

THE ESSENCE OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY IN ART PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE

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Abstract

To solve personal and environmental problems, man over time has created objects as tools and equipment to ease challenges. Spiritual yearnings and cosmic insights have caused artists to create symbols for divinity, as ancient civilizations created art as symbols of deities for religious purposes. Farm tools and equipment, household furniture, and articles for personal adornments and ornamentations have been created through art. Art has served as therapy, and has inspired other aesthetic concepts generally. With civilisation and technological development, formats of creativity have changed and the relevance of art in society seems dwindled. Reasons for such dwindling include downturn of economy, social attitudes, and misconceptions about the arts. This study asserts that art can be enhanced to become more relevant if social psychology of communities are examined and formatted to address yearnings, and relevant strategies adopted to produce art that are indispensable to society. This in turn offers patronage and ensure artistic sustainability. Social psychology reveals thought, attitude, and yearnings of the people and enables artists to understand what captures the interests of people as they create products or services for purchase and patronage. The study objectives include investigating how attitudes, perceptions, and culture influences creativity, and effects of social consciousness on art productivity. Primary and secondary data sources are used, and study adopts descriptive survey for analogy. Findings elucidate essence of social psychology in the creative industry same as in multidisciplinary dimensions. It portends the distinct relevance of social psychology in art pedagogy and practice.

Keywords: Strategy, clientele, demography, psychology, pedagogy.

Introduction

Every society has needs that are peculiar to their environments be them in physical forms that can be addressed through products, or in abstractive forms that can be addressed as services. Such physical forms may include tools and equipment, and such abstractive forms may include therapy, values, religion, and ideals. What propels needs of people may include but not limited to features as material needs, religion, culture, physical environment, and other aspirations. Such features are embedded in the consciousness of the society and becomes the properties that motivate trade, religion, social activities, and social responsibilities. This is the fulcrum that drives creative instinct in humans to perform or produce products that connect to artistic traits and social consciousness.

Social psychology plays a significant role in trade and industry. It concerns with consumer behavior, it influences market forces, and is a major reason goods are advertised. Barron, Branscombe, & Byrne (2008), see social psychology as scientific scope of studies that seek to understand the nature and cause of individuals' behaviours and thoughts in social situations. In another perspective, Villacija, (2023) observes that social psychology is about

how individual thoughts, feelings, and actions are influenced by the presence of others. The insights in this context include conformity, obedience, attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices, and group dynamics.

Social psychology in art refers to artist's consciousness and understanding of how art can be used to address social needs. It is an insight of social needs that an artist can envisage to capture interests, and appeal to audience such that art produced are relevant to their needs and attract patronage. Knowledge of social psychology allows the artist produce works that are valuable to attract patronage, based on the fact he understands the social needs and aspirations. It explores the cognitive, emotional, and social factors influencing art creation, perception, and interpretation. Artistic social psychology in this scope refers to the communal insight an artist possesses to be able to create objects that are relevant in solving social problems thereby motivating the populace to patronise such creative objects, tools, or articles.

The current socio- economic experiences in Nigeria is a stark reality facing artists and such allied professionals. The dwindling strength of government to employ, and the prevalent economic hardship experienced in Nigeria has presented the art career as precarious. An artist does not just need to produce because the art work is beautiful. Buying art work becomes a function of available extra, before someone buys an art work as ornament of beautification, there must be extra finance to cater for more needs. The number of Nigerians that can afford art works easily is drastically reduced because of the national economy, therefore to thrive as an artist one must be able to create and produce products that are important and needed by people to attract patronage. The ability to forecast, fabricate, and inject aesthetics in wares to attract people to patronise, this is the psychology; insight to visualise, investigate, and create social relevant articles and services.

To have knowledge to attain what has been said here, for an artist to successfully maneuver his trade in the tight Nigerian economic whether, there is need for school curriculum to provide understanding between art and the society. The curriculum must provide entrepreneurial education in the arts. Knowledge that highlights creative essence, planning and managerial acumen, risks taking and adaptability, advertisement, marketing and sales, and financial literacy. Art pedagogy ensures adequate sequences of knowledge transfer, provides the social relevant crafts and wares, materials and methods of production, and marketing and sales capacities.

