The Effectiveness of Visual Arts Teachers and Students' Practice of Portfolio Assessment at the Senior High School

Dr. Atta Kusi Ankrah[1], Patrick Osei-Poku[2] and Osei Adiyaa[3]
[1]Doctor, Department of Art, Christ the King College of Education, Appiadu-Kumasi, GHANA.
[2]Professor, Faculty of Educational Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, GHANA.
[3]Department of Visual Arts, SDA Senior High School-Agona, GHANA.

[1]Corresponding Author: ankrahkusi4@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Visual arts', teachers and learners' engagement with portfolio assessment was investigated in order to ascertain the effectiveness of their practice at the Senior High School (SHS) in Ghana. The qualitative research design which consists phenomenological study was engaged to answer the study question. The population of the study was 124 respondents from two selected Senior High School in Kumasi Metropolitan were sampled based on purposive and convenient sampling technique. Data was gathered using the questionnaire, interview guide and observational guide. Data from the study was analysed through frequencies, percentages and content analysis. The study revealed that teachers and students aligned portfolio assessment with the objectives of the teaching syllabus; teachers evaluate students' scores; teachers provide feedback to students on portfolio assessment; visual arts, teachers had limited knowledge in portfolio assessment, and as a result teachers in this study have been designing portfolio elements such as marking the rubric with difficulty; and professional support in the form of seminars/workshops and in-service training on portfolio assessment will be well come by teachers and students.

Keywords- Portfolio assessment, Visual Arts, Effectiveness, Students, Teachers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Visual Arts course involves processes using varied materials which are in association with peculiar designs to create their expressions in two or three dimensions. To add to that, it positively affects students' qualities of perception and sense of beauty and self-expression skills. To comprehend this positive effect, data in the form of numerical value is required to ascertain the degree of knowledge and skills of the students. Also the achievement of the learning objectives in relation to the learning processes is ascertained (Eısner, 1997). This is done through only the assessment. Assessment has become integral components of teaching and learning. Amsami, Mohammed and Mazila (2015) asserted, creating assessment criteria in Visual Arts is a very hard. This is due to the fact that measuring one's thought, creative ability, personal development, abstract thinking, and originality, are strenuous. One of the assessment strategy employed to understand the level of knowledge and skills of visual arts students is portfolio assessment. A portfolio assessment is a gathering of learners' works that are in relation to attainments they are needed to learn so as to collect information on their learning in classroom. Individual selected work in the portfolio is there due to its genuine representation of what learners have acquired and show learners' present knowledge and skills (Meador, 2020). This assessment involves formative, metacognitive and summative. The formative portfolio assessment records the degree of engagement, learning, and expressions that have happened over a span of time. They demonstrate a more detailed standard of learning. Metacognitive portfolio assessment is where students themselves perform the assessment in accordance with developed criteria. Summative portfolios involve gathering of the finished artworks that offer evidences of capabilities at a given point in the learning process, normally at the close of a programme of study. Portfolios

that house a lot of completed art works only give the indication of capabilities. Such portfolios miss out of showing a continual method of learning and development. However, portfolios with a lot of art works are beneficial in determining student's genius with media and processes. Engaging in portfolio assessment becomes appropriate when used in a balanced approach. That is in formative, metacognitive and summative. Portfolio assessment in the art classroom is considered today as an important indication of a student's advancement, attainments, and performances that encourage student-teacher interaction, student explorations, and report; affirms several learning methods and positions; enhances analysis and assessment as learning; and encourages students (Beattie, 1997). There has not been much research conducted on visual arts, students and teachers use of portfolio assessment at the Senior High School in Ghana, but available literature by Alkharusi (2011), identified contradictions between teachers' practices and recommendations of educational assessment in the classroom. Again, educators' failure to conduct portfolio assessment properly can likely detriment learners' confidence and strangle their creativity (Gruber & Hobbs, 2002). Therefore, the study sought to assess students and teachers' effectiveness in the practice of portfolio assessment at selected Senior high school in Kumasi Metropolitan, Ghana.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

According to (Boughton, 2005), a portfolio is an assembling of work gathered over time. Many researchers have given types of portfolios base on their different purposes. This include learning portfolios, credential portfolios, showcase portfolios. learning portfolios, credential portfolios, showcase portfolios and portfolio assessment (Perry 2018; Zeichner & Wray, 2001; Abrami & Barrett, 2005; Smith & Tillema, 2003).

