

# The Perceptions Of Teacher Trainers And Trainees On The Relevance Of The Content Of Creative Arts Teacher Education Curriculum To Learners' And Societal Needs In Kenya

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*Abstract: The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of teacher trainers and trainees on the relevance of the content of Creative Arts teacher education curriculum to learners' and societal needs in Kenya. This study was guided by Structural Functionalism theory. The philosophical stance adopted was pragmatic paradigm. The study adopted mixed methods research approach. This study targeted teacher trainees, trainers and Head of Departments (HoDs) of Creative Arts drawn from public primary teacher training colleges in the Western region of Kenya. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling methods were used to select the sample whereby 310 participants were selected for the study. These comprised of 270 teacher trainees, 30 teacher trainers (tutors) and 10 HODs for Creative Arts. Data analysis was done by the use of descriptive statistics whereby frequencies and percentages were calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The findings indicated that the content of Creative Arts teacher education curriculum was perceived to be relevant to trainees and societal needs in terms of the array of skills on offer drawn from fine arts, performing arts, domestic arts, and outdoor arts. Inadequacy in space, time and support were however perceived as key barriers to making the content practically oriented. The recommendation was that there was need to use a practical approach to teaching so that trainees could actually actualize their needs; to set aside adequate space so that the content which was perceived to be adequate could be taught more practically; curriculum developers to avail more time for the teaching of the specific arts so that trainees could be able to master them; parental and community support could also go a long way in enhancing content coverage. The results of this study will be useful to curriculum planners and educational stakeholders in curriculum design and implementation of the teacher education curriculum for Creative Arts in Kenya and elsewhere.*

**Keywords:** Creative Arts, curriculum content, perceptions, curriculum relevance

## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The significant role art plays in everyday life cannot be overstated. Through art for instance, the environment is beautified, memories are captured, values are imparted, ideas are communicated and emotions are evoked. Lois Hetland (as cited in Upitis, 2011) extols the virtues of arts by ascertaining that arts form the basis through which cultures are judged. Consequently he identifies arts as time honored means to learning, gaining knowledge and more importantly achieving self-expression.

The utility of arts is also reflected in cultures and beliefs (Fleming, 2010). It is argued that knowledge of arts provides a framework upon which students can understand and feel their own cultures and those of others. In this way, arts provide an avenue for self-expression and communication of thoughts and emotions (Drew & Ranki, 2004). Moreover, experiences gained in learning art reportedly enhance students visual literacy that allow them look at the world from a vintage point of awareness and aesthetic sensitivity (Zigler, Singer & Josef, 2004). Besides, students develop creativity and engender a sense of self-worth.

Creative Arts is an integrated course of Art, Craft, Music and some elements of Drama. Research has shown that creative arts develop creativity and critical thinking skills in the learners while giving a holistic education (Deasy, 2002). Recently there has been a general recognition of creative arts education's function in developing an individual's personality and strengthening social cohesion (UNESCO, 2001). Despite this recognition, creative arts education programmes are absent throughout a majority of the world. Those with these creative arts programmes such as Kenya do not address the pre-service teacher and societal needs.

Dunphy et al. (2009) in his findings show that although creative arts content exposes pre-service teachers to practical skills for development of culture, creative employment and enterprise, most educational policies fail to recognize and value arts education. UNESCO (2006) points out that the teaching of creative arts is not given the due consideration it deserves. The findings further supports views which find parental/community support for creative arts lacking. The research findings of Okong'o et al., (2015); Syomwene (2013) and Likoko et al., (2013) established that inadequacy of resources is an impediment to implementation of educational programmes. The absence of minimally adequate workshops, equipment, consumables and trained teachers' vocational subjects such as arts, degenerate into being taught theoretically with inadequate attention to practical skills learning (Langlo, 2004).