Art practice is equally an aspect of art pedagogy and vice versa, as the learner learns the trade, it is constant practice that ensures dexterity and competence in production. The importance of one to the other is equally stressed by Eisner (2024) who observes that pedagogy and practice of arts are critical means of developing complex aspects of the mind. He asserts how various aspects of thinking are evoked, developed, and refined through the arts, that such experiences are impactful in dealing with the ambiguities and uncertainties of life.

Pedagogy and practice are prominent aspects of art especially emanating from scholarly perspectives, but beyond scholarship is the reality of everyday living. The aptitude of artistic production combined with the most impeccable skills of production may not convince the ordinary citizen towards art patronage, it may be minimal where possible. But a grounded knowledge of what appeals to the people, the sensitive aspects of their culture that arouses their emotions towards heritage, the needs of households, and the mode of presentation to attract more interests from knowledge of communal emotions, these are factors that marketers highlight in order to arouse sentiments and attract patronage to their industry. These are the foundations that uphold the components of artistic social psychology. They include factors of Era and time,

civilization, technological development, culture and heritage, religion, sociology, politics, Social injustice, etc. these are discussed elaborately as the study progresses.

Theoretical Framework

Social psychology at the academic sphere is an interdisciplinary concept. It has both professional distinctions and realistic relativity to life. The various disciplines as they relate with social psychology are broad in linkages that in their different perspectives offer deep understanding of human attitudes and social behaviour. Within the scope of this study, the social psychology of creativity and social psychology of marketing are specifically adopted to aid analysis and evaluations.

The study hinges the theoretical framework on 2 social psychology theories. These are the Teresa Amabile's theory of Social Psychology of Creativity, and Philip Kotler & Nancy Lee's theory on Social Psychology in Marketing. Adopting the 2 are apt in this study given the fact that the essence of the study includes inculcating social psychology in pedagogy and practice to ensure creative competence whose success is to be measured by wellbeing of artists and growth of artistic industries. The most prominent variables as it relates to social psychology, art pedagogy and practice, and sustainability in arts and amongst artists are creativity and marketing. The reason for this is that creativity is the crux of art pedagogy and practice, while marketing ensure that the wares produced from practice are promoted and traded, and the dividends contribute towards arts, and artists' sustainability.

In considering Amabile (1983), his theory of social psychology of creativity asserts that cognitive ability, imbedded personality traits, and environmental factors, all confined in psychology within the social scope contribute to stages of developments of the creative process. The theory presents how social psychology of creativity contributes to creative performance. It is a practical essence of combining different art education theories as cognitive theory, perceptual theory, and perceptual delineation theory within a specific scope to ensure a positive resultant concept. The framework describes the existence of man as an entity, his ability to learn and apply what is learned (cognitive), the influence from his interaction with the environment (perceptual), and his engagement within creativity and his output back to the society (perceptual-delineation). The theory address creative concerns within the framework of art pedagogy and practice.

On the other hand, social psychology in marketing applies psychology principles to understanding consumer behavior, art production decision making, and social influences on purchasing decisions. The framework provides a comprehensive understanding of social psychological factors that influence trading behaviours. As observed by the proponents, Kotler & Lee (2007), social psychology in marketing centers on social thinking, social influencing, and social behavior. Social psychology is applied in marketing by considering factors that have capacity to inspire and motivate individuals to make purchase. Such factors include age, ethnicity, location, gender, and personal preferences on one hand, while on the other hand evaluating variables as audience/ customers' needs, desires, believes, values, motivations, and triggers on the other. These factors can be strategised to become stimuli that drive people to make purchases.

The 2 theories complement each other to institute positive results within the context of this study. While one presents modus for creativity which is the basis for pedagogy and practice, the other highlights the essence of marketing if successful art entrepreneurship must be attained. Social psychology in creativity dwells on heritage and cultural affiliation, trend and styles,

mental/ intellectual ability, innovation and creative aptitude, personality traits (hard work and motivation), environmental factors. While social psychology in marketing applies psychology principles to understand consumer needs, social influences, and personal decision for purchase. Factors that influence social psychology in marketing include social identity, crowd followership, advertorials, religion, and cultural affinity.

