour was noticed in both groups the controlled and the experimental groups. The researcher and the LSA decided to find out why they were behaving in that manner.

After visiting some of the pupils in their homes it was noticed that most of them were house helps, orphans and petty traders. The researcher and the LSA had a talk with the pupils by sharing our personal experiences with them. The pupils were encouraged to concentrate on their studies through motivation, praise and rewarding them for good behaviour. With the help of Learning Support Assistants, teachers can work more on this group of pupils by concentrating on both their self-esteem and academic achievements.

3. The pupils who are weak do not get the needed attention from their teachers as most lessons are planned to suit the average pupils in the classroom. As contended by Laws (2002), the Learning Support Assistant can offer support to special educational needs (SEN) pupils and the teacher in the classroom in a variety of ways. The LSA can help in the preparation of materials to be used by the pupils, to enable them study. The LSA would help such pupils to understand what is required of them in a lesson, assist them with reading questions asked by the teacher, help them to understand the texts and assist them to write down notes during a lesson.

4. Teachers in Ghana handle large classes which makes it difficult for them to attend to the individual needs of the pupils. One teacher cannot attend to individual needs of every pupil in a class of 50, in the case of Al-Azhariya JHS some classes had more than 50 pupils in one classroom. Pupils from the experimental classrooms were well behaved as compared to their

peers in the controlled classroom. The experimental class was most of the time more lively and active as pupils competed among themselves to answer questions. Posner (1982) relates that a well organized classroom would facilitate good management. In a classroom, which is well structured the behaviour of pupils is well controlled and the works of pupils are also well monitored. The use of the LSA helped to create a good learning environment for pupils, they also helped them to absorb quickly what was taught in the classroom.

5. Most pupils could not read simple passages and could also not write simple sentences properly. Pupils who knew the answers to questions asked by the teacher tend to keep quiet because they could not express themselves in the English Language. Ten minutes' practice of reading and writing of the lessons' core points, which was conducted twice in a week for eleven weeks was beneficial to the pupils of the experimental classroom. Pupils were paired and able pupils were made to support the less able to practice reading in their spare time. McPhillimy (1996) identifies that a successful teacher can use the child's strengths to help the child to gain interest in the lesson. A pupil with an interest in art can be given written instructions to follow when attempting art. The pupil could also be asked to give written instructions for other students to follow in order for other pupils to experience similar success in art.

6. Pupils fail examinations not because they are not good or that they do not study, they do fail partly because they cannot read and understand the instructions given and therefore do not know what is expected of them at a time. As the LSA took their time in explaining instructions given by the teacher to the pupils in their groups, this helped them to understand tasks given and perform them as such.

7. Pupils do not get the full attention required from their teachers, especially the less able who needs a lot of support to succeed in the classroom. According to Ayers (1995), teaching is an

intellectual and ethical work which requires the full attention of a caring and a thoughtful person who would be able to think on his or her feet and at the same time be fair and firm; teaching is not just an occupation, it is a type of work that you cannot just do anyhow. It requires the total devotion of the teacher else, the result will be ineffective and the results would affect the pupils for a life time. The use of LSA can help class teachers to pay attention to each child in any classroom to increase pupil's participation in learning activities.

8. Visual Arts is seen by some pupils and teachers as an expensive subject and so they think they cannot afford the relevant tools and materials for the subject. They therefore concentrate on Technical drawing and Home Economics, which the schools already have some facilities for. The use of LSA can help Visual Art teachers to guide their pupils to develop simple improvised tools for use in the classroom and also identify relevant local materials to do their exercises. This will increase participation in the Visual Arts.

5.3 Summary of findings by the LSA

In satisfying objective 4 of the study, which was to pre-test the programme at Al-Azhariya Junior High School and assess the results, the LSA were sent to the classroom after the training to pre-test the programme at the above mentioned school. Some of the pupils got closer to the LSA and as such confided in them and so discussed their problems with them. Most of them became fond of Ayisha, one of the LSA, because she was a Moslem and spoke their native language (Hausa and Dagomba). After assisting the teacher and supporting the pupils throughout the teaching and learning process, the LSA were able to identify some of the problems of the pupils and they reported them to the researcher for discussion.

