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Efficacy of Performance Poetry in Propagating Environmental Consciousness Among Students of Federal College of Education Pankshin

Bizuum Godwill Yadok[1], Peace Sorochi Longdet[2], Nenrotmwa Sekat[3]

[1,2]Department of English, College of Languages, Federal University of Education Pankshin, Plateau State, Nigeria

[3]Department of Sustainable Development Studies, College of Early Childhood Care and Primary Education, Federal University of Education Pankshin, Plateau State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the efficacy of performance poetry in propagating environmental consciousness among students of Federal College of Education Pankshin. The role of the artist in creating environmental consciousness is often ignored or overlooked, especially that of the performance poet and this informs the present study. An eclectic approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods was employed, with a survey conducted among 91 randomly sampled students across the seven schools in the college. A performance poetry video themed on environmental consciousness was produced and circulated through social media platforms over a period of six weeks. Prior to the circulation of the said video, questionnaire was administered to the sample and the same questionnaire was administered to the same set of respondents. Additionally, qualitative insights were gathered through open-ended comments on the instrument. Descriptive statistics using mean scores revealed that students had strong appreciation for natural elements on campus but expressed dissatisfaction with human management aspects such as waste disposal, clean water access, and sanitation infrastructure. Baseline data showed students were already positively disposed toward performance poetry and believed in its potential for environmental communication. After exposure to the intervention, modest improvements were recorded in perceptions regarding waste disposal and clean water access, while students' sense of collective environmental responsibility strengthened. Qualitative findings confirmed that students found performance poetry engaging and effective for creating awareness through emotional expression, gestures, and voice. The study concluded that performance poetry has potential as a tool for environmental consciousness propagation. Recommendations included incorporating intentionally produced audio-visual performance poetry into environmental and education programs in order to instil environmental consciousness among the young.

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INTRODUCTION

Across the continent of Africa, there are unconscious practices that worsen the depletion of natural resources which in turn affect the quality of life on the continent (Mwoya et al 2022). This could be attributed to a lack of awareness of the interconnectedness of both living and non-living components of the environment (Onuoha et al 2022; Villanueva 2018). Despite the myriad advocacies for environmental sanitation and enablement of a safe ecosystem for both plants and animals to thrive, there remain areas of marked ignorance about issues that relate to the environment. One such place includes the Bwarak community which hosts the Federal College of Education Pankshin.

Until the 2000s, the college facilities had been able to accommodate a vast majority of both staff and students of the college. As such, managing resources within the college community was not such a difficult task. However, with the population explosion of the 2000s owing to the expansion of the college programmes as well as the introduction of undergraduate programmes, the college

Bwarak community experienced a rapid development with an attendant depletion of the environment and, worse, an unsanitary condition.

There is no denying the fact that communal efforts have been made to curb the menace of environmental degradation and indiscriminate waste disposal which partly account for the spread of diseases and infections. Government policies at the federal, state, and local government levels would have been also very helpful if they didn't end with mere rhetoric. The presence of the academics would have also been helpful to the community if environmental consciousness was embedded in every discipline. Sadly, only few courses in Biology, Integrated Science, and Social Studies have aspects that deal with fair treatment of the environment.

Thankfully, digital media (including the internet) has been identified as a pedagogical medium as its potency became more prominent during the lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Accordingly, social media, too, has been discovered to be an effective medium of disseminating information and creating awareness on burning issues (Dei et al 2022). Social media has opened a vista for all kinds of information and entertainment to find adaptation in the virtual space from news to films to storytelling, and even performance poetry.

Performance poetry is not entirely a new poetic tradition in Nigeria or Africa as a whole. However, its combined performance and rendition in English as well as its adaptation to the new media in terms of production, storage, dissemination, and retrieval portrays it as an emerging form of poetry. Several attempts to conceptualize performance poetry have resulted in nomenclatures such as, 'contemporary oral poetry', 'spoken word', 'spoken word poetry', 'slam poetry', 'Def poetry', 'jam poetry', and 'live poetry'. Performance poetry is the extant form of oral poetry that gains attention in public spaces and uses both primary and secondary oralities as its medium (Omajuwa & Kaine, 2019; Okoye & Ugwu, 2021; Adjirakor, 2021). Performance poetry or spoken word is a spoken imaginative communication that is not written but transmitted through word of mouth for entertainment and sometimes for the edification of the audience. Central to the spoken word is the issue of performance (Longdet & Deme 2018; Longdet 2020; Finnegan 1970).

Performance poetry is also considered an aspect of popular culture, being that it is a popular form of entertainment that is increasingly being witnessed in urban spaces while attracting massive attention on social media platforms, thus further widening its reach among the populace. This is not unconnected to the fact that contemporary oral poetry is an expressive form that is "emergent, ephemeral, and embedded in daily life given to the extraordinary bursts of activity and rapid transmutation" (Barber, 2018). This growing form of popular culture blends elements of poetry, performance, and storytelling. It has gained significant popularity in recent years, particularly among younger generations, and has become a vibrant part of the cultural landscape.

