



CHAPTER 31

CONTRIBUTIONS OF LITERARY STUDIES TO SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

Literature is the great creative and universal means of communicating the emotional, spiritual and intellectual concerns of mankind. Literature is defined as a writing of recognised artistic value and works of fiction and non-fiction in which compositional excellence and advancement are of high priorities (Wikipedia, 2016). Literature is characterized by high imagination, aesthetics, meaningfulness of expression and good forms and techniques. Literary studies, an option in English major, provides a general literary arts education emphasizing literature, critical thinking and writing. Literary studies do not focus on one style or genre in particular, but the students select from a wide variety of courses, addressing a wide multitude of genres, cultures, historical and theoretical perspectives through the intricacies of fiction, poetry, drama, essays and films (Department of Theatre and Drama, Indianapolis University). It is therefore the study, evaluation and interpretation of literature often influenced by literary theory, which is the philosophical discussion of literature's goals and methods. The study therefore aids all students including the people with disabilities (PWDs) to develop skills of communication, analysis, writing, discrimination, interpretation, evaluation and judgement which are all vital to academic success, effective leadership and career choice in the society.

The concept of literary appreciation is built around readers' recognition and understanding of literary terms such as theme, plot, setting, background, characterization, style, language and structure. These terms are also called literary techniques or elements of literature, they cut across the genres of literature and are needed for effective appreciation, analysis and assessment of literary works. Sutherland (2000, p. 1) observed that "appreciating literature also includes recognizing and responding to literary texts by noting how imagery, figurative language, author's voice, genre and structure convey meaning". Literary theory will further familiarize students with the history and movements of interpretation such as structuralism, post-structuralism, feminism, Marxism, psychoanalysis and postcolonialism. Literary studies emphasize the power of reading, which makes the world what it is and what it can become as it transforms our communities and societies. Literary studies students can then bring their expertise on non-literal materials such as mathematics, geography, sciences, humanities, medicine, engineering and education including Special Education.



Drama, an aspect of literary studies which this chapter will dwell on, is from the Greek word 'draein' meaning 'to do' or 'action'. Longley (2019) defines drama as a portrayal of fictional or non-fictional events through the performance of written dialogue. Dramas can be performed on stage, on films, or the radio. Dramas are typically called plays, and their creators are known as playwrights or dramatists. Dramatic literature is also defined as a type of literature written for the purpose of being performed in front of an audience, written in the form of a script and the story is told through the lines of characters played by actors. 'Closet dramas' are works written in the same form as plays with dialogue, scenes, and stage directions but meant to be read rather than staged (Webster, 2002). According to Longley (2019) the types of drama are: Tragedy, comedy, opera, docudrama, melodrama, musical drama, tragic comedy, romance, satire, heroic drama and sentimental comedy. He further identified the elements of drama as subject matter, theme, plot, dialogue, asides, soliloquies, audience, convention, stagecraft, design and conversion. In drama, roles are arranged into units called scenes and scenes are arranged into acts to illustrate the message of focus.

The roles of drama ranges from instructive, educative, entertaining, therapeutic, social and cultural to religious and political experiences. Drama enables readers to learn about oneself, the society and about life in general. Drama teaches readers to reflect on life's actions and experiences and exposes life's actions and experiences through performances. The didactic nature of drama encourages readers to choose the good and discard the bad aspects of life. Drama entertains the readers and the audience, reading a story is powerful but watching the story being performed by actors adds a level of reality to the work because the message becomes clearer and practical. According to Dutt (2015) drama nurtures one's ability to express thoughts orally as well as enables one to organize and record thoughts in writing. Dutt further stated that it preserves the ideas of human life like culture, tradition, religion and history and enables one to understand the world and to transform oneself as it opens up the mind of the individual to the unknown. Sharna (2022) stated that drama broadens our mind about other people's cultures and beliefs and it helps us to pay attention to human experiences as we make decisions in our daily lives.

Disability is the experience of any condition that makes it more difficult for a person to do certain activities or have equitable access within a given society. Disabilities may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory or a combination of multiple factors (Wikipedia, 2022). Disability can be present from birth or acquired during a person's lifetime and it can be visible or invisible in nature. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (2006) defines disability as long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (UNCPRD, 2006). The world report on disability 2011 found that "there are over a billion people which represents about 15% of the world's population who have



some form of disability” (WHO & World Bank, 2011, p. 44). They also found that disability prevalence is higher in low and middle income countries than in high income countries especially among the elderly people aged between 65 years and above than in the younger people. Adesina, Oladele, Olufadewa and Oduguwa (2021) classified disability into the following groups: physical disability, visual disability, hearing disability, mental disability, intellectual disability and learning disability.