1. Money/funds: The LSA found out that some the pupils' parents are not able to support the education of their wards and some also think that it is not necessary to invest in the education of their female wards. Because of the FCUBE and the school feeding programme that is most talked about by politicians, some parents are not willing to give any extra financial assistance to their wards. They think the government is supposed to assist them in everything. Some think that their wards are collecting the money to use by themselves or the money is illegally demanded by the teachers. The parents of the JHS pupils do not believe that their girls are not benefiting from the school feeding programme as is the case with the primary school.

2. Unemployment: Some of the parents of the pupils are unemployed and others too do not care about their wards, as some of the girls came to school on empty stomachs and in worn out uniforms.

3. Peer pressure: Because of the hardship some of the girls go through, they associate themselves with friends and they walk in groups. Some of them have boyfriends who are mechanics and taxi drivers who assist them financially.

4. Early marriages: Most of the older girls in the school are given out in marriage in school or as soon as they leave school. They are made aware of it early so they do not resist when the time comes. This has made most of the girls less serious about their studies as they know they could get married anytime.

5. Ignorance: The people in the community of which the study school is located place more value on the Arabic education than the secular education. The pupils who are good in Arabic are given scholarships to study in Saudi Arabia to become Arabic teachers (Malams). The parents hold the Arabic education in high esteem and therefore do not invest in the formal education.

6. Environment: There are few or no female role models in the community and so the girls do not see the teachers too as their role models; most of the female teachers are not Moslems and also do not dress like them. The pupils only see petty traders among them and to them, they see those women as successful and wish to model their lives after them.

7. Child Labour: There are orphans among the pupils in this school. They have been given out to stay with other families as house helps and are most of the time maltreated. Most of their foster mothers are food sellers so they wake up at dawn to prepare the fire and food and carry them to their vantage selling points before going to school.

8. Poverty: Some of the pupils engage in petty trading to support the home immediately they close from school and this makes it difficult for them to study at home. They rush home after school to attend to their various businesses; some of them are food sellers themselves.

The discussions point to the fact that pupils in this school have a host of problems with some not being able to read at all. It was found out that, such pupils started secular education at the JHS level without any basics from the nursery and primary education. They did all their early childhood education in the Arabic schools and were sent start JHS when were already grown-ups. They had no foundation to build on and that has made reading, writing and understanding simple texts in the English Language a huge burden for the pupils and also their teachers. The LSA could be use to build up confidence and skills of the pupils.

5.4 Specifics of LSA training

Baker (2001) states that an LSA is an important asset in the classroom. To satisfy objective 3 of the study, which was to design a training programme and use to train the LSA. The training of the LSA lasted for two weekends, it started on 15th August, 2009 to 23rd August, 2009. In order

to prepare them for the classroom, the LSA were made aware of their roles in the classroom through a workshop. A training programme was designed and used to train the LSA, these were the specifics of the training:

- 1.To train them to handle learners with different ability groups as individuals.
- 2.To guide them to prepare TLM and use them in their small groups.
- 3.To expose them to the roles expected of them in the visual art classroom.

The LSA were trained to be patient with pupils, to handle every individual as a person and not as the group they would be supervising. They were briefed on their roles and as they worked alongside the researcher, they also learnt more from her. It was like on-the-job training.

5.5 Feedback from the LSA

The research started on 24th August, 2009 to 5th March, 2010 at the end of it all, there was a brief discussion with the LSA and the following were the outcome of the discussion:

1. Most of them said the duration for the training programme which lasted two weekends was too short to adequately prepare them for what they experienced with the pupils in the classroom. They asked for about two weeks of training sessions in the near future.
2. Some also stated that, they did not really understand what the whole thing (training) was about until they saw the reality of the situation in the classroom. They suggested they would prefer to watch a documentary on real classroom situations instead.
3. The LSA also stated that they thought they were being trained to be recruited for paid permanent jobs, so they were excited but lost interest when they realized it was otherwise. They

were not sure of how they would perform in the classroom but were amazed at what they were able to do with the pupils and they know then that they could teach in some situations.

4. Again they noted that some of the pupils had too many problems to deal with and they felt very sorry for them; this made them realize how lucky they had been in life.

5. Duration of forty minutes per period allocated on the schools' timetable was too short to exhaust all the activities and also to perform given tasks.

6. The pupils worked at a slow pace, some had to be rushed through some of the activities in order to enable them to finish on time.