Beyond the different analogies on social psychology of creativity and marketing, this study observe that both creativity and marketing have variables which can be employed to be essential for success of both concepts, these include but not limited to experience, culture and traditions, religion, and mental aptitude. These can influence both the psychology of creativity and marketing, however variables like experience, personality and style, and mental aptitude may influence at different levels depending on individual levels of experience, perception, and intelligence quotient.

Social psychology in Art

The psychology of art have different meanings to different people and ideologies. Some are totally aligned to academic guidelines and merits, following the disciplinary procedures to identify terms and distinctions, especially as they relate to the content of their research. Seminov (1986), sees the social psychological purpose of art to include the encouragement of societal solidarity and promotion of mutual understanding. The context sees art as a positive promoter of peoples' psychology which culminate in morals. In another analogy, Whitten (2022), investigates the relationship between art and culture in relationships of culture as an aspect of social psychology. The analogy stipulates that as art shape culture, culture equally shapes art, and in detailed reportage discusses the artistic influence on society and vice versa. In the analysis of Wang (2023), the artist uses his work to reflect the psychological problems of society under different social environments, and the psychology of society on the other hand feed the artist with subject matters to form art themes.

Analogies above explain different aspects of understanding of social psychology of art. By the principles of social psychology one sees art as possessing qualities as social compass to motivate positive psychology and sound morals. Another sees art as an influencer of culture, and culture as a content contributor to art, while the other sees art as an avenue of reflection of social content, a mirror of society. By all the presentations the different correlations are correct, but this study attempts a different module while investigating on previous studies. It presents some concept of art and social psychology, chiefly concerning the artist and reasons to derive insights to improve on artistic sustainability especially given the prevalent socio-economic condition of Nigeria.

The militating factors against artistic growth and excellence are numerous. As enumerated by Horejs (2024), 5 of the most pressing challenges artists face include;

1. Cash-flow management
2. Time management
3. Project management
4. Labour management, and
5. Pricing management.

Effiong (2013), adds another series of constraints militating against artists' growth. Though not all, what are enumerated includes;

1. Colonial experiences
2. Poor attitudes
3. Inadequate funding, and

4. Low value perception

In another perspective, Ribas (2022), lists some major artists' challenges to include;

1. No enough money
2. No enough time to do everything
3. Lack of knowledge of the business
4. Lack of contacts

The different scholars have similar findings regarding artistic challenges, these amount to finances, time, attitudes, and management, but (Ribas 2022) mentions lack of knowledge of the business which the others never did. Lack of knowledge of the business tends to be similar to this study content because this study previews knowledge of the society, and how to harness creativity to become art/ crafts that society needs so as to produce relevant art and enjoy patronage for all round success of art practice. Knowing what the people want and presenting them for consumption ensures supply to demands. It is a core of business acumen that ensures success.

It is important for the artist to know and understand what if produced will appeal to the consumers interests and motivate purchase. This is why it is imperative that the artist should be conversant of social psychology; insight of the peoples' needs. Social psychology is the understanding of social attitudes. The artist must take cognisance of needs, factors that will propel interests be them sentimental, subjective or objective. These are the motivators that prompt purchase of various crafts by consumers. Such factors may not base much concentration on aesthetics and art for art's sake. This is because the downturn of economy is not populace friendly and few citizens possess financial strength to still purchase arts based on just aesthetics. Emphasis may drift towards functional arts (crafts), to feed routine needs and suffice that artists procure wares that are functionally relevant so to ensure patronage.

For artists to achieve this, there is need to envisage factors that inspire social interests. Artist may strategise using concepts that attract social sentiments as religion, culture and heritage, morals, class, aristocracy, technology, time and era, economics; vocational development and manufacturing, values, and pricing, etc.

Enumerated above are factors that can motivate artistic social psychology, they can influence and cause enhanced interests towards the arts whether subjectively or objectively. The basic interest is for the populace to develop interest towards the art and purchase the products. Whatever strategies that are not negative and fraudulent that can be employed to motivate interests are palpable. Any arsenals within the disposal of the user that are not contrary to professional ethos, social values, morals, and legal infringements can be adopted for procedures.