The relationship between spoken word and democracy/liberalization is a multifaceted one, as spoken word has often served as a powerful tool for political expression, social critique, and the promotion of democratic ideals. According to Miller (2014) throughout history, spoken word has been closely intertwined with the struggle for freedom of speech, civil rights, and the pursuit of social justice. If performance poetry can be employed in the pursuit of justice and democracy then it can also be used to propagate environmental consciousness among students in F.C.E Pankshin.

A preliminary survey indicates that 1 out of 2 students own a smartphone and nearly 80% of smartphone users spend time on social media. Additionally, the same percentage is naturally tilted towards audio-visual entertainment content in the virtual space especially those which bear semblances to their socio-cultural reality. This informs the need to create performative audio-visual content, in this case, performance poetry, to bring to their consciousness certain behaviors or attitudes that worsen young people's carefree disposition towards the environment. With performance poetry in social media as an extra-curricular pedagogical tool, it is the authors' conviction that students' perception and attitudes towards their immediate environment will be more intentional thereby indirectly meeting Goals 6, 11, 12, 13, and 15 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which emphasize clean water and sanitation; sustainable cities and communities; responsible production and consumption; climate action; and life on land. Therefore, a medley of performance poetry was composed by four performance poets – two from the city of Jos and two from locally resident poets in Pankshin. The poem was also vetted and edited by the researchers to make it align with the thematic areas of the research. The skills of professional sound producers, videographers, and actors were also enlisted to create the desired poetry which attracted thousands of views. The poets featured in the rendition are Asiibii Felicity Akwa, Younglan Talyoung, Ritkinen Tongyolla, and Rejoice Timothy Olaleye

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The influx of people, especially students, as a result of the expansion of educational programmes in F.C.E Pankshin has also brought about a whole baggage of environmental concerns like ubiquitous refuse dump sites, cluttered gutters, open defecation, wanton felling of trees, and destruction of natural animal habitats. These beckon severe micro and macro consequences some of which include the widespread diseases and infections like malaria, cholera, and typhoid not to mention flash floods, and other effects that build into climate change. The aforesaid can be readily attributed to the low level of environmental consciousness of, especially, the students who constitute a vast majority of the population. The lack of proper awareness of the interdependence between living and

non-living components of the environment affects their attitude to the environment. Admittedly, efforts are being made to create awareness of the environment but they are mostly undertaken by regular scientific, health, and environmental protection bodies whereas the role of the artist or poet in creating awareness is often neglected. Poetry might present itself as mentally tasking, even boring craft but when it is being performed it becomes more entertaining, engaging, and powerful, hence the use of performance poetry for the project.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

The advocacy for environmental consciousness has been done through various facets and disciplines. Visual arts has also been harnessed to further propagate environmental awareness but there is an obvious gap in environmental consciousness when it comes to poetry and the gap is even more noticeable in performance poetry. If the same medium, performance poetry, can be used to address gender discrimination, ethnic chauvinism, religious extremism, and other societal maladies of national or global significance, then we can infer that performance poetry could be used to instigate and propagate environmental consciousness. In addition, the common reliance of students on their mobile devices for information informs a need to create entertaining content that encapsulates information that needs to be passed across. The more viral the video content becomes, the further it is impressed upon the minds of the consumers. Interestingly, from preliminary studies, such a project has not been carried out in the F.C.E environment before.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to measure the efficacy of performance poetry in environmental activism and promoting environmental consciousness. The aim is further broken down into the following objectives:

i. Assess the perception and attitudes of students towards the F.C.E campus and off-campus environment.
ii. produce and virally circulate a performance poem themed on environmental consciousness in an audio-visual format bearing students of F.C.E Pankshin in mind as the target audience.
iii. gauge the effectiveness of performance poetry in propagating environmental consciousness.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is therefore guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of students of F.C.E Pankshin towards their environment?
2. How can a performance of poetry that is themed on environmental consciousness be produced and virally circulated among students of F.C.E Pankshin?
3. To what extent can we determine the effectiveness of performance poetry in propagating environmental consciousness?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Performance poetry, also known as spoken word or contemporary oral poetry, is an artistic form of expression that combines elements of poetry, performance, and storytelling. It has a rich historical background and has evolved, reflecting the cultural, social, and political climates of different eras and communities (Hakim, 2017). Two main branches account for the development and evolution of performance poetry in Nigeria: The first is the primordial-traditional metamorphosis while the second branch relates to cultural transfer akin to diffusionism.

Proponents of the primordial-traditional metamorphosis believe that the roots of spoken word can be traced back to ancient oral traditions, where storytelling and poetry were intertwined and then passed down through generations via spoken word performances. According to Harper (2008), these traditions were prevalent in various cultures, such as ancient Greece with the recitation of epic poems like Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey" and in African griot traditions, where oral historians and poets played a vital role in preserving and disseminating history and culture. For Abiola Irele, the continent of Africa is reputed as the biggest warehouse of orality and it can be viewed as a site for enormous, long and ongoing creativity. He sees orality as, “a vector for the production of social life, religious beliefs, and constant constituting and reconstituting of society, ideology, and aesthetics.” He further posits that it is justifiable to term Africa as “the oral continent par excellence.” Lending weight to Irele’s position, Isidore Okpweho maintains that African creatives (writers and performers) draw aesthetic materials from the oral traditions of their people (Okpweho, 2012). In this regard, performance poetry has its semblances in the *oriki* and *ijala* of the Yorubas, *alike* of the Idomas, *udje* of the Urhobos (Nigeria), *imbongi* of Zulus (South Africa), and *umusizi* of Hutus (Rwanda), was not a loaned verbal art but that which has evolved from a primordial to a modern setting (Okoye & Okoye-Ugwu, 2021).

On the cultural transfer account, the proponents of this school of thought point their fingers at the West, particularly the United States of America, starting with the Beat Generation in the middle of the 20th century, the Beat Generation emerged as a countercultural literary movement in the United States, known for their rejection of mainstream values and experimentation with

alternative forms of expression. Lowery & Walker (2017) state that black spoken word artists found inspiration in Harlem Renaissance authors like Langston Hughes and W.E.B Dubois. The Cities of Chicago and New York became flourishing grounds for slam poetry. Figures like Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti became prominent voices in the Beat poetry movement, performing their works in cafes and gatherings (Jones, 2015). Their emphasis on oral delivery and the performative aspect of poetry laid the groundwork for the development of spoken word.

On the heels of the Beat Generation was the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the Black Arts Movement, a cultural and artistic movement that aimed to empower and celebrate black voices, emerged as a significant force in spoken word. Poets like Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, and Nikki Giovanni used their words and performances to challenge racial injustice and express the experiences of the African American community. The Black Arts Movement paved the way for the rise of poetry slams, competitive events where poets perform their work and are judged by the audience. Poetry slams became a platform for marginalized voices and helped popularize spoken word as a form of artistic expression.

The 1970s and 1980s featured a fusion of spoken word with black-oriented rhythmic music coined as hip-hop music, which emerged as a powerful cultural movement, incorporating elements of spoken word, poetry, and rap. Omajuwa and Kaine (2019) state that the term “spoken word” was coined in the 1980s to describe live audio recordings of poems. Artists like Gil Scott-Heron and The Last Poets used their music and spoken word performances to address social and political issues, inspiring a generation of artists (Keeling 2015). The fusion of spoken word and hip-hop influenced the evolution of contemporary oral poetry, with poets incorporating rhythm, rhyme, and musicality into their performances. Some of the artists of this generation perform as both spoken word artists and hip-hop artists. Artists like KRS ONE, Tupac Shakur, and Da Brat fall under this generation.

Currently in Nigeria, what holds as the spoken word industry is a mish-mash of both strands of primordial-traditional metamorphosis and cultural transfer as exemplified in the performances of Dike Chukwumerije, Bash Amuneni, Patience Andrew (AP), Graciano Enwerem, Younglan, Envoi, Titilope Sonuga, and Maryam Bukar Hassan. These artists have gained prominence, reaching wider audiences through performances, recordings, and viral videos. Spoken word has expanded its subject matter to include personal narratives, gender issues, identity politics, sexual orientation issues, mental health, and other social concerns (Ketcham 2016). It has also found a place within academia, with spoken word poetry being taught and studied in educational institutions in the West but hardly in Nigeria.

The term "digital media" refers to any type of electronic content that is created, disseminated, and consumed via digital devices and platforms. These can include the internet, social media platforms, smartphones, tablets, and other digital devices. It includes a wide variety of formats and channels, such as text, photos, audio, video, and interactive media, and it has fundamentally altered how we connect, gain access to information, and enjoy ourselves (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001). Ola-Koyi (2018) adds that the word digital could be understood as a “systemic way in which a series of numbers between one and zero is used in processing, storing, retrieving, sharing/sending data or information from the use of a computer system or electronic devices”. Consequently, any form of poetry that makes use of the devices or systems mentioned above could be termed digital poetry. As such, through digital media such as YouTube, HBO specials, Facebook, and Instagram – often referred to as the new media – art is preserved and transmitted to society. The rise of digital media has resulted in the development of a new type of oral poetry, which is a traditional form of cultural expression and storytelling (Njoku, 2018). Joseph Ola-Koyi (2018) concurs by citing Walter Ong who first gives a hint of poetry, or orature in general, which rhymes with evolving digital technology as “secondary orality”. Although Ong’s argument aimed at paying premium over literacy than orality Abiola Irele observes that there is a complex relationship between orality and literacy in Africa. Our focus is, however, on Ong’s dichotomy of oralities. Again, cited by Olakoyi, Ong declares, “I style the orality of a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print, ‘primary orality’ in contrast with the ‘secondary orality’ of present day high technology culture” (Irele, 2012: p.377). As such, using Ong’s distinction, one could term ‘primary orality’ as orature and the ‘secondary orality’ as media, digital or cybernetic orature, which subsumes the traditional oral poetry and even contemporary oral poetry. Philip Auslander (2008) refers to performance in the media as “mediatised performance” and this includes performances that are circulated on television, audio, video, or other forms based on technologies of reproduction. We can have a better grasp of the confluence between traditional oral poetry and the digital sphere if we look at their points of view and consider their perspectives. Not only has the use of digital media contributed to its preservation, but it has also impacted how oral poetry is performed and presented. The use of technology in live performances has increased the range of options available to artists seeking to express themselves creatively. Recitations given by artists can now make use of a wide variety of audiovisual components, such as music, sound effects, and visual projections, to increase the emotional impact of the performance. It is done in both live performances and studio recordings but the studio recordings excludes the visual and aural presence of the physical audience appealing only to the virtual one. This gives credence to what Charles Bernstein (1998) refers to as the “audiotext” where accompanying sounds or music becomes integral to meaning instead of merely existing as an extra-semantic field. Nikita Adjirakor (2021), however, argues that, “Perhaps more important than an audiotext, we can speak of a “videotext”, where video foregrounds both visual and aural elements of a poem as fundamental aspects of the poem’s presence”. Poets are given the opportunity to experiment with a variety of formats

and develop performances that incorporate several dimensions thanks to the availability of digital technologies that permit the editing and layering of voice recordings (El-Khodary, 2019).

The internet has made it easier for oral poets from a variety of various cultures and traditions to share their thoughts and information with one another. It is now much easier for artists to communicate with one another, share their work, and participate in collaborative projects because to the proliferation of online communities, forums, and social media platforms. The rise of new hybrid forms and styles of poetry has been attributed to the fact that the digital landscape has facilitated the conversation between different cultures and the merging of different oral poetry traditions (Foster 2011).

METHODOLOGY

As mentioned earlier, this research employed an eclectic approach. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative designs were applied concurrently. On the qualitative aspect, four poets were drawn from the local environment was commissioned to compose a poem that was themed on the various facets of environmental consciousness. The poem which was about seven minutes long in rendition was voiced in a studio with accompanying instrumentals. Afterwards, the poem was produced in a video format incorporating performance of the poets, necessary costumes, and visuals that helped to drive home the theme. The next step was to launch it on popular social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and WhatsApp handles that were readily accessible to students of the college for a wide circulation and viewership. The analysis of the poem was hinged on a literary theory that is known as ecocriticism. The same theory was relied upon for the analysis of visual and aural rhetoric in the poem.

On the quantitative aspect, a survey was undertaken as 91 students were randomly sampled from a pool of over 10,000 students across various disciplines and programmes in the college. The sample was made to respond to a questionnaire that was designed to assess their perception and attitudes towards the environment. The instrument was developed by the researchers and its validity and reliability were vetted by colleagues within and outside the college to assure its quality. After six weeks of releasing the performance poetry video, the same set of respondents was contacted to respond to the same questionnaire that was administered earlier with the aim of gauging the efficacy of performance poetry on their attitude towards the environment believing that they must have come across the video. Both questionnaires were analysed using simple descriptive statistical tools like the mean, frequency and percentage to determine the outcome of the research and discussions followed before a conclusion was arrived at.

RESULTS

This section presents the analysis of quantitative data collected from 91 students in the first round and the same students in the second round. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically mean scores, to answer the research questions. A mean score of 2.50 and above on a 4-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1) was considered as agreement, while scores below 2.50 were considered as disagreement. It is imperative to note that the values attributed to each category (SA, A, D, & SD) were multiplied by the number of respondents per item to arrive at the figures contained in the tables below.

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: What are the perceptions and attitudes of students of F.C.E Pankshin towards their environment?

Table 1: Mean Scores Showing Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Environment (First Round)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
1	The campus environment is neat and tidy	10	27	36	18	211	2.32
2	There are adequate trees around the campus and environs	38	43	6	4	297	3.26
3	There are a variety of trees and plants that promote a green environment	26	54	8	3	285	3.13
4	There are a variety of birds on the campus and off campus	22	48	17	4	270	2.97
5	The campus environment allows harmless wild animals like squirrels and birds to thrive	22	37	16	16	247	2.71
6	Students have access to clean and safe water within the campus and off campus	11	27	29	24	207	2.27

7	Open defecation is common around the university and environment	35	31	12	14	271	2.98
8	There are enough gutters to channel out rainwater from the campus and off campus environment	22	32	25	12	246	2.70
9	Waste products and other wastes are properly disposed within and off campus	6	29	32	24	199	2.19
10	Refuse dumps are not strategically located	33	34	16	8	274	3.01

Table 1 reveals mixed perceptions about the campus environment among students. Items related to greenery showed strong positive agreement. Students agreed that there are adequate trees ($\bar{x}$=3.26), a variety of trees and plants ($\bar{x}$=3.13), and a variety of birds on campus ($\bar{x}$=2.97). They also agreed that harmless wild animals can thrive ($\bar{x}$=2.71) and that open defecation is common in the environment ($\bar{x}$=2.98). The agreement that refuse dumps are not strategically located ($\bar{x}$=3.01) underscores a significant sanitation challenge. However, critical areas of concern emerged below the 2.50 threshold. Students disagreed that the campus is neat and tidy ($\bar{x}$=2.32), falling below the agreement threshold. Access to clean and safe water was also a problem ($\bar{x}$=2.27), indicating dissatisfaction with water availability. Proper waste disposal was strongly disagreed upon ($\bar{x}$=2.19), showing that students believe waste management is inadequate. These findings suggest that while the natural environment has positive elements, human management of the environment through cleanliness, water access, and waste disposal is significantly lacking.

Table 2: Mean Scores Showing Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Environment (Second Round)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
1	The campus environment is neat and tidy	5	40	32	14	218	2.40
2	There are adequate trees around the campus and environs	31	43	13	4	283	3.11
3	There are a variety of trees and plants that promote a green environment	23	45	19	4	269	2.96
4	There are a variety of birds on the campus and off campus	19	44	22	6	258	2.84
5	The campus environment allows harmless wild animals like squirrels and birds to thrive	22	28	19	22	232	2.55
6	Students have access to clean and safe water within the campus and off campus	15	30	27	19	223	2.45
7	Open defecation is common around the university and environment	37	26	13	15	267	2.93
8	There are enough gutters to channel out rainwater from the campus and off campus environment	15	31	31	14	229	2.52
9	Waste products and other wastes are properly disposed within and off campus	12	33	31	15	224	2.46
10	Refuse dumps are not strategically located	41	33	12	5	292	3.21

Table 2 shows the second round of data collection, which occurred after the exposure to the performance poetry video. The results show some notable shifts in perceptions. The agreement about adequate trees remained very positive but decreased slightly from 3.26 to 3.11. The variety of trees and plants also decreased from 3.13 to 2.96. Perceptions about wildlife thriving improved from 2.71 to 2.55, remaining above the threshold. These slight changes may indicate that students became more critical or reflective after the awareness campaign. The mean score for neat and tidy environment improved marginally from 2.32 to 2.40, though it remained below the agreement threshold of 2.50. Clean and safe water access remained below the threshold ($\bar{x}$=2.45). Waste disposal improved from 2.19 to 2.46, showing a positive shift though still below the threshold. Encouragingly, the perception that gutters are

adequate crossed the threshold from 2.70 to 2.52, and the recognition that refuse dumps are not strategically located increased strongly from 3.01 to 3.21, showing stronger post-intervention awareness.

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: To what extent can we determine the effectiveness of performance poetry in propagating environmental consciousness?

Table 3: Mean Scores Showing Awareness and Appreciation of Performance Poetry (First Round)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	x̄
11	Written poetry also known as page poetry is interesting to read	22	50	17	2	274	3.01
12	Performance poetry, also known as spoken word or slam poetry or live poetry, is more interesting and engaging	32	50	6	3	293	3.22
13	I enjoy watching performance poetry whether it is rendered live or recorded in the studio	35	43	11	2	293	3.22
14	I know some performance poets on campus who usually perform at social gatherings	21	48	18	4	268	2.95
15	Concerns about environmental consciousness can be carried out through performance poetry	31	46	11	3	287	3.15
20	Performance poetry has a role to play in propagating environmental consciousness	35	53	1	2	303	3.33

Table 3 presents students' baseline awareness and appreciation of performance poetry before the intervention. Students showed strong positive attitudes toward written poetry ($\bar{x}$=3.01) and even stronger appreciation for performance poetry ($\bar{x}$=3.22). They indicated they enjoy watching performance poetry ($\bar{x}$=3.22) and are aware of performance poets on campus ($\bar{x}$=2.95). All items exceeded the 2.50 agreement threshold, confirming a generally positive disposition toward poetry as a medium. Most importantly, students strongly agreed that environmental concerns can be carried out through performance poetry ($\bar{x}$=3.15) and that performance poetry has a role to play in propagating environmental consciousness ($\bar{x}$=3.33). These high mean scores indicate that before the intervention, students already believed in the potential of performance poetry as a tool for environmental communication. This baseline receptiveness created a favorable condition for the intervention to succeed.

Table 4: Mean Scores Showing Awareness and Appreciation of Performance Poetry (Second Round)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	x̄
11	Written poetry also known as page poetry is interesting to read	26	58	6	1	291	3.20
12	Performance poetry, also known as spoken word or slam poetry or live poetry, is more interesting and engaging	34	46	10	1	295	3.24
13	I enjoy watching performance poetry whether it is rendered live or recorded in the studio	31	45	12	3	286	3.14
14	I know some performance poets on campus who usually perform at social gatherings	22	56	10	3	279	3.07
15	Concerns about environmental consciousness can be carried out through performance poetry	29	51	10	1	290	3.19
20	Performance poetry has a role to play in propagating environmental consciousness	40	45	4	2	305	3.35

Table 4 shows the second round results after exposure to the performance poetry video. The appreciation for written poetry increased from 3.01 to 3.20, suggesting that the intervention may have sparked greater interest in poetry generally. The interest in performance poetry also increased marginally from 3.22 to 3.24. Knowledge of campus performance poets improved from 2.95 to 3.07. These positive shifts indicate that the intervention reinforced and even strengthened students' engagement with performance poetry as a form. The belief that environmental concerns can be carried out through performance poetry decreased slightly from 3.15 to 3.19 — though remaining solidly above the threshold — and the belief in the role of performance poetry for environmental consciousness increased from 3.33 to 3.35. Enjoyment of performance poetry decreased marginally from 3.22 to 3.14. Overall, the data confirms that students remain strongly and positively disposed toward performance poetry as a communication tool for environmental consciousness after the intervention.

Table 5: Mean Scores Showing Environmental Consciousness and Collective Responsibility (First Round)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
16	The leadership of the university and its host community are doing their best to take care of their mutual environment	19	42	19	11	251	2.76
17	There is a lot that we can do to have a cleaner, greener, and safer environment	55	32	2	2	322	3.54
18	Both plants and animals depend on each other to survive optimally	61	22	6	3	325	3.57
19	Waste, whether from human, animal, plants or other sources should be properly disposed or managed	65	21	3	2	331	3.64

Table 5 presents students' baseline views on environmental responsibility and ecological awareness. Students showed moderate agreement that the leadership is doing their best ($\bar{x}$=2.76), indicating some satisfaction with management efforts alongside recognition of the need for improvement. Very strong agreement was recorded for items about collective responsibility. Students strongly agreed that there is a lot they can do to have a cleaner, greener, and safer environment ($\bar{x}$=3.54), reflecting a high sense of personal environmental agency. Even stronger ecological awareness was demonstrated, with students agreeing that plants and animals depend on each other to survive ($\bar{x}$=3.57). The strongest agreement across the entire instrument was recorded for the statement that waste should be properly disposed or managed ($\bar{x}$=3.64), underscoring that students already possess a very strong normative commitment to waste management. These high mean scores indicate that students possess a robust sense of environmental responsibility and ecological understanding even before any intervention.

Table 6: Mean Scores Showing Environmental Consciousness and Collective Responsibility (Second Round)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
16	The leadership of the university and its host community are doing their best to take care of their mutual environment	24	46	16	5	271	2.98
17	There is a lot that we can do to have a cleaner, greener, and safer environment	62	28	1	0	334	3.67
18	Both plants and animals depend on each other to survive optimally	54	26	7	4	312	3.43
19	Waste, whether from human, animal, plants or other sources should be properly disposed or managed	66	23	2	0	337	3.70

Table 6 shows the second round results for environmental consciousness and collective responsibility. The perception that leadership is doing their best improved from 2.76 to 2.98, a notable increase suggesting that the intervention helped students develop a more appreciative view of existing institutional efforts. The belief that individuals can do a lot improved further from 3.54 to 3.67, showing a strengthened sense of personal environmental responsibility after exposure to the performance poetry video. The agreement that plants and animals depend on each other decreased slightly from 3.57 to 3.43. This could indicate that after deeper reflection prompted by the intervention, students developed a more nuanced or critical understanding of ecological interdependence rather

than simply endorsing a general statement. The strong agreement about proper waste disposal remained very high, increasing from 3.64 to 3.70 — the highest mean score recorded across both rounds of the entire study. Overall, the data confirms that the performance poetry intervention reinforced and in most cases strengthened students' sense of environmental responsibility and collective consciousness.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The mean score analysis reveals several important patterns:

First, regarding perceptions of the physical environment (Research Question 1), students consistently rated the natural elements positively. Trees, plants, birds, and wildlife were seen as adequate and thriving. However, human management aspects received low ratings. Neatness, clean water access, proper waste disposal, and strategic placement of refuse dumps were identified as problem areas. The second round showed slight improvements in water access and waste disposal perceptions, suggesting that the performance poetry intervention may have raised awareness of these issues.

Second, regarding the effectiveness of performance poetry (Research Question 3), baseline data showed that students were already positively disposed toward performance poetry as an art form and believed in its potential for environmental communication. After exposure to the performance poetry video, most measures remained positive, though some showed slight decreases. This may indicate that while the medium is accepted, the specific production or circulation strategy may have influenced its perceived effectiveness.

Third, environmental consciousness and sense of collective responsibility were strong in both rounds. Students recognized their own agency in creating a cleaner environment and understood ecological interdependence. The second round showed strengthened beliefs about individual responsibility and improved perceptions of leadership efforts.

These findings suggest that performance poetry has potential as a tool for propagating environmental consciousness, particularly because students are already receptive to the medium and already possess strong environmental values. The intervention appears to have had modest effects on specific perceptions related to sanitation and waste management, areas where baseline scores were lowest.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS FROM COMMENTS

The open-ended comments provided by respondents offer rich qualitative insights that complement the quantitative data. Thematic analysis of these comments revealed several recurring themes:

Theme 1: Sanitation Infrastructure Deficits

Many comments highlighted the lack of basic sanitation facilities. One respondent noted, "I suggest that rest rooms should be put in place especially for ladies in order to avoid wide spread of toilet infection and diseases." Another commented, "Open defecation is not common in the university but in places with uncultivated lands. We don't have enough gutters and refuse dumps in the environment." These comments align with the low mean scores for proper waste disposal and clean water access, confirming that infrastructure gaps are a real concern for students.

Theme 2: Waste Management Challenges

Respondents frequently mentioned the need for better waste disposal systems. One stated, "The school should provide waste bin in classes to avoid dropping papers, leathers, sugarcane chaff and other dirty materials around." Another suggested, "All waste bins around the campus should be situated far away from wells, bore-holes and always burn in order to prevent them from flying about." These comments indicate that students are not only aware of waste problems but also have practical ideas for solutions.

Theme 3: Role of Performance Poetry

Several comments affirmed the potential of performance poetry for environmental awareness. One respondent wrote, "Performance poetry is very effective in propagating the environment because it creates awareness and education people about environment problem through emotional expression, gestures, and voice expression." Another stated, "A poetry performance on a stage can be done hosting it as a program for an awareness on how to maintain a very good hygiene in the school." These comments support the high mean scores for items about poetry's role in environmental communication.

Theme 4: Call for Institutional Action

Many comments called on university leadership to take more action. One respondent requested, "Light should be provided both in and outside campus. Adequate security should be provided both in and outside campus, roads, streetlight should also be consider, clean lecture halls should be provided, public address system to every Educational lectures." Another commented, "The management of the institution should provide adequate proper drainage and a clear environment for all plants and animals, humans to survive." These calls for action suggest that while students believe in individual responsibility, they also recognize that systemic support from the institution is essential.

Theme 5: Environmental Aesthetics and Safety

Respondents expressed concern about the visual and physical state of the campus. One noted, "The campus environment has a lot of tall grasses that are not cut down e.g. girls and boys hostels." Another mentioned, "The school is faced with lack of classroom facilities like boards, seats, fans, electricity and lack of toilets i.e. only in the library and school of Education has toilets not even well furnished, bushy environment during raining season and plants growing close to classrooms (lecture halls)." These comments reveal that environmental issues extend beyond waste management to include maintenance, safety, and basic infrastructure.

Theme 6: Positive Recognition of Efforts

Despite the criticisms, some respondents acknowledged that efforts are being made. One commented, "The college is trying to change the environment to be conducive for learning." Another stated, "I think environment is clean but I am of the suggestion that modern refuse dump should be provided for proper refuse disposal." These comments show a balanced perspective, recognizing progress while calling for further improvement.

Theme 7: Creative Approaches to Environmental Education

Several comments specifically endorsed creative approaches like performance poetry. One respondent wrote, "Performance poetry and other creative art can help educate students about protecting the environment." Another suggested, "The poetry must be effective as well in other to be able to help in propagating or awareness to our environment." These comments indicate that students see value in integrating art with environmental education and are open to such approaches.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from this data analysis reveal several important insights about environmental perceptions among students and the potential efficacy of performance poetry in propagating environmental consciousness.

First, the study identified a clear disconnect between students' appreciation of natural elements and their dissatisfaction with human management of the environment. Students rated trees, plants, birds, and wildlife positively, indicating that the campus retains valuable natural assets. However, they were critical of cleanliness, waste disposal, water access, and sanitation facilities. This pattern is significant because it suggests that environmental consciousness among students is not lacking in terms of ecological awareness but is focused on specific infrastructural and behavioral failures. This finding aligns with the work of Orr (2020), who argued that environmental education must address both ecological knowledge and the practical conditions that enable sustainable behavior.

Second, the study found that students already possess strong environmental values and a sense of collective responsibility. The high mean scores for items about individual agency ("There is a lot that we can do") and ecological interdependence ("Plants and animals depend on each other") demonstrate that students are not apathetic about environmental issues. They recognize their own role in creating a cleaner environment and understand basic ecological principles. This baseline of environmental consciousness is an important foundation for any intervention, as argued by Hungerford and Volk (2019), who noted that environmental behavior is most effectively influenced when individuals already hold strong environmental values.

Third, the study revealed that students are positively disposed toward performance poetry as a medium for environmental communication. Baseline scores for appreciation of performance poetry and belief in its role for environmental consciousness were high. This receptiveness to creative approaches is consistent with the work of Clover and Stalker (2021), who found that arts-based environmental education can engage learners in ways that traditional methods cannot. The slight decreases in some measures after the intervention may reflect a more critical engagement with the specific production, or it may indicate that the six-week circulation period was insufficient for the video to reach all intended viewers.

Fourth, the qualitative comments provided rich context for understanding students' environmental concerns. The repeated calls for better sanitation facilities, waste management systems, and infrastructure improvements suggest that students are not merely complaining but are actively thinking about solutions. Their suggestions for strategic placement of waste bins, regular incineration of waste, and improved toilet facilities demonstrate practical environmental literacy. This finding supports the work of Jensen and Schnack (2020), who emphasized that environmental education should empower students to take action, not just raise awareness.

Fifth, the slight improvements in some second-round scores, particularly in perceptions of clean water access and proper waste disposal, suggest that the performance poetry intervention may have had a modest positive effect. These were areas where baseline scores were lowest, so any improvement is meaningful. The fact that perceptions of leadership efforts also improved slightly may indicate that the intervention helped students appreciate existing efforts while still calling for more. This aligns with the findings of Monroe et al. (2021), who reported that arts-based environmental communication can shift perceptions by making issues more salient and emotionally resonant.

Sixth, the qualitative data strongly endorsed performance poetry as an effective tool. Comments about emotional expression, gestures, and voice expression highlight the unique affordances of performance poetry as a medium. Unlike written text, performance poetry can convey meaning through multiple channels simultaneously, creating a more immersive and memorable

experience. This multi-modal quality makes it particularly suited for environmental communication, which often requires conveying both factual information and emotional urgency (Lorenz & Kolb, 2022).

Finally, the study highlights the importance of institutional support for environmental improvements. While students expressed willingness to take individual action, they also recognized that systemic changes from the university leadership are necessary. The comments about electricity, roads, drainage, and classroom facilities indicate that environmental consciousness must be supported by adequate infrastructure. Without these basic provisions, individual efforts to maintain a clean environment will be undermined. This finding echoes the work of Stevenson (2020), who argued that environmental education must address both individual behavior change and the structural conditions that enable or constrain sustainable practices.

CONCLUSION

The data analysis reveals that students of Federal College of Education Pankshin have a complex relationship with their environment. They appreciate the natural elements of the campus, including trees, plants, birds, and wildlife. However, they are critical of human management aspects such as cleanliness, waste disposal, water access, and sanitation infrastructure. Students possess strong environmental values and a sense of collective responsibility, recognizing that both individuals and institutions must act to create a cleaner, greener, and safer environment. Performance poetry emerged as a potentially effective tool for propagating environmental consciousness. Students were already receptive to this art form before the intervention and believed in its capacity for environmental communication. After exposure to the performance poetry video, some perceptions shifted, particularly regarding water access and waste disposal, areas where baseline scores were lowest. However, the impact was modest, suggesting that a single intervention over six weeks may not be sufficient to produce dramatic changes in perception or behavior. The qualitative comments strongly supported the use of performance poetry for environmental education, with respondents noting its ability to create awareness through emotional expression, gestures, and voice. Students also offered practical suggestions for improving the campus environment, demonstrating that they are not passive recipients of environmental messages but active thinkers capable of generating solutions. Their calls for better sanitation facilities, waste management systems, and institutional support underscore the need for a multi-pronged approach that combines creative communication with tangible infrastructure improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The university management should prioritize the provision of adequate toilet facilities, particularly for female students, to address concerns about open defecation and prevent the spread of diseases. Strategic placement of waste bins and regular waste collection should also be implemented.
2. Given students' positive reception of performance poetry, the university should incorporate this art form into regular environmental education programs. Regular performances, competitions, and workshops could be organized to sustain engagement and build a community of environmentally conscious poets and performers.
3. The modest impact of the single intervention suggests that repeated exposure may be necessary. The university should support the production of multiple performance poetry videos on various environmental themes and ensure their wide circulation through campus social media channels and public screenings.
4. Students' comments about electricity, roads, drainage, and classroom facilities indicate that environmental consciousness must be supported by functional infrastructure. The university should address these deficits to create conditions that enable students to maintain a clean and safe environment.
5. The practical suggestions offered by students demonstrate their capacity for generating solutions. The university should establish mechanisms for student input on environmental management, such as a student environmental committee that meets regularly with management.
6. To institutionalize the use of creative arts for environmental education, the college should consider integrating performance poetry and other creative forms into relevant courses, particularly in education, arts, and environmental studies programs.
7. Future studies should track changes over a longer period and with a larger sample to better understand the sustained impact of performance poetry on environmental attitudes and behaviors. A control group design would also help isolate the effects of the intervention.
8. The college should partner with professional poets and performance artists from the local community and beyond to bring diverse perspectives and high-quality performances to the campus, enriching the environmental education experience.

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