

**THE ROLE OF THEATRE IN SCHOOLS: UNIVERSITY OF BENIN AS A CASE
STUDY**

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JANUARY, 2025.

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) HONOURS DEGREE IN THEATRE ARTS,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY, NIGERIA**

JANUARY, 2025.

DECLARATION

I, **Ivoh, Ukachukwu Victoria with Mat No ART2000934**, hereby declare that this research project titled “**The Role of Theatre in Schools: University of Benin as a Case Study**” is my original work, conducted and compiled in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A) Honours Degree in Theatre Arts, in the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, under the supervision of Dr. J. N. Bardi. All ideas and views were a product of my personal research, and sources used have been duly acknowledged.

IVOH, UKACHUKWU VICTORIA
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DATE

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, certify that this research project was carried out by Ivoh, Ukachukwu Victoria with Mat No ART2000934, of the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria; under my supervision.

DR. J. N. BARDI
(Project Supervisor)

DATE

PROF. J. E. ABBE
(Head of Department)

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to Almighty God for granting me the wisdom, strength, and determination to conduct this research and complete this work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I express my heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for His guidance, provision and protection throughout my educational career in the University of Benin.

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the role of Theatre in Education (TiE) within the University of Benin. TiE uses drama and performance as tools to make learning more engaging and interactive. It encourages creativity and collaboration, while also supporting emotional and social development. TiE has the power to transform teaching methods and create a richer learning experience for both students and educators, as it combines theatrical

techniques with educational content. The research adopted a mixed-methods approach, using questionnaires for students and interviews with lecturers and administrators. Findings showed that students benefit significantly from participating in TiE programmes. They develop good problem-solving skills, improved creativity, and also the ability to work with others. TiE also enhances students' emotional intelligence, helping them understand and manage emotions while showing empathy for others. Lecturers observed that using TiE methods helped to make their lessons more effective and interactive, and it also promotes a sense of community and collaboration among staff and students. However, challenges in implementing TiE were also identified. Limited funding, lack of trained personnel, and inadequate resources were among the major obstacles. Lecturers expressed the need for more professional development programmes, better funding, and increased awareness about TiE's benefits to address these challenges. The study concludes that TiE is a valuable educational tool that can transform the learning environment in schools. When it is well-supported, it has the potential to improve academic results, teaching practices, and build stronger relationships within the school community. Recommendations were made for integrating TiE into the school curriculum, organizing teacher training sessions, and providing adequate resources to maximize its impact.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Theatre in Education (TiE) is a creative teaching approach that combines drama and theatrical techniques into the educational process. This approach goes beyond traditional teaching methods by engaging students in active and experiential learning. TiE uses various forms of drama, such as role-playing, storytelling, improvisation, and performance, to make learning more interactive and enjoyable. It encourages students to explore ideas and concepts in a creative and collaborative environment. As stated by Gavin Bolton, "drama has a great deal to do with pedagogy because it is an art" (Bolton 39). This suggests that TiE is a co-ordinated set of theatre based educational activities that are generally centered on subjects that are relevant to both the students' lives and the school curriculum.

TiE originated in Britain in the mid-1960s in response to the need for child-centered education, emphasizing the importance of active play in promoting effective learning through exploration and discovery. It involves skilled actors or educators, engaging children in performances with the aim of changing their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour. Prendergast & Saxton (7) describe TiE as "one of the two historic roots of

applied theatre practice”. Theatre functions as a tool for education by capturing the interest of children and highlighting the importance of learning, by combining real life and imaginary scenarios, using entertainment and humour. TiE offers a method to involve youths in discussions about health, wellness, and society as a whole. The main goal of TiE is to enhance young people's understanding, attitudes, and actions by addressing issues like HIV/AIDS, smoking, healthy living, financial literacy, social problems, and bullying. Furthermore, TiE explores themes like emotional expression, self-respect, respect for others, anger management, and conflict resolution. Through interactive drama and storytelling, it allows children to shape narratives with their decisions. This supports the notion of Wessels (8), where drama “allows our students to explore the foundations of surface reality”.

Although other methods such as Theatre for Development (TFD) and Drama in Education (DiE) also use theatre for educational and enlightenment purposes, they should not be confused with TiE. TFD involves theatre professionals addressing issues affecting a community using theatre, with the participation of the affected community, and DiE takes place in the classroom without any external support. However, what makes Theatre in Education (TiE) different is that students have the opportunity to perform with actual actors who introduce the school to the magic and power of the theatre, providing students with a first-hand experience of the performing arts. One of the most important aspects of

TiE is that it goes beyond just the presentation of a play, consisting of a complete programme of activities. The staging is part of an educational project covering some curricular or cross-curricular topic, involving both previous and additional efforts within the school. The participation of students in the performance is carefully planned in order to provide a meaningful learning experience in accordance with specific educational aims. According to Jackson (4), the nature of the TiE programme is “a co-ordinated and carefully structured pattern of activities, usually devised and researched by the company, around a topic of relevance both to the school curriculum and to the children's own lives, presented in the school by the company and involving the children directly in a experience of the situations and the problems that the topic throws up.”