Beattie (1997) explained on the varied types of portfolio assessment that can be selected by art teachers for use. These incorporate but are not restricted to: a best works' portfolio (product portfolio), an extended art portfolio, evaluative portfolio, a mini portfolio, and a process portfolio. For the purpose of this article, product and process portfolio are the focus. The engagement of a portfolio for collecting information on students' learning is one method to fit assessment with intentional learning output (Boughton, 2005). The component of a portfolio is included in daily classroom delivery (Guzik, 2016). This indicates that, a portfolio should not contain an assembled of the teacher-defined 'on-demand' piece of work, but rather it should display personal research of the leaner (Boughton, 2005). Portfolio assessment is important when employed to display what learners have achieved within the space of an art education course. Boughton (2005) and; Popovich, (2006), asserted that, the usefulness of portfolios can be largely improved when digital component is amalgamated as other means. An electronic portfolio can be demonstrated as "any portfolio recorded in digital media and assembled in any format as an alternative to a collection of actual artworks" (Fitzsimmons, 2008). An electronic portfolio can expand learners' encouragement to record their art work, in addition to encourage leaners to document contemplative suggestions, and acquire additional importance of giving students a proper analysis of their personal development (Boughton, 2005). Moreover, "examination of information in alternative formats provides the brain with a new set of information from which new meaning must be resolved" (Fitzsimmons, 2008). Electronic portfolios offer learners the chance to revisit and assess their evidence in a new circumstance. Digital portfolios also ensure that a huge number of learner work is recorded for a several period of time without occupying the classroom space. According to Heidi et al., (2014), portfolios as an authentic assessment tool are typically evaluated with a rubric. Hence, what is also necessary to factor in portfolio assessment is the manner in which the basis for the rubric is selected. Eventually, it is up to the expertise evaluation of teachers to establish the art work being examined, but it is necessary to consider the element about the curriculum and the concepts of a programme of study, that is being stressed and the part abandoned when designing rubrics in association with a given piece of work. Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, (1992), asserted that, it is possible to utilize anecdotal records or notes as both "a medium for strategizing teaching and recording students' development, but in addition offers a narrative about a person.

Margery and Gominda (2005) and Lahmer (2015), enumerated below stages as a plan for portfolio application:

•   The Assembling of Artworks: In the course of everyday learning undertaking, visual arts' students assemble evidence of learning attainment on their practical works.

•   The Reflection on Artworks: the visual arts students after assembling the best works of their practical works are expected to reflect on how these collected art works influenced their learning and how it assisted in building on their individual and a professional level. This process should be guided to enhance learning, individual and professional attainment, and enhancement of practice by teachers.

•   The Evaluation of Evidence: – When the learner offers his portfolio for assessment, the visual arts teacher is expected to evaluate the standard of work in the portfolio. This will enable him to establish the strengths and weaknesses of the learner and the areas of the work that need to be improved. In reality, it is of importance that the assessment of the learners' art work be a continuous process, with response offered for learners during the entire stretch of portfolio developing.

•   The Defense of Evidence: the portfolio designer /student is offered the opportunity to fight for his option relating art works selected for the portfolio. The visual arts teacher uses the interview to affirm or disapprove the

conclusions they arrived at relating students' firmness and infirmities in association with their learning outcomes, when they read and give judgment of the portfolio at the evaluation of the evidence stage.

- The Assessment Decision: Pre-certified rating scales with a plainly characterised word form (rubrics) are engaged to examine visual art students' evidence (collected practical works).

A rubric is a making scheme engaged to assess performance, a product, or a project. It is a peculiar word-form, naming the basis for degrees of expected outcomes or achievements from maximum to minimum. Rubric can be restricting to learners as regards "potentially narrowing artistic vision or fragmenting a performance because the rubric leads the students to pay attention to the parts at the expense of the whole" (Connelly & Wolf, 2007). Due to that, it is necessary for educators to be thoughtful of designing yardstick that is "enabling to creativity by not pre-establishing processes or products of learning but also constraining by providing students with a set of parameters" (DeLuca, 2010) that renders the anticipations comprehensive and achievable. When a rubric is developed insightfully and meticulously, it does not only guide the assessment process, but they enrich the learning experience as well (Connelly & Wolf, 2007). This occur when learners are given instructions and speech associated with what is relevant. Cox et al., (2015), explained rubrics as the process of assessing and grading students' work. According to Cox et al., (2015), rubrics normally seen in tabular structure and arranged of:

- An account of the task (the piece of work) that is being judged,
- The criteria being evaluated (row headings),
- A rating scale that indicates varied degrees of knowledge and skills (column headings). Rating scale is depended on a numerical, verbal or visual organization for rendering evaluations of the standard. For example, when the qualitative measure of students' ability to perform portrait painting meet the set criteria in numerical value (0-20, 21-30, 31-40) or alphabets (e.g. A, B, C) it might be given a rating scale of Excellent, Very Good, Good etc.
- An account of each level of performance, (the demonstration of knowledge and skills) for each criterion (within each box of the table).