There are some problems encountered by PWDs in the world, such problems include stigmatization, lack of awareness, maltreatment, rejection and a host of others. Disability inclusion recognises the individuals as beyond disability. The PWDs should have personal relationships with family, friends and acquaintances, they should be involved in recreation and social activities and they should have appropriate formal and informal education and employment. The language used to describe the PWDs is very important as it is about fundamental respect for the integrity and dignity of people with disabilities. PWDs should be managed comprehensively, psychologically and they should be properly educated and trained. They should be involved in developmental processes and emergency responses to address the barriers which hinder their participation as this chapter is set out to do.

Special Needs Education (SNE) is education for PWDs in consideration of their individual educational needs, which aim at full development of their capabilities and at their independence and social participation (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2022). SNE is carried out in different forms, in regular schools, such as in resource rooms, in special classes and in schools for SNE which can accept the students with several types of disabilities and pupils with severe disabilities. These schools are made of four levels, namely – kindergarten, elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools. Unesco (2020) revealed that SNE is designed to facilitate the learning of individuals who require additional support and are adaptive to pedagogical methods to meet learning objectives for a wide variety of reasons. Some of the reasons include disadvantages in physical, behavioral, intellectual, social and emotional capacities. Such disabilities include blindness, deafness, intellectually disabled, physically disabled, health impaired, autism, dyspraxia and dyslexia to mention but a few.

SNE involves a modified programme which involves some unique tools, techniques and research efforts in improving instructional arrangements to meet the need of PWDs. In the special arrangement, extra time may be devoted to the candidate by the same teacher or by an expert in the field and he may be assigned with extra consultation hours to make the students meet their educational endeavors. With the designed programmes the people with disabilities achieve great success in their personal and academic endeavors. Some of the objectives of such education are to: develop motivational patterns in the handicapped that will produce achievement in school. The other objective is to develop a realistic self concept in handicapped children and to reach the maximum level of effectiveness



in school subjects (Barik, 2022). Educational programmes may follow a similar curriculum as offered in parallel regular education systems, existing educational programmes or as a separate class in the same or separate educational institutions. The important thing is that they take individual's particular needs into account by providing specially trained personnel, equipment, space and content (UNESCO, 2020).

The goal of special needs education is to ensure that the students with disabilities are given the opportunity to attend and profit from education. The concept was described as not comparing one child to another but to the differences of ability within a single child. This chapter was set out to highlight the great roles that literary and creative study (drama) can play in the rehabilitation of PWDs in Nigeria. The chapter was prompted by the fact that in all the rehabilitation centres, special needs learners are mainly taught vocational courses (Shehu, 2021). The creative and literary potentials in drama should be tapped because many PWDs are interested in creative writing. The inclusive practices of drama create opportunities for special teachers to work with the PWDs in order to examine, extend and shape how they can identify with knowledge and social realities for the eventual workplace. The curriculum planners and developers should therefore include dramatic literature in the curriculum for PWDs. The thesis statement of this chapter is to examine the goals of teaching drama to people with disabilities, the roles of dramatic literature in Special Needs Education, the challenges of teaching dramatic literature to people with disabilities and the implication of such challenges to Special Needs Education. With drama, we can create a more inclusive world, where the voices of PWDs will be heard, supported and respected.

Goals of Teaching Drama to People with Disabilities

Rehabilitation is a form of life re-organisation that could assist PWDs to conform to a new pattern of life adjustment that affects his role in the society. This section tends to emphasize the goal of dramatic literature for the rehabilitation of special needs children. The Special Needs are rarely exposed to any serious form of creative and literary studies despite the fact that literature has a great way of enhancing a learner's life positively in the area of curriculum development and its implications. Dramatic literature could help those that are not mentally retarded so that their lives would have more relevance (Shehu, 2021). There is a need to expose PWDs to creative and literary studies so that they could realize their potential through the literary medium. The following are some of the goals of teaching drama to PWDs.