TiE is a modern form of education that focuses on the development of critical thinking, creativity, and social skills. By incorporating theatre into education, teachers can create a more welcoming classroom environment that accommodates different learning styles and needs. Theatre activities can help students develop various skills including communication and teamwork, which are essential in both academic and personal life.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although Theatre in Education (TiE) has its advantages in improving student engagement and promoting creativity, there is still a gap in how it directly affects

academic performance and social skills within school environments. There are many challenges that the implementation of TiE face, such as limited funding and resources, inadequate teacher training, and cultural resistance. Identifying these gaps is important in creating plans to address them. This research would highlight the challenges and difficulties in introducing TiE programmes in the University of Benin community.

This study aims to address these gaps by investigating the challenges of theatre in schools and exploring its roles and potential benefits. Addressing these problems is essential for realizing the full potential of TiE.

Suggestions will also be made according to the results of this study to guarantee the general acceptance and long-term success of TiE programmes. This research will focus on providing recommendations to teachers and educational administrators on how to improve the implementation of TiE in educational institutions, in order to maximize its advantages for students.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the relationship between students' theatre involvement with their academic performance.

2. To assess how theatre enhances students' creativity, emotional understanding and social development.
3. To examine how TiE enhances teaching methods and increases classroom engagement.
4. To explore strategies administrators can use to integrate TiE into the school system to benefit both students and staff.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between students' involvement in theatre and their academic performance?
2. How does theatre participation enhance students' creativity, emotional understanding and social development?
3. How does TiE improve teaching methods and classroom engagement?
4. How can administrators integrate TiE into the school system to benefit both students and staff?

1.5 Rationale for the Study

Traditional education often focuses on fixed learning and regular testing, which may not engage all students or foster essential life skills. Theatre in Education offers a more interactive approach to learning, promoting active participation and creativity.

Mohammed Jade emphasizes the role of theatre in empowering individuals, encouraging social change, and enhancing educational outcomes by making learning more interactive and relevant to real life situations. (Jade 90).

The rationale for this study on Theatre in Education (TiE) stems from several considerations related to the limitations of regular teaching methods, the evolving needs of students, and the proven benefits of integrating arts into education. This study would explore and advocate for the integration of theatre in schools, address the shortcomings of traditional education methods, meet the evolving needs of students, cater to different learning styles, fill existing research gaps, and inform educational policy and practice.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this project is in its ability to change educational practices and outcomes. The research is focused on offering perspectives and suggestions that can help students, teachers, and the general educational sector.

An important aspect of this project is in its exploration of how theatre activities can be made more enjoyable and engaging. By doing so, it can increase students' interest in school and improve their understanding of academic subjects, which may lead to better grades. Additionally, theatre encourages creative thinking and innovation, important skills

for the 21st century. By promoting these skills, the project supports a balanced approach to education that values creativity alongside traditional academic learning.

Furthermore, the findings from this study can help school leaders support and fund Theatre in Education (TiE), leading to its wider use in schools. It will also stress the importance of training teachers and providing resources to effectively include theatre in teaching.

Beyond the classroom, theatre programmes often include performances and community events, which help strengthen the relationship between schools and their communities. This project will show how theatre programmes preserve cultural heritage and help students understand and appreciate different cultures.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on understanding how Theatre in Education (TiE) can be integrated into schools and the impact it has on students. The study will be conducted in the University of Benin to see how TiE affects their academic performances.

The target group includes students, teachers, and school administrators. This research will involve students from different grade levels to get a broad perspective. Teachers and school administrators will provide insights into how TiE can be incorporated

in both regular classes and extracurricular activities, and also suggest new strategies that schools can use to incorporate theatre into their teaching methods.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

There is a risk of bias in data collection and analysis, especially with methods like surveys and interviews. Respondents may provide socially desirable responses, and researchers' interpretations of the data may be influenced by personal views. Also, factors beyond the study, like family background, socioeconomic status and community support, could affect the results of TiE programmes. Lack of funds, personnel, research materials and access to facilities may limit the scope of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework for Understanding TiE

Theoretical framework for understanding TiE simply refers to the fundamental principles, the methods, aims, functions and characteristics of TiE.

- **Socio-Cultural Theory**

The Socio-cultural Theory, developed by Lev Vygotsky, is an important framework supporting the success of Theatre in Education (TiE). This theory emphasizes the importance of social interactions and cultural influences in learning and development. In TiE, it helps explain how theatre activities can improve students' learning and personal growth.

Vygotsky's theory states that cognitive development is closely linked to social interactions. According to Vygotsky, “learning occurs most effectively within a social context where individuals engage in dialogue, collaborate, and share perspectives with

others” (Vygotsky 56). Social interaction is an important part of TiE, as students work together to create and perform plays. This teamwork builds collaboration skills and strengthens social abilities. Role-playing in TiE also allows students to experience different situations and perspectives, which helps them develop empathy and understand others better.

A major concept in Vygotsky's theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is the difference between what a learner can do alone and what they can achieve with help from a more experienced person (Vygotsky 84). TiE applies this idea by offering guidance during theatre activities. Teachers and professionals support students at first, then gradually let them take the lead as they gain confidence. This process helps students accomplish tasks they couldn't do on their own, improving their skills and knowledge.

Vygotsky also emphasized that learning is influenced by culture and shaped by tools like language and symbols. TiE integrates cultural elements to make lessons more engaging and relevant. Theatre activities often use local stories, traditions, and themes, creating a meaningful learning experience. The use of language in theatre also helps students improve their communication skills as they express themselves during performances. The Socio-cultural Theory in TiE reflects Vygotsky's idea of education as a

social and cultural process, where students learn best through interaction, collaboration, and active involvement with their community and culture (Vygotsky 86).