The general Knowledge in Art syllabus for SHS visual arts (GES, 2010) in Ghana also provided the criteria for dividing students work into categories when scoring as follows;
- Creativity, originality, innovation;
- Mastery in the use of tools and materials;
- Design: composition of elements and principles;
- Technical competence in draughtsmanship and craftsmanship;
- Suitability

Using the above literature on how rubrics are developed together the criteria provided by the GKA syllabus, researchers designed the below rubric:

Sample of Rubric for Scoring Visual Art work

Criteria	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point	Total
Principles and Elements of design	The artifact indicates *effective* use of the principles and elements of design.	The artifact indicates *good* use of the principles of design while using one or more elements of design.	The artifact indicates *some* use of the principles of design while using one or more elements design.	The artifact indicates *little* evidence of the elements and principles of design.	4
Craftsmanship	The artwork indicates *effective* use of tools and materials	The artwork indicates *good* use of tools and materials	The artwork indicates *some* use of tools and materials	The artwork *fails* to indicate the use of tools and materials	4
Creativity	The artwork indicates *effective* unique piece base on an idea, philosophy and concept	The artwork indicates *good* unique piece based on an idea, philosophy and concept	The artwork indicates *some* unique piece based on an idea, philosophy and concept	The artwork indicates *little* unique piece based on an idea, philosophy and concept.	3
Suitability	The artwork indicates *outstanding* ability to satisfy the intended.	The artwork indicates *good* ability to satisfy the intended purpose.	The artwork indicates *some* ability to satisfy the intended purpose	The artwork indicates *little* ability to satisfy the intended purpose	4
Total					**15**

Source: researchers, 2020.

A study conducted by Julia et al., (2016), investigated performances of Lesotho primary school educators on the engagement of portfolio for lesson delivery, learning and for ascertaining information on students' learning. Therefore, the study established the manner of performance of this strategy in the classroom by teachers and its success. The study employed purposive sampling technique to select 20 primary school teachers from 20 schools in the Maseru District and semi-structured interviews was engaged to assemble data. Thematic approach was utilized in the data analysis. The outcome of the research reported ineffective use of the portfolio assessment, due to inadequate knowledge.

In addition, Eridafithri (2015), researched into the revised English Curriculum of Indonesia. The redesign expected educators to employ a portfolio as one of the possible means of gathering information about students' learning in English as a second language. The research revealed that the instructors demonstrated low knowledge on portfolio assessment, therefore, it was strenuous for these educators to develop portfolio elements including marking rubrics. As a result, accuracy for assessing leaners' performance leaves much for desire. Due to teachers' low knowledge in portfolio assessment, they feel unenthusiastic to execute it.

Moreover, Tangdhanakanond and Wongwanich (2015) examined instructors' technical know-how on portfolio assessment in Thailand. The research concentrated teachers' know-how the principle of portfolio for assessment; the manner in which outcome from leaners' portfolio is utilise by teachers to influence their delivery; and also the way instructors were executing the four major stages of leaner portfolio assessment (a) Taking decision on portfolio assessment implementation (b) assembling creative works (c) Choosing and considering on the assembled artworks and (d) revisiting and judging products. The research work revealed that teachers had inadequate knowledge and had misunderstanding towards guidelines of portfolio assessment, and that this was stem from the inadequacy of training, received on the use portfolio assessment by teachers.

III. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research design which involves phenomenological study was used to answer the research question. The population of the study was 124 respondents, made up of 57 participants from SHS A (50 SHS 2 &3 visual art arts' students of 2019/2020 academic year and 7 visual arts teachers) and 67 participants from SHS B (57 SHS 2 &3 visual art arts' students of 2019/2020 academic year and 10 visual arts teachers) were sampled using on purposive and convenient sampling strategy. The data collection process involves the use of questionnaire designed based on literature, interview guide and observation guide. The items in the questionnaire were scored as "YES" or "NO". Face and content validity judgment by an expert were used to establish the validity of these research instruments. Face validity is where someone with an expertise judge the instruments by mere looking at the elements in the instruments by face and concluding, it measures what is expected of it. (Azura et al. 2022). Content validity assesses the manner in which an instrument (like a test) fit all important components of the concept it purposes to measure (Bölenius, 2012). Consequently, a trial was carried due to enhance data gathering and augment the result of the research. Data from the questionnaire was analysed using frequencies, percentages, and tables. Data from the interview guide and observation guide was analysed through content analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outcomes of the research are centered on the research question: *How effective is visual arts, teachers and Students' practice of Portfolio assessment at the Senior High School?*

A summary of the responses by respondents on the study topic "effectiveness of Visual Arts students' practice of portfolio for assessment" is given below. All the 50 (100%) students answered "YES" to the statement items 1,3,5, 6, 7 and 8 as shown below. 15 (30%) students answered "YES" while 35 (70%) students answered "NO" to the statement item 2. 0 (0%) students answered "YES" while 50 (100%) students answered "NO" to the statement item 4.