Content is the subject matter of a curriculum (Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998). An important criterion of effective content in a curriculum is its relevance to learner and societal needs (Syomwene, et al, 2017; Parkay & Hass, 2000; Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). For curriculum content to be regarded as relevant, it must address the current needs of the learners in question as well as the societal needs (Syomwene, et al, 2017; Parkay & Hass, 2000). Oketch and Asiachi (1992: 92) state that "The quality of curriculum, more especially when it is practically oriented, is of paramount importance". The national goals of education point out the learner and societal needs which should be met by Creative Arts Teacher Education Curriculum. Education in Kenya should foster nationalism, patriotism and promote national unity (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). This is so because Kenya's people belong to different ethnic groups, races and religions, but these differences need not divide them. They must be able to live and interact as Kenyans. It is paramount of education, more especially creative arts, to help the youth acquire this sense of nationhood by removing conflicts and by promoting positive attitudes of mutual respect which enable them to live in harmony and foster patriotism in order to make a positive contribution to the nation. During music and drama festival and during art and craft exhibition, the participants from various ethnic groups come together whereby they share ideas, make friends, and thus appreciate culture of various ethnic groups.

Education in Kenya should be geared towards promoting the social, economic, technological and industrial needs for national development (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). There is bound to be a silent social revolution following in the wake of rapid modernization. That is education in Kenya should produce citizens with skills, knowledge, expertise and

personal qualities that are required to support a growing economy. Kenya is building up a modern and independent economy which is in need of adequate domestic manpower. Creative arts can meet these economic needs. Through creative arts offered in the school curriculum for instance, learners become creative and innovative and engage in economically viable ventures such as production of artifacts and improvisations. The Jua Kali sector in Kenya for instance, has been recognized by the World Bank as a major contributor to the country's economy (Omono, 2016, ventures africa.com/visual-art-mashup-kenya).

Education, creative arts inclusive, should promote individual development and self-fulfillment (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Alongside other subjects, Creative Arts contributes to the development of the intellectual, emotional and physical abilities of a person. Through creative artworks in art, craft, music and drama, one is able to exercise the freedom of expression which includes freedom of creativity. Besides this, learners develop the power of imagination. They develop critical, analytical, leadership and social skills through discussions during work displays (KLB, 2013). Ndi (2015) opines that, creative industries make significant contributions in terms of job creation. The Jua Kali sector for instance, account for most of furniture, fittings and household items being used in the country.

Education, creative arts inclusive, should promote sound moral and religious values (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). This is done through singing sacred and topical songs on such issues like HIV/AIDS, performing religious drama and skits, picture making and graphic designing. Education, creative arts being part of it, should promote social equality and responsibility (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Creative arts promote social equality and responsibility through songs, drama and dance that contain messages with relevant themes such as gender and equality. Capacities of making judgments and sensitivity are cultivated by the arts. Wagner (as cited in Glenn, 2011) posits that use of drama creates an environment through which students are able to appreciate interaction between humans, have empathy towards others and take on diverse points of view.

Education, should promote respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied culture (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992) and Creative Arts play an important role on this. That is, education, creative arts inclusive, should instill in the youth of Kenya an understanding of past and present cultures and their varied placed in contemporary society. Education, creative arts inclusive, should promote international consciousness and foster positive attitudes towards other nations (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Creative arts enhance social development at international level by promoting international consciousness and fostering positive attitudes towards other nations. This is done through performance of drama, dances and music at international level, performing music and exhibiting art and craft regionally and internationally as well as encouraging international exchange of cultural programmes. Glenn (2011) opines that an art integrated with cultural education cultivates cultural diversity and social cohesion thereby contributing to societal needs.