- **Communication Behaviour Change Model**

The Communication Behaviour Change Model in TiE is a framework that uses theatre techniques to influence people's attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge. It combines communication and behavior change theories to achieve specific learning and personal growth goals. This model's success can be understood through several important elements.

One main idea behind this model is Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which focuses on learning through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura 22). In TiE, students observe behaviors from various performances and are encouraged to imitate them. This is supported by communication theories like the Health Belief Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which explain how people's attitudes, perceptions, and intentions can be shaped through effective communication (Glanz, Rimer, and Viswanath 67).

Active engagement and participation are also important in this model. TiE uses interactive performances, ensuring students take part in the learning process rather than just watching or listening. Techniques like role-playing and simulation allow students to step into different perspectives and practice new behaviors in safe environments. By

acting out roles, students can explore the outcomes of their actions and better understand the importance of changing their behavior (Glanz, Rimer, and Viswanath 90).

The framing and delivery of messages in TiE is also very important. Storytelling and narratives make lessons more relatable and memorable. Stories simplify complex concepts and make them easier to understand and remember (Fisher 35). Feedback and reinforcement are also important parts of this model. After performances, reflective discussions allow students share their thoughts and feelings, helping them process what they've learned. Follow-up activities and discussions reinforce the messages from the performance, making it easier for students to adopt new attitudes and behaviors (Thompson and Bundy 120).

The Communication Behaviour Change Model in TiE uses interactive and participatory theatre to promote positive behavior changes. It engages students in activities, encourages participation, provides follow-up actions, and ensures continuous feedback to embed new behaviors and attitudes into their daily lives.

- **Experiential Learning Theory**

This theory, developed by David Kolb explains that learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb 41). The model highlights the importance of direct experiences and reflection, which closely align with

Theatre in Education (TiE). It includes four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Each stage plays vital roles in the learning process and can be applied in TiE to improve educational outcomes.

The first stage, “concrete experience”, involves learners actively participating in a task. In TiE, this might include students performing in a play, role-playing, or acting out real life scenarios. These activities provide students with direct experiences that form the foundation for deeper learning (Kolb 21).

Following the concrete experience is “reflective observation”, where students think about their experiences, considering what happened, why it happened, and how they felt. In TiE, this could involve group discussions where students share their thoughts and insights about the performance or activity. This stage helps them process their experiences and draw meaningful conclusions (Kolb 30).

The third stage, “abstract conceptualization”, involves developing general ideas or theories from reflections. Students begin to understand the principles behind their experiences. In TiE, this might include analyzing a play’s themes, understanding character motivations, or connecting the experience to academic topics or real life issues. This stage links practical experiences to deeper understanding (Kolb 36).

The final stage, active experimentation, involves applying new knowledge in different situations. Students test their ideas and strategies, which leads to new experiences and the cycle begins again. In TiE, this might include students creating their own plays, trying out new role-play scenarios, or applying lessons from theatre activities to real life situations. This stage reinforces learning through practice and experimentation (Kolb 43).

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory is a helpful tool for TiE practitioners as it enhances critical thinking, reflection, and real life application (Kolb 50), making it an effective method for teaching.

2.1.1 Overview of Theatre in Education (TiE)

Theatre in Education (TiE) is an approach that uses theatre and drama as powerful tools to improve learning across different subjects. It combines performance arts with the school curriculum, encouraging students to actively take part in activities like role-playing, simulations, and storytelling. This approach creates an interactive environment where students can explore and understand complex ideas in a practical way (Jackson 33).

TiE helps students gain a deeper understanding of academic topics by letting them practice new skills and ideas in a theatrical setting. It simplifies difficult concepts and promotes critical thinking by encouraging students to analyze characters, plots, and

situations, while considering different perspectives and possible outcomes (Neelands 58). It also builds empathy and social awareness by placing students in scenarios where they reflect on the feelings and experiences of others, helping them develop a better understanding of different perspectives (O'Toole 76).

Also, by including cultural themes, stories, and traditions that connect with students' backgrounds and communities, TiE makes learning more engaging and relatable. This approach ties lessons to real life situations, making the educational experience more practical and meaningful (Jackson 89). Additionally, TiE supports students' emotional and social growth by providing a safe space for them to explore and express their feelings, boosting their confidence and self-esteem. It also encourages essential social skills like teamwork, communication, and conflict resolution, which makes education more impactful to students (Neelands 112).

2.1.2 History of TiE

Theatre in Education (TiE) began in the mid-20th century when educators and theatre practitioners saw the potential of drama as a teaching tool. It officially emerged in 1965 in Britain, where the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry started one of the first TiE programmes. These programmes aimed to make learning more interactive and engaging, using theatrical performances, workshops, and role-playing activities to help students

actively participate. This approach made complex concepts easier to understand, leading to better learning outcomes (Jackson 22). It's success in the UK led to its spread worldwide, including in the United States, where it was used in schools to teach subjects like history, literature, and social studies. Educational theorists like John Dewey supported the idea of experiential learning, emphasizing the importance of arts in fostering holistic development (Dewey 104).

In Africa and Nigeria, the roots of TiE can be traced back to the Pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Post-Colonial periods. Before colonization, African societies had rich traditions of storytelling, dance, music, and ritual performances. These performances were not just entertainment but also a way to teach moral lessons, share history, and pass down cultural values (Kerr 15). In Nigeria, traditional performances like masquerades and storytelling played important roles in educating communities about societal norms and values (Soyinka 17). These indigenous traditions laid the foundation for integrating theatre into formal education.