Teaching dramatic literature to PWDs will improve their language skills-speaking, reading, writing and listening skills. The drama teacher must develop three types of responses in his students for proper appreciation. These include cognitive, affective and aesthetic levels of appreciation. The cognitive level includes the analysis of theme, plot, setting, characterisation, style and technique. This cognitive domain involves knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis,



synthesis and evaluation which will help the students in responding to other subjects in the curriculum. It will stimulate their creative and critical thinking skills and social/emotional skills since drama is performance in action. The special teacher by providing special equipment such as Braille, hearing aid, support and attention will help the students to listen and read drama scripts for details. This will improve comprehensibility in speaking and writing for the purpose of building communication skills, understanding main ideas, supporting details and the speakers' attitudes, emotions, mood, tone and the atmosphere of the play. The PWDs will then be able to speak on any given topic, they will pronounce clearly, handle stress, intonation and write dramatic scripts for different purposes and audiences. They will be able to formulate, express and defend ideas and opinions in drama texts and other texts (Shehu, 2021). They will develop and use language learning strategies for all language skills. they will acquire critical thinking skills to participate in dramatic impromptu improvisations, make critical and rational judgements, interpret, input and understand inferences and implied meanings (Utopia Education and Arts, 2022).

According to Mohan (2022) the affective response to drama signifies how the students feel about the characters imagery, sound, events, plot and setting. The five levels of affective domains are receiving, responding, valuing and characterizing by a value. Drama students will learn how to express affective factors (emotions) that can enhance their English language proficiency. The PWDs when taught drama will cope effectively with change, extended speaking tasks and unplanned impromptu speaking. They will develop positive attitudes towards transacting with texts for constructive ideas, opinions and values that are transmitted or dramatized in oral or written forms. According to Mohan (2022) they will develop confidence in their ability to speak English, they will also learn to perform before any audience in a complex culminating tasks and manipulate body movements, facial expressions and gestures to convey emotions and meanings. The reader will develop the ability to form an opinion and pass judgement on the play and other subject areas.

The students through drama develop the aesthetic response which is the ability of the people with disability to say the appropriateness of the devices of the language employed by the author and the organization of this to achieve the desired effect. This aesthetic response helps the students to develop the ability to look at the images, symbols, figures of speech and structure in forming the artistic merit of a drama piece. This helps to strengthen the students' imaginative power. Drama is an explanation of the possibilities of language which helps to develop the mental abilities of students for suggestive power and the implications of various styles and ways of using language. It is said that every child with a disability has a right to education. Drama therefore is valuable because it is used in questioning and gauging every facet of our lives, such as social, political, religious, cultural, moral, economic, physical values and that of other nations of the world. Drama is the road to wisdom, it enriches the spirit and illuminates the mind through



parables, proverbs, myths, legendary stories and images. People with disabilities develop communication skills through role play, dramatization, conversation and observation because important concepts such as eye contact, turn taking, verbal and non-verbal communication, social and interpersonal skills are assessed during drama class (Vis-Maggit, 2022).

Roles of Dramatic Literature in Special Needs Education

The popular saying that there is a book in every human being shows that there is the need to expose as many people as possible to creative and literary studies so that they could realize their potential through the literary medium (Shehu, 2021). Teaching dramatic literature plays a great role in rehabilitating the handicapped since holistic education is better than teaching only vocational studies to people with disabilities. Drama points out the bad aspects of the constitution of the society to pave way for change and it mirrors every aspect of human life – love, hate, culture, politics, social life, education and religion. Drama praises good conduct and laughs at folly such as the stigmatization of the unfortunate members like the handicapped. With drama the PWDs will now realize that they are dignified people who can contribute to the development of the society. When the creative medium is added to SNE curriculum, the PWDs will be able to express their feelings on what it really means to live with disability positively (Shehu, 2021). This will go a long way in correcting the age long wrong views and attitude of the society who see them as helpless without any useful contributions to the society. The society will accept, respect and give affection to these people who can achieve as much as the normal people if given the right opportunities. Through role play and dramatization, they will creatively express themselves, have better self-management, increase social responsibility, material well-being and self-actualisation.

The curriculum in place for the PWDs did not lay any emphasis on literary and creative studies like drama, prose and poetry despite the fact that National Policy on Education (2013) places much emphasis on the integration and equal opportunities to all citizens. The curriculum used in such rehabilitation centres, devoid of literary studies, will have to be reviewed because of what the participants can gain from literary studies. Drama and cultural values, folktales, folk songs, stories, poetry, written texts and experiences should be part of the SNE curriculum not just vocational subjects. In this way persons in the rehabilitation centres will become more independent in reasoning and decision making while some can even become authors, poets and even actors. The curriculum should include tap and develop adequate practical writing workshops to develop the creative potentials of the learner to promote Nigeria's diverse cultural values. Shehu (2021) stated that the curriculum modification should take into consideration aspects of sign language, finger spelling, speech reading and communication derived from drama for the hearing impaired while Braille reading should be incorporated for the visually impaired. The same condition applies to other areas of special needs.