In spite of the central role craft plays in the study of other subjects and particularly science, technology, engineering and

mathematics, arts and crafts education as a whole remains marginalized in teacher education as well as in public primary and secondary schools. The time allocated for creative arts in the teacher education time table for arts and crafts is often no more than 3 hours per week. The situation is worse in primary schools with no more than an hour of arts and crafts education per week. Even then, the subject is hardly taught given that it is not examinable (KIE, 2010) and teachers tend to use time allocated for it to catch up with other examinable subjects (KIE, 2010). Whereas creative arts is one of the subjects offered in the official secondary school curriculum (KIE, 2011), it is offered as an optional subject hence most schools don't take it due to budgetary constraints (KIE, 2010). Under such a framework it was interesting to examine whether teacher trainees perceived the teaching of crafts as relevant to learner and societal needs. This study sought to establish the perceptions of teacher trainers and trainees on the relevance of Creative Arts teacher education curriculum to learners' and societal needs in Western Kenya. Trainers' perceptions (as implementers) were deemed useful as well as the perceptions of the trainees (the consumers of the curriculum).

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The curriculum for Creative Arts contributes immensely in all areas of the society such as social/cultural, economic, political, utilitarian, communication and personal expression. Cultures around the world are rich in practices that use creative arts (Music, dance, drama and the visual arts). Creative Arts prepare the youth to be self-reliant. A student (learner) who has a good grounding in Creative Arts, given the initial capital has the ability to start and manage business out of creative arts (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992).

Economically, the country aspires at improving the prosperity of all Kenyans through an economic development program covering all the regions in Kenya. Creative Arts, part of school curriculum, can develop skills which form a strong foundation for economic, technological and industrial needs for national development and self-employment. Socially, the country aims at building a just and cohesive society with social equity in a clean and secure environment. Creative Arts can play a great role in enhancing or promoting these values in the society. Politically, the country aspires to realize a democratic political system founded on issue based politics that respects the rule of law and protects the rights and freedoms of every individual in Kenyan society. Creative Arts therefore can enable the Kenyan society to live by the laws in the constitution.

In view of the scenario outlined in the background of the study, the problem was whether the teacher education curriculum for Creative Arts could meet pre-service teachers' and societal needs as expected. The main emphasis of this study was to establish the perceptions of teacher trainers and trainees on the relevance of creative arts teacher education curriculum to learners' and societal needs in Western Kenya.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of teacher trainers and trainees on the relevance of Creative

Arts teacher education curriculum to learners' and societal needs in Kenya.

#### RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the perceptions of teacher trainers and trainees on the relevance of the content of Creative Arts for teacher education curriculum to learners' and societal needs in Kenya?

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Creative Arts curriculum contributes immensely in all areas of the society such as social/cultural, economic, political, utilitarian, communication and personal expression. Cultures around the world are rich in practices that use creative arts (Music, dance, drama and the visual arts). We live in a rapidly changing society, where the demands of a global economy mean that flexibility, critical thinking, problem-solving and the ability to respond to creativity are being recognized as important traits. Creative Arts prepare the youth to be self-reliant. A student (learner) who has a good grounding in Creative Arts, given the initial capital has the ability to start and manage a business out of creative arts (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Economically, the country aspires at improving the prosperity of all Kenyans through an economic development program covering all the regions in Kenya. Creative Arts, part of school curriculum, can develop skills which form a strong foundation for economic, technological and industrial needs for national development and self-employment. Socially, the country aims at building a just and cohesive society with social equity in a clean and secure environment. Creative Arts can play a great role in enhancing or promoting these values in the society. Politically, the country aspires to realize a democratic political system founded on issue based politics that respects the rule of law and protects the rights and freedoms of every individual in Kenyan society. Creative Arts therefore can enable the Kenyan society to live by the laws in the constitution. Through Creative Arts; an environment for vision 2030 can therefore be created.

The findings of the study of the perceptions of trainers and pre-service teachers on the relevance of the content of Creative Arts for teacher education curriculum to pre-service teachers' personal and societal needs in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya will inform the government and all other stakeholders on issues of curriculum design and implementation for Creative Arts and other subjects as well.

