MOTIVATIONAL IMPACT OF VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION THROUGH THE 'ARTISTS IN SCHOOLS' (AiS) COLLABORATION PROGRAM AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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Research Highlights
The aim of the paper is to highlight some of the findings on the study on the impact of the 'Artist in Schools' (AiS) collaboration on the motivation of students of selected secondary schools in Malaysia in visual art education. AiS is aimed at establishing a collaboration between the students of nine schools and nine Malaysian artists in order to share their experiences, skills and knowledge consecutively. The research design of multi-case studies or multisite studies was selected and Keller’s ARCS Motivational Theory has been used for assessment purposes and as the main conceptual framework. The open-ended questionnaires were distributed to obtain the data of the students’ motivation, and the collaboration between AiS program and the students.

Research Objectives
This research is aimed at exploring the impact of the collaborative program of "Artists in Schools" (AiS) program on the motivation of the Malaysian secondary school students in visual arts. The concept of AiS program is to establish a collaboration between the selected schools and Malaysian artists in a different fields, in order to share their experiences, skills and knowledge consecutively. The results obtained from the collaboration between students and the AiS program, can indirectly affect future practices, policies and research (Merriam, 1998). The main conceptual framework used is the ARCS Motivational Model by Keller (2010).

Methodology
The research design of multi-case studies or multisite studies was selected for this study. This design allow wider exploring of research questions and theoretical evolution (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Nine (9) secondary schools are selected based on the six (6) zones in Peninsular Malaysia namely upper north (Kedah), lower north (Perak), upper east coastal (Kelantan and Pahang), middle (Kuala Lumpur), and the west (Melaka). The selection was made through the list of schools which registered at the AiS program website at http://www.artistsinschoolsmalaysia.com developed by researchers. The respondents of the study were recruited among students aged 13 to 17 years old (N=319). They were divided into two groups; 1) Lower secondary - 13 to 15 years old; and 2) Upper secondary - 16 to 17 years old. These respondents were categorized into two levels based on the fact that the secondary school education system in Malaysia is divided into Lower Secondary Education (Form 1 to Form 3) and Upper Secondary Education (Form 4 to Form 5). All respondents took visual arts education as one of the schooling subject; 56.4% (n=180)) were female while 43.6% (n=139) were male.
Keller’s ARCS Motivational Theory (2000) has been used for assessment purposes. The research method is designed as the fundamental components in sequence to acquire the correct and reliable data. The data are systematically collected with a proper guidance and are elaborated in detail. This study uses open-ended questionnaires in order to collect reliable data.
Each AiS session took approximately three (3) to four (4) hours and began with a brief introduction of the program followed by sharing of technical knowledge and experiences by the artist with the respondents. A two-hour task was then given by the artist to them. Observations were made by the artist on the students. Comments or opinions were given to
the students when necessary. A short wrap-up talk was then delivered by the artist and open-ended questionnaires were distributed at the end of the slot by the researcher.

**Results**

With regards to visual arts education and its relevance to the development of artistic motivation, the results show that the lower secondary school respondents shared interesting perspectives: they claimed that this subject was fun and interesting. They were interested to learn visual art and could sustain their passion in learning arts, specifically visual arts. On the other hand, the upper secondary school respondents had a different perspective. Many perceived that from the visual arts subject, they could sell their art. Friendly artists is a catalyst for interest and creativity amongst the students. It creates a positive learning environment: "The artist is spontaneous and friendly", "the artist can draw our attention to focus more on what's being learned", "talented artists are attracting students' attention", and, "the artist gives a compelling and spontaneous guide", were among the comments received.

As in any skill-building processes, the diligence and frequency of doing something are vital. Through this program, the respondents were indirectly aware of this fact through the practice of some basic forms of art works. The artists managed to create fun and cheerfulness in the teaching and learning process. Not surprisingly, many respondents were of the opinion that the collaboration should be a part of the teaching and learning of art education in their schools.

The AiS program was seen as a process to be experienced again and should be shared with the rest of the school community. In every school visited, the pre-AiS perception was that art was complicated and boring. However, the program had proven that it is not so and in fact, very beneficial, exciting, and full of fun.

**Findings**

The results of the evaluation have shown that the AiS program is significantly functional and instrumental in enhancing and developing motivation of the students towards arts and thus, highly potential in improving students’ creativity. Studies have shown that creativity, art, music and imagination are dominated by the right brain, while logic and memorization such as mathematics, science and language are dominated by the left brain and that every human being has a different brain dominance leading to different interests creating variety and diversity in the society (Daymut, 2009). In addition, the analysis of the results of the artist – school collaboration showed positive feedback and response where the respondents suggested that AiS should be held more frequently in the future. The collaboration also clearly increased the students’ understanding of new techniques and skills gained from the invited artist. By involving the artists of various fields, it has positively impacted both parties: the students as well as the schools. Conclusively, this collaboration must be continued in other schools in Malaysia as the impact will not only be significantly beneficial to the level of motivation and creativity of the students but also an eye-opener to the society, specifically on the importance of visual art education in Malaysia.

**References**