The literary and creative learning programme should be restructured taking into consideration the peculiarities of the PWDs and the time allocation should be in accordance with the special needs conditions. Students with special needs are especially affected by the lack of social-emotional skills disorders like autism which affects the portion of the brain that makes children understand social cues. In creative drama groups, participants are guided by the leader to imagine, enact and reflect on experiences real and imagined. Creative drama takes children's natural world, creates play and develops it further using theatre techniques to create learning experiences. Creative drama is a very effective tool for PWDs because it is a discipline in which a sense of respect and empathy are developed between the individuals and the principles of ethics, equality and respect are exercised in the classroom for the development of self confidence, self expression skills and trust.

Erbay and Dogru (2010) stated that drama is much more useful in learning for the PWDs because their listening, observation, confidence and participation increases. The types of drama that their lesson plans are geared towards self-esteem would be valuable in the workplace. Teachers can devise games and place the students in real life problem solving scenarios. Lessons can be planned also to explore anger management, attitudes, behavioural issues, opinions, culture and cooperative learning which would benefit the learners. Because the special needs students are creative, it is important for teachers to utilize their students' creativity through drama to open up their feelings and emotions. Play is the way children make sense of their world and it is a developmental process especially when consciously planned by the teacher for a specific purpose. Drama is a symbolic process where the child can experiment with his imaginative choices because objects are employed to represent other objects. When children play, they sometimes choose their space, a safe play where their creative life begins (Smith, 2022). The teachers using drama could devise the lesson plans that would be appropriate for their classrooms and their particular student's disabilities.

Challenges of Teaching Dramatic Literature to People with Disabilities

This section examines the challenges of teaching dramatic literature to PWDs in Nigerian schools. Some of the challenges are lack of the acquisition of four basic language skills, communication problems, critical and creative thinking skills not developed, issues with social skills, role-play and inadequate trained special educators. The other problems bedeviling the teaching of drama to PWDs in schools include: teacher centered methods, behavioural issues of PWDs, inadequate human and material resources, lack of funds, parental problems, low of self-awareness, low self-esteem and a host of others as mentioned in this chapter. The first problem that drama teachers face in class is lack of four basic language skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This happens in countries where English is not the first language, and yet students must master English literature. Most of the time, teachers fail to communicate to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It becomes extremely difficult to get a verbal response



from them and sometimes it takes 6 months to one year to get a minimum response from them (Shehu, 2012). Teaching becomes incredibly frustrating for the teacher who speaks, explains and tries hard to make them understand what he/she says. Speaking and writing skills makes it almost impossible for PWDs generally to read drama scripts, understand main ideas, supporting details and writers' attitudes or emotions. For listening skills the PWDs have issues with sound discrimination, dictation, listening for main ideas, listening for details and discussions. For speaking skills, PWDs still battle with responding to visual clues, role-play, conversation, story building and problem solving. They struggle with the subskills of reading - predicting, questioning, skimming/scanning, summarizing, and discussions. Writing skills create more problems for instance copying, describing pictures, sentence completion, editing/drafting and reacting to situations. These issues constitute a serious setback to the teaching/learning of drama.

The next problem encountered by the PWDs in drama class is inadequate communication skills. The feeling of inhibition when speaking English and the problem of intelligibility are the issues. The absence of communicative skills makes it almost impossible for the PWDs in drama class to formulate, express, infer and defend individual ideas and opinions, when working on tragedy or comedy. To participate in pair and group dramatization and to listen, speak and perform on a given topic constitute extra work to the teacher. PWDs find it difficult to communicate during role-play, through speech and writing in both imaginary and everyday situations. They become afraid to use English due to lack of confidence and to avoid being laughed at by their group members and the teacher. During role-play and dramatization, they become introverted due to anxiety and fear of negative evaluation when they make mistakes. Groping for words and vocabularies, fear of grammatical blunders and problems of translating ideas to the target language constitute communication apprehension to them (Zaidi, Rani & Rahman, 2017).

