

**THEATRE AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNICATING HAND WASHING
AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS**

ABSTRACT

This research work examines theatre as a tool for communicating hand washing among primary school pupils in an attempt to assessing the importance of Theatre to children and how it serves as a platform for learning and not just for entertainment. Further it goes to show also that (Theatre) serves as a place for connection of attitude and behaviours, this attest to the fact that it teaches good morals to children both in comic and serious issues. Different theatre activities were used ranging from games and exercises, songs and dances, story-telling, role play and hand washing exercises. The pupils were the stakeholders in the practical field work, with the researcher as the facilitator using all these activities as tools of analysis and the research methodology

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Theatre is not just another genre, it is one amongst many. It is the only genre in which today and every day, now and always; living human beings address and speak to other human beings. Because of that; theatre is more than just a performance of stories and tales, it is a place for human encounter, a space for authentic human existence. It can also be seen as a building where a live performance takes place such as a play or dance or a place where people gather to watch performances for relaxation.

Theatre can be seen as a variety of art forms showcased in and outside the building and is seen as activities that man engages in. It is a conscious activity of man sometimes used to relate to specific activities of man with certain features of performance and worship. Theatre is used to denote specific conscious activities (design activities). It is an art which encapsulate varieties of art form which entertains, communicate, educate and enlightens. It shows the relationship between humans and the society, man tries to penetrate the deep

mystery of life and consciously develops theatre in order to correct what is wrong, which makes man a gregarious animal.

The word theatre is also originally Greek, where the term is used to mean a seeing place. The theatre is therefore a place where we go to watch and participate in a kind of Fantasy life or imaginary life or world of elusion or world of make believe. In other words, it is a place where we go to eave-drop into the life of other people. Theatre is also used to refer to events such as play performances which are organized for the viewing delight of the audience, as well as its use to refer to ritual, ceremonies and festivals. The purpose of which may be or not be the delight of anybody or audience.

Theatre generally is that genre that gives room for participation and not just watching and hearing audience in a building or an open space, using this theatre as a tool to communicate and educate and not just to entertain is another exciting phase of the theatre among it numerous facets and aspects. It is very interesting to know that theatre can serve as a tool for communicating important life issues in our society. We should also understand that theatre is a mirror unto the society, because plays, performances, dances, storytelling, folklores are part of the human activities in the society.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

Even though traditional mediums have tried to address the issue of hand washing, it has failed to reach the hearts of majority of children and the grassroots as they are cut-off from mediums like the televisions, billboards and internet and radio advertisements due to underdevelopment. Most importantly majority of individuals especially children of all classes in the society have not imbibed the habit of hand washing; therefore this important knowledge is at an unfortunate low among the populace. Using theatre as a medium to communicate this practice (hand washing) will cut-across all parts of the society and can reach the grassroots children because it is participatory and is going to reach out to the kids so that they can participate. According to Aristotle, "tell me, I will know, show me, I will not forget, show me, I will remember, involve me I will understand".

1.3 Objectives of the study

The aim of this research is to use theatre as a tool and medium to communicate hand washing to primary school pupils and to see how effective the theatre which encompasses drama, storytelling, songs and role play can be use to achieve this habit among the children.

More specifically, these following objective were formulated;

1. To help children inculcate hand washing as a habit that will help enhance their personal hygiene toward healthy living and lifestyle.
2. Using theatre as a tool to communicate and teach children the importance of personal hygiene and the need to stay healthy and why it should be started at a young age.
3. To score the importance of theatre to children and how it can serve as a platform for learning and not just for entertainment.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is necessary because it exposes the importance of theatre to the society especially its relevance towards teaching children and how in time past the theatre has been used to inculcate and communicate certain habits to children, this research will show how theatre as a tool can be use to communicate hand washing among children.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The focal point of the study is how theatre can be used to achieve hand-washing habit among primary school pupils. Therefore the study would draw its population from the Ahmadu Bello University, Demonstration Primary School

Zaria and selected primary school pupils would be engaged for a period of three days and their after evaluation will be done based on what they have learnt.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The study would be limited to ages 5-11 years old and they majorly can be found in primary 5 and 6 therefore other lower class may be limited from this exercise.

The time frame chosen to engage the pupils is a period of three days more time with the pupils would have been experimental and engaging.

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