During the colonial period, European missionaries introduced Western education to Africa, often incorporating drama into their teachings to promote Christian values and Western culture (Banham 112). Although these early forms of TiE reflected colonial agendas, they gave African students a platform for creativity and self-expression.

Playwrights like Wole Soyinka, J.P. Clark, and Chinua Achebe used theatre to critique colonialism and advocate for independence.

After independence, African countries experienced a cultural revival. TiE became a tool for social change and national development, combining traditional African performance styles with modern educational methods, creating a hybrid form of TiE that addressed local needs and issues (Mlama 43). Kenyan playwright Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o used theatre for political and cultural education, incorporating local languages and traditions to engage audiences and promote critical thinking (Ngũgĩ 78). Similarly, Nigerian playwrights used theatre to explore post-colonial identity and address cultural and political issues.

In the late 20th century, the concept of popular theatre became a significant force in African TiE. This form of theatre involved communities in creating and performing plays, often focusing on issues like health, education, and human rights. For example, Zambia's Chikwakwa Theatre used participatory performances to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and gender equality, ensuring the content was relevant and impactful (Kerr 27).

Today, TiE in Nigeria continues to evolve despite challenges like limited funding, infrastructure problems, and political instability. Digital technologies have introduced new ways to create interactive and multimedia theatre, helping practitioners reach wider

audiences. Despite these difficulties, TiE remains a valuable tool for education and cultural development, fostering creativity and addressing societal issues through drama (Osofisan 52).

2.2 Benefits of Theatre in Education (TiE) in Schools

According to Neelands (58), Theatre in Education (TiE) transforms traditional learning by using drama and performance to create engaging and interactive educational experiences. He also stated that the benefits of TiE are not limited to just students, but also to parents and the entire school community. Some of the benefits include:

- 1. Collaboration and Teamwork:** Theatre activities encourage students to work together to create and perform scenes, which encourages teamwork and collaboration. This collaboration teaches students to listen to others, share ideas, and contribute to a common goal, which are very important in different areas of their lives (Neelands 58).
- 2. Increased Engagement and Academic Performance:** TiE makes learning more interesting, and increases students' involvement. By actively participating, students find difficult or boring subjects more enjoyable and easier to understand, which can lead to better grades (Neelands 58).

3. **Enhanced Teaching Strategies:** Jackson (45) noted that TiE improves teaching methods, as it provides teachers with creative ways to make lessons more engaging and suitable for different learning styles. Teachers can use drama techniques to demonstrate complex concepts, making them easier for students to understand and remember.
4. **Professional Development:** Participation in TiE programmes offers teachers opportunities for professional growth. They can develop new skills such as classroom management, student engagement, and creative instruction methods which would be helpful in their teaching practices (Neelands 58).
5. **Enhanced School Culture:** TiE contributes to a positive and supportive school culture by integrating arts and creative expression into the curriculum. School administrators can create an environment that values creativity and collaboration, which would improve morale and engagement among both staff and students (Neelands 59).

2.3 The Role of Theatre in Education (TiE) in Schools

Theatre in Education (TiE) serves several functions and purposes within the school community, it plays diverse roles in enhancing the educational environment. The influence of TiE extends beyond the classroom, impacting students, teachers, administrators, parents, and society at large (Bolton 30). Some of these roles are:

1. Enhancing Curriculum Delivery

TiE helps make lessons more engaging and interactive by using drama to teach curriculum content. Traditional teaching methods may not always interest students or suit their learning styles, but TiE uses drama to simplify difficult ideas and make them easier to understand and remember, which can make (Bolton 30). This approach makes learning more interactive and enjoyable.

2. Developing Cognitive and Analytical Skills

TiE activities encourage students to think critically and analytically. When students participate in role-playing or simulations, they are often presented with scenarios that require problem-solving and decision-making (Bolton 30). This active engagement promotes high thinking skills, such as analysis and evaluation, which are important for academic success and personal growth.

3. Supporting Professional Development for Educators

TiE offers teachers unique professional development opportunities. Teachers can learn new teaching strategies that combine drama and theatre, enhancing their teaching methods. Teachers could attend workshops on integrating drama into the curriculum, which can inspire them to adopt more interactive teaching methods (Bolton 32). This

professional growth would benefit both the teachers, who grow professionally, and the students, who enjoy better learning experiences.

4. Emotional and Social Growth

Theatre activities allow students to explore their emotions and understand other people's feelings in a supportive environment.. Through acting, students learn to understand and manage their own emotions, as well as to empathize with others. Collaborative theatre projects help students develop social skills such as communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution (Vygotsky 56). For example, working together on a play requires students to cooperate, share ideas, and resolve disagreements, which builds their social skills.

5. Promoting Cultural Understanding and Inclusivity

TiE often uses stories and themes from different cultures, helping students learn about those cultures and respect their diversity. By exploring different cultural perspectives through theatre, students learn to appreciate diversity. This cultural education helps reduce prejudices and promotes a sense of global citizenship (Heathcote 60).

6. Addressing Social Issues and Promoting Advocacy

TiE can be a powerful tool for addressing social issues and promoting advocacy within the school community (Taylor 83). Through theatre, students can explore and discuss important topics such as bullying, discrimination, and health issues. Taylor (83), also noted that these activities help students understand societal issues, inspiring them to advocate for positive change in their schools and communities.