THE ESSENCE OF ARTISTIC SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY IN ART

Organised assemblage: Artistic social psychology fosters knowledge to use assemblages to commercial advantage. Assemblies of people with like believes and shared heritage have capacity to influence social attitudes. People like to display mutual interests and are always drawn to their distinct groupings with pride and zest. Such communal followership and organised assemblies include religion and cult affiliations, ethnicity, political attachments, and cultural sects. It is worthy of note that some religions encourage particular styles and methodologies, this may be prospective as it can inspire production of wares that fit description of needs and encourage massive procurements from the group members. An artist that produces costumes and uniforms can catch in, introduces unique design with iconage to depict identity and shared brotherhood, this can inspire interests and motivate sales. Religion, ethnicity, cultural, and

political affiliations and other shared beliefs have capacity that artists can explore and adapt symbolism to motivate people that share mutual sentiments towards artistic patronage.

Since such groupings have large followership, artists can strategise by adopting creative displays that exude common identifying interests. Such sentiments inspire commitment of belonging and attract patronage from faithful, indigenes, or members that share ideologies of the groupings as the case may be. Certain sentiments are common amongst people that share beliefs and values in societies, such people can be docile towards sentiments, they do not adopt critical analysis in such matters and adhere to the creeds without care if such creeds are cogent or fallacious. They swallow everything that are presented as long as they are affiliated or align with their sentiments. This experience has eaten deep into the Nigerian fabrics and can be seen in ethnic biases and even electoral experiences. This crowd alliance can be adopted to boost art sales.

Contemporary trends and cultural evolution: Change is constant in life. As the days go by, new developments and advancements are being introduced in all facets of life. Contemporaneity and evolution in the arts breed diversity, inclusiveness, and dynamism. It becomes foundations for modernity and breeds ability to stay relevant and adaptable in the ceaselessly changing world. It allows the artist respond to changes in cultural contexts, methodologies, and even marketing trends. Comparative practices allow reflection in current issues, critique of societal norms, and evolving new technologies and media. Cultural evolution involves development and changes in customary practices over time, due to influences of other cultures. It involves transformation of cultural elements amongst range of cultures.

Adaptation and innovation cause advent of new cultures because the old or existing traits are modified to form new cultural practices. This inculcates changes and motivates interests as new things are witnessed within spaces. Modernity brings new experiences, the previous values are considered and the unwanted traits are jettisoned while those that are desirable are adapted, adopted, and practiced. With these are environmental, social, and economic changes. These are whole new formations and offer interests amongst the audience. At the same time, the experience fosters zeal for the audience to procure artistic produces that are available. The cultural traits available still inspire native loyalty and pride. It retains symbols and formats that remind the audience of their ways, and become a major reason why they motivate the audience that purchase the art creations. New things excite everyone and seeing new formations that incorporate their symbols and characteristics becomes reason why audience are drawn to such new traits inspiring them to buy such arts.

Cultural evolution births cultural innovation. This is the creation of new cultural traits or the modifications of the existing ones. As culture is a component in art making, the modifications in values, styles, and themes emerge and kindle new interests, attract fresh audiences and ensure rise in artistic demands. Alternately, introducing new art form may raise the values of the old causing reevaluation of traditional art. This can cause renewed appreciation for such seeming underrepresented arts. Depending on how it is presented, it can raise interests for the radiance of the old form to be really witnessed and motivate vigour in their purchase.

Technological development: Artistic social psychology has been tremendously influenced by advancements in modernity. The thought patterns of people have changed and social reasoning has predominantly been modified towards rules of international judgments. With this, to be sustained in modernity, artist must change social perspectives and align with what is obtained universally. Amongst the evidence of modernity is technology. Technology has caused changes in attitudes and behavior. It is a major foundation of globalisation. This has allowed artists from

different cultures explore and innovate on media and techniques, characteristics and styles. Technology has ensured ease of artistic productions as manual crafting has in most cases been replaced by gadgets, electric tools and appliances. These have equally caused improved artistic creations that have made art more appealing and interesting for prompt purchase. Technology has made artists to be informed and know current trends, produce works that can compare with modern and universal standards, and has made it possible to reach wider audience through professional web, social media, online platforms, etc.