7. Pupils of the study school were truant and most of them were too aggressive to handle, they would have preferred a regular school to that of the Islamic school.

In spite of the above listed feedback received from the LSA, some have shown interest in teaching. While waiting for their results from the West African Examinations Council some would like to enroll in the National Youth Employment Programme, as teaching assistants and seek admission to teacher training college later when their results were in.

5.6 Feedback from the researcher (Action Research)

As the project was an action research, feedback from the teacher had to be published. The researcher who was the teacher for both the controlled and the experimental groups noticed a contrast between teaching alone and teaching with LSA. Teaching in the experimental classroom with the help of the LSA was more exciting than the controlled classroom. The lesson preparation through to the delivery was more of fun. With the help of the LSA, a relaxed

atmosphere was created and maintained throughout the duration as they kept an eye on the pupils.

Working alone in the controlled classroom on the other hand made the researcher more tired and exhausted at the end of each lesson. The researcher realized that, she used more energy from start to finish in the controlled classroom. Although, both groups were taken through the same activities, the pupils in the controlled classroom were more difficult to handle only a few of them co-operated with the researcher. They saw her more of a visitor, who would only be there for a very short time than a teacher; some of the pupils did not even open up to discuss their problems with her.

Researcher's experience derived from the experimental and controlled groups

The pupils in the experimental group were more attentive than those of the controlled group. With the help of the LSA the pupils comported themselves as they were assisted to collect materials from their friends without disrupting the rest of the class. The pupils participated a lot in class in the form of contributions to discussions and asking of questions that were either directed to the researcher or to the LSA. The pupils had the needed attention from both the teacher and the LSA so they behaved well and less punishment was administered to pupils in this group. Group work was more organized for smooth teaching and learning; it was also easy to know the pupils as they were identified as groups. A healthy competition was promoted among the groups in the class as each group tried to give out its best to please its LSA and the teacher (researcher).

Working with the controlled group was somehow difficult. When the researcher's back was turned while attending to other pupils, some pupils disturbed. That is they talked to their friends

and there were also a lot of movement in the classroom. The pupils moved from one table to the other and when questioned, the response was always the same, “I am going to collect.....pencil, rule, etc”. Those who disturbed the class were mostly those who never contributed in the classroom because they did not always listen to instructions; whenever a question was directed to them, they just stared at the teacher. Most of the time group work turned the class into a market place as the researcher had to give them more time to settle before commencing the work of the day. More punishments were given to this group as its pupils always misbehaved and this put a lot of pressure and stress on the teacher/researcher.

In spite of the punishment given to them, they still misbehaved. This was partly because some knew they would not be noticed when they misbehaved and most of them also did not get the required attention from the teacher, as the teacher had to attend to so many things at the same time. There was no significant change in their behaviour; some were truant and others did not turn in their work for marking. The researcher had to use some kind of force and persuasions before majority of the pupils turned in their works. Aside the troublesome pupils, only a few of them were known by the teacher as members of the class. Those known were only the best and average pupils that competed among themselves. Only two out of fifteen of the weaker pupils made some kind of progress. The reason was that the teacher could not attend to all of them at the same time.

5.7 Conclusions

This study has shown that for the teacher to perform effectively in the classroom, he/she would need a helping hand. A teacher can possess all the qualities of a good teacher but will not be able

to put up his/her best in a large classroom. For one teacher to handle about 50 or more pupils under one roof and be expected to perform the following functions is to ask for trouble:

1. Attending to individual needs of all pupils under his or her care
2. Planning lessons to suit all ability groups with differentiation also at the back of his or her mind
3. Motivating and supporting the less able in his or her class to succeed academically
4. Finding ways of controlling a large class and issuing punishments when needed
5. Gathering and preparing quality teaching and learning materials for lessons
6. Keeping records and assessing pupils' works
7. Monitoring pupils' progress and giving feedback to parents
8. Checking bullying which normally occurs at lunch times

If these and other duties are expected of one person (teacher) to achieve full class attention and teaching, then there must be another pair of hands, eye and feet in the classroom to manage teaching and learning effectively. Since the aim of the BDT subject is to produce a new breed of problem solvers who have good thinking skills while in the Junior High School and this largely depends on the teachers ability to interpret and implement the BDT syllabus to achieve its aims and objectives. There is the need to find and train another adult to be present in the classroom to support both pupils and teachers.