2.4 Challenges of Theatre in Education (TiE) in Schools

Despite the roles it play and the numerous benefits it has, the implementation of Theatre in Education (TiE) in schools faces several challenges, which can hinder the effective integration of TiE programmes. Below are some of the challenges of TiE in schools among others:

- 1. Limited Funding and Facilities:** According to Brockbank and McGill (45), one of the primary challenges is the lack of adequate funding and facilities. Schools often struggle to allocate enough money to support theatre programmes which require costumes, props, trained personnel and spaces for rehearsals and performances. Without enough funding, these programmes may lack quality and impact.
- 2. Lack of Training and Professional Development:** Theatre education requires specific skills and pedagogical approaches that many educators are not formally

trained in. Winston (72) was of the opinion that without proper professional development and training opportunities, teachers may feel unprepared and less confident in integrating theatre techniques into their regular curriculum.

- 3. Curriculum Constraints and Academic Pressures:** School curriculums are often rigid, with a strong focus on traditional teaching and test preparation. Teachers may feel pressured to adhere strictly to the curriculum, making it hard for them to include creative methods like TiE in their lessons (Baldwin and Fleming 98).
- 4. Cultural Resistance:** In some school communities, people don't see theatre as an important part of education. Parents and even teachers may see drama activities as less valuable than other "more academic" subjects , which can hinder the implementation and success of TiE programmes (Ackroyd 35).
- 5. Logistical Challenges:** Organizing and managing TiE activities may prove to be difficult for schools without staff who have good managerial skills. As stated by Nicholson (112), coordinating schedules, managing rehearsal times, and ensuring that all students participate can be challenging for schools with limited staff and resources. Also, arranging for performances and managing technical aspects such as lighting and sound require expertise and equipment that schools might not have.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study will adopt a descriptive survey design. This design is chosen because it allows the researcher to gather detailed descriptions and insights from the participants on their experiences and perceptions of Theatre in Education (TiE). The design will focus on exploring how TiE impacts various aspects of the academic and social life of students and the broader University of Benin community.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study will include members of the University of Benin community, including students, lecturers and administrators that have been involved in TiE programmes to provide a balanced perspective.

3.3 Sample Size

The target population will include students, lecturers, and administrators at UNIBEN. Approximately 50 students from various departments, especially from the Theatre Arts Department, who have participated in TiE programmes or related extracurricular activities. This group will include students from different levels to ensure

diversity in perspectives. Around 3 lecturers, with a focus on those from the Theatre Arts Department, as they may have experience with TiE or similar teaching methods. 1 administrator (Head of a Department) who have been involved in managing or supporting theatre programmes in the university.

3.4 Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique will be used for this study. This technique ensures that participants who are knowledgeable and directly engaged in TiE programmes will be selected. Specifically, the target will be 50 students who are actively involved in TiE activities. 3 lecturers from Theatre Arts department and 1 administrator who is involved in managing the theatre programmes. Purposive sampling is appropriate because it focuses on selecting individuals who can provide rich and relevant data related to the research objectives.

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

The primary instruments for data collection in this study will be interviews and questionnaires. Interviews will be conducted with lecturers and administrators involved in TiE at the University of Benin. These interviews will provide qualitative data about their experiences and perspectives on TiE. A structured questionnaire will be distributed to students who participate in TiE activities at the University of Benin. The questionnaire

will consist of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions will gather quantitative data on students' perceptions of TiE, its impact on their academic performance, and their emotional and social development. Open-ended questions will allow students to provide detailed responses about their personal experiences with TiE programmes.

This combination of interviews and questionnaires will provide both qualitative and quantitative data, offering a comprehensive view of the impact and role of Theatre in Education within the University of Benin community.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the project supervisor will evaluate the interview questions to ensure that they are clear, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives. The reliability of the questionnaire will be tested using the test-retest method. This involves administering the same questionnaire to a particular group of students on two different occasions. The consistency of responses will be measured to ensure that the instrument provides stable and consistent results. For the interview process, a standard interview protocol will be followed, ensuring that all participants are asked the same questions, which supports the reliability of qualitative data collection.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

A structured questionnaire will be distributed to a sample of students participating in TiE programmes at the University of Benin. The questionnaire will be distributed via online platforms for easy access. Participants will be given clear instructions in completing the questionnaire. Interviews will be conducted with selected lecturers and administrators from the University of Benin who are knowledgeable or involved in Theatre in Education programmes. Each interview will be conducted face-to-face. The interviews will be recorded (with the consent of the participants) and then transcribed for analysis.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The interview data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. After transcribing the interviews, the researcher will identify recurring themes, patterns, and key insights related to the role of TiE in the university. The questionnaire responses will be analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and tables. This will help summarize the students' perceptions of TiE and its impact or role in their academic performance,

creativity and social skills. This mixed-method approach will provide a clear understanding of the roles of TiE in the University of Benin.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the data collected from the questionnaires distributed to students and interviews conducted with lecturers at the University of Benin. The responses are analyzed and interpreted to address the research objectives and answer the research questions of this study.

4.1 Table, Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Respondents' Gender

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	28	56
Female	22	44
Total	50	100

Table 1 above presents the data on the frequency and percentage of respondents' gender. Out of 50 respondents, a total of 28 individuals, 56% of the participants, were males and the other 22 persons, 44% of the responses were females. This close balance shows that the study reflects both male and female perspectives. However, the slightly higher number of male respondents might point to some cultural or social factors that

encourage more male participation in Theatre in Education programmes. These findings show the need for inclusive methods in TiE programmes to ensure equal opportunities for both genders to participate and benefit.