Artists need to put these factors into action as they strategise to make their practices successful. Art teachers must equally inculcate these experiences into curriculum, impart them to learners to enable them visualise what the society needs and how they can factor in to create social relevant art and crafts that are not ignorable as sundry wares. Art should properly align within the frameworks of aesthetics and utility. In fact given the current experience of Nigeria, artistic wares should capture more of utilitarian scopes than aesthetics because a larger percentage of Nigerians do not have purchasing power to procure aesthetics but utility is basic so anyhow, they must strive to purchase functionary wares.

Demographic consideration: This consideration might not be very popular but is a sensitive point to analyse psychologically among factors to boost art sales. There is need for artists to view their clientele and identify and understand such target audience. Understanding the essence of education/ exposure, income levels, geographical location, and cultural backgrounds are sensitive in strategising to boost artistic sales. Topaz, Higdon, Epps-Darling, Siau, Kerkhoff, Mendiratta, & Young (2022), make some sensitive observation about demography in art sales, they view the American art market and observe that while women are 51% of the population, they have contributed to the general artistic merchandise of America but are relatively not accorded due recognition. Mentioning this assertion is to alert the artist of the essence of knowledge of who does what in art so as to know where to channel what.

Art sales thrive most in cosmopolitan areas hence an artist should have consideration to suit localisation and location. However, assuming no artists operate in a particular area that is not so metropolitan, it might not be out of place for one to reside and form a monopoly in a not so developed area. An artist may establish links between young, established, and senior collectors. This offers opportunity to trade by emerging collectors for contemporary tastes, trade with middle level collectors grades that can buy art with premium prices, and also trade with collectors that have tastes for classic styles. The last set of collectors sometimes provide individualised services. These different grades of collectors provide quality patronage to art producers and can ensure sustainability in their trades.

Viewing income is important. Localisation may better suit areas with high earners that will be able to afford arts than in other areas with lower income earners, because low income earners may not afford art purchases as higher earners. Artists may also consider education and exposure levels of audience, while art-educated buyers offer conceptual and sometimes conceptual art with specific interests; customised, non-art-educated buyers buy accessible art with some emotional emphasis, decoratives, and rarely on order. Artist need to consider arts they create to be relevant to audience needs within their areas of concentration. They must make art for all interests, considering manners of class, taste, earners, and considering functionality, striking a balance with aesthetics in order to ensure that even the ultimately functional art are boosted with aesthetic values so as to foster appeal to the audience.

Community engagements: Social psychology reveals vague social concepts and if employed can engage with communities and present first-hand knowledge of what communities want. This

is an avenue of addressing pressing social need. Interactions highlight social and physical environmental needs of the people. This is a measure of deep reflection of society that can be highlighted in creative statements. It can address emotional needs, inspires empathy towards society, sparks reflection, and resonates dormant yet potential social perspectives. Community engagement is a solemn avenue of presenting social commentary, this reflects values, norms, and morals and can inspire awareness for change. It can motivate technology and impact on society, address injustice and inequality, politics and corruption, environmental issues etc. Social commentary in art has capacity to inspire and challenge audiences' interests in the society and is a vital component for healthy environment. This through the stress of environment interests and empathy inspires patronage as measures of bold social statements for public and individualised spaces.

Community engagements breed levels of interactions and exchanges that are necessary. Amongst this is collaborations with other artists. When artists collaborate, they borrow ideas from each other and such new ideas enable them produce works that are new in concepts, style and content. This can add appeal to art and inspire interests for patronage. Collaboration increases exposure, introduces artists to new audiences while presenting variety to the audiences thereby expanding the market reach. Collaboration ensure innovation and uniqueness in art due to exchange of ideas amongst collaborating artists. It also introduces new experiences to the audience who now deal with new presentations from a previous schemes they witnessed.