Table 1: Responses from Visual Arts Students from SHS A&B

Statements	YES Freq. (%)	NO Freq. (%)
1. Do you understand what is meant by portfolio building in Visual arts?	124(100)	0 (0)
2. I understand the principles (collect, select and reflect on created works) for preparing portfolio for assessment in Visual Arts	37 (30)	87(70)
3. I prepare Portfolios for Assessment in Visual arts	124(100)	0 (0)
4. I understand rubrics for scoring portfolio presented for assessment in Visual Arts	0 (0)	124(100)

5. **Do you receive feedback on the presented portfolio for assessment**	124(100)	0 (0)
6. **Preparation of Portfolio for assessment increases collaboration among students**	124(100)	0 (0)
7. **Do you agree that portfolio training and seminar should be organised for students**	124(100)	0(0)
8. **Should Portfolio be used as an assessment method in visual arts**	124(100)	0 (0)

Source: Researchers, 2020

This study shows that 100% of the students understand what is meant by portfolio building in Visual arts; prepare portfolios for assessment in Visual arts; portfolio for assessment increases collaboration among students; agree that portfolio training and seminar should be organised for students and portfolio be used as an assessment method in visual arts. 30% of the students understand the principles (collect, select and reflect on created works) for preparing portfolio for assessment in Visual Arts while 70% of the students do not understand. 100% of the students do not understand rubrics for scoring portfolio presented for assessment in Visual Arts.

The study therefore revealed that, portfolio is prepared and presented for assessment by visual arts students and that, students receive feedback on them. Again students realised collaboration among them when using portfolio for assessment and agreed that portfolio training and seminar should be organised for them. Students accepted that portfolio be used as an assessment method in visual arts. However, it was realised that not all students are familiar with the principles (how to collect, select and reflect on created works) for preparing portfolio for assessment in Visual Arts and rubrics used for scoring their practical portfolio works are not know to them as students' scores are expressed in rating scale without any details.

The results from the interviews' section with the visual arts teachers, on the effectiveness of their practice of portfolio assessment are as follows based on the following interview guide: *Do you employ portfolio assessment as an assessment strategy? What type of portfolio assessment do you engage in? How do you plan towards the use portfolio assessment? Do you encourage students to collect, select and reflect on created works for portfolio assessment? Yes/No. Do you score students' portfolio for assessment by designing rubrics or by blind scoring? Are you aware of the criteria for designing rubrics suggested by the GES teaching Syllabus for visual arts? How do you evaluate students scored works? Will you recommend training or conferences for visual art teachers on portfolio assessment?* During the interview sessions, the visual arts teachers summarily said: they use portfolio assessment as an assessment strategy and that Process and Product assessment dominate the type of portfolio assessment they use. Teachers summarily said portfolio assessment are planned to focus on the learning outcomes of the teaching syllabus and to obtain accurate evidence the students' progression in particular creative skill.

Teachers responded they encourage students to collect, select and reflect on created works for portfolio assessment. This was consistent with studies conducted by Tangdhanakanond and Wongwanich (2015). Teachers answered using blind scoring in assessing students' portfolio. That is, teachers score students' portfolio without having specific knowledge of which student is tied to which answer. It was revealed teachers are not familiar with the designing of rubrics for scoring portfolio. Teachers demonstrate their ignorance of being aware of the criteria for designing rubrics suggested by the GES teaching Syllabus for visual arts as revealed in studies by Julia et al., (2016). Visual arts teachers said they assign grades (A_1, B_2, B_3, C_4..........) to students' artworks, after scoring students portfolio as way of evaluating. Teachers agreed that training or conferences on portfolio assessment will be well come to contribute to visual art teachers continues professional development.

The observation section by the researchers with the observation guide on this study, showed that portfolio assessment is practiced by teachers and students, only that it is practiced twice in a semester. It was realised that teachers are not conversant with the suggested criteria for designing rubrics for visual arts and how the rubrics itself is designed. Teachers were observed to aligning assessment objectives with that of the teaching syllabus and also providing feedback to students on portfolio assessment. Researchers' observation was in line with studies conducted by Julia et al., (2016), Eridafithri (2015) and Tangdhanakanond and Wongwanich (2015).

V. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that teachers and students aligned portfolio assessment with the objectives of the teaching syllabus, teachers evaluate students' scores and also provide feedback to students. The results indicate that visual teachers had limited knowledge in portfolio assessment, and as a result it was hard for these teachers to develop portfolio elements including marking rubrics. For this reason, learners' achievement was not reported accurately. But according to Gruber & Hobbs, (2002) while assessments have the likelihood to be relevant to learners, they could also equally affect students' confidence and harm their creative abilities if not well executed. conducted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that seminars/workshops and in-service training on portfolio assessment are organised for visual arts teachers. Future studies may be carried out to attain a decisive conclusion by utilizing methods that ensure a higher level of cross-validation with other SHS.

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