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Below 18	5	10
18-20	17	34
21-24	23	46
Above 24	5	10
Total	50	100

Out of the total sample size of 50; 23 individuals, 46% of the participants were between the ages of 21 and 24, forming the largest group. This indicates that TiE programmes primarily attract young adults. 17 individuals, 34% of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 20, suggesting significant interest among younger adults. 5 individuals, 10% of the participants were below the age of 18; and 5 individuals, 10% of the participants were above the age of 24. This representation shows lesser but notable involvement of both younger and older individuals. These findings imply that TiE initiatives are most impactful among young adults and would need specific techniques to engage other age groups effectively.

Table 3: Educational Level of Respondents

Level of Study	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
100	13	26
200	9	18
300	9	18
400 and above	19	38
Total	50	100

Out of the total sample size of 50; 19 individuals, 38% of the participants were in 400 level and above, making them the largest group. This suggests that more advanced students may have greater exposure to or knowledge about TiE programmes. 13 individuals, 26% of the participants were 100 level students, showing a significant level of engagement among fresh undergraduates. 9 individuals, 18% of the participants were 200 level students; and 9 individuals, 18% of the participants were 300 level students, implying moderate involvement. These findings suggest that TiE programmes may appeal more to those at the beginning and advanced stages of their academic journey, potentially due to differences in academic focus and responsibilities across levels.

Table 4: Oral Interview Schedule

Name	Occupation	Date of Interview
Mr. C. Omesah	Lecturer, UNIBEN	06/11/2024
Mr. D. A. Yakubu	Lecturer, UNIBEN	21/11/2024

Table 4 presents the data on the name and occupation of informants for the interview. 2 lecturers from the University of Benin were interviewed. The interview was conducted and audio recorded by the researcher, with the consent of the informants.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What is the relationship between students' involvement in theatre and their academic performance? In answering this question, respondents' opinion were sampled using the following questions: Has your participation in theatre activities affected your academic performance? If yes, how has it affected your academic performance?

Table 5: Distribution of Opinion on Whether Theatre Activities has Affected Students' Academic Performance

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	32	64
No	9	18
Not Sure	9	18
Total	50	100

In table 5 above, 32 individuals, 64% of participants affirmed that theatre activities has affected their academic performance; 9 individuals, 18% of participants expressed disagreement with the notion that theatre activities has not affected their academic performance; 9 individuals, 18% of participants were not sure if theatre activities has affected their academic performance. With the data provided in the table, it is evident that theatre activities has affected students 'academic performance, as majority of the participants affirmed so.

Table 6: Distribution of opinion on how theatre activities has affected students' academic performance

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Improved Grades	8	16
Focus in Class	18	36
Increased Interest in Learning	22	44
No Noticeable Effect	2	4
Total	50	100

Table 6 shows the opinion of participants on how theatre activities has affected their academic performance. 8 individuals, 16% of participants has had improved Grades as a

result of theatre participation; 18 individuals, 36% of participants focus more in class because of theatre participation; 22 individuals, 44% of participants have increased interest in learning due to theatre participation; 2 individuals, 4% of participants did not notice any effect on their academic performance.

This data indicates that theatre activities has influenced the academic performances of majority of students in the University of Benin positively, as it has improved their grades, enhanced their focus in class and increase their interest in learning.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

How does theatre participation enhance students' creativity, emotional understanding and social development? In answering this question, respondents' opinion were sampled using the following questions: How has theatre participation influenced your creativity? Does theatre help you better understand other people's emotions? How has theatre participation impacted your ability to work with others?

Table 7: Distribution of opinion on how theatre participation has influenced students' creativity

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Influenced	32	64
Moderately Influenced	18	36
Slightly Influenced	0	0
No Change	0	0
Total	50	100

From table 7 above, it is evident that theatre participation has strongly influenced the creativity of 32 individuals which comprises 64% of the total sample size of 50 participants; it has moderately influenced 18 individuals which comprises 36% of 50 participants. The findings indicates that a significant amount of the participants' creativity have been strongly influenced by theatre participation.

Table 8: Distribution of opinion on how theatre participation has enhanced students' emotional understanding

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
Not Sure	0	0
Total	50	100

The data presented in table 8 shows that all the respondents out of the total sample size of 50 participants, which makes up 100% of the sample expressed agreement that theatre participation has enhanced their emotional understanding. This indicates that theatre participation has greatly enhanced emotional understanding amongst students in the University of Benin.

Table 9: Distribution of opinion on how theatre participation has improved students' social development

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Strongly Improved	32	64
Moderately Improved	18	36
Slightly Improved	0	0
No Change	0	0
Total	50	100

According to the data presented in the above table, it can be observed that 32 individuals, 64% of participants affirmed that theatre participation has strongly improved their social development; 18 individuals, 36% of participants affirmed that theatre participation has moderately improved their social development; while none of the participants expressed a slight improvement, or no change in their social development.

From this data, it can be seen that the social development of majority of the participants has been affected positively as a result of theatre participation.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

How does Theatre in Education (TiE) improve teaching methods and classroom engagement? In answering this question, the lecturers, Mr. C. Omesah and Mr. D. A. Yakubu were interviewed with this question: How has Theatre in Education (TiE) impacted your teaching methods or strategies in the classroom?