Art Pricing: Pricing in art marketing is a sensitive issue. Several factors are considered in order that an artist adequately places prices on his works. Tommey (2021) asserts the essence of developing pricing strategy in art business. That artist should not base pricing factors on what they think, but rather attempt to define differences between making ends meet and making money with art, and create income and have impact on the art prospect. The analogy highlights factors of considerations in art pricing to include art pricing formulas which includes, knowing when to increase or lower prices, discount and bonuses, pricing and mistakes, creating multiple price points etc. the considerations involved are multiple and are effective due to influences which may include location, artist's personality, clientele, etc.

On the other hand, Art Connect, an online art media blog observes that there are no "one-size-fits-all" approach in how to price art. The study enumerates formulas for pricing art works and observes that there are variables and other factors which may not conform totally to laid down stipulations of any particular school of thoughts. Such pricing may be placed based on specific experiences and occurrence. The analogy records level of experience, previous sales, and competition, for example. It goes on to list general formulas to include considering the market, gallery sales, comparing other artists- their works and sales, determining fair wages for works, clear price structuring, and consistent pricing.

Beyond stipulations of general conventions, artists' mode of determining prices of their works may be influenced by their knowledge, exposure, and experiences. Uniqueness of art work, artists' strength in depicting imagery, originality and imaginative strength may be considered. Size and scale, media and materials, personality and recognition, and sales history may add character to the artist and project how society views him and elevates how his works are priced. Certain articles are in demand more than others due to different reasons, the artist needs to take cognizance of this and determine how he balances between available artworks and buyer demand as this affects pricing. Market trends can be influenced by new innovations and popularity in styles. Such can become vogue and raise the demands. Artists should observe and know when their business is waning to become moribund, and when to inject innovations in their

trades to pep up new energy. An example is the new trend of ankara fabric designs which make use of radiant colours and native African motifs in production. This has immensely raised the rate which people adorn the ankara fabrics in recent times.

Summary and Conclusion

This study amongst other observations has established that understanding factors that motivate social consciousness in the arts by artists is important in practice. One of the avenues of attaining this is establishing curriculum that address and inform learners on formula, strategy, and other factors to aid appeal to potential buyers. Artists can purposefully school high earners in arts the potentials for arts appreciating in value, and their capacities to attract investment conscious connoisseurs. These are critical thought patterns that can reveal and influence the consciousness of audience. This is a critical essence of social psychology in art. An important crux on above includes artists knowledge of balancing between needs of aesthetics and utility within the framework of creating art, knowing that given the current experience of Nigeria, limited finances in circulation, and general downturn of economy, arts in Nigeria is waning in the aspects of aesthetics. Artistic produces need to feature functional imperatives as this is currently more social relevant than strict aesthetics scopes.

The study equally elucidates the essence of technology in art. Simplifying art production methodologies, incorporating innovation, and an impactful measure of artistic social relevance. A well-grounded curriculum articulates the importance of vocational development in technology, the essence of curriculum; pedagogy is discussed. Social media influencing is an important component in technology in art. It has been established that globalisation breeds knowledge exchange, cultural evolution, and leverages participations, exploration and adaptations, and reach of artists. Galleries, art centers and institutes, and cultural centers can aid artists' assess to new contacts and audiences to motivate sales and production of art. Social media can showcase appeal in quality and aesthetics, builds artist credibility and reputation, and establish confidence in trade to help modify marketing efforts and increase sales.

A broad perspective of social psychology in art is essential for the art profession. It enables the artist plan and execute his strategies to explore new concepts and themes. It allows him push new boundaries and attempt new feats, these bring the need for managerial quotient. All this cannot be totally achieved through field practice and experiences alone, a purposeful curriculum design to tailor and impart relevant knowledge to prospective artists is important. The contexts of creativity and administration must be well harnessed in art entrepreneurship. Other scopes as accounting, networking, and marketing are all incorporated, they can be managed through planned administration. Administrative acumen equally raise strategies of time management and risks control to ensure effective practice. The knowledge of all that has been enumerated and discussed, the people, environment, the trade, and how to harmonise these all are the rudiments of artistic social psychology.

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