5.8 Recommendations

Owing to the findings and conclusions drawn from the research, it is recommended that:

1. Training programmes should be designed by the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) to train Senior High School graduates

who are neither in employment nor further education as Learning Support Assistants to help teach pupils at the Junior High Schools within the country. Teachers can then put up their maximum by attending to all their duties with joy and much dedication. The LSA would bridge the gap in education by supporting pupils to succeed in their education while also assisting teachers to run activities effectively in the classroom.

2. Learning Support Assistants should be trained and introduced in basic education to support teaching and learning especially in public schools. Pupils learn best when they feel loved and understood by their teachers; as the teacher cannot do it all by him or herself, the presence of another adult even if quiet young, will be an asset to stabilize the classroom and support teaching and learning activities. The LSA could also serve as mentees in their communities.

3. The Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment programme should include the recruitment of LSA in their Programme and spell out their roles and duties in the Youth Employment guidelines brochure to guide their behaviours.

4. More in-depth research should be conducted on this topic the study time was too short for the project to achieve a more significant and distinguished difference in pupils' achievement in the experimental group with the help of the LSA. If the programme was to run for a longer period of time, a more significant impact would have been made in the works of the pupils in this group.

If the recommendations above are considered by all stakeholders of education teachers could be assisted to perform effectively in the classroom.

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APPENDICES

A. Interview schedule

HEADTEACHER

1. Is your school prepared for the BDT course in terms of:
 - a. Qualified teachers for visual Art
 - b. Structures
 - c. Tools, materials and equipments
 - d. How do you see the Visual Art option of the BDT course?
2. How best can you make this course interesting to be learnt by the pupils?
3. How much money are you willing to invest in this course, in order to make it better?
4. From your point of view, is it too expensive to offer visual Art as a BDT option?
5. The way it is taught in your school, do you think the course would achieve its objectives?
6. Would you be willing to allow and support the BDT department, when comes to holding exhibitions?
7. How often can you let them hold exhibitions in your school?
8. Would you release funds for this department, if they decide to channel their practical lessons into the making of TLM to be used for the school?
9. Are you willing to create more facilities for the teaching and learning of BDT and more especially Visual Art?

TEACHERS

1. Are you ready for the teaching of the Visual Art aspect of the BDT subject?
2. How much time do you spend in the preparation for the class?
3. Do you have enough facilities in your school, for this course?
4. How best do you think you can help the students to be interested in the course?
5. How do you sustain the interest of your pupils throughout a lesson?
6. Do you have enough space in the classroom to supervise pupil's works?
7. The time allocated for you on the timetable, is it enough for you to exhaust a topic?
8. Is the Visual Art aspect of the BDT subject an interesting topic to teach?
9. How comfortable are you as Technical Drawing teacher, who is also handling visual art?
10. Do spend the same time when preparing for both the Technical drawing and visual art class?

PUPILS

1. If Visual Arts is offered as an option in your school, would you have chosen to do it?
2. Do you find the visual art aspect of BDT, to be interesting?
3. On the scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest. How much are you interested in Visual Arts?
4. Do you think that you have to have a lot of money before you can do visual art?
5. Does the school provide you with materials during practical lessons in this subject?
6. At the primary school, were you interested in creative arts?
7. Was your teacher teaching it every time as specified on the time table?
8. Between catering, technical drawing and visual art, which one are you interested in?

Are you comfortable with the same teacher, teaching you technical drawing and visual art at the same time?

9. What in your opinion should be done to visual art in your school to make it more interesting?

B. Observation check list

Pupils

- a. Pupil's behaviour in the classroom.
 - i. Stress level
 - ii. Attention span
 - iii. Participation in the lesson
 - iv. Interest
- b. Pupil's attitude towards LSA
 - i. Do they ask questions about the subject matter?
 - ii. Do they listen to the instructions given by the LSA?
 - iii. Do the students seek for the teacher's approval before they perform a task, while the LSA are around them?
- c. Has there been an improvement on student's performance with the help of the LSA?

Learning Support Assistants

- a. How LSA support special needs in the classroom?
- b. LSA relationship with pupils.
- c. How comfortable are the LSA in the classroom?
- d. Does the LSA apply what they learnt during the training in the classroom?

- e. How does the LSA react to student's wrong answers?
- f. Does the LSA try to instill discipline in students who behave badly during lessons?

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