Lecturers unanimously agreed that TiE introduces innovative teaching methods that break the monotony of traditional lecture-based approaches. Mr. C. Omesah stated that, incorporating TiE in his lessons has changed the way students engage with the course materials. He cited an example saying, “using role-plays to teach historical events or literary texts interests students much more than reading textbooks.” He added that TiE encourages active participation, making it easier to identify and address students’ challenges. He also noted that theatre based methods encourage shy students to participate because the activities are less intimidating and more collaborative.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4

How can administrators integrate TiE into the school system to benefit both students and staff? In answering this question, the respondents were interviewed with this

question: How do you think Theatre in Education (TiE) can better be integrated into the school system to benefit both students and staff?

Both lecturers, Mr. C. Omesah and Mr. D. A. Yakubu proposed several strategies to incorporate TiE into the educational system. Mr. D. A. Yakubu suggested that administration should allocate a specific budget for TiE activities, such as training workshops for lecturers, facilities for productions, and spaces for performances. Mr. C. Omesah emphasized the need for a structured curriculum. He was of the opinion that incorporating TiE into both core subjects and extracurricular programmes would maximize its reach and impact.

Mr. C. Omesah and Mr. D. A. Yakubu also emphasized the importance of professional development. They were of the opinion that workshops and seminars on TiE methods would provide teachers with the skills to use theatre as a teaching tool, which would also ensure the consistency and quality of TiE implementation across the institution. They also mentioned collaboration with other departments as essential, and the administration was encouraged to foster partnerships between the arts and other academic disciplines.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The analysis of data collected through questionnaires and interviews provides important insights on the role and impact of Theatre in Education (TiE) in the University of Benin. These findings address the research questions and emphasize the diverse nature of TiE in improving students' academic and social development, and also its influence on teachers and administrators.

The Relationship between Students' Involvement in Theatre and Academic Performance

The findings indicate that there is a positive correlation between students' participation in TiE and their academic performance. The data showed that 96% of students agreed that participating in TiE activities improved their academic performance and understanding of difficult or confusing topics. This finding is consistent with Jackson's assertion that theatre-based learning offers an active and experiential approach to education, making difficult courses easily understandable (Jackson 87). Students who participate in theatre programmes often demonstrate improved comprehension and increased academic interest. Theatre activities such as role-playing enhance students' understanding of complex courses by presenting them in engaging and relatable ways (Smith 102).

Additionally, students reported that their involvement in theatre improved their teamwork skills, which in turn led to better performance in group assignments and projects. These results align with previous research that has emphasized the cognitive benefits of arts education. As indicated by Jackson, theatre develops analytical skills and boosts students' academic confidence through experiential learning (Jackson 87).

The Role of Theatre Participation in Enhancing Creativity, Emotional Understanding, and Social Development

The data reflects TiE's role in promoting creativity and emotional intelligence among students. From the analysis, all the students indicated that TiE has contributed in enhancing their creativity, emotional understanding and social development. These results reflects Bolton's findings that theatre stimulates the imagination and promotes interpersonal relationships. Through improvisation and storytelling, students develop imaginative thinking and innovative problem-solving skills (Bolton 84).

Mr. C. Omesah and Mr. D. A. Yakubu, along with students confirmed that TiE provides a platform for the exploration of emotions, and helps participants understand and manage emotions effectively. This is in line with Neelands who noted that theatre allows students to put themselves in the characters' shoes, thereby deepening their social and emotional awareness (Neelands 56). The study also found that theatre activities promote social skills such as collaboration and conflict resolution. Students who actively

participate in TiE are more likely to develop strong relationships. These findings reflect the thought of O'Toole, who states that "theatre builds a sense of community by encouraging shared experiences and mutual respect among participants" (O'Toole 142).

The Impact of TiE on Teaching Methods and Classroom Engagement

The results from the interview conducted with Mr. C. Omesah and Mr. D. A. Yakubu highlight TiE's ability to transform regular teaching methods. Both respondents affirmed that incorporating theatre techniques into their lessons increased classroom engagement and made learning easier for students with diverse needs. One of the lecturers made an example saying, using dramatization to teach historical or complex topics makes lessons more lively and memorable for students.

These findings are in line with Ebewo, who noted that "drama-based teaching strategies not only improve student engagement but also help to effectively address different learning styles" (Ebewo 33). The interactive nature of TiE allows teachers to connect with students on both intellectual and emotional levels, allowing them to actively participate in the learning process.

Strategies for Administrators to Integrate TiE into the School System

Despite its benefits, challenges such as inadequate funding and insufficient teachers' training were identified in the implementation of TiE. The results from the

interview gave recommendations to the school administration to support TiE integration. Some of the recommendations include funding TiE programmes, providing professional development opportunities for teachers, and creating dedicated spaces for theatre activities. These responses are consistent with Wagner, who advocates for systemic support to maximize the institutional impact of TiE (Wagner 99).

Respondents emphasized the need for collaboration between the arts departments and other disciplines to ensure TiE becomes a key part of the school's curriculum. Respondents also highlighted the importance of policy development to institutionalize TiE. According to Adeoye, "without administrative backing and resources, the potential of TiE to transform education cannot be fully realized" (Adeoye 49).

The data indicate that TiE significantly improves students' academic performance, creativity, and emotional intelligence while providing teachers a versatile teaching tool. Administrators recognize the value of TiE, and are encouraged to address logistical barriers to its implementation. Overall, TiE proves to be a powerful educational tool that can transform the learning environment when supported by adequate resources and training.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study examined the role of Theatre in Education (TiE) at the University of Benin, focusing on its academic and social significance. The study used a mixed-methods approach combining student questionnaires and interviews with lecturers to gain insight into the roles, benefits and challenges of implementing TiE. Findings showed that TiE enhances students' creativity, emotional intelligence and social skills while also providing teachers with innovative teaching strategies and administrators with an opportunity to promote a collaborative school culture. However, challenges such as limited funding, inadequate teacher training, and lack of institutional awareness about TiE have been identified as major barriers to its effective implementation. This study highlights the transformative power of TiE and the importance of overcoming these challenges to realize its full potential.

5.2 Conclusion

The research concludes that Theatre in Education is a powerful and impactful tool that goes beyond traditional teaching methods. It enriches the educational experience by engaging students in active, participatory learning, and enhancing their social and

emotional development. For teachers, TiE offers innovative strategies to make learning engaging and relatable, while administrators can use TiE to promote a creative and collaborative school culture. However, to achieve these outcomes, systemic barriers such as funding limitations and a shortage of trained staff must be overcome. Various educational institutions would greatly benefit from fully integrating TiE into their educational curriculum.

5.3 Recommendations

- 1. Resource Allocation:** It is important for the University of Benin to allocate specific funding to support TiE programmes. Resources such as performance spaces, costumes, props, and technical equipment should be prioritized. Additionally, the university should consider partnering with arts organizations and government agencies to secure additional funding.
- 2. Professional Development:** Teachers and administrators should be involved in regular trainings to become familiar with TiE methods. Workshops and seminars led by educational theatre professionals should be organized to help educators incorporate theatre activities into their teaching practices. These trainings should focus on both technical skills, like stagecraft, and pedagogical strategies, such as creating lesson plans that incorporate theatre elements.

3. **Curriculum Integration:** TiE should be formally integrated into the university curricula, either as a stand-alone subject or as an interdisciplinary component within other courses. Elective courses on theatre and education could be introduced to provide theoretical and practical insights into TiE. Also, extracurricular events could serve as a platform for students to participate in TiE activities.
4. **Community Engagement:** To promote deeper connections between the university and its surrounding community, TiE programmes should include public performances and community-oriented workshops. Issues such as social justice, health awareness, and cultural preservation could be addressed in the performances, which would benefit both students and members of the community. Parents and community leaders should also be encouraged to participate to strengthen community ties and support for TiE.
5. **Research and Evaluation:** Ongoing research is essential to measure the effectiveness of TiE initiatives. Universities should establish research committees to conduct regular evaluations of TiE programmes and gather feedback from students, teachers, and administrators. This data should drive continuous improvements in the design and delivery of TiE for it to remain relevant and impactful.

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APPENDIX

Department of Theatre Arts,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Benin,
Benin City, Edo state,
Nigeria.

15th of October, 2024.

Dear Participant,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a student in the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Benin. I am currently conducting a research study as part of my academic requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A Hons) Degree in Theatre Arts. My study is titled "Theatre in Education: The Role of Theatre in Schools: University of Benin as a Case Study." I kindly request your help in filling in the relevant answers in the attached questionnaire.

Your responses will be treated as confidential, and the data collected will be used for academic purposes only. Participation in this study is voluntary, and by completing this questionnaire, you are providing consent for your responses to be included in this research. Thank you for your time and valuable contribution to this research.

Yours faithfully,

Ivoh, Ukachukwu Victoria.
Researcher

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please tick any option of your choice, and also note that no answer provided is wrong.

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Age: Below 18 () 18-20 () 21-24 () Above 24 ()
3. Level of Study: 100 () 200 () 300 () 400 and above ()

SECTION B: PSYCHOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

4. Are you involved in any Theatre in Education (TiE) programmes or activities? Yes () No ()
5. How often do you participate in theatre activities? Rarely () Occasionally () Regularly ()
6. Has your participation in theatre activities affected your academic performance? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
7. If yes, how has it affected your academic performance? Improved my grades () Helped me focus more in class () Increased my interest in learning () No noticeable effect ()
8. Do you feel more motivated in class after participating in theatre? Yes () No ()

9. How has theatre participation influenced your creativity? Strongly improved ()
Moderately improved () Slightly improved () No change ()
10. Does theatre help you better understand other people's emotions? Yes () No ()
Not sure ()
11. Do you feel more confident interacting with others due to your theatre involvement?
Yes () No ()
12. How has theatre participation impacted your ability to work with others?
Strongly improved () moderately improved () slightly improved () No change ()
13. Would you recommend Theatre in Education programmes to other students? Yes ()
No () Not Sure ()

SECTION C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

15. What do you think are the main benefits of theatre participation as a student?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LECTURERS

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This study seeks to explore how Theatre in Education (TiE) influences academic performance, creativity, emotional understanding, and social development, as well as how it can improve teaching methods and classroom engagement. Your insights will provide valuable information for this research.

1. From your experience, how do students who participate in Theatre in Education programmes perform academically compared to those who do not?
2. In your opinion, how does theatre participation affect students' creativity, emotional understanding, and social development?
3. How has TiE impacted your teaching methods or strategies in the classroom?
4. How do you think TiE can be better integrated into the school system to benefit both students and staff?
5. What challenges do you foresee in implementing or expanding TiE programmes in the university?