#### II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by Structural Functionalism theory. Structural Functionalism is a sociological theory that attempts to explain why society functions the way it does by focusing on the relationships between the various social institutions those make up society (Kibera and Kimokoti, 2007). Structural Functionalism is simply a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It asserts that our lives are guided by social structures, which are

relatively stable patterns of social behaviour. Social structures give shape, for example, in families, the community, and through religious organizations. And certain rituals, such as handshake or complex religious ceremonies, give structure to our everyday lives. Each social structure has social functions, or consequences for the operation of society as a whole. Education, for example, has several important functions in a society, such as socialization, learning and social placement.

Functionalists emphasize that order and balance are the normal state of society, and a disruption in one part of the system will certainly disrupt the other parts. Creative Arts is part of the educational system and if it is not relevant to work effectively it may not impact the other parts of the system positively. As a result of this, the learners' and societal needs may not be met. The school and the society according to this theory co-exist. The school receives learners from the society and it has a duty of preparing them for life in the society. On the other hand, for the school to achieve this function, the curriculum offered has to be relevant to learners' and societal needs.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews literature on Creative Arts curriculum: Its content, significance and relevance.

#### THE CURRICULUM FOR CREATIVE ARTS FOR PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION IN KENYA

Upitis (2011) defines arts from three broad domains. The first domain is the fine and performing arts which encompass arts such as sculpting, painting, playing instruments, writing poetry, dancing, film making, singing and acting. The second domain according to Upitis (2011) relate to outdoor arts such as hiking, swimming, diving, skating, and kayaking. The third domain identified is domestic arts that include Serving, cooking, carpentry, embroidery, quilting, and metal works. Gardner (as cited in Upitis, 2011) contends that the broad definition of arts implies that a multiplicity of intelligences such as linguistics, kinesthetic, musicals, visuals, spatial, naturalistic, intrapersonal and interpersonal are either directly or indirectly involved in arts.

On the basis of these definitions, it can be argued that arts focus on creation, reflection, connection and curiosity. They foster critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. Upitis (2011) summarizes this notion of arts by positing that a deep and thorough knowledge of arts provides the tools to be creative in social and environmental sciences.

Creative arts teacher education curriculum is deeply embedded in the teacher education preparation programme. The teacher education programme takes cognizance of views by Wafa, Ramayah and Tan (cited in Katitia, 2015) which recognize teachers as the human resource at the centre of moulding and nurturing the young minds. Building on this notion, Brunet (2004) posits that being at the heart of the educational process, teachers should be given the self-confidence required to implement their expert knowledge. Lending support to the need for teacher preparation, Kafu (cited in Katitia, 2015) contends that teacher education focuses

on the production of school teachers to take charge of the established system of education.

The primary teacher education programme in Kenya is intended to prepare trainee teachers in diverse subject areas of which arts are inclusive. According to Katitia (2015), the course is provided through a residential programme that takes two years. The current curriculum was revised in 2004 and provides for five core subjects; two options, and professional studies (Katitia, 2015). The arts are provided in option B and are broken down into music, art and craft. The curriculum provides evidence for the support of creative arts education by offering a comprehensive mix of music, art and craft courses (KIE, 2004). An examination of the primary teacher education syllabus reveals three major strands that are covered within the creative arts course. They include visual arts, performing arts, and craft (KIE, 2004).

Under the visual arts curriculum, teacher trainees are given an opportunity to develop their imagination and creativity (KIE, 2004). Technical drawing for instance, is intended to expose teacher trainees to various types of lines used in technical drawing and to use those lines in coming up with oblique and isometric shapes (KIE, 2004, p. 146). Exposure to picture making is designed to boost trainees' imagination when they interact with tools and materials for creating shapes (p. 147). Painting and use of mosaic, collage and montage techniques in pictorial compositions is designed to develop creativity among teacher trainees when they integrate assorted colours during creation and composition of pictorial shapes (p. 148).

Performing arts also constitutes the Creative Arts curriculum for teacher education in Kenya. Performing arts as observed by UNESCO (2003) include music both vocal and instrumental; dance and theatre, sung verse and pantomime among others that are reported to possess cultural expressions and to portray human creativity. Performing arts are appropriately covered in the PTE curriculum both at year 1 and year 2 levels (KIE, 2004). The year 1 & 2 syllabus covers basic performing arts skills such as melody whose objectives include ability for teacher trainees to write major scales, read tonic-solfa pitches, and identify notes of the diatonic scale by their technical names (KIE, 2004, p. 143). Other key performance arts sub topics handled at this level include; rhythm, intervals, aural, sight singing. Composition of melodies is a topic taught in year 1 and aimed at sensitizing trainees on emerging issues such as HIV and AIDS, drug abuse, and corruption among others through adoption of melodies of existing African traditional folk songs (p. 154). The traditional folk songs topic also taught in year 1 of teacher education captures the role of music in identifying occasions requiring use of African traditional folk songs such as initiation, marriage, worship and funerals.

Drama is emphasized in the curriculum of Creative Arts as well. Drama as noted by Barbee (2013) is also referred to as theatre or dramatic playing. It is considered as a form of arts through which people are able to communicate their feelings, thoughts, emotions and concerns.

Craft is perhaps the main component of creative art currently taught in Kenya primary teacher education curriculum. In year one for instance, teacher trainees are introduced into the craft of drawing through the technical

drawing topic and picture making through the drawing, painting and mosaic, collage and montage subtopics (KIE, 2004, p. 146-148). Other crafts include; woodwork (p. 149); the craft of assembling media (p. 152); pattern making (p.155); print making (p. 156); the craft of graphic design (p. 157); sculpture (p. 158); metal work (p. 159); the craft of making ornaments and Jewellery (p. 162); pottery, carpentry, and sewing.

UNESCO (2006) identifies four key areas in society that arts education can be useful.

Firstly, is the role of enhancing human rights. Education was made a human right with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) proclaiming that participation in a community's cultural life together with its art and scientific advancement should be freely enjoyed by everyone (as cited in Glenn, 2011). Moreover, article 26 advocates for a right to education that can enable full development of human personality which is central to tolerance, understanding and peace (as cited in Glenn, 2011). It is argued that the arts contribute significantly in the cultural life and hence promotes participation in a community's cultural life as proclaimed in article 27 (Glenn, 2011). Moreover, evidence shows that the arts aid in enhancing tolerance, friendship and understanding owing to its ability to teach empathy (UNESCO, 2004). It is therefore apparent that creative arts play a significant role in the observation of human rights as anticipated in articles 26 and 27 of the UDHR.

Secondly, arts enhance learner capabilities. Development of learner's capabilities is recognized as one of the main aims of arts education (UNESCO, 2006). Enhancement of learner capabilities is reported to provide greater opportunities that culminate into development (Glenn, 2011). Through arts, individuals develop in terms of creativity, imagination, confidence and competence which in essence enhance their capability to value and appreciate artifacts and images in time and across culture. It is further posited that experiences gained in art and craft raises the individual's potential to make a critical reflection of own and others work (Abrahams, 2007).

Thirdly, arts enhance the quality of life. Research reveals that the arts are central to individuals and society's quality of life which is manifested in creativity, brain stimulation, instrumental outcomes, and economic value (Glenn, 2011). It is argued that arts education provides the enabling environment necessary for creative practices. Moga, Burger, Hotland & Winner (2000) found that involvement in arts has an association with performance in creative thought. Indeed Adhengo (2011) lauds the quality of life enabled through arts by way of empowering societies and communities to reflect on them; using it for overt development or social ends such as use of theatre to promote cultural cohesion, and to increase awareness of emerging issues in the society. Stimulation of the brain has also been attributed to engaging in arts activities. Rich (2009) contends that introduction of creative arts activities leads to brain stimulation. This has further been shown to optimize the potential of the brain to learn since it involves emotion, creativity and imagination (Sylvester, 2010). The argument is that creative arts activities act as nourishment to sensory, cognitive, attention and motor

capacities leading to an enriched environment that promotes learning (Eisner, 2010).

Fourthly, arts enhance cultural diversity. The Kenya National Policy on Culture and Heritage underscores the utility of creative arts in national cohesion and sustainable development (GoK, 2009). The government clearly enumerates the role of craft as a basis for entry into industries economy. Among key policy statements directed towards sustainability of craft include; "The government shall put into place mechanisms to prevent financial and artistic exploitation of craftsmen" (p.14) and "the government shall undertake to establish national arts galleries, to recognize, protect and promote art and creative talents" (p. 14).

#### IV. RELEVANCE OF THE CONTENT OF CREATIVE ARTS CURRICULUM

The ability to express our personal and imaginative ideas as well as to respond to the environment in which we live requires development of multiple-literacy to cater for the teaching of arts. According to Dunmill and Arslanagic (2006), the arts require higher thinking that is synonymous with kinesthetic, symbolic, visual and audio literacy. It is further argued that creative arts content ought to have suggested pedagogies suitable for achieving quality arts praxis (Loveless, 2002). Loveless further contents that, creative arts content can be more relevant if ICT is used to support development of authentic creativity.

Reasonable evidence exist showing need for content that offers a variety of experiences in order to create or enhance pupil creativity (Addison & Burgess &, 2007; Hall et al. 2007; Troman et al., 2007). Moreover evidence advocates for content that allow for flexible use of available space to promote creativity among pupils (Addison et al. 2010; Bancroft et al., 2008). Content allowing for props and role play for instance should relevantly improve children's imagination and allow for greater freedom (Bancroft et al., 2008; Davies, 2011).

Evidence further points to content that allows for use of outdoor development (Addison, et al., 2010; Bancroft et al., 2008). Dillon et al., (2007) conducted a study of a primary school and found that content that allows for outdoor learning empowers pupils in terms of space and time. Besides, outdoor learning tended to encourage collaboration. Evidence from a study on children in and around Paris reveals that creative performance variability among children can be determined by the learning environment (Besancon & Lubart, 2008). Relevant content should therefore reflect the context of the school.

According to UNICEF (2000), quality content should be compatible with measurable objectives. Glatthorn and Jailali (2000) aver that relevant content should look to cater for individual differences and focus on standards relevant for student learning. Kraft (as cited in UNICEF, 2000), contends that relevant content should be based on learning outcomes that are clearly outlined. Muskin argues that the local environment or community should dictate the content based on its priorities (as cited in UNICEF, 2000).

The question of quality content also features in music education. A review of music education points to challenges emanating from development and sustenance of a curriculum that could maximize benefits of music education while at the same time engaging student's maximally (Pascoe et al., 2005). Davis (2008) points to the confusion surrounding the constitution of quality education as far as visual education is concerned. Moreover, it is argued that teacher factors such as perceptions, experience and training need to be factored if creative arts content has to be relevant (Hargreaves, Lamont, Marshal & Tarrant, 2003, Russel-Bowie & Dowson, 2005). This then brings to mind the question of whether the current creative arts teacher education curriculum content as used in public primary teacher education colleges in Kenya is relevant to meeting the learners' and societal needs.

## V. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in public Primary Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) situated in the Western region of Kenya. The western region of Kenya encompasses 10 public Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) namely: Asumbi; Migori; Kenyenyia; Bondo; Eregi; Kaimosi; Kericho; Mosoriot; Tambach; and Baringo primary teacher training colleges. The choice of public primary teacher training colleges from this region was informed by the rich artistic cultures exemplified by colleges from the regions in national performing arts competitions.

The pragmatic worldview was found to be ideal for the purposes of the present study in the sense that besides being not committed to particular systems of reality and philosophy, it also offered the researcher freedom of choice. Moreover, there was need to choose approaches that worked in order to maximize teacher trainees and trainers perceptions. The researcher therefore focused more on the problem at hand as opposed to the methods.

On the basis of the pragmatic worldview, the study adapted the mixed methods research approach. This involved integrating the qualitative and quantitative approaches. An examination of the perceptions of teacher trainees and trainers required that open-ended data without predetermined responses be combined with closed-ended responses making use of both qualitative and quantitative techniques quite ideal. More specifically, the convergent parallel mixed methods design was used. Under this design, both the quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately and then merged for interpretation of overall results.

The study targeted teacher trainees, trainers and Heads of Departments (HoDs) of Creative arts departments, with a view to drawing generalizations regarding teacher trainees and trainers. For purposes of this study, the target population for teacher trainees was further narrowed down to a study population of those attending their second year of training. The argument was that second year teacher trainees having been in the colleges for long would have more telling perceptions. The total target population therefore comprised of 4828 teacher trainees, 80 teacher trainers and 10 HODs.

All the ten HoDs in the ten public primary teacher training colleges in the region were selected. This was consistent with Krejcie and Morgan's sample size table which recommends a sample of size 10 if the population size is 10. Second, 3 creative arts teacher trainers were purposively selected from each of the institutions yielding a total sample of 30. Stratified and simple random sampling methods were used to select teacher trainees from the respective teacher training colleges. First the trainees were stratified by college and then by gender then simple random sampling was used to select 138 female trainees and 132 male trainees to take part in the study. The total sample size was 310 respondents comprising 270 teacher trainees, 30 teacher trainers (tutors) and 10 HOD's.

Three instruments were used to collect data for purposes of the present study. These were the teacher trainees' questionnaire; The teacher trainers' questionnaire (for the tutors) and the Head of Departments (HoD's) interview schedule. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics for all the quantitative data. It was coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Ver.20 which was then used to screen data for missing values and response rate. Frequency distribution tables were used to summarize the perceptions of teacher trainees and trainers with regards to the relevance of the constructs under study. The perceptions of trainees and trainers were therefore captured in terms of proportions of agreements or disagreements. Thematic analysis was used to explore the perceptions of HoDs derived from interviews with this set of respondents. Consequently, recurrent themes and sub-themes arising from respondents were presented in form of data matrices which are ideal in compressing data. Data was first analyzed separately for the quantitative and qualitative sets. Results were then merged and interpretations were made from the combined results.

## VI. THE FINDINGS

The research question focused on establishing perceptions of teacher trainees and trainers on the relevance of the content of Creative Arts teacher education curriculum. The findings revealed that teacher trainees perceived the content of Creative Arts as relevant in terms of skills such as singing, melody composition, stencil and template patterning, calligraphy, typography and poster design which are good for the trainees' own needs and the society's needs.

The study also found out that teacher trainers perceived the content for Creative Arts relevant and comprehensive enough to suit the needs of trainees and the society. These perceptions reflected those of HODs who through their narratives, identified fine, performing, domestic and outdoor arts as the arts exposed in the content and which are relevant for trainees' and societal needs. Both trainees and trainers perceived inadequate space, time and lack of parental or community support as barriers to the practical teaching of the content.

The need for active participation by trainees in the teaching of Creative Arts is consistent with arguments by Davis (2008) that learning is an active constructive process that is contextual and that information is meaningful when it is

presented in some type of framework". In concurring with these views Meyers and Jones (1993) posit that learning is by nature an active endeavor and that different people learn in different ways. Further, it has been acknowledged that participation in creative arts activities increases students reflective processes and motivates the development of thought that relate to their everyday life thereby making knowledge to have relevance (Brooks, 2005; Mckenna et al., 2013).

## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A careful analysis of the findings obtained from the study led to the conclusion that the content for Creative Arts was perceived by both the teacher trainers and trainees as relevant to learners' and societal needs in terms of the array of skills on offer drawn from fine arts, performing arts, domestic arts, and outdoor arts. Inadequacy in space, time and community support were however perceived as key barriers to making the content practically oriented.

Following the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were made: Teacher training colleges need to set aside adequate space so that the content which is perceived to be adequate can be taught more practically. Moreover, curriculum developers should look to avail more time for the teaching of specific arts so that trainees can be able to master them. Lastly, parental and community support could also go a long way in enhancing the coverage of the content.

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