The PWDs are not used to thinking in a creative/critical way in drama classrooms since they lack the tools to do so. The drama class is the best platform to learn to think outside the box but lack of language competence deters the students from acquiring one of the primary goals of education in the 21st century. When the drama teacher problematizes situations, most of the PWDs fail in conceptualizing, argumentation, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating the information properly. Most of the PWDs fail to become autonomous problem solvers, innovators and creators of new ideas. Responding to drama at the cognitive, aesthetic and affective levels becomes a problem. Responding to the play at the level of theme, plot, character, setting, style, language and society appear almost impossible. The affective response concerning emotions and feelings become difficult, due to problems of language proficiency. At the aesthetic level, the PWDs may not be able to explain how the dramatist used his/her devices of language to convey the message in the play.



Mohan (2022) identified role-play and lack of social skills for performance as the issues that constitute set-back to drama students. The PWDs find it difficult to perform before any audience including classmates. They find it cumbersome to manipulate body movements, facial expressions and gestures to convey the emotions, messages and opinions conveyed in the play. They tend to feel nervous when acting or making oral presentations in the classroom. Some would refuse to participate while others would feel apprehensive. Role-play also becomes difficult when it does not apply to real life situations and it becomes harder if the time and space are not conducive. It is also not easy to multi-task when doing role-play if the students are not trained to be conversant with doing that. The students cannot act out the scenes assigned to them if they lack communication skills (Vesmin, Khan & Vitah, 2020).

There are still not enough trained special educators to meet the educational needs of the PWDs. Many unqualified teachers are left to teach these children forgetting that disabilities are in various forms and would need specially trained teachers to manage the different equipment, instruments, gadgets and tools. Untrained teachers tend not to understand the students because they refuse to sit in one place. They move around the classrooms aimlessly coupled with strange noise. Skilled language therapists are the only people that can train the hearing, visually impaired, intellectual retarded, physical handicaps and so on (Vesmin, Khan & Vitah, 2020). They also emphasized on the implication of modern equipment in teaching language to PWDs and drama by implication. The poverty level in the country makes it impossible for some parents to provide drama textbooks or even the costume needed for the performance. Some students are not keen on drama, they see drama period as play time (Aurora Theatre, 2022).

The majority of drama lessons in Nigeria are teacher led and teacher based lessons involving lecturing and questioning which students answer in turns. Generally, most classrooms do not have displays of teaching aids on the walls. Group work and discussions are usually abandoned for reading in turns, teacher's explanations and answering of questions by the raising of hands (Sarton & Smith, 2022). The other problems drama teachers encounter teaching PWDs are lack of funds, teaching materials and curriculum structure, drama is not strategically placed on PWDs curriculum. The students' behavioural issues, expectations from parents and low self-esteem are the problems in drama class (Ahammed, 2021). The other problems bedeviling the teaching of dramatic literature to PWDs according to Ferry (2012) are: inadequate classrooms, theatre halls, and material resources, lack of support by the government and the society, lack of appreciation, not collaborating with general education teachers and unfriendly customs, and traditions. Many teachers only read drama in class, they do not guide the students to perform the play, short stories, playlets or some scenes.



Implications of Teaching Drama to People with Disabilities

Drama presents a stage to learn about life, the world, people, culture and experiences. For PWDs, it is a place to learn transformative skills and concepts because of its inclusive nature and venue for fun and friendship. After studying drama, the PWDs develop skills for socialization because they can engage socially with peers and other members of the society without fear of judgement. They interact with others in a way that celebrates being unique, they listen for cues and engage in eye contact with other speakers, stay on task and work with others (Bennett, 2017). After studying drama, PWDs grow in following directions and abandon misbehavior because of actions and reactions in class. The structure therefore emphasizes trying new things, holding a conversation, listening patiently, using kind words and respect, the students therefore experience attitudinal growth. Different tools such as sound, props, drawing, dancing, mime, choreography are used to develop and promote communicative skills. These activities meet each child's individual skills. According to Deolinda (2020) drama is entertaining, didactic and therapeutic in nature.

PWDs develop critical and creative thinking skills in drama class because drama is a form of expression of emotions, feelings and opinions. Bennet (2017) stated that through embodiment, storytelling and performance, the child is able to express his feelings, release his opinions and emotions about a text because dialoguing allows for deeper exploration. These experiences are further applied to real life situations after graduation. Graduates of dramatic arts and literacy studies generally are highly imaginative. It helps the child on the autism spectrum initiative to imagine, explore and experience new characters and the world after school. After studying drama, the PWDs develop language skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing skills needed for vocabulary development and greater communication skills. Through listening patiently and quietly when it is someone else's turn to speak, the PWDs learn teamwork and develop self-awareness skills. In an inclusive programme while in school they learn that body language can change for different characters and situations. The students develop creativity skills, project management skills, problem-solving and active learning skills. They try new things on their own, become comfortable with physical activities and applaud what makes them unique in the society. Drama exercises teach coping skills and tolerance, acting in front of the audience, playing a role, speaking lines, wearing a costume and demonstrating sign language builds self-restraint and self-esteem.

The vital prospect of students of dramatic and theatre arts in the labour market is self-reliance as dramatic art is divided into areas of specialization such as acting, directing, choreography, costuming/sewing, play-writing, media arts, advertising, theatre management and public relations. Apart from taking teaching as a career, graduates of dramatic and theatre arts can pursue careers such as programme producers, directors or presenters, they can fit into carpentry, painting works, dancing, film industry and drumming. They can be creative artists who



design posters, banners, billboards. They can become journalists, dramatic artistic and literary artists. Drama training also inculcates wisdom, moral discernment, cultural values, historical and religious knowledge in school and outside school. People become more articulate, communicative, critical, creative and less inhibited in attitudes. Role-play prepares the students to face real-life situations, to become more interactive and cooperative and it enhances other skills such as tolerating others, articulating responses and understanding words used by the other students (Zaidi, Rani & Rahman, 2017).

Dramatisation has advantageous effects on improving grammatical mistakes, it builds vocabularies, motivation, images and figures of speech. It inculcates in the students the abilities to respond to themes, plot, character, setting, style and the language of the work read. It fosters interpersonal and intercultural attitudes and promotes academic literacy at the cognitive, affective and aesthetic development of a child with special needs. After taking courses in drama, the PWDs are able to discuss, paraphrase, compare, summarize, evaluate and develop fluency in their workplaces. They develop high intelligence quotient, become highly experienced and solve their life issues drawing from the experiences of others. The roles of drama in a child's daily life, in political, social, economical, educational, cultural and its roles in developing nations of the world cannot be over-emphasized. Drama study helps the PWDs to develop some 21st century skills branded as critically important for contemporary careers and workplaces. Some of such skills include task management skills, active learning skills, self-management skills, analytical and evaluative skills, cross cultural and inquisitive skills. Drama ensures that PWDs are mainstreamed, it reduces discrimination, makes them employable into various fields, reduces handicap, stigma, builds acculturation and stabilizes the mind. Drama study encourages self-employment, Steve Wonders, the American blind musician is known and applauded all over the globe. The Nigerian film industry employs the dwarfs, physically disabled and the stunted in growth for humour and to promote comedy for entertainment.

Conclusion

The PWDs have a lot to gain from Special Needs Education if they are introduced to drama, which encourages the development of language and communication skills, social and self-awareness skills, critical and creative and self-esteem skills. To join other progressive countries in the 21st century, it is imperative that Nigeria joins other countries which include these learners into the mainstream of the society and help them to maximize their fullest potentials in all the subject areas. This is precisely why it is necessary to expose as many people as possible to the study of drama which offers students different areas of specialty and job opportunities. It is important to give holistic education to the handicapped to help them realize that they are dignified people who can contribute more to the development of the society. When the PWDs are engaged in drama activities, the poor attitude and impression of the public towards these people will surely change



for the better. Experiences have shown that if properly exposed to dramatic literature and creative writing in general, the PWDs can achieve as much as the normal looking people and surprisingly even better. Drama will help them generate the skills of self-expression, improve their socialization, self-management, material well-being and self-actualization for sustainable national development.

Suggestions

1. The curriculum in place for the people with special needs should include literary and creative studies in the primary, secondary and tertiary levels to help inculcate language, social and communicative skills and to help expose Nigerian cultural values to the PWDs.
2. The method for teaching dramatic literature to the PWDs should adopt role-play and dramatization for the hard of hearing and Braille speech reading for the visually impaired. The same provision should be made for the other areas of special needs conditions.
3. Special teacher educators should be trained to teach drama and the needed facilities, equipment, instruments, gadgets and tools for the special needs conditions should be provided by the government, school authorities and parents to help the PWDs realize and develop their literary and creative potentials.

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