Utilitarian Theatre Forms and their Relatedness: The Imperative of Conceptual Clarifications

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Abstract

Theatre in general and applied theatre in particular has beyond reasonable doubt gained recognition for its capability to serve as a participatory communication tool that is geared towards achieving sustainable development. Applied theatre forms like Community Theatre, Guerrilla Theatre, Drama and Theatre in Education and Theatre for Development have been borrowed by many social science and anthropological researchers in their field works, for pursuing their dreams of achieving participatory communication for the purpose of achieving sustainable socio-economic and political development. Fields like Mass Communication, Sociology, Development Communication, Social and Behaviour Change Communication, Social Works, Medicine, Philosophy and many others have found drama as a veritable tool for achieving some set goals. In the course of the borrowing from theatre, there arise the misuse, misplacement and misappropriation of concepts, leading to confusions. In the light of this therefore, this paper is set out to do some conceptual clarifications in the areas mentioned above for the benefits of other communication scholars who use theatre as a tool and exploit the utilitarian nature of theatre. The methodology used in this study is observation and the consultation of secondary sources. The paper concludes that concepts, tools of research and theories be taken very seriously in any research process. They should be adequately and comprehensively understood before they are used to anchor any study; this is more imperative when such theories, concepts or tools are borrowed from other disciplines.

Keywords: Applied Theatre, Participatory Communication, Sustainable Development, Utilitarian, Community

Introduction

It is only natural and intellectually correct that knowledge is not absolutely domiciled in any field. Theories and new knowledge from one are borrowed to fit in some discourse in another area. This has been happening between the Humanities, Science and Social Sciences. For example, the evolution theory of Darwin has helped in integrating many discourses in theatre, sociology and economics. It is also a known fact that cultural studies and theories are the foundations of much knowledge in all fields of life. This academic networking has made many scholars to be versatile and productive. The Late Professor Jenkeri Okwori of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria taught or facilitated discourses in Mass Communication, Sociology, Medicine and Engineering all over the world. Little wonder the fact that Professor Steve Abah of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria is a scholar of Development discourse, citizenship issues, culture and conflict resolution.

Having stated the importance of knowledge sharing and borrowing amongst academic disciplines, it is however expedient to state that borrowed concepts and theories should be adequately studied and appropriately situated in their new space in terms of context. Anything short of this is capable of creating some academic confusion and students are at the receiving end of the academic disaster that can emanate from this situation. This paper is set out to do some clarifications of theatre concepts in other to support their appropriate usage by scholars of theatre and for other scholars who borrow theatre as communication tool. This paper attempts to put in perspectives the operational styles of theatre phenomena such as Community Theatre, Theatre for Development, Theatre-in-Education, Drama-in-Education, and Guerrilla Theatre. This is because they have been grossly abused by scholars who borrow them from other fields and regrettably, even amongst theatre scholars.

It is important to state the fact that every form of theatre that is geared towards improving the socio-economical, health and political wellbeing of humanity is a theatre for development. In the light of this argument, it is difficult to pinpoint the difference between Community Theatre, Theatre for Development, Guerrilla Theatre, TIE and DIE in terms of their goals. This is because their common goal is about engendering change and development for the benefit of humanity. However, the differences can come in terms of methodologies, practitioners' experiences and idiosyncrasies. Let us attempt some conceptual clarifications.

What is Community Theatre? Community theatre is a theatre form that is carried out in a community in terms of area and people with a common culture, geographical unity and language. The theatre form is a product of the people's experiences emanating from their environment like festivals, rituals, rivers, occupation, laws, myths, weather, idiosyncrasies, bias, farming, fishing, passage rites, seasons and so on which have been built over generational times. It is a theatre that addresses the issues affecting or confronting a people using the people's artistic forms and expression like communal singing and dancing

Okwori argued that community theatre deals with a theatre form which involves the experiences or situations that the people partake in or witness… it involves artistic forms of expression (singing, dancing, drumming, masquerading etc; showing abnormality or enlargement of behaviour and people telling or partaking in the events not being told or being shown the events (14). Okwori further argued that the people are not to be treated as audience or spectators but as participant observers. He stated further that "real community theatre involves taking up residence in a particular community and working with the people and with them being part and parcel of the activity" (26)

The people's experiences on the farms, hunting expeditions, fishing at the rivers, carrying farm produce home, erosion issues, flood, preparing meals, fetching woods and water, death and burial, marriages, government neglect, societal crime, mystics, seasons, draught, famine etc. form what they re-enact for the purpose of relaxing themselves through dance, songs and larger than life theatrical actions. This is what community theatre entails. As they re-enact their experiences, they work paths to finding solutions to better their lots. Any theatre out of the people's experiences in their domain is not community theatre. I made bold to argue that the community is the communality. Community theatre is the people's theatre, after all theatre started with the people.

Community theatre enables the partakers to communally examine, assess and re-assess their problem which emanate from the struggles for survival in their environment/domain. Okwori posited about community theatre thus:

> It is done by the community members themselves, sometimes in partnership with others. The plays are intended to provide information and

awareness which will instigate the community members to engage in debate and discussions of the issues raised in the drama… This will lead to critical consciousness, a kind of awareness that moves the community members to take action… Community theatres are sometimes rendered incomplete to encourage the spec-actors to fill in the gaps. It encourages the active participants to intervene in the story to change it… the real change lies outside the drama. (2004:16)

The above quotation, in other words implies that after the use of theatre as a tool for examining and assessing situations around themselves, the community can come up with action plans which will be participatory for short or long run solutions.

Stages in a Community Theatre Intervention
Firstly and fundamentally in a Community Theatre intervention, the facilitators (who could be a group of students from a University's or College's Department of Theatre Arts or a dramatic group in town or an NGO that is using drama as communication tool, should start by linking up target community to acquaint them with the initiative with a view to getting their consent and support. The outsiders and the target community have to participate in discussing the project, plan the modalities and logistics for carrying out the project. This step can happen over a short time as the facilitators pay courtesy visits to the community's elders, gatekeepers/local authority to gather basic information about the community.

It is expected that after the consultation, the community would have been convinced to accept and agree to actively participate in the intervention; they should also be allowed to participate in planning the operational modalities alongside with the outsiders. in the process of doing this, the facilitators can identify and study the available communication channels and the culture of the community. This is very germane because without understanding the people, the outsiders cannot operate well and this may set the project towards the rock.

The second step can be described as a research stage in which the outsider used participatory tools such as interview, questionnaire to elicit information from the community about their problems as lived by the people themselves. This process creates the opportunity for participatory research as the people

are involved in researching themselves by articulating the challenges that confront them. Participant observation by the outsiders can also be a tool for gathering data about the community. This engagement/approach will enable the outsiders to relate freely with their host community, as they live with them, learn to eat their food, participate in their daily activities such as farming, fishing, trading and attending social functions with them. This will acquaint the outsiders with the traditions and values of the people, build confidence and trust amongst them which is a necessary way of achieving acceptability and active participation from the people. As the outsiders engage with the community members, they gather information via discussions and sharing of experiences, presenting observations for analysis as they participate in the daily activities of the community.

The third stage of data analysis entails that the information elicited from the participatory research is presented at a community gathering whereby there can be adequately discussed by everyone looking at the issues and how they arise, presenting their effects and talking about the way out. This stage empowers the people to understand the problems, appreciate and re-appreciate them, ruminate about them and plan the strategies that could be used to overcome them. This process also enables the community to have a common voice as to how to prioritize the problems according to their pressing nature. This whole stage of identifying, appreciating and re-appreciating one's community problems and planning on how to overcome them is on its own a step towards development which is sustainable.

The fourth step in community theatre intervention is called scenario building. Having gathered raw materials from the research stage to the data analysis stage, it is now time for building a play by creating a sequence for the story that will pinpoint and dramatize the problems. The intention of this stage is to provoke discussion and challenge people to take action and this is the point where appropriate cultural forms are identified and integrated (Okwori:2004: 29). He further posited that:

> The outsider should take care to allow the story evolve from the sensibilities of the people. The scenario should be a plan of action which is amenable to change at any time according to the changing perspectives of the community…you should facilitate the process of the story creation…you may use personal life story of people in the community which illustrate the

> problems identified…you may build an imaginary story around it as long as it is the people who are involved in doing so. (29)

It is worthy of note that the scenario building state is also a research process as perspective are challenged and put straight in order to achieve an acceptable story line by the community. This process can go on for as long as the community wishes to drive it. However, every intervention is guided by time.

Step five is rehearsals. Unlike conventional theatre, rehearsal in community theatre is the focus or emphasis and not the performances. This is due to the fact that in community theatre, the process encompasses the catalyst for conscientization which may snowball to change. The rehearsals enable the people to prepare on how to play the characters by adjusting and readjusting for the role and by so doing, they internalize and see clearly through the issues. This in itself is empowering. As many people as possible are allowed to play roles and discuss their roles and this process according to Okwori forges group solidarity and throw up challenges which can provoke action (30). It is important to note that rehearsals schedules should be dictated by the community and the language of performance is that of the people.

The sixth stage is referred to as performance and post-performance discussion. Okwori described it thus:

> Rehearsals become performances once the play making process crystallizes. They are an extension of the rehearsals. Like the rehearsals, they allow for the community members to intervene. The performance must contend with the noise, the haggling and the human traffic impinging upon the performance venues/sites. Exaggerated action is useful to attract attention, generate interest and clarify issues. The body in such moment complements in actions and movements what the words are supposed to say. (2004:30)

He emphasized on this by stating clearly thus:

> It is necessary that the performers draw the audience into the play as participants by engaging the audience regularly. To do this the actors

> constantly throw actions and debates to them, ask questions, call them as witnesses, request their supports for arguments, conspire with them…telling them what you are about to do, distinguishes between you as a person and the character you are portraying, ask for their comments and opinions over an issue, reach out and act in their midst, touch them, take sides with them. When the exercise comes to an end, sit with the people and encourage them to re-examine the issues of the play and plan strategies for action (30-31)

Note: the actors in these performance and post-performance discussions should be predominantly members of the target community in a mix with the outsiders. In this way, the larger audiences will see their community members who have taken roles in the performance as icons to emulate.

The seventh stage is usually the last stage and it is as important as other stages in the process. This is referred to as the follow through stage. It is aimed at enabling the outsider to revisit the target community to observe the development after the intervention. This stage is important because if not done, the community theatre experience and knowledge achieved may fissile away without them translating to change. The visitors should encourage and empower the community to be able to tinker new areas of further intervention. This is also a stage of evaluation of impart or effect of the earlier intervention. At the end of the follow through, there should be proper documentation of the findings of evaluation which when put together with all that was earlier achieved in the intervention would form a useful documentation and case study of field experience.

It is important to clarify that before a theatre can be classified to as community theatre, it must have taken place amongst a group of people who live together in a given locality, share common cultural norms and experiences, common socio-economic and political experiences. They must have participated in researching themselves in their own community, collectively identify their problems/challenges, prioritize them , engage in analyzing them and being part of the enactment/ play creation process of the issues elicited. They have to be part of the post performance analysis and charting a course for community action plan (CAP) which could take place via self- help and soliciting help through advocacy. In the light of this therefore, if you go into a school or hospital or shopping mall or a motor park or any

other public place for that matter to engage in theatre activities, it cannot be classified as community theatre even when such areas could be called communities in dynamic sense.

Guerrilla Theatre

Guerrilla theatre is derived from the nature of guerrilla warfare. It is a hit and run theatre which came into prominence in San Francisco, United States of America where activist use theatre forms to protest against what they referred to as the unwarranted and negative consequences of the Vietnam War. They also used this radical form of theatre to speak against state policies that were anti-masses and capitalist in nature.It is a form of theatre in which performers who are engaged in activism create plays about societal verifiable problems and go into villages, streets, public places such as market, motor parks, hospital, government offices etc. to perform such plays. The plays put up in a hurry and the actors move away quickly from the scene by melting into the audience to avoid being seen as instigators of people against constituted authorities.

In guerrilla theatre, there is no defined audience as the people are not notified that a performance will take place. However, there is a target audience as the message (s) is directed at people who are affected by the abnormality. The emergent audience is caught unawares by the radical performance. The actions in a guerrilla theatre performance are initially thought to be real life development as people see their lives being played out in the performance. The audience would much later discover that what they were watching was a performance. However, the question would be who are the performers?

The issues that are raised in a guerrilla theatre are usually protestant; raising issues of local and national concerns that are affecting the people. It could be about economic hardship caused by the authority's commission or omission. It could be about bad governance, it could be on corruption of leaders, and it could be on poor health service delivery and many other societal challenges. The method of guerrilla theatre is not necessarily in accordance with the people's culture, language and artistic form. It is all about using the language that is popular in the target area.

Guerrilla Theatre: Narratives of Two Experiences in Calabar

Firstly, in the year 2015 (27th August) the 400 level students of the Department of Theatre and Media Studies, University of Calabar took a guerrilla theatre to an area known as Atakpa – a police station. The student-

theatre activist infiltrated the very busy area with a performance; acting the story of how vehicles are stuck by police officers without any form of check, but all the police does is to extort money from the poor taxi drivers in town. The performance portrayed how the taxi drivers manage to make ends meet with their rickety vehicles. They manage their families from the little money made and sometimes spend all the money at the mechanic workshop. The performance ridiculed the essence of what the police call check-point by replacing the sign post with another inscription tagged 'settle post'.

It was so spontaneous that the police at the post started getting ready to prevent what they initially thought was an uprising. They later realized that it took a drama form as they relaxed to watch. However, the police got angry when they realized that the drama was a reflection of their behaviour and felt that it was a challenge brought to their door step. They swung into action by arresting some of the student-actors whom they referred to as rascals while other student-actors disappeared into the audience. The taxi drivers who could not hitherto express their displeasure with the way they are being extorted by the police took advantage of this platform/opportunity and started protesting. At the end, the large crowd demanded the release of the students and at long run the police shifted grounds and released them. They were warned by the police not to carry out such dramas near the police station anymore. However, the message was passed. Another Guerrilla Theatre experience in the year 2016, a new set of students from the same Department studied the disheartening and deplorable state of the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH) and created a guerrilla theatre performance which was performed at the entrance of the hospital complex. The performance started at about 8:10am on a Monday as workers were seen coming into the building. The spontaneous performance attracted workers of the hospital, some out patients and their family members who clustered around to watch the very loud speaking actors.

The issues raised were about the fact that the ambulances of the hospital were all grounded, the entire edifice had become very dirty, rough and unkempt due to lack of quality maintenance and painting. The drama also referred to the very dirty hospital premises showing bushy areas that are habitat for mosquitoes in a hospital premises where malaria patients are being treated. The drama also pointed at the terrible roads leading into the hospital, mentioning several potholes that are capable of causing accidents within the premises and aggravate the health conditions of incoming patients.

As the performance was going on, workers of the hospital were involved in the art of citizen journalism as they recorded the performance and took snapshots of the actions with the use of their phones. They were also seen talking about the raised issues in the performance. Suddenly from a corner, a group of men started shouting towards the actors and calling for their arrest. According to them, the actors were being sponsored by elements to ridicule and bring down the administration of the hospital. And the facility security men succeeded in arresting some female actors and took them to the Chief Security office. They were interrogated and asked if they were being sponsored by anyone and the students explained to them that they were only carrying out the practical component of one of their courses in the theatre and media studies department of the University. To confirm the students' position, the security chief asked them to call their course lecturer for further explanation. The course lecturers visited the security office of the hospital and confirmed that the students were on their practical to earn their grades and nothing more. After all, the chief security officer pleaded that the lecturers should collect the videos of the performance from the students and hand same over to the hospital management. This was to ensure that the video did not leak out to the larger public, and as that was done, the students were released.

Three weeks after that guerrilla theatre encounter, information reaching the course lecturers and the students indicated that the authority of the hospital had started painting the entire facility, refurbishing their ambulances and patching all potholes on the network of roads in the premises and also engaged in a massive grass cutting exercise. Visiting the hospital afterwards, the lecturers and students observed that there was an apparent improvement in the areas pointed out in the drama. The narratives above indicate what guerrilla theatre is capable of doing – engendering change and development through radical commentary that could spur people into action. However, the practice usually comes out with hitches and bruises as narrated in the two stories.

Theatre for Development

It is important to establish that every form of theatre that is designed towards bringing change from the unpleasant to the pleasant can be referred to as theatre for development. However, there are different approaches/methodologies to the different theatre forms. Therefore, popular, community, street and guerrilla theatres can be collapsed into a generic term called Theatre for Development (TfD). According to Adie,

"theatre for development is an unconventional form of theatre that seeks to engender change and progress in the standard of living of people". (34) Epskamp posited that "theatre for development is about learning together through the arts and about using the arts to inform and to teach." (87)

TfD deals with the application of traditional media and art forms which include the re -enforcement of cultural identities of societies as raw materials for its practice. TfD operates through non-formal education that allows for learning amongst targeted audience with the aim of achieving sustainable problem solving capacities for communities. It is applicable to various development targets such as politics, health, economy and social disorderliness. Theatre for Development (TFD) as utilitarian theatre approach has its roots in the philosophy of empowerment. It uses local materials and enables the audience to make use of the tools it offers to make sense out of an issue so as to change their realities. Theatre is powerful because it creates an aesthetic space in which issues are magnified and dichotomized. This art can be said to be telescopic because it pulls and brings close things in the distance and enlarges small things. What this means is that TFD does not limit itself to exploring the material aspects of people's lives but provides means of exploring and addressing dynamic issues affecting people. The core issue here is not feeding people with information in a top down model of interventions. The drama approach to education begins with what people know and work with people as subjects, rather than objects to be handed information.

Crispin, Nturibi and Muriithi (1998:1) posit that;

> The TFD approach is an alternative to the paternalistic, elitist, urban based media sources, planned and directed by powerful policy makers and sophisticated media producers who assume they know the right direction for development and changes needed by those whom they see as voiceless, ignorant villagers.

Participatory performance on the one hand places priority on working with the people and using their own modes of communication to enable small communities look at their own situations, to analyze their own problems with the aim of arousing and stimulating target groups to take desired steps to improve their wellbeing. Baz (1992: 5) agrees with this when he says that "this type of performances; … represent a theatre of social engagement, a

theatre primarily committed to bringing about actual change in specific communities". This type of Theatre is anti- Aristotle in that the dramatist engages the audience with a view of turning history from its set course. This is because when Theatre 'opens the eyes' of the people or target groups – concientizes; the next thing is doing what they have learned – the action phase. However, doing or changing as a result of what they (individuals or communities) have discovered through the theatre is a matter of choice. They have to decide when and how they want the change. In other words they initiate change in their own terms. It expected that at the end this intervention, community respondents will appropriate TFD. Invariably, we can say that TfD while it makes use of discussions; such discussions is geared towards visualizing why and how changes might be necessary and how they will be achieved and realized. As such, TfD can be described as an instrument of empowerment for the socially deprived individuals.

Kidd (1980:267) writing on popular theatre and formal education submit that:

> Popular theatre (TfD) is used as a means of bringing people together, building confidence and solidarity, stimulating discussion, exploring alternative options for action, and building a collective commitment to change; starting with people's urgent concerns and issues; it encourages reflections on these issues and possible strategies to change.

In other words, TfD is a dramatic technique employed by drama activists in mobilizing their audiences. It is a means of putting across information and development messages. People through this approach, are made aware of their situation, and are encouraged to critically analyze the situation and take action towards collectively solving such problems. Suffice it to say that, TfD as an approach focuses on generating impact that goes beyond the limit of mere existence into a limit where minds meet and are prodded to react towards a given target to better their lives. What can be rightly termed "play for learning". Okwori, (2005) reiterates this when he says; "Theatre can do more than entertainment. It can go beyond fiction to intervene in reality because it is based on it".

The role of popular performance in social education has been acknowledged worldwide. Theatre activists have not only acknowledged this role but have

utilized popular performances for popular action. In the recent past, social education programmes particularly those geared towards development generally, have sprung up in many parts of the third world: Brazil, Mexico, Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana, Cameroon, Nigeria etc. Organizers of these programmes attest to the fact that, the common starting point for social education programmes was the validation of the performing culture of the people. It was also observed that popular performing culture should not simply be seen as mere performances of folksongs and dances but events that have far reaching implication in the day to day life of the people.

This implies that the process of using theatre to mobilize and motivate participation in the development process as well as educate rural communities is a task that entails deploying drama to facilitate development. To this end, the art of performance goes beyond the point of excitement and pleasure of the audience to the point where it brings about tangible evidence of change and development in the field. Here, the cognitive value of drama as an art rests in its capacity to stir up a thought that propels the target audience to develop an approach that conforms to the situation to address issues raised in the skits.

Ode (2008:7) defined TfD as:

> Theatre for Development (TfD) is a method of non-formal education. It is simply a kind of self-development oriented theatre that involves the people fully by enabling them take control of their destinies… Here the people are expected to arise from their state of ignorance and apathy in the quest for social change. This is done through a process of making drama.

In this sense, the theatre activist automatically becomes a popular educator. As a popular educator, the Theatre activist(s) becomes a strong catalyst in mobilizing the people to discuss their needs in such a way that they will begin to see such needs more specifically as wants. It must be noted that the theatre activist/popular educator cannot realize this alone. The first significant step in achieving this is by identifying key actors among the selected performers from the chosen traditional performing groups. The theatre activist then takes the group through series of skill acquisition exercises which puts them in a better position to conduct a social education programme with the people. These skills involve using traditional

performances in setting these villagers minds in a thinking process. Once they begin to think about why they must do a specific thing such as improving their political culture and enhancing their fundamental human rights for themselves, how and what to do to achieve this becomes easy. The performers are trained to engage their audience in after production discussions.

The role of both the performances and the theatre activists here is to use their skills to supply the stimulus for thought and action, and they do this by asking penetrating questions that will put the people in the position to think till they arrive at a plausible solution to the problem. They must also ensure that the conclusions they have reached are not only useful but achievable. There and then a workable action plan is drawn up, setting out what should be done, who will do it, when it will be done and how we get to know the successes and failures of actions further. On the whole, team work and interactive exercises are central to the work of a popular educator for without these, most participants will become passive recipients of ready-made messages .All these will receive attention at the TFD workshop level

As such, TFD aims at social transformation which begins at grass root education and aimed at the exclusive good of the people (masses), breeding liberating initiatives that permeate their whole being and communities. This means TFD is an approach that practically can be said to be a theatre which can be used as a weapon for community awareness and collective engaging. The above is predicated on the fact that the practice aims to help vulnerable groups question certain undesirable situations inherent in their lives.

The Issue of Approach: TfD as Process and as Product

TFD is about learning together through the arts, and about using the arts to inform and to teach (Epskamp 2006:87) TFD deals with application of traditional media and arts forms which include the reinforcement of cultural identities of societies as raw materials for its practice. TFD operates through non-formal education that allows for learning amongst targeted audience with the aim of achieving sustainable problem- solving capacities for communities. TFD is applicable to different development targets such as health, politics, agriculture and economy.TFD is a social intervention through which the process of creating a play is educationally speaking, as valuable the performance. This indicates that TFD is a process and a product.

TFD as a process is the practice at community level for analyzing local problems in a creative way towards local awareness raising and problem solving by exploring various solutions and courses of action. TFD is a research as well as a training instrument which is all about discovery, learning and empowerment (Epskamp, 2006:88)) TFD as a process is people centered and learner-oriented. TFD as product deals with performances that are used for promotional and educational purposes which are message centered rather than learning oriented. The main objective of the use of TfD as Product is to inform people of important developmental issues and to persuade them to change their behaviour. In this light therefore, TFD has regularly served as a means of advocacy and mobilization campaign in support of national development. The kind of drama that we watch on TV and the ones we listen to on radio that are designed towards informing or educating the public in the bid of seeking change in different ramification is also TfD in its own rights. In Nigeria, Tv series like the Area 11 Center, the Oga Driver, Professor JohnBull are theatre for development as products. They are meant for the public to consume for enlightenment purpose. There are other dramatic jingles by National Agency for Food, Drug, Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) that I classify as TfD also because they are message centered

Drama and Theatre in Education

The creative imagination is essentially dramatic in its character. It is the ability to see the imaginative possibilities, to comprehend the relationships between two concepts and to see the dynamic force between them. The developing human child has a first year of life which is essentially motor; and then, suddenly with some children, the change comes – he plays, develops humour, and pretends to be himself or someone else. He has gone through other changes before this, some extremely important, but this is the specific development that makes the difference between man and other living creatures – the ability to see another person's point of view, to see the possibilities in a situation which can make it funny, to see the inherent qualities in two ideas and the possible action between them. Pretending to be

someone else – to act – is part of the process of living; we may actually pretend, physically, when we are young children or we may do it internally when we are adults. We act everyday: with our friends, our family, strangers…acting is the method by which we live with our environment, finding adjustment in play. The young child, coming upon something within the external world which he does not comprehend, will play with it dramatically until he does. We can observe infants doing this many times a day. As we get older, the process becomes more and more internal until, as adults, it is automatic and we play dramatically in our imagination. (Courtney: 7)

The above quotation provides explanation for the usefulness of drama and theatre in all educational spheres. However, there is still the confusion amongst scholars about the difference between drama in education and theatre in education. Many do not see any difference between the duos since they are traditionally used interchangeably to mean the same thing. Indeed, it is difficult to separate them one from the other; however, for the purpose of this study (educational use) I shall attempt to draw our attention to the thin line that exist between them specifically in terms of appropriation for education.

Drama as a Method of Teaching Something Else

Reflecting on the opening quotation, the capacity of drama and theatre in education has been underscored. I therefore want to discuss drama in education in the perspective of a methodical tool for learning in schools. Dramatic method can be deployed in schools, in teaching and learning other subjects in school curriculum such as the skills and knowledge of mathematics, language, literature, geography etc. This can be achieved (learning and teaching through play). A Mathematics teacher can use drama as a method to teach that (-1+1=0.) The dramatization of this paints a clearer picture of what that means than the ordinary mathematical expression of sign and number. Therefore the creativity to dramatize the mathematical expression to the understanding of the students is an art of drama in education in terms of teaching methods. The method of using drama to teach subjects in school has received poor attention in the past; however, many schools are going back to the potentials of drama as teaching aid.

On the other hand, Courtney argued that:

> Theatre in education can be referred to a situation where dramatic play is pursued for its own sake purely for the personal development of the child and as a separate subject on the curriculum; and here we meet the various elements of the subjects – improvisation (creative drama), creative movement, and creative speech. (3)

Courtney posited further that

> Theatre in education operates when the child is instructed in stage technique, diction, theatre movement, costuming, singing and dancing according to a specific syllabus…the child plays dramatically and is introduced to specific technical skills as and when he requires them for his own development. (3)

The significance of drama or theatre in education cannot be over-emphasized as according to Plato (cited in Courtney:9) "consider that education must be based upon play and not compulsion…that children from their earliest years must take part in all the more lawful forms of play, for if they are not surrounded with such an atmosphere, there can never grow up to be well educated and virtuous citizen". Aristotle, outside of his poetics also agreed with Plato that playful movement should be encouraged to prevent indolence…it can be introduced for relaxation as a 'medicine'. He argued that education must provide for the practical life and leisure at the same time, play is of the utmost importance (10)

Theatre for Development: An Umbrella Name for Other Utilitarian Theatre Forms

As stated earlier, any theatre form that is directed towards providing information that can lead to change and betters the lots of people is theatre for development. Popular theatre, community theatre, street theatre and even guerrilla theatre can be classified as different genres of theatre for

development. This is so because they all seek change in society, however, their methodologies vary.

It is worthy of note that there has been some academic confusion in conceptualizing these nomenclatures differently. To clarify the issues, it must be known that the art of using drama for the purpose of change started with what is called popular theatre which graduated into community theatre. Afterwards, it split into subs like street theatre, guerrilla theatre and recently, according to Abah (2005:34) practitioners all over Africa have agreed to collapse these applied theatre forms/nomenclatures into one which is theatre for development. The various forms are however unique in their methodologies and concepts, but the goal is the same which is to improve human conditions.

The common characteristics in all of them are the use of drama as a medium of communication, the goal is about change, it is about people's living conditions and how they can improve as well as giving back theatre to the people. Adie succinctly posited thus: "TfD as a process is the practice of analyzing local problems in a creative way towards creating awareness, for problem solving by exploring various solutions and causes of action." (2015:35) Epskamp argued that "TfD is a research as well as a training instrument which is all about discovery, learning and empowerment…it is a process that is people centered and learner-oriented." (2006:88)

Conclusion

This paper concludes that any theatre form that seeks to communicate change or transformation from the undesirable to the desirable is simply a theatre for development. However, their approaches